

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.

## 1. Coffee Mornings in June – 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>

A big thank you to those who came along to our recent coffee morning yesterday with Sarah Griffiths and Janet Ritchie and shared their experiences and feedback around the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) process. It was really valuable to have parent carers in the room sharing both what has worked well and where families feel things could be improved. If anyone was unable to attend but would like to share some feedback, please get in touch and I can forward it over to Sarah and Janet.

Our next coffee morning will take place on 18<sup>th</sup> June when we will be joined by Peter Styzaker, Clinical Team Manager for Halton Mental Health Support Team (in Schools), and Becky Ratcliffe, Senior Mental Health Practitioner. They will be coming along to talk about the work they do in Halton and give parent carers the opportunity to ask questions and chat with them in an informal setting.

As always, these sessions are a lovely chance to come together for a cuppa and a chat, share experiences and hear directly from local services.

**Date:** 18<sup>th</sup> June

**Time:** 9.30am – 11.30am

**Venue:** Bridgewater Park Hub



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.

- ✔ 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)

**Focus Group Guest:**  
 Peter Styzaker-  
 Mental Health  
 Schools Team

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

**9:30-11:30am**  
**18 JUNE 2026**

**Venue**  
**BRIDGEWATER PARK,**  
**WA7 2 LW**

**Guest**  
 Peter Styzaker

contact go

## 2. Hummingbird Pizza and Craft Night – 19th June

Our next Hummingbird Pizza and Craft Night is coming up on 19th June, and we would love to fill the last few remaining spaces.

These evenings are always a lovely opportunity for families to come together, enjoy some creative activities, and spend time with other parent carers in a calm and welcoming space. If you have not attended before, this is a great chance to come along and see what it is all about.

There is still time to book if your family would like to join us, so please do get in touch via [info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk](mailto:info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk) to reserve a place.



**HUMMINGBIRD  
ARTS, CRAFTS & PIZZA**

join us for our monthly family friendly session at Hummingbird Art studio.

- ✔ Meet other parent carers
- ✔ Life Skills
- ✔ Independence
- ✔ Friendship

5-7pm  
**19 JUNE 2026**

Contact us  
[INFO@HALTONSENDPCF.ORG.UK](mailto:INFO@HALTONSENDPCF.ORG.UK)

Visit our website



**REGISTER VIA EMAIL**



## **Halton Borough Council Updates**

### **3. Zoom Update from Kelly Carey**

A big thank you to Kelly Carey for joining our recent Zoom session and to all of the parent carers who came along. The session covered a range of important local updates, including the launch of the new Neuro Hub on the Family Hubs website, updates on Speech and Language Therapy in Halton, progress with the SEND Improvement Plan, the Shine Therapy offer, and early discussion around the possibility of school closures and mergers across some schools in Runcorn.

### **4. Neuro Hub Launch**

Kelly shared that the new Neuro Hub launched on 2nd June through the Family Hubs website. This brings together nine different sections of support for children and young people with SEND. One of the tools available through the hub is the Knowing Me tool. Which is there to support not only parent carers, but also schools and professionals, with a number of schools currently involved in a pilot programme

As this is a new tool/ Hub, Halton Borough Council is keen to hear feedback from families so they can continue to make it as accessible and useful as possible.

<https://www.haltonfamilyhubs.co.uk/neurodiversity-hub>

### **5. Speech and language therapy SALT update**

An update was also shared on SALT in Halton. Families will already be aware that commissioning has moved over to the NHS, and it was explained that Halton Borough Council and the ICB are currently holding fortnightly meetings to oversee this transition.

At present, there are still vacancies within the NHS provision, which means independent providers are continuing to support while the service transfer takes place. A phased approach is being used to reduce reliance on these providers, with December being the current ideal timescale for all children to have moved fully into NHS provision. Families were also reminded that Speech and Language Therapy information is available on the Family Hubs website.

### **6. SEND Improvement Plan**

Kelly also gave an update on the SEND Improvement Plan. A draft plan has now been submitted, and Halton Borough Council has received feedback and advice from Department for Education representatives. The final version of the plan is due to be submitted on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June.

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## Halton Borough Council Updates

### **7. Sensory Partnership with Shine Therapy**

Halton Borough Council has shared that Shine Therapy Services will be working in Halton during 2026 and 2027 to provide training for parents, carers and professionals. The training will include practical strategies and interventions to help better support children and young people with sensory needs. With Shine therapy also conducting audits in Halton's special schools and inclusion bases and providing feedback to those settings. These parental training sessions are expected to commence in the autumn term.

### **8. Possible School Closures and Mergers**

The final topic discussed was the around the possible closure or merger of eight identified schools in Runcorn. This is due to a falling birthrate and under occupancy of schools. It was made clear that this is still at the very beginning of the process, and that parents will be involved in consultations as plans develop.

A gradual approach is expected, with September 2027 being the earliest point at which any changes would take effect. Throughout the process, it was stressed that parents, carers and staff will be informed and reassured, with a clear wish not to lose good staff during the period of uncertainty.

### **9. Local Offer Live**

Following on from the You Said, We Did event in March, Halton Borough Council and the ICB, in partnership with the forum, are now planning their next event, which will be a Local Offer Live session. To help make sure this event is planned at a time that works as well as possible for families, a short survey is being shared with parent carers. If you can take a few moments to complete it, this would be really appreciated and will help shape the planning of the event.

[Halton Borough Local Live Event Preferred Schedule Survey for Parent Carers | SurveyMars](#)

### **10. Youth Grant funding – 11-25 for those with Send**

Halton Borough Council's Youth Grant Fund offers free activities for young people aged 11–19, and up to age 25 for those with SEND or disabilities. A range of activities are available. To find out more and book places, families can view what is available here and apologies for the incorrect link being shared last week.

[Youth Grant Funding](#)

## **Cheshire and Merseyside ICB Updates**

This week we are resharing updates from Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board.

### **11. Cheshire and Merseyside Neurodevelopment Pathway resources**

Additional resources continue to be added to the Cheshire and Merseyside Neurodevelopment Pathway website for children and young people, families and professionals. This includes information and support to help families better understand the pathway, with further additions planned such as frequently asked questions about Right to Choose referrals and a family-friendly guide to standardised triage. It has also been shared that this work is being developed with input from clinicians and Parent Carer Forum representatives, with ongoing meetings with families to help shape future resources and engagement.

[Neurodevelopment pathway - NHS Cheshire and Merseyside](#)

### **12. ADHD and sleep medication repeat prescriptions**

Families are reminded that requests for repeat ADHD and sleep medication for children and young people in Halton should now be sent by email only.

Requests should be emailed 7–10 days before medication runs out to:  
[bchft.halton.prescriptions@nhs.net](mailto:bchft.halton.prescriptions@nhs.net)

### **13. All Smiling together Campaign - Oral health**

Families may also be interested in the **All Together Smiling** campaign, which supports good **oral health** for children and young people.

The programme promotes **supervised toothbrushing** and wider oral health support, helping children build healthy habits from an early age. This may be especially helpful for families looking for simple, practical information around toothbrushing and oral health.

[All Together Smiling - NHS Cheshire and Merseyside](#)

We also have toothbrush and toothpaste packs available at our coffee mornings.

## **Other Information & Support**

We are always happy to hear suggestions from our parent carer members about useful information, services or charities that could be shared in our newsletter.

If there is something you think would be helpful for other families to know about, please email us at [info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk](mailto:info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk) and we will get back to you.

### **14. Kooth – online mental health and wellbeing support**

Young people may find Kooth helpful if they are struggling with their mental health or are not sure where to turn for support. Kooth offers free, confidential online mental health support for young people. It is available without referral, with support from trained professionals as well as access to self-help tools, information and advice.

This may be a useful option for young people who would prefer to access support online and in their own time. With more information available at [Home - Kooth](#)

### **15. Catalyst Museum – New Quiet Hours**

Catalyst has launched new Quiet Hours sessions, giving families the chance to explore the museum in their own time and at their own pace. These sessions are designed to be more accessible for people with SEND needs, with reduced noise in exhibition spaces, a dedicated quiet space, and sensory packs and ear defenders available. Quiet Hours are taking place on the 25th June and 16th July, from 3pm to 5pm, with £5 per person entry. Families can ask at the front desk or follow Catalyst's social media for more information. With free carer tickets also available.

### **16. HAF – Summer Holiday Activity and Food**

Families may also wish to keep an eye on the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, which offers free activities and healthy meals during the school holidays. The programme is available for children and young people aged 4 to 16 who receive benefits-related free school meals, and also for young people up to age 25 with special educational needs or disabilities.

A range of activities take place across Halton, and more information about upcoming provision can be found here with some providers already letting families register interest. [Summer HAF Link](#)

## Other Information & Support

### 16. Funding and support for families

**Caudwell Children** - Families may find Caudwell Children helpful for both support sessions and some types of specialist equipment funding. This can include certain powered wheelchairs, specialist buggies, therapy tricycles, multi-sensory equipment, and some specialised car seats and harnesses. They also offer autism-related support, including assessment, occupational therapy assessment, and family support sessions on topics such as sleep, sensory needs, language and communication, eating and nutrition, and change and transition.

<http://www.caudwellchildren.com/services>

**WellChild** - Families may also find WellChild's grants information helpful as a starting point when looking for funding for specialist equipment, therapies or respite. Their website signposts to a range of organisations that may be able to help, including support with items such as wheelchairs, car seats, sleep equipment, sensory equipment and other specialist items.

[Grants for families | WellChild](#)

**Dreams Come True** - Families may also be interested in Dreams Come True, which supports children with serious illness, disability or life-limiting conditions. Alongside community projects, such as sensory spaces, they may also be able to offer support for individual children and families. Including things like equipment, sensory spaces and UK breaks.

[Individual Dream Eligibility - Dreams Come True Charity](#)



Halton Send Carers Forum



haltonsendcarersforum

[Haltonsendcarersforum.org.uk](http://Haltonsendcarersforum.org.uk)

To keep up to date with events, consultations, and support for parent carers, you can stay connected with us in the following ways:



**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

## 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** KOOOTH  
[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



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

# WORKING TOGETHER FOR SEND FAMILIES

## A SIMPLE GUIDE TO OUR FORUM

We want to explain what the Parent Carer Forum is and what we do.

We listen to parent carers and share your experiences to help improve services.

This is called co-production.

**Your voice matters.**



### 1 WHAT IS CO-PRODUCTION?

Co-production means working together.

Parent carers share their experiences.

Services listen.

We talk about what is working well and what is not working well.

We use this to help improve support.

It does not mean staying quiet.

- ✓ Families share
- ✓ Services listen
- ✓ We work together
- ✓ Support improves



### 2 WORKING WITH HBC AND THE ICB

We meet with Halton Borough Council (HBC), the NHS ICB and other local services.

We feed back what parent carers tell us.

We raise themes, ask questions and follow up.

We help services improve and help hold organisations to account.

We may not fix individual cases, but we can raise common issues.



### 3 HOW CAN PARENTS GET INVOLVED?

There are lots of ways to engage with us:

- Coffee mornings
- Evening Zooms
- Our closed Facebook group
- Reading our weekly newsletter
- Taking part in surveys about local services
- Sending us an email



### 4 SUPPORT FOR PARENT CARERS

Our coffee mornings are a friendly, supportive space. Parent carers can meet others in similar situations.

We often invite guests from different services.

They may share information or ask parent carers for their views about what is working well and what is not working well.

- Connect with others
- Share experiences
- Ask questions
- Hear from services

### 5 CAN FAMILIES STILL SPEAK UP?

Yes.

Parents and carers can still speak up, make complaints and campaign as individuals.

As a funded Parent Carer Forum, we have rules to follow.

These rules affect how the forum works, but they do not take away parents' rights.

**Your voice still matters.**



Thank you for sharing your views and experiences.  
**Your voice makes a difference.**



Better support



Families heard



Services improve



Inclusive future

Questions or concerns?

Halton SEND Parent Carers Forum

info@haltonsendpcf.org.uk

# WHATS ON

JUNE 2026



Peer to peer support  
and advice



Click & Like

Informing  Empowering  Engaging



## PARENT CHECK-IN

- Halton stadium 4th June with Ben Holmes
- Bridgewater Park Hub 11<sup>th</sup> June- Sarah Griffiths Independent Living Services
- Bridgewater Park Hub 18<sup>th</sup> June- Peter Styzaker Mental Health Schools Team & Becky Ratcliffe Senior Mental Health Practitioner
- Bridgewater Park Hub 25<sup>th</sup> June

## ZOOM

- Zoom with Michaela Bridge 11<sup>th</sup> June 8-9pm

## EVENTS

- Hummingbird 19<sup>th</sup> June 5-7pm
- SYNC Club 20<sup>th</sup> June

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

**contact**  
For families  
with disabled children



**kooth**

**Not sure where to turn?  
We're here for you, whenever you need us.**

Free, confidential mental wellbeing support for young people. Whenever you feel overwhelmed, lonely, low or just need some time for yourself, we're here.

Find community support, have one-to-one text chats with professionals or explore self-tools, without needing a referral.



Scan to register  
or visit **kooth.com**

**NHS**

Providing NHS services