



**Bedfordshire**  
county council

**Children's Services**



# Commissioning Strategy Children & Young People's Plan 2006 – 2009

Prepared by the CYPSP Commissioning Group  
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### 1.0 Vision

The Bedfordshire Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership aims to achieve high quality integrated services that represent value for money and produce successful outcomes for children. The County Council and other agencies which have shared responsibilities for children, young people and families are developing integrated and partnership arrangements based on a shared vision, common values and jointly agreed priorities as detailed in the Children & Young People's Plan.

The commissioning strategy provides a framework for identifying needs and gaps in service provision; Setting priorities and evaluating options for meeting these, including developing the market, drawing up service specifications that are outcome focussed, negotiation and management of contracts, review and performance reporting.

The values that support Bedfordshire's vision for children and young people are:

- Putting customers and diversity at the heart of all we do;
- Promoting needs led child centred and outcome focussed approaches;
- Providing inclusive local services to local people that are creative & dynamic and enable a timely flexible response;
- Refining individual support planning so that it makes sense to service users and reduces duplication and effort across agencies;
- Building and maintaining effective partnerships;
- Promoting wholesale accountability;
- Providing value for money and sustainability;
- Focussing on vulnerable children, young people and families, and those that find it difficult to access services;
- Targeting resources on prevention and early intervention.

## 2.0 National Drivers

### 2.1 Legislation

There are a number of forthcoming and potential legislative changes as outlined in the Queens Speech in November 2006. The key bills that will have an effect on the work of the council and other agencies and organisations include:

- **Local Government Bill.** Measures on performance management, political leadership, Local Area Agreements (LAA's), frontline councillors, community engagement and structural changes to local government.
- **Further Education and Training Bill.** Measures to implement the skills white paper including reforming the structure and duties of the Learning Skills Council.
- **Offender Management Bill.** Bringing together possible proposals to establish a regionally based National Offender Management Service.
- **Education and Inspection Act 2004.** Lays new expectations on the Council with the requirement to champion pupils and learners, commissioning rather than providing education and act decisively when schools are failing.
- **Children Act 2004.** This identified five core outcomes for children; they should be healthy, safe, enjoy and achieve in their life, make a positive contribution to society and experience economic well-being. The Act requires that by 2008 we will have in place a Children's Trust which will integrate governance, commissioning, processes and services for children and young people.
  - > This will require the integration and co-location of services and service teams
  - > A focus on increasing partnership working and an enhanced role for the Local Authority in holding the ring on performance and standards.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006.** This lays out the guidance for all organisations on the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This will require the rolling out of new procedures, the strengthening of multi-agency practice and the continuing development of the Local Safeguarding Children's Safeguarding Board. (LSCB)
- **Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners 2005.** This requires us to dramatically expand the vocational opportunities for young people from 14 – 19. We will introduce new specialised Diplomas covering 14 occupational sectors within the economy. The first five lines are for introduction from September 2008. The second five lined from September 2009 and the final four lines from September 2010.
- **10 Year Child Care Strategy.** This requires us to expand our Early Years provision:
  - > Increase the free early years education entitlement for all 3 and 4 year olds in the Private, Voluntary and Independent Sectors (PVI's) from 33 to 38 weeks per year;
  - > Increase in line with DFES guidance, the element of free child care provision from 12.5 hours to 15 hours per week and eventually 20 hours per week providing flexibility for parents to access this over a minimum of three days;
  - > Development of Children's Centres, ensuring the full 'core offer' in the 30% most deprived areas;
  - > Enhanced information services for parents;
  - > Development of Extended Services to provide the 'full core offer' by 2010;

- > Ensure sufficient childcare places for parents wishing to access training or work.
- Youth Matters 2006. Requires the Local Authority to commission Connexions Services by 2008.
- Respect Agenda.
- Crime & Disorder Act Review 2006.

## 2.2 Major Policy Issues

The governance, leadership and structures required within the new strategic framework are provided by the guidance on The Role and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children. These core requirements are supported by the following key policy and planning documents:

- Every Child Matters Agenda which provides an outcomes framework to improve the life chances of all children: Be Healthy, Stay Safe, Enjoy & Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution and Economic Well-Being.
- The National Service Framework for Children and Maternity Services which sets out a ten year programme to stimulate long term and sustained improvement in children's health and well-being.
- Commissioning a Patient Led NHS which sets out changes to the way the NHS commission services, Practice Based Commissioning and the need for PCT's to focus on the promotion of health improvement and reducing inequalities.
- The Health White Paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say – a new direction for community services' sets out that the commissioning of children's services must be through a Children's Trust approach with commissioning intentions reflecting the priorities in the CYPP.
- The Duty of Local Authorities to Promote the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children which sets out the implications of the new duty in the Children Act 2004 for local authorities strategic planning, joint area reviews and day-to-day working practices.
- The Framework for the Inspection of Children's Services which sets out the principles to be applied by an inspectorate or commission assessing any children's service and defines the key judgements which where appropriate and practical, inspectors will seek to make.

Further guidance focuses directly on integrated and front line delivery and the processes that support it. These include:

- The Common Assessment Framework and cross-government guidance on information sharing within and between agencies and organisational boundaries.
- The Children's Workforce Strategy and the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge. This guidance informs strategic planning for developing the children's workforce locally.
- Lead Professional Good Practice Guidance sets out key responsibilities, skills and knowledge required by practitioners to carry out this function, and draws on good practice to provide emerging models, working solutions and suggestions on how the role might be developed, implemented and managed.

## 2.3 Major Projects

### 2.3.1 Building Schools for the Future and The Primary Capital Programme

In planning for Building Schools for the Future (BSF), secondary schools (middle, upper and appropriate special schools) have been divided into three tranches. The Local Authority is within wave 6 of BSF. This will cover the areas of Bedford, Kempston and Wooton. The other two tranches are currently included in waves 13-15 although it is hoped that agreement will be reached with the DfES to bring the second tranche forward in order to provide continuity of work for a Local Education Partnership.

A similar programme for primary schools, the Primary Capital Programme, is likely to bring similar benefits for lower schools in Bedfordshire, although the funding (likely to be in excess of £50 million) is expected to be delivered through an annual allocation over the 15 year period.

### 2.3.2 Children's Centres

Bedfordshire has a target of providing at least 18 new Children's Centres in addition to the 7 already opened by March 2008. In order to achieve this £2.9 million of capital funding and £3.2 million of revenue funding has been provided by the DfES for the period April 2006 to March 2008.

The programme includes:

- An agreed integrated approach to early intervention and family support services which provides:
- The full core offer for Children's Centres in the 30% most disadvantaged areas;
- A flexible approach to other areas;
- The co-ordination of extended services;
- The development of childcare provision.

### 3.0 Partnership Working

Bedfordshire re-launched its Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership (C&YPSP) in April 2005. This Partnership comprises of Chief Executives and non Executives from voluntary, independent and statutory agencies and organisations that work with children across the county. All Partners have agreed to work within the Every Child Matters Outcomes framework, setting the overall strategy and direction, overseeing progress and reviewing outcomes; Ensuring effective involvement of children and young people, parents and the wider community in designing and delivering changes. A Change Management Board, Chaired by the Director of Children's Services has been formed, the members being the key influencers in each agency. They have been given delegated responsibility for managing the implementation of the agreed strategy for partnership development, steering county wide and local commissioning and resource allocation, establishing partnership agreements and performance management and communication arrangements.

During 2005 the Change Management Board has undertaken the following activities:

- Completed Needs analysis and mapping of services against the Every Child Matters and National Service Framework outcomes
- Engaging stakeholders, including children and young people
- Developed the Children & Young People's Plan
- Developed the Workforce Strategy
- Developed systems for:
  - > Communication
  - > Commissioning
  - > Performance management
  - > Action planning including, ensuring all planning groups develop a proactive approach to addressing equality and diversity

The focus has been on joint planning and deploying resources based on an action/audit approach which is outcome driven. The board has agreed a number of sub groups that work to them. These reflect the five outcomes from Every Child Matters; Be Healthy, Stay Safe, Enjoy & Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution and Achieve Economic Well Being, alongside some specific groups such as Looked After Children, Children's Involvement; Children with Special Educational Needs and Disability, Work Force Planning, Voluntary Organisation Consortium, Common Assessment Framework/Lead Professional, Early Intervention & Preventative, Equalities, School Heads Forum and Commissioning.

The Local Safeguarding Children's Board sits in parallel to the C&YPSP as does the Youth Offending Chief Officers group and 14 – 19 Strategy Forum. The Drug Action Team Partnership Board is considering the young people's strand of their work and accountability moving to the C&YPSP.

## 4.0 Analysis of the needs of Children & Young People in Bedfordshire

### 4.1 Local Factors

- National measures of deprivation indicate that Bedfordshire is relatively affluent. There are, however, significant pockets of deprivation especially in Bedford. Children's Services are highly focused to meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people;
- The average age of population in Bedfordshire is 38 years. Although the overall population is set to grow by 1%, the population under 24 is expected to grow by only 0.3% which has implications for school and place planning;
- There are a slightly higher proportion of black and minority ethnic groups (BME) in Bedfordshire than in the region. BME representation is highest among younger people rising to over 10% of those aged under 20, and over 20% in Bedford Borough. Children's Services have developed specific initiatives to meet the needs of those groups of young people and their parents and carers;
- Crime rates are lower than regional and national averages. However, crime is high in the town centres of both Bedford and Dunstable which has implications for inter agency service delivery;

### 4.2 Needs Analysis

The C&YPSP has undertaken a robust needs analysis.

#### 4.2.1 Be Healthy

Health outcomes for Children and Young People in Bedfordshire are generally good.

- Teenage pregnancy rates are below the national average (32.3 compared to national 44.4) Teenage conceptions have fallen by 16.9% between 1998 and 2004;
- The incidence of sexually transmitted disease (Chlamydia) is below the national average and has fallen quite sharply from 64.6 (2004) to 30.5 (2005) for under 16 year olds. Infections for 16-19 year-olds have also fallen (714-690) while there has been an increase nationally;
- Obesity levels are below national levels (2002) for both boys (3.2% compared to 5.7%) and girls (5.0% compared to 7.7%);
- Looked after children key indicators have improved significantly
- School inspection judgements show that health awareness is promoted by encouraging healthy eating and access to sport and exercise. The number of accredited healthy schools has risen from 50 to 80 (2005-2006);
- Response times for access to children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) have improved (from 52% in April 2005 to 89% in April 2006);
- Screening for substance and alcohol mis-use with those involved in the YOS has improved from 30% in 2005 to 99% in September 2006.

## Areas for improvement

- Undertake research into the low birth weights in parts of Bedford;
- Undertake more work to monitor and reduce levels of STI through enhanced screening;
- Further develop health initiatives which engage children and young people in their planning and delivery;
- Use our recent research on the BME communities to inform service planning and commissioning;
- Further refine early intervention programmes to reduce early years and childhood obesity and increase breastfeeding;
- Further promote and develop community sport partnerships and PE in schools;
- Monitor and review the agreed CAMH's Service Specifications & Agreements and Care Pathways.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of the Home/School Workers/ Primary Mental Health Workers and related outreach activity;
- Ensure the effective transition of services from Luton PCT to Bedfordshire;
- Ensure that children with LDD are effectively prepared for the transition to adult health services;
- Strengthen screening and treatment for alcohol and substance misuse.

## 4.2 Stay Safe

Stay Safe outcomes for children are good in Bedfordshire. We have achieved significant and sustained improvement since 2004 evidenced in successive CSCI Inspections. Collaborative working across agencies and tighter managerial focus has led to a successful two year refocusing programme leading to better outcomes for children. The Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board set up in November 2004 is now well established with a clear structure and work programme which is delivering effective multi agency interventions. Outcomes have continued to improve over the past twelve months:

- Reduction in LAC (from 360 to 309);
- Fewer children subject to Child Protection enquiries from 35 to 23;
- Reduction in Care Proceedings from 37 to 18;
- Improved placement stability to 65%;
- Assessment timescales running at 90% for initials and 78% for cores.

Our 2006 APA letter identified only two areas for improvement in this outcome area; continue to improve long term stability of looked after children and secure timely initial and core assessments. As can be seen good progress has been made in these two key areas.

### Areas for Improvement

- Improve the quality of assessments and care packages
- Continue to strengthen multi- agency working
- Continue to Increase the capacity and quality of our in house foster care and residential provision
- Raise the educational attainment for children in care
- Reduce entrants of Looked After Children prosecuted or receiving custodial sentences;
- Continue to drive improvement through user feedback and audit.

### 4.3 Enjoy & Achieve

We have developed a robust school improvement strategic Plan and put in place new phase specific arrangements for consulting with head teachers. The 2006 National Curriculum test and examination results show clear improvement on previous years:

- Key Stage 1 attainment remains high, well above national averages and at the top of the statistical neighbour league table;
- There has been significant improvement at Key Stage 2 in mathematics and science and this year, for the first time Bedfordshire is above the national average for English, Mathematics and Science;
- Key Stage 3 performance has improved in Mathematics and Science. English shows a decline of 1.4% which mirrors the national picture. We are in line with the national average for English and above for mathematics and science;
- Standards have improved in relation to GCSE 5A\*-C by 2.6% taking Bedfordshire to 56.3%. We have had three schools scoring in excess of 70%. Despite this improvement GCSE remains a key focus for further improvement as we remain below the national average;
- Reduction of 25% in our permanent exclusion figures and one school in special measures;
- Our programme for establishing Children's Centres is meeting the national target as are our targets for the roll out of extended services;
- Youth Service Action Plan is on target to meet required improvements;
- We are improving outcomes for Looked after Children and Pakistani and Bangladeshi children.

#### Areas for Improvement

- Delivering a step change in standards over the next three years by implementing the School Improvement Action Plan;
- Tackling underperformance in English by targeting our interventions with under achieving schools and pupil groups and improving systems of tracking pupil progress;
- Tackling underperformance of boys through targeted intervention in boys writing, especially at level 5+;
- Strengthening our approach to BME including a review of current arrangements, better analysis of pupil performance data, improved guidance for pupil induction and admission and continued implementation of National Strategy initiatives;
- Implementing the roll out of inclusion units in our mainstream schools;
- Developing a further 18 Children's Centres and providing extended services in 90% of schools by 2008;
- Further developing school facing resource & allocation panels (MAAG's) and support services to schools.

## 4.4 Make a Positive Contribution

Outcomes for children in this area are good. We have involved children and young people in planning and decision making. We have listened to them and included their views on what they need to make a positive contribution to their community.

- The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership has developed a children's involvement strategy which built upon existing involvement activities across the county. This has actively supported the development of area based virtual teams working with children's involvement forums. These forums enable focused consultation around the children's agenda. With the employment of a County Participation Officer focusing attention on involving the under twelve's and hard-to-reach groups we are beginning to get views from children and young people that are representative of our diversely rich community;
- Looked After children and young people enjoy a variety of events and activities that promote their involvement in planning and decision making. They are, for example, having direct contact with professionals and members of the council through the Total Respect Training initiative, enabling a better understanding of the needs of Looked After Children;
- Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service has attracted media coverage due to successfully reducing re-offending rates in three areas, as well as reducing the number of young people appearing in Court for the first time. The service is in the top 30% of fastest improving services throughout England and Wales;
- As part of our preventive strategy for engaging young people in law abiding and positive behaviour voluntary and statutory agencies across Bedfordshire are providing differing levels of intervention and activities to address diverse identified needs in communities and settings;
- We are beginning to develop confidence within the court arena and this has resulted in courts looking more favourably at alternative interventions to custody;
- With a strengthened new management team the youth service has delivered on its action plan, increasing the number of contacts it has achieved and the development a menu of accredited learning and volunteering opportunities;
- Young Offenders are encouraged to complete service evaluation questionnaires and these are used to improve service delivery.

### Areas for Improvement

- Encourage and support children and young people to access volunteering opportunities
- Increase the number of organisations willing to accept youth volunteers;
- Explore a range of initiatives to minimise the impact of transition between schools;
- Work with children and young people to develop new facilities designed to meet their needs
- Involve youth volunteers in the recruitment and selection of staff;
- Roll out subsidised activity and transport programmes across the county.

## 4.5 Achieve Economic Well-Being

There is a strong and well developed partnership between the key strategic agencies.

The 14 – 19 Strategic Forum has:

- Developed a vision and a strategy for 14-19 education in Bedfordshire;
- Established two local collaborative to drive implementation (one for Mid-Bedfordshire and Bedford and one for the South);
- Identified vocational 'hubs' for the delivery of vocational courses;
- Endorsed the development of the on-line Prospectus, for a first model launch in November 2006, with full implementation in September 2007;
- Set up the structure and capacity to support the implementation of the new Diplomas.

Better partnership working is beginning to lead to positive outcomes:

- Rates of participation in learning post 16 for 16-19 year olds increased from 62.88% (2002) to 73% (2006);
- Young people in employment education and training at 91% (June 2006 adjusted figure) are above average for statistical neighbours and the national average;
- In July 2006 the unknown % for Bedfordshire was 6.3% of 16-18 year old and this represents 634 individuals and a significant downward trend from previous years;
- More learners have access to a wider range of courses at Key Stage 4;
- The proportion of young people opting for vocational courses at Key Stage 4 has increased significantly. These students are making better than expected progress, as shown by their overall Key Stage 4 residuals;
- Connexions figures show that the NEET numbers are reducing and at a faster rate than that seen nationally and in Statistical Neighbour Authorities.

### Areas for Improvement

- Increase the pace at which the agreed 14-19 strategy is implemented and review and refresh this in line with the national implementation plan as appropriate;
- Improve standards of attainment at Key Stage 4 and in the 6th forms across Bedfordshire;
- Promote collaboration between schools to broaden choices for students in post-16 education;
- Improve the ways we target information for hard to reach groups;
- Complete the implementation of the on-line prospectus and promote its availability;
- Improve the range and quality of facilities to enable larger numbers of pupils to access vocational courses;
- Agree with partners our arrangements to ensure vulnerable young people have comprehensive support (including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, looked after children and young people facing homelessness).

#### 4.6 Key agreed priorities within the Children and Young People's Plan 2006 – 2009 are:-

1. Reduce health inequalities, particularly in relation to mental ill health.
2. Reduce sexually transmitted infections and teenage pregnancies.
3. Improve healthy lifestyles.
4. Reduce the number of exclusions from schools.
5. Raise the achievement levels of children and young people at Key Stages 2 & 4.
6. Raise the attainment of children who are looked after and those with special educational needs.
7. Improve multi-agency protection for vulnerable children, particularly those affected by domestic violence.
8. Increase the stability of looked after children.
9. Engage with and listen to Children and Young People.
10. Reduce rates of re-offending and custodial sentences.
11. Improve citizenship activities.
12. Increase the number of young people in employment, education and training.

## 5.0 Resources

The Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership Commissioning Strategy reflects the priorities in the Children & Young People's Plan and focuses capacity on deliverable outcomes that will make a demonstrable difference to improving outcomes for children and young people.

It is acknowledged and recognised that needs will change during the three year period of the Plan and therefore the commissioning strategy provides for the flexibility needed to meet new identified needs.

The Every Child Matters agenda is very much in line with the Governments drive to increase efficiency in public services. Efficiency gains will be achieved by:

- Reducing inputs for the same outputs;
- Reducing prices (procurement, labour, costs etc.) for the same outputs;
- Getting proportionally more outputs or improved quality in return for an increase in resources.

The introduction of aligned children's services and health budgets to support children and young people, particularly those with challenging and complex needs will see the commissioning of improved value for money services and outcomes for children and families.

As with any new strategy it will take until the end of 2007 to realise overall savings within the Children's Services budgets. Bedfordshire County Council continues to view Children's Services as a priority in recognition of the time required to transform it to a well performing service.

Several initiatives have been introduced to improve multi-agency working and sustainability to support the delivery of seamless, timely needs led services for children and families:

- The commissioning of differing levels of family support services:-
  - > **Services for Children at High Risk** e.g. Adoption, Fostering, Residential and Inpatient care. Respite care.
  - > **Services for Children with Complex need** e.g. Social Care Services, CAMHS, Youth Offending, Continuing Care, targeted parenting support, substance misuse services, services for Looked After Children and children Leaving Care, Children with disabilities.
  - > **Services for Children with identified needs** e.g. SEN, Special Schools, Speech and Language Therapy, Education Psychology, Education Welfare. Mentoring schemes, Child care, Parenting group work programmes, Targeted Youth Services, Group work programmes for children and young people, Young Carers services, Home-school family workers, Primary Mental Health Workers, School nurse clinics, Behaviour support services to schools, Targeted health visitor programmes, Connexions, Youth Inclusion Support Programme/Youth Inclusion Programme, Family Support Services offering individualised support/assessment, Domestic Violence group work programmes and Children's Fund Projects.

- > **Services for all children in identified areas** e.g. Children's Centres/Sure Start. Services are designed to help combat the factors we know are associated with poor outcomes for children.

**The main ones are:**

- poor parenting skills,
- obesity,
- post-natal depression among mothers,
- low birth weight,
- teenage pregnancy,
- alcohol/substance misuse,
- low income and parental unemployment,
- homelessness,
- individual characteristics such as intelligence,
- community factors, such as living in a disadvantaged neighbourhood.

- > **Services for all children and families** e.g. G.P's, Health Visitors, School Nurses, Connexions, Child Health Promotion, Nurseries, School Improvement, Children & Young People Information Services, Extended Schools programmes and Youth Services.

The Private, Voluntary and Independent sectors have a key role in all the differing levels of service delivery.

**A broad range and level of interventions is providing for a sustainable refocusing strategy.**

- The development of resource allocation panels:-
- > **The Multi-Agency Allocation Groups (MAAG)** sit in the three main areas of Bedfordshire and include voluntary sector providers, field social workers, Education, CAMH, Health, Connexions, and Youth Service, Youth Offending Service and Police. It is chaired by a Children's Services Head of Commissioning. This panel also acts as the Youth Inclusion Support Panel. These panels are school facing and aim to provide early interventions that are seamless and timely. Linked to the development of the MAAG's has been the roll out of the Common Assessment Framework which is being used as the referral tool for the MAAG's.
- > **The Bedfordshire Allocation Panel** sits weekly and is responsible for agreeing high level family support, therapy and education packages as an alternative to accommodating children, care & criminal justice proceedings, accommodation and therapy linked to court proceedings. This has provided a 'gate keeping' forum and driven our preventive strategy enabling more children and young people to remain living at home. All allocations of service provision are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure desired outcomes are being met.

- > **The Joint Agency Panel** sits monthly and agrees joint or tripartite funding for accommodation or support packages for children with complex and challenging needs. Commissioners from Health, Education and Social Care form the panel. Through this panel we have been able to develop multi-agency packages of interventions to enable children who previously would have accessed out of county provision to remain living within the county.

## 6.0 Commissioning Intentions

All partners have identified current and likely future resources available to deliver on the priorities. These resources are being aligned and where appropriate combined to deliver services that are effective and efficient. Some existing services are being decommissioned or reconfigured if they are not meeting identified needs and / or achieving desired outcomes.

### 6.1 Be Healthy

- Develop 18 more children's centres by 2008 and deliver services that support healthy living from the centres e.g. health visiting, midwifery, health promotion, primary mental health and family support services;
- Implement systems and services to reduce early years and childhood obesity;
- Provide training to schools to enable the identification of health issues and enable the delivery of healthy eating and sexual health and relationship, substance misuse and smoking cessation programmes;
- Undertake research into low birth weights in Bedford and take appropriate action to remedy;
- Target services to reduce teenage pregnancies in hot spot areas and monitor and reduce the levels of STI's;
- Develop sport and activity opportunities for children and young people, including promoting sport and PE in schools;
- Develop the Children's Information Service to provide an accessible comprehensive directory of services to children, young people and families 0 – 19 years. (To include ongoing mapping and needs analysis);
- Develop County multi-agency early intervention services at differing levels for vulnerable children around clusters of schools/children's centres;
- Map and co-ordinate parenting group work within the county;
- Develop services for young carers;
- Use research on BME communities to provide appropriate services to reduce health inequalities;
- Develop CAMH services to provide needs led services in a timely, flexible and responsive manner;
- Develop transition arrangements for children moving from children's to adult services;
- Develop more effective health assessments for Looked After Children;
- Develop more effective alcohol/substance misuse services;
- Implement 24/7 access to specialist mental health assessment.

## Resource Envelope

> BDAT(substance misuse)	£294,771
> YOS	£51,000
> PCT - Early Years & Health Visiting	£3,854,142
> PCT - School Health	£980,155
> PCT - Children's Therapies	£1,674,057
> PCT - CWD	£1,501,987
> PCT - CAMHS	£2,827,361
(less £96,264 reduction due to financial recovery plan)	
> PCT - Continuing Care Challenging Behaviour	£507,000
> PCT - Continuing Care Paeds	£363,000
> PCT – Out of County (OATS)	To be advised
> Children's Centres	£1,632,000 revenue
> Children's Centres	£1,486,000 capital
> Social Care family support at all level	£1,700,000
> Social Care family support CWD	£595,000
> CAMH grant	£443,000
> Teenage Pregnancy gt	£152,000
> Children's Information Service	£184,000
> Sure Start Local Programme	£685,000

## 6.2 Stay Safe

- Multi- agency umbrella adolescent services to include preventative work in the community, drug and alcohol services, specialist fostering and residential care to adolescents with challenging behaviour, to include 24hour availability of services;
- Improve the quality of assessments;
- Embed new Safeguarding Procedures;
- Develop user feedback and audit processes;
- Increase capacity of in house fostering service to provided long term placements, placements for older children, children with disabilities, sibling groups;
- Restructure Fostering & Adoption Service and strengthen recruitment and retention function;
- Increase capacity in the looked after children teachers team;
- Remodel PEP's and dovetail review process with statutory Looked After children reviews;
- Develop in county children with a disability unit(s) into medium to long term residential facility for children on the autistic spectrum with challenging behaviour, linking to neighbouring special schools and health provision;
- Increase supported accommodation for care leavers, including those with disabilities;
- Develop systems to practically and financially support Special Guardianship and Residence Orders;
- Develop system to practically and financially support informal family and friends placements;
- Develop family group meetings;
- Reduce the impact of domestic violence:
  - > Collect base line data on incidents of domestic violence and impact on children,
  - > Develop advocacy service,
  - > Develop help line,
  - > Increase refuge provision,
  - > Develop multi-agency training programme,
  - > Develop group work programmes for victims of domestic violence.
- Develop Restorative Justice Programmes in Children's Homes.

### Resource Envelope

> LAC support (Contact, IV'S & Advocacy)	£550,000
> Residential Respite	£2,000,000
> Residential Children's Homes	£1,500,000
> Out of County Placements (IFA's & C.Homes)	£6,000,000
> In house fostering	£2,000,000
> Domestic Violence	To be advised
> LSCB	£150,000
> Comprehensive Adolescent Service	£500,000
> Mother & Baby places	£120,000
> Informal Family & Friends	£40,000
> Young Carers	£75,000
> Family Group Meetings	£85,000

### 6.3 Enjoy & Achieve

- Roll out school facing Multi-Agency Allocation Groups providing packages of intervention for vulnerable children and young people. Linking to training and implementation of the use of the Common Assessment Framework and Lead Professional Roles.
- Access higher levels of support through Bedfordshire Allocation Panel and Joint Agency Panel to prevent permanent exclusions and placement breakdowns. Commission additional support to schools, families and services where necessary through this resource.
- Refocus behaviour support services and develop rapid response service around learning areas to support schools.
- Support schools to develop extended services.
- Special schools review, to include consideration of developing in county residential EBD School(s) and development of area complex need schools, offering outreach to support mainstream schools.
- Work with schools that are causing concern to develop proactive approaches to early identification of difficulties and strategies for intervention which have a real and substantial impact.
- Develop specific interventions for black and ethnic minority groups to improve attainment; including school/education data set, targeted improvement activities, more effective management of poor behaviours e.g. racist incident action plans.
- Refocus School Improvement Services to more effectively tackle underperformance.
- Develop services that focus on the raising attainment of children in care.

#### Resource Envelope

> Out of County Residential School Placements	£3,500,000
> Therapy agreed in SEN tribunals	£200,000
> SEBBS	£1,000,000
> PRU	£3,616,000
> Extended Schools	£500,000
> Education Welfare	£756,623
> Community & Culture	To be advised

## 6.4 Make a Positive Contribution

- Co-ordinate volunteering opportunities in the County and develop further opportunities in response to young peoples views on what they would want to do;
- Develop system to link subsidised access to physical and other activities – transport and cost of activities;
- Use Youth Opportunity Funds and Youth Capital Funds to improve activities available to young people;
- Develop youth led identification and development of services;
- Develop parenting support programmes;
- Develop service user experience & expertise in service reviews and contributing to the development of improvement planning;
- Provide Children's fund monies to projects to pilot early intervention services. Develop outcomes framework to evaluate success;
- Develop services that minimise the impact of transition between schools;
- Involve youth volunteers in the recruitment and selection of staff;
- Increase number of accreditations 13 – 19 yrs;
- Acknowledge positive change in behaviour.

### Resource Envelope

> Mid Beds District Council	£627,500
> CDRP	To be advised
> Bedford Borough Council (incl. recreation)	£3,201,300
> South Beds District Council	£105,500
> YOS	£2,297,135
> Children's Fund	£637,820
> Youth Service	£1,792,540
> Play Space Mid Beds	£216,744
> Play Space South Beds	£244,211
> Play Space Borough	£342,304
> Youth Opportunities Fund	£218,503
> Youth Opportunities Capital Fund	£187,798
> Youth Opportunities running costs	£17,625

## 6.5 Achieve Economic Well-Being

- Provide careers advice and guidance that increases young people's confidence in the job market;
- Provide a range and quantity of education, training and employment opportunities to reduce NEET; particularly in relation to care leavers and children on the margin;
- Provide support to post 16 year olds to increase the rates of participation in learning;
- Develop supported housing for 16 – 19 year olds;
- Review the service delivery model for the provision of integrated youth services for youth across the county;
- Develop a strong strategic vision which provides pathways and choice, high quality workplace provision (as well as schools & colleges) and excellent pupil guidance;
- Implementation of the on line prospectus;
- Promote collaboration between schools;
- Increase the quality and range of vocational provision.

### Resource Envelope

> 14 – 19 strategy revenue	£1,284,000
> 14 – 19 strategy capital	£105,000
> Connexions	£3,945,205

## 6.6 Local Area Agreement

The CYPSP priorities have been adopted by the Local Area Agreement and arrangements are in place to deliver on these priorities:

- Develop a skilled workforce to increase local productivity (outcome 2). Key measures are:

- > Level 2 attainment at age 19
- > The number of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment and training.

- Improve the health and well being of children and young people (outcome 5). Key measures are:

- > An increase in the % of schools with Healthy schools status.
- > An increase in number of schools signed up to the Bedfordshire Healthy Schools Programme.

- Improve examination results at ages 11 to 16 (outcome 6). Key measures are:

- > An improvement in mathematics at age 11.
- > An increase in the % of pupils gaining 5 or more grades A\*-C (or equivalent), including English and Mathematics.
- > A decrease in the rate of permanent exclusions.
- > A decrease in the rate of fixed term exclusions.

## 7.0 Commissioning Mechanisms

As partnership working increases steps will be taken to work towards greater integration, in particular taking advantage of the freedoms and flexibilities in the Children Act 2004; The aim being that joint commissioning increasingly becomes the preferred way of working for improving outcomes for local children, young people and families.

**7.1 Bedfordshire County Council Commissioning Service** ensures that services commissioned meet a defined set of quality standards; which includes having a range of policies and procedures in place to ensure children and families are safeguarded. Some services are subject to external inspections from the Commission for Social Care Inspectorate (CSCI) and therefore they are required to meet a minimum set of standards. The commissioning service requires those that are not subject to inspections to meet the same minimum standards and ensures evidence of these standards being met are provided prior to procurement. All services commissioned work to agreed service specifications with clearly defined expected outcomes. Services provided are regularly monitored against outcomes.

**7.2 National Health Services (NHS)** are commissioned through the Bedfordshire Primary Care Trust, (PCT) with indicative budgets increasingly being devolved to Practice Based Commissioning (PBC) Groups. At present, commissioning for children's services by the NHS is carried out separately, with services being provided by a range of primary, community, secondary and tertiary services and by NHS, independent and voluntary sector provision.

There is growing joint working, for example in relation to care packages for children and young people with complex needs requiring continuing care, whose cases are reviewed through the Joint Allocation Panel.

The NHS has instituted annual children's commissioning mapping exercises, which will start to provide more accurate information on children's commissioning, with the opportunity to benchmark with similar geographical areas.

Over time, the intention is to work with PBC groups and the PCT to agree joint commissioning strategies for appropriate service areas, supported initially by an alignment of budgets and, in the future, to develop pooled budget pilots in selected areas. As part of this, Bedfordshire County Council and PCT officers are working with PBC groups and other primary care professionals to raise the profile of the children's agenda and the benefits of close partnership working.

**7.3** Work is currently being undertaken to establish a Joint County Council Children's Services and PCT Commissioning Unit, also a joint Early Intervention Managers post.

**7.4** It is envisaged that Partners other than Bedfordshire County Council and the PCT, for example, the [Districts and Borough Councils](#), [Connexions](#) and the [Learning Skills Council](#) will align or join up funding where appropriate.

**7.5 Regular meetings with the PVI's** and their involvement in the CYPSP outcome focussed groups enable shared understanding about priorities and expectations and provide a forum to explore service development in the market place.

**7.6 As well as being providers of services** Schools are commissioners in their own right and increasingly so given the pattern of resource allocation which is being put in place by the Government. They regularly commission services for individual children and groups of children, much, though not all of it using their own in house staff. In consultation with the CYPSP Heads Forum there will be a particular focus on multi-agency commissioning in which schools are involved, especially around Children's Centres and Extended Schools.

The development of more integrated commissioning will provide an opportunity to address a number of commissioning issues, such as integrating service specifications, quality standards required from providers, joint market development and tendering work and a common approach to performance management based on agreed performance management metrics.

## 8.0 Governance Arrangements

Children's Trusts have emerged as a relatively fluid concept in Government thinking that enables local flexibility. It is now clear that Government has shifted from the idea of a children's trust as a single, monolithic organisation to the concept of a trust as a means of bringing together key partners to strategically manage, commission and deliver children's services.

In this context a trust can be described as a mature partnership of organisations that:

- Share a vision of the development of children's services in their locality;
- Agree joint plans and priorities to pursue the vision;
- Set out joint commissioning intentions;
- Pool financial and other resources to achieve objectives and maximise efficiency;
- Seek to dismantle unnecessary barriers to the integrated planning, procurement and delivery of services;
- Collectively involve the local community in its work;

In Bedfordshire we are working on an incremental approach to the development of a trust in order to offset concerns that management effort could be diverted from core tasks by any major change. Between now and 2008 we will be focussing on the following:

- Agreeing trust governance and accountability arrangements,
- Determining a shared vision of the work of the trust,
- Agreeing a prioritised programme of integrated service development,
- Developing the agreed Joint County Council Children's Services and PCT Commissioning Unit,
- Appointing to the agreed Joint funded County Council Children's Services and PCT Early Intervention and Prevention Managers post.

## 9.0 Performance Management

The CYPSP has a framework of indicators that are monitored by the Partnership. This includes BVPI's, PAF (for Children's Services and Adult Services), LAA, CPA, and other key ECM and agency indicators.

On an annual basis, targets are set for these framework indicators. Consideration is given to a number of factors that will affect the target-setting process – e.g.

- Past performance,
- Local Area Agreement,
- Local Delivery Plans,
- Contribution/involvement of all partners,
- Comparative data e.g. National or family statistics,
- Customer requirements,
- Legislation,
- Budget decisions,
- Other political, organisational, technological and environmental factors.

### 9.1 Children's Directorate approach to Performance Management

Improvements in County Council Children's Services have been driven by strong performance management arrangements. A comprehensive performance framework was put in place to deliver the changes required in Children's Social Care and this has been extended across the work of the CYPSP. The key elements are:

- High quality management information based on key performance indicators are scrutinised on a quarterly basis by the Change Management Board and the CYPSP;
- The CYPSP sub groups regularly monitor current performance against targets in their action plans;
- The CYPSP provide a progress report twice a year and publishes an annual report;
- Progress on critical programmes in County Council Children's Services such as the Children's Centres and Extended Services are subject to regular discussions at Children's Services Select Committee and key plans such as the Youth Service Improvement Plan and the School Improvement Action Plan are subject to specific additional performance boards involving the Director, senior managers and relevant cabinet members;
- Regular performance reports are also made to the Corporate Parenting Panel.

## 10.0 Communications

The Local Authority has a dedicated Children's Services Communications lead who is working with other agencies communication teams to implement a strategy that uses a wide range of communication tools and methods to ensure feedback in and out of the C&YPSP, including an E-magazine and a monthly briefing targeting schools entitled Schools 1st.

The CYPSP publicises and raises awareness of services amongst local communities through the following publications and events:

- The Children and Young People's Plan,
- Children and Young People's Conferences,
- Children's Information Service,
- Youth Offending Service Annual Plan,

### 10.1 Raising Awareness

We raise awareness of services amongst hard to reach and BME groups through:

- Targeted services and initiatives delivered through integrated multi-agency teams;
- Improved culturally sensitive guidance and information;
- Improved outreach work through, for example, home school support, "children's voice" consultancy and support for youth action initiatives.

## 11.0 Accessible Services

We analyse take-up rates for services by different groups through:

- Performance monitoring;
- Monitoring and evaluation of training and development programmes;

We ensure there are a variety of service access types and delivery through:

- The publication of culturally sensitive documentation and guidance;
- The provision of a multi-agency panel, the joint allocation panel, to promote and co-ordinate support for children with complex needs;
- Targeted assessments of the health care, learning and transition needs of Looked After Children;
- Childcare/childminding

### 11.1 Service Availability

We ensure service availability through:

- The provision of childcare support, especially through our Children's Centres and Extended Schools;
- Service level agreements, for example, with CAMHS;
- The Local Authority Children's Services website.

### 11.2 Appropriate Services

Arrangements for developing inclusive customer feedback and consultation include:

- The publication of Children's Involvement Strategy;
- Area Children's Involvement forums;
- The development of the Children's Youth Parliament;
- The appointment of a Children's Participation Officer focussing on Under 12's and hard to reach groups;
- Dedicated Looked After Children Participation Officer;
- Targeted events for Looked After Children including the Total Respect initiative;
- The engagement of PVI's in providing interventions as part of our preventative strategy;
- Engagement of children and young people in developing events and activities that divert young people from anti-social behaviour, such as Right Direction and stand together;
- Involvement of Looked After Children and Children with LDD in their personal programme planning.

## Finding out more

If you would like further copies, a large-print copy or information about us and our services, please telephone or write to us at our address below.

Për Informacion

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01234 228888



Customer Services Team  
Freepost ANG 5499  
**Commissioning Strategy**  
**Children & Young People's Plan**  
**2006-2009**  
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