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# Better Together

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

### You Said, We Did: Highlights April - June 2022

## Introduction

Bromley Council, Southeast 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.

The Department for Education (DfE) have published the Schools White paper 'Opportunities for All' and SEND Review Green Paper – 'Right Support, Right Place, Right Time'.

You can read more about the SEND Review in full [here](#), or the summary notes [here](#). The DfE are seeking views on the green paper about the changes they

want to make to the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and alternative provision (AP) system in England, which will close on **22nd July**.

Parent carers were invited to share their views to inform the Bromley Local Area response. Your feedback will also help us to plan local support and services.

## **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...**

- Not knowing how to find help and support when your child is struggling with their mental health is very worrying.
- There is a rising need and demand for children and young people (and their parents/carers) who are seeking help around mental health and wellbeing concerns.
- Delays in assessment and/or diagnosis is having a wider impact on families.
- You would like more support for sensory processing disorders.
- Some parents lack confidence in their children’s schools to implement the ‘graduated approach’ for dyslexia.

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

- We are working with Bromley Y, Health Education England, and the Charlie Waller Trust to develop a Parent Carer Peer Support role for families whose children and young people are experiencing mental health and wellbeing difficulties. This role will provide a practitioner with lived experience to offer peer to peer support to other families and signposting to information and resources.
- We are recruiting a new Local Offer Development Officer who will continue to develop the Local Offer once the new LB Bromley corporate website is launched.
- Through our Therapy Transformation work, we are seeking to provide clear resources, information, advice, and services proportionate to levels of need, including sensory processing difficulties.
- In the 2021-22 academic year, Inclusion Support Advisory Team (ISAT) facilitated a new Dyslexia Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program for SENCOs. The core purpose of the program was to coach SENCOs to improve/extend staff awareness of dyslexia and inclusive practice in their schools, through use of a wide range of basic dyslexia training materials and resources. A total of 40 Bromley mainstream school SENCOs registered on the course which ran from November 2021 until June 2022.

## **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 are paying for private assessments because waiting times for therapy services are too long.
- Some families have expressed concerns about the support available for children and young people with Down Syndrome.
- You are worried that there are not enough specialist places available in Bromley.
- You would like to see more employment opportunities or young people when they leave education.

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

- We are attempting to address current levels of demand for therapy services that are exceeding capacity, particularly in relation to occupational therapy by sourcing more resources to increase provision. However, this is continuing to be a challenge given capacity issues both locally and nationally.
- We are also working with Bromley Healthcare to complement their efforts to recruit more therapists with alternative and innovative ways of working, for examples apprenticeship schemes.
- We are also looking at ways that we can provide more information and support to those children, young people and families that are waiting for assessment for therapeutic services and/or diagnosis.
- We are working with education settings, parent carers and young people to codesign a web-based resource that will better collate, communicate, and signpost to resources and services across the different levels of need. Families have told us that they really like the resource and that it has 'huge potential'.
- The Down Syndrome Bill has completed its journey through the Houses of Parliament and received Royal Assent on 28 April 2022. We continue to work with the Bromley Down Syndrome Support Group (BDSSG) to strengthen the offer available in Bromley whilst we wait for the government to publish the statutory guidance.
- As we continue to face increased demand for specialist placements for children with complex SEN needs, the Council has asked Riverside

Special School to offer some additional educational provision from September at the Phoenix Centre, creating 16 new special school places. This will be a short-term satellite site while the Council finds a suitable long-term site for the school that can manage ongoing demand.

- We are working with Oaklands Primary Academy in Biggin Hill, to open a SEN Additionally Resourced Provision for children with severe and complex needs during the Autumn Term in 2022 .
- Through our work with London South East Colleges and the Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH) we are now recruiting for the next supported internship programme, starting in September 2022. 5 of the 7 students who participated in the 2021-22 scheme have been offered employment with the hospital. Parents have told us:

*“W’s confidence has grown, and he’s learnt so many life skills whilst working at the hospital. We are thrilled he’s been offered a job but the experience of working in this environment has been valuable. Thank you to you all!”*

*“I would recommend this course to anyone with a disability. It has been really beneficial to C and she has learnt a lot from it. She has learnt travel, time keeping, socialising, become more confident and gained lots of different skills in the various roles she’s had. The staff have been wonderful, patient and supportive.”*

*“What an amazing course.... thank you for the opportunity and experience.”*

## 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...

- The thing that would make the biggest difference would be *‘a proper comprehensive one stop shop of assessment of need.’*
- You would welcome transparency and clarity of process and support not just signposting.
- There needs to be *‘shorter timescales, less red tape, trauma informed working so the process doesn't inflict more trauma on child and parent/carer.’*
- The timeliness of Annual review process needs to be considered so that the EHCP is updated and fit for purpose, this is especially important at key transition points.

### We did...

- We are committed to working with you all to coproduce a system that is more responsive, informative, and effective in identifying the level of need and ensuring that children young people and their parents / carers are signposted and supported to access the right service or resources, to best enable development.
- We are committed to improved multi-agency working; this enables better information sharing and ensures that children, young people and their parents do not have to continually retell their story.
- We have coproduced a best practice timeline for the Annual Review process. This is being rolled out as part of the Annual Review training which continues to increase a consistency of understanding across education settings, parents, and other professionals of the Annual Review process.

## **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...**

- Early Years families need to access information and support/strategies in a timely way. Early identification and intervention are key.
- There are a growing number of children and young people not attending an education setting due to their social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH).
- Better support for transition into adult services would make the biggest difference to your child and family's lives.
- The thing that would make the biggest difference would be to have a school within Bromley that caters for my young person across all PFA pathways.

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

- We have piloted two Early Years parent workshops in June focussing on the importance of information and ensuring that the child is at the centre of discussions and support.
- We held an engagement session with families whose children are struggling to attend school due to emotional factors. The lived experiences will help us to develop our position statement and support for Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA).
- On 25<sup>th</sup> April we held our second Transition event at the Warren. There was a strong focus on Preparing for Adulthood outcomes across the different pathways.
- SEN Teams, partner agencies and service providers came together to deliver effective support as young people move into 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...

- Some parents do not feel listened to and heard. The system is difficult to navigate and confusing.
- Sometimes the views of your child/young person are not listened to.
- Families of children and young people who are struggling to attend school because of their anxiety can feel isolated and struggle to access the support that their child needs.
- As part of our SEND Review Parent Engagement sessions you told us, *“Thank you for really listening to us.”*
- Through the Integrated Therapies Engagement sessions you said, *“Thank you again for making us feel heard last night. I came away feeling positive about the new format for families accessing support for their children/young people.”*

#### We did...

- A training offer have been developed so that all staff and partners have the appropriate understanding and skills to engage with and listen to children and young people with SEND and know how to involve them in decision making. So far training has been delivered to:
  - Schools, settings. Multi-agency professionals and parent carers through the Annual Review project
  - ARP Leads on Child, Young People and Parent Carer Engagement & Preparing for Adulthood Themes
  - SEND Network Champions
- We have met with parents and carers of children and young people who emotional based school avoidance.
- 78 young people attended our Transition event at the Warren on 25<sup>th</sup> April. The young people participated in 3 workshops including working with Remix Theatre Arts to support the young people to have their voices heard.
- As part of the Integrated Therapies engagement groups, we have been working with members of the Youth Council, LinCC and some of the hearing-impaired young people at Darrick Wood Secondary School. We have great children and young people in the borough who have some

superb, innovative and very technically advanced ideas to shape the Integrated Therapies resource that we are codesigning.