

Summer 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)