

WFPF Newsletter April '26



Hi everyone

We hope you are all having a good Easter break and managing to find some time to rest.



Forum update

As we reach the end of the financial year, we wanted to share a snapshot of our work and impact.

We now support over 3,200 families across Waltham Forest, with membership continuing to grow.

Parent carers have attended 194 strategic meetings this year, contributing over 740 hours of lived experience to improve services.

We are also pleased to confirm that DfE funding for 2026/27 has been agreed, allowing us to continue our parent participation and strategic work.

The main issues raised by families continue to be:

- EHCP delays, quality and process issues
- Communication breakdown across services
- CAMHS and diagnosis waiting times
- Pressure on schools and inclusion
- Delays in social care and short breaks

Around 25% of feedback this year has been positive, highlighting the difference individual professionals can make.

Thank you to everyone who has shared feedback, attended meetings or supported the forum this year. Your feedback really helps us identify key issues and push for change.

If you have anything you would like to share, please use our feedback and issues log:

<https://forms.office.com/r/1dUa2sDfHH>



SEND White Paper Consultation

There is still time to respond to the SEND White Paper consultation.

To gather views for our response, we are running a series of evening online sessions to support parents and carers to understand the proposals and share their views. The first session will be Monday 13th April at 7PM. All dates are found on the booking link.

Booking link: <https://forms.office.com/r/67epE1w7yV>

Sessions will cover:

- Family voice and participation
- Early years and universal support
- Targeted and specialist support
- Plans, provision and transitions
- Specialist placements and assessment
- Funding, accountability and local partnerships

Each session will include a short overview and time to discuss key questions from the consultation.

We also hope to run some lunchtime sessions in May and run a short survey to gather views.

NATIONAL DEMO:

There is also a national demonstration taking place in central London on Saturday 9th May for those who would like to get involved and share their views on the proposed reforms:

<https://facebook.com/events/s/save-send-legal-rights-nationa/851492921288457/>

Meetings with MPs

There have been two recent sessions with local MPs about the proposals:

- Calvin Bailey hosted an in-person SEND coffee morning where parents shared questions and concerns
- We hosted an online session with Stella Creasy, where parent views have been formally submitted to her office

Key themes raised included:

- Lack of legal protections for children without EHCPs
- Concerns about moving from a needs-led system to a provision-led system
- Questions about whether funding will meet demand
- Lack of clarity for children not in school, including EOTAS and home education

We will share any updates when we receive them.

Forum funding and sustainability

The end of the financial year also means some funded activities have come to an end, including Saturday and Sunday football and additional art sessions for parent carers. We will continue to fund these in the short term, but beyond September they will only be able to continue if further funding is secured. Without additional support, these much-needed activities are at risk of stopping.

The DfE grant funds our strategic work, ensuring parent voices are heard.

However, it does not fund activities, support groups or community sessions.

We are continuing to apply for funding, but this is not guaranteed each year.

We have added a donation button to our website:

<https://www.walthamforestparentforum.com/donate>

If every member gave:

- 50p per month = £19,200 per year
- £1 per month = £38,400 per year

This would allow us to grow sustainably and respond more quickly to families requests.

If you value what we do, please consider making a small monthly or one-off donation.

Every contribution makes a difference.

We are also looking for local businesses who may be interested in sponsoring activities in exchange for visibility. If you own a business or know someone who would be interested in sponsoring activities, please let us know.

Training and support (April)

All training sessions can be booked via:

<https://www.walthamforestparentforum.com/events-training>

- Meltdowns and Shutdowns with Sarah Fisher
Tuesday 14 April, 7–9pm
- Supporting Autistic Young People to Understand Themselves – Jess Garner (The Grove)
Tuesday 21 April, 7–9pm
- Parenting our Neurodivergent Son – Regina Winter
Thursday 23 April, 7–8.15pm

- Girls and Keeping it all Inside – Autistic Girls Network
Thursday 30 April, 7–8.30pm

Help shape future training

If you haven't already completed our training survey, we would really value your input.

<https://forms.office.com/r/4acg1Ji1TQ>

We will aim to run as many of the top 10 requested topics as possible, and potentially additional sessions where funding allows.

Other sessions and activities

- Autism Support Group – 17th April 11AM-1PM at 99 Leyton Green Road E10 6DB
- Coffee and Chat
With SENDIASS, SEND Navigator and Steady Steps – a service supporting families to find specialist nannies and childminders with SEND experience. If you've ever struggled to find the right childcare or support, this is a great opportunity to find out more and ask questions. Come along if you're exploring options, need advice, or just want to see what support is available.
- Meeting with Head of CAMHS – 23rd April
Book via: <https://www.walthamforestparentforum.com/events-training>
- Ongoing activities available to book:
Yoga, Saturday and Sunday football, Lego Engineers
<https://www.walthamforestparentforum.com/shop>

Stay connected

And finally.....You can find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Waltham-Forest-Parent-Forum-142452533350/> and on Twitter @WFParentforum.

A reminder that we have closed Facebook groups and WhatsApp groups for parent carer members.

Facebook groups:

- Waltham Forest Parent Forum Chat (general)
- ADHD chat
- Epilepsy chat
- EBSNA (Emotionally Based School Non- Attendance) chat
- 4Ds (dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia) chat
- Profound needs chat
- Preparing for Adulthood chat
- Cerebral Palsy chat
- Social Anxiety chat

WhatsApp groups:

- Early Years (0–5)
- Reception / KS1 / KS2
- Primary (ages 7–11)
- Secondary (11–16)
- Post 16
- Tribunal support

If you would like to join any of our groups, please email us and we can send you the relevant links.

These are supportive spaces to share experiences, ask questions and connect with others who understand.

Have a good week
Carol

