

October 2025



Welcome from Mim Kendrick, SEND Local Area Partnership Manager

The first half term of the new academic year always seems to fly by, and this year has felt no different! We've been setting up all of the working groups to deliver our new SEND Strategy 2025 – 2028 – you can read more about this below.

We hope you have a fun half term planned – and if you're not yet sure what you're doing during the break, there are some ideas below for you and your family, along with some dates for future training opportunities, and some new resources that are available on the local offer. If your child has an EHCP, don't forget that your [short breaks vouchers](#) can be accessed via the BookingLab website and used in the holidays.



Activities and events

Activities can also be found on our SEND Local Offer homepage.

[Thomley](#) have a variety of activities available over the October half term
[Cirquoise Halloween Spooktacular Circus Show at Frosts Garden Centre Woburn Sands](#)
[The Parks Trust](#) at Willen Lake for a FREE Halloween trail running every day during the holidays
[Gravity](#) have a variety of sessions available over the holidays

Autism in Teens Parent Programme

This programme offers support and advice for parents of autistic teenagers. It includes helpful tips, shared experiences, and ways to understand and support your teen. For full details and booking, download the poster below.

[Autism in Teens Parent Programme \(PDF\)](#)

Events and workshops by Milton Keynes SENDIAS

Autumn Term 2025 workshops

- [Annual Review of EHCP](#) – Thu 20 November, 10am – 11:15am

For more information, please visit the [SENDIAS website](#).

Starting primary or junior/middle school in September 2026

The closing date is **15 January 2026** and all applications must be made before the closing date to receive a school place offer on **16 April 2026** (national offer day).

For more information, see our [parents/ carers guide](#).

If you need help or have any questions, don't miss the next face-to-face session with the admissions team to help you complete your child's school application.

Wednesday 29 October 2025 11:30am - 3:30pm at Civic Offices, MK9 3EJ

Please note: if your child doesn't have an EHCP but is in the process of needs assessment and final plan hasn't been issued yet, you **MUST** apply online before this deadline. The application process is only different for children with a finalised EHCP, if you have any queries please contact your SEND Officer.

Applying for a school place and need help?

(Reception, year 3 or 7)

Here's when you can drop by Civic for free and friendly advice about applying. No need to book.

Wednesdays | 11:30am to 3:30pm
between 17 September and 29 October

 **Milton Keynes**
City Council



SEND Strategy

The new 2025 – 2028 SEND Strategy – that “Milton Keynes is a place where children and young people with SEND thrive, belong and are at the heart of our plans” has been published on our [Local Offer](#) and the programme of work to deliver towards this strategy has begun.

Our first action meetings for the new strategy have taken place this month, and we look forward to sharing more about progress as the year goes on.

Understanding and Navigating School Avoidance

The EBSA Working Group has developed free guidance and resources to support parents and carers in understanding EBSA. These tools aim to help you feel more confident in promoting your child's emotional wellbeing and engagement with learning.

The guidance includes practical strategies and resources, supportive advice and signposting to local services. Whether you're just noticing signs or already dealing with EBSA, these resources are here to support you and your child.

Take a look at this sample from the Practical Resource Pack - it illustrates how the strategies can be applied.

Emotion check-ins

Children can find it hard to communicate what they are feeling and why. They might not know what they are feeling, might have difficulties finding the right words or might feel embarrassed to say it out loud.

It is likely that your child's school has a range of visual emotion communication resources that they use in school. For example, they might use the Zones of Regulation curriculum, the Incredible 5-point Scale or Communicate in Print resources. Ask the SENCo to share the key resources they use in school so that you can use them at home as well. You might also be able to share ideas for how to personalise these resources, based on your child's interests.

What Zone Are You In?



[Emotional Regulation Handouts](#) | Based on clinically validated interventions.



[Feelings and Emotions Charts](#) | Wdigit



[Emotional Regulation MINECRAFT: 5 Point Scale, Zones](#)

RESOURCE: examples of visual emotion communication tools available online

Find the resources on our Local Offer

Update on EHC Needs Assessments in Milton Keynes

We continue to make progress in addressing the backlog of Education Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessments. To date, over 200 assessments have been completed.

We continue to prioritise these assessments - ensuring we clear any outstanding assessments, while enabling future assessments to be completed in a timely manner. The team are committed to maintaining high standards and supporting children with SEND effectively.

Read the full update [here](#).

School Transport update for parents

Following the October half term, payments for Family Led Travel Budgets (FLTBS) and Mileage will now be uploaded to a Direct Payment Card. The card can be used for School/College travel related expenses and can be used online, at a petrol station, also for bank transfers. This card offers greater flexibility and helps keep school travel expenses separate from your personal bank account.

Many families will have received their card already but if not, it should be with you by the end of this week. Payments will be uploaded by 30 October for expenses across the rest of the rest of this autumn term. FAQs have already been sent to families to support this change and are available on our website: [School travel support | Milton Keynes City Council](#).


If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact School Travel Support Team at STS@milton-keyes.gov.uk or **01908 252526** – We're here to help.

Parents and Carers Alliance



A busy start to the new term!

We've had a fantastic start to the new term, filled with wellbeing activities — from **Somatic Release sessions** to **Pilates** — and our very first **monthly evening Exhale, Sip, and Chat** event!

Our **Online Coffee and Chats** have also been warmly received. We were delighted to be joined by **CHUMS** and **CAMHS**, and we're excited to welcome **Emily Star** in November and **Mandy Fell** from the **Children with Disabilities Team** in December. **Don't forget to check our "What's On" calendar** for all upcoming sessions and updates:  pacamk.org/calendar

A Big Thank You!

A huge thank you to the **Milton Keynes Dons Community Trust** for generously providing tickets to PACA families for last weekend's match! It was wonderful to see children with SEND enjoying the day and feeling included as part of our wider community.

♥ Join the PACA Community — It's Free!

Did you know that **PACA Membership is completely FREE**? It's open to **parent carers** of children and young people (aged 0–25) with disabilities or additional needs who live in **Milton Keynes**. As a member, you'll receive:

- Regular updates and newsletters
- Invitations to events and workshops
- Access to helpful resources and local developments

Find out more: pacamk.org

Be part of our growing community — whether you'd like to learn more about membership, get involved, or discover what PACA does, we'd love to hear from you!



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!

This newsletter has been co-produced between and the MKCC SEND Team, SENDIAS, Health colleagues and with engagement from Parents and Carers Alliance (PACA MK).

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 the SEND Strategic Partnership Board.

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](#)

Note: Please do not respond directly to this email.

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

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