



Halton SEND Carer's Forum



Weekly update – 20th March 2026

Welcome to this week's update from the Halton SEND Parent Carers Forum newsletter - Our aim is to keep parent carers informed, connected and able to share their experiences so local services can continue to improve.

HSPCF Events and Opportunities

1. 'You said, we did, we're doing' Event

Please note that there will be no Parent Carer Coffee Morning this week as the Forum team will be attending the upcoming "You Said, We Did, We're Doing" event.

We would really encourage parent carers to come along if they can, as this is a valuable opportunity to hear how feedback from families is being used, find out more about current work across services, and continue sharing views on what matters most to parent carers in Halton. The Forum team will also be there so please do come and say hello. Please register using the link here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/1Tz2aPGPD4?origin=lprLink>

Date: 26.03.2026

Time: 10am - 12.00pm

Venue: Bridge Suite DCBL

Stadium

2. Parent Carer Zoom Session 19th of March

Thank you to everyone who joined our recent Parent Carer Zoom session, where we were joined by Michaela Bridge, Kate Charlton and Kelly Carey.

Updates included an overview of the Government's SEND White Paper. As the proposals are still at consultation stage, there is not yet enough detail to answer many of the practical questions families have. Parent carers were encouraged to respond to the consultation and Michaela is preparing a document to answer questions using information from the White Paper documents. We have included the department for Education guides here: [school send reforms sheets](#)

Other updates included work on Preparation for Adulthood, with a focus on starting planning earlier so young people and families are better supported as they move towards adult life. There was also an update on plans for new inclusion bases in Halton schools, which aim to increase local SEND provision and reduce the need for children to travel out of borough. With the expression of interest document being shared [SEND Report Appendix A 002.docx.pdf](#)

Michaela also shared the outcome of the recent Ofsted / CQC monitoring visit, which found that Halton has made progress in four out of five priority areas, with waiting times across some services remaining the main area where further improvement is still needed.



3. New Halton borough council Parent Carer Newsletter

Halton Borough Council has launched a new monthly Parent / Carer SEND newsletter, which shares SEND news, useful information and relevant events for families across Halton.

[Parent and Carers Newsletter from Halton Borough Council](#)

We have included a link to the latest edition in this newsletter, and if you would like to receive future editions directly, you can sign up here:

<https://signup.esmail.co.uk/Signup/a7125672ee19683656ed341c758c6fb3>

4. Ofsted/ CQC – Send monitoring inspection report.

The Ofsted / CQC Area SEND monitoring visit report for Halton has now been published. The report found that Halton has taken effective action in four of the five priority areas identified at the previous inspection, including progress in parent carer voice, support for schools, and improvements to EHCP timeliness and quality.

It also makes clear that waiting times remain too long across autism, community paediatrics and speech and language therapy, and that further work is still needed in these areas.

You can read the full report here: [ofsted report](#)

5. Easter Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

The Halton HAF programme will be running again over the Easter holidays, offering free activities and a meal for children and young people aged 5 to 16 who receive benefit-related free school meals.

There are also some places available for other vulnerable groups, including children and young people with SEND, young carers, and those who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Different providers offer different activities, with some sessions specifically designed to support SEND children and young people. The link is included here: [HAF](#)



Cheshire and Merseyside ICB

The Forum continues to attend the Health Co-production meetings, where updates are shared from partners including Cheshire and Merseyside ICB, Bridgewater and Mersey Care.

6. Animal Safari Groups for Young People

Halton's Children's Mental Health Service is offering Animal Safari sessions for children and young people who are already receiving support for their emotional or mental health needs.

themed group sessions use creative, animal-based activities to help young people explore feelings, build confidence and learn coping strategies in a safe and supportive environment.

Read more here: [Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in Halton provided by Mersey Care](#)

7. Reshared health reminders – SALT and ND Pathway

We are also resharing a few important health updates for families from previous newsletters.

From 1 April 2026, Bridgewater Community Healthcare will take over the Speech and Language Therapy contract in Halton. Families whose child has Speech and Language provision written into their EHCP should now have been allocated a provider. If this has not happened, parents are encouraged to contact their child's EHCP Co-ordinator.

For families waiting for assessment through the Neurodevelopmental Pathway (Autism / ADHD), children are being prioritised using a Red / Amber / Green system. If your child has been waiting a long time, the professional who made the referral can ask for the referral to be reviewed.

Families are also encouraged to let services know as soon as possible if they need to cancel an appointment, as this may allow that time to be offered to another child or young person waiting for support. If your child has received an ADHD or Autism diagnosis privately or through Right to Choose, families are encouraged to let Bridgewater know so records can be updated.

8. ADDvanced Solutions – What's On Guide

ADDvanced Solutions has shared it's latest What's On Guide which includes upcoming support, groups and opportunities for families.

A new Neurodevelopmental Learning Programme is due to start in Murdishaw on 14 April. Families interested in this are encouraged to contact ADDvanced Solutions directly to register for a place. The guide also includes information about other support available, including Community Network Groups, which take place on Monday afternoons at Ditton Community Centre. View the guide here: [What's on Guide](#)

9. SENDIASS Drop-In Sessions

SENDIASS can offer information, advice and support to families around special educational needs and disabilities. Including help with understanding processes, support in school, and navigating SEND services. They will be running drop-in sessions throughout 2026 for families who are not already receiving support from the service.

These sessions offer a chance to have a 20–30 minute conversations with no appointment needed. If further support is needed this can be arranged. Families can attend whichever hub is easiest for them.

Warrington Road Family Hub – 10am–1pm, 3rd Friday of the month (term time only)

Brookvale Family Hub – 10am–1pm, last Friday of the month (term time only)

Upcoming dates include:

Warrington Road: 20 March, 17 April, 15 May, 19 June, 17 July, 18 September, 16 October, 20 November

Brookvale: 27 March, 24 April, 26 June, 25 September, 27 November

10. Family Fund – Free Virtual Workshops

Family Fund offers support to families raising a child or young person with additional needs. Including a range of free virtual workshops designed to help build digital skills, confidence and practical knowledge.

This month's workshops for parents and carers include topics such as checking benefits online, finding grants, using accessibility features on an iPad, and supporting young people into adulthood. There are also creative digital workshops for children and young people during the school holidays.

Families can find out more and sign up through the Family Fund website here: [Family Fund website](#) or the Discover Digital closed Facebook group, which families can find here: [Discover Digital closed Facebook group](#)

11. SEND Parents Help AI tool

Families may also find SEND Parents Help useful. This is a free online AI tool for SEND parents in England. It has been created by a parent who wanted to make it easier to find reliable information when navigating SEND systems.

It covers topics including DLA, EHCPs, Blue Badges, school transport, Carer's Allowance and many other areas families may need help with. The tool is designed to use trusted information and is free to access with no sign-up required.

Find out more here: <https://sendparentshelp.com>



Halton Send Carers Forum



haltonsendcarersforum

HaltonSendCarersForum.org.uk



Website:

www.haltonparentcarersforum.org



Email:

info@haltonparentcarersforum.org

Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/HaltonSENDParentCarersForum>

👥 Closed Facebook group (for parent carers):

Halton SEND Parent Carers Forum – Closed Group



HALTON SEND

Important Information



PARENT CARER ADVICE / SUPPORT

SIGNPOST FOR HALTON



1 Halton Send Parent Carer's Forum



A voice to inform families with children with additional needs of the services in our local area which may be beneficial to your child.

www.haltonsendcarersforum.org.uk

1 Bridgewater



Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. Here you will find information about all of Halton's Health services

www.bridgewater.nhs.uk/halton/

2 ADDvanced Solutions



An open access offer that supports the emotional health and wellbeing of neurodivergent children and young people, their families and the professionals that work with them.

www.addvancedsolutions.co.uk

2 Sendiass



If you need some advice, guidance or support on any issues that are affecting you or your child then we're here to help. We provide impartial and confidential information and support.

www.sendiasshalton.co.uk/

3 Halton Carer's Centre



Halton Carers' Centre is a network partner of the Carers Trust. We work to reach unpaid young & adult carers and develop services for them across the borough.

www.haltoncarers.co.uk

3 Family Hubs



A one stop digital platform for Halton residents to use to find services, events, support groups and advice

www.haltonfamilyhubs.co.uk/



SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH



1 MHST
www.mersecare.nhs.uk

Our Mental Health Support Team provides direct mental health support to 45 schools in Halton. We promote the early detection and prevention of mental health problems, strengthen links with mental health services, providing direct, ongoing support around mental health and wellbeing across the whole school.



2 KOOTH
www.kooth.com

Kooth is a free digital safe and anonymous platform for support for young people. They have wellbeing activities, journals, discussion boards, tips and a free Chat and messenger option for young people to talk to someone.



3 CAMHS
www.mersecare.nhs.uk

Headz Up Halton drop-in hub
An informal drop-in café where young people up to 18 years, parents and carers can drop by to speak with a mental health professional for assessment, advice and signposting to local services.
Tues- Brookvale / Thursday Warrington Rd

WHATS ON

MARCH 2026



Click & Like



Peer to peer support
and advice



Halton SEND PARENT
Carer's Forum
Your voice counts.

Halton Send Parent
Carers Forum

Informing ♥ *Empowering* ♥ *Engaging*



PARENT CHECK-IN

- Heath Cafe 5th March- 9.30-11.30 am
- Halton Stadium 12th March- 9.30-11.30 am- with Ben Holmes
- Heath Café 19th March- 9.30-11.30

ZOOM

- Zoom with Michaela Bridge 19th March 8-9pm



YOU SAID, WE DID, WE'RE DOING...

26th March 10am-12- Halton Stadium
Opportunity for parents and carers to hear about the progress being made in improving services and provisions to support SEND in Halton



EVENTS

- Sync Club 21st March
- Hummingbird Date 13th March

FORUM CLOSING FOR EASTER 27TH MARCH

E-MAIL FOR INFO
Info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk

contact
For families
with disabled children



Health

Update: March



Halton SEND PARENT
Carer's Forum
Your voice counts

Key Points:

- Mental Health Schools Team (MHST) will have 100% school coverage in Halton during 2026/2027
- From 1st April Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust will become the new provider for Speech and Language in Halton
- Halton has an above average did not attend rate currently across NHS services (Bridgewater & Merseycare)
- Bridgewater uses a Red/Amber/Green system. Parent/Carers need to speak to the professional who referred into service to inform them of any changes

Dates for Diary:

- You Said We did Event- 26th March, Halton Stadium 10am-12

HSPCF: Meetings attended

- Health Co-Production
- Emotional Health Well-Being
- Bridgewater Communications
- SEND strategic Board
- SEND Health/Hospital Passport



PARTICIPANTS NEEDED!

**ARE YOU A PARENT OR CAREGIVER OF AN
AUTISTIC CHILD AGED 8 – 18?
DO YOU HAVE VIEWS ABOUT THEIR SCREEN
USE?**

- Complete a short survey to help us understand more about the role of media in their lives.
- It will take less than 20 minutes and your answers will be anonymous.
- You can also provide your email address to be entered into a competition to win an Amazon voucher (closing date 18th March)



For more information, contact e.boardman1@edu.salford.ac.uk



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Salford Research Ethics Committee

HALTON SUPPORTED INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

INTERNSHIP



For young people aged 18 - 24
who want to get a job and need extra support to do this

Halton Borough Council's Employment, Learning and Skills Division (Halton People into Jobs and Halton Adult Learning) deliver a Supported Internship programme for young people aged 18 -24 who want to get a job and need extra support to do this.

Eligibility

Young people 18-24 with an Education Health and Care Plan who want to work.



You are invited to attend our next **Supported Internship Open Event** to find out more, and to see if a Supported Internship is a suitable option for you to start in September 2026

The Open Event will be held at Kingsway Learning Centre, Widnes WA8 7QY on Wednesday 25th March from 3pm until 5pm

Limited places available. Don't miss out!

To book a place contact:

Mellanie Lythall-Brennan

0151 511 6233 | mellanie.lythall-brennan@halton.gov.uk

Lynsey Carr

0151 511 7547 | lynsey.carr@halton.gov.uk or

