





Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs

Pathfinder Application Form

This completed application form must be sent to SEND.contracts@education.gsi.gov.uk by Midday, 15 August 2011

I – Applicant details

<p>Name(s) of local authority/ authorities</p> <p>London Borough of Bromley</p> <p>London Borough of Bexley</p>	<p>Signature of Chief Executive(s) LA(s)</p> <p>Chief Executive (Bromley)</p>  <p>Acting Chief Executive (Bexley)</p>
	<p>Signature of Director(s) of Children's Services</p>  <p>Director of Children and Young People Services (Bromley)</p>  <p>Director of Education and Social Care (Bexley)</p>
<p>Name(s) of PCT(s)</p>	<p>Signature Chief Executive Officer(s) of PCT Cluster (s)</p>  <p>Simon Robbins Chief Executive NHS South East London</p>

II – Background Information Bromley	
<p>Number of children and young people</p> <p>There is a total resident population 0-19 of 74959 this is taken from the ONS mid year estimate figure for 2010.</p>	<p>1966 number of children and young people with Statements of SEN 2.6% of population.</p>
<p>% and number of Looked After Children</p> <p>There were 266 children in Bromley at the end of March 2011. This pertains to 0.4% of the population.</p>	<p>137 (51.5%) of children who were looked after by Bromley in 2010/11 were placed out of borough.</p>
<p>% and number of Looked After Children placed in your area</p> <p>129 (48.5%) of Bromley Looked after Children are placed within the Borough. Unfortunately we do not have the number of Looked after Children who are placed within the borough by other authorities as we often do not receive notification from the authorities concerned.</p>	<p>% and number of Children in Need</p> <p>The number of children in need recorded during 2010/11 was 2642. 3.5% of population.</p>
<p>Number of Tribunal cases and % successful</p> <p>49 tribunals registered 2 (4%) were won by parents.</p>	<p>% SEN statements completed in 26 weeks</p> <p>64.1% of SEN statements (excluding exceptions) were completed within 26 weeks in 2010/11. If exceptions are included the figure for 2010/11 is 56.8%</p>
<p>Please state whether this pathfinder is an NHS early implementer health and Well Being Board</p> <p>YES</p>	<p>Please state whether any partner in this pathfinder is already engaged in:</p> <p>a) piloting personal health budgets NO</p> <p>b) Piloting DfE Individual Budgets NO</p>
<p>Socio-economic commentary for SEN Pathfinder application</p> <p>Bromley is geographically the largest of the 32 London Boroughs. There is a population is over 300,000 people, of which around 71,000 (~24%) are under the age of 19.</p> <p>Ranked 228 of 354 in the least deprived authorities with stark variations Penge and Cator ward ranks in 10% of wards with high child poverty, five other Bromley wards contain areas ranked among the 20% most deprived in England.</p> <p>About 22% of children in school are from BME whereas 90% of whole population is white British</p> <p>Attainment in Bromley schools is generally high. The LA average is in line or above the national average across all phases of the national curriculum.</p>	
<p>Background Information Bexley</p> <p>Number of children and young people – 2011 mid year estimate (GLA) Age 0 – 19: 53,500</p> <p>% and number of children and young people with Statements of SEN – 1356 (2.5% of population)</p> <p>% and number of Looked After Children – 213 (0.4% of population)</p> <p>% and number of Looked After Children placed out of area – 96 (0.2% of Looked After Children)</p> <p>% and number of Looked After Children placed in your area – 345 (0.6% of Looked After Children)</p> <p>% and number of Children in Need – 1882 (3.5% of population)</p>	

Number of Tribunal cases and % successful – **97 cases, 57% successful**

% SEN statements completed in 26 weeks – **without exceptions – 100%, with exceptions – 61%**

Please state whether your pathfinder is an NHS early implementer of networks of Health and Wellbeing Boards **YES**

Please state whether any partner in this pathfinder is already engaged in:

 piloting personal health budgets NO

 piloting DfE Individual Budgets NO

There are approximately 53,500 children or young people aged 0-19 years living in Bexley.

Around 27% of Bexley's primary school pupils, and 26% of secondary school pupils are from BME backgrounds and approximately 14% of primary and 9% of secondary pupils speak English as an additional language.

There are at least 447 moderately, severely or profoundly disabled children or young people in Bexley and 1250 under 16 years received DLA. Around 20% are from BME backgrounds and around 40% of the total number of disabled children have Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

71% of Bexley residents of working age were in employment in 2010.

III – Basic Information

This application is based on the procedures currently used by Bromley but Bexley will be very involved in the testing. Bexley will lead on the Personal Budgets and Bromley will be involved in this testing. This arrangement has been discussed and agreed at a senior level in both Boroughs.

Whilst we have tried to keep the bid succinct where word limits have exceeded the stated amount this was agreed with SEND contracts as it is a joint bid. The first section concentrates on what we have done and the second focuses on what we will do if successful.

Partnership arrangements:

Bromley is a nationally recognised authority for effective partnership work across all agencies involved with Children with SEN & Disability, evidenced by achieving a number of prestigious national awards for Early Support including the National Children & Young People's Awards for "integrated working" and being presented as models of best practice in national case study exemplars. Early Support in Bromley has protocols with over 180 multi agency professionals and is currently being rolled out to school age children. Bromley and Bexley LA already have integrated services with social care for disabled children. Other partnerships will include:

- Special and mainstream schools,
- Pre school providers
- Health services
- Voluntary Sector
- Adult Services
- London Borough of Bexley

Front line working arrangements are co-ordinated through the Specialist Support and Disability Service and Strategic Developments through the Disability strategy Group which includes all partners and reports to the Children's Trust.

The Early Support Partnership in Bexley is well placed to take forward a single assessment.

Work with a range of front line services:

In the Bromley structure, the Specialist Support and Disability Service (SSDP), including and integrated Social Care and Short Break Service, co-ordinates frontline services including Bromley health Care and the VCS.

Bexley has strong partnership arrangements across Children's Services, health services, voluntary sector and a joint Adult and Children's Service thus improving frontline co-ordination of transition.

Plans and current working practice include mainstream schools, schools with specialist units, special schools, local colleges and Bromley unique position in having 170 plus pre-school private and voluntary sector pre-school settings offering targeted support for children with SEN and Disability.

Bromley Joint Disability Plan (April 2011-2013) for delivering frontline services includes jointly agreed co-ordinated targets and outcomes covering the full range of front line services.

Work between Bromley/Bexley front line services is progressing through jointly commissioned SEN transport service, plans for joint working with Sensory Support Services and at senior management level we are working on other cross Borough initiatives to maximise service delivery.

Role of VCS sector:

There is strong partnership and engagement in the strategic decision making, planning and actual joint delivery of services within both Bexley and Bromley Voluntary Sector Organisations. At a strategic level the voluntary sector takes a very active role in the Disability Strategy Group where they are represented at Chief Executive level.

At a service delivery level Bromley and Bexley commission a large number of voluntary sector organisations to deliver a range of provision and support including parent training for families and young people and holiday schemes. All are carefully monitored to achieve outcomes.

The Parent Voice co-ordinates Bromley involvement with parents across these organisations and has helped us to develop robust mechanisms for consultation with parents. A termly meeting is held with the chairman which enables issues from the VCS to be discussed at an early stage.

We will involve the VCS from both boroughs at all stages in our plans.

Engagement of parents:

Both Bexley and Bromley have strong models of active engagement of parents in decision making at all levels. Bromley Parent Voice role is to inform decision-makers about the experiences of parents of disabled children and to ensure their views are fed into decisions about services. A Bromley Parent Participation Officer has been appointed to facilitate further engagement and parents have been supported to attend the National Loughborough University "Partners in Policy Making" course. Parental confidence and engagement has been increased through the Assessment & Communication Team. Some of the key decision making groups are chaired by parents, e.g. Bromley Parent Partnership Service.

Bexley has a Parent Carer Forum, which has reduced conflict and improved relationships between the local authority and parents. Trained parent/carers now represent the forum in both strategic and operational planning meetings and are invited to take a very active part in consultations and decision making.

We will involve Bromley and Bexley parents at all stages in our plans.

Engagement of children and young people:

The Disabled Young Advisors Group were actively involved in the decision-making process in developing the Aiming High for Disabled Children core offer. Bromley were one of the few local authorities who were congratulated by "Together for Disabled Children" on reaching the Core offer

ahead of time.

In partnership with Bromley & Bexley Advocacy we have developed strong active involvement with disabled children and young people. The Advocacy group have provided a robust evaluation of the new holiday and short break provision for example a new facility will provide a regular venue for older disabled teenagers to meet and enjoy short break time together during weekends and holiday periods in an area of the borough that has few facilities. CYP were also involved in developing our new SEN transport policy and this now has more opportunities for independent travel.

We will involve children and young people throughout the testing of our plans.

Capacity to test and innovate:

Bromley has already clearly demonstrated capacity to manage a complex pathfinder with ambitious plans to lead change where there are no "well worn paths". Bromley was one of the first nine Pathfinder sites for Early Support building integrated teams within the Borough now involving over 180 multi-agency professionals. We articulated and translated this vision of "joined-up" working to senior officers in education, health, social care, members and Head Teachers/schools in Bromley and 42 other local authorities translating the national "Together from the Start" guidance into frontline effective national award winning practice required strong strategic thinking, the ability to test resources and to innovate. We have also been a pilot site for development of the new CLDD curriculum and have presented our findings at the national dissemination conferences.

Bexley has already begun work on personal budgets and has taken part in a number of initiatives as an early adopter notably Aiming High.

We will use pathfinder funds to ensure that appropriate officers can have capacity to develop the EHSC plans.

Project plans

We will:

- work with all agencies in Bromley and Bexley to select appropriate children and families to pilot the new approach and to undertake personal budgets;
- develop Bromley's current assessment formats into a common flexible format focussing on outcomes and test with Bexley;
- use the Early Support Multi Agency Meeting and protocols to develop a team around the child and key worker approach at key transition points. The approach will be tested with Bexley families;
- use Bromley's SSDP Panel to develop a single point of access to resources and test the transferability of the model with Bexley;
- Bexley will develop personal budgets and test how these can be applied in Bromley;
- develop a multi agency commissioning forum (including GP consortia) to ensure that sufficient resources are commissioned to fulfil plans and provide a local offer;
- engage Parent Voice to trial a mediation model based on Bromley's ACT;
- develop and test other new areas as required.

Evidence base

In testing our new system we will ensure that we:

- involve education, social care, health, VCS and adult services in Bromley and Bexley at all stages in the testing;
- successfully engage parents and children through current and developing mechanisms so that they are involved in service design as well as their own provision;
- involve all front line services across all age groups especially at key transition points;
- further engage the voluntary sector in both mediation and design and delivery of services;
- maintain and mature partnership working across agencies;
- involve colleagues in finance, legal and personnel services at an early stage to ensure that our plans are robust and cost effective;
- cost our plans at each stage so that we can ensure their sustainability;
- use pathfinder funds to provide capacity for the co-ordination and development of the project and not the provision of resources.

IV – Core testing areas (see section x)

Impact on Children and Young People of All Ages:

We will test key areas for proposed to achieve reform by rolling out Bromley's highly successful Early Support Service processes to all age ranges but testing will concentrate on key transition points.

We will develop a single flexible outcome based assessment process building on the model Bromley has already developed to provide for medical needs without recourse to a statement, our successful assessment processes for short breaks under Aiming High for Disabled Children and the work we have done to improve 139a assessments using the Moving On assessment framework. We will also work with the successful national tender for "Early Support and Key Working" to achieve and test this model.

We will select children to be involved in the project to ensure that we are able to test the model across all age ranges and we will concentrate on where we could have greatest impact at transition points into pre school, school, between education phases and moving on to further education, adult services and employment. Ensure that children and families are selected using transparent criteria and include a variety of needs and circumstances as well as age ranges.

We will work with some young people attending residential independent specialist colleges to be part of the testing with a view to increasing their capacity for supported living and or employment in the future using EHSC plans.

We will build on Bromley and Bexley's strong working relationships with Adult Social Care and the VCS to test the plans at transition into adulthood and ensure impact with this age group.

Work with the VCS to test the plans as CYP move into their supported employment schemes.

A key challenge will be the different ages at which statutory duties change in education, health and adult services but as both Bromley and Bexley have (or will have) departmental structures incorporating both adults and children's services we will be well placed to overcome this.

A further key challenge will be to ensure that appropriate people are available to provide key workers for young people as well as their parents at transition to FE and adulthood.

Person Centred Planning:

A person centred planning approach will be key to the development of the EHSC plans which we will test.

We will build on the successful multi agency family conference approach which we have maintained from the Early Support pathfinder and provide key workers for each family where the child has complex needs to take the plan forward at all ages concentrating on key transition points.

We will use Bromley and Bexley's effective mechanisms, developed for the Aiming High for Disabled Children Core offer, to test a person centred planning approach using Direct Payments and Personal Budgets for service provision.

We will test Bexley's personalised budget approach ensuring that it is also effectively monitored and that we are able to link personal planning with effective service development.

We will use Bromley's multi agency conference approach to form a team around the child and family and we will work with the Parent Voice, our voluntary sector lead partner, to act as moderators to ensure that families and children feel that the conferences were designed to put the child at the centre of the plan. We will use some of the pathfinder funds to ensure that they have the capacity to do this work.

We will build on Bromley's use of the voluntary sector in Adult Services to train young people and parents in person centred planning. Bromley already has 160 people trained and 80 facilitators to test EHSC plans for 18-25.

The key challenge will be to ensure that Bromley's SSDP panel is then able to offer sufficient resources to implement the plan and we must manage the expectations of parents carefully. Personalised budgets will enable children and families to direct their own service delivery within an agreed budget envelope.

We will test who are the appropriate lead professionals to take the plan forward and whether there should be a lead professional as well as a key worker to support the family.

A further challenge will be to ensure that we have effective mechanisms for translating the resources allocated through person centred planning into future commissioning intentions rather than developing services on a piecemeal basis.

Links between Planning and Assessment:

We will build on the assessment models that Bromley has developed to supplement the statementing process and ensure that we have effective links between agencies to join up individual assessments with person centred planning and strategic planning and commissioning specifically:

We will use Bromley's multi agency bases at the Phoenix and Hawes Down Centres to join up key professionals in assessing and planning for children together with their families.

We will use our build on Bromley assessment arrangements with Bromley Health Care (a social enterprise) to provide safe and effective plans for the most complex children. These plans will be flexible so that the level of support can be decreased as a child's condition improves. Bromley has had some success in this area and so we will work with Bexley to trial our plans with Bexley children and schools.

We will review assessments at Bromley's Specialist Support and Disability Panel (SSDP) (which has been developed from the Early support Model) where appropriate resources will then be allocated to the plan. We feel that this model can be successfully rolled out for the health element of the EHSC plans as we already have a joint service with health and social care the working arrangements are embedded and make us well placed to develop these plans and provide a local offer. A challenge will be to maintain the links between planning and assessment in a changing health landscape and the school academies agenda. This is addressed further in a later section.

Bromley's SSDP has become our single access point for additional services and considers the social care needs of children and families especially where there is a danger of a placement breaking down because of a family crisis. After receiving the social workers assessment a multi agency plan is then put into place and a key worker appointed. We feel that this model can be rolled out to meet the needs of families before we arrive at crisis point and we will test this arrangement and model its transfer with Bexley.

We will ensure that Bromley's robust 139a assessment process for transfer to FE considers the wider needs of the young person so that as well as Individual learning Plans required by the YPLA they can have EHSC plans for their future.

Increasing Transparency:

We will build on the learning from the transparent process developed through Aiming High for the allocation of short breaks in both Bexley and Bromley.

We will ensure that all parents are aware of the resources available which can be included in the EHSC plans and will use the voluntary sector through Parent Voice in Bromley and the Parents Forum in Bexley to test that parents understand the resources and the criteria for access.

We will test the use of personalised budgets for children and parents to determine the resource that best suits their individualised needs.

We will test the use of the very well used web site developed by Bromley Parent Voice as a tool for receiving regular comments from parents about the introduction of the new plans and for collating comments about resource developments that parents would wish to see. Bromley has successfully reviewed its SEN transport policy (in conjunction with Bexley) to make the allocation more transparent and used the website and Parent Voice to ensure that this was communicated appropriately to parents.

Three key booklets have been produced to provide information on multi-agency services, support, specialist provision and resources available locally and nationally to parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities. This ensures that timely information reaches parents, supporting them to reach informed decisions about support and provision available to meet the needs of their child. The books are as follows: Early Support Guide for Parents and Carers & Families of babies and young children from Birth to 5 years; Resource Guide to Services and Support for Parents/Carers and Families of Children and Young People with additional needs or disabilities and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities: A Guide to Specialist Support and Provision for Children and Young People. We have recently developed a guide to transition to adulthood for parents and young people which is increasing transparency in this area.

A key challenge will be to develop a similar level of transparency in the allocation of health resources especially during the changes in the health economy. We will use the Health and Well Being Board to help increase transparency in the new commissioning relationships.

A further challenge will be achieving transparency in the use of resources in mainstream schools. Bromley has a robust system of auditing provision made in special schools and resources provision and we will look to developing this to cover mainstream provision where a child has an EHSC plan. We will test the audit with Bexley Schools.

Key professionals:

The bid has the full support of Bromley and Bexley Directors of Children's Services and PCT cluster. Bromley's Member/Officer Working Group for SEND is also fully supportive of the proposal.

We will ensure that we have the support of key professionals in developing EHSC plans and the development of personalised budgets from the start by involving them in planning, design, implementation and review.

We will ensure that we utilise fully the joined-up line management in Bromley where the Disabled Children's Social Work Team and SEN Teams have already been brought together into a single Special Educational Needs and Disability Service along with the Educational Psychologists, Inclusion Support and SEN Operations including Transport.

We will continue to use the mechanism of a Joint Disability Service which was formed over three years ago in Bromley with colleagues from the PCT and Bromley Health Care. A key challenge will be to continue this relationship in the new health economy with GP consortia and to ensure that the methodology is transferable should a different health care provider be commissioned (although this is not anticipated during the project).

At the front line the Social Work and Short Break Team is part of the Specialist Support and Disability Service which includes the expert pre school provision at the Phoenix centre and a Complex Needs Team which supports the most complex children at pre school and school age. The Complex Needs Team is also supported by the Special School Head Teachers who work as part of the team on a periodic secondment basis when particular issues arise. These teams have recently been co-located into a specialist centre for disabled children, The Hawes Down Centre.

The Specialist Support and Disability Service is led by Helen Norris MBE and the pathfinder funds will be used to ensure that she and other members of the Complex Needs, the Specialist Support and Short Breaks Teams and Bromley Health Care can give their time to supporting the testing. Funds will be used to develop and support the personalised budget agenda. We will also commission additional support from the voluntary sector lead by the Parent Voice where we already have a funded post to ensure that we are always able to take parents with us in SEN and Disability developments.

The Assistant Director in Adult Services is also fully behind the proposals and will ensure that appropriate time is committed from the transition team with whom Children's services already work closely. Finally we have a post for FE commissioning for LDD who will work on our plans for change in the FE sector.

A Focus on Outcomes:

We will ensure that the multi agency conferences at each key transition point focus on the outcomes that both parents and child want for the future. A key feature of this planning will be to ensure that plans across education, health and social care can dovetail so that all have the same high expectations for the child.

We will be developing outcome measures at pre school that include a successful transition into school and maximising achievement at EYFS. We will pilot involving the Early Years private and voluntary sector and Children's Centres in developing outcomes that maximise the development of a disabled child at this stage. The vast majority of Bromley's early years provision is in PVI settings and we have also pioneered support without statement at pre school making us well placed to pilot this area.

We will review Bromley's robust audit for specialist provision to ensure that the review of children's progress is sufficiently outcome focussed and that these outcomes are in line with the parents and child's expectations.

We will pilot developing outcome measures for the use of short breaks and outreach support that enable children to remain successfully in the family home. A key challenge will be to ensure that this can be achieved by working together to make provision locally for the child for example plans for excellent educational outcomes are all too often unsuccessful because the family cannot have sufficient short breaks to ensure that the child can remain in a local school.

We will continue to develop a programme to maximise the independence of disabled young people at 18+ using Department of Health funding accessed via the Health and Well Being Board. This will enable us to set outcome measures for further education especially where young people attend Independent Specialist Colleges.

We will commission college placements based on outcome measures for each young person which minimise their dependence on adult services and maximise their use of supported living in the future. We are therefore well placed to test EHSC plans for this age group.

Another key challenge will be to ensure that where outcomes are achieved plans are sufficiently flexible to enable resources to be appropriately reduced and that we do not create a dependency culture with users and providers. We have had some early success with our medical plans where we have been able to reduce the health support as children have begun to manage their own conditions within a school setting.

Alignment of resources:

We will develop a model for the alignment of resources using Bromley's multi agency SSDP and will take into account testing the different resource allocation requirements and statutory duties at pre school, school, FE, and adult services. Financial thresholds for professionals at these meetings have been agreed across agencies. Bromley and Bexley already pool budgets, in their respective LA's, for SEN, social care and short breaks although a key challenge is how the Dedicated Schools Grant features in this alignment especially when Council Tax funded budgets are reducing rapidly.

We already have, with the PCT, a joint commissioning post for disabled children. Bexley has a joint commissioning post with the Bexley Business Support Unit (previously the PCT) for commissioning Children's Services and have successfully engaged with the GP consortium through the Disability Strategy Group. A key challenge will be to continue to align resources under the new commissioning regime.

We will engage the support of Bexley and Bromley Health and Well Being Boards in the strategic co-ordination of commissioning. However as Bromley and Bexley are both part of the same PCT cluster and we have already engaged with our GP consortium we will be well placed to test this new development.

We will take the EHSC plans to the SSDP to allocate any additional resources required for implementation. The panel already has the budget holders for health, education and social care with agreed financial limits and has enabled us to reduce the number of funding panels for individual services. We will test how to involve the voluntary sector in this panel as providers and brokers.

We will work with Bexley to test how this panel mechanism can be used to allocate personal budgets. Bromley already uses this panel to allocate direct payment packages and so these procedures should translate effectively.

A key challenge will be the likely introduction of a new Fair Funding Scheme which delegates more funds to school in the context of the large number of schools in both Bexley and Bromley are becoming academies. We have developed contracts with academies that have specialist provision and will be well placed to test plans within this context.

We will test the use of EHSC plans to make best use FE budgets as they transfer from the YPLA and reduce the need for costly independent specialist colleges outside the borough. At FE and transition to adulthood Bromley has already developed a joint FE commissioning group. We are well placed to test this area as we have a highly effective FE commissioner for LDD and a close working relationship with a local college.

Join-up Between Key Agencies:

The London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley are jointly working on this project. Bromley will be the lead authority.

We will test Bromley's joint procedures and have agreed with Bexley that they will test them using their systems. Whilst this application is based on Bromley's plans and intentions regarding the EHSC plans, both Bromley and Bexley have already begun to work closely in a number of areas for example we have a jointly commissioned SEN and short breaks transport service. As part of these ongoing discussions we have agreed to look at personalised budgets, with Bexley taking the lead on this aspect of the bid, as this is an area in which Bexley has begun to make progress in SEN.

Bexley and Bromley are part of the same PCT cluster which is fully behind this application.

Throughout the rest of this application we have shown that our current procedures for children with complex needs work closely and effectively across, PCT, Bromley Health Care, Social Care and Short Breaks, Pre School Services, Special Schools, Mainstream Schools with additionally resourced provision, Further Education, Adult Services and the voluntary sector.

In some areas Bromley's services are so well integrated that it is difficult to regard them as separate agencies for example the Social Care and Short Breaks Service is completely integrated into the Specialist Support and Disability Team so that the Head of Service effectively manages front line social workers as well as teachers, dual workers with health training, portage and other pre school services, educational psychologists and sensory support teams. As explained earlier this service also includes a jointly funded with the PCT, commissioning post.

We will ensure that our testing maximises the joint working already established and enables us to gain further learning in developing cost effective, outcome focussed plans.

Colleagues in Adult Social Services have joint posts with the PCT for service delivery and commissioning in Learning Difficulties and Disabilities. The partnerships across Adult and Children's Services have developed into very effective systems for strategic planning so that we now have a Joint Transition Strategy and have worked together inform the Health and Well Being Board of our progress in this area and release Department of Health Funding to implement the strategy.

We will ensure that this joined-up working is routine across all age ranges and that in times of budget cuts that we maintain the commitment to joint working.

Value for Money and Assessment of Cost:

We will assess the value for money that our EHSC plans represent and we will use some of the pathfinder funding to ensure that we have sufficient capacity to assess the costs of implementing and rolling out the plans. This has already been agreed with Bromley's Finance Team.

We will compare the development of EHSC plans with the current cost of producing and implementing statements. We have achieved some success in challenging what are often unrealistic expectations of parents to receive statements and rolling out Pupil Resource Agreements is proving successful.

We will test the flexibility of EHSC plans so that resources can be reduced when they are no longer necessary to the achievement of outcomes.

We will also test some work force development so that we are not always using high cost teachers and social workers in developing resource agreements with parents.

We will look at how the development of outcome focussed EHSC plans will enable children with complex needs to be maintained within the borough and reduce spending on costly out of borough residential placements. We would also hope to trial using an EHSC outcomes focus to reduce some of our current residential placement's costs and we have already agreed to work with Bexley in joint trials.

We will align our resources in strategic commissioning. Bromley have achieved some success in auditing our education provision so that we can ensure that we have appropriate cost effective provision for new cohorts of children with complex needs however this has not so far been as effectively aligned with commissioning residential short break provision. We will look closely at how we can ensure that these arrangements are sufficiently flexible and cost effective to meet the needs identified through our EHSC plans and what further residential provision through specialist foster care and other services we might require in the future.

In Bexley, personal budgets are used to assist parents in making appropriate choices for their children and achieving value for money.

We will look to achieve better value for money in FE by working with the FE commissioner to ensure that EHSC plans can be implemented in local mainstream FE as well as Independent Specialist Colleges. Our joint LDD commissioning group for FE sees us well placed to test this area.

We will continue to work with Adult Services and the VCS to develop employment and supported living opportunities and test how these can be accessed through EHSC plans. We will look to make savings in residential care placements.

Use of Mediation:

We will test how Bromley's virtual Assessment Communication Team (ACT) which was developed to improve parental confidence and reduce tribunals can be rolled out across Education, Health and Social Care. ACT is commissioned by the SEN panel whenever a statement has been refused or when additional resources or a change of placement have been requested by a school and not granted. Key professionals visit the school with the SEN case worker and meet with the parents and SENCO. A plan is developed which ensures that the school can continue to meet the child's needs either within existing resources or with a small amount of additional resources through a PRA. In the first year of operation we reduced tribunals by 50%. We have begun to use a modification of this when, for example, parents request residential school and we wish to negotiate additional short breaks. The challenge will be to have effective mediation in place across agencies when the provision is not school based.

Bexley and Bromley have a well developed Parent Partnership Service which operates at an arms length from SEN services but still within the same department. This group has a large number of volunteers who successfully steer parents through the statementing process. Bexley has a similar group of trained parents through their Parents Forum.

We will trial how we can use these groups in tandem with Bromley's voluntary sector partner Parent Voice in mediation with parents.

We will trial the use of Bexley and Bromley Advocacy Service in mediation with young people especially where parents and young people do not agree on their EHSC plans.

We will use some of our pathfinder funding to facilitate these developments. We also need to use pathfinder funding to facilitate any developments in personal budgets.

We will test how in developing EHSC plans we can begin to influence the current system and reduce tribunals before wholesale change is made. The new EHSC plans will be facilitated by key workers and/or lead professionals working very closely with professionals and parents so that the process is far less bureaucratic than the current statementing process. We will involve our current case workers for SEN in developing the new processes so that the current procedure will also become more transparent and parent friendly and involve mediation where necessary. However we would not see our new system as replicating the use of the same personnel or processes in the future.

We will look to test Adult Services use of the VCS in a brokerage system where adults do not meet criteria for services.

Transferability:

We will test our EHSC plans with Bexley throughout the project but also have significant links with Croydon, Lewisham and Greenwich and have been fully involved in the SEN South London Hub which will also provide further more extensive contacts from which to trial transferability. A challenge will be to ensure that this work is considered alongside the Fair Funding changes being proposed. These should however benefit the project as a current issue is the different levels of funding delegated to schools for SEN and were this to be regularised one barrier would be lessened.

We write our EHSC plans in very straightforward language in order to ensure that they are transparent and easily understood by parents. Using language in this way will also help professionals in other authorities understand the services and resources outlined in the plan. A key challenge will be the considerable difference in funding levels across Local Authorities in Inner and Outer London but more specifically in the level of involvement of health economy funding.

A further key challenge for transferability will be the availability of different resources in local authorities to implement the plan. For example Bromley uses social care funding to jointly commission a residential short break facility with the PCT leaving fewer funds for commissioning packages of support. Bromley also has outstanding special schools which readily support the LA and this resource is not available in all local authorities.

We will test how plans can be written to overcome these differences.

We will hold dissemination sessions with other LAs in our area in order to identify transferability issues at an early stage. We would also anticipate working closely with the project's key strategic partners to learn lessons from other pathfinders and increase transferability.

V – Optional areas (see Annex x)

Please rank from 1 to 5 (1= favourite to test, 5 = least favourite) the optional testing areas in order of preference. It is acceptable choose more than one 'favourite' option: please make sure your ranking reflects this. Please note that we will prioritise applications from pathfinders wishing to work on children's personal budgets. Please indicate how many additional options your pathfinder could reasonably test.

Number of options	3
Personal Budgets	1
Banded Funding	3
Age Range & Employment	2
Support to parents and young people	1
Support to vulnerable children	4

VI - Contact details

Please provide a lead contact for the pathfinder as a whole and for each local authority and PCT cluster engaged in this bid.

Lead Pathfinder Officer

Name of local authority	Bromley
Name of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Position of lead contact	[REDACTED]
E-mail of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Tel of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Address of lead contact	[REDACTED]

Local Authority 1

Name of local authority	Bexley
Name of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Position of lead contact	[REDACTED]
E-mail of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Tel of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Address of lead contact	[REDACTED]

Bromley and Bexley are in the same PCT cluster.**PCT 1**

Name of PCT	Bromley
Name of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Position of lead contact	[REDACTED]
E-mail of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Tel of lead contact	[REDACTED]
Address of lead contact	[REDACTED]