

JULY 2025

Listen 4 Change Newsletter



Contact Listen 4 Change:

Website : www.listen4change.uk

Email: listen4change@outlook.com

Facebook private group -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1815692118888096>

Facebook page - Listen4Change, St Helens Parent Carer
Forum | Saint Helens | Facebook

JOIN US FOR A COFFEE & CHAT – YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Each month, Listen 4 Change hosts daytime and evening coffee events for parent carers of children and young people (0–25) with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

A relaxed space to connect with other parent carers, share experiences, and talk openly about local services.

Your feedback is shared by Parent Reps to help shape better support.

Whether you want to influence change or simply chat—we'd love to see you.



📍 Drop in and say hello:

Wonderland Community Centre cic

Canal St, Saint Helens WA10 3JQ

Coffee events next term

10am-12pm Fridays - 12th Sept, 10th Oct, 7th Nov and 5th Dec

6.30-8pm Tuesdays - 30th Sept, 21st Oct, 25th Nov

Childrens Commissioner attending 12th September

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Listen 4 Change: What We've Been Up To in June

- Met with St Helens Council's new Community Engagement & Partnership Lead to introduce L4C. This is a new role to ensure local people are listened to and have the opportunity to influence how St Helens is developed.
- Hosted a coffee morning on Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) and shared your feedback with the Council's PfA Team.
- Joined the PfA Steering Group to plan an Autumn term PfA event, to discuss the development of the Support Internship Programme and to hear updates from the National Development Team for Inclusion.
- Met with the Director of Children's Services to discuss feedback from recent parent carer events.
- Took part in National Carers Week with an info stall at the Carers Centre Information Day to raise awareness of L4C and connect with parent carers and other local services.
- Attended the SEND Workstream Leads meeting with NHS and council leaders to review workstreams and identify themes for presentation to the SEND Partnership Board.
- Worked with the Designated Clinical Officer for SEND and a local primary school to prepare a presentation for the SEND Partnership Board around the positive impact of the national Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools (PINs) project.
- Held a relaxed coffee evening for parent carers to share what's working—and what isn't.
- Met with the Senior Commissioning Manager for the Neurodevelopmental Pathway (NDP) to discuss the new Cheshire & Merseyside NDP and to plan parent workshops around how the St Helens NDP can be transformed to ensure a positive experience for families

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- Worked with Children's Social Care to review their document outlining the criteria for a social care assessment with the Children with Disabilities team
- Shared parent carer feedback with the library service to help expand the home delivery offer for SEND families

St Helens Council appoint a Children's Commissioner

Newly appointed Children's Commissioner, Lauren Cole, messaged Listen 4 Change to say "I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to introduce myself, I am the new Children's commissioner within the developing All-Age Commissioning Team at St Helens' Council. This is a brand new and developing role and I am looking forward to working with colleagues and partners to identify the key areas of priority across Children's services." Lauren will be attending our coffee morning on 12th September to meet with parent carers

St Helens council SEND helpline

If you have a general query about SEND and would like to speak to someone about it, please call 01744 671054. This line is staffed Monday to Friday 9am until 1pm

[St Helens Family Information Directory](#) | [SEND Helpline St Helens Council](#)

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SEND Young People's Survey



We're the SEND Youth Partnership – a group of young people from St Helens with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We work with adults who make decisions to help improve things for young people like us. We've created this survey because we want to hear from you.

What's it about?

We want to know what life is like for you if you have SEND.

That includes things like:

- How things are going at school or college
- What support you get
- How you feel at home and in your local area
- What your hopes are for the future

This survey links to the SEND Strategy for St Helens – which is all about making sure young people with SEND feel Visible, Valued and Included. Your answers will help us check if things are getting better – and what still needs to change.

Who can fill it in?

You can do the survey if you:

- Live in St Helens, or go to school or college here
- Have SEND (you don't need to have an EHCP)

Why should I do it?

- It only takes a few minutes
- You don't have to give your name
- You can ask someone to help you fill it in if you want
- You'll help make things better for other young people with SEND
- You could win a £50 voucher!

Ready to get started?

[SEND Young People's Survey.](https://familyinfodirectory.sthelens.gov.uk/kb5/sthelens/directory/site.page?id=L5lvd7H4Rk8)

<https://familyinfodirectory.sthelens.gov.uk/kb5/sthelens/directory/site.page?id=L5lvd7H4Rk8>

Thanks for taking part – your voice really matters.

If you have any questions, or need the survey in a different format, you can email us at: elizabethbarr-jones@sthelens.gov.uk

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HAF Summer program

The Family hub have produced an action-packed fun guide to show you all of the great things that are happening across St Helens borough over the summer holidays.

If your child is aged 4-18 and eligible for benefit related free school meal and would like to attend, please see our list of providers who will be running the activities. Children who are in receipt of a support plan or EHCP are also eligible for the HAF programme.

Take a look at our [HAF Summer 2025 Guide \(PDF, 17 MB\)](#) to see what is happening near you. The guide is presented in a handy calendar format to help you plan activities for each day during the school holidays.

Find FREE events and activities suitable for you using the age ranges next to the listings.

We have endeavoured to ensure that all sessions are SEND friendly, but would advise you to pre-book sessions and speak to the facilitator for further information on suitability and individual requirements for your children.

Booking links for all activities will go live at **2pm on Monday 14 July** for people to book onto all activities. Places are subject to availability.



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An update from NHS commissioning Tics and Tourette's pathway

The Tics and Tourette's Pathway was established in St Helens in 2023; this initial Pathway provides assessment, diagnosis and interventions based on psychoeducation or therapy. Medication is currently not an option but is being explored. Nationally, there is no set medication pathway and no NICE guidelines etc to follow, so we need to use European and American guidelines and research papers to agree a local medication approach. Having the right clinicians with the necessary level of confidence and expertise to prescribe is also not readily available; so, we need to build this capability in locally via training which isn't something that is readily available. The Cheshire & Merseyside Prescribing Group also don't have a Formulary that includes management for Tics and Tourettes so we need to propose something to them once we have overcome the aforementioned issues. Great Ormond Street Hospital are National leads for T&Ts and we are working on liaising with them to understand what we can access through that service, such as medication advice and guidance for a local prescriber. We are also liaising with colleagues in Alder Hey Children's Hospital to understand how they have overcome some of these challenges as they currently prescribe for Liverpool children and young people.

National charity Family Fund

National charity Family Fund has grants available for families living in the UK raising a disabled or seriously ill young adult, and living on a low income.

If you're the parent or carer of a disabled adult, aged 18 to 24, who lives at home with you, you may be eligible for a [grant from the Your Opportunity programme](#).

Grants range from digital devices, membership to a club, sports equipment, education materials, or even a musical instrument – whatever is needed the most.

The quickest way to apply is online. You can also download a paper application or request for one to be sent to you from Family Fund website.

To check if you're eligible, and find out more about what grant programmes are available please [visit the Family Fund website](#).

<https://www.familyfund.org.uk>

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The ear checks team

You're Invited! Understanding the Ear Checks Programme and How You Can Get Involved

Join us for an insightful online event where we'll dive into the Ear Checks Programme - an award winning programme making ear health checks accessible for children who are autistic and/or have a learning disability, in residential special schools across England.

Since its launch in 2021, this programme has championed a co-produced approach, ensuring ear checks happen in familiar surroundings, led by trusted staff. With the national rollout announced in 2024, now is the perfect time to learn more about what this means, how it works, and most importantly how you can play a part.

In this session we will be exploring what the programme is, the incredible impact it can have for children and young people in residential special schools, and how you can get involved.

Tuesday 15th July, 11:00am -12:30pm.

This session will be held online via Teams (link provided once registered).

Sign up via this google form!

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScbRozYO6-eXJcpQzdlgCso4RAEUIKFubmt9F2AygwA6VKHQg/viewform>



LEARNING DISABILITY REGISTER AND ANNUAL HEALTH CHECKS

Did you know that your GP Practice keeps a list of all people with a learning disability and offers them an annual health check from the age of 14 onwards. Please see the link for more information, including 5 downloadable leaflets with easy read options.

[St Helens Family Information Directory | Learning Disability Inclusion Guidance for Young People and Adults](#)



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SEND home to school/college transport

Following on from the consultation St Helens Council undertook at the end last year to review its home to school/college transport policy for children and young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), details of the new policy have recently been published and can be found in the link:

SEND Home to School Transport

<https://familyinfodirectory.sthelens.gov.uk/kb5/sthelens/directory/advice.page?id=ZKrQnX9qlfl>

Transport for Post 16 Learners

<https://familyinfodirectory.sthelens.gov.uk/kb5/sthelens/directory/advice.page?id=JEzXg4eu4B4>

Applications open until 31st July

Preparing for Adulthood

Are you supporting a young person with additional needs to prepare for adult life?

This event is for you. Join St Helens council and Listen 4 Change to explore the four key pathways of Preparing for Adulthood:

- Education & Employment
- Independent Living
- Community Inclusion
- Health

Hear from expert speakers Tuesday 23rd September 2025
Totally Wicked Stadium Peasley Cross Ln, St Helens, WA9 3AL
Two sessions: 10am–1pm or 5pm–7:30pm
Book your free place: <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/FBUG>

Ask the questions that matter to you get clear, practical advice on planning next steps whether you're just starting to think about the future or already on the journey, this event will help you feel more confident and informed.

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NHS Cheshire & Merseyside

NHS Cheshire & Merseyside are launching a new neurodevelopmental pathway and vision for how services across Cheshire and Merseyside can better support neurodivergent children and young people. The link contains more information.

<https://www.cheshireandmerseyside.nhs.uk/your-health/cheshire-and-merseyside-neurodevelopment-pathway/>

Listen 4 Change are working closely with local services to consider how this will work best for St Helens and how things can be done differently so families have a positive experience. We will be running some workshops in the Autumn term to enable parent carers to share their views and thoughts on this with the NDP Commissioner. Details to be confirmed.

Supported Internships

Supported Internships are an educational programme offered to young people aged 16-24 with an Education Health and Care Plan. What makes them different to other courses is that most of the learning is done at work and 'on the job'. If you are looking to go into employment but require additional support to do so, then a supported internship could be perfect for you! See the link for more information:

[St Helens Family Information Directory | Supported Internships](#)

St Helens IASS

Please note: Drop-in sessions don't run through the summer, but IASS are still available via telephone and email if you need support during the holidays. 01744 673428 or atIASS@sthelens.gov.uk

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SEND friendly swimming

Every School Holidays - Every Thursday 3-4pm at Newton-Le-Willows Health and Fitness

Families will have exclusive access to the pool and there is now an accessible Pool Pod Lift. It's a village change set up with good sized individual cubicles and larger family cubicles available. There is also a fully equipped DDA changing room available. If anyone has specific requirements for a quiet changing room this can be accommodated on request subject to availability. This accommodation will be in one of the school changing rooms however which do not have cubicles and locker facilities.

Regular fees apply

<https://goactive.sthelens.gov.uk/article/9561/Swimming>

www.youtube.com/poolpod



Neurodevelopment pathway drop ins

Come along to one of our drop in sessions in St Helens.

Our team will answer questions you have about the neurodevelopment pathway process.

You don't need to be using our service, you can drop in if you have any questions to ask about this.

We look forward to meeting you.

Second Tuesday of the month at Parr Children's Centre, 9.30am to 11.30am and Sutton Family Hub 1pm to 4pm*.

Third Tuesday of the month at Newton Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

Fourth Tuesday of the month at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

*Please note, on Tuesday 8 July the session will be held at Sutton Family Hub 1pm to 4pm only.

13 May at Parr Children's Centre, 9.30am to 11.30am and Sutton Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

10 June at Parr Children's Centre, 9.30am to 11.30am and Sutton Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

8 July at Sutton Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

20 May at Newton Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

17 June at Newton Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

15 July at Newton Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

27 May at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

24 June at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

22 July at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

Sutton Family Hub, Ellamsbridge Road, Sutton, St Helens, WA9 3PY

Parr Children's Centre, Ashton's Green Drive, Parr, St Helens, WA9 2AP

Central Link Family Hub, Westfield Street, (off Peter Street), St Helens, WA10 1QF

Newton Family Hub, Patterson Street, Newton-le-Willows, St Helens, WA12 9PZ



Neurodevelopment pathway drop ins



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Our team will answer questions you have about the neurodevelopment pathway process.

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We look forward to meeting you.

Tuesdays at Parr Children's Centre and Central Link Family Hub

See details and times below

12 August at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

23 September at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

25 November at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

26 August at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

7 October at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

9 December at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

9 September at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

18 November at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

16 December at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

We work with children and young people with complex neurodevelopmental difficulties, who need an assessment to gain a better understanding of their needs.

Sutton Family Hub, Ellamsbridge Road, Sutton, St Helens, WA9 3PY

Central Link Family Hub, Westfield Street, (off Peter Street), St Helens, WA10 1QF

If you need more information you can contact us on **01744 415 608** or email: mcn-tr.sthelensneuropathway@nhs.net





What's Going On With Autism and ADHD Help in St Helens?

July 2025 Update

Why is this being shared?

Parent Carers have told us how important communication is about the local Neurodevelopmental Pathway. So, here are some things you and your family may want to know!

How Long Will it Take?

Autism Pathway



Time for reply after referral Within 4 weeks



Speech & Language Assessment Within 18 weeks



Paediatrician Assessment About 45 weeks



Whole Process About 25 months

What Help Can You Get?

In St Helens, you can get the same support before, during and after a referral to the Pathway.



Help at School: Adaptations & support in can be given regardless of a diagnosis. Speak with your SENCO or Teacher.



SEND Info Hub: Visit the [Hub](#) for information about the [Local Offer](#), including support in [Family Hubs](#).



Learning & Peer Support: Access a range of support with [Advanced Solutions](#) Tel: 01744 582 172



Emotional Wellbeing: Visit [Thrive](#) for CYP MH support including [MHST](#) in Primaries and [Resilience Service](#) in High Schools.



Sleep: For support with sleep, first contact the 0-19+ Service on Tel 01744 411 277 or your local Family Hub Tel 01744 673 445 or visit [Sleep Charity](#)

How Long Will it Take?

ADHD Pathway



Time for reply after referral Within 4 weeks



Qb Test Within 18 weeks



Decision Appt (Paediatrician) / Whole Process About 24 months



Let's Clear Up Some Myths!



"Having a diagnosis will give my CYP access to new areas of support."



Nope! Lots of help is there before, during or after being on the Pathway.



"School won't help without a diagnosis."



Schools in St Helens will support based on individual needs using the graduated response.



"My child's referral was rejected by the Pathway, because school doesn't see the differences or didn't fill it in properly."



Non-acceptance is usually due to the Pathway believing that more helpful work can be done with the young person first.



"A diagnosis will mean that my young person can access specialist educational provision."



Access is based on need and not a diagnosis.



"Having a diagnosis of Autism or ADHD will allow my child to access medication."



Medication should be a last resort option and will only be considered after other strategies have been trialled.



"A diagnosis will mean my child can get an EHCP."



Also based on need rather than a diagnosis and many CYP, including those with a diagnosis, can be fully supported and understood under their schools universal and SEND provision.



The next update will come Sept 2025