

Children & Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

2023-2027

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Foreword

In Barnet, children and young people are an integral part of our community and are key to realising the potential of our collective future. Their wellbeing and mental health are essential cornerstones upon which their growth, resilience, and success depend. As the Children's Partnership, it is our responsibility to prioritise the mental health needs of our young people, ensuring that they thrive in a nurturing and supportive environment. The COVID-19 pandemic, in particular, has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities, highlighting the urgent need for a comprehensive and inclusive strategy to address the mental health needs of our young people.

The following Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy represents our commitment to their wellbeing, and to fostering an environment where our children can flourish, equipped with the tools and resources necessary to navigate the challenges that may come with working towards and maintaining positive mental health and wellbeing.

Through research, collaboration, and engagement with mental health professionals, colleagues in education and, most importantly, young people themselves, we have developed a strategy that seeks to address the multifaceted aspects of mental health. This approach recognises that mental wellbeing is not isolated from the broader social, economic, and cultural fabric of our community. It acknowledges that the responsibility for

nurturing mental health lies not only with specialist services but also with every part of Barnet's wider community, including families, schools, health, and local voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) organisations.

This strategy emphasises prevention, early intervention, and resilience-building. By investing in the promotion of positive mental health for children and young people, we can create a strong foundation for our children to thrive and develop into happy, healthy and resilient adults. Moreover, by fostering awareness and reducing the stigma surrounding mental health, we can create a community where seeking support is encouraged and accessible to all.

We are committed to providing the necessary resources and support systems to ensure that mental health services are accessible, equitable, and evidence-based to meet the unique needs of our diverse population. This strategy aims to strengthen existing partnerships and forge new collaborations with community organisations, mental health providers, schools, and stakeholders to create a comprehensive network of care and support.

This strategy and its action plan are living documents that will require ongoing evaluation and adaptation to ensure that we are flexibly meeting needs in a changing landscape. We envision a community that embraces empathy, compassion, and understanding—a community that safeguards the mental health and well-being of every child and young person. We invite every member of our community to join us on this journey—to actively participate, lend their expertise, and share their experiences. Together, we can build a brighter future for our children, where their mental health is nurtured, and their potential unleashed.

Introduction

This Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy underlines the commitment from the Partnership to provide high quality, creative and young-person centred mental health and wellbeing provision in the borough to build resilience in all children and young people by detailing how the offer will continue to be developed and improved. It identifies Barnet's current and future priorities to enhance our offer around the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people and provides a framework through which to engage in collaborative partnership working, and to determine the actions through which these priorities are met. The health and wellbeing strategic objective is set out in more detail in the Barnet's Children and Young People's Plan 2023-2027.

In 2022 we established a multi-agency Barnet Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board, which brings together representatives from across Children's Mental Health and wellbeing services in Barnet to oversee the implementation of the Barnet Children and Young Peoples Transformation Action Plan, transformation funding, and other related funds and grants, either Local Authority or NHS and agree and monitor spending plans. The Transformation Action Plan supports a whole system approach, focusing on early intervention and improving access and is based on delivering the THRIVE model. This board will also monitor implementation of this Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and action plan.

This multiagency group has agreed the following principles that will be embedded within dedicated mental health and wellbeing

services for Children and Young People and used in shaping service delivery to ensure that mental health and wellbeing are consistently centred as priorities. These principles have been informed by consultation with young people in the Borough, including those groups who are currently underrepresented in accessing services.

Accessible

We will ensure that the relevant services and support offers function in ways that encourage all elements of accessibility to be at the forefront of our service delivery. This means working around the diverse circumstances of Barnet's children and young people by working to expand services that operate outside of the 9 – 5 pm working hours and ensuring that venues for service delivery are distributed across the borough in a way that is accessible to young people in all communities. Accessibility also depends upon the promotion of existing services to establish awareness of the support available within the borough, and in being flexible in our delivery models, both virtually and in person. We will ensure that there are clear channels to communicate to children and young people what services are available and how to access them. We will specifically look at how we can make mental health and wellbeing support more accessible to those with SEND.

Equitable

We will shape our approach to mental health and wellbeing to make it equitable in all areas through the creation and maintenance of services that reflect the diversity of need in Barnet's children and young people. Ensuring that our services are flexible enough to cater to specific cohorts of young people is key to this principle and to maximising the efficacy of the available

mental health services. This principle also requires the use of preventative mental health support and the provision of early support at the correct and most useful times for children and young people in the borough.

Evidence-based

Our services and offers of support will be needs-led, through a focus on effective consultation and subsequent co-production. As well as working on collecting comprehensive feedback from the children and young people who use our services, we will also develop robust feedback loops, where the results of consultations are shared with these children and young people. Key to embedding this evidence-based principle within these services is the maintenance and strengthening of our communications with other Local Authorities for effective benchmarking against alternative service models and to improve our understanding of how local services impact on outcomes.

Impact-driven

We will ensure that the impact of our offers of support is paramount in the shaping of service delivery. We will actively engage with the children and young people who utilise these support offers, as well as practitioners to monitor their impact, and to make continual improvements. Our service delivery and design processes will be outcomes-focused, and we will work with children and young people to determine the kinds of outcomes they both expect and require from these services.

The Local Context

The 2021 NHS Mental Health of Children and Young People in England survey found that 39.2% of 6 to 16 year olds had experienced deterioration in mental health since 2017. The coronavirus pandemic and school closures have meant that for extended periods of time, young people were unable to access support through some of the previously established routes. It has had particularly acute impacts on already vulnerable young people, with The Children's Commissioner's Office explaining that 'Vulnerable children faced real hardship as a result of Covid-19, in particular children in care and custody, those with disabilities or mental illness, those at risk of abuse or without a permanent home.'



In 2020, Barnet 2.61% of school pupils were identified as having social, emotional, and mental health needs. This is **marginally higher than the overall rate for London (2.49%), and slightly lower than for England (2.7%)**



For primary school age children in Barnet, 2.54 % had social, emotional, and mental health needs in 2020. This is **slightly higher than the comparable rates for London (2.24%) and England (2.45%)**



In Barnet's secondary school age pupils in 2020, 2.6% had social, emotional, and mental health needs. **This is slightly lower than the rates for London (2.63%) and England (2.67%) for the same period**

Currently, Barnet has 10,942 young people in absolute low-income families and 13,288 in relative low-income families, with areas with the highest proportions of these young people being Colindale North, Burnt Oak and Cricklewood – all above the national average of 15.35% (absolute) and 18.67% (relative) respectively. The current data around households vulnerable to cost-of-living increase suggests a similar picture, with these areas having the highest concentrations of vulnerable families and households. This highlights the need for place-based approaches for mental health and wellbeing support facilities and signposting.

In recent years there has been increased investment into children's mental health and wellbeing provision in Barnet to enhance services focused on early help through to crisis support. This includes the development of the Barnet Council Integrated Clinical Service (BICs), which incorporates Mental Health in Schools Teams; Resilience Schools Programme and the creation of an Out of Hours Crisis Support team delivered by Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust wait times for specialist services remain a challenge and some children are still waiting far too long especially for neurodevelopmental assessment.



Globally, depression is the leading cause for disability and illness among 10–19-year-olds.



Nationally children from the poorest 20% of households are four times as likely to have a serious mental health difficulty by the age of 11 as those from the wealthiest 20% (Morrison Gutnam et al 2015)



Children and young people with a learning disability are 3x more likely than average to have a mental health problem (Lavis et al 2019), and young people identifying as Black/Black-British ethnicity had the highest increased odds of experiencing poor mental health.



Children and young people with a learning disability are 3x more likely than average to have a mental health problem (Lavis et al 2019)



The rate of inpatient admissions for deliberate self-harm in 15–19-year-olds in Barnet was 458.9/100,000, which was lower than for England.



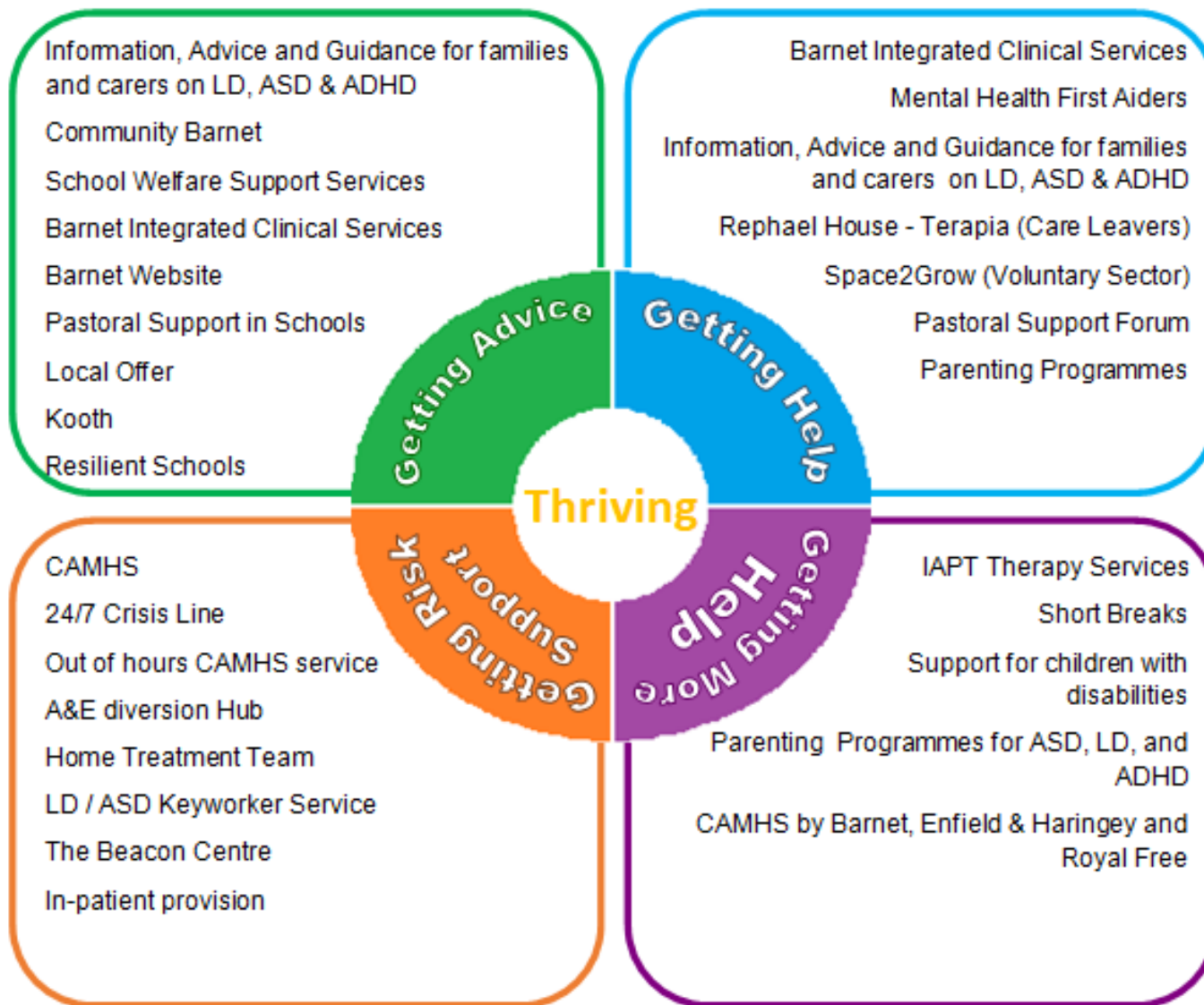
It is not known exactly how many children in Barnet are living with a mental illness as many children with mental ill health may not be recognised or treated.



The rate of child inpatient admissions for mental health conditions in Barnet in 2020/21 was 68.7 per 100,000, which is lower than England as a whole, but higher than the regional average (JSNA)



Nationally in England rates of probable mental disorder increased between 2017 and 2021; 6- to 16-year-olds from one in nine (11.6%) to one in six (17.4%), and in 17 to 19 year olds from one in ten (10.1%) to one in six (17.4%). (2021 MH survey)



Thrive Model and Local Delivery

This strategy is underpinned by the framework of the five areas of the Thrive model and sets out principles to drive our delivery against the areas of 'thriving', 'getting advice', 'getting help', 'getting more help' and 'getting risk support'.

Our current offer aims to improve the emotional wellbeing and resilience of the borough's children and young people through prevention and early intervention in the form of parenting programmes, mental health first aiders, programmes in schools including MHSTs and resilience schools and support from children's wellbeing practitioners through the BIC service. When children and young people require more help or crisis support a range of provisions are available including the out of hours CAMHS service, in-patient provision and the Home Treatment Team.

This framework is used by Barnet's mental health and wellbeing partnership to plan our menu of interventions ensuring that there is sufficient and equitable support for children and young people across each of the Thrive domains.

The principal aim of the Thrive Model is to keep as many children and young people in a state where their mental health and wellbeing is positive, and being maintained through preventative support. Ideally, there would be no escalation into the four quadrants of the model, and there are a number of services and support with the aim of maintaining positive mental health and wellbeing amongst young people in Barnet. These include, but are not exclusive to:

- Barnet Young People Thrive's interactive virtual webinars on topics around their emotional health and wellbeing
- Raising awareness of what good and poor wellbeing looks like through a whole school approach and being able to know where and when to seek support, delivered through the Resilient Schools Programme and the Mental Health Support Teams.
- Youth Mental Health First Aid, allowing educators to understand the signs and symptoms of poor wellbeing and intervene early.
- Barnet wide services to promote emotional and physical health for children and their families :
 - The Healthy Schools and Healthy Early Years programme of support for schools.
 - The Healthy Weight Pathway Services for children in Barnet.
 - The Sexual Health and Healthy Relationship Service delivered by Brook in Barnet.
 - The Health Coach Services delivered by Home Start to support families in Barnet.
 - The Healthy Child Programme Services.
- Barnet's Wellbeing Service's self-help offer, which includes:
 - Educational workshops
 - Barnet Circle Yoga
 - Happy Stream
 - Arts and crafts
 - Guidance around mindfulness, exercise and nutrition
 - Recommendations on apps for wellbeing
- Barnet's Wellbeing Hub, where members of the community can have access to an emotional health check, as well as mental health social prescribing. This aims to identify any mental health and wellbeing challenges, and offer the appropriate, effective support to ensure that there is no need for escalation into the outer quadrants of the Thrive Model.

The above support aims to inform young people about mental health and wellbeing, as well as offering support and opportunities to boost their mental health and wellbeing through positive activities.

Wider support available to young people, endorsed by Barnet include:

The Mix

This is an offer of support to anyone under 25, about anything that's troubling them. This is an opportunity to identify and prevent any mental health and

wellbeing challenges, and can support in the transition to adulthood for young people who may need additional support and guidance.

Good Thinking

This is a London-wide digital wellbeing service, offering resources for young people to improve mental wellbeing, including free NHS-approved apps.

Reading Well

This offers young people from 13-18 years of age recommendations on expert-endorsed books about mental health, with advice and information about issues like anxiety, stress, OCD and experiences such as bullying and exam-related pressures.

By investing in preventative support, we aim to divert from escalatory support services through early identification. In keeping as many young people as possible in a healthy state of mental health and wellbeing, we can relieve pressure on the services focused on crisis support, and thereby ensuring that the more intensive resource within the getting more help and getting risk support quadrants is more readily available to those children and young people who are at a higher level of need.

Strategic priorities

Children's Mental Health and wellbeing is a priority in the delivery of national strategies including a priority for the NHSE CORE20PLUS5 approach at a local level. In Barnet the Children & Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board is the delivery mechanism for the children's aspects of the Barnet Borough Partnership and ensures that there is a robust focus on Barnet's children and young people while aligning with North Central London (NCL) Integrated Care Partnership when appropriate. Promote good mental and emotional health across all ages and different communities and Children's mental health and wellbeing is a key objective within the children & young People's Partnership plan 2023-2027 to deliver better outcomes. The priorities set out in this strategy will feed into the delivery of that overarching objective.

The following four strategic priorities have been identified from consultations with children and young people within the borough, as well as aligning with wider health initiatives on both a borough-wide and national-scale.

Priority 1: Raising Awareness

Ensuring that children, young people, and their families know what services and support is available to them is key to this strategy, and in making sure that the support services available are made use of effectively by those who need them. It's also important that young people and their families have an understanding of *how* to access this support too, and where they can go for help. We will do this through ensuring that our available services are featured on the local offer site, and that this is promoted widely. We will also support individual services to promote their services through engagement with schools and the VCSFE. Through our communications team, we will work to maximise our reach via social media, as well as making use of targeted informative poster campaigns across the borough to reach as many children, young people and their families as possible. Working closely with young people to spread this awareness is important, both in terms of engaging with them to find out which avenues of communication they prefer to receive information through, but also working with them to develop these communications. As part of this, we will be co-producing a short film around mental health, how to access support and reducing the stigma around getting help.

System-wide awareness

Raising awareness of the mental health and wellbeing support offers for children and young people throughout the system also involves ensuring uniform understanding and awareness of what is available on the part of those working in the system. We will be conducting a system-wide mapping exercise of the mental health and wellbeing support available to children and young people in Barnet. The intention is that this will support colleagues working within the system to better understand the roles and relationships of each area of the system, as well as having a uniform understanding across Barnet of the referral

pathways. Through the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board, we will work to ensure that all parts of the system are aware of the work going on in other areas, to encourage collaborative working, reduce duplication and improve efficiency. This will aid in effectively communicating the support offer to children and young people, as well, ensuring that children and young people get the right mental health and wellbeing support, at the right time.

Outcomes:

- Children and their families know what support is available to them, where and how to access it.
- The Local Offer is accessible and provides accurate and up to date information on the services available.
- Communication campaigns are relevant to current issues and needs and targeted to achieve increased engagement and support to children and young people
- Professionals work together to create a system that is joined up improving the experience of children and their families.

Priority 2: Engagement with Children, Young People and those with service-experience

Engagement with Barnet's young people forms a key part of our service design and delivery, and it is therefore essential that we have a diverse set of avenues through which to gather the sentiments and concerns of our young people.



Engaging with young people is key to our aim of embedding co-production throughout our services, and this requires engagement with young people with a range of levels of need as and a diverse range of backgrounds. This includes engaging with current service users, those young people who are seldom heard, as well as wide-ranging engagement pieces with large cross-sections of Barnet's children and young people. Our work with children and young people on mental health and wellbeing will be guided by the My Say Matters strategy launched by Family Services in 2022, which uses the Lundy model (above), to approach engagement.

In order to tailor this model to working with the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, we will do the following:

Space

To give children and young people safe and inclusive opportunities to form and express their views we have and will proactively engage young people from diverse backgrounds.

For this strategy we identified groups of young people who are proportionally disengaged with Barnet's mental health and wellbeing services, and we are designing the feedback process following this initial work. We will arrange engagement sessions within existing spaces where young people have said that they feel comfortable and with organisations who have the expertise to do this work with specific cohorts such as Chazak, Noa Girls and BLAM UK.

Voice

To ensure that children and young people are provided with sufficient information to support the expression of their views we will provide practitioners with the necessary training to effectively communicate to a range of age groups the details around the engagement. For each piece of engagement work, we will be clear about the information needed from young people. Practitioners will assess young people's level of understanding prior to, during and throughout the engagement piece.

Audience

To ensure that the views of children and young people are communicated to the right people, we will ensure that key decision makers in relevant areas are made aware of any engagement work around mental health and wellbeing taking place within their service areas to provide input around the design of the engagement activity and the kind of information we seek from these activities.

Influence

To ensure that the views and voices of children and young people are taken seriously and acted on where possible, we will ensure that feedback is collated and fed back to said decision makers, and where relevant, they will be encouraged to feed this back to the practitioners within their areas. Young people will be made aware of the impacts of their feedback through follow-up sessions and other context-appropriate avenues.

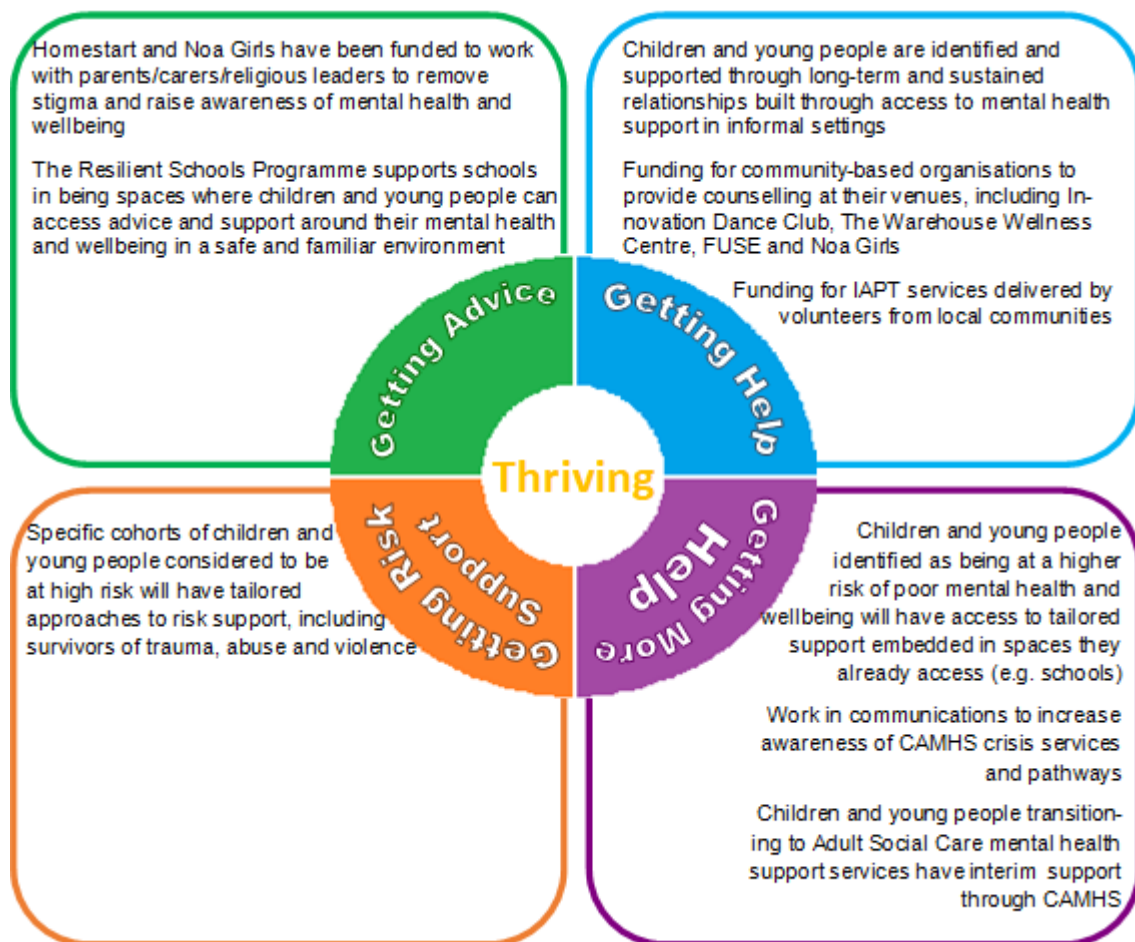
Outcomes:

- Insight-informed service design and delivery
- Barriers to access are identified and mitigated early
- Children and young people within the borough are aware of opportunities to support in the co-production of mental health and wellbeing support services

Priority 3: Nearby and Relevant support

Making mental health and wellbeing support more accessible to all of Barnet's young people in ways that consider their individual circumstances

Ensuring that Mental Health and Wellbeing support is practically accessible to all children, young people and families requires these offers of support to be embedded within communities. This support will also be situated strategically in ways that align with need and projected need within the borough, with risk factors of poor mental health amongst children and young people considered. The below diagram shows our intentions in this area, as well as demonstrating some of the ongoing work to ensure that nearby and relevant mental health and wellbeing support is available and accessible to all children and young people.



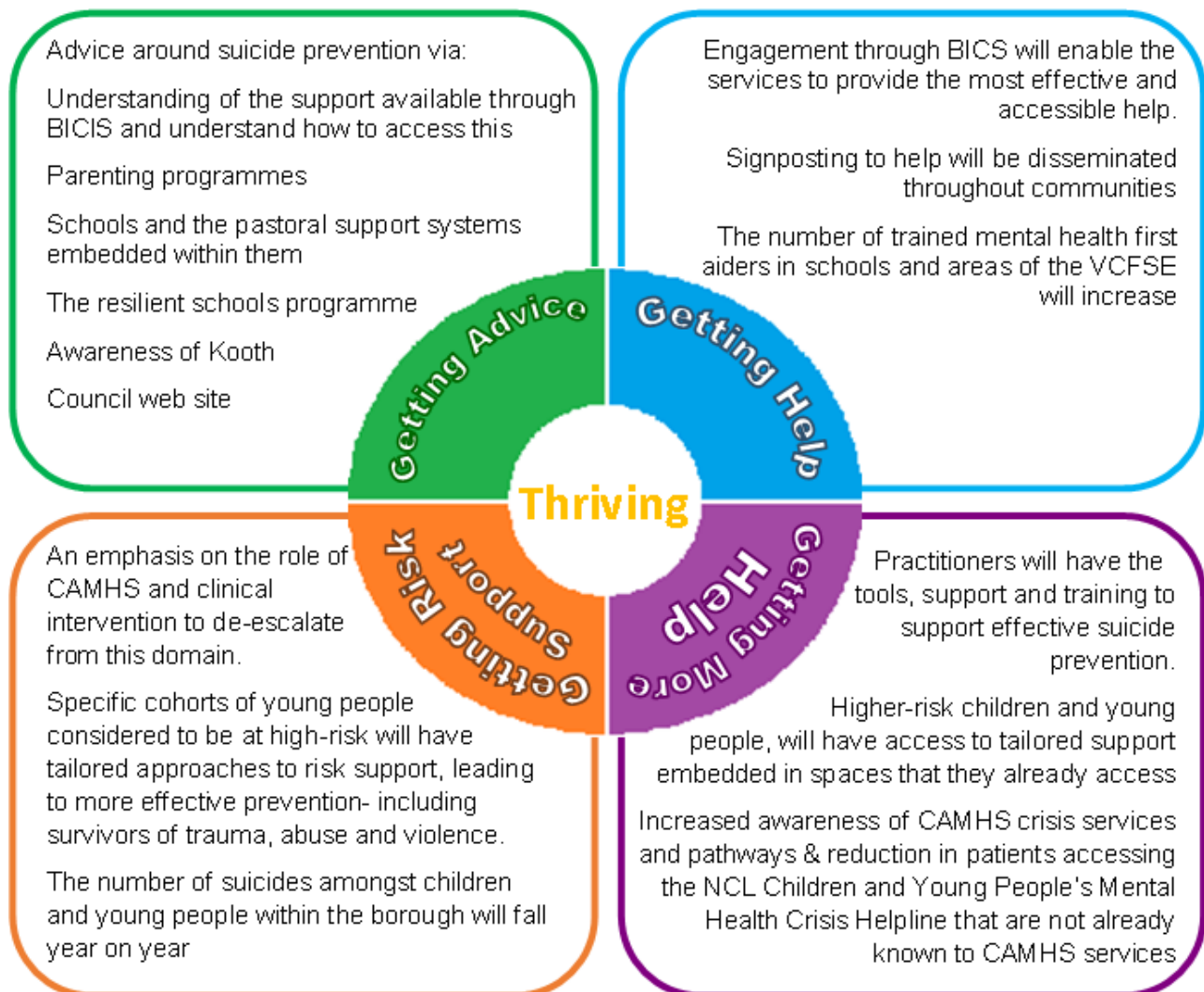
Outcomes:

- Ease of access to advice due to increased trust and reduced stigma
- Increased understanding of how to support children and young people's mental health within communities.
- There is access to a range of services that provide early help to children and their families
- Improved access to services and children experiences a reduction in the time they wait for services.
- Wrap around support is available while children are waiting for a targeted intervention.
- A reduction in patients accessing A&E for mental health support.

Priority 4: Suicide prevention

The multi-agency Barnet Suicide Prevention Partnership ensures that robust and effective support is in place to ensure that the number of Barnet’s children and young people lost to suicide falls every year.

The Barnet Suicide Prevention framework provides detail on high-risk groups and encourages tailored approaches for specific groups and circumstances. The framework specifically cites insight from data, research and children and young people with lived experience as a key foundation for action in seeking to prevent suicide attempts by young people, and in line with this we will continue to ensure that our approach to suicide is evidence-driven and highly informed by insight from those with lived experience.



Outcomes:

- Opportunity and capacity for human intervention and help-seeking is increased.
- Access to means of suicide and self-harm are reduced for those identified as being at particularly heightened risk.
- Number of attempted and completed suicides amongst Barnet’s Children and Young people falls year on year.

Priority 5: A System for Success

As part of our aims to improve the experiences of children and young people accessing mental health support, it is key that we develop the conditions for success, whereby we create a system that can deliver on our priorities and lead to better outcomes.

To do this, we will:

- Explore the development of a single system, enabling children and young people to experience a seamless service.
- Explore the concept of a single provider to coordinate activity across the system so that children and young people do not fall through the gaps when moving between services.
- Explore single point of access and no wrong door.
- Ensure a workforce that is able to deliver the best outcomes for our children and young people and that they have the support to do so.

Outcomes:

- Improved interim support in transitions between services.
- Increased accessibility to mental health and wellbeing services for all children and young people
- Increased integrated working across the system.

In prioritising the above areas in alignment with the THRIVE model, our aim is to ensure that as many young people in Barnet are able to remain within the Thriving domain, with the services and multiagency support within each domain being able to mobilise around children and young people in need in order to prevent instances of escalation and to build resilience within children, families and communities.

Governance

Performance Management

An action plan is currently in development, which will be used to capture status updates on a quarterly basis during Children & Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board meetings where action owners will report on updates and Red Amber Green (RAG) ratings.

Monitoring

This strategy's implementation will be monitored by both the Children & Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board (Children's Integrated Care Board for Barnet) Progress on individual actions within the action plan will be reported on a quarterly basis to the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board.

Roles and Responsibilities

Approval for any amendments to this strategy will need to be given by the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board.

Corporate Knowledge

	Levels of Impact			
	High	Medium	Low	None
People	✓			
Place		✓		
Planet			✓	

APPENDIX

A: The Barnet Suicide Prevention framework

Theme	Foundation for Action		Prevention of Suicide and Self Harm				Postvention	
Area for Action	Insights from data, research and children and young people with lived experience	Leadership and Collaboration	Awareness	Interventions*	Services & support	Wider determinants of mental health and wellbeing	Bereavement Support	Community Response
Cross-cutting concerns	1. Each area should address high risk groups 2. Each area should consider the need for tailored approaches for specific groups 3. Each area should mitigate the impact of high-risk distressing life events							

*Interventions are actions which delay or disrupt suicidal thoughts or actions; for example reducing access to means, increasing the opportunity or capacity for human intervention and providing opportunities for help-seeking.

Preventing suicide by children and young people requires responsiveness to emerging insight, and thus, the regular collective review of our approach and strategy.

B: Mental Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference

Barnet Children & Young People’s Mental Health & Wellbeing Partnership Board Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

These Terms of Reference set out the membership, remit, and responsibilities of the Barnet Children and Young People’s Mental Health & Wellbeing Partnership Board.

2. Purpose and duty

The Partnership Board brings together representatives from across Children’s Mental Health and wellbeing services in Barnet to oversee the implementation of the Barnet Children and Young People’s Transformation Action Plan. The board will also oversee

transformation funding, and other related funds and grants, either Local Authority or NHS and agree and monitor spending plans.

The Transformation Action Plan supports a whole system approach, focusing on early intervention and improving access and is based on delivering the THRIVE model. The Board has a duty to assure delivery of:

- **Prevention and early help services** *led by London Borough of Barnet*
- **Outpatient CAMHS** *led by Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust*
- **Acute pathways for crisis and assertive outreach** *led jointly by Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust and the Royal Free London*
- **Specialist and Inpatient care** *led by the North Central London STP Programme with input from Barnet CCG*
- *Communication*
- *Effective involvement of young people in service design, development and improvement*

3. **Membership**

The Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Board will include the following representation:

- Louise Miller – Barnet Health GP member with the lead for Mental Health (CCG)
- Jess Baines-Holmes - Director of Commissioning (CCG)
- Deputy Director of Transformation and Complex Projects (CCG)
- Senior Commissioning Manager – Children's Transformation (CCG)
- Chris Munday - Director of Children's Services (LBB)
- Tamara Djuretic - Director of Public Health (LBB)
- Brigette Jordaan - Assistant Director of SEND (LBB)
- Senior Programme Manager, Mental Health Lead (STP)
- CAMHS Operations Director (RFH)
- CAMHS Operations Director (BEH MHT)
- Associate Medical Director (BEH MHT)
- CAMHS Operations Director (TP)
- HealthWatch

Members are able to elect an appropriate Deputy (with delegated responsibility) to attend on their behalf.

Others will be invited to the meeting for specific areas of focus as required.

4. **Chair**

Chair will be Chris Munday – Director of Children Services (LBB)

Co-Chair to be confirmed at the meeting

Tasneem Anjary - Mental Health & Wellbeing Commissioner manage the agenda, papers and take meeting notes.

6. **Frequency of Meetings**

Meetings will last for 1.5 hours and will be quarterly

7. Authority

The Barnet Children and Young People’s Mental Health & Wellbeing Partnership Board will report to the Children’s Integrated Partnership (CYP ICP)/Children & Young People’s Partnership Board which has ultimate responsibility for the delivery of the Action Plan and the deployment of funding against it. The Partnership Board is not a decision making body, but it will make commissioning recommendations to the Children and Young People’s ICP.

The Joint Commissioning Executive Group oversees the Section 75 agreements between the Council and CCG.

The Health and Wellbeing Board provides joint oversight of the programme. In line with the Board’s priority of improving mental health and wellbeing for all through a life course approach, the Board will oversee the programme and ensure that the changes being proposed are embedded in the wider system.

Reporting of Children and Young People’s Mental Health & Wellbeing Partnership Board
The Board will establish Task and Finish Groups and subgroups as appropriate including a mechanism for children, young people and family engagement and coproduction.

8. Conflicts of Interest

The Chair shall manage actual and potential conflicts of interest to ensure that recommendations are made and are seen to be made in an open and transparent way and will be dealt with in accordance with relevant organisational policy.

9. Review

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually.

