



BARNET FAMILY SERVICES CHILD AND FAMILY EARLY HELP STRATEGY 2023 - 2027

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Our Mission Statement

Our multiagency partnership believes that every child has the right to a healthy, happy childhood. We are committed to ensuring all children living in Barnet have equal opportunities to learn, play, participate and thrive. It is our mission to create an Early Help system of support that is designed with and for children, young people and families in our borough; a system that understands and responds to local needs and builds on the strengths of our local schools, communities and services. We will do this using our resilience-based approaches and by working effectively together to improve outcomes for all children in Barnet.



1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Barnet's 0-19 Early Help Strategy 2023 -2027. It has been developed by the multi-agency partnership working in the borough in collaboration with children, families, local communities and Barnet's political leaders. Our strategy sets out our shared vision, values and ambition for every child, from pre-birth to adulthood and beyond, to be healthy, happy and to thrive. Using our shared knowledge and experience and informed by research and evidence about child development and what works in early intervention, we have produced this strategy to provide a framework for delivery of Early Help Services in the borough

WHAT IS EARLY HELP?

Early Help is not a single service but a network of services and professionals who can work separately and together to provide support when children, young people and their families need it. Our services aim to ensure that help is provided as early in the life of a problem as possible, so problems do not get worse.

Agencies providing early help services, include Children's Centres, GP's, midwives, school nurses, health visitors, housing providers, Barnet Family Services, sexual health, drug and alcohol services, nurseries, childminders, speech and language therapists, Barnet Education & Learning Service, schools and colleges, police, mental health services, adult services and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise providers.

We have agreed on some basic principles that underpin the way in which we work, these are:

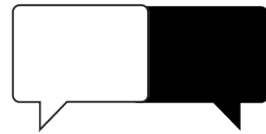
- All children and families have strengths that we can help them build upon
- Every child can reach their potential when agencies work well together
- Our services should, where possible, be close to where children live and go to school
- Professionals should know the communities they are supporting well
- Children, young people and families should have a say in how we deliver services
- There is 'no wrong door' to getting help
- Families should get the right help, first time
- children and families should not have to tell 'their story' to multiple professionals, multiple times
- We will improve children's life chances by supporting their health and wellbeing and that of their families

“Providing Early Help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at a point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early Help can also prevent further problems arising, for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan where a child has returned home to their family from care.”

2. LOCAL CONTEXT



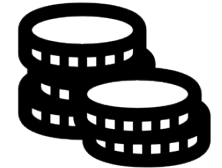
With 402,700 residents, we have the largest population in London, with the population of children projected to reach 101,875 by 2025. 47,000 are young people aged 10 -19 years



In 130 schools; 52% of primary and 38.2% of secondary school pupils speak English as an additional language. There are 182 languages spoken in schools across the borough



48% of the borough population are from racially minoritized backgrounds rising to 52% in the child population compared to 30% across England



The borough has lower levels of deprivation than most other London Boroughs, although a fifth of young people aged 10-19 years live in the most deprived parts of the Borough.



The percentage of children at secondary school in receipt of free school meals is in line with the national average of 13.1%, in nursery and primary the percentage of Barnet children receiving free school meals is higher at 16.7% against 14.5% nationally



20% of children in Barnet are obese, which is slightly higher than the national average of 18.2%

Levels of excess weight in children in reception and Year 6 has remained around 19% and 34% respectively, which is slightly lower than both London and England



3,189 Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), increasing by 28% in during 2018 - 2021; lower than the national average of 33.2%.

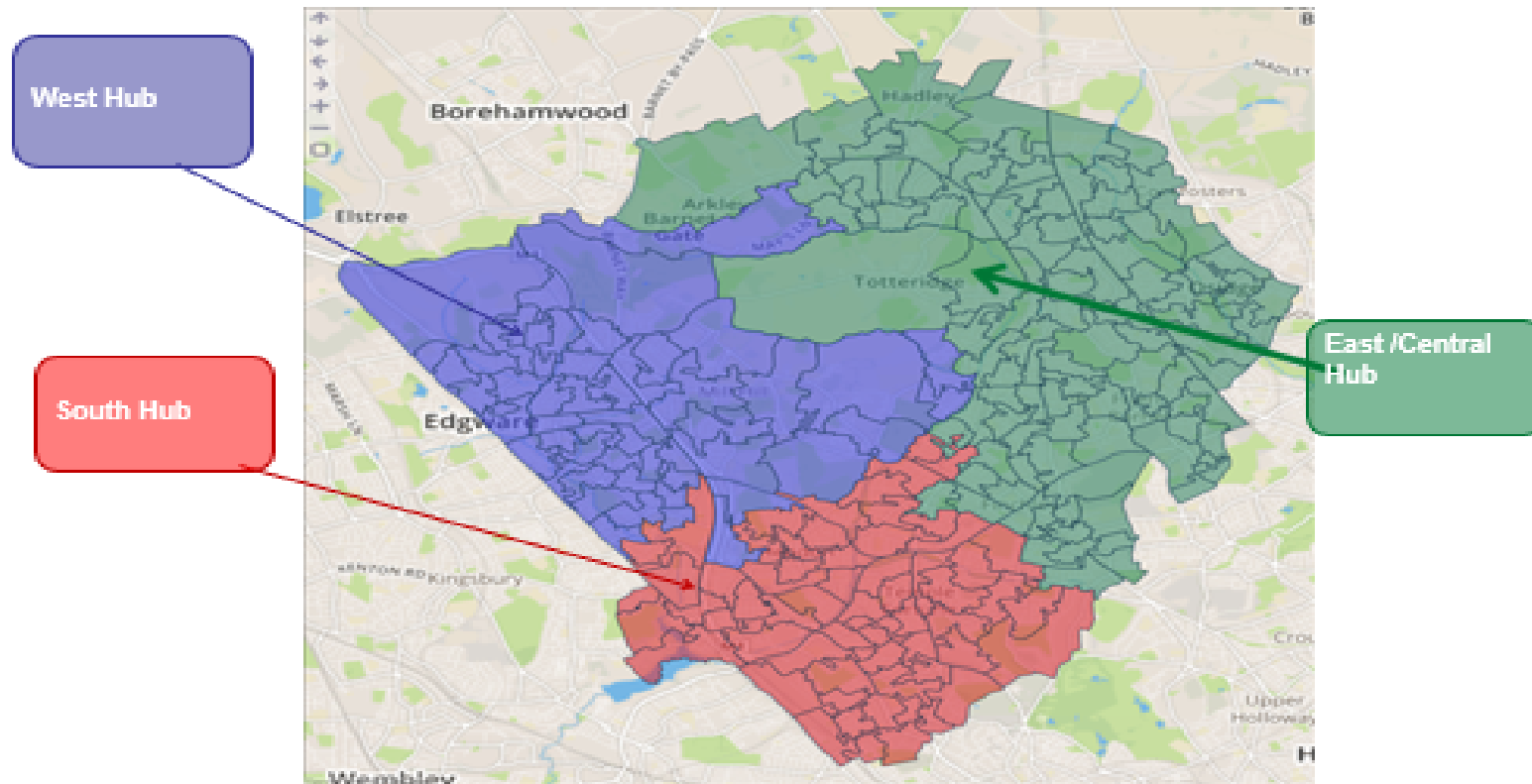
3.4% of pupils in schools in Barnet have an EHCP, compared with 3.7% of all pupils in schools in England.



9.6% of pupils in Barnet are identified with SEN Support, compared to 12.1% in England

3.

CHILD AND FAMILY EARLY HELP HUBS



Barnet has three Child and Family Early Help Hubs and a number of satellite buildings where we offer a range of preventative and early help support for children and families. You can walk in, call, and speak with GPs and schools for advice on how to access the support services offered. This includes midwifery, health visiting, breast feeding, parenting support, positive activities, mental health support, welfare advice, groupwork programmes, welfare advice and a range of other services. Our hubs are linked to local schools, GP's and other community-based services. Contact details for the 0-19 Early Help Hubs can be found on the last page. *Barnet also has 14 libraries offering a wide range of early help support for children and families.* This includes access to physical and digital resources for learning and leisure, information and signposting to other services and a comprehensive programme of creative and educational activities and events. Library buildings provide public spaces to spend family time and quiet space to study.

4. EARLY HELP VISION

Barnet's Early Help Vision is based on our aim for the borough to have resilient children, resilient families and a resilient children's workforce. We believe through our approach:

Children, Young People and Families will be:

- ✓ Supported to make changes for themselves.
- ✓ Able to get the right services first time and at the right time.
- ✓ Supported to thrive from pre-birth, throughout their childhood and into adulthood

Supported by Skilled professionals that:

- ✓ Are accessible, responsive and care about what they do.
- ✓ Are innovative and creative in their approaches to practice
 - ✓ Are well-trained, supported and advocate for equality.
 - ✓ Work together to get it right

Enabled and equipped by:

- ✓ Clear governance that involves children and families, putting them at the heart of how we plan, deliver and monitor the effectiveness of service
- ✓ A clear resilience-based practice framework which includes tools such as Signs of Safety and systemic practice as approaches that build on families' strengths.

5. PRE-BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS (0-5 years)

Our priorities

In Barnet we are committed to ensuring every child gets the best start in life, from pregnancy through to the time they start school and grow into adulthood. Through the universal midwifery service, healthy child programme and children centre offer we aim to reach every baby, child and family and provide help and support to improve their life chances. To achieve our vision, we are committed to building on current delivery in the following ways:

To have Early Help services accessible to all families

Ensuring that working in partnership with parents and carers is at the centre of everything we do

Deliver a wide range of parenting programmes and support

Children are accessing quality early years provision

Ensure information, services and opportunities are provided at the right time

Through supporting home learning and child/adult attachment

Providing an inclusive service delivery that supports children with special educational needs or a disability

To deliver Family Support which respects, values and thinks about the need of the whole family

Further develop the links between education, health and early help

Meeting childcare sufficiency and providing families quality-assured childcare options

All children are supported to access free early years education offer

Supporting children to be ready to start school

Perinatal health and wellbeing support provided to all expectant parents

Improving vaccination uptake rates

Offering families advice to achieve financial stability

To ensure delivery of appropriate services based on local demography and needs analysis

The services below set out how we will deliver our vision and meet our priorities, ensuring all children in their early years have the opportunity to achieve positive outcomes. Whilst children with additional needs may not achieve these exact outcomes, the outer ring of additional support is there to help all children and young people to reach their potential.



Outcomes

Explore the World

Be Social

Be Nurtured

Be Helped to Thrive

Be Confident

Be Healthy

Be Safe

Be Happy

PRIMARY (5-11 years)

We are committed to ensuring that the primary years are a stage at which all children are able to thrive, discover their talents, develop healthy friendships and achieve. Through this strategy we will work together to deliver the below priorities

Early identification and support of special educational needs and disabilities

Children have the tools to build resilience, friendships and trusted relationships

Supporting emotional wellbeing and good mental health

Offering families advice to achieve financial stability

Providing opportunities for play, positive activities and social development

Providing inclusive services that supports all children's needs including special educational needs and disabilities

Further developed links between education, health and primary-age support services

All primary-aged pupils to have access to a quality school placement and supported to be ready for secondary school

Promoting healthy family relationships

Promoting healthy lifestyles and addressing health inequalities

All children are safeguarded by all partners regardless of educational setting

Healthy Weight Management and preventing childhood obesity

The services below set out how we will deliver our vision and meet our priorities, ensuring all children of primary school age have the opportunity to achieve positive outcomes. Whilst children may not achieve these exact outcomes, the outer ring of additional support is there to help with additional needs to reach their full potential.

Outcomes

Explore the world and develop a strong sense of self
Be Engaged with learning

Be safe and helped to make good choices

Be Social

Be Nurtured

Be Helped to Thrive

Be Confident

Be Healthy

Be Happy



SECONDARY

(11-16 years)

In Barnet, we are committed to providing support that recognises and responds to the complex task of adolescence. We want to ensure that all children are supported to positively transition from primary to secondary education and are equipped with the skills they need to develop and maintain healthy, positive friendships and relationships and interests. We want to ensure young people in Barnet have access safe spaces where they can build resilience, build a positive sense of identity and have opportunities to participate and engage in preparation for further education, training and employment. Through this strategy we will work together to ensure children aged 11 – 16 years:

Early identification and safeguarding young people from exploitation

To recognise and develop Healthy Relationships

Support young people as they mature into adulthood

Young people are safeguarded from harm

Encouraged to be aspirational and achieve

Making sure services are accessible and available to all children including SEN disabilities

We will address structural racism and inequalities

Reduce exclusions and criminalisation of racially minoritized children

For young people to have safe spaces to express themselves freely and engage in positive activities

We will listen and involve you in decisions about our services

Supporting emotional wellbeing and good mental health

Young people have the tools to build resilience, friendships and trusted relationships

Young people are able to make safe and healthy choices with the support of trusted adults

Young people are helped to problem solve safely

Tackling period poverty

Offering families advice to achieve financial stability

The services below set out how we will deliver our vision and meet our priorities, ensuring all children of secondary school age have the opportunity to reach their potential and achieve positive outcomes. Whilst secondary aged young people may not achieve all of the below outcomes, the outer ring of support is there to help young people with additional needs to reach their full potential.

Outcomes



- Have the resilience to build good mental health and a positive sense of identity
- Be social and have relationships
- Explore the world and challenge skills and abilities
- Reach their educational and academic potential
- Be safe and helped to make good choices
- Be Healthy
- Be Nurtured
- Be Confident
- Be Happy

POST-16 SUPPORT (16-25)

In Barnet, we are committed to providing support to adolescents to enable them to prepare for adulthood and ensure that they are supported to successfully transition into adulthood. Through this strategy we will work together to ensure young people aged 16+ years

Early-identification and safeguarding of vulnerable adolescents

Preventing child-exploitation and understanding lived & contextual experiences

Fully-supported young people at all points of transition

Adolescents that are safe and secure at home, at school and out within the community

Information, services and opportunities are provided at the right time

Equal opportunities for Barnet's young people to achieve

Providing an inclusive service delivery that supports adolescents with special educational needs or a disability

Co-production and engagement with young people

Further develop the links between education, police, health and adult social care

Adolescents with an understanding of healthy and safe relationships

All adolescents in Barnet have the tools and resilience to build and maintain positive mental health

Reducing rates of disproportionate school exclusions

Adolescents with the resource and understanding to make healthy choices around their physical health and wellbeing

Addressing health inequalities

Areas of unmet need are addressed through tailored services

Offering advice to achieve financial stability

The services below set out how we will deliver our vision and meet our priorities, ensuring all adolescents and young people aged 16-25 years have the opportunity to reach their potential and achieve positive outcomes. Whilst adolescents and young adults may not achieve all of the below outcomes, the outer ring of support is there to help young people with additional needs to reach their full potential.



Outcomes

Have the resilience to maintain good mental health and a positive sense of identity

Encouraged and supported to access training and employment and/or explore further / higher education

Be social and have good relationships

Explore the world and challenge skills and abilities

Be safe and able to make good choices

Be Healthy

Be Nurtured

Be Confident

Be Happy

6. VALUES, PRINCIPLES & THE WAY WE WORK

We believe that children and young people are best supported by people they know and trust and that supporting and nurturing relationships are essential to health and wellbeing. We know that most Early Help is provided by families, friends, neighbours, and communities, and this is central to our strategy as we are committed to recognising the value of these informal support networks and supporting them to and our local community-based professionals (both paid and volunteers) to continue providing support. We will work with local communities and extended support systems together with local partners, including health services, police, voluntary sector, educational settings, housing, and Local Authority services to provide early support to children and their families that build resilience, prevents difficulties from escalating and leads to better outcomes and positive changes that are sustained. This can only be achieved if all partners work together with families and their networks towards goals that are developed in partnership with children, young people and their families.

It is important, that the moment a need for help and support is recognised, a professional has a conversation with the child/family and their support network about that need or concern to explore what it looks like and how it affects the child's life, as well as what the important people in the child's life are doing to help keep them happy and safe. When there is a need for the multi-agency partnership to work together to meet a need, a professional will work in agreement and partnership with the family to complete an Early Help Assessment.

Early Help Assessments help us listen to families and guide our work with them. During an assessment we will gather, share and make sense of information with families so that we can make decisions together. We use tools, like the one below, to capture the thoughts, worries and aspirations of children and families and work in an open and honest way to find solutions together



When we identify that a family needs support from more than one agency we will start a Team Around the Family (TAF) process. This is where all the people who care about or are working with a child form a team that works together to help support them. One professional will take the lead and ensure that services are co-ordinated and working effectively towards the change that is needed for the child and family. The lead professional can be any professional working with the family and who is part of the Team Around the Family, they will act as a single point of contact for the child and their family throughout the period of assessment and support. They will work closely with the child and family to ensure everyone is clear on how, when and where support will be provided.¹

Our Principles for working with families :

- Children are at the centre of all we do
- Listening to children and families and valuing their input
- Building on strengths as well as identifying the difficulties.
- Identifying the right support on the first time
- Open and honest communication

¹ Barnet's Early Help System is committed to ensuring the secure protection of the personal information of the children, young people and families we work with. We have strong processes in place, upheld by compulsory GDPR training for all of our staff to ensure that we remain GDPR compliant, and that children and families in Barnet are kept safe.



7. HOW WE WILL WORK

We will work together across the Early Help Partnership to ensure information is shared that enables us to understand the needs of our child population. We will use this information to develop integrated and coordinated services. For children's needs to be well understood and for the right help to be provided at the right time, it is our expectation that all agencies working with children exercise and model positive and proactive curiosity about what life is like for children and young people living in and going to school in the borough. We are committed to ensuring our services and practice are anti-racist and inclusive. We recognise that not all children have the same opportunities, so we expect that all professionals working with children in Barnet provide challenge to systems and practices that do not promote equity and equality for all children in the borough.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of every professional and we take this responsibility seriously, we will work to ensure children at risk of harm are promptly identified and their circumstances improved.

We believe that delivering services close to where children live and go to school is the best way to meet local need. We will ensure our 0-19 Child & Family Help Hubs and our satellite buildings such as schools and health centres are accessible to local families and responsive to local needs. Our integrated approach aims to support early identification of need and risk and will enable services to develop whole system early intervention approaches that prevent the need for escalation to statutory intervention and/or social or educational exclusion and poor health outcomes.

We will work in partnership with local voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VSFSE) providers and leaders to ensure when we are planning to make changes or decisions to our services to ensure local voices influence the design and delivery approaches. We want our services to be free of stigma and accessible to established and new communities living in the borough, by ensuring barriers caused by language, immigration and social economic status are removed so everyone feels valued and welcome. To do this, our practitioners will engage with local community groups and faith leaders developing mutual understanding and trust, be culturally competent and deliver inclusive services and we will develop a one stop shop approach in each of our localities so families can receive advice and be signposted to the right help quickly without waiting for a referral

We want children and young people to be actively engaged in services that promote their emotional wellbeing, pro-social behaviour, social and educational inclusion, and we want them to be safe at home, in school and in the community. . We will ensure our children's workforce has access to training and support that enables practitioners to swiftly identify the signs that a child or young person might need our help, we will promote our

resilience-based practice approaches to ensure we are all working with children and young people in ways that build on their strengths, involve them in assessments, planning and decision making and keeps them safe. We will support our workforce to be resilient. We will ensure information about our services is available in schools, GP surgeries, community settings and on digital platforms so everyone knows what we are doing, where we are doing it and how to access our services. We will encourage participation and co-production with children, young people and families, so they can share their feedback, tell us what we are doing well and what we need to do better. We will work openly and transparently and be accountable for the services we deliver.

Further Reading

Further Reading:

[Supporting Families: early help system guide](#) – Outlines a national vision and descriptors for a mature early help system that is shared by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Department for Education.

[Early years high impact area 2: Supporting maternal and family mental health](#) – Public Health England guidance updated in 2021 detailing the significance of familial and maternal mental health on the wellbeing of children and young people and providing direction and instruction on the roles of health visitors and the healthy child programme in encouraging and supporting improved mental health and wellbeing.

[School-aged years high impact area 1: Supporting resilience and wellbeing](#) – Public Health England guidance updated in 2021 establishing the resilience and wellbeing of children and young people as a ‘significant public health priority’.

[No child left behind: A public health informed approach to improving outcomes for vulnerable children](#) - Reports for local government and their partners to inform their co-ordinated approaches to reduce vulnerability and adversity in childhood.

[Growing up in the Covid-19 pandemic: An evidence review of the impact of pandemic life on physical development in the early years](#) – An Early Intervention Foundation review of emerging international and UK evidence on seven key factors associated with children’s early physical health and development, and the extent to which the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic (such as lockdowns and social distancing) have impacted on these factors and affected children’s early physical development, including children from low-income and UK ethnic minority families

APPENDIX 1. Local Strategies for Children's Services

[Barnet's Children & Young People Plan 2019 – 2023](#) – The plan captures the priorities, needs and aspirations of the local population and sets out how, together, we can make Barnet an enjoyable place for children and families to live

[Barnet's Education strategy 2021 - 2024](#) 'Barnet is well known for the excellent quality of its schools and settings and the diversity of its educational offer. These are at the heart of Barnet's continuing success as a desirable place where people want to live, work and study'.

[Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 – 2025](#) 'The Barnet Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy sets out our vision for improving the health and wellbeing of the people who live, study and work in Barnet'.

[Barnet Life Chances Strategy 2020 – 2024](#) 'We will work to improve young lives and increase their opportunities to succeed. The strategy is underpinned by our family friendly vision that is focused on making Barnet the most family friendly borough in London and a better place for all families to live'

[Barnet Vulnerable Adolescents Strategy 2022 - 2025](#) – 'Safeguarding children and young people from the psychological and physical harm caused by sexual and criminal exploitation and involvement in gangs and serious youth violence remains a core priority for the Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP)'

[Barnet SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2024](#) builds on the recent achievements and progress already made and includes a focus on minimising the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children and young people with SEND and their families

[Barnet Infant Feeding Strategy 2021-2025](#) sets out the direction to support agencies and the public, Borough wide, to protect, promote, support and normalise breastfeeding.

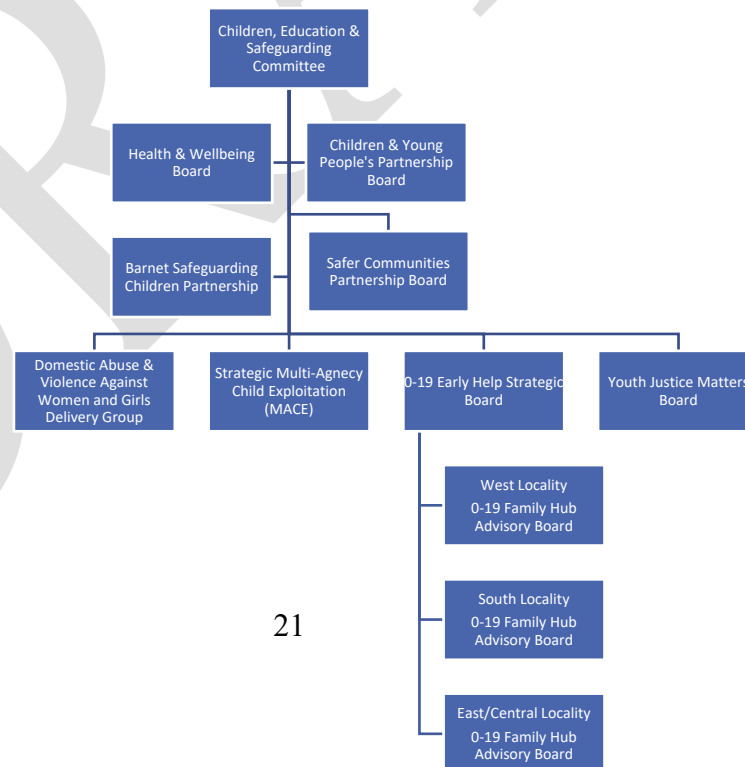
[Barnet's Youth Justice Plan 2022 -2024](#) - This plan sets out the ambition for Youth Offending Services in Barnet, the YOS service structure, governance arrangements, resources and partnership arrangements.

[SEND Self-Evaluation January 2022-](#) Barnet's multiagency early help partnership has 'embraced the SEND reforms that came into effect in 2015 and there is an established partnership across the local area 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.'

[Corporate Priorities 2021 – 2025](#) - ‘We are committed to strengthening families and early years as the early years are critical to longer term outcomes and life chances. We need to ensure that all groups can access opportunities in order to improve life chances for all and so we will target support to those that are most disadvantaged’

Appendix 2: Governance

This strategy will be monitored by the multiagency partnership of the 0-19 Early Help Strategic Board which meets quarterly. The Family Hub Advisory Boards in each locality is comprised of local partner agencies and parent representatives, the Advisory Boards report to the 0-19 Early Help Strategic Board. As early help services includes prevention of crime and violence, there is some cross-over into Youth Justice, Community Safety and Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls. The Chair of the 0-19 Strategic Board will produce an annual report on activity of the 0-19 Early Help Strategic Board and progress against the 0-19 Child and Family Early Help Strategy, this report is shared with the Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership, Performance Quality and Assurance (PQA) group and the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee. The governance arrangements are set out below



Early Help Hub Locations and Contact Details

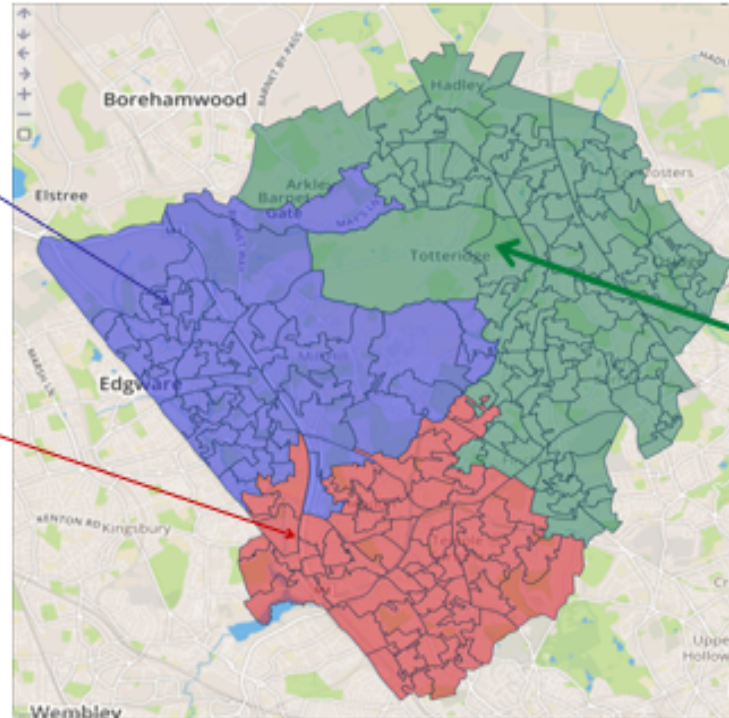
West Hub

Covers the postcodes of: HA8, part of NW7, part of NW9

Main Hub office: Barnet and Southgate College- Colindale, 7 Bristol Avenue (formerly Lanacre Avenue) London NW9 4BR, Telephone 020 8359 3510

West Hub

South Hub



East /Central Hub

East/Central Hub

Covers the postcodes of: N2, parts of N3, parts of N10, N11, N12 parts of N14, EN4 and EN5.

Main Hub

office: Newstead Children's Centre, 1 Fallows Close (off Tarling Road), Finchley, N2 8LG, Telephone: 020 8359 3460.

South Hub

Covers the postcodes of: part of NW2, NW3, part of NW4, part of NW11, part of NW9, part of N3

Main Hub office: Parkfield Children's Centre, 44 Park Road, Hendon, NW4 3PS, Telephone: 020 8359 3590

A full list of all of the libraries in Barnet and their contact details can be found [here](#)