

Central Bedfordshire Family and Youth Information Service



Services for parents and carers
with children of additional
needs or disability



Parents and Carers



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Who we are...

The Family and Youth Information Service is part of Central Bedfordshire Council's commitment to supporting all children and young people aged from 0 to 19 and their families.

The service is available 24/7 via telephone, face to face, online via the Family Information Directory www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/fyis and www.direct.gov.uk and at information points including Sure Start Children's Centres.

We provide a one stop shop for information on childcare, financial support for parents and carers, working parent rights, activities for children and young people, careers information for young people and support groups offering help with issues such as bullying, drug misuse, parenting and bereavement. We also offer a Childcare Brokerage service, please contact us if you need our help.

Contact:

Family and Youth Information Service



Telephone: 0300 300 8119

Fax: 0300 300 8208

Opening times:

Mon-Thurs 8:30am – 5:15pm

Fri 8:30am – 4:45pm - answer phone outside these hours



Email:

fyis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



Website:

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/fyis

Or find us on Facebook and Twitter

Disclaimer

While every care has been taken in the compilation of this information, Central Bedfordshire Council will not be held responsible for any loss, damage or inconvenience caused as a result of any inaccuracy or error within our information.

The information provided is only intended to be a general summary. It does not constitute legal or other professional advice and does not seek to describe your rights in full. Before any action is taken, individual advice should be sought.

Childcare and early years services

Choosing childcare or finding a suitable setting can be a daunting prospect for any parent.

Sometimes it can be even more complex if your child has an additional need or disability.

Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to ensuring that all childcare and early years settings in Central Bedfordshire provide a service that includes all children.

The Family and Youth Information Service holds information on all registered childcare and early years providers in Central Bedfordshire, whatever your childcare needs. This includes information on:

- registered childminders
- home childcarers
- out-of-school care
- day nurseries
- holiday schemes
- pre-schools / playgroups

Your childcare / early years options

The type of care you choose for your child will depend on the hours and days for which you need care and also your child's needs. You have the option of choosing group care, a registered childminder or home childcarer (having a carer in your own home).



Registered childminders

If you feel that your child will benefit from more one to one attention, then you have the option of using a registered childminder. A registered childminder is a person who is registered with the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) to care for children in the childminder's home.

Childminders are self-employed and provide full or part-time care. This might be day care, before/after school, and/or holiday care and overnight care (a childminder must have permission from Ofsted for overnight care). Childminders are often prepared to take and collect your child from pre-school, nursery or school. For further information please refer to our leaflet **"Help with Choosing the Right Childcare."**

Community Childminding Scheme

If you feel that your child would benefit from more specialist care then you may want to consider using a registered childminder on the **Community Childminding Scheme**.

Central Bedfordshire Council and the National Childminding Association are working together to provide this specialist scheme for children that have an additional need or disability. Community childminders have gone through the same registration process as all other childminders and usually care for other children at the same time as those referred to them.

The co-ordinator for the scheme helps to find a suitably trained registered childminder to care for a child who has a disability or an additional need. The childminder will offer a flexible package to meet your childcare needs whether this is providing full day care or arranging shorter periods of care according to the needs of both you and your child.

If you would like more information then please contact the **Community Childminding Scheme Co-ordinator, Caroline Morris**
Tel: **01234 242808** or email **caroline.morris@ncma.org.uk**

Home based care

Another childcare option is to have someone come to your home and care for your child e.g. a nanny. This may be because your child requires large equipment or your house has been specially adapted for your child's needs.

At present there is no requirement for a home childcarer to be registered. If they are not registered you will not be

able to claim the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit.

However, they may register on the Ofsted Voluntary Childcare Register which will enable you to claim the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit or employer supported childcare vouchers. See page 8 for more information on Childcare and the Law.

Group care

If you would like your child to attend **group care**, for example a pre-school, day nursery or out of school club, you can obtain a list from the **Family and Youth Information Service** on 0300 300 8119.

All early years and childcare settings should have a member of staff who has particular responsibility for co-ordinating work with all other staff in identifying and supporting children with an additional need or disability. These are known as Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCo).

The SENCo works closely with an Early Years Inclusion Officer, employed by Central Bedfordshire Council, whose role it is to support settings to include all children. The Early Years Inclusion

Officer gives advice on policies and practice but also, with parental permission, if a child has not been assessed by another service, is able to observe and give staff advice on appropriate strategies to meet the child's individual needs.

When you visit the premises, try to take notes as you go along for reference later. You must be your own judge of what is best for you and your child, but the list overleaf may help guide you on points to look for and what to ask.

Things to consider and questions to ask:

- did you and your child feel welcome?
- what is their previous experience of working with a child that has an additional need or disability?
- ask to see their Special Educational Needs / Equal Opportunities policy and ask how it is used in practice.
- how will they be able to adapt the curriculum for your child's needs?
- how would they keep you updated on your child's progress?
- will you be able to have regular meetings with the Special educational Needs Co-ordinator at the setting and / or your child's keyworker?
- can your child access all parts of the setting?
- will they be willing to attend training on your child's particular needs?

Childcare and early years providers are able to apply for funding from Central Bedfordshire Council to assist them in caring for a child that has an additional need or disability. This could be to cover the cost of purchasing special equipment, for staff to access suitable training or to help with extra staffing.

For further information please call Central Bedfordshire Council's

Family and Youth Information Service



Tel: 0300 300 8119



Email:

fyis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

or **The Parent Partnership Service**



Tel: 0300 300 8088



Email: [parentpartnership@](mailto:parentpartnership@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

[centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:parentpartnership@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)



Childcare and the law

Most childcare providers caring for children aged under eight must register with Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) and their registration certificate must be prominently displayed on the premises. You can view an Ofsted report at www.ofsted.gov.uk/childcare or ask the childcare provider. Ofsted registration requirements will specify the number of children that are allowed to be on the premises at any time and the ratio of staff to children.

Home childcarers do not need to be formally registered, although most nannies would register with an agency. If you are employing a nanny through an agency, you need to find out about what checks they will have carried out. If employing someone directly you may need to consider organising your own security checks. Some home childcarers may choose to join the voluntary part of the Ofsted Childcare Register.

Nursery, pre-school staff, nannies, childminders and any other adults that work with children are all subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check.



Financial support

Direct Payments

Direct Payments are cash sums that Central Bedfordshire Council pay to people who are ill or disabled to enable them to buy the care and support they need.

People who are eligible for community care services can receive Direct Payments.

If you are not already receiving community care services, a care worker will first make an assessment to identify your care and support needs and discuss these with you.

If this shows that you are entitled to social care services you then have a right to ask to be considered for Direct Payments instead of the Council arranging services for you.

If you have a parental responsibility for a disabled child, you may need these care services.

If you would like to consider the option of Direct Payments, please talk about this with your social worker.

Your assessment is the best starting point from which to explore it further. If you do not have an allocated social worker, you can contact the **Direct Payments Support Team** at the **Disability Resource Centre**, who will give you information and guidance on **01582 470 900**.

For more information on financial support for parents see our leaflet **“Financial Support for Parents and Carers”**.



Useful contacts

Autism Bedfordshire

A small independent charity providing information, advice, emotional and practical support for children/young people with Autistic Spectrum Conditions (A.S.C.) and their parents/carers in Bedfordshire.

St. Marks Church Community Centre,
Calder Rise, Brickhill
Bedford MK41 7UY

Tel: 01234 350704

Website: www.autismbeds.org/home.htm

Bedford and District Cerebral Palsy Society

Information and support for families and carers.

Cerebral Palsy Society
(Bedford and District),
43 Bromham Road,
Bedford, MK40 2AA

Tel: 01234 351 759

Contact a Family

A charity for families with disabled children, offering information on specific conditions and rare disorders, financial and educational advice.

Tel: 0808 808 3555

Website: www.cafamily.org.uk

MENCAP

Family advisory service for parents and individuals with learning disabilities.

Tel: 01582 560003

Central Bedfordshire Council's Early Years Support Service

Offers educational support and advice to children from birth to five years of age with special educational needs.

Tel: 01234 290770

Central Bedfordshire Council's Parent Partnership Service

A free, confidential and impartial support service for parents and carers of children with special educational needs.

Tel: 0300 300 8088

Email: parentpartnership@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Central Bedfordshire Council's Children with Disabilities Team

Provide additional support for children and families.

Tel: 01582 818114

Central Bedfordshire Council's Disability Register

Produces a free information newsletter for children and families on the Disability Register.

Tel: 01582 818022

Central Bedfordshire Council's Special Educational Needs Service

Provide support to educational settings to enable them to include all children

Tel: 0300 300 8128

Central Bedfordshire Council's Special Educational Needs Youth Team

Provides education and careers advice and support for young people aged 13-25 who have special educational needs.

Tel: 01234 718650

Disability Resource Centre

Provides information on a variety of topics including equipment, support groups, benefits and transport.


Tel: 01582 470900

Other leaflets you may want to look at:

- Financial Support for Parents and Carers
- Help with Choosing the Right Childcare
- Work and Families: Your Rights


Contact


The Family and Youth Information Service

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 **Email:** fyis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

 **Website:** www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/fyis

Or find us on Facebook and Twitter



Central Bedfordshire in contact



on the telephone...

0300 300 8000



by email...

customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



on the web...

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



Alternatively you can write to:

Central Bedfordshire Council Priory House, Monks Walk,
Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ

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