



**Barking &
Dagenham**

Just Say Conference

5th March 2025

Barking & Dagenham Council Update

Elaine Allegretti, Strategic Director Childrens and Adults
Jane Hargreaves, Commissioning Director Education
and Barking & Dagenham Council colleagues

Elaine Allegretti, Strategic Director Childrens and Adults

Introduction and Overview

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Image source: Riverside Bridge School

one borough; one community; no one left behind

**Barking &
Dagenham**

Denise Watts, Head of Statutory SEND Services / Amila Sarwar, Education Health and Care Unit Manager

SEND Improvement Plan – Progress

Area 1: All children and young people with SEND are effectively prepared for adulthood

- **Interim Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) Lead** appointed (January 2025), delivering training to schools and further education settings around transition and annual review meetings and processes.

Area 2: Robust overview in securing rapid improvement on EHC Plan quality

- **Annual Review Recovery Plan** implementation started in August 2024, and since that time the EHC have actioned casework for over 1000 outstanding annual reviews, ensuring that necessary EHCP updates were made for the phase transfer cohorts, ensuring that accurate and fully informed EHCPs will be in place for their transitions in September 2025.
- From 31 March 2025: focus will progress to the second phase of our improvement plan. Working with professionals and SENDCOs to improve the quality of advice from both professional assessments and annual review paperwork.
- **Multi-Agency EHCP Quality Assurance Group** met in the autumn term to audit a sample of EHC Plans in order to inform and identify improvements on EHC Plans, professional statutory assessment and review advice. There is parent carer representation on the membership, and there is a priority action being taken by the Lead Professional for Quality Assurance and Performance to ensure that the involvement of young people is also included.
- **Assessments:** currently have 251 live assessments. Since the start of January 2025, we have ensured Lead oversight to ensure we are clearing any assessments that have exceeded 20 weeks with an expectation that these don't exceed 29 weeks. Setting the foundation that new assessment requests are actioned efficiently within 20 weeks.

Preparation for Adulthood (1)

Carolyn Greenaway, Head of Disability Service/Sam Hanson, Service Manager Adults

Transitions – Children's and Adults Social Care

- Transition Pathway now in place between Children's and Adults Social Care
 - young people identified early to enable joint working
 - Care Act Assessment – visits at home and/or school
 - forward planning of support to avoid gaps
- Parent Carer Workshops
 - quarterly workshops with Adults and Children's Social Care and EHC Team
 - sharing information
 - listening and responding to parent/carers concerns



Preparation for Adulthood (2)

Jessica Core, Interim Preparation for Adulthood Lead

Preparation for Adulthood – Developments

Preparing for Adulthood from the Earliest Years

- Creation of Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) specific annual review paperwork for children & young people in Year 9 and above, to be rolled out Spring 2025. Greater focus on views and aspirations of the young person and their parents/carers.
- Development and delivery of training to Case Coordinators in relation to annual reviews, amending EHCPs and PfA. EHCP writing and amendment training has already been delivered, upskilling coordinators and improving the quality of our EHCP's.
- Annual review training to be delivered to SENCOs in March 2025 with a focus on PfA. Content will include key information SEN need from settings in order to write quality EHCPs, promoting independence and Preparation for Adulthood from the earliest years.
- Ongoing work with careers advisors, colleges and participation service to identify and support NEET cohort. Further collaboration with colleges to highlight at risk young people, working towards NEET prevention.
- Creation of robust procedure for Post 16 and Post 19 phase transfer which will facilitate smoother transitions for September 2026 cohort. EHCP amendments and placement finding is one of the team's key priorities for the September 2025 cohort as we near the 31st March deadline.

Better quality EHCPs

Preparation for Adulthood (3)

Preparation for Adulthood – Employability

- Almost 100% of careers interviews with Year 11s with EHCPs completed in the Autumn Term, remainder being arranged.
- Year 9 careers interviews now underway and on track for 100% completion by Summer.
- Barking and Dagenham College continues to grow its Supported Internship (Reach) and Pre-Supported Internship (Rise) Programmes. 12 LBBB young people on Reach (up from 10), and 9 on Rise.
- Project SEARCH Supported Internship Programme commenced at Queen's Hospital in September 2024. 7 LBBB young people on programme, some offered employment already.
- An additional 8 young people on Supported Internships through other providers (Shaw Trust, Talper and Newham College).

Gigi Kwong, SEND Co-production Lead

Celebration of our Co-production and Service Offer

NOTHING ABOUT YOU, WITHOUT YOU;

YOU SAID, WE DID.



Our 2024 Co-production Journey Highlights	Co-production Impact and 2025 Planning
★ Just Say Steering Group and LA SEND Monthly Meetings	At a service level, we continuously work together in enhancing our services to meet local community needs. [2025: ongoing collaboration 🤝]
★ <i>Pilot</i> : In-person Monthly SEND Drop-in at Barking, Dagenham, Marks Gate Family Hubs with Just Say and Targeted Early Help Team	Through collaboration with 3 local communities and locality-based partnership networks, we empowered SEND families with the information and advice they need. [2025: co-develop a better information service to support our SEND communities ⓘ]
★ <i>Pilot</i> : ‘Parents Evening with SEND Local Offer Network’ at Trinity and Riverside Bridge schools with Just Say	Our partnership with schools successfully connected many new families to the key SEND community services, resulting in many new member registrations and making the services known. [2025: reach out to Pathways and Mayesbrook Park schools 🔗]
★ SEND Local Offer Quarterly Newsletter co-produced with Just Say	We prioritise families voice and service updates through an entirely accessible online e-news format. [2025: ongoing co-creation 💡]
★ SEND Local Offer 1 st Happy Birthday (Statutory Annual Review) with Just Say	Our SEND Local Offer is now fully accessible, featuring an advanced translation function and a content read-aloud tool, and significantly enriching the information available for SEND PfA local offer. [2025 Local Offer Annual Review: Aug-Dec25 📅]

Some Highlights and Priorities for 2025

Jane Hargreaves, Commissioning Director Education

