

# The local area of Barnet's Special Educational Needs and Disability and Alternative Provision Strategy 2024 – 2027.

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## 1. Introduction.

The overarching aim of this strategy is to set out how we will maintain or improve the experiences and outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or who are educated in Alternative Provision (AP) and their families.

It is for children and young people with SEND or who are educated in AP, their families as well as everyone who works to support them, headteachers, governors, SENDCos, Further Education (FE) and settings, professionals across health, education and social care and the voluntary sector. It covers the Local Area of Barnet, and includes the council, schools, early years settings, further education, the North Central London (NCL) Integrated Care Board (ICB), and specialist services in health and our voluntary sector.

Our thanks to all those who gave feedback and made comments in the shaping of this strategy at every stage, particularly our children and young people with SEND or educated in AP. It draws together information about our local area, the improvements we have made since our last local Area SEND inspection and our priorities for the next three years. This strategy sets out:

- the actions we have taken since our last Area SEND Inspection to address the areas where it was judged further improvements were needed as well as ensuring we continue to maintain or improve those areas judged to be areas of strength.
- The priority areas which our children and young people, families, partners have identified we need to target over the next three years, how we will make those improvements and the evidence we will use to evaluate impact and effectiveness.

The strategy was developed and coproduced with all stakeholders involved in our SEND and AP Strategic Board between 2023 – 2024 and was formally consulted on during XX and XX 2024 (*dates to be inserted ahead of final publication*). All Consultations for Barnet are held on our 'Engage Barnet' pages which can be found [here](#).

The strategy will be in place for three years. Progress will be monitored through the SEND and AP Strategic Partnership Board. All new SEND and AP strategies after this will be published in accordance with our local Area SEND Inspection outcome judgement timelines.

It should be noted this is a high level strategy informed by a range of data and information sources, these include:

- Feedback from stakeholders, this includes Parent/carers, education, health and Care professionals, at a strategic level, via Strategic boards and meetings.
- Feedback at an operational level – direct feedback from parents and young people about the services they have received, this includes compliments and complaints (informal and formal).
- Data analysis – based on nationally reported data. Key SEND statistics can be found [Special educational needs in England, Academic year 2022/23 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#) and [Education, health and care plans, Reporting year 2023 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#).
- Internal and external audit/evaluation/inspection.

A more detailed analysis of our area can be found in our Local Area Inclusion Plan (LAIP) which will be developed in line with the DfE's SEND and AP Improvement Plan. We will feedback on progress annually via a 'You Said, We Did' report which will be published on our local offer. This annual report will include an overview of the actions and changes we have taken during the previous year as well as an update on local area statistics, including our performance against national and regional comparators and or standards.

2. **SEND statistics.** *Please note all statistics will be updated ahead of final publication expected September 2024) following nationally published statistics in June and July 2024.*

- Barnet has 133 schools serving 63,099 pupils (May 2023) an increase of 3,000 since 2021.
- There are 27 secondary schools (inc two Sixth Form Academies), 89 primary schools, three all through schools, four nursery schools, eight special schools (inc one Early Years provision and one Sixth Form SEN Provision) and two pupil referral units. There is also one General Further Education College.
- In November 2023 there were 131 Private, Voluntary and Independent Nurseries (PVI) in Barnet with a further 39 who take no funded children. There were 136 registered childminders in Barnet taking funded children with a further 61 childminders not taking any funded children.
- 47.4% of children have English as an Additional Language (EAL), higher than the national average of 20.3%).
- 20.4% of the Barnet school population are entitled to Free School Meals (Autumn 2023), below the national figure of 23.8%.
- There has been a significant increase in the percentage of pupils nationally and in Barnet schools with special needs over the last seven years. Nationally, the total number of pupils with an Education Health and Care plan (EHCP) increased by almost two-thirds between 2016 and 2023. In Barnet the increase in EHCPs since 2016/17 to 2022/23 was 48.14% nearly 5 times the increase in the total pupil population which over the same period was 10.9%.
- The proportion of all Barnet school pupils with an EHCP has continued to increase year-on-year, reaching 4.0% in 2023, this is slightly below the England and statistical neighbour averages, both at 4.3%.
- The percentage of school pupils requiring SEN Support increased to 10.8% in 2023, below the England average of 13.0%.
- The percentage of AP and PRU pupils with an EHCP in Barnet increased from 5.9% in 2022 to 11.4% in 2023, lower than the English average. The percentage of AP and PRU pupils with SEN Support was higher than both the statistical neighbour and England averages.

**Percentage of EHCPs and SEN Support trend data since 2016, England, London and Barnet.**

		2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>England</b>	<b>EHC plans %</b>	2.8	2.9	3.1	3.3	3.7	4	4.3
	<b>SEN support %</b>	11.6	11.7	11.9	12.1	12.2	12.6	13
<b>London</b>	<b>EHC plans %</b>	2.9	3	3.2	3.5	3.8	4.1	4.5
	<b>SEN support %</b>	11.4	11.3	11.4	11.5	11.4	11.7	12.1
<b>Barnet</b>	<b>EHC plans %</b>	2.7	2.8	3	3.1	3.4	3.6	4
	<b>SEN support %</b>	10.3	10.6	10.7	10.7	10.2	10.6	10.8

- The proportion of SEND pupils with speech, language and communication needs in Barnet has continued to fall, 22.8% in 2023 which is below the England average of 23.7%.
- The proportion of all SEND pupils with autistic spectrum disorder as their primary need rose to 18.5% in 2023. This is higher than the statistical neighbour average of 16.2% and the England average of 14.3%, placing Barnet in the highest quartile of local authorities in England. Within the EHCP cohort specifically, the proportion of pupils with ASD is very high – at 47%, this is the 11th highest in England.

- Around 1 in every 5 (20.1%) SEND pupils in Barnet have social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) as their primary need. This has remained relatively stable, in contrast to the England trend which has seen this proportion increasing. Barnet's proportion of SEND pupils with SEMH is slightly higher than the England average of 19.2%.
- The proportion of looked after children with an EHCP rose from 33.6% in 2021 to 37.6% in 2022. This is above the England average of 30.2%, conversely, the proportion of looked after children with SEN Support was relatively low at only 21.3%.
- The proportions of children on a child protection plan (CPP) and children in need (excluding CPP) with either a EHCP or SEN Support all decreased from 2021 to 2022. The proportion of children on a child protection plan (CPP) with a EHCP fell from 16.2% in 2021 to 7.5% in 2022, below the England average.
- The percentages of 16 and 17 year olds with an EHCP or SEN Support who are in education and training are some of the highest in England, ranking fourth and second out of all local authorities in England respectively.
- The percentage of 16 and 17 year olds with an EHCP or SEN Support whose activity was NEET or unknown are low and only 1.3% of 16 and 17 year olds with an EHCP are NEET or have a not known activity in Barnet, ranking second in England, far lower than the England average of 9.3%.
- The percentage of adults with a learning disability is 8.2% compared the national average of 4.8%.  
Embedding structures to support independence and positive outcomes for adulthood start in childhood.

### 3. Our Vision

"Our vision for all children and young people especially those with special educational needs and disabilities or who are educated in alternative provision is that they are supported to:

- achieve well - socially, emotionally, and academically,
- are healthy,
- are visible and heard,
- successfully transition at each phase of their education,
- are prepared for adulthood, including participation in their local community and/or the world of work".

*"I want to work, work hard and I want to work fully for the NHS. I want to earn my own money, buy things, do what I want and not ask mum".*

SI Learner Feb 2024.

These values very much align with our [Children and Young Peoples Plan 2023 – 2027](#); our [Barnet plan 2021-2025](#) ; our [Education strategy and our Post 16 strategy](#), our [Family Services Child and Family Early Help Strategy 2023 - 2027](#) and our [mental health and Wellbeing strategy](#). Links to all our strategies can be found [here](#).

### 4. Aims.

Ensuring that children and young people with SEND or who are educated in AP are and **feel** included, valued, safe in every way so they grow, develop achieve underpins every aspect of our work.

Our aims

- *To ensure that all children and young people with SEND and in alternative provision have their needs identified as soon as possible and receive the right support at the earliest opportunity.*
- *To work in a person-centred and family friendly way so children and young people and their families feel confident in our local offer, that they are supported and know where to go for support.*
- *To ensure that children and young people with SEND and in alternative provision receive high quality, integrated inclusive services, including opportunities out of education.*
- *That children and young people with SEND and in alternative provision are supported to ensure their voices are heard and acted on.*
- *To ensure services are delivered locally in our borough and as close to home as possible so that children and young people with SEND and those who are educated in alternative provision can benefit from community integration and support from local services in Barnet.*
- *We want children and young people and those who support them to be valued and included for their unique and wonderful 'authentic' selves, reducing masking and developing confidence and recognition of their own strengths .*
- *Have high expectations for children and young people with SEND, celebrating their achievements so they inspire others.*

## 5. Area Barnet's SEND Inspection (January 2022).

The purpose of Area SEND Inspections is to provide an independent, external evaluation of the effectiveness of the local area partnership's arrangements for children and young people with SEND and in AP and where appropriate, recommend what the local area partnership should do to improve those arrangements.

Barnet was inspected between the 17 - 21 January 2022. The inspection outcome feedback letter can be found [here](#). We are due the next Inspection on or around January 2027. The main findings were:

1. *"Leaders from education, health and care have an accurate view of the positive impact of their work. They know what works well and what needs to improve. This is underpinned by strong and trusting working relationships and effective communication between partners. This means that services are managed effectively across education, health and social care.*
2. *Children and young people with SEND enjoy their time in education and in their social lives. They like living in Barnet. They feel well supported by the professionals who help them. The support they receive helps them to access learning at school and college more easily.*
3. *Parents and carers are typically positive about their children's experiences in schools and colleges. They feel that education settings meet their children's needs well. Parents and carers feel that the education, health and care (EHC) plans make a positive difference in assessing and meeting their children's needs.*
4. *Parent representatives feel respected and valued as part of strategic and operational teams. One parent told us, 'We work fantastically well together.' Parents /carers help leaders to design and deliver different services in the area. Their views are taken seriously and contribute to decision-making at all levels.*

5. *The area has experienced recruitment challenges across health services. This has led to a reduction in therapeutic provision. It has also increased the length of time children and young people wait to access therapies. Despite these pressures, staff have worked creatively to support children and young people and their families. Nevertheless, parents and carers are concerned about the impact this has on their children.*
6. *School and college leaders speak highly of area leaders. They said that area leaders provide 'invaluable support' and are 'very responsive' to meeting the needs of children and young people, including those who need specialist provision.*
7. *Leaders have responded thoroughly and promptly to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has helped leaders to think differently about how to tackle needs, such as providing safe and inclusive outdoor spaces for CYP with SEND.*
8. *There is a strong, extensive and multi-agency training offer in Barnet. Many people, from parents to school governors, were positive about the quality and helpfulness of training in improving their ability to identify and meet the needs of children and young people.*
9. *Co-production (a way of working where children, families and those that provide the services work together to create a decision or a service that works for them all) in Barnet goes beyond consultation and collaboration. Children, young people, and parents and carers influence and help deliver improvements across a wide range of services.*
10. *Leaders have rightly focused on further strengthening the offer for young people after they are 16. There is now more effective collaboration between colleges, post-16 settings and secondary schools to assess young people's needs. This has made the move from secondary schools - post-16 providers more effective.*
11. *The special educational needs and/or disabilities information and advice service in Barnet is well established and well used. Leaders have recognised and responded to the need to reduce waiting times and meet increased demand by employing more staff. However, some parents told us that they experience long waiting times for this service.*
12. *Parents and carers who are aware of the online local offer say that it is useful. Leaders have worked to strengthen the offer so that it is more appealing to children and young people. Leaders have added a 'young people's zone' section on the local offer website, which is useful and more engaging for children and young people".*

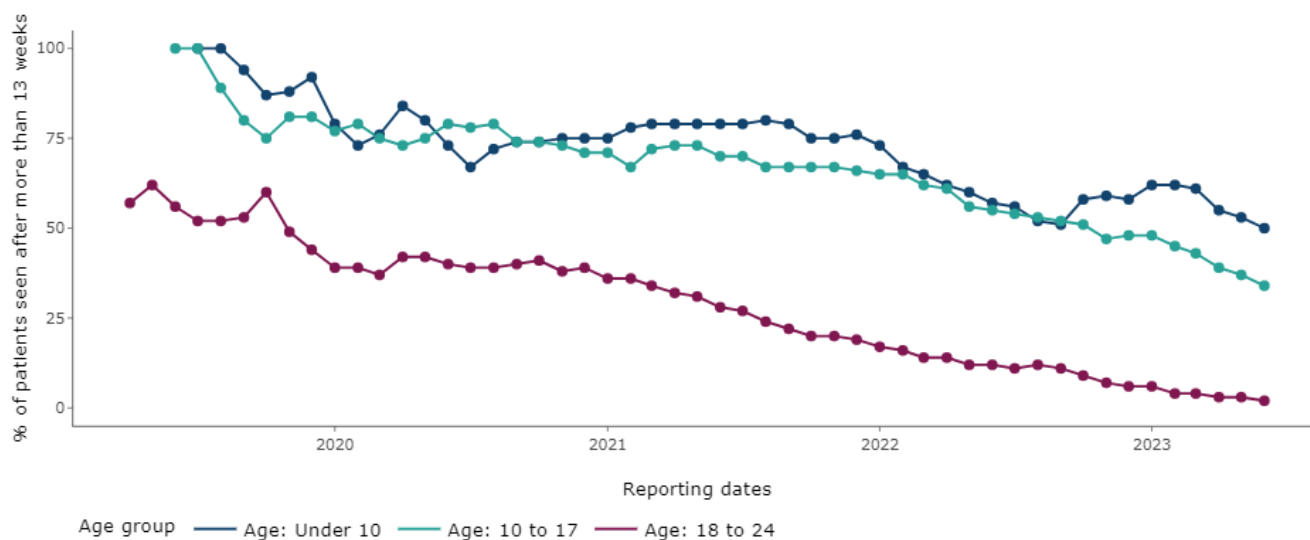
#### Areas that the inspectors identified required further development were:

1. *Children and young people in Barnet wait too long for a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and waiting times for occupational therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and physiotherapy have been too long.*
2. *Not all expectant parents are offered an antenatal contact in Barnet. This is one of the requirements of the healthy child programme. This means that some early or emerging needs may not be identified and responded to.*
3. *Some children and young people wait too long for specialist child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). This means that sometimes, other professionals struggle to help these children and young people while they wait.*
4. *Some children and young people with complex medical and health needs have to wait for essential home equipment. For example, due to commissioning arrangements, there are differences in the equipment that health and social care practitioners can prescribe. There is not a clear pathway for those under 18 who need pressure care equipment. This means that children and young people under 18 experience a delay in receiving essential equipment.*
5. *Outcomes in EHC plans do not typically focus on the steps needed to help children and young people realise their wider hopes and ambitions.*

## 6. The Actions and improvements we have made since the Area SEND Inspection January 2022.

### Waiting times for Diagnoses and support.

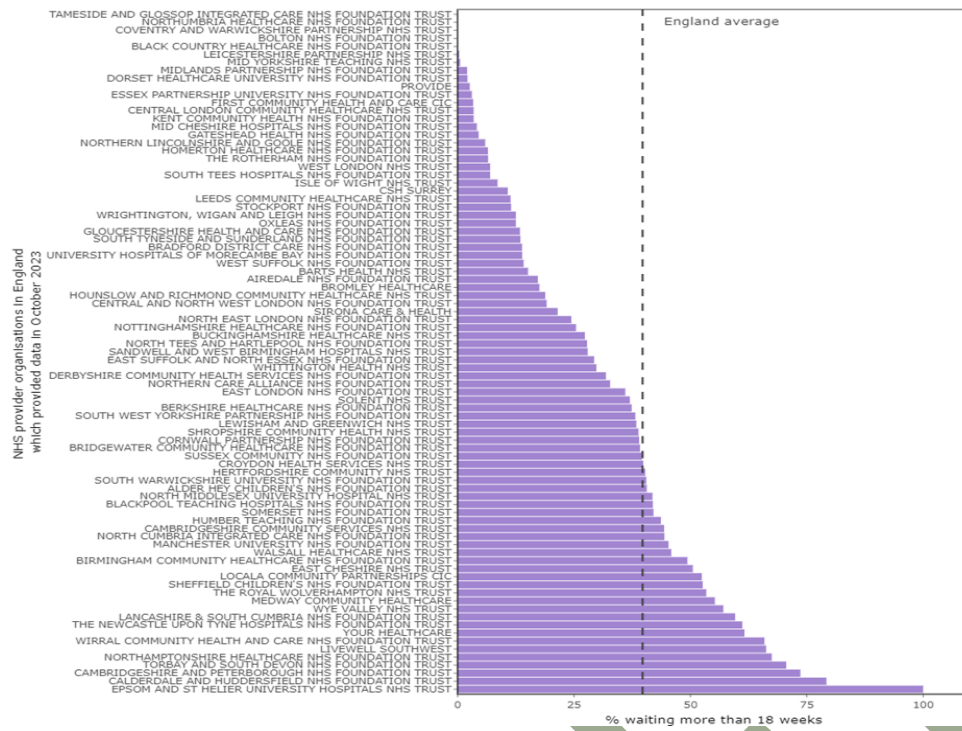
- The percentage of children and young people across North Central London ICB that are waiting to be seen for autism diagnostic first appointment for more than 13 weeks has dropped over time as follows:
  - Under the age of 10: 100% in June 2019 to 50% in June 2023 (national average at 24%)
  - Between the ages of 10 and 17: 100% in June 2019 to 34% in June 2023 (national average at 20%)
  - Over 17 (and below 25): 57% in April 2019 to 2% in June 2023 (national average at 11%)



Source: DfE SEND and AP Dashboard (pilot dashboard as part of the DfE SEND and AP Improvement plan).

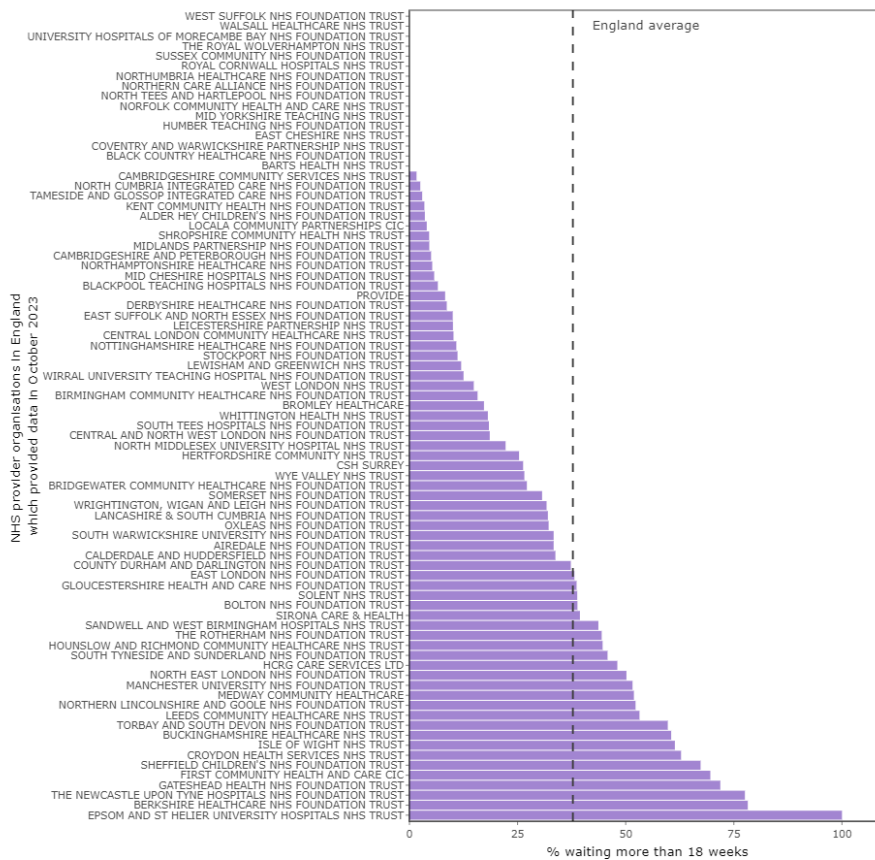
- For the North Central London ICB, the percentage on the waiting list who have been waiting for children and young people services for more than 18 weeks for speech and language therapy was at 28.9% in October 2023, compared to a national average of 40%.





Source: DfE SEND and AP Dashboard

- For the North Central London ICB, the percentage on the waiting list who have been waiting for children and young people services for more than 18 weeks for occupational therapy was at 18.1% in October 2023, compared to a national average of 37.5%.



Source: DfE SEND and AP Dashboard

## Autism Hub

- The development of the Autism Hub is underway - the vision is to establish a community based service where families, children and young people can access support and specialist intervention according to their need. Creating a 'one stop shop' reduces wasted time and resources and enables families to find and navigate support services with greater ease.
- Our shared vision is to create a welcoming, safe, neuro-affirmative place where autistic people and those who love and care for them can access the support and social opportunities they need and where professionals can connect and collaborate ensuring our services are more joined-up and effective. This will be an opportunity to have a co-located multi-disciplinary team that can be accessed directly by families or through MASH, Early Help, Children Social Care and the designated Autism leads in Education and Health.

## SEND and Health

- The Local area's aim is to provide a comprehensive offer of Health support for Barnet children with SEND to at a universal, targeted or specialist offer based on their needs. There are a range of health services commissioned and funded through NCL ICB and Barnet LA for children and young people with SEND 0-25 years from a range of different providers.
- Speech and Language Therapy (SLT), Physiotherapy (PT) and Occupational Therapy (OT):
- Enhance the early help/universal offer into early years and schools by providing drop ins, advice, training, website resources to enable families and educational practitioners implement helpful strategies and make environmental reasonable adjustments.
- In Barnet, Speech and language Therapy (SLT), Occupation Therapy (OT) and Physiotherapy have all significantly reduced the waiting time to first appointment over the last two years:

Waiting Times for First Appointment	March 2022	March 2024
Speech and Language Therapy	18.7 weeks	12.4 weeks
Occupational Therapy	29.6 weeks	9.3 weeks
Physiotherapy	13.0 weeks	7.1 weeks

*Source: Local Provider Data*

## Neurodevelopmental diagnosis:

- The North Central London (NCL) Autism Hub and Helios have been created/commissioned to address the waiting times for diagnosis and have been funded to complete almost 1,000 initial assessments for autism and/or ADHD. We know there is mor work to be done including pre and post diagnosis support.

## Mental health

- Additional investment in the form of Mental Health Support Teams in schools, the roll out of the Barnet Home Treatment Team and additional funding to the local CAMHS provider (BEH MHT) so that they can reduce waiting times.
- The Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy underlines the commitment from the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) to provide high quality, creative and young person centred mental health and wellbeing provision in the borough to build resilience in all children and young people by detailing how the offer will continue to be developed and improved. As part of this approach, we will ensure that mental health and wellbeing support is made more accessible to those with SEND.

### Increased the number of specialist places available in ARPs and Special schools.

- We have continued to increase the numbers of commissioned places in both our special schools and mainstream ARPs including the building of a brand new all age specialist Autism school, the Windmill, in 2024 which will provide 90 places from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 5 when at capacity.
- We have also developed satellite provisions for Oakleigh Special school on the Queenswell site and a satellite site for Northway school which opened in September 2022 on the Grasvenor site.
- We opened a new secondary ARP for cognition and learning at the Friern Barnet school in September 2022, followed by a 28 place ARP for primary children with cognition and learning needs in September 2023 at Queenswell. Our existing ARPs all increased the number of pupils they could admit.
- We also built a brand new purpose built Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) for the [Pavilion](#) which opened in 2023.

### Improved the compliancy rates for Annual reviews.

- We have invested in additional staffing to focus on annual reviews, we have increased our rates of compliance for received annual reviews from 37% in February 2023, to 70% in February 2024. We will continue to work on our systems to improve this further.

### Antenatal contact

- The midwifery service informs the health visiting service of any parents who have special needs or are expecting a child with special needs identified antenatally and they are prioritised for an antenatal health needs assessment.

### Quality of EHCP Plans

- We continue to have a multi-agency audit including parents and carers for 10% of newly issued plans.
- We are also trialling the DfE developed EHCP template as part of the Challenge Programme Partnership for the London region – you can find out more details with regards the DfE SEND and AP Improvement plan [here](#).

### Put in place online information sessions for parents and carers.

- These have comprised of two sessions covering each topic, one at lunchtime and one at 6pm, to increase the number of parents and cares that can attend.
- Topics have included – SEN including EHCNAs, annual reviews and phased transfer processes, all things autism and all things social care.
- We will continue with these and ensure a rolling programme of the sessions most requested from parents and carers and change the evening session from 6 to 7pm based on feedback.

## 7. Our Strengths

### Co- production.

- We are very grateful that so many parents/carers and young people continue to give of their time to sit on strategic and operational boards such as the [Barnet's Childrens Partnership Board](#) , or working parties that really clarify our values and commitments such as our [Mental Health Wellbeing Charter](#) .
- We have parent representatives on the BELS Board of Directors and of course our SEND and AP Strategic Partnership Board and the [children's partnership board](#).
- Parents and carers are an integral part of the interview processes for key posts such as the Director SEND and Inclusion and our Dedicated Clinical Officer (DCO).

- All relevant [strategies](#) and plans are codesigned and developed with parent/carers and informed by the experiences of children and young people.
- We are proud to have representatives from our [Barnet Parent, Carer Forum](#) in their roles as professionals by experience take part in our decision making processes relating to requests for Education, Health Care Needs Assessment process and those with EHCPs.

## Inclusion

- We have a very inclusive ethos across our schools and have higher than national and regional levels of pupils being educated in mainstream. In January 2023, the percentage of residents with an EHCP educated in state-funded mainstream (not resourced/unit) remained stable at 45.6%. This was the second highest proportion among statistical neighbours, and the 17th highest of all local authorities in England.
- The percentage of the EHCP cohort attending resourced provision or an SEN unit in a mainstream school was 6.9%, in 2023, above the England average of 3.9%, placing Barnet in the highest quartile of local authorities in England.
- Our schools and education staff are skilled and confident in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND and are supported by our dedicated specialist inclusion and educational psychology teams.

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- *“From EYFS through to KS5, EHCP pupils in Barnet schools had high levels of attainment and SEN Support pupils consistently performed above averages from KS1 to KS4. SEND pupils tended to have low levels of absence and suspensions across mainstream schools. These consistently strong outcomes in Barnet were also reflected in Mime’s 2019 inclusion index, where Barnet ranked second in England”. [Barnet SEND Dashboard commentary report, Updated April 2024.](#)*
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- Professionals within and supporting schools work incredibly well together and with families to coproduce clear expectations of what every family can expect to be in place in all schools. This is known as ordinarily available provision and can be found [here](#).

## Compliance rates for newly issued EHCPs. *To be updated ahead of final publication*

- Since 2017 Barnet has maintained compliance rates above 97% with regards the 20 week timescale for newly issued plans.
- In 2022-2023 (Jan 2023 SEN 2 census data) the percentages of EHCPs issued within the 20 week target (both including the excluding exceptional cases) remained some of the highest in England in 2022. At 97.9%, the proportion of EHCPs issued within 20 weeks (excluding exceptional cases) was particularly high, compared to the England average of only 49.2%, placing Barnet 11th out of all local authorities in England.
- We know that quality is as important as compliance and we continue to improve the quality of our plans based on feedback from our quality assurance system which includes parent/carers, health, education and social care representation.

## Attainment and progress.

- In recent years children’s achievements in Barnet’s schools and settings at all key stages have been among the very best in the country. Over 95% of Barnet pupils are at schools and settings which were graded good or better at their last Ofsted inspection.

- Achievement for children and young people with SEN in Barnet is strong in comparison to national at all Key Stages and children identified as requiring SEND support in Barnet made better progress between KS2 and KS4 than children nationally with no recorded SEN.
- In Barnet, 9% of EHCP pupils achieved a Good Level of Development at EYFSP in 2023. This was the highest proportion among statistical neighbours and the eighth highest in England.
- In 2023, 28% of EHCP pupils and 56% of SEN Support pupils met the year 1 phonics standard, both ranking Barnet in the top quartile of all local authorities in England.
- KS1 SEND pupil performance was strong again in 2023, with Barnet consistently ranking in the top 10 local authorities in England for EHCP pupils, and in the top 30 for SEN Support pupils. In particular, 23% of EHCP pupils reached the expected standard or higher in KS1 reading, compared to 12% across England and ranking sixth of all local authorities in England.
- Both the SEN Support and EHCP cohorts performed well at KS2, with Barnet consistently ranking in the best performing quartile of local authorities in England.
- Maths attainment was particularly strong, with 58.3% of SEN Support pupils achieving the expected or higher standard, the seventh highest rate in England.
- SEN Support and EHCP pupils also made more progress from KS1 and KS2 than their peers in Barnet's statistical neighbours and across England, consistently ranking in the top quartile of local authorities in England.

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*I have found the support I have had so far really helpful,  
I feel more confident and independent. SI Leaner.*

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### Developed the Children and Family Early Help Hubs

- Our multiagency partnership believes that every child has the right to a healthy, happy childhood. We are committed to ensuring all children living in Barnet have equal opportunities to learn, play, participate and thrive. It is our mission to create an Early Help system of support that is designed with and for children, young people and families in our borough; a system that understands and responds to local needs and builds on the strengths of our local schools, communities and services. We will do this using our resilience-based approaches and by working effectively together to improve outcomes for all children in Barnet.
- Barnet has three Children and Family Early Help Hubs and a number of satellite buildings where we offer a range of preventative and early help support for children and families. This includes midwifery, health visiting, breastfeeding, parenting support, positive activities, mental health support, welfare advice, groupwork programmes and a range of other services. Our hubs are linked to local schools, GP's and other community-based services.

[Early help for children, young people and families | Barnet Council](#)

### Short breaks

- Since 1 April 2011, Barnet has had a statutory duty to undertake the Break for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 to:  
*“Provide short breaks to those who are carers for disabled children when it would improve their ability to care for their disabled child, or when they could not continue to provide care without a short break and to Publish information to parents about the services available in their area and criteria for accessing it by 1 October 2011”.*

- Since 2018 the number of children accessing short breaks has increased from 387 to over 1000 in March 2024. Families receive either 15 days (90 hours) of commissioned activities or £1200 per annum on a prepaid card. The majority of families prefer the prepaid option as that gives them the most flexibility in choice of activity and timing of when it is needed. Further information about short breaks can be found [here](#).
- In delivering short breaks Barnet Family Services will continue to;
  - Ensure transparency over short breaks and increasing flexibility where appropriate.
  - Provide stakeholder briefings on processes, developments and changes to the offer.

## Youth Justice

- Barnet's Youth Justice Service works with children aged between 10 and 18 years who have come into contact with the criminal justice system and supports them to help make changes in their lives, so they do not re-offend or cause further harm to the community.
- Barnet Council's Youth Justice Service has been awarded [Youth Justice SEND \(special educational needs and disability\) Quality Lead Status with a Child First Commendation](#), which recognises consistently high levels of practice with children who have SEND.
- Youth Justice SEND Quality Lead Status is awarded to teams that provide evidence and case studies of improved outcomes for children in their borough achieved through effective partnership working.

## Barnet SENDIASS

- The team are stable and fully staffed, they have also trained and recruited additional volunteers to meet the increase in demand for the service.
- A new system of triaging was introduced from 2023 to manage waiting times for advice and support. The service is stable and fully staffed and has also recruited additional volunteers to support with potential increases in demand.
- The service works in collaboration with multiple professionals to deliver quarterly informational sessions to parent/carers. These sessions, delivered both in-person and virtually, are organised based on parents'/carers' feedback and requests and are very well-attended. 100% of feedback received rated the sessions as good or very good.

# 8 Our priority areas, actions and key indicators for the period 2024-2027:

## 1. What?

**More families feel listened to and able to participate in shaping service developments, have a greater sense of co-ownership.**

### How?

- *Continue to ensure we have parent/carer representation at all strategic boards.*
- *Codesign an annual survey for parents and carers to complete so we can use their lived experience to identify gaps and improve our service.*
- *Continue to ensure we make improvements/changes based on feedback opportunities at a range of levels for example, by working with Barnet Parent/carer Forum to arrange information sessions delivered by professionals across the area including Barnet SENDIASS.*

### When?

- 1<sup>st</sup> survey to take place December 2024.

#### Evidence?

- We will publish an annual 'you said, we did' document which will provide an update on our coproduced Local Area Inclusion Plan and show how we have listened to and acted on feedback.
- Parent/carer information sessions to be advertised on the Local Offer and SENDIASS websites.

## 2. What?

***More young people with SEND irrespective of whether they have an EHCP or not, feel listened to, valued and seen and are respected for who they are.***

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*"For children and young people to be their authentic selves, they need to feel safe, seen and heard.*

*Growing up in Barnet, an ethnographic study into the lives of disabled children and adolescents. LBB & Habitus Collective.*

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#### How?

- Codesign an annual survey for children and young people so we can use their lived experience to identify gaps and improve our service.
- Work with education providers to ensure the arrangements for consulting young people with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education is made explicit in their SEN information reports, that they are involved in the school's council (or equivalent) and their achievements are celebrated.
- Make sure our young person's zone on our local offer page is updated and includes information about services in the community as well as clubs and activities opportunities outside of education.
- Ensure that all children and young people are valued and welcomed so they feel confident in being their authentic individual self.

#### When?

- 1<sup>st</sup> survey to take place December 2024.
- Young persons zone to be updated by December 2024.
- SEN Information reports to be reviewed and updated annually by schools.

#### Evidence?

- We will publish an annual 'you said, we did' document which will provide an update on our coproduced Local Area Inclusion Plan and show how we have listened to and acted on feedback.
- SEN Information reports are updated by April 2025, following an annual report to the SEN Governor which focuses on pupils with SEND in terms of attainment and progress, adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment, engagement in the activities of the school (including physical activities), emotional, mental and social development and individual achievement.

- We will have reviewed and updated our *'things to do'* on our young person's zone of the Local Offer.

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*"I would like to find out more information about local services".*

*"I am not currently active in the community and would like to see if there are any clubs or groups I can join".*

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### 3. What?

**We will refine and improve our local offer to build confidence from families and professionals in our mainstream as well as our specialist education and continue to cultivate our relationships with children and young people with SEND and their families by adopting a 'family friendly' approach to processes, support and information.**

#### How?

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*"Trusted relationships and relational approaches can make a lasting difference to children and young people".*

*Growing up in Barnet, an ethnographic study into the lives of disabled children and adolescents. LBB & Habitus Collective.*

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- We will use the Change Partnership Programme (CPP) funding to employ a dedicated early disagreement resolution officer. We will learn from this role in terms of how to better engage families at an earlier stage, to build confidence and trust and reduce the rates of appeals to SENDT.
- We will develop a communication strategy so we can engage with our parent/carers more effectively, to ensure they are aware of our early disagreement resolution processes and their advantages.
- We will ensure transparency and timeliness of support for families and children and young people through early help and social care including short breaks.
- We will increase our understanding of the reasons for absence so we can better tailor or commission support where the need is greatest and improve the attendance of children and young people with SEND attending special schools and Alternative Provision wherever possible.
- We will further develop our support for children who are not attending due to emotional based school avoidance (EBSA).
- We will increase our materials and resources to support families who are Electively Home Educating and make clear the duties on families where they EHE, so they can make informed choices.
- We will further improve our compliancy rates for annual reviews and maintain our high rates of compliancy for newly issued EHCPs.

#### When?

- Assistant Educational Psychologist dedicated to developing training to schools to better support pupils in this cohort will be in place by September 2024.
- Dedicated early resolution officers to be in place on or before 1 September 2024.

#### Evidence?

- Increased attendance rates of pupils in special schools and AP.



- Timeliness for Annual reviews is improved.
- The number of requests for EHE for children and young people for reasons other than lifestyle choice is reduced.
- The rate of appeals to SENDT which was 3.7% in 2023 – higher than the national average is reduced or the increase slowed by August 2026 and the number of cases going to a hearing or the areas of disagreement reduced.

#### 4. What?

***We will continue to improve the educational progress, outcomes and experiences of our children with SEND and in AP, across all phases and types of institution from early years to post-16, including transitions and progress into independent living, apprenticeships, supported internships, higher education, training or employment.***

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*“In creating positive transitional experiences, children and young people may require specific support. This can prevent a small issue from compounding and can be an effective early intervention approach”.*  
*Growing up in Barnet, an ethnographic study into the lives of disabled children and adolescents. LBB & Habitus Collective.*

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#### How?

- Maintain our standards of attainment for all pupils with SEND so they are above the national comparators.
- Maintain our low number of children and young people with SEND that are NEET and increase the number of young people with SEND accessing supported apprenticeships/internships.
- Ensure there are appropriate curriculum pathways in our secondary schools to provide an engaging and stretching curriculum and accreditation at a range of levels for every learner irrespective of level of need including life skills.
- Learn from our partners in the CPP regions nationally and locally to co-produce clear guidance for best practice at key transition points for all SEND and vulnerable pupils and those educated in Alternative Provision.
- By ensuring independence is embedded throughout everything we do across education, care, health, council provided transport to places of education and employment.
- By continuing to coproduce and keep our ordinarily available offer updated and increasing range of support and provision that is available.

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*“It is most important to me to receive high quality support and learning skills to become independent for the future”.*

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#### When?

- August 2025

#### Evidence?

- Updated Ordinarily Available document is published.
- ELSEC training has been delivered to a minimum of 12 primary pupils, referrals for specialist SLT are slowed or reduced.

- Published expectations of early years settings, schools and post 16 providers with regard expectations around transitions, including coproducing templates, self-audits or wider supportive documentation as appropriate.

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*“I would also like to achieve a transition into the workplace and travelling independently. I would like to learn more about independently using my money and using a bank account”.*

*“The school needs to be aware of supporting me through a transition to sixth form and on to University”.*

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## 5. What?

***Develop our Alternative Provision PRU pathways so they are in line with the three tiered approach as set out in the DfE’s Improvement Plan.***

### How?

- We will utilise both the expertise and the funding available as part of the CPP programme to develop a three tiered approach for children and young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. This will include in reach support, short term outreach and longer term placements to prepare children and young people with SEMH needs through their transition to their next phase of education.
- We will review our pathways, decision making and criteria into and out of each pathway including those children and young people with medical needs.

### When?

- By September 2025.

### Evidence?

- Exclusions and Suspensions continue to be below national average.
- AP pathway and support offer reviewed and published on the Local Offer website.
- Referral processes and criteria reviewed and updated and published.

## 6. What?

***There are sufficient high-quality school places in Barnet across mainstream, specialist and additionally resourced provisions, from early years through to post 16 to meet current and future demand to ensure children and young people with SEND are able to access appropriate provision that is as close to home as possible.***

### How?

- Through the development of the Local Area Inclusion Plan we will better finesse our forecasting so we can plan in a strategic way to ensure sufficiency of need.
- We will continue to offer training and support to mainstream schools, so they are confident to meet the needs of pupils with a range of needs.
- We will establish a working party to review the curriculum offer at secondary.

### When?

- To be reviewed annually as part of the LAIP updates.

## Evidence?

- Reduction in number of children and young people placed in independent placements due to lack of capacity locally.
- Reduce the number of requests for EHE for children and young people for reasons other than lifestyle choice.
- Maintain our high rate of inclusion of pupils with SEND in mainstream settings.

## 7. What?

***Putting in place earlier intervention and support to children and young people who have health (including mental health) or development needs including those who waiting for a diagnosis and their families.***

## How?

- Developing more support for children and young people whilst they are waiting for formal assessment so they 'wait well'.
- Reduce waiting times for specialist assessments and advice so they are moving towards or below national averages.
- Embedding of the universal offer in Barnet, including access to a depository of therapy support.
- Baseline and increasing take up rates of annual health checks of young people 14+ who have Learning Disability.
- Maintain or improve take up of 2 year old health checks.
- Increase the number of antenatal contacts.
- By developing further, the early intervention offer including embedding ELSEC, continuing to fund the Language Enrichment Programme, to learn from our pilot Nurture and EBSA work.
- Embedding our mental health strategy and support including I-thrive and mental health support teams in schools.
- Working with our NCL partner boroughs in the development of the Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) programme.

## When?

- Baseline of take up for health checks/antenatal contacts by December 2024 and monitored annually thereafter.

## Evidence?

- Wait times are reducing.
- Number of children accessing the 2 year old health check increases as does the offer of antenatal contact.

## 8. Accountability, transparency, reporting and sustainability – our commitment to you.

- We are rightly being asked to do more to support our children and young people with SEND or who are educated in AP.
- In a landscape with diminishing resources, it is critically important that we use limited funding in a way that makes the most impact and targets those who are most in need in an equitable and fair way.
- This means we must be open to doing things differently by
  - taking a test and learn approach to improvements, for example through national pathfinders such as the Early Language and Support for Every Child (ELSEC) programme which we will be trialling over the coming 18 months.

- Identifying opportunities for additional funding – through national pilots for example.
  - Thinking about how to do things more efficiently – for example whether they are less bureaucratic ways of funding pupils who have been identified as needing Special Educational Provision (SEP) that is in addition to and different from that ordinarily available.
- We will ensure we continue to use data and information to hold ourselves accountable and so we can measure our performance and the impact this has for our children and young people with SEND or who are educated in AP – against ourselves as well as national and regional comparators.
  - We will continue to monitor and evaluate the arrangements to ensure the most effective use of limited funding sources, whether that is from the ICB, the Council’s General fund or the High Needs Block Element of the Dedicated Schools Grant. Value for money and sustainability is therefore a critical and overarching priority across all areas of our work.
  - We want to make sure that everyone is kept informed about any changes and that we are transparent about these as well as our performance. To this end we will be developing an annual SEND and AP ‘*You Said, We Did*’ report that will be published on our local offer website. This will include key statistics.
  - We can’t do any of this without you and we want to thank all those who give up their time to
    - Give feedback, advice, scrutiny and constructive criticism.
    - Be involved with strategic and operational practice and developments.

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*“Parent representatives feel respected and valued as part of strategic and operational teams. One parent told us, ‘We work fantastically well together.’ Parents and carers help leaders to design and deliver different services in the area. Their views are taken seriously, and they contribute to decision-making at all levels”.*

*Barnet Aerea SEND Inspection outcome letter 2022.*

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----- End of Draft Strategy -----

## Appendices.

### Appendix 1: Statistical Neighbours

Statistical neighbours are a way of benchmarking one LAs performance against other local authorities that have similar characteristics, rather than simply being geographically close. The statistical neighbours for Barnet are listed below, ranked by similarity to Barnet (1 being most similar). The table also includes state-funded school population size (as of 2023) although the key measures used to determine the similarity of local authorities are:

- Average pay
- FSM eligibility
- Ethnicity
- Household size, composition and ownership
- Prevalence of managerial/professional occupations.

Rank (1 = Most alike)	LA	School population
-	Barnet	62,000
1	Merton	28,000
2	Kingston upon Thames	27,000
3	Reading	25,000
4	Sutton	41,000
5	Hillingdon	53,000
6	Redbridge	58,000
7	Hounslow	46,000
8	Milton Keynes	51,000
9	Ealing	55,000
10	Bromley	53,000

## Appendix 2. Links to the relevant legislative frameworks/guidance

- Children and Family Act 2014 - [Children and Families Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk) .
- SEND Regulations (2014) - [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk).
- SEND (Personal Budget) regulations 2014 - [The Special Educational Needs \(Personal Budgets\) Regulations 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk) .
- SEND Code of Practice - [SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk).
- The Equality Act - [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk) .
- The Health and Care Act 2022 - [Health and Care Act 2022 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk).
- Area SEND Inspection Framework 2023 - [Area SEND: framework and handbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) .
- Human Rights Act 1998 - [Human Rights Act 1998 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability [enable convention cover \(un.org\)](https://www.un.org)
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 - [Mental Capacity Act 2005 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)
- Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019. [Mental Capacity \(Amendment\) Act 2019 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)
- Alternative provision guidance - [Department for Education \(DfE\)'s alternative provision guidance.](https://www.gov.uk)
- School attendance - [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- School Suspensions and Exclusions - [School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- Safeguarding - [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- North Central London Integrated Care Board website - [Home - North Central London Integrated Care System \(nclhealthandcare.org.uk\)](https://www.nclhealthandcare.org.uk)
- Preparing for Adulthood - [Preparing for Adulthood | PfA | Home Page](https://www.gov.uk)
- SEND Improvement Plan - [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) and Alternative Provision \(AP\) Improvement Plan \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk).
- DfE SEND and AP Green paper [SEND Review - right support, right place, right time \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Supporting pupils with Medical conditions [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Working together to improve School attendance [Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

## Appendix 3: Feedback from our formal consultation **To Be Inserted.**