

Families Matter

A magazine full of news and information to support families includes the Let's Talk SEND Information Supplement



CELEBRATING SUMMER

The borough gears up for a summer of family fun
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Thousands attend this summer's Festival of Communities
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Creative opportunities for young people this summer
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www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/familiesmatter

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Welcome to the summer edition of Families Matter

This edition is packed with information and updates to inform and support parents and carers and also to guide practitioners in their work with Tower Hamlets families.

We hope you find the Families Matter magazine useful and welcome your feedback and contributions. Please email and tell us what else you would like to see in future editions.

Best wishes,

Parent and Family Support Service

Working with families?

Sign up to the Parental Engagement Team's network mailing list

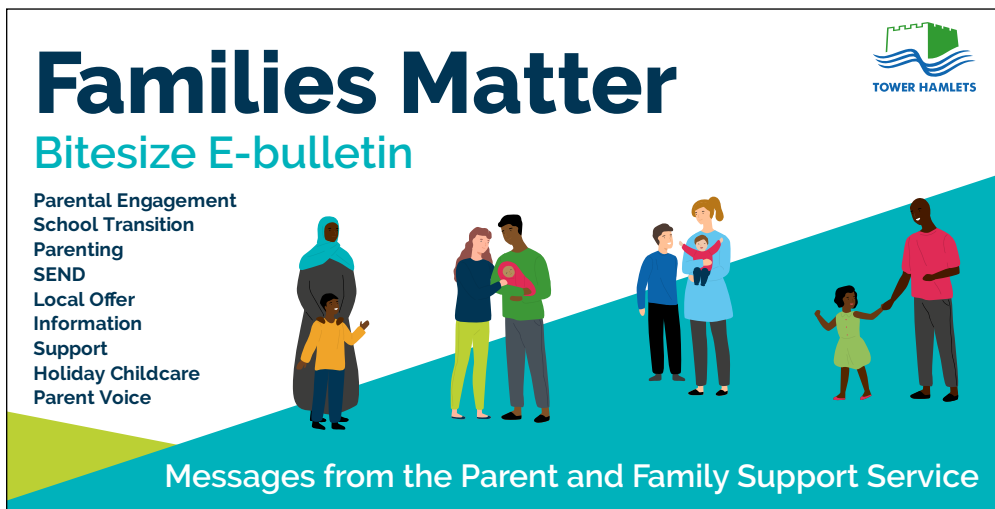
If you are working with families in the borough, sign up to the Parental Engagement Team's network mailing list to be emailed the latest news and information to support your work. Encourage your colleagues to sign up too.

Email: parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Families Matter: Bitesize E-bulletin

In addition to the regular termly Families Matter magazine, we publish a monthly e-bulletin. It provides regular updates, information, advice and support for all parents in Tower Hamlets.

Parents can sign up via the council's resident subscriber list, choosing 'children and education' as their preferred topic after closing the initial pop-up box and completing the one on the main webpage.



Visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/signup

This magazine is produced by the Parental Engagement Team within the Parent and Family Support Service, Children and Culture Directorate. To share news in future editions of Families Matter contact

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References to 'parents' describes any caregiver responsible for the care, protection and upbringing of a child or young person, including foster parents or connected persons, grandparents, siblings or other family members living in Tower Hamlets.

References to 'SEND' is used in some articles as the abbreviation of special educational needs and disabilities.

New parent volunteers for E1 Partnership

The E1 Partnership is a group of schools in Tower Hamlets that work together to empower the community by raising aspirations and achievements. The partnership, composed of **Thomas Buxton, Osmani, Stewart Headlam, Hague, Canon Barnett, Kobi Nazrul** and **William Davis** primary schools, as well as **Swanlea Secondary School**, has been empowering their parents and supporting them to develop by providing valuable volunteering experiences at E1 Partnership schools.

The E1 Partnership has been helping the latest cohort of parents prepare for their volunteer role by offering selected parents a place on the 'Volunteering in Your Child's School' course, which was



The latest cohort of E1 Partnership parent volunteers receiving their certificates

hosted at Hague Primary School. The Open College Network accredited course, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, has given the new parent volunteers a solid foundation so that they feel ready for their volunteer roles at the E1 Partnership.

“

I learned so much on the course that I know it will really help me as a volunteer.

Parent

”

More parent volunteers for Columbia Primary School



Columbia Primary School parent volunteers receiving their certificates

Columbia Primary School has been successfully running the 'Volunteering in Your Child's School' since 2016. It has been supporting potential parent volunteers by offering them a place on the five-week introductory course. The course

gives parents an understanding of teaching and learning in school and ways they can support classroom learning as volunteers. The latest cohort of volunteers have completed the course and have started their volunteer roles at the school.

“

The course was fun, interactive and extremely useful. I learned so many new skills that I have been putting into practice as a volunteer. It has even helped me with my own children.

Lindsey, parent volunteer
Columbia Primary School



”

Unique volunteer roles at Marion Richardson

Parents from **Marion Richardson Primary School** completed the 'Volunteering in Your Child's School' course in 2022. We catch up with some of them to find out about their experience of the course and the unique volunteering roles they have been offered since completing it.

“

The course was very informative, and it really confirmed for me



that volunteering is a rewarding thing to do. Since completing the course, I have been volunteering on creative projects throughout the school, such as the Disney Group. Currently, I'm busy creating stage props and all the scenery for a school performance in the summer.

Farooz Lewis
Parent volunteer

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“

The course has helped me gain some valuable experience and to get to know a lot more about volunteering.



The school has been really supportive. They have listened to me and even created volunteering opportunities to suit my skills and interests. Soon I will be taking up my role as a sports volunteer.

Sathish Kumar
Parent volunteer

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“

We have had great success with our volunteers at Marion Richardson.



In the last ten years, 20 volunteers from Marion Richardson have successfully gained paid employment, either in our school or at other schools. I'm sure that this success will continue with our latest volunteers.

Alison Jones
Parental Engagement Lead
Marion Richardson Primary School

”

The 'Volunteering in Your Child's School' course

The 'Volunteering in Your Child's School' course can be delivered either as a ten-week Open College Network accredited course or as a five-week non-accredited introductory course.

Delivered by experienced practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team, the course aims to prepare parents for their roles as volunteers by giving them an insight into teaching and learning in school.

Key topics include teaching and learning methods, the National and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum, communication strategies, professionalism and safeguarding.



To find out more or to book the course for your school or setting, email parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk



New guide for professional development in the early years

High-quality professional development for educators working in the early years should be sustained, well-organised and include four areas of learning, according to a new guide published by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF).

It was created as part of the EEF's role as Evidence Partner to the Department for Education's Stronger Practice Hubs.

The guide recommends that professional development should:

- **Build** on practitioners' knowledge
- **Motivate** them to make changes to their practice
- **Develop** specific techniques to improve their practice
- **Embed** new approaches in their practice

It highlights these four main areas and discusses how they

might be built into professional development opportunities.

It includes valuable insights from professionals at different stages in their careers and working in various early years settings. They share how they have used these areas to improve their professional development provision.

Download the guide [here](#) or scan QR code.



PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT IN OUR SECONDARY SCHOOLS



Bow School Parent Ambassadors Forum at the fundraising cake sale

Bow School parent ambassadors continue fundraising drive

Bow School Parent Ambassadors Forum is going from strength to strength as they continue their fundraising drive.

The group, which is made up of parents from the school, was formed with the help of the Parental Engagement Team. The forum works in close partnership with the school to support families and the wider community.

Their latest fundraising effort was to raise much needed funds for families affected by the earthquake in Turkey and Syria. With the support

of the school and the Parental Engagement Team, the parent ambassadors organised a cake sale, which raised an amazing £350 for their chosen charity – The British Red Cross.

The success of this event has encouraged the forum to continue with their fundraising efforts. They have now set their sights on raising money for the Bow School Hardship Fund. The money they raise for the fund will help families who may be struggling with purchasing things like school uniforms and trips.

If you are a parent at Bow School and would like to join the Parent Ambassador Forum, email

morrisj@bow-school.org.uk

www.bow-school.org.uk/Bow-School-Parents-Forum

The art of embroidery at Swanlea

Parents from **Swanlea School** have been expressing themselves creatively on a specialist embroidery course, developed by the Parental Engagement Team.

The parents got their inspiration from observing plants and flowers. Over the six-week course, they developed their initial design ideas from rough sketches into intricate designs using a range of embroidery techniques, from the traditional to the more experimental.



PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT IN OUR SECONDARY SCHOOLS



Parents from Central Foundation Girls' School receiving their Ministry of Food certificates

Cooking towards better mental health

Parents from **Central Foundation Girls' School** have been discovering how cooking together from scratch can help save money, build relationships and even contribute to better mental health.

Parents from the school took part in a cooking course called 'Ministry of Food' delivered by the Parental Engagement Team. The course, devised by Jamie Oliver, emphasises the health and financial benefits of preparing your own meals using fresh ingredients. It introduces parents to new ingredients and cooking methods while exploring the link between healthy eating and wellbeing.

“

I made so many new friends on the course. We learned how to prepare healthy, budget-friendly recipes from scratch. Cooking together in a group like this was great fun and really good for my mental health.



Muna, parent

”

Varied parental engagement programme at Morpeth

The Parental Engagement Team have been working with **Morpeth Secondary School** over the past few years devising a comprehensive parental engagement programme.

The programme consisted of various one-off sessions covering different themes including:

- Supporting your child's learning
- Revision and exam techniques
- Managing stress and anxiety
- Supporting your child's mental health
- Understanding the teenage brain
- Building positive relationships.

“

It has been wonderful working with the Parental Engagement Team. They have worked with us to develop and deliver sessions that meet the needs of our families and the feedback has been unanimously positive. We're really looking forward to developing the partnership.

Kate Worden, Assistant Headteacher and Parental Engagement Lead Morpeth Secondary School

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Ministry of Food at Bow School

Parents from **Bow School** have been developing their cooking skills on an eight-week Ministry of Food course. The course introduced the parents to new ingredients and cooking methods while exploring issues such as portion size and mindful eating.

Healthy eating principles were a key feature of the course and the parents were supported as they made small changes to improve the health of their family.

The parents enjoyed learning how to create dishes from around the world that were low in salt, sugar and fat without compromising on flavour.

“

The course has changed my life. It has taught me how to use ingredients, so that the food still tastes good without using lots of salt.

Parent

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Parents get curious about maths at St Peter's



Laura with her children, Matteo and Susie, creating their own 100 square during the session

Parents from **St Peter's London Docks Church of England Primary School** have been discovering how maths games and puzzles can help develop higher level thinking skills like problem solving and reasoning in children.

They attended a three-part workshop, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, called 'Fun with Maths'. The interactive sessions give parents an overview of the different strands of mathematics, reinforced key mathematical concepts and encouraged the families to become more curious about maths.

“

I was never good at maths, but the course gave me so many great ideas. I had fun with maths for the first time in my life.

Laura

”

Outdoor Learning at Columbia Primary

Parents from **Columbia Primary School** have been reflecting on how children today seem to have fewer opportunities to play and learn outside which could be hampering their development.

During a special three-part course, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, the parents discovered the many benefits of outdoor learning. The course promoted the benefits of screen-free, outdoor learning and inspired parents to use local outdoor spaces to enrich their child's learning and support their wellbeing.



“

I picked up so many great outdoor learning ideas – we will definitely be spending more time outside this summer.

Parent

”

Parents 'Get Writing' at Mowlem Primary School

Writing came to life for families from **Mowlem Primary School** when they attended an interactive writing course called 'Get Writing'. Parents learned different ways they can help their child to generate ideas and plan their writing. Using visual resources like story maps and story mountains, the parents became more familiar with the elements of a story as they collaborated with their child to produce a piece of creative writing.

“

I learned so many new things that will really help me support my children with their writing.

Tania

”

For more information on how the Parental Engagement Team can support your school to engage with families, email parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Magic mother figures at Thomas Buxton

Thomas Buxton Primary School

recognises the importance of celebrating all family figures in its pupils' lives. In March, the school held a MAGIC (Mothers, Aunts, Grandmothers including Carers) Week which included special lunches for each year group, a camp fire, cooking workshops and an arts and crafts session. It was fantastic for mother figures to come along and get involved with different activities in school with their children.

In June, the school plans to celebrate father figures in a special FUDGE (Father figures, Uncles, Dads and Grandfathers' Excellence) Week with a range of activities to bring families together.

Amelia Chau
Acting Assistant Headteacher
Thomas Buxton Primary School



A tent full of stories

Parents from **Harry Gosling** and **St Paul's Whitechapel Primary Schools** took part in a Rich Mix project to decorate a tent to depict their life journeys. The parents had the chance to delve into the Tower Hamlets' archives and see how local history may have informed their own life journey.

Using a variety of craft mediums, the journeys began to come to life. As they worked on their own personal journey, the group bonded and firm friendships were formed. Each panel has stories of a life and how that person arrived in Tower Hamlets. Although every story is so different, each one will create memories and inspire others to tell their story too.

Janice Hill Kocoglu, Family Engagement Practitioner
Harry Gosling and St Paul's Whitechapel Primary Schools

For more information on how the Parental Engagement Team can support your school to engage with families, email parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Free school meals to be rolled out in secondary schools

Tower Hamlets is the first borough in England to offer free school meals to school pupils up to the age of 16, following the approval of the proposal at a Cabinet meeting in May. The scheme will be implemented in three phases starting from September.

Eating a healthy meal supports pupils with their learning and has been shown to improve behaviour and academic achievements.

With nearly half the children in Tower Hamlets going into secondary school with excess weight, the scheme is a step towards improving the physical health of young people.

It will also provide vital support during the cost-of-living crisis, saving families an average of £550 per year, per child.



More details on free school meals for secondary school pupils in Tower Hamlets can be found on the borough's [website](#), or scan QR code.

New Child Healthy Weight Directory of Support Services

Health professionals in Tower Hamlets now have access to the Child Healthy Weight Directory of Support Services – a directory to connect families to services relating to healthy weight help in the borough. It brings together all the available support services and assets in Tower Hamlets that help families to address obesity and its drivers.

Developed in partnership with the GP Care Group and the council, the directory draws from the Tower Hamlets Local Offer, Clarity and other service directories in the borough.



For more information, [click](#) here or scan the QR code.

New survey reveals that more children are vaping

Even though it is illegal to sell vaping products to under 18s, a new survey by Action on Smoking and Health has revealed that the number of children aged between 11 and 17 who have tried vaping has risen by 50 per cent in the past year.

The survey asked children and young people questions like 'Why they are vaping?', 'Where are they purchasing them from?' and 'Where are they being influenced online?'

Why are they vaping?

- 40% said they wanted to give them a try
- 19% said they wanted to join in with others
- 14% said they like the flavours

Where are they buying vapes?

- Corner shops
- Petrol stations
- Online

Contact Compass Safe East, a confidential health and wellbeing service for children and young people who need support around substance misuse.

Visit www.compass-uk.org/services/tower-hamlets-compass-safe-east

New developments to Healthy Families programme

Specialist practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team have been delivering a refreshed Healthy Families programme in schools, community centres and children and family centres across the borough.

The newly developed programme now has a cooking element, which is a great way for parents to put into practice all that they have learned over the five-week course. There are still plenty of opportunities for parents to share their experiences with each other and be supported as they make

positive lifestyle changes that will benefit the health of the whole family.

Other developments include a new parent and child Healthy Families programme. These sessions provide a nurturing environment where parents and children learn about healthy eating in an interactive way. Children can explore their senses to see, touch, smell and taste the fruit and vegetables. Parents get to model tasting fruit and vegetables which means children are more likely to follow and try themselves.



To book a Healthy Families programme for your setting or to refer yourself, email parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Healthy Families programme – supporting families in the early years

Habits formed in our early years are more likely to follow us into our teens and adulthood so making small changes for a healthy lifestyle when our children are young benefits them for years to come.

The new one-off sessions, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, were devised after a series of co-production sessions with parents and their children. During the session, families participated in fun interactive learning games and discussed ways to make easy and small changes to family routines and eating habits to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

A recent session at Wapping and Bigland Children and Family Centre covered oral health.

Parents were able to discuss how to prevent caries and decay, how to brush effectively, dentist check-ups and tips to encourage children to brush their teeth independently. The children were provided with teeth sets, which helped them learn how to squeeze toothpaste and brush their teeth.

Children also took home a goody bag containing a two-minute timer, a brushing teeth star chart and other resources.

Healthy Families programme one-off workshop themes

- Oral health
- Children's emotional health
- Eat Well, Feel Well (what's in our snacks)
- Active Families, Healthy Families
- Eat Well, Feel Well (eat to thrive)

Sessions take place in schools, early years settings and children and family centres.

Parents receive goody bags, top tips, recipes and information about family health services.

For more information about the programme or one-off sessions, email denise.de-goze@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Run Ruba run

We catch up with the Parental Engagement Team's Parenting Practitioner, Ruba Talukdar, as she completed her third London Marathon

What's the best thing about your job?

I love working directly with parents, delivering parenting programmes. I really enjoy getting to know people so that I can support them better.

What are the challenges you face?

It can be challenging to engage with parents who might not understand that parenting support could help them. I spend a lot of time on the phone explaining how parenting support can be helpful.

Why do you run?

I find that running helps my emotional wellbeing and it gives me some time for myself that I need. I also want to be a role model for my daughters and show them that there are no limits to what you can do.

I feel passionate about representation and diversity in running – I want to show others that if someone like me can do it, so can they!

What running achievements are you most proud of?

Completing my first London Marathon in 2021 and fundraising for a water well in my late mother's memory.

I am also proud of the fact that I have been running consistently for the past four years. Despite working full-time and taking care of two young children – I still love it!

What's next?

I want to try and get a place for next year's London Marathon and to focus on improving over shorter distances like half-marathons. I'd also like to explore setting up a running community in my local area.



What advice would you give to anyone interested in taking up running?

Invest in a decent pair of running shoes and just get out there. You don't have to just run – walk/run combinations are absolutely fine, especially in the beginning. Finally, get organised and plan when to run because consistency is key!

Keep up to date with Ruba's running adventures on Instagram @runrubarun



For information on how you can keep active, visit the Tower Hamlets [website](#) or scan the QR code.

Free family cycle training this summer

Bikeworks are offering free cycle training over the summer for Tower Hamlets families with up to six members.

During the three-day course, instructors work closely with families to understand their needs and offer bespoke training to meet their expectations.

Please note that this course is not suitable for complete beginners.

To find out more visit www.bikeworks.org.uk/towerhamlets



Somali sisters cycling project

Bikeworks has teamed up with Cycle Sisters to offer free cycle sessions in Victoria Park. The sessions are for Somali women and girls, aged over 16, who live, work or study in Tower Hamlets.

The weekly sessions will help participants to develop their cycle skills and increase their confidence within a supportive group.

To find out more, visit www.bikeworks.org.uk/tower-event/Somali-Sisters-Cycling-Project

or email towerhamlets@cyclesisters.org.uk



Get Creative, Get Active this summer in Tower Hamlets Parks

Our parks' summer school holiday programme includes adventure play sessions, arts and crafts, growing and planting and nature activities. The Victoria Park Team will have nature based and outdoor activities throughout the school holidays. All activities are FREE and open to all families who live, work or study in Tower Hamlets.

For more information, visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/summerevents

Working together, supporting families

Around one in five children in the UK have been exposed to domestic abuse at some point in their lives. Living in a home where domestic abuse happens can have a serious impact on a child or young person's mental and physical wellbeing, as well as their behaviour. It can affect how they feel, think and behave in harmful ways.



The NSPCC identifies signs that a child has witnessed domestic abuse which can include: aggression or bullying; anxiety, depression or suicidal thoughts; attention seeking; bed-wetting; constant or regular sickness like colds, headaches and mouth ulcers; withdrawal or tantrums. Children are now recognised by law as victims of domestic abuse and there's lots going on across the borough to support these children and their families.

Many schools in Tower Hamlets have opted into the national police initiative, Operation Encompass. This initiative facilitates information sharing between police and schools to safeguard children who have been impacted by domestic abuse. When police respond to a report of domestic abuse where children are present, officers notify both Children's Services and the schools the children attend through the secure Operation Encompass platform. Operation Encompass fully recognises children as victims of domestic abuse and the crucial role schools have in providing early intervention and support as a safeguarding partner.

The Parental Engagement Team (PET) deliver the Early REPAIR Course (ERC), see [page 16](#) for more information. ERC is a brief awareness raising course for fathers who have been identified to be using abuse (physical and/or emotional and/or coercive control) at a level currently considered to be low risk. Alongside the programme, a

perpetrator's partner is offered support via telephone calls, check-ins and signposting to support agencies. Other support provision available includes:

- Family Support Practitioners (FSPs) support domestic violence victims as part of a case load in schools. This work is varied and includes support with housing, finance, children's behaviour, food and basic living essentials, counselling and health referrals.
- Where domestic violence is disclosed, PET practitioners offer signposting and referrals to support agencies.
- Parents who are victims of domestic violence attend parenting programmes, build self-confidence and ways to practise self-care, whilst also learning to manage and parent their children's behaviour in an appropriate way.

Since the launch of Operation Encompass in Tower Hamlets in the summer term of 2019-20, 85 of our schools have signed up – this is 91% of the total number of eligible schools, one of the highest sign-up rates in London.

In the period April 2022 to April 2023, a total number of 233 police notifications were sent to schools. Through each notification from the police, school staff have been able to be aware of the child's experience and respond with a trauma-informed approach showing understanding, care and compassion. The initiative has also strengthened partnership work where schools, as part of their safeguarding response, have proactively made contact with Children's Services to ensure a full joined up approach is taken to support the child.

Working together our services can help children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse to move on and receive the care they need.

Lisa Fraser
Director of Education
London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Domestic abuse

In an emergency you should always call 999. If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, call 999 and then press 55. This will transfer your call to the relevant police force who will help you without having to speak. Domestic abuse covers a range of types of abuse, including, but not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, economical or emotional abuse. For more information on the support available, visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/domesticabuse

Early REPAIR Course

WHAT IS THIS COURSE?

Early REPAIR Course (ERC) is a brief awareness raising course for fathers who have been identified to be using abuse (physical and/or emotional and/or coercive control) at a level currently considered to be low risk.

The course is delivered in two day long group work sessions a month apart with a 1-1 session in between.

Day 1

- Denial, minimisation and partner blame, disclosure and what that felt like
- Impacts (mainly impacts on children)
- Sore points, signals, time outs and basic de-escalation strategies

Four weeks of keeping a log of sore points and use of techniques plus one 1-1 meeting

Day 2

- Review logs
- More on impacts on children
- Review sore points and safety plan for future

For more information or to make a referral, email parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk

WHO WILL BE ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND THE PROGRAMME?

Here are some suggested criteria:

1. The risk assessment did not classify the father as high risk.
2. The family are not at child protection (CP) tier.
3. The father admits to some physical domestic violence (DV) if there have been allegations of violence, and some coercive control if that has been alleged. We do not expect full disclosure.
4. The father has signed the referral description of Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and also had to agree to attend.
5. The victim has not indicated that the conditional non-escalation / stepdown would place her or the children at significant risk.
6. The father has sufficient cognitive and language capacity to take part in the course.
7. There are no factors such as substance abuse or mental health which would prevent the father from benefitting.



The Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) Programme

Some conflict between parents is normal. It can even be healthy for children to see their parents argue but then sort out their disagreements. However, when conflict is frequent and poorly resolved, it can be harmful for children. That's because the home environment no longer feels safe for them. Even if parents have separated, conflict may still be present, leaving children feeling upset.

The RPC programme is funded for two years by the Department for Work and Pensions. Tower Hamlets is integrating RPC into its services and approaches. It is also working closely with the Early Intervention Foundation to build and share the evidence base.

RPC uses the following interventions:

- Family mediation
- Family Group Conference
- Triple P Transitions
- OnePlusOne programme

OnePlusOne programme

OnePlusOne is an online programme of courses for parents, devised by relationship experts and are free for residents. It is made up of the following courses:

- Arguing better
- Getting it right for children
- Debt and relationships
- Me, you and baby too

More details and sign up at www.oneplusone.org.uk/parents



RPC – support and training for schools and practitioners

Tower Hamlets takes parental conflict seriously and has a range of interventions that can support front line practitioners to help parents manage conflict.

Using the Early Help approach, the vision is for every child and young person to be happy, healthy and able to reach their potential. The RPC programme aligns with the Domestic Abuse Strategy but focuses on conflict below the threshold of domestic abuse. It aims to reduce conflict early and to help parents

understand how conflict can affect children.

The RPC team are happy to attend any team meetings, learning and networking events to reach as many practitioners as possible. They can facilitate presentations and short training sessions. These could be stand-alone workshops or incorporated within themed events and training your school or organisation may have planned. These can be delivered either online or in-person.

For further details email earlyhelp@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Resources available at www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/rpc

Tower Hamlets Parent and Family Support Service

Parenting programmes

Parenting programmes are a source of support for all parents and offer an opportunity to share experiences, develop an understanding of child development, build positive relationships and learn to deal with challenging behaviour.

PROGRAMME	AGE	INFORMATION
Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities (SFSC)	2-18 years	Aims to increase parental self-esteem and confidence and reduce child behavioural difficulties. Five sessions, shortened version adapted for online. Also available in Bengali and Somali. Evening programme in English. Thirteen weekly sessions.
Triple P Teen	12-18 years	For parents to build positive relationships with their teenager or for those who have concerns about problem behaviour, non-cooperation and aggression or wish to prevent behavioural problems from developing. Nine weekly sessions.
Triple P Group	2-11 years	For parents who wish to build positive relationships with their child, increase self-confidence and develop their skills and techniques for dealing with difficult behaviour. Eight weekly sessions.
Triple P Family Transitions	All parents	For parents who are experiencing personal distress after separation or divorce, which is impacting on their parenting. Six weekly sessions.
Triple P Online	2-11 years & 12-18 years	An individual online programme for parents to access and complete at their own pace. Practitioner support and guidance to complete the programme is available on request.
Emotional First Aid	All parents	Offers an overview of mental health and wellbeing in relation to parenting. Learn strategies to manage anxieties, identify stress factors, gain a better understanding of ourselves and promote a healthier sense of wellbeing. Six weekly sessions.
Speakeasy	5-18 years	For parents to develop the skills and confidence to talk to their children about growing up, relationships and keeping safe. Explores how Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is taught in schools and the influence on children from media and peers. Four weekly sessions.
The Parent Factor in ADHD	5-16 years	A programme for parents with children diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). The course will cover information to help understand the diagnosis and treatment, strategies to support your child and manage difficult behaviour and how to advocate on your child's behalf within the education system. Nine weekly sessions.
Early Repair		Early repair is a brief awareness two-day group programme for fathers identified as using abuse (physical and/or emotional and/or coercive control). Early Repair is for fathers who are assessed as being a lower risk in accordance with the Tower Hamlets risk matrix. Professional referrals only.

Triple P discussion groups

For parents of children aged 2-11 years

- Encouraging positive behaviour
- Managing fighting and aggression
- Developing good bedtime routines
- Hassle-free mealtimes with children

For parents of children aged 12-18 years

- Coping with teenagers' emotions
- Reducing family conflict
- Getting teenagers to co-operate
- Building teenagers' survival skills

Get in touch

Email: parenting@towerhamlets.gov.uk Tel: 020 7364 6398

To book a place or to make a referral download a referral form, scan the QR code or visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentingprogrammes



Let's Talk SEND Updates and Information

Information on previous and upcoming Let's Talk SEND events and updates on the borough's SEND improvement journey can be found at

www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/local-offer/send/let-s-talk-send



TERMS

SENCOs are also referred to as SENDCOs (Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinators) in some schools.

SENDIASS refers to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service.



Scan the QR code or click [here](#) for the SEND Improvement Board Annual Report 2021.

Let's Talk SEND – Post-16 Options event

The Tower Hamlets SEN department and Tower Hamlets and City SENDIASS hosted a Let's Talk SEND Post-16 Options event on 13 May at the Brady Arts and Community Centre.

A large number of parents, carers and young people with SEND attended to take the opportunity to meet senior leaders and to hear from a wide range of professionals and services about the support available as their children enter adulthood.

James Thomas, Corporate Director of Children and Culture, presented an update on the SEND Improvement Plan following the Ofsted report, highlighting areas that have been addressed.

The presentations included information on the following topics:

- [Let's Talk SEND Post-16 Presentation - Written Statement of Action](#)
- [Transition from CAMHS \(Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services\) to Adult Mental Health Services](#)
- [Speech and Language Therapy](#)
- [Preparing for Adulthood](#)
- [Pathways to Employment](#)



Corporate Director of Children and Culture, James Thomas presenting information to parents and carers at the Let's Talk SEND Post-16 Options event

- [Project Search – Supported Internships](#)
- [Our Time All Ability Youth Forum information](#)



To view the presentations and for more information on the event, visit the [Local Offer](#) or scan the QR code.

Let us know what you would like to see in our next 'Spotlight On...' as part of the termly Let's Talk SEND supplement. Email parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk

More information on the support available to families can be found at www.towerhamletsandcitysendiass.com



Let's Talk SEND transition event success

Over 130 parents, carers and young people attended a Let's Talk SEND transition event in May.

Arranged by the Tower Hamlets and City SEND Information Advice and Support Services (SENDIASS), parents and carers of children in school years four and five, were invited to hear about the progress on pathways to adulthood and transition work that supports children with Education, Health and Care Plans.

The interactive session gave families an opportunity to hear from representatives across health, education and social care about the support services available in the borough.

Senior leaders gave an update on the progress of the SEND improvement plan and the steps that are being undertaken. There were question and answer sessions that gave parents and carers an opportunity to voice their questions, opinions and concerns.

Numerous SENCOs from secondary schools across the borough were invited to interact with parents and give information relating to SEND and what help is available. The event gained a lot of positive feedback from parents and carers as it equipped them with vital information relating to transitioning into secondary schools.

Many thanks to the Tower Hamlets and City SENDIASS team, managed by Jenny Miller, for a successful event.

For more information email
towerhamlets&city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Sornnaly's 'spot on' presentation at summit

A big shout out to Sornnaly Hossain, Chair of Our Time All Ability Forum who attended the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA) Annual SEND Summit at City Guildhall in March. The summit was for strategic SEND managers from across London to come together and hear from the Department for Education on how the proposed changes to the SEND system will be implemented and how outcomes for children in London can be improved.



Sornnaly delivered a presentation to over 100 senior managers. She outlined the parts of the SEND Improvement Plan that the forum agreed with as well as highlighted areas that they had concerns about. The presentation was very well received and praised for its honest appraisal of the plan.

“

We greatly appreciated Sornnaly's open views on the plan. The challenge on the lack of detail on how it will be delivered was spot on.

Frank Offer
 SEND & Commissioning Lead, LIIA

”

Join Our Time Youth Forum

Our Time is an all-ability forum for young people with SEND. The purpose of the forum is to make changes to the SEND support system, meet new people, and gain new experiences.

Becoming part of Our Time is a great way to build confidence, find out more about SEND and promote inclusion for all young people.

There are lots of opportunities for Our Time members, like becoming a volunteer, attending events and even going to trips.

To find out more, visit
www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/young_peoples_zone



Swimming lessons for children with autism

A year-long pilot swim programme is currently underway to support primary school aged children with autism in Tower Hamlets. Funded by the Sports Development Team in partnership with Love to Swim, the project is taking place at St Luke's Primary School on the Isle of Dogs.

Sessions take place once a week on Monday evenings at 5.15pm although other days and locations are planned. As the project is funded, pupils can benefit from participating in a block of lessons at just £2 per session. The school teaching pool is ideal for delivering lessons to pupils who may need extra support in the water.

For more information, please contact Jesse at admin@lovetoswim.co.uk
www.lovetoswim.co.uk/autism-swim.html

Coffee morning

Are you a parent or carer of a child or young person (aged 0-25) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities?

Come and meet other parents/carers and enjoy some tea, coffee and biscuits.

Limited crèche available, call to book.

Every Friday,
9.30-11.30am
Term time only

John Smith Children
and Family Centre
90 Stepney Way, E1 2EN
020 7364 0537



OAP/Inclusion Framework document

Tower Hamlets Council is delighted to announce it is engaging in a new initiative, in partnership with the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) and key individuals (stakeholders) across Education, Health, and Social Care, to co-produce a Tower Hamlets Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) document or Inclusion Framework.

The aim of this initiative is to co-produce a document which sets out what must be made ordinarily available for pupils with SEND attending mainstream school settings in the borough.

The document will support schools to reflect on how their inclusive practice and early intervention benefits all children and young people, including those with SEND, as well as agree a set of expectations to help improve consistency and practice across all school settings to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND.

The aim is for the document to also signpost to key services, guidance, and training to support schools to develop their capacity for inclusion.

While this document is aimed at professionals, the intention is that it will also support parents/carers and children and young people with SEND to better understand the support provided for those without an Education, Health and Care Plan in mainstream schools.

Initial meetings to discuss content and begin constructing the document are due to happen during the summer term.

If any parents/carers or children and young people would like to be involved in this initiative, please contact Lindsey Kelly, SEND Inclusion Advisor for Tower Hamlets for more information.

Lindsey Kelly
SEND Inclusion Advisor
Learning Advisory Service
Email: lindsey.kelly@towerhamlets.gov.uk

SEND family fun day and information event

Parents and carers attended a family fun day and information event, with fun activities for families to enjoy, including arts and crafts, at St Paul's Bow Common in Mile End in June.

Organised by the **Tower Hamlets Independent SEND Parent Forum** and featuring the borough's Parent and Carer Council, parents were able to visit an information marketplace with stalls and updates from education, health and community services that support children with SEND or who have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Parents took the opportunity to book 'bitesize' ten- minute surgeries with the SEN Team and other services that support families who have children with SEND – this was a suggestion made by parents at a **'Let's Talk SEND'** information event held last November.

The event was focused on providing information to families who have children with SEND but all Tower Hamlets families were welcome to attend to gain information and join in with activities on the day.

For more details or to join the Independent SEND Parent Forum email thsendforum@gmail.com or visit www.thsendforum.co.uk

Tower Hamlets Independent SEND Parent Forum



The Tower Hamlets Independent SEND Parent Forum is pan-disability. Members work with families and professionals from the council and health services to ensure the views of parents, carers and young people contribute to the design and delivery of services.

Join other parents and carers of children and young people with SEND (0-25 years) for coffee and talk about the issues that are important to you.

For more information, email thsendforum@gmail.com www.thsendforum.co.uk



Young Adult Carers Project

The Tower Hamlets Young Adult Carers Project provides holistic support to young people aged 16 to 25 who live with a family member with a long-term illness, disability or substance abuse issue. Young Adult Carers may suffer from a range of issues including social isolation, mental illness, learning difficulties, behavioural issues and reduced academic outcomes. The project provides:

- A support worker to help with personal issues
- A weekly social group that meets on Wednesday evenings
- Monthly day trips/outings
- Short breaks, including weekends away
- Youth-centred counselling
- Support for domestic abuse
- Benefits advice
- Small grants of up to £300
- Advocacy

There is now a legal requirement for schools to identify young carers and Carers Centre Tower Hamlets can help schools provide carers with the support they need.

For more information or to refer a young person, please contact Ben Phillips, Young Adult Carers Project Co-ordinator, Carers Centre Tower Hamlets
Email: benjamin@ccth.org.uk
Tel: 07869 387 665
www.ccth.org.uk/services-for-carers/young-adult-carers

Summer events and activities programme returns this year

Teenagers, children and families can look forward to another summer of fun this year. Council parks, sports and art centres, and youth teams, together with children and family centres and Idea Stores, are gearing up to host a variety of exciting activities in partnership with community organisations during the school summer holiday.

The council is putting the finishing touches to the programme, which promises to offer a variety of free activities for families of all ages and backgrounds.

This year's parks programme will include adventure play sessions, arts and crafts, growing and planting, nature activities and more. Victoria Park will host nature-based and



outdoor activities throughout the school holidays.

All Points East In The Neighbourhood will also return to Victoria Park this August. Put on in partnership with the council, the local community

and local organisations, the free, four-day programme offers activities and entertainment for all ages, including outdoor cinema screenings, children's theatre, music, sport, wellbeing sessions and more.

For the complete timetable, visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/summerevents

Thousands visit the Festival of Communities

The annual Festival of Communities returned in June, attracting thousands of residents to the two action-packed days of fun for people of all ages.

Hosted by Queen Mary University of London and Tower Hamlets community groups and organisations, the festival gave visitors a chance to engage with the latest research through games, sports, crafts and other family-friendly activities and events.

The Parental Engagement Team delivered creative activities for children and families on the theme of 'celebrating summer' at Stepney Park.

For more information visit www.qmul.ac.uk/festival





A Team Arts Education Summer Programme

Take part in courses this summer holiday on the themes of community and heritage. Aimed at young people who live, study or work in Tower Hamlets, the courses are FREE and are being delivered at the Brady Arts and Community Centre, 192-196 Hanbury Street, E1 5HU.

For more information, visit www.towerhamletsarts.org.uk/?cid=76243

Textiles Crafts and Design

Induction Day: Saturday 22 July, 11am-4pm

Monday 24 – Friday 28 July 2023

10.30am-4.30pm

AGES: 14-18 years

This programme provides opportunities to discover new materials, processes, and global techniques. The Prince's Foundation, Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London and craft practitioners will provide support, practical skills, knowledge and advice into studying options at all levels.

What is Art and Design?

Induction Day: Saturday 29 July, 11am-4pm

Monday 31 July – Friday 4 August

10.30am-4.30pm

AGES: 11-13 years

Students will work across different art forms in a friendly and fun environment.

Create a Sketchbook

Induction Day: Saturday 5 August, 11am-4pm

Monday 7 – Friday 11 August

10.30am-4.30pm

AGES: 14-16 years

This course will help students understand how to develop a sketchbook. It will generate inspiration for independent learning and sketchbook development.

Film Making and Animation

Induction Day: Saturday 12 August, 11am-4pm

Monday 14 – Friday 18 August

10.30am-4.30pm

AGES: 13-16 years

An introduction to stop motion animation, supported by Alexander McQueen Design Team and alumni from Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. It will enable young people to get hands-on experience in animation.

To book an A Team Arts Education summer programme course

Email: ateamartseducation@gmail.com Tel: 07956 377 537

Spaces are limited. Course booking deadline: Monday 17 July
Taster sessions available for some courses on Saturday 1, 8, and 16 July.



TOWER HAMLETS

Holiday Childcare Scheme

Ages
3-13
years old

The Tower Hamlets Childcare Scheme offers Ofsted registered childcare.
020 7364 0523

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs

Summer Scheme
24 July to
18 August
2023

Bookings
now open



TOWER HAMLETS

South West Locality Partnership presents

Family Hub Networking Event

Wednesday 5 July 2023, 2pm-5pm
Ocean Children and Family Centre
Whitehorse Road, London E1 0ND

Come along and network with our friendly partners and join us for a day of fun filled activities including: Face painting, bouncy castle, arts and crafts, head and neck massage, smoothie bike, freebies

There will be a range of information stalls including: Health Awareness, Training and Volunteering, Youth Provision, Schools and Settings

Refreshments provided.
All activities are free and everyone is welcome.
No Booking required. If you have any questions please call the centre on **020 7364 0537**.

Summer Reading Challenge 2023

Ready, Set, Read!

Register online free at
www.ideastore.co.uk/SRC
or come into any Idea Store or library
in Tower Hamlets

**STARTS
SATURDAY
8 JULY!**

First 200 to
register at
each store
receive a Mini
Frisbee!



Young V&A (formerly the V&A Museum of Childhood) will open its doors in Bethnal Green on Saturday 1 July, in time for the summer holidays. Young V&A is a free, national museum where children, young people and families can imagine, play and design. There will also be a family friendly summer festival on the weekend of 8-9 July.

For more information visit www.vam.ac.uk/young

Multiply programme boosts numeracy confidence

The London Multiply programme is a free programme designed to help adults improve their numeracy confidence and skills. The programme, delivered by Idea Store Learning, is for adults aged 19 and over who do not already have a GCSE at grade C in maths.

Multiply courses include:

- Managing your money
- Maths for parents

- Maths for life and work
- Maths for ESOL learners
- Introduction to functional skills maths

Idea Store Learning can work with partners across the borough to deliver Multiply courses and one-off workshops. Courses and workshops can be delivered at your venue as part of a standalone activity or a wider event you are running.



To find out more visit www.ideastore.co.uk/multiply

National Numeracy Day a big success

The Idea Store Team put on a range of activities to raise awareness of National Numeracy Day (Wednesday 17 May).

The programme of activities which took place over a week in Idea Stores across the borough was a great success, with residents engaging in a wide range of activities. These included making draft excluders to save money, planting seeds to grow vegetables and making jewellery.


There were more than 240 entries to the 'Guess the number of sweets' competition. Congratulations to the two competition winners, who are Idea Store adult learners from Lawdale Primary School and John Smith Children and Family Centre. They will both receive a £20 shopping voucher.



www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/News_events/2023/May/Thanks-for-making-National-Numeracy-Day-a-big-success.aspx

Training and events calendar

Parental engagement information and training for parents

DATE/TIME	DESCRIPTION
Tuesdays 11 July 11am-1pm	<p>Somali Parents and Carers Network virtual meetings</p> <p>This network meets monthly and provides opportunities for Somali parents and carers to discuss key issues around education, health and wellbeing, get information and hear from guest speakers.</p> <p>Email: parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk</p>
Thursday 13 July 10am-1.30pm	<p>Annual Parent Conference at the New Town Hall Whitechapel</p> <p>Save the date. Further information on how schools can book places for parents will be available shortly.</p>
Friday 14 July 10-11am	<p>Platform to Talk – Good Start at Secondary School</p> <p>Help children get off to the best possible start at secondary school by attending this online session. Learn how to help children manage any anxiety they may be feeling about their new school and pick up some practical tips so that everything goes as smoothly as possible in September.</p> <p>To book your place scan the QR code or click here. For more details, email parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk</p> 
Thursdays Fortnightly Term time only 10am-12noon	<p>SEND Parent Support Group</p> <p>This group offers parents and carers of children or young people with SEND, support and information around key themes/relevant issues and an opportunity to meet other parents and carers of children with SEND.</p> <p>Email: towerhamlets&city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk</p>

Other events to look out for from the Parent and Family Support Service

DESCRIPTION
<p>Let's Talk SEND: Information Sessions for Families</p> <p>An opportunity for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND to hear from senior leaders about the Local Area SEND system and find out more about plans following the SEND Local Area Inspection. Parents and carers can also share their experiences to help improve communication throughout the SEND system.</p> <p>Email: towerhamlets&city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk</p>
<p>Healthy Families End of Year Celebration Event</p> <p>Further information on how parents can book places will be available shortly.</p>

For more information contact the Parental Engagement Team on **020 7364 6398**
or email parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Induction to other agencies

These are bite-sized sessions that introduce professionals to a range of organisations that can help in your work with families. To book your session visit www.learninghub.towerhamlets.gov.uk/index.php and enter 'Induction to other agencies' in the search bar.

DATE/TIME	DESCRIPTION
Tuesday 25 July 26 September 2-3.30pm	Induction to Eva Armsby Family Centre An overview of the centre's three main areas of work – the Positive Change Service, working with those affected by domestic abuse, the Parenting Assessment Service and the Contact Service.

For more information, contact Marie Larvin. Email: marie.larvin@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Useful contacts



For a list of local and national advice services, providing free information for Tower Hamlets residents on welfare benefits, debt, housing and other matters, scan the QR code or visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/advice

Specialist advice agencies and solicitors firms also provide legal aid services to eligible clients.

Your guide to information and services for families in Tower Hamlets

LOCAL OFFER
 @thlocaloffer
localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk



Guide to information and services in Tower Hamlets for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and **all** families in the borough



Support for Ukrainian families

For information on the support available for Ukrainian families who have recently arrived in the borough, including information on the Barnardo's Ukrainian Support Helpline, visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/homesforukraine



Help for households

The government is offering help for households.

To find out what cost of living support you could be eligible for visit www.gov.uk/helpforhouseholds



Read the latest edition of the Families Matter magazine and monthly e-bulletin online at www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/familiesmatter