

# Barnet Children's Partnership Board Report

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<b>Title:</b>	SEND Self-Evaluation Framework
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> July 2021
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## 1. Summary

This report explains the requirement for the Barnet Local Area to carry out a self-evaluation of provision and arrangements for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. This includes an overview of the current strengths and areas for development, and the Local Area's response to meeting the requirements of the SEND reforms and the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 years (2015). It includes, as an Appendix, the Local Area's self-evaluation report, which was updated in June 2021.

## 2. Updates since last BCPB

N/A.

## 3. Impact

- **Equalities and Diversity**

N/A

- **Corporate Parenting**

N/A

## 4. Consultation and Engagement

The Local Area Self-Evaluation has been developed by the Local Area partners, which include the council, Barnet Education and Learning Service, health service partners (the Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS England, health service providers) schools and settings, and parents and carers. Barnet Parent-Carer Forum has been fully involved.

## **5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The Children's Partnership Board is asked to note and comment on the report.

## **6. Background papers**

Key education strategies, including the SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2024 were considered by the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Following consultation the SEND and Inclusion Strategy was finalised and has been published on the council's website and can be seen here:

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-support-information>

Information on the Resilient Schools Programme (see 6.1 below) can be found in the report on Mental Health presented to the meeting of the Children's Partnership Board in April:

[Agenda for Barnet Children's Partnership Board on Thursday 22nd April, 2021, 4.30 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

## **SEND Self-Evaluation**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Local Area Inspections of provision and arrangements for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities are carried out jointly by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission. These inspections were paused in March 2020, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2021, the government announced that full inspections will begin again in June 2021. The Barnet Local Area is due an inspection, which could take place at any time from June until the end of March 2022 when all Local Area SEND Inspections are to be completed. There are 30 full inspections to take place, 8 of those being in London.
- 1.2 In reaching their inspection judgements in respect of each Local Area, inspectors, in line with the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice, pay particular attention to the accuracy and rigour of the Local Area's self-evaluation, the extent to which the local area knows its strengths and weaknesses, and what it needs to do further to improve the life chances of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 1.3 While it is expected that the Local Area will have a thorough understanding of its effectiveness in fulfilling its responsibilities, Ofsted and the CQC do not require the Local Area to produce a self-evaluation document or summary in a particular format. Any self-evaluation that is provided should be part of the Local Area's usual business processes and not generated solely for inspection purposes. Given the changes to the Inspection Handbook in light of the pandemic, the Local Area may provide any additional or updated self-evaluation in light of COVID-19 and resulting development plans.
- 1.4 In October 2020, the Local Area received a SEND assurance visit from Ofsted and the CQC. This was to look at the impact of the pandemic on children and young people with SEND and their families, and how the Local Area was responding to the presenting issues. Information about the changes made to services and support for children with SEND and their families is included in the SEF.
- 1.5 The Barnet Local Area includes the council, Barnet Education and Learning Service, health service partners (the Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS England, health service providers) schools and settings, parents and carers and the voluntary sector. This partnership has worked collaboratively to develop the Local Area's SEND strategy 2021 - 2024, policies, processes and arrangements for the support of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, aged 0 to 25 years. The partnership has developed its own self-evaluation of SEND arrangements, which is attached as Appendix A to this report. This will be shared with inspectors, when the inspection of the Barnet Local Area is announced.
- 1.6 The following paragraphs are a brief summary of the self-evaluation. The full self-evaluation is shown in Appendix A.

### **2. Local SEND context**

- 2.1 Barnet maintains 2,964 Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). 3.5% of pupils in schools in Barnet have an EHCP, compared with 3.3% of all pupils in schools in England. 9.6% of pupils in Barnet are identified with SEN Support, compared to 12.1% in England. The highest need by type of SEN for EHC

Plans in Barnet is Autism. Autism accounts for 36% of all EHC Plans in Barnet, with Speech, Language and Communication (SLCN) at 19% and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) at 14%. Between 2015 and 2018 the number of EHCPs in Barnet increased by 30.3%, compared to the national average of 33.2%. The London figure for the same period shows a 31.3% increase. Over the last year there has been an increase of 21% in EHCPs in Barnet. We are awaiting comparative national and regional data, but SEND leaders across London are reporting a similar increase, possibly as a consequence of the impact of the pandemic on some children's development.

- 2.2 Barnet has a relatively high proportion of pupils with an EHC Plan placed in state maintained mainstream schools (56% compared to 42% nationally and 44% in Outer London - 2019 data). 26% of pupils with an EHC Plan in Barnet are placed in a special school (compared to 53% nationally and 36% in Outer London - 2019 data). A higher proportion of pupils with an EHC Plan are placed in mainstream independent schools (5% compared to 1% nationally and in Outer London). Unlike many other local areas, Barnet has a range of excellent specialist provision for children and young people with SEND. The remaining 13% of pupils with an EHC Plan are placed in one of the 13 Additional Resourced Provisions in mainstream schools.

### **3. Co-production**

- 3.1 One of the underlying principles of the SEND Code of Practice is the practice of co-production, which is often defined as a way of working where children and young people with SEND, their families and those that provide services work together to make a decision or create a service which works for them all.
- 3.2 Services across the Local Area routinely obtain feedback from parent carers and children and young people with SEND and this is published in the "You said, We did" updates on the Local Offer so that families can see the impact their feedback has had on the quality and delivery of services in Barnet.
- 3.3 We have parent carer representation at all levels of decision making and governance in SEND, including the SEND Partnership Board, SEND Development Group, SEND workstreams, the Local Offer Steering Group, the Joint Commissioning Group and more recently on the Complex Needs Panel. This Panel is responsible for making decisions about EHC Plans and provision for children and young people with SEND who have complex needs. We also have six parent carers in the EHCP Auditing team, which is a multidisciplinary team who undertake audits to quality assure new EHC Plans. The impact of parent carer involvement has included a review of the EHC Plan template, the development of a Parent Carer Zone on the Local Offer, the development of a Mental Health Zone on the Local Offer, and a clearer focus on outcomes in the SEND Strategy 2021-2024.
- 3.4 There is a well-established and highly valued set of conferences for parent carers and professionals. A SEND Newsletter is produced three times a year, giving updates across Health, Education and Social Care. This is shared with schools and settings, Barnet Parent Carer Forum, health providers and other partners and is published on the Local Offer website.
- 3.5 Our Young People's Voice group, 'Barnet Inclusion Next Generation' (BING), is active, well supported and is influencing (or has influenced) the design and content of the Local Offer, the SEND Strategy 2021-2024, Short Breaks and the redesigns of CAMHS, therapies, the Autism strategy, transitions and the youth service.
- 3.6 Barnet SENDIASS (SEND Information and Advice Support Service) is well regarded by families and within the local authority. It is placed in Family

Services to remain separate from the SEND management structure, therefore strengthening impartiality. The service has excellent links with the SEN/Inclusion teams and strong links with the voluntary sector. SENDIASS also has excellent links with the Youth Offending Team and Unitas to support a shared agenda.

#### **4. Improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND**

- 4.1 Nearly half of all Barnet's specialist provision (including special schools, Additional Resourced Provision (ARPs) and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) are rated by Ofsted as outstanding, and the remainder, are graded 'good'.
- 4.2 At every Key Stage and in every measure pupils with SEND in Barnet (both SEN Support and with an EHC Plan) performed above national averages in 2019. Key Stage 2 attainment of pupils at SEN Support is in the top 10% nationally and for EHCP pupils is in the top 15%. Key Stage 2 progress for both groups exceeds national and statistical neighbour averages. Barnet has seen a large improvement in the attainment and progress of SEN pupils at Key Stage 4 both for pupils receiving SEN Support and pupils with an EHC Plan, with Attainment and Progress being in the top 10% nationally for SEN Support pupils and above the national average for EHCP pupils.
- 4.3 Attainment and progress data is extensively analysed and shared with individual schools and clusters. School Learning Network Inspectors (LNIs) meet with Heads where there are concerns around the achievement of pupils with SEND and plans are in place to improve performance within those schools.
- 4.4 All EHCPs in Barnet specify arrangements for short and long-term targets for the school or setting, as well as including the aspirations of the young person as part of their preparation for adulthood. A focus on outcomes is embedded in practice through the Outcomes meetings for all new EHC Plans helping to ensure that outcomes are person centred, and SMART targets are set. Schools lead on these for school-aged pupils and pre-school settings are supported by specialist teams within BELS.
- 4.5 Schools are supported by specialist Advisory teachers to use a variety of tools to ensure they are outcomes-focused for children with SEND.
- 4.6 Children attending Barnet's Special Schools are 'baselined' on entry and reviewed against assessment targets every term. Children who have SEND and attend Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) nursery settings are well supported; settings have a named Area SENCO from the Pre-School Inclusion Team who offer proactive advice, training and guidance to the setting's SENCO to meet the needs of children in their settings and to support inclusion.

#### **5. The local area's response to the pandemic**

- 5.1 To support local areas during the pandemic, some of the duties placed on them in sections 42 and 43 of the Children and Families Act 2014 were temporarily modified to give local authorities and health bodies more flexibility in responding to the demands placed on services during the pandemic. The duty was changed to "use reasonable endeavours" to secure the provision in the EHC Plan, and the statutory timescales for EHCPs were replaced with a requirement to take relevant actions as soon as 'reasonably practicable'. All of the temporary modifications expired on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2020.
- 5.2 Inspectors will be mindful of the impact of the pandemic on the Local Area's ability to fulfil their responsibilities towards children and young people with

SEND. The inspectors will expect local area leaders to discuss how they have understood the experience of children and young people with SEND during the pandemic, and how they have involved children and young people with SEND and their families in co-producing decisions about how best to support them. Local leaders will also be expected to show how they have worked collaboratively to prioritise, adapt and provide services to children and young people with SEND and their families.

- 5.3 In response to the pandemic, services in Barnet have adapted their delivery to include a blended approach with a combination of face-to-face and virtual support, determined by the needs of the child. Virtual training and support sessions for school staff have been well attended and highly valued. This has included advice and guidance on supporting pupils with SEND back to school. For some pupils who have complex needs and need more support to re-engage with learning, temporary specialist provision has been put in place at Church Farm (a facility managed by the Pavilion PRU). The 'Open Spaces' project has provided safe environments for families to go to during the pandemic, with transport provided as required. This has been extended to include access to swimming pools for some families where a family member has been shielding and/or has been unable to access physical activities with the restrictions.
- 5.4 Mental health services, including CAMHS have responded to increased demand by offering quicker and easier on-line access to advice and support for children and young people experiencing anxiety and distress. Community Paediatricians have adopted a well evidenced and effective virtual assessment model for autism which is helping to reduce waiting lists for diagnosis.
- 5.5 Information and guidance about online learning and other support has been developed for the Local Offer to support families during lockdown. There has been a significant increase in the number of people accessing the Local Offer, with the SENCO Zone continuing to be a popular source of advice, guidance and materials.

## **6. Areas of strength**

- 6.1 These include:
  - The quality of our educational provision for pupils with SEND is among the best in the country, with over 96% of Barnet schools graded good or outstanding by OfSTED; all Barnet's specialist provision (special schools, ARPs and PRUs) is rated as good or better by OfSTED, with nearly half rated as outstanding.
  - Attainment and progress of pupils on SEN Support and with EHCPs is in the top 10% nationally on most measures.
  - All Barnet schools have access to detailed guidance and support (Ordinarily Available and SEND Toolkit) to help them to identify the needs of children and young people with SEND accurately and be clear about their responsibilities in relation to SEND.
  - There are robust and well-co-ordinated arrangements for the identification of SEND in early years.
  - There is a clear focus on outcomes and preparation for adulthood in EHC Plans, and our performance data for completion of EHCPs within statutory timescales is excellent (consistently over 95%).
  - Transition support for children with EHC Plans is very strong.

- The Local Area has put in place robust arrangements for the planning of specialist provision with good engagement with stakeholders.
- There is a wide range of therapeutic support for children, young people and their families. The council has invested in mental health services with dedicated mental health professionals sitting alongside Children's Social Care, Youth Offending and Early Help Services.
- Our Resilient Schools Programme provides mental health support and training to school staff to enable them to address mental health difficulties early.
- There are strong joint commissioning arrangements for children and young people with SEND across health, education and social care.

## **7. Areas of further improvement**

7.1 These include:

- There is a clear focus across the Local Area to ensure that there is a high-quality universal offer of support and advice for Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Physiotherapy. Work is also underway to ensure that children and young people with the highest level of therapeutic need are able to access specialist support in a timely way.
- The full implementation of the Autism action plan with a focus on reducing waiting times for diagnosis of autism, ensure that families are supported pre-assessment and that provision and support for pupils in mainstream schools is of a consistently high quality.
- Build on the Children and Young People's Mental Health Plan to incorporate all aspects of SEMH provision, and develop clear pathways of support and advice for families to access.
- To further our understanding of the impact of the pandemic on children and young people with SEND and their families and take necessary and appropriate steps to put in place support and interventions as part of a Recovery programme.