

Barnet Children's Partnership Board

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 16 November 2023 AT Virtual meeting - Online

PRESENT:

Cllr Pauline Coakley Webb	Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb - Cabinet Member Family Friendly Barnet
Cllr Giulia Monasterio Chris Munday (Chair)	Executive Director for Children and Family Services
Ben Thomas	Assistant Director Education, Strategy and Partnerships
Collette McCarthy Rebecca Morris Neil Marlow	Assistant Director Commissioning Participation Officer Director of School Improvement and Traded Services (BELS)
Janet Matthewson Joanne Kelly Liz Longworth (Co-Optee) Sarah Sands (Co-Optee)	Chief Executive Officer, Young Barnet Foundation Community PRU Headteacher Head of Northside School Garden Suburb Infants

ALSO PRESENT:

Karen Flanagan	Director SEND and Inclusion
Debra Davies (LBB)	Assistant Head of Service, Child and Family Early Help Whittington Health NHS Trust
Marion Neuman	Capital Delivery Portfolio Lead Highways and Transport NHS North Central London ICB
Alexander Sexton (LBB)	Whittington Health NSH Trust
Daniel Morgan	NHS North Central London ICB
Kate Bayley	Graduate Trainee
Jessany Wooding	
Anjola Oluwo (LLB)	

1. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and allowed everyone to introduce themselves.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

3. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Lisa Coffman - the Barnet Parent Carer Forum and a Director of BELS.

Apologies were received from Janet Matthewson who had to leave during the meeting early.

4. MY SAY MATTERS

Liz Shaw, Practice Standards Manager - Children's Services, updated the board on behalf of the Young People who were unable to attend. It was reported that the current Young People representing the Youth Democracy would be coming to the end of their term and the process to elect two young people for the Youth Parliament and two Youth Ambassadors was imminent. The Practice Standards Manager asked the Board for help and support in distributing and advertising the candidate pack which holds all the information on how to stand for either position, as the service previously relied on school support to inform and encourage young people to stand for election.

Councillor Coakley Webb raised the question of how the Practice Standards Manager ensures gender balance within the Youth Parliament and Youth Ambassador positions. In response, the Practice Standards Manager outlined that they aim for candidates to be representative of their borough, but it is a democratic process with candidates being elected by their peers.

The Chair thanked the Practice Standards Manager - Children's Services for her update and asked the Board Members for their support and engagement.

The Board noted that further information relating to the Children and Young People's participation was available at the link below:

<https://barnetyouth.uk/Children-and-Young-People-Participation-across-Barnet>

5. SCHOOL ROAD CONSULTATIONS

Alexander Sexton, Capital Delivery Portfolio Lead Highways and Transport informed the board of the Schools Streets Programme. The Capital Delivery Portfolio Lead Highways and Transport reported the progress of 'school streets.' It was explained that a school street is a scheme whereby restrictions were placed on roads outside of a school, prohibiting the majority of vehicles from entering during school drop off and pick up. The scheme aims to create a safer environment for those travelling to and from school as well as helping to tackle air pollution and promote active travel such as walking or cycling. A number of schools have a school street such as Wren Academy Primary and Secondary School, St Agnes Roman Catholic Primary School, St Paul's Church of England Primary School, Colindale Primary School, Summerside Primary School and Garden Suburb Infant and Junior School, with many more schools to follow. The Capital Delivery Portfolio Lead Highways and Transport outlined to the Board that the consultation period on school streets has recently ended, and a decision will be made by Councillor Alan Schneiderman, Cabinet Member for Environment & Climate Change.

The Chair thanked the Capital Delivery Portfolio Lead Highways and Transport for the update and opened the discussion to the board for questions.

Councillor Coakley Webb declared a personal interest in the item as a School Governor at Danegrove, and raised the question whether the Schools Streets Programme will be looking at both Danegrove Schools alongside East Barnet School as their close proximities would directly impact each other. In response the Capital Delivery Portfolio Lead Highways and Transport explained to the Board that a joined-up approach would be taken.

In response to questions raised, the Capital Delivery Portfolio Lead, Highways and Transport explained to the Board that when school streets are implemented, they are monitored for six months, any findings are then analysed, and a decision is made whether to keep the school street permanently.

Neil Marlow (BELS), Chief Executive and Director of Education and Learning raised a concern about the lack of signage on school streets. The Capital Delivery Portfolio Lead, Highways and Transport outlined that early warning signs will be looked at and consideration would be given regarding the feasibility of the installation of illuminated signs.

The Chair noted the report and invited the Capital Delivery Portfolio Lead, Highways and Transport to return to the Board in six months to report the data and impact the school streets have had.

6. EARLY LANGUAGE AND SUPPORT FOR EVERY CHILD

Karen Flanagan, Director SEND and Inclusion, presented a report on Early Language and Support for Every Child (ELSEC) to the Board. This is a programme of early intervention in speech and language which will be piloted in Barnet by the Whittington Hospital Trust. There is a specific model which will be tested.

The London Borough of Barnet is the lead Local Authority (LA) for the London Challenge Programme Partnership (CPP). As the Lead LA, Barnet received the first tranche of funding for the partnership at the end of September 2023. This funding can be allocated for therapy staffing needs and upskilling schools further.

Pilot schemes were taking place across the 9 Department for Education's (DfE) regions and are focused on delivering the improvements set out in the DfEs Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP). Schools must request to take part in the pilot and are being asked that all works continue after the pilot scheme ends; the overall main aim being early intervention.

Each of the CPPs would be taking a test and learn approach by trialling the following: national standards; establishing SEND and AP partnerships; trialling a standardised Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) template; providing tailored lists to parents of suitable placements; a three-tiered approach to AP; an Introduction of Inclusion dashboards so parents and professionals can see how the SEND system is performing at local and national level; and provide data in terms of the CPPs system of funding EHCPs to explore the feasibility of national banding and tariffs.

The Director SEND and Inclusion, provided a brief update on therapies. It was outlined to the Board that the service has worked hard to secure long term funding. The Director SEND and Inclusion highlighted that the first point of contact within the service had improved. It was brought to the attention of the Board that due to the concerted efforts of those at Whittington Health there had been an improvement in recruitment and improved links and relationships between schools and families.

The Chair thanked and noted the report.

7. COLLABORATE PROJECT - UPDATE ON VOLUNTARY SECTOR INITIATIVE

Janet Matthewson, Chief Executive Officer at The Young Barnet Foundation, updated the Board on the Collaborate Project. The Collaborate Project was funded by John Lyons Charity Fund to create a 'Home – School – Community'.

The project brings together a cluster of three to four organisations to address identified needs that have been exposed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Themes focused on are:

- Carers,
- Mental Health – whole schools approach with Parental Support,
- Mental Health – Individual/Group Counselling with Parental involvement,
- Crime – diversionary activities & whole school engagement,
- Crime – gender specific – DV,
- Healthy relationships,
- Physical activities and SEND – inclusion, outreach.

Janet Matthewson reported to the Board plans, work and progress by St Mary's St John's (SMSJ) within the project. Members of the board asked questions and commented on the diversity of the offer. The Chair would like to invite SMSJ to present the progress and findings to the Board within the next year.

The Chair thanked the presenter and noted the report.

8. PARENT CHAMPION UPDATE

Debra Davies, the Assistant Head of Service, Child and Family Early Help – Family Services provided an update on Parent Champions.

Parent Champions are parent volunteers who contribute a few hours per week to engage with fellow parent/carers, offering guidance on accessing organisations that can provide them with support, such as local Children's Centres, Youth Service, Early Help and Family Information Services.

The current network is made up of three strands Coram, EPEC and VRU. The three strands enable with infants through to secondary school. This proactive approach ensures that parent/carers are well-informed about the services available to them and their children within their borough. Barnet Parent Champions are able to use their own experiences to support other parent/carers.

Empowering Parent Empowering Communities (EPEC) (ages 4 to 11)

- This 8-week parenting course is led by parents who have completed an accredited EPEC training and receive ongoing training, supervision and support from parenting specialists.
- EPEC groups are highly interactive, involving an engaging and creative blend of small and large group discussion, role play, demonstrations, information sharing and reflection. Parents practice and use new skills in everyday life to achieve specific goals.
- The parent group leaders receive ongoing supervision and support from parenting specialists and have fulfilled DBS and other mandatory requirements.

Coram (ages 0-5)

- Coram Family and Childcare is the leading national charity in the field of policy, research and advocacy on childcare and family issues, working closely with government, local authorities, businesses and charities to achieve positive and long-lasting change for families across the UK. Their vision is a society where all families are well-supported and have genuine choices about their lives. Coram Family and Childcare was formed when the Family and Childcare Trust joined the Coram group of charities in August 2018.

VRU (ages 9-18)

- The London Violence Reduction Unit has provided funding to sustain Barnet's thriving Parent Champion Programme. This programme empowers parent/carers to support one another by sharing information about available resources within the borough and using their own personal experiences to offer support, guidance and the ability to signpost, all with the aim of reducing youth violence.

Parent/carers encounter various challenges, including:

- Accessing information for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Managing school transitions
- Managing behaviours
- Uncertainty about meeting their children's needs
- Increased anxiety related to youth violence in the community
- Growing concerns about children's mental health and support
- Worries about exclusion and rising NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training)

The two Parent Champions gave an overview of their experiences. They outlined that Parent Champions have had positive effects such as increase of attendance to workshops due to the relatable experiences of other parents.

The Chair asked the Assistant Head of Service, Child and Family Early Help, and the two Parent Champions how the board could further support the programme and make the role of a Parent Champion more influential. In response, one of the Parent Champions outlined that being invited and attending things such as the Barnet Children's Partnership Board and building networks and connections is important to the role.

The Chair urged the board to use the Parent Champion programme if they ever require the views and/ or engagement from parents.

The Chair thanked the Parent Champions and Assistant Head of Service, Child and Family Early Help for the report.

9. ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

Neil Marlow (BELS), Chief Executive and Director of Education and Learning thanked the Board for everyone's continued collaboration to support attendance. It was reported to the Board that the rate of attendance in Barnet was better than the national average. However, the attendance rate in special schools is lower and is being investigated. He further reported to the Board that on 6th May 2022, the Department of Education (DfE) published new guidance for Schools. The DfE were currently in consultation about how Local Authorities and schools use and issue fixed penalty notices, with the intention of setting a national standard to unify the process and ensure equity across boroughs. The

DfE intend for this to become statutory by September 2024. In response to the 'Working Together to Improve Attendance' Guidance from the DfE, BELS had recruited to the position of Attendance Support Team Officer as a move towards the responsibilities in the guidance. This role was relatively new and therefore the impact could not be seen yet but would be reported in due course to the Board. In response to the 'Promoting Education for Children with a Social Worker' guidance published in June 2022 by the DfE, the Education Welfare Team has co-created the Children with a Social Worker (CWSW) Attendance Forum, which identified and reduced barriers for those with severe absence who were subject to a child protection plan. It was noted by the Board that there would be no extra funding available for the implementation of the Guidance.

The Chair noted the report and thanked Neil Marlow (BELS), Chief Executive and Director of Education and Learning for the report.

10. LIFE CHANCES UPDATE

Ben Thomas, Assistant Director Education Strategy and Partnership, provided a brief overview of the report, which asked providers to focus on the impacts on life chances of children.

The Chair thanked Ben Thomas, Assistant Director Education Strategy and Partnership, for the overview of the report and thanked partners for their contributions in support children and young people in Barnet.

11. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Board were invited to send suggestions for inclusion in the Work Programme at any time to the Chair.

The Chair suggested the Police alongside the Safe School's Team should be invited to attend the next meeting to give an update on 'Clear, Hold, Build' from viewing it from a child's perspective.

The Chair also mentioned that the Home Office should be invited to the next or a future meeting to provide an update on Asylum Seeker children living in hotels.

The Forward Work Programme was noted.

12. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The list of abbreviations was noted.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

The meeting finished at 5.50 pm