

Fixing the SEND system



The SEND system is broken. I hear this from so many frustrated parents and family members who are at breaking point. Reform-led Lancashire County Council (LCC) are responsible for SEND in West Lancashire and my constituents feel they are not listened to and repeatedly let down by them.

The system, inherited from the previous Conservative Government, is now changing under Labour. Children with SEND will get the right support, when and where they need it.

I attended a SEND debate in Parliament. I asked Georgia Gould, the Minister for School Standards, to confirm that children who need an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or similar support, will still have a legal right to it. I also asked her to confirm that families will still be able to make sure the support they're entitled to is actually provided, and that this won't be weakened by any changes.

I'm holding LCC to account. Labour has released the biggest single funding allocation to deliver more places for children with SEND on record, with over £23 million for LCC. I've written to LCC to ask how they'll be using that money to the benefit of children in West Lancashire.

The Government is currently consulting on the proposed reforms and I want to ensure you've had a chance to have your say.

On Tuesday 12 May, I'm holding a roundtable to the proposed SEND reforms with key individuals from the local area.

I'm also collecting the views of my constituents in this SEND survey, which I will send to the Government.

Giving children in West Lancashire the best start in life

April saw the opening of 6 free breakfast clubs in West Lancashire, bringing us to 8 so far!

Across the country, 500 more free breakfast clubs opened to 142,000 children. Labour's free breakfast clubs have already served over 7 million free breakfasts to hundreds of thousands of children.

I had the pleasure of visiting St John's Catholic Primary School to see their breakfast club in action. It was brilliant to speak to the children about how much fun they have seeing their friends before the school day starts.

This Labour Government is committed to having a free breakfast club in every Primary School.

The difference these breakfast clubs are making is huge: from increased attendance, readiness to learn, to reduced pressures on parents.

[Read more](#)

Making West Lancashire safer



I'm delighted to share the news that 4 local organisations have secured funding through my grant with the Police and Crime Commissioner, Clive Grunshaw!

This MP Grant Funding Programme aims to support local organisations in delivering initiatives that enhance community safety.

The successful organisations and their projects are:

- **KNOWKnifeCrime** - West Lancashire Says **KNOWKnifeCrime** - focusing on local concern around knife-carrying, myths, peer pressure and inconsistency safety knowledge.
- **About the Town CIC** - **Hashtag Girls** - online harm, vulnerability, cyberbullying and emotional wellbeing challenges for girls aged 10-14.
- **Stable Lives** - young people in Skelmersdale affected by trauma, family breakdown and cycles of crime/addiction affecting emotional stability and education engagement.
- **First Kick Foundation** - 'Burscough and Ormskirk Youth Empowerment Programme' - youth work in Ormskirk and Burscough, with a focus on anti-social behaviour, exploitation risks and police visibility.

This Labour Government is committed to reducing serious harm, including halving knife crime and halving Violence Against Women and Girls. Projects like these are vital to making the streets of West Lancashire safer.



Royal Mail

Letters arriving late or not at all, post delivered to the wrong address, missed appointments. These are just some of the issues you've been having with Royal Mail. Many of the concerns raised have been in Skelmersdale, but areas across the constituency have also been facing issues.

I have been reporting all these issues to Royal Mail directly, and I have written to the Minister for Small Business and Economic Transformation, Blair McDougall, to raise these issues with him and ask him to look into this as a matter of urgency.

If you're having issues with Royal Mail, please email me and I can take this up with them on your behalf.

[Email me](#)



Northern Rail



I had a productive meeting with Northern, where we discussed service reliability, Sunday services, rail connectivity for Skelmersdale, the buffers at Ormskirk, and The Burscough Curves.

I'm always keen to hear from you about transport in the area. If there's anything you want to raise with me, please email me on ashley.dalton.mp@parliament.uk.

[Email me](mailto:ashley.dalton.mp@parliament.uk)

Tackling the cost of living in West Lancashire

In case you missed it, some brilliant cost of living policies came into effect in April.

What this means for families:

- The two child limit has been removed – expected to benefit 211,000 children in the North West and lift 450,000 children out of poverty across the country

What this means for pensioners:

- The state pension has been increased by 4.8% – reaching up to £241.30 per week for 21,292 people in West Lancashire

What this means for workers:

- Workers now get Statutory Sick Pay rights and entitlement to paternity leave from day one of employment
- The National Minimum Wage has gone up – a boost of £1,500 for 330,000 in the North West
- The National Living wage has gone up – a £900 pay rise for full time workers

What this means for households:

- Universal Credit standard allowances have increased by 2.3% more than inflation – benefitting 1,093,652 people in the North West
- Our new Crisis and Resilience Fund will help low-income households in immediate need of financial support, for things like heating oil costs
- The energy price cap has fallen to £117, benefitting millions of households

