

Summer 2023

## 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](http://www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/local-offer/send/let-s-talk-send)



FamiliesMatter

### 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](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

More information on the support available to families can be found at [www.towerhamletsandcitysendiass.com](http://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](mailto: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.

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**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

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## 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](http://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](mailto:admin@lovetoswim.co.uk)  
[www.lovetoswim.co.uk/autism-swim.html](http://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](mailto: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 [thesendforum@gmail.com](mailto:thesendforum@gmail.com) or visit [www.thesendforum.co.uk](http://www.thesendforum.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 [thesendforum@gmail.com](mailto:thesendforum@gmail.com) [www.thesendforum.co.uk](http://www.thesendforum.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](mailto:benjamin@ccth.org.uk)  
Tel: 07869 387 665  
[www.ccth.org.uk/services-for-carers/young-adult-carers](http://www.ccth.org.uk/services-for-carers/young-adult-carers)