
Better Together

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

You Said, We Did: Highlights October 2023 to December 2023

Introduction

Bromley Council, SEL Integrated Commissioning System (Bromley) 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.

Parent carers are invited to share views in a range of ways. Your feedback helps us to plan local support and services.

Our approach centres around [four principles](#) which will result in continuous improvement across all our SEND services:

Shaping our casework
Shaping our place

Shaping our systems
Corporate Intelligence

Our priorities

The report is shaped around our five strategic priorities:

Priority 1

Embed effective engagement with parents, children and young people and all partners as central to the delivery of better outcomes

Priority 2

Children and young people receive early support through universal and targeted provision, reducing reliance on specialist provision

Priority 3

Increase local capacity across education, health and social care for children and young people with more complex needs

Priority 4

Ensure robust multi-agency decision making processes are embedded across the SEND Partnership enabling sustainable, timely integrated support for children and young people with more complex needs and their families.

Priority 5

Enable all our children and young people to transfer successfully to the next stage of their education or into employment, and to transfer to an independent adult life in their local community.

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](#).

We contract with [Your Voice and Social Care](#) (YVHSC) to widen our engagement with parent and carers and work in partnership with the Bromley Parent Carer Forum which funded by the Department for Education.

Why are we doing this?

We want all children and young people with SEND in Bromley and their families to feel valued, empowered and included in their communities.

We want to continually improve our support and practice.

We are doing well for many of our children and young people with SEND but we can do more to make our services more inclusive.

We must address demand pressures for which Bromley is an outlier. The number of children and young people with EHC plans is rapidly increasing in Bromley, significantly faster than nationally.

We want to make sure that multi-agency decision making ensures we have the best possible arrangements in place across the SEND Partnership to make the right plans for our children and young people.

This includes working openly and collaboratively with children, young people, and their families to support and guide them through their education and care pathways to achieve strong outcomes and become independent adults.

We need to make the best use of the resources to make a difference. As costs and demand are continuing exponential increase, we need to develop more local and inclusive provision, supporting more children and young people at universal and targeted level and reducing the dependence on specialist provision.

This report is also available in accessible formats using children, young people and family friendly storyboards on the [Bromley Local Offer website](#).

Priority 1 – Embed effective engagement with parents, children and young people and all partners as central to the delivery of better outcomes

You Said...

- Parent/carers would like to see greater transparency around effectiveness of SEND provision in Bromley and the outcomes that children and young people are achieving.
- Parent/carers would like someone early in the process to help them navigate the SEND system, providing information, consistent advice, support.
- Parents would like everyone to use and understand the Local Offer more, including children and young people.

We did...

- A month-long celebration of SEND in Bromley sought to strengthen our relationship with parent carers and ensure that leaders make sure that parents are included fully in decisions about their children and are confident that their children's needs are identified accurately and in a timely way.
- Attended the Young Persons weekly meet up to hear lived experiences of their Autism diagnosis. Their views and experiences were shared with the Bromley All Age Autism Board to inform priorities and next steps.
- Hosted a virtual Question Time with members of the student council at the Glebe Special School, the Director of Children Services and SEND Programme Manager. The students spoke about their hopes for the future and what the Council can do to support them to achieve them.
- We hosted a Local offer marketplace event for parent carers and professionals. The event enabled parent carers to find out more about the services and support available in Bromley and provided networking opportunities. Parents told us that they would like "*More of them!*"
- Attended parent coffee mornings at Blenheim Children and Family Centre to offer SEND information and support. Parent gatherings at early years settings to support parents getting access to information at the earliest point.
- Participated in the planning of Project ME for parent/carers from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. The workshops are designed to

inform and empower parent carers living in Bromley who may experience isolation and stigma.

Priority 2 – Children and young people receive early support through universal and targeted provision, reducing reliance on specialist provision

You said...

- Parent/carers would like to have a better understanding of what can be expected of mainstream schools in supporting all children and young people with SEND, what funding they receive and any other additional funds they can access.
- Parent/carers would like to see more training in schools as to the needs and behaviours of children and young people who are experiencing high levels of anxiety and are struggling to attend school.
- Some parent/carers report that waiting times for some services could be further improved.

We did...

- Meeting with parents at local primary schools to raise awareness of the Local Offer, [B-Hive](#), [EHC Needs Assessment eligibility](#) and the Bromley Parent Carer forum being established.
- Met with parents to discuss Autism diagnosis experience. Feedback will be used to inform the review of the diagnostic pathways for autism assessments. Support children and families whilst on waiting list for assessment is offered through the Autism Family Support service.
- Delivered SEND training to Bromley Y whole staff team
- Hosted SEND Network Champion event which is open to all professionals working with children and young people with SEND in the borough and parent carers. Please email SENDMatters@bromley.gov.uk if you would like to join this network.
- Continue the work to develop and implement an evidence-based model of practise which identifies and meets children's SLT needs at a universal and targeted level in education settings.
- Through the UKSPF SEND Employment Project work in collaboration with LSEC Good Works Bromley to support young people to gain employment.

- As part of the SEND celebration Information stations were set up in our Children and Families centres across the borough and a marketplace event was held in central Bromley where parent and carers could meet professionals find out more information about the support and services available in the London Borough of Bromley. Parents and carers who attended this event said it is: *“incredible to know there is such a range of help available. Thank you!”* Professionals who attended valued the opportunity to network with services and support parent carers face to face. *“Let’s have another soon. Please!”*

Priority 3 – Increase local capacity across education, health and social care for children and young people with more complex needs

You said...

- Parent/carers value greatly the short breaks that they receive, but some would like a more personalised short breaks offer in addition to that and a wider range of short breaks, both mainstream and specialist (birth-25).
- The Supported Internship model is a good one and further development would be welcomed.

We did...

- Monthly virtual EHC Needs assessments information workshops held with the purpose of informing parent/carers of the needs assessment process and provide opportunities to ask questions.
- Met with young people from year group 9 and above in a range of settings to discuss what outcome are important to the young people and what outcomes are important to the young people. Feedback is informing our Joint SEND Outcomes framework.
- Through the Internships Work programme, the SEN Service has worked closely with our SEND Programme team to review the planning that takes place from Year 9 for children and young people with EHCPs. This has resulted in Annual Review training for schools in setting outcomes linked to preparing for adulthood so that PFA Outcomes are considered at all age phases.
- Through the [Good Work Bromley Project](#) we are working in collaboration with London Southeast College, CASPA and Bromley Mencap to support young people to gain employment.

- We continue to develop our local Supported Internship offer and are working with colleagues in our Human Resource team to develop a Supported Internship programme in the Council.
- Focus group to inform the Short Breaks Offer and statement attended by Bromley Parent Carer Forum, Your Voice Health and Social Care and parent representatives across the 0-25 age range. The views and experiences shared are informing commissioning priorities and next steps.

Priority 4 – Ensure robust multi-agency decision making processes are embedded across the SEND Partnership enabling sustainable, timely integrated support for children and young people with more complex needs and their families.

The overarching aim of our SEND Strategic Vision and priorities is to improve the outcomes for children and young people with disabilities and those with special educational needs.

In reviewing our vision and priorities, we asked children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) about their experiences of growing up and going to school in the local area and what they think their future might look like.

You said...

- Our children and young people with SEND told us that want to get a job, do an apprenticeship or undertake meaningful work experience; they want to have their own home, to have a family and shop and cook for themselves; they want to travel, have meaningful hobbies and feel safe in their local community.

We did...

- The SEND Partnership is committed to keeping the voices of our children and young people at the centre of all our decision making and planning, not only now, but as they progress into adulthood. We know that our starting point must be their hopes, dreams and aspirations.
- We have increased the input of children and young people into the SEND Local Offer. A specific children and young people's section has been

developed, which includes resources and contributions from local children and young people.

- We hosted an Art Exhibition in the Pavilion, Bromley. In the SPOTLIGHT provided an opportunity for children and young people to celebrate their friendships, diversity, difference and hopes for the future by using their many artistic talents.
- Hosted the Bromley SEND Stars event. The SEND Partnership want to share and celebrate the achievements of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and shine a well-deserved spotlight on families, service providers, carers, school staff or anyone that makes a difference to the lived experiences of our children and young people with SEND and their families.

SEND star event quotes:

“It was a truly wonderful afternoon and to see so many inspirational children and families who advocate SEN throughout our Borough was an extremely humbling experience”.

“The families that accompanied Midfield both said how impressed they were and what a wonderful opportunity it was to see so many people who have dedicated their lives to support these beautiful children on what is usually a very difficult journey”.

“We cannot wait for next year and look forward to using this year to continue to provide all that we can for our children and families”.

“If I may use three words to sum it up, I'd say uplifting, authentic and important”.

Priority 5 – Enable all our children and young people to transfer successfully to the next stage of their education or into employment, and to transfer to an independent adult life in their local community.

You said...

- Parent/carers would like greater understanding about how Further Education Colleges can meet the needs of young people with complex needs and associated medical conditions.
- Parent/carers would like to see strengthened post 16 outcomes, building on consistent Year 9 reviews and Preparation for Adulthood.
- Young people shared their aspirations for the future with us including *“To be a journalist. I want to travel the world and document it all”*; *“to be a Hairdresser”*; *“Go to college and study sports and drive transport buses”*; *“Study IT and become a teacher”*; *“Making sure I’m okay and everything is positive”*

We did...

- Attended the Transition event at Marjorie McClure to provide information, advice, and support for young people with SEND as they transition to adulthood.
- Question Time with members of the student council at the Glebe Special School and the Director of Children Services and SEND Programme Manager about their hopes for the future and what the Council can do to support them to achieve them.
- Established a dedicated post to improve the pathways to employment for young people with SEND, including a local Supported Internship offer.
- Delivered a webinar to Post 16 and Career Leads on Post 16 Education and Training options and updated the information on the [Bromley Local Offer](#) including:
 - Employment for YP with SEND
 - Help to find a job
 - Employment Rights