

The Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS)

Swale District

The Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS) were devolved to Meadowfield School in September 2012. Following a TUPE process, the STLS staff are all now Meadowfield employees.

Rebecca Kenny, Inclusion and Outreach Manager, leads the team of specialist teachers and manages the Midas Training and Development Centre. Outreach support and training delivery are co-ordinated to provide a continuous level of provision.

The Specialist Teaching and Learning Team for the Swale District aim to advise and support Early Years' settings and schools to build capacity and confidence to deliver high quality provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to improve pupil progress and outcomes.

A collaborative problem-solving approach, using the skills and experience of specialist teachers together with the expertise of schools and other professionals, lies at the heart of the service delivery.

STLS are part of a wider network of services from Education, Health and Social Care bringing children's services together to ensure seamless provision for children and young people with SEND.



The STLS team are based at The Midas Centre in Meadowfield School

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Rebecca Kenny
Specialist Teaching Learning Service District Lead



Becky began her teaching career in a mainstream primary school where she taught across all year groups. She has subsequently taught in several different schools within Kent. In 2010 Becky gained a Postgraduate Certificate in Inclusive Education. Following this she accepted a position teaching across Key Stages 2 – 4 at The Caldecott Foundation, a special school catering for children who have significant social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, due to suffering severe neglect and trauma in the early stages of life. Becky also gained her Regional Makaton Trainer qualification and has used this across many mainstream schools supporting staff to communicate confidently with children and young people who have communication difficulties and needs. Becky joined the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service in January 2014, and became STLS District Lead September 2022.

Jonathan Smeeton
Specialist Teacher – SEMH



Before going into teaching Jonathan worked for Sure Start with vulnerable families in Canterbury. He worked at Cornwallis secondary school in Maidstone for a year as an unqualified teacher to gain classroom experience before beginning his GTP at Invicta Grammar School. Jonathan remained at Invicta for four years leading on PSHE and served as second in department in English. He then moved to Bradfield's School in Chatham to help establish a new ASD provision before moving to Meadowfield School in 2013 working within the secondary department. In 2017 Jonathan joined the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service.

Susan Cassingham
Inclusion Support



Susan has 33 years' experience supporting pupils with communication, interaction, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in both specialist and mainstream settings in early years, primary, secondary level and young adults in a post 19 provision. She began her career in a Gravesham mainstream primary school delivering speech and language programmes and writing statement plans to support pupils on the SEN register. Susan has co-ordinated EAL in a primary school delivering a bespoke curriculum to support new arrivals and supported local primary school SENCO's with new arrivals through outreach. Susan moved to a special school where she helped develop an engagement curriculum to support pupils who had significant SEMH and behavioural needs. Susan is a qualified Forest School Leader. Susan completed a Specialist Teaching Assistant, Child in Education degree course, with a focus on SEN at the University of Greenwich. She qualified as a Sleep Scotland Sleep Counsellor in 2019. Susan supports primary and secondary schools in her role as STLS Inclusion Support Assistant.

Jemma Williams
Specialist Teacher - C&I



Jemma's teaching career started in a local mainstream Secondary school where she completed her teacher training. She quickly found a passion for supporting those with SEN and became a Lead Practitioner in the school's Nurture Provision.

After ten years working across two mainstream Secondary schools, teaching students with SEN, in 2014 she qualified as a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo). She carried out the SENCo role in the Secondary school for two years, Jemma then moved into the SENCo role in a local Primary school.

She joined the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service in January 2023.

Laura James
Specialist Teacher - C&L



Laura began teaching in 2009. She taught across the primary age range within several schools in Kent, before completing the NASENCo qualification. Laura subsequently worked as a SENCO for 6 years. In 2021, Laura obtained a Postgraduate Certificate in the Assessment of Specific Learning Difficulties. Laura joined Swale STLS in April 2023.

Tracey Farley
Specialist Teacher – SEMH



Tracey has over 20 years experience, teaching across Early Years and Key Stage 1 and 2 in Medway and Swale. She gained her Nurture UK certificate in 2019, successfully setting up a Nurture provision to support children who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, including children who are looked after in the care system. Gaining a National Professional Qualification in Senior Leadership, supported the Senior Leadership positions Tracey held in various roles, most recently, Assistant Head for Inclusion. In 2020, Tracey gained the Postgraduate Certificate National Award for Special Educational Needs, supporting her role as SENCO in a primary school. Tracey joined the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service in January 2023.

Tanya
Specialist Teacher – C&L



Tanya began her teaching career in a nurture provision in a mainstream secondary school. During her time working in secondary education, she taught students from years 7 to 13, across multiple departments. When a Speech and Language SRP was opened at the school she was working at, she was appointed as the lead teacher which further fueled her passion to support pupils with additional needs. Tanya then went on to complete the National Award for Special Needs Coordination. In 2016 she transferred to Meadowfield school where she taught in both KS1 and EYFS. In September 2021 Tanya was seconded to STLS and became a permanent member of the team soon after.

Jamie Evans
Specialist Teacher Early Years



Jamie trained as an Early Years and Key Stage 1 Teacher, with a specialism in Inclusion. She started her teaching career at a specialist residential school for children with challenging behaviour as a result of communication difficulties. From here Jamie moved on to be the Lead Teacher for Autism based in an SRP in a mainstream school supporting children with Autism both within the nursery, school and other primary schools in the Ashford district. Jamie then spent some time teaching in a mainstream Key Stage 1 specialising in Phonics. Jamie has also taught in the primary department at Meadowfield. Jamie joined the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service in 2017 and has since gained a Post Graduate Certificate in Autism (Children).

Kate Chatfield
Specialist Teacher Early Years



Kate began her teaching career in 2006 in a mainstream Junior school, she taught across all year groups and had a variety of roles across 14 years including Head of Year, supporting vulnerable pupils and lead student mentor. In 2016, Kate achieved the National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership. Kate accepted the position of SENCO in 2020 and in 2021 achieved a Post Graduate Certificate having successfully completed the National Award for SEN Coordination qualification. Kate joined the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service in May 2022.

Clare Bushell
Inclusion Support



Clare previously trained as a nursery practitioner to gain an Early Years Care and Education Advanced Modern Apprenticeship, where she settled into her role in a nursery setting and remained there for 21 years. It was there, she found her passion to support children and their families. She became SENCO, practicing this for around 15 years and went on to Room Leader, supporting staff and ensuring all the children had an enabling environment to reach their full potential.

Her love for children with additional needs grew and she wanted to play more of a role in supporting those children and their families to a wider scale. Clare then had an opportunity to join the STLS team as an Early Years Inclusion Support Assistant and joined in January 2023.

STLS & Midas Administrative Support

Rebecca McCarthy
STLS LIFT Administrator



Jenna Paternoster
MIDAS Administrator



Jacqueline Woodhouse
STLS Administrator



Tommy
Wellbeing Dog

