

General election manifestos

June 2024

Following the launch of the RCSLT's General Election call to action, we are pleased to share key points from some of the manifestos of the political parties. The most relevant issues are included in this note, with a link to each party's manifesto provided, if you wanted further information.

If you want to call on local candidates to pledge for SLT, and support the RCSLT's policy calls, all you need is [five minutes and your postcode](#).

We look forward to working with whichever party forms the next Government to ensure their manifesto pledges maximise the role of speech and language therapists and deliver better lives for people with communication and/or swallowing needs and their families.

Conservatives

- Deliver a Family Hub in every local authority in England.
- Transform education for children with special educational needs by delivering 60,000 more school places and a further 15 new free schools for children with special educational needs.
- Overhaul the fit note process and design a new system that moves the responsibility for issuing fit notes away from GPs towards specialist work and health professionals.
- Publish and implement a Major Conditions Strategy.
- Modernise autism and learning disability services.
- Pass a new law to provide better treatment and support for severe mental health needs in the first session of the next Parliament.
- Invest in and modernise the NHS and improve working conditions for all NHS staff.

Manifesto accessible: <https://manifesto.conservatives.com/>

Labour

- Create 3,000 new primary school-based nurseries.
- Improve inclusivity and expertise in mainstream schools.
- Ensure special schools cater to those with the most complex needs and make sure admissions decisions account for the needs of communities.
- Require all schools to co-operate with their local authority on school admissions, SEND inclusion, and place planning.
- Improve data sharing across services, with a single unique identifier, to better support children and families.
- Fund evidence-based early-language interventions in primary school.
- Launch an expert-led review of curriculum and assessment and support to develop essential digital, speaking, and creative skills in all subjects.
- Modernise mental health legislation by updating the Mental Health Act.
- The National Health Service needs to move to a Neighbourhood Health Service, with more care delivered in local communities to spot problems earlier.
- Introduce 40,000 new appointments each week, during evening and weekends.
- We will work with prisons to improve offenders' access to purposeful activity, such as learning, and ensure they create pre-release plans for those leaving custody.
- Use spare capacity in the independent sector to aid in quicker diagnosis and treatment.
- Introduce a new Teacher Training Entitlement to ensure teachers stay up to date on best practice with continuing professional development.
- Publish regular, independent workforce planning in health and social care.
- Deliver the NHS long-term workforce plan.

Manifesto accessible: <https://labour.org.uk/change/my-plan-for-change/>

Liberal Democrats

- Give local authorities extra funding to reduce the amount that schools pay towards the cost of a child's Education, Health and Care Plan.
- Establishing a new National Body for SEND to fund support for children with very high needs.
- Give local authorities with responsibility for education the powers and resources to act as Strategic Education Authorities for their area, including responsibility for places planning, exclusions, administering admissions including in-year admissions, and SEND functions.
- Provide free access to sign language lessons for parents and guardians of d/Deaf children.
- Ensure that all parents can access childcare that is flexible, affordable and fair by including a specific emphasis on identifying and supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities in the new training programme for early years staff.
- Develop a career strategy for nursery staff, including a training programme with the majority of those working with children aged two to four to have a relevant Early Years qualification or be working towards one.
- Ending inappropriate and costly inpatient placements for people with learning disabilities and autism.
- Modernising the Mental Health Act.
- Adopt new accessibility standards for public spaces.
- Incorporate the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into UK law.
- Implement a targeted strategy to support disabled people into work, with specialist disability employment support.
- Build on the British Sign Language Act by increasing the use of BSL in Government communications and working collaboratively with the BSL Alliance to promote and facilitate the use of BSL.

Manifesto accessible: <https://www.libdems.org.uk/manifesto>

Green Party

- Advocate for a new legal framework for mental health conditions, and adequate support for neurodivergent children and children with SEND.
- An immediate boost to the pay of NHS staff.

Manifesto accessible: <https://greenparty.org.uk/about/our-manifesto/>

Reform

- Utilise independent and not-for-profit health provisions in the UK and overseas.

Manifesto accessible: <https://www.reformparty.uk/policies>

SNP

- Boost NHS spending by a minimum of £10 billion extra each year to address inflationary pressures and improve performance.
- Match Scotland's NHS pay deals by increasing investment in NHS England staff pay and conditions of at least £6 billion.

Manifesto accessible: <https://www.snp.org/manifesto/>

Plaid Cymru

- Review the financing model for Welsh healthcare services.
- Increase the availability of degree apprentices in the healthcare sector.
- Introduce a regulatory body for Senior Health Managers.
- Deliver a National Care Service that is free at the point of use and pay social care workers at least £1 over the Real Living Wage.
- Transfer powers over the "Mental Health Act" to Wales and reform the Code of Practice.
- Implement national and free Welsh-medium early years education and childcare service.
- Support the full transfer of justice powers to Wales.

Manifesto accessible: <https://www.partyof.wales/manifesto>