



# SEND newsletter

Special Educational Needs  
and Disability

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## Welcome from Sidrah Goheer

I am pleased to have the opportunity to open the first newsletter for this academic year and hope the return to school from the summer holidays has been a positive one for you.

My name is Sidrah Goheer and I am the Manager of SENDIAS Service. Our service offers free and impartial information, advice and support to help parents/carers, children, and young people build their knowledge, understanding, and confidence in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities procedures, policies, practices, and law, and enable them to communicate their own needs, wishes, aims, and rights. Our aim is to help you play an active and informed role in making decisions about your child's education, health, and social care.



You can contact us in a number of ways; by [email](#) or leaving a message on our advice line 01908 254518 or by completing our [online referral form](#).

On our [website](#) you can find SEND related information, advice and support including factsheets and template letters.

We have had a very busy start of the academic year, with 16% rise in new referral compared to same time last year. In addition to our advice line, we also run SEND drop-in sessions which are very popular, and these will resume after the October half-term. Come and meet us, along with other support services ([PACA MK](#), [Carers MK](#) and [Local Offer](#)) on Thursday 09 November, 12 – 1:30pm at the Hedgerows Family Centre.

We also offer a number of workshops for parents and carers – our upcoming sessions are; SEND Support (31 October) and EHCP (21 November), you can book via this [link](#).

Finally, I would like to say thank you to all the families who we have supported over the years for all your kind words and lovely feedback.

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## SEND Updates

### Coming soon!

During the Summer term, we worked with representatives from SENDIAS, education, health and social care to review our current EHC needs assessment guidelines. Our new coproduced EHC needs assessment guidelines will be shared in the coming weeks on our [Local Offer Pages](#). The guidelines aim to support professionals and parent/carers understanding of the EHC needs assessment process to ensure that requests are being made at the right time.

### SEND Event 4 July

Following the SEND Event in July we have information and a summary of key findings, this is now available on the [SEND Local Offer](#). We will provide further updates on this in our December SEND newsletter.

## EBSA Parent Guidance

Exciting news!! We are thrilled to announce the release of the [EBSA Parent Guidance](#). This guide aims to answer questions asked by parents and carers. It has been produced by parents and professionals, to support you and your child if they are finding it difficult to attend school and can be found on the [Milton Keynes SEND Local Offer](#).

In the guidance information can be found on:

- What is Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)
- My child is struggling to get to school, this is what it could look like
- What could you do?
- What can you expect the school to do?
- EBSA including autism
- The impact on parents and carers
- How can I support my child? Top Tips
- FAQ
- Where can you go for help?

In addition the EPS are offering an [EBSA workshop](#) in the autumn, spring and summer term, more information can be found on the SEND Local Offer.



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## Secondary School Applications

Is your child due to start Secondary school in September 2024 (children born between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013) The Citizens Portal opened on 1 September 2023 for parents and carers to apply online for a secondary school place. The closing date is 31 October 2023, and all applications must be made before the closing date to receive a school place offer on 1 March 2024 (national offer day). This information only applies if you want to apply for your child to start in Year 7 at secondary school in September 2024.

Please ensure that a secondary school place is applied for if you are going through the process of an EHC needs assessment application. If you have any questions or would like to talk things through in more detail, please contact our SEND Support Line 01908 657 825 / [SENDSupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:SENDSupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

For more information please visit our [MKCC admissions page](#).



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## Meet the team: Mim Kendrick

Hi, I'm Mim Kendrick and I'm the new SEND Local Area Partnership Manager and I started this new role on the 18 September. My role is joint funded across Milton Keynes City Council and Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board (BLMK ICB) which means that I work across education, social care and health. I'll be responsible for ensuring that the local area have a shared plan for children and young people with SEND so that things are as joined up as possible. I'll also be working closely with parent representatives including PACA MK, and with children and young people with SEND in Milton Keynes to ensure that they're involved in agreeing our priorities and that they understand the plans that are being made.



Prior to joining Milton Keynes local partnership, I've worked in children's education services in a number of other local authorities, most recently spending 5 years in Hertfordshire working on their SEND improvement programme and leading their EHCP team.

Outside of work, I enjoy anything that involves paint or ink – the messier the better! I also enjoy yoga, cats, eating delicious food and hanging out with my family.

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## Parent / Carer Workshops

We are excited to let you know The SEND Team working in collaboration with colleagues from health have released their autumn term parent programme offer for autism and social communication difficulties in the [Early Years](#), [Primary Years](#) and [Teenagers](#). These sessions cover a variety of themes including:

- What is social communication difficulties and autism
- Supporting communication
- Supporting behaviour
- Independence and relationships

The programmes offer valuable insights and a chance to connect with other parents and carers. Following feedback from our parents, we have introduced face to face sessions for each of our parent programmes.

Did you know we had 166 parents/carers attend our parent programmes last year with 97% sharing that they would feel able to put in place new strategies with their child. Some of the feedback we received:

*'This training was amazing. Not just because gave us information and help, but I was able to interact with other parents with similar struggles. I would love to have these sessions on regular basis, not just to learn about it, but to have it as an ongoing support. Thank you so much.'*

*'These sessions provide me with some useful strategies to help my child.'*

*'Having a face-to-face workshop or course or support group to share ideas.'*

*'Really good sessions, sharing with other families. Input and specialist knowledge from the team has been invaluable. Please do more. I loved this course it is so important for any parent struggling with an autistic child.'*

Top tip - Parent programmes can be found on our calendar of events with a green tag.



## Local Offer Updates

As part of the [MK SEND Strategy](#) the autism workstream group have coproduced and developed [The Milton Keynes Social Communication Difficulties/Autism Directory of Services and Support](#). This information is now available on Milton Keynes SEND Local Offer. The directory has a list of service providers, schools, specialist schools, further education (post 16) as well as information about leisure activities and clubs.



The Local Offer Team have recently shared on Facebook that we now have a new accessibility and language tool on the SEND Local Offer.

Following feedback from our young people, families and professionals, the toolbar now enables users to:

- Have the text on the website read aloud
- Change the font and colours
- Customise background colours
- Translate text into over 100 different languages

**DID YOU KNOW?**

We now have an accessibility and language bar on the SEND Local Offer

Following feedback from our families we have now introduced an accessibility toolbar. This allows our users to:

- Have the text on the website read aloud
- Change the font and colours
- Customise background colours
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Click on this image when you visit us  
<https://www.mksendlocaloffer.co.uk/>

MK Milton Keynes City Council

## Working together and coproduction: You Said, We did

Our 'you said, we did' initiative is about listening to all stakeholders, categorising their feedback and sharing what changes are being made. We continue to talk to our children, young people, parents, carers and professionals to try and improve our services and make sure everyone is updated with what is happening. This allows us to review and develop to ensure we continue to provide the best possible opportunities for our children and young people.



We wanted to highlight this section on the [SEND Local Offer](#) where we will be sharing updates on:

- You said we did

- SEND event 4 July
  - Our coproduction projects
  - SEND newsletter
  - SEND events
  - Provider training
  - Social media
  - Comments, compliments and complaints
  - SEND strategy action plans
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## SEND Youth Council

The SEND Team are excited to share that we are looking to set up a SEND Youth Council that will form a strand of the Raise Your Voice Youth Council. This will enable children and young people to be actively involved in representing children and young people with SEND/EHCP across Milton Keynes and address the issues that are important to them.

We have shared this information with our school's in Milton Keynes, We are reaching out to parents and carers for a child or young person that is home educated to be a member and share experiences. If your child or young person is interested in being part of the SEND Youth Council please [email](#)

We will continue to share updates on this element as we move forward with our children and young people.

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## School Travel Support Team

Information on school travel support can be found on the [MKCC website](#) and also via our [MK SEND Local Offer](#). Following feedback from PACA's parent forum, we wanted to share with our families that the email address to contact the School Travel Support team (previously known as home to school transport) has been updated and the contact email address is: [STS@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:STS@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

We wanted to reassure if families have emailed the HTST email this will be redirected to the updated email address.

PACA MK have further information on their website on [School Travel Support](#).

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## Parents And Carers Alliance (PACA) MK





PACA MK is an independent and voluntary group of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities or additional needs.

The group is open to parents and carers of children and young people aged 0—25 years old with disabilities or additional needs who live in the city of Milton Keynes.

## Upcoming Events from PACA MK

**Steering Group: Wed 11th October 2023, 9.30am-11am** at The Quaker Centre, 1 Oakley Gardens, Milton Keynes MK15 9BH or you are welcome to join us online. New members are always welcome, please [contact us](#) if you would like to attend.

### Post 16 – What next?

**Sat, 14 Oct 2023, 09:30 – 13:00** at South Central Institute of Technology, Sherwood Drive, Bletchley, England, MK3 6DR

We are excited to announce our first PACA MK SEND Marketplace event all about post 16 options for young people with a disability or additional needs.

Do Come and join us ! If your young person would like to submit some art around what does Post 16-What next? look like for them please send it in and this can be displayed throughout the event.

For more information and to book your place please visit [PACA MK website.](#)

### Wills & Trusts Workshop for Parent Carers

**Tuesday 17th October from 10am – 12pm at The Quaker Centre, 1 Oakley Gardens, Downhead park, Milton Keynes MK15 9BH**

The workshop will be delivered by Tonina, a Solicitor and Partner with HCR Hewitsons, specialising in supporting vulnerable individuals and their families with legal advice. Tonina has a wealth of knowledge and experience in Wills and Trusts. To book a place please [email](#) or call 01908 231703.

Further information can be found on [PACA MK What's On Calendar.](#)



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## SEND Drop In

SEND Drop-In Session at the Hedgerows Family Centre

Do you need help with the special educational needs processes relating to education,

health and social care? Find out what support there is for children with additional needs and how our services can support you.

Upcoming SEND Drop-In Sessions

[Thursday 9 November 12:00 -13:30 at Hedgerows Family Centre](#)

[Thursday 7 December 11:30 - 13:00 at the Rowans Family Centre](#)

## SEND Drop-In Session at the Hedgerows Family Centre



Need help with the special educational needs processes relating to education, health and social care? Find out what support there is for children with additional needs and how our services can support you.

<b>Thursday 09 November 2023</b>	<b>12:00 – 1:30 pm</b>	<b>Hedgerows Family Centre</b> Langland Road, Netherfield, MK6 4NP
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A statutory service offering confidential and impartial information, advice and support. The service supports children, young people (0-25) with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as their parents/carers.

**T: 01908-254518 | E: [Contact@mksendias.org.uk](mailto:Contact@mksendias.org.uk)**



Parent Forum - An independent and voluntary group of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities or additional needs.

**T: 01908-257828, 07852526057 | E: [pacamk@gmail.com](mailto:pacamk@gmail.com)**



Carers MK are dedicated to supporting the wellbeing of unpaid family carers in Milton Keynes.

**T: 01908-231703 | E: [mail@carersmiltonkeynes.org](mailto:mail@carersmiltonkeynes.org)**



An opportunity to find out more about the 'SEND Local Offer' and the SEND Team offer of support.

The SEND Team includes Educational Psychology Service; EHCP Specialist Teaching Team; EHCP Review Team; Inclusion Specialist Teaching Team; EHCP Assessment Team; Sensory Team; Children with Disabilities (CWD)

**T: 01908-657825 | E: [SENDSupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:SENDSupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk)**

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## Half Term Activities

We are continuing to update our SEND Calendar of events, please do check the calendar at the bottom of the home page on the [SEND Local Offer](#). Please see below some of the activities and providers that are available over the half term.

[Climb Quest Autism and SEND Sessions](#) – 22 October, 29 October

[Thomley](#) have several events in the half term, including their Disability for all sessions - 24 October, 25 October

[MK Gallery Art Together: SEND Family Workshop](#) - 26 October.

[Spectrum Community Arts](#) Broom and Bubbles sessions – 27 October

[Relaxed Screening: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem](#) (PG) 29 October 10:30 at MK Gallery

Please find information on providers offering SEND specific sessions in our [Short Break Voucher booklet](#).

We hope you have a wonderful half term.



*By sharing this information, we are not endorsing or quality checking any events or activities, and parent/carer/families remain responsible for their own research. We recommend contacting providers directly.*

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## Sign up!

We produce this newsletter half termly. If you are not receiving this directly and would like to, [please follow this link to sign up.](#)

We welcome your views on the newsletter and any ideas you have for future editions, please share your views via [email.](#)

[Sign up here!](#)

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**This newsletter has been co-produced between and the MKCC SEND Team and Parents and Carers Alliance MK, SENDIAS and Health colleagues.**

*PACA is an independent forum for parent carers of children and young people with disabilities or additional needs who live in Milton Keynes.*

*We share our experiences with the SEND Team as an independent voice representing what matters to families in MK. We do this by taking an active role in meetings such as the Short Breaks Steering Group, Local Offer Group and Additional Needs and Disabilities Strategy Group.*

*The idea for this newsletter came from our regular meetings with the SEND Team, with the aim of keeping parents informed and up to date with the latest developments in SEND.*

*If you are a parent and would like to join PACA MK, or would like to know more about us, please visit [PACA MK](#)*

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**Note: Please do not respond directly to this email.**

For SEND queries email: [SEND support line](#)