
Better Together

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

You Said, We Did: Highlights April-June 2020

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 enables children and young people, their families and those that provide services to work together to plan or create services which works for everyone.

The last few months were not something any of us could have planned for. The individual experiences of our children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and their families during the pandemic will be unique to them. We are acutely aware that many families have experienced significant pressures during lockdown. During the Covid-19 pandemic services across Education, Health and Social Care have worked together to ensure a continuation of SEND services in line with published guidance. We have continued to work closely with our parent carer and young people representative groups and wider partners to listen to and address the concerns that children and young people with SEND and their families have raised at this difficult time.

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 as the Department for Education funded our parent carer forum.
- Report in accessible formats through the use of 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...

- You are worried and anxious about your child returning to school and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on your child’s mental wellbeing.
- You want to be confident that your child’s education setting has suitable arrangements in place to meet their special educational needs following the Covid-19 lockdown.
- You would like your child or young person to return to their education safely, develop their own emotional resilience and positive wellbeing and make good progress towards their outcomes.

We did...

- During the Pandemic we have followed Government guidance. We have worked with educational settings, parents and carers to undertake risk assessments to determine whether a child or young person’s needs can be as safely or more safely met in their educational environment than at home.
- The risk assessments helped educational settings and the local authority ensure that the right support is in place for children and young people with an EHC Plan to return to school or college. The risk assessments also informed how the educational setting should support pupils if they were not in their usual setting or where the child or young person remained at home.
- We are re-procuring the Bromley Community Wellbeing service based on the THRIVE model and person-centred care. This service will serve the diverse needs of children and young people (birth-25) including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- We are excited to be working in partnership with the Anna Freud Centre for children and families (a registered mental health charity) who have been contracted by the Department for Education. The focus of this work is to identify challenge in the local area as a result of Covid-19. Colleagues from across health and education will work with senior representatives from Bromley schools, facilitated by therapeutic leads from the Anna Freud Centre, to plan an integrated support offer.

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 access good local provision and high quality support across Education, Health and Care.
- It is really important for children and young people with complex needs to access appropriate mental health support when they need it.
- You are worried about health inequalities for children and young people with SEND.

We did...

- We have consulted on expanding Riverside Community Special School through opening a new satellite site at the Hawes Down Centre, West Wickham from September 2020. The expansion of Riverside School will help Bromley Council meet the increase in need for specialist provision through increasing the capacity of the school, which is rated Outstanding by Ofsted.
- We continue to work with the Department for Education to open a free school to address the gap in education opportunities and support for children with autism spectrum conditions and associated learning needs.
- Through the CAMHS Trailblazer pilot we are working with the Anna Freud centre to develop an early intervention programme of emotional wellbeing support for all children and young people with complex needs. This means that children and young people can access the right mental health and wellbeing support in the places that best work for them, including in school, building resilience, overcoming challenges and self-managing their own mental health.
- We have completed phase 1 of our project to increase the uptake of Learning Disability health checks for young people from age 14 and phase 2 is underway.
- Bromley Children's Disability Service are working with providers to provide additional short breaks this summer for children and young people with a range of disabilities.

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...

- You would like the statutory decision making processes across Education, Health and Care to continue during the Pandemic.

We did...

- During the Pandemic, the government issued a notice under the Coronavirus Act 2020 confirming that local authorities and health commissioning bodies (e.g. Clinical Commissioning Groups) must use their **reasonable endeavours** to secure the provision set out within a child or young person's EHC plan. We have worked with our partners to ensure that where possible a child or young person's provision set out in their EHC plan has continued. For example, support may have offered virtually rather than face to face. This legal change will be in force until 31st July 2020.
- We have continued to receive EHC Needs Assessment referrals throughout the pandemic and are processing the assessments in a timely way.
- Annual Reviews have still been going ahead, although in a different format. Meetings are being held virtually or via conference calls or video links rather than in school. Initial feedback from families and young people has been positive. Where families have said they do not want to go ahead with the Annual Review during the pandemic and we respected these wishes.

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 want all services who work with your child or young person to support their individual needs across education, health and care.
- You value timely information which is accessible, particularly at a time of uncertainty.

We did...

- The Local Offer has been a source of helpful information and resources for families and young people throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.
https://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/10122/children_and_young_adults_with_disabilities_and_learning_needs/1419/sendmatters_coronavirus_covid-19
- We have rolled out a full programme of multiagency training with over 100 professionals from across Education, health and social care attending. .
- We have established the Bromley All Age Autism Partnership (BAAP) to improve the lived experience of children, young people and adults with autism living in the borough.
- In response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the reopening of all education settings from September we are offering each school a multi-agency support team with a single point of contact to access help and guidance. The teams across education, health and social care will work collaboratively with schools to improve community wellbeing and build relationships.

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...

- **You would like your children or young person to be active in relation to developing their own emotional resilience and self-care skills**
- **You would like parent carers to feel well supported to have their voices heard.**

We did...

- Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic children, young people and their families have been supported with information and resources that are appropriate to their needs.

https://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/10122/children_and_young_adults_with_disabilities_and_learning_needs/1419/sendmatters_coronavirus_covid-19

- We have asked what it has been like for children and young people who have SEND during the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/mylockdownexperience>

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/easyread-mylockdown>

- We have held regular meetings with IASS Bromley, Bromley Parent Voice and Your Voice Health and Social Care to listen to the issues that families are facing during the pandemic and to work together to address them.
- We are working with a group of parent carers to test our Outcomes framework. The framework will be used to demonstrate progress and the impact that changes to provision and services has made for children and young people with SEND and their families in the London Borough of Bromley.