

Barnet Children's Partnership Board Report – 15th July 2021

Report on SEND Self-Evaluation Framework

Appendix A

Barnet Local Area

# SEND Self-Evaluation 2021



<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Executive Summary	3
Local Context	6
Our population	6
The children and young people we work with	6
Educational outcomes for children and young people	6
Future trends	7
The Local SEND context	7
The Children and Young People's Plan	8
The SEND Strategy 2021 - 2024	9
Feedback and Scrutiny	11
Improving Outcomes for children and young people with SEND	12
Focus on outcomes in EHCPs and for SEN Support	13
Vulnerable Groups	13
Transitions	14
Preparation for Adulthood	14
Planning specialist school places	14
Post-16 provision	15
Short Breaks	16
Strengths and achievements	17
Focus for the year ahead	17
The Local Area's response to the Pandemic	19
The Local Offer	22
Voice, Influence and Participation	25
Early Identification	30
Timeliness and quality of EHCPs	32
Joint Commissioning	34

# Executive Summary

The Barnet Local Area – the council, Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS), health service partners (the Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS England, specialist health service providers) schools and settings, and parents and carers – has embraced the SEND reforms that came in in 2014 and there is an established partnership across the local are to plan, review and implement measures to deliver the child-centred and family-centred services envisaged in the Children and Families Act 2014 and statutory guidance.

The evidence from research and visits undertaken by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has concluded that impact of the pandemic on children and young people with SEND and their families has been significant. From a series of interim visits between 1<sup>st</sup> September and 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2020, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) found that some children with SEND faced additional barriers to regular attendance as a result of the pandemic, having a knock on effect to their learning and psychological wellbeing. A loss of enriched opportunities or difficulties providing a full and balanced curriculum was a concern for all age groups. For a small number of children with SEND, not being in school increased their risk of emotional harm, emotional abuse and neglect.

Over the last year, services have worked together and with schools and families to put in place support during the pandemic, with robust monitoring and safeguarding systems in place for children and young people with SEND not in school. This included weekly meetings with MASH and the SEN Team to go through the risk assessments for children not attending out of borough and independent provision due to school closure. Steps were taken early on in the pandemic to update the information on our Local Offer, developing a Parent Carer Zone for easier access to information for families, and a 'carousel' with updates on changes in legislation, ways of working and information from Public Health. A 'Virtual SEN Hub' was developed on the Local Offer to support schools with remote learning and reintegration of pupils with SEND back into school.

In response to some families having limited access to outdoor space and children who were having to shield during 'lockdown', services worked together to develop safe outdoor spaces for families to access. The 'Open Spaces' project has run from April 2020 and has been extended in response to feedback from families to include access to swimming pools. Where a family has needed it, SEN transport has been provided. Over 90 families have used 'Open Spaces' and feedback from families has been very positive.

As the majority of pupils returned to school on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2021 additional provision at Church Farm (an off-site provision managed by the Pavilion PRU) was commissioned, staffed by home tuition staff and other education staff to support children with complex needs who had been mainly accessing on-line learning back in to school. This was in recognition that some children would need more support for transitioning back to school and re-engagement with school life and social interaction with peers. The progress of children is carefully monitored with the child's 'home school' to determine the best time for the child to transition back to school. This temporary provision will run until the end of the academic year 2021.

Throughout the pandemic, a 'business as usual' approach has been adopted wherever possible, across all of our statutory services. The quality and timeliness of EHCPs has been maintained throughout with over 95% of new Plans meeting the 20 week statutory timescale. We have continued to monitor the quality of our EHC Plans on a quarterly basis, with six parent carers joining the multidisciplinary Auditing team.

In October 2020, Barnet had a SEND Assurance visit from Ofsted and CQC, having volunteered to participate in this research which aimed to understand the impact of the Covid19 pandemic on children and young people with SEND and their families, learn from what had happened and identify areas for improvement. The visit highlighted how leaders in health, education and social care in Barnet had changed and adapted important ways of working in response to the pandemic.

The findings and recommendations from the Ofsted and CQC visit have fed into the SEND Strategy 2021 – 2024, with a focus on minimising the long-term impact of the Covid19 pandemic on the attainment, achievement and psychological wellbeing of children and young people with SEND.

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, including all our special schools and every mainstream school with an additional resourced provision (ARP).

Educational attainment in 2019 (most recent published data) at Key Stage 2 for Reading, Writing and Maths combined was in the top 10% for children with SEN Support and narrowly outside the top 10% (19<sup>th</sup>) for children with an EHCP. Progress in Key Stage 2 is in the top 25% for Reading, Writing and Maths for pupils on SEN Support and with EHCPs. In 2019 at Key Stage 4 Barnet ranked in the top 10% of LAs for both Attainment 8 and Progress 8 for pupils at SEN Support. For pupils with an EHCP, Barnet was ranked narrowly outside the top 10% (19<sup>th</sup>) and below for Attainment 8, but better than the national average.

Based on the grades submitted by schools in 2020 for the achievement of pupils at Key Stage 4, Barnet ranks in the top 10% of LAs for Attainment 8 for pupils at SEN Support. For pupils with an EHCP, Barnet is ranked within the top 10% (5<sup>th</sup>) in attainment 8.

Attendance is above national and London averages for pupils with EHCPs and in the top 10% of local authorities for SEN support pupils in both primary and secondary phases. There have been no permanent exclusions of primary pupils at SEN support or any pupils with an EHCP in either primary or secondary phases for the last three years for which data is available (up to 2018/19). The percentage of permanent exclusions of SEN support pupils has fluctuated at secondary level but was below the national average in 2018/19.

96% of 16- to 17-year-olds with special educational needs are in education or training, compared to the national figure of 89%. Barnet is well known as an inclusive local authority, and in 2019 was found to be the second most inclusive local authority in England, based on inclusion scores from combined public data sources (Mime Consulting).

Barnet also featured strongly in the London Councils publication, "Inclusive Practice: The role of mainstream schools and local authorities in supporting children with SEND" (September 2019). Alongside examples of good practice in Barnet schools, it highlighted the

online toolkit for SENCOs, moderation meetings for SENCOs, clear expectations for schools and settings in the “Ordinarily Available” document and sharing of school level data for SEN Support and EHCPs.

The number of Tribunal cases in 2020 was 95, one less than the previous year. Of the 95, 34 for Refusal to Assess (39 in 2019), 1 Refusal to Issue, 2 out of borough appeals and 50 for Sections B, F and I (59 in 2019). In 2019, the rate of Appeals to Tribunals in Barnet (2.7%) is above the national rate (1.9%), and slightly above the London Appeal rate of 2.4% (awaiting 2020 data, June '21).

We have a proactive approach to resolving issues through mediation. In the 2020-21 financial year there were 15 mediations, and 13 were resolved at an early stage of Appeal.

We believe we have made major progress in the successful implementation of the SEND reforms and in improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND. We know, however, that we have more to do, and we are constantly reviewing our progress in order to secure continuous improvement.

In 2018, LBB, the CCG and Cambridge Education jointly commissioned North East London Foundation Trust to deliver Children’s Integrated Therapies for children and young people at SEN Support and those who have therapy provision in their EHC Plan. The service has struggled to deliver Occupational therapy, Speech and language therapy, and more recently Physiotherapy due to issues with recruitment and retention of staff. This has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Weekly meetings between SEN managers, CCG, managers from NELFT and operational leads from Children’s Integrated Therapies have been held since September 2020 to prioritise casework and support for schools. Short and long term plans are in place to deal with the backlog of individual casework across the three therapies, and to ensure a high quality and sustainable therapy service in the future.

There has been further investment in a range of provision based on local need, particularly in the area of Autism. This includes additional funding for the Autism Team in BELS to provide advice and support to secondary schools, and support children and young people pre-diagnosis. Additional funding has been provided to the SEN Team for more SEN Caseworkers, and new Annual Review Co-ordinator roles. With the increasing numbers of EHC Plans, there has also been increased funding for Educational Psychologists to provide statutory professional Advice.

There are very good working relationships across statutory services in health, education and social care. Representatives from statutory services attend the weekly Complex Needs Panel to make decisions about undertaking an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment. Since March 2021, parent carers have joined the Complex Needs Panel as equal partners in decision making processes. A new jointly managed role has been created to further strengthen the link between the SEN Assessments and Placement team and Social Care. This post reports to the Strategic Manager in the 0 – 25 years Disability Service.

Our conclusions are informed by regular feedback from parents and carers, children and young people with SEND, schools and settings, and other partners across social care and health, as well as from our DfE SEN Adviser, and the Ofsted/CQC SEND Assurance visit in October 2020.

# Local Context

## Our population

- With 394,000 residents, we have the largest population in London, with 23.9% aged under 16 years old (London average 22.65);
- The borough's overall population is projected to increase by around 10.9% between 2020 and 2030, compared with a 4.9% increase in the 0-19 age group and a 9.4% increase for working age adults aged 16-64 years.
- The BAME population in Barnet is 38.7%, with the proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people in the borough population rising to 42.8% in 2030. Over 180 languages are spoken in our primary schools;
- The most common religion in Barnet is Christianity (39.2%), followed by the Jewish (19.2%) and Muslim (11.8%) faiths. Around one in five people in the borough has no religion (19.4%). One in twenty-five people are Hindu (4.0%), and one in fifty people are Buddhists (1.9%).
- We have an employment rate of 71.4%, below the London average of 74.2%, and the average income is £50k, higher than the outer London average of £44k;
- There are 70.5 crimes per 1000 people, below the London average of 92.9 per 1000.

## The children and young people we work with

- The percentage of children at secondary school eligible for and in receipt of free school meals is 14.3%, narrowly below the national average of 15.9%; in nursery and in primary the percentage of Barnet children 14.3% eligible for free school meals is below the National average of 17.7%;
- There are fewer children in out of work households than nationally, 9.3%, which is lower than the national average of 14%, and there are fewer children in low income families in Barnet at 13.1% against the national average of 18.4%;
- 48.6% of children and young people in Barnet schools are from black and minority ethnic groups, compared with 27.23% across England; 53.5% of primary and 39.6% of secondary school pupils speak English as an additional language.

## Educational outcomes for children and young people

- The percentage of schools in Barnet rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted is 96.5%. 100% of Secondary schools, Special schools, PRUs and Nursery schools are rated Good or better by Ofsted. All schools with Additional Resourced Provision for pupils with special educational needs are rated good or outstanding.
- The percentage of children attending a Good or Outstanding school in Barnet is 96.6%.

- At Key Stage 2, Barnet is 7th in the country for the number of pupils reaching the expected standards in Reading, Writing and Maths combined.
- Progress of pupils between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in all subjects is significantly better than the national average and Barnet is in the top 10% of LAs for Maths and Reading progress.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils at KS2 for 2019 is in the top 10% of LAs for Maths (8th), GPS (13th), Reading (13th) and in the top 10% for Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined (ranked 9th out of 151 LAs).
- In Key Stage 4 Barnet's Attainment 8 and Progress 8 scores in 2019 ranked Barnet as 2nd out of 151 Local Authorities. Barnet's Attainment 8 score increased in 2020 to 60.1 whilst the ranking remained 2<sup>nd</sup>, the same as 2019.
- Barnet was in the top 5% nationally in both Progress 8 (4th) and Attainment 8 (5th) for disadvantaged pupils. In Progress 8 Barnet disadvantaged pupils are once again performing better than non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. Barnet's Attainment 8 score for Disadvantaged pupils improved in 2020 with the ranking moving from 5<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>.
- There was improved attainment and progress of Looked After Children in 2019. The Progress 8 scores for looked after children was better than national and London averages and statistical neighbour LAs. This data relates to the 2018/19 academic year.

Information on achievement outcomes for children and young people with SEND is shown below in the section on Improving Outcomes.

## Future trends

- The population of children and young people in Barnet is estimated to grow by 3% between 2018 and 2025, when it is projected to reach 101,875.
- Projections suggest that by 2025, the population of children and young people in Colindale will be the highest of any ward, although the wards with the highest proportions of young people aged 0-19 years old in 2025 are projected to be: Golders Green (32%), Edgware (30%) and Burnt Oak (29%).

## The Local SEND Context

In Barnet, the number of EHCPs has increased by 30.3% between 2015 and 2018, compared to the national average of 33.2%. The London figure for the same period shows a 31.3% increase.

Nationally, in the 2019 calendar year there were 53,900 children and young people with new EHC Plans made. This is a 10% increase compared to the previous year. For the same period, there was an increase in the number of new Plans issued by Barnet from 277 in January 2019 to 301 in January 2020, the percentage increase being 8.6%. Between January 2020 and January 2021 Barnet saw an increase from 301 to 365 new Plans issued, which is an increase of 21%. *(NB. Comparative data not yet available)*. A task-finish group has been established to provide an explanation of the increase, whether there has been in

increase in need resulting from the pandemic, and to identify any further actions that need to be taken to ensure accurate and robust identification of need.

Barnet maintains 2,964 Education, Health and Care Plans (April 2021). 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 SLCN at 19% and SEMH at 14%.

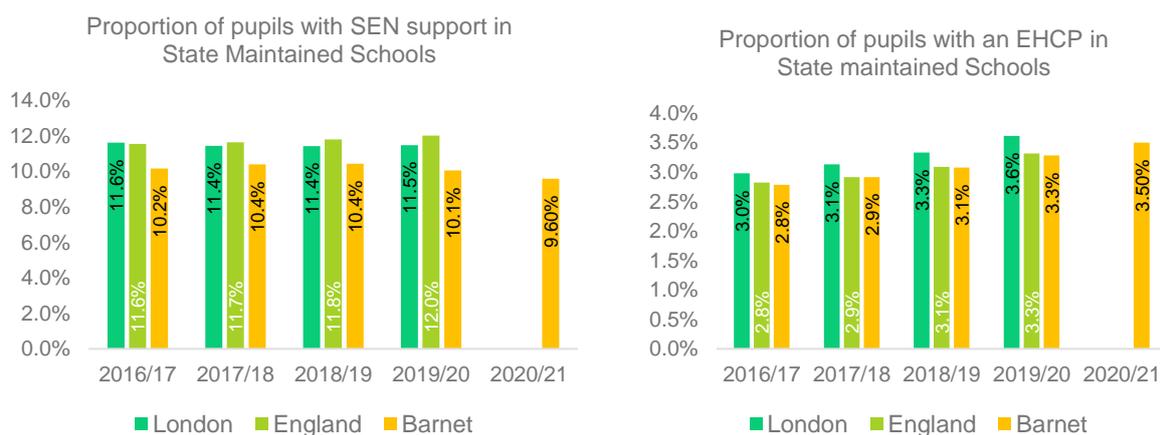
For children with SEND in Barnet schools (SEN support and an EHC Plan), the most common needs in primary schools are SLCN (35.6% compared to the national average of 29.8%) and SPLD (11.4% compared to 9.5%)

In secondary schools, the most common primary need is SEMH (24.3% compared to 18.9%) and MLD (19.6% compared to the national average of 22.9%).

In Barnet state maintained special schools, the most common primary need is ASD (29.7% compared to the national average of 28.5%) and SLD (17.5% compared to 22.4%).

Barnet generally has higher rates of pupils with SEMH and SLCN than the national average, and lower rates of pupils with SPLD and MLD across all school phases.

Barnet’s placement of pupils with an EHC Plan is shown to have a much higher proportion of pupils placed in state maintained mainstream (non-ARP) provision (56% compared to 42% nationally and 44% in Outer London). A much smaller proportion of pupils are placed in state maintained special schools (26% compared to 53% and 36% nationally and Outer London respectively). A higher proportion of pupils are placed in mainstream independent schools (5% compared to 1% nationally and in Outer London). This reflects Barnet’s demography and parental preference for schools with a Jewish ethos.



## The Children and Young People’s Plan

The Children and Young People’s Plan 2019-2023 establishes the vision, key priorities and outcomes for children and young people in Barnet, providing a strategic framework for partnership activity in the borough. Barnet is forecast to have the largest number of children

of any London borough by 2020. With a large and growing number of children, young people and families, we remain committed to our vision to make Barnet the best place to live for families in London.

The concept of Family Friendly Barnet was introduced in the 2016-2020 plan. The 2019-2023 Plan builds on that vision where outcomes and priorities focus on how partners can support families to be resilient and strengthen communities.

The Plan's outcomes and priorities have been informed by our work as a UNICEF UK child-rights partner, engaging with children and young people, parents and carers, and professionals as well as analysis of need from key documents including the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

The role that Barnet council and its partners play in the life of children and their families provides an opportunity to promote and embed resilience. Resilience based practice sits at the heart of improving outcomes for children and young people; an approach that is based on looking for strengths and opportunities to build on, rather than for issues or problems to treat. This approach is being embedded across the partnership.

We have worked with UNICEF as part of our ambition to be recognised as a UNICEF Child Friendly Community in 2023. Several core outcomes have been identified, which form the basis for our Children and Young People's Plan 2019-2023:

#### Family and Belonging

Families and children can be together and be part of a community that encourages resilience

#### Safe and Secure

Children and young people are safe and protected from harm

#### Education and Learning

Children and young people can learn about the world around them

#### Culture

Our attitudes and behaviours enhance the way we work with and for children and young people

#### Cooperation and Leadership

We include children and young people in decision making

#### Communication

Information is shared effectively to children, young people and families across the borough

#### Health and Wellbeing

Children are supported to achieve a healthy start in life, enjoy a healthy lifestyle and to build resilience

### The SEN and Disabilities Strategy 2021 - 2024

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy 2021 – 2024 has been reviewed, refreshed and updated in the light of the pandemic by the Council in partnership with parent carers, children and young people with SEND, schools and settings, health partners, and voluntary sector partners.

Our vision is for all children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities to achieve well, be confident individuals, live fulfilling lives and successfully transition to adulthood.

To realise this vision, the local area has agreed seven priorities. These build on the progress already made in implementing the SEND reforms.

Our priorities are:

Priority 1: To ensure that we are working in a Family Friendly way and co-production is central to our work.

Priority 2: To minimise the long-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the attainment, achievement and psychological wellbeing of children and young people with SEND.

Priority 3: To ensure sufficient high-quality provision in borough for children and young people with complex needs, including Autism.

Priority 4: To ensure effective joint commissioning with clear pathways of support from Early Years through to adulthood.

Priority 5: In line with Resilient schools, develop greater confidence, skills and competencies in mainstream schools to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND, utilising resources and services across Barnet, such as Specialist Team Support and Mental Health Teams.

Priority 6: Champion the educational progress and attainment of pupils with SEND.

Priority 7: Develop skills, knowledge and understanding across the workforce and local area to create supporting environments that promote community integration and independence, enabling young people to make informed decisions and have control over their own lives.

Delivering the priorities in this strategy requires close collaboration and planning across statutory services, partner agencies, parent carers, schools and settings.

The SEND Partnership Board is responsible for leading the strategic approach of the partnership of the council, Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS), schools, the health service and parent-carers to meeting the needs of Barnet's children and young people with SEND. The Board acts as a strategic forum to identify priorities and to oversee the delivery of the council's statutory requirements in relation to the Children and Families Act 2014. The Board also monitors the performance of SEND services on behalf of the council.

The strategy is supported by multidisciplinary SEND workstreams, which report on progress to the SEND Development Group. This is a multi-agency group involving all partners, including parent carers, schools, FE and early years, specialist health providers, social care and education services. It is the primary forum for co-ordinating the operational SEND developments in Barnet. It is also responsible for driving the implementation of

the national SEND reforms. All of the SEND workstreams have representation from parent carers, health, education and social care, working on key priorities linked to the SEND Strategy:

The SEND workstreams are:

- Early Years
- SEN Support
- Autism
- SEMH
- Preparing for Adulthood

There is a well-established Local Offer Steering Group with representation from all partners, including parent carers, health, social care and education services.

There is also an established SEND Joint Commissioning Group with membership comprising a parent representative from the Parent Carer Forum and commissioners from across health, education and social care.

The SEF should be read alongside the SEND Strategy 2021 – 2024 , SEND JSNA, and the Special Places Plan.

## Feedback and scrutiny

The Barnet local area actively seeks internal and external scrutiny. Examples include the Council for Disabled Children audits, MGA (Marie Gascoigne Associates) review, and the internal reviews of the local area's implementation of the SEND reforms held in December 2018 and January 2020 and the Ofsted/CQC SEND Assurance visit in October 2020. These activities have contributed to this self-evaluation.

Additional activities include:

- An extensive review of a wide range of partnership documents, submitted to form a self-evaluation 'evidence bank';
- Views of parents, carers, children and young people obtained through partnership events, surveys, and workshops. When an EHCP is issued, we also contact parent carers to obtain feedback about the process and to provide the opportunity for their views to be represented;
- Having parent carers as members of the auditing team to quality assure new EHC Plans;
- Extending the membership of the Complex Needs Panel (for agreeing to EHC Needs Assessments and issuing new Plans) to have parent carers;
- A review of qualitative and quantitative performance information from commissioners and providers across the partnership, including waiting times;
- A process of critical review and quality assurance with front-line managers across the partnership. This includes a robust auditing process for new EHCPs.
- An annual survey to all Barnet schools for feedback on education services, including all of the SEND teams in BELS (this includes the SEN Assessment and Placements Team).

# Improving Outcomes for children and young people with SEND

## Summary

At every Key Stage and in every measure Barnet pupils with SEND (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.

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.

As at February 2019, nearly half of all Barnet's specialist provision (including special schools, ARPs and PRUs) are rated by Ofsted as outstanding, and the remainder, are graded 'good'.

The most recent performance data for pupils with SEND is as follows:

- The percentage of children with SEN Support achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) in the Early Years Foundation Stage is above the national average.
- Educational attainment in 2019 at Key Stage 2 for children with SEN Support for Reading, Writing and Maths combined is in the top 10% (7<sup>th</sup>) and the proportion of children with an EHC Plan for the same measure is in the top 15% - narrowly outside the top 10% (19<sup>th</sup>). For both groups, attainment exceeds national, London and statistical neighbour averages.
- Progress in Key Stage 2 for children with SEN Support in 2019 is in the top 10% for Reading (10<sup>th</sup>) and Maths (14<sup>th</sup>) and exceeds national, London and statistical neighbour averages. Progress for the same group was 31<sup>st</sup> in Writing and exceeds national and statistical neighbour averages. The lower ranking for Writing reflects the lower ranking for attainment and progress in Writing for all Barnet pupils. There remain inconsistencies nationally with teacher assessment of Writing, which casts doubt on the validity of national rankings.
- KS2 progress for children with an EHCP in 2019 is in the top 10% for Maths (14<sup>th</sup>) and in the top 25% for Reading and Writing. Progress in all subjects exceeds national, London and statistical neighbour averages.
- In 2019 Barnet ranked in the top 10% of LAs for both Attainment 8 and Progress 8 for pupils at SEN Support. In 2020 Barnet was once again ranked within the top 10%.

Attainment 8 for EHCP pupils is narrowly outside the top 10% (19<sup>th</sup>) and above London, Statistical Neighbours and National. Progress 8 has seen a slight dip for Barnet in 2019 but this is still above the national average. This is a small cohort and has high variability. In 2020 Barnet was ranked within the top 10% of local authorities in the country for Attainment 8.

## Focus on outcomes in EHCPs and for SEN Support

Education, Health and Care Plans specify arrangements for short and long-term targets for the school or setting, as well as including the aspirations of the young person. 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 and pre-school settings are supported by specialist teams within BELS.

Schools use a variety of tools and receive support to ensure they are outcomes-focused for children with SEND. These include:

- Person centred “My support plan”;
- Detailed guidance on what should be ‘Ordinarily Available’;
- An outcomes section in the SENCO toolkit.

Children attending Barnet’s Special Schools are ‘baselined’ on entry and reviewed against assessment targets every term. Children who have SEND and attend 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 SENCO to meet the needs of children in their settings and support inclusion.

Schools in Barnet are inclusive, borne out in recent research by Mime Consultants of all local authorities in England. Using an Inclusion Index of 12 indicators for inclusion, Barnet was found to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> most inclusive of all the local authorities (published report November 2019).

## Vulnerable Groups

One of the three main aims of the council’s School and Settings Improvement Strategy is: ‘To ensure there is accelerating progress of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils in order to close the gap between them and their peers’.

School Improvement priorities are reviewed each year and one of the main priorities for improvement has been, and remains, improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and other vulnerable groups (including Children in Need).

Targeted work also takes place for different teams in relation to children and young people with special educational needs:

- The Youth Offending Team has an allocated Educational Psychologist (2 days per week) linked to the service to support in the identification of, and meeting the needs of, any of the young people with SEND. The Children’s Integrated Therapies (CIT) provides YOT with half a day of support on a weekly, year-round basis.
- The Early Help Hubs provide a co-ordinated, multiagency approach to support children and families, including those with SEND. All partner agencies are involved, including early years, education (schools and representatives of the SEND Team), housing, police, social care and health.
- The Virtual School has an allocated Educational Psychologist (2 days per week) linked to the service to support in the identification of, and support to meet the needs of, any children or young people with SEND. The LA and CCG jointly commission a LAC nursing team, including a named nurse, from CLCH; and the CCG employs a designated nurse.

This nursing team works closely with the Virtual School. The CCG commissions paediatricians to undertake initial health reviews for 0-9-year olds and GPs for older children.

The Virtual School also delivers a range of training courses and support material tailored to the SEMH needs that frequently exist within their cohort. The Virtual School has delivered an Attachment Conference. Virtual School provision is the same for all LAC wherever the child or young person is placed in the country.

The Virtual School Challenge Committee receives regular reports on the progress, attainment, attendance and exclusions of its looked after children, including those with SEND, to ensure that the highest expectations are maintained.

## Transitions

Transition support for children with an EHCP is strong. There is an early years transitions protocol for transition from PVI settings to Primary schools; however, further awareness needs to be raised with schools around the application of this. This forms part of the Early Years SEND workstream.

The transitions tracking group is a multi-agency panel which reviews children and young people who require additional support through transition to adulthood with EHCPs or SEN support (with complex health needs/ social care support). This includes Looked After Children, and as required, those with health needs without an EHCP or SEN support. The group cascades actions relating to specific cases of transition and wider best practice and learning to their service areas.

## Preparation for Adulthood

Barnet's Multi-Agency Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) Protocol 2020 - 2023 details the responsibilities of the agencies involved in transition planning for young people with complex learning difficulties, disabilities, additional needs and/or mental health needs. It was co-produced with parents and its implementation is overseen by the transitions tracking group. The protocol applies to young people aged 14 to 25 years who have complex needs and/or disabilities.

Within the Adult Clinical team there is a Learning Disability Community Matron with responsibility to support the 18-25 service, specifically on transitions at age 18. This post is realising significant benefits, particularly in relation to collaborative, early transition planning. The CCG also commissions a continuing care service through CLCH for children and young people with complex physical needs. The CCG employs a community matron to undertake joint assessments.

Preparation for Adulthood is high on the agenda for services in Barnet, and is reflected in the Post 16 Education and Skills Strategy. Work is under way to support more young people with independent travel training, that will enable many young people to have greater independence.

## Planning specialist school places

We currently have six special schools in Barnet, and 13 Additional Resource Provisions (ARPs). These provide a range of specialist provision for children and young people with different special educational needs, including physical disabilities, hearing impairment and autism.

Over the last few years, we have been working with families, schools and other professionals to plan what special educational needs provision we need in Barnet in the future. As part of the review of our provision in the first half of 2019, we carried out a Needs Analysis to help us to plan for our future provision in Barnet, so that we can ensure we have enough, and the right type of, provision to meet the needs of our children and young people with SEN in Barnet.

The council consulted from 18th June to 30th July 2019 on its proposed Special Places Plan and proposals for allocating the Special Provision Fund to support the development of additional provision for children and young people with special educational needs.

Having regard for the responses to the consultation, the council agreed the Special Places Plan and use of the Special Places Fund.

The Special Places Plan includes:

- Continuing with existing plans to increase numbers of places at new and existing ARPs: Coppetts Wood, Chalgrove, Claremont and Whitefield.
- Increasing numbers of Early Years places at Oakleigh special school.
- Exploring and securing provision for an additional 25 special school places (12 Primary; 13 Secondary) by September 2020, rising to 52 special school places (25 Primary; 27 Secondary) by September 2021. The majority of additional Secondary school places will be provided by Kisharon Special School.
- Continuing to support plans for a new all-through Special Academy to cater for the needs of children and young people with autism ('The Windmill').
- Continuing to explore and develop pathways for post-16, including Supported Internships and Apprenticeships.
- Reviewing provision in Barnet for children and young people with SEMH and developing clear pathways and support arrangements.
- Reducing placements in out of borough provisions as more specialist placements in Barnet come on stream.

All the schools where expansion of specialist places was proposed were judged either good or outstanding at their last OfSTED inspection.

As part of our cycle of continuous improvement, we have recently updated our SEND Needs Analysis, and will be consulting on the proposed Special Places Plan in June 2021. This is to ensure that we have the right amount and right type of specialist provision in Barnet and this is one of our priorities in the SEND Strategy 2021 – 2024.

In the meantime, we have responded to an increased demand in primary aged children who have learning needs requiring support that is over and above what mainstream provision can provide. We have been working with one of the schools with an existing ARP for autism to expand their ARP provision to cater for the needs of children with high levels of learning need. This is due to come on stream in September 2021.

## Post-16 provision

In 2013 the local authority led a rigorous process of mapping post-16 provision and pathways. As a result of the review, Barnet and Southgate College developed a new post-16 SEND offer. The local authority and Barnet and Southgate College formed a partnership to develop a new post-16 SEND offer, creating a greater breadth and depth of local provision, increasing the post-16 options available to young people with SEND and reducing reliance on out of borough provision. The development of local community-based provision has given greater choice to young people with SEND in Barnet.

Post-16 provision is judged as “good” or better in Barnet secondary schools, but Barnet and Southgate College was assessed by Ofsted as ‘Requiring Improvement’ in December 2018, which included an RI judgement for ‘provision for learners with high needs’. However, the college has improved rapidly under new leadership and an Ofsted Monitoring Visit in November 2019 reported significant improvements in two areas from the new inspection framework (‘Ensuring students develop deep and secure knowledge’ and ‘Improving the quality of subcontracted provision’) and reasonable progress in the third area (‘Improving student attendance’). A re-inspection was expected in autumn 2020, but due to the Covid19 pandemic, all routine inspections were suspended from 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Barnet and Southgate College did, however, receive a two day interim visit from Ofsted on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> November 2020. The findings from the visit included good provision for on-line learning during the pandemic, face-to-face provision in place for vulnerable students and those with high needs, and college leaders working closely with staff to identify the impact of curriculum changes on the progress and well-being of students.

To support the College with their re-inspection, the post 16 Team in BELS is undertaking a SEND Review, which will highlight the strengths as well as areas for improvement and training needs of college staff.

Other key measures of success for post-16 young people with SEND are:

- 96% of 16- to 17-year-olds with special educational needs are in education or training, compared to the national figure of 88%; Barnet is ranked in the top 10% in the country (10<sup>th</sup>).
- The percentage of SEND young people with an EHCP going to university is below the national average (48% compared to 50%, although we have a high proportion not captured in our data, many of whom we know attend higher education abroad in Israel due to our high Jewish population).
- Of children with SEND who attend higher education, a very high proportion attend the top third selective HEIs – 24% compared to 15% nationally, with 18% attending a Russell Group university compared to 11% nationally.
- The percentage of SEND pupils on an apprenticeship is slightly below the national average (5% compared to 6%) but is in line with the London average.
- The percentage of children with SEND in a sustained employment destination is below national (13% compared to 17%) but in line with the London average.
- Since the proportion of pupils with a non-sustained destination is lower than the national and London average (7% compared to 9% and 10%), our focus is on ensuring the quality of pathways.

Additional places for young people with learning difficulties (LDD) and/or disabilities are being created at Barnet and Southgate College in their LDD provision at the Southgate campus helping to meet the rise in this cohort of young people.

The post 16 team in BELS are developing clear pathways for supporting young people with SEND into employment and preparing them for work. There is an established process to identify and track young people at risk of NEET from year 11 onwards; this leads to targeted interventions that are effective in reducing risk. This 'Risk of NEET' screening is carried out by all non-selective mainstream secondary schools and by Oakhill Special Academy (SEMH special school) and the Pavilion PRU. Historically, person-specific information has not been routinely shared between the post-16 team and the SEN team; however, systems have recently been established to ensure that records are routinely synchronised.

In 2020 we had three Supported Internship programmes – Public Health England, Transport for London, and Mencap. The plan was to develop more work-based provision to give greater choice to young people. In 2018/19, 6 Barnet resident students were enrolled on Supported Internships; in the year 2019/20 30 young people were enrolled on Supported Internships.

In April 2021, a relaunch of the Supported Internship Council initiative has been devised to minimise the number of NEETs amongst young people (aged 16 to 24 years) with moderate learning difficulties or Autism, many having an Education Health and Care Plan. In recent times, Barnet Council was running one of the most successful supported internships in London with Public Health England (PHE), but this ceased, as their focus was diverted to combating Covid-19 and safeguarding the health of the nation. However, 11 graduates out of a cohort of 23 LDD learners secured paid employment and we intend to build on this success by creating a suite of supported internships in Barnet and so achieve economies of scale.

Our current supported internship partnership with MENCAP is being closely monitored and reviewed to ensure we receive the best return for our involvement and that of our young people. A new role of Supported Internship Officer has recently been created in the post 16 team in BELS, whose remit includes quality assurance of the learner experience, employer host offer and number of paid employment outcomes.

The post 16 team in BELS have recently approached four supported internship provider partners to bolster and achieve even better sustainable paid employment outcomes than our previous SI programme with PHE (50% SEND learners into work). However, recruitment is still ongoing and currently (May 2021), 16 young people continue their Supported Internship with Mencap and an additional 25 learners have secured places for September 2021.

The post 16 team in BELS have also identified a careers adviser with SEN experience to meet with parents and students to provide impartial information and guidance on what is available to learners with an EHCP post-16. They are also working with colleagues within the Regeneration department to identify work experience and employment opportunities for learners with SEND and this is written in S.106 obligations with contractors.

### Short Breaks

Short breaks are part of a range of services offered by Barnet Council to children and young people with disabilities living within the borough. The services enable children and young

people to take a break from their normal routine and try new experiences, giving them the opportunity to learn new skills, develop their confidence and have fun. The services give children and young people positive experiences, whilst, at the same time, giving a break to their primary carers. They are designed to contribute to the children's personal and social development, reducing social isolation and preventing family breakdown.

## Strengths and achievements

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 above national, London and statistical averages on almost all measures at Key Stages 2 and 4 and in the top 10% nationally on most measures.

There are robust processes in place for monitoring the attainment and progress of SEN pupils and for challenging schools, where there are concerns.

EHCPs include short-term and long-term targets and aspirations of young people and 'outcome meetings' are a strength.

Schools are well-supported with excellent tools and guidance.

Transition support for children with an EHCP is strong.

Independent travel training is being expanded to support more young people to further develop their independent skills. This is part of the work around Preparation for Adulthood.

Barnet has a detailed multiagency Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) Protocol 2020 - 2023 which is overseen by the transitions tracking group.

The Local Area has put in place robust arrangements for the planning of specialist provision with good engagement with all stakeholders.

## Focus for the year ahead

- Attainment and progress of looked after children, including those with SEND, in Barnet is above the national average for looked after children but low compared with other Barnet pupils. This is an area of focus, and the Virtual School is working with a BPSI consultant to develop its systems and processes for monitoring and tracking attainment and progress.
- Ensure that ambitious and accessible pathways exist for all children and young people with SEND.
- To develop a multi-agency quality assurance framework for children and young people in out of borough placements to ensure that all children and young people receive the highest quality provision.
- More work needs to be developed on ensuring that preparation for adulthood is embedded from the earliest point in annual reviews.
- There are some knowledge gaps for post-16 settings about SEND. We will facilitate relationships between colleges and other post-16 providers to share best practice.
- To commission additional specialist provision in line with the Special Places Plan, including support for the development of the Windmill School (specialist ASC provision) so that more young people can have their needs met locally.

# The Local Area's response to the Pandemic for children and young people with SEND and their families

## Summary

Research that has focused on the impact of the pandemic for children and young people with additional needs, including SEND, has highlighted that many children and families have experienced greater disadvantage than families of children without additional needs. As a result of the impact of school closures, and less access to services, research has found that parents of children with SEND have experienced increased fear and anxiety about the threat of Covid-19 ( National Children's Bureau, March 2021), and profound effects on mental health of children and young people (The Covid-19 Marmot Review, 2020).

Findings from Ofsted and CQC interim visits in the autumn term, 2020 have highlighted the additional barriers for children and young people attending an educational setting, a loss of enrichment opportunities and families experiencing increased 'adverse conditions' during the first lock down.

In October 2020, Ofsted and the CQC carried out a joint visit to Barnet to support the local area's understanding of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children and young people with SEND and their families, and to help identify opportunities for improvement. They reported that area leaders had reached out, listened and given weight to the views and experiences of families of children with SEND, building on the existing collaborative culture and fully involving Barnet Parent Carer Forum. Leaders and practitioners had responded in an agile way to children and young people's existing and emerging needs.

The local area has worked together to consider the recommendations from the visit, and further feedback from schools and families. The following gives an outline of actions taken to date.

## Business as usual

A decision was made early on in the pandemic to maintain 'Business as usual' for statutory processes and decision making, including requests for EHC Needs Assessments, finalising EHC Plans and placement decisions. Over 95% of new EHC Plans have been finalised within the statutory timescales during 2020 – 21, and the quality of EHCPs has remained good throughout this time (as shown by the findings of the EHCP audit). The weekly Complex Needs Panel has been run virtually throughout the pandemic, along with Placement meetings with special schools and ARPs.

Between September 2020 and April 2021, 42 parent carers gave feedback on their experiences of the EHCP process, and opportunities for them and their child to give their views. 93% said that they had been able to express their views throughout the process. 96% said that their child's views had been obtained and included in the EHCP. 90% said

that overall, they had had a positive experience of the process. 90% said that the EHCP contained meaningful outcomes for their child.

One of the biggest challenges has been supporting children and young people with SEND who have therapies (Speech and language; Occupational therapy; Physiotherapy) in their EHC Plan. This has been due to capacity issues of the NHS provider and difficulties with recruitment and retention during the pandemic. From September 2020, the Director of SEND & Inclusion and the Head of SEN Assessment and Placements have met weekly with the NHS provider to address gaps of provision, where possible. This has included commissioning private therapists to undertake assessment work, and as restrictions have been loosened, to provide direct therapy to children.

### Open Spaces Project

The Open Spaces Scheme is a multiagency initiative in response to feedback from parent carers about the lack of safe, outside opportunities for their child during the first lockdown. The project has been running from May 2020 and offers families the chance to book a safe space where they can play together. This includes outdoor play areas and indoor space and has recently been extended to offer families free bookable sessions in an indoor swimming pool. All sessions are free and transport has been provided where needed.

Families have exclusive access to the space during pre-booked sessions, which last 60 to 90 minutes. The scheme has been open to families within Barnet who have a child with special educational needs associated with ASD (autism spectrum disorder), learning difficulties or other challenging behaviour which prevents them from accessing public outdoor venues.

Over the last 12 months, 108 families have accessed the scheme. Feedback from families has been overwhelmingly positive, with regular text messages, emails and photos received as a “thank you” from those using the space. Every family who has responded to our feedback survey stated that exclusive access to a safe ‘open space’ has been ‘very important’ to their family’s wellbeing. As part of the evaluation, all parent carers using the scheme have been surveyed and asked to give a score out of 10 for the quality of what is provided. The average score given is 9.75.

### Mental Health Support

The effect of the pandemic on children and young people’s mental wellbeing has been mixed. 48% of primary and secondary aged children reported feeling “Okay” since the first ‘lockdown’, while 43% reported their long-term mental wellbeing had been negatively affected. Survey findings have found that in Barnet, young people of Asian ethnic origin, girls, young people with a disability and those aged 13 years and over are more likely to be worried about the coronavirus. Barnet’s Youth Realities have reported an increased demand for 1:1 mental health support. In Barnet Integrated Clinical Service (BICS), there has been a 25% increase in anxiety related presentations due to Covid-19, and CAMHS have seen a 30% increase in crisis and 35% increase in presentations of eating disorder during the pandemic.

BICS are running a series of Wellbeing Workshops in 2021 for parents and carers and for children and young people. Topics include “Building resilience”, “Going back to school”, “Building confidence”, “Dealing with anxiety” and “Transitioning from primary to secondary school”.

For vulnerable children, Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS) have worked collaboratively with Family Services to support children back to school. Staff in BELS have also delivered training to school staff and to parent carers covering topics including loss, bereavement and anxiety. Between March and July 2020, the educational psychologists delivered 20 universal training sessions to parent carers and professionals. From the 426 responses received, 99% of those attending the sessions said that the materials were useful and thought the training would improve their practice and skills.

## ‘Lost Learning’

BELS, in collaboration with the Council and voluntary sector, undertook strategic actions to mitigate against the potential negative impacts of lost learning, including support for the development of online learning and support and training for teaching staff and parents during lockdown. This has included:

- Resources through the online Barnet Partnership for School Improvement (BPSI) website to provide materials for virtual learning for schools and parents;
- A survey was undertaken of schools to audit the level of support required to deliver online learning. This was followed up with workshop sessions with schools showcasing the best examples;
- Barnet joined five other London boroughs in a “Lost Learning” project, which involved speaking with schools and students, focusing on Years 5 and 6 and Year 11, 12 and 13 in secondary schools.

## Transition Hub at Church Farm

As schools re-opened to all children from the 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2021 it was evident from a number of different sources (mainstream schools, special schools, parent carers and professionals) that there were some families who were very anxious to send their child back to school due to fears and anxiety about how safe their child would be, and how their child would cope with returning to school on a full-time basis. There had been a meeting with parent carers of children who were shielding and the Director of SEND and Inclusion in December 2020 to explore possible options for some face to face teaching and access to therapies. The parents chose not to pursue the offer at that time due to concerns about their child’s safety. In recognition of the need for some additional support for some families and children to return to school, a temporary provision was set up at the Pavilion PRU’s offsite provision at Church Farm to provide small group teaching and support for a small number of children to successfully transition back to their usual school. This has run from 15<sup>th</sup> March and will continue to support between 10 – 12 children back to full-time school by the end of the academic year 2021 when the provision comes to an end.

## Recovery, Reset, Renaissance

Since March 2021, BELS staff have met with headteachers, other senior leaders and governors to find out from schools what they need to recover from the effects of school closures during the pandemic. As a result, a package of support has been put together to support schools with their recovery. This includes schools being given additional BPSI consultancy time; 50% funding of the cost of engaging in the Compass for Life programme; access to a Language Enrichment programme for small groups of primary and secondary aged children, facilitated by a qualified speech and language therapist, and further support for mental health from educational psychologists and the Inclusion Advisory Team.

# The Local Offer

## Summary

Barnet Local Offer has been co-produced with parent carers, young people and other partners and our data shows increasing use of the Local Offer as the 'go to' place for information about SEND in Barnet. In December 2019 there were 2,008 users, of which 79.8% were new users. This was an increase of 263% on the number of users for the same month in 2018. The number of users has increased steadily over the last three years and more noticeably from March 2020 onwards with the launch of our Home Learning Zone and our Parent and Carer Zone. In June 2020, we had our greatest number of Local offer users (3,924) accessing the Local Offer the greatest number of times (5,477). There has been a 32% increase in the number of users in March 2021 compared with March 2020.

The Local Offer has been translated into 37 languages.

A Local Offer Steering Group is established and has active membership from parent carers. Membership of this group includes representation from Barnet Parent Carer Forum, the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO), Educational Psychology and Specialist Inclusion Services, the 0-25 Team in Family Services, and schools and settings.

Young people are also actively involved in reviewing and developing information on the Local Offer, including the dedicated 'Youth Zone'. The Local Offer Steering group reports to the SEND Development Group, a multidisciplinary group of parent carers, providers and commissioners.

A new Parent Carer Zone was a welcome addition to the Local Offer in 2020, providing easy access to information and updates.

In response to feedback from parent carers, young people and schools, particularly in relation to the impact of the pandemic on emotional health and psychological wellbeing, we are launching a Mental Health Zone on the Local offer in June 2021.

In accordance with the Children and Families Act (2014), Barnet publishes an Annual report on the Local Offer, detailing feedback from children and young people with SEND and their parent carers about the progress we have made in developing the Local Offer, what we have learnt from the feedback and next steps in further developing the Local Offer. Information about the SEN Information Report and what schools are responsible for with regards to SEN support and accessibility is published on the Local Offer and there is a wide range of materials to support schools in undertaking their duties in relation to SEND. There is a dedicated SENCO Zone on the Local Offer, which has been developed by SENCOs. This has proved very popular with school staff and parent carers.

Barnet Partnership for School Improvement (traded service) also offer a website review for schools, which will check for SEN Information Report compliance. The Governor Services training programme also includes information on the SEN Information Report.

## Strengths and achievements

We have a well-established Local Offer Steering Group to oversee and further develop the information available on the Local Offer website and highlight areas for improvement. This feeds into the SEND Development Group and is fed back to parent carers, and other partners through “You said, We did” on the website.

As a result of some of the feedback, we have made a number of recent changes to the Local Offer. Our Home Learning Zone has been established to provide effective support for parents and carers home schooling during Covid-19. This area of the Local Offer includes resources for learning, wellbeing, fun family activities, and information about local and national organisations offering support to parents and carers. Our data analytics show that, during April 2020, this was one of the most visited areas of the Local Offer.

Our Parent and Carer Zone was launched in March 2020 and has been designed to support with signposting our parents and carers to useful information such as helpful organisations, courses and support groups as well as the latest news and events. Findings from our data analytics suggest that the Parent and Carer Zone is currently the second most visited area of the Local Offer website.

We have continued to develop the content of the SENCO Zone and there have been opportunities to co-produce content and resources with our SENCO community through our local SENCO forums, and in response to the pandemic (Covid-19), on the following areas:

- Covid-19: Latest SEND News and Updates
- Supporting Transition and Reintegration
- Home Learning – Useful information for Parents and Carers
- Resources from our Specialist Settings
- Resources to Support Schools

Our data analytics show that this continues to be the most visited area of the Local Offer website and is a valued resource by our school and professional community.

There are plans to refresh and relaunch the Young People’s Zone to include further information on money, housing and employment. This work will be undertaken with the support of the Young People’s Voice Coordinator and BING (Barnet Inclusion Next Generation) a forum for children and young people with SEND aged between 11 and 25 years.

New for the Local offer is a Mental Health Zone which will contain information about services and support available to children and young people experiencing a range of issues in relation to mental health, including anxiety and depression. This will be launched at the end of June 2021.

Schools receive support and advice about their SEN Information report and SEN Support on a regular basis through SENCO meetings and moderation events.

## Focus for the year ahead

- Further develop the Young People’s Zone in the Local Offer
- Develop a dedicated post-16 Zone for education providers

- Develop a Mental Health Zone (to be launched in June 2021)
- Develop a SEN information report audit schedule
- Provide a framework for schools to ensure they publish a high-quality SEN information report

# Voice, Influence and Participation

## Summary

Barnet Parent Carer Forum (BPCF) is active, engaged and involved in setting strategic direction. Funding to the BPCF has been increased to help them engage with the widest possible group of parents and to support the attendance of parent carers at the weekly Complex Needs Panel.

We routinely publish 'You said, We did' updates on our Local Offer so families and professionals can see the impact their feedback has had on the quality and delivery of services in Barnet.

The Educational Psychology team lead five Leading Edge Groups, who each meet three times a year. Health, social care, education, parents and carers are part of these research and development groups, taking decisions about borough wide processes relating to SEND and feeding this into the relevant SEND workstreams.

There is a well-established and highly valued set of conferences for parent carers and professionals, and parent carers are encouraged to attend the free conferences that take place throughout the year. These include the annual SEN Conference, dedicated SEN Health and Social Care conferences, and a SEN Early Years conference. These are advertised widely through SENDIASS, Barnet Parent Carer Forum, the Local Offer and through professionals. All of these events are well attended and highly regarded by 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.

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.

Barnet SENDIASS is well regarded by families and within the local authority. It is placed in Family Services to remain separate from the SEND Management structure (within BELS), 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. (Barnet Youth Zone, named by young people as 'Unitas', is an independent charity and a purpose-built facility for the borough's young people aged 8 to 19, and up to 25 for those with disabilities).

During the reporting period of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020, SENDIASS supported 573 families; 257 of these were new referrals, the rest were families and young people being supported with ongoing cases. The number of general enquiries and one-off advice and support remains the same as in the previous year.

	<b>New referrals to SENDIASS</b>	<b>Total numbers of families supported</b>
1 September 2016 - 31 August 2017	427	514
1 September 2017 - 31 August 2018	246	728
1 September 2018 - 31 August 2019	210	720
1 September 2019 – 31 August 2020	257	573

The Short Breaks offer was launched in October 2019 following a comprehensive review. Families told us they were not able to use their allocation due to lack of capacity with approved providers or providers not offering something that was right for them or their child. We conducted surveys and focus groups to find out what local families wanted and needed from Short breaks (including a picture-based survey with children from one special school) and co-designed new service requirements with local parent representatives (parent carer forum).

Families told us that they found the offer confusing and they did not understand why some families received more days than others. The consultation also showed mixed views regarding whether families felt everyone should get the same offer or if some families should get more.

In the light of the consultation we reviewed a range of models and options to understand what good looked like and developed the local market and recommissioned the service to be responsive to local needs, and family interests. We awarded contracts to 8 quality approved providers. The contract mode allows new providers to join at a later date, allowing for further market development in line with local needs, and we added an option for families to take up a personal budget, enabling them to have the flexibility to go 'off list'.

The offer makes the basis of allocations clearer and more transparent, with the new offer involving 15 days or 90 hours of a commissioned service or £1200 personal budget to allow flexibility and choice of provision. We extended the offer to eligible 3- and 4-year olds (previously the lower age limit was 5 years of age), although there were some under 5's previously but not many and certainly it is now offered to children and young people aged 0 to 18. To support those with higher needs, there is now an option to apply for discretionary additional support with a clear application process via our Disability Resource Panel

## **Strengths and Achievements**

Barnet CAMHS Transformation Plan 2015-2020 outlines joint priorities between health, social care and other partners to improve children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. The plan identifies key goals to achieve this transformation which include increasing access and improving accessibility for more young people to get support.

We have consulted face to face with 400+ young people via visiting 27 Barnet schools and reached 8,000 Barnet young people online to inform and shape our plans for transforming CAMHS services. The overwhelming response from young people was that they wanted CAMHS provision to become much more accessible to young people, including online access to services, advice and support. Young people also wanted the option of contacting services anonymously.

Barnet offers a wide range of therapeutic support for children and young people and families. We have invested in our Mental Health Services by placing dedicated mental health professionals alongside our Children's Social Care, Youth Offending and Early Help Services. Our Resilient Schools Programme provides mental health first aid training to school staff which enables them to address mental health difficulties early and we have listened to children and young people by providing them with services that they want.

In addition, we have extensive support offers for parents including parents with children diagnosed with ASD/ADHD. We have a variety of service providers; both internal and external, including the voluntary sector. Venues are flexible to meet the needs of families, and include an online service which has been in place for over a year. Families can access support in schools, homes, and in community centres.

Barnet has adopted the THRIVE model and has ensured services are available to cover the specific areas. 80% of CYP are Thriving.



Below gives an outline of services that are available in Barnet for children and young people and families where there are concerns about emotional health and psychological wellbeing.

**Kooth**

This is digital service where the young people's identity is anonymous, comprising online access to services, advice and counselling. It has been a popular service as it also offers a wide range of articles, chats and forums that young people can access and participate in

discussion forums. The online counselling and support service is available seven days a week, 365 days a year.

### **Qwell**

To compliment Kooth, Barnet also has similar offer for school staff.

The online counselling and support service for school staff is available seven days a week, 365 days a year.

### **BICs**

At the end of 2017/18 Barnet developed the Integrated Clinical Service; this reflects investment in early help, enhancing our prevention offer. Integrated Clinical Service provides clinical expertise across Early Help, Schools, Children's Social Care and Youth Offending Services so that CAMH clinicians are embedded with the wider children's workforce offering direct support to children, young people and families, as well as clinical consultation, supervision and training.

Barnet won the Trailblazer bids for Wave 2 and 3 funded by NHSE, is part of the Integrated Services and has a whole family approach. Emotional Wellbeing Mental Health Practitioners and Children Wellbeing Practitioners are linked to schools to provide support to pupils in need of mild to moderate support and also to provide a source of support for school staff.

**Resilient Schools Programme** has been co-produced with parents, pupils, Barnet Public Health, specialist staff in Cambridge Education, Local Schools and Barnet CCG. Currently 56 schools in Barnet are signed up to the programme.

The programme aims to:

- Help schools, parents and pupils to recognise their own mental wellbeing needs and be confident to access information to support themselves and others
- De-stigmatise mental health in schools
- Intervene early to prevent escalation of mental health problems
- Involve parents, pupils and schools in tackling issues

A core package of support comprising of a menu of whole school interventions (for pupils, parents/carers and staff) is offered to the schools. Key elements included are Mental Health Youth First Aid and Resilience Training, Peer Mentoring and supportive therapies (Kooth and Qwell text based counselling services) and Digital Resilience workshops to address online health as well as online safety.. As of December 2020:

80 schools in total have trained YMHFA

- 100+ YMHFA trained total
- 56 schools have achieved the Resilience School award and more are interested to join.

**Space2Grow, led by the Young Barnet Foundation** aims to:

- Support local voluntary and community groups, who are members of the Young Barnet Foundation and are working with children and young people (and their families).
- Develop activities and services for children and young people in the London Borough of Barnet.

- Give priority to community organisations with limited access to other sources of funding.

Using joint grant funding to grow capacity in children and young people's mental health; awards of up to £10,000 per organisation per year have been given to a variety of local community and voluntary sector providers.

As part of the third wave of funding, eight projects were funded for a total of £90,000 and in 2019-20, a further 10 projects were approved for funding for a total of £75,000. For 2020-21, seven projects were funded for a total of £47,000.

**Raphael house** provides 1:1 counselling for young people aged 13-19 years; play therapy sessions for 4-12 years; art and drama therapists as well as psychodynamic and integrative approaches. Sessions are typically for 12 weeks.

### **Parenting support and programmes for Autism:**

Barnet has a range of support services for parents with children that have been diagnosed with ASD/ADHD. Barnet Mencap provide information, advice and guidance for young people with learning difficulties who have ASD and/or ADHD.

In 2019, Family Services piloted a service with Resources for Autism to provide intensive home-based support to families with children that have ASD and complex needs. This service works with families to identify positive strategies and tools to enable parents and carers to understand and support their child's needs. This has been a successful support service with positive outcomes, especially in times of Covid 19 pandemic and it has avoided the potential breakdown of families and children being placed outside the family home.

Autism specialists in BELS deliver the Cygnets parenting programme to parents of children and young people on the Autism Spectrum aged 5 – 18 years.

Parent carers and children and young people with SEN have been active participants in developing the ASD Strategy, which was published in June 2020.

### **Focus for the year ahead**

- Implementation of the SEND Strategy 2021 - 2024.
- Full implementation of the Autism Strategy.
- Further support parent carers as equal partners in decision making forums, including the Complex Needs Panel.
- Further develop the BING (Barnet Inclusion Next Generation) by strengthening and diversifying the representation to ensure the voice of children and young people is clearly heard, including strategies to gain the views of non-verbal children and young people.
- Undertake a review of Short Breaks to understand the impact of the new offer.

# Early Identification

## Summary

We use evidence to inform our approach to identification of SEND. In response to a lower than average proportion of SEN Support children on the school census, our SEND team in BELS led on a process to work in partnership with schools and SENCOs to identify that there was inconsistency in SEND identification across schools, and we set up moderation groups across schools and co-developed a SEND toolkit. We are measuring impact through the moderation meetings with SENCOs. Since 2019, 74 schools have attended the moderation sessions held by the Advisory Teachers. All but three schools have agreed to use the identification toolkit as part of their initial concerns process.

The Local Area promotes equality and inclusion for disabled children when securing funded early education in the early years through the funded places team and outreach workers. We offer specialist support for inclusion at this age through the Early Years, the pre-school inclusion team and the pre-school teaching team, Barnet Early Autism Model (BEAM). We also offer SEN Inclusion Funding (SENIF) to support individual children with complex SEND in private, voluntary and independent early years settings and maintained schools. We have delivered a review of places through the Childcare Sufficiency Needs Assessment to ensure that there are sufficient places within the borough.

The integration of the Early Help arrangements with the identification of SEND means that any referral that comes through the MASH also results in consideration as to whether or not the child may have special educational needs. This system is well understood by all agencies and by parent carer representatives.

Referrals for an EHC Needs assessment are received through a variety of routes:

- A range of early assessment and healthcare providers (e.g. health visitors, paediatricians, audiology etc) through the Barnet Child Development Service and intake meetings. Barnet's Child Development Service is a multi-agency collaboration between local teams with expertise in child development. Medical, nursing, therapy, educational and family services are involved. The intake meetings screen for access to therapies/interventions based on identified child development concerns. We ensure that partner organisations are aware of these referral routes through training sessions.
- The majority of requests for an EHC Needs Assessment are from schools and settings. Relatively few are requests directly from parent carers and young people.
- 0-19 Early Help Hubs – a member of the SEND team attends the weekly panel meetings which take a multi-agency approach to evaluating early help referrals, and proactively identify the lead professional for that child and family and the team around the child. The Hubs are also starting to undertake a role in evaluating what Early Help services are available in what local community, so that they can be more responsive to need at a local level.
- Schools can refer to the Barnet Child Development Unit, or access traded services for support in the identification of SEN. There is a clear policy available on the Local Offer website which provides information on how applications for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment can be made to the multidisciplinary Complex Needs Panel.

The Complex Needs Panel meets weekly to make decisions about Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments and EHC Plans.

## Strengths and Achievements

All Barnet schools have access to detailed guidance (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. The guidance and supporting materials have been co-produced with SENCOs in Barnet schools and are on the Local Offer website.

Barnet supports early years settings to identify children with SEND at the earliest opportunity, through:

- A well-established and high-quality early years SEND training programme;
- Promoting schools offering FEE2 places which enables them to support children and families earlier and identify possible need;
- All early years PVI settings, children's centres with childcare and CODPs have a named Area SENCO who is proactive in helping to identify children at risk of SEND and offers a core SEND training package and INSET development sessions.
- The role of health visitors and community nursery nurses has helped to improve performance of the 2.5 year checks.
- All PVI settings have a named community nursery nurse.

Barnet Early Years Alliance (BEYA) is a federation of three 'outstanding' nursery schools and a children's centre; BEYA uses the Early Excellence Assessment Tracker which is effective in identifying children who may have additional needs at the earliest point.

## Focus for the year ahead

- The SEN Support workstream has developed guidance on quality first teaching strategies for children and young people with SEND, which will help to support schools to identify children with SEN and improve the consistency of identification across Barnet.
- Reduce waiting times for BEAM, Integrated therapies, and paediatricians.
- Re-establish health visiting developmental checks for 2.5 year olds.
- Following a review, implement new Pre-school Teaching Team pathways to provide a quick response to families.
- Develop a clear 0 to 25 years pathway for ASD across education, health and social care, including early identification and support for emerging and complex needs.
- Build on the Children and Young People's Mental Health Plan to incorporate all aspects of SEMH provision.

# Timeliness and quality of EHCPs

## Summary

We focus on both the quality and timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plans and have robust systems of accountability, reporting performance of both of these to the SEND Development Group and the SEND Partnership Board. Outcomes in EHCPs are SMART and determined by what is most important for the child or young person. These often include communication skills and skills for leading an independent life (e.g. getting dressed independently).

From March 2021, we have welcomed parent carers to the weekly Complex Needs Panel. As equal members of the Panel, parent carers participate in decision making about starting an EHC Needs Assessment and issuing new EHC Plans.

Our SEND dashboard is reviewed by the SEND Development Group and monitors the timeliness of EHC plans. We consistently meet statutory timescales for EHC Plans. In 2019 we delivered 98% of all EHCPs within statutory timeframes (excluding exceptions). This compares with the national average of 60.4%. We have maintained the timeliness and quality of EHCPs during the pandemic and delivered on the statutory timescales for over 96% of new EHCPs, compared with a national average of less than 55%.

There is a rigorous, multi-agency quality assurance process for new EHCPs undertaken on a quarterly basis with recommendations produced and reviewed by managers across Education, Health and Social Care. In 2020 we welcomed six parent carers on the EHCP Auditing team. Over the last year, 98% of all new EHCPs have been audited, and 63% have been rated as good or outstanding.

## Strengths and achievements

We have systems in place to enable parents and carers to give their views on the EHC needs assessment process.

In 2020/21

- 93% of parents and carers surveyed agreed their views were included in their child's EHCP,
- 90% agreed that they had had a positive experience of the EHCP process
- 96% agreed their child's views were included in their EHCP.
- 90% agreed that the outcomes in their child's EHCP were meaningful
- Many parents commented on the feeling of a positive outcome and the help provided by schools, nursery settings, SEN caseworkers and educational psychologists.
- 98% of all new Education, Health and Care Plans have been audited over the last year, and 63% have been rated as good or outstanding.

Joined up ways of working have taken place to share awareness of the Early Help Hub Model, such as joint training sessions to Health Visitors with representation from Health,

Education and Social Care, work with voluntary sector organisations, and we continue to further embed this across teams and partners.

The multi-agency, clinical ASC strategic pathway task and finish group, which includes parents, aims to reduce waiting times for ASC assessments; the group feeds into the SEND ASC Workstream. We are working closely with colleagues from the Royal Free Trust and Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust (BEHMHT) to deliver further improvements, particularly for children and young people under 7 years old. In 2019/20, Barnet CCG commissioned BEHMHT to deliver a waiting time initiative. The task and finish group is working on a redesign of the ASC assessment pathway and aims for an improved clinical pathway to be implemented by quarter 2 / quarter 3 2020. This is being led by CCG commissioners with DCO support.

### **Focus for the year ahead**

- To ensure the high quality of new EHCPs is maintained by developing annual review processes through the EHCP workstream.
- To review and update the EHCP auditing tool in light of any updates to the EHCP template.
- To ensure health providers deliver timely contributions across the EHCP timeline.
- To look at how we use communication aids and other approaches to gain the views of children and young people.

# Joint Commissioning

## Summary

In Barnet we have well established joint commissioning arrangements in place. Commissioners from the local authority and CCG work very closely together, and we have S.75 agreements in place for: LAC nursing; Integrated Therapies, mental health and wellbeing. The LA collaborates with the CCG in the commissioning of Public Health Nursing. For SEND Joint commissioning we have a SEND Joint Commissioning working group which reports into the SEND Development Group and SEND Partnership Board.

Parent carers and children and young people have had an important role in designing and commissioning the delivery of services, including the Children's Integrated Therapies, Short Breaks, Children and Young People's Mental Health Plan (previously the CAMHS Transformation Plan), SEND Strategy 2021 - 2024 and Autism Strategy.

Joint Commissioning is underpinned by qualitative and quantitative data such as the JSNA, SEND Needs analysis undertaken in November 2020, and feedback from parent carers and partners through conferences, drops ins, the SEND Development Group, Barnet Parent Carer Forum, meetings with Head teachers and school staff and other joint forums.

Feedback from parents/carers and young people tells us that we still have further work to do with regards to the offer of support for children and young people with Autism and those with SEMH. The Children and Young People's Mental Health Transformation Programme aims to embed and strengthen a reduction in waiting times for assessment and follow-up.

The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) leads and jointly commissions, with the local authority, North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) to deliver therapies in Barnet. Like other providers, NELFT have had considerable difficulties with capacity, recruitment and retention of staff over the last 12 months.

Over the last year, and particularly since September 2020, the local authority, BELS, the CCG and NELFT have been working very closely to prioritise and increase the therapy support available to children and families, and schools. This has included working with individual private therapists and other private providers to secure more therapists, who will work alongside NELFT in undertaking assessments and delivering therapies to children with therapy provision in their EHC Plan.

Although we would want therapists to work closely with staff in schools, we recognise the need for children who require therapy to receive the necessary input and support, and have asked all the therapists to offer therapy during the school holidays. This additional resourcing for therapy will continue until the end of autumn term 2021, when we hope that our commissioned provider will have sufficient capacity to meet need in Barnet.

In addition to the work being undertaken to obtain and deliver more therapy support, BELS is also putting together a recovery package of support for schools. This includes offering all mainstream primary and secondary schools in Barnet access to a qualified private Speech and Language Therapist who will train school staff and facilitate small group support for

pupils with a lower level of speech and communication need who will benefit from a language enrichment programme. This is due to start in June 2021 and will be repeated in the autumn term.

## Strengths and achievements

Key achievements include:

- The joint development of tripartite arrangements for the most complex children supporting around 25 children and redesign of continuing care processes including a dedicated community matron for children.
- Increased capacity into mental health and wellbeing services including the introduction of KOOTH and QWELL, Terapia and the resilience schools service.
- Transformation of the Public Health Nursing Service including the establishment of the 2.5-year-old check and a named health visitor for all children with SEND.
- Increased investment into the LAC nurse team and the introduction of a paediatrician completing all Initial Health Assessments for under 5-year-olds and up to 9 for children with SEND.
- Increased investment in the Autism Team in BELS to provide support to secondary schools, and support to children and families pre-diagnosis.
- Recruitment to key roles such as the DCO and Designated Nurse for LAC.

## Focus for the year ahead

- Building on the CYP Mental Health Transformation and transition support, develop clear pathways of support and provision for those children and young people whose behaviour puts them at risk of exclusion in mainstream schools.
- Ensure that all children and young people placed in out of borough and independent schools receive the highest quality of provision through the development and implementation of a multi-agency quality assurance framework.
- Building on the short breaks work, enhance respite provision for children and families, to increase resilience of families and help ensure that children and young people with SEND have their needs met locally in borough;
- Through robust contract management and working with providers, ensure that there is a high quality universal offer of therapeutic support and advice for OT, Speech and Language therapy, and Physiotherapy. Ensure that children and young people with the highest level of therapeutic need are able to access specialist support in a timely way.
- Through the development and implementation of the Autism strategy, reduce waiting times for diagnosis of Autism, and ensure that children and families are supported pre-assessment and while undergoing assessment over time.