
Better Together

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

You Said, We Did: Highlights July - September 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.

In April 2021 we launched our first Local Offer SEND survey for parents and carers of children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities to help us to understand the state of the current offer across the borough.

We are currently analysing the survey responses. The report will be published on the [Local Offer](#). Intelligence gathered through this survey will help the Bromley Council, SEL Clinical Commissioning Group (Bromley) and our wider partners to understand what is working well and key areas for improvement.

We know that the demands on families with children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have been greater and more sustained than ever before. We want to thank you for continuing to share your views and experiences with us.

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 disabled children and young people who require specialist toileting facilities are struggling to access the local community and enjoy the same opportunities as their peers.
- Some families have told us that they are being advised by their child’s school to apply for an EHC Needs Assessment to access the support that their child needs.
- Some families have told us that they have concerns about the Covid vaccination for children and young people aged 12 to 15 years with specific underlying conditions

We did...

- We have asked service users who require specialist toileting facilities and their families, where they would you most like to see a new Changing Places toilet locally and what difference it would make. These views have informed our Expression of Interest which we have submitted to the government for funding to build more (registered) Changing Places facilities in the borough.
- We continue to work with schools and other education settings across Bromley so that they have the knowledge and resources required to meet the needs of all children and young people with SEND.
- We have worked with our partners to deliver the Covid vaccination programme, including developing pop-up clinics at Riverside School, Marjorie McClure School and the Phoenix Centre.
- We have published Frequently Asked Questions and coproduced reasonable adjustments guides for Health Care Practitioners and parent carers to make the Covid 19 vaccination experience as positive as possible for children and young people and their families.

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 speech and language therapy in a timely way.
- Children and young people with Down Syndrome are not reaching their potential.
- Some families have expressed concerns about the specialist secondary provision available for children and young people with complex ASD.

We did...

- We are continuing to work with the Bromley Down Syndrome Parent Group to develop a pathway for children and young people with Down Syndrome in the borough.
- We recognise that there are some gaps in specialist provision in the borough. This currently includes secondary aged provision for CYP with more complex ASD who are working considerably below expected levels. Through the SEND Governance Board, we are developing an Education Provision Plan which will identify current and future demand for specialist provision, examine existing capacity and explore opportunities address gaps in provision
- We acknowledge that connecting with and receiving information from professionals such as speech and language therapists is very important to families. We have held engagement sessions with parents and carers following the Speech and Language Therapy Review report undertaken by Better Communications Limited. This feedback will help to shape and design the joint Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) strategy and therapy offer.
- We are working with schools to listen to the voices of children and young people who receive speech and language therapy.

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...

- Starting school, moving to secondary school or college can be a worrying time for children and young people with SEND and their families.
- The Annual review process can be confusing and inconsistent. Some families have told us that they feel 'left in the dark'.
- Preparing for Adulthood is an anxious time for young people and their families. It requires careful planning.

We did...

- We know that due to the Pandemic, planning the next steps for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) has not been straight forward. We have published new pages [Transition through Education](#) on the Local Offer website to help parents to plan for the next phase of their child's education.
- We are introducing termly Parent Information sessions to help parents to understand the Annual Review process and how they and their child can get involved.
- As part of the Council's Transforming Bromley roadmap for 2019-2023, Children and Adult Services are exploring opportunities for developing the offer for children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities.
- We have held engagement sessions with parents, carers and young adults to help us to improve the pathway for preparing for adulthood.

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...

- How are you responding to the launch of the [national Autism Strategy](#)?
- You are concerned about employment and training opportunities for young people with SEND.
- You are worried about the future for your young person as they approach adulthood.

We did...

- Through the work of the Bromley All Age Autism Partnership we have held engagement sessions with young people and adults with autism and their parents/carers to tell us what you think. Your views will be used to inform the All-Age Autism strategy for Bromley.
- We have launched our Increasing Employment Opportunities 100 day challenge which seeking to develop more employment opportunities for young people and adults with disabilities in Bromley.
- As part of the 0-25 Transformation Project, we have held engagement sessions with parent carers to understand how we can improve the pathway for preparing for adulthood from age 14.
- We are planning a Transition Day on Tuesday 26th October at Bishop Justus school to inform and empower young people and their parents and carers.
- We have created a new post. The SEND Information Officer joined the SEN Advisory team from September. Their role to provide information and advice to young people and their families regarding preparation for adulthood.

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...

- *"I've been really impressed with the SENCO and their whole process (EHCP Annual Review). I've been included and asked about my opinion. I have had plenty of notice about the Annual Review and been provided with the previous reports. For me it's been clear."*
- However, other families feel that they are not fully listened to and are not fully involved in decisions about their child.
- Families from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority groups sometimes struggle to engage with the services their child requires. *"Bromley is doing something and has given us this opportunity (Embracing Diversity Project)."*

We did...

- Through the Annual Review project we are working with schools and other education settings to improve children, young people and parent/carer involvement in the annual review process.
- 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 tailor our support for SEND families.