



Cabinet

Title	Education Strategies 2024/5 – 2026/7
Date of meeting	14 th May 2024
Report of	Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb - Cabinet Member for Family Friendly Barnet
Wards	All
Status	Public
Key	Key
Urgent	No
Appendices	<p>Appendix 1 – Education Strategy 2024/5 – 2026/7</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Schools and Settings Improvement Strategy 2024/5-2026/7</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Draft SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy 2024/5 – 2026/7</p>
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Summary

This report seeks approval for the Education Strategy for Barnet (Appendix 1) for the period 2024/5 to 2026/7. The strategy sets out the priorities for ensuring that children and young people continue to benefit from an excellent, high quality education offer. This strategy for 2024/5-2026/7 now replaces the previous strategy which was for 2021-24 and is aligned with the academic years.

The report also seeks approval for the draft Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) (Appendix 3) and Alternative Provision Strategy and for consultation on the draft strategy. The draft strategy sets out the priorities for ensuring that children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities continue to benefit from an excellent, high quality education offer in mainstream schools and specialist provision (including Alternative Provision). The strategy for 2024/25 - 2026/27 will replace the previous strategy which was for 2021-24.

The School and Settings Improvement Strategy (Appendix 2) sets out the priorities for ensuring that children and young people continue to benefit from an excellent, high quality education offer. This strategy for 2024/5 – 2026/27 now replaces the previous strategy which was for 2021-24.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet approve the Education Strategy 2024/5 – 2026/7 (Appendix 1).
2. That the Cabinet approve the draft SEND and AP Strategy 2024/5 – 2026/7 (Appendix 2) as a basis for consultation and delegates authority to the Executive Director for Children’s Services to approve the final strategy taking account of consultation responses.
3. That the Cabinet approve the School and Settings Improvement Strategy 2024/5 – 2026/7 (Appendix 3).

1. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 1.1 The Cabinet’s approval is required for the education strategies shown in the appendices in order to provide a clear vision and clear strategic goals and priorities for the education service in Barnet over the next three years.
- 1.2 We are committed to ensuring that Barnet is the most family friendly borough in London. To assist us in achieving this we are focussed on building resilience in children, families and schools. The cost of living, falling rolls in part of the Borough, budgetary challenges and the rise in the number of children with complex needs is putting a strain on the system.
- 1.3 For some years, Barnet has been among the top performing local authority areas in the country in relation to the achievement of children and young people and the quality of our schools. Barnet’s aspiration is to be among the top 10% of local authorities in relation to the quality of provision in its schools.
- 1.4 In 2020, the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee approved the Education Strategy 2011–2024 and the SEND and Inclusion Strategy and School and Settings Improvement Strategies for the same period. It is now time to review these strategies and set clear aims for the next three years.

2. Alternative Options Considered and Not Recommended

- 2.1 None

3. Post Decision Implementation

- 3.1 Action to deliver the strategic priorities will be overseen by the governance arrangements set out in each strategy

4. Corporate Priorities, Performance and Other Considerations

Corporate Plan

- 4.1 The quality of the education offer in Barnet is at the heart of Barnet's continuing success as a place where people want to live, work and study. It plays a crucial part in making Barnet a popular and desirable place with many families attracted to the area by the good reputation of Barnet's schools.
- 4.2 This supports the council's corporate priorities as expressed through Our Plan for Barnet 2023-2026 which sets out our vision and strategy for the borough. This includes the outcomes we want to achieve for the borough, the priorities we will focus limited resources on and, our approach for how we will deliver this.
- 4.3 The report specifically supports the corporate plan's aim of being a Family Friendly borough where children and young people have the best start in life with the right support and safeguarding when they need it, and the right tools to live their lives successfully into adulthood.

Corporate Performance / Outcome Measures

- 4.4 Outcome measures are identified in Barnet's Education Strategy and sub strategies: Schools and Settings Improvement Strategy and SEND and AP Strategy

Sustainability

- 4.5 Not applicable for this report

Corporate Parenting

- 4.6 The School and Settings Improvement Strategy includes details of progress in respect of the achievement of looked after children and includes this as a priority for the future.

Risk Management

- 4.4 None

Insight

- 4.5 None

Social Value

- 4.6 Not applicable.

5. Resource Implications (Finance and Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT and Property)

- 5.1 The work to drive the delivery of the council's contribution to the Education Strategy is delivered from within existing resources of the Education and Learning service, which is delivered in partnership with Barnet Education and Learning Service Ltd (BELS).

6. Legal Implications and Constitution References

- 6.1 Under the Council's Constitution, Part 2D the terms of reference states that Cabinet is responsible for the following functions:

- Recommending major new policies (and amendments to existing policies) to the Council for approval as part of the Council’s Policy Framework and implementing those approved by Council;
- Approving policies that are not part of the policy framework; and all key decisions.

6.2 The Education Act 1996 places a duty on local authorities to secure efficient primary, secondary and further education are available to meet the needs of the population of their area. The Act also requires local authorities to:

- ensure that their functions are exercised with a view of promoting high standards, ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training and promoting fulfilment of learning potential for children and young people in its area

and

- secure sufficient schools and sufficient is defined by reference to number, character and equipment to provide appropriate education based on age, ability and aptitude, as well as ensuring diversity of provision. These duties are overarching duties and apply regardless of whether schools are maintained by the local authority or independent of local authority support.

6.3 The Children and Families Act 2014 together with The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 set out the requirements in respect of the provision of Education Health and Care Plans.

6.4 In relation to academies, local authorities should raise any concerns directly with the Regional Schools Commissioner.

7. Consultation

7.1 A summary of the key changes from the previous Education Strategy will be presented to all headteachers at the Director’s Meeting in May 2024. A draft of the strategy has been shared with the relevant Partnership Boards for comment.

7.2 Following this Cabinet Meeting, the Strategies will be shared with all schools and settings

7.3 Key priorities for the SEND and AP strategy were considered by the SEND and AP Strategic Partnership Board in both the Autumn Term ’23 and Spring Term ’24. The draft strategy has also been shared with the Parent-Carer Forum, health and social care services and with all schools, for comment. Subject to Cabinet approval, there will be consultation with stakeholders during June and July on the draft SEND and AP Strategy and the strategy will be finalised and published in September 2024.

7.4 A draft of the Schools and Settings Improvement Strategy was considered by the Schools and Settings Standards Partnership Board in the Autumn Term ’23 and Spring Term ’24. A summary of the key changes from the previous strategy will be presented to all headteachers at the Director’s Meeting in May ’24.

7.5 The Education Strategy and the accompanying two strategies will be considered and approved by the Children’s Partnership Board at its meeting in June 2024

8. Equalities and Diversity

8.1 A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- a) Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

8.2 The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

8.3 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- a) Tackle prejudice, and
- b) Promote understanding.

Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act. The relevant protected characteristics are:

- a) Age
- b) Disability
- c) Gender reassignment
- d) Pregnancy and maternity
- e) Race
- f) Religion or belief
- g) Sex
- h) Sexual orientation
- i) Marriage and civil partnership

8.4 The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day-to-day business and to keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services. School improvement monitoring, supporting and challenging arrangements ensure that the quality of education in Barnet is maintained and improved. Outcomes for all groups of children and young people are monitored including children with special educational needs and disabilities and disadvantaged children (those in receipt of free school meals and children looked after). Barnet's Children and Young People Plan, the Education Strategy 2024/5 -2027/8 and the accompanying School and Settings Improvement Strategy and SEND and AP Strategy all have a strong focus on improving outcomes for disadvantaged groups of children and young people.

9. Background Papers

9.1 [Children and Families Act 2014 – Parts 3,4 and 5](#)

9.2 [Agenda for Children, Education & Safeguarding Committee on Monday 30th November, 2020, 6.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#) – Agenda Item Education Strategy