

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Newsletter

Local Offer - Parent and Carer Zone

We are thrilled to share the launch of our new Parent and Carer Zone. This new area of our Local Offer has been designed to support parents and carers with a range of useful information from helpful organisations to our courses and support groups. You will also find the latest news, events and helpful resources.

Our 'Learning at Home' feature has practical information and links to support families during their time at home. These include learning resources, wellbeing resources, fun family activities and links to organisations that can provide information and support to parents and carers.

Visit our Parent and Carer Zone at:

- <https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/parent-zone>

Samantha Rothwell
Inclusion Advisory Teacher

The screenshot shows the 'Parent and Carer Zone' website. At the top, there is a breadcrumb trail: 'You are here: Home / Parent and Carer Zone'. Below this is a header for 'Parent and Carer Zone' with a welcome message: 'Welcome to our Barnet Parent and Carer Zone! This has been designed to support you as parents and carers. Packed full of useful information, you should find all you need to know from helpful organisations to our courses and support groups. Latest news, events and helpful resources available for you to access any time.' There is a 'Find Out More' button. The main content area features a grid of nine categories, each with a representative image and a title: 'Latest News', 'How to Get Help', 'Helpful Organisations', 'Learning at Home', 'Supporting Your Child', 'What's On - Activities for Children & Young People', 'What's on - Courses and Support Groups for Parents and Carers', 'Online Learning - Helpful Podcasts and Webinars', and 'Our Journey - Parent and Carer Stories'. To the right of the grid is a 'Helpful Resources' section with the text: 'Our Resource Library contains useful documents, leaflets and information that you can view and download.' Below this text is an 'All Help and Advice' button.

Short survey for Barnet children and young people

We would like to find out about your experience of the Covid-19 lockdown and your thoughts about school in the autumn term. The survey is for children and young people of school age.

This short survey asks five questions. It will take about five minutes to complete, or longer if you want to provide more information. The survey will not ask for any personal data. We will not be able to identify you and the information you provide is anonymous. When the survey is complete we will let you know what we find out. We will also share your thoughts and ideas with schools. The survey is open until the 16 of August 2020.

Here's the link to the survey:

- <https://forms.gle/XBvVq9m4dmFU1Y4y8>

If you have any questions about this survey, please email sarah.geiger@barnet.gov.uk

Dr Helen Phelan
Assistant Director, SEND and Inclusion

Short Break Summer Activities

We are pleased to confirm that a range of providers are available to deliver services and fun activities across the summer holidays, both face to face and online. This includes a range of creative and proactive solutions developed in partnership with families.

The table in the attached document includes a list of Short Break services that are planning sessions and details of how to contact them to find out more and to book.

We would like to say a big thank you to the short break providers and partners for working so hard at this difficult time to stay in touch with families and offer their continued support, where this has been possible.

- [Short Breaks Summer Activities](#)



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Children's Integrated Therapies Schools Update

In response to the challenges we have all faced in responding to Coronavirus, and making 'reasonable endeavours' to meet the needs of children and young people in Barnet, we have amended our service- offer to respond to the pandemic with support and advice via phone or video to schools and parents with urgent queries regarding therapy input/programmes.

NELFT, Barnet CCG and the London Borough of Barnet/Cambridge Education have in partnership, continued to work hard to ensure that the children and young people who are most at risk and vulnerable continue to receive support from the NELFT's Barnet Children's Integrated Therapy (CIT) Team. Barnet CIT will continue to prioritise the high need interventions for children and young people with and without EHCPs requiring urgent care.

The following gives a summary of our modified offer:

- We will be available to offer a support and advice contact via phone or video to parents with urgent queries regarding therapy input/programmes over the summer holidays. We have identified time slots where an OT/SLT/PT will be available to support families. If parents/carers need advice regarding their child or young person's therapy they can contact the Barnet CIT service on Tel: 03003001821, and a therapist will return their call to discuss the support we can offer.
- As per the published changes in the legislation for EHCPs, we will continue to use 'reasonable endeavours' to deliver the service. These temporary changes to legislation came into effect on 1 May and will continue until 25 September 2020 for carrying out an EHCP assessment and until 31 July 2020 for provision of EHCP requirements. This may result in a child or young person's provision being adjusted from that which is set out in their EHC plan, for some, or all, of the time.
- Face to face contacts will be possible where this is clinically urgently required and a Tele-review will not adequately support the need.
- Annual Review advice – the service will be prioritising completing a full AR where provision will be changing e.g. due to transition, etc. For others we will be sending an update, indicating what input there has been from our service and that therapy will continue as per the EHCP/last AR report.
- For concerns around dysphagia please contact nem-tr.barnetcit@nhs.net or 0300 300 1821 and a dysphagia specialist will contact you.

All Special Schools will have therapist cover from September and schools will be contacted with their details. We are currently recruiting to a number of vacant therapist posts and also looking at agency cover to fill any staffing gaps.

Please contact the service on nem-tr.barnetcit@nhs.net or 0300 300 1821 if you have any queries.

Raj Guruchandran
Head of Service CIT, Barnet
Children's Integrated Therapies



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Back to School and Thinking About What We Learnt at Home

At my secondary school we are helping our students think about returning to school, what that will look like and also finding out about what they learnt at home. We have sent a survey to all our SEN students so we can find out what they liked about learning at home, any difficulties and then moving on do they have any worries about returning to school?

There have been great accounts of baking, cooking meals for the family and learning new skills. We have enjoyed seeing the photos of cakes as we have tried to encourage our students to use this time to develop life skills. As one of the areas most vital for our SEN students to focus on having time at home has been something they never thought they would have.

We have tried to simplify links to online learning and focus on the main areas we want our students to make progress in e.g. reading and making this fun through quizzes and competitions. Also using bitesize and oak academy resources as well as links on the Barnet SENCO zone to help our students as at the start of the time of learning at home the work could be overwhelming. As a school we are also sending out weekly well-being advice including the experience of a teenager who wrote about the challenges of lockdown. All year groups have sent out surveys to find out how students are finding this time and so as a school we can adapt what we are doing and celebrate what has gone well.

The families we work with have been amazing and one key role for me and my staff has been to thank them and reassure them that the most important thing is their child's well-being and then getting some tasks completed comes next alongside all they can learn at home as mentioned above. Speaking to families at home has given me more of an insight into what a fantastic job parents are doing but also the challenges; having meetings over the phone with all the family in the background makes me realise how much pressure parents must be under particularly where there are several children with SEND needs. Parents have appreciated the weekly contact and also signposting to resources such as parent helplines.

As we prepare to return to school, supporting our students means letting them know step by step how school is likely to look when we return, telling them about timetables and listening to any anxieties they have. Alongside this we are putting staff well-being at the heart of our planning and thinking of how staff can get support and time for themselves if things get too much. Both staff and students have a vast range of experiences lived during this time and the challenge is to take on board everyone's views and work together to gradually transition back.

Clare Jeffries
SENCO
Mill Hill County High School

It's Okay to Be Different Competition Summer Competition

We launched our 'It's Okay to be Different' competition at our SENCO Conference in February. The competition is an opportunity to celebrate difference and is open to our schools and children & young people in Barnet.

Over the summer holidays, we'd like you to create something based on the theme of 'It's Okay to be Different'. For some ideas to get you started, have a look at the competitions page on the Local Offer:

- https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/blog_articles/2624-it-s-okay-to-be-different-competition-summer-competition



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Barnet – Helping Children Back To School

Please visit our “Barnet – Helping Children Back To School” website where we are sharing a diverse range of resources, guidance and support on offer from all services across Barnet for children, young people, parents, carers, educational and social care settings (including residential homes). Please also watch our Back to School film for those returning this week.

We hope that these resources will be useful for you.

A new podcast series produced by Barnet Integrated Clinical Service (BICS), is available to support residents’ wellbeing. These free podcasts will cover a variety of themes and helpful psychological strategies you can use whilst moving out of lockdown. The Podcast is available on our Helping children back to school webpage –

- www.barnet.gov.uk/backtoschool

Dr Anindita Sarkar, CPsychol
Consultant Clinical Psychologist
Clinical Lead for Barnet Integrated

Introduction of Gateway, a new web-based platform

I am really pleased to say that Barnet is introducing a new system called Gateway which provides a web-based platform for reports to be shared directly with one another through the EHC Assessment process and following an EHC Plan being issued to log Annual Reviews for children with EHCPs.

With Gateway, all children and young people with an EHC Plan will have their own individual platform and the parent/carer and professional network around that child/young person will all be able to access the reports for that child directly.

This will hopefully make the sharing of information much quicker and will be a more efficient use of time as people will not need to email each other reports/copies of EHCPs etc.

Training on using the Gateway system will be rolled out in the 2020/21 Academic Year and more information will be shared with parents/carers directly as we launch the parent and child and young people areas of the platform.

Linda Orr
Head of SEN Assessments & Placements

