

Decision Maker: **PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES**

Date: For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee on 20 June 2023

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: **EARLY INTERVENTION AND FAMILY SUPPORT ANNUAL UPDATE**

Contact Officer: Rachel Dunley, Head of Service Early Intervention and Family Support Services (CSC)
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Chief Officer: Richard Baldwin, Director; Children Education and Families

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the work of Early Intervention and Family Support and the services provided to families.
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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 The Children Education and Families PDS Committee is invited to note the content of the report.
- 2.2 The Children Education and Families Portfolio Holder is recommended to endorse the annual update.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: Positive
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People Excellent Council Safe Bromley Healthy Bromley Regeneration:
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: N/A
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable: within existing Budget
 3. Budget head/performance centre: N/A
 4. Total current budget for this head: £ N/A
 5. Source of funding: N/A
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: N/A
 2. Call-in: Applicable; Portfolio Holder decision.
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: N/A
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): N/A
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 Early Intervention and Family Support Services sits within Children's Social Care. The umbrella of EIFS encompasses both statutory and non-statutory services, as well as being the lead for Bromley's Supporting Families (previously known as 'Tackling Troubled Families') work. Consequently, during the period of this report, EIFS comprised of the different services / programmes as listed below.
- Children and Family Centres
 - Bromley Children Project Family Support and Parenting Practitioner Team (FSPP Team)
 - Parenting offer
 - The 'CAF' Team (Common Assessment Framework)
 - Children's Contact Centres
 - Information Advice and Support Service (IASS)
 - Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategic Lead Officer
 - Reducing Parental Conflict Programme
 - Social Communications (ASC) Family Support Coordinator for the Borough
- 3.2 During 2022/23 the Domestic Violence and Abuse work transfer back to Public Protection and Enforcement, its natural home.
- 3.3 During 2022/23 Bromley's Children's Social Care created a new Children and Family Hub ('Front Door'). Under Phase 1 of this process the CAF Practitioners transferred to support the introduction of the new Front Door and will remain within the Children and Family Hub.
- 3.4 This paper will provide a snapshot of examples of the work undertaken in the past 12 months (01 April 2022 to 31 March 2023). All data reported will be for this timeframe unless otherwise stated in the report.
- 3.5 In our Children and Family Centres, due to the impact of COVID on commissioning of activities, the usual broad offer of support was narrower than pre-COVID. The full commissioning cycle was reintroduced in 2022 and the broader range of services will commence in April 2023.
- 3.6 The safety of our staff and our residents has remained paramount despite COVID being reclassified as endemic. Safety remains centre stage and we continue to promote robust measures in line with guidance from colleagues in Public Health. These measures have allowed the service to keep the doors open to the public since June 2020, providing services and support to residents, as well as developing other ways to provide support such as on-line.
- 3.7 It is also important to acknowledge that although this paper focuses on the work of the EIFS, early help services across the Borough also include a number of other teams and partners. The contribution to early help support from organisations such as Bromley Y and our Youth Services play an important role in ensuring that all our young people are able to access a full range of services. EIFS works closely with these other services and partners to ensure a seamless service and that where young people need to move between services, that this happens as easily as possible.
- 3.8 **Children and Family Centres**
- 3.8.1 We had been restricted to offering 'by appointment only' health appointments for health Visiting, Midwifery, and some mental health services such as the perinatal team, including during the National Lockdown (tier 5 = 'T5') periods. Health partners have been invited to resume 'drop-in' sessions; when partners are ready we will support them.

- 3.8.2 Learn and Play sessions have run throughout the year, returned to drop-in as soon as we were allowed to safely do so, and have been led by our staff. We are seeing increasing numbers of participants, and during this reporting period 14,924 session places were filled. Feedback has been very positive.
- 3.8.3 We have continued to be an issuer for Healthy Start Vitamins, despite this now being rolled out to supermarkets and available directly on-line to families, and during this year have issued forty-seven.
- 3.8.4 Our Swap-Shop offer continues and following the lifting of restrictions, donations are now being accepted. Local business have also sent donations of new items and pre-loved cleaned items e.g., a local dry cleaner donated uncollected clothes, and a children's boutique has donated school uniforms and other children's clothes. There have been in excess of 115 request for support via the Swap-Shop this year.
- 3.8.5 We retained our Foodbank Voucher status and continue to support the Foodbanks however during the pandemic many other teams in Bromley and other partner agencies started to undertake this role too and we saw a dramatic reduction in the number of families approaching the Children and Family Centres for Foodbank support.
- 3.8.6 During the year we continued to work with local charities, e.g., Bromley Brighter Beginnings, Bromley Children and Families Voluntary Sector Forum, to help distribute food hampers, gifts for children and families, school uniforms, books, e.g., over 90 hampers were collected and taken to families in the week before Christmas. Families were hugely grateful for the gifts and the generosity of Bromley's residents and businesses.
- 3.8.7 Our work with the Gypsy Romany and Traveller (GRT) community has continued, with the focus on developing a strong understanding of the individual and collective needs of our local GRT communities and how we can use our local knowledge creatively to develop services to meet identified needs. One challenge is that the GRT community do not choose to identify as GRT when reporting to authority. We are working with the community to change this. We are building data reporting to capture GRT statistics using addresses, but this will not capture those families living beyond own known sites.
- 3.8.8 The Practice Assurance Stocktake in June 2021 stated: "*Impressive work was seen with the Traveller community, which showed sensitivity, and a developing understanding of their culture and how to work with the community to link them into services*". Work by the service has led to the introduction of a 'Traveller Awareness' training module being added to the Evolve training system for staff across the entire Council to access.
- 3.8.9 Our site visits to the Star Lane site continued throughout the year, and we extended this to include the Old Maidstone Road site. This year our focus will be to extend this to include the sites in the west of the borough. We believe this consistent and proactive approach to engage families from this community has resulted in more of the families choosing to declare their Gypsy, Romany, and Traveller heritage.
- 3.8.10 The Children and Family Centres are recognised as the first port of call for families seeking support in relation to information, advice and signposting for service focused on children with Autism / ASD and other social communication challenges. The Social Communication Needs Family Support Coordinator (previously known as Autistic Spectrum Conditions ASC Coordinator) embedded within EIFS has been positively received by families and professionals. During this year in excess of 300 enquiries have been received and actioned.

- 3.8.11 Work with our colleagues in the SEN Advisory Team continues, and targeted play sessions for children with SEN including Social Communication difficulties continue to run from the Children and Family Centres.
- 3.8.12 Our Social Media presence has grown from strength to strength. We have used our social media platforms to re-post information, advice and guidance from Public Health, specific support services such as Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid for DVA support, and increased our video /play activity library. In addition to this, we used these platforms to promote and demonstrate the local authority's commitment to all our residents e.g., during October, Black History Month, we posted daily in Facebook and Instagram information on unsung historical and current day achievers to educate and inspire, and in March, likewise for International Women's Day. We have promoted engagement events and Bromley's public consultations, for example the future of the Council's two in-house nurseries;
- we have in excess of 2,689 Facebook followers (an increase of 1,000 in the last 12 months), and in excess of 2,175 Instagram followers (an increase of over 1,000 in the last 12 months).
 - we have published in excess of 800 posts on Facebook and 917 in Instagram (over 600 in this reporting period).
 - our YouTube Channel now has 31 videos, with 2,346 views of these.
- 3.8.13 During this period, we have supported colleagues from a range of services both within the council and partner agencies to return to face-to-face service delivery in the community through Children and Family Centres. Some of those we have worked with are:
- CSC Children Looked After Team; activities including NEET including holiday and out of hours sessions into the evening
 - CSC Children with Disabilities Team
 - Partners delivering activities for children with ASD
 - Hidden Harm Worker; by appointment only – appointments with young people
 - CSC Safeguarding Teams; undertaking Parenting Capacity Assessments
 - CSC ASYE Group; a safe space for weekly group Supervision sessions
 - CSC Social workers and our own staff; a safe space for face-to-face meetings with families whilst enabling eyes-on the children; and
 - Public Health: providing sites for pop-up and planned children's vaccination drives for COVID, MMR, Flu, BCG, and Polio.
 - Birth Registrations
- 3.8.14 Our Children and Family Centre Support Officers continue to offer targeted 'Light Touch' support for families who need help as a lower level of need. Their 'Assessment' tool is now embedded and is providing better identification of issues at an earlier point in time for the family and families' feedback remains positive.
- 3.8.15 Some examples of the feedback from parents being supported via Light Touch caseloads held by the Children and Family Centre Support Officer (CFCSO) or just accessing the Children and Family Centres for activities:

"I just wanted to thank you and the amazing team at the Children and Family Centre for all their support during this time. Without you guys I'm not sure I would be here right now. Between classes, phone calls and meetings I have felt so supported and made some incredible friends. Thank you for everything you have done"

"I visited the Children and Family Centre for the first time today with my 4-month old for music and movement and it was fantastic. Lovely staff and all were extremely welcoming and made us feel so comfortable – thank you"

“During my support with the Children and Family Centre Officer, I am pleased to say she was a saint. She will community with me at least every week, she was encouraging. She went out of her way and beyond to give me the support I needed. She was nurturing. Some days she will just call to check in and have a chat and this was so helpful during a time where I was going through a lot. She help me with my mental health always gave me the best advice and till this day I know I can always go to her and she will receive me with open arms. She is a very compassionate person and a great asset to the community. I don’t know where I would be right now if she didn’t come into our family lives when I needed the help. She gives you the feel that she is one of the family almost like the aunt that you can always come to and she can support you and give you the tools you need to get on and be better. My little girl love seeing her whenever we go to the Center to attend activities or just to simply visit. It’s reassuring that we have such a caring member in the community. And her team give of the same sense of feel that when we attend the Center it just feels like a second home.”

- 3.8.16 Our data for 2019/20 was on track to reach our highest-ever recorded levels however due to COVID, we were closed for the last two weeks of March 2020 which impacted on our registrations and footfall (visits). Data shows that 2020/21 was an exceptional year due to COVID, but more importantly, data for 2022/23 shows families returning to the centres to access the services they need, in their communities.
- 3.8.17 Registration data – this data shows new registrations only. Once you register, you are registered for life or until you ask us to remove your records. If someone has another child, that child needs to be registered but the existing registered family members do not. Therefore, each added registration is a unique person. Data shows in 2019/20 there were in excess of 9,650 new registrations across the six Children and Family Centres, but due to COVID this dropped to just 1,819 in 2020/21. Data shows this has dramatically increased during 2021/22 to 5,340 whilst remaining within COVID safety measures and have now increased during 2022/23 to in excess of 8,735 new registrations.
- 3.8.18 Footfall data – this data shows visits to the Children and Family Centres. One person visiting 10 times is 10 visits = 10 footfall by 1 unique service user, whereas 10 people each visiting once is 10 visits = 10 footfalls but by 10 unique service users. Data shows in 2019/20 there were in excess of 98,000 visits across the six Children and Family Centres by over 24,500 service users. Due to COVID this dropped to just 6,668 visits by 3,355 unique service users in 2020/21. Data shows this has dramatically increased during 2021/22 to 28,280 visits by 11,404 unique service users as we have flexed our capacity whilst remaining within COVID safety measures and has now increased during 2022/23 to in excess of 52,055 visits by 16,088 unique service users. This is clearly shows that families appreciate and want to access services locally.
- 3.8.19 We have undertaken a considerable Capital Works programme which has included two streams: outside play spaces and internal works. Outside play spaces were completed last year, whilst the internal works have progress this year. The internal works programme focuses on two sites: Blenheim Children and Family Centre and Cotmandene Children and Family Centre. The works in Blenheim are to bring the site in line with the council’s duty under the Equality Act to ensure the site is accessible. The works in Cotmandene are to extend the current very small site into the empty and derelict shop next door. Contractors were appointed, works commenced in May 2022, and, with snagging aside, completion is anticipated for summer 2023. The works have made the sites accessible and functional. Existing service users who use a wheelchair were involved in the process of testing accessibility.

3.9 **Family Support and Parenting Practitioner Team**

- 3.9.1 Family Support services have continued to support families just below the threshold for statutory interventions. This work is shaped by the Supporting Families agenda (nee Trouble Families). Practitioners are required to work with the entire family, to complete a holistic family assessment, to identify challenges and areas of need, working to a plan and goals, to ‘turn the family around’.
- 3.9.2 Data shows that we received our highest ever number of referrals for support for our Family Support and Parenting Practitioner Team in 2019/20 at 977. Despite COVID this extremely high rate of referrals for support was mirrored in 2020/21 with 971 referrals, and likewise in 2021/22 with 949 referrals. In 2022/23, Bromley asked agencies to hold referrals for a five week period to support the launch of the new front door ‘Children and Families Hub’ when referrals were then able to be passed through the new hub. During the period 2022/23, 909 referrals were received and data shows that comparing the period April to January to previous years, we received our highest ever number of referrals for targeted family support.
- 3.9.3 Data shows that the highest number of referrals into the service are from Children’s Social Care. Normally we would expect Schools to be the second highest source of referrals but in 2020/21 Schools’ referrals drop which was to be expected with the challenges faced by schools during the height of the pandemic. In 2021/22 the normal pattern of referrals returned with Schools being the second highest source. This trend continued through 2022/23.
- 3.9.4 We actively seek feedback from families both during and after the support has ended. The families continue to be very open and share with us their feedback on the support they have received.
- 3.9.5 This is some of the feedback received in the last 12 months from parents supported by Family Support and Parenting Practitioners in the post-closure evaluation telephone calls:

“...the support has made a massive difference to me and the children, I do not know what I would have done without you and the Bromley Children Project”

“I couldn’t have asked for anything more, brilliant service and I’m so very grateful to have had it!”

“I just wanted to drop you a line to say thank you for the amazing support you have offered to us and our family. When you first met us, we were in a desperate situation, completely confused and worn out battling to find support for our son. Your professional guidance and support has been second to none and helped us I our darkest times. You handle difficult situations with forthright determination and skilful diplomacy...I felt I had a trusted, knowledgeable advocate I could rely on for honest counsel and support at all times”

“A few years ago my family had the support of a Bromley Children Project worker, ...(she) was very helpful, and really helped myself and my son... he is now 16yo and doing really well. Thank you!”

- 3.9.6 The work of the Family Support and Parenting Practitioner Team is the core work used for the Supporting Families Grant (previously known as Tackling Troubled Families Grant). The measures are pre-determined by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and the grant is ‘payment by results’. Outcomes are measured over a period of time to evidence sustained change, making this a robust and challenging grant to achieve. Internal Audit are required to verify all claims to ensure that the outcomes claimed for are appropriate and evidenced.
- 3.9.7 Throughout the entire Supporting Families Grant programme, Bromley has achieved all the targets set by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, in respect of both ‘attaching’ families and ‘turning families around’. This has continued, and we have achieved all

targets for 2022/23. This has resulted in Bromley being able to draw down the full grant allocation for the year 2022/23.

- 3.9.8 We track the number of families we support, and the number of times those families come back to us for more support. Our tracking runs from 01 April 2012 to the current day. This provides us with data over the past 11 years and demonstrates the effectiveness of the work we are doing with families. This data shows we have worked with in excess of 4,800 families and supported in excess of 6,545 cycles of support. Of these 6,545 cycles of support our impact has been very positive with over 92% of families receiving no more than 2 cycles - in fact, 75% (3,587) families have only received one cycle of support in the 10 years we have been tracking.
- 3.9.9 In addition to this, our embedded Employment Advisors, who are loaned to us full time by the Department for Work and Pensions from the Job Centre Plus Team in Bromley have continued to work alongside the team and support the families with employment and skills opportunities as well as benefit checks to ensure that the local authority is not having to provide for where there is existing funding available via central Government.

3.10 Parenting Offer

- 3.10.1 During COVID our normal level of classroom delivery of parenting courses was not possible due to the restrictions however as restrictions lessened, we reintroduced classroom delivery. Permission to return to pre-COVID delivery model which took place in September 2022. This has impact on the number of parents able to attend a classroom-based parenting course.
- 3.10.2 To better support the wider parenting population, we developed and introduced an interim solution, a Parenting Hotline. The hotline is operational Monday to Friday 9am to 4.30pm, with answerphone for calls outside this window. The service is being used and we have taken the decision to keep this option for parents to access ad-hoc advice and support as it has proved to be a better use of staff time than hosting a weekly 'drop-in' at each Children and Family Centre, and it extends the service for our residents from a weekly drop-in to a daily accessible helpline.
- 3.10.3 We continue to deliver 18 different online parenting standalone seminars covering a number of topics; Boundaries, Relationships, Communications, New to Parenting ('NAP'), ASC bedtime, ASC anxiety, Parenting Styles. We are demand led and run the courses request by parents in each locality in line with our needs-led approach.
- 3.10.4 We continue to deliver 2 virtual 'short-course' options, which require a little more commitment from a parent as they span 4 and 5 weeks, for some of our most popular parenting programmes such as the New Forest Parenting Programme ('NFPP') for parents of children with /likely to have ADHD, and New at Parenting ('NAP') for new parents.
- 3.10.5 In the period of October 2020 and until 31 March 2022, we ran 151 online parenting seminars and short courses, which equated to 261 online sessions of virtual parenting. During 2022/23, we reduced the number of online seminars to create capacity for face-to-face and virtual courses. We ran 88 online parenting seminars, 7 online NFPP short courses (3 of which were in the evening), and 3 online NAP short courses. Despite the reduction in the number of online seminars, attendees for seminars increased; there were 731 online seminar attendees compared to 561 online seminar attendees last year.
- 3.10.6 During 2022/23 in addition to the 10 online parenting courses delivered, we ran a further 33 face-to-face parenting courses out of the Children and Family Centres, including 2 on a Saturday, and covering 8 different courses. Courses vary in length from 4 weeks to 13 weeks. Data shows that the 33 face-to-face courses had 370 attendees and 10 online courses had

210 attendees, totalling 580 parenting course attendees compared to 327 parenting course attendees last year.

3.10.7 Due to the success of this mixed delivery model, online sessions, we have already committed to deliver in quarter 1 of 2023/24; 20 online seminars including 2 evening seminars targeting parents of teenagers, 3 online short courses and 14 face-to-face courses including 1 at the weekend.

3.10.8 We have trained all our new staff in our core programmes, and they will commence their delivery of these during the coming term, with the ambition for all to achieve formal accreditation by the relevant overseeing / licensing bodies in the coming 12 months.

3.10.9 This is some of the feedback received in the last 12 months from parents attending parenting courses with Bromley Children Project at the Children and Family Centres:

“The course has taught me to be calmer and to recognise how my children are feeling even if they are not directly showing it”

“It has made me think about things from my child’s point of view and realise that a lot of the negative behaviours are not his fault. I definitely feel more positive to use the techniques I’ve learnt”

“I feel motivated and empowered to do things differently and I enjoy spending time with my children more now”

3.11 **CAF Team (Common Assessment Framework)**

3.11.1 During this year, and up until 31 January 2023, the CAF Team continued to offer their full range of services including contributing to the MASH team and supporting Lead Professionals whether in-house, school-based or from other partners agencies. We have altered the model to ensure EIFS is represented in MASH throughout the week which enables participation in the morning MASH partners’ meeting.

3.11.2 As might be expected, the number of CAF logged with the CAF Team dipped in the height of the pandemic from 591 in 2019/20 to 487 in 2020/21. We saw a resurgence in 2021/22 with 540 CAF being logged, and during 2022-23, 505 CAFs were logged. As at 31 March 2023 there were 573 live CAFs for children and young people across Bromley.

3.11.3 In pre-COVID times, the predominate author of CAF were education settings, which is to be expected as CAF are early help assessments and completed by the professionals, often at universal level, working with children and young people. As a borough we have over 100 schools and therefore this is the pattern we would expect to see, followed by Bromley Children Project’s Family Support and Parenting Practitioners and step-downs from statutory social care. However, during the height of the pandemic, when schools were having to adjust to the huge challenges of keeping children and staff safe, whilst still providing an education, this balance swapped. During 2021/22 we saw this pattern start to revert and in 2022/23 educational settings were the main authors of CAF, followed by Early Intervention and Family Support and then Children’s Social Care.

3.12 **Family Contact Centres now known as Children’s Contact Centres**

3.12.1 Recruitment of staff during the past year has continued to be a challenge. The ambition remains to enhance the service provided to our children by extending the operating hours,

improving the premises, and identifying quiet times where there is the opportunity to sell unused space and officer time to generate income to offset the cost of providing this statutory service. We are in the process of recruiting to the additional posts and vacancies and are currently offering a 6-day week service with the ambition to offer a 7-day week service once fully staffed.

- 3.12.2 During 2021/22, without formally promoting the 'sold' element we generated £3,200 income to off-set against the service's running costs. During the past year, 2022/23, we increased this income generation to in excess of £17,500, again without formally promoting the 'sold' element, described in 3.11.1, due to staff shortages.

3.13 Information Advice and Support Service

- 3.13.1 Business as usual has continued and the IASS team have continued to support families in their meetings with professionals and at SENDIST Tribunals. This has been both virtually and in person. Our team of five Independent Volunteer Supports have also continued to give up their time, energy, and expertise to support our families.
- 3.13.2 The team have a public-facing website www.bromleyiass.org.uk which has been live for 2 years and is recognised as a beacon of best practice by the Council for Disabled Children, and the National Information Advice and Support Services Network. Work continues to develop the website further, as our residents and professionals have told us how valuable and useful it has been.
- 3.13.3 We receive a lot of feedback from parents and carers

"I hope everyone had a good weekend. I just wanted to say 'Thank you' to the IVS who came to my meeting with 'H' School on Friday. She was extremely helpful and got the school to listen to her when they wouldn't listen to me. I'm hoping that the meeting helped shift the school's stance enough, but if it hasn't then it's good to know that IASS is there to help. Thank you again. The links you sent me were also very helpful and I even referenced some of them in the meeting."

"Your support and help is very much appreciated, Thank you, you've put a smile on my face 😊"

3.14 Domestic Abuse

- 3.14.1 During this year, the responsibility for Domestic Abuse returned to Public Protection and Enforcement. EIFS Service is proud of the milestone pieces of work achieved as detailed in last year's annual report, which have developed this key strand of work over the past 5 years but is also reassured that this has now returned to the correct Directorate.
- 3.14.2 Domestic Abuse remains prevalent in cases supported by EIFS and statutory Children's Social Care, and interventions are needed to support children impacted by it. Consequently, in EIFS we continue to devote time and staffing to the delivery of 'CODA' Children Overcoming Domestic Abuse. This is a course of 10 child focused support sessions for children who have witnessed DA against their primary female carer. It is an evidence based licenced programme overseen by the charitable organisation 'AVA' (Against Violence and Abuse).
- 3.14.3 EIFS has been delivering the CODA programme for over 6 years. Schools work in partnership to enable the children to attend these sessions, whilst their mothers attend a parallel session.
- 3.14.4 Parents have told us that this programme is making a real difference to their lives and the lives of their children. Here are some examples of the type of feedback received from those attending the courses which ran during 2022/23 (children in these cohorts were aged 7-12).

Feedback to the question 'How has it (this course) made you feel differently from when you started?'

Children after completing the course

"that I am not responsible"

"I now feel so confident when I get abused or anything I know what I can do"

"it's made me happier"

Parent after completing the course

"I learnt a lot for myself and my children, the tools I have now should allow us to stay strong and together"

"Lots of personal reflection which has been hard but worth it, ... I now have a 'new' support system!"

3.15 Reducing Parental Conflict Programme

- 3.15.1 We have received funding from the Department for Work and Pension to raise awareness about the concept of Reducing Parental Conflict 'RPC'. Our goal is to intervene earlier, to help people identify that their relationship is not healthy, that the conflict they expose one another to, could develop into domestic abuse, can harm their own mental wellbeing, and impact the long-term wellbeing of their children. The end of the road does not have to be a domestic abuse relationship, and conversely, domestic abuse happens without going through a 'safe enough' parental conflict stage.
- 3.15.2 We are currently in year 3 of this funding. To date we have developed a training programme for professionals to better understand the sign and symptoms, enlisted 'champions', developed a Forum for discussion and learning, developed and produced a toolkit and strategies for those who work with families to help the families alter their pathway which is given to colleagues and partners who complete the Awareness Raising Training, and most recently developed a short 3-week course to deliver the Reducing Parental Conflict message in an accessible format directly to parents through the Children and Family Centres existing parenting support offer, being piloted in April 2023.
- 3.15.3 We have complimented this with a website www.bromleyparentinghub.info which is free to access for families and professionals, sharing the tools and strategies, and encouraging families to look at their own lives and challenge themselves to change – with support.

3.16 Social Communications (ASC) Family Support Coordinator for the Borough

- 3.16.1 This role was developed as part of Bromley's All Age Autism strategy and also reflects the growth in requests for support from families with a child who has social communication challenges. The post funded through the SEND Department in Education but hosted with EIFS and located in the Children and Family Centres. The role supports not only families, but professionals too through the provision of advice, guidance, and challenge, as well as being the gateways to specialist support from MENCAP. We have worked collaboratively to ensure the Children and Family Centres are centres of excellence for Autism and Social Communication.
- 3.16.2 During 2022/23, demand has exceeded expectations with the number of families who have reached out to this service exceeding 300 and it continues to grow.
- 3.16.3 We have provided access for parents via on-line coffee morning which have recently transitioned to in person at the Children and Family Centres. The response has been good, and feedback supports this.

3.16.4 Some of the feedback received this year
“Face to face meetings really helped as I met other parents”

“I have a better understanding of SEND and the provision in Bromley”

“Speaking to her has been mentally beneficial”

“She answered my questions about how to move forward and also gave me information about services I had not even considered”

3.17 General developments

3.17.1 As a service we recognise the importance of our staff without whom we would not have managed to deliver the services detailed in this paper. We have seen staff achieve promotions within and beyond the Service, some have stepped out for a period to have babies or to be seconded to support other teams, and several have retired after long service with Bromley. We have welcomed a number of new staff into the Team during the past year who have already become valuable team members.

3.17.2 In November 2022 the Service was nominated for the prestigious national Children and Young People now Awards for Early Intervention. Whilst we did not win on the night, the service was shortlisted as one of the Finalists for this category. The staff are able to add this recognition to their signatures for 12 months.



3.17.3 Recognising the need to keep our staff, the face of Bromley, relevant and supported, we have continued with our Whole Service Training days and returned to Face to Face events in April 2023. Over 100 of the team successfully participated both Training Days in April and October 2022. We ran multiple sessions which included self-care for staff as well as practice workshops by working with partners across the council and other key partner agencies who supported this by delivering sessions in addition to our in-house led sessions; some examples being Gambling Awareness, SEND, Working with Fathers.

3.17.4 We have continued to deliver general awareness raising information sessions to support colleagues and partners to understand the EIFS offer of support for families in the shape of our EIFS Info Sessions, and sessions targeting Education, Health and Pre-school/Nursery settings (EEE, HEE, and PEE respectively). The ambition is to ensure all families who need support know where to access this, and those professionals working with them are sighted on the offer too and can signpost when families are unaware. The aim being to get the right support to the family at the earliest opportunity, local to where they live, in order to promote any necessary change in their lives to improve the children's and parents' lived experience and outcomes. These sessions are monthly on-line and bookable via Eventbrite. We have delivered eight sessions, but with mixed attendance, with 65 people attending.

3.17.5 The Single Point of Contact 'SPOC' model developed during COVID for our colleagues in Children's Social Care, schools across Bromley's educational landscape, and partner agencies such as Change Grow Live, Bromley and Croydon Women's Aid, Probation

Services, continues to offer support to colleagues in the moment. This model continues to promote communication, bespoke training, improved referrals, and better case management.

- 3.17.6 Multi-Agency Partnership Events ‘MAPE’ which focused on the front door to family support, called “Safeguarding is Everyone’s Responsibility’ were introduced in 2016. These are delivered in partnership by two Team Managers from Early Intervention and Family Support, and the Group Manager for the Children and Families Hub. The sessions have been fully booked, running virtually rather than face to face, and 6 times a year but paused in Spring 2023 when the new front door model was introduced to prevent confusion during the roll out of Phase1 of the Children and Families Hub.

| MAPE sessions scheduled for 2022/23 | | | |
|--|---|-----------|----------|
| Date | HOST Agency | Booked | Attended |
| 28/01/2022 | Early Intervention and Family Support Svs | 30 | 30 |
| 15/03/2022 | Early Intervention and Family Support Svs | 30 | 30 |
| 26/04/2022 | Youth Justice Service | 29 | 40 |
| 15/07/2022 | SEND | Cancelled | |
| 27/09/2022 | Early Intervention and Family Support Svs | 30 | 20 |
| 22/11/2022 | Youth Justice Service | Cancelled | |

- 3.17.7 During 2022/23 four sessions were delivered by EIFS and 80 people completed the training.

- 3.17.8 Working with Children’s Strategy and Performance Team, EIFS supported the development of a corporate Early Help Strategy. This was approved in the November 2022 PDS Schedule (CEF 22066) and is being launched April 2023.

3.18 Update on our ambitions for 2022/23

- 3.18.1 Last year we set challenges for the Service to focus on. We have progressed these, an update is provided below.

3.18.2 Children and Family Centres

- a) *Streamlining our front facing processes to make it quicker and easier for service users and reduces the time spent on administration, e.g., online registration portal, online activity bookings.*

- This has taken longer to implement due to technical challenges. This will now go-live in summer 2023.

- b) *Expanding our outreach to the Gypsy Romany and Traveller Communities in Bromley to encompass the sites across the south of the borough.*

- This has been successful and expanded further than planned. The team are now attending not only Star Lane but have extended this to include Old Maidstone Road and from April 2023, the Layhams Road site too.

3.18.3 Family Support and Parenting Practitioner

- a) *Developing the existing assessment tool to include the Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) and Contextualised Safeguarding models.*

- The Assessment Tool has been updated, piloted, and rolled out to include not only RPC and Contextualised Safeguarding, but also reference to Adverse Childhood Experiences too.
- b) *Working with our embedded Job Centre Plus Employment Advisors and other partners such as Clarion's Love London Working team, to ensure we are providing the best possible advice and support e.g., checking benefits and providing more employment opportunities and training.*
- This has developed further and the partnership working with JCP colleagues and Clarion has resulted in regular drop-ins for parents about Childcare Support and activities to support the cost-of-living crisis such as cooking on a budget.

3.18.4 Parenting offer

- a) *Developing additional parenting courses to meet the needs of Bromley's residents and utilising the virtual reality training tools to enhance the experience and learning of participants.*
- Parenting seminars have been developed to meet the needs expressed by parents for example, the 3-week Reducing Parental Conflict course for parents.
- b) *Continuing with the mixed delivery approach to provide all parents and carers with the opportunity to access parenting courses and seminars.*
- The service has continued to run services in virtual settings, in the classroom, during the day, in the evening and some Saturdays too, as well as out of all six Children and Family Centres and the Central Library.
 - The service has supported colleagues in Youth Justice Service to be trained and to deliver target parenting to their parental cohort, again, in evening sessions.

3.18.5 CAF

- a) *Undertake a review of the CAF service.*
- The CAF service delivery model changed during 2022/23 and in Autumn 2022 adopted a 'triage' model to support the waiting list for those families awaiting support from Family Support and Parenting Practitioners.
 - In Spring 2023 a new front door was implemented, and the Children and Families Hub (C&FH) was launched on the 6th March 2023. This resulted in the CAF Practitioners posts moving into the C&FH, allowing a better first response within the front door, with the Early Intervention social workers embedded.
 - The ambition for the new Front Door is for all Tier 2 requests and referrals for support from both Council and Partner led services to come via the C&FH. The roll out of the C&FH is planned as a multi-phased project; Phase 1 of this project started with the referral route for this Early Intervention and Family Support Service. With effect from 6 March 2023, requests and referrals for Bromley Children Project's Tier 2 services, Family Support and Parenting Practitioner support and Light Touch support, moved into the C&FH.
- b) *Explore options to increase the online offer e.g., automated CAF registers, development of E-Learning guidance.*
- This is no longer relevant.

3.18.6 Children's Contact Centres

- a) *To further develop the 'sold' element of this service to other local authorities and private users when not being used by our own families, to increase the income generation which can be used to offset running costs.*
 - We have struggled to recruit to the vacancies but despite this, we have generated in excess of £17,500 income this year.
- b) *To review the capital needs for the Orpington site and progress the redevelopment of our premises in order become Equality Act 2010 compliant for both staff and service users.*
 - Work has been completed, but due to the corporate Property Review undertaken in 2021/23, work on the capital renovation of Saxon stalled. Alternative options have been explored and a decision about the best proposed option is anticipated in May 2023, once decisions regarding 'Bromley's on the Move' are finalised.

3.18.7 Information Advice and Support Service

- a) *Further develop the range of material available to service users on our website in a range of different media formats.*
 - Work to review the website content has been undertaken, and the website refreshed, updated and a workplan for the coming year finalised.
- b) *Undertake a focused recruitment exercise to increase the number of Independent Volunteer Supporters (IVS) in the Team.*
 - Work has commenced but to date we have not increased our team of IVS.

3.18.8 Domestic Abuse

- a) *Complete the procurement exercise for DA victim survivor services for 2022/23, and as part of this exercise review the existing provision and whether this meets the needs within the borough.*
 - No longer relevant as this work has moved to Public Protection and Enforcement.
- b) *To develop the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference panel, MARAC, to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets the challenges outlined in the SafeLives Improvement Action Plan.*
 - No longer relevant as this work has moved to Public Protection and Enforcement.

3.18.9 Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC)

- a) *Recognising the importance and value of the RPC agenda, and the focus on communication, we will embed the learning for parents and carers in to all our existing parenting delivery.*

- This has been completed.
- b) *Using the funding for the coming 3 years, we will be increasing the strategic awareness and requesting buy-in to the RPC ethos across all departments within the council, partner agencies and professionals working with families.*
- The RPC Coordinator joined the team in Spring 2023 and this work is now moving forward.

3.18.10 General

- a) *Following on from the work undertaken to support the Ukrainian Hub, we will look at ways to develop tools and resources in formats which are easier to translate using universally available tools*
- Work to exploit the universally available tools has started. Our websites have this functionality embedded within them and we have requested that all images are replaced by text to enable translation.
- b) *We are reviewing the data we collect, collate and present to reflect the changes in service delivery models, such as online delivery.*
- This is evidenced in the delivery of services to families across EIFS, and the decision to maintain some of the changes introduced in response to COVID, where parents have told us that they found the changes helpful, an example being working parents who liked short online parenting seminars they could access in their lunch break.
- c) *We will be using electronic tools to enhance and improve our outreach and capture of the voice of our service users, parents, carers, and children as well as other professionals.*
- The team have developed tools, outreach, and engagement options utilising technology, one example is the use of Flipbooks for parents and professionals to help bring services to their fingertips on their electronic devices.
 - Please see **Appendix 1** for some examples of these tools
- d) *We will be presenting a separate paper on the Early Help Strategy following the May 2022 elections.*
- This was completed, paper CEF 22066.

3.19 Future Focus

3.19.1 The services continue to look for opportunities to enhance service delivery, despite capacity challenges. The following highlights just one of our focused pieces of work for each of the service areas within EIFS for the coming year.

3.19.2 Children and Family Centres:

We will be introducing on-line registration and booking options for the Children and Family Centres with the ambition of improving access, streamlining administration functions, and improving data capture quality.

- 3.19.3 Family Support and Parenting Practitioner:
We will be focusing on developing the ways we capture and record families' journeys, looking at embedding relevant nationally recognised measurement tools to evidence sustained change to validate the Supporting Families grant draw-down.
- 3.19.4 Parenting Offer:
We will be reviewing all the existing programmes, refreshing the content to reflect the latest research and any new findings as approved by the licensors of each individual programme.
- 3.19.5 Children's Contact Centres:
Our focus this year will be to achieve our National Association of Child Contact Centres 'NACCC' Accreditation.
- 3.19.6 Information Advice and Support Service:
We will continue to focus efforts on two key streams, firstly our development of digital alternative communication options such as video for our children and young people, and secondly recruitment of Independent Volunteer Supporters.
- 3.19.7 Reducing Parental Conflict:
Our focus will be on the development of additional tools to support both professionals and families which will provide information, guidance, and signposting to the tools available. This is to raise the profile and support conversations to lead to positive change.
- 3.19.8 Social Communications (ASC) Family Support Coordinator for the Borough:
Developing streamlined referral pathway to make the process easier for parents with an online portal and calendar booking system.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 4.1 Our most vulnerable families and their children have continued to be supported by EIFS services throughout the past 12 months.
- 4.2 There is always more that we can do, and the wider EIFS will continue to look for and exploit available opportunities to expand the reach and range of support that can be offered. EIFS have continued with the 'needs-led' approach, driven by what our families are telling us they need to ensure our resources are best placed and not wasted.
- 4.3 This PDF is a extract of our compliments log for 2022/23. It is not exhaustive. It does not repeat quotes included in this paper (above). It is included in Appendix 2 to this paper but can be viewed more easily by double-clicking the PDF link too.



EIFS
Compliments.pdf
Double click on image above to see full-size

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 All of the work outlined in this paper has been achieved within the existing budget and staffing allocations, or through successful bids such as Capital Bid for the development of some of our

sites and grant bids to external funders e.g., DWP for the Reducing Parental Conflict programme.

5.2 There is has been no additional cost to the local authority.







6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 All of the work outlined in this paper has been achieved within the existing establishment.

| | |
|---|---|
| Non-Applicable Sections: | POLICY IMPLICATIONS LEGAL IMPLICATIONS PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS |
| Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer) | NONE |

The Early Intervention and Family Support e-Flip Books 2023

| | | |
|---|--|---|
|  | <p>Parenting Course Handbook for professionals https://heyzine.com/flip-book/35bbe0b576.html</p> |  |
|  | <p>Parenting Course Handbook for parents/ carers https://heyzine.com/flip-book/e46ab40f21.html</p> |  |
|  | <p>Handy Guide to 1-1 Family Support for parents/ carers https://heyzine.com/flip-book/0981266253.html</p> |  |
|  | <p>The FSPP Assessment Guidance Booklet https://heyzine.com/flip-book/6229c354d3.html</p> |  |
|  | <p>A Social Worker's Guide to Parenting Plus https://heyzine.com/flip-book/ff4c8a0ae2.html</p> |  |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
|  | <p>Your Guide to Reducing Parental Conflict https://heyzine.com/flip-book/84c1d63830.html</p> |  |
|  | <p>*Final stages* CFC Programmed activities/ services booklet 2023 https://heyzine.com/flip-book/8c99317efc.html</p> |  |
|  | <p>EIFS Tour eNewsletter: https://express.adobe.com/page/LKMvuJnwkRDJe/</p> |  |
|  | <p>*New* RPC Newsletter https://heyzine.com/flip-book/2aa4f8f88e.html</p> |  |



***New* CCC Information Leaflet**
<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/6b1d55fadb.html>



***New* EFS Safety Awareness Newsletter**
<https://heyzine.com/flip-book/89ee7254ce.html>



FEEDBACK

(A selection of many)

(FSPP) YOU'RE AMAZING + I DON'T WANNA CLOSE THE CASE BUT I UNDERSTAND WHY.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HELP YOU WAS NEVER SEEN AS HELP FOR US YOU WAS + ARE OUR FRIEND! THANK YOU - C

(Handwritten note in yellow circle)

(CFC) HELLO DONNA, HELLO TRACY,

IT IS UNFORTUNATELY TIME TO SAY GOODBYE FROM US. WE WILL MOVING TO WELLINGTON NZ THIS THURSDAY. ME, MY HUSBAND AND THE LITTLE "C" WE WANT TO THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR GREAT SUPPORT DURING THIS 18 MONTHS OF COLIN'S LIFE. IT WAS A VERY DIFFICULT TIME FOR US AND FOR MANY FAMILIES DURING THE COVID PERIOD, HOWEVER WE HAD ALWAYS A HARD HELP FOR YOUR SPECIAL CENTRE!!

THANK YOU VERY MUCH AND WE NEVER FORGET YOU

"You know when you don't believe in no one, hope is only 3%, the world shuts you down, then the angels... you see a haze, this person just wants to help you, didn't judge you, thank you for providing support for mums like me, to make us feel important, to know there is help."

(FSPP)..because of your involvement, we are in a significantly better place this year than when you were working for us. I feel like I have my James back. You knew exactly where to send me & told me specifics that I should do to improve our situation & it worked. Your expertise & experience had a huge impact on us - C

Dear Cat, (ASC)

I just wanted to thank you and Kieran (and all the lovely team at the ticket office) for giving "E" and his family the chance to enjoy the theatre. He really liked the play and lit up when we told him we'd take him to the theatre. Thank you for giving children with SEND like mine the opportunity to enjoy the theatre and for enriching their lives. A big thank you from "E" and his family!

Parenting Hotline call: "Angela (FSPP) was amazing. She hit all the buttons. I really needed to speak to someone like her. She is an angel. Thank you so much, Angela."

(JASSC)

I wanted to say a huge huge thank you for sending me your detailed school list and wanted to let you know that it has been a humongous help. I have been to visit several schools and I am still currently looking at a few others but without your list I would have been a lost soul. Your support and help is very much appreciated, Thank you.

BILL HELPED PARENT WITH INFO. MUM HAD FSPP IN PAST!

DEAR BILL, THAT'S FANTASTIC, THANK YOU SO MUCH. IT MEANS THE WORLD TO US. BCP IS TRULY THE BEST SERVICE THERE IS! KINDEST REGARDS, P

I have been to the Carlisle Centre a few times now. It's a great place and the staff are so friendly. Love you the group that I have been to and she is lovely. My baby was used the sensory room. A wonderful free resource that is right on the doorstep!

(Handwritten note in black circle)

I just wanted to let you know that I booked a women's gathering and for partner had read and support from Stephen at Carlisle and he was really pleased with the way Stephen had acted like.

(Handwritten note in black circle)

I just wanted to let you know on the kind of help I've needed. The family wanted me to let you know.

(Handwritten note in black circle)

From a personal perspective I also feel Stephen really helped and was amazing when I was running my clinic. He is always really kind and welcoming to my women. (From Rita B)

(JASS) "Thank you so much for your time today. You don't know the difference you have made! Definitely mark me down as your act of kindness for the day! Many thanks."

(Handwritten note in black circle)

(Mum) said that Amy (FSPP) did a brilliant job, she went "above and beyond" to help Jodie's family. Jodie said "big up" from me, because Amy was brilliant. Jodie said she was "pilled" that the support had to end.

(Handwritten note in black circle)

Thanks to completely helping our little to overcome our issues and her ability to work with us and come to end the...
 I just wanted to say how wonderful you have been, kind, caring and perceptive and very caring. She has helped enormously and I just wanted to let her message know how grateful we have been.
 A real asset to BCP.
 kind regards

(ASC webinar)

Thank you! Please send my best wishes to Bernice - she's been so lovely on the webinar! M

Thank you for being so kind, helpful and everything you have done for me and my little one...

(NEW FOREST COURSE) IT HAS BEEN A BRILLIANT COURSE. ABSOLUTELY INVALUABLE AND SUCH PRACTICAL ADVICE AND STRATEGIES. PLEASE PASS ON MY THANKS.

Dear Kay, I hope you have a good Christmas. Thankyou for helping me out for visiting in on me. Being told that I was obsessive was such a really hard lesson. Although that I was just dumb and it's given me confidence in doing academic things without you I don't think I would've found out. Thankyou -Gisele