

# Families Matter

A magazine full of news and information to support families  
Featuring the SEND Information Supplement

## Celebrating family learning



Read all about the Parental Engagement Team's family learning workshops in schools, including the newly developed Reading for Pleasure and Family Science Lab workshops, see pages 5-7.

Read the latest edition of the Families Matter magazine and monthly e-bulletin online at  
[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/familiesmatter](http://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 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 us at [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk) 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

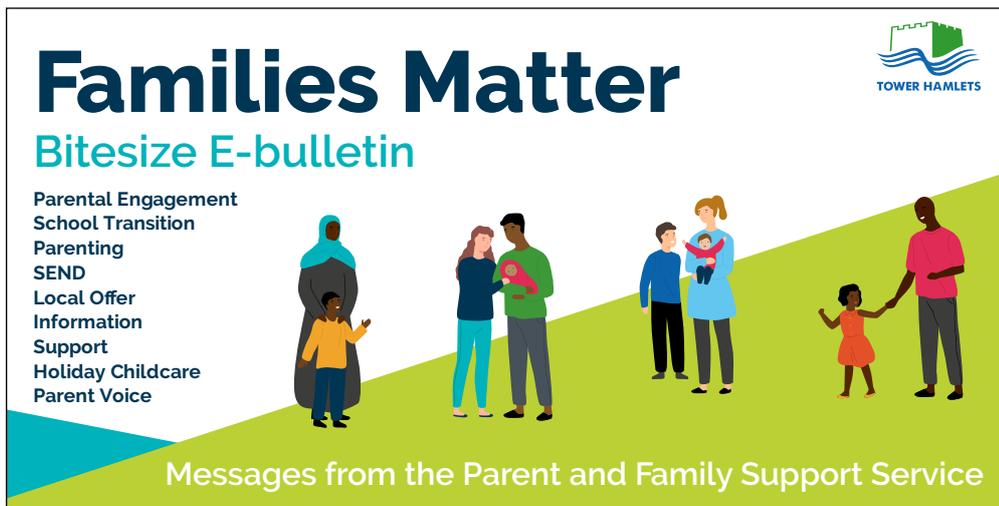
If you are working with families in the borough, sign up to the Parental Engagement Team's network mailing list to be emailed the latest news and information to support your work. Encourage your colleagues to sign up too.

Email: [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/signup)

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

**Fiona Stokes, Parental Engagement Advisor**

Tel: **020 7364 6049**

Email: [fiona.stokes@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:fiona.stokes@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

*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 Family Science Lab workshop for schools

The Parental Engagement Team have been adding to their offer of curriculum-based learning sessions for schools with a new science-based workshop – the Family Science Lab.

The workshop provides insight into science learning in the Early Years and Key Stage 1 and the chance for parents to help their children to develop key scientific skills such as observation, prediction, and experimentation.

Families from **St Peter's London Docks Church of England Primary School** were the first to participate, with their classroom being turned into a science lab.

Parents worked alongside the children on experiments that demonstrated how materials can change their properties based on how they are manipulated through bending, twisting, squeezing or squashing.

For more details and to book a Family Science Lab session for your school, email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Bags of creativity

Parents from **Morpeth** and **Bow Secondary Schools** developed their creative skills on an introductory sewing course, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team.

During the course, parents learned the basics of sewing by making a tote bag. They developed their design skills and enjoyed exploring how to combine recycled materials and visual elements, such as colours and pattern, to create striking bags that they were proud of.



To find out more or to book a sewing course for your school or setting, email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)



## Parental engagement at Bow and Bishop Challoner Secondary Schools

### Coffee morning success at Bow

**Bow Parents Forum** have been building on the success of recent parental engagement activities by establishing a regular fortnightly coffee morning.

The first coffee morning was held in April. It gave parents the chance to share ideas, get to know each other, build a strong school community and keep informed about upcoming events.

### Parental engagement at Bishop Challoner

**Bishop Challoner Secondary School** is enjoying an energised approach to parental engagement with the appointment of a new Family Support

Practitioner from the Parental Engagement Team. Fahmida Begum has taken up the role and will support parents at the school to:

- Engage in their child's learning
- Work with school staff
- Improve family relationships and enhance parenting skills.

Fahmida will be delivering workshops and information sessions as well as providing one-to-one support and hosting informal coffee mornings. Her first coffee morning was held in April, where Fahmida was on hand to introduce herself and explain the scope of her role as a Family Support Practitioner. The parents who attended really valued the opportunity to get to know her and share their ideas and concerns.

“

The coffee morning was greatly appreciated by all the parents who attended. The opportunity to meet other parents in such a relaxed and welcoming environment was invaluable.

Shabna, Parent from Bow School



”

“

I look forward to supporting the parents at Bow and Bishop Challoner and developing parental engagement at both schools.

Fahmida Begum  
Family Support Practitioner



”

To find out how a Family Support Practitioner can support your school or setting, email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)



## Reading for pleasure at Old Palace

Parents from **Old Palace Primary School** have been discovering that reading for pleasure is one of the most important factors that contributes to a child's educational success.

The workshop, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, highlighted the importance of reading together for pleasure and the role parents can play in establishing reading as a habit. The parents enjoyed finding out how they can help to develop their child's comprehension skills and get them curious about books.

“

The course was really excellent. I didn't realise how important reading for pleasure is and even though my child can read by themselves, it's still so important to read to them.

Parent from the Reading for Pleasure workshop

”

## Free Transition to Secondary School programme

This targeted programme is being delivered by the Half Moon Theatre and is for children in Year 6 who will be moving to secondary school this September. It will be offered in four locations across the borough.

As part of the interactive programme, children will enjoy free access to after school clubs, a free summer school and then free after school drama clubs until they are in Year 9.

The children will develop their critical thinking and decision-making skills through drama.

The programme runs from 10 June to 11 July, 4-6pm at these locations:

- Mondays – Bernie Cameron Centre, E3 4LX
- Tuesdays – The Reach Hub, E14 0GB
- Wednesdays – Sundial Centre, E2 7RU
- Thursdays – Half Moon Theatre, E1 0ND

For more details on the programme, visit [www.halfmoon.org.uk/next-steps](http://www.halfmoon.org.uk/next-steps)

# Careers information and advice

Young WorkPath is a council service that works with young people aged 13 to 19, or up to age 25 if they have a special educational need or a disability (SEND).

It provides careers information, advice and guidance about the options and next steps available to help young people reach their goals.

Young Workpath continues to support young people during A-level, BTEC, T level and GCSE results days. The team of advisers will be available in schools and colleges on the morning of A-level and GCSE results day. Leaflets will also be sent to schools beforehand for students.

Young people can drop into the Young Workpath Centre at Idea Store Watney Market on **Thursday 15 August** and **Thursday 22 August, 2-4.30pm**. Alternatively, career interviews can also be offered over the phone or via video.



**YOUNG TOWER HAMLETS  
WORKPATH**  
CONNECTING PEOPLE TO POTENTIAL

For further details of where to find Young Workpath, contact:

Email: [youngworkpath@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:youngworkpath@towerhamlets.gov.uk) Tel: 0800 3581 2410 or 020 7364 1401  
[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/youngworkpath](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/youngworkpath)

## New Post-16 Prospectus published

The latest version of the Tower Hamlets Post-16 Prospectus has just been published. It is written for students who will complete Year 11 this summer.

It showcases a range of courses and opportunities provided by post-16 providers across the borough.

It is designed to help young people make informed choices about their next steps and includes information about all the schools and colleges in Tower Hamlets, as well as specialist providers outside the borough.

It also includes information on how to apply to university, the route to apprenticeships and what financial support is available, such as bursaries.

The prospectus can be downloaded at [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/youngworkpath](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/youngworkpath).

**Progressing to Post-16 in Tower Hamlets in 2024**

A guide for Year 11 students and their parents and carers

**THE Partnership** **TOWER HAMLETS**

# Parent volunteer celebration

A special graduation celebration was held in May at the Parents Advice Centre for parent volunteers who completed the Volunteering in Your Child's School course.

The event was organised by the Parental Engagement Team, who have been successfully delivering the course for the past 12 years. Denise DeGoze, Interim Head of the Parent and Family Support Service, welcomed parents from **Marion Richardson Primary School, E1 Partnership schools** and from a universal volunteer course funded by **ICON College**.

The parent volunteers were awarded their certificates by Steve Reddy, Corporate Director, Children's Services, and Lisa Fraser, Director of Education. This event was an opportunity to celebrate all that the parent volunteers have achieved and the valuable contributions they are making to schools in Tower Hamlets.



Parent volunteers from the universal course offered by ICON college receiving their certificates



Parent volunteers from Marion Richardson Primary School receiving their certificates



E1 Partnership parent volunteers receiving their certificates

“

It is important to recognise the high success rate of this valuable course and the number of participants who go on to secure paid employment. I was so impressed with the confidence demonstrated by the parent volunteers.



Steve Reddy, Corporate Director of Children's Services

”

# 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.

The partnership is formed of seven primary schools (**Thomas Buxton, Osmani, Stewart Headlam, Hague, Canon Barnett, Kobi Nazrul and William Davis**) and one secondary school (**Swanlea**). It supports parents by providing volunteering placements at its schools.

It has also helped the latest cohort of parents to prepare for their volunteer roles by offering them a place on the Volunteering in Your Child's School course, which was held at **Hague Primary School**.

The Open College Network accredited course, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, provides new parent volunteers with a solid foundation so that they feel ready for their volunteer roles.



Parent volunteer, **Shamina Khanom**, on the volunteering course

“

The course helped me to know how to support children's learning. I now feel confident to start volunteering at school.

Hasan Raja, E1 Partnership parent volunteer

”

“

The volunteer course helped build my confidence and has prepared me for future work in education.

Shamina Khanom, E1 Partnership parent volunteer

”



Parent volunteer, **Hasan Raja**, on the volunteering course

## 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 (OCN) 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 role as a volunteer 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](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

# 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	ELIGIBILITY	INFORMATION
<b>Early Repair</b>	All fathers and male carers	Early repair is a brief awareness two-day group programme for fathers identified as using abuse (physical and/or emotional and/or coercive control). It is for fathers who are assessed as being a lower risk in accordance with the Tower Hamlets risk matrix. Professional referrals only.
<b>Emotional First Aid</b>	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.
<b>Family Transitions</b>	All parents	For parents who have experienced separation or divorce to learn how to co-parent effectively and to learn strategies for how to deal with the loss of their relationship with their ex-partner.
<b>Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities</b>	2-18 years	Aims to increase parental self-esteem and confidence and reduce child behavioural difficulties.
<b>Speakeasy</b>	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.
<b>Triple P for Baby</b>	0-12 months	To prepare parents for a positive transition into parenthood and the first year with baby promoting sensitive and responsive care.
<b>Triple P Group</b>	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.
<b>Triple P Teen</b>	12-18 years	For parents who wish to build positive relationships with their teens, increase self-confidence and develop their skills to communicate more effectively with their teens.

### 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](mailto: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](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentingprogrammes)



# Digital Safety Parent Ambassadors

In a digital age when children are facing increased online risks, innovative approaches are needed. This is why the new Digital Safety Parent Ambassador programme has been set up. The programme aims to foster a culture of digital responsibility and nurture a generation of informed parents who have the tools to help keep children safe online.

The new ambassadors met for their first training session, delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, at the Town Hall.

The training explored topics such as cyberbullying, online privacy and internet safety,



equipping the ambassadors with the skills needed to support parents at **Globe Primary School**.

The training gave them a better awareness of online dangers and the confidence

to support other parents when tackling these issues head-on. Empowered by the strategies and resources the training provided, the ambassadors are now poised to be advocates for digital safety within the community.

To find out more or to become a Digital Safety Parent Ambassador, email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Platform to Talk – workshops for parents

Platform to Talk, the online discussion-based sessions delivered by the Parental Engagement Team, provide a safe space for parents to come together, share their experiences and get reliable information. The programme covers a range of issues that matter to parents or relate to national awareness dates.

### Growing up and change

**Wednesday  
12 June  
10-11am**

Join this session to discover how to talk to children about growing up, the changes happening in their bodies and relationships.

Parents will get an insight into the pressures children face and pick up some important tips to help keep them safe.



### Good start at secondary school

**Friday 12 July  
10-11am**

Help your child get off to the best possible start at secondary school by attending this informative session.

Parents will learn how to help their child 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.



For more details and to book your place, email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

# Additional support for parents of children aged 0-2 years

The first 1,001 days of a child's life is such a crucial time in their development. To provide extra support, the Department for Education (DfE) has made funding available to develop or deliver programmes for parents of children aged 0-2 years.

The Parental Engagement Team have successfully received some of this funding to develop and deliver the following programmes:

## Get Talking

In this three-part workshop, which was delivered at **Marion Richardson's Early Years site** and **Alice Model Nursery School**, parents learned about the importance of communicating with their baby or toddler, even before they can speak.

They discovered playful ways to encourage communication and interaction that are the foundations to early language development.



## Get Mark-making

In this workshop, delivered at **Columbia Market Nursery School**, parents learned how mark-making is a crucial phase in their baby's journey towards writing.

They discovered ways they can help their baby or toddler develop the strength in their hands, fingers and wrists required for mark-making that will eventually help when they begin to explore letter formation.



## Healthy Families

These specialist workshops for parents of children aged 0-2 were delivered in children and family centres across the borough.

The sessions explored how good early nutrition gives children the best start in life. Parents learned ways to introduce fruit and vegetables into their child's diet and ways to establish good eating habits even at this early stage in their development.



## Triple P for Baby

This parenting programme provided parents-to-be and new parents with some useful tips to help them adjust to life with their new baby.

Parents who attended the eight-week programme, delivered in children's and family centres, discovered ways to build a close relationship with their baby and support their development, learning and well-being.



For more details and to book one of these programmes for your setting, email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

# Triple P for Baby at Overland

Practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team have successfully delivered the latest addition to their parenting programme, Triple P for Baby, at **Overland Children and Family Centre**.

The programme was open to parents-to-be or new parents with a baby aged up to 12 months. Over the course, the parents picked up some tips to help them adjust to life with their new baby. They also discovered ways to build a close relationship with their baby and support their development.

“

The course was great and helped make things much calmer for me. It helped me realise that the things we are going through as new parents are normal.

Anna, Triple P for Baby participant

”



Anna receiving her certificate from the Triple P for Baby course

For more details or to secure a place on the next course, email [PAE@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:PAE@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Family Hubs – the right help at the right time

Family Hubs are a new way of bringing together all the support a family may need, from pregnancy through to young people turning 19 (or 25 if they have SEND).

Tower Hamlets vision is for Family Hubs to operate as a network of services that includes health, education, housing, council and the voluntary sector.

These services work together to provide high quality, whole-family, joined up support, ensuring that children, young people and families get the right help at the right time.



For more details, visit [www.thfamilyhubs.co.uk](http://www.thfamilyhubs.co.uk)

# Building better relationships: free online support for parents

Relationship experts at OnePlusOne have devised a range of online support for parents which Tower Hamlets residents can access for free. Their online courses help parents learn how to cope with stress and communicate better.

Courses include:

- **Arguing better**

For anyone looking to learn how to cope better with stress and deal with arguments in a healthy way.

- **Getting it right for children**

To help separated or separating parents learn to manage conflict and minimise the impact it has on their children.

- **Me, You and Baby Too**

To help new and expecting parents navigate the changes that happen in their relationship when a baby arrives.



To find out more or to register for one of the courses, visit:

[www.oneplusone.org.uk/parents](http://www.oneplusone.org.uk/parents)

## Getting on Better – free resource cards for parents

Free hand out cards to help reduce conflict and improve communication are available to help parents who are together or separated get along better.

The Getting on Better cards, devised by relationship experts at OnePlusOne, help parents to think about how they communicate and the effect this can have on their relationships.

Schools and professionals who work with families can find out more about the cards by contacting their local children and family centre. Parents can also get a pack of cards at their local children and family centre: [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/childrenandfamilycentres](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/childrenandfamilycentres)

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



# Children and families safeguarding services merge

The Early Help Hub and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) have merged to create one integrated team – the Multi-Agency Support Team.

This new team of professionals will be responsible for all aspects of safeguarding children and family support in Tower Hamlets.

The merger has happened in response to the recommendations from the Greater London Authority peer review that took place in 2022. The team will ensure that children, young people and their families receive the right

service at the right time, preventing confusion and making it easier to access services.

They are now operating from the Town Hall in Whitechapel and a new pathway for referrals has been developed. The new single pathway has replaced the two previous pathways for the Early Help Hub and MASH. This will ensure a more joined-up approach between services.

For more information on the children and families safeguarding services merger, scan the QR code or click [here](#).



## Restorative Practice: Learn more about the 'Better Together' framework

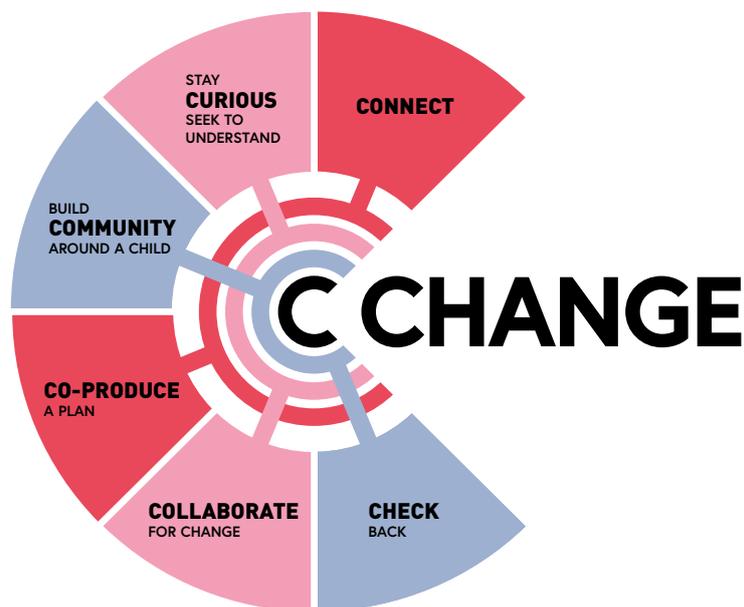
In 2022, the Supporting Families Division (which includes the Early Help Service, Youth Justice and Young People's Service and Children's Social Care) launched the 'Better Together' framework. This sets out how staff in the division work with children, their carers and people involved in the network of support. The framework is based on restorative practice as well as drawing on some systemic and trauma Informed ideas.

The framework's C-Change approach:

- **Connect**
- Be **Curious**
- Build a **Community** around the child
- **Co-produce** plans with those affected by them
- **Collaborate** to bring about change
- **Check** back to see if it's making a difference

The framework's commitments

- Be open and honest
- Listen to understand
- Value families' experiences
- Work to prevent harm and repair damage
- Empower people with support



If you interact with workers in the Supporting Families Division and would like to know more about their 'Better Together' framework, or see how some of the restorative ideas could be applied in your work, join the:

**Introduction to Better Together webinar**  
**Wednesday 12 June**  
**2-4pm**



## Ministry of Food cooking session at the Holiday Childcare Scheme

Children from the Holiday Childcare Scheme have been discovering how cooking together can be fun and good for your health. They took part in a special one-off cooking session during the Easter holiday period.

The Ministry of Food session, devised by Jamie Oliver and delivered by trained practitioners from

the Parental Engagement Team, emphasises the benefits of preparing your own meals from scratch using fresh ingredients.

The children enjoyed learning some professional knife skills, which they used to chop up ingredients for their sizzling tofu with black bean sauce.

To book your child on the next scheme, visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs)

## Be Well – a new leisure service for Tower Hamlets

The new Be Well leisure service launched in May.

The management of the seven leisure centres in Tower Hamlets has now been brought in-house under the Be Well service and will be focusing on a holistic view of health and wellbeing.

The service aims to increase participation and access for residents, particularly for women and girls, older adults and people living with long-term health conditions.



For more information, visit [www.be-well.org.uk](http://www.be-well.org.uk)



## Emotional First Aid course delivered in Bengali

Parents from **Stepney Park Primary School** attended an Emotional First Aid course, which was delivered for the first time in Bengali.

The course, delivered by Bengali speakers from the Parental Engagement Team, encouraged parents to notice the signs of stress and identify

things that could enhance their emotional wellbeing.

Over the six-week course, parents from the Bengali-speaking community shared their experiences and picked up some practical self-care tips.

To find out more or to book the course for your setting, email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)



## Help shape services for black women's needs

Amplifying the Lived Experience of East London Communities (ALIVE) wants to hear from women of Black African or Black Caribbean heritage living in east London to take part in a study that will shape research and services around their needs.

To find out more email [info@amplifyinglives.com](mailto:info@amplifyinglives.com)  
To take part in the survey, click [here](#)

## App to help children manage their worries

The Lumi Nova app supports children aged seven to 12 years who are experiencing worries or anxiety. It is an adventure game that helps young people to face fears and manage worries. While exploring planets, customising characters and earning treasure, children break down their fears into manageable steps, learning skills that build resilience.

The app may be useful for children who lack the confidence to try new things, struggle to face challenges or have negative thoughts about the future

To find out more, attend one of the upcoming information sessions:

[Information sessions for parents](#)

[Information sessions for professionals](#)

For more information, visit [www.luminova.app](http://www.luminova.app)



## Healthy Families at Food and the Future

Practitioners from the Parental Engagement Team attended the Food and the Future event at the Bromley by Bow Centre in May. The event was a collaboration between community members, researchers, Tower Hamlets Council and the Bromley by Bow Centre.

The event gave the practitioners, who deliver the Healthy Families programme, an opportunity to keep abreast of the latest research and to showcase the important work they do in the community to ensure children have the best possible start in life.

The Parental Engagement Team delivered an interactive Healthy Families workshop on creating

healthy snacks that are low in sugar, salt and fat. Families who attended the workshop learned how to create their own sushi sandwiches using wholemeal bread with a fresh vegetable filling.

“

The event was a great way to keep up-to-date with the latest research, but also to inspire families with healthy eating ideas.



Sarah McSweeney, Parental Engagement Team Practitioner

”

To book a Healthy Families session for your school or setting, email [parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Free healthy lifestyle drop-in sessions for parents

Parents with children in Tower Hamlets schools can attend free, healthy lifestyle sessions with practitioners from the School Health and Wellbeing Service.

The drop-in sessions provide parents with information and support about growth, nutrition, physical activities, emotional health and oral health.

- John Smith Family Hub, E1 2EN  
Wednesday 26 June  
9.30-11.30am
- Mile End Stadium, E3 4HL  
Tuesday 2 July  
9.30-11.30am

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



# Evidence-based therapy strengthens family relationships

Functional Family Therapy is an evidence-based, therapeutic intervention for the whole family. It is delivered in families' homes by skilled therapists. It mainly focuses on children aged 10-17 years who face harm outside the home.

The aim is to strengthen relationships and reduce the impact of the harm of risky behaviour on the family.

Functional Family Therapy works

- With the whole-family for up to five months
- Using highly qualified clinicians
- Using a quality assured model and clinical oversight
- With a relational focus, building on strengths in the family.



For more information on how your setting can work with team email [jennifer.flandro@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:jennifer.flandro@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

## Share your views about children's vaccinations

The Royal Society of Public Health (RSPH) help people lead healthier lives.

RSPH is doing research in Tower Hamlets to understand how vaccines are perceived by people who work or live with children, including parents and carers, GPs, nurses, teachers, community leaders and volunteers.

Take the five-minute survey:

- Parents, carers and families [here](#)
- Health and care professionals [here](#)
- People working in education [here](#)



For more information, email [policy@rspgh.org.uk](mailto:policy@rspgh.org.uk)

# How to keep your family safe from measles

Measles cases are on the rise in London. Measles is highly contagious and can cause serious illnesses, such as pneumonia, meningitis, and in extreme cases, blindness or death. One in five children with measles requires hospital treatment. Both children and adults can be infected.

## Know the symptoms

Measles usually begins with cold-like symptoms, followed by a rash that begins on the head and face and moves down towards the feet:

- On dark skin, the rash may be harder to see and may appear purple or look darker than the surrounding skin.
- On white skin, the rash tends to be brown, or red.
- Small white spots may also appear inside the mouth.

## Keep your family safe

The MMR vaccine is the safest and most effective way to protect your family. There are two types of vaccines: MMR VaxPro® contains pork gelatine, Priorix® does not. Both vaccines are available freely on the NHS and you can request Priorix® from your doctor. Side effects are usually mild. If you have questions or concerns, contact your GP.

## Take Action

If you or your child has missed a dose, schedule a GP appointment today or call 020 7613 9422 to visit a pop-up clinic. For more information, visit

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles)

[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/immunisation](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/immunisation)

## Visit one of the community clinics

DATE	TIME	PLACE
Thursday 13 June	3.30-5.30pm	Sutton Wharf Health Centre, 26 Palmers Road, E2 0FA
Tuesday 25 June	3.30-5.30pm	Gough Walk Practice, 21 Newby Place, E14 0EY
Thursday 11 July	3.30-5.30pm	Sutton Wharf Health Centre, 26 Palmers Road, E2 0FA

If you would like to attend any of the above dates, call 020 7613 9422 or email [towerhamlets@v-uk.co.uk](mailto:towerhamlets@v-uk.co.uk) to make an appointment.

**Vaccination is the best way to protect your child against measles. Are your child's vaccines up-to-date?**

Vaccines are available for all ages. Contact your GP to book an appointment.

Call 07814 444 094 to book an appointment for Saturday clinics only.




# Early Years childcare funding for working parents

Childcare support is expanding. The expansion includes free paid for hours for two, three and four-year-olds to begin with, and eventually spanning to babies from nine months old.

## Key dates

- **From April 2024**  
Eligible working parents of two-year-olds will be able to access 15 hours per week from the term after their child's second birthday.
- **From September 2024**  
Eligible working parents of children aged nine months up to three years will be able to access 15 hours per week (from the term after their eligible birthday).
- **From September 2025**  
Eligible working parents of children aged nine months up to three years will be able to access 30 hours per week (from the term after their eligible birthday).



For more information and to check your eligibility, visit [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/upcoming-changes-to-childcare-support](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/upcoming-changes-to-childcare-support)

## Thinking of becoming a childminder?

Childminding could be the career for you if you:

- Love working with children in your own home
- Can be flexible and adaptable
- Would like to run your own business
- Are committed to providing good quality childcare.

To find out more, attend an upcoming information session where you will find out about the process of becoming a registered childminder.



To book your place on a childminder information session, email [EECTraining@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:EECTraining@towerhamlets.gov.uk)



## DLR Treasure Hunt

The Docklands Light Railway (DLR) are organising a summer treasure hunt with their mascots, DLR Dave and Doris. Families will need to find hidden treasures around London's Docklands starting at Tower Gateway DLR station. Medals will be handed out at London City Airport Information Centre. The hunt will take place from 28 July to 8 September.

It's completely free to join, but you must download the Actionbound app on your smartphone and then search for 'DLR Treasure Hunt'.

For more information, email [dlr-discovery@keolisameydlr.co.uk](mailto:dlr-discovery@keolisameydlr.co.uk)



## Summer Fun 2024

Council teams, including sports, arts and events, Young Tower Hamlets, children's centres and parks, are preparing to host an exciting and adventurous six weeks of summer fun during the school summer holidays.

All activities will be free and open to all families who live, work or study in Tower Hamlets.

The complete timetable will be listed at: [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/summerevents](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/summerevents)

You can also check the Local Offer for events and services to support the family over the summer period.

Visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/localoffer)

## Holiday Activities and Food Programme: Summer 2024

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme will be taking place again this summer. Clubs will offer a range of activities from 24 July to 1 September.

To get a free spot at a HAF club, children or young people must be in Reception to Year 11 and receiving benefits-related Free School Meals (FSM). Places are also available for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities up to the age of 25.



For more information, visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/HAF](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/HAF)



## Green opportunities for young people

The Spitalfields City Farm's Young Farmers Programme is open to young residents of Tower Hamlets, aged 10-17 years, who want to learn about farming and the natural world.

The programme offers a range of activities, including animal care, woodworking, cooking and food growing, as well as a chance to make new friends, gain skills and build confidence.

The farm hopes to create a space where young people can feel a sense of belonging. Those who are carers, identify as LGBTQIA+ or are from Black, Asian or minority ethnic communities are encouraged to join.

**Saturdays**  
**Spitalfields City Farm, E1 5AR**  
**9.30am-12noon (14-17 years)**  
**1-3pm (11-13 years)**

For more details, visit [www.spitalfieldscityfarm.org/young-farmers](http://www.spitalfieldscityfarm.org/young-farmers)

# Free Summer Art and Design Academy

This year's A Team Arts Education Summer Art and Design Academy's theme is 'Yesterday, Today and New' and will feature partnerships with Knowledge Exchange at Central Saint Martins, the King's Foundation and Alexander McQueen Design Team.

The academy is open to young people who live, study or work in Tower Hamlets.

It will comprise of four programmes aimed at different age groups. The programmes will have a strong focus on sustainability by using materials that do not have a negative impact on the environment.

Sessions will take place at the Brady Arts and Community Centre in Whitechapel, with trips to external sites also planned. Numbers are limited. The deadline to register for all programmes is **Friday 5 July**.



For more information and to secure your place, visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/arts](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/arts)

## Support for young carers and young people with health conditions

Renaissance Foundation is a youth charity offering young carers and young people with health conditions a safe space to explore their interests, build friendships and engage in activities that help develop their social and emotional skills.

The three-stage programme includes weekly sessions at the Youth Hub in Aldgate and trips and activities during the school holidays.

The charity also offers mentoring, work experience, careers advice and one-to-one support.

Renaissance Foundation is free to join. Travel bursaries are also available to support young people with travel costs.



For more information or to refer a young person, visit [www.renaissance-foundation.com](http://www.renaissance-foundation.com)

# Free after school drama clubs for young people in Years 7-9

Drama clubs for young people in Years 7-9, delivered by Half Moon Theatre, are being run in three community settings in Tower Hamlets. The clubs act as an early intervention for vulnerable young people using drama to build confidence, relationships and creativity.

Each term, the young people explore topics that are relevant to them and work towards creating a 'sharing' that is showcased in front of proud families and friends.



## Where to find the after school drama clubs

Harford Centre  
E1 4FG  
Monday  
4.30-6.30pm

Granby Community Centre  
E2 6DT  
Wednesday  
4.30-6.30pm

The Reach Community  
Centre, E14 0GB  
Thursday  
4.30-6.30pm

For more details about the after school drama clubs, email [malachi@halfmoon.org.uk](mailto:malachi@halfmoon.org.uk)



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](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/hcs)

29 July to  
23 August  
2024

Bookings  
open on  
25 June 2024



## 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)



## New Head of SEND appointed

Tower Hamlets Council is delighted to confirm that Dr Tina Sode has been appointed as the permanent Head of SEND. Tina has been acting Head of SEND for over a year but has been a senior manager in SEND for many years.

Tina is totally committed to the children, young people and families of Tower Hamlets and has huge knowledge of SEND services and what families want for their children.

Tina will take forward the strategy for SEND and inclusion and will engage with everyone, including parents, children and young people, schools, health and all partners to build on and improve the borough's SEND services.



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



[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)

### 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.

# The SENDIASS Annual Report for 2023

The Tower Hamlets and City SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) is a self-referring service which offers advice, information and support to parents or carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) from birth to 25 years old.

It aims to build confidence in parents to be able to be actively involved in their child's education and to participate in the development of local services.

The team works in partnership with parents, schools, voluntary and statutory agencies, as well as young people themselves, to provide a flexible menu of services in order to empower parents and children and young people to play an active and



informed role in their child's education, leading to higher achievement for all children.

The service recently published its Annual Report for 2023.

## 2023 report highlights



**1,192**

parents/carers received advice, information or ongoing support about their child's Special Educational Needs



**360**

families a month on average received casework service – interventions ranging from one month to over a year



**26%**

of the children and young people, whose parents/carers contacted the service had a disability (as defined under the Equality Act 2010)



**76**

young people received support and advice, information or on-going support from the Young Peoples Advice Centre



For more information and to read the 2023 Tower Hamlets and City SEND Information Advice and Support Service Annual Report, scan the QR code or click [here](#).

# SENDIASS – supporting families of children with SEND

SENDIASS provides support to families of children with SEND, including:

- Expert information and advice on SEND
- Information leaflets
- Mediation service
- Annual transition event for parents/carers of Year 5 children with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Casework
- Admissions and exclusions service for families of children with SEND

SENDIASS also runs a variety of support/information groups and parenting programmes including a weekly SEND parent support group and specialist programmes such as:

- An epilepsy parenting programme
- Sex and relationship training
- Twice-yearly ADHD parenting programme
- Triple-P specialist parenting programme.



“

Thank you so much for attending the meeting yesterday. You had a really positive impact and helped us to come to a resolution. We really appreciated your impartial advice and the experience which you drew upon to open up the conversation.

School

”

“

SENDIASS workers treat you and your child as individuals and my daughter has improved at school. Can't begin to thank you!

Parent

”

For more information about the Tower Hamlets and City SEND Information Advice and Support Service, visit [www.towerhamletsandcitysendiass.com](http://www.towerhamletsandcitysendiass.com)

# Let's Work! SEND Careers Fair at the Art Pavilion in Mile End

On 8 March, over 350 Tower Hamlets young people with SEND and their teachers attended the Let's Work! SEND Careers Fair at the Art Pavilion in Mile End. The event provided tailored careers information, guidance and support from a range of local and national employers.

Exhibitors included the Marriott Hotel chain, Canary Wharf Group, London Fire Brigade and Tower Hamlets Council.

Students could speak to employers, find out more about pathways into different careers and sign up for more information and support from the Workpath Team. Students enjoyed meeting alumni from their schools who were representing their employers. Some of the students even left the event with job offers.

The event was organised by The Tower Project's Job, Enterprise & Training (JET) Service in partnership with Tower Hamlets Careers and Social Mobility Team and Tower Hamlets SEND Preparing for Adulthood Team. Tower Project's



JET service is east London's leading provider of specialist supported employment services for young people and adults with a learning disability or autism.

Catering and refreshments were provided by those who have gained work through the JET service.

For more information about the Tower Project's JET Service, visit [www.towerproject.org.uk/jet-service](http://www.towerproject.org.uk/jet-service)

## Let's Talk SEND secondary transfer event

Parents of children in Years 4 and 5 with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) attended an event to support their children with the secondary school transfer process.

The Let's Talk SEND event, which was held at the Brady Arts and Community Centre in April, was an opportunity for families to meet with secondary school SENDCOs, hear how the council's SEN department are supporting secondary transfer and pick up some information on independent travel training.

The Family Information Service were also on hand to provide information on the services available to support families and to promote the Local Offer website as a valuable resource for families.



For more information, visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/localoffer)



## Updates – Our Time All Ability Youth Forum

### Our Time impress at SEND Summit

Our Time, the youth forum run for and by young people with special educational needs and disabilities, delivered an impressive presentation at a SEND summit in March.

The chair of Our Time Youth Forum, Sornnaly Hossain, delivered the inspirational presentation to the summit at Guildhall, City of London. She used the presentation to highlight some of the forum's key achievements including:

- Running a peer research project
- Participating in national SEND conferences
- Completing leadership courses
- Taking part in national consultations
- Attending stakeholder groups
- Devising engaging activities for members
- Running informative workshops
- Giving talks in schools and colleges

Attendees were so impressed with the content and delivery of the presentation that senior managers from across London now want to consult with Our Time about setting up similar forums in their boroughs.

### Our Time become a certified community interest group

Our Time All Ability Youth Forum has now become a Certified Community Interest Group. .

Our Time members feel that this is a positive development and a good way attract potential external funding from groups like Canary Wharf.

### Our Time All Ability Youth Forum Newsletter

To get the latest news and updates on what the Our Time Youth Forum have been doing, read their latest newsletter on the Local Offer, scan the QR code or click [here](#)



To find out more and to join Our Time All Ability Youth Forum, email [ourtime.yf@gmail.com](mailto:ourtime.yf@gmail.com) or call 020 7364 6489

# Help shape the new SEND and inclusion strategy

The Tower Hamlets Partnership is refreshing its SEND and inclusion strategy.

The SEND and inclusion strategy will help services deliver the borough's vision of an inclusive and child-friendly borough.

The Tower Hamlets Partnership has listened to what parents, young people and professionals have to say about SEND services in Tower Hamlets to refresh the strategy. It will set out how the right support will be delivered at the right time for children and young people with SEND, and their families.

The Tower Hamlets Partnership encourages all parents of children and young people with SEND to read the strategy and would love to hear your feedback. It is important that the strategy reflects the experiences of families, children and young people with SEND.

Share your views. The survey is open until **Wednesday 12 June**.

## Consultation priorities for the SEND and inclusion strategy:

1. Timely, effective and well-coordinated support for children and young people with SEND
2. User-friendly services for children and young people with SEND and their families
3. Early identification and support for under-fives
4. A great education and support for every school-age child with SEND
5. Opportunities and support for young adults with SEND
6. A borough that welcomes and celebrates children and young people with SEND and supports them to thrive.

To take the survey, visit <https://talk.towerhamlets.gov.uk/send-consultation>



## 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](mailto:TowerHamlets&City.SENDIASS@towerhamlets.gov.uk)  
🐦 @TH\_IASS  
🌐 [www.towerhamletsandcitysendiass.com](http://www.towerhamletsandcitysendiass.com)

We meet fortnightly,  
Thursday, Term time only  
**10am-12noon**  
at Tower Hamlets &  
City SEND IASS



## 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)  
call 07498 573872  
[www.thesendforum.co.uk](http://www.thesendforum.co.uk)

## Residents' Hubs ensure "no one is left behind"

As more council services move online, some residents don't have the digital skills to access those services and are left feeling excluded. The Residents' Hubs were introduced to make sure no one was being left behind. The hubs help residents to access a range of council services, including specialist benefits and debt advisors.

These specialist advisors can help people to maximise the amount of financial help they are eligible for. There is also a virtual debt advice booth where an advisor is available for video chat and to help overcome any financial difficulties residents may be facing. There are five hubs across the borough:

- Town Hall in Whitechapel.
- Idea Store Bow
- Idea Store Chrisp Street
- Cubitt Town Library in the Isle of Dogs
- Professional Development Centre in Bethnal Green.



### Residents' Hub Team's school outreach visits

The Residents' Hub Team have been visiting school coffee mornings to promote the service to parents and carers.

Manager, Shakir Sayed, recently visited **Cubitt Town Primary School** on the Isle of Dogs and **Thomas Buxton Primary School** in Whitechapel, sharing information on how the hubs can support families.

If your school is interested in hosting an information session from the team, email [residents.hub@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:residents.hub@towerhamlets.gov.uk) with 'school outreach visits' in the subject heading.

For more details, visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/residentshub](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/residentshub)

## The Financial Health Centre supports residents

The Tower Hamlets Homes Financial Health Centre brings together a whole range of benefit, training and employment specialists under one roof.

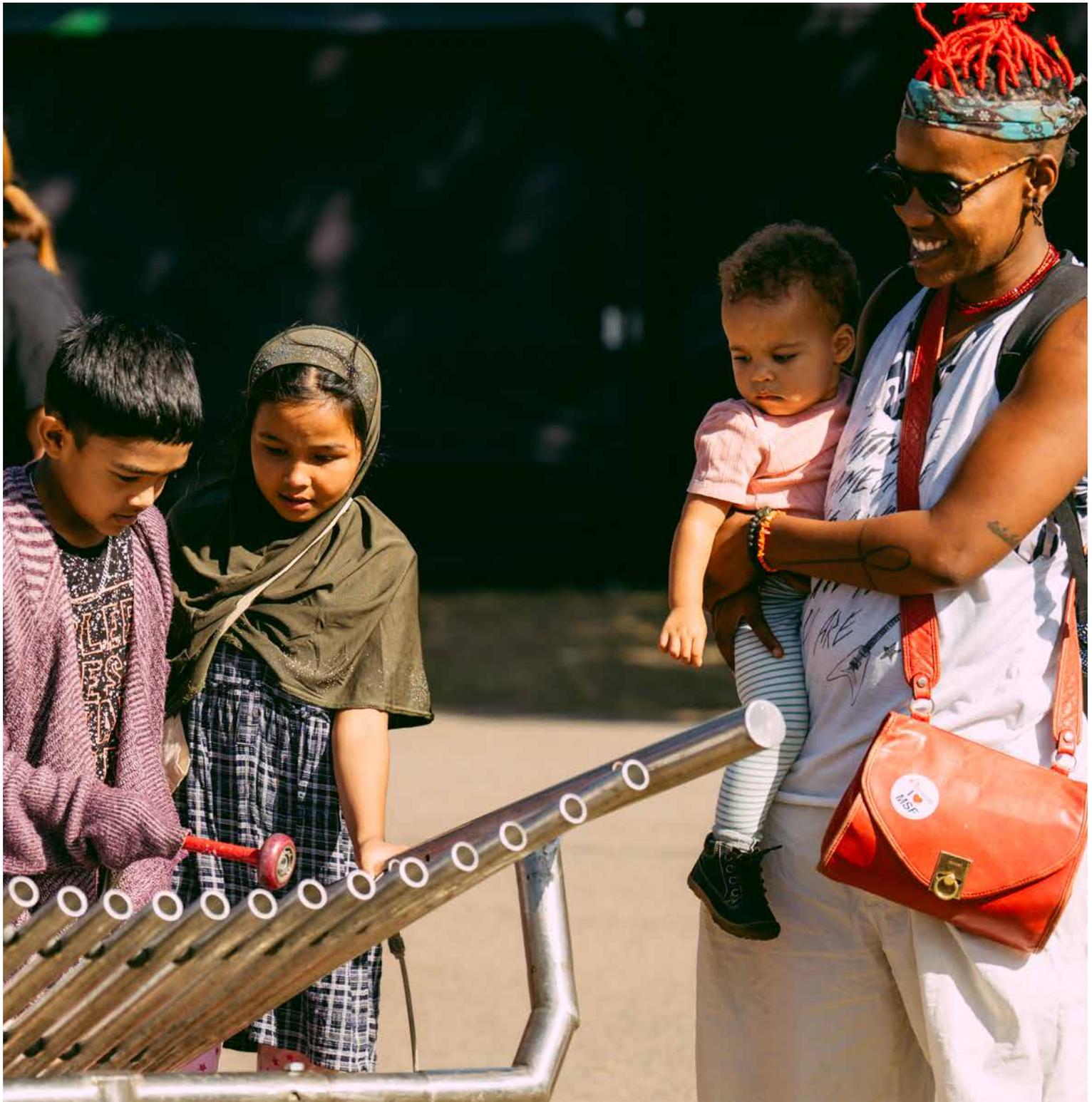
It is open to all Tower Hamlets residents who would like support managing their finances or getting back into work, education or training.

The Financial Health Centre can help with:

- Debt
- Welfare benefits
- Employment
- Housing
- Money management
- Training and job search
- Disability matters.



For more details or to book an appointment, email [fhc@thh.org.uk](mailto:fhc@thh.org.uk) or call 020 7364 2200



## In the Neighbourhood event for families

In the Neighbourhood is a vibrant programme of free activities for the community. Families can enjoy the best that east London has to offer with amazing performances and activities from local arts organisations, creatives and suppliers. There will be outdoor cinema, music, street food, theatre, arts, sports, children's activities and much more.

**In the Neighbourhood event for families**  
**Monday 19 August - Thursday 22 August**  
**Victoria Park, London E3**

**Free entry**

For more details, visit [www.allpointseastfestival.com/in-the-neighbourhood](http://www.allpointseastfestival.com/in-the-neighbourhood)

# Grand Union Orchestra at the Ragged School Museum

The museum recently hosted a series of workshops with musicians from the Grand Union Orchestra. The workshops celebrated the different cultures living in Tower Hamlets and reflected on migration to the borough during the 19th century when the museum was a free school.

The musicians leading the workshops showcased an array of musical instruments and participants enjoyed learning new tunes and rhythms. The workshops provided an opportunity for families to meet and learn ways to make music together.



The museum will be hosting many more free family events over the summer.

Follow the museum on Instagram to find out more @raggedschoolmuseum

For more details, visit [www.raggedschoolmuseum.org.uk](http://www.raggedschoolmuseum.org.uk)

## Idea Store tablet lending service

Idea Store Whitechapel is piloting a tablet computer lending service over the next six months. Tower Hamlets residents who are digitally excluded can borrow a tablet computer for free for up to 12 weeks.

Idea Store's Get Online drop-in sessions:

**Wednesdays, 2.15-3.45pm**

**Idea Store Whitechapel**

**321 Whitechapel Road, E1 1BU**



To find out more visit  
[www.ideastore.co.uk/our-services/  
tablet-lending](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/our-services/tablet-lending)

# Training and events calendar

## Parental engagement information and training for parents

DATE/TIME	DESCRIPTION
Wednesday 12 June Friday 12 July 10-11am	<p><b>Platform to Talk online sessions</b></p> <p>These virtual sessions cover a range of topical issues from health and wellbeing to family life, parenting, school and more. See page 10 for details.</p> <p>For more details, email <a href="mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk">parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></p>
Tuesdays 18 June 9 July 10am-12noon	<p><b>Somali Parents and Carers Network meetings</b></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>For more details, email <a href="mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk">parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></p>
Thursdays 20 June, 4 and 18 July 10am-12noon	<p><b>SEND Parent Support Group</b></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: <a href="mailto:towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk">towerhamlets&amp;city.sendiass@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></p>
Thursday 11 July 9.15am-12.45pm	<p><b>Annual Parent and Carer Conference</b></p> <p>Save the dates – further information on how to book places for parents will be available to schools shortly.</p> <p>For more information, email <a href="mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk">parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></p>

## Parental engagement information and training for practitioners

DATE/TIME	DESCRIPTION
Thursday 27 June 1.30-3.45pm	<p><b>Working with Families: Multi-Agency Seminar</b></p> <p>This multi-agency forum aims to improve the exchange of information and increase links between organisations and practitioners working with parents/families in Tower Hamlets.</p> <p>For more information, email <a href="mailto:parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk">parentalengagement@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></p>

## Useful contacts

For details of local services providing free information for Tower Hamlets residents on welfare benefits, debt, housing and other matters, visit [www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/advice](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/advice)

Your guide to information and services for families in Tower Hamlets

**LOCAL OFFER**

[@thlocaloffer](https://twitter.com/thlocaloffer) [localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk](http://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