

Strategy 2025 to 2030

Barnsley's Great Childhoods Ambition





1 Purpose

We want Barnsley to be a 'place of possibilities' for everyone. A place where children and young people from all backgrounds and starting points benefit from the opportunities that great childhoods can bring.

Children and young people today will experience very different challenges for the future.

Creating new opportunities that enrich lives, increase wellbeing and to offer the opportunity to gain skills, qualifications, and behaviours that enable healthy fulfilling lives and pathways to work, ready for the changing future of our borough.

2 Vision

Our Great Childhoods Ambition will create a borough-wide, collaborative approach to ensure enriching experiences are available for children and young people to learn, grow and be inspired by the possibilities in Barnsley.

This approach brings together current and future opportunities that make great childhoods possible. There are options for all ages, stages, and levels of need.

3 Context

Barnsley is home to roughly 67,000 children and young people (aged 0-24) approx. 22% of whom are growing up in low-income families, and approx. 29% living in poverty. Approx. 27% of our children and young people have Special Educational Needs, 1,637 children are open to Children's Social Care and 165 children in care.

There and other factors can have an impact on education and attainment that are known to create barriers to opportunities, and thus affect children and young people's well-being, and hinder future prospects.

At the end of the 2023/24 academic year, 28.5% of primary students were classed as disadvantaged, 4.2% higher than the national average.

At secondary school phase, 28.8% of pupils were classed as disadvantaged, 4.7% higher than the national average.

Barnsley disadvantaged students had 19.8% more fixed term exclusions than the national average.

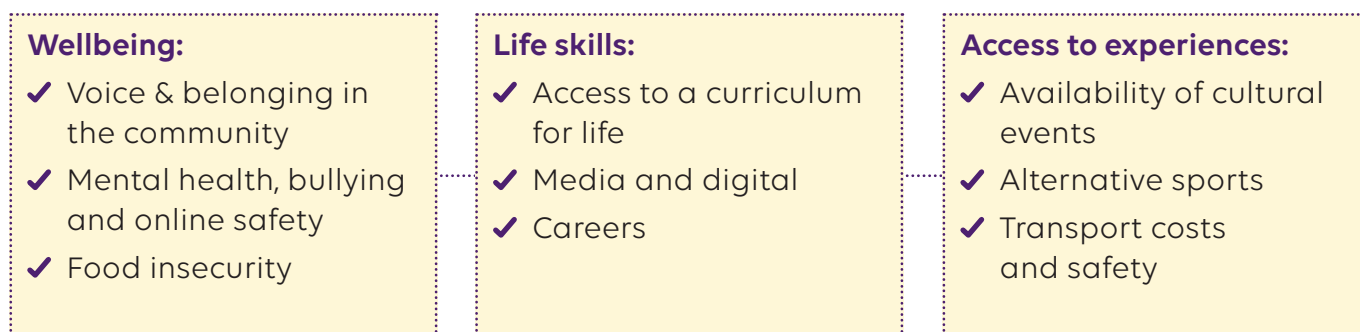
The percentage of students achieving a grade 5+ in both English and maths is 26% lower than overall national averages.

On average, people in Barnsley have fewer years of good health in their lifetimes than anywhere else in England. Current Healthy Life Expectancy in Barnsley published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for the period 2021-23 is 53 years for males and females. Compared to all other areas we rank 150th/151 for males and 151st/151 for females.

4 Children and Young People's Voice

Barnsley Great Childhoods Ambition is committed to listening, hearing and embedding children and young people's voice as experts by experience throughout the design and deliver of the strategy and programme.

We have collated feedback from a range of universal and targeted services through the Make Your Mark survey and wider engagement activity which has provided the following insights:



Existing engagement groups include:

- ✓ Youth Council,
- ✓ SEND parent/care consortium,
- ✓ Children in Care Council,
- ✓ SEND Young Commissioners.

Collaboration and co-production with children, young people and families throughout this programme of work will be considered and invested in.

5 Inequality Gap

The Barnsley Great Childhoods Ambition strategy and programme will work to break down barriers to families accessing the range of offers across the sector, strengthening outreach and local community provision, as well as supporting to address the root causes of disadvantage through the Poverty Action Group and the Children and Young People's partnership.

'Poverty can mean children going without basics. It can also mean missing out on everyday fun and activities that other kids take for granted. Poverty harms children's health, social and emotional wellbeing, and education. It harms their childhoods and their futures.'

Source: National Child Poverty Action Group

Children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds often face significant barriers to participating in enriching activities, such as extracurricular programs and educational trips, which can hinder their social, emotional, and academic growth. Great Childhoods Ambition will work towards closing the inequality gap and work towards levelling up.

Families struggling with poverty may also encounter obstacles such as limited transportation, lack of affordable childcare, and insufficient information about available resources. These can make it challenging to access opportunities that could improve their circumstances and foster their children's potential.

6 Our approach

To encapsulate how the whole system works towards achieving our ambition the Barnsley Great Childhood's Ambition strategy will Innovate, Collaborate and Embed (ICE) as outlined in the ICE Framework below:

Innovate	Collaborate	Embed
We will actively consider how our most disadvantaged children, young people and families can access existing and new provision.	We will work with partnerships, networks, and anchor organisations to co-design and co-produce solutions to improve lived experience of families.	We will build in sustainability, impact and legacy throughout the design and delivery of the programme.
We will grow the sector using existing expertise across the system to pilot new ways of working for all children and young people to have the opportunity to learn, grow and be inspired.	We will aim to grow the intelligence and data across the system to understand what is required, what works and the impact this is having on children, young people and families.	We will actively pursue joint funding or investment opportunities to collectively expand the Barnsley offer to children's young people and families.
We will expand the offer for children, young people and families through investment and engagement in the local VSC to be part of the solution.	We want to work across the system to ensure families know what is available, be able to navigate the offer and have access to the right services in the right place at the right time.	We want to embed children and young people's voice in all the work that is being undertaken through the collection of monitoring information from all programmes.

7 Strategic Priorities (SPs)

The development of the Great Childhoods Ambition focuses around five strategic priorities, developed with the sector and feedback from children and young people.

These priorities reflect the key elements of a great childhood in Barnsley and allow the existing work across Barnsley to be cohesive around these golden threads as well as identifying key areas for further investment at all ages and stages of childhood.

1 Belong

Children and young people feel part of their community. We support them to have resilience and engage positively in their local area.

Core themes for Strategic Priority investment:

**Every Child in School
Everyday**



2 Explore

All children and young people have opportunities to explore and understand the wider world. Reduce the barriers to developing cultural capital and special experiences in the arts, sports and travel.

Core themes for Strategic Priority investments:

**Enrichment and
Every Child
a Coder**



3 Dream

Children and young people are inspired to think boldly about their future. We provide opportunities to learn about a wide range of careers and experiences that ensure they are ready for the world of work.

Core themes for Strategic Priority investments:

**Future Careers –
work readiness**



4 Grow

Children and young people thrive and succeed as they grow up in Barnsley. We ensure they have opportunities to be healthy, confident and learn new things.

Core themes for Strategic Priority investments:

**Home and community
learning environments**



5 Connect

Children, young people and families have access to a connected and responsive system of support. We develop digital and systematic changes to the infrastructure around them to reduce barriers to access to support.

Core themes for Strategic Priority investments:

**Building the system
and breaking
down barriers**



8 Programme

The Barnsley Great Childhoods Ambition programme will invest additional funding into specific areas of the strategy. These includes expansion in existing provision, piloting new opportunities and developing systemic change.

The individual programmes of work are in the design and development stages but include exciting opportunities including Youth Work in Schools, and Free bus travel for under 18s. Further information on programme development will be published on the Great Childhoods Ambition online store front.

The core groups for Strategic Priority investments are:

Group	Priorities
Pre-school	Increase investment in home learning environment through stay and play sessions, parenting support, resources to support parents and carers to create a positive home learning environment.
Primary	Develop Barnsley's Children's University, growing an offer of validated learning opportunities that inspire young people to explore and take part, learn essential skills and enable them to dream big about their futures.
Secondary	Supporting the Child in School Everyday strategy with a focus on engaging EHE, encouraging young people to engage with education and personal development.
Post 16	Ensuring all young people have access to a wide variety of experiences as they prepare for adulthood , with a focus on life skills, future learning and enrichment.

9 Outcomes

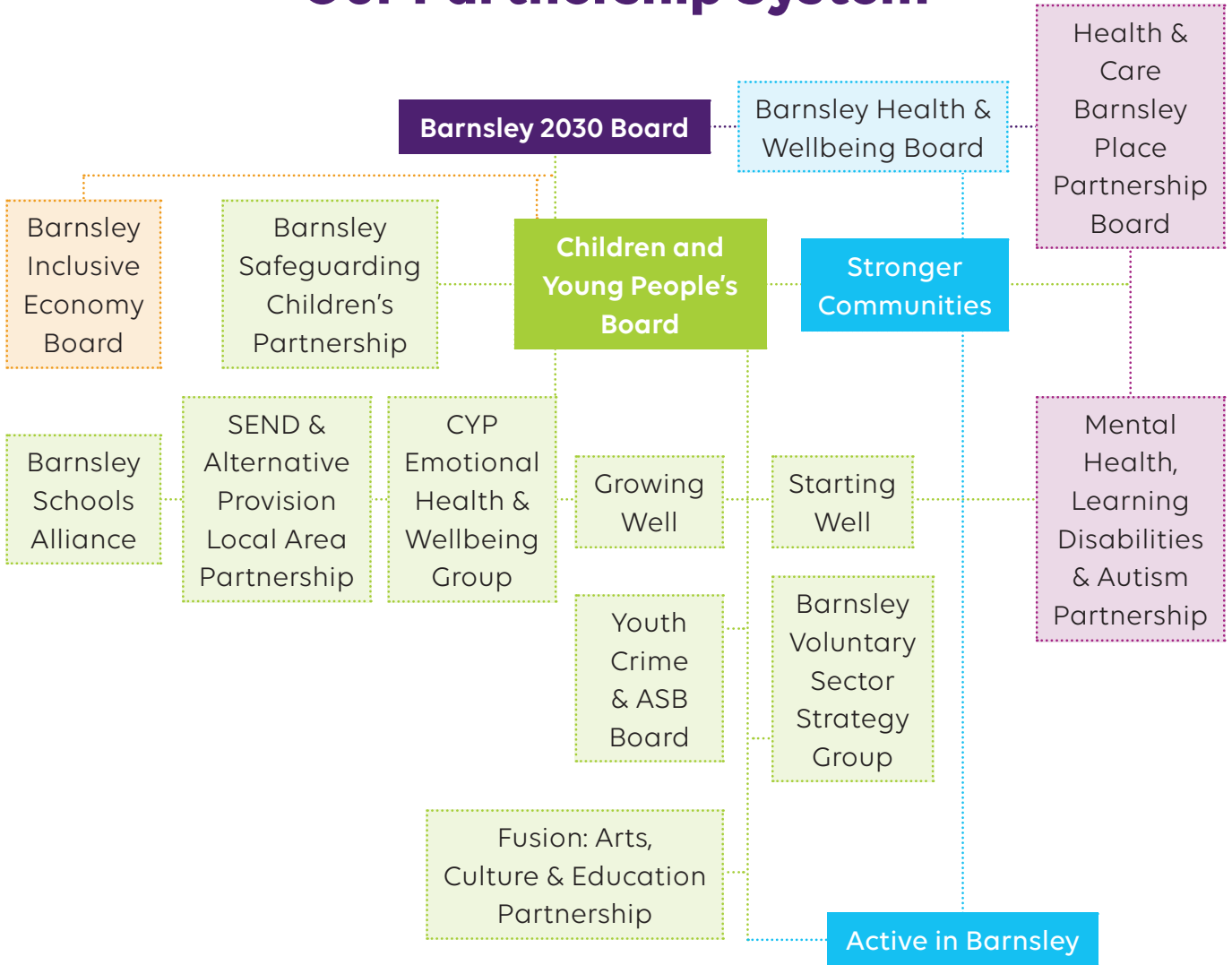
The table below demonstrates a range of outcomes that be aligned to the Strategic Priorities there will however be an outcomes framework developed for each Great Childhoods Ambition programmes of work.

	Strategic Priority	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5
SP1	Belong	School attendance	Community cohesion incidents	Reduce exclusions	Reduce EHE	Volunteering
SP2	Explore	Barnsley Children's University data	CYP Museum attendance	Number of school trips and events	Sports offers take up	
SP3	Dream	Gatsby benchmarks	NEET	Post 16/18 destination data	Apprenticeships	
SP4	Grow	School readiness	Key stage attainment	Skills builder	Digital skills	Healthy Child and Mental health data
SP5	Connect	Youth offer engagement	Increase external funding	Uptake of free travel	Online store front usage	

10 Governance

This strategy will be bringing together disparate services through the Children and Young People’s Board who will oversee the Strategy and programme implementation, changing the way strategic planning is undertaken to reduce gaps, increase access and create a multiplier effect.

Our Partnership System



Additional Resources across the system that connect to Great Childhood’s Ambition Strategy:

- Children and Young People’s Plan 2023-26

- Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership

- Health and Wellbeing Strategy

- Barnsley Place Health and Care Plan 2023-25

- Children & Young People Early Help Strategy 2022-27

- Barnsley Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026

- Send Strategy 2022-2025

- Young People’s Participation Strategy (in development)

- Autism Strategy (in development)

- Safer Barnsley Partnership Plan

- Stronger & Healthier Communities: Early Help Adults Plan

- Barnsley School Alliance Education Improvement Strategy 2022-2025

- Employment and Skills Strategy – More and better jobs

- Barnsley Transport Strategy

- Barnsley Zero Carbon Sustainable Energy Plan

- Barnsley Cultural Strategy (in development)



barnsley.gov.uk/GreatChildhoods



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Metropolitan Borough Council