

Closer to Camden

Summary

Commissioning strategy for children with complex needs





Introduction

The aim of this strategy is to improve the outcomes for children and young people of all ages with complex needs. Our ambition is to do more to prevent children and young people from being placed out of Camden and keep as many as possible closer to their families and wider support networks.

Although we may always need to place some children and young people in residential schools, we know that there is more that we can do to support families earlier when issues arise and prevent the escalation of needs. We are committed to supporting families in a culturally appropriate way that meets their individual needs.

Transition to adult services and preparing for adulthood are key and enabling young people to live independently in Camden or locally if they and their parents/carers so wish is also crucial.

The strategy was developed using findings from the following work:

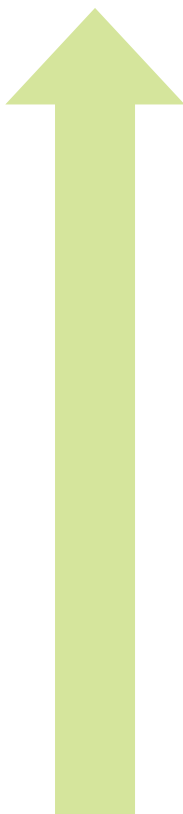
- A needs analysis by Camden Public Health and all partners
- An accommodation needs assessment carried out by the Children and Young People Disability Service (CYPDS)
- A deep dive case analysis of a small sample of children with complex needs
- An external review of Camden’s out of borough placements
- Feedback from quality assurance visits to residential schools
- Engagement with parents/carers and young people through the Camden Reactive Forum

How we engaged with parents/carers:


- Meetings with parents - research into a family’s experience of bringing up children with very high level, complex health needs and/or disabilities. Feedback from these meetings helped inform the development of the strategy.
- Engagement and co-production - working with parents/carers to help develop the short, medium and long term commissioning priorities, discussing some of the suggested options and opportunities (group meetings and one to ones).

What parents told us:

What is working well

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- Health services and the pathways of support through MOSAIC (Making Our Services All Integrated in Camden)
 - Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) when available
 - Respite is important for parents and siblings and parents welcome the short breaks service to give them time out and respite
 - Keyworker or lead professional support to help navigate through the complexity of agencies
 - Access to parent/carer networks and support groups
 - Positive feedback about our community paediatrics service

What could work better

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- Support needs recognised earlier and not have to fight to get the support
 - More support for behaviour that challenges, as children grow older and stronger
 - More provision of sports and activities for 12-18 year olds at weekends, after school and during school holidays
 - Availability of appropriate planned overnight respite
 - Better communication between education, social care and health
 - Early planning for transition
 - More locally based support based in the borough/local areas
 - Long waiting times for CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
 - Support for siblings

Delivering improvements commissioning priorities

STAYING AT HOME



More Breaks for Children and Families

What you told us

- Family Link was a good option however there were a lack of carers and parents said they had not been able to access the service.
- Parents/carers told us that having respite in a home setting would be an option they would like to explore further.
- Individual overnight stays with another family would build confidence in options like Shared Lives in the future.



What we plan to do:

Targeted recruitment for Family Link workers

What you told us

- The short breaks service gives parents/carers time out and respite is important to families and siblings.
- Would like to see more opportunities for children/young people over 12 to engage in play and physical activities.



What we plan to do:

Explore options for developing the range of activities accessible to 12 – 18 year olds in the borough

What you told us

- Parents/carers stressed the importance of respite for them as well as siblings. An overnight respite resource for young people with complex needs – created in the borough or surrounding local area would be helpful.
- Some parents aren't interested in overnight respite because they lack confidence in the ability of others to meet their child's needs.



What we plan to do:

Explore the development of a local residential overnight respite unit with neighbouring boroughs

Greater support for families, schools and others to manage challenging behaviour

What you told us

- The keyworker or lead professional support was identified as important for families.
- Helps with the coordination of appointments and navigation of the system.



What we plan to do:

Expand key worker provision

What you told us

- Families told us that interventions involving Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) were very helpful for the young person and family.
- Families want a better understanding of what professionals are doing and how to replicate effective behaviour management strategies at home.
- Support and access for families to CAMHS and Positive Behaviour Support – acting earlier before situations break down.



What we plan to do:

More consistent offer of PBS

Building Care Around the Family's Strengths

What you told us

- Family Group Conferences are a good idea, but some families do not have family members in the UK. Those who are available are often reluctant to help when challenging behaviour is involved.
- Family Group Conferences should be available more widely, not just during a crisis - that would reduce stigma.
- Described how Family Group Conference had helped to find common ground on care arrangements.



What we plan to do:

Extend the use of Family Group Conferences to more families of children with complex needs

What you told us

- Parents/carers noted the huge difference the social care direct payments system had on improving the planning of their lives giving them the flexibility to find carers.
- Parents/carers were concerned about the consistency of carers and finding the right carer for the family.



What we plan to do:

More choice and control over the health care and support young people and families receive through the use of personal budgets or personal health budgets

Living and learning provision that is closer to home

What you told us

- Concerns around integration in mainstream schools -that children not fully supported if they have learning disabilities, are autistic and display behaviours of concern.
- Teachers in mainstream schools need to be adequately trained to support children with complex needs.



What we plan to do:
Meeting the needs of more children and young people with complex needs in Camden mainstream schools and ensuring every child can have their needs met in their local community through a number of ways including:

- providing funding to mainstream schools to make settings more inclusive
- additional staff training

What you told us

- It would be beneficial to have local shared living and individual flats based on each young person's needs and shared social space to help young people to socialise.
- There should be opportunities for supported housing, employment, independent living and staying local to be near friends and family.



What we plan to do:
Explore the feasibility of the Council's housing allocation scheme being made available to younger adults with complex needs

Develop accommodation for people with complex needs in line with the accommodation strategy for adults with learning disability

What you told us

- Camden should have residential schools and Colleges for children with complex needs.
- No child should be refused because the school staff are unable to accommodate their needs – for example with behaviours of concern.



What we plan to do:
Explore the feasibility of developing a specialist residential unit with or without education across other North Central London (NCL) boroughs

What you told us

- Early planning for transition and worries about what would happen to their child in the longer-term when they aren't around to look after them or unable to do so.
- Worries about transition to adult services - not adequately communicated or planned for earlier.



What we plan to do:
Ensure all Annual Reviews in Schools Year 9, Year 11 and Year 14 focus on Preparing for Adulthood pathways

What you told us

- Shared Lives could be a good opportunity following on from a full or part time foster placement.
- The availability of the service should be made aware to parents via the social worker at an early stage and should be part of the transition conversations.
- Early conversations are important – especially as parents need to prepare for their young people moving on.



What we plan to do:
Raise awareness of Shared Lives

Our additional priorities

We will also continue to work to make improvements in the areas below. We will be building on the existing systems that we have and improving them across the Council using good practice to inform our work.

Placement making

- Clearer focus on what placements should achieve for the young person
- Explore ways to negotiate with providers so that we get the most out of the placement for our young people with complex needs
- Greater engagement with out of borough residential schools

Placement management

- Closer multi-agency monitoring of placement outcomes for the young person
- Earlier collaboration by agencies to ensure that placements are maintained
- Improve forecasting and modelling of demand for services in the future

FORWARD PLAN / NEXT STEPS

- All the priorities that have been identified in this strategy have been agreed by Camden Council and the North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group (now called the Integrated Care Board).
- Some priorities are already in progress and are able to be implemented in the short-medium term. Others are larger-scale ambitions that will involve extensive work to explore and develop over longer timeframes.
- There will be further opportunities for coproduction work with parents/ carers as we continue to develop our commissioning priorities.

