

Parent Carer Support Group Network Event



Thursday 26th June 2025
9.45 till 12.30
Pudsey Civic Hall, Stanningley, LS28 5TA



The Leeds Parent Carer Forum and Voice, Influence & Change Team at Leeds City Council host three parent carer support group network events a year (February, June & October).

The events are an opportunity to:

- Hear about the top issues raised by parents and carers in Leeds.
- Hear from services about their responses to the issues raised and next steps.
- Network with other parent carer support groups.

The event

The first parent carer support group network event took place on Thursday 26th June 2025 at Pudsey Civic Hall. There were 20 parent carers in attendance representing SPARKS, Neurostars, Refresh Carers, Little Hiccups, Teenage, Refresh Carers, ZigZag, Lightbulb Moment, WY ADHD and the Leeds Parent Carer Forum.

The ran for 2 hours and 30 minutes and covered:

- An introduction from the Leeds Parent Carer Forum.
- STARS Team proposal.
- Education, Health and Care Plans (SENSAP).

Leeds Parent Carer Forum

The Leeds Parent Carer Forum are all local parents and carers whose children and young people have SEND.

By working in co-production they aim to make a positive difference so that services are better at meeting the needs of all local SEND families.

They listen to local families and work in partnership with the Local Authority (Education and Social Care) and health providers to champion children's needs and influence strategy, policy, pathways and practice. They highlight where local services are working well and constructively challenge when changes or improvements are needed to be made.

How your voice is shared

All issues shared with the Leeds Parent Carer Forum are added to the issues tracker which is shared with Local Authority (Education and Social Care) and Health (NHS and ICB) at various boards and meetings.

The issues raised also feed into the Self Evaluation Form (SEF) which is used by OFSTED to assess how well the LA understands areas for improvement and effectiveness.

What the Leeds Parent Carer Forum have achieved 2024/25

- attended monthly parent carer information drop in sessions.
- attended parent carer coffee morning and events.
- hosted workshops for parents and carers i.e. financial toolkit, hospital passport, ARFID and IPSEA training.
- parent carer afternoon team sessions.
- promoted surveys to parents and carers to give their views and feedback on service reviews and developments.
- attended national and regional parent carer conferences.
- attended boards and meetings across the LA and health to represent the views of parents and carers.

Join the parent carer forum and give your views

<https://www.leedsparentcarerforum.co.uk/register-with-us/>



STARS Proposal

Joan Kavanagh, SEND & Inclusion Team Service Delivery Manager

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Philippa Sheikh, STARS Team Leader

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The proposal (STARS and SENIT Teams)

Currently, schools and other education settings in Leeds can only refer a child or young person (CYP) to STARS (Specialist Training in Autism and Raising Standards) team if the CYP has a formal diagnosis of autism.

The Learning Inclusion Service is proposing to change this system of referral and enable schools and settings to refer CYP for access to support if the CYP presents with complex social, communication and interaction needs (including autism), regardless of diagnosis. The proposed changes are set to be implemented from January 2026, pending approval.

- Settings can access support for a CYP who presents with complex social, communication and interaction needs (including autism) without a diagnosis.
- SENIT team and STARS team become one team under new team title and their current service delivery manager.
- Early Years offer solely provided by Early Years SEND team .

Give your feedback on the proposals:

Parents and carers are being encouraged to share their feedback on the proposals via an online survey: <https://surveys.leeds.gov.uk/s/VBWSOZ/>



Education, Health and Carer Plans (SENSAP)

Rhena Khan, SENSAP Lead

Maz Cullen, Communications and Resolutions Officer

SENSAP are aware of the current challenges families are facing with the service when requesting education, health and care needs assessments.

The top priorities going forward are:

- communication
- meeting time frames.

Updates

MAP meetings

- started in the summer of 2024 as part of the SEND Change Programme.
- Take place weekly.
- Made decisions around proceeding with assessment, funding, change of placement, ceasing plans and issues with plans.
- On average 150-200 cases are looked at each week at panel.

The Leeds Parent Carer Forum have observed a panel, however there is currently no parent involvement in the panels. This is something SENSAP will explore as they review the panel.

Productivity

Case work officers are being given targets each week in terms of productivity, if these targets are not met they are reviewing the reasons why.

Phase transfers

The team are currently working on phase transfers, if an annual review is out of date please let the casework officer know.

SENSAP have delegated the responsibility of annual reviews to SILCs and schools, however it is still the LA's legal duty to ensure they are completed.

Communications and resolutions officer

Max Cullen is the new communications and resolutions officer within the SENSAP team.

Maz's email is maz.cullen@leeds.gov.uk