

July 2026 Newsletter



Families First – Supporting Progress Beyond the School Year

For many families, the end of the school year is a chance to pause, reflect and hope that the months ahead bring a little more certainty. For others, the questions continue long after the final school bell has rung. Concerns about education, EHCPs, school placements and accessing the right support don't disappear during the summer holidays — and neither does PEAK.

Looking back on the 2025–2026 academic year, one thing stands out above everything else: the resilience of the families we have had the privilege to support. Behind every piece of paperwork, every meeting and every appeal is a parent or carer determined to remove barriers for their child. July brought more examples of that determination leading to meaningful progress, with families securing educational placements, moving forward through appeals and gaining the confidence to make informed decisions about their children's futures.

While this newsletter reflects on some of those successes, it also recognises that many journeys are still ongoing. Progress is rarely straightforward, but families continue to show extraordinary perseverance, and PEAK remains committed to standing alongside them every step of the way.

In This Newsletter

[July Update](#)

[Family Outcomes](#)

[Community](#)

[News & Developments](#)

[Supporters Spotlight](#)

[What Families are Saying](#)

[Founder Message & Reminders](#)

FAMILY OUTCOMES

Progress made through advocacy, support and persistence

The challenges facing families continue to grow in both complexity and duration. Increasingly, parents are approaching PEAK after months — or even years — of trying to navigate a system that can feel overwhelming, confusing and emotionally exhausting.

Throughout July, PEAK supported families with EHCP advice, evidence gathering, documentation, advocacy, assessments, SEN appeals and educational placement guidance. Each family's circumstances are different, but each receives the same commitment: practical advice, honest guidance and support tailored to their individual journey.

A new beginning after two years out of education

One of July's most significant outcomes involved supporting a child who had been out of formal education for almost two academic years.

Working closely with the family, PEAK helped build the evidence needed to demonstrate why specialist educational provision was appropriate. Alongside constructive discussions with the local authority, a suitable school was identified and arrangements were agreed that included deferring entry by one academic year. While this required careful planning, it meant the child would miss considerably less education than originally anticipated and could begin in an environment better suited to their needs.

For the family, this was about much more than securing a school place. After a prolonged period of uncertainty, it represented hope, stability and the opportunity for their child to re-engage with education in a setting where they could thrive.



Every step forward matters

Not every success reaches a conclusion within a single month. Many of the families supported during July continue to move through assessments, reviews and appeals, often facing lengthy waiting times and difficult decisions along the way.

Although these journeys remain challenging, every meeting attended, every document reviewed and every conversation held helps parents feel more informed and better equipped to advocate for their children. Sometimes progress is measured by a final decision; just as often, it is measured by a family feeling more confident about the road ahead.

As the summer holidays continue, PEAK will remain available to support families who need advice, reassurance or guidance. Whether you're preparing for September or simply trying to understand your next steps, you don't have to navigate those decisions alone.

Impact at a glance	Total
Children supported (Inc. PEAK Day)	500+
EHCP support provided/awarded	9
School support meetings	17
Documentation support	1
SEN appeals supported	8
Direct home support interventions	2
Educational placements awarded	3
Volunteer hours given (Inc. PEAK Day)	567

COMMUNITY



A summer celebration of inclusion

July's highlight for many families was **PEAK Day 2026**, held at Hunts Grove Primary School. Despite exceptionally warm weather, families spent the day enjoying activities, entertainment, local stalls, food vendors and opportunities to connect with others who understand the realities of raising neurodiverse children.

The event was designed with inclusion at its heart, offering sensory spaces and a quiet zone alongside the wider activities so families could enjoy the day in ways that suited their individual needs. It was encouraging to see children, young people, parents, carers and supporters sharing the day together in a welcoming environment where everyone could participate at their own pace.

PEAK Day was also a great example of what can be achieved when neurodivergent and neurotypical communities come together. By creating opportunities for people to share the same space, enjoy activities and connect with one another, the day demonstrated the value of inclusion in action.

There were plenty of memorable moments, from children enthusiastically lining up to Soak the Founder to the excitement of the raffle draw at the end of the afternoon. More importantly, PEAK Day created space for conversations that don't always happen elsewhere — parents sharing experiences, volunteers meeting families for the first time, and supporters seeing first-hand the community they help make possible.

This year's event also marked six years of PEAK's work supporting neurodiverse children, young people and their families. That milestone reflects not only the growth of the charity, but also the strength of the community that has grown alongside it.

Thank you to every volunteer, stall holder, performer, community organisation and family who helped make the day such a success. Your support continues to make a real difference.



NEWS & DEVELOPMENTS



New conversations are creating opportunities for wider collaboration

While PEAK's day-to-day work is centred on supporting families, lasting change also depends on building strong relationships with the organisations and decision-makers who shape services for children and young people.

July brought encouraging progress on that front, with conversations that reflect the growing recognition of PEAK's expertise, lived experience and the difference its work is making across Gloucestershire and beyond.

Constructive conversations with local authorities

PEAK met with senior representatives from Gloucestershire County Council Children's Services and Social Care for a wide-ranging discussion about the challenges facing SEND families and the role charities can play in improving support.

During the meeting, PEAK's impact data, quality of work and reputation were recognised, with discussions exploring how the charity could contribute to future SEND improvement work, training opportunities and local authority networks. These conversations are now helping to shape further collaboration with local authorities, with some agreements already being secured from September onwards.

As these relationships develop, PEAK will continue to look for opportunities to contribute its practical knowledge and lived experience to SEND improvement, training and development while continuing to advocate for families and challenge decisions where necessary.

Taking PEAK's training further with PGL

July also saw Marco visit a PGL site in Lincolnshire as discussions continued around neurodiversity awareness and staff development.

The visit provided an opportunity to explore how PEAK's practical experience of supporting neurodiverse children and young people could help build confidence among staff working across PGL sites. With PGL operating centres across the UK and internationally, the potential reach of this work extends well beyond one location.

Conversations remain positive as PEAK explores how training could support staff understanding and confidence when working with neurodiverse children and young people. If developed further, the training has the potential to benefit staff across multiple sites, helping create more inclusive experiences for children and young people taking part in PGL activities and residential programmes.

SUPPORTERS SPOTLIGHT

Communities grow stronger when people work together

Behind every family supported by PEAK is a wider network of people, schools, organisations and volunteers who choose to invest their time, skills and encouragement. July offered several examples of how those relationships continue to grow.

Strengthening partnerships at Finlay Community School

PEAK was pleased to return to Finlay Community School to meet with SENCOs, governors, parents and professionals working within children's services.

The visit focused on sharing knowledge, strengthening relationships and exploring how schools and community organisations can work more closely together to support children and families. Conversations also looked ahead to the new academic year, with opportunities for settings to engage with PEAK around future support and community engagement.

Building strong partnerships before challenges arise helps create better outcomes for everyone involved, and PEAK looks forward to continuing these conversations with schools across the county.



Running every mile for PEAK

One of July's standout fundraising achievements came from Sian Louise Thomas, who completed the Saucony London 10K while raising more than **£350** for PEAK.

Having only completed one previous 10K, Sian achieved a new personal best while finishing within the top 60% of female runners — a fantastic personal accomplishment alongside an equally important contribution to the charity.

Fundraising challenges like these help PEAK continue providing advocacy, guidance and practical support to families when they need it most. We are incredibly grateful for Sian's dedication and generosity.

If you've ever considered taking on your own fundraising challenge, we'd love to hear from you. Whether it's a run, walk, cycle or something completely different, every challenge helps make a difference to local families.



WHAT FAMILIES ARE SAYING

Real experiences from families supported by PEAK



The most meaningful measure of PEAK's work will always be the experiences of the families we support. Every review reflects a unique journey, but together they share a common theme: feeling better informed, more confident and less alone while navigating the SEND system.

Our featured review this month comes from Katherine L.

I can't recommend PEAK highly enough. Throughout my daughter's diagnosis, our EHC needs assessment request and tribunal process they've been incredibly supportive, knowledgeable and generous with their time.

Every question I've had has been answered with kindness and patience and they've helped me understand what can feel like a very overwhelming system. Their advice has given me the confidence to advocate for my daughter.

The community support sessions have been invaluable. It's so reassuring to be able to ask questions, hear from other parents going through similar experiences and get practical advice from people who really understand.

I'm so grateful for their support and wouldn't hesitate to recommend them to any family trying to navigate the SEND system.

Katherine L.

Hearing how families grow in confidence is every bit as important as the outcomes themselves. Knowing your rights, understanding the process and having someone alongside you during difficult moments can make an enormous difference.

If PEAK has supported your family, we'd be grateful if you would consider leaving a Google or Facebook review. Your experience may help another parent take the first step towards finding the support they need.

Have we helped your family?

Leave a Google or Facebook review to help others find PEAK.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER



As I look back on July, what stands out most isn't a particular meeting or event — it's the determination of the families we support every single day.

Every positive outcome we've celebrated this month has been built on persistence. Parents who refused to give up, children and young people who deserve the right support, and a community willing to stand alongside them. Those are the moments that remind me why PEAK exists.

PEAK Day was a fantastic example of that community in action. Seeing families enjoying the day together, volunteers giving their time so generously, and local organisations helping to create such a welcoming atmosphere made me incredibly proud of what we've built together over the past six years.

I'd also like to thank everyone who continues to champion PEAK beyond our own events. Whether that's taking on a fundraising challenge like Sian Louise Thomas, opening doors for new conversations, or simply recommending us to another family, every act of support helps us reach someone who may otherwise have struggled alone.

This month has also brought encouraging conversations about the future. Our meeting with Gloucestershire County Council and continued discussions with PGL suggest a growing recognition of the importance of lived experience in shaping better support for neurodiverse children and young people. There's still work to do, but those conversations are moving in a positive direction, and I'm excited to see where they lead.

As many families enjoy a well-earned summer break, I hope you're able to find moments to relax, reconnect and make memories together. And if this summer brings new questions or unexpected challenges, remember that PEAK is only ever a conversation away.

Thank you for continuing to believe in our work and for being part of this remarkable community.

Enjoy your summer break with your families.

Marco Cetara

Dates for the Diary

Community Dates

- 25 September - Community session

Awareness Days

- August - National Wellness Month
- 7 August - Playday
- 19 August - World Humanitarian Day