

# Corporate Parenting Service

[www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Dear Director

Central Bedfordshire Council would like to let you know about the resources available to children and young people in care, who may be placed in our area by other local authorities, including children placed for adoption.

We have set out in this letter some information about the area and the processes for notifying us of the placement of a child in the Central Bedfordshire area or when they subsequently move or are adopted. We have also included information about accessing universal services and contact information for our Children in Care Council.

## **Information about Central Bedfordshire:**

Bedfordshire is located 60 miles north of London and 80 miles south of Birmingham, with excellent road and rail connections to both.

The population per the 2011 Census was 254,000 and comprised 228,000 (90%) white British. The next largest ethnic group was white other which accounted for 10,500 (4%) of the population. Of the total population 56,350, (22.2%) were children and young people aged 0-18.

## **Notifications:**

When your authority places a looked after child in Central Bedfordshire, notifications should be sent to [conferenceandreviewdutydesk@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:conferenceandreviewdutydesk@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk). Any change of address and notifications of children leaving Central Bedfordshire should also be sent to this email address so we can update our records.

Please ensure that notifications highlight any particular risks or vulnerabilities to assist us to respond effectively to any issues that might arise.

If you need to contact Central Bedfordshire Children's Services to make a referral, please call the Access and Referral Team on 0300 300 8585 or email

**Corporate Parenting Service**  
Unit 16, Stephenson Court  
Priory Business Park  
Fraser Road  
Bedford, Bedfordshire MK44 3WJ

**Telephone** 0300 300 8090 **Fax** 0300 300 8255  
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[accessandreferral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:accessandreferral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk). For emergencies, outside office hours call 0300 300 8123.

Confidential information relating to a child can be sent securely to the following email address: [crsdutydesk@centralbedfordshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:crsdutydesk@centralbedfordshire.gcsx.gov.uk)

### **School Admissions**

One of the factors most likely to disadvantage young people in care is the school time they may lose by being out of school, so securing a suitable place must be a priority. Central Bedfordshire is an admissions authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools. The governing bodies of academies, foundation schools and voluntary aided schools are the admissions at these schools. Details about admissions to schools in Central Bedfordshire are available on the website:

[www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions)

Further enquiries regarding school places should be made to:

- 0300 300 8037
- [admissions@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

### **Central Bedfordshire's Virtual School**

The Virtual School is part of the School Improvement Service within Children's Services. We are here to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children aged 3 to 19 years ensuring they have high aspirations and reach their full potential by:

- Promoting high aspirations and raising achievement through challenge, support and targeting intervention
- Ensuring that Looked After Children access high quality learning, which meets their needs in a timely manner.
- Working closely with all those directly and indirectly providing education and support working together proactively to respond to and overcome them
- Promoting equality and diversity.

We work closely with admissions, which ensures that we are consulted where additional support may be needed to secure a school/college place.

To contact the Virtual School contact: Jackie Edwards 0300 300 4795 email:

[jackie.edwards@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:jackie.edwards@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

### **Information, Advice and Guidance:**

The child's school is responsible for ensuring they have access to impartial careers advice and guidance. The young person or their social worker should speak to the school in the first instance. The Careers Service trades with all Central Bedfordshire secondary schools and provides them with careers advisers, who can see the young person and produce for them a careers action plan which would outline their options.

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We would also offer any young person resident in Central Bedfordshire the same facility. The young person or their social worker just needs to contact us to make an appointment.

They can do this by calling Central Bedfordshire 0300 300 8000 or emailing  
Or follow the link: <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/learning/schools/support-for-young-people/choices.aspx>.

## **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)**

The Local Authority promotes a graduated approach to the identification and support of children and young people with SEN and disability. It has coproduced SEND guidance documents for children and young people 0 – 25 who attend early years settings, schools, colleges or other educational establishments. These documents can be found by visiting the following links on the Local Offer:

Children in early years settings: [http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/send-early-years\\_tcm3-15049.pdf](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/send-early-years_tcm3-15049.pdf)

Children and young people at school:

[http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/send-5-16\\_tcm3-15050.pdf](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/send-5-16_tcm3-15050.pdf)

Young people post 16: [http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/send-16-25\\_tcm3-15051.pdf](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/send-16-25_tcm3-15051.pdf)

The Local Authority provides a range of services that work with schools and early years settings to help meet the needs of children and young people with SEN and disability. These include services to support children and young people with hearing impairment, visual impairment, autistic spectrum conditions and social emotional and mental health difficulties. It also includes early years specialist support, educational psychology and special school outreach.

For those children and young people with a statement or EHC plan the SEND Support Team is responsible for coordinating placement within the local authority. The team is also responsible for monitoring and reviewing statements and EHC plans, as well managing EHC needs requests. To contact the team email: [statass@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:statass@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) or telephone 0300 300 4768 / 5533.

The local authority has a range of specialist provision for children and young people with statements and EHC plans. These include 2 area special schools, a school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and a school for pupils with social, emotional and mental health. In addition, there are specialist provisions in some mainstream schools to support children with speech and language needs, hearing impairment, autistic spectrum conditions and social, emotional and mental health. Further information can be found by visiting CBCs Local Offer:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/children/sen-disability/education/schools-colleges/overview.aspx>

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## **CBC SEND Parent and Young Person Partnership Service**

CBC Special Educational Needs and Disability Parent and Young Person Partnership Service is a statutory service who work at arm's length from the authority and offer a free confidential support service for parents and carers of children with special educational needs. Further information can be found by visiting the Local Offer: <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/children/sen-disability/send-partnership/overview.aspx>

### Free Early Education for 3 and 4 year olds

Every child, regardless of their background or family circumstances, is entitled to receive 570 hours per year of free early year's education from the term following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. The 570 hour entitlement equates to 15 hours per week for 38 weeks (usually term time) of the year, or if you prefer, many childcare providers are able to 'stretch' the entitlement by offering less hours over more weeks (for example – 12 hours per week for 48 weeks of the year) Early education can be accessed at a variety of local day nurseries, playgroups, child-minders and maintained nursery schools and classes.

The Central Bedfordshire Family Information Service holds up-to-date details about local childcare, including approved early education providers. They are the only organisation in Central Bedfordshire to receive this information directly from Ofsted and they work closely with child care providers are able to 'stretch' the entitlement by offering less hours over more weeks (for example – 12 hours per week for 48 weeks of the year). Early education can be accessed at a variety of local day nurseries, playgroups, child-minders and maintained nursery schools and classes. They work closely with childcare providers and encourage regular updates of their information (about vacancies, costs, opening hours etc.) so that the information you receive is always the most up-to-date.

There are many ways to contact Central Bedfordshire Council Family Information Service.

Telephone: 0300 300 8585

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

Website: <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/learning/schools/choosing-childcare/default.aspx>

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You can also access childcare information via our easy to use on-line directory by visiting: [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

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## **Children's Centre's**

There are 9 Children's Centre's across Central Bedfordshire offering a range of activities and support including: adult and child activities, home learning, family support outreach, community events, volunteering, family health, antenatal as well as a range of additional activities and events. Please visit [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) for details or follow the link (right click – open hyperlink):

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/learning/schools/support-for-families/childrens-centres/default.aspx>

## **Health:**

South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust provide community health, mental health and learning disability services for a population of approx. 2.5 million people throughout Bedfordshire, Essex, Luton and Suffolk

Telephone: 0300 123 0808

Address: The Lodge, The Chase, Wickford, Essex, SS11 7XX

Website: <http://www.sept.nhs.uk>

The Looked After Children (LAC) Service aims to ensure the health of looked after children by providing holistic health care from birth to 17 (inclusive) years of age. Providing statutory health assessments, information and a link to health for looked after children and young people, parents, carers and other professionals working with LAC

- To co-ordinate and monitor health assessment reviews for children placed in Bedfordshire by Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Councils
- To arrange and co-ordinate health assessment reviews for co-shared care children placed out of Bedfordshire
- To ensure that looked after children have equality of access to health care
- To undertake assessments of non-school children in care homes, or those who have complex needs and or previous history within the service

The LAC Nurse and Team Administrator/Co-ordinator are based at:

Florence Ball House, Bedford Health Village

3 Kimbolton Road, Bedford, MK40 2NT

Tel: 01234 310106

## **CAMHS:**

The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMH) provides outpatient assessments, support and treatment for children experiencing moderate to severe mental health problems in young people up to the age of 18. The service works to provide patients with a greater knowledge of their condition and improve coping techniques. This includes support to young people who may be accommodated or under Care Orders with the local authorities. The placing Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) retains responsible commissioner role, which means they maybe charged for services.

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The service provides help to children and to the wider family, including children living with foster parents, children who have been adopted and young people living in children's homes. There are specialist workers for these children.

The service may see children and adolescents on their own, with their parents or with their family, and may also see parents on their own.

Children, adolescents and their families referred to the service may be experiencing different kinds of problems. These may include:

- Eating difficulties
- Emotional feelings such as those of unhappiness, loneliness
- Fears and anxieties
- Parents may have problems managing their children or may feel that their own difficulties are affecting their children
- Relationship problems
- Traumatic experiences
- The service is also available to help children, adolescents and their families with mental health issues related to physical or learning disabilities

The service consists of a multi-disciplinary team which offers a range of expertise including:

- Art Psychotherapists
- Child & Adolescent Psychiatrists
- Clinical & Educational Psychologists
- Nurse Specialists
- Psychotherapists
- Social Workers
- Other Child & Adolescent Clinicians

Located within Central Bedfordshire are the following teams

Mid Bedfordshire CAMH Team

Tel: 01234 310800

Dunstable CAMH Team

Tel: 01582 707635

Support to children in Central Beds may also be offered from these teams:

Luton CAMH Team

Tel: 01582 708140

North Bedford CAMH Team

Tel: 01234 310670

<http://www.sept.nhs.uk/our-services/bedfordshire-and-luton/bedfordshire-and-luton-mental-health-services/childrens/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-service/>

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### **Youth Service:**

The Youth Support Team provides a range of services for young people aged 13-19 (up to 25 for young people with special needs), these services are delivered by a range of commissioned providers, or in the case of vulnerable young people directly by the team.

Ensuring positive impact, developing aspirations and having fun are key objectives at the heart of the service. We believe that by empowering young people and ensuring they feel positive about themselves and their futures we can support them in improving their outcomes.

Please see link for services:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/learning/youth-support-service/default.aspx>

### **Bedfordshire Youth Offending Teams:**

The Bedfordshire Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) are directly involved in the administration of the Youth Justice System at local level. They give support to young people who become involved in the System, and to their families, from the initial point of involvement through to supervision of young people who have been through the courts. Where reparation forms part of the solution, they will be involved in making all the necessary arrangements to see it through, and take an active part in the process to ensure the most satisfactory outcome for all concerned. In addition the YOTs work closely with schools to develop restorative justice activity, as well as undertaking specific school focussed projects aimed at crime prevention. These include Citizenship and Crime projects and arranging prison visits with young people who are at risk of offending.

The Youth Offending service is made up of multi-agency professionals from health, education and the police to provide a tailored support and intervention to all young people.

The service can be contacted as below:

South Bedfordshire Youth Offending Team

39 Oakwood Avenue  
Dunstable  
Bedfordshire  
LU5 4AS

Tel: (01582) 818660

Fax: (01582) 524421

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The Children in Care Council (CiCC) is a group of children and young people who are or have been in the care of Central Bedfordshire Council. The members of the CiCC work with the Corporate Parenting Panel to improve services for Central Bedfordshire Council's looked after children.

The CiCC meet monthly and work towards a number of priorities which have been agreed between the members of the CiCC and members of Corporate Parenting Panel.

Contact details are:

Participation Officer  
Central Bedfordshire Council  
Tel: 0300 300 4881  
Website: (coming soon)

#### **NYAS:**

Advocacy for children in Central Bedfordshire is provided by NYAS who offer the service of Independent Visitors and Advocates to contact them. Please contact via the Freephone number 0800 616101.

#### **Child Sexual Exploitation:**

Bedfordshire Police has a child sexual exploitation team that coordinates work to prevent exploitation, gather intelligence, and investigate cases where Child Sexual Exploitation is suspected.

If you have concerns about a child or young person you are placing in county being at risk of sexual exploitation please contact:

Bedfordshire Police Child Exploitation Team  
Telephone: 101 (or 999 if it is an emergency) with any CSE concerns  
Email: [serac@centralbedfordshire.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:serac@centralbedfordshire.gcsx.gov.uk)

#### **Missing Children:**

In line with the statutory guidance in 2014 about children and young people who go missing from home or care, central Bedfordshire children services offer return home interviews to all children who go missing or absent. This includes resident children to the local authority as well as looked after children by central Bedfordshire who are placed out of the local authorities and looked after children who central Bedfordshire are the host authority to. The return home interview team offer an independent interview to young people to give them opportunity to talk about their experience while missing. The team seek to try and understand the push and pull factors behind the

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missing episodes to then liaise with relevant professionals, parents and carers to make change for the child to de-escalate the missing episodes. The Return home interview team sit on the missing persons, community safety and child sexual exploitation panels to feed in to a multi agency response to missing children.

If you have concerns about a child or young person you are placing in county being at risk of missing or absconding please contact:

Bedfordshire Police Missing Persons Unit, Public Protection Unit  
Telephone: 101 (or 999 if its an emergency)  
Telephone: 01234 9AX

For Return Home Interviews please contact:  
Central Bedfordshire Council  
Telephone: 0300 300 8585 [during office hours] or 0300 300 8123 [out of hours]

**General information:**

Further information about general services available in Central Bedfordshire can also be found on the council website at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk) .

We hope this information is useful to professional colleagues from outside Central Bedfordshire, who are working with Looked After Children placed in Central Bedfordshire.

Yours faithfully

Corporate Parenting Team

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