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Parent Carer Forum
Cheshire West & Chester

November 2026

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES : SEND NEWS IN OUR REGION : PCF EVENTS

Message from our Chair

Hello everyone!

Welcome to this month's Parent Carer Forum update and the last one of 2026!

We've been working hard behind the scenes to share your voices with partners and services and have updates on the Knowing Me Profiling Tool, current national consultations and parent carer services in our region.

As always, we welcome your feedback and encourage you to contact us if there are issues, challenges or successes you would like us to hear about.

Together, we can continue to make a difference for SEND families across Cheshire West and Chester.

Wishing you all a peaceful few weeks in the run up to the festive family season!

Lucy Kennerley
Parent Carer Forum

one, Executive Functioning, here: https://www.pcfcheshirewest.org/adhd-send-training



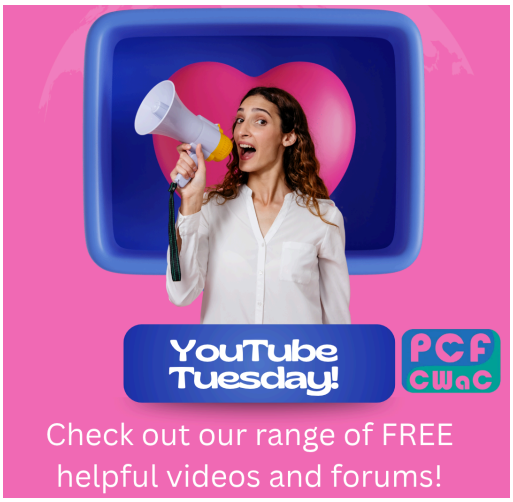
In addition, our parent volunteer training starts early next year too. It's been designed to equip parent carers with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to work alongside professionals, advocate for families, and influence real change.

Voices that Shape SEND



Lovely to see new faces and families at our in-person forum at Hartford Golf Club this month - we had a great turnout. Thank you to everyone for attending, sharing, (*eating baps*) and asking questions of our local SEND partners.

This event was for parent carers of children and young people (aged 0–25) with SEND in Cheshire West and Chester. Don't forget to access our



a parent carer in Cheshire West.

NATIONAL SEND NEWS

Unpaid carers will no longer lose their entire Carer's Allowance award if they go over the weekly earnings limit, the government has announced.

In a huge win for our parent carer campaigners, the Carer's Allowance earnings limit will become tapered. Carers will lose £1 of their award for every £1 they earn over the limit, currently £204 a week.
Currently carers lose their entire Carer's Allowance award if they earn even 1p over the limit.
This announcement follows a government review into the main benefit for carers following a number of overpayments made to carers. The change will be implemented in 2030.

New hope for families as the PM indicated in parliament the need to unlock Child Trust Funds for disabled young people.

When a young person lacking mental capacity turns 18, their families are often forced through a complex, lengthy, and expensive process to access savings that rightfully belong to their child.

Responding to a question from Sarah Smith MP, the PM acknowledged the unnecessary hurdles parent carers are facing. He confirmed that ministers are reviewing the system and aim to set out a response within weeks.

Government urged to rethink postponed SEND reforms – what we know so far…

Families have shared their thoughts on the SEND reforms with PCF Cheshire West & Cheshire, with changes to legal appeal rights among the key concerns.

These vital consultations include:

- EOTAS, AP and Section 19

- The call for evidence on school suspensions and exclusions, where we shared families' views

- The ongoing SEND Reform consultation

That's three important national consultations where we've helped

November, now feels like a good time to share an update.

This year, your parent carer forum has also taken local voices to a national level by contributing to other important consultations

government's response.

Together, we can make a difference and help shape the future of services and provision for our SEND families..

SEND reforms blog

Our response to the DfE School Exclusion Reform call for evidence

We have submitted our response to the Department for Education's call for evidence on school exclusion reform. It draws on our 2026 SEND survey, where 701 parent carers shared their experiences, and on what families tell us every day.

Parents described children facing repeated sanctions for behaviour linked to their disability, time in "inclusion" rooms that feels like isolation, informal sending home, and reduced timetables used to manage behaviour. Many said support after a suspension was late or never came.

Our key messages:

- Look at unmet need first, not just behaviour
- Record every removal, including informal sending home and part-time timetables
- Reintegration plans should link to the SENCo and EHCP review, with a named contact and a review date
- Schoolwork should be set from day one, adapted for SEND and marked, with clear responsibility from day six
- Report data by SEND status

Read our full response here.

Upcoming PCF Events



Who is this for? Parent carers who work during the day and want to learn more about how to support their children with ADHD and SEND.

These three webinars run 6.00pm to 8.30pm, so you can join once the working day is over, from the comfort of your own home. All sessions are a webinar format - attendees have cameras and microphones off and interact via the chat and Q&A.

Book Here

Social Care, Family Support
Wednesday 25th November 2026
9:30am – 1:30pm
Venue - Hartford Golf Club

Preparation for Adulthood
Tuesday 9th February 2027
9:30am – 1:30pm
Venue - Civic Hall Ellesmere Port

Education, Health and Inclusion
Tuesday 16th March 2027
9:30am – 1:30pm
Venue - Vicars Cross Golf Club

Support for Me as a Carer
Monday 10th May 2027
9:30am – 2.00pm
Venue - Brio Northwich

Who We Are and What We Do
Tuesday 15th September 2026
10:00am – 11:30am

Children and Young People's Mental Health
Thursday 22nd October 2026
1:00pm – 2:30pm

Technology & Digital Resources
Friday 29th January 2027
10:00am – 11:30am

Short Breaks
Monday 14th June 2027
10:00am – 11:30am

AGM/Transport/ Summer Holiday Provisions
Tuesday 13th July 2027
10:00am – 11:30am

See all our events online

Keep PCF in your pocket! 🤳

Want to keep updated real-time with our events, consultations and news? Join our WhatsApp channel! Just scan the QR code opposite and you're in! Or click here!



Meet Vanessa...
Our longest serving member!





the Parent Carer Forum after attending a series of training sessions that ran for one day a week back in 2016. It was just after my son had started school and I had a bit more time to get my head round the world of SEND.

For the first few years that I was involved our main priority was to make more people aware of the PCF and spread the word about our events and what we do and how people can get involved. I'm so proud of how much it has grown and the number of people that we now reach. Today we have an amazing website with loads of information and a newsletter - and all of our online events are recorded so that even more people can access them (especially working parents).

I hope that the PCF can continue to go from strength to strength as new parents join and volunteer. Together we support people who are new to the world of SEND, as well as those who have been round a long time like me!

Things are always changing and policies, procedures and services always need reviewing. Making sure the voices of the children, young people and parent carers who have real lived experience are heard will always be the biggest priority for the PCF.

Click below to read the full version of Vanessa's PCF journey

Vanessa's PCF Journey

device for 15-year-old Ollie

Proud to share this story from one of our own families!

Ollie, a young person from Cheshire West, has been helping raise awareness of a new wrist device that is helping people with Tourette's to manage their tics.

We are so proud of Ollie and his mum Sarah for raising awareness and sharing their story

Ollie started making involuntary neck movements nearly two years ago.

"I just suddenly cracked my neck, and then about 48 hours after that, it was constant movements," he said. "It was incredibly sudden."

Ollie's dad, Alex, said daily tasks - including sleeping, eating and drinking - became "incredibly difficult", and said he and Ollie's mother were "at a loss... just watching our son deteriorate". "There's a period of it where I didn't leave the house for about a month," Ollie said. "I didn't hang out with my mates. "Reading and writing became really hard. I was out of school for six, seven months as I'm getting into GCSEs."

Read his story and watch the video of Ollie the moment he tried the device…

Free Programmes

Funded by Active Cheshire and **Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner**, Active Futures is a daytime programme for neurodivergent young people aged 12-17 who are not currently in education.

Participants can stay active, build confidence and connect with others through weekly boxing, gym sessions and a weekly Connect Hour. To register, please click here.

APS has been commissioned to offer **FREE autism parent six week training programmes** for residents in Northwich, Winsford, Chester, Rural Cheshire and Ellesmere Port, on behalf of the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB). The parent training sessions are created by parents, for parents, offering practical strategies, guidance, and a space where you feel understood and supported every step of the way. Find out more here.

❄️ What's On 🧤📍

Winter Activities and Events for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities 2026

Check out all the SEND Winter activities on Padlet - CLICK HERE!



Best Pantomimes offers a free guide to this season's UK pantos.

Each panto has the theatre's access line, its carer-ticket policy, what changes at the relaxed show, and a link to

Embracing Art is an arts charity that brings interactive performance, play and the shared experience of creative arts to young people with complex needs and life-limiting illnesses.

They are delivered by a team of experienced



Aged 11-16? Join New Images for a fantastic

page for BSL-signed, captioned and audio-described shows.

It's free to use, with no sign-up. Oh yes it is!

Find out more

fantastic puppets.

Every year they offer a free digital Christmas show to families which you can sign up to watch online.

Sign up…

to impress! There will be a prize for the best Christmas outfit, so go all out with your festive jumpers, sparkles and Christmas costumes!

🎟️ £2 per person or FREE with HAF

Book here

Share your voice!

There are some important consultations, developments and new sessions that might interest you as a parent carer. Make sure your voice is heard!

Email for details…

The Disabled Children's Partnership has recently launched a SEND Needs in Your Constituency tool.

This brings together local data to show the scale of the challenge across England.

You can see the data looks like in the constituencies of some of the political decision-makers involved in shaping SEND reform. Behind every statistic are disabled children and families who are too often left fighting for the support they need.

Now it's your turn to make sure your MP sees the evidence.

Explore the data for your constituency and send it to your MP, asking them to become a Disabled Children's Champion and help ensure SEND reforms deliver real change.

DfE Consultation: Children Not in School Statutory Guidance

The Department for Education is asking for views on draft statutory guidance and proposed regulations about children not in school. This includes local authority registers, information sharing, and support for families who electively home educate. This could be especially relevant if your child or young person has SEND and is educated outside of school. The proposals may affect how local authorities keep track of and support children who are home educated, so it's a good chance to have your say.

You can share your experiences and views with us at PCF CWaC, and we will use them to inform our feedback.

Share with us

Visit the DfE consultation page via the button below.

DfE Consultation

Join the Contact Child Trust Fund campaign

Maria Scholey, Engagement Lead at Contact and parent campaigner Andrew Turner joined forces in a productive meeting with Justice Minister Jake Richards. At this meeting they discuss practical solutions and pressed for reform. Learn more about the proposed changes, access step-by-step guidance, and support Andrew's campaign on the Child Trust Fund Campaign Page.

Down Syndrome Act - #ActintoAction

The National Down Syndrome Policy Group (NDSPG) has created an Easy Read pack to help people with Down syndrome write to their MP about the Down Syndrome Act and its guidance.

It's simple to take part:
📖 READ the letter.
✍️ SIGN it if you agree — add today's date and your name.
📮 POST it to your MP.
You can ask someone you trust to help you too.
Every letter helps show MPs that people with Down syndrome want their voices heard.

#DownSyndromeAct
#FourYearsStillWaiting
#ActIntoAction



And if you post your letter, send us a photo — we'd love to celebrate you!
💗

📩 Download the Easy Read pack from their website:
🔗 https://ndspg.org

View it here…

Other Parent Carer SEND News

In the latest Cheshire West and Chester SEND Newsletter you'll find out how the SEND local area reform plan sets out how the council is going to improve services for children and young people with SEND over the next couple of years...



🆓 FREE Event for Christmas 🎄
Never been to a Smart Bright workshop?
Want to find out how we work?
Join us online from the comfort of your own home.
🎄 Why not come along to our free festive session all about reasonable adjustments for the festive period.
With Sara & Karen.
📍 We'll share a few tips to support you through the silly season, you can ask questions and if course you can even wear your Christmas Pj's...we won't judge!
🔗 Use the link to book your spot.
😁 We look forward to seeing you there remember to bring your own mince pie/ cakes/ drinks 🧁 🧉 🍷
📍 Reasonable adjustments for the festive period...free drop in session!
🗓️ Date: Dec 2nd • 19:30

Book my slot!

6 sources for carers

Our parent carer community has found that the six support services below have been a useful source of information, advice and support along their parenting journey. Click on the logos to visit their websites and find out more...

Available to families with children from pre-birth – 18 years (25 if there is identified Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). ENS can Help Families Navigate what support is available.

Contact: the charity for families with disabled children can help you with the best possible guidance for your child. From benefits to early years education, social care and legal advice - all in one place.

Disability Positive provide services, opportunities and a voice to people with lived experience of disability and long-term health conditions, and their families.
They are commissioned by the Council to support families in accessing funding for short breaks

Inclusive, accessible, high-quality learning, personal development and social activities for children, young people and adults with disabilities.

Live Well Cheshire West provides a directory of mental health support services for children and young people. These include telephone, text and online services, as well as face to face services to make these support services as accessible as possible.

Need someone to talk to? Listening Ear offers 1:1 telephone appointments for emotional support—because sometimes being heard makes all the difference.

Our Aims

VOICE **Be the voice of as many parents/carers as possible!**

Co-produce improvements to Services so that all children and young people in the Borough with SEND are given the chance to achieve the best possible outcomes

Work in **partnership** with providers of Education, Health Care and Social Care services to influence decisions about gaps in services

Provide feedback, advice and information links to Professionals and Voluntary Organisations

GET INVOLVED!

SEND US YOUR NEWS!



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