

Barnet Children and Young People's Plan – 2013 - 2016

February 2013

Foreword

“My most important duty is to get things right for Barnet’s children and young people and to champion their interests. But helping them to achieve their best, and supporting children and families when they need extra help, can only be done by working in partnership, across organisations. Barnet’s Children and Young People Plan 2013/14 – 2015/16 is a real partnership plan, with a strong shared agenda, shaped by people from across our borough who know and work with children and young people, and also by the children and young people themselves.

Partners on Barnet’s Children’s Trust Board provide excellent opportunities and services to children and young people, and our aim is to continually improve our provision, by making services personal to each child’s needs. Particularly in this challenging time, when increasing pressures are being faced by all services, and resources are tight, it is vital to be clear about our common purpose. This plan sets out our aims to support the whole journey of children in Barnet, underpinned by our three key priorities of intervening early, narrowing the gap and keeping children and young people safe. It has children and young people at its heart and prioritises their participation across our services.

Together, we can make life even better for Barnet’s children and young people and make sure they have the opportunities they all deserve.”

Cllr Andrew Harper
Chairman of Barnet Children’s Trust Board
Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Families

Vision

‘All children and young people in Barnet should achieve the best possible outcomes, to enable them to become successful adults, especially our most vulnerable children. They should be supported by high quality, integrated and inclusive services that identify additional support needs early, are accessible, responsive and affordable for the individual child and their family.’

Compared with the rest of the country and statistical neighbours, Barnet’s children do well at school, have good health, benefit from low crime rates and access to high quality open spaces. The Children’s Partnership has the highest expectations for children in Barnet and we are committed to help them have happy and successful lives on their journey through childhood.

To achieve our vision will be challenging, especially given the increasingly tough environment in which children and young people live, trying to find work, accommodation and support. However, we remain committed to close partnership working between organisations, with a focus on early intervention and prevention, targeting resources to narrow the gap in achievement between those most at risk of not achieving their potential and those with greater advantages, and keeping children and young people safe.

Partners in Barnet are committed to working with children and young people to analyse need, design services and review how effectively we are performing.

About this plan

This plan explains what the organisations represented on Barnet's Children's Trust will do to support children, young people and their families to lead happy and successful lives. It is structured around the journey of the child and our cross-cutting priorities:

- Early Years
- Primary
- Secondary
- Preparation for Adulthood
- Early Intervention and Prevention
- Targeting Resources to Narrow the Gap
- Keeping Children and Young People Safe.

We have worked hard to make sure that this partnership plan truly reflects the breadth of work with children and young people in Barnet as well as being responsive to the wishes and needs of families themselves. Children and young people were engaged in the process through focus groups held by the Barnet Youth Board, and an online survey distributed via schools and youth networks.

This plan outlines the Children's Partnership's priorities for the period 2013-16. An annual action plan will sit beneath this plan and will detail how services are delivering the plan against their targets. In addition, the plan will sit alongside the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Safer Communities Strategy. Several sub-strategies support the Children and Young People Plan, detailing work in specific areas, these will cover:

- Education
- Inclusion
- Early Years
- Child Anti-Poverty
- Early Intervention and Prevention.

Understanding Barnet's Children and Young People

Children and young people make up around a quarter of Barnet's total population and the borough's population of 90,464 children and young people is the second largest in London. Males account for a slightly higher proportion of the younger population than females. Since 2004 there has been a 23.4% increase in births in Barnet, compared with a 16.9% increase in London and a 19.2% increase in England.

Barnet's younger population is more diverse than Barnet's population overall; while the majority are White there are high proportions of children in many minority ethnic groups.

Despite the tough economic climate, households in Barnet remain relatively prosperous, with average household income 5.4 per cent above the London average. However, there are variations in different parts of the borough and household incomes have been increasing at a slower rate than the rest of London. There are pockets of deprivation, notably around the western boundary's 'A5 corridor' and in some of our local housing estates.

Some groups of children and young people in Barnet are more vulnerable than others: The Department for Education estimates that around 7% of children have a disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). In Barnet, this would equate to around 4,400 – 6,100 children and young people between the ages of 0 and 19. The council is also responsible for maintaining a list of children in the area who are at risk of continuing significant harm, and for whom there is a child protection plan. At 31 March 2012 there were 211 children subject to a child protection plan in Barnet.

You can find more information about the demography of children and young people living in Barnet in the [Profile of Children and Young People in Barnet](#).

Performance management and governance

Barnet's Children's Trust brings together all services for children and young people in the borough, to focus on improving outcomes for all children and young people. Key members of the trust are:

- Barnet Council
- North Central London NHS, GPs, and health providers
- Barnet Borough Police
- CommUnity Barnet, representing the voluntary sector
- Primary, Secondary and Special Schools in Barnet
- Barnet and Southgate College
- Focus Groups of Children and Young people, representing specific issues.

Representatives from all these organisations make up the Barnet Children's Trust Board which will keep a strategic oversight of the plan. Each organisation has agreed to be responsible for implementing the Children and Young People's Plan and the Executive Management Group of the Trust will monitor this.

The Children's Trust Board will monitor the this plan against a combination of the success measures detailed in each section of the plan and progress reports submitted to the Board.

Ways of working

Barnet Children's Trust Board and the Children's Partnership is committed to working in the following ways to achieve the strategic outcomes in this plan:

Working in partnership

We will work together to make sure that activity and resources are joined up and target those who most need them. We will collaborate with other service providers as required to meet the diverse needs of children and young people.

Involving children and young people in our work

We will consistently engage actively with children, young people and their families in developing and implementing solutions to meet their needs.

Keep safeguarding at the forefront of all we do

We will constantly keep the safeguarding of children in our thinking and working practices. We have a duty of care to all our residents, especially the vulnerable, to keep them safe.

Improving the customer experience

We will take steps to improve the way in which parents, carers and professionals can navigate and engage with the system on behalf of children and young people.

Delivering better services with less money

We will seek to ensure the best value for money so that children and young people get the maximum benefit.

Early years

Every child in Barnet has a great start in life, with the security and safety to grow in a nurturing environment.

The number of children aged between 0 and 5 years old in Barnet is growing every year and it is expected that by 2016 there will be 28,300 children in this age group. This represents an increase of 8% over the period of this plan. This presents the Children’s Partnership with a significant challenge, especially as resources diminish.

Priority	What does this mean?	How will we judge success?
1) Engage families early to ensure children have happy lives at home	<p>Recognising that families have the greatest influence over young children, we will engage with families pre-birth and in the early years of a child’s life.</p> <p>We will work with those families on the cusp of need to help set positive habits for life and ensure that children are ready for school by the age of 5.</p> <p><i>This could include parenting classes or ensuring the sufficiency of childcare places.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ an improvement in attainment of children against Early Years targets ▪ growth in the prevalence of breastfeeding at 6 – 8 weeks from birth ▪ an increase in the numbers of resident children immunised by their second birthday (MMR) ▪ a decrease in the proportion of babies born under 2.5kg (5.5lbs) per 100 live births ▪ an increase in the early identification of children with special educational needs ▪ a declining number of children who are obese upon entering Reception.
2) Provide high quality health services for mothers and young children	<p>A growing body of evidence shows that good health for mothers and young children makes the biggest difference to life chances. This includes birth weight, development at age 2 and the mother’s early relationship with the child. In order to give children the best possible start in life, the health of mother and child should be regularly monitored and maintained.</p> <p><i>This could include health visitors who support and promote breastfeeding and immunisations and Family Nurse Partnerships.</i></p>	
3) Ensure children in need of support are identified early and appropriately supported in their early years	<p>We will identify children with additional needs – whatever the cause – and work with families to reduce the impact of disadvantage later on.</p> <p><i>This could include early years development checks across education, health and social care or the putting in place of a child protection plan.</i></p>	

Primary

Childhood in Barnet is safe and fun, with lots of opportunities to grow and develop through education, leisure and play.

There are currently over 28,000 children living in Barnet who are between the age of 5 and 11, and 25,700 children being educated in Barnet's primary schools. Children of this age group achieve well over all, with at least two thirds achieving at expected academic levels by the time they leave primary school. We recognise that there is more to childhood than school; children at primary level should be enjoying life, be safe in their environments and be making healthy lifestyle choices.

Priority	What does this mean?	How will we judge our success?
<p>1) Provide exciting and supportive learning experiences in welcoming schools</p>	<p>Barnet's primary schools do provide these learning experiences - the vast majority of are rated good or outstanding and standards are above the national average. A good range of choice is available to parents, and schools generally cater well for a spectrum of abilities and needs. The main challenge facing the partnership is maintaining these high standards and ensuring Barnet's schools keep up with emerging national requirements.</p> <p><i>This could include schools supporting each other to improve standards through exchange of expertise or sharing good practice.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a decline in the numbers of children judged to be obese in Year 6 ▪ a growth in the number of schools who feel confident in identifying additional needs among their pupils and referring on for support. ▪ an increase in the number of children achieving above the floor targets in Year 6
<p>2) Work with schools and families to join up education, health and safety services</p>	<p>Teachers in Barnet schools have the greatest amount of professional contact with Barnet's children and as such, are able to identify issues early and make contact with partners when additional support needs to be put in place. We will work to make services more joined up and easy to access, with service users at their heart.</p> <p><i>This could include better communications to improve awareness of services available and making better use of school nurses.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a decrease in the number of children who are persistently absent from school ▪ increase the percentage of children making 2 levels of progress in English between Key Stages 1 and 2.
<p>3) Encourage healthy lifestyles and choices to combat obesity in children and young people</p>	<p>In 2009/10, 12.7% of Barnet Reception children surveyed were found to be overweight and 10.6 were obese. By Year 6 15.1% of children were found to be overweight and 17.5% obese –above the national average. We will work with children and families to ensure they foster good habits early to stay healthy into adulthood.</p> <p><i>This could include parenting programmes or health providing resources to schools to help promote healthy eating.</i></p>	

Secondary

Children and young people feel supported to achieve and engage, while developing their identities and resilience.

There are 24,550 children between the ages of 11 and 16 in Barnet, and around 21,800 children educated in Barnet secondary schools. The January school census 2011 recorded that 143 different languages apart from English were spoken by pupils in Barnet schools. By the time young people in Barnet reach the Secondary stage of their journey, they have a wide range of experiences and are forging their own individual identities.

Priority	What does this mean?	How will we judge our success?
<p>1) Offer opportunities for engagement and support, recognising the needs of the individual and supporting them to achieve</p>	<p>In the survey of children and young people in Barnet 90% of respondents were taking part in activities outside of school, within the borough. A range of activities is currently on offer across the borough, and we need to take action to mitigate the impact of the current economic climate on the equality, targeting, and longevity of these opportunities. <i>This could include ensuring the sustainability of mainstream youth services through some charging.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a declining number of children who are persistently absent from school or are excluded ▪ improve school attendance among children identified as having 15% or more unauthorised absence or 3 fixed term exclusions ▪ an increase in the number of children achieving 5 A* - C grades including English and Maths at GCSE ▪ an increase in professionals who feel supported by their local network.
<p>2) Work in partnership with schools to address the root causes of exclusion and poor attendance</p>	<p>Exclusion has a major impact on the young person's learning as well as contributing to issues of isolation, criminal activity and health. <i>This could include behaviour training or making better use of data to ensure that support can be provided early on.</i></p>	
<p>3) Build peer support networks among professionals to enable healthy mutual support and challenge that improves outcomes for young people</p>	<p>Many professionals in Barnet feel supported by numerous and diverse networks in which they can share best practice, resources and challenge one another. We want to help facilitate the development of these networks to ensure that all professionals feel supported. This should raise awareness of services available to young people, helping to join them up and drive improvement for children and young people. <i>This could include working with primary schools to identify the most appropriate model of working together or expanding network meetings to be more inclusive.</i></p>	

Preparation for Adulthood

Young people are ambitious for their futures and contribute positively to society.

There are around 12,000 17 -19 year olds in Barnet, and a growing number of young people continuing to receive services between the ages of 19 and 25. We want young people to feel ambitious about their futures and begin to prepare for independence, particularly economic independence.

Priority	What does this mean?	How will we judge our success?
1) Enable young people to foster ambitious and realistic aspirations	<p>We will support young people to have confidence in their abilities, be ambitious about their futures, set realistic goals and achieve these ambitions. Job Centre Plus reports a general lack of understanding and awareness of the jobs market and some young people are ill-prepared for the world of work. We need to work together to improve this situation.</p> <p><i>This could include effective use of the pupil premium or providing personalised and relevant advice in schools to enable young people to make well-informed choices about their futures.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ an increase in the proportion of children with a statement of special educational needs moving towards independent living ▪ a growth in the number of children achieving a level 2 qualification by the age of 19 ▪ a rise in the percentage of care leavers in employment, education or training
2) Ensure services are integrated to support young people as they transition to adulthood	<p>We want children and young people who are in care or have special educational needs to have a positive transition into adulthood. We will put the appropriate support in place to help them to achieve their potential and live lives that are as independent and fulfilling as possible. If young people need to transition to Adult Social Care in their journey to adulthood, we will make this as seamless and positive as possible.</p> <p><i>This could include a multi-agency programme for young people leaving care or better joint planning with young people with high levels of disability and complex needs.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ an increase in the percentage of young offenders engaged in suitable education, employment or training ▪ a decline in the percentage of 16 to 19 year olds who are not in education employment or training.
3) Offer relevant and tailored learning and employment opportunities	<p>We want all young people to be prepared for the world of work and will ensure there is a broad range of educational & training opportunities (incl. apprenticeships) that meet the needs of all Barnet residents. We know that the right skills and early experiences of training and employment help to foster economic independence for the rest of a young person's life but that more can be done to make sure some young people are able to participate and achieve.</p> <p><i>This could include building a residential unit as a step to supported living for young people with learning difficulties and / or disabilities or the creation of a studio school to provide a more business orientated learning experience.</i></p>	

Early intervention and prevention

Intervening early improves outcomes for children, young people and families, enabling them to thrive

A whole family approach to early intervention and prevention that joins up support from all partners not only gives children and young people the best life chances but is vital to our financial sustainability. Early identification, targeting and planning of interventions, working in partnership and sharing information at the appropriate level are at the heart of our approach.

Priority	What does this mean?	How will we judge our success?
1) Take a whole family approach to improving outcomes for children and young people	The partnership is committed to supporting communication, emotional, physical and social development in families and addressing risk factors early on. We will help parents to maximise their skills as we aim to give their children the best start, including supporting families affected by domestic abuse. <i>This could include supporting families with employment or housing issues.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ decrease the number of households with children living in temporary accommodation ▪ decrease the number of children in care per 10,000 of the under 18 population ▪ reduce the number of 17 and 19 year olds who are not in education, employment or training ▪ reduce the number of young people offending.
2) Strengthen early identification and intervene early to improve life chances for those living in the most difficult situations	Children and young people who have chaotic lives at home need early support to help minimise the impact of these difficulties on their development and later lives. Identifying and addressing needs at an early stage can help to prevent the difficulties that they can experience from arising. We aim to ensure that children and young people receive the right support at the right time, so that problems are addressed well before reaching 'crisis point'. <i>This could include intensive support from a family focus worker, improving the identification of neglect or targeted youth and play opportunities.</i>	
3) Reduce the involvement of children and young people in crime and anti-social behaviour	Crime rates in Barnet are relatively low amongst children and young people, and we are committed to reducing them further, particularly through partnership working between the police and youth justice system as well as working intensively with families to alleviate the drivers of criminal and anti-social behaviour. <i>This could include supporting young people to cope with peer pressure or Kickz football schemes to engage young people in positive activities.</i>	

Keeping Children and Young People Safe

Children and young people are safe in their homes, schools and around the borough, with an ability to develop healthy relationships with others. The partnership will work together to protect children from harm to ensure their safety and welfare, in particular through the work of the Barnet Safeguarding Children Board. The Children's Partnership has recognised a need to develop its quality assurance to help keep our children and young people safe.

Priority	What does this mean?	How will we judge our success?
1) Address unhealthy relationships based on exploitation and build aspirations for the future	<p>We will work to broaden awareness and support around bullying and vulnerability to exploitation to identify and support vulnerable children and young people. We want to identify exploitation early, ensure children and young people are safe and then reduce the impact of exploitation on their aspirations and plans for the future.</p> <p><i>This could include a multi-agency approach to domestic violence and raising awareness of sexual exploitation and developing services for young people most at risk .</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days) ▪ proportion of children and young people who have been victim of exploitation who feel ambitious for their futures and prepared to reach their ambitions ▪ reduce the number of young people admitted to hospital with alcohol specific conditions ▪ percentage of children at the virtual school meeting the targets in their Personal Education Plans ▪ children subject to a child protection plan, where neglect is the main characteristic ▪ reduction in number of individuals identified through the gang matrix approach ▪ reduced level of offending risk for those on the gang matrix list.
2) Educate children and young people on how to stay safe and provide support for those who are victims of crime. Taking action to prevent the impact of gang involvement developing in Barnet	<p>There is often significant peer pressure affecting children and young people, to enter into activities that may not keep them safe, in particular to use drugs and alcohol. We will educate young people on the effects and outcomes of these activities, and provide access to a range of services to get advice, socialise together and keep themselves positively engaged.</p> <p>We will work as a partnership to ensure early intervention with individuals identified as being at risk of progression towards prolific / violent offending as part of a group or gang and focus on an anti-drugs and anti-gangs message within primary and secondary education in Barnet.</p> <p><i>This could include working with youth forums to gain a better understanding of the impact of bullying in Barnet and how the partnership could work to combat this, better use of intelligence products combining multi agency data sets, and the establishment of a Multi Agency Gang meeting.</i></p>	
3) Protect children at risk of harm and support them to achieve their potential	<p>In cases where children are found to be at risk of significant harm as defined in the Children's Act 1989, the Local Authority has a clear legal duty to take steps to protect them, taking children into Local Authority care or professionals supporting the family to keep the child at home.</p> <p><i>This could include implementing the Munro Review model of child protection, to contribute to a new model of social work delivery and quality assurance.</i></p>	

Targeting Resources to Narrow the Gap

Targeted, personalised support for those most at risk of not achieving their potential, helping to reduce inequalities.

Narrowing the gap means improving the rate of progress and outcomes for children who are at risk of underachievement.

They are those children and young people whose educational achievement may be affected by factors relating to their ethnicity, gender or their social, cognitive and linguistic development.

Priority	What does this mean?	How will we judge our success?
<p>1) Ensure that the families of children and young people at risk of underachievement, support their learning at home</p>	<p>A significant body of research now points towards the importance of the home learning environment, from an early age and throughout the child's journey, to the life chances of children and young people. It will be important to work in partnership to ensure that children's lives outside their education, support their participation, learning and on-going development. <i>This could include outreach from children's centres or schools running homework sessions for the whole family.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ reduce the achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stage 2 (Level 4+ in both English & maths) ▪ increase the percentage of children with Special Education Needs (SEN) achieving 5 or more A*-C GCSE including English and Maths at Key Stage 4 ▪ increase the percentage looked after children making the expected level of progress in English and Maths between Key Stages 2 and 4 ▪ ensure waiting times for CAMHS services are as low as possible.
<p>2) Continue to support children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing</p>	<p>We must ensure that we address health, including mental health, both as a cause and consequence of poverty. We will work to join up resources to support the commissioning of integrated services for children and young people with emotional and mental health difficulties. Poor emotional wellbeing can prevent children and young people from achieving and may mean that they disengage entirely, having a major impact on their educational and personal development. <i>This could include provision of therapies in schools.</i></p>	
<p>3) Enable those with Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulties and Disabilities and complex needs to achieve their potential</p>	<p>Over the past five years there has been a general improvement in the attainment of pupils with SEN and those eligible for free school meals (FSM) at both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. The attainment gap between pupils eligible for FSM and those not eligible is narrower at KS2 than at KS4 and at KS4 the gap is narrowing. Changes to the local authority capacity to support schools may impact on the pace of change. <i>This could include travel training or special schools providing additional support within mainstream schools.</i></p>	