



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

List of UK-based organisations for schools, young people, and families

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About this list

This list includes organisations relevant to neurodivergence (for example, those focusing on dyslexia, autism, and other diagnoses), and those focused on **education, families, and children**, because this is closest to the LEANS Project's remit. *Please note that some organisations may not serve the entire UK (e.g., may operate only in Scotland, Wales, etc).*

The list is intended to be a useful starting point for people who may be looking for information, advice, or practical support. It does not include all organisations working in these areas, but has largely focused on larger or national-level organisations. We encourage you to look up what is happening in *your* area in terms of groups, services, and local charities. There are many smaller but excellent groups, and it wasn't feasible to find and list them all! We also know that there are some diagnoses that aren't currently covered by this list at all. We hope to expand it in the future.

Contact information and organisation remits may change over time. We encourage you to **please check with individual organisations** about what they currently offer, to which people, and how best to contact them.

Please be aware, inclusion on this list:

- Does not constitute an endorsement of these organisations, or their information or services.
- Does not imply that these organisations have any relationship with, or knowledge of, the LEANS research project/ LEANS programme.

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1. General organisations

Support for children and young people, disabilities, assistive technologies

ACiP:S

<https://acipscotland.wordpress.com/>

The role of ACiP:S has developed over the past twenty years to include the provision of information on augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) in Scotland, support for services and professionals through ongoing continuing professional development and support for people who use AAC and their families.

Barnardo's

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/helping-families>

Provide a range of services to help and support families across the UK, working with organisations and professionals so that children get the best start in life.

See also:

Barnardo's Scotland: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/scotland>

Barnardo's Wales (English): <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/wales>

Barnardo's Wales (Cymraeg): <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/barnardos-cymru>

Barnardo's Northern Ireland: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/northern-ireland>

CALL Scotland

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

Website includes Services, Information, Support and Downloads. CALL Information/Enquiry service is to provide information and advice on technological aids for communication and learning to professionals, carers and disabled people themselves. They also run webinars on practical, specialised topics (for example, technology for dyslexic learners or accessibility features available on the iPad).

Children's Commissioner roles (individually in all UK nations)

In general, commissioners work to make sure the laws that affect children's lives are fair. They challenge people in power to keep human rights promises they've made to children and young people, that make sure they have what they need to grow up in an environment of happiness, love and understanding. They can advise individuals and organisations. *Details of the role may vary by nation.*

The Children's Commissioner [England]

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/>

The Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland

<https://cypcs.org.uk/>

Children's Commissioner for Wales / Comisiynydd Plant Cymru

English: <https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/>

Cymraeg: <https://www.complantcymru.org.uk/ein-cynlluniau/>

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People [NICCY]

<https://www.niccy.org/>

Do-IT Solutions, a tech-for-good company

<https://www.doitprofiler.com/sectors/do-it-in-education/schools/>

The company has developed a unique person-centred computer profiling system used to help map strengths and challenges and map out other people's spiky profiles and highlight their strengths. It is used in schools, universities, apprenticeships, colleges, employment, offending and into-work and employment settings in the UK and internationally. **(Not Free)**

Enquire

<https://enquire.org.uk/>

Enquire is the Scottish advice service for additional support for learning, and offers a range of access options including a telephone helpline, fact sheets, and outreach work. Their mission is to raise awareness of children's rights to extra support in school, help families and schools work together on support issues, and advise young people who are struggling in school. In addition to providing guidance and information about additional support for learning legislation, they can help families find their local education and support services. These services include **Resolve** independent mediation. They also offer the **Reach** website (listed below).

Health and Education Chamber, First-tier Tribunal for Scotland

<https://www.healthandeducationchamber.scot/>

The Additional Support Needs Tribunals for Scotland (ASNTS) transferred into the Health and Education Chamber of the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland on 12 January 2018, and became the Additional Support Needs jurisdiction within the Chamber.

Meic [Wales]

English: <https://www.meiccymru.org/>

Cymraeg: <https://www.meiccymru.org/cym/>

Meic is the helpline service for children and young people up to the age of 25 in Wales, with online chat, freephone, and text options. Available daily, 7 days a week. Website does a good job answering questions children might have about the service, such as privacy issues. Website also includes a section for professionals.

The Mix

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

The Mix is a UK based charity that provides free, confidential support for young people under 25 via online, social and mobile. They say, "Whether you're 13, 25, or any age in between, we're here to take on the embarrassing problems, weird questions, and please-don't-make-me-say-it-out-loud thoughts you have."

My rights, my say

<https://myrightsmysay.scot/>

This service is targeted at children in Scotland with additional support needs, who are slightly older than LEANS (age 12-15). It helps children be involved in the decisions that affect them, regarding their support and education. They offer advocacy work, support for practitioners, and resources such as template documents.

NHS Education for Scotland (Let's Introduce Anxiety Management [LIAM])

<https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/21126/early-intervention-for-children>

This training has been developed for qualified multi-disciplinary staff across agencies who work with children and young people, e.g., in school settings. The resources are evidence and competency-based and aligned to the NES Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) MATRIX, and Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) in Scotland.

OpenLearn

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/>

Free online learning from The Open University. OpenLearn gives you free access to course materials and expert opinion on topical issues.

Parents Voices in Wales Community Interest Company (CIC)

<https://parentsvoicesinwales.wordpress.com/> (English)

A parent and carer support group (private, via Facebook) who campaign for improved mental health and neurodiversity services by working collaboratively with all sectors in Wales. Website includes extensive links to other organisations and informational resources.

Partners In Advocacy (PiA)

<http://www.partnersinadvocacy.org.uk/>

PiA is an independent advocacy service that can provide an advocate for a young person with additional support needs. Their service is free and confidential and they have extensive experience supporting people to express their thoughts and opinions in various settings, including meetings with schools. They work exclusively with the young person to enable them to express their views.

Reach

<https://reach.scot/>

Reach can help you understand children's rights to be supported and involved in decisions so they have an equal chance to flourish in their education. Hear from school pupils across Scotland sharing what has helped them, and get accessible, bitesize advice on additional support for learning. Much of the website content is written for children, with information to help them understand what their rights are, especially in relation to education and support.

Respect Me

<https://respectme.org.uk/>

Their vision is of a respecting, just, equal and inclusive Scotland in which all children and young people can live free from bullying and harassment and are encouraged to reach their full potential. Their work is driven by a focus on children's rights. They work with all adults involved in the lives of children and young people to give them the practical skills and confidence to deal with children who are bullied and those who bully others.

Salvesen Mindroom Centre *SMC is a partner on the LEANS project*

<https://www.mindroom.org>

A Scottish charity that supports, informs and empowers parents, carers, children and young people living with learning difficulties. SMC wants all children and young people with learning difficulties to lead a fulfilling life, and offers direct support to families and young people to achieve that. Their multi-disciplinary team has the experience to inform and provide evidence-based procedures and tools to help families and professionals.

Skills Development Scotland (SDS)

<https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/>

Scotland's national skills body. They support people and businesses to develop and apply their skills, and work with partners to provide services that deliver the very best outcomes for Scotland's people, businesses and the economy.

Sleep Scotland

<http://www.sleepscotland.org/>

Sleep Scotland is a charity which promotes healthy sleep in children and young people through sleep awareness, sleep counselling and education. They specialise in providing intensive sleep programmes for children with additional support needs by training sleep counsellors to work directly with families.

Young Minds

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

A UK charity fighting for children and young people's mental health. They want to see a world where no young person feels alone with their mental health, and all young people get the mental health support they need, when they need it, no matter what. Website has sections/resources for young people, parents and carers, and for professionals working with young people. Includes a curated set of "Real Stories", with young people directly sharing their own experiences of difficulties, and with seeking help.

2. ADD & ADHD

ADDISS

<http://www.addiss.co.uk/>

The National Attention Deficit Disorder Information and Support Service. They provide people-friendly information and resources about Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder to anyone who needs assistance - parents, people with ADD/ADHD diagnoses, teachers or health professionals.

Attitude

<https://www.additudemag.com/>

Online and print magazine with range of topical articles about ADHD (multiple age groups). They cover information about this condition, tips and advice, personal experiences, and more. This site commits to verifying the factual accuracy of their content.

The ADHD Foundation

<https://adhdfoundation.org.uk/>

National ADHD charity for the UK, and the largest user-led ADHD charity in Europe. The Foundation promotes a neurodiverse paradigm in health, education and employment. Working in partnership with individuals, families, doctors, teachers, government and other agencies, the ADHD Foundation actively promotes a strength-based approach to living successfully with ADHD and other types of neurodivergence, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism, dyscalculia and Tourette's syndrome.

Scottish ADHD Coalition

<https://www.scottishadhdcoalition.org/>

The Scottish ADHD Coalition was launched in June 2017 to bring together the voluntary organisations providing support to adults and children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in Scotland, and their parents, carers and families.

UK ADHD Partnership (UKAP)

<https://www.ukadhd.com/>

UKAP was established in January 2013 by mental health and allied professionals who share an interest in improving outcomes and securing better futures for children and young people affected by Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), together with their carers and families. The Partnership brings together practitioners with a wealth of experience from a range of services who are committed to raising awareness and understanding about ADHD and fostering positive outcomes.

3. Autism (ASC/ASD)

The Curly Hair Project

<https://thegirlwiththecurlyhair.co.uk/>

A social enterprise that supports people on the autistic spectrum and the people around them, founded by autistic author Alis Rowe. They use animated films, comic strips and diagrams to make their work interesting and easy to understand! **(Not free)**

National Autistic Society

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

They are the UK's leading charity for people on the autism spectrum and their families. Since 1962, They have been providing support, guidance and advice, as well as campaigning for improved rights, services and opportunities to help create a society that works for autistic people.

NAS also maintains a searchable directory of other autism-related services and organisations that may be local to you: <https://www.autism.org.uk/directory> (can filter by location)

National Autism Team [Wales]

Known as the National Neurodivergence Team as of October 2023

English: <https://autismwales.org/en/>

Cymraeg: <https://autismwales.org/cy/>

Website run by the National Autism Team, funded by the Welsh Government in support of their autism strategy. Includes information for autistic people and for parents/carers in a range of areas, including employment and education. Also includes info and links for Wales' Integrated Autism Services.

PDA (Pathological Demand Avoidance) Society

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

PDA is widely understood to be a profile on the autism spectrum, involving the avoidance of everyday demands. They provide information, support and training about PDA for individuals, families and professionals, aiming to increase acceptance and understanding of the PDA profile and to improve outcomes for individuals and families.

Scottish Autism

www.scottishautism.org/

Established in 1968 by a group of parents, they are now the largest provider of autism-specific services in Scotland and a leading authority and advocate for good autism practice.

Scottish Women's Autism Network (SWAN Scotland)

<https://swanscotland.org/>

SWAN is a network for & by autistic women, girls and non-binary people, representing a wide range of views and life experiences. They offer events, information, and training.

4. Dyslexia

Addressing Dyslexia

<http://addressingdyslexia.org/>

This free resource provides information for teachers, schools and local authorities on inclusive practice, literacy difficulties and dyslexia. The Toolkit guides users through a child-centred, collaborative process of identification, assessment, support and monitoring.

British Dyslexia Association

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

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) is the voice of dyslexic people. We aim to influence government and other institutions to promote a dyslexia friendly society that enables dyslexic people of all ages to reach their full potential.

DysGuise

<https://dysguise.com/>

The aim of DysGuise is to identify some of the challenges that people might come across in their learning, and to uncover the strengths that they can use to deal with these challenges.

(Not Free)

Dyslexia Scotland

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

Dyslexia Scotland is a national charity dedicated to enabling people with dyslexia in Scotland to realise their potential.

Dyslexia Unwrapped

<http://unwrapped.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/>

Dyslexia Unwrapped, the online hub for young people with dyslexia.

The Dyslexia Association

<https://www.dyslexia.uk.net>

Information and services related to dyslexia in children and adults, including dyslexia awareness training for schools and employers. Provides a free helpline (see website for current dates and times). Pages about children includes specific information and resources on talking to a child's school about dyslexia. Also offers screening, assessment, and tuition services **(not free)**.

5. Dyspraxia (Developmental Coordination Disorder/DCD)

Movement Matters

<http://www.movementmattersuk.org/default.aspx>

Movement Matters is the UK “umbrella organisation” representing the major national groups concerned with children and adults with coordination difficulties, a condition called Developmental Coordination Disorder (or DCD) and sometimes referred to as ‘dyspraxia’.

Movement Matters brings together the key bodies involved in Developmental Coordination Disorder/Dyspraxia in the UK. This includes DCD-UK, the [Dyspraxia Foundation](#), and the [National Handwriting Association](#).

<http://dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk/>

<http://www.nha-handwriting.org.uk/>

6. Developmental Language Disorders (DLD)

If you are looking for information on Specific Language Impairment, try the organisations in this category.

Afasic

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

Afasic promotes understanding, acceptance, equal opportunities and the inclusion into society of children and young adults with speech and language impairments.

I CAN (the children’s communication charity)

<https://ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/professionals/tct-resources/>

This charity offers practical help for parents who are concerned about their child, plus training and support for early years and school professionals. They run outreach programmes in the community, and have developed intervention programmes for delivery in over 5,000 nurseries and schools across the UK.

RADLD (Raise Awareness of Developmental Language Disorder)

<https://radld.org/>

Raise Awareness of Developmental Language Disorder or ‘DLD’ (previously RALLI campaign). Developmental Language Disorder is diagnosed when children fail to acquire their own language for no obvious reason. This results in children who have difficulty understanding what people say to them, and struggle to articulate their ideas and feelings. Through RADLD you will learn more about DLD, access resources and find out how to raise awareness.

NB: RADLD also offers materials in multiple languages, and has volunteer ambassadors in a range of countries globally.

7. Tourette's Syndrome

Tourette's Action

<https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk/>

Tourette's Action works in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and is the leading support and research charity for people with Tourette Syndrome and their families.

Tourette Scotland

<https://www.tourettescotland.org/>

Providing support and advice for anyone living with Tourette's in Scotland.

8. Neurodivergence (across categories)

National Neurodivergence Team [Wales]

Formerly National Autism Team, before October 2023

English: <https://autismwales.org/en/>

Cymraeg: <https://autismwales.org/cy/>

Website funded by the Welsh Government in support of their autism strategy, now pivoting to look more broadly at different types of neurodivergence, not autism alone. As of October 2023, site includes information for autistic people and for parents/carers in a range of areas, including employment and education. Also includes info and links for Wales' Integrated Autism Services.

Neurodivergence support via the C.A.L.L. Helpline Wales

English: <https://callhelpline.org.uk/AboutUs.php>

Cymraeg: <https://callhelpline.org.uk/AboutUsW.php>

A 24-hour all-Wales mental health helpline, providing emotional support to people living in Wales (bilingual service by phone or text). Website specifies that in addition to a range of mental health topics, helpline operators have specific training related to neurodivergence. This means adapting their practice for neurodivergent individuals and their families, including parents (no formal diagnosis required). They can also provide information on local and national services related to neurodivergence.

Many thanks to Marie-Clare MacAskill, Michael Sinclair, and the other helpers who compiled the initial list in 2021, and all those who have suggested organisations since!

Do you want to suggest an organisation that should be on this list, or have you found out that one of these organisations is no longer operating? You are welcome to e-mail us at LEANS@ed.ac.uk, though please be aware that due to team capacity we do not have a regular schedule for making updates. *Thank you!*