



The Local Area Partnership of Barnet: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Alternative Provision Strategy 2024-2027



North Central London
Health and Care
Integrated Care System



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Caring for people, our places and the planet

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Foreword

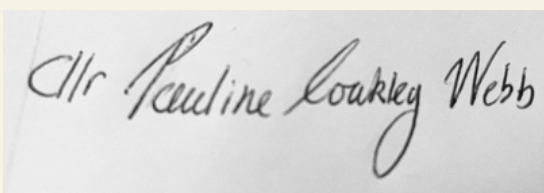
As the lead Councillor for family friendly Barnet and the Executive Lead for Children , Young People, Maternity and Neonates for NCL ICB, we are proud to share the local Area of Barnet’s strategy for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP). This strategy is a testament to our shared commitment to ensuring that every child and young person in our community receives the support and opportunities they need.

Our vision is clear: to create an inclusive education system where all children, regardless of their needs, can achieve their full potential. This strategy outlines our plans to provide high quality, early support and to ensure that our services are accessible, effective, and tailored to the unique needs of each individual.

We have worked in partnership with our children and young people with SEND or who are educated in AP and their families, as well as our wider stakeholders across education, health and care to co-produce this strategy. Their insights and experiences have been instrumental in the development of this strategy and ongoing improvements across both the Council and the wider North Central London Integrated Care System.

The strategy outlines the work we have done so far to improve experiences and outcomes, as well as our priority areas for the next three years. There are no quick fixes - change will take time and commitment - but by working in collaboration and partnership, we are determined to improve the outcomes for the children, young people and families we serve.

We really couldn’t do this without you - thank you for your continued support.



Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb



Sarah Mansuralli



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01

Introduction

The overarching aim of this strategy is to set out how we will maintain or improve the experiences and outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or who are educated in Alternative Provision (AP) and their families.

It is for children and young people with SEND and/or who are educated in AP, their families, as well as everyone who works to support them, headteachers, governors, SENDCos, Further Education (FE) and settings, professionals across health, education and social care and the voluntary sector. It covers the Local Area of Barnet, and includes the council, schools, early years settings, further education, the North Central London (NCL) Integrated Care Board (ICB), and specialist services in health and our voluntary sector.

Our thanks to all those who gave feedback and made comments in the shaping of this strategy at every stage, particularly our children and young people with SEND and/or educated in AP. It draws together:

- Information about our local area.
- The actions we have taken since our last Area SEND Inspection.
- The priority areas which our children and young people, families, partners have identified we need to target over the next three years, how we will make those improvements and the evidence we will use to evaluate impact and effectiveness.

The strategy was developed and coproduced with all stakeholders involved in our SEND and AP Strategic Board between 2023 – 2024 and was formally consulted on during June and July 2024. All Consultations for Barnet are held on our ‘Engage Barnet’ pages which can be found [here](#).

The strategy will be in place for three years. Progress will be monitored through the SEND and AP Strategic Partnership Board. All new SEND and AP strategies after this will be published in accordance with our local Area SEND Inspection outcome judgement timelines.

It should be noted this is a high level strategy informed by a range of data and information sources; these include:

- Feedback from stakeholders, this includes Parent/carers, education, health and Care professionals, at a strategic level, via Strategic boards and meetings.
- Feedback at an operational level – direct feedback from parents and young people about the services they have received, this includes compliments and complaints (informal and formal).
- Data analysis – based on nationally reported data. Key SEND statistics can be found [Education, health and care plans, Reporting year 2024 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#) and [Special educational needs in England, Academic year 2023/24 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](#) .
- Internal and external audit/evaluation/inspection.

We will feedback on progress in an annual SEND and AP report which will be published on our local offer. This annual report will include an overview of the actions and changes we have taken during the previous year as well as an update on local area statistics, including our performance against national and regional comparators and or standards.

Acronyms

Below is a list of acronyms used throughout the document. They will also be explained in the text throughout.

ADHD – Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AP – Alternative Provision
ARP – Additionally Resourced Provision
ASD/ASC – Autism Spectrum Disorder/Autism Spectrum Condition
BELS – Barnet Education and Learning Service
BPCF – Barnet Parent Carer Forum
CAMHS – Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CPP – Change Programme Partnership
DfE – Department for Education
EBSA – Emotional Based School Avoidance
EHCNA – Education Health and Care Needs Assessment
EHCP – Education Health and Care Plan
EHE – Electively Home Educated
ELSEC – Early Language Support for Every Child
EYFS – Early Years Foundation Stage
FE - Further Education
FSM – Free School Meals
ICB – Integrated Care Board
ICP – Integrated Care Partnership
KS – Key Stage
LA – Local Authority
MASH – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
NCL – North Central London
NEET – Not in Education Employment or Training
NHS – National Health Service
NHSE – National Health Service England
OT – Occupational Therapy
PT – Physiotherapy
SEMH – Social Emotional and Mental Health
SEN/SEND – Special Educational Needs/Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SENDIASS – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Independent Advice Service
SENDT – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Tribunal
SLCN – Speech Language and Communication Needs
SLT – Speech and Language Therapy



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02

SEND statistics



Schools

- Barnet has 131 schools serving 70,404 pupils (2023-24) a decrease of 200 pupils since 2022-23.
- There are 27 secondary schools (including two Sixth Form Academies), 89 primary schools, three all through schools, four nursery schools, seven special schools and two pupil referral units. There is also one General Further Education College.
- In March 2024 there were 145 Private, Voluntary and Independent Nurseries (PVI) in Barnet with a further 35 who take no funded children. There were 187 registered childminders in Barnet taking funded children with a further 8 childminders not taking any funded children.
- 54.1% of primary and 38.7% of secondary school pupils speak English as an additional language (national averages 22.3% and 17.9%).
- The percentage of schools that are good or better is 96.1%. We know one word Ofsted judgements have been removed and that a new report card will be introduced in September 2025. We will keep stakeholders updated about this change.



Educational outcomes 2023

- From EYFS through to KS5, pupils with SEN in Barnet schools had higher levels of attainment on every measure of attainment in the academic year 2022/23. The only exception was EYFS good level of development for pupils at SEN support where attainment was in line with the attainment of SEN pupils in England and London.
- The progress of SEN pupils in Barnet is also greater than England and statistical neighbours from KS1-2 and from KS2-4.
- Barnet SEN pupils also attend school more consistently, and experience fewer suspensions and exclusions, than SEN pupils in London and England.



EHCPs and SEND support

- Nationally, the total number of pupils with an EHC plan increased by 140% between 2015 and 2024. In Barnet the increase was 120% and across London it was 127%. Over the same period the total pupil population in England increased by 6%, in London by 3% and in Barnet by 10.6%.
- The growth in the SEND cohort is substantially disproportionate in comparison to changes in the total pupil population. This means that the proportion of pupils with EHCPs in nurseries, schools and colleges is higher. Nationally, this has increased from 2.8 % in 2015/16 to 4.8% in 2023/2024, in London the increase has been from 2.8% to 4.9% and similarly in Barnet the percentage of pupils has increased from 2.6% to 4.9%.
- The percentage of school pupils requiring SEN Support has also increased during this period. In Barnet the percentage of pupils accessing SEN support was 10.9% in 2015/16 and is now 11.5%.
- The total SEND cohort in Barnet for 2023/2024 was 16.4%.

Percentage of EHCPs and SEN Support trend data since 2016, England, London and Barnet.

		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
England	EHC plans %	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.1	3.3	3.7	4.0	4.3	4.8
	SEN support %	11.6	11.6	11.7	11.9	12.1	12.2	12.6	13.0	13.6
London	EHC plans %	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.2	3.5	3.8	4.1	4.5	4.9
	SEN support %	11.7	11.4	11.3	11.4	11.5	11.4	11.7	12.1	12.7
Barnet	EHC plans %	2.6	2.7	2.8	3.0	3.1	3.4	3.6	4.0	4.9
	SEN support %	10.9	10.3	10.6	10.7	10.7	10.2	10.6	10.8	11.5



Mainstream inclusion

- Barnet's rate of mainstream inclusion continues to be high with 49% of pupils in state-funded mainstream settings (not resourced/unit provision). Barnet also rank within the top quartile of local authorities for the proportion of their EHCP cohort attending state-funded mainstream resourced provision or SEN units.
- The proportion of the EHCP cohort under 5 years old increased to 6.2% in 2024. This is the second highest proportion among statistical neighbours and in the top quartile of local authorities in England. This indicates that residents with SEND are being successfully identified early in Barnet.



Need types

- In Barnet, of all children with SEN, whether they have an EHCP or are supported at SEN support, the cohorts with the highest numbers are:
 - ➔ Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) - 23.8%
 - ➔ Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs - 20%, and
 - ➔ Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) - 19.6%.
- The same three primary needs are also the most prevalent nationally (Speech, language and communication needs 24%; Social, emotional and mental health needs 20.1%; and Autistic spectrum disorder 15.5%).
- The proportion of pupils in Barnet who have an Autistic Spectrum Condition is above both national and statistical neighbour averages (19.6% vs 15.5% and 17.1%).



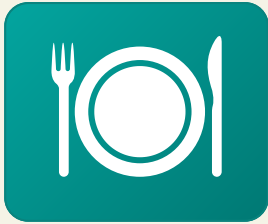
Adult social care

- The proportion of adults with learning difficulties in paid employment is almost twice national and statistical neighbour averages (8.2% vs 4.8% and 4.8%). Barnet ranked third among statistical neighbours and in the top quintile of local authorities in England on this measure.
- 84.9% of adults receiving long term support for learning disabilities in Barnet live at home or with family. This is the second highest proportion among Barnet's statistical neighbours.



Destinations

- After KS4, the proportion of EHCP students remaining in education, employment or training was higher than England averages (Barnet 93.5%, England 92.1%).
- The proportion of SEN Support pupils remaining in education, employment or training was also above England averages (Barnet 95.9%, England 90.2%).
- Barnet had relatively large proportions of both EHCP and SEN Support pupils progressing to a school sixth form or sixth form college. Around a third (31%) of the EHCP cohort progressed to a sixth form or sixth form college after KS4, compared to the England average of 11.6%.
- This rate of progression to a sixth form or sixth form college for EHCP pupils is also high compared to in other London local authorities – the regional average of 20.2% is more than 10% points lower than the rate in Barnet.



Free school meals

- Pupils with SEN are more likely to be eligible for free school meals. Nationally, 42.2% of pupils with an EHC plan, and 38.3% of pupils with SEN support, are eligible for free school meals in 2024. This compares with 24.6% of all pupils in schools.
- The percentage of Barnet pupils who are eligible for free school meals is lower across all categories - EHCP, SEN support and No SEN than either the London or national rates.



Specialist places (ARP or Special schools)

- Since 2018 Barnet has increased its specialist and ARP places by 40%. We had 1,319 specialist and ARP places in September 2023, compared with 944 places in 2018.
- Demand is continuing to grow at a rate that outstrips current capacity. Ongoing work with regard to increasing the number of specialist places available in the Borough remains a priority area for us.



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Our vision

Our vision for all children and young people especially those with special educational needs and disabilities or who are educated in alternative provision is that they are supported to:



achieve well - socially, emotionally,
and academically



be healthy



be visible and heard



successfully transition at each
phase of their education



prepare for adulthood, including participation in
their local community and/or the world of work
as appropriate

**“I want to work, work hard
and I want to work fully for
the NHS. I want to earn my
own money, buy things, do
what I want and not ask
mum”**



SI Learner February 2024

These values very much align with our [Children and Young Peoples Plan 2023 – 2027](#); our [Barnet plan 2021-2025](#) ; our [Education Strategy](#) and our [Post 16 Strategy](#), our [Family Services Child and Family Early Help Strategy 2023 - 2027](#) and our [Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#). Links to all our strategies can be found [here](#).



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Aims

Ensuring that children and young people with SEND, and/or who are educated in AP feel included, valued, and safe in every way, so they grow, develop and achieve, underpins every aspect of our work.

Our aims:

To ensure all children and young people with SEND and in alternative provision have their needs identified as soon as possible and receive the right support at the earliest opportunity

To work in a person-centred and family friendly way so children and young people and their families feel confident in our local offer, that they are supported and know where to go for support.

To ensure children and young people with SEND and in alternative provision receive high quality, integrated inclusive services, including opportunities out of education.

That children and young people with SEND and in alternative provision are supported to ensure their voices are heard and acted on.

Our aims:

To ensure services are delivered locally in our borough and as close to home as possible so children and young people with SEND and/or those who are educated in alternative provision can benefit from community integration and support from local services in Barnet.

We want children and young people and those who support them to be valued and included for their unique and wonderful 'authentic' selves, reducing masking and developing confidence and recognition of their own strengths.

Have high expectations for children and young people with SEND, celebrating their achievements so they inspire others.



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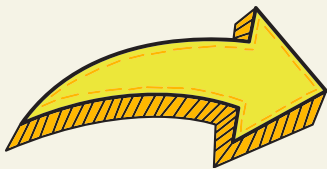


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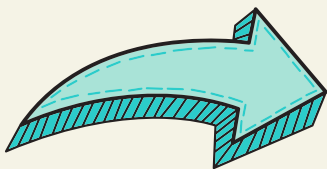
Area SEND Inspection - Barnet (January 2022)

The purpose of Area SEND Inspections is to provide an independent, external evaluation of the effectiveness of the local area partnership's arrangements for children and young people with SEND and in AP and where appropriate, recommend what the local area partnership should do to improve those arrangements.

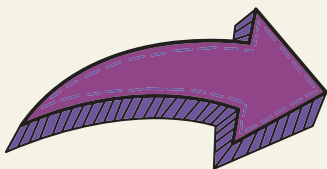
Barnet was last inspected between the 17 - 21 January 2022. The inspection outcome feedback letter can be found [here](#). The next Inspection is expected to take place around January 2027. The main findings were:



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.

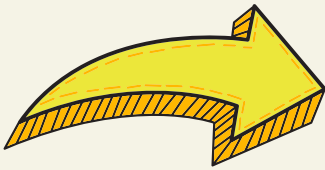


Children and young people with SEND enjoy their time in education and in their social lives. They like living in Barnet. They feel well supported by the professionals who help them. The support they receive helps them to access learning at school and college more easily.

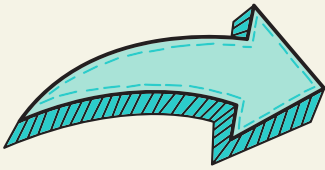


Parents and carers are typically positive about their children's experiences in schools and colleges. They feel that education settings meet their children's needs well. Parents and carers feel that the education, health and care (EHC) plans make a positive difference in assessing and meeting their children's needs.

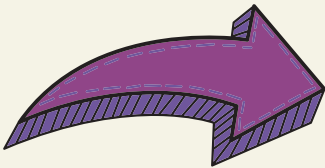




The area has experienced recruitment challenges across health services. This has led to a reduction in therapeutic provision. It has also increased the length of time children and young people wait to access therapies. Despite these pressures, staff have worked creatively to support children and young people and their families. Nevertheless, parents and carers are concerned about the impact this has on their children.



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.

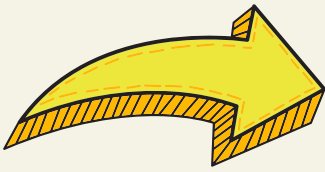


Leaders have responded thoroughly and promptly to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has helped leaders to think differently about how to tackle needs, such as providing safe and inclusive outdoor spaces for CYP with SEND.

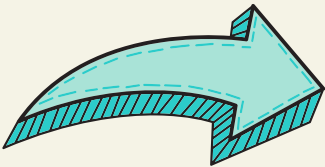


There is a strong, extensive and multi-agency training offer in Barnet. Many people, from parents to school governors, were positive about the quality and helpfulness of training in improving their ability to identify and meet the needs of children and young people.

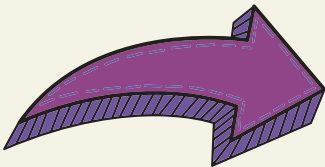




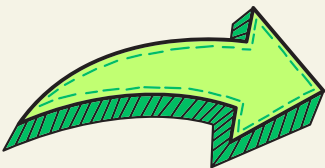
Co-production (a way of working where children, families and those that provide the services work together to create a decision or a service that works for them all) in Barnet goes beyond consultation and collaboration. Children, young people, and parents and carers influence and help deliver improvements 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 - 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 that the inspectors identified required further development were:

1

Children and young people in Barnet wait too long for a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder and waiting times for Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy and Physiotherapy have been too long.

2

Not all expectant parents are offered an antenatal contact in Barnet. This is one of the requirements of the Healthy Child Programme. This means that some early or emerging needs may not be identified and responded to.

3

Some children and young people wait too long for specialist child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). This means that sometimes, other professionals struggle to help these children and young people while they wait.

4

Some children and young people with complex medical and health needs have to wait for essential home equipment. For example, due to commissioning arrangements, there are differences in the equipment that health and social care practitioners can prescribe. There is not a clear pathway for those under 18 who need pressure care equipment. This means that children and young people under 18 experience a delay in receiving essential equipment.

5

Outcomes in EHC plans do not typically focus on the steps needed to help children and young people realise their wider hopes and ambitions.



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06

Actions and improvements made since the Area SEND Inspection 2022



Waiting times for diagnoses and support:

Nationally the wait times for neurodevelopmental developmental such as Autism and ADHD vary and so comparison data is not straightforward.

They may not represent the number of referrals where there is comorbidity such as is often the case for ADHD and ASD. Many statistics will record wait times from referral to diagnosis and other referral to end of assessment. Some as below, only include referrals via CAMHS rather than wider child development services.

	Mean waiting time from referral to diagnosis
Autism	527 days (75.29 weeks or 17.31 months)
ADHD	570 days (81.43 weeks or 18.73 months)

Data Source: Mental Health Services Dataset (MHSDS)

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- In June 2024, the number of children and young people across North Central London that are waiting to be seen from referral to completing an Autism assessment is as follows:
 - ➔ Under the age of 5: In June 2024, the average weeks wait from referral to completing assessment is 68.
 - ➔ Over the age of 5: In June 2024, the average weeks wait from referral to completing assessment is 88.



Waiting times for diagnoses and support:

- In Barnet as of November 2024 there were 904 children aged 0-5 in its Autism neurodiversity pathway. The average wait time from referral to completion of assessment is 70 weeks (16 months).
- For children aged 5-17, there were 167 on the Autism neurodiversity pathway, with a wait of time of 60 weeks (14 months) from referral to completing of assessment.
- In Barnet, as of June 2024, for children aged 5+ the average wait time from referral to completion of an ADHD assessment is 88 weeks (20 months).
- The national wait time from referral to diagnosis via mental health services (see above) according to the MHSD data set for Autism is 17.3 months and for ADHD is 18.7 months.
- NCL ICB has confirmed recurrent investment to expand capacity Q4 24/25 onwards and to establish a standardised Neurodevelopmental Disorder (NDD) Diagnosis pathway for children and young people aged 0-18 across NCL. Providers are working collaboratively to undertake additional assessments and plans include improving pre and post diagnostic support (psychoeducational) for parents/carers.
- The NCL Waiting Room is an online offer ([here](#)) providing support for children and young people, families, carers and other professionals either seeking or signposting support whilst waiting for diagnosis or other assessments.



Waiting times for diagnoses and support:

- For the North Central London ICB, the percentage on the waiting list who have been waiting for children and young people services for more than 18 weeks for speech and language therapy was at 31% in November 2024, compared to a national average of 36.2%
- ➔ In Barnet 54% of children and young people are seen within 0-18 weeks.
- ➔ As of November 2024, the average waiting time for first appointment for speech and language therapy is 17.2 weeks.

- For the North Central London ICB, the percentage on the waiting list who have been waiting for children and young people services for more than 18 weeks for occupational therapy was at 12.9% in November 2024, compared to a national average of 35.1%
- ➔ In Barnet as of November 2024, 52 children and young people were on the waiting list; the average wait time for 1st appointment is 5.9 weeks.
- For the North Central London ICB, the percentage on the waiting list who have been waiting for children and young people services for more than 18 weeks for physiotherapy was at 2.4% in November 2024, compared to a national average of 12.9%
- ➔ In Barnet, as of November 2024, 30 children and young people were on the wait list, the average wait time for 1st appointment is 5 weeks.



Autism Hub:

- The development of the Autism Hub is underway - the vision is to establish a community based service where families, children and young people can access support for specialist intervention according to their need. Creating a 'one stop shop' reduces wasted time and resources and enables families to find and navigate support services with greater ease.
- Our shared vision is to create a welcoming, safe, neuro-affirmative place where Autistic people and those who love and care for them can access the support and social opportunities they need and where professionals can connect and collaborate ensuring our services are more joined-up and effective. This will be an opportunity to have a co-located multi-disciplinary team that can be accessed directly by families or through MASH, Early Help, Children's Social Care and the designated Autism leads in Education and Health.

SEND and Health:



- The Local area's aim is to provide a comprehensive offer of Health support for Barnet children with SEND at a universal, targeted or specialist offer based on their needs. There are a range of health services commissioned and funded through NCL ICB and Barnet LA for children and young people with SEND 0-25 years from a range of different providers.



SEND and Health:

- Speech and Language Therapy (SLT), Physiotherapy (PT) and Occupational Therapy (OT):
 - ➔ Enhance the early help/universal offer into early years and schools by providing drop ins, advice, training, website resources to enable families and educational practitioners implement helpful strategies and make environmental reasonable adjustments.
 - ➔ In Barnet, OT and PT have significantly reduced the waiting time to first appointment since March 2022.
- More recently numbers have been increasing for children waiting for their first appointment for SLT. The Council has continued to fund its Language Enrichment Programme and is also the only London Borough to be part of a national pilot with regards to Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC). Early indicators suggest a very positive response to this programme.

Waiting Times for First Appointment	March 2022	April 2022	March 2024	April 2024	December 2024
Speech and Language Therapy	18.7 weeks	18.8 weeks	12.4 weeks	13.6 weeks	15.9 weeks
Occupational Therapy	29.6 weeks	17.0 weeks	9.3 weeks	6.8 weeks	6.1 weeks
Physiotherapy	13.0 weeks	16.0 weeks	7.1 weeks	6.4 weeks	3.7 weeks

Source: Local Provider Data



Mental health:

- Additional investment in the form of Mental Health Support Teams in schools, the roll out of Barnet Home Treatment Team and additional funding to the local CAMHS provider (NLFT) so that they can reduce times.
- The Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy underlines the commitment from the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) to provide high quality, creative and young person centred mental health and wellbeing provision in the borough to build resilience in an all children and young people by detailing how the offer will continue to be developed and improved. As part of this approach, we will ensure that mental health and wellbeing support is made more accessible to those with SEND.
- NHSE guidance sets out an expectation of 4 week waiting times for CAMHS.
 - As of October 2024, in Barnet, the waiting times:
 - ➔ 265 children and young people (37%) waited less than four weeks from referral to first contact.
 - ➔ 245 children and young people (34%) waited from four to twelve weeks from referral to first contact.
 - ➔ 205 children and young people (29%) waited twelve weeks and over from referral to first contact.

Source: Barnet CAMHS Data



Increased the number of specialist places available in ARPs and Special schools:

- We have continued to increase the numbers of commissioned places in both our Special schools and mainstream ARPs including the building of a brand new all age specialist Autism school, the Windmill, in 2024 which will provide 90 places from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 5 when at capacity.
- We have also developed satellite provisions for Oakleigh Special school on the Queenswell site and a satellite site for Northway school which opened in September 2022 on the Grasvenor site.
- We opened a new secondary ARP for cognition and learning at the Friern Barnet school in September 2022, followed by a 28 place ARP for primary children with cognition and learning needs in September 2023 at Queenswell. Our existing ARPs all increased the number of pupils they could admit.
- We also built a brand new purpose built Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) for the Pavilion which opened in 2023.

Improved the compliancy rates for Annual Reviews:



- We have invested in additional staffing to focus on Annual reviews, we have increased our rates of compliance for received Annual Reviews from 37% in February 2023, to 70% in February 2024. We will continue to work on our systems to improve this further.



Antenatal contact:

- The midwifery service informs the health visiting service of any parents who have special needs or are expecting a child with special needs identified antenatally and they are prioritised for an antenatal health needs assessment.

Quality of EHC Plans:



- We continue to have a multi-agency audit including parents and carers for 10% of newly issued plans.
- We are also trialling the DfE developed EHCP template as part of the Change Programme Partnership for the London region - you can find out more details with regards to the DfE SEND and AP Improvement plan [here](#).



Put in place online information sessions for parents and carers:

- These have comprised of two sessions covering each topic, one at lunchtime and one at 6pm, to increase the number of parents and carers that can attend.
- Topics have included EHCNAs, Annual reviews and phased transfer processes, all things Autism and all things social care.
- We will continue with these to ensure a rolling programme of sessions that have been most requested from parents and carers. Based on feedback, we will also change the evening session from 6 to 7pm.





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07

Our strengths



Co-production

- We are very grateful that so many parents/carers and young people continue to give their time to sit on strategic and operational boards such as the Barnet's Childrens Partnership Board , or working parties that really clarify our values and commitments such as our Mental Health Wellbeing Charter .
- We have parent representatives on the BELS Board of Directors and of course our SEND and AP Strategic Partnership Board and the children's partnership board.
- Parents and carers are an integral part of the interview processes for key posts such as the Head of Service for SEND and our Designated Clinical Officer (DCO).
- All relevant strategies and plans are codesigned and developed with parent/carers and informed by the lived experiences of children and young people.
- We are proud to have representatives from our Barnet Parent, Carer Forum in their roles as professionals by experience, being part of the decision making relating to requests for Education, Health Care Needs Assessment and those with EHCPs.



Compliance rates for newly issued EHCPs

- Since 2017 Barnet has maintained compliance rates above 97% with regards the 20 week timescale for newly issued plans.
- In 2023 Barnet achieved a 100% completion rate within statutory timescales (20 weeks from initial request for a plan to final plan being issued), compared to 70% for London and 50.3% for England, one of only 3 local authorities in the country to do so.
- We know that quality is as important as compliance, and we continue to improve the quality of our plans based on feedback from our quality assurance system which includes parent/carer, health, education and social care representation.



Inclusion

- Our schools are inclusive. In January 2024, the percentage of Barnet residents with an EHCP who were placed in state-funded mainstream schools (not in a resourced provision or SEN unit) was 49%. This was the second highest proportion among statistical neighbours, and in the highest quintile of all local authorities in England, demonstrating the inclusive nature of Barnet schools.
- The percentage of the EHCP cohort attending a resourced provision or an SEN unit in a mainstream school was 6.7% in 2024. This is a slightly lower proportion than the statistical neighbour average of 6.9%, but well above the England average of 3.9%.
- Our schools and education staff are skilled and confident in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND and are supported by our dedicated specialist inclusion and educational psychology teams.
- Professionals within and supporting schools work incredibly well together and with families to coproduce clear expectations of what every family can expect to be in place in all schools. This is known as ordinarily available provision and can be found [here](#).
- Our toolkits are considered excellent examples of practice.



“From EYFS through to KS5, EHCP pupils in Barnet schools had high levels of attainment and SEN Support pupils consistently performed above averages from KS1 to KS4. SEND pupils tended to have low levels of absence and suspensions across mainstream schools. These consistently strong outcomes in Barnet were also reflected in Mime’s 2019 inclusion index, where Barnet ranked second in England”.

MIME report, July 2024



Attainment and progress

- In recent years children’s achievements in Barnet’s schools and settings at all key stages have been among the very best in the country. Over 95% of Barnet pupils are at schools and settings which were graded good or better at their last Ofsted inspection.
- Achievement for children and young people with SEN in Barnet is strong in comparison to national at all Key Stages and children identified as requiring SEND support in Barnet made better progress between KS2 and KS4 than children nationally with no recorded SEN.
- In Barnet, 9% of EHCP pupils achieved a Good Level of Development at EYFS in 2023. This was the highest proportion among statistical neighbours and the eighth highest in England.
- In 2023, 28% of EHCP pupils and 56% of SEN Support pupils met the year 1 phonics standard, both ranking Barnet in the top quartile of all local authorities in England.
- KS1 SEND pupil performance was strong again in 2023, with Barnet consistently ranking in the top 10 local authorities in England for EHCP pupils, and in the top 30 for SEN Support pupils. In particular, 23% of EHCP pupils reached the expected standard or higher in KS1 reading, compared to 12% across England and ranking sixth of all local authorities in England.
- Both the SEN Support and EHCP cohorts performed well at KS2, with Barnet consistently ranking in the best performing quartile of local authorities in England.
- Maths attainment was particularly strong, with 58.3% of SEN Support pupils achieving the expected or higher standard, the seventh highest rate in England.
- SEN Support and EHCP pupils also made more progress from KS1 and KS2 than their peers in Barnet’s statistical neighbours and across England, consistently ranking in the top quartile of local authorities in England.

“I have found the support I have had so far really helpful, I feel more confident and independent”



SI Learner



Children and Family Early Help Hubs

- 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.
- Barnet has three Children 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. This includes midwifery, health visiting, breastfeeding, parenting support, positive activities, mental health support, welfare advice, groupwork programmes and a range of other services. Our hubs are linked to local schools, GP's and other community-based services.
- [Early help for children, young people and families | Barnet Council](#)



Youth justice

- Barnet's Youth Justice Service works with children aged between 10 and 18 years who have come into contact with the criminal justice system and supports them to help make changes in their lives, so they do not re-offend or cause further harm to the community.
- Barnet Council's Youth Justice Service has been awarded [Youth Justice SEND \(special educational needs and disability\) Quality Lead Status with a Child First Commendation](#), which recognises consistently high levels of practice with children who have SEND.
- Youth Justice SEND Quality Lead Status is awarded to teams that provide evidence and case studies of improved outcomes for children in their borough achieved through effective partnership working.



Short breaks

- Since 1 April 2011, Barnet has had a statutory duty to undertake the Break for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 to:
 - ➔ *“Provide short breaks to those who are carers for disabled children when it would improve their ability to care for their disabled child, or when they could not continue to provide care without a short break and to Publish information to parents about the services available in their area and criteria for accessing it by 1 October 2011”.*
- Since 2018 the number of children accessing short breaks has increased from 387 to over 1000 in March 2024. Families receive either 15 days (90 hours) of commissioned activities or £1,200 per annum on a prepaid card. The majority of families prefer the prepaid option as that gives them the most flexibility in choice of activity and timing of when it is needed. Further information about short breaks can be found [here](#).
- In delivering short breaks Barnet Family Services will continue to:
 - ★ Ensure transparency over short breaks and increasing flexibility where appropriate.
 - ★ Provide stakeholder briefings on processes, developments and changes to the offer.



Barnet SENDIASS

- The team are stable and fully staffed, they have also trained and recruited additional volunteers to meet the increase in demand for the service.
- A new system of triaging was introduced from 2023 to manage waiting times for advice and support.
- The service works in collaboration with multiple professionals to deliver quarterly information sessions to parent/carers. These sessions, delivered both in-person and virtually, are organised based on parents'/carers' feedback and requests and are very well-attended. 100% of feedback received rated the sessions as good or very good.



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08

**Our priority areas,
actions and key
indicators for the
period 2024-2027**

These are our key priorities over the next three years. We know that some of the priorities will feel more important than others dependent on your individual circumstances and want to make clear they are not written in any particular order of importance.

1.  **What?**

More families feel listened to and able to participate in shaping service developments, ensuring a greater sense of co-ownership.

 **How?**

- Continue to ensure we have parent/carer representation at all strategic boards.
- Co-design an annual survey for parents and carers to complete so we can use their lived experience to identify gaps and improve our service.
- Continue to ensure we make improvements/changes based on feedback opportunities at a range of levels for example, by working with Barnet Parent/Carer Forum to arrange information sessions delivered by professionals across the area including Barnet SENDIASS.

 **When?**

First survey to take place before the end of March 2025

 **Evidence?**

- We will publish an annual update report - 'you said, we did'.
- Parent/carer information sessions to be advertised on the Local Offer and SENDIASS websites.

2.



What?

More young people with SEND, whether they have an EHCP or not, feel listened to, valued and seen and are respected for who they are.

“For children and young people to be their authentic selves, they need to feel safe, seen and heard.”

Growing up in Barnet, an ethnographic study into the lives of disabled children and adolescents, LBB & Habitus Collective



How?

- Co-design an annual survey for children and young people so we can use their lived experience to identify gaps and improve our service.
- Increase the representation of children and young people at strategic board level across the partnership
- Work with education providers to ensure the arrangements for consulting young people with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education is made explicit in their SEN information reports, that they are involved in the school’s council (or equivalent) and their achievements are celebrated.
- Make sure our young person’s zone on our local offer page is updated and includes information about services in the community as well as clubs and activities opportunities outside of education.
- Ensure that all children and young people are valued and welcomed so they feel confident in being their authentic individual self.



When?

- First survey to take place before the end of March 2025.
- Young person’s zone to be updated by end of March 2025.
- SEN Information reports to be reviewed and updated annually by schools.



Evidence?

- An annual 'you said, we did' report.
- SEN Information reports are updated by December 2025, following an annual report to the SEN Governor which focuses on pupils with SEND in terms of attainment and progress, adaptations to the curriculum and learning environment, engagement in the activities of the school (including physical activities), emotional, mental and social development and individual achievement.
- We will have reviewed and updated our 'things to do' on our young person's zone of the Local Offer by July 2025.
- There is increased representation of children and young people at strategic boards

"I would like to find out more information about local services."

"I am not currently active in the community and would like to see if there are any clubs or groups I can join."

3.



What?

We will refine and improve our local offer to build confidence from families and professionals in our mainstream as well as our specialist education; and continue to cultivate our relationships with children and young people with SEND and their families by adopting a 'family friendly' approach to processes, support and information.



How?

- We will use the Change Programme Partnership (CPP) funding to employ a dedicated early disagreement resolution officer. We will learn from this role in terms of how to better engage families at an earlier stage, to build confidence and trust and reduce the rates of appeals to SENDT.
- We will develop a communication strategy so we can engage with our parents/carers more effectively, to ensure they are aware of our early disagreement resolution processes and their advantages.
- We will ensure transparency and timeliness of support for families, children and young people through early help and social care including short breaks.
- We will increase our understanding of the reasons for absence so we can better tailor or commission support where the need is greatest and improve the attendance of children and young people with SEND attending special schools and alternative provision wherever possible.
- We will further develop our support and guidance for those unable to attend due to emotional based school avoidance (EBSA).
- We will increase our materials and resources to support families who are Electively Home Educating (EHE) and make clear the duties on families where they EHE, so they can make informed choices.
- We will further improve our compliancy rates for annual reviews and maintain our high rates if compliancy for newly issued EHCPs.

“Trusted relationships and relational approaches can make a lasting difference to children and young people.”

Growing up in Barnet, an ethnographic study into the lives of disabled children and adolescents, LBB & Habitus Collective



When?

- Published guidance for education settings to identify, understand and support children and young people who are unable to attend school due to EBSA by December 2024.
- Dedicated early resolution officers to be in place before 1st of September 2024.



Evidence?

- Increased attendance rate of pupils in special schools and AP.
- Timeliness for Annual Reviews is improved.
- The number of requests for EHE for children and young people for reasons other than lifestyle choice is reduced.
- The rate of appeals to SENDT (currently 3.6%) is reduced or the increase slowed by August 2026 and either the number of cases going to a hearing, or the areas of disagreement reduced.

4.  What?

We will continue to improve the educational progress, outcomes and experiences of our children with SEND and in AP, across all phases and types of institution from early years to post-16, including transitions and progress into independent living, apprenticeships, supported internships, higher education, training or employment.

 How?

- Maintain our standards of attainment for all pupils with SEND so they are above the national comparators.
- Maintain our low number of children and young people with SEND that are NEET and increase the number of young people with SEND accessing supported apprenticeships/internships.
- Engage with the national call for evidence in relation to curriculum reform.
- Use the Change Programme Partnership to maintain our focus on mainstream inclusion.
- Learn from our partners in the CPP regions nationally and locally to co-produce clear guidance for best practice at key transition points for all SEND and vulnerable pupils and those educated in alternative provision.
- Refresh the preparing for adulthood strategy, to give visibility of the offer across the partnership. By ensuring independence is embedded throughout everything we do across education, care, health, council provided transport to places of education and employment.
- By continuing to co-produce and keep our ordinarily available offer updated.

“In creating positive transitional experiences, children and young people may require specific support. This can prevent a small issue from compounding and can be an effective early intervention approach.”

Growing up in Barnet, an ethnographic study into the lives of disabled children and adolescents, LBB & Habitus Collective

“It is important to me to receive high quality support and learning skills to become independent for the future”



When?

- December 2025.



Evidence?

- Updated Ordinarily Available document is published.
- ELSEC training has been delivered to a minimum of 25 primary schools.
- Published expectations of early years settings, schools and post 16 providers with regard expectations around transitions, including co-producing templates, self-audits or wider supportive documentation as appropriate.
- A co-produced, preparing for adulthood strategy is published.

“I would also like to achieve a transition into the workplace and travelling independently. I would like to learn more about independently using my money and using a bank account”.

“The school needs to be aware of supporting me through a transition to sixth form and on to University”.

5.  What?

Develop our Alternative Provision PRU pathways so that they are in line with the three tiered approach as set out in the DfE's Improvement Plan.

 How?

- We will utilise both the expertise and the funding available as part of the Change Programme Partnership to develop a three tiered approach for children and young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. This will include in reach support to schools, short term outreach and longer term placements to prepare children and young people with SEMH needs through their transition to their next phase of education.
- We will review our pathways, decision making and criteria into and out of each pathway including those children and young people with medical needs.

 When?

- By September 2025.



Evidence?

- Exclusions and suspensions continue to be below average.
- Alternative Provision pathway support offer reviewed and published on the Local Offer website.
- Referral processes and criteria reviewed, updated and published on the Local Offer website.

6.  **What?**

There are sufficient high-quality school places in Barnet across mainstream, specialist and additionally resourced provisions, from early years through to post 16 to meet current and future demand to ensure children and young people with SEND are able to access appropriate provision that is as close to home as possible.

 **How?**

- Continue to work with partners to develop the plans to rebuild Mapledown and Oakleigh Special schools. We know this will take time and recognise the need to develop further satellite provisions until this is completed.
- We will continue to offer training and support to mainstream schools, so they are confident to meet the needs of pupils including those with very complex needs.

 **When?**

- To be reviewed annually.

 **Evidence?**

- Reduction in number of children and young people placed in independent placements due to lack of capacity locally.
- Reduce the number of requests for EHE for children and young people for reasons other than lifestyle choice.
- Maintain our high rate of inclusion of pupils with SEND in mainstream settings.

7.



What?

Putting in place earlier intervention and support to children and young people who have health (including mental health) or development needs, including those waiting for a diagnosis, and their families.



How?

- Reduce waiting times for specialist assessments and advice so they are moving towards or below national averages.
- Embedding of the universal offer in Barnet, including access to a depository of therapy support.
- Baseline and increasing take up rates of annual health checks of young people 14+ who have Learning Disability.
- Maintain or improve take up of 2 year-old health checks.
- Increase the number of antenatal contacts.
- By developing further the early intervention offer including embedding ELSEC as part of the CPP.
- Embedding our mental health strategy and support including I -thrive and mental health support teams in schools.
- Working with our NCL partner boroughs in development of the Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) programme.



When?

- Baseline of take up for health checks/antenatal contacts by March 2025 and monitored annually thereafter.



Evidence?

- Wait times are reducing.
- Number of children accessing the 2 year-old health check increases as does the offer of antenatal contact.



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09

**Accountability,
transparency,
reporting and
sustainability -
our commitment to
you**

We are rightly being asked to do more to support our children and young people with SEND or who are educated in AP.

In a landscape with diminishing resources, it is critically important that we use limited funding in a way that makes the most impact and targets those who are most in need in an equitable and fair way.

This means that we must be open to doing things differently by:

Thinking about how to do things more efficiently e.g. whether there are less bureaucratic ways of pupils identified as needing Special Educational Provision (SEP) that is in addition to and different from that ordinarily available.



Identifying opportunities for additional funding e.g. through national pilots.

Taking a test and learn approach to improvements e.g. through national pathfinders such as the Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC) programme which we will be trialling over the coming 18 months.

We will ensure we continue to use data and information to hold ourselves accountable and so we can measure our performance and the impact this has for our children and young people with SEND or who are educated in AP - against ourselves as well as national and regional comparators

We will continue to monitor and evaluate the arrangements to ensure the most effective use of limited funding sources, whether that is from the ICB, the Council's General fund or the High Needs Block Element of Dedicated Schools Grant. Value for money and sustainability is therefore a critical and overarching priority across all areas of our work.

We want to make sure that everyone is kept informed about any changes and that we are transparent about these as well as our performance. To this end we will be developing an annual SEND and AP 'You Said, We Did' report that will be published on our local offer website. This will include key statistics.

We can't do any of this without you and we want to thank all those who give up their time to:



“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”.

Barnet Area SEND Inspection outcome letter 2022.



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Appendices

Appendix 1: Statistical Neighbours

Statistical neighbours are a way of benchmarking one LAs performance against other local authorities that have similar characteristics, rather than simply being geographically close. The statistical neighbours for Barnet are listed below, ranked by similarity to Barnet (1 being most similar). The table also includes state-funded school population size (as of 2023) although the key measures used to determine the similarity of local authorities are:

- Average pay
- FSM eligibility
- Ethnicity
- Household size, composition and ownership
- Prevalence of managerial/professional occupations.

Rank (1 = most alike)	Local authority	School population
-	Barnet	62,000
1	Merton	28,000
2	Kingston upon Thames	27,000
3	Reading	25,000
4	Sutton	41,000
5	Hillingdon	53,000
6	Redbridge	58,000
7	Hounslow	46,000
8	Milton Keynes	51,000
9	Ealing	55,000
10	Bromley	53,000

Appendix 2: Links to the relevant legislative framework/guidance

- Children and Family Act 2014 - [Children and Families Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#).
- SEND Regulations (2014) - [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#).
- SEND (Personal Budget) regulations 2014 - [The Special Educational Needs \(Personal Budgets\) Regulations 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#).
- SEND Code of Practice - [SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#).
- The Equality Act - [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#).
- The Health and Care Act 2022 - [Health and Care Act 2022 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#).
- Area SEND Inspection Framework 2023 - [Area SEND: framework and handbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).
- Human Rights Act 1998 - [Human Rights Act 1998 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#).
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability - [enable convention cover \(un.org\)](#).
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 - [Mental Capacity Act 2005 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#).
- Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019 - [Mental Capacity \(Amendment\) Act 2019 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#).
- Alternative provision guidance - [Department for Education \(DfE\)'s alternative provision guidance](#).
- School attendance - [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).
- School Suspensions and Exclusions - [School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).
- Safeguarding - [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).
- North Central London Integrated Care Board website - [Home - North Central London Integrated Care System \(nclhealthandcare.org.uk\)](#).
- Preparing for Adulthood - [Preparing for Adulthood | PfA | Home Page](#)
- SEND Improvement Plan - [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) and Alternative Provision \(AP\) Improvement Plan \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#).
- DfE SEND and AP Green paper SEND Review - [right support, right place, right time \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#).
- Supporting pupils with Medical conditions - [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#).
- Working together to improve School attendance - [Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#).

Appendix 3: Feedback from our formal consultation

You Said, We Did: SEND and AP Consultation.

Thank you to all those who took the time to feedback – we know how busy you are, and it is appreciated.

31 residents (most of whom were Barnet families with children with SEND who are educated within our Borough), responded to the consultation, although not all responded to or commented on, every question.

We have made changes to the strategy based on your views. In addition, all of your feedback informs our planning for children and young people with SEND or who are educated in Alternative Provision.

86% of respondents supported the Vision and 84% the Aims of our SEND and AP Strategy.

Whilst the vast majority of respondents supported our aims, vision as well as the priorities, there was some concern that we would not achieve these. We rightly have high ambitions for our children and young people, but also know change does not happen overnight. To hold ourselves accountable, as well as to promote transparency, we will publish an annual report on our local offer outlining our progress in terms of the actions we have taken each year.

Please find below a summary of the analysis of the SEND and AP Strategy and some of the key points that were raised.

Our Vision:

Our vision for all children and young people especially those with special educational needs and disabilities or who are educated in alternative provision is that they are supported to:

- *achieve well - socially, emotionally, and academically,*
- *are healthy,*
- *are visible and heard,*
- *successfully transition at each phase of their education,*
- *are prepared for adulthood, including participation in their local community and/or the world of work.*

Overall, 86% of you strongly agreed or tended to agree with the vision. The vision that had the highest support with 90% that strongly agreed or tended to agree, was that children and young people “successfully transition at each phase of their education”. We will continue to make this a focus.

2 respondents were concerned that their child might not enter the world the of work and felt this should be better reflected in the vision. We have therefore added “as appropriate” as suggested.

In terms of themes, families wanted to make sure their children were ‘Happy and confident’. ‘Had their views listened to’. ‘Not treated like they all fit in the same shaped hole’. That they are given “opportunities and to not give up on them”, so they “reach their full potential” and better understand how we would deliver “30 hours of nursery provision”. They wanted better ‘training’ for staff and to make sure that ‘mental health’ is given the same priority as physical health.

Our Aims:

- To ensure that all children and young people with SEND and in alternative provision have their needs identified as soon as possible and receive the right support at the earliest opportunity.
- To work in a person-centred and family friendly way so children and young people and their families feel confident in our local offer, that they are supported and know where to go for support.
- To ensure that children and young people with SEND and in alternative provision receive high quality, integrated inclusive services, including opportunities out of education.
- That children and young people with SEND and in alternative provision are supported to ensure their voices are heard and acted on.
- To ensure services are delivered locally in our borough and as close to home as possible so that children and young people with SEND and those who are educated in alternative provision can benefit from community integration and support from local services in Barnet.
- We want children and young people and those who support them to be valued and included for their unique and wonderful ‘authentic’ selves, reducing masking and developing confidence and recognition of their own strengths.
- Have high expectations for children and young people with SEND, celebrating their achievements so they inspire others.

84% agreed or tended to agree with our vision overall.

Some respondents were concerned about how it would be achieved and about NHS support especially Mental Health support (CAMHS), and therapy provision.

We know these are areas we need to develop further. We are building on our universal offer with the continuation of our Language Enrichment Programme (LEP) and more recently the development of the Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC) pilot. We aim to support 30-40 schools over the course of the project over the next 18 months which will support over 1,000 children.

We believe that many of the themes are addressed either explicitly or implicitly within our strategy, we will for example develop ways of making sure we gather and respond to the voices of children and young people, we value individuality and want to ensure that more children and young people feel confident to reduce masking where appropriate, so they can be their authentic selves.

One of our respondents asked us to consider how we could 'make the process to get support quicker and easier'. We currently have the highest adherence to statutory timescales nationally but will continue to look into ways we can streamline processes to ensure that children and young people get access to the support they need as soon as possible.

Our priorities:

- 1. More families feel listened to and able to participate in shaping service developments and have a greater sense of co-ownership.*
- 2. More young people with SEND irrespective of whether they have an EHCP or not, feel listened to, valued and seen and are respected for who they are.*
- 3. We will refine and improve our local offer as well relationships with children and young people with SEND and their families by adopting a 'family friendly' approach to processes, support and information.*
- 4. We will continue to improve the educational progress, outcomes and experiences of our children with SEND and in AP, across all phases and types of institution from early years to post-16, including transitions and progress into independent living, apprenticeships, supported internships, higher education, training or employment.*
- 5. Develop our Alternative Provision PRU pathways so they are in line with the three tiered approach as set out in the DfE's Improvement Plan.*

6. *There are sufficient high-quality school places in Barnet including specialist and additionally resourced provisions, from early years through to post 16 to meet current and future demand to ensure children and young people with SEND are able to access appropriate provision that is as close to home as possible.*
7. *Putting in place earlier intervention and support to children and young people who have health (including mental health) or development needs including those who waiting for a diagnosis and their families.*

70% or more of respondents agreed or tended to agree with each of the priorities.

Priority 2 and 7 received the highest support with more than 90% of respondents agreeing or tending to agree.

Some respondents raised concerns about the order or ranking of the priorities. We can see that by numbering them it looks like some priorities are more important than others. We believe all the priorities to be equally important and are in many ways interlinked – as one respondent said, “they will feel heard [priority 2] if the education and services provided are appropriate and available at the right time [priority 7]”. We will add an explanation about the ranking of priorities at the start of this section.

There was concern over the number of specialist placements whether in special schools, mainstream (ARPs) and specialist support.

We have increased our specialist and AP places by 40% from 944 places in 2018 to 1,319 specialist and AP places in September 2023. This has included the opening of new ARPs at Friern Barnet and Queenswell as well as our new special all age school for children and young people with Autism. The Council recognises the importance of special school places so we can continue to maintain our commitment that children and young people are educated locally within our borough wherever possible. To this end a lot of work is being done to identify suitable areas of land so we can rebuild and expand specialist provision and expand in the long term and in the shorter term identify space where we can develop satellite specialist provision.

Our specialist services continue to work with children, young people, their families and our education providers to ensure schools have access to advice and tailored support for individual children. Please visit our recently developed Autism pages on the local offer as an example of the work we do.

One respondent asked about our strategy for nursery provision and the 30 hour entitlement. We have been working closely with Nurseries across the borough to support them to expand their provisions to ensure sufficient spaces for children. Each year we also publish a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) and are currently in the process of gathering data and information for our 2024/25 report.

There were also questions about how we support mental as well as physical health:

“To allow children to be able to voice their emotions and feelings and to value mental health. To create a space where topics such and school based anxiety are discussed and understood”

We have this year introduced our Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter, which has been created from the views of children and young people across Barnet. Along with this we have launched the Talk About IT campaign also designed by and to encourage children and young people to talk about Mental Health and Wellbeing more.

We will shortly be publishing guidance with regard supporting children and young people who may experience emotional based school avoidance.