

Southampton Parent Carer Forum

Review and Updates

September 2026

We hope you and your family have had an enjoyable summer and managed to make some happy memories along the way. We also know that the summer holidays aren't easy for every family. Changes in routine, reduced support and the pressure of keeping everyone occupied can make the six weeks particularly challenging. And for some children and young people, returning to school can feel even harder.

As we head into a new school year, we want to remind you that Southampton Parent Carer Forum is here for you. Whether you need information, someone to listen, or simply the chance to chat with other parent carers who understand, please do reach out. Our first session of the new term is next week, and we'd love to see you.

Here's to a new term — and to continuing to make sure parent carers' voices are heard across Southampton.

Key Updates

- You can now text or Whats App the forum on 07354 940 838
- Parent Portal is now live for EHCP applications
- Direct Payment policy consultation is being launched next week
- Short breaks statement consultation is being launched next week
- School travel service policy consultations (including post 16 policy) is being launched later this month

Activity in the Spotlight - Parent Portal

We're pleased to announce that families can now use the Citizen Portal to send in a request for Education Health and Care Needs Assessment. The portal is a service which hopefully you will already be familiar with as it is used to make applications for school places amongst other council services.

https://ems.southampton.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/en

See next page for more information.

Key Dates - More info on the following page

Thursday 1st October
and
Wednesday 14th October

Consultation events -
Transport and Social
Care staff will be
attending to share the
new transport
policies, direct
payment policy and
short break
statement

6th November, 10-12

Celebrating 10 years
of the forum. More
information to come.

Scan the QR code for
the link to our facebook
page for the most up to
date info.



Continued ...



July Play Day at Hoglands

We had a fantastic day at Hoglands Park Play Day over the summer, speaking with a wide range of families from across Southampton about SEND and the work of the Forum. A huge thank you to everyone who came over to say hello, have a chat and share their experiences with us – it was lovely to meet so many of you!



Parent Portal for EHCP applications Continued

The portal provides a secure and convenient way for families to submit an application for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment and upload any supporting information online. You can save your application and come back to it at any time.

The SEND teams long-term vision is for the Citizen Portal to become a single gateway for a wide range of SEN services, giving families greater visibility and control over their child's SEN journey. Watch this space as we continue to develop and expand the services available through the portal in the months ahead.

If you have any questions about accessing the portal, please contact the SEN Duty Line on 02380 833013 and a member of the team will be happy to help.

JOIN US AS A PARENT REP

Your experience. Your voice. Their future.

Help shape services, support families and make Southampton a better place for children and young people with SEND.



Parent Reps are at the heart of our Forum.

You'll work with other parent carers to raise the profile of the Forum, support other families and help influence the services and support that children and young people with SEND need and deserve.



RAISE THE PROFILE OF THE FORUM

Help us spread the word about the Forum and the support we offer.

Together, we can build a stronger, more visible voice for parent carers in Southampton.



SUPPORT PARENTS

Be a listening ear, offer guidance and share information with other families navigating SEND services.

No professional experience needed – just a caring heart.



INFLUENCE CHANGE

Represent the views of parent carers and help influence local decisions, policies and services that impact our children and young people.

Your voice matters.



TRAINING AND SUPPORT

We'll provide training and ongoing support to help you feel confident and equipped in your role – from understanding SEND to speaking up and influencing change.



RENUMERATIONS AVAILABLE

We recognise and value your time and contribution. Renumerations are available for your role and involvement with the Forum.

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED!



EXPENSES COVERED

Travel, parking and other reasonable expenses are covered so you're not out of pocket.



FLEXIBLE & FAMILY FRIENDLY

We work around school runs, caring responsibilities and busy lives.



BE PART OF A SUPPORTIVE TEAM

You'll be joining a welcoming team of parent carers who understand and have your back.

Interested?
We'd love to hear from you!



Email us at chair@sotonpcf.org.uk
Message us on Facebook

Your experience.
Your voice.
Their future.

Whats On ...

FREE ENTRY



Date	Event Info	Time	Location
Tuesday 8 th September	SEND get together with a range of professionals (1:1 slots available too)	10-12	High Point, Bursledon Rd, Thornhill, SO19 8BR
Thursday 17 th September	Hearing your voice - Short breaks allocation tool	10-12	Freemantle and Shirley Community Centre, Randolph Street, SO15 3HE
Friday 18 th September	Workshop - Understanding behaviour delivered by ND team	10-12	Harbour Lights, Southampton SO14 3TL
Monday 21 st September	Workshop - Communication with Danielle (SALT with ND team)	10-12	Harbour Lights, Southampton SO14 3TL
Tuesday 22 nd September	SEND get together - Sharing experiences and Wellbeing focus	10-12	Blackberry Family Hub, Byron Road, Thornhill, Southampton, SO19 6FH
Thursday 1 st October	Consultation event - Transport and Social Care staff will be attending to share the new transport policies, direct payment policy and short break statement	10-12	Freemantle and Shirley Community Centre, Randolph Street, SO15 3HE
Wednesday 7 th October	SEND get together with a range of professionals (1:1 slots available too)	10-12	Lordshill Community Centre, Cromarty Rd, Lordshill, Southampton SO16 8LX
Tuesday 13 th October	Workshop - EBSA delivered by ND team	10-12	Harbour Lights, Southampton SO14 3TL
Wednesday 14 th October	Consultation event - Transport and Social Care staff will be attending to share the new transport policies, direct payment policy and short break statement	10-12	High Point, Bursledon Rd, Thornhill, SO19 8BR
Tuesday 20 th October	SEND get together - Sharing experiences and Wellbeing focus	10-12	Honeysuckle Family Hub, Honeysuckle Rd, Southampton SO16 3BZ

Whats On Locally ...



The homepage features a green header with the forum's name. Below is a navigation bar with links: Home, About, Need Help, Upcoming Events, News and Updates, and Getting Involved. The 'Upcoming Events' link is highlighted. The main content area is divided into sections: 'Support, information and a strong network for parent carers in Southampton', 'What we do?' (listing 1:1 support and SEND workshops), and 'Education' and 'Health' sections. A sidebar on the right contains links for Venue Information, Events (Map), and Submit Event. A photo of three people is also present.

New Activities Map
Our new interactive Activities Map is now live on our website! It's designed to help families find activities, events, support and services taking place throughout the year.

Visit the Upcoming Events page to explore what's available or submit an event for us to include.

Our easy-to-use filters help you find the activities that are right for your family. Search by age, SEND need, activity type, location, date and accessibility to quickly narrow down the options.

The filter sidebar shows a date selector set to 'Today' and 'Now - July 9'. Below are expandable filter categories: 'Your selections' (with 'Things to do: Family events' selected), 'Things to do (1)', 'Support', 'Who for', 'Age', 'Accessibility', 'Venues', and 'Organisers'. Each category has a plus sign to expand it.

The map interface shows a search bar for events and a location selector. A date filter is set to 'Now - July 9'. A map of Southampton displays several event locations marked with blue pins. A list of events is shown on the right, including 'Longdown Dairy Farm', 'Sensory Room Hire', 'Chatter Matters', and 'Bumps and Babies'.

This map is just the beginning. Over the coming months, we hope to continue growing it by adding even more activities, support groups, services and information for children, young people, parent carers and families across Southampton. To make it as useful as possible, we need your help.

If you know about a local activity, event or support service that would benefit other families, please submit it using the form on our website or email the details to us. Together, we can build a comprehensive resource that helps families discover the fantastic opportunities and support available throughout the year.