

Barnet Youth Parliament and Youth Ambassador Elections 2026-2028

CANDIDATE PACK

The election process starts on 1 October 2025

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a digital version of this booklet with live links:



“MY SAY
MATTERS”



Candidates in the 2024-26 Cycle with Barnet's Mayor Cllr Narenthira



Members of Barnet's Youth Board, part of the My Say Matters Youth and Democracy offer



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Meet our Barnet Members of Youth Parliament and Youth Ambassadors 2024- 2026



**L-R Freddie Atkinson (MYP), Sylvia Bega (Youth Ambassador),
Connor Gill (MYP) Eleanor Sidnick (Youth Ambassador).**

Connor

“I loved being involved in the Youth Parliament events like the debates in parliament, including being able to speak at the dispatch box, which is a memory that I will never forget. Young people should 100% be standing in the next elections to represent what they believe in. More than ever young people need to ensure that leaders of today know their views and know how they think the world they inherit should look like. By taking up a role like this, you are actively taking it upon yourself to do that and represent all young people in the area. It shows a real character and is something to be proud of even if you aren't successful. It truly is a life changing role to have and can help you do things that would've otherwise seemed impossible”



Freddie

“Being a Member of Youth Parliament has been one of the most rewarding and transformative experiences I have ever had. It has given me the chance to represent young people, while also helping strengthen my public speaking, debating and communication skills, learning how to present arguments with clarity and confidence. I have also developed the ability to work with people whose views differ from mine, finding common ground and creating positive outcomes from disagreement. I have spoken in the House of Commons, standing in the very chamber where the country is governed and amplifying the concerns of young people from rural communities to major cities on a national stage.

This role is not simply about politics; it is about leadership, representation and making a genuine difference. If you are passionate about giving young people a stronger voice, eager to gain once-in-a-lifetime skills and ready to be part of shaping the future, I cannot recommend applying highly enough.”

Eleanor

“During my time as youth ambassador I have learned how a voting system works, the different elements of the council eg education and health and many other aspects, and how each one has an impact on young people. I have developed my debating, public speaking and leadership skills and have enjoyed the community and being surrounded by so many young people who feel the same as me. I enjoyed making my manifesto and what change I want to see over the coming years, I enjoyed hearing all the speakers at meetings talk about their job and what it means for us to contribute to change.

You should stand in the next election if you have ever felt that a modification should be done about something, making our lives and voices heard no matter your age. Being a Barnet Youth Ambassador allows you to get that change you speak about done! You can represent your peers, meet new people and create lasting change.”

Sylvia

“The thing I have enjoyed most as Youth Ambassador is listening to other peoples’ opinions and taking in other peoples’ thoughts and ideas. I like that there has been no judgement, everyone appreciates each other’s ideas and despite our different opinions we can adapt to each other. My Say Matters is a really comforting community where you can express yourself.

My campaign isn’t finished yet, but when I have done everything I planned I will feel successful. I came in feeling clueless and I will leave with knowledge and experience! I haven’t found the campaign difficult as I am confident in my ideas, but it has been slower than expected to make the changes. At the end I will feel proud of myself! I feel happy when I tell people I am a Barnet Youth Ambassador – it’s pride. I am helping other people because just as they express their opinions, I express mine, and we can help each other change our points of view.”



Frequently Asked Questions

Youth Parliament focuses on the national picture for young people, Barnet Youth Ambassadors is a specific scheme local to Barnet. Candidates have to choose one or the other so cannot apply to stand for both. The term for both positions is 2 years – March 2026 – March 2028. Candidates are elected by their peers on the basis of a chosen campaign topic and not affiliation with a political party. Barnet secondary schools host the election process giving all students the chance to take part in the vote.

What is the UK Youth Parliament (UKYP)?

The UKYP is a youth led national forum currently run by the National Youth Agency. It enables young people to use their energy and passion to change the world for the better. Open to 11-18 year olds that have been elected as Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs) by their communities, UK Youth Parliament provides opportunities for young people to bring about social change through meaningful representation and campaigning.

How Many MYPs will Barnet Elect?

Barnet has 3 MYP positions available.

What does a Barnet Member of Youth Parliament do?

- Represent the young people of Barnet at national and occasionally international events
- Take part in an annual debate in the House of Commons chamber and vote to decide the top issues which will become the UK Youth Parliament's priority campaigns for the year ahead
- Work alongside other elected Barnet youth representatives eg Youth Ambassadors and chairs of Barnet Youth Assembly
- May be invited to attend local boards or committees to contribute their ideas
- Campaign on their chosen topic to influence change for Barnet young people



What is the Barnet Youth Ambassadors scheme and what do they do?

Barnet elects 2 Youth Ambassadors who will be involved in council decision-making at local level. This is different to the MYPs who focus on representing Barnet young people as part of a national scheme – Youth Ambassadors focus on what happens here in Barnet.

Youth Ambassadors

- Attend Barnet's Youth Board which is a forum for young people to comment on council policy
- May be invited to attend local boards or committees to contribute their ideas
- Campaign on their chosen topic to influence change for Barnet young people
- Take part in a wide range of initiatives under Barnet's My Say Matters offer

How are young people elected and what do I need to do?

If you are interested in standing for election for either scheme then you need to fill in the nomination form at www.barnetukyp.co.uk which will go live on

Monday 13 October 2025 and close on Sunday 7 December 2025.

To stand for election you will need to choose a topic to campaign on, something that you believe needs to change or improve for young people in Barnet. Examples of previous campaign topics are knife crime, LGBT+ inclusion in schools, supporting the learning and mental health needs of young people and diversifying the curriculum.

There is a form for you to set out your campaign manifesto and we are offering workshops (see below) to give you some advice about how to do this.

We recommend you attend the workshop before filling in the form but this isn't compulsory.

On the nomination form you will set out your campaign manifesto; we will confirm this has been accepted shortly after the end of the nomination window. You will then have the chance to campaign on your chosen topic and influence others to vote for you. You should also check your school is registered to hold a vote for the elections and let them and us know if they are not.

Then in Spring 2025 the young people of Barnet will vote to select their 3 MYPs and 2 Youth Ambassadors to represent them. Last time 40 young people stood for election and over 7000 young people voted!

Young people across Barnet elect representatives to champion their views | Barnet Council



Do I need experience to take part?

No! You do not need any particular experience – you need to be enthusiastic about representing the voice of other young people in Barnet and you need to be able commit some time to attend meetings and events over a 2 year period.

Qualities that will help you succeed in the role include

- being able to listen and respect the views of others
- a willingness to learn new skills and have a go
- using support available
- and having a sense of humour!

Who is eligible to apply?

We welcome applications from all young people who are living, studying or working full time in Barnet and are

- Aged 11 upwards and in year 7 or above
- Have their 17th birthday on or after 1 April 2026 as both schemes cut off at 19 and young people cannot continue after this

I'm interested in both schemes, which should I pick?

Which scheme you pick is a matter of personal preference. To be an MYP you do need to be available to attend the events outlined in the further information section of this booklet. You will be working with a larger group of other MYPs from around the UK and commonwealth and debate can be lively! Being a Youth Ambassador might suit someone younger, who wants to remain locally, has a little less time or is starting their youth and democracy journey.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion

We want to encourage young people of all backgrounds and circumstances to take part. We value diversity and welcome applicants who represent our Barnet community through their personal characteristics: gender, disability, faith and belief, class, race, culture and LGBT+ identity. Support can be provided for those with additional needs.



Key Dates

1 October	Window opens for schools to register to host voting	Schools to confirm they wish to take part via mysaymatters@barnet.gov.uk
13 October 2025	Candidate nominations open	www.barnetukyp.co.uk
15 October 2025 6-7pm	Info Session/Campaign Manifesto Workshop Option 1	Email us at mysaymatters@barnet.gov.uk and we will send you a link that works for all 3 sessions
20 October 2025 6-7pm	Info Session/Campaign Manifesto Workshop Option 2	Email us at mysaymatters@barnet.gov.uk and we will send you a link that works for all 3 sessions
29 October 2025 11-12pm	Info Session/Campaign Manifesto Workshop Option 3	Email us at mysaymatters@barnet.gov.uk and we will send you a link that works for all 3 sessions
7 December 2025	Candidate nominations close	
18 December 2025	We confirm acceptance of nominations to candidates The window for schools to register to host voting closes	
20 January 2026 6-8pm	Hustings Further details to be supplied to candidates	In Person – Venue is Accessible
2 February 2026	Voting Opens	Voting starts in schools
6 March 2026	Voting Closes	Voting ends in schools
25 March 2026 TBC	Results evening Further details to be supplied to candidates	In Person – Venue is Accessible

Where can I get more information?

Further information on the schemes is below. You can also get more information by coming to our information sessions on 15/20/29 October or emailing **rebecca.morris@barnet.gov.uk**. She can confirm arrangements and will be happy to have chat by phone too.



Further Information

UK Youth Parliament

The UKYP scheme is hosted by the National Youth Agency
(UK Youth Parliament - National Youth Agency).

More information about Youth Parliament is also here

UK Youth Parliament - Wikipedia

Here are some national news stories about MYPs to inspire you to take part including the story of Seth Burke a disabled MYP:

Youth Parliament: How Seth Burke is an unwitting political pioneer - *BBC News*

UK Youth Parliament: ‘We have fire in us to create change’ - *BBC News*

UK Youth Parliament: Get involved, says Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle - *BBC News*

Important information about MYPs Duties and Eligibility to Apply

We expect our elected Barnet MYPs to abide by all the arrangements set out in the National Youth Agency Rulebook here **NEW-UK-Youth-Parliament-Rulebook-2023-2025-June-24-compressed.pdf** which includes details of eligibility criteria.

To be elected as an MYP you need to be able to commit some time to take part over the two year term. We don't set a minimum amount of hours and we understand that young peoples free time will fluctuate around their commitments and exam periods.

Below are some highlights but there are many other opportunities on offer.

- Up to 2 Weekend Residentials during the term of office, usually in July (expected) – these could be anywhere in the UK. We fund transport and accommodation costs.
- Up to 2 House of Parliament sittings – One day each (essential). You can view Connor Gill Barnet MYP opening a debate in the House of Common's Chamber in February 2025: **UK Youth Parliament 2025 - afternoon session**)
- Other events offered by the National Youth Agency as part of the scheme (optional)



Barnet Youth Ambassadors Scheme

Although the Youth Ambassadors scheme does not have a formal code of conduct we will use the principles for young peoples behaviour in the Youth Parliament Rulebook as a basis to support the role. Candidates should therefore be familiar with these expectations and if elected adhere to them. The Youth Ambassador role is non party political and issue based and those elected need to follow guidance offered around their social media usage.

Filling in Your Nomination Form

You need to do this with your parent or guardian as they will be asked to give consent for you to take part including whether you give media consent (information about that is on the form). We will also ask you about information we may need to assist you taking part if elected.

We will ask you to fill in details of your manifesto for election which will be your campaign if elected. This will include a subject title, why you want to campaign on the issue and what you hope to achieve. Manifestos will be grouped into topic areas to assist voters in making a choice due to the expected high numbers of candidates. These topics are guidelines and should not limit the area you can chose to campaign on.

Your manifesto/campaign must be something relevant to young people in Barnet. Chose something specific and achievable as well as aspirational. We can help you develop your manifesto if you attend one of our workshops where we will offer more information and you can ask questions.

Campaigning and Elections Process

All candidates get a chance to campaign on their chosen topic or issue in their own school and beyond. More information will be given at our campaign workshops about how this works. You will also have the chance to attend a Hustings meeting on 20 January 2026 to share your campaign in front of other candidates.

Barnet secondary schools administer the voting process and only their students are eligible to vote. We use a digital ballot process which will be confirmed to schools and candidates before the election. The number of votes allocated is based on the number of pupils in each school – each student can only use their ballot card once. Schools will be asked to encourage young people to vote by topic and not just because the candidate is in their school. Schools will need to pre-register with us to take part - we cannot guarantee that all schools will take part in the vote but we especially encourage schools putting up candidates to do so.



It is important to know that the election process is an educational experience and is not a formal democratic one. That means it differs from the way adult politicians get elected. However we strive to ensure the process is fair and robust and that everyone taking part has a good experience. We use a partner MiVoice an electoral services company to help us. This ensures that there is no tampering with the voting process and that we are able to detect any attempts at cheating. All candidates and their supporters are expected to abide by the rules around the voting process – failure to do so may result in disqualification.

We will not make public details of the votes polled by each candidate and these will not be announced on results night - we will announce the winners names only. We are happy to answer any queries you may have about this beforehand.

The application process can be accessed at www.barnetukyp.co.uk from 13 October 2025.

We will send out voter cards to schools in time for voting to take place between 2 Feb and 6 March 2026.

If after election a MYP or Youth Ambassador cannot under take their duties as hoped we will discuss with you offering more support/taking a break – in exceptional circumstances a candidate may need to step down and the opportunity be offered to someone else.

What happens if I am not elected?

The results of the election can be influenced by lots of factors, for example how many young people stand and how many schools take part, or the numbers of children who vote. If you are not successful, this doesn't mean the issue you have raised is not important. We will be able to offer you other opportunities to progress your ideas and meet with those with similar interests for example **via Barnet Youth Assembly | Barnet Council or Join the Barnet Youth Board | Barnet Council**. So think of taking part as a gateway to other chances to take part in local democracy and a great way to meet people and build new skills!

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