

May 2025



## Welcome from Amanda Bousaki, Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) SEND



Welcome to our summer SEND newsletter and a packed edition with numerous updates from across all of our MK SEND services. As the [Designated Clinical Officer \(DCO\)](#) for health services, an important part of my role is to ensure we listen to the views of children and young people and their families and what matters to you, read on to find out more about that. We also have updates about summer activities, how to prepare for school moves if your child is moving in September, an update on processes for EHC assessments and the next steps on the SEND strategy for 2025 – 2028. As always, we've also included some information about activities and events that are coming up, and an update from SENDIAS and PACA MK about their work in the area.

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## You said, we did – health services focus

Here are some of the headlines of things we are doing as a result of your feedback:

The [MIND Sanctuary](#) is now offering their 7 day a week ( 4-10pm) drop-in service for ages 11 – 17 years, instead of 14-17years.

CAMHS have started up a parent and carer information and support group for those children/young people open to CAMHS. You can speak to your CAMHS Practitioner or [e-mail Demetra Brege](#) for more information

Thank you to all the young people who responded to the survey about experiencing difficulties attending school due to anxiety. Your feedback has been important to help us understand what it is difficult for you and to have your suggestions on how we can support you better. Parent views have also been sought through focus

groups with PACA . All feedback will help us to identify how we can better support children and young people with these particular challenges and fed back to you in the [“You said, we did”](#) section of the MK SEND Local Offer.

Thank you to the [SEND Youth Council](#) for giving us valuable insight into how young people would like to access mental health support and their tips for how we can make to the website more accessible to them. We are looking at how we can do this over the summer term. We are also adding more information about health conditions to the health section of the LO.

The physiotherapy service has started up two new small groups for autistic preschool and school aged children who need help with strengthening their muscles. This will provide parents with peer support and to share their tips with each other.

BLMK have asked young people to be involved in producing a video about the free Annual Health Check provided by GPs for all young people aged 14 yrs and over with a learning disability. This is currently in production and I will let you know when it is available on the Local Offer. There are currently many resources about the importance of having these checks with your child’s GP to enable them to support and monitor health needs as children prepare to move into adult health services [Looking after your health | Milton Keynes City Council](#).

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## Activities and events

Please find a selection of events listed below, more can be found here [SEND calendar of events](#).

[Gravity SEND Sessions](#) 28 May, 01 June, 02 June

[SEND Family Swimming](#) 07 June

[Top Jump SEND sessions](#) 25 May, 01 June

[Climb Quest SEND Sessions](#) 28 May, 01 June, 08 June

[Positive Mindset Drumming with drum united](#) - 27 May, 28 May, 29 May

[Thomley](#) Offer a variety of activities over the half term

[Petite Ponies](#) have a variety of sessions available

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## Summer HAF

The Milton Keynes HAF (Holiday Activities and Food) program is back, bringing 16 days of fun-packed activities from **28th July to 2nd August**! It's a fantastic opportunity for eligible families to enjoy enriching experiences designed to keep children engaged, active, and happy during the summer break. What's more, families will receive their e-voucher on **29th June**.

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## SEND Strategy

Thank you for your feedback about what should be in our SEND strategy. We are now sharing the next stage: Our priorities.

We'd like to hear your thoughts on this too. We'll finalise these in the summer and at that stage we will also build an action plan with specific actions to achieve these priorities. This means we'll be ready to start delivering towards our new vision and priorities from September 2025.

If you have any [feedback about our priorities, you can share them at this link](#).

Please find further information on our [SEND Strategy 2025 - 2028 page on the Local Offer](#).



## Supporting SEND Children Through Transitions

Transitions can be both an exciting and challenging time for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families. Whether it's moving to a new school, going up to secondary education, or preparing for adulthood, every child deserves the right support to make these changes as smooth and successful as possible.

There are lots of resources and strategies available to help SEND children during periods of change.

Practical steps can include:

- **Preparing in Advance:** Visiting the new environment, meeting staff, and using visual aids like photos to build familiarity.
- **Creating a Transition Booklet:** A personalised booklet with key details about the new setting, such as schedules, classrooms, and important contacts.
- **Social Stories:** Using simple, child-friendly narratives to explain what to expect and how to handle potential challenges.
- **Building Routines:** Establishing consistent daily schedules that provide comfort and predictability.

Please find further information on the [SEND Local Offer](#).





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## Update on EHC Planning meetings

You will be aware that we are currently working through EHC needs assessments with a number of assessments being delayed due to a national shortage of Educational Psychologists. We are now making good progress in completing the assessments, so in the short term have made a decision to pause planning meetings.

The draft plan will be sent to both parents and schools for review, allowing comments and any necessary additions. Full guidance on what to do will be included in the email. Once feedback is received, we will finalise the EHCP to avoid further delays.

If you would still like a planning meeting, you can request one through your Assessment Officer, who will get in touch to discuss further.

This is a temporary measure while we complete outstanding assessments, and we appreciate your patience and support.

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## Transport

This is a reminder for anyone who has received a reapplying agreement for School Travel Support that the deadline was 30 April. Parents can still reapply or submit a new application for September, transport arrangements may take time to be finalised.

For any question, please contact [STS@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:STS@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

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## Parents and Carers Alliance (PACA)



PACA MK is an independent and voluntary group of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities or additional needs. PACA Membership is **FREE!** And open to parent carers of children and young people with disabilities or additional needs aged 0 – 25 years, and live in the city of Milton Keynes.

[Sign up online HERE](#)

Or, email us to receive a membership form [pacamk@gmail.com](mailto:pacamk@gmail.com)

The benefits of being a member include:

- Newsletters with local news, events, and resources.
- The opportunity to participate in upcoming events and workshops.
- The opportunity to connect with other Parents and Carers in the local area

Don't forget to:

- Follow us on Facebook: [Parents and Carers Alliance MK](#)
- Access our [website for more information](#).
- Check out our [Calendar of upcoming events](#) (updated regularly)
- View our online [Supporting Your Neurodiverse Child](#) Written for parents, by parents, resource.

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## SENDIAS Milton Keynes

**SENDIAS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support) Milton Keynes** offers free, confidential, and impartial information based on SEND law and local policies. They provide support in three main areas:

- Education: SEN Support, EHC Plan processes, exclusions, admissions, and other educational issues.
- Health: Medical needs related to SEND.
- Social Care: Social care aspects connected to SEND.

These workshops and sessions are designed to provide valuable information and support for parents of children with SEND.

- [Understanding SEND Support](#) - Wed 21 May, 10am -11:15am
- [Understanding Education Health Care Plan](#) - Thu 12 June, 10am - 11:30am
- [Helping Your Child Start Secondary School](#)- Tue 03 June, 12 -1pm
- [Helping Your Child Move to a New Year Group](#) - Tue 10 June, 12 -1pm

### SEND Drop-In Session

[Daisychain Family Centre](#)- Thu 22 May, 1pm - 2:30pm

