



medway parents & carers forum

Registered Charity 1183372

November 2024
Newsletter

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?



SEN Transport

Once again the start of the school year saw issues from SEN transport and as usual MPCF were there to speak to the transport team on behalf of families and did our best to get issues resolved in a timely manner.

Thank you to the team for coming along to a zoom meeting set up for parents, which was arranged quickly into the school year.

Communication when things don't go right is key to alleviate worries.

The team confirmed that it is the provider who is responsible for route planning and not the council.

Short Breaks

The forum has consistently let senior leaders know about our concerns regarding delays with short breaks funding for families.

After many, many months a review is taking place and finally a plan is being made to clear these backlogs and ensure they don't fall behind again.

Hopefully those on the waiting list will finally start seeing some money come through. We will continue to chase waiting times and ensure they are coming down.

During our regular social care meeting we were able to clarify that to qualify to apply for short breaks funding, you either need to have a diagnosis OR be in receipt of DLA. We hope this information helps you to decide whether to apply.

Update on waiting times for short breaks:

New applications- 310 - dating back to September 2023

Reviews – 404 - dating back to June 2024

There are currently 1271 families waiting or in receipt of short breaks payments

Social Care Team Coffee Morning



We were delighted to welcome the Social Care team to a coffee morning, at our new venue in the Healthy Living Centre in Rainham.

All parents who attended were grateful for all the advice and information they gained.

The team will be facilitating drop in's as follows:

Transitions, Social Care and SEND Advice Drop In Sessions:

**1st Monday of the Month:
2-5pm**

Hempstead Library, Neighbourhood Community Hub Hempstead (Hempstead Road, Hempstead, Gillingham, ME7 3QG)

Please note parking is on the road and not the primary school.

**2nd Tuesday of the Month:
1-4pm**

Strood Children and Family Hub, Clifton Close, Rochester, ME2 2HG

**3rd Thursday of the Month:
1-3pm**

Blue Room, Wayfield and Rainham Children and Family Hub, 146 Wayfield Road, Chatham, ME5 0HH

**4th Friday of the Month:
9am -12pm**

Maple Room, Gillingham Children and Family Hub, Woodlands Road, Gillingham, ME7 2BX

If you have any questions or queries regarding the transition for your child for Social Care or the SEND team, please come along to these Drop In sessions on throughout the month.

****Housing Advice will be also available****

If you are unable to make these sessions, but you have a question to ask us, please email the asctransitionsteam@medway.gov.uk and we will get back to you.

Thank You

Thank you to the **Medway Diversity Forum** for inviting us to have an information stand at their event at the Glassbox Theatre in September.

Our collaboration with the Forum has gone from strength to strength this year and we hope to continue to support each others work in the future.

We are always delighted to be invited to schools and speak to staff, parents and have information stands at parents meetings. Thank you to **St Marys School, Gillingham, Parkwood Primary School, and Leigh Academy** for inviting us.

If you are a school and want us to come along to speak to parents please email info@medwaypcf.org.uk.

We also attend the monthly **Military families coffee morning** and are very proud of this collaborative working.

Coffee Mornings

Our coffee mornings and evenings have been very successful with more parents attending than ever before.

Thank you to all the teams who have come along to talk to parents and answer questions.

Topics recently have been EBSA, MCH emotional wellbeing team and Post 16 transitions team.

EBSA

(Emotionally Based School Avoidance)

Thank you to all the parents who signed up to be a part of the EBSA appreciative enquiry.

Karen was very complimentary about how the session went and that it was a very constructive and informative meeting.

It's so important for families to share their experiences as this is the only way we have a chance to changes things for the better in Medway.

Medication Reviews

MCH have confirmed that Medication reviews should be taking place at least once a year. If you have not had a review during the past year, please email us on info@medwaypcf.org.uk and we will pass your details onto MCH, with your permission, so they can look into this for you.

If you are experiencing a delay in getting hold of any medication please get in touch with the prescriber who can offer advice.

Also, if lack of medication is having an impact on your child's behaviour at school please make sure the school is aware and seek guidance from the SEN team if there are any issues.

Sleep / Contenance Difficulties



If you are experiencing sleep/continence issues with your child there is information on MCH website that may be of help. The school nursing team and/or health visitors can also help with this.

Inclusion and SEND Team Update

Inclusion and SEN team update meeting:

A record number of parents and carers joined us for the update.

Please do email us at info@medwaypcf.org.uk if you need any help navigating the system for your child.

Latest update from SEN team:

Cohort A will all be allocated with an EP by December and be notified of the date of assessment.

Cohort B are all on track to be completed within the 20 weeks time frame.

Welcome to Medway

Welcome to Medway event in Strood was a great success and some of the team were there to speak to parents to offer support, guidance and signposting.

Our lovely Lisa, pictured with The Mayor of Medway.



Keep a lookout on our Facebook page for upcoming events
Including a Christmas coffee morning
where you can meet the professionals!