

# SEND and AP Report: May 2024.

There are four main updates to this report:

1. [SEND and AP Strategy – consultation coming.](#)
2. [Transport Policies – consultation coming.](#)
3. [SEND and AP Change Programme Partnership \(CPP\) update.](#)
4. [Wider updates.](#)

## 1 SEND and AP Strategy.

- 1.1 Our current SEND Strategy 2021 – 2024 can be found [here](#). It sets out our vision for children and young people (0 – 25 years) with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) for whom we are responsible as well as achievements, strategic goals and priorities.
- 1.2 Our refreshed draft SEND and AP Strategy has been coproduced with stakeholders across our local area who are part of our SEND and AP Strategic Board. This board comprises stakeholders from across the local area including parents, who are all committed to improving the experiences, provision and outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and or Disability, or who are educated in Alternative Provision (AP) and their families.
- 1.3 School representatives on our SEND and AP Strategic Board are:

Special School HT Rep	Mrs Sandra Chaaya. Mapledown
Mainstream Primary HT Rep	Mrs Liz Longworth. Northside
Mainstream Secondary HT Rep	Mr Chris Hunt. Whitefield School
Mainstream Secondary HT Rep	Dr Matthew Stevens. Saracens High School
School Governor	Simon Benson St Mary's and St John's All through school
School Governor	Chelsea Considine All Saints School NW2.

- 1.4 We also asked for feedback on the strategies Aims and Visions from children and young people – thank you to all those schools that facilitated those discussion and sent in their pupils/students' views.
- 1.5 The draft strategy draws together information about our local area, the improvements we have made since our last local Area SEND inspection and our priorities for the next three academic years as well as our commitment to accountability, transparency, reporting and sustainability (section 8 of the draft SEND and AP Strategy).
- 1.6 There is an expectation that the Local Area SEND and AP Strategy will be updated after every Local Area SEND and AP Inspection. We were last inspected in January 2022 and the inspection [outcome letter](#) was published in March 2022. We are due the next Inspection on or around January 2027. Therefore, the renewal date for the strategy will broadly coincide with our next Area SEND Inspection.
- 1.7 The draft SEND and AP Strategy (attached) was considered at a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday 14 May 2024 where it was agreed it could go out to consultation. Consultation will be for 6 weeks from the 23 May 2024 – 4 July 2024.
- 1.8 All consultation feedback will be analysed and reflected where appropriate in changes to the draft strategy.
- 1.9 The final SEND and AP Strategy for 2024-2027 is expected to be published September 2024.

All cabinet reports can be found [here](#).

## 2 SEND Transport Policies

- 2.1 We are required to update and publish our SEND Travel Assistance policies by 31 May each year for 6<sup>th</sup> form and young adult learners and by the 19 September for compulsory aged pupils.
- 2.2 Changes were made to the DfE's '[travel to school](#)' guidance for compulsory aged pupils in January 2024. As a result of these changes, we have taken the opportunity to review and make changes to our existing policy which can be found [here](#).
- 2.3 For compulsory aged and young adult learners there will be additional options for travel assistance with a greater emphasis on greener travel options, independence and preparing for adulthood:
- Independent travel training
  - Cycling allowance
  - Walking allowance
  - Funding parents travel cards to use on public buses.
  - Personal Transport Allowance.
  - Increasing designated pick-up & drop-off points instead of door-to-door service.
- 2.4 The age group with the most significant proposed changes are for 6<sup>th</sup> form learners where differences in the legislation mean there is no automatic right to travel assistance for this cohort.
- 2.5 We also know it is a phase where we need to focus much more on developing independence in order to improve their outcomes into adulthood in relation to participation in the community and employment, including supported employment. To this end the proposed options for this cohort have been reduced:
- A Personal Transport Allowance (PTA) see banded rates in table 1 above, or,
  - Independent Travel Training (ITT).
- 2.6 There will be **exceptions** for those learners with needs that are so complex it is likely they will always require council arranged travel assistance. Where this is the case, and the council provides travel assistance there will be a parental contribution of 10% or 5% for those on low incomes towards the costs.
- 2.7 This is a relatively small cohort, currently 163 learners of which 28 already have a PTA.
- 2.8 The 6<sup>th</sup> form establishments attended of the 135 learners who access council arranged travel assistance are listed in table 1 below.

Table 1. Sixth form Establishments attended by 16-18 students with council arranged discretionary Travel Assistance.

Establishment	Number of Passengers
Mapledown school	33
Oak Lodge School	69
Kisharon School	10
Barnet & Southgate	12
Hendon School	6
Village School	5
Total	135

- 2.9 Whilst the underpinning aims of these changes are to promote independence, it should also be noted that the changes would also secure savings to the council of circa £400k per annum.
- 2.10 The policies (attached) were also considered at the Cabinet meeting on Tuesday 14 May 2024 where it was agreed they could go out to consultation. Consultation will be for 6 weeks from the 23 May 2024 – 4 July 2024.
- 2.11 All consultation feedback will be analysed and reflected where appropriate in changes to policies.
- 2.12 The updated compulsory and post 19 policy will be in place for September 2024 and the 6<sup>th</sup> form policy for September 2025, allowing families to prepare for these changes, apply if they feel their child has an exceptional case for council assisted travel or appeal.

All consultations can be found on [Engage Barnet](#).

### 3 SEND and AP national Change Programme Partnership (CPP).

3.1 Following concerns at a national level the DfE published a Green Paper in March 2022 '[SEND Review: Right Support, Right Place, Right Time](#)' and a year later published its [SEND and Alternative Provision \(AP\) Improvement Plan](#).

3.2 The Green Paper set out its vision with regard how to support children and young people with SEND and improve the system for families. The Improvement Plan sets out how and when it will achieve this.

3.3 key areas of testing are:

- National standards, developing ordinarily available provision (OAP).
- Establish SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Partnerships, multi-agency decision panels, Local Area Inclusion Plan (LAIP).
- Standardised EHCP template.
- Tailored lists to parents of suitable placements.
- A three-tiered approach to AP
- National dashboards so parents and professionals can see how the SEND system is performing at local and national level.
- A national framework of banding and tariffs for funding matched to levels of need and types of education provision set out in the national standards.

3.4 Progress:

- Barnet has so far issued over 100 EHCPs using the new template, feedback indicates that schools feel the new template is too long and contains lots of duplication. From a caseworker perspective, the templates take longer to complete. Schools have also said they would prefer that the new template includes the funding. We have fed back to the DfE about our findings. We know the DfE will be making changes as a result of national feedback, concern is that the DfE are reporting that other LAs are positive about this template. A standardised template will be helpful to both families and schools.
- We already have a SEND and AP partnership in place and have parent representation on a decision making panels. This is something we are supporting other LAs with.
- We have currently said we will not take forward testing in relation to the Advisory tailored lists due to concerns about the amount of work involved to be provide lists of schools with the amount of detail expected (which have sensory rooms and so on), we also feel that this may lead to schools with such resources receiving an unequitable number of consultations. There are wider concerns about demands on schools – in essence will 2 consults be required or just the 1? What if the LA suggests a school who then say no when formally consulted? Will it lead to expectations that cannot be met for our families?
- We have taken on additional capacity undertake a complete review of our Alternative Provision offer (PRUs). We will be making use of our brilliant Heads from Pavilion and Northgate as part of this. This was also a recommendation in our SEND HNB review.
- Key aims of the review are to
  - Meet the needs of more pupils.
  - Improving the offer – including range and flexibility of individualised programmes. This could involve a greater use of a blended approach to learning including a virtual platform to reduce costly reliance on independent tuition providers as well as use of AI bots where appropriate.
  - The three-tiered approach as set out in the DfEs improvement plan – inreach support to schools, supporting earlier identification, support, upskilling and reducing exclusions, short term time limited time out, but with a plan from the start of full reintegration back into their home school.

- Longer term placements where the focus is on transitioning to their next phase of education (e.g. primary to secondary or secondary to post compulsory)
  - An approved AP list for all schools to access.
  - Referral processes and pathways.
  - Curriculum offer - in AP as well as our secondary schools.
  - Accountability and reporting.
- Early Language Support for Every Child (ELSEC), is a being funded in Barnet as part of the CPP programme. It aims to identify earlier children with speech, language and communication needs in early years and primary settings. Staffing have been recruited or are in the process of being recruited and three schools have been identified already. The focus is on upskilling staff in schools to identify and support these children. Training will be provided by speech and language therapy assistants.
- The DfE have set up a dashboard which will be useful if it is developed sufficiently to cover the range of data we need.
- The DfE are currently looking at different banding systems, but where we see this having the most impact is the potential to have standardized costs for children and young people placed in independent setting, where costs are disproportionate and where providers to not work cooperatively with LAs.

## 4 Wider updates:

### SEND review.

- 4.1 We are currently recruiting a person to oversee wider aspects of the recommendations of the HNB review, and specifically options with regard access to funding for children in mainstream without recourse to an EHCP.
- *Thank you to those who have already volunteered to be part of the working party around this.*

### HNB financial position.

- 4.2 We are in the process of finalising the HNB outturn for 2023-2024 and forecasting the position for 2024-2025. Whilst the final outturn for 2023-24 is likely to show a surplus of circa £1.5m which is higher than expected, we are still expected to go into a deficit position for 2024-2025, which if we maintain the same level of increase in expenditure each year (circa 10%) and the increase in HNB (around 3%) remains the same the deficit will be circa £10m by 2026-2027.
- 4.3 This means it is even more important to consider how we are utilising our HNB (which has been chronically underfunded as have schools), to make sure all spend is equitable and focusses on those most in need.
- 4.4 The DfE's Safety Valve (SV) and Delivering Better Value (DBV) programmes target the local authorities with the biggest Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficits. The SV programme targets the authorities with the highest percentage deficits. Participation in the SV and DBV programmes is voluntary. Local authorities receive additional funding as part of their agreed plan, but this is provided in increments and is **subject to the authority making satisfactory progress towards achieving the targets** set out in their plan for sustainability.
- 4.5 Following the increase in banded and top up rates last year there are no immediate plans to increase these further at this time.
- 4.6 We have established a working party to review fair share arrangements – you will recall last year we made changes to include OOB children which we now positively impacted schools.

All School forum agendas, reports and minutes can be found [here](#).