

End of Summer Holidays Newsletter 2026



A busy summer of listening, sharing and connecting!

We hope you've been enjoying the sunny summer holidays as much as we have!

It's been a busy few weeks across Medway, with lots of family activities and community events taking place, and you may even have spotted the MPCF team at some of them!

Alongside getting out and meeting families, we've been continuing our work behind the scenes: listening to parent carers, sharing your experiences with decision-makers, responding to issues affecting SEND families and helping make important information easier to understand.

Here's a little look at what we've been up to this summer...



**32+ Parent Carer
connections made
in July**

Our Incredible Parent Support Team made at least 32 connections with parent carers during July, offering advice, support and guidance

If you can no longer make a Parent Support Team appointment, that's okay! If you have an appointment with our Parent Support Team and find that you're no longer able to attend, let us know where you can

Connecting at our Coffee Mornings

In July we hosted one of our coffee mornings. It continues to provide an opportunity for Medway parent carers to meet and connect with other families who understand the experiences that can come with navigating SEND.

They're also an important opportunity for us to listen to you - what is working well, where families are struggling and what you feel needs to change.

We can then take those themes and experiences into our wider work with services and decision-makers.

Please see below for our next upcoming coffee morning in september.

**Stay up to date on all things MPCF
by following us:**



@medwaypcf



@medwayparentsandcarersforum

You're invited to

MPCF'S COFFEE MORNING

Come along, have a cuppa & have your say

Special guest: Marie Woolston Experts at Hand Programme Lead

Join us to find out more about Experts at Hand, a new SEND programme being developed in Medway from september 2026. Meet Programme Lead Marie Woolston, ask questions, and share your experiences

No need to book • Free to attend • Parent carers welcome



**9 SEPTEMBER,
10AM–12PM**



**Medway Park, Sports Centre
Mill Road Gillingham ME7 1HF
ROOM 1**



No need to book • Free to attend • Parent carers welcome

Taking parent carer voices to our local MPs

This summer, we've had the opportunity to meet with both Nausheba Khan MP (online) and Lauren Edwards MP, who joined us at Snapdragons Children's Centre in Strood.

These meetings gave us an important chance to share the experiences and views of parent carers directly. We discussed SEND reform and national policy, including how future changes need to better reflect the realities facing children and young people with SEND and their families. Members of our team spoke about their lived experiences of the SEND system, including the challenges young people can face as they move beyond school and into further education, training and employment.

Following the meeting, Lauren reflected on an article with Kentonline, writing that **"their reflections have stayed with me"**, and highlighting the importance of ensuring that SEND support and opportunities do not simply stop at the school gates.

As Medway's Parent Carer Forum, part of our role is to make sure the experiences, concerns and priorities of local families reach the people and organisations who can influence services, policy and change. A huge thank you to everyone who joined these conversations and shared their experiences so openly.

You can read Lauren Edwards MP Kent Online Article here:



scan here!

<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/medway/news/our-ambition-for-young-people-with-send-cannot-stop-at-the-343740/>



Our ever-growing Team!

We've also been incredibly lucky to welcome some new volunteers to MPCF this summer!

Our volunteers bring their own experiences to the Forum and help us reach and represent even more families across Medway.

A huge welcome and thank you to our newest volunteers. We're so pleased to have you as part of the team.



Interested in getting involved?
email: info@medwaypcf.org.uk

Have your say: Current SEND consultations

There are currently two Government consultations open which could affect children and young people with SEND and their families.

- **EOTAS Consultation:** Looking at Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS), including how support should work for children and young people who cannot attend a school or college setting.
- **SEND Funding Consultation:** Looking at proposed changes to how funding for SEND support in mainstream schools could work.

Government consultations can contain a lot of information and technical language, so we've been working to break down the proposals and make it easier for parent carers to understand what is being suggested.

We are also gathering your views through MPCF surveys.

Your responses will help us identify common experiences and concerns and allow MPCF to respond to the consultations with the collective voice of Medway parent carers.

You can find all information regarding the consultation including our surveys and links to easy-read guides here (or via the QR code)
<https://medwaypcf.org.uk/surveys/>

scan here!



SUMMER EVENT GALLERY

We've been busy attending family and community events throughout the school holidays, giving parent carers the opportunity to stop by, ask questions, find out more about the Forum and tell us about their experiences. Some events we've attended were;

Careers fair at lordswood library, welcome to medway family hub event, Dino day by Child-friendly Medway, Hoo family fun day and Child-friend medway inflatable fun day, and sticks n'stones at the University of Greenwich Campus - **Did you catch us at any of these events?**

