



# Welcome Pack and Handbook for families

Date Revised: 29/05/2026  
By: Miriam Watson-Pratt

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Registered Charity No: 1170147 Company Limited by Guarantee No: 9692276

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# 1. Welcome to Little Hiccups



## Welcome to Little Hiccups

Little Hiccups is an award-winning, Leeds-based, parent-led support charity dedicated to helping families with children who have disabilities or additional needs. Founded by parents who understand the unique challenges of raising a child with complex

needs, we provide a safe, inclusive, and welcoming community where families can connect, share experiences, and access vital support.

In 2005, Linsay, the founder of Little Hiccups gave birth to her little boy, full of the joys of becoming a parent and filled with all of the dreams and aspirations for their lives ahead.... Those dreams were shattered just a few days afterwards as they very nearly lost their boy. They spent the following weeks in PICU before finally bringing their son home, only to keep returning to the LGI as the extent of his injuries became apparent. Jack had been left with scarring all over his brain, resulting in him having severe cortical visual impairment, he cannot sit, stand, hold up his head, or use his hands. He cannot speak (though he can certainly vocalise and express his teenage strops! He is fed via a gastrostomy, has a very difficult to treat form of Epilepsy called Lennox Gastaut Syndrome which means he has 20-30 seizures a day of every different kind and his condition is life limiting. All that said, he is the most loving and inspirational boy we have ever met.

The journey he has taken Linsay on since then has been a roller coaster. He is also the inspiration behind Little Hiccups. In fact, he is the reason behind the Little Hiccups name. The name came about because when Jack

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was first born he appeared to be having 'little hiccups'. We later found out they were seizures and this was the start of our journey and in 2009, Little Hiccups was founded.

Our mission is to ensure that no family feels isolated. We offer a wide range of services including accessible family events, sensory-friendly activities, and inclusive play sessions that are tailored to meet the needs of children with disabilities. These events are designed not only for fun but also to foster social inclusion and build confidence in both children and their families.

In addition to our events, we provide practical support such as equipment lending, signposting to relevant services, and emotional support through peer networks. We also work closely with local authorities and healthcare providers to advocate for better services and accessibility.

Little Hiccups is committed to creating a world where all children, regardless of ability, are celebrated and supported. Our work is made possible through the dedication of our volunteers, the generosity of our donors, and the resilience of the families we serve.

Thank you for joining us on our journey.

## 2. Contact Details

### Office Address

Little Hiccups  
% The Barrowbys  
170 Barrowby Lane  
Garforth, Leeds  
LS25 1NG

### Stay n Play Address








Little Hiccups  
% Leeds Mencap  
The Vinery Centre  
20 Vinery Terrace, Leeds  
LS9 9LU

Tel: 0783 123 0741

Email: [info@littlehiccups.co.uk](mailto:info@littlehiccups.co.uk)

Website: <https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk>

To ensure you are kept up to date with changes and events we recommend you sign up to our email Mailing List which can also be joined on our website or here: <https://mailchi.mp/d71ce0974eff/subscribe-to-our-mailing-list>

	Public Facebook <a href="https://www.facebook.com/littlehiccups1">https://www.facebook.com/littlehiccups1</a> Private Facebook <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/LittleHiccups">https://www.facebook.com/groups/LittleHiccups</a>
	BlueSky <a href="https://bsky.app/profile/littlehiccups1.bsky.social">https://bsky.app/profile/littlehiccups1.bsky.social</a>
	Instagram <a href="https://www.instagram.com/littlehiccups1">https://www.instagram.com/littlehiccups1</a>
	YouTube <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8LPwi8yh0DLCy02a4CtfjQ">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8LPwi8yh0DLCy02a4CtfjQ</a>
	LinkedIn <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/company/21383684">https://www.linkedin.com/company/21383684</a>
	TikTok <a href="https://www.tiktok.com/@little_hiccups">https://www.tiktok.com/@little_hiccups</a>
	WhatsApp <a href="https://www.whatsapp.com/channel/0029Vb8UfNsChq6Ojt4ilm1Z">https://www.whatsapp.com/channel/0029Vb8UfNsChq6Ojt4ilm1Z</a>

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### 3. What We Do

To access all of our services you need to register online to ensure your eligibility on our website at <https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/register>

#### Stay n' Play

A twice weekly Stay n' Play for under 5's for children with special needs and disabilities. We aim to provide a place where parents/carers can go with their children where they can relax in a safe environment and meet other families in similar circumstances.

<https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/stay-n-play>

#### Family Fun Days

A weekend Family Fun Day out and about on a monthly basis for all the family that cannot make the weekly session and because we recognise that the whole family is involved. Our goal is also to show that there are no limits to having fun!

<https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/family-fun-days>

#### Parent/Carer Events

A regular Parent/Carer event out and about on a regular basis for parent/carers of children with additional needs. Because you deserve a break for the amazing job you do! Events are 18+

<https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/parent-carer-events/>

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## Hydrotherapy

Hydrotherapy with trained physiotherapists at a reduced cost so that it is accessible to all families.

<https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/hydrotherapy>

## Physiotherapy Support

Physiotherapy support to Little Hiccups families for your child's specific physiotherapy needs.

<https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/physiotherapy-support>

## All Terrain Wheelchairs Hire

To hire out all terrain buggies to families to enable children in wheelchairs to access the beach and other tricky areas.

<https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/all-terrain-wheelchairs>

## Travel Bed Hire

To hire out accessible and secure travel beds to families to enable children who need a safer bed to visit family or to go on holiday.

<https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/travel-bed>

## Stabilo Bagel Hire

To hire out the Stabilo Bath Bagel which provides excellent head control and stabilisation thus ensuring safe bathing and swimming

<https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/stabilo-bath-bagel>

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## Counselling

Counselling support for parents and carers who might need a listening ear, support and a safe place, or just let off steam about anything which troubles you.

<https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/counselling>

## Compassion Packs

Little Hiccups produce two different types of Compassion Packs - an Emergency Hospital Pack and a Bereavement Pack.

<https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/compassion-packs>

## Mosaic Trail

An accessible and inclusive Mosaic Trail inspired and designed by Little Hiccups families.

<https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/mosaic-trail/>

## Educational/Informative Courses

Educational/Informative Courses for parents to support them with knowledge about how to support their child, their family and themselves.

<https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/educational-informative/>

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## Third Party Partnerships

Here to support and guide you through all the information and to signpost you to other services such as links to Third Party Charities and Companies including-

- [Max Cards](#) – providing discounts for fostered and disabled children
- [The Principle Trust Holidays](#) - Based in Skipton, North Yorkshire The Principle Trust Children’s Charity aim is to help improve the quality of life of children from across Yorkshire who are underprivileged, disadvantaged, or disabled through the provision of free holidays and respite breaks.
- [Ison Harrison Solicitors-Making a Will](#) – making sure your loved ones are looked after in the event of the worst happening.
- [West Yorkshire CANN](#) – links to other West Yorkshire Charities that provide support and services for children with additional needs.
- [Other Information](#) – This page will hopefully provide further information about different areas, Charities, services or funding that could support you in your journey.

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## 4. Our Values

### *Support*

Our aim is to support families to support themselves. Whether that is emotional, practical or informative support.

### *Share*

We encourage families to join in family events and on social media, to meet other families and to share their highs and lows and experiences.

### *Experience*

Our aim is to make memories that last forever. We want our families to experience life to the full and with friends and family. We believe in No Limits.

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## 5. Our Mission Statement

The aim of Little Hiccups is to provide a support network for families with children with a disability/additional need. This is achieved by:

- Offering a safe and unthreatening place to meet.
- Providing the opportunity to meet people in similar situations, to share experiences, make friends and support each other.
- Providing an environment where children can learn through play, make friends and have fun.
- Providing the opportunity for families to attend experiences that they would not usually access on their own.

Little Hiccups is committed to providing the best possible support for children and families. It aims always to place the needs of the child as a first concern and to act to ensure their safety and protection.

## 6. Behaviour Statement

Little Hiccups provides opportunities for therapy, fun, friendship and enjoyment for children with additional needs, their brothers and sisters and parents, grandparents and carers and other supporters. Our aim is to be a fully inclusive and transparent charity.

We want to provide a safe, welcoming and fun environment for the whole family and therefore we expect that all staff, volunteers, parents, carers and children show respect, acceptance and tolerance to all who attend Little Hiccups sessions.

We encourage parents to use positive behaviour management and understand that different needs may present different behavioural challenges. We understand that behaviour is a form of communication and allow children to engage with the activities on offer however they feel comfortable, as long as they and the other people attending are safe.

Very occasionally, some sessions might not be suitable for some children. Either for a particular child on a particular day or at that particular stage of their development. We will gather information during the application process to ensure we know as much about your child's needs as possible before a session to help us to decide with you if an activity is suitable or not. We want to support you and your children, so we will do our best to offer an alternative activity.

We will make reasonable adjustments to include all children where possible. For example, we could try to find extra staff or volunteers with relevant experience for additional support during a session. Or we could modify the experience provided in the session, on a planned future occasion, to better meet the child's needs. In our Stay n Play sessions, we could arrange for the child to visit before the session starts so they are able to experience the environment with no other distractions around.

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In extreme circumstances, we may have to admit that Little Hiccups is not the right environment for a particular child or family at that time; where this is the case, we will work with the family to find another suitable provision where possible. And of course, just because it is not right at the moment, does not mean that it will not be in the future. We will always be willing to try again.

If you feel, from the description of the experience provided by the session, and your experience of your child's reaction to similar environments that a session would not be suitable, please let us know. We can look at the reasonable adjustments mentioned above to adapt the session to include your child or offer an alternative.

It could also become gradually evident during a session that a new environment and experience is causing a child to be distressed or to behave in a way likely to cause distress for the other children in the session. On this occasion, it might be necessary to end the child's participation in the session. If a child's reaction was thought to be likely to cause a risk to their own safety, or to the safety of others during the session, we might also need to ask for the child to be withdrawn on that occasion. We would do this discreetly and respectfully.

Everyone at Little Hiccups wants to make attending Little Hiccups sessions a great experience for all the children who attend and their families. We have gained lots of experience over the years that we have been running sessions, but we really do need your expertise as parents and carers to help make this happen. So we would welcome any advice or feedback about services we offer, what we could provide in the future, and what we could try to do differently or as extra support for your child or other children with similar additional needs, to make it a better experience. It might take some time or even a bit of extra fundraising, but we will do our best to make it possible for everyone who comes to Little Hiccups to take away a great experience.

## 7. Policies and Procedures

Little Hiccups' update to date Policies and Procedures including the Privacy Policy, Complaints Policy, Event Cancellation Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy are always available to view and download on our website at:

<https://www.littlehiccups.co.uk/policies-and-procedures>

Little Hiccups is committed to meeting the needs and aspirations of service users and communities in a fair, respectful, and proportionate manner. Our approach to diversity and equality is to promote inclusiveness by recognising that anyone can make a positive difference in the achievement of the organisation's vision and in the wider society.

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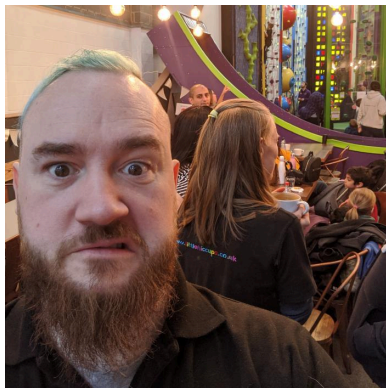
## 8. Meet The Team

All of our Trustees are DBS checked, have completed Child Protection Courses and we have several trained First Aiders. You can find out a little bit more about each of our Trustees below.

Chairperson: Sarah Stewart  
Secretary: Miriam Watson-Pratt  
Treasurer: Linsay Medica

### Noel Davies-Atack

**Position: Trustee**



“I joined Little Hiccups originally in 2012 so I could spend more time with my God-daughter Freya and to help in any way I could. Since then I have been roped into multiple extreme events and ridden from Liverpool to Leeds!

My primary role has been to help out on our monthly trips out....I’m normally the loud guy you all see when you first arrive with a big smile and three kids hanging off me. I really enjoy Little Hiccups and think it’s a fantastic way of meeting new people and having loads of fun.

If you ever see me at an event and you want to chat just give me a prod and say Hi!!”

## Linsay Medica

**Position: Founder / Treasurer**



I am mum to Jack, who is profoundly disabled and the most amazing boy ever! However life with a disabled child is a real roller coaster of emotions and challenges. Seeing other parents in Clinic I realised I wasn't alone and that support from others going through similar situations is invaluable. That was what inspired me to start Little Hiccups, to give parents a chance to meet others, share experiences and help focus on the positives that our children bring. It's very easy to get caught up in hospitals, therapies and meds and lose track of the amazing little person who is stronger than belief and deserves the best shot at everything positive. That's why we try to make as many happy memories with our Little Hiccups as we can! Jack has taught me so much and put my life on a path I wasn't expecting but I wouldn't change it for the world.

## Tracy Reece

**Position: Trustee / Stay n Play Facilitator**

**Role: Deputy Safeguarding Officer**



I first came to Little Hiccups in 2011 after meeting Linsay and Jack at his school where I was a Learning Support Assistant in his class. I have my own son James with additional needs. James has Cerebral Palsy.

A couple of years later I made it onto Team Conquerors and began to face challenges of my own giving me a better understanding of what life can be like for a child with additional needs. I

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began volunteering to help run Stay and Play sessions each week so that I can hopefully help to reassure and support parents and children as they begin their journey.

## **Sarah Stewart**

**Position: Chairperson**

**Roles: Responsible for Child Protection on the Board of Directors**



Hello, Conqueror Sazzle reporting for duty. So I've been fund-raising for Hiccups for some years now. It started with jumping into the sea on Boxing Day 2010, then joining Hiccup Conquerors in 2014, A year later I was a trustee. I've done my stint as chair. As a team we have made some amazing achievements and battled some challenges. It's a total joy to be part of it all. I am a learning Disability Nurse by trade but really it's what I eat, sleep and breath. I've always believed that carer

and family support is an important part of my role. Hence the underpinning values of Little Hiccups is something I've always wanted to support.

As part of the committee I enjoy actively being involved with events and helping the charity to grow. Watching families thrive with the support of Little Hiccups is one of the core elements of the charity making all this worth it. I also get to enjoy some amazing days out with you all.

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## James Thompson



### Position: Trustee

James is the head of the clinical negligence team at Ison Harrison Solicitors and a Director of the firm. He is a member of the Law Society Clinical Negligence Accreditation Scheme and is an accredited Senior Litigator with the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL). His accreditations means that we are one of the few specialists able to undertake legal aid work for those who qualify and wish to choose this funding option.

James deals with all types of clinical negligence, but specialises in acting for patients with life changing catastrophic injuries including Erb's & Cerebral Palsy. He also supervises the senior lawyers in the team, manages the department and is a member of the firm's Senior Management Team.

James gets job satisfaction from helping people. He always wanted to be a lawyer and was interested in medicine from a young age. He likes solving complex problems. Being a clinical negligence lawyer was the perfect fit for him as it allows him to use his eye for detail, analytical skills, ability to communicate complex issues clearly, effectively and construct persuasive arguments so as to help others in their time of need. He fights hard and smart for his clients and delivers a high standard of care.

It is really difficult for James to pick a case which means the most to him as he has been fortunate to have successfully represented so many lovely clients and their families over the years. However, since he became a father he has to confess that he finds working for children and their parents close to his heart. He understands the need to know what happened and why, to have lessons be learnt and avoid it happening to others. He does not underestimate the importance for a parent to know that their child will

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be safe and secure if anything happens to them in the future. He is also keen to ensure that as part of understanding what happened and why, parents learn to accept that it was not their fault and they must leave any guilt they carry.

James and his team are the only Erb's Palsy Group (EPG) recommended solicitors in the North of England, <http://www.erbspalsygroup.co.uk>

Outside of work, James is kept busy with his 2 young children and his German Wire Haired Pointer.

## Heather Watson

**Position: Trustee**



I'm Heather and I've volunteered at Little Hiccups since 2016 after finishing my degree at Leeds College of Music. During term time I'm a Head of Year at a High School but during the holidays you will find me clambering round the soft play area during the Stay n' Play sessions and dressed in brightly coloured, normally glittery, fancy dress at the Hiccups parties. Every couple of years you will also find me head to toe in mud as part of Team Conquerors and yes there is glitter under the mud.

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## Miriam Watson-Pratt

**Position: Secretary / Stay n Play Facilitator**

**Roles: Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer / Records Management / Data Protection Officer**



I first came to Hiccups in 2009 as two of my three children and I all have hearing impairments. I fell in love with the group and the people running it and somehow became more and more involved. I am currently the Hiccups Secretary and do most of the day-to-day running of Little Hiccups so if you have an enquiry about anything, just give me a yell and I'll do what I can to help.

## B Williamson

**Position: Trustee / Stay n Play Facilitator**



Hi. Let me introduce myself.

I'm B or Twanky, some of you may even know me by my Sunday name Belinda!!

(The only time you will catch me in a dress is at a Little Hiccups Ball)

I joined Little Hiccups as a parent back in 2013 after meeting Linsay and Jack at a Christmas party.

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Myself and my wife Karen are foster parents for children with disabilities.

Karen was a Learning Disability nurse for 25 years. And I worked as a Senior Support Worker for the NHS in Challenging Behaviour and Learning Disabilities for 9 years before changing from Adults to children and fostering for Leeds City Council. We have two adopted SEN children and one Foster Child.

I'm very sociable, love watching sport, baking and attending Little Hiccups events!

As my journey has finally taken me full circle with Little Hiccups. Finally getting to attend Stay n' Play, I thought it was about time I registered as a volunteer so I can help out at various activities/events, as our Little Hiccups family has grown so big over the years. In 2023, I'm glad to have joined the team of Trustees.

## 9. Meet Some Families

### Case Study: Tilly - Strength in the Water, Joy in the Journey



When Tilly's family first heard about Little Hiccups' hydrotherapy sessions, they were cautiously hopeful. At just 3 years old, Tilly lives with Rett Syndrome—a rare genetic condition that means she'll need 24-hour care for life. She can't talk or use her hands, but she's learning to stand and weight bear, and physiotherapy is essential to her progress.

Hydrotherapy, in particular, is a lifeline. But with long NHS waiting lists, access was limited—until Little Hiccups, with support from Children in Need, offered Tilly a funded place at Armley Pool.

Each week, Tilly worked with two physiotherapists who gently guided her through movements her family hadn't even considered. The results were incredible. She grew stronger, more confident, and visibly happier in the water. She loved the feeling of weightlessness, the freedom to kick and stretch, and the joy of being in motion.

The sessions didn't just help Tilly—they brought the whole family together. Swimming became a shared experience with her big sister Thea, and now, through her eye gaze device, Tilly often asks to go to the pool.

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And the best part? Just recently, Tilly took her first steps with a walker—something doctors once said she'd never do.

“We're so grateful,” her family told us. “This has been key to her happiness and well-being. If she's happy, she can face anything—with a smile and her gentle, loving nature.”

## Case Study: Oscar - Rolling with Confidence



When Oscar suddenly developed a hip problem and couldn't walk, his family found themselves in a tough spot. At 30kg, carrying him everywhere just wasn't sustainable.

That's when they reached out to Little Hiccups—and within no time, they had a Medium Delta buggy ready to go.

“The team were amazing,” his parent said. “I rang in a flap, and they were so calm and helpful.”

The Delta made a huge difference. It was comfortable for Oscar, easy to use at the farm, and gave the whole family a sense of freedom again. Oscar loved it so much, he didn't want to give it back!

“We'll definitely be hiring one again soon,” they told us. “Thank you, Little Hiccups.”

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## Case Study: Matilda - A Little Bit of Courage, A Lot of Joy

When Matilda's mum got in touch before our Family Fun Day event, she had a very understandable concern: the event was being held in an Indian restaurant, and Matilda is sensitive to strong smells. She wasn't sure if it would be the right environment for her daughter.

We had a chat and talked through the options. We explained that we'd set up a quiet area in the restaurant's waiting space, with LEGO, sensory toys, and a calm atmosphere—just in case Matilda needed a break.

And we're so glad they decided to come.

From the moment she arrived, Matilda was full of curiosity and creativity. She made a beeline for the face painting station, where the artist remembered her from a previous event. Back then, Matilda had spent time painting her parents and even the face painter herself!

This time, she chose a small design for her face, then joyfully coloured her palms—her favourite shade being indigo. She was completely in her element.

"She just oozes creativity," the face painter told us. "It's these little moments that really make me smile."

And the best part? The smells didn't seem to bother her at all. She spent nearly the whole session exploring, playing, and enjoying herself.

## Other Testimonials

"When I was first told about Little Hiccups I was very apprehensive and wasn't sure what to expect but from our first visit over 3 years ago we have felt at ease and welcomed. It gives families with SEN children hope and most importantly support. We meet every week and it feels so good knowing we can be somewhere where nobody will judge or mutter under their breaths about us. We have monthly outings to places I'd never think of going and very cost-effective which makes it possible to make "normal" memories. I personally feel like we're one big family and I haven't a clue

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where we would be without Little Hiccups. It feels like an escapism from the real world.”

“As a parent of a child with additional needs, Little Hiccups gave me the support I needed to successfully navigate our new world. Little Hiccups offer brilliant opportunities for outings as well as stay and play. They have guided and signposted us to other services that we were unaware of like Hawthorn. Meeting other families in the same boat, although our children are all unique, has provided an essential network. We love Little Hiccups!”

“Little Hiccups allows us to participate in activities with confidence and support that we would never dream of alone!”

“Little Hiccups is a lifeline when you’re in a world that feels like it doesn’t understand. There’s always someone who will take time to listen and support with a smile.”