

Summer 2026 NEWSLETTER

July 2026

Medway Parents & Carers Forum
Registered Charity 1183372



THANK YOU FOR COMING TO OUR COFFEE MORNING

Thank you to all the parent carers who took the time and joined our MPCF family for a lovely coffee morning at Aliko's Cafe Lounge.

It was amazing to see you and we hope you all found it insightful, and enjoyed the morning.

UPCOMING COFFEE MORNING:

you're all invited to join us for our upcoming informal coffee morning on the 16th July @10-12 at Medway Park. It's a great opportunity to speak to our team and meet other like-minded parent carers in Medway.

The event is free, and no need to book, just show up. However if you'd like to get a reminder of the event on your phone, you can book via our eventbrite



**BOOK VIA
EVENTBRITE:**



July 16th, 2026
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM



Medway Park Sports Centre
Mill Road, Gillingham
Kent ME7 1HF
Meeting Room 1

More Information:

Book via Eventbrite



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SEN TRANSPORT DEADLINE

We want to make parent carers aware that the deadline to re-apply for SEN Transport is **21st July 2026**

Who needs to reapply?

- If your child or young person is changing placement or they are going into a transition year. Transition years are years R, 7 and 12.
- They also ask ALL parents and carers of post 16 students to reapply EVERY year. This is due to the contribution towards the cost of transport. There is no contribution for post 16 families who opt for fuel allowance.
- You also need to reapply if you have changed address since you made your last application.

To re-apply:



WE HAD SO MUCH FUN!

Although it was scorching hot, we had so much fun at the **armed forces day** on the 27th June at the Historic Dockyard in Chatham. Thank you to all the parents that came over to say hi!

See our upcoming calander below



WALKING CHATHAM CARNIVAL

We were given the lovely opportunity to walk the Chatham Carnival with our Forum Family. Our brilliant team had an idea to decorate our trolley with words that our parent carers came up with, and from those words created a beautiful and emotional poem. You can read the poem below.

Please be aware this poem is a raw depiction of being a parent carer so some may find it triggering



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Life as a Parent Carer

by Medway Parents and Carers Forum Members & Team

Metamorphosis—
there is no steady shape here,
only becoming.
Carer, therapist, advocate, teacher, doctor
researcher—
a chameleonic life,
always changing,
always learning...

This constant stretching into new skins,
new roles you never asked for,
but wear anyway.
Unconditional love
at the centre of it all—
protector, guardian—
strong, even when you feel
helpless,
not enough support out there,
left in the gaps between systems.

Blamed—
parent blaming whispers in corridors,
misunderstood in meetings
that are meant to be
eye opening,
insightful,
but leave you
isolated and lonely.

Isolating.
Lonely.
A quiet ache that hums beneath
battle mode.
Because this is a battle—
advocate voice sharpened daily,
resilience forged through
challenging moments,
stressed mornings,
complicated forms,
draining days,
and knacker nights
spent worrying, planning,
researching, preparing for tomorrow.

Exhausted—
and still going.
Exhausted—
and still strong.

Overwhelmed on the rollercoaster,
up through hope,
down through frustration,
looping through being let down again.
Afraid of what comes next,
yet optimistic—
because you have to be.

And hope—
it lives in the smallest places:
a breakthrough no one else would notice,
a smile hard-earned,
a moment of calm in the chaos.
Hope whispers,
keep going,
even when everything feels
frustrating,
draining,
overwhelming.
Hope is quiet—
but it stays.

Guilty—
because despite the advocacy,
the perseverance,
the unconditional love,
you still cannot take their pain away,
cannot make the world more understanding
overnight,
cannot shield them from every disappointment or
struggle.
And sometimes that helplessness hurts
almost as much as the pain itself.
Yet you keep showing up,
keep fighting,
keep hoping for a better tomorrow.

Perseverance becomes
the rhythm of your days,
the steady step after every setback,
the courage to keep showing up,
keep speaking up,
keep believing,
even when the road ahead seems uncertain.

Determined.
Adaptable.
Open minded—
learning acceptance,
not of limits,
but of the path you walk
and the strength it demands.

A warped sense of humour
helps you survive the drops,
the absurdity of fighting for what should just... be.

Self-sacrificing—
pieces of yourself given freely,
quietly, daily.

And still—
you stand.
Strong.
Resilient.
Unseen, yet unyielding.

Metamorphosis again tomorrow.



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The Forum

A poem for parent carers



When metamorphosis feels endless,
when you are carer, therapist, advocate,
teacher, doctor or researcher,
wearing every hat
and carrying every burden,
the Forum is a place
where you can put some of that weight down.

A place where being misunderstood
becomes being heard.
Where isolation and loneliness
meet understanding and belonging.
Where exhausted parents find others who say,
"Me too."
And in those two small words,
you feel a little less alone.

The Forum cannot remove every challenge,
or smooth every complicated path,
but it can walk alongside you
through the battles,
the setbacks,
the frustrating moments
of being let down.

It turns individual voices
into a chorus too powerful to ignore.
Advocates standing together.
Protectors becoming partners.
Guardians becoming changemakers.

Through shared experience,
comes insight.
Through connection,
comes acceptance.
Through listening,
comes hope.

And hope grows here—
in conversations over coffee,
in meetings where parent voices matter,
in knowing that someone understands
the rollercoaster you're riding.

And when guilt arrives—
the Forum reminds you
that these burdens were never yours
to carry alone.

That being a good parent
does not mean fixing everything.
That love is not measured
by the battles you win,
but by the fact that you keep showing up,
keep caring,
keep believing in a better future.
And when helplessness feels heavy,
the Forum helps carry the weight,
offering understanding where there is doubt,
and reminding you that doing your best
has always been enough.

When perseverance feels difficult,
the Forum reminds you
how far you've already come.
When resilience feels worn thin,
the Forum helps strengthen it.
When battle mode is all you've known,
the Forum helps you imagine
something more.
Because no parent carer should have to navigate
this journey alone.

Together we are open minded,
adaptable, determined.
Together we celebrate victories,
however small.
Together we challenge what needs to change.
Together we create understanding
where there was once misunderstanding.

And through every transformation,
every challenge, every new chapter,
the Forum stands beside you—
not leading the way,
not walking ahead,
but walking with you.

Always learning. Always listening.
Always believing.

That every parent carer matters.
That every voice has power.
And that lasting change begins
when we stand together.



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Summer 2026

WHERE WE'LL BE OVER THE SUMMER

23RD
JULY

Medway Go
Medway Park Sports
Centre Gillingham,
England

29TH
JULY

**Welcome to
Medway**
Wayfield and Rainham
Hub

12TH
AUGUST

Dino Day
child friendly Medway
Chatham Town Centre

14TH
AUGUST

**Hoo Family
Fun Day**

18TH
AUGUST

**Inflatable fun
day**
child friendly medway

22ND
AUGUST

**Sticks 'n Stones
Festival**
University of Greenwich
Medway Campus in
Chatham

*watch out for some support sessions we're planning on hosting over the Summer Holidays with your local Mental Health Support teams

VOLUNTEER WITH US

Make a difference in Medway's SEND Community

Can you spare a few hours a week?

We are seeking:

- **Parent Champions:** *Help amplify voices of families navigating SEND at strategic meetings, quality assuring EHCP's or helping out with events and coffee meetings*
- **Trustees:** *Helping guide the strategic direction of the forum and ensure our work remains impactful & inclusive*



if interested, email info@medwaypcf.org.uk



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