

Follow up from Our Voice conference February 2019

At the last Parents' Conference in February 2019, a number of points were raised by parents which did not receive a full response at the time, or where further actions were agreed. Our Voice put these questions to the Local Authority and their responses are shown in red below.

Issues raised by parents:	Service update:
<p>Issues with EHCPs where school is not fully supportive – it seems impossible to progress properly in those circumstances.</p>	<p>Discussions with the school should be encouraged, to explore why they do not consider an EHCP to be required at this time. If a parent has a complaint around the school/SENCO they should follow the complaints procedure for the school</p>
<p>Issues with cross-Borough cases – individuals are being bounced backwards and forwards between e.g. Enfield and Barnet councils with neither taking responsibility. As a result, children don't get the provision set out in EHCPs. Particularly the case for speech and language services, but also applies to OT and physiotherapy. Speech and language services can be difficult to access even within Borough.</p>	<p>NCL (North Central London) has coordinated a joint meeting with providers and we are in the early stages of sharing our local offer including for EHCP specification. The aim is to work towards a mutual agreement so EHCP provision can be delivered equitably in Mainstream Education across the sector Within special Education arrangements exist across local authorities and Health to deliver the school-based service for Therapies. Where Health needs is part of Educational provision (section F), local authorities make arrangements for provision to be in place. If Health provision is in section G, health providers are fully involved in the process and work with providers across GP /school boundaries to ensure seamless provision is delivered.</p>
<p>How will Council deal with schools carrying a budget deficit?</p>	<p>There is a recent announcement on funding that is currently being modelled to see how it impacts on schools. We are expecting additional funding into our high needs block and we are currently reviewing the allocation of funding to SEN pupils and special schools.</p>
<p>Some schools are failing to support SEND. Some seem to 'give up' claiming it is 'too difficult'. Some schools make parents feel (whether explicitly or implicitly) that their children with SEND will be unwelcome, meaning they do not apply to that school. Cllr Nesil Caliskan confirmed that this is unacceptable. Examples were cited of schools saying that they can't support a particular pupil with SEND because of lack of council funds.</p>	<p>Inclusion and meeting the needs of all pupils is a primary focus in the new Ofsted inspection framework. Inspectors will also focus on "gaming" and "off-rolling of pupils. The curriculum offer in schools should meet the needs of all pupils. An Inclusive Conference was held with all schools invited and an Inclusion Guidance Handbook was issued to all schools which outlined inclusion in Enfield with an Inclusion audit for all schools to use. An "Ordinarily Available Provision in mainstream schools "has been developed and shared with all schools. This</p>

	<p>highlights Enfield’s expectations of provision for all learners including those with SEND. It outlines a range of strategies and approaches to be used in schools in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice</p>
<p>Numbers of individuals with EHCPs has increased because children cannot get any provision without having a plan in place. In some cases, there is really no need for a plan – and creating one costs time and money.</p>	<p>The profile of Special Schools Outreach work has been raised so all schools can access this for support. On-going CPD training around pertinent areas is delivered.</p>
<p>Process of obtaining an EHCP is often hugely difficult and parents have to ‘fight’ to get a plan in place. LA need to reflect on how parents are supported through that process.</p>	<p>The Officers in SEN Service are working hard with parents so that this is not an adversarial position. However, sometimes expectations of parents are very high and this leads to challenging conversations. We want to continue to work with parents to make sure everyone is clear on the processes and the strategies we would welcome the opportunity to work with Our Voice to continue to improve the process.</p>
<p>Concerns about numbers of exclusions of children with SEND. Particular concern around unlawful exclusions (i.e. where parents are asked to collect a child part way through the day e.g. because child is ‘having a melt-down’ but the school don’t record this as an exclusion).</p>	<p>There have been discussions with schools and this has been raised at various meetings and forums. We have been encouraging schools to contact the SEN Service prior to any permanent exclusion and have “stopped” some of these. Sometimes it will depend on the reason.</p>
<p>Need to work with schools and support and train teachers dealing with challenging behaviour in schools.</p>	<p>The importance of understanding the need with schools has been put to the fore of this issue. There have been developments in the area of PBS across some of the Special Schools. Our Special Schools also provide outreach to support schools as does the primary and secondary behaviour support services. Nexus is our programme to bring together several programmes that support children at risk of exclusion, and staff to manage behaviour. There is significant support from the council to ensure that there is support to prevent exclusion</p>