

Barnet Family Services Child And Family

Early Help Strategy 2023 - 2027



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LONDON BOROUGH

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Our Mission Statement

Our multiagency partnership believes that every child has the right to a healthy, happy childhood. We are committed to ensuring all children living in Barnet have equal opportunities to learn, play, participate and thrive.

It is our mission to create an Early Help system of support that is designed with and for children, young people and families in our borough; a system that understands and responds to local needs and builds on the strengths of our local schools, communities and services.

We will do this using our resilience-based approaches and by working effectively together to improve outcomes for all children in Barnet.



What is Early Help?



Early Help is not a single service but a network of services and professionals who can work separately and together to provide support when children, young people and their families need it.

Our services aim to ensure that help is provided as early in the life of a problem as possible, so problems do not get worse.

Children with special educational needs and disabilities may need additional support to help them thrive and achieve. Our SEND local offer sets out the comprehensive range of support available which includes support for the emotional wellbeing of autistic children and young people, therapies, help with transport and much more. Details of the local offer, and how to access services can be found here www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk

Agencies providing early help services, include Children's Centres, GP's, midwives, school nurses, health visitors, housing providers, Barnet Family Services, sexual health, drug and alcohol services, nurseries, childminders, speech and language therapists, Barnet Education & Learning Service, schools and colleges, police, mental health services, adult services and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise providers. as well as by dropping in and visiting our Child and Family Early Help Hubs for more advice and support.'

You can find out more by contacting the Early Help Hubs or by dropping in – see last page for ways to contact us

Providing Early Help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at a point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early Help can also prevent further problems arising, for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan where a child has returned home to their family from care.

WORKING TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN,
HM GOVERNMENT, 2018



1. Introduction

Welcome to Barnet's children and families early help strategy. It has been developed by the multi-agency partnership working in the borough in collaboration with children, families, local communities and Barnet's political leaders.

Our strategy sets out our shared vision, values and ambition for every child, from pre-birth to adulthood and beyond, to be healthy, happy and to thrive.

Using our shared knowledge and experience and informed by research and evidence about child development and what works in early intervention, we have produced this strategy to provide a framework for delivery of Early Help Services in the borough.

We have agreed on some basic principles that underpin the way in which we work, these are:

- All children and families have strengths that we can help them build upon
- Every child can reach their potential when agencies work well together
- Our services should, where possible, be close to where children live and go to school
- Professionals should know the communities they are supporting well
- Children, young people and families should have a say in how we deliver services
- There is 'no wrong door' to getting help
- Families should get the right help, first time
- Children and families should not have to tell 'their story' to multiple professionals, multiple times
- We will improve children's life chances by supporting their health and wellbeing and that of their families

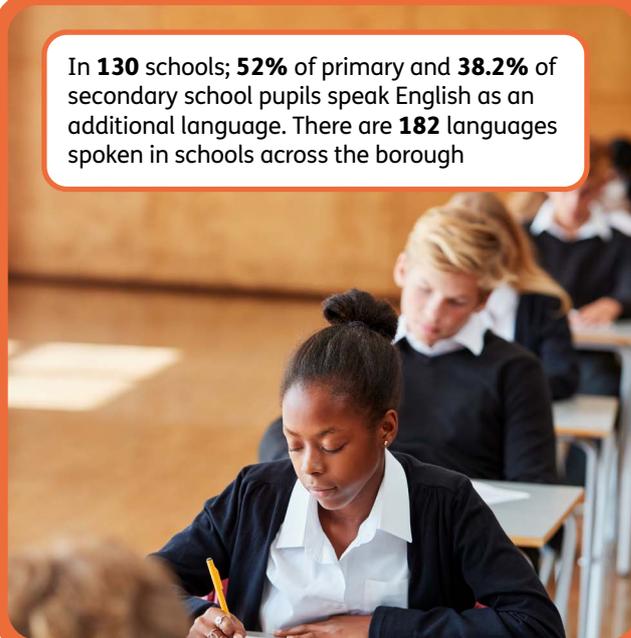
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2. Local Context



With **402,700** residents, we have the largest population in London, with the population of children projected to reach **101,875** by 2025. **47,000** are young people aged 10 -19 years.



In **130** schools; **52%** of primary and **38.2%** of secondary school pupils speak English as an additional language. There are **182** languages spoken in schools across the borough



48% of the borough population are from racially minoritized backgrounds rising to **52%** in the child population compared to **30%** across England.



The percentage of children at secondary school in receipt of free school meals is in line with the national average of **13.1%**, in nursery and primary the percentage of Barnet children receiving free school meals is higher at **16.7%** against **14.5%** nationally.



Families should get the right help, first time

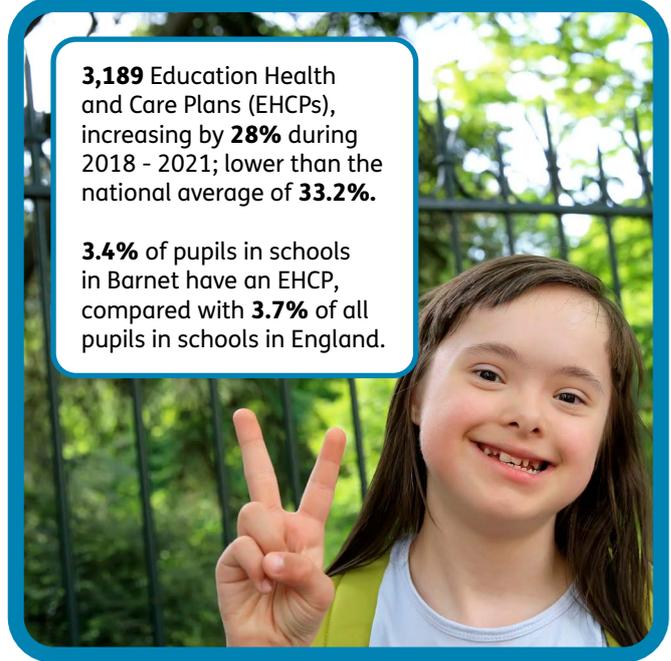
20% of children in Barnet are obese, which is slightly higher than the national average of **18.2%**

Levels of excess weight in children in reception and Year 6 has remained around **19%** and **34%** respectively, which is slightly lower than both London and England.

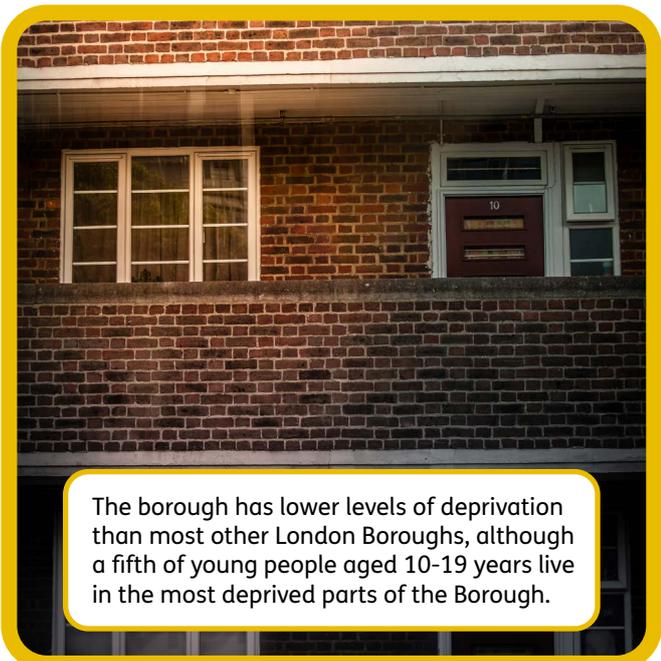


3,189 Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), increasing by **28%** during 2018 - 2021; lower than the national average of **33.2%**.

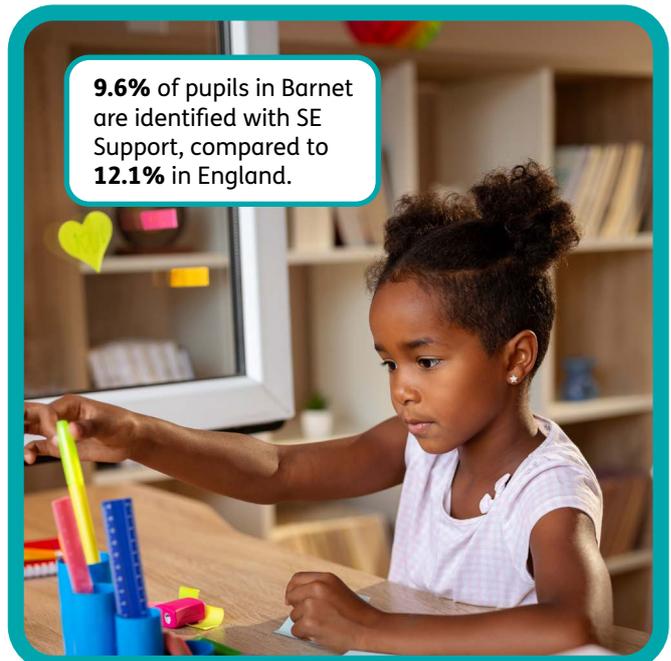
3.4% of pupils in schools in Barnet have an EHCP, compared with **3.7%** of all pupils in schools in England.



The borough has lower levels of deprivation than most other London Boroughs, although a fifth of young people aged 10-19 years live in the most deprived parts of the Borough.



9.6% of pupils in Barnet are identified with SE Support, compared to **12.1%** in England.



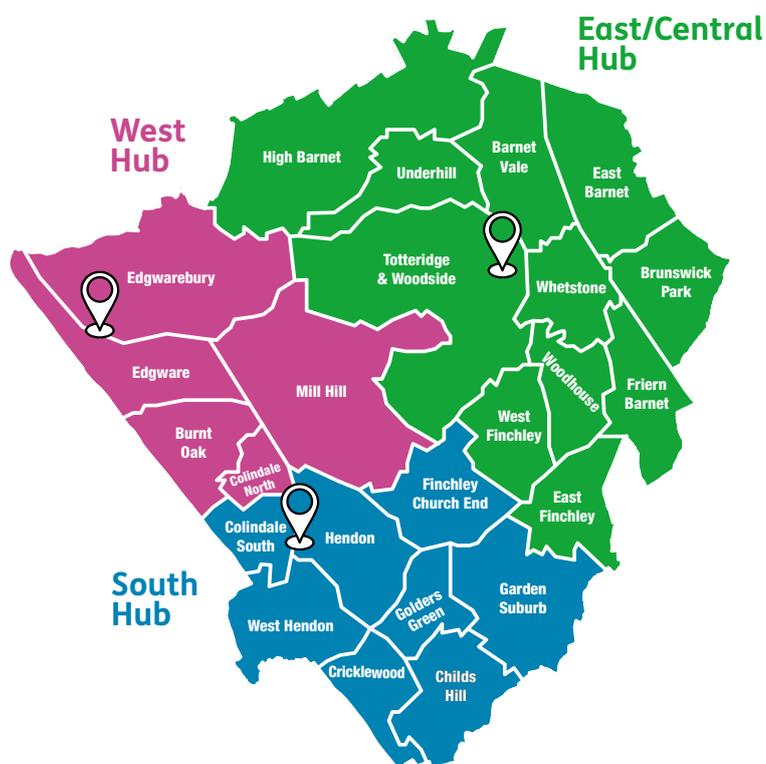
3. Child and Family Early Help Hubs

Barnet has three Child and Family Early Help Hubs and a number of satellite buildings where we offer a range of preventative and early help support for children and families. This includes midwifery, health visiting, breastfeeding, parenting support, positive activities, mental health support, welfare advice, groupwork programmes and a range of other services.

Our hubs are linked to local schools, GP's and other community-based services. You can walk in or call (contact details on last page) or speak with GPs and schools for advice on how to access the support services offered. [Click here for more information Early help for children, young people and families | Barnet Council.](#)

Barnet also has 14 libraries offering a wide range of early help support for children and families.

This includes access to physical and digital resources for learning and leisure, information and signposting to other services and a comprehensive programme of creative and educational activities and events. Library buildings provide public spaces to spend family time and quiet space to study.



Barnet also has 14 libraries offering a wide range of early help support for children and families.

4. Early Help Vision

Barnet's Early Help Vision is based on our aim for the borough to have resilient children, resilient families and a resilient children's workforce. We believe through our approach:

Children, Young People and Families will be:

- Supported to make changes for themselves.
- Able to get the right services first time and at the right time.
- Supported to thrive from pre-birth, throughout their childhood and into adulthood



Supported by Skilled professionals that:

- Are accessible, responsive and care about what they do.
- Are innovative and creative in their approaches to practice
- Are well-trained, supported and advocate for equality.
- Work together to get it right

Enabled and equipped by:

- Clear governance that involves children and families, putting them at the heart of how we plan, deliver and monitor the effectiveness of service
- A clear resilience-based practice framework which includes tools such as Signs of Safety and systemic practice as approaches that build on families' strengths.



5. Pre-Birth and Early Years (0-5 Years)

Our priorities

In Barnet we are committed to ensuring every child gets the best start in life, from pregnancy through to the time they start school and grow into adulthood. Through the universal midwifery service, healthy child programme and children centre offer we aim to reach every baby, child and family and provide help and support to improve their life chances. To achieve our vision, we are committed to building on current delivery in the following ways:



To have Early Help services accessible to all families

Ensuring that working in partnership with parents and carers is at the centre of everything we do

Deliver a wide range of parenting programmes and support

Children are accessing quality early years provision

Ensure information, services and opportunities are provided at the right time

Through supporting home learning and child/adult attachment

Providing an inclusive service delivery that supports children with special educational needs or a disability

To deliver Family Support which respects, values and thinks about the need of the whole family

Further develop the links between education, health and early help

Meeting childcare sufficiency and providing families quality-assured childcare options

All children are supported to access free early years education offer

Supporting children to be ready to start school

Perinatal health and wellbeing support provided to all expectant parents

Improving vaccination up-take rates

Offering families advice to achieve financial stability

To ensure delivery of appropriate services based on local demography and needs analysis

Every child living in Barnet has access to a range of services aimed at supporting good outcomes in their early years, these are universal so are at the centre of our Early Help offer for all children aged 0-5. Additional services wrap around our core offer, this is targeted or specialist support which is available to children and families that need more help to reach their potential.



Our partnership will work together to ensure every child achieves these outcomes.

Outcomes

- Explore the World
 - Be Social
 - Be Nurtured
- Be Helped to Thrive
- Be Confident
- Be Healthy
 - Be Safe
 - Be Happy

Primary (5-11 years)

Our priorities

We are committed to ensuring that the primary years are a stage at which all children are able to thrive, discover their talents, develop healthy friendships and achieve. Through this strategy we will work together to deliver the below priorities:



Early identification and support of special educational needs and disabilities

Children have the tools to build resilience, friendships and trusted relationships

Supporting emotional wellbeing and good mental health

Offering families advice to achieve financial stability

Providing opportunities for play, positive activities and social development

Providing inclusive services that supports all children's needs including special educational needs and disabilities

Further developed links between education, health and primary-age support services

All primary-aged pupils to have access to a quality school placement and supported to be ready for secondary school

Promoting healthy family relationships

Promoting healthy lifestyles and addressing health inequalities

All children are safeguarded by all partners regardless of educational setting

Healthy Weight Management and preventing childhood obesity

Every primary-aged child living in Barnet has access to a range of services that aim to support good outcomes through their primary years and to ensure that they have all that they need to thrive at their secondary stage. These services are universal and are in the centre of our offer for primary-aged children. Additional services wrap around this core offer. These are targeted or specialist forms of support which are available to children and families that need more help to reach their potential.



Our partnership will work together to ensure every child achieves these outcomes.

Outcomes

- Explore the world and develop a strong sense of self
- Be Engaged with learning
- Be safe and helped to make good choices
 - Be Social
 - Be Nurtured
- Be Helped to Thrive
 - Be Confident
 - Be Healthy
 - Be Happy

Secondary (11-16 years)

Our priorities

In Barnet, we are committed to providing support that recognises and responds to the complex task of adolescence. We want to ensure that all children are supported to positively transition from primary to secondary education and are equipped with the skills they need to develop and maintain healthy, positive friendships and relationships and interests. We want to ensure young people in Barnet have access safe spaces where they can build resilience, build a positive sense of identity and have opportunities to participate and engage in preparation for further education, training and employment. Through this strategy we will work together to ensure the below priorities are met.



Early identification and safeguarding young people from exploitation

To recognise and develop Healthy Relationships

Support young people as they mature into adulthood

Young people are safeguarded from harm

Encouraged to be aspirational and achieve

Making sure services are accessible and available to all children including SEN disabilities

We will address structural racism and inequalities

Reduce exclusions and criminalisation of racially minoritized children

For young people to have safe spaces to express themselves freely and engage in positive activities

We will listen and involve you in decisions about our services

Supporting emotional wellbeing and good mental health

Young people have the tools to build resilience, friendships and trusted relationships

Young people are able to make safe and healthy choices with the support of trusted adults

Young people are helped to problem solve safely

Tackling period poverty

Offering families advice to achieve financial stability

All secondary-aged children and young people in Barnet have access to core services that aim to support good outcomes between 11-16, so that they have all they need to thrive in their adolescence and onwards. These are at the centre of our offer for secondary-aged young people, whilst wrap-around additional services are there to support young people and families who may need additional support to reach their potential.



Our partnership will work together to ensure every child achieves these outcomes.

Outcomes

- Have the resilience to build good mental health and a positive sense of identity
- Be social and have relationships
- Explore the world and challenge skills and abilities
- Reach their educational and academic potential
- Be safe and helped to make good choices
- Be Healthy
- Be Nurtured
- Be Confident
- Be Happy

Post-16 Support (16-25)

Our priorities

In Barnet, we are committed to providing support to adolescents to enable them to prepare for adulthood and ensure that they are supported to successfully transition into adulthood. Through this strategy we will work together to ensure the below priorities are met.



Early identification and safeguarding for adolescents with additional vulnerabilities

Preventing child-exploitation and understanding lived & contextual experiences

Fully-supported young people at all points of transition

Adolescents that are safe & secure at home, at school and out within the community

Information, services and opportunities are provided at the right time

Equal opportunities for Barnet's young people to achieve

Providing an inclusive service delivery that supports adolescents with special educational needs or a disability

Co-production and engagement with young people

Further develop the links between education, police, health and adult social care

Adolescents with an understanding of healthy and safe relationships

All adolescents in Barnet have the tools and resilience to build and maintain positive mental health

Reducing rates of disproportionate school exclusions

Adolescents with the resource and understanding to make healthy choices around their physical health and wellbeing

Addressing health inequalities

Areas of unmet need are addressed through tailored services

Offering advice to achieve financial stability

All adolescents in Barnet have access to central, core support that aims to provide them with the tools and resilience needed to ensure good outcomes into their adulthoods and beyond. Additional, wrap-around support is available to those young people who may need targeted, specialist services to enable them to reach their potential.



Our partnership will work together to ensure every child achieves these outcomes.

Outcomes

- Have the resilience to maintain good mental health and a positive sense of identity
- Encouraged and supported to access training and employment and/or explore further / higher education
- Be social and have good relationships
- Explore the world and challenge skills and abilities
- Be safe and able to make good choices
- Be Healthy
- Be Nurtured
- Be Confident
- Be Happy

6. Values, principles & the way we work

We believe that children and young people are best supported by people they know and trust and that supporting and nurturing relationships are essential to health and wellbeing.

We know that most Early Help is provided by families, friends, neighbours, and communities, and this is central to our strategy as we are committed to recognising the value of these informal support networks and supporting them to and our local community-based professionals (both paid and volunteers) to continue providing support.

We will work with local communities and extended support systems together with local partners, including health services, police, voluntary sector, educational settings, housing, and Local Authority services to provide early support to children and their families that build resilience, prevents difficulties from escalating and leads to better outcomes and positive changes that are sustained.

This can only be achieved if all partners work together with families and their networks towards goals that are developed in partnership with children, young people and their families.



Our Principles for working with families:

- Children are at the centre of all we do
- Listening to children and families and valuing their input
- Building on strengths as well as identifying the difficulties.
- Identifying the right support the first time
- Open and honest communication

It is important, that the moment a need for help and support is recognised, a professional has a conversation with the child/family and their support network about that need or concern to explore what it looks like and how it affects the child's life, as well as what the important people in the child's life are doing to help keep them happy and safe. When there is a need for the multi-agency partnership to work together to meet a need, a professional will work in agreement and partnership with the family to complete an Early Help Assessment.

Early Help Assessments help us listen to families and guide our work with them. During an assessment we will gather, share and make sense of information with families so that we can make decisions together. We use tools, like the one below, to capture the thoughts, worries and aspirations of children and families and work in an open and honest way to find solutions together.

HOUSE OF WORRIES

HOUSE OF DREAMS

HOUSE OF GOOD THINGS

When we identify that a family needs support from more than one agency we will start a Team Around the Family (TAF) process. This is where all the people who care about or are working with a child form a team that works together to help support them. One professional will take the lead and ensure that services are co-ordinated and working effectively towards the change that is needed for the child and family.

The lead professional can be any professional working with the family and who is part of the Team Around the Family, they will act as a single point of contact for the child and their family throughout the period of assessment and support. They will work closely with the child and family to ensure everyone is clear on how, when and where support will be provided¹.

¹Barnet's Early Help System is committed to ensuring the secure protection of the personal information of the children, young people and families we work with. We have strong processes in place, upheld by compulsory GDPR training for all of our staff to ensure that we remain GDPR compliant, and that children and families in Barnet are kept safe.



7. How we will work

We will work together across the Early Help Partnership to ensure information is shared that enables us to understand the needs of our child population.

We will use this information to develop integrated and coordinated services. For children's needs to be well understood and for the right help to be provided at the right time, it is our expectation that all agencies working with children exercise and model positive and proactive curiosity about what life is like for children and young people living in and going to school in the borough.

We are committed to ensuring our services and practice are anti-racist and inclusive. We recognise that not all children have the same opportunities, so we expect that all professionals working with children in Barnet provide challenge to systems and practices that do not promote equity and equality for all children in the borough.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of every professional and we take this responsibility seriously, we will work to ensure children at risk of harm are promptly identified and their circumstances improved.

We believe that delivering services close to where children live and go to school is the best way to meet local need. We will ensure our Child & Family Help Hubs and our satellite buildings such as schools and health centres are accessible to local families and responsive to local needs.

Our integrated approach aims to support early identification of need and risk and will enable services to develop whole system early intervention approaches that prevent the need for escalation to statutory intervention and/or social or educational exclusion and poor health outcomes.

We will work in partnership with local voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCS) providers and leaders to ensure when we are planning to make changes or decisions to our services to ensure local voices influence the design and delivery approaches. We want our services to be free of stigma and accessible to established and new communities living in the borough, by ensuring barriers caused by language, immigration and social economic status are removed so everyone feels valued and welcome.

To do this, our practitioners will engage with local community groups and faith leaders developing mutual understanding and trust, be culturally competent and deliver inclusive services and we will develop a one stop shop approach in each of our localities so families can receive advice and be signposted to the right help quickly without waiting for a referral



We want children and young people to be actively engaged in services that promote their emotional wellbeing, pro-social behaviour, social and educational inclusion, and we want them to be safe at home, in school and in the community.

We will ensure our children's workforce has access to training and support that enables practitioners to swiftly identify the signs that a child or young person might need our help, we will promote our resilience-based practice approaches to ensure we are all working with children and young people in ways that build on their strengths, involve them in assessments, planning and decision making and keeps them safe.

We will support our workforce to be resilient. We will ensure information about our services is available in schools, GP surgeries, community settings and on digital platforms so everyone knows what we are doing, where we are doing it and how to access our services.

We will encourage participation and co-production with children, young people and families, so they can share their feedback, tell us what we are doing well and what we need to do better. We will work openly and transparently and be accountable for the services we deliver.

Further Reading

Supporting Families: early help system guide – Outlines a national vision and descriptors for a mature early help system that is shared by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Department for Education.

Early years high impact area 2: Supporting maternal and family mental health – Public Health England guidance updated in 2021 detailing the significance of familial and maternal mental health on the wellbeing of children and young people and providing direction and instruction on the roles of health visitors and the healthy child programme in encouraging and supporting improved mental health and wellbeing.

School-aged years high impact area 1: Supporting resilience and wellbeing – Public Health England guidance updated in 2021 establishing the resilience and wellbeing of children and young people as a 'significant public health priority'.

No child left behind: A public health informed approach to improving outcomes for vulnerable children - Reports for local government and their partners to inform their co-ordinated approaches to reduce vulnerability and adversity in childhood.

Growing up in the Covid-19 pandemic: An evidence review of the impact of pandemic life on physical development in the early years – An Early Intervention Foundation review of emerging international and UK evidence on seven key factors associated with children's early physical health and development, and the extent to which the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic (such as lockdowns and social distancing) have impacted on these factors and affected children's early physical development, including children from low-income and UK ethnic minority families.

Here you can find our local strategies linking to:
Strategies | Barnet Council

[CLICK HERE](#)



Appendix 1.

Governance

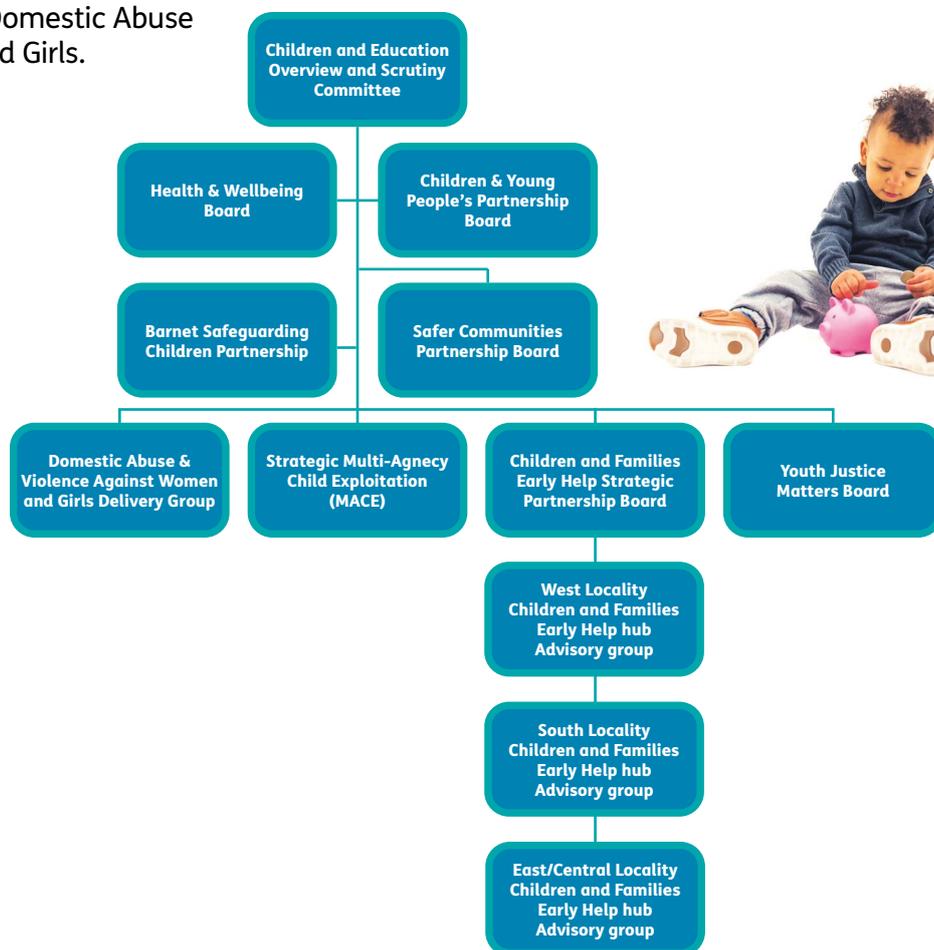
This strategy will be monitored by the multiagency partnership of the Child & Family Early Help Strategic Board which meets quarterly.

The Family Hub Advisory Boards in each locality is comprised of local partner agencies and parent representatives, the Advisory Boards report to the Child & Family Early Help Strategic Board.

As early help services includes prevention of crime and violence, there is some cross-over into Youth Justice, Community Safety and Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls.

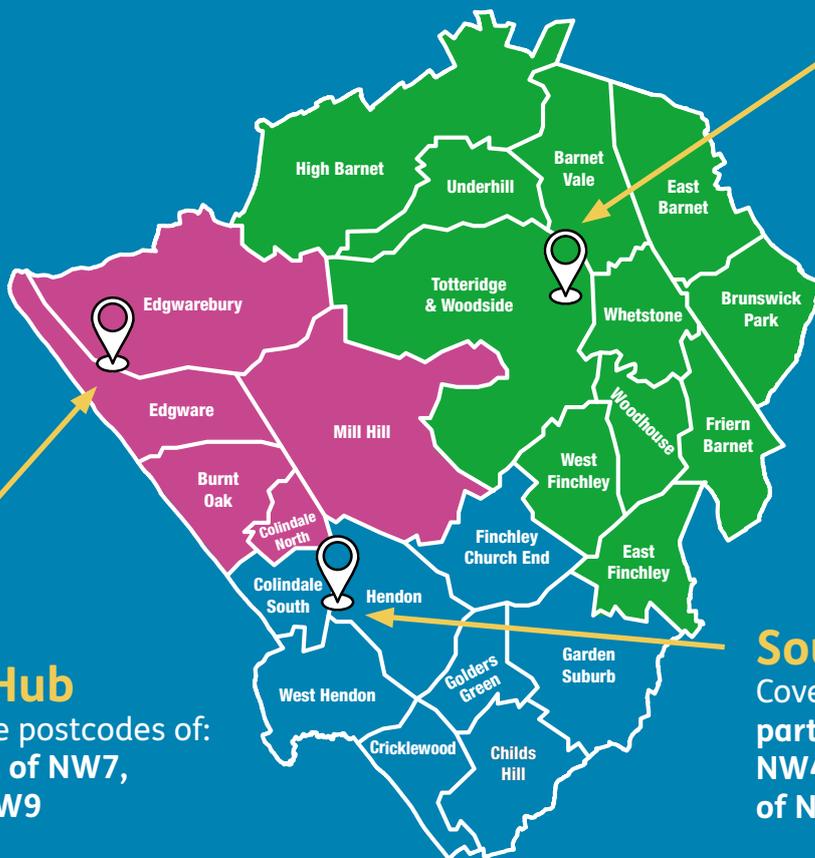
The Chair of the Child & Family Early Help Strategic Board will produce an annual report on activity of the Child & Family Early Help Strategic Board and progress against the Child and Family Early Help Strategy, this report is shared with the Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership, Performance Quality and Assurance (PQA) group and the Children and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The governance arrangements are set out below.





Early Help Hub Locations and Contact Details



East/Central Hub

Covers the postcodes of:
N2, parts of N3, parts of
N10, N11, N12
parts of N14,
EN4 and EN5.

Main Hub office:

Newstead Children's Centre,
1 Fallows Close
(off Tarling Road),
Finchley, N2 8LG

Telephone: 020 8359 3460

West Hub

Covers the postcodes of:
HA8, part of NW7,
part of NW9

Main Hub office:

Barnet and Southgate College -
Colindale, 7 Bristol Avenue
(formerly Lanacre Avenue)
London NW9 4BR

Telephone 020 8359 3510

South Hub

Covers the postcodes of:
part of NW2, NW3, part of
NW4, part of NW11, part
of NW9, part of N3

Main Hub office:

Parkfield Children's Centre,
44 Park Road, Hendon,
NW4 3PS

Telephone: 020 8359 3590

A full list of all
of the libraries in
Barnet and their
contact details
can be found here



Feel free to
walk in and
get in touch



Scan QR code and
link to key strategic
documents and plans.

SCAN HERE

