

Ofsted Local Area SEND Inspection

Local Area SEND Inspection 17th – 21st January

- ▶ Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection Team: 2 Ofsted Inspectors, 1 CQC Inspector, plus 1 Ofsted and 1 CQC QA officer;
- ▶ Short presentation from education, health and social care: 18 focus groups; individual meeting with the Designated Clinical Officer (DCO);
- ▶ Over 400 parent carers completed the Ofsted/CQC survey;
- ▶ An Inspector met with BING (Barnet Inclusion Next Generation – a group of young people with SEND who regular meet to discuss issues and give feedback on SEND services);
- ▶ Visits to 3 primary schools, 2 secondary schools, a special school and Barnet and Southgate college;
- ▶ Conversations with 2 Out of borough schools (Suffolk and Gloucestershire);
- ▶ The Inspectors audited a sample of EHCPs which they selected;
- ▶ We sent them the SEF (Self Evaluation Framework), our large Evidence store (or over 200 documents) and some supplementary information.

A big “Thank you” to all of you who took part in the Inspection

Information shared with the Inspectors included:

- Data on EHCP 20 week completion rate 97%; EHCP Audit tool and findings, including 90% of those audited in Quarter 2 were rated “Good” or “Outstanding”;
- Our education outcomes:
 - In 2019, Barnet pupils with SEND (both SEN Support and those with an EHCP) performed above the National Averages at every Key Stage and in every measure.
 - In 2021 Barnet is in the top 10% for EHCP pupils and pupils with SEN Support for KS4 measures.
 - In 2021 GCSEs SEN Support pupils in Barnet outperform their peers nationally, in London and amongst statistical neighbours for all measures; and EHCP pupils outperformed their peers nationally, in London and amongst statistical neighbours in all measures.
 - 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.
 - At KS2, attainment for pupils in receipt of SEN Support and EHCPs exceeded the National average. Progress at KS2 for pupils with an EHCP exceeds the National average.

Information on Health and Social Care:

- Information about the new NHS provider for therapies – Whittington Health NHS Trust and the mobilisation plan.
- Waiting times for therapy: Physiotherapy: Average of 10 weeks – down from an average of 15 weeks across 20/21; Occupational therapy: Average of 13 weeks – down from an average of 26 weeks over 20/21. The percentage of children waiting more than 18 weeks is now lower than the NCL average – 84% against an NCL average of 71%; Speech and Language Therapy: Average of 15 weeks – down from an average of 19 weeks over 20/21
- Development of the autism hub;
- Autism pathway has been drafted;
- Duke of Edinburgh Expeditions for young people with ADHD, Autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia along with additional medical conditions were facilitated.

What did Ofsted say.....

- Very positive report which reflects the excellent provision in Barnet.
- No “Statement of Action” required

Strengths:

- *“Leaders from education, health and care have **an accurate view** of the positive impact of their work. They know what works well and what needs to improve. This is underpinned by **strong and trusting working relationships and effective communication between partners**. This means that services are managed effectively across education, health and social care.*
- *Children and young people with SEND **enjoy their time in education and in their social lives**. They like living in Barnet. They feel well supported by the professionals who help them. The support they receive helps them to access learning at school and college more easily.*
- ***Parents and carers are typically positive** about their children’s experiences in schools and colleges. They feel that education settings meet their children’s needs well. Parents and carers feel that the education, health and care (EHC) plans make a positive difference in assessing and meeting their children’s needs.*
- ***Parent representatives feel respected and valued** as part of strategic and operational teams. One parent told us, ‘We work fantastically well together.’ Parents and carers help leaders to design and deliver different services in the area. Their views are taken seriously, and they contribute to decision-making at all levels.*
- ***School and college leaders speak highly of area leaders**. They said that area leaders provide ‘invaluable support’ and are ‘very responsive’ to meeting the needs of children and young people, including those who need specialist provision.*
- *Leaders have **responded thoroughly and promptly to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic**. The pandemic has helped leaders to think differently about how to tackle needs, such as providing safe and inclusive outdoor spaces for children and young people with SEND.*

Strengths (continued):

- *There is a **strong, extensive and multi-agency training offer in Barnet**. Many people, from parents to school governors, were positive about the quality and helpfulness of training in improving their ability to identify and meet the needs of children and young people.*
- ***Co-production** (a way of working where children, families and those that provide the services work together to create a decision or a service that works for them all) in Barnet goes beyond consultation and collaboration. Children, young 3 people, and parents and carers influence and help deliver improvements across a wide range of services.*
- *Leaders have rightly focused on **further strengthening the offer for young people after they are 16**. There is now more effective collaboration between colleges, post-16 settings and secondary schools to assess young people's needs. This has made the move from secondary schools to post-16 providers more effective.*
- *The **special educational needs and/or disabilities information and advice service** in Barnet is well established and well used. Leaders have recognised and responded to the need to reduce waiting times and meet increased demand by employing more staff. However, some parents told us that they experience long waiting times for this service.*
- *Parents and carers who are aware of the **online local offer say that it is useful**. Leaders have worked to strengthen the offer so that it is more appealing to children and young people. Leaders have added a 'young people's zone' section on the local offer website, which is useful and more engaging for children and young people."*

Areas for Improvement:

- Six of the seven Areas for Improvement were related to health and not education or social care. An Action Plan has been formulated to address the areas for improvement which is shown in Appendix A
- The one education related area for improvement related to outcomes in some EHC plans which do not “typically focus on the steps needed to help children and young people realise their wider hopes and ambitions.” To improve the Outcomes written in EHCPs to better reflect the aspirations of the children and young people we have:
 - ❑ Amended the EHCP template to include the aspirations of the children and young people at the top of Section E (Outcomes) of the plan
 - ❑ Ensured there is a focus from professionals in their reports on transition to adulthood from Year 9 including outcomes related to helping children and young people achieve their ambitions
 - ❑ Ensured that there is input at SENCo training on purposeful transition, driven from children and young people's aspirations
- One area for improvement related to antenatal contact with some expectant parents not being offered support. For all expectant parents to be offered an antenatal review so their health needs can be identified, the following actions will be put in place from September 2022:
 - ❑ Parents to receive the full midwifery antenatal offer as part of the healthy child programme. Currently, the Health Visitors only offer a review to targeted parents identified as being vulnerable. A full antenatal review by a health visitor needs to take place.

Areas for Improvement (continued):

- One area for improvement related to waiting times for essential home equipment for children with SEND. To address this:
 - The equipment pathway will be reviewed in order to expedite provision to patients

- One area for improvement related to the wait time for specialist child and adolescent mental health (CAMHS) services. To improve access to CAMHS services:
 - Mental health community services are carrying out a review to determine priorities for each Borough in North Central London (NCL) which will include a gap analysis
 - Development of a patient treatment list across NCL to ensure that patients waiting for treatment can be identified by borough and service line in order to better target resources

Areas for Improvement (continued):

- The remaining four areas for improvement related to the reduction in therapeutic provision in Barnet and the increased wait time for therapies. This has been mainly due to recruitment challenges across health services. This was a challenge for the previous provider, North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT), and is continuing to be a challenge with the new provider, Whittington Health. However, the following actions are being put into place to improve recruitment:

- New recruitment campaign underway [Join our Children and Young People's Services \(whittington.nhs.uk\)](https://whittington.nhs.uk) including use of social media
- Developing an apprenticeship programme within Whittington Health
- Whittington Health have invested in two new additional senior clinical posts
- Shadowing opportunities within Whittington Health to grow their own and provide development opportunities
- Increased banding (salary scale) for hard to recruit posts
- Working with Whittington Health boroughs (Barnet, Haringey, Islington, Camden) to link up vacant posts
- Golden Hello' to make posts more attractive
- Attending job fairs at local universities
- To work with schools and consistently communicate the offer available in order to improve the school working environment for therapists

Areas for Improvement (continued):

Since taking over the contract Whittington Health have been successful in filling seven vacant posts with a further eight appointed to and going through the normal appointment processes. This leaves seven posts currently vacant, some of which are being covered by agency staff. Vacancy rate at transfer to Whittington Health was 45%. Current vacancy rate down to 33%

In addition there are also actions in place to improve the retention rate of staff including support for well-being, staff surveys, buddy system, exit interviews, training needs analysis etc

Current Waiting Times

Speech and Language – 16 weeks (was 45 weeks on transfer)



Physiotherapy – 18 weeks (was 30 weeks on transfer)



Occupational Therapy – 40 weeks (was 38 weeks on transfer)



What did other people say about the Report.....

- Many people outside of Barnet have commented that it is one of the best inspection reports that they have read.
- Recognised by the then Secretary of State for Education, the Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi, in the House of Commons when he launched the SEN Green Paper. In response to a question for MP for Vauxhall, the Secretary of State commented “What I would urge her local authority to do is to look around them to the areas in London that are doing well; Barnet, Islington, are doing incredibly well in that local provision, that ability to co-create with families what they need...”
- Congratulatory letter to Barnet from Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for children and families

Next Steps

- Action Plan written to address areas for development – approved by CES Committee
- Appointed new Director for SEND and Inclusion