



# Better Together

## Engaging children and young people with SEND, and their parents and carers

### You Said, We Did: Highlights October - December 2021

#### Introduction

Bromley Council, South East London Clinical Commissioning Group (Bromley), Bromley Parent Voice and Your Voice Health and Social Care are strongly committed to improving education, health and well-being outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities. We recognise that effective engagement and coproduction rest on an organisational culture which values the voice of service users and fosters systems which give service users ways to share their thoughts and experiences. This is a way of working that enables children and young people, their families and those that provide services to work together to plan or create services which work for everyone.

Collecting views of our children and young people with SEND and their families is important but ensuring that these views are listened to and acted upon is at the heart of what we do in Bromley. We want to inform parent carers and young people about how their views and opinions have influenced change. This *You Said, We Did* report gives examples of the difference their feedback has made to Education, Health and Care services across Bromley.

As we await the proposals from the national SEND Review, we acknowledge that as parents and carers of children with SEND, you are seeking change to the system so that your children get support earlier and outcomes improve alongside better access to services and paid employment.

It is key that you are actively involved in the planning of local support and services.

You can read more about the SEND Review in an open letter to parents from Minister Quince about the SEND review [here](#).

## Our priorities

The report is shaped around our five strategic priorities:

### Priority 1

**The right provision at the right time is available for children and young people who have SEND, accessing universal and targeted services.**

### Priority 2

**There is good local specialist provision and support for Children and young people who have SEND.**

### Priority 3

**We have Consistent, Transparent, Timely and Co-ordinated services across Education, Health and Care.**

### Priority 4

**We are delivering effective coordination of SEND Services 0-25.**

### Priority 5

**We are effectively engaging Children, Young People and their families.**

There is a strong commitment across Education, Health and Social Care to work closely with parents and carers to ensure that individual needs are met and that children and young people make good progress and achieve good outcomes. This commitment is encapsulated in the Bromley SEND Strategic Vision and Priorities and the extended strategy for 2019-22.

### **This means that we will:**

- Engage with you in decisions relating to your education, support and care so that you can shape decisions to improve your personal experiences and life outcomes.
- Provide opportunities for you to share your views and hopes for the future.
- Listen to your feedback about your experiences to date and your aspirations for the future to influence improvements to our systems and services.
- Keeping working to improve the clarity and accessibility of information.
- Promote access to Information, Advice and Support (IASS), local advocates and our complaints and compliments processes.

- Embed a culture of engagement and co-production across the network of services for children in Bromley (including our commissioned services), supported by SEND champions in services.
- Contract with Your Voice Health and Social Care to widen our engagement reach and to:
  - facilitate information exchange
  - contribute to shaping our developing vision and priorities for SEND
- Continue to work with Bromley Parent Voice parent carer forum.
- Report in accessible formats using children, young people and family friendly storyboards.

## **Priority 1 – The right provision at the right time is available for children and young people who have SEND, accessing universal and targeted services**

**Our promise:** You will be able to influence ‘Bromley the place’

### **You said...**

- Families of children with social communication difficulties and autism need a range of support from being to access universal and targeted services to the need for more specialist and ongoing support.
- Some families have told us that they value the parenting support that is available from the Early Intervention and Family Support Service. This is helping them to meet their child’s needs.
- You are worried about the ongoing impact of the pandemic on your child’s mental health and wellbeing.
- Children and young people with specific learning difficulties are not always able to access the support that they need to access their learning.

### **We did...**

- In October we launched our new Autism Family Support service. This service will be delivered by the Bromley Children Project (BCP) and Bromley Mencap through a new partnership approach. BCP will offer an information and signposting service to all families with children and young people (0-25) with Social Communication Difficulties (including Autism). Bromley Mencap will support those families who would benefit from extra input through short intensive support and guidance.
- We continue to work closely with the Early Intervention and Family Support Service to develop the range of webinars and courses that are delivered for parents and carers.
- We launched the Mental Health and Wellbeing Leads network on 3 November 2021 for schools and other settings. The network builds on Anna Freud Centre LINK workshops and seeks to drive a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing.
- A new specific learning difficulties (SpLD) Padlet (an interactive digital page) has been launched. A SpLD training offer for SENCOs has been developed who are then cascading training their own school community.
- Revised Fair Access Protocols (FAP) have been developed and implemented introducing a more inclusive approach to reduce exclusions.

## **Priority 2 – There is good local specialist provision and support for Children and young people who have SEND**

### **Our Promise: We will build our own skills and improve our learning**

#### **You said...**

- You would like your child or young person to be able to access occupational therapy in a timely way.
- You are told that there is not sufficient funding available to meet your child's needs.
- Some families have expressed concerns about the specialist secondary provision available for children and young people with complex ASD.

#### **We did...**

- We understand that access to occupational therapy (OT) for your child is very important to families. We acknowledge that there is currently not enough capacity in the system to meet demand. We are commissioning some additional OT provision in the short term. The gap in service will be addressed through the Integrated Therapy Review.
- As part of the Integrated Therapy Review, we have been working with pupils from our schools to understand how speech and language therapy supports them to achieve their outcomes. Thank you to the Glebe School, Poverest Primary School and Warren Road Primary school for supporting us with this project.
- During February and March, we will be arranging working groups to enable children, young people, parents/carers, schools and settings to engage, input and coproduce our therapy offer in Bromley.
- The Local Authority has a duty to review the funding arrangements in place. We have started the High Needs Funding Banding Review which will provide an opportunity for us to work in partnership with education settings to develop a funding model that meets the needs of our children and young people and creates a fair, equitable and sustainable system.
- The Redwood Academy Special Free School has been approved to be operated by [Rivermead Inclusive Trust](#). Detailed feasibility studies are underway on the proposed 152 place school and multi-agency centre of excellence for Autism.
- Construction of new premises for Marjorie McClure special school started in October 2021 due for completion January 2023.

## **Priority 3 – We have Consistent, Transparent, Timely and Co-ordinated services across Education, Health and Care.**

### **Our Promise:** You will be able to influence our processes and systems

#### **You said...**

- Written contributions for Annual Reviews are not always prepared and/ or distributed in enough time for proper consideration and comment before the meeting.
- Information and communication regarding the Preparing for Adulthood pathways needs to be improved.
- You would like all children and young people with autism to be able to access the services they need in a timely way.

#### **We did...**

- The Bromley all-age Autism partnership board are developing our local all-age Autism Strategy. We have published a [survey](#) as part of the engagement work to better understand the lived experiences of our families, young people, and adults who have Autism. We have used the National All Age Autism strategy's six priorities. Your feedback will be used to inform our Autism strategy priorities in the borough.
- We are rolling out Annual Review training to Education, Health and Social Care professionals, SENCos, Early Years and specialist settings.
- Through the Annual Review project, we have redesigned the parent contribution template. This is part of our wider work to measure progress towards outcomes and to measure the impact of our work.
- The Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) has worked jointly with one GP practice to trial the GP form for EHC needs assessment advice using a recent tribunal case. Feedback was positive and will be fed into the ongoing work to support GPs to contribute to statutory needs assessment processes for young people aged from 18 to 25.
- Additional funding has been agreed to significantly increase the number of EHC plan coordinators to support the rise in statutory assessments and EHC plans. Additional resource has enabled an increased focus on young people as they are preparing for adulthood through building expertise in this area.

## **Priority 4 – We are delivering effective coordination of SEND Services 0-25**

**Our Promise:** You will be able to influence how we support you.

### **You said...**

- You would like to see a holistic and integrated approach to preparing for adulthood.
- You would like more support and choice with all types of work opportunities including volunteering.
- You would like us to work in partnership with local businesses to increase employment opportunities for young people with SEND.

### **We did...**

- We are working with London Southeast Colleges and The Princess Royal University Hospital to develop employability skills through a new Supported Internship programme.
- We are participating in an accelerated learning project led by the Department for Education and NDTI to explore what works to support young people into employment.
- On the 26th October the local area hosted our inaugural transition event, which had over 30 provider stalls, including Local Authority staff and organisations from across the local area. Parents were able to access workshops with information on benefits, wills and trusts, 14+ learning disability health assessments, annual reviews, aspirations and the transition process.

## **Priority 5 – We are effectively engaging Children, Young People and their families**

### **Our promise: We will involve and engage with your support network**

#### **You said...**

- The child, young person's and/or parents' views are not always listened to or recorded as part of the Annual review process
- There is a lack of helpful accessible information and support for families of African, Caribbean, Asian and Minority Ethnic (ACAME) groups.

#### **We did...**

- We have held our first Parent Information sessions to help parents to understand the Annual Review process and how they and their child can get involved. The feedback has been extremely positive.
- Through our Quality Assurance work are developing new [resources](#) for parents, carers and young people to provide them with the information they require to contribute to the annual review, statutory assessment process and to support their son or daughter as they prepare for adult life.
- Through the Embracing Diversity Project, we are listening to the experiences of Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority SEND families in Bromley. We are working with parents to help to foster wider understanding of cultural differences so that we can better engage with and provide accessible information to SEND families from ethnic minority communities.
- SEND Matters live events were held in the Glades in November. The store was visited by over 100 families over the 4 days where the focus was on Early Years and SEN.
- Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan quality assurance has focused on ensuring the voice of the child or young person is consistently captured and informs outcomes.