

Better together – Coproduction

Memorandum of Understanding for the SEND Partnership

Introduction

We want to put the voice of our children and young people who have special education need and/or disabilities (SEND) and their families at the heart of what we do. Ensuring that they are engaged actively planning and evaluating the services they need is everyone's business.

We have codesigned this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Bromley Parent Carer Forum and Your Voice Health and Social Care. This MOU describes ways of working which engage children, young people and their parents and carers in discussions and decisions relating to them, shaping the services they need through genuine co-production.

The MOU has been informed by the Engagement Principles (Section 19) underpinning the Children and Families Act 2014.

The SEND Code of Practice (CoP) says:

- Parents and carers must know what services they can reasonably expect to be provided
- Children, young people and their parents and carers must be fully involved in decisions about their support and what they want to achieve

The SEND Partnership is committed to “working in a way which ensures that children, young people and their families feel that they have participated in the process and have a sense of co-ownership.”

(Section 4.9 of the SEND CoP: 0-25 years)

Our commitment is encapsulated in the [SEND Strategic Vision and Priorities](#). Engagement remains one of our strategic priorities for 2023-24.

Our shared aim is to get the right support at the right time for every child with SEND in the London Borough of Bromley.

This Memorandum of Understanding is based upon the following principles and values that our young people, parents and carers has told us that is important to them.

- Being open and honest
- Listen actively and respond
- Be respectful
- Value contributions as equal partners
- Value their lived experiences
- Being focussed on outcomes
- Working together to find solutions

These relationships need to be planned for with sustainability in mind. Representative structures need to be in place to ensure that co-production is embedded, and resources are in place so that families do not experience consultation fatigue and lack of capacity. This will ensure that the ethos of 'tell it once' is the experience that parents receive from us all.

To achieve good quality co-production in the London Borough of Bromley there must be:

- processes in place that engagement opportunities are available and accessible to all parent carers from across our diverse communities;
- processes in place to ensure that the feedback from families is influencing improvements;
- partnerships with children, young people and their families which are embedded in the way that all partners work, at both an individual level for children and young people and also at a strategic level;
- a parental role in improving the system.

Good quality co-production happens when leaders across the SEND Partnership actively engage and work with children, young and families. This MOU seeks to strengthen the governance arrangements to ensure leaders have an accurate and shared understanding of the needs of the children and young people in the borough.

Where are we now?

This document recognises that in order to strengthen culture, we must continue to model changes in our behaviour and it constitutes a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Council, South East London Integrated Care System (SELICS), Bromley Parent Carer Forum (BPCF) and Your Voice Health and Social Care. It sets out how we will work together to ensure effective parent carer participation in the shaping of services, provision, information and support. This MOU demonstrates all parties' commitment to collaboration, joint outcomes and innovation in the planning of services for children and young people with SEND. It defines and formalises the relationship between the parties and sets out their roles and responsibilities within the spirit of co-production.

Bromley Parent Carer Forum (BPCF)

[Bromley Parent Carer Forum](#) is an independent, voluntary group of committed parents and carers who genuinely want to work with partners to make the improvements needed for our children and young people to achieve their full potential. As part of the [National Network of Parent Carer Forums \(NNPCF\)](#), the Forum receives government funding to strengthen parent participation in Bromley. The Forum is not a campaigning group.

Your Voice in Health and Social Care (YVHSC)

Your Voice in Health and Social Care (YVHSC) are the strategic engagement partner for the Council and SEL ICB. The Bromley Parent Engagement SEND Service (BPES) supports the engagement of parent/carers of children and young people with SEND in Bromley, in accordance with the Children's and Family Act 2014. This is achieved through an extensive programme of parent/carers engagement sessions covering a wide range of SEND related topics.

The SEND Partnership

The Bromley SEND Partnership brings together all the agencies in the London Borough of Bromley which provide special educational needs and disability (SEND) services for children, young people, their parents and carers, with representatives from those who use the service.

To achieve co-production, the SEND partnership has agreed to:

- Enable the Bromley Parent Carer Forum (BPCF) and YVHSC to participate as active and equal partners to the planning for services and provision for SEND families;
- Ensure families have the information, support and training they need to take part in service planning;
- Ensure that everyone is treated with fairness and respect, and that any barriers to participation are identified, and every effort is made to find positive solutions;
- Work through the BPCF and YVHSC to ensure that the wider views of parents and carers are heard on all strategic planning groups;
- Ensure open and transparent processes are in place when planning services so that families understand what difference their contributions have made;
- Offer practical support to facilitate parent engagement in partnership working, including the assurance that where possible, meetings to be attended by parent carer representatives are held during term times, in school hours using accessible venues. Ensuring meetings have clear terms of reference, including membership, have clear agendas distributed in sufficient time, with papers that are in plain English and avoid jargon;
- Recognise the independence of both BPCF and YVHSC and the importance of decision making within both organisations that places the interests of its members first and foremost.
- Ensure Parent Carer participation is well established and delivered in a truly representative way by the BPCF and Your Voice in Health and Social Care.

Impact

Effective Co-production happens when:

All SEND Partners co-produce decisions, plans, actions and resources as a collective and shared responsibility. This process develops over time, blends a range of expertise and perspectives, is driven by a solution focus approach from all participants and requires strong leadership. Communication that is transparent and open and relationships that are equitable and respectful help the partnership overcome challenges and to continue the process of learning together.

In Bromley this means all partners will:

1. Commit to developing a partnership based on trust and open and transparent dialogue;
2. Respect confidentiality;
3. Constructively challenge and support each other whilst working together to provide effective and innovative solutions using available resources creatively;
4. Commit to regular engagement in meetings, where progress with planned work and potential new developments can be reviewed and discussed -

- Develop a set of quality indicators to measure how the principles of co-production are working in practice.
- Regular engagement reports will be shared with the SEND Governance Board.

Review

This MOU was agreed and endorsed by the SEND Governance Board on 17th April 2025

The Board will keep the MOU under regular review. The next review is due in April 2025.