



# Halton SEND Carers Forum

Weekly update – 27th March 2026



Welcome to this week's update from the Halton SEND Parent Carers Forum. **Please note that the Forum will be closed for the Easter break from today, 27 March, until 12 April.** During this time emails and messages will not be monitored as regularly, and we will respond as soon as possible after we return.

## HSPCF Events and Opportunities

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

A big thank you to everyone who attended the event and took the time to share their experiences, questions and feedback. The session gave parent carers an update on SEND improvement work in Halton, while also creating space for honest discussion.

It was acknowledged that although Ofsted/CQC recognised progress in areas such as leadership, governance and partnership working - families are still facing long waits, inconsistent communication and uneven experiences. particularly around speech and language therapy and neurodevelopment pathways.

The session also highlighted plans to increase specialist provision locally, including new classrooms, additional resource bases in mainstream schools, and more inclusive local options for children with SEND.

### 2. Parent Carer Coffee Morning - 16<sup>th</sup> April - With Ben Holmes

Our next Parent Carer Coffee Morning will take place after the Easter break and we're pleased to share that Ben Holmes will be joining us.

This is a good opportunity for parent carers to come along, hear updates, ask questions and continue sharing their experiences. As always, the session will be informal, with no pressure and no need to book — parents are welcome to drop in for all or part of the morning.

**Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> April

**Time:** 9.30am – 11.30am

**Venue:** DCBL stadium - Widnes

### 3. Exciting new Venue – Bridgewater Park SEN Hub

We're excited to share that Bridgewater Park will soon become the Forum's new base for coffee mornings.

This new venue will give us a welcoming space to continue bringing parent carers together and will also create future opportunities for 1-to-1 conversations with Forum staff for parents who may want to talk through a range of topics in a more individual or private setting.

We're looking forward to sharing more information soon and welcoming families to our new space!



Thank you again to everyone who attended the recent “You Said, We Did, We’re Doing” event. Sessions like this are expected to take place around every six months going forward to help keep communication open and families updated on SEND developments in Halton.

### **3. Short Breaks Commissioned Services Update**

Providers have now been confirmed for the delivery of Short Breaks commissioned activities with a mix of familiar favourites along with a new provider joining the offer. Families will see support continuing from Everton in the community, Mako create, Turtle Tots and Vibe, and we’re also pleased to share that Halton Play Council will be running their summer play schemes again this year. The new provider Sean Bailey Wellness has also been added to the offer.

Alongside those listed above are the referral-only services: Halton Play Council Play Clubs, Vibe Friendship Groups and the PA Recruitment Service.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their views as part of the consultation process. Parent carers, children and young people all helped shape the commissioned services and the support being delivered going forward.

Please see the attached poster for more information. Details will also begin to appear on the Local Offer / Family Hub website as providers confirm specific arrangements.

### **4. New Halton borough council Parent Carer Newsletter**

Halton Borough Council is now sharing a monthly Parent / Carer SEND newsletter, with SEND news, useful information and relevant events for families across Halton. We have included a link to the latest edition in this newsletter: [Parent and Carers Newsletter from Halton Borough Council](#)

If you would like to receive future editions directly, you can sign up here: <https://signup.esmail.co.uk/Signup/a7125672ee19683656ed341c758c6fb3>

### **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. More information can be found 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. Representatives from the ICB attended the 'You said, We did, We're Doing' event. Offering updates on the SALT and ND pathways along with having 1-1 conversations with parent carers. SALT and ND pathway information is shared below.

### **5. Reshared information – 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.

### **6. Animal Safari Groups for Young People**

Families may be interested in Animal Safari sessions being offered through Halton's Children's Mental Health Service for children and young people already receiving support with their emotional or mental health.

Using creative, animal-themed activities, the sessions aim 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](#)

### **8. Information Webinar from Council for Disabled Children.**

Recordings are now available from the recent parent carer information webinars series designed to help families understand the Government's SEND Reform consultation and what the proposals could mean for children and young people with SEND. These were information sessions to explain the consultation and did not form part of the official consultation process. Families can watch the webinar here:

<https://youtu.be/aNFydMsNu5Q?si=IFo2zDFrhhJ8i-n>

Families can also still share their views directly through the Government's consultation, which is open until 18 May 2026. By using the link below.

[SEND reform: putting children and young people first - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

### **9. ADDvanced Solutions – What's On Guide**

A new Neurodevelopmental Learning Programme is due to start in Murdishaw on 14<sup>th</sup> 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 latest 'Whats on' guide here: [What's on Guide](#)

### **10. 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:** 17 April, 15 May, 19 June, 17 July, 18 September, 16 October, 20 November

**Brookvale:** 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](http://Haltonsendcarersforum.org.uk)



**Website:**

[www.haltonparentcarersforum.org](http://www.haltonparentcarersforum.org)



**Email:**

[info@haltonparentcarersforum.org](mailto: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 PARENT CARERS FORUM

A voice for Halton SEND families

Please note the forum will be closed for Easter from Friday  
27th March and will re-open Mon 12<sup>th</sup> Apr

CONTACT US :

[info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk](mailto:info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk)  
[www.haltonsendcarersforum.org.uk](http://www.haltonsendcarersforum.org.uk)





# 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](http://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/](http://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](http://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/](http://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](http://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/](http://www.haltonfamilyhubs.co.uk/)



### SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH



**1** MHST  
[www.mersecare.nhs.uk](http://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](http://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](http://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

## APRIL 2026



Click & Like



Peer to peer support  
and advice



HaltonSEND PARENT  
Carer's Forum  
*Your voice counts*

Halton Send Parent  
Carers Forum

*Informing* ♥ *Empowering* ♥ *Engaging*



### PARENT CHECK-IN

- Halton Stadium 16th April- 9.30-11.30 am- with Ben Holmes
- Bridgewater Park Hub 23<sup>rd</sup> April- 9.30-11.30
- Bridgewater Park Hub 30<sup>th</sup> April- 9.30-11.30

### ZOOM

- Zoom with Michaela Bridge 23rd April 8-9pm



### NEW HSPCF HUB

After Easter we are delighted to be based in our new Hub at Bridgewater Park school. We will host our parent coffee sessions here and going forward there will be opportunities for you to have 1:1 discussions with HSPCF staff here



### EVENTS

- Sync Club 18<sup>th</sup> April

**E-MAIL FOR INFO**  
[Info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk](mailto:Info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk)

**contact**  
For families  
with disabled children

Informing  Empowering  Engaging

# PARENT ADVICE, SUPPORT & CHECK-IN

Come and meet other parents on a similar journey to yourself. Get peer to peer advice and support along with a Coffee.



**Focus Group Guest:**  
**Ben Holmes-**  
**Director of**  
**Education, Inclusion**  
**and Provision**



-  **Meet other parent carers**
-  **Help shape local services**
-  **Share important information**
-  **Get support & Advice**
-  **Discuss important topics**



## CONTACT US

-  Halton SEND Parent Carers Forum
-  [info@haltonsendpcf.org](mailto:info@haltonsendpcf.org)
-  [haltonsendcarersforum.org.uk](http://haltonsendcarersforum.org.uk)

 **9:30-11.30am**  
**16 APRIL 2026**

 **Venue**  
**HALTON STADIUM**

 **Guest**  
**BEN HOLMES**

**contact**  
For families  
with disabled children





Halton **SEND PARENT**  
Carer's Forum  
*Your voice counts*

Halton Send Parent  
Carers Forum



Click & Like



# ZOOM

## HBC UPDATE

With Michaela Bridge

*Informing* ♥ *Empowering* ♥ *Engaging*



zoom link

**THURSDAY 23RD APRIL - 20.00-21.00 PM**

Meeting ID: 890 2652 8931  
Passcode: 223913

Join us on zoom for a discussion with Michaela Bridge for a Monthly update

**ZOOM**



**E-MAIL- FOR INFO**  
[Info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk](mailto:Info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk)



# Halton Short Break Service FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES



**We are pleased to announce that the following Short Breaks activities have been commissioned for 2026/27**



Holiday activity trips and visits for children aged 7+



Two weeks of Summer Play Schemes



Monthly digital, creative art activities for children age 8+



SEAN BAILEY WELLNESS

Term-time multi-skills activities for children aged 4 to 14



Term-time Swimming Lessons for children aged 4 to 10  
Term time Splash Play for children aged 4 to 17



Monthly Vibe Outdoors activities for children aged 8 to 17

**These activities are in addition to the referral only Halton Play Council Play Clubs and Vibe Friendship Groups**

Providers will start to promote the activities during April and this information including eligibility criteria will be found at [Halton Short Break Service for children with disabilities](https://www.haltonfamilyhubs.co.uk/send-short-breaks) or <https://www.haltonfamilyhubs.co.uk/send-short-breaks>

From 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026 Halton will be using <https://eequ.org> for bookings

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us  
[AimingHigh.forDisabledChildren@halton.gov.uk](mailto:AimingHigh.forDisabledChildren@halton.gov.uk)





# 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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- 26<sup>th</sup> March, Halton Stadium 10am-12

### HSPCF: Meetings attended

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