This plan was approved by SESLIP SG on 14 July 2026 and includes subsequent amendments to Appendix 4 and 5 to reflect updated targets and financial detail.

SESLIP Regional Improvement Plan 2026-27, including RIIA Grant Delivery Plan 2026-27

Author: Richard Tyndall, Programme Manager, richard.tyndall@richardtyndall.co.uk 07880-787007

Introduction

1. The purpose of this regional improvement plan is to identify action that will assist all the local authorities in the South East to deliver effective services which improve outcomes for children and young people.

2. The plan recognises that all children's services have strengths which can help inspire improvement in others; it recognises that they are all capable of further improvement. It aims to discourage the conclusion that only poor or weak services need improvement help; instead, it celebrates honest self-evaluation and constant improvement as antidotes to complacency.

3. The main features of the plan are:
   - a non-stigmatising approach to improvement
   - support for innovation and new approaches to service delivery challenges
   - development of the skills of staff, managers, corporate and political leaders
   - increased sharing of ideas, insight, understanding and solutions.

4. At the SESLIP Conference on 22 May 2026, six priorities for the region were identified:

   - SESLIP to develop a single **regional improvement narrative** across all major reforms (CSC, SEND, Education etc)
   - Both SESLIP and Home+Future to increase **sub-regional collaboration** to reflect emerging system footprints.
   - SESLIP to focus on **practice, innovations, and building relationships** between LAs whereas Home+Future to focus on data, sufficiency, market management and commissioning.
   - SESLIP to **strengthen partnership working** with health, education and police particularly at a subregional footprint and focused on the agendas that are important to partners.
   - SESLIP to expand **peer learning, workforce development and shared improvement activity** connecting with the LGA offer.
   - Clarify the future roles of SESLIP and Home+Future (especially relating to education/SEND and fostering where there are seen to be overlaps) and **strengthen the South East's collective voice**

5. For further details, please consult the conference report: www.seslip.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/SESLIP-May-2026-conference-report-evaluation-and-recommendations.pdf

DfE RIIA Grant

6. The core activities of the programme have been confirmed in the announcement of a substantial DfE grant.

Table 1: DfE Grant to SESLIP in 2025-26 and 2026-27 for CSC and SEND

SESLIP	Data	Diagnostic	Universal work	Targeted support	TOTAL 2025-26
CSC 2025-26	80,000	60,800	200,000	90,121	430,921
SEND 2025-26	160,000	76,000	600,000	370,200	1,206,200
Total 2025-26	**240,000**	**136,800**	**800,000**	**460,321**	**1,637,121**
SESLIP	Data	Diagnostic	Universal work	Targeted support	TOTAL 2026-27
CSC 2026-27	80,000	60,800	214,000	-	354,800
SEND 2026-27	240,000	76,000	875,000	-	1,191,000
Total 2026-27	**320,000**	**136,800**	**1,089,000**	**-**	**1,545,000**

7. The DfE grant is subject to a "Statement of Requirements" in respect of CSC and SEND Grant for 2026-27; the general requirements are:

A. Maintain a programme management function
B. Maintain a data management function
C. Promote partnership working with each other and with health, police, parents and carers
D. Work with LGA and D2I

The changes from last year are identified as:

A. SEND reform and the schools white paper: RIIAs should support the development and successful delivery of Local SEND reform plans
B. CSC reform: RIIAs should bolster regional systems: specifically regional fostering hubs; regional care cooperatives; Families First Partnership Programme
C. Amended delivery planning and reporting
D. New focus on LGR impacts and learning

The SEND requirements are:

A. Support collaboration on delivering Local SEND Reform Plans to ensure consistency and comparable levels of ambition across all LAs
B. Experts at Hand Offer
C. Strengthening sufficiency and place planning
D. Improving partnership working and practice
E. Supporting national SEND reform data join-up
F. Strengthening mainstream inclusion

G. Working with RISE advisers
H. Regional diagnostics (which refers to our Courageous Conversations workstream)

The CSC requirements are:

A. The use of data benchmarking
B. Implement learning from Families First for Children, regional fostering and RCCs
C. Align with CSC Improvement Teams (CITs) and Expert Advisers (EAs) to avoid duplication and discontinue targeted support
D. Diagnostics for FFP, RFH, RCC and LGR
E. Establish effective partnerships with leaders in police, health and education

8. In responding to this document, we have prepared Appendix 1 (an analysis of the CSC dashboard and the relative performance of the south east and its LAs) and Appendix 2 (an analysis of the plan's proposed projects against the CSC and SEND outcomes and enablers).

9. The plan is also informed by the output of the 2025-26 round of DCS self-assessments and peer challenges. Appendix 3 is a summary of the main themes that emerged from these challenge events.

10. We acknowledge, however, that there is always room for improvement and innovation and will ask our relevant communities of practice to review practice and improvement opportunities in these service delivery areas.

11. Appendix 4 reproduces the RIIA grant application format and appendix 5 is a full SESLIP budget for 2026-27, including RIIA grant.

Objectives of this plan

12. We will identify ways in which local authorities can support each other to improve and take collective action to address systemic issues within the region.

13. We will recognise both positive and negative variance in performance and try to ensure that no child is left behind.

14. We will ensure that authorities who are facing more challenges have access to support from others in the region and, where appropriate, national programmes co-ordinated as appropriate with the DfE's CSC Improvement Teams (CITs) and Expert Advisers (EAs).

15. We will take collective action where this will support several authorities with their improvement journeys, including lobbying government where necessary.

16. We will support the effectiveness of lead members and their deputies and colleagues.

17. In addition to the DfE RIIA grant, SESLIP has other resources (see Table 2) available that are not subject to the grant delivery plan reporting process. Some of this resource is earmarked for specific purposes as set out in the table below. The remainder is available to allocate to activities not covered by the grant.

Table 2: SESLIP Budget for 2026-27 showing all resources

Income	2025-26	Notes
Carry forward – earmarked for Targeted Support	254,691	To complete the programme begun last year
Carry forward - unrestricted	211,960	
SE subs	165,500	
Total before DfE grant	**632,151**	
DfE – data	320,000	Combined CSC and SEND resource
DfE – diagnostic	136,800	
DfE – universal	889,000	
DfE – SEND programme management	200,000	
Total DfE Grant	**1,545,800**	
Grand total	**2,177,951**	

Grant Delivery Plan

18. The RIIA Grant Delivery Plan is part of the overall SESLIP Regional Improvement Plan, and it is shown in Appendix 4 in the format required by DfE.

19. I have constructed our plan under the three policy headings used by the DfE: Data Capacity and Capability; Regional Diagnostics; and Universal Improvement.

20. Some projects are continuations from last year and these projects have retained last year's numbers. This means that some project numbers are unused and new projects from 2026-2027 start at number 50. It also means that the projects are not listed in numerical order.

Data Capacity and Capability

Project No. 1: Data Benchmarking for both CSC and SEND, £320,000
Project Manager: Luke Ede, East Sussex
DCS sponsor: Carolyn Fair, East Sussex

21. SEND Data
We will utilise our current active network of LA SENDAP data experts and the help and support of Vanessa Good from Data to Insight, to
   A. improve the quality and scope of SENDAP data collection in the SE building on our current regional SEND and Education benchmarking dashboards.
   B. refresh/rebuild the current dashboards responding to new standardised measures and associated data collection.
   C. develop a high-level insights dashboard targeted at SENDAP leaders across SE and develop new networks of SEND leaders and experts to host data insights workshops for senior leaders and partner agencies to explore trends and outliers in LA and regional dashboard, and drive improvement.
   D. build upon our current scheduled workshops with LA SENDAP data experts to further explore issues and barriers to standardised measures and data collection.
   E. expand our current bi-annual data collection and workshops to quarterly.
   F. in addition, we will engage with local partners and agencies, including LA senior leads for SENDAP to identify priority areas for standardisation and data collection.

22. Recruitment:
We will
  A. appoint a SENDAP Data Manager to lead on all activities described as well as preparation for upcoming SEND reforms in the East Sussex team.
  B. appoint a part-time SENDAP Data Manager to lead on AP and inclusion activities in the Brighton and Hove team.

23. National standardisation:
We will
  A. set aside a contribution to D2I for coordination of national benchmarking.
  B. we will work alongside other regional data leads from across the country to share insights and best practice.
  C. utilise current close links with Data to Insight and NPIMG
  D. escalate / share insights and issues identified from regional SEND data collection and analyst workshops.
  E. escalate / share insights and issues identified from regional data insight workshops.
  F. collate insights and issues to highlight best practice around resolutions.

24. CSC Data
We will utilise our current active network of LA CSC data experts to
  A. improve the quality and scope of our CSC data collection,
  B. work-shop issues and barriers and agree standardised measures and definitions.
  C. continue producing quarterly and annual benchmarking dashboards and share with DfE.
  D. engage with local partners and agencies, including LA senior leads for CSC to inform areas of focus.
  E. develop our current CSC Benchmarking Dashboard, in line with enhanced data collection, to facilitate identification of trends and outliers.
  F. explore local issues and factors that impact upon data.
  G. host data insights workshops for senior leaders to explore trends and drive improvement, inviting partner agencies to attend.
  H. work alongside other regional data leads from across the country to share insights and best practice.

New Project

Project No. 50: ICB Partnership Data Dashboards £120,000
Project Manager: Caroline Tozzi, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Grainne Siggins, Bracknell Forest

25. Following the establishment of Thames Valley ICB in April 2026, the eight local authorities, (Bracknell Forest, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Reading, Slough, West Berkshire, Windsor and Maidenhead, and Wokingham) have made a commitment with senior leaders in the ICB to create a SEND Data Dashboard that operates across the ICB footprint whilst also enabling individual local authority place data and analysis to be presented across key partnership metrics.

26. This project will draw on learning from Data to Insight, other areas of the country (e.g. Nottinghamshire) and jointly commission a SEND data dashboard for the sub-region.

27. The project is resourced to encourage the other ICB areas in the south-east to follow on from the work done in the Thames Valley to establish equivalent SEND data dashboards in the other three ICB areas in the South East.

28. The sequence and timing of work in Kent and Medway; Surrey, Sussex and Brighton and Hove; and Hampshire and Isle of Wight will be the subject of consultation early in the life of the project.

Regional Diagnostics

Project No. 2: DCS Self-assessment and Peer Challenge, £60,800
Project Manager: Richard Tyndall and Selina Rattu, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Christine McInnes, Kent

29. We will commission a review of the regional CSC diagnostic arrangements, to be conducted by Selina Rattu (SESLIP Consultant). The context is set in the Statement of Requirements and requires us to consider:
    1. the six core Principles of the National Framework
    2. identify strengths and effective practice across the Framework's four Outcomes and three Enablers, and
    3. place specific emphasis on:
       FFPP delivery – understanding strengths and barriers
       RCC rollout – identifying effective practice
       Regional Fostering Hubs – identifying effective practice
       LGR – assessing support needs, leadership capacity, migration issues, and workforce stability

30. The project will:
    1. Engage with other Regions across the country to understand how they are approaching regional diagnostics and to identify any transferrable learning
    2. Work with the DCS's across all 19 South East LA's to:
       - Share insights and models from other Regions
       - Gather feedback on the current SESLIP Self-Assessment and Peer Challenge model
       - Explore how the process may evolve to meet the RIIA Requirements and better support regional priorities
    3. Consider where SESLIP diagnostic activity under the headings "FFPP delivery", "RCC roll-out", "Regional Fostering Hubs", and "LGR" should be located to best effect
    4. Consider how and when to support the LGR transition for Surrey, East Surrey and West Surrey

Project No. 3: SEND Courageous Conversations, £76,000
Project Manager: Chris Baird, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Lee-Anne Farach, Medway

Courageous Conversations (SEND) will be led by Chris Baird. This programme has been running for over two years, with the first one taking place in Buckinghamshire in Jan 2024.

32. Since then, Brighton and Hove, Buckinghamshire, East Sussex, Kent, Hampshire, Medway, Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire, Portsmouth, Reading, Southampton, Surrey, West Berkshire, West Sussex, Windsor and Maidenhead, and Wokingham have all had at least one SEND Courageous Conversation. Reading and Buckinghamshire have had two. There are 10 more planned for 2026/27. The offer is open for LAs to have a SEND Courageous Conversation - so there may be more.

33. Two of three yet to engage, Slough and Bracknell Forest, are fully engaged in SEND improvement programmes following poor inspection reports. Isle of Wight have been in active discussion but have not yet made a priority for this activity over all the other SEND improvement projects underway.

34. In addition to being the subject of the conversation, 13 LAs have used the opportunity to enable their staff to take part in other LA's SEND Courageous Conversations - they have valued sharing their perspectives, learning about what is taking place in another LA, reflecting on their own work and situation. LAs continue to offer this opportunity to their staff.

35. All SEND Courageous Conversations have a representative from a different Parent Carer Forum attend (SESLIP provides some funding to enable this). This has been greatly valued by participating PCFs and also LAs, enabling a widening of awareness of the SEND system, of what is taking place in different areas, and an opportunity to reflect anew on good practice in their "home" LA.

36. An interim evaluation of the programme, further detailed briefing and a summary of the forward programme is available at https://www.seslip.co.uk/project-3-send-courageous-conversations/

37. SEND Courageous Conversations are dependent on LAs determining when would be useful, alongside their other work. This has led to a number of planned SEND Courageous Conversations shifting both in when they take place and the topic. They are designed to be useful for LAs and to fit into their development programmes. The SEND Reforms for example has meant that some Courageous Conversations have shifted to autumn 2026. The impact of inspection also means that SEND Courageous Conversations have shifted to new dates. They still take place, but sometimes not on the original date envisaged.

38. SEND topics covered have included:
    - Developing/reviewing the local area SEF
    - Transitions, including 16+
    - Alternative Provision
    - Timeliness/quality of new EHC assessments (including review of individual anonymised child records)
    - Annual Reviews (inc. review of individual anonymised child records)
    - SEND support and inclusive practice in mainstream schools
    - Joint commissioning

- Coproduction and impact of this
- Ordinarily available provision/Prevention
- Outcomes for children – including evidence of partnership working having positive effects
- Quality Assurance
- What happens when? (Ie once referred for an assessment but waiting times are significant)
- Communication
- Experts at Hand - wider engagement in development of the model

Universal Improvement

Take Your Place – our future leaders' programme

Project No. 4: SEND Workforce development in residential settings, £88,000
Project Manager: Mark Evans, SESLIP and Kevin Gordon Home and Future
DCS sponsor: Lucy Butler, Home and Future (South East RCC)

39. Working with the South East Regional Care Cooperative, we will continue to support the development of the residential workforce.

40. There are further details of the programme, an evaluation, and our future plans available at https://www.seslip.co.uk/project-4-send-workforce-development-in-residential-settings/

41. Three activities are planned for 2026-2027:

    1. Kingston Graduate Diploma – £30k A specialist advanced practice and leadership programme designed to strengthen the pipeline for senior roles in Children's Homes. The programme embeds relational and evidence-based practice approaches and provides a progression route beyond Level 5. It is currently not eligible for apprenticeship funding, making pump-priming essential for early cohorts.

    2. Step into Residential Care – £29k An entry-level access programme that supports recruitment by preparing new entrants for the realities of residential practice. It provides a structured introduction to core skills, values, and practice expectations, improving readiness for Level 3 progression and reducing early attrition. The pilot course in the northwest is currently undergoing accreditation to receive 'Skills Bootcamp' status, allowing funding from Adult Education budgets. Part or match funding will help promote a similar approach in the southeast with individual councils that manage adult learning budgets.

    3. Care to Lead – £29k A development programme for aspiring supervisors and shift leaders. It strengthens frontline leadership capability, supports succession planning for Registered Manager roles, and provides a bridge between practitioner and management pathways. It is currently not eligible for apprenticeship funding, making pump-priming essential for early cohorts

Project No. 5: Take Your Place: CSC and SEND future leaders programme, £120,000
Project Manager: Mark Evans, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Emma Cockerell, Wokingham

42. Working across both CSC and SEND, to continue our partnership with The Staff College in delivering learning programmes that focus on developing leadership skills. These programmes will include:
    1. aspirant assistant directors (from CSC, SEND and other backgrounds).
    2. leading in partnerships – this one to include our health, police, education and third sector partners learning alongside local authority staff working in groupings based on ICB footprints
    3. black and global majority leadership.

43. Mark Evans has worked with the Staff College to develop the programme which will build on our regional subscription to deliver these benefits. The new programme includes a multi-agency focus to improve leadership across services boundaries for SEND and CSC.

44. We will explore opportunities for jointly commission these opportunities with our RIIA partners.

Workforce, agency, recruitment and retention

Project No. 6: CSC workforce agency and MoC, £34,000
Project Manager: Mark Evans, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Mac Heath, Milton Keynes

45. We have developed a good understanding of the CSC workforce, and we are continuing to support and develop the response to the agency worker regulations. We have joined forces with LIIA in the past and we will seek to continue to develop our joint working with other RIIAs, which includes a shared dashboard and work on aligning agency workforce spending caps.

Project No. 7: SEND workforce, £45,000
Project Manager: Sheelagh Sullivan, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Lee-Anne Farach, Medway

46. Building upon the success of workforce projects in 25/26 this project will take forward three areas of support:

    1. Legal training from Bevan Brittan – 16 sessions of training which will include sessions covering SEND 'fundamentals' suitable for new members of staff across education, social care and health services but specifically aimed at staff in statutory services delivering EHCPs. Further sessions will be aimed at wider audiences including PCFs and cover 'hot topics' including those requested by parents/carers.
    2. SEND apprenticeship – phase 2 of the SEND apprenticeship work will explore the appetite for LAs as providers and review the progress of candidates involved in phase 1.

3. SEND workforce survey – we will repeat the survey work published in 2025 (https://www.seslip.co.uk/project-7-send-workforce/)
4. The potential for additional training activity to support Experts at Hand is anticipated and will be informed by the workforce survey and work undertaken in project 20 'Mainstream Inclusion'.

Universal Projects (SEND)

47. SEND network groups for leaders in SEND meet regularly to provide peer support, share practice and disseminate information. In 26-27 this will be extended to provide practical support to the health partners through support to the DCO/DMO network with guidance from the regional SEND adviser (health). The networks will also continue to strengthen relationships with the SESLIP AD Education networks through joint events/working days and the identification of common priorities and activities. SEND forum provides an opportunity for all with an interest in SEND across the region to hear about the latest developments in SEND from national and regional speakers. Presentations include focus on 'what worked well'.

Project No. 8: Leaders in SEND (Strategic and Operational Leads' networks) £15,000
Project Manager: Sheelagh Sullivan, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: DCS sponsor: Lee-Anne Farach, Medway

Project No. 9: not used
Project No. 10: see below

Project No. 11: DCO/DMO network £5,000
Project Manager: Sheelagh Sullivan, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: DCS sponsor: Lee-Anne Farach, Medway

Project No. 12: SEND Forum £10,000
Project Manager: Sheelagh Sullivan, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Lee-Anne Farach, Medway

48. These three networks operate in tandem to support and encourage colleagues in Area Partnerships to work co-operatively, openly and the spirit of sharing and mutual support.

49. The first network is intended for those with leadership responsibilities in SEND. Experience from 25/26 indicated that changes in SEND management structures required a more flexible network to reflect new roles whilst still supporting the requirements of managers with statutory responsibilities. The three joint networks chairs reflect this range and meetings/events are organised to reflect common priorities alongside tailored input targeting specific roles. The network is intended to provide professional support with opportunities to discuss key issues with peers in the changing landscape for SEND services. Half termly virtual meetings will be organised. Some meetings may be replaced by in person day conferences. These conferences will be held jointly with SEN Operational leads and at least one with SESLIP Educational Leads. Wider partners will also be invited. Day conferences will provide opportunities for sharing and gaining feedback around regional SEND projects and initiatives alongside national developments.

50. The second network was established by NHS colleagues and supports those in the DCO /DMO role in local areas. ICB reorganisation has had a profound impact on this area of work and the need to work in partnership with colleagues to address organisational and capacity issues underpins support to this network. SESLIP will support key tasks identified by the network which meets half-termly. Tasks will be developed with the regional SEND heath adviser with a view to supporting partnership working to facilitate SEND reform.

51. In addition to network meetings, the region will continue to organise SEND forums (termly) which are open to all involved in SEND across the region including settings, parent/carers and CYP. Forums will continue to be co-hosted by the NHS regional SEND Adviser and the SE19 SEND Programme Manager. The forum will ensure a mixture of national updates and sharing of regional good practice, include activity linked to RIIA send activity. Several additional forums "SEND Forum Plus" (at least termly) will be organised to facilitate deeper dives and greater opportunity for dialogue with presenters. As well as opportunities to hear from national figures, colleagues will be encouraged to share learning (what worked well), including sub regional learning.

Project No. 10: PfA and post-16 Network £17,000
Project Manager: Sheelagh Sullivan, SESLIP; Julie Pointer, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Lee-Anne Farach, Medway

52. This project builds upon the existing community of practice which has wide ranging membership including providers, PCFs and the voice of young people. The COP has identified transition as a priority for the coming year. There will be a particular emphasis on transition post 16 given the ongoing challenges young people with SEND are experiencing in gaining entry to the workforce. Further information is available from https://www.seslip.co.uk/preparing-for-adulthood-forum/

53. The COP will meet once per term with an additional in-person event in Q4. Additional task and finish groups will be convened as required to develop regional guidance. Feedback will be gathered following each COP meeting (Q2,3,4). A final report will be produced to include the impact of project work from the perspective of COP members and including regional data as available (Q4).

Project Nos. 11 and 12: see above

Project No. 13: CYP Regional Network £28,000
Project Manager: Sheelagh Sullivan, SESLIP; Julie Pointer, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Lee-Anne Farach, Medway

54. The project builds upon work begun in 25/26 in cooperation with health colleagues, to build a community of practice through which CYP collectively can challenge, develop and celebrate ways in which their voices are heard in SEND across the region. The project will expand this work and develop a bank of resources to encourage participation of a broader range of CYP, supporting cohesion rather than repetition around engagement. There will be an emphasis on the engagement of young people in implementing SEND reform. Further information is available from https://www.seslip.co.uk/project-13-cyp-regional-network/

55. There will be at least one termly meeting of the COP with evidence of increased participation at COP in meetings (Q2-4). Task and finish groups will take forward at least two priorities identified by the survey (Q3-4). There will be an in-person celebration event to share achievements (Q4). A final report will summarise progress and impact, including the extent to which CYP feel that the COP has supported them in making their voice heard (Q4)

Project No. 14: not used

Project No. 15: AP networking and cross-border oversight arrangements (part 2), £25,000
Project Manager: Chris Owen, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Sarah Daly, Portsmouth

56. To build on the work of the task-and-finish group from 2025-26. Firstly, to carry out follow-up interviews with participating LAs and publish updated practice vignettes with a focus on impacts on practice. This will also draw further from the learning developed by two of the LAs that were part of the DfE Change Partners Programme (CPP) including around developing approach to the learners' voice in AP.

57. Part 1 of the project identified the opportunity to more closely align quality assurance (QA) processes between adjacent LAs. Two groups of adjoining LAs will be supported to identify non-school providers in common and the options for streamlining QA activity. These groups will also work together to identify information-sharing risks, particularly around safeguarding, and steps to formalise information-sharing about cases placed in non-school AP between LAs who have local children placed with the same provider. It is anticipated that an approach using 'memorandum of understanding' (MOU) will be trialled and examples of one or more MOUs will be published as a result. Engagement with local safeguarding arrangements, including LADO, will be included in the activity of at least one of the groups.

58. Learning and case studies will be published and disseminated with existing South-east groups such as the Education Directors Network and the Access to Education Group.

Project No. 16: see below under Universal Projects (CSC)
Project No. 17: not used

Project No. 18: Using technology to improve decision making in SEND to enable best use of resources to support CYP and SEND, £30,000
Project Manager: Nick King, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Lee-Anne Farach, Medway

59. This project, begun in 2025-2026 has developed, tested and refined a SEND "Banding Tool", designed to help colleagues in different settings assess and evaluate the additional needs of young people of all ages. Colleagues from Oxfordshire have used it to assist in

over 600 child assessments and have provided valuable feedback on the prototype version.

60. The further deployment of the tool is planned in conjunction with project 52 – cluster funding models (see below). This project will be concerned with ensuring that the Banding Tool can be properly supported from a technical standpoint. The tool has used bespoke software and if it is to be successfully deployed in the field, it will have to have appropriate technical support that can diagnose and fix bugs, convene user groups, write and develop new features, especially in the context of the SEND reforms which will place new demands on users in the field.

61. Over the course of the year, this project will move the SEND Banding Tool from a tested prototype into a properly supported product ready for wider deployment. The first priority will be to secure a technical partner company capable of taking on ongoing development and support of the bespoke software. This will involve scoping the technical requirements, running a light-touch procurement or partner-search exercise to identify a suitable supplier, and agreeing a support arrangement that covers bug diagnosis and resolution, feature development, and responsiveness to the changing demands the SEND reforms will place on users in the field. Building on the feedback gathered from Oxfordshire's use of the tool. We will work with the chosen partner to prioritise and implement refinements to the existing tool.

62. Alongside this, we will establish the structures needed to sustain the tool in live use, including convening a user group to gather feedback and steer development, and coordinating deployment with Project 52 (cluster funding models) so that the two initiatives reinforce one another.

Project No. 19: Working with partners to improve co-production, 19 £25,000
Project Manager: Sheelagh Sullivan, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Lee-Anne Farach, Medway

63. This project will continue to be developed through joint working with PCFs. The results of the co-production survey will be used to produce a regional co-production report. The next step will be to agree key regional principles for co-production, including recommendations for ways in which PCFs could be supported to participate fully in local area SEND development. The results of the survey will be shared at key regional meetings, including SEND Forum Plus.

Project No. 20: Mainstream Inclusion Project, £87,000
Project Manager: Marian Cullen, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Lee-Anne Farach, Medway

64. This project will build upon work undertaken in 2025-2026 to support local areas to strengthen inclusive practice in mainstream settings through the regional Inclusion Community of Practice. This year the work will be focussed upon supporting the development of mainstream inclusion practice in line with Local SEND Reform Plan expectations.

65. The project will include activity that highlights the work of schools themselves as recommended by LAs and/or partner agencies. To facilitate this, as part of the project, the

RIIA will work with partner agencies through the DfE's mainstream inclusion forum to develop guidelines for quality assurance around mainstream inclusion, including participating in joint QA activity.

66. In line with the SEND Reform Plan expectations for all Local Areas in 2026-2027, the project will include activity to support the development of the 'Experts at Hand' model.

67. The project will be delivered through a range of activity coproduced with the Community of Practice, including contributions to the SESLIP SEND library, webinars to share innovative practice and an in-person celebration event involving all partners, including CYP.

68. Surveys to monitor engagement, regional cohesion and impact will be carried out at the end of each quarter.

69. The work will continue to use case studies (written and recorded) as well as materials and practical exemplars, shared on the RIIA website and beyond, to promote innovative practice and creative thinking around Mainstream inclusion.

70. Further information from year one of this project is available at https://www.seslip.co.uk/project-20-mainstream-inclusion-project/.

Project No. 21: SENDAP and Inclusion with a focus on alternative education arrangements £30,000
Project Manager: Chris Owen, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Sarah Daly, Portsmouth

71. To build on part one of the project, by taking forward recommendations from the progress pack, published earlier in 2026. Part 2 will arrange opportunities for LAs participating in part 1 to share practice and challenges via two webinars, an opportunity that will be available to all LAs in the region. An opportunity for SE LAs to receive an update from the LGSC Ombudsman about s19 communication and procedures and further work to comply with best practice recommendations will be delivered (in a webinar format, subject to LGSCO approval).

72. The finance principle of 'funding following the child' was a focus of discussion in part 1. Three or four LAs discussed arrangements with their local school systems, in terms of provision of suitable education under section 19 of the Education Act 1996, in 2025-26. This project will engage with further LAs who are considering agreeing similar arrangements. SESLIP will support paired working for an LA with procedures to assist one without during part 2 of this project and papers and procedural agreements will be collated and made available to share between South-east LAs.

73. The challenge of defining cases and sub-sets of cases within the broad terms of s19 was raised in part 1. Part 2 aims to work with a small group of LAs and a data officer to assess and trial definitions of the case sub-sets, options for collation and monitoring within LA children's services with an emphasis on reintegration practice and assess whether there is a form of regional collation to recommend for the future. Case studies will be produced, and recommendations for the future reviewed with SE Access to Education Group and the SE Education Directors Group, before being published.

Project No. 22: Youth Justice/SEND Promoting Re-inclusion, Reducing Exclusions (PRRE) Part 2 £50,000
Project Manager: Carly Murphy, Milton Keynes
DCS sponsor: Mac Heath, Milton Keynes

74. Last year, part 1 of the PRRE project delivered some effective early work in relation to Youth Justice services and Speech and Language Therapy being part of the assessment for young people when on the edge of the criminal justice system. The project will 'pilot' evidence or 'grow' an intervention, and we can utilise the Heads of YOT's in the Thames Valley Police Area.

75. The outcome will be an evidence-based approach to support those on the edge of the criminal justice system. In particular it will consider mechanisms for young people to receive the right speech and language assessments and SEND interventions where those needs are unrecognised and/or undiagnosed at point of coming to the attention of the YJS. The aim is to design an intervention to divert young people away from the criminal justice system. This year we will look to implementation and roll-out across the 9 LAs within the Thames Valley Police area.

76. The implementation will be completed through the following activity:
    1. Create pathway and distribution documents to share with practitioners across the 9 LAs. These will include:
        - Evidence Base and Referral Pathway document
        - Model Overview and Implementation Guide
        - Standard Operating Procedures
        - Referral and Triage guide
        - Service Level Agreement
        - Referral and Consent Forms
        - Report Templates
        - Action Plan
        - FAQ's
        - Roll out plan
    2. Identify key contacts within the 9 LA's
    3. Deliver briefing presentations about the project.
    4. Offer follow up support and guidance to support local area implementations.

New Projects Universal Projects (SEND)

Project No. 51: Regional analysis maturity indicators and reform plans £20,000
Project Manager: Sheelagh Sullivan SESLIP
DCS sponsor: TBC

77. The project will involve the collection and analysis of regional SEND reform plans and maturity indicators to identify collective areas of strength and priority areas for regional development/support.

78. The project will make use of key COP and network groups established in previous years, particularly the SEND governance and SEND leadership groups, to refine agreed projects

and identify new areas for support and/or development in the context of agreed indicators of progress.

79. The data may also be used to tailor targeted support to individual LAs and/or inform peer review activity enabling system leaders to benefit from identified strengths in regional knowledge and experience.

80. Feedback from meeting discussions alongside short questionnaires, pulse surveys and other appropriate feedback tools will be used with key groups to gauge the ongoing usefulness of the data in accurately identifying and supporting the delivery of the regional improvement plan.

Project No. 52: Cluster funding models £45,000
Project Manager: Sheelagh Sullivan SESLIP
DCS sponsor: TBC

81. The project delivers in two parts:

82. The project will support local areas to explore the cluster model to make best use of people and resources locally. The approach provides a mechanism for equitable distribution of SEND resources allocated through collective engagement in decision making. The intention is to foster a shared vision for SEND, including agreement around local priorities. Through termly meetings of the Community of Practice, participating local areas will be supported to develop and test the approach by sharing their experience.

83. National insights from an expert in the approach will support LAs to navigate the cultural and operational change required to enable mainstream schools to take collective responsibility for managing demand and SEND resources, including the 'Experts at Hand' model.

84. The second part of the project envisages allocating a small amount of project time to use flexibly in consultant advice and support to individual local areas taking forward the model. Learning from this involvement will be fed back into the Community of Practice.

Universal Projects (CSC)

Project No. 16: Transformation Network, £50,000
Project Manager: Rebecca Eligon, Selina Rattu, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Steph How, Hampshire

85. The Transformation Network will include meetings chaired by Steph How (DCS Hampshire) with a focus on FFP transformation across all 19 LAs in the South East.
86. This will augment and compliment other regional and national FFP work (e.g. learning networks facilitated by Mutual Ventures).

87. The network will create modelling tools, and a create a library of documents (e.g. example single assessments, JDs, process documents and threshold documents).

88. The network will also oversee monthly meetings for case management system leads across the region (two groups – Mosaic and LCS).

89. In addition to sharing progress and developing regional responses to FFP each meeting will also provide opportunities for networking and sharing of best practice relating to children's services transformation outside of FFP.

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Project Nos. 17-22: see above Universal Projects (SEND)
Project Nos. 23, 24, 25, 26: not used

Project No. 27: Kinship Connected deployment. 27.1 £92,000; 27.2 £45,500. Total £137,000
Project Manager: Rebecca Eligon, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Mac Heath, Milton Keynes

90. In 2025/26 Project 27 developed a business case for Kinship Connected (an in-person navigator programme). The project will launch in November 2026 with local authorities in the Berkshires (Slough, Reading (tbc), West Berkshire, Bracknell Forest, Wokingham, Windsor and Maidenhead) with in person support provided to up to 80 carers.

91. Kinship Connected is the only independently evaluated programme for kinship carers in England and Wales. An evaluation by Starks and Ecorys (2020) found strong evidence of impact, including;
    1. Improved relationships: better communication within families
    2. Reduced isolation: opportunities to meet peers, share experiences, and seek advice Less financial stress: access welfare benefits and emergency grants
    3. Fewer concerns about children's behaviour: carers can focus on health / wellbeing and
    4. Greater confidence: carers feel more able to manage their role

92. The total cost of the project is £137,500 of which £92,000 is needed for this financial year.

Project No. 28: see below SESLIP own funds schemes

Project Management

Project No. 29: SEND Programme Manager and support, £108,000
Project Manager: Sheelagh Sullivan, Sonia Dayal SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Lee-Anne Farach, Medway

Project No. 30: SESLIP Programme Manager and support, £35,712
Project Manager: Richard Tyndall, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Christine McInnes, Kent
Project No. 31: SESLIP website, £2,400
Project Manager: Isabelle Gregory, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Christine McInnes, Kent

Project No. 32: KCC overhead contribution, £25,000

Project Manager: Emma Stone, Kent
DCS sponsor: Christine McInnes, Kent

93. The SESLI Programme has three elements: two derive from the DfE RIIA grant for CSC and SEND work; the third derives from SESLIP's own funds.

94. The total budget available in 2026-27 is set out in Table 3.

Table 3: SESLI Programme available funds 2026-27

	DfE CSC	DfE SEND	SESLIP own funds
	354,800	**1,191,000**	**632,151**
Percentage of DfE Grant	**23%**	**77%**	
Percentage of SESLI Programme	**16.3%**	**54.7%**	**29.0%**

95. Four costs are identified as programme management costs: the SEND Programme Manager and her support; the SESLIP Programme Manager and his support; the website; the contribution to Kent CC recognising their costs in receiving and administering SESLIP funds.

96. Where costs fall across more than one heading they are apportioned according to the percentages set out in Table 3

Targeted Support

Project No. 33: Targeted Support **£254,691** (carried forward unspent grant from 2025-2026)
Project Manager: Chris Baird, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Carolyn Fair, East Sussex

97. In 2025-2026 SESLIP created an ambitious programme of Targeted Support in response to the DfE's grant statement of requirements. The implementation of the programme resulted in a large (£250k) carry forward at the close of the financial year. The revised prospectus is available here https://www.seslip.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Targeted-Support-Prospectus-v2.0-April-2026.pdf

98. In 2026-2027 we intend to spend the carry forward on a programme of targeted support which will include some or all of:
    1. SEND support in Bracknell Forest; Brighton and Hove; Buckinghamshire; Isle of Wight; Kent; Medway; Milton Keynes; Portsmouth; Slough; Southampton; West Berks; West Sussex;
    2. SEND Partnership work with four LAs in Hampshire and Isle of Wight
    3. CSC Safe Uncertainty Partnership work with Brighton and Hove, East Sussex, Portsmouth, Southampton and West Sussex.
    4. Fostering Partnership work with Brighton and Hove; East Sussex; Hampshire; Milton Keynes; Portsmouth; Southampton; and West Sussex
    5. Coaching for senior leaders
    6. Lean Academy Training

7. Project management

SESLIP own funds schemes

Project No. 28: Piloting Kinship Reach. £61,000
Project Manager: Rebecca Eligon, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Mac Heath, Milton Keynes

99. Project 28 developed the approach in 2025-2026. Kinship Reach is a remote programme which launched as a pilot in November 2025 with 18 LAs.

100. Each intervention with a kinship carer is delivered over three months through telephone or video calls with a Kinship Family Worker.

101. The current pilot ends in October 2026. To enable a business case to be developed to compare with the impact of regionalised face to face support. This project will continue until Oct 2027. Costs are **£61,000**. for up to 60 referrals over 12 months.

Project Nos. 29-33: see above Project Management

Project No. 34: Regional Adoption Leadership Board. £11,500
Project Manager: Rebecca Eligon, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Mac Heath, Milton Keynes

Project No. 35: Commissioners Network. £18,000
Project Manager: Chris Baird, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Lara Patel, Reading

Project No. 36: Early Help Network. £9,500
Project Manager: Rebecca Eligon, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Grainne Siggins, Bracknell Forest

Project No. 37: Fostering Network. £9,500
Project Manager: Rebecca Eligon, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Sarah Daly, Portsmouth

Project No. 38: Kinship Care Network, £20,000
Project Manager: Rebecca Eligon, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Mac Heath, Milton Keynes

Project No. 39: Principal Social Workers Network. £6,000
Project Manager: Jenny Boyd, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Lara Patel, Reading
Project No. 40: Quality Assurance Network. £15,000
Project Manager: Kevin Kasaven, Kent
DCS sponsor: Christine McInnes, Kent

Project No. 41: AD Safeguarding Network. £23,000

Project Manager: Mark Evans, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Mac Heath, Milton Keynes

Includes £5,000 for additional coordination work with ADs on unregulated placements

Project No. 42: Education Directors' Network. £21,000
Project Manager: Chris Owen, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Sarah Daly, Portsmouth

Project No. 43: Lead Members' Network. £500
Project Manager: Helen Watson, LGA
Cllr sponsor: Cllr Prue Bray, Wokingham

102. SESLIP has identified and supported communities of practice in many areas of CSC: Adoption; Commissioners; Early Help; Fostering; Kinship Care; Principal Social Workers; Quality Assurance. We support two Assistant Director networks for Safeguarding and Education. We also support a Lead Members Network.

103. We will continue to support these groups to deliver pilot projects; learning days; co-production conferences and similar activities that share good practice and encourage change and innovation. This work will be funded from SESLIP own funds and not part of the DfE grant funding regime.

Project No. 44: Foster Carer Wellbeing. 44.1 £25,000 44.2 £50,000 44.3 £25,000 Total £100,000
Project Manager: Anne-Marie Ali, Bracknell Forest
DCS sponsor: Grainne Siggins, Bracknell Forest

104. Foster Carer Wellbeing has been developed in direct response to the South East Rewards and Offers for Foster Carers Diagnostic, undertaken between September 2025 and February 2026. (project 44 in the 2025-26 Regional Improvement Plan)

105. The diagnostic, which included a regional Foster Carer Survey and a deep dive into the utilisation of fostering beds, identified a consistent message from foster carers and fostering services across the South East. This identified the need for greater access to preventative emotional wellbeing support and therefore strengthening the wellbeing offer for foster carers. This has the potential to improve retention, increase utilisation of in-house fostering capacity and enhance placement stability for children and young people.

106. Foster Carer Wellbeing represents the next phase of this regional improvement programme and has a budget of £100,000 from the South East Sector Led Improvement Programme (SESLIP) over three years (2026-2027: £25,000; 2027-2028: £50,000; 2028-2029: £25,000) to co-design, pilot and evaluate a preventative Foster Carer Retention and Wellbeing Programme that equips foster carers with practical emotional regulation skills, strengthens confidence and resilience, and supports more stable family relationships.

107. Rather than responding once placements are under pressure, Foster Carer Wellbeing focuses on early intervention, helping foster carers recognise and manage stress, build

emotional resilience and develop practical techniques that can also be used to support children through co-regulation and trauma-informed relationships.

108. The programme will initially support approximately 60–80 foster carers, generating regional learning, implementation resources and an evidence-based model that can be adopted by all South East local authorities.

Project No. 45 not used

Project No. 46: Children and Young People and Continuing Care £35,000
Project Manager: Sue Kocaman, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Lin Ferguson, Windsor and Maidenhead

109. This project will continue to support the regional community of practice for service managers concerned with continuing care for children and young people. It is closely aligned with the national network

110. The project will: promote sharing of good practice; sharing of information on cases where a legal challenge is being considered; strengthen the position of the SE LAs in influencing change to the CYPCC framework; and support the network to think sub regionally (i.e. in ICB groupings of authorities) as well as considering the whole SE region

Project No. 47: QA research project, phase 3 47.3 £35,000; 47.4 £35,000 Total £70,000
Project Manager: Kevin Kasaven, Kent
DCS sponsor: Christine McInnes, Kent

111. In phase 1 of the project, Kent Analytics were commissioned by SESLIP to complete an analysis of the region's Quality Assurance Frameworks (QAF) and activity to understand what makes a strong QAF whilst developing a proforma to support improved inclusive supervision. An analysis of the region's Ofsted activity regularly cites the quality of management oversight recorded on the child's file as an area of improvement. The aim of the proforma is to both improve inclusive practice and the quality of management recordings on a child's file. The research was completed in summer 2025 and the findings and a suggested proforma, co-produced by QA leads from across the region, were circulated in the autumn. A conference was held in December 2025 aimed at QA professionals from across the region with 80 delegates attending.

112. A business case for a two-year extension of the project is available at https://www.seslip.co.uk/project-47-quality-assurance-phase-2/. It includes the following summary of the proposed phases of the project:

Phase	Period	Delivery Focus	Outputs and Value
Site Selection and Onboarding	Summer 2026	Identify 3 to 4 sites, agree expectations and data-sharing, build readiness	Stable foundations and early trust for safe implementation

Phase	Period	Delivery Focus	Outputs and Value
Implementation Cycle	Summer 2026 to September 2027	Embed the QA tool in live oversight; provide interpretation support; run site visits and cross-site reflective learning; collect baseline to midline to endline evidence with continuous monitoring	Deep, context-aware testing and live refinement with clear learning notes
Integrated Evaluation (EFTI)	July 2027 to March 2028	Evaluate using the four criteria drawing on the full evidence stream	Robust multi-authority findings and readiness for wider adoption
Final Products and Regional Sharing	January to March 2028	Final QA toolkit, implementation guidance, cross-authority insights and a "you-said/we-did" session	A tested, region-ready QA package that is usable and transferrable

Project No. 48: BGM workforce survey, phase 2 48.2 £50,000 48.3 £50,000 Total £100,000
Project Manager: Kevin Kasaven, Kent
DCS sponsor: Mac Heath, Milton Keynes

113. In phase 1 of this project, we explored the difficulties and barriers to collecting insightful and accurate data around the black and global majority workforce. We owe special thanks to the colleagues in Reading for helping us to understand these issues at a very detailed level.

114. From 2024 to 2026, evidence across SESLIP showed that BGM staff participation remains low when engagement is episodic. The BGM evidence reveals significant workforce inequities, extremely low participation rates, and widespread mistrust rooted in historical experiences of tokenism, unfulfilled commitments, inconsistent responses to discrimination, and incomplete or inaccessible HR/EDI data.

115. Attempts to gather new data or consult staff through short, one-off engagements have proven insufficient, participation remains low unless trust, presence, and clear follow-through are demonstrated. Improving workforce equity therefore requires:
- Relational engagement with BGM staff and leaders, supported by preparatory touchpoints and a September 2026 in-person co-design conference.
- Slow-build trust, based on visible action rather than diagnostic exercises.
- Iterative piloting of practical interventions such as mentoring, progression pathways, and microaggression response mechanisms.
- Sustained organisational support, including leadership buy-in and improved HR data systems.
- Context-responsive adjustment, as different authorities face different workforce conditions.

116. The BGM strand must transition from "identifying the issues" to actively implementing and refining solutions over time.

117. We are proposing a two-year investment (https://www.seslip.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/SESLIP-BGM-Project-Two-Year-Business-Case-v2.pdf). It includes the following summary of the proposed phases of the project:

Phase	Period	Delivery Focus	Outputs and Value
Engagement Reset and Co-Design	July to September 2026	In-person conference to rebuild trust; co-design interventions; establish shared ownership and safety	Addresses mistrust and creates buy-in for implementation
Site Selection and Onboarding	October to November 2026	Select 3 to 4 pilot authorities; confirm leadership sponsorship; agree HR data pathways and communications	Feasibility and stability for piloting
Extended Implementation Cycle	December 2026 to December 2027	Deliver mentoring, progression pathways, microaggression response and anti-racist supervision; relational support, site visits and ongoing data collection	Real-world evidence, deeper trust and a clear view of enabling conditions
Integrated Evaluation (EFTI)	January to March 2028	Evaluate against the four criteria using the full evidence arc	Evidence of impact on equity, retention, progression and psychological safety
Final Products and Regional Sharing	January to March 2028	Workforce Equity Toolkit, dashboard, case examples and a "you-said/we-did" event	Region-ready, evidence-based resources for authorities

Project No. 49: SE ADCS room bookings, £20,000
Project Manager: Richard Tyndall, SESLIP
DCS sponsor: Christine McInnes, Kent

118. SE ADCS Rooms. SESLIP subscriptions are used to pay for regional meeting room bookings.

Project No. 50: see above Data Capacity and Capability
Project Nos. 51 and 52: see above Universal Projects (SEND)

Appendix 1

Analysis of CSC Dashboard as at June 2026

Outcome	1st sub head	2nd sub-head	3rd sub-head	Better or Worse vs Nat Ave	Regl Rank	Outlier LA1	Outlier LA2
1 Family Support	Access	CIN		Better	4	Isle of Wight	Reading
1 Family Support	Access	Re-Referrals		Worse	9	Isle of Wight	Hampshire
1 Family Support	Stability	New CLA		Worse	8	Kent	Milton Keynes
1 Family Support	Stability	Stock CLA		Better	4	Isle of Wight	Portsmouth
1 Family Support	Stability	New UASC		Worse	9	Kent	-
1 Family Support	Stability	Stock UASC		Worse	8=	Kent	-
1 Family Support	School Stability			Worse	7=	Bracknell Forest, Bucks	Oxfordshire, Slough
1 Family Support	Child Well-being and development	Absence	CINO	Worse	6	Portsmouth	Oxfordshire
1 Family Support	Child Well-being and development	Absence	CPPO	-	5	Southampton	Portsmouth
1 Family Support	Child Well-being and development	Absence	CLA	Worse	6	Windsor and Maidenhead	Brighton and Hove
1 Family Support	Child Well-being and development	Persistent Abs	CINO	Worse	7	Portsmouth	Brighton and Hove
1 Family Support	Child Well-being and development	Persistent Abs	CPPO	Worse	6	Southampton	Oxfordshire
1 Family Support	Child Well-being and development	Persistent Abs	CLA	Worse	7	Brighton ad Hove	West Berkshire
1 Family Support	Child Well-being and development	Severe Absence	CINO	Worse	6	Portsmouth	Oxfordshire
1 Family Support	Child Well-being and development	Severe Absence	CPPO	Better	5	Southampton	Oxfordshire
1 Family Support	Child Well-being and development	Severe Absence	CLA	Better	3	Brighton and Hove	Portsmouth
1 Family Support	Ed Attainment	KS2	CINO	Worse	7	Brighton and Hove	Southampton
1 Family Support	Ed Attainment	KS2	CPPO	Worse	6	-	-
1 Family Support	Ed Attainment	KS2	CLA	Worse	9	-	-
1 Family Support	Ed Attainment	KS4	CINO	Better	3	Southampton	Brighton and Hove
1 Family Support	Ed Attainment	KS4	CPPO	Worse	7	Reading	Southampton
1 Family Support	Ed Attainment	KS4	CLA	Worse	6	Brighton and Hove	Slough
2 Safety	General safety	ICPC to s47 Ratio (higher is better)		Worse	9	Hampshire	Kent
2 Safety	General safety	2nd + CPP		Worse	7	West Berkshire	East Sussex
2 Safety	General safety	CPP 2yrs+		Worse	7	-	-
2 Safety	General safety	Hospital Admissions		Better	4	Isle of Wight	East Sussex
2 Safety	Child abuse or neglect	DA child		Worse	5	Medway	Hampshire
2 Safety	Child abuse or neglect	DA parent		Worse	5	Isle of Wight	Hampshire

Outcome	1st sub head	2nd sub-head	3rd sub-head	Better or Worse vs Nat Ave	Regl Rank	Outlier LA1	Outlier LA2
2 Safety	Child abuse or neglect	DA person		Worse	9	Medway	Kent
2 Safety	Child abuse or neglect	EA		Better	4	Isle of Wight	Medway
2 Safety	Child abuse or neglect	Faith linked abuse		Better	2	Southampton	Slough
2 Safety	Child abuse or neglect	Neglect		Worse	9	Hampshire	Isle of Wight
2 Safety	Child abuse or neglect	Phys abuse adult on child		Worse	8	Isle of Wight	Portsmouth
2 Safety	Child abuse or neglect	Phys abuse child on child		Better	4	Brighton and Hove	Isle of Wight
2 Safety	Child abuse or neglect	Phys Abuse unkn			-	-	-
2 Safety	Child abuse or neglect	SA - adult on child		Better	5	East Sussex	Isle of Wight
2 Safety	Child abuse or neglect	SA - child on child		Worse	6	East Sussex	Isle of Wight
2 Safety	Child abuse or neglect	SA - unkn			-	-	-
2 Safety	Harms outside the home	Child Criminal Exploitation		Better	1	Reading	Slough
2 Safety	Harms outside the home	Child sexual exploitation		Better	1	Slough	East Sussex
2 Safety	Harms outside the home	Gangs		Better	2	Slough	Milton Keynes
2 Safety	Harms outside the home	Going missing		Better	4	Milton Keynes	East Sussex
2 Safety	Harms outside the home	Trafficking		Better	1	-	-
3 Family Network	CLA to SGO			Worse	9	-	-
3 Family Network	CLA to RO-CAO			Worse	9	-	-
4 Stable Homes	Where a child lives	CLA with 3+ placements in yr		Worse	8=	Milton Keynes	Oxfordshire
4 Stable Homes	Where a child lives	distance from home		Worse	7	Oxfordshire	Buckinghamshire
4 Stable Homes	Where a child lives	% in setting (more is better)	foster	Worse	8	Bucks	Windsor and Maidenhead
4 Stable Homes	Where a child lives	% in setting (fewer is better)	secure	Worse	8	Bucks	Windsor and Maidenhead
4 Stable Homes	Where a child lives	% in setting (fewer is better)	Indep/sup	Worse	7	Kent	Wokingham
4 Stable Homes	Where a child lives	adoption time to match					
4 Stable Homes	Child well being	SDQ Q/a		Worse	7	Brighton and Hove	Windsor and Maidenhead
4 Stable Homes	Quality of life	EET	17-18	Worse	9	Wokingham	West Sussex
4 Stable Homes	Quality of life	EET	19-21	Worse	7	Hampshire	Bracknell Forest
4 Stable Homes	Quality of life	Suitable Accom	17-18	Worse	9	Hampshire	Isle of Wight
4 Stable Homes	Quality of life	Suitable Accom	19-21	Worse	9	Hampshire	Southampton

Appendix 2

Mapping Projects to Enablers and Outcomes

1. The SESLIP response to the RIIA grant for 2025-26 is informed by the DfE's objective to support:
    - the delivery of the Children's Social Care National Framework (March 2026) in children's social care; and
    - the implementation of the DfE's SEND Reforms

Table 1: CSC National Framework Enablers and Outcomes

	Enablers	Outcomes
1	Multi-agency working is prioritised and effective	children, young people and families stay together and get the help they need
2	Leaders drive conditions for effective practice	children and young people are safe in and outside of their homes
3	The workforce is equipped and effective	children and young people are supported by their family network
4	-	children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes

Table 2: Seven SEND Pillars

	Pillars
1	Co-production with parents and carers and children and young people
2	Effective system leadership and governance
3	Accurate understanding of needs and experiences of children and young people through effective use of quantitative and qualitative data
4	High-quality service delivery at universal, targeted and specialist levels to promote inclusion
5	Effective partnership working across education, health and social care
6	Skilled workforce across LA, education settings, health and social care
7	Targeted and judicious use of resources including place planning, sufficiency, use of capital

2. This document maps our proposed projects against the enablers and outcomes in Table 3 (and vice-versa in Table 4).

Our projects

Table 3: Projects sorted by enablers and outcomes

Proj. No.		National framework enablers	National framework outcomes	SEND Pillar
Data Capacity and Capability				
1	Data Benchmarking for both CSC and SEND	2	1	3
50	ICB data dashboards			5
Regional Diagnostics				
2	DCS Self-assessment and Peer Challenge	2	1	
3	SEND Courageous Conversations			3
Universal Improvement				
Take Your Place – our future leaders' programme				
4	SEND Workforce development in residential settings			6
5	Take Your Place: CSC and SEND future leaders programme	3	1,2,3,4	6
Workforce, agency, recruitment and retention				
6	CSC workforce agency and MoC	3	1,2,3,4	
7	SEND workforce			6
Universal SEND				
8	Leaders in SEND (formerly Strategic and Operational Leads)			2
10	PfA and post-16 Network			5
11	DCO/DMO Network			5
12	SEND Forum			2
13	CYP Regional Network			1
15	AP Network part 2			4
18	Using technology to improve decision making in SEND to enable best use of resources to support CYP with SEND			4
19	Working with partners to foster co-production			1
20	Mainstream Inclusion Project			4
21	SENDAP Inclusion part 2			4
22	Youth Offending Teams and Speech and Language assessment - PRRE			4
51	Regional analysis maturity indicators and reform plans			3
52	Cluster funding models			7
Universal CSC				
16	Transformation Network	2	1,2,3,4	
27	Business case for Kinship Connected	1	3	
Project Management				
29	SEND Programme Manager and support			
30	SESLIP Programme Manager and support			
31	SESLIP website			
32	KCC overhead contribution			
Targeted Support				
33	Targeted Support (carried forward)	2	1,2,3,4	4
SESLIP own funds schemes				

Proj. No.		National framework enablers	National framework outcomes	SEND Pillar
28	Kinship Reach – roll-out	2	4	
34	Regional Adoption Leadership Board	2	4	
35	Commissioners Network	2	1,2,3,4	
36	Early Help Network	2	1	
37	Fostering Network	2	4	
38	Kinship Care Network	2	3	
39	Principal Social Workers Network	2	1,2,3,4	
40	Quality Assurance Network	2	1,2,3,4	
41	AD Safeguarding Network	2	1,2,3,4	
42	Education Directors'Network	2	1,2,3,4	
43	Lead Members Network	2	1,2,3,4	
44	Rewards and Offers for Foster Carers	3	4	
46	CYP and Continuing Health Care	2	1	
47	QA research project, phase 3	2	1,2,3,4	
48	BGM workforce survey phase 2	3	1,2,3,4	

Table 4: Enablers and outcomes sorted by projects

	CSC National Framework enablers	Projects
	All enablers	
1	Multi-agency working is prioritised and effective	27,
2	Leaders drive conditions for effective practice	1, 2, 16, 28, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 46, 47,
3	The workforce is equipped and effective	5, 6, 44, 48,
	CSC National Framework outcomes	
	All outcomes	5, 6, 16, 3, 35, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 47, 48,
1	children, young people and families stay together and get the help they need	1, 2, 36, 46,
2	children and young people are safe in and outside of their homes	
3	children and young people are supported by their family network	27, 38,
4	children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes	28, 34, 37, 44,
	SEND Pillars	
1	Co-production with parents and carers and children and young people	13, 19,
2	Effective system leadership and governance	8, 9, 12,
3	Accurate understanding of needs and experiences of children and young people through effective use of quantitative and qualitative data	1, 3, 51
4	High-quality service delivery at universal, targeted and specialist levels to promote inclusion	15, 18, 20, 21, 22, 33
5	Effective partnership working across education, health and social care	10, 11, 50
6	Skilled workforce across LA, education settings, health and social care	4, 5, 7,
7	Targeted and judicious use of resources including place planning, sufficiency, use of capital	52

Appendix 3

Outputs from 2025-6 round of DCS Peer Challenge events

1. In the period January – April 2026 four DCS self-assessment and peer challenge events were held, in which each local authority's self-assessment was subject to peer challenge by two or three other LA teams (see Table 1 below for the details of these events).

2. This was the eighth annual round of peer challenge events SESLIP has successfully completed. More details of how SESLIP organises peer challenge are here https://www.seslip.co.uk/dcs-peer-challenge/.

Purpose

3. The SESLIP peer challenge continues to provide a valuable opportunity for Directors of Children's Services and leadership teams to reflect collectively on progress, challenges and opportunities. The 2026 discussions highlighted strong examples of local innovation and improvement, alongside shared pressures arising from reform, demand, workforce capacity and system change.

4. The strength of the approach remains the trusted space it creates for honest dialogue, peer challenge and collective problem-solving.

Key Messages

5. A consistent message was that taken together the pace and scale of reform exceed available capacity in many systems. Authorities are working hard to interpret national change in ways that make sense locally, while maintaining operational delivery.

6. All authorities are managing multiple major changes simultaneously:
   - SEND reform.
   - Families First Partnership.
   - Best Start in Life.
   - NHS/ICB changes.
   - Regional Care Collaborative developments.
   - Local Government Reorganisation.
   - Increasing financial and workforce pressures.

7. There is an opportunity for SESLIP to support authorities to identify where collective regional approaches can reduce duplication, strengthen influence and improve outcomes.

Shared Strategic Challenges and Opportunities

8. Health and ICB Relationships

Challenges

a. Significant changes in ICB structures have disrupted established relationships.
b. There is uncertainty about the future focus on children, SEND and safeguarding within health systems.
c. Local authorities are concerned about reduced capacity and expertise within new arrangements.

Opportunities

a. A stronger collective voice across the ICB footprint could support work on:
b. SEND reform.
c. Sufficiency and placement development.
d. Children's health pathways.
e. Joint approaches with NHS providers.

Workforce, Capacity and Resources

9. Leadership teams highlighted increasing pressure from:
    a. Delivering services while implementing multiple reforms.
    b. Workforce shortages across the system.
    c. Difficulty recruiting even where funding is available.
    d. Increasing national reporting requirements.
    e. The challenge of delivering sustainable change within unrealistic timescales.
10. Many authorities have strong examples of effective practice but limited capacity to expand or embed them.

SEND, Inclusion and Attendance

11. SEND pressures remain a significant shared concern:
    a. Increasing assessment demand.
    b. Growth in Education, Health and Care Plans.
    c. Pressure on specialist provision.
    d. Increasing complexity of need.
    e. Strain on Parent Carer Forums.

12. A key regional question is how to support children who do not fit neatly within existing thresholds:
    a. Too complex for mainstream settings.
    b. Not meeting thresholds for specialist SEND support.
    c. Not yet requiring statutory family support.

13. Potential regional focus
    a. Inclusion approaches.
    b. Primary-age support.
    c. Attendance.
    d. Earlier intervention models.
    e. Strengthening partnership approaches with schools.

Placement Sufficiency and Regionalisation

14. Authorities continue to experience:
    a. Limited placement availability.
    b. Challenges matching children to appropriate provision.
    c. Increasing placement costs.
    d. Growing complexity of need.

15. There was a shared view that Home and Future/RCC work needs greater ambition.
    a. Increasing fostering recruitment ambition.
    b. Exploring new approaches to carers and kinship care.
    c. Developing alternative placement models.
    d. Better understanding and influencing independent fostering agency provision.
    e. Improving placement choice and matching.

Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams (MACPTs)

16. Shared themes:
    a. The need to ensure models are locally meaningful.
    b. Concerns about the direction of travel and implementation.
    c. A desire to align thinking across authorities.

17. SESLIP could support:
    a. Regional learning and shared evidence.
    b. Collective discussion with Ofsted.
    c. A stronger regional voice on implementation.

Strengths and Improvement Highlights

18. The peer challenge identified significant strengths across all authorities.
    a. Strong place-based identity and understanding of communities.
    b. Clear focus on prevention and early intervention.
    c. Strong children's strategy linking key agendas.
    d. Effective participation approaches.
    e. Innovative fostering developments.
    f. Improved alignment between transformation and finance.
    g. Mature approach to transformation.
    h. Strong voluntary and community sector partnerships.
    i. Confidence in developing locally appropriate MACPT approaches.
    j. Strong corporate ownership of children's outcomes.
    k. Innovative approaches to school and adolescent support.
    l. Significant improvement journey with increasing confidence.
    m. Stable and coherent leadership.
    n. Strong understanding of local context.
    o. Reduced re-referrals.
    p. Ability to move at pace while strengthening foundations.
    q. Clear improvement narrative and governance.
    r. Strong political and corporate support.
    s. Investment in early help and family hubs.
    t. Strong use of data and intelligence.
    u. Significant delivery of new provision and improved outcomes.

Potential SESLIP Priorities

19. Using regional influence effectively
    a. Explore how SESLIP can collectively influence:
    b. Health partners.
    c. National reform implementation.
    d. Regional commissioning approaches.

20. Developing shared responses to common challenges
    a. SEND and inclusion.
    b. Placement sufficiency.
    c. Fostering.
    d. MACPT development.
    e. Early intervention.

21. Strengthening regional intelligence by continuing investment in regional data approaches to:
    a. Understand shared challenges.
    b. Identify opportunities for collaboration.
    c. Support deeper peer challenge conversations.

22. Maintaining the peer learning model
    a. The value of trusted peer relationships remains significant.
    b. Space for honest reflection.
    c. Flexibility to follow emerging issues.
    d. Opportunities to understand each authority's journey over time.

Conclusion

23. The peer challenge events demonstrated strong leadership ambition and innovation across the region. Despite significant pressures, authorities are making progress and developing effective local approaches.

24. The next opportunity for SESLIP is to build on existing trust and move beyond sharing practice towards greater collective action — using regional influence, intelligence and partnership to address challenges that no single authority can solve alone.

Table 1: Details of the 2025-26 round of DCS self-assessment and peer challenge

Triad / Quartet	2026	LA1	LA2	LA3	LA4	F to F or virtual?
1	20 March	Brighton and Hove	Isle of Wight	Portsmouth	Wokingham	F to F
2	17 April	East Sussex	Surrey	West Sussex		F to F
3	-	Hampshire	Kent	Oxfordshire		Did not meet
4	26 March	Bracknell Forest	Medway	(Reading)		F to F
5	3 March	Milton Keynes	West Berkshire	Windsor and Maidenhead		F to F
6	-	Buckinghamshire	Slough	Southampton		Did not meet

Appendix 4

Some of the targets were amended for clarification and 'smartness' on 23 July and 7 August 2026.

RIIA delivery plan

Please note: a return of this template is mandatory for the grant as per the Memorandum of Understanding. However, when submitting this delivery plan, RIIAs are welcome to front or annex this document with any additional narrative and documentation (or further forms of plan) that explains the delivery of the RIIA, specifically in relation to this grant, that you want the relevant DfE regional team to consider in the approval of the grant funding.

SESLIP RIIA delivery plan – approved 14 July 2026, and amended 23 July 2026, to reflect additional information request from DfE, and again on 7 August 2026 to adjust for rounding errors

This document is incorporated into the SESLIP Regional Improvement Plan 2026-2027 which was approved at the SESLIP Steering Group on 14 July 2026. It appears in the plan as Appendix 4. Please refer to the Regional Improvement Plan for a full description of SESLIP activities.

The 23 July amendments requested by DfE relate to adding in a line for Project 6, omitted in error, and further detail on targets and spend profile throughout.

The 7 August amendments resolve a rounding error on the sums allocated to CSC and SEND project management, and adjust the quarterly targets on project 3

SEND RIIA:
The purpose of this document is to form the core underpinning to the RIIA's delivery plan for the purposes of this grant. When completing this template, please refer to the Statement of Requirements which outlines the strategic ambitions for the RIIA grant. When drafting the SEND element of the plan please also consider the 7 SEND Pillars outlined below, when designing your projects:

Pillar 1: Co-production with parents/carers and CYP
Pillar 2: Effective system leadership and governance
Pillar 3: Accurate understanding of needs through effective use of data
Pillar 4: High quality service delivery at universal, targeted and specialist levels to promote inclusion
Pillar 5: Effective partnership working across education, health and social care
Pillar 6: Skilled workforce across LA, education settings, health and social care
Pillar 7: Targeted and judicious use of resources including place planning, sufficiency, use of capital

Requirement 1: SEND Data Capacity and Capability
RIIAs should continue to support the better use of data by individual LAs and collectively as a region to support collaborative improvement and reform delivery.

- Build on work that has already started on systematically collecting SEND and AP data including the sharing of SEND and AP data across different agencies and institutions in the region, particularly with health partners. Work towards resolving local issues in data collection where possible.
- Develop analytical expertise and experience within the RIIA. Use this expertise to identify trends, outliers and policy issues both quantitatively and qualitatively within local and regional SEND and AP data. The resource should directly support senior regional leaders to drive improvement and work collaboratively with the Children's Improvement Board (CIB) to improve oversight of the regions SEND system.
- Work with the Department and other partners to support the development of a national SEND data set of core indicators to ensure national join-up on data collation. This work should be developed alongside data returns provided to the Department by LAs and Local Area Partnerships as part of the Local SEND Reform plans.

Project(s): Please outline the projects you will undertake to achieve this objective across the region. Please add more as necessary	**Pillar:** Identify the key pillar that this project seeks to deliver against across the region. Where there is more than one pillar targeted by a project, please identify the core pillar.	**Benefits:** What benefits will the RIIA realise through the delivery of this project?	**Baseline:** What is the current baseline of performance against the benefit you have described for this project?	**Target:** What is your targeted benefit for this project and over what timeline?	**Indicative funding and spending plan per quarter**
Project No.	**Pillar 3:** Accurate	1. Better transparency and understanding between	1. SE SENDAP data is currently provided by around half of	By the end of March 2027, we will	£240,000 in

1: Data benchmarking	understanding of needs through effective use of data	partners at ICB partnership level 2. Ability to spot trends in data and react with better more timely decisions	SE LAs and attendance at workshops is only a little better than this. 2. SENDAP measures have consistent definitions but are not currently in line with DfE and RIIA.	1. agree a renewed set of SE SENDAP measures, standardised with consistent definitions, in line with DfE and RIIA measures 2. publish annual SENDAP Benchmarking dashboards 3. have engaged all 19 SE LAs in data collection and workshop attendance 4. publish an analysis of barriers, drivers and best practice for SE SENDAP data collection and benchmarking. Each quarter, we will 5. publish quarterly SENDAP Benchmarking dashboards 6. organise and hold quarterly meetings of the SE SENDAP data leads network and Insights & Trends workshops	three equal instalments of £80,000 each Transfer to East Sussex planned for Q2
Project No 50: ICB partnership data dashboards	**Pillar 5:** Effective partnership working across education, health and social care	1. An understanding of what the key elements are to success that can be shared with other ICB footprint areas. 2. Effective sharing and presentation of data that maximises the efficiency of working across an ICB footprint	1. In principle agreement to take the work forward across 8 LAs and Thames Valley ICB. 2. Agreement to work on this between the LAs and with the Hampshire and Isle of Whight ICB	1. By Dec 26, establish the project group in TVB ICB area for development of the shared dashboard 2. By Mar 27, establish the timetable for production of similar dashboards in the other three SE ICB areas	£120,000 in three equal instalments of £40,000 each Spend in Q3: £40,000; Q4: £80,000

Requirement 2: SEND Regional Diagnostics

Continue to identify issues in SEND and AP provision within LAs and across the region;

- Ensure there is an agreed delivery strategy for Regional Diagnostics to review area(s) of SEND performance within LAs in the region and area(s) of performance across the region as a whole, considering the Schools White Paper and SEND reforms. It should identify areas of strength and effective practice that can be disseminated and areas of the weakness that can be targeted for improvement.
- Deliver the designed Regional Diagnostics. Ensure delivery is available to every LA in the region. Delivery can take any form the RIIA and LA deems appropriate and could include a self-assessment and/or peer challenge programme to drive improvement.
- Collate and share headline learnings from the Regional Diagnostics with individual LAs and across the region to inform continuous improvement and sharing of good practice. Liaise with the CIB RIIA engagement sub-group to share learnings from Regional Diagnostics.
- Utilise the Department's 7 SEND pillars and the requirements of the local SEND reform plans in the delivery of regional diagnostics to ensure the RIIA is best supporting the local areas transformation, and the development of their local SEND reform plans.

Project(s): Please outline the projects you will undertake to achieve this objective across the region. Please add more as	**Pillar:** Identify the key pillar that this project seeks to deliver against across the region. Where there is more than one pillar targeted by a project, please identify the core pillar.	**Benefits:** What benefits will the RIIA realise through the delivery of this project?	**Baseline:** What is the current baseline of performance against the benefit you have described for this project?	**Target:** What is your targeted benefit for this project and over what timeline?	**Indicative funding and spending plan per quarter**

necessary					
Project No 3: Courageous Conversations	**Pillar 3:** Accurate understanding of needs and experiences of children and young people trough effective use of quantitative and qualitative data.	1. Enabling effective practice to be identified and shared across the region. 2. Enabling an increased confidence in local partnerships as well as a clarity on what needs to be addressed 3. Enabling peer challenge and support, including the involvement of PCF representatives from other areas within the South East region 4. Enabling the development of skills and understanding in participants, including from other peers. 5. Providing diagnostic results to inform SEND Regional Improvement activity	1. Over a two-year period 16 out of 19 LAs have had at least one SEND Courageous Conversation 2. 13 LAs have had staff take part in other areas. 3. All SEND Courageous Conversations have had PCF representatives take part from other areas. 4. Learning has been shared with all 19 LAs 5. An evaluation report has been produced that sets out the very positive impact, including changes to processes that have improved quality of service for children and families, and enhanced partnership relationships 6. Learning sessions between groups of LAs have taken place.	1. Up to 10 SEND Courageous Conversations to be delivered April 2026 to end of March 2027, with LA and PCF representatives from other areas taking part delivering peer challenge, enabling sharing of learning across the region. 2 by end Q2; 4 in Q3; 4 in Q4 2. At least 3 (1 each in Q2, 3 and 4) learning sessions to be held with groups of LAs to reflect on diagnostic work and next steps, to share best practice and improvement activity 3. Evaluation report to be produced, enabling sharing of best practice by March 2027.	£76,000 in three equal instalments of £25,333 each Spend in Q2: £38,000 ; Q3: £19,000; Q4: £19,000.

Requirement 3: SEND Regional Improvement Deliver programmes of work that support delivery of SEND and AP improvement and reform across every LA within the region and where appropriate, with specific regions. • Design and deliver activity that drives improvement and effective delivery of SEND reforms and transformation of the system. Activity should support key areas as outlined in the Department's 7 SEND pillars, and drive priorities aggregated from within the region's Local SEND Reform Plans, supported by learnings from the Change Programme. • Regional support provided by the RIIA should include a specific focus on collaboration and join-up across the design and delivery of Local SEND Reform Plans for all LAs in the region. This could include establishing communities of practice for relevant leads involved in plan design, development, and delivery. • With agreement of the whole RIIA and in consultation with the DfE regional team, delivery of regional improvement support projects can, in some instances, be targeted at specific LAs. • Projects should be developed with the support and engagement of regional partners specifically including, but not limited to, health (Integrated Care Boards), Parent Carer Forums (PCFs), and education settings.

Project(s): Please outline the projects you will undertake to achieve this objective across the region. Please add more as necessary	**Pillar:** Identify the key pillar that this project seeks to deliver against across the region. Where there is more than one pillar targeted by a project, please identify the core pillar.	**Benefits:** What benefits will the RIIA realise through the delivery of this project?	**Baseline:** What is the current baseline of performance against the benefit you have described for this project?	**Target:** What is your targeted benefit for this project and over what timeline?	**Indicative funding and spending plan per quarter**
Project No. 4: SEND Workforce	**Pillar 6:** Skilled workforce across LA, education	1. Improvement to both the capacity and capability of the children's residential workforce. 2. The programme is acting to enhance local authorities'	1. The Residential workforce in the South East (alongside the rest of the country) is poorly developed and supported.	1. Kingston Graduate Diploma (12-24 places): by the end of Q2 we will identify employing partners; by the end of Q3 will identify between 12-24	£88,000 in three equal instalments of

Residential Staff	settings, health and social care	ability to develop and deliver high quality residential care for children with additional needs. 3. This will contribute to their ability to meet the needs of their communities and specifically the children with most complex needs. 4. Plans are set at https://www.seslip.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/Project-4-SEND-Residential-Workforce-2026-27-programme.pdf	2. This has been recognised in the planned national review (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-professional-development-for-the-childrens-homes-workforce-terms-of-reference). 3. This project is a key component of SESLIP and the SE RCC's work to address the issues in this critical component of the SEND/CSC workforce.	delegates; by end Q4 12-24 delegates will be enrolled on The Kingston Diploma course 2. Step into Residential Care and Care to Lead; subject to the National Review making expected progress, by the end of Q3 we will have identified potential employing partners for these two programmes. By the end of Q4 we will have published investment proposals for investing in both programmes	£29,333 each Spend in Q2: £88,000
Project No. 5: Take Your Place	**Pillar 6:** Skilled workforce across LA, education settings, health and social care	1. This programme is designed to equip leaders in SEND and CSC for the complex and challenging environment faced. 2. It aims to provide the skills, knowledge and support needed to deliver effective services. 3. It also helps develop a pipeline for future leaders in the region.	1. SESLIP has developed an offer to improve leadership of SEND and Children services over the last 5 years. 2. This has contributed to developing a pipeline of potential Assistant Directors and Directors in Children's services	Working with The Staff College as our delivery partner, by end Q2 we will publish a programme including: 1. Delivery of leadership additional cohort of SESLIP programme for SEND and CSC leaders. 2. Offering joint leadership VUCA workshops to partners in each of the 4 ICB areas 3. 20 places on the core leadership programme, 4. 60-80 leaders completing the VUCA workshops 5. 10 people accessing the BALI programme.	£120,000 in three equal instalments of £40,000 each Spend in Q3: £120,000 to be split between CSC and SEND in the proportion 23:77
Project No. 7: SEND Workforce part 2	**Pillar 6:** Skilled workforce across LA, education settings, health and social care	1. Through training from expert legal practitioners, regional skills and expertise will be developed and enhanced. 2. Benefits LAs with high numbers of new staff in statutory delivery services by providing training in fundamental areas of SEND legal practice. 3. Hot topics provide an informed opportunity for professionals and parent/carers to clarify issues and procedures, supporting collective understanding and improved delivery of services 4. Widening of topics reflects links with related areas of legislation (e.g. DoLS)	1. A successful programme of legal support was delivered by Bevan Brittan in 25/26. This project extends that programme based upon attendee feedback and SEND reform requirements. 2. The SEND apprenticeship programme was developed in 25/26 and a delivery partner was found to take forward the apprenticeship. The aim of work as part of this project will be to evaluate the impact of the model and, depending on feedback, either build on what has been achieved or explore options to improve delivery. 3. A successful SEND workforce survey was carried out in 25/26. The 26/27 survey will include an additional focus on challenges associated with 'Experts at Hand'.	1. 16 training session from Bevan Brittan delivered. 6 sessions in Q3 will target professional staff and cover the fundamentals of the statutory process. 10 sessions in Q4 will cover topics suited to a more wide-ranging audience. 2. Sessions will be recorded where appropriate and materials made available on the SESLIP website 3. Ongoing evaluation (after every session) will be collated to gauge the perceived value and impact of sessions. 4. The SEND apprenticeship programme will have increased numbers of participants and/or secured new providers 5. The SEND staff survey (Q2/3) will provide a comparative picture of current regional SEND staffing, including data	£45,000 in three equal instalments of £15,000 each Spend in Q2: £5,000; Q3: £15,000; Q4: £25,000

				that supports readiness for 'Experts at Hand'.	
Project No. 8 Leaders in SEND (formerly SEND Strategic and Operational Leads)	**Pillar 2:** Effective system leadership and governance	1. Supports the maintenance of a stable knowledgeable workforce around SEN leadership 2. Encourages focus on high quality delivery of service essentials 3. Provides a platform to share practice, experience and progress around local area SEND reform plans 4. Promotes collegiality and trust amongst regional SEND leaders to drive improvement 5. The project may be extended in response to requirement for additional meetings in support of improvement/SEND reform plan delivery	1. A well-attended network group for SEND Strategic Leads and Operational Leads has been in place for the last 3 years with engagement from all 19 local areas. 2. There are strong chairs for both networks. This project proposes a slight change in the title of network groups to reflect a changing workforce and the potential implications for leadership roles associated with SEND reform and LGR. 3. The groups have successfully trialled a pattern of joint and separate meetings which will inform the pattern of meetings and events in 26/27.	1. Joint termly meetings (Q1-4) for both groups with agendas also jointly agreed in advance 2. Potential considered for 2 focussed meetings (Q2 & 4) to reflect concerns of varied SEND management responsibilities 3. SEND in-person event held (Q3), delivered jointly with Education Leads network and, potentially AP network 4. Surveys conducted at the end of Q2,3 & 4 to gauge impact and steer the content of network meetings.	£15,000 in three equal instalments of £5,000 each Spend in Q2: £7,500; Q3: £3,750; Q4: £3,750
Project 11: DCO/DMO network	**Pillar 5:** Effective partnership working across education, health and social care	1. Better understanding between partners 2. Opportunities for collaboration to drive change and improvement	1. RIIA links with the regional DMO/DCO network have existed for several years. The network has supported health colleagues through current upheavals and provided a means of linking with RIIA activity. 2. New plans formalise this support with plans to work together on jointly agreed task and finish projects linked to SEND reform.	1. Termly meetings of DCO/DMO network 2. Sharing of regional and national joint SEND practice at SEND forum/SEND forum plus 3. Updated regional practice guidelines for health partners working in SEND (Q3-4)	£5,000 (approx.) in three equal instalments of £1,666 Spend in Q2: £2,500; Q3: £1,250; Q4: £1,250
Project No. 12: SEND Forum	**Pillar 2:** Effective system leadership and governance	1. User friendly timings support attendance by professionals and parent/carers enabling attendees to keep up to date with national and regional SEND developments 2. Provides an opportunity for sharing innovation from a wide range of service providers, including independent organisations 3. Attendees value the inspirational nature of presentations 4. The forum attracts national speakers that attendees may not otherwise have opportunity to hear from 5. The in-depth presentations provided at SEND forum plus will support greater understanding of approaches, including SEND reform requirements 6. Recording of SEND forum plus sessions will facilitate	1. A very successful regional SEND forum has been in place for the last 2 years, jointly chaired with NHSE and hosting a very wide range of speakers. 2. To accommodate all speakers and make best use of time, existing forums are content heavy with less opportunity for in depth exploration and questions. 3. Feedback is extremely positive but has also highlighted that opportunities for greater depth around some topics would be appreciated. "SEND forum plus" is designed to fill this gap.	1. Sustained interest and attendance at termly SEND forums (Q1, 2,3 & 4) 2. Forum relevance assured through feedback at every forum with an overall summary produced in Q4 to reflect on progress and inform next steps 3. Successful implementation of SEND Forum Plus (Q2.3 & 4) gauged via data (numbers participating) and short feedback surveys.	£10,000 in three equal instalments of £5,000 each Spend in Q2: £5,000; Q3: £2,500; Q4: £2,500

		wider reach and more reflective use of information.			
Project No. 10: PfA and post-16 Network	**Pillar 5:** Effective partnership working across education, health and social care	1. Provides a unique opportunity for services to work with parent/carers, young people and service providers to tackle complex issues and develop as appropriate regional guidance 2. Creates a forum for discussion and clarification as further guidance around post 16 SEND provision emerges	1. Provides a unique opportunity for services to work with parent/carers, young people and service providers to tackle complex issues and develop as appropriate regional guidance 2. Creates a forum for discussion and clarification as further guidance around post 16 SEND provision emerges	1. The COP will meet once per term with an additional in person event in Q4 2. Additional task and finish groups will be convened as required to develop regional guidance 3. Feedback will be gathered following each COP meeting (Q2,3,4) 4. A final report will be produced to include the impact of project work from the perspective of COP members and including regional data as available (Q4)	£17,000 in three equal instalments of £5,666 each Spend in Q2: £8,500; Q3: £4,250; Q4: £4,250
Project No. 13: CYP Regional Network	**Pillar 1:** Co-production with parents/carers and CYP	1. Amplifies the voice of children and young people and provides a forum for sharing experience 2. Supports the development of strong engagement models and empowers CYP to challenge and celebrate how their voice is heard 3. Provides a bank of tools and information to support the development of CYP engagement models in local areas 4. Develops a holistic model for engagement for CYP regionally and local areas – 'say it once' that has an influence on commissioning and practice 5. Explore the opportunity for eLearning training to ensure a cohesive approach across the region in partnership with CYP	1. The network has secured joint chairs from the participation sector and has secured involvement from all 19 regions. 2. It is well placed to increase involvement from CYP. Two task and finish groups were successfully set up to support the creation and distribution of a regional survey and arrange a celebration event. 3. The results of the survey will be used to inform priorities for next steps in the context of SEND reform.	1. There will be at least one termly meeting of the COP with evidence of increased participation at COP in meetings (Q2-4) 2. There will be an event in the Autumn to share the findings of the survey and to identify priorities for this year. (Q2) 3. Task and finish groups will take forward at least two priorities identified by the survey (Q3-4) 4. There will be an in-person event with CYP with SEND(Q4) 5. A final report will summarise progress and impact, including the extent to which CYP feel that the COP has supported them in making their voice heard (Q4)	£28,000 in three equal instalments of £9,333 each Spend in Q2: £14,000; Q3: £7,500; Q4: £7,500
Project No. 15: AP network (part 2)	**Pillar 4:** High quality service delivery at universal, targeted and specialist levels to promote inclusion.	1. Extending insights and learning from 2025-26 work. 2. Supporting implementation of an area of recommendation: support building blocks for increased consistency of cross-border QA. 3. Reducing safeguarding risk for CYP with SEND and/or vulnerable as a result of information-sharing agreement(s). Engagement with LADO arrangements. 4. Trial cross-border collaborations within a sub-regional / ICB geography.	1. Building on last year's QA of non-school AP task-and-finish group, which tested a method to summarise an overview of local arrangements and local challenges. 2. Cross-border arrangements (info sharing; shared QA of some providers; market development) were identified areas for development. 3. Pan-Berkshire has an informal network of LA officers whose responsibilities including QA of N-S AP. 4. The other LAs in the Thames Valley footprint, as yet have no regular 'between LA' arrangements.	1. Follow-up interviews with LAs from the part 1: to publish updated practice vignettes, identifying further practice impacts. (Nov26) 2. Publish two learner voice in AP: case examples (Jan 27). 3. Support two sub-regional groups of adjoining LAs to draft and share information-sharing agreements regarding QA and risk in non-school APs. Publish two case examples (including an information-sharing MOU), Mar 27. 4. Support two sets of adjoining LAs to better align with each others' QA processes. Publish 2 case studies about shared QA processes of non-school	£25,000 in three equal instalments of £8,333 each Spend in Q3: £12,500; Q4: £12,500

				AP and insights from trialling. (Mar 27) 5. Publish an insights report from the project and disseminate to SE LAs via the South-east Education Directors Network and the Access to Education Group. (Apr 27)	
Project No. 18: Decision technology part 2	**Pillar 4:** High quality service delivery at universal, targeted and specialist levels to promote inclusion	1. More consistent, evidence-based assessment and banding of the additional needs of children and young people with SEND across settings and local authorities, enabling fairer and more transparent resource allocation and better use of available funding. A technically supported, well-maintained tool ensures reliability at scale, reduces variation in decision-making between areas, and gives practitioners a shared framework as new demands arise from the SEND reforms.	1. The tool currently exists as a tested prototype, used by Oxfordshire approx. 600 child assessments, but without dedicated technical support, an established user group, or a supported deployment route beyond the initial pilot. 2. Assessment and banding practice across the wider region remains variable.	1. By end March 2027, secure a technical partner and a sustainable support arrangement; 2. By Dec 2026 we will establish a functioning regional user group; 3. By Dec 2026 we will publish the timetable for an agreed set of refinements and reform-driven features; and 4. By Dec 26 we will identify which new local authorities/settings beyond the original pilot.	£30,000 in three equal instalments of £10,000 each Spend in Q2: £15,000; Q3: £7,500; Q4: £7,500
Project No. 19: Coproduction part 2	**Pillar 1:** Co-production with parents/carers and CYP	1. Completion and sharing of co-production multi-agency survey will provide a regional picture of practice 2. Survey provides an informed basis from which to develop a shared regional understanding and commitment to coproduction	1. Survey has been completed and the majority of PCFs have responded. 2. Local Areas requested additional time due to pressures of producing SEND reform plans. 3. Requests to complete are being refreshed.	1. Survey completion and presentation (Q 2/3) 2. Development of coproduction guidelines (Q4) 3. Collective identification of potential ways in which LAs could support PCFs (Q4)	£25,000 in three equal instalments of £8,333 each Spend in Q2: £20,000; Q3: £5,000
Project No. 20: Mainstream Inclusion project part 2	**Pillar 4:** High quality service delivery at universal, targeted and specialist levels to promote inclusion	1. Sharing of best practice supports understanding of SEND reform aspirations and provides practical models that foster high quality delivery across the region. 2. Joint working with RISE, NASEN, CDC etc will promote a shared vision and ensure efficient and cohesive regional support around mainstream inclusion with a focus on practical, agreed methods for identifying best practice. 3. Opportunity to support and track the development of the 'Experts at Hand' model in line with DfE support guidance and Year 1 expectations. This will include a focus on ways in which aligned initiatives (e.g. FFPP/LGR) can be harnessed through the Experts at hand model to	1. An Inclusion COP was established in 25/26, with representatives secured from several agencies and organisations and including PCF representatives. 2. The interim evaluation noted that the project had moved beyond the implementation stage to sharing learning around innovative practice and identifying barriers to successful mainstream inclusion. 3. The group currently has engagement from most local areas, including good representation from parent/carers. 4. Case studies have been shared from the group using an agreed methodology. 5. The group is in a good position to move from sharing	1. Regional survey to gauge progress and approaches around 'Experts at Hand' (Q2/3). 2. Survey (alongside data from SEND staff survey) will inform development of an Experts at Hand task and finish group. (Q2-4) Learning from this group will be shared once per term at SEND forums. 3. Refresh Inclusion COP to widen group membership to schools and settings. 3 meetings to be held (Q2,3 &4) and one 'celebration event' (Q4) 4. Pulse surveys issued and analysed after every COP meeting 5. A minimum of two virtual meetings of EAH focus group held (Q2-4) 6. Three examples of mainstream inclusion good practice, including one delivered by a school	£87,000 in three equal instalments of £29,000 each Spend in Q2: £7,500; Q3: £3,750; Q4: £3,750 Spend in Q3: £43,500; Q4: £43,500

		support a shared vision for the future. 4. Provides a consistent feedback loop. The intention will be to expand membership to include CYP and representation from schools within the region. 5. Celebrates progress and achievement – a whole day in-person event will focus on the impact of work In Local areas and individual settings 6. Supports the development of knowledgeable leadership and governance in SEND through sharing of good practice at multiple levels.	practice to supporting the implementation of consistent practice whilst highlighting new and innovative approaches.	or provision, shared through "SEND Forum Plus" and/or recorded seminar shared on SESLIP website (Q2-4) 7. Contribution made to activity with regional delivery partners to assure examples of best practice using QA guidance 8. In-person celebration event (Q3/4) to include settings, including specialist and AP. The event should also highlight practice around the development of EAH. 9. Final report produced which may include a follow-up EAH survey if required (Q4)	
Project No. 21: SEND AP and inclusion, (part 2)	**Pillar 4:** High quality service delivery at universal, targeted and specialist levels to promote inclusion	1. Stronger strategic position with local school systems in support of inclusion. Financial incentives for a school to identify escalating absences and disengagement from learning earlier (and underlying needs such as SEND). 2. Reinforce a principle of funding following the child and increase school-led interim provision, which is more likely to achieve reintegration. 3. Review procedures and comms templates with input from LGSC Ombudsman to reduce complaints found against LAs. 4. Trial an approach to collate data for comparable group of CYP educated under s19 which could be extended across the South-east.	1. 10 LAs participated in sharing and developing practice on AP & education support via section 19 (Education Act 1996). 2. Progress was made on policy wording, procedure and decision-making. 3. Further work on financial agreements between LA & schools. 4. Further work on defining key groups of CYP educated under s19 and how to collate / report data / reintegration. 5. Update requested from LGSCO following their updated guidance.	1. Two webinars sharing LA practice on an aspect of s19 / non-school arrangements by Mar 27. 2. 1 dissemination session with LGSCO and considering updated case studies from LAs of s19 procedure / communication with parents / decision-making. (Mar 27). 3. Recruit min 5 LAs to s19 data collation project supported by SESLIP. Publish recommendations for future s19 data collation. (Mar 27). 4. Publish practice vignettes and published examples of local procedures for 'funding to follow the child', when s19 education is put in place. (Mar 27).	£30,000 in three equal instalments of £10,000 each Spend in Q3: £15,000; Q4: £15,000
Project No. 22: Youth Justice/SEND: Promoting Re-inclusion, Reducing Exclusions (PRRE) part 2	**Pillar 4:** High quality service delivery at universal, targeted and specialist levels to promote inclusion	1. Through delivery of the Promoting Re-inclusion, Reducing Exclusions (PRRE) project, the RIIA will realise significant regional benefits by establishing a scalable, evidence-based model for the early identification and support of children at risk of exclusion and youth justice involvement. 2. The project will strengthen workforce capability across education, health, social care and youth justice, improve multi-agency collaboration, increase the identification of previously unmet Speech, Language and Communication Needs, and reduce key risk factors associated with exclusion,	1. The baseline position is that the PRRE model currently operates within Milton Keynes only and is not embedded consistently across the Thames Valley region. 2. During 2025–26, PRRE received 53 school referrals, with assessment findings demonstrating high levels of previously unidentified Speech, Language and Communication Needs amongst children at risk of exclusion. 3. Regional variation exists in the identification of SLCN, access to specialist assessment, workforce knowledge and the	1. By March 2027, the project will deliver a fully developed and transferable PRRE implementation model, workforce development offer, and evaluation framework capable of supporting roll-out across all nine Thames Valley local authorities. 2. By March 2027, the project will publish a review of the progress including impact on the following: identification of Speech, Language and Communication Needs amongst children at risk of exclusion; practitioner confidence and multi-	£50,000 in three equal instalments of £16,333 each Spend in Q2: £16,333; Q3: £16,333; Q4: £16,333

		serious youth violence and offending. 3. The project will also generate robust regional data and evaluation evidence, creating a sustainable foundation for future commissioning, policy development and system-wide improvement across all nine Thames Valley local authorities	availability of consistent outcome data. 4. The SESLIP project has established baseline referral, assessment and stakeholder feedback measures which will enable comparison of outcomes as the model is implemented across participating local authorities	agency practice; consistency of regional data collection; school inclusion; reduced exclusion risk; known risk factors associated with youth justice involvement, serious youth violence and social vulnerability.	
Project No. 51: Analysis of maturity indicators and reform plans	**Pillar 3:** Accurate understanding of needs through effective use of data	1. Provides collective evidence-based data to inform the direction of ongoing SEND reform and improvement projects. 2. Identifies areas for targeted SEND reform support 3. Supports the development of a shared vision and highlights evidence informed priorities. 4. Fosters coproduction and relationships building at the heart of all activity by sharing findings with partners, facilitating informed joint identification of priorities and methodology 5. Ensures high quality delivery of the essentials through identification of strengths, barriers and priorities	1. LAs have shared aspects of SEND reform plans through networking and targeted support activity. 2. There is agreement from Education Leads to share reform plans/maturity index with the region for the purpose of identifying regional priorities and support.	1. Confirm willingness to share information and collect from individual LAs (Q 1 & 2) 2. Agree methodology for analysis and presentation of results. Complete analysis (Q2-3) and share with 'Leaders in SEND' group and SEND governance group (others as required), 3. Adaptations to existing projects or proposals for new projects agreed and shared. (Q3) 4. Requirement for further survey considered to gauge regional progress (Q4)	£20,000 in three equal instalments of £6,666 each Spend in Q3: £10,000; Q4: £10,000
Project No. 52: Cluster funding models	**Pillar 7:** Targeted and judicious use of resources including place planning, sufficiency and use of capital	1. Provides a proven means for local areas to work with settings and partners to understand, evaluate and make joint decisions for allocating local SEND resources 2. Facilitate cross LA working to address common issues around place planning and sufficiency 3. Can be used as a tool for developing Experts at Hand 4. Supports the development of the model in local areas through the sharing of practice	1. Local areas approached the RIIA in 25/26 to support the development of a Community of Practice to share learning and understand of the cluster model. 2. Interest is growing and there is need to formalise support to extend the reach and impact of this work	1. Termly meetings of Cluster COP (Q2,3 &4) held 2. By end Q2 have 2 LAs engaged; by end Q3 increase to 4; by end Q4 increase to 6 3. Support to individual LAs is shared at COPs to benefit development of the approach for all 4. The implementation of the approach is shared at SEND forums on at least one occasion 5. A final report will summarise progress, including elements identified as supporting implementation of the approach.	£45,000 in three equal instalments of £15,000 each Spend in Q3: £22,500; Q4: £22,500

CSC RIIA:
The purpose of this document is to form the core underpinning to the RIIA's delivery plan for the purposes of this grant. When completing this template, please refer to the Statement of Requirements which outlines the strategic ambitions for the RIIA grant. When drafting the CSC element of the plan, please also consider the National Framework outcomes and enablers, when designing your projects:

There are 3 enablers:
• Multi-agency working is prioritised and effective
• Leaders drive conditions for effective practice
• The workforce is equipped and effective

There are 4 outcomes:

• Outcome 1: children, young people and families stay together and get the help they need
• Outcome 2: children and young people are supported by their family network
• Outcome 3: children and young people are safe in and outside of their homes
• Outcome 4: children in care and care leavers have stable, loving homes

Within each Requirement, please also state which **reform programme** each project supports the delivery of across the region (e.g. RCCs, Regional Fostering Hubs, FFP). When a project aims to address a specific region-wide challenge (e.g. LGR, leadership), please identify how this initiative aids the successful delivery of a reform programme.

Requirement 1: Increase CSC Data Capability and Capacity

Each RIIA should:

- Continue to collect and report the core children's services indicators for FY26-27.
- Develop data collection and analytical capability within the RIIA to make effective use of local and regional CSC data.
- Use data insights to strengthen RIIA oversight, drive improvement activity, and inform senior regional leaders and the Children's Improvement Board (CIB).

Project(s): Please outline the projects you will undertake to achieve this objective across the region. Please add more as necessary	**Reform programme:** Identify the reform programme that this project will enable the delivery of across the region, and the relevant National Framework outcomes and enablers that this project progresses.	**Benefits:** What benefits will the RIIA realise through the delivery of this project?	**Baseline:** What is the current baseline of performance against the benefit you have described for this project?	**Target:** What is your targeted benefit for this project and over what timeline?	**Indicative funding and spending plan per quarter**
Project No. 1: Data benchmarking	**All four outcomes**	1. Better transparency and understanding between partners at ICB partnership level 2. Ability to spot trends in data and react with better more timely decisions 3. Please confirm that this is how you wish the final text to appear – Yes happy with this	1. All 19 SE LAs engage with data collection and workshops, across the breadth of CSC reporting. 2. Work around Insights and Trends is still being developed, to ensure the appropriate audience is engaged and outputs are useful.	By the end of March 2027, we will 1. deliver annual CSC benchmarking reports for RIIA, Peer Challenge, Early Help and Adoption Services Each quarter we will 2. deliver quarterly CSC benchmarking reports for RIIA, Peer Challenge, Early Help and Adoption Services 3. have engaged with all 19 SE LAs in both data collection and workshop participation 4. have organised and held quarterly meetings of the SE data leads network and Insights & Trends workshops	£80,000 in three equal instalments of £26,666 each Transfer to East Sussex planned for Q2

Requirement 2: CSC Regional Diagnostics

Regional diagnostics should assess whether local authorities and the wider region have the core capabilities - and regional systems - needed to deliver and sustain reform. RIIAs should use the core principles of the National Framework to identify strengths and effective practice against the Framework's outcomes and enablers that can be disseminated, as well as areas of improvement that can be supported by regional improvement.

Diagnostics should also specifically draw out progress in implementing the following:

- Delivery of Families First Partnership Programme reforms - Identify areas of strength and effective practice against the core components of FFP which can be shared, as well as areas for improvement that can be supported by the CSC universal improvement offer – specifically via the Families First for Children Pathfinders.

• Regional Care Co-operatives - support and prepare the region for the role out of RCCs, driving forward arrangements at a regional or sub-regional level. • Regional Fostering Hubs – Support the development of local and regional systems to better manage the market and increase the number of foster carers locally. Diagnostics should also consider how Local Government Reorganisation will impact the delivery of the above.

Project(s): Please outline the projects you will undertake to achieve this objective across the region. Please add more as necessary	**Reform programme:** Identify the reform programme that this project will enable the delivery of across the region, and the relevant National Framework outcomes and enablers this project progresses.	**Benefits:** What benefits will the RIIA realise through the delivery of this project?	**Baseline:** What is the current baseline of performance against the benefit you have described for this project?	**Target:** What is your targeted benefit for this project and over what timeline?	**Indicative funding and spending plan per quarter**
Project No. 2: DCS Peer Challenge	**All four outcomes**	1. DCS Peer Challenge has a long-established place in the region, with DCSs having renewed their commitment to this project several times over at least 10 years 2. DCSs continue to value the support and challenge they give (and receive) in the partnerships 3. This project will conduct a review of the methodology used, and provide a diagnostic report on the three headlines of FFP; RCC and RFH	1. We have strongly established triad groups of three (and four) LAs 2. Our RCC, Home and Future is established 3. Our regional fostering hub, LASFE, is being merged into the RCC	1. By Nov 26, engage with other Regions across the country to understand how they are approaching regional diagnostics and to identify any transferrable learning 2. By Nov 26, publish findings from insights and models from other Regions 3. By Nov 26, publish feedback on the current SESLIP Self-Assessment and Peer Challenge model, and recommendations for how the process might evolve to meet the RIIA Requirements and better support regional priorities 4. By Nov 26, complete the diagnostic activity under the headings “FFPP delivery”, “RCC roll-out”, “Regional Fostering Hubs”, and “LGR” should be located to best effect 5. By Nov 26, consider how and when to support the LGR transition for Surrey, East Surrey and West Surrey 6. By Mar 27 complete a further round of peer challenge activity	£60,800 in three equal instalments of £20,266 each Spend in Q2: £10,800; Q3: £25,000; Q4: £25,000

Requirement 3: CSC Regional Systems Each RIIA should: • Collate and share learning from the Regional Diagnostics with LAs across the region through a regional community of practice for children's social care. • Deliver regional solutions that support improvement to the regional systems identified through the diagnostic process. • Establish effective partnerships with key regional stakeholders and safeguarding partners, specifically leaders in police, health and education.

Project(s): Please outline the projects you will undertake to achieve this objective across the region. Please add more as necessary	**Reform programme:** Identify the reform programme that this project will enable the delivery of across the region, and the relevant National Framework outcomes and enablers this project progresses.	**Benefits:** What benefits will the RIIA realise through the delivery of this project?	**Baseline:** What is the current baseline of performance against the benefit you have described for this project?	**Target:** What is your targeted benefit for this project and over what timeline?	**Indicative funding and spending plan per quarter**
Project No. 5: Take Your Place	**All four outcomes**	1. This programme is designed to equip leaders in SEND and CSC for the complex and challenging environment faced. 2. It aims to provide the skills, knowledge and support needed to deliver effective services. 3. It also helps develop a pipeline for future leaders in the region.	1. SESLIP has developed an offer to improve leadership of SEND and Children services over the last 5 years. 2. This has contributed to developing a pipeline of potential Assistant Directors and Directors in Children's services	Working with The Staff College as our delivery partner, by end Q2 we will publish a programme including: 1. Delivery of leadership additional cohort of SESLIP programme for SEND and CSC leaders. 2. Offering joint leadership VUCA workshops to partners in each of the 4 ICB areas 3. 20 places on the core leadership programme, 4. 60-80 leaders completing the VUCA workshops 5. 10 people accessing the BALI programme.	£120,000 in three equal instalments of £40,000 each Spend in Q3: £120,000 to be split between CSC and SEND in the proportion 23:77
Project No. 6: CSC Workforce Agency and MoU	**All four outcomes**	1. The region values agency staff to cover vacancies and short term requirements but aspires to minimise their use. The benefits of this are better value for public money, more consistent levels of service and less time and energy deployed in inducting and training temporary staff.	1. 13.4 % Agency worker rate - FTE (as at 30 September 2025) 2. For the fourth year in a row the SE use of agency staff reduced by this measure and others	1. The target is a further 1% (to 12.4%) reduction in the use of agency staff across the region.	£34,000 in three equal instalments of £11,333 each Spend in Q2: £17,000; Q3: £8,500; Q4: £8,500

Project No. 16: Transformation Network	**All four outcomes**	1. Greater connectivity, relationships and sharing of progress around FFP across the region. 2. Greater regional progress in reform delivery through informal support between LAs which are more and less progressed.	1. 24 meetings a year relating to case management systems 2. 8 regional transformation leaders' meetings a year regarding FFP and wider children's transformation 3. 60% attendance on average 4. Baseline mapping of reform implementation and readiness	Each quarter we will deliver 1. 6 meetings relating to case management systems 2. 2 regional transformation leaders' meetings regarding FFP and wider children's transformation, with 70% attendance on average	£50,000 in three equal instalments of £16,666 each Spend in Q2: £25,000; Q3: £12,500; Q4: £12,500
Project No. 27: Kinship Connected part 2	**Outcome 2:** children and young people are supported by their family network	1. Improved confidence among kinship carers 2. Reduced placement breakdown	1. No baseline as service not yet in place	1. By end Q2 we will confirm the identity of 5 participating LAs 2. By end Q3 we will have identified 80 Kinship Carers across the 5 LAs who will participate in the project 3. By end Q4 we will publish and interim report on the impact of the support packages, including statistics on placement breakdown and carers' reported confidence	£92,000 in three equal instalments of £30,666 each Transfer to Kinship planned for Q2

Programme and Project Management

In addition to the projects identified above, the delivery plan includes programme and project management costs as follows

		CSC	SEND	SESLIP	TOTAL
29	SEND Programme Manager and support		108,000		108,000
30	SESLIP Programme Manager	5,936	19,617	10,159	35,712
31	Website	391	1,312	697	2,400
32	KCC Overhead	4,073	13,671	7,256	25,000
	Project Management	10,400	142,600	18,112	171,112
	RIIA Grant Element	153,000			

Please pay this element of the grant in three equal instalments of £51,000 (CSC: £3,467; SEND: £47,533; Total £51,000).

The spend profile will be

	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
CSC	5200	2600	2600	10400
SEND	71300	35650	35650	142600
Total	76500	38250	38250	153000

Appendix 5

SESLI Programme proposed budget 2026-27 including RIIA Grant

Income	2026-27 DfE RIIA Grant		SESLIP funds	Budget 2026-27
	CSC	SEND	SESLIP	Totals
DfE – CSC – data	80,000			
DfE – CSC – peer challenge	60,800			
DfE – CSC – universal	214,000			
DfE – CSC – targeted	-			
Total DfE - CSC				354,800
DfE – SEND – data		240,000		
DfE – SEND – peer challenge		76,000		
DfE – SEND – universal workstreams		675,000		
DfE – SEND – project management		200,000		
DfE – SEND – targeted		-		
Total DfE - SEND				1,191,000
Carry forward – earmarked for TS			254,691	
Carry forward – unrestricted			211,960	
Total Carry Forward				466,651
Total SE subs 2025-26			165,500	165,500
Total In	**354,800**	**1,191,000**	**632,151**	**2,177,951**
Percentage of DfE Grant	**23%**	**77%**		
Percentage of SESLI Programme	**16.3%**	**54.7%**	**29.0%**	

Project No.	Expenditure	2026-27 DfE RIIA Grant		SESLIP funds	Budget 2026-27	Totals
		CSC	SEND	SESLIP	sub-totals	
1	Data Benchmarking	80,000	240,000		320,000	
50	ICB data partnerships		120,000		120,000	
	Data Benchmarking					**440,000**
2	DCS Peer Challenge	60,800			60,800	
3	SEND Courageous Conversations		76,000		76,000	
	Diagnostics					**136,800**
4	SEND Workforce Residential Staff		88,000		88,000	
5	Take Your Place	27,600	92,400		120,000	
6	Workforce matters, MoC	34,000			34,000	
7	SEND Workforce part 2		45,000		45,000	
8	Leaders in SEND		15,000		15,000	
11	DCO/DMO Network		5,000		5,000	
12	SEND Forum		10,000		10,000	
10	PfA and post-16 Network		17,000		17,000	
13	CYP Regional Network		28,000		28,000	
15	AP Network part 2		25,000		25,000	
18	Decision technology part 2		30,000		30,000	
19	Coproduction part 2		25,000		25,000	
20	Mainstream Inclusion project part 2		87,000		87,000	
21	SENDAP part 2		30,000		30,000	
22	Youth Justice/SEND/PRRE part 2		50,000		50,000	
51	Maturity indicators and reform plans analysis		20,000		20,000	

Project No.	Expenditure	2026-27 DfE RIIA Grant		SESLIP funds	Budget 2026-27	Totals
		CSC	SEND	SESLIP	sub-totals	
52	Cluster funding models		45,000		45,000	
16	Transformation	50,000			50,000	
27	Kinship Connected part 2	92,000			92,000	
	Universal					**816,000**
29	SEND Programme Manager and support		108,000		108,000	
30	SESLIP Programme Manager	5,936	19,617	10,159	35,712	
31	Website	391	1,312	697	2,400	
32	KCC Overhead	4,073	13,671	7,256	25,000	
	Project Management					**171,112**
33	Targeted Support Scheme (c/f from 25-26)			254,691		
	Targeted					**254,691**
28	Kinship Reach - roll-out			61,000	61,000	
34	Adoption			11,500	11,500	
35	Commissioners			18,000	18,000	
36	Early Help			9,500	9,500	
37	Fostering			9,500	9,500	
38	Kinship care			20,000	20,000	
39	Principal Social Workers			6,000	6,000	
40	Quality Assurance			15,000	15,000	
41	AD Safeguarding			23,000	23,000	
42	Ed Directors			21,000	21,000	
43	Lead Members			500	500	
44	Fostering rewards and offers part 2			25,000	25,000	
46	CYP & Continuing Care			35,000	35,000	
47	QA phase 3			35,000	35,000	
48	BGM phase 2			50,000	50,000	
49	SE ADCS Rooms			19,348	19,348	
	Total SESLIP own funds					**359,348**
	Unrestricted carry forward				0	
	Total Out	**354,800**	**1,191,000**	**632,151**	**2,177,951**	
	Total In	**354,800**	**1,191,000**	**632,151**	**2,177,951**	