

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



SEND inspection update

The Tower Hamlets Local Area SEND Inspection took place between Monday 9 June and Friday 27 June. Inspectors from Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) met with our staff, reviewed information, and spoke to our children, young people, parents, carers, and professionals as part of the process.

As well as looking at how well services across Tower Hamlets – including council, education, social care and health services – work together to support our children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and their families, inspectors were particularly focused on the experiences and outcomes of our children and young people with SEND and how we listen to and act upon the voice of the child.

I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has been involved in the inspection process, especially our parents, carers and young people who took the time to complete surveys and meet with inspectors.

Although the process proved to be an intense three weeks, it's been a genuinely positive experience with a great deal of learning. We expect the final report to be published in the autumn, and we will share this with you once available.

Steve Reddy
Corporate Director,
Children's Services



Let us know what you would like to see in the next 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



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.

Parents – 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.

New parent led group for local SEND parents

Raising a child with complex needs can often feel isolating, especially when those around you don't fully understand the daily challenges involved. For one east London mum, this sense of isolation became a turning point.

Sabha is the parent of five-year-old Yahya, who was born with a rare genetic condition. Yahya is deaf, blind and lives with several additional needs. While surrounded by friends and family, Sabha often found herself unable to speak freely about her experiences. She felt she had to hold back, worried that others wouldn't relate.

It was only in the company of other parents of children with SEND that she began to feel truly seen and heard. These connections brought comfort and a space where she could speak freely without judgement. Inspired by this, Sabha launched a local coffee group, specifically for SEND parents and carers, called Chat and Chai.

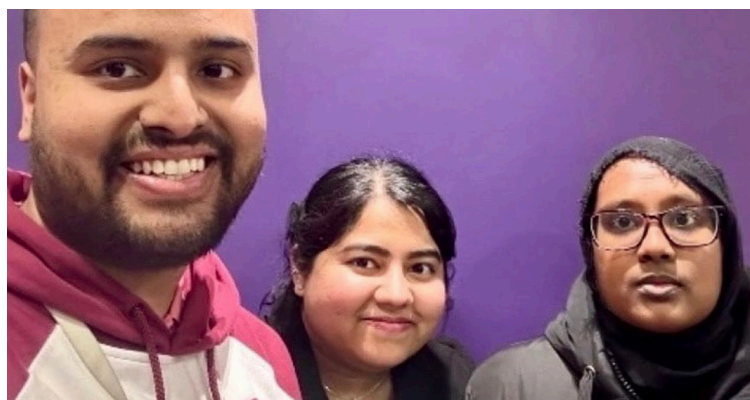
The idea is simple – a welcoming space to come together over a cup of tea, with no pressure to talk unless you want to. The group offers an opportunity to share experiences, exchange advice, or just be in the company of others who understand the realities of raising a child with additional needs.

The group is currently meeting on the last Friday of the month, during term time.



To find out more or to join the group, email sabha.khan@hotmail.co.uk
If you have specific questions about anything related to your child's needs
please call the SENDIASS Advice Line 020 7364 6489.

Our Time inclusive all-ability youth forum



Our Time is an all-ability youth forum, run for and by young people between the ages of 14-25 with special educational needs and disabilities.

It has been set up so that young people can:

- Get their voices heard
- Gain new experiences and skills
- Meet new people and build confidence
- Find out about their rights
- Raise awareness and campaign for change

For more details or to join the forum, email ourtimeyf@gmail.com

Let's Talk SEND event: Navigating autism and social communication differences in young children

The Let's Talk SEND Waiting Well ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) event was held in May at the Town Hall and was attended by over 140 parents and professionals.

Organised by Barts Health NHS Trust in partnership with the council, the event aimed to support parents and carers of children aged 0-7, regardless of whether their child had received a formal diagnosis or not.

The event, designed to empower parents through community engagement, began with attendees visiting information stalls and meeting service providers. A presentation followed which offered guidance on the SEND system and provided updates from services.



Representatives from the NHS, education sector, Parent Carer Forums and SEND teams were on hand to share advice and guidance on local resources, early support and inclusion

pathways. The event ended with more opportunities for families to speak directly with professionals and connect with one another in a relaxed and supportive environment.



For more details and to find out about upcoming Let's Talk SEND events, click [here](#) or scan the QR code.

Inclusive family swimming sessions at Tiller Leisure Centre

Tiller Leisure Centre are hosting swimming sessions for families with children up to 16 years who have special educational needs or disabilities. The centre is wheelchair accessible and has accessible changing facilities.

The sessions are not instructor led so children must be accompanied by an adult with a maximum of two children per adult.

Sessions

Saturdays, 12-12.45pm and 1-1.45pm

Sundays, 12-12.45pm and 1-1.45pm

Tiller Leisure Centre, E14 8PX



Booking required. Visit www.be-well.org.uk/family-sen-swimming-sessions

Support for dads to get involved with their child's learning

A session is being held for dads and male carers of children with SEND to help them get involved with their child's learning. The session is being delivered by the SENDIASS team and will include tips, advice and support, including:

- How to support their child's learning at home
- Effective communication strategies with teachers
- Fun activities to do with their child
- Resources and support available for SEND families.

Wednesday 6 August, 10-11.30am
Ocean Children and Family Centre,
Whitehorse Road, E1 0ND



For more information, email mark.penn@towerhamlets.gov.uk
 or call 07858 689 243



SEND Support Group

- Come and meet other parents
- Share information
- Younger children welcome
- Monthly guest speakers
- No diagnosis needed

For more information contact:

Tower Hamlets & City SEND IASS, 30 Greatorex Street,
 Whitechapel, London E1 5NP

☎ 020 7364 6489

✉ TowerHamlets&City.SENDIASS@towerhamlets.gov.uk

🐦 @TH_IASS

🌐 www.towerhamletsandcitysendiass.com



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, call 07498 573872 or email thesendforum@gmail.com
www.thsendforum.co.uk

SEND play at the Young V&A's Mini Museum

Children and their carers are invited to enjoy a session on **Saturday 2 August, 10.30am-12pm** to explore sensory materials at the Mini Museum at the Young V&A's Play Gallery. It is open to children of any age with additional sensory needs.

Other sensory-friendly sessions

- Sensory Friendly Storytelling for Families
Fridays, 25 July, 1, 8 and 15 August
10.15-11.15am
The Stage, Imagine Gallery
Free, pre-booking via website
- Sensory Friendly Studio for Families
Thursday 28 August
11am-12.30pm and 2-3.30pm
Community Room
Free, pre-booking via website



Visit www.vam.ac.uk/festival/2025/summer-school-holiday-at-young-va
or email yvalearningevent@vam.ac.uk

Tower Hamlets new SEND and Inclusion Strategy

The new Tower Hamlets SEND and Inclusion Strategy sets out the priorities the Local Area SEND Partnership will work towards over the next five years. These priorities were developed in discussion with young people, parents, carers and the professionals who make up the SEND Local Area workforce.

The improvements

- Clearer emphasis of the role of the SEND partnership
- Better sharing of outcomes for children and young people with SEND
- More commitment to alternative provision for children and young people with SEND
- More effective performance measures

The priorities

- Timely, effective and well-coordinated support
- User-friendly services and early identification
- Support for the under-fives
- Effective education and support for school-age children with SEND
- Opportunities and support for young adults with SEND
- Children and young people with SEND are celebrated, valued and supported to thrive

Read the full strategy [here](#)
or scan the QR code.



Sensory Station fun day for SEND families

Over the second May bank holiday, the Sensory Station made its debut at the Tarling East Community Centre. The idea was born in 2023, when SEND Parent Ambassador, Tahmina Choudhury, attended Queen Mary University's Festival of Communities, and noted the lack of inclusive activities for SEND families. Teaming up with fellow Ambassador, Suhela Khatun-Hussein, and Our Time Youth Forum, the group planned to launch the Sensory Station at the next festival, but when Queen Mary cancelled the event, the team faced a setback.

Determined to make the project a reality, Tahmina and Suhela successfully applied for a Communities Keeping Well grant from NHS North East London. The funding enabled them to host the Sensory Station fun day, which welcomed 62 families from across the borough. The event featured a bubble machine, themed sensory boards, sensory activities and a goodie bag for families to take home. It is hoped that this will become an annual event in the borough.



For more information, email sendparentambassadors@gmail.com

Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Workshop

The Tower Hamlets & City SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) are delivering a workshop for parents to provide key information about the EHCP process, including:

- What is an EHCP?
- What is the purpose?
- What is the process?
- What makes a good EHCP?

Wednesday 3 September, 9am-1pm
John Smith Family Hub
90 Stepney Way, E1 2ES

For more information or to book a place call 020 7364 6489 or email towerhamlets&city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk