



CHILD PARTICIPATION AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

“
MY SAY
MATTERS
”

GETTING
OUR
MESSAGE
OUT

**Barnet Family
Feedback
Report**

November 2024

Caring for people, our places and the planet



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The Young Experts said that adding artwork designed by young people to this report would make it more fun and creative. The photographs in this report (with a wavy border) were taken by two of the young experts aged 14 years old and 15 years old.



Introduction

This report reviews the areas of service development identified in the Family Feedback Report February 2024:

1. To embed the use of the co-produced practice tools.
2. To collaborate with Children and Young People to share feedback in creative ways.
3. Further embed the role of the young experts in co-producing and evaluating our service developments.
4. To offer participation activities to 12 children with child in need plans in the next 6 months.
5. Using the Roles and Responsibilities Index and children's co-produced summaries to strengthen partnership collaboration.

Our young experts have continued to take their role very seriously, evaluating our progress, sharing their ideas for what we can do differently, and what they think is important for us to focus on. We hope you can see how we have listened and acted on your contributions and feedback. Thank you so much for all your hard work, thinking and sharing of your ideas. We look forward to making services even better with your help!



1. You said: Embed The Use Of The Co-produced Practice Tools.

We did:

Our practice tools were co-produced with children to increase transparency and manage expectations, so that children are supported to understand who the professionals involved with supporting them and their family are, and what each professional does.

The Service Development Officer has attended team meetings and held five one-on-one sessions with social workers to tailor the Roles and Responsibilities Index for individual children.

The Index has been used by a Social Worker in the Intervention and Planning teams, as well as in each of the four Duty and Assessment teams. Practitioners have reported that the tool boosts their confidence in explaining professional responsibilities to children.

The CP animation remains a valuable practice tool, with Ofsted noting that 'Conference chairs and social workers engage well with children to explain to them the purpose of the meeting. They have access to co-produced, creative media tools to engage children, which allows children to successfully attend and have their views included in meetings'.

Our young experts say:

It's really good, that each team is using it, it's good the social workers have said that it's helpful too. They should definitely keep doing it. I like that one social worker from each team is doing it as well, but make sure this is being given to the young people who want it as some might not and that's OK.

Young Expert (aged 15 years)

To be honest it's really good, I think it's something they should keep doing and it seems to help both the young people and the social worker, It's important to know who's helping you even if you don't see them often and it's also important that the professionals feel confident in explaining too.

Young Expert (aged 12 years)

2. You said: Collaborate With Children And Young People To Share Feedback In Creative Ways.

We did:

We continue to collaborate with the Young Experts to gather feedback and think of ways to share it creatively. Young Experts support the continuation of the six-monthly family feedback update reports, believing they are beneficial for professionals. They think that images created by young people would be good to include in the report.

Our young experts have suggested creating a one-page digital poster on the Barnet website to update young people on key messages from the family feedback reports.



Our young experts say:

I like that we are able to share how we feel, and we can say what we think in the report. The pictures is a good idea, to make the reports more fun and creative.

Young Expert (aged 12 years)

A poster is a good idea for young people. Not too much writing, just key points. Having it on the Barnet website is good, it doesn't need to be printed.

Young Expert (aged 15 years)

3. You said: Further Embed The Role Of The Young Experts In Co-producing And Evaluating Our Service Developments.

We did:

We have continued to encourage young people to become young experts. We have worked in partnership with young experts to evaluate how well we are meeting the priorities set out in this report.

- Ofsted recognised how we work with young people to develop services, reporting: 'Co-production is a strength and is embedded, with numerous opportunities for children to present and engage with leaders so that experiences of care and of wider services inform decision-making... Leaders have a very strong focus on engaging children and ensuring that their voices influence the way services are delivered. This is evident across all services and strongly evident in further developing the corporate parenting offer'



Our young experts say:

Its really good you still ask us what we think of what you are doing. It's important you keep asking us.

Young Expert (aged 16 years)

It's good that the tools we helped create are now being used to help other young people. Makes me feel like we're in charge!

Young Expert (aged 14 years)

4. You said: Offer Participation Activities To 12 Children With Child In Need Plans In The Next 6 Months.

We did:

We offered participation activities to 12 children with child in need plans over the past six months. As a result, five children joined our Young Experts group, where they actively contributed to service development and participated in activities at Barnet Active Creative and Engaged (BACE).

Our young experts say:

I like that young people are asked if they want to be a young expert. Makes you feel like you matter. I don't think we need support going to activities. I think it's a nice idea but it's like a bit too much. They can just make sure we know what activities there are.

Young Expert (aged 11 years)



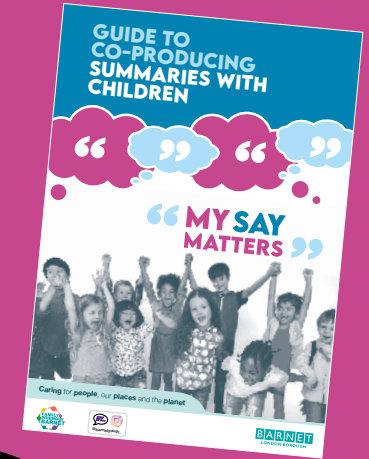
It's good that we have access to BACE and I think that in general we get support from BACE so I think that's enough support if you need it.

Young Expert (aged 12 years)

5. You said: Use The Roles And Responsibilities Index And Children's Co-produced Summaries To Strengthen Partnership Collaboration.

We did:

When the Roles and Responsibilities Index has been completed, practitioners are asking young people if they can be shared with the professional network. Practitioners are reporting that they are explaining to professional networks that young people do not like retelling their stories to different professionals. This message is also being included in multi-agency training sessions.



Our young experts say:

Professionals used to always repeat the same questions before, and it was annoying. It hardly happens now. I like that my Social Worker and me did the spider thing (Roles & Responsibilities Index) at the beginning and it made sense to me and other adults involved also have it.

Young Expert (aged 10 years)

I have noticed that I get asked the same question less often or if they do (ask) they explain why they are repeating the question so it's OK. My Social worker used the professional map with me, it was definitely useful.

Young Expert (aged 12 years)

My school is really careful, whenever someone comes to speak with me at school, they do it in a way to avoid the other students noticing they have supported me.

Young Expert (aged 14 years)

My school got better, I think there was a shift, they weren't bad but now they take extra care to make sure people don't know that I have a Social Worker

Young Expert (aged 16 years)

Service Area Updates – Participation days



The bi-annual participation days for children in care and children supported by a child protection plan were held in the October half term holidays. All the children who attended chose to become one of our young experts.

Conference review officers and Quality Assurance officers enjoyed a bowling activity with a family supported by a Child Protection Plan. These opportunities for children to build positive relationships with professionals continue to be valued, with the child saying “I prefer speaking to you (CRO and QAO) in this way, not you coming to my house and I like that I get to know the people who work with me”

Children in Care and their Independent Reviewing Officers showed their bravery and sense of adventure when they took part in a Go Ape activity. 13 young people aged 8-16 years attended the day, which provided an opportunity for trusted relationships between children and their IROs to be developed outside of their review meetings.

The young people who attended shared their views about the family feedback report, how information about Child in Care reviews should be shared with children, and how best children’s feedback following their reviews should be sought. We are really grateful for all the thinking and sharing of views on the day, and we will be continuing to work with the young experts to co-produce the information leaflets linked to QR codes that they requested.

Service Area Updates

Assessment, Intervention and Planning:

Feedback from parents who had been through the Public Law Outline (PLO) process was sought to consider their views about whether their pre-proceedings letters explained the worries about their family and what would happen next. We asked what they thought could be improved.

Parents reported that they found discussing the letters and process with a social worker was most helpful, and the importance of continuing with this practice was shared with social workers across Intervention, Assessment and Planning.

When Ofsted visited, they noted that:

Social workers take time to discuss the contents of pre-proceedings letters, which are carefully crafted, and parents confirmed that this helps them to understand concerns workers have about their care of children.

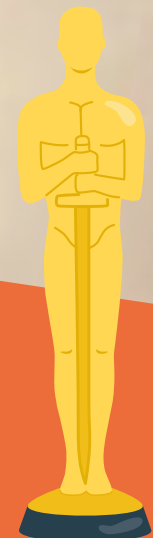


Service Area Update: Barnet On Point (BOP) - the Coram 'A National Voice' Awards.

BOP have been learning new skills during creative workshops and producing a series of three films with six members of BOP about their experience of being in care.

We are very proud that these films won second place at the Coram 'A National Voice' awards in October 2024. Five young people in care travelled to Manchester for the awards and enjoyed meeting other children in care from across the country.

BOP have ideas for future films, including one video for those new to the UK. We can't wait to see what they produce next!



Service Area Update: Strategy, Insight and Commissioning service

The Young Commissioners programme continues, with five Young Commissioners gaining valuable skills and making a real impact on service delivery.

- The five young commissioners:
 - Completed their AQA accreditation
 - Participated in interview panels to select service providers.
 - Created questions for competitive tenders, ensuring youth perspectives are at the heart of decision-making.

Our young experts say:

That's amazing, the fact they all completed AQA accreditation and real work experience. I think a lot of young people panic about work experience nowadays.

Young Expert (aged 16 years)



Service Area Updates: Youth Justice Service

- **Paintball Day at Watford Centre (5 July 2024):**

13 young people joined a day of paintball, designed to build trust and assess group dynamics ahead of the annual Residential Programme. The event encouraged sportsmanship and took young people outside their comfort zones to engage in positive activities.

- **Residential Programme:**

Seven young people completed this highly successful programme, gaining life skills like cooking, teamwork, and problem-solving. One participant has become a local youth mentor after successfully finishing their Youth Justice Order.

- **BMX Project – ‘On Track’
(30 May 2024 – 4 July 2024):**

Over 6 weeks, 11 young people took part in a BMX programme led by the Whyte Bros, learning racing mechanics while building resilience, teamwork, and self-confidence.

Our young experts say:

The fact we are making sure that young people are getting qualified in education even if they made a mistake is amazing. The BMX thing sounds really cool and to be honest it's something I would like to do too; It's a good skill to learn.

Young Expert (aged 16 years)

The paintballing sound fun, especially young people like us don't get the opportunity to do it with our families or friends because its expensive. Even that fact that one member became a local youth mentor is just WOW.

Young Expert (aged 15 years)



Service Area Updates: Barnet Integrated Clinical Services (BICS)

- BICS has worked with young people and partner organisations to co-produce a Low Mood and Self-Esteem workshop. This workshop addresses common misconceptions about mental health and provides practical tools for managing emotional wellbeing.
- Through collaboration with Young People Thrive, BICS ensured that wellbeing content is culturally sensitive and age-appropriate. Updates to the “Talk About It” webpage include simplified content titles and visuals designed to engage younger audiences (ages 5-11 years).
- BICS launched its first summer work experience programme, providing young people with hands-on professional experience. During Mental Health Week, a young person served as a judge for a poster competition led by the Mental Health Support Team.
- BICS participated in the Children in Care summer celebration, running a stall and engaging young people through interactive activities.



Service Area Updates: Early Help and BACE

BACE Holidays Activities:

Feedback from families highlighted the need for some more inclusive activities. As a result, new sessions created and tailored to children with disabilities were introduced during the summer holidays. Participation has increased by 15%, indicating a significant positive response to these additions.

BACE Activities:

Weekly programs have been expanded based on young people's input and by including new workshops like mental health awareness and digital skills. The number of attendees has grown by 10% due to the broader range of activities on offer.

Pop up Cinema



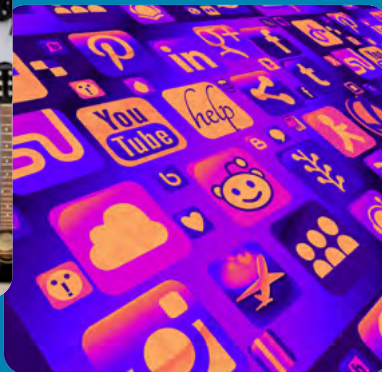
BACE POSITIVE ACTIVITIES+



Flip Out



Laser Quest



Young Expert Review

It's nice seeing all our feedback in one place where all our voices are being heard and how we're being listened to. There is almost this whole community your part of without know, and seeing this report shows you that.

Young Expert (aged 12 years)

To see how what we say is listened to is really good. Like you know so much of what we say changes things. This kind of makes me feel happy

Young Expert (aged 14 years)

It's interesting seeing how our voices change the way you work with us, I think sometimes we say stuff but don't expect it to be taken so seriously, I guess when I see this it highlights how much does change because of what we say.

Young Expert (aged 16 years)

I like the family feedback report, it's good to have something like that for workers so they can see what we are saying.

Young Expert (aged 16 years)

**The reports
great!!!**

Young Expert
(aged 13 years)

Feedback from Children and Young People

Children and young people are telling us that practitioners are reliable and caring:

“She cares about me she’s not like other workers who just say so, but you don’t believe them” I&P

“When she comes to do the visits, she shows up and she does what she says she’s going to do, she don’t make empty promises, then you know you can rely on her to come through” I&P

Children and young people continue to experience positive, trusted relationships with practitioners, and they feel heard:

“The great part about my care was that I felt safe to talk about whatever I was feeling without being judged. I really liked how comforting it felt. I want to say that the service I received was fantastic and for the first time in a long time I didn’t feel I was a burden because of how I felt.” BICS

“She helped me to stay focused and not be distracted, I asked if I could keep her as my SW because she talks to me on a level.” DATS

“I loved my therapist; she supported me so much and I felt very comfortable with her.” BICS

“She always want to hear what I think” DATS

Feedback from Children and Young People

The importance of professional transparency, children knowing what is going to happen next, who knows what about them and why it continues to be extremely important to young people. The use of tools (like the Roles and Responsibilities Index) can support practice and communication when professionals change. For example, the feedback below highlights a young person's experience.

“A spoke about feeling embarrassed with the involvement of social care and personal information being shared with the school. A said at the beginning, she needed to understand why things were happening the way they were, although she understood why social care was concerned. She felt it was not helpful having 3 social workers and being called from different numbers. She had notes put through her door when social workers tried to call her, but they might not have the right number” I&P



Feedback from Parents and carers

Parents and carers have told us that they have found practitioners to be helpful and professional:

“To have J involved is a breath of fresh air, she handles everything excellently. She has an excellent relationship with carer S and child D. She communicates openly and is a joy to work with.” CIC

“Your practice in relation to O has been absolutely fantastic. You have been extremely professional and gone above and beyond to obtain positive outcomes for O.” MASH

**“N, D and P have all been really helpful, I’ve been so lucky with the social workers I’ve had.”
Carer Assessment Team**

**“M is absolutely wonderful; child She has been attending weekly stay and play sessions and I’m seeing her become more confident and learning to engage.”
Early Help**



Feedback from Parents and carers

Feedback from parents and carers is that the support offered is enabling them to make positive changes to their parenting:

“This programme has helped me in more ways than I thought because as not only am I a better listener to my kids, I also feel like I’ve bonded a lot more. Am also able to cater for their emotional needs and without my usual self-guilt. I’ve been blessed by this Programme in helping to improve my mental health because I am normally always lonely, but I was given the space to express myself and feel I had a non-judgemental people around. Thank you ever so much for the wealth of knowledge I acquired here, which I’m very sure will be put to good use. Already made positive change with my kids and I know we’ll keep benefitting from this Programme for many years to come. Massive thank you guys.” EYPH

“This programme is life changing. Great tools and tips for my family. Useful and encouraging and inspiring to become a better mum.” EYPH

“Dad felt that the Social Worker had been amazing and he is very thank for the help. Dad felt that probation require that he attends weekly as a form of control and he does not learn anything from seeing probation. Dad however felt SW had spent time to teach him about how to treat women and children, about rules and regulations and he has learnt a lot and feels he has changed.” I&P

Feedback from Parents and carers

Parents and carers have experienced practitioners to be kind, supportive, and that their help makes a positive difference to their families:

“Let me express my gratitude for your helpful support of A. Without saying, A received additional and very useful care from your side in the most required period of time. Thanks for your human and kind attitude for my son (it will be a real good life-example for him).” CIC

The difficulties of working with multiple professionals remains a challenge for some parents:
and it is important that parents are supported to share these views with professionals who are arranging meetings with them.

‘I sometimes found it hard to keep track of all the meetings with different people’

“I just wanted to email you quickly to say thank you for all your hard work during your time supporting us. I know it was very stressful for you but you handled it well.

You made myself and the children feel heard, understood and supported and I can’t really put into words how much we all needed that during what has been such a difficult period. I have no doubt that you were very much a key factor in things being much more settled now and am hopeful that the courts continue to help us with that. I appreciate the clarity that I now have about how to move forward and your honesty in what needs to improve, as well as what is working. It is a journey for us and I appreciate the part that you played while you joined us on it.” I&P

Impact and Next Steps

Overall, feedback from children and their families highlights positive relationships with practitioners, and helpful support being provided. Our Young Experts have been curious to see how we are responding to their feedback and ideas and are looking forward to doing so again in six months.

This report highlights that progress has been made on the priorities identified previously and young people agree that these remain important and need more focus to embed their ideas.

Over the next 6 months we will continue to:

1 Embed the use of the co-produced practice tools

With the aim of each Social worker having used at least one of the practice tools with at least one young person

2 To collaborate with children and young people to share feedback in creative ways

With the aim of co-producing a poster with young people to set out the key messages from the family feedback report

3 Further embed the role of the young experts in co-producing and evaluating our service developments

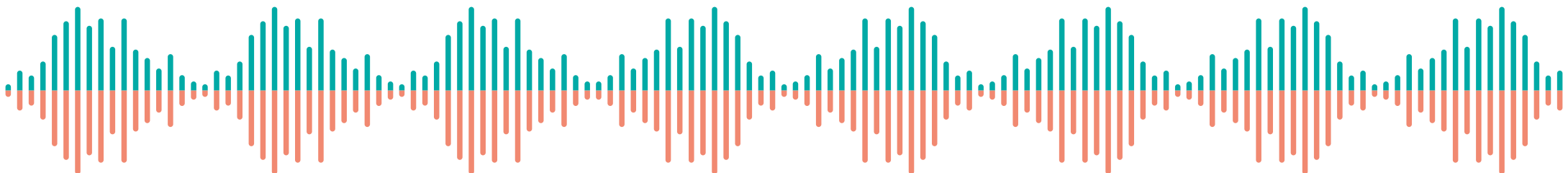
With the aim of continuing to support young people to become young experts so their voice is heard in future family feedback reports

4 To offer participation activities to 12 children with child in need plans in the next six months

With the aim of ensuring that children supported by different plans all have access to fun participation opportunities

5 To strengthen partnership collaboration by sharing family feedback and practice tools with the multiagency network

With the aim of fewer children experiencing the need to share their stories with different professionals



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