

## **Brent Children and Families Information Service – brokerage service**

### **What is a brokerage service?**

Brokerage is provided for parents and careers who require additional support in finding childcare to meet their needs. This may be because they have specific needs including requiring childcare at short notice or at particular times. Essentially brokerage is about additional support to connect parents with the right childcare to meet their needs.

### **Our brokerage service:**

Brent Children and Families Information Service (CFIS) officer can discuss your needs in detail and support you in making decisions around childcare. We offer free, confidential and accurate information, advice and support which includes:

- listening to your concerns
- offering advice and assistance about the types of childcare that are available
- discussing the benefits of childcare settings for you and your child
- contacting childcare providers on your behalf
- arranging to meet to discuss your needs
- introducing you to a childcare provider
- finding childcare to meet the needs of your family
- signposting you to appropriate sources of funding

### **As part of the brokerage support provided to you Brent Children and Families Information Service (CFIS) officers typically ask the following questions:**

- What age is your child?
- What time of the day or week do you need childcare?
- Which area (including post code) would you prefer?
- Have you been unable to find the childcare you need for any reason?
- Do you need childcare at short notice?
- Are you struggling to find childcare to access the funded 2, 3 and 4 year old free entitlement to early years education?
- Would you like someone to talk to a childcare provider on your behalf?
- Do you have a preference for a specific type of provider (eg. childminder, school or private, voluntary or independent nursery)

### **We are committed to ensuring children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) can benefit from their entitlement to childcare. In supporting access to childcare the Children and Families Information Service (CFIS) may ask the following questions:**

- Does your child have special educational needs or disabilities or complex health needs?
- Do you need support in accessing the Brent Local Offer to obtain additional support for your child?
- Do you need to find a suitable before or after school club for your child who has additional needs?
- Do you want to talk to somebody about your options?
- Do you need support with funding for this childcare?

## **Childcare costs**

Once Brent Children and Families Information Service (CFIS) has found childcare options to meet a family's needs, the cost, time and days of childcare is agreed between the parent and the provider. The payment for the childcare cost would be directly to the provider from the parent.

The Parent Fact Sheet ([hyperlink](#)) around the free entitlement provides information about free entitlement funded places including eligibility criteria and charging.

## **Will I have to pay to use the brokerage service?**

The service along with all Children and Families Information Service support is free.

## **Impartiality and brokerage via Brent Children and Families Information Service**

Brent Children and Families Information Service regards impartiality as a high priority. In practice, impartiality means families using our service receive unbiased access to information.

In order to ensure impartiality Brent Children and Families Information Service will:

- Provide families with information about the range of childcare in the area requested to enable parents to make informed choices about the provider they will use
- Provide information regarding the Ofsted inspection judgement for childcare providers
- Provide information in the public domain regarding training or accreditation that childcare providers have undertaken that makes them suitable to meet families' needs
- Where requested, seek additional information from childcare providers
- Ask questions of families to determine their priorities in finding suitable childcare

As an impartial provider of information, Brent Children and Families Information Service will not:

- Provide parents with views or recommendations about which childcare provider they should use
- Share information not in the public domain regarding childcare provision in their area

## **Why we do what we do**

Section 12 (5) of the Childcare Act 2006 requires all local authorities to provide assistance to parents or prospective parents who use or propose to use childcare. The Act states: 'further assistance should be offered where parents do not find childcare that readily meets their needs or would face difficulty in using the service'. The brokerage the Brent Children and Families Information Service provides helps families find the childcare that meets their needs.

## **How will information be used?**

We process information that families provide to us in accordance with the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) we will use this information to monitor sufficiency of childcare provision in the borough.