

JANUARY 2026

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 (aged 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 with local services 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

JANUARY 2026

Events in Spring Term

Friday 16th January - Financial workshop in person or join us online

10am-12pm. Wonderland Community Centre WA10 3JQ

Join us for a relaxed coffee morning where you can chat with other parent carers and take part in a workshop on how parent carers can better manage their personal finances to reduce stress and improve their financial wellbeing.

<https://us06web.zoom.us>

Tuesday 27th January - Financial workshop in person or join us online.

6:30-8pm Wonderland Community Centre WA10 3JQ

Join us for a relaxed coffee evening where you can chat with other parent carers and take part in a workshop on how parent carers can better manage their personal finances to reduce stress and improve their financial wellbeing.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j>

Thursday 12th February Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) online

Workshop 10am-12pm. Delivered by Eleanor Wright, SOS!SEN Legal Officer

This online workshop is for parent carers of children/ young people with SEND. Places are limited so booking is essential. Please book your place here

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe_QgyfwR64qu3gRTSsRDmepvBHe1cVw0elLFvK7RN-PpUTaQ/viewform?usp=dialog

Friday 13th February - Coffee morning

10am-12pm. Wonderland Community Centre WA10 3JQ

The SEND Practitioner from the St Helens 0-19+ Service will be attending to listen to your feedback.

JANUARY 2026

Events in Spring Term

Tuesday 24th February- Coffee evening
6:30-8pm Wonderland Community Centre WA10 3JQ

Thursday 26th February Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) online Workshop 6-8pm Delivered by Eleanor Wright, SOS!SEN Legal Officer
This online workshop is for parent carers of children/ young people with SEND.
Places are limited so booking is essential. Please book your place here
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe_QgyfwR64qu3gRTs_tDmepvBHe1cVw0elLFvK7RN-PpUTaQ/viewform?usp=dialog

Friday 13th March - Coffee morning
10am-12pm. Wonderland Community Centre WA10 3JQ
A Specialist Paediatric Therapist from Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust will be speaking with parent carers on how the service can support with sensory difficulties and answering questions.

Tuesday 24th March- Coffee evening
6:30-8pm Wonderland Community Centre WA10 3JQ

JANUARY 2026

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

- We attended training sessions ran on behalf of NHS Cheshire & Merseyside to help parent carers understand the Neurodiversity Profiling Tool and how it will be used to better support neurodivergent children and young people. This was helpful in answering our questions and ensuring we are well-informed on how the new process will work in practice
- We attended the ND Change Steering Group meeting to discuss the proposed roll out of the new Neurodiversity Profiling Tool across St Helens and the plans for transforming the Neurodevelopmental Assessment Pathway
- We reviewed and shared final comments with Children's Social Care on an easy read document prepared for parent carers to explain how to access social care support for a child with a disability
- We joined the DfE national conversation event to discuss 'early' SEND reform principle with the Schools Minister, Georgia Gould, and a panel of experts as part of a series of events focused on SEND reform ahead of the imminent Schools White Paper which will outline proposed reforms to the SEND system
- We held a coffee morning to chat with other parent carers about what's working well for our children and young people with SEND, what needs improving and what's available to support families of children with SEND and even enjoyed a couple of games of Christmas Bingo!

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

- We attended a project meeting to finalise purchases of sensory toys, assistive/sensory technology and the phases of work scheduled with local suppliers before work commences in January to convert Haydock library into a SEND-friendly library
- We held a meeting with members of a task group from the Children and Young People Services Scrutiny Committee for members of Listen 4 Change to share their perspective on the current state of school SEND provision so that parent carers voices contribute to the Scrutiny review of school places for pupils with SEND considering whether provision is meeting the needs of pupils with SEND
- We manned a market stall at Carmel College's SEND Transition Event to speak with parent carers and professionals about Listen 4 Change and raise awareness of the opportunities for parent carers to have their voices heard so as to improve local services for children and young people with SEND
- We attended a meeting with senior leads to discuss the SEND Strategy workstreams, including a brief update on the transformation of the Neurodevelopmental Assessment Pathway

JANUARY 2026

FREE Training - Education, Health & Care Plan workshop with SOS!SEN



We are excited to announce that Eleanor Wright, SOS!SEN Legal Officer, will be delivering a daytime and an evening online workshop to our members on

Thursday 12th February 10am-12pm

Thursday 26th February 6-8pm.

The workshop will cover:

- What advice and information should be obtained during the assessment period
- Timescales
- Format of EHC Plans
- Content of each section of EHC Plans
- Includes discussion of a draft Plan with pointers on what to look out for
- Q&A session at the end

The workshop is ideal for any parents wanting an introduction to how to navigate the EHCP process. Places are limited and booking is essential. Places can be booked via the link:

[Education, Health and Care Plan \(EHCP\) online workshop with Eleanor Wright, SOS!SEN Legal Advisor](#)

SOS!SEN is a national charity that aims to empower parent carers of children and young people with SEND to successfully tackle the difficulties they face when trying to secure the right educational provision for their children.

You can read more about them here: [SOS!SEN – The Independent Helpline for Special Education Needs – We offer a free, friendly, independent and confidential telephone helpline for parents and others looking for information and advice on Special Educational Needs \(SEN\)](#)

JANUARY 2026

Contact's Autumn budget coverage

Contact are a national charity that provide support for families of children with disabled children. They have produced an article explaining what announced benefit changes could mean for families with disabled children and you can read their CEO Anna Bird's initial comment on the Autumn Budget.

Other Contact news and views <https://contact.org.uk>

Learning Disability - what support does your child need and what support do they already have?

Does your child have a learning disability? If yes, we need your help.

Listen 4 Change is involved in a project to establish a Cheshire & Merseyside regional model for diagnosing learning disabilities (LD) and identifying which services are available to support children and young people with a LD diagnosis once a diagnosis has been made.

A learning disability affects general intellectual functioning and day-to-day life. It is lifelong, present from childhood and characterised by significantly reduced intellectual ability (usually an IQ below 70) and impaired social or adaptive functioning. Learning Disability is different from a learning difficulty (such as dyslexia or dyspraxia) which affects learning in specific areas but does not impact overall intelligence or cognitive ability.

To make sure the correct support is in place, the Project Lead wants to know:

What support does your child need?

What support do they have?

What is missing/What do they still need?

Please email your responses directly to

LDProjectmanager@homestartknowsley.org.uk before the end of January.

JANUARY 2026

Survey: Parent Carer Support - What is it really like?

Parent Carer Forums across the Cheshire & Merseyside region are working with children's services and health teams to ensure parents and carers receive the appropriate support to meet their needs as a parent carer in a timely, consistent way no matter where they live in Cheshire & Merseyside.

Please complete this short survey - your views will help make changes that work for families.

The survey closes on **16 January 2026**.

The results will be shared at a workshop on 21 January where parents, carers, and professionals will work together to find better ways to support families. Your answers will stay private.

Parent Carers: Click this link - Parent Carer Support - What is it really like? – Fill in form

Bonus: Parent carers who complete the survey can enter a draw for a £20 Amazon voucher!

Survey: Social media and screen time use in children/young people

The Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care Board are developing best-practice guidance and advice for parents and carers on safe, healthy use of screens and social media by children and young people.

They would like to know more about the challenges parents/carers experience when managing their children's screen and social media use and are asking for your experiences and insights.

Please complete the survey: [Parent/Carer Survey: Safer and Healthier Social Media & Screen Time Guide – Fill in form](#)

Closing date: 5pm on Friday **16th January 2026**

JANUARY 2026

ADDvancedSolutions



ADDvanced Solutions
Community Network

Supporting you to find the answers



ADDvanced Solutions offers support, coaching and mentoring for families and professionals living with neurodevelopmental conditions and learning difficulties.

Scan the QR code to view ADDvanced solutions latest newsletter!
It includes full details of face-to-face and online offers available Spring Term 2026

<https://mcusercontent.com/324ac5731eb9f0525ea588dba/files/f0590b1a-7346-efec-cc25-9d4bf0a878d3/ST HELENS Spring 2026 What 039 s On Guide.01.pdf>



St Helens IASS

St Helens IASS is an Independent Advice and Support Service for children, young people and families with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

It is a statutory service that provides free, information, advice and support on matters relating to SEND, helping families to understand their rights, options and the support available to them.

The service is offered to children and young people with SEND, and their parents/carers

Please use the online form to help the team deal with your query in the most efficient way.

Parents can contact the service, attend a SEND drop in and make a self-referral
<https://forms.office.com/e/ahV5HQfz6F>

More information can be found here

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

JANUARY 2026

Youth, Parent & Carer Research Sessions

The North West Multi-Agency Safeguarding Learning and Support Hub are working on a national piece of research that will shape a new Executive Leadership Course for senior leaders across policing, education, social care, health and community services aiming to support and develop senior leaders in a multi-agency setting to improve outcomes for children and families.

As part of this research, throughout December and January they are running a series of 30–45 minute online or in person youth-friendly engagement sessions using creative, gamified activities and are inviting young people 8–25 and parents and carers to take part.

The sessions will explore what good leadership feels like to young people and families, how leadership behaviours build or break trust, what families need from the people who lead services and how leaders should communicate, listen and involve children, young people and parents.

All contributions are anonymous and no personal case information is collected.

Each participant receives a £30 Amazon voucher but must actively participate in at least 1 of the 3 games.

Here is the link for young people, parents and carers to directly sign up and register your interest:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf3Y148jig3NtwFHf9cbgfr-UNDvK8javhAbyKpwqNwJlj1qw/viewform>

JANUARY 2026

Invitation to Take Part in the University of Cambridge Attend Well Study



Some students find school really tough — so tough that they stop going.

School should be a place where everyone feels safe, supported, and like they belong.

This study is about creating a programme that helps schools become more supportive and inclusive for everyone.



Who can take part?

We are looking for parents/carers of young people aged 11–18 who have had difficulties attending school.

What will you ask me to do?

- Fill in two 30-45 minutes online questionnaires (now and in 12 months)
- Join a 1-hour interview (optional)

Interested?

- Sign up by visiting attendwell.org.uk or clicking [here](#)
- Contact: attendwell@medschl.cam.ac.uk.



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

FUNDED BY
NIHR

National Institute for
Health and Care Research

JANUARY 2026

Internships Work Conference 2026



The Internships Work Conference 2026, is taking place online on **Tuesday 24 February 2026**.

This national event celebrates four years of progress in supported internships which has been backed by a £33 million Department for Education investment in the Internships Work programme.

This investment means more young people accessing high-quality supported internships – opening doors to employment, independence, and greater choice and control over their futures.

The conference will feature a series of short, engaging sessions that will spotlight the voices of young people, families, job coaches, employers, and local authorities. Sessions include:

- **Internships Work because young people do**
10:00am–12:30pm
- **Insights from the pilot**
2:00pm–3:00pm
- **Helping families navigate supported internships**
6:00pm–7:30pm

Book your place today

JANUARY 2026

**Free Online workshops for parents of children in early years
(age 0-5)**

We are delighted to share upcoming online workshops for parents of children in early years (age 0-5), from Contact, as part of the EY SEND Partnership:

[Brighter Beginnings: Early Years \(0-5\) workshops | Eventbrite](#)

Upcoming dates in January include:

- Thurs 15 Jan – Toilet training children with SEND
- Wed 21 Jan – Wellbeing support for families of children with SEND
- Thu 29 Jan – Understanding your child's sensory differences

These workshops are all free of charge.

Booking is via Eventbrite and spaces fill up fast, and DfE funding for this programme ends in late March so please do make most of these informative sessions.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/brighter-beginnings-early-years-0-5-workshops-2712059>

JANUARY 2026

St Helens Council Scrutiny Review of SEND School Provision in St Helens - share your views!

For those of you that were not able to attend the meeting we held with the Scrutiny Task Group in December, we would encourage you to contact the Scrutiny Team at scrutiny@sthelens.gov.uk to share your views on the:

- current state of SEND provision in the Borough,
- whether existing provision is meeting the needs of your child or young person with SEND,
- what could be done to improve the provision of suitable support for pupils with SEND.

We'd suggest you title your email "Scrutiny Review into SEND School Places" so it reaches the right Task & Finish Group.

The task group will finish their review during January, a report will be prepared and presented to the Scrutiny Committee in March recommending actions that can be taken and will then be agreed and submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

If you are interested in knowing more about the work of the Children and Young People Services Scrutiny Committee and their oversight and scrutiny of children and young people's services, their meetings are available to watch live or recorded on St Helens public TV via the link:

<https://sthelens.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>



DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE A NEURODISABILITY?

(E.G AUTISM, ADHD, EPILEPSY, CEREBRAL PALSY)

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES OF ACCESSING DENTAL CARE FOR YOUR CHILD?

WE ARE LOOKING FOR PARENTS/CARERS OF CHILDREN AGED 4-16 TO TAKE PART IN A GROUP DISCUSSION ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES OF ACCESSING DENTAL CARE FOR THEIR CHILD.

YOU WILL RECEIVE A £20 VOUCHER AS A THANKS FOR YOUR TIME.

**10TH FEBRUARY 5:30-7:30PM
WONDERLAND COMMUNITY CENTRE, WA10 3JQ**

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED PLEASE FOLLOW SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW OR EMAIL EMMA:
EMORGAN@LIVERPOOL.AC.UK**





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



Dec 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 29 months

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 12 months



FACTS



MYTHS

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. Medication is not available for, and will not help, with autism.



“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.



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 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](#)



The next update will come March 2026



CHAT &
CHILL OVER
A BREW

JOIN OUR COFFEE MORNING

Are you a Parent Carer of a child or young person with Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability (SEND) aged 0-25 in St Helens? Join us for a relaxed coffee evening where you can chat with other parent carers and take part in a workshop on how parent carers can better manage their personal finances to reduce stress and improve their financial wellbeing. Delivered by Natwest Bank - the workshop will be independent and non-bank specific. Join us in person or online using the link

[**https://us06web.zoom.us/j/**](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/)



**Friday 16th
January
10am-12pm**

**Wonderland
Community
Centre
WA10 3JQ**

CONTACT US ➤

Email
listen4change@outlook.com

**FREE
PARKING**

Website:
listen4change.uk



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Tuesday
27th January
6:30-8pm

**Wonderland
Community
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WA10 3JQ**

**FREE
PARKING**

CONTACT US

Email
listen4change@outlook.com

Website:
listen4change.uk

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.



Mersey Care
NHS Foundation Trust

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

See details and times below

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

28 April at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

23 June 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.

Parr Children's Centre, Ashtons Green Drive, St Helens, WA9 2AP
Central Link Family Hub, Westfield Street, (off Peter Street),
St Helens, WA10 1QF

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

01744 415 608



Neurodevelopment pathway drop ins

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

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See details and times below

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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If you need more information you can contact us on
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