

# Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust

## Agenda



Meeting: **CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD**  
Date: **Thursday, 1 December 2011**  
Time: **4.00 p.m.**  
Venue: **Room 14, Priory House, Chicksands**  
Contact: Karen Oellermann Tel: 0300 300 5265

### Members:

Angela McNab	Chief Executive, NHS Bedfordshire and Luton
Ann Nevinson	Non-Executive Director, NHS Bedfordshire
Bob Shore	Vice Principal, Central Bedfordshire College
Cllr Mark Versallion (Chair)	Executive Member for Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council
Edwina Grant (Vice Chair)	Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council
Frances Image	Catholic Diocese of Northampton
Jon Reynolds	Diocese of St Albans
Linda Bulled	Officer, Voluntary Organisations for children, young people and families (VOCyfp)
Linda Hennigan	Chief Probation Officer, Bedfordshire Probation
Matt Buttery	Chair, Voluntary Organisations for children, young people and families (VOCyfp)
Melanie Mercer	Headteacher, Aspley Guise Lower School
Mike Colbourne	Chief Superintendent, Local Policing Commander, Bedfordshire Police
Paul Davies	Head of Department and Associate Dean, University of Bedfordshire
Peter Haddon	Headteacher, Holywell Middle School
Phil Picton	Chair, Central Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Board
Richard Carr	Chief Executive, Central Bedfordshire Council
Shirley Crosbie	Headteacher, Glenwood School
Steve Palmer	Headteacher, Cedars Upper School
Sue Corbett	Youth Offending Service
Thomas Mulholland	Member of Youth Parliament
Tony Rogers	Area Commander, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue
Val Ellar	Head, Lawns Early Excellence and Children's Centre

**Other Attendees:**

Cllr Mrs Angela Barker	Deputy Executive Member for Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council
Fiona Mackirdy	Head of Adoption and Fostering, Central Bedfordshire Council
Joe Keir	Member of Youth Parliament, supporting representative above and acting as substitute when needed
Karen Oellermann	Head of Partnerships, Performance and Workforce Development, Central Bedfordshire Council
Ken Harvey	Head of Service, Children with Disabilities and Children's Health, Central Bedfordshire Council
Lee Miller	Head of Joint Child Health Commissioning, NHS Bedfordshire
Leslie Manning	Committee Services Officer, Central Bedfordshire Council
Lisa Wright	Senior Youth Worker, Central Bedfordshire Council
Muriel Scott	Director of Public Health, NHS Bedfordshire
Pete Dudley	Assistant Director for Learning, Commissioning and Partnerships Children's Services

# AGENDA

1. **Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Children's Trust Board held on 15 September 2011 (copy attached).

3. **Procedural Business**

- (a) Declaration of Substitutes – Where Board Members are unable to attend a meeting, a substitute agreed with the Chair may attend, speak and vote in their place for that meeting;
- (b) Declarations of Interest by all Members present of any personal interests in matters on the agenda;
- (c) Exclusion of Press and Public – to consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

## Reports

<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Page Nos.</b>
4	<b>Children and Young People's Plan - Quarter Two Performance Monitoring Report</b>  Karen Oellermann will present the latest performance report for Board members to review and challenge.	* 17 - 48
5	<b>Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Overview</b>  Lee Miller will present a report which outlines the current CAMHS provision in Central Bedfordshire.	* 49 - 56
6	<b>Looked After Children Placement Strategy and Position Statements</b>  (a) <b>Looked After Children Placement Strategy</b>  Fiona Mackirdy will present to Board Members a Placement Strategy for review and comment.	* 57 - 72

**(b) Position Statements: Children Living with Family and Friends and Short Breaks**

Fiona Mackirdy and Ken Harvey will ask Board Members to note the recently published position statements relating to children living with family and friends and those eligible for short breaks.

\* 73 - 104

**7 Health and Wellbeing Board Update**

A standing item to allow Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board to update Trust Board Members on any developments.

**8 Forward Plan**

\* 105 - 106

The Forward Plan sets out the dates of future meetings and proposed agenda items for Board Members to note and consider.

**Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust Board  
15 September 2011**

**Present:**

Paul Davies	University of Bedfordshire
Lisa Wright	Senior Youth Worker, CBC
Joe Keir	Member, Central Bedfordshire Youth Parliament
Ben Pearson	Head of Children's Services Commissioning, CBC
Steve Palmer	Headteacher, Cedars Upper School
Peter Dudley	Assistant Director for Learning, Commissioning and Partnerships Children's Services , CBC
Bob Shore	Vice Principal, Central Bedfordshire College
Cllr Mark Versallion	Chairman of the Children's Trust Board and Executive Member for Children's Services
Cllr Angela Barker	Deputy to the Executive Member for Children's Services, CBC
Edwina Grant	Vice Chairman of the Children's Trust Board and Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services, CBC
Frances Image	Diocesan Representative, Catholic Diocese of Northampton
Karen Oellermann	Head of Partnerships and Communications, CBC
Leslie Manning	Committee Services Officer, CBC
Linda Bulled	Officer, Voluntary Organisations for Children, Young People and Families
Matt Buttery	Officer, Voluntary Organisations for Children, Young People and Families/Family Matters Institute
Melanie Mercer	Headteacher, Aspley Guise Lower School
Muriel Scott	Director of Public Health, NHS and CBC
Phil Pickton	Independent Chair, Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board
Richard Carr	Chief Executive, CBC

Clive Seall	Service Manager, Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service

**1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies**

The Chairman of the Trust Board welcomed new attendees to the meeting. All attendees then introduced themselves.

The meeting was informed that apologies for absence had been received from :

Ann Nevinson	Sue Corbett	Thomas Mulholland
Angela McNab	Tony Rogers	Jon Reynolds
Mike Colbourne	Shirley Crosbie	

**2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 9 June 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Procedural Business**

(a) Declarations of Substitutes:

Joe Keir was present as a substitute for Thomas Mulholland (Bedfordshire Youth Parliament);

Clive Seall was present as a substitute for Sue Corbett (Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service);

Muriel Scott was present as a substitute for Angela McNab (NHS Bedfordshire).

(b) Declarations of Interest:

There were no Declarations of Interest.

(c) Exclusion of Press and Public:

There were no exempt matters for consideration before the Trust Board and no members of the public were present.

**4. Annual Report – Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board**

The meeting received the annual report of the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. The meeting noted that, following the change in status

of statutory Children's Trusts and the recommendations arising from the Munro review of child protection, the requirement to submit such reports to Trusts could change although it was recommended in the officer's covering report that should this happen such reports should continue to be presented to the Central Bedfordshire's Children's Trust Board.

Following comment by the Trust Board the Chair of the Central Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Board acknowledged the need to review the content and presentation of the report to reflect outcomes and include an executive summary and opinion on where work was required to improve safeguarding. He undertook to ensure that a review was carried out in time to impact on the content of the next annual report.

Reference was made to the information included in the report on the number of staff receiving training related to child protection. In response the Chair of the Safeguarding Board undertook to examine the basis for the figures and provide an explanatory note to be circulated with the minutes of the meeting.

A request was also made for the inclusion of more background information in future reports.

#### **AGREED**

1. **that the Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust Board formally acknowledge receipt of the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board's annual report for 2010-11;**
  2. **that the priorities for safeguarding in 2011-12 and the proposed areas of focus for the Safeguarding Board during that year, as set out in section 4 of the report, be noted;**
  3. **that the annual report of the Central Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Board continue to be presented to the Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust Board in addition to any other body as required by changes in legislation and statutory guidance.**
5. **Preparing for the Raising of the Participation Age and the Future Link With the Developing All Age Skills Strategy**

The Trust Board received a presentation by the Head of Children's Services Commissioning entitled 'Raising the Participation Age' which highlighted the main issues arising from the new statutory duty (enshrined within the Education and Skills Act 2008) on young people in England to remain in education or training until they were to 17 (from 2013) and to 18 (from 2015). A copy of the presentation is attached at Appendix A to these minutes.

Following a query regarding the current national figure of young people aged 17 and 18 engaged in accredited education or training compared to the figure of 88% in Central Bedfordshire, the Head of Children's Services Commissioning undertook to ensure the information was circulated with the minutes of the meeting.

The meeting was advised of the key challenges that were to be faced, the developing All Age Skills Strategy and the future role of the Trust Board. Questions then followed. The first was with regard to the short length of a training course offered by the Princes' Trust and the second on the relatively lower productivity levels within Central Bedfordshire and the possible link with the lower rate of training offered locally by some employers. The meeting was advised that all evidence pointed to the advantages in investing in employees through apprenticeships but that this did present a challenge within Central Bedfordshire due to the high number of small employers. With regard to the Prince's Trust, the Trust would explain possible future options to the trainee and that the training period would not totally cease after 12 weeks had passed.

However, comment was passed that the demand by young people for apprenticeships far outstripped supply. Concern was also expressed that the number of NEET's (Not in Education, Employment or Training) could possibly treble over the next three months and that the young people who needed the most assistance were not receiving it.

The meeting gave full consideration to the current situation in Central Bedfordshire regarding the percentage of young people aged 17 and 18 engaged in accredited education or training (88%), those in employment without training (4.3%), NEET (3%) and unknown (4.6%). Concern was expressed regarding the activities, if any, of 4.6% of young people though it was noted that this figure was similar to that in other local authority areas and it was acknowledged that it was not always possible to know what every young person was doing. Discussion took place on the setting of targets for achieving 100% participation. The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services stated that, whilst the previous government favoured a statutory strategic route, the current government have said that they will leave target setting to local areas. It was suggested that targets be considered by the 14-19 group and reported back.

The Head of Children's Services Commissioning advised that there were specific questions regarding apprenticeships within the consultation on the All Age Skills Strategy. Some concern was expressed, however, that some employers regarded apprentices as a form of cheap labour to lower costs. The Chairman of the Trust Board requested that the issue be discussed further at the next meeting.

## **AGREED**

**that the presentation be noted.**

## **6. Academies and the Structural Reform Agenda**

The Trust Board received a presentation by the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services entitled 'Academies & Structural Reform Agenda – Briefing on National Policy' which provided a summary of the broad principles of the Government's structural reforms for 5-18 schools and how they would affect the way that Central Bedfordshire Council would operate in this area in the future. A copy of the presentation is attached at Appendix B to these minutes.

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services advised the meeting that the conversion rate of maintained schools to Academies in Central Bedfordshire was now slowing. She added that only one Free School application had been received. This was in Potton and, if established, would impact on Sandy Upper School which already had surplus places.

The meeting noted that a debate was underway with regard to changes to education transport provision mindful that it was one of the Council's most significant costs.

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services commented on the Council's possible role in the future as a 'Market Maker' and champion of children and young people and which retained sufficient powers and responsibilities to ensure that a largely unregulated education system worked and vulnerable children were protected.

Following comment the meeting acknowledged the suspicion generated within some schools as they viewed the possibility of Academies expanding their intake age range to the detriment of the former. The meeting also acknowledged the anxiety felt by parents whose children attended schools within Central Bedfordshire as local Academies challenged the existing three tier school system and changes occurred in education provision as a result. The Chairman of the Trust Board stressed, however, that the changes would ultimately lead to an improvement in standards. He also stressed the desire to see increased partnering between schools whether maintained or Academies.

### **AGREED**

**that the presentation be noted.**

## **7. Youth Parliament Proposals**

The Trust Board received a report by the Head of Children's Services Commissioning and members of the Central Bedfordshire Youth Parliament which informed the Board and key partners and stakeholders about proposed changes to how the Youth Parliament

operated and communicated and sought the Board's approval.

Both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Trust Board indicated their support for the proposals.

### **AGREED**

1. **that the new structure of the Central Bedfordshire Youth Parliament be endorsed;**
  2. **that the Youth Parliament be recognised as the elected representatives for young people;**
  3. **that the action to put in place clear, effective and meaningful communication links with Bedfordshire Police, Bedfordshire and Luton NHS Trust and Central Bedfordshire Council (Executive Member for Children's Services) be supported;**
  4. **that all services/organisations be encouraged to undertake a transparent review of youth participation within their business and report this back to the Trust;**
  5. **that the Trust and all stakeholders have a comprehensive understanding of the needs of young people and that there is a collective understanding of the extent to which services are in place to meet core needs.**
8. **Children and Young People's Plan – Quarter One Performance Monitoring Report**

The Trust Board received a report by the Head of Partnerships and Communications which presented the progress, as at Quarter One, in delivering the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan. A summary of the performance for the four key priorities was included.

In response to a query regarding partnership issues the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services explained that a flaw had been discovered in the procedures in relation to referring Looked after children to Health. However, a structural solution had been found and she assured the meeting that this would alter the situation for the better.

Turning next to the performance of the Youth Offending Team the meeting noted that the rate of custodial sentences was slightly above target and the number of first time entrants to the criminal justice system had increased for the second quarter to 49, compared to 43 in the first quarter. The Service Manager (Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service) explained that the number of young people sentenced by a court to a custodial sentence was three out of 54 and, given the nature of the offences, there had been no choice in the type of sentences that

could be applied. With regard to the increase in the number of first time entrants he stated that the prevention budget had been withdrawn. However, the Youth Offending Service and the police were working together to increase restorative disposals and, since 1 September, a triage system had been introduced to identify risk factors.

The Chairman commented on the success of restorative justice measures employed elsewhere and expressed the hope that useful lessons would be learnt for application within Central Bedfordshire.

The meeting next considered the outcome of the review of the Children's Trust Annual Report by the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The following key issues had been raised by the Committee:

- the importance of good parenting and the role of the Children's Trust in supporting and promoting this fundamental issue
- the need for early intervention, if necessary
- the need to review the work of Children's Centres
- the importance of religious education within schools and the need to influence emerging government policy regarding this issue
- recognition of the excellent work of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)
- the need to target limited resources at greatest need
- breastfeeding, and the need for Children's Centres to offer better advice regarding this issue
- the importance of promoting healthy lifestyles generally and the need to improve performance in reducing childhood obesity and teenage pregnancy.

The meeting noted that the Committee had recommended that the Children's Trust take due regard to the above when working with partners to deliver the priorities and that the Trust consider undertaking an in-depth and robust review of early intervention/parenting at the earliest possible opportunity.

#### **AGREED**

- 1. that the proposed indicators for measuring the success of partners in delivering the priorities in the new Children and Young People's Plan be approved and adopted;**
- 2. that the Trust Board notes the progress in delivering the priorities and targets in the Children and Young People's Plan and the action taken to address issues where performance is not on track to meet targets;**
- 3. that members of the Trust Board report progress as appropriate to Central Bedfordshire Together (Local**

**Strategic Partnership) and the shadow Health and Wellbeing Board;**

4. **that the Children's Trust have due regard to the key issues raised by the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 28 June 2011 when working with partners to deliver the priorities contained within the Children and Young People's Plan;**
  - 5a. **that a sub-group be formed to work with the acting Assistant Director for Children's Services Operations who has responsibility for Safeguarding and Children in Care in order to make comment on a review of early intervention/parenting at the earliest possible opportunity;**
  - 5b. **that the sub-group be composed of the following persons:  
Cllr Angela Barker (Deputy to the Executive Member for Children's Services)  
Linda Bulled (Voluntary Organisations for Children and Young People and Families) or Matt Buttery (Voluntary Organisations for Children and Young People and Families/Family Matters Institute)  
Bob Shore (Central Bedfordshire College)  
Paul Davies (University of Bedfordshire);**
  - 5c. **that the scope of the review be determined by the Deputy Chief Executive/ Director of Children's Services**
- 8a. **Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) Performance Report**

The Trust Board received a report by the Head of Children's Services Commissioning which was submitted in response to concerns raised at the last meeting regarding the envisaged increase in NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) young people. The report outlined how the Council and its partners were working to support NEET young people and those at risk of becoming NEET although it was pointed out that the performance data was not current.

Whilst welcoming the Council's success in sustaining low NEET levels it was acknowledged that the situation would need to be closely monitored. Comment was also passed on the likelihood of NEET related issues arising in the long term.

The meeting discussed the potential gap in work with NEET's because the European Social Fund (ESF) provision would not start until January 2012 and noted that the Commissioning Team were to spot purchase short programmes to meet need in the Autumn term.

**AGREED**

1. **that the progress in sustaining low levels of NEET by securing opportunities for young people and effective partnership working between the Council, commissioned providers, Job Centre Plus, the national Apprenticeship Service and learning and training providers be noted;**
2. **that schools, colleges, training providers, Job Centre Plus, Council directorates and, where relevant, employers be requested to work to improve information sharing between them in order to reduce duplication, reduce the number of young people becoming lapsed or unknown and increase the speed of support to young people who are likely to leave school or college without a positive destination;**
3. **that the 14 to 19 group be requested to consider proposals to deal with possible increases in NEET levels and that consideration be given to the short and medium term separately.**

**9. Review of the Strategic Commissioning Framework**

The Trust Board considered a report by the Head of Children's Services Commissioning which outlined proposed changes to the Joint Commissioning Framework and changes to the governance structure around commissioning services for children and young people.

The meeting noted that, in the absence of suggested amendments to the Joint Commissioning Framework from the lead officers for the Children's Trust delivery groups, Council officers had developed the following suggested amendments:

- Remove the reference to Every Child Matters and replace with reference to the Children and Young People's Plan priorities
- Members of the of the Children's Trust delivery groups work with the Children's Services Commissioning Team to develop policies and procedures to improve the quality of commissioning and developing new services with all partners
- Members of the Children's Services Commissioning team attend and contribute to the delivery groups to provide updates on current commissions and support for developing new services.

The meeting concurred with the recommendations.

**AGREED**

- 1 **that the amendments to the current Commissioning Framework, as outlined in the preamble above, be made under the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's**

**Services delegated authority as approved by the Council's Executive;**

2. **that the Council lead the development of commissioning policies and procedures to complement the Commissioning Framework and the work of the Children's Trust delivery groups.**
- 10. Early Intervention Grant – Summary of Allocation**

The Trust Board received a report by the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services which provided a summary of the allocation of Early Intervention Grant (EIG) for 2011/12. The meeting noted that the EIG was a new Government grant allocated to local authorities to invest in early intervention. It could be used to fund universal programmes and activities available to all children, young people and families as well as specialist services where intensive support was needed.

The Deputy Chief Executive emphasised that the grant was being spent as effectively as possible. She also stated that officers were examining the increasing need and complexity and the associated likelihood of financial pressures arising in the future. However, the Deputy Chief Executive also stated that should any underspend occur in any programme area then the money would be allocated to another area of early intervention and, in the interest of transparency, the Trust Board would be notified.

The Deputy Chief Executive drew the meeting's attention to the Children's Centres programme area, the Government's consultation document on Children's Centre provision and the Council's possible future focus on service provision in deprived areas as means of maximising the impact of reduced levels of funding.

#### **AGREED**

**that the allocation of the of the Early Intervention Grant, as set out in the report of the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services, be noted.**

#### **11. Health and Wellbeing Board**

The Trust Board received a verbal update by the Director of Public Health on the outcome of the inaugural meeting of the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board on 28 July 2011. She advised that the following matters had been considered:

- the Shadow Board's Terms of Reference, which had been approved
- how integrated services would make a difference
- the establishment of the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning

- Group and the arrangements for their own Shadow Board
- the Shadow Board's development needs
- engaging with stakeholders
- transition plans for HealthWatch, the new statutory body with responsibility for patient and public representation and advocacy.

In response to a query regarding the relationship between LINK and HealthWatch the Director of Public Health explained that the existing Bedfordshire LINK was would only continue to exist until HealthWatch was established from the LINK. A priority for the new body would be the representation of children. Concern was expressed regarding the representation on the new body and the Chief Executive undertook to consider this point.

**AGREED**

**that the verbal update on the inaugural meeting of the Shadow Health and WellBeing Board be noted.**

**12. Forward Plan**

The Trust Board considered its forward plan which covered meetings on 1 December 2011, 1 March 2012 and 24 May 2012.

**AGREED**

**that the following reports be submitted to the meetings indicated:**

**Report on Mental Health - 1 December 2011**  
**Report on review of Parenting/Early intervention – 1 March 2012**  
**Report from 14-19 Strategy Group on short and medium term proposals in relation to NEET's and raising the participation age – 1 March 2012**

The meeting having commenced at 16.00 concluded at 17.59.

Chairman.....

Date.....

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## **Children and Young People's Plan: quarter two performance monitoring report**

### **PURPOSE**

1. The purpose of this report is to present to Trust Board Members quarter two progress in delivering the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. That Board Members note progress in delivering the priorities and targets and note actions to address issues where performance is not on track to meet targets.
3. That Board Members note the feedback on the outcomes from the previous challenge discussion in relation to young people not in education, employment or training and the September Guarantee (paragraphs 25-29).
4. The Trust Board Members agree to report progress as appropriate to the Local Strategic Partnership and the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board.
5. That Board Members note the summary six month report that is being presented to the Central Bedfordshire Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Appendix B.

**PUBLIC/EXEMPT:** Public

**CONTACT:** Karen Oellermann, Head of Performance, Partnerships and Workforce Development, Central Bedfordshire Council, Tel 0300 300 5265

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### **MONITORING THE CHILDREN'S TRUST PRIORITIES**

6. The quarterly monitoring report reflects the priorities agreed in the new Children and Young People's plan and the quarter two report is attached at Appendix A.
7. RAG (Red, Amber, Green) ratings have been used to provide Board Members with an assessment of progress to deliver priorities and targets.
  - a. GREEN indicates good progress is being made with either no delay in activity or very minor delay which is unlikely to have any adverse impact on outcomes. Targets are being achieved and will be met.
  - b. AMBER indicates progress is being made but there is significant delay or underperformance in some activities and this is likely to adversely impact some outcomes if not corrected. Targets have been missed but corrective action is in place to achieve final target.
  - c. RED indicates overall progress is well behind schedule and activities are under performing and will have an adverse impact on outcomes. Targets are being missed and there is a high risk of missing final targets.
8. Progress on the priorities and the development of the plan is regularly scrutinised by the Central Bedfordshire Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A six month review of the Children and Young People's Plan will be scrutinised by the Committee at their meeting on 15 December. Board members are asked to note this review report which set out a summary of six month performance in Appendix B.

## **QUARTER 2 PROGRESS ON PRIORITIES**

9. Progress on the priorities is set out in Appendix A. Performance for the four key priorities in quarter two is summarised below:
10. **Helping children and young people achieve more and transforming our relationship with schools:** Performance for this priority is mixed.
11. Ofsted inspections show that 79% of schools are either good or outstanding.
12. One school has been removed from 'Notice to Improve' and Ashton Middle School was given a Notice to Improve on 9th February 2011. The school received a monitoring visit on 23 September 2011 and was judged to be making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising pupils' achievement.
13. Key Stage 2 standards have fallen this year and targets have not been met. Actions to improve performance for 2012 include a conference for middle schools to look at good practice in raising achievement, and a programme of support targeted at those pupils at risk of not achieving Level 4 in English and/or mathematics. It is expected that Key Stage 4 results will show an improvement when the final results are reported in November.
14. **Protecting children and keeping them safe:** Performance for this priority is mainly good and on target.
15. Performance in protecting vulnerable children and young people has remained good this quarter. Key indicators measuring social care assessment, timeliness and review remain on target to year end 2012. The demand on frontline teams continues to increase with high numbers of children subject to child protection plans. This multi agency work is resource intensive but regular monitoring ensures that access to services and assessment for children in need and those in need of protection is maintained, rather than solely pursuing targets.
16. Performance in relation to Youth Offending shows that the rate of custodial sentences is low but the number of first time entrants to the criminal justice system is increasing. The Youth Offending Service and Bedfordshire Police are working together to resolve issues in relation to first time entrants to the justice system in order to increase Restorative disposals and successfully implement a Triage system to identify risk factors.
17. **Reducing child poverty and the effects for those living in poverty and improving early intervention and prevention:** Progress for this priority is difficult to assess on a quarterly basis as this is a long term objective and the effectiveness of the strategy will be seen in improved performance across a range of indicators in the Children and Young People's Plan over the next two to three years.

18. Good progress has however been made in implementing the plans to deliver the strategy 'From Poverty to Prosperity – a strategy to Reduce Child Poverty and alleviate its effects' and a range of programmes has been commissioned.
19. Annually published information about the proportion of children who live in relative low income has increased from 12.1% to 13.1%. These figures relate to 2008 and 2009 respectively and given the economic downturn it is likely that this figure will continue to show increases for the next few years.
20. The numbers of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) continues to be low. However given the current economic climate it is acknowledged that maintaining this good performance will be difficult and it is likely that a rise in the numbers will occur over the year. This is underlined by the reduction in percentage of economic activity in quarter two from 81.6% to 81.1%. This indicator provides useful contextual information, however given the range of factors and stakeholders that have an influence on this measure it will not be RAG rated.
21. **Targeting the most deprived areas and vulnerable groups to improve children's emotional and physical health:** Performance for this priority is difficult to assess on a quarterly basis as much of the information is available on an annual basis, however the general picture shows that performance is off track.
22. Performance in relation to health assessments for looked after children, both initial and reviews, has seen improvements over the last six months however it is still not on track.
23. Provisional data for obesity rates in primary school children show a decrease in the Reception year and an increase in year 6. However as these changes are small they are not statistically significant. Although performance is off track it is better than the East of England.
24. There is no new information to report in relation to the under 18 conception rate. Services for disabled children are on track and a new service has been commissioned for children's mental health which should see a reduction in waiting times for short term interventions.

#### **FEEDBACK ON OUTCOMES FROM DISCUSSION ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE NOT IN EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT OR EDUCATION AND THE SEPTEMBER GUARANTEE**

25. At the meeting on 15 September, Board Members considered a report setting out the issues around young people who are not in education or employment and the September Guarantee. The September Guarantee is an offer of a suitable place in education or training to young people completing compulsory education at year 11 and those in year 12, by the end of September. The offer must be one of the following:

- full or part-time education in school, sixth form college, independent learning provider or Further Education college;
- an apprenticeship or programme-led apprenticeship (this must include both the training element and a job or work placement);
- Entry to Employment (e2e / foundation learning); or
- Employment with training to NVQ level 2.

26. In previous years Central Bedfordshire Council has been in the top cohort of authorities on performance relating to September Guarantee. However, this year due to the Council's decision to cease running a universal Connexions service, there were difficulties in meeting the September Guarantee on time. This was a similar experience to many authorities and the Department for Education (DfE) extended the September Guarantee to the end of October.

27. At the end of October, performance as submitted to the DfE on September Guarantee was as follows:

- Year 11 = 88% had a guaranteed offer.
- Year 12 = 76% had a guaranteed offer.

28. This is excellent performance, given that this year is a transition from internal direct delivery to identifying different delivery models. The above achievement illustrates effective partnership working between schools, colleges, training providers and Children's services to collate intelligence.

29. Work has now begun with the 14-19 Strategy group to ensure effective procedures are in place to meet the September Guarantee on time for the forthcoming year.

## **CONCLUSION**

30. Performance across the new set of key indicators for the plan is mixed. In some areas measures are still being developed and in others where performance is measured annually the last known results have been reported. Key challenges remain children and young people's achievement and health issues for vulnerable groups. Effective reporting and monitoring of progress on priorities and providing information to ensure that partners are able to challenge each other on performance is a key role and function of Children's Trusts. Trust Board members are asked to consider the progress on priorities as set out in this report, identify any issues for more detailed consideration and make recommendations as appropriate.

Priority 1: Transform teaching and learning and raise achievement for all learners including underachieving groups and children in vulnerable circumstances	
Objectives	Commentary
Transform teaching and learning and raise achievement for all learners including underachieving groups and children in vulnerable circumstances	<p>2011 Key Stage 2 test results (still subject to final confirmation at the time of drafting) show a likely fall of 3% points in the number of pupils achieving the national benchmark score of level four or above. This is set against a national increase in this of 2%. This 5% difference places Central Bedfordshire in the bottom quartile for Key Stage 2 performance nationally and in the lowest ranking position amongst its statistical neighbours. Two schools are below the Department for Education (DfE) floor standards and a plan of action to improve standards has been agreed with the schools and the DfE. Performance is there for <b>off track</b> in this area. The confirmed results will be reported at the meeting of the Children's Trust board on 1st December. In response to this a conference was held with middle schools in October to address Key Stage 2 standards and was attended by all but one. Targeted work is taking place with schools to support pupils identified as being at risk of not achieving two levels of progress in 2012. It is expected that Key Stage 4 scores will show a marked improvement of around 4% points when the final results are reported in November. Finalised results will be reported at the Board. Performance for this area is therefore <b>on track</b>. A report on the achievements of underperforming groups will be available in the next quarter report. Two Ofsted school inspections took place in this quarter. One school improved from satisfactory to become good and the second declined from good to satisfactory, so there was no net change from Quarter 1.</p> <p>Headteacher and governor meetings this term considered broad proposals to develop models for commissioning school to school support in line with government and Council policy. Headteachers also reaffirmed the Education Vision for Central Bedfordshire agreeing minor modifications to its underpinning principles in order to re-contextualise the vision into the new policy landscape. In response to the outcomes of the first transforming learning area review in Dunstable Houghton Regis, guidelines to assist schools that wish to apply to the Council change their age ranges were published by the Council in September. The Council also published a school organisation plan giving all interested parties access to data forecasting likely growth in school places over the coming 5 years. <b>On track</b></p>
Develop and promote children and young people's positive contribution to all communities across Central Bedfordshire so that they are able to influence the decisions that affect their lives and wellbeing	<p>All commissioned Youth Support Services are now operational and include young people's positive contribution as part of the outcome requirements. The commissioned services have a strong focus on young people's volunteering. <b>On track</b></p> <p>The Children in Care Council supported by the Council hosted a very successful awards evening in October recognising the achievements of young people in care.</p> <p>The Central Bedfordshire Youth Parliament held the election for Middle School Representatives with the declaration of results taking place on the 1<sup>st</sup> November. The Central Bedfordshire Youth Parliament continues to work hard in responding to the key issues that affect young people and are currently working with the Young Inspectors team to inspect health services through the 'You're Welcome' initiative.</p> <p>12 new young Inspectors have been recruited and trained and are being supported by 3 peer mentors from the previous cohort.</p> <p>The Council's Regeneration and Skills Team have recently appointed the Training and Employment Research Unit at the University of Glasgow to undertake an evaluation of the impact of activities supported by the European Social Fund, Economic Participation Programme and Future Jobs Fund across Central Bedfordshire – a number of young people who have benefitted from these programme have volunteered to participate in the evaluation in order to highlight the benefits and impact the programmes have had on them. <b>On track</b></p>

## Appendix A

Ref.	Title	Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	RAG rating
			National 09/10	Group 09/10	CB 09/10						
Local	Published Ofsted school and college classifications (new inspections in period shown in bracket)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Total 247 (62)	N/A	Total 247 (11)	Total 247 (2)	Total	Total	N/A
					Outstanding 63 (11)		Outstanding 64 (1)	Outstanding 64 (0)	Outstanding	Outstanding	
					Good 132 (35)		Good 131 (7)	Good 131 (1)	Good	Good	
					Satisfactory 50 (14)		Satisfactory 51 (3)	Satisfactory 51(1)	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
					Inadequate 2 (2)		Inadequate 1 (0)	Inadequate 1 (0)	Inadequate	Inadequate	
73	Key Stage 2 – Level 4 in both English and Mathematics	High	74%	76%	73%		To be reported annually when final results known. RAG rating relates to last known performance.				Red
75	Key Stage 4 – 5A*-C including English and Mathematics	High	53.4%	58.6%	54%		To be reported annually when final results known. RAG rating relates to last known performance.				Amber
Local	% achieving English Bacallaureate	High	N/A	N/A			To be reported annually when final results known. RAG rating relates to last known performance.				
114	Rate of permanent exclusions from school (reported on a cumulative basis according to Academic year)	Low	Not yet available	Not yet available	0.20%		0.19% (Sep 10 to Jun 11)	0.20% (End of Academic Year)			Red

Risks	Actions to mitigate the risk
1. Exclusions - Areas of risk were identified in connection with a possible higher rate of exclusions arising from the move by many schools to Academy status.	The target for permanent exclusions has not been met. All fixed term exclusions are now analysed on a monthly basis in order to identify actions required and we are working with maintained schools to support and challenge them. Schools are now more accurately recording fixed term exclusions and it is a priority to work with schools to improve inclusion, and early identification and intervention with children at risk of exclusion.

<b>Priority 2: Protecting children and keeping them safe</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Protect children and young people from harm by providing a co-ordinated and effective safeguarding process	Performance in protecting vulnerable children and young people has remained good this quarter. Key indicators measuring social care assessment, timeliness and review remain on target to year end 2012. The demand on frontline teams continues to increase with high numbers of children subject to child protection plans. This multi agency work is resource intensive but regular monitoring ensures that access to services and assessment for children in need and those in need of protection is maintained, rather than solely pursuing targets.
Reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people	<p>The Strategy Implementation Group for Domestic Abuse, a multi agency group co-ordinating the delivery of a domestic abuse strategy across Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough, are currently consulting on an updated action plan. Proposals include a feasibility study into the delivery of a community based perpetrator programme, improved third party reporting mechanisms, training to enhance routine enquiry among health professionals and an improved communications strategy. These measures should contribute towards improved identification, reporting and subsequent provision of service to children and young people exposed to domestic abuse and their families.</p> <p>In addition work is being scoped across the 3 councils Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and Luton to explore improved early help to families where domestic abuse is a feature.</p> <p>In respect of the priority to increase referrals to MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference), it can be reported that compared to same reporting period in 2010 there has been an increase in referrals to MARAC between April and September 2011, from an average of just under 12 per month to just over 13 per month. The number of children involved has also increased from 131 last year to 138 this year over the same six months. There has been an improvement in the number of referrals to MARAC from most agencies.</p>
Reduce youth offending and anti-social behaviour	<p><b>First time entrants:</b> This indicator is <b>off track</b> and has recorded an increase for the third quarter in a row, albeit a lower increase than in quarter one. 44 young people entered the criminal justice system as compared to 43 in Qtr 2 2010/11, showing a rise of 2.3%. This indicator is achieved as a result of joint action between Beds Police and the Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service (BYOS). It should be noted that the number of Restorative disposals delivered by Beds Police could be increased, thus reducing the number of FTE. BYOS and Beds Police are continuing to work together to fully embed Restorative disposals. It should also be noted that the rise in FTE figures coincided with the ending of YOS Early Intervention/Prevention projects. In order to address this gap, a Triage system was jointly implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> September. However, as a result of process changes during the Beds Police no referrals were received between 1 and 17 October. The business change also affected Luton YOS and joint meetings have now been held with Beds Police to review their lack of consultation and the effect on services to young people. Beds Police have now reversed their implementation of the business change as it affects under 18's. The Triage service was suspended whilst negotiations took place, and will be re-instated, with additional promotion and awareness raising, alongside the reversion to the original business model.</p> <p><b>Custodial sentences:</b> The rate of custodial sentences is <b>on track</b>. None of the 43 young people sentenced in the period received a custodial sentence</p> <p><b>Proven re-offending:</b> The baseline and method of counting is in transition as a result of new approaches by the Ministry of Justice. Not yet possible to report, as data is collected in arrears.</p>

Ref	Title	Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	RAG rating
			National 09/10	Group 09/10	CB 10/11						
NI 59	% of initial assessments in 10 working days of referral	High	67%	59%	95.9%	85%	91.7%	82%			Green
NI62	% of children looked after at 31 March with 3 or more placements during the year	Low	10.9%	11.7%	6.3%	10%	2.2%	6.2%			Amber
NI 67	% of child protection cases which should have been reviewed during the year that were reviewed	High	97.2%	94%	100%	100%	100%	100%			Green
NI 68	% of referrals of children in need that led to initial assessments	High	64%	61%	56%	60%	60.2%	67.2%			Green
NI 19	Re-offending rates amongst young people	Low	0.88 (10/11)	0.80 (10/11)	0.63	-	0.85 (12 mths)	n/a			n/a
NI 111	Number of first time entrants to the youth justice system aged 10-17	Low	-25.3% (10/11)	-27.0% (10/11)	-38.6%	-5%	14.0%	2.3%			Red
NI 43	Young people receiving a conviction in court who are sentenced to custody	Low	5.6% (10/11)	3.8% (10/11)	1.56%	5%	5.56%	0%			Green

Risks	Actions to mitigate the risk
The significant increased workload in the frontline social work teams could impact negatively on access to necessary services for children and families, to manage risk and need.	The impact of the workload is regularly reviewed through performance management, 1:1 supervision and monthly monitoring. The case loads of workers are monitored and performance targets are clearly set. Support is offered when appropriate and managers ensure staff are working within safe environments with access to regular supervision and management support.

**Priority 3: Reducing child poverty and the effects for those living in poverty and improving early intervention and prevention**

Objectives	Commentary
<p>Maximise opportunities for families in poverty to access employment which will have the outcome of more families working and thus reducing the levels of family and child poverty</p>	<p>1. A variety of projects have been commissioned to start at the beginning of the Autumn term.</p> <p>a. <b>Raising Aspirations in Children, Young People and Parents/Adults: <i>CBC Xers</i></b> offering young people aged 12 – 16 from Sandy opportunities to develop basic cross bike mechanics skills; <b><i>Young Mechanics</i></b> offering young people aged 13 – 16 from Flitwick opportunities to develop car and motorbike mechanic skills alongside a parent / other family member; <b><i>Crossroads</i></b> offering group based support to Year 8’s and years 9’s in Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard at risk of exclusion or becoming NEET; <b><i>Career Idol</i></b> offering mentoring and a programme of support for 14 – 19’s to enable young people to plan for a successful future career and gain a basic ALAN (Adult Literacy and Numeracy) qualification; <b><i>Babysitting courses</i></b> for 14 – 17 year olds in Houghton Regis and Dunstable, enabling young people to develop basic childcare skills, earn money and possible entry into a childcare career.</p> <p>b. Provision of <b><i>information advice and guidance</i></b> including ‘life coaching’. This will be direct front-line support to include mentoring and support in areas of debt, cooking/nutrition, budgeting, benefits advice, careers advice. Additional provision includes a local exchange scheme targeted at 100 vulnerable families where parental disability mental health/drug and alcohol issues make accessing the right support more challenging; <b><i>Jamie’s Home Cooking Skills</i></b> offering a level 1 programme to young parents with children aged 5 – 12 with minimal cooking skills in Dunstable and Houghton Regis; a Volunteer Work Development Programme to provide training and support to parents of young children in the Leighton Buzzard area who have been out of the workplace for 2 years or more into volunteering</p> <p>c. The <b><i>Young Mums to be programme</i></b>: focusing on developing teenage parents to be confident in parenting and support their learning in key subjects, during which participants gain recognised qualifications</p> <p>e. <b><i>Aspire Programme</i></b>: an accredited programme to raise aspiration, confidence and self-esteem of young men and women in Year 8 and increase their resilience to risk and support successful transition into upper schools (working in Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton Buzzard)</p> <p>f. Expansion of the <b><i>Health Champions Scheme</i></b> to include a roll out to young people aged 16 – 24 to enable them to become a qualified volunteer health champion and encourage other young people to access appropriate health, leisure, education and social care services. Roll out of the <b><i>MK Dons healthy families programme</i></b> supporting families in Dunstable with children aged 8 – 16 to achieve a healthy lifestyle and gain Open College Network qualifications such as the community sports leader award.</p> <p>g. Unfortunately no tenders were received for provision of a <b><i>crèche service</i></b>, to enable all support services being delivered to be accessed by the appropriate parents who could not normally attend due to childcare issues, thus alternative options will need to be explored, possibly through the NCMA (National Childminding Association).</p> <p>2. Leighton Buzzard Citizens Advice Bureau in conjunction with the Bedfordshire Advice Forum have been commissioned to deliver a <b><i>benefits awareness training and support package</i></b>. The aim of this is to ensure that there is a basic understanding and awareness of the benefits system by all front-line staff working with children and their families so that they are able to signpost to the appropriate specialist areas.</p> <p>3. Work is being undertaken with Bedfordshire Adult Skills &amp; Community Learning to target appropriate adult and family learning within existing programmes.</p> <p>4. Negotiations are continuing around the Job Centre Plus offer within Children’s Centres in areas of highest need, especially with regard to the introduction of the package of measures branded as <b><i>Get Britain Working</i></b>. This includes pre-employment training and work clubs, with this being incorporated into the new specifications for Children’s Centres.</p>
<p>Ensure families in poverty are accessing all available financial assistance so that non-working families move from worklessness into work in the meantime accessing appropriate benefits</p>	
<p>To improve life chances of children and families by intervening early to prevent poor outcomes and raising educational achievements and aspirations so that children from poor households gain better qualifications to ensure their access to the labour market so that the cycle of intergenerational poverty is broken</p>	
<p>Work with colleagues from all sectors and agencies to improve the environmental factors which exacerbate the effects of poverty and harness the resources of the third sector and services across the Council so that poor families develop healthier lifestyles to prolong life expectancy and live in an improve environment</p>	

Ref	Title	Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Rag rating
			National	Group	CB						
Local	Proportion of Children who live in relative low income	Low	21.6%	16.85% (East of England)	12.1% (published Aug 2010 for 2008/9)	10% by 2020		13.1% (published Aug 2010 for 2009)			Amber
Local	Percentage of young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)	Low	6.1%		4.63%		3% (as at June)	3.6%			Green
Local	Percentage of Economic Activity – those working and those unemployed but actively seeking work within a given period	High	76.5%	78.8% (East of England)	82.1% (Sept 2010)		81.6% (Oct-Dec 2010)	81.1% (Jan-March 2011)			No rating.

Risks	Actions to mitigate the risk
<p>The ability to sustain a reduction in the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) given the impact of the recession and loss of grant.</p> <p>Rising youth unemployment across UK – likely to be replicated in Central Bedfordshire.</p>	<p>Actions include more effective communication between the Council and the following agencies: schools, colleges, the Job Centre Plus, Training agencies and employers, as well as by the immediate sharing of data with the Commissioning Team once a young person has dropped out or left a positive destination (school, college training place or job). This will enable us to maintain accurate data as well as ensure that the young person is targeted by the appropriate commissioned service provider. In addition the Council is increasing its capacity to track and contact young people who are unknown or about to become lapsed i.e. those young people who are NEET and not contacted within a three month period. The Council needs to confirm that those young people who are on training courses have their status confirmed every 6 months and those in education have their status confirmed every 12 months, other wise these young people become lapsed and join the unknown cohort.</p>

**Priority 4: Targeting the most deprived areas and vulnerable groups to improve children’s emotional and physical health**

Objectives	Commentary
<p>Focus on early intervention including children’s mental health services, childhood obesity, drugs and alcohol and sexual health</p>	<p><b>Healthy weight:</b>                      The National Childhood Measurement Programme (NCMP) for 2010/11 has been completed. Validated data will be available in December. The unpublished data indicates that we were once again successful in increasing participation rates. Compared to the previous year obesity rates have decreased in year R and increased in Year 6 although there is no statistically significant difference. Overall performance against the target is <b>off-track</b>, however the targets were set when participation rates were significantly lower and therefore results were not representative of actual obesity rates, making onward comparison unreliable. Central Bedfordshire rates are below the East of England average for both cohorts.</p> <p>We currently have healthy lifestyles programmes in place to support children and their families in Central Bedfordshire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 families have joined the Beezee Bodies Programme (for 7-15 year olds) in Dunstable. This is a multi-disciplinary intervention that leads to a follow on academy giving a total of 30 weeks contact. Families are introduced to healthy eating and physical activity with a focus on fun, localism and long term engagement. Families are supported through the challenges of behaviour change through intensive engagement with trained staff.</li> <li>• The Beezee Tots programme for children aged 2-4 year olds has begun in Dunstable with maximum capacity of 18 families, with a second programme planned to start in October at the Orchard Children’s Centre in Shefford. This programme interacts with families with risk of having overweight or obese children and teaches/supports through healthy living behaviours. In development with Luton and Dunstable Hospital dietetics and local Children’s Centres.</li> <li>• Making the Most of Me (a programme running in schools identified from NCMP data profiling) teaching and delivery of physical activity and healthy eating sessions – provision of formatted lesson plans for embedding into the school’s curriculum for year 4. 2011/12 schools: Robert Peel Lower, Church End Lower, Linslade Lower.</li> </ul> <p>In addition the Change 4 Life programme is continuously promoted through a range of programmes.</p> <p><b>Under 18 Conception Rate - Against the newly agreed 2013 target for Central Bedfordshire progress is mixed.</b>  <b>Due to the time lag in the release of teenage pregnancy data progress against the target can not yet be reported.</b> The latest provisional data (2009 Office for National Statistics) showed a conception rate of 32.5 per 1,000 females under 18 (153 actual conceptions) in Central Bedfordshire. This is a 12.6% reduction from the 1998 baseline rate of 37.2 (158 actual conceptions) and is significantly lower than the national rate in England. The Coalition Government have acknowledged that the previously set target requiring a 50% reduction by 2010 (compared to the 1998 baseline) was unachievable given the complex factors that impact upon teenage pregnancy. Using trend data a new Central Bedfordshire 3 year reduction rate target has been now been agreed to reduce the rate to 30.8 per 1,000 females aged 15-18 by 2013. This would equate to a 5.13% reduction from the 2009 rate. To address the issue of time lag in data progress against this target will be monitored through Office for National Statistics rolling, quarterly average rates.</p> <p><b>Children’s mental health: A local measure to replace the previous self-assessment and track progress is under development.</b>  <b>Progress against key objectives is on track.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following a Health needs Assessment in June 2011 a pathway is currently being redesigned to enhance services at all levels for eating disorders</li> <li>• A contract was awarded to CHUMS in July 2011 to deliver a new CAMHS Early Intervention Service and is on track to start in November 2011</li> <li>• An updated draft Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) pathway has been submitted to a clinical reference group and has been signed off</li> <li>• Learning disability CAMHS has been redesigned to ensure further integration with local authority Social Care services, and specialist core CAMHS services</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Health of looked after children:</b> New local targets have been set for initial and review health assessments. Q2 performance is currently <b>mixed</b>, but there have been improvements on Q1 and we expect this to continue over the year as a result of ongoing work at strategic and operational level to improve IT and admin systems between the SEPT LAC (Looked after Children) health team and Central Bedfordshire in order that performance in this area is monitored and improved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although not reported nationally, the timescales for initial health assessments (within 20 working days) is a local focus. Both NHS Bedfordshire and Central Bedfordshire Council are developing systems and processes to increase the numbers of children initially assessed within the timeframe.</li> <li>• A designated LAC Nurse who provides support to NHS Bedfordshire commissioners on issues of quality and effectiveness of provision for Looked After Children is now in place. Although funding has been identified funding for designated doctor input, it has been difficult to find an appropriate clinician to undertake this role. A piece of work to help identify some of the key issues related to designated doctor responsibilities will help move the process of recruitment forward.</li> <li>• Looked After Children Out of County will be discussed at the next strategic LAC Health Group meeting to ensure monitoring of their health assessments, and establish an operational pathway for all children placed out of Central Bedfordshire.</li> <li>• A part-time Health Champion from Central Bedfordshire has been recruited by NHS Bedfordshire who is both Looked After and Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) . He is due to start his role with the NHS Bedfordshire Public Health team shortly, and will work with peer groups and young people to provide sexual health information and advice.</li> <li>• A small Task and Finish Group will be set up to identify those Looked After Children who have not had their full schedule of immunisations, and will work with them to bring these up to date.</li> <li>• A multi-agency LAC Health Improvement Group is now producing Health Packs for Looked After Children. The development of these has been informed by Looked After Children themselves.</li> <li>• Scheduled 1:1 and group work on sexual health for Looked After Children, including Chlamydia screening, will be provided by Brook Outreach workers.</li> <li>• Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for LAC – joint funded services for LAC are currently being redesigned, and will provide additional dedicated capacity for LAC, with greater emphasis on early intervention and more flexible delivery.</li> <li>• Proposals for the enhancement of services for LAC Leaving Care are to be developed during November 2011.</li> </ul>
<p>Transform services for disabled children</p>	<p><b>Transforming services for disabled children:</b> The Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme finished at the end of March 2011. The new Break for Carers Act 2010 was implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 and requires local authorities to provide breaks for all carers of disabled children living in their area if needed. The regulations attached to his duty also require the Local authority to determine a ‘local offer’ for disabled children and their families, and to publish on their website a short break statement by 1 October 2011. This is available at <a href="http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/parental-support/default.aspx">http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/parental-support/default.aspx</a>.</p> <p>The Special Education Needs (SEN) and Disability Green Paper: ‘Support and Aspiration – A new approach to special educational needs and disability’ was published for consultation from 9 March to 30 June 2011. This proposes a radical change to the way in which services are delivered to children with SEN and disabilities 0 - 25. The proposals recognise that local authorities and local health services will play a pivotal role in delivering change for children and young people with SEN or who are disabled ,and enabling local professionals to work together to put in place integrated packages of support for families. It is proposed that a new single assessment process and Education, Health and Care Plan (single plan) will replace the statutory assessment and statement by 2014. The single plan will provide the same statutory protection to parents as the statement of SEN and will include a commitment from all parties to provide their services. Pathfinders will test this approach from September 2011. Families will also have the option of an individual budget by 2014. Any necessary legislative change to enable the changes will be taken forward from May 2012 at the earliest.</p> <p>The proposal recognises that local authorities and local health service will play a pivotal role in delivering change for children and young</p>

	<p>people with SEN or who are disabled. As reforms of the school system and health services come into effect the role of the local authority is likely to change. For children and young people with SEN or who are disabled and their families there will be three core features of the local authority role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- strategic planning for services that meet the needs of the local communities</li> <li>- securing a range of high quality provision for children with SEN or who are disabled</li> <li>- enabling families to make informed choices and exercise control over services</li> </ul> <p>The Children with Disabilities Service is currently being reviewed with the recommendations on the 1<sup>st</sup> phase due to be reported by December 2011. The scope of the review is social care provision for children with disabilities and the interface with partner agencies and stakeholders. This will enable the continuation of the transformation of services and lay the foundation for the radical changes needed by agencies in providing services for the future.</p>
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Ref	Title	Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	RAG rating	
			National 10/11	Group 10/11	CB 10/11							
Local	Services developed and integrated for children and young people with emerging mental health problems and complex needs						Local measure in development					
Local	Health of Looked After Children (LAC)	% LAC Children receiving their initial Health assessment within 20 working days	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	95%	25%	33%			Red
		% LAC children receiving their review health assessment within the statutory timeframe (every 6 months for those 0-5 yrs and every 12 months for those over 5 yrs.	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	95%	9%	13%			Red
		% LAC Children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months and who had an annual health assessment during the previous 12 months	High	82.8% (09/10)	83.3% (09/10)	84.7%	85%	70%	77%			Amber
		% LAC who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months and who have had their teeth checked by a dentist during the previous 12 months	High	82% (09/10)	86.5% (09/10)	87.3%	85%	67.6%	85%			Green
		% LAC up to date on immunisations/ vaccinations	High	77.5% (09/10)	68.5% (09/10)	66.3%	Tbc	Reported annually in quarter 4.				Amber
NI 112	Number of conceptions per 1,000 teenage girls	Low	40.5 (2009)	31.4 (2009)	32.5 (2009)	30.8 (2013)	Reported annually in quarter 4. ONS due to release provisional data for 2010 in Feb 2012.				Amber	

Ref	Title		Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	RAG rating
				National 10/11	Group 10/11	CB 10/11						
NI 55	% Obese primary school aged children	in Reception  (National averages relate to England, Group comparator is East of England)	Low	9.8% (09/10)	9.2% (09/10)	8.5% (09/10)	7.2%	8.2% (10/11) Unpublished data – confidence interval 1%				Red
NI 56		in Year 6  (National averages relate to England, Group comparator is East of England)	Low	18.7% (09/10)	16.8% (09/10)	14.3% (09/10)	13.4%	15.4% (10/11) Unpublished data – confidence interval 1.8%				Red

Risks	Actions to mitigate the risks
LAC initial and review health assessments not meeting current statutory guidelines could mean that children and young people are not accessing necessary health provision.	Health and Social care have a framework in place to address the issue. Alongside this health needs identified are dealt with appropriately and if specialist treatment is required this is made available. LAC reviews monitor any health needs as do the children and young persons care plan and carers will ensure health needs are met.

**Cross cutting priority: Develop an integrated workforce which is ambitious for all children and their families and expert in its practice**

Objectives	Commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Engage key sectors in understanding and identifying generic and specialist workforce needs for the future so that opportunities for collaboration can be identified and implemented</li> <li>● Improve communications</li> <li>● Work with key delivery partners to develop a collaborative and coherent approach to training and development for the Children's Workforce in Central Bedfordshire</li> <li>● Ensure all members of the children's workforce know how to keep children and young people safe</li> <li>● Develop and implement recruitment and retention strategies in key sectors</li> </ul>	<p>Progress is good and <b>on track</b>. Most general workforce learning priorities have now been arranged and are being delivered, with the exception of Behaviour Management. Members of the strategic group with interest in this area will meet to develop a common understanding of what learning activity is needed. A method of common evaluation has been discussed and agreed as a good model to use across the workforce. This model is based on the Bedfordshire Police exemplar.</p> <p>Updates from <b>priority specialist areas</b> of the children's workforce development are set out below:</p> <p><b>Schools:</b> Feedback from Newly Qualified Teachers at the 8 training sessions led by the Training schools in September was 97% good or better. Robert Bloomfield have just resubmitted their bid to the National College to become a Teaching School. A meeting has been arranged 14 November for the Teaching School alliance to share their plans and ideas with other schools. The Headteacher Induction programme is in place and now engages 10 Heads and Acting Heads and Day 1 of 4 has been delivered. The Central Beds Strategic Steering Group which co-ordinates leadership development through school to school support is now planning to deliver programmes for aspiring heads, deputies and middle leaders.</p> <p><b>Social Work:</b> A short programme of advanced skills is currently underway around the intervention skills of cognitive, motivational and Solution Focused interview skills. The Career Progression Scheme has had 2 significant developments, firstly, the planning of a qualification framework for Social Work Assistant grades to support their development in their current role and offering them a 'bridge' to entering further training to become a qualified Social Worker. Secondly, there are advanced plans for a programme of developing supervision skills for managers at master's degree level planned to start in the early new year. Advanced planning has also taken place for a Central Eastern Partnership (Herts, CBC and Luton Authorities) second cohort of the <i>Step Up to Social Work</i> programme. Recruitment starts during late October/November with a start date of February 2012. It is anticipated that a cohort of 20 student social workers will be recruited and undertake training across the three Authorities linked to the masters degree delivered by University of Bedfordshire.</p> <p>The <i>Newly Qualified Social Worker</i> (NQSW) scheme is progressing well with all NQSWs commencing the Post Qualifying Consolidation Award. The <i>Early Professional Development</i> (EPD) programme is also progressing with all EPDs successfully completing and passing their PQ Consolidation module.</p> <p><b>Early Years:</b> The Central Bedfordshire Learning and Development Centre, which is accredited by the Council for Awards in Care, Health, and Education (CACHE) recently passed its Quality Standards Monitoring Inspection with flying colours. Feedback from the Regional Centre Advisor, who visited us to complete the regulatory checks, was that our Quality Assurance was "the best he had seen".</p> <p>In quarter two 150 learners were undertaking a qualification and 74 completed their qualifications. There are 36 candidates on the waiting list which has an average waiting time of 6 weeks. Candidates rated the following as excellent or very good: pre-qualification advice and guidance (83%), induction (93%), support provided by the assessor (97%). The new training directory is offered as a quarterly flyer now as opposed to an annual programme, providing more flexibility to amend and adjust according to the needs of workforce and take up of programmes. Level 1 courses continue to be in high demand and the challenge is finding suitable placements for volunteers within settings as there is more retention and less movement in and out of this workforce area. E-Learning and the range of qualifications on offer through the programme continue to be well supported. 207 learners are registered on a course and 169 completed a course in quarter two. The average time take to complete a course was 11.4 days and 96% of learners were <i>very satisfied</i> or <i>satisfied</i> that the course gave them the information that they needed.</p>

	<p><b>Ensure all members of the Children’s Workforce know how to keep children and young people safe.</b>          Extended menu of FREE LSCB On Line E learning opportunities launching on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2011. New courses include: THINK SAFE BE SAFE for 11-18 year olds in peer mentoring or similar roles; and other safeguarding courses on themes of Parental Mental Health; Risk Assessment; Sexual Exploitation and Vulnerable Children becoming Vulnerable Adults. Academies and Independent schools will be charged</p>
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Ref	Title	Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	RAG rating
			National 10/11	Group 10/11	CBC 10/11						
Local	Outcomes of Ofsted announced and unannounced inspections	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No priority actions relating to capacity, skills and knowledge	None identified				Green

Risks	Actions to mitigate the risk
1. Learning opportunities are delivered in a fragmented way as the children’s workforce is spread across many sectors.	Ensuring the strategic group is well attended by key partners in order to share and plan integrated learning opportunities so that key messages and core skills reach across all sectors of the workforce.

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**Meeting:** Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 15 December 2011  
**Subject:** Children and Young People's Plan – six month report  
**Report of:** Executive Member for Children's Services, Councillor Mark Versallion  
**Summary:** The report presents to Members the six month report of the Children and Young People's Plan.

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**Advising Officer:** Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Council

#### **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Council Priorities:**

The Children and Young People's Plan supports the Council deliver the following Council priorities:

- Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people.
- Creating safer communities.
- Promoting healthier lifestyles.

##### **Financial:**

Working with partners to deliver services together in a more integrated way, with a focus on prevention and early intervention is a key driver of the plan and will in the longer term deliver efficiencies. All priorities and actions are developed within partners' current resources.

##### **Legal:**

None.

##### **Risk Management:**

Risk is part of delivery planning for the Children's Plan and regular quarterly monitoring of performance supports effective risk management.

##### **Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

None.

##### **Equalities/Human Rights:**

During the development of the plan equalities issues and impacts were considered and included in the priorities are a number of strategic actions which identify children and young people who are not achieving, who are excluded or in vulnerable circumstances. An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed alongside the development of the Plan.

**Community Safety:**

Protecting children and keeping them safe is a priority in the new Children and Young People's Plan which contributes to delivering safer communities.

**Sustainability:**

Sustainable schools are a priority for the Transforming Learning agenda and this has been set out in the Education Vision for Central Bedfordshire.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **That the progress in delivering the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan from April 2012 to August 2012 is noted as at Appendix 1.**
2. **That Members record any questions or comments that they would like the Children's Trust to consider.**

**Background**

1. The first Children and Young People Plan was agreed in September 2009 and following a review, refreshed priorities were agreed for the new plan in June 2011.
2. The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee has played a key role in shaping both plans and in scrutinising the work of the Children's Trust in delivering the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan.
3. At the Board Meeting in September, Board Members considered Overview and Scrutiny Committee comments in relation to the Annual Plan and the recommendation that the Trust consider undertaking an in-depth and robust review of early intervention/parenting. Trust Board members agreed to convene a sub-group which will report to the next Trust Board meeting in March.

**The Children and Young People's Plan (2011-2014)**

4. The Children and Young People's Plan is reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Children's Trust Board.
5. Red, Amber and Green (RAG) ratings are used to provide an assessment of progress to deliver priorities and targets.
  - GREEN indicates good progress is being made with either no delay in activity or very minor delay which is unlikely to have any adverse impact on outcomes. Targets are being achieved and will be met.

- AMBER indicates progress is being made but there is significant delay or underperformance in some activities and this is likely to adversely impact some outcomes if not corrected. Targets have been missed but corrective action is in place to achieve final target.
  - RED indicates overall progress is well behind schedule and activities are under performing and will have an adverse impact on outcomes. Targets are being missed and there is a high risk of missing final targets.
6. Progress on the priorities for the first six months of the year is set out, on this basis in Appendix 1.
7. Performance for the four key priorities is summarised below:

### **Helping children and young people achieve more and transforming our relationship with schools**

8. Performance for this priority is mixed.
9. Ofsted inspections show that 79% of schools are either good or outstanding.
10. One school has been removed from 'Notice to Improve' and Ashton Middle School was given a Notice to Improve on 9 February 2011. The school received a monitoring visit on 23 September 2011 and was judged to be making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising pupils' achievement.
11. Key Stage 2 standards have fallen this year and targets have not been met. Actions to improve performance for 2012 include a conference for middle schools to look at good practice in raising achievement, and a programme of support targeted at those pupils at risk of not achieving Level 4 in English and/or mathematics.

### **Protecting children and keeping them safe**

12. Performance for this priority is mainly good and on target.
13. Performance in protecting vulnerable children and young people has remained good this quarter. Key indicators measuring social care assessment, timeliness and review remain on target to year end 2012. The demand on frontline teams continues to increase with high numbers of children subject to child protection plans. This multi agency work is resource intensive but regular monitoring ensures that access to services and assessment for children in need and those in need of protection is maintained, rather than solely pursuing targets.
14. Performance in relation to Youth Offending shows that the rate of custodial sentences is low but the number of first time entrants to the criminal justice system is increasing. The Youth Offending Service and Bedfordshire Police are working together to increase Restorative disposals and implement a Triage system to identify risk factors.

### **Reducing child poverty and the effects for those living in poverty and improving early intervention and prevention**

15. Progress for this priority is difficult to assess on a quarterly basis as this is a long term objective and the effectiveness of the strategy will be seen in improved performance across a range of indicators in the Children and Young People's Plan over the next two to three years.
16. Good progress has however been made in implementing the plans to deliver the strategy 'From Poverty to Prosperity - a Strategy to Reduce Child Poverty and alleviate its effects' and a range of programmes has been commissioned.
17. Annually published information about the proportion of Children who live in relative low income has increased from 12.1% to 13.1%. These figures relate to 2008 and 2009 respectively and given the economic downturn it is likely that this figure will continue to show increases for the next few years.
18. The numbers of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) continues to be low. However given the current economic climate it is acknowledged that maintaining this good performance will be difficult and it is likely that a rise in the numbers will occur over the year. This is underlined by the reduction in percentage of economic activity in quarter two from 81.6% to 81.1%. This indicator provides useful contextual information, however given the range of factors and stakeholders that have an influence on this measure it will not be RAG rated.

#### **Targeting the most deprived areas and vulnerable groups to improve children's emotional and physical health**

19. Performance for this priority is difficult to assess on a quarterly basis as much of the information is available on an annual basis, however the general picture shows that performance is off track.
20. Performance in relation to health assessments for looked after children, both initial and reviews, has seen improvements over the last six months however it is still not on track. For these reasons a number of new measures have been included to ensure a partnership focus on this area.
21. Provisional data for obesity rates in primary school children show a decrease in the Reception year and an increase in year 6. However as these changes are small they are not statistically significant. Although performance is off track it is better than the East of England.
22. There is no new information to report in relation to the under 18 conception rate. Services for disabled children are on track and a new service has been commissioned for children's mental health which should see a reduction in waiting times for short term interventions.

#### **Conclusion**

23. Children's Trust Board members will be asked to consider and challenge each other's performance over the last six months and agree further actions to achieve improved outcomes as necessary.

#### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Children and Young People's Plan – six month report

**Background Papers:** Children and Young People's Plan (2011-2014)

**Location of papers:** Priory House, Chicksands

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Priority 1: Transform teaching and learning and raise achievement for all learners including underachieving groups and children in vulnerable circumstances	
Objectives	Commentary
Transform teaching and learning and raise achievement for all learners including underachieving groups and children in vulnerable circumstances	<p>Ofsted inspections show that 79% of schools are either good or outstanding. Two Ofsted school inspections took place in this quarter. One school improved from satisfactory to become good and the second declined from good to satisfactory, so there was no net change from Quarter 1.</p> <p>2011 Provisional Key Stage 2 test results show a likely fall of 3% which is set against a national increase of 2%. This 5% difference places Central Bedfordshire schools in the bottom quartile nationally and in the lowest ranking position amongst its statistical neighbours. Two schools are below the Department for Education (DfE) floor standards and a plan of action to improve standards has been agreed with the schools and the DfE. Performance is there for <b>off track</b> in this area. A conference was held with middle schools in October to address Key Stage 2 standards and was attended by all but one. Targeted work is taking place with schools to support pupils identified as being at risk of not achieving two levels of progress in 2012.</p> <p>It is expected that Key Stage 4 scores will show a marked improvement of around 4% when the final results are reported in November. Performance for this area is therefore <b>on track</b>.</p> <p>Headteacher and governor meetings this term considered broad proposals to develop models for commissioning school to school support in line with government and Council policy. Headteachers also reaffirmed the Education Vision for Central Bedfordshire agreeing minor modifications to its underpinning principles in order to re-contextualise the vision into the new policy landscape. In response to the outcomes of the first transforming learning area review in Dunstable Houghton Regis, guidelines to assist schools that wish to apply to the Council change their age ranges were published by the Council in September . <b>On track</b></p>
Develop and promote children and young people's positive contribution to all communities across Central Bedfordshire so that they are able to influence the decisions that affect their lives and wellbeing	All commissioned Youth Support Services are now operational and include young people's positive contribution as part of the outcome requirements. The Children in Care Council supported by the Council hosted a very successful awards evening in October recognising the achievements of young people in care and the Central Bedfordshire Youth Parliament continues to work hard in responding to the key issues that affect young people. <b>On track</b>

Ref.	Title	Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	RAG rating
			National 09/10	Group 09/10	CB 09/10						
Local	Published Ofsted school and college classifications (new inspections in period shown in bracket)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Total	N/A	Total	Total	Total	Total	N/A
					247 (62)		247 (11)	247 (2)			
					Outstanding		Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding		
					63 (11)		64 (1)	64 (0)			
					Good		Good	Good	Good		
132 (35)	131 (7)	131 (1)									
Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory								
50 (14)	51 (3)	51 (1)									
Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate								
2 (2)	1 (0)	1 (0)									

Appendix 1

Ref.	Title	Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	RAG rating
			National 09/10	Group 09/10	CB 09/10						
73	Key Stage 2 – Level 4 in both English and Mathematics	High	74%	76%	73%		To be reported annually when final results known. RAG rating relates to last known performance.				Red
75	Key Stage 4 – 5A*-C including English and Mathematics	High	53.4%	58.6%	54%		To be reported annually when final results known. RAG rating relates to last known performance.				Amber
Local	% achieving English Baccalaureate	High	N/A	N/A			To be reported annually when final results known. RAG rating relates to last known performance.				
114	Rate of permanent exclusions from school (reported on a cumulative basis according to Academic year)	Low	Not yet available	Not yet available	0.20%		0.19% (Sep 10 to Jun 11)	0.20% (End of Academic Year)			Red

Risks	Actions to mitigate the risk
1. Exclusions - Areas of risk were identified in connection with a possible higher rate of exclusions arising from the move by many schools to Academy status.	The target for permanent exclusions has not been met. All fixed term exclusions are now analysed on a monthly basis in order to identify actions required and we are working with maintained schools to support and challenge them. Schools are now more accurately recording fixed term exclusions and it is a priority to work with schools to improve inclusion, and early identification and intervention with children at risk of exclusion.

Priority 2: Protecting children and keeping them safe	
Objectives	Commentary
Protect children and young people from harm by providing a co-ordinated and effective safeguarding process	Performance in protecting vulnerable children and young people has remained good this quarter. Key indicators measuring social care assessment, timeliness and review remain on target to year end 2012. The demand on frontline teams continues to increase with high numbers of children subject to child protection plans. This multi agency work is resource intensive but regular monitoring ensures that access to services and assessment for children in need and those in need of protection is maintained, rather than solely pursuing targets. Performance is <b>on track</b> .
Reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people	A multi agency group co-ordinating the delivery of a domestic abuse strategy are currently consulting on an updated action plan. Proposals include a feasibility study into the delivery of a community based perpetrator programme, improved third party reporting mechanisms, training to enhance routine enquiry among health professionals and an improved communications strategy. These measures should contribute towards improved identification, reporting and subsequent provision of service to children and young people exposed to domestic abuse and their families. In addition work is being scoped to explore improved early help to families where domestic abuse is a feature.
Reduce youth offending and anti-social behaviour	<p><b>First time entrants:</b> This indicator is <b>off track</b> and has recorded an increase for the third quarter in a row, albeit a lower increase than in quarter one. 44 young people entered the criminal justice system as compared to 43 in Qtr 2 2010/11, showing a rise of 2.3%. This indicator is achieved as a result of joint action between Beds Police and the Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service (BYOS) and following a dip in performance a Triage system to increase referrals for Restorative justice disposals is now being implemented.</p> <p><b>Custodial sentences:</b> The rate of custodial sentences is <b>on track</b>. None of the 43 young people sentenced in the period received a custodial sentence</p> <p><b>Proven re-offending:</b> The baseline and method of counting is in transition as a result of new approaches by the Ministry of Justice. Not yet possible to report, as data is collected in arrears.</p>

Ref	Title	Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	RAG rating
			National 09/10	Group 09/10	CB 10/11						
NI 59	% of initial assessments in 10 working days of referral	High	67%	59%	95.9%	85%	91.7%	82%			Green
NI62	% of children looked after at 31 March with 3 or more placements during the year	Low	10.9%	11.7%	6.3%	10%	2.2%	6.2%			Amber
NI 67	% of child protection cases which should have been reviewed during the year that were reviewed	High	97.2%	94%	100%	100%	100%	100%			Green
NI 68	% of referrals of children in need that led to initial assessments	High	64%	61%	56%	60%	60.2%	67.2%			Green
NI 19	Re-offending rates amongst young people	Low	0.88 (10/11)	0.80 (10/11)	0.63	-	0.85 (12 mths)	n/a			n/a

Ref	Title	Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	RAG rating
			National 09/10	Group 09/10	CB 10/11						
NI 111	Number of first time entrants to the youth justice system aged 10-17	Low	-25.3% (10/11)	-27.0% (10/11)	-38.6%	-5%	14.0%	2.3%			Red
NI 43	Young people receiving a conviction in court who are sentenced to custody	Low	5.6% (10/11)	3.8% (10/11)	1.56%	5%	5.56%	0%			Green

Risks	Actions to mitigate the risk
No risks noted yet.	

**Priority 3: Reducing child poverty and the effects for those living in poverty and improving early intervention and prevention**

Objectives	Commentary
Maximise opportunities for families in poverty to access employment which will have the outcome of more families working and thus reducing the levels of family and child poverty	<p>Good progress has however been made in implementing the plans to deliver the strategy ‘From Poverty to Prosperity - a Strategy to Reduce Child Poverty and alleviate its effects’ and a range of programmes has been commissioned. These include:</p> <p>a. Programmes to <b>Raise Aspirations in Children, Young People and Parents/Adults: <i>CBC Xers and Young Mechanics</i></b> offering young people opportunities to develop basic bike and mechanics skills; <b><i>Career Idol</i></b> offering mentoring and a programme of support for 14 – 19’s to enable young people to plan for a successful future career and gain a basic ALAN (Adult Literacy and Numeracy) qualification; <b><i>Babysitting courses</i></b> for 14 – 17 year olds enabling young people to develop basic childcare skills, earn money and possible entry into a childcare career. The <b><i>Aspire Programme</i></b> which is an accredited programme to raise aspiration, confidence and self-esteem of young men and women in Year 8, increasing their resilience to risk and supporting successful transition into upper schools. Expansion of the <b><i>Health Champions Scheme</i></b> to young people aged 16 – 24 so that they can become a qualified volunteer health champion and encourage other young people to access appropriate health, leisure, education and social care services. Roll out of the <b><i>MK Dons healthy families programme</i></b> supporting families with children aged 8 – 16 to achieve a healthy lifestyle and gain Open College Network qualifications such as the community sports leader award</p> <p>b. <b><i>Information advice and guidance</i></b> including ‘life coaching’ mentoring and support in areas of debt, cooking/nutrition, budgeting, benefits advice, careers advice.</p> <p>c. The <b><i>Young Mums to be programme</i></b> which is focusing on developing teenage parents to be confident in parenting and support their learning in key subjects and gain recognised qualifications .</p> <p>2. Leighton Buzzard Citizens Advice Bureau in conjunction with the Bedfordshire Advice Forum has been commissioned to deliver a <b>benefits awareness training and support package</b>. The aim of this is to ensure that there is a basic understanding and awareness of the benefits system by all front-line staff working with children and their families so that they are able to signpost to the appropriate specialist areas.</p> <p>3. Work is being undertaken with Bedfordshire Adult Skills &amp; Community Learning to target appropriate adult and family learning within existing programmes.</p> <p>4. Negotiations are continuing around the Job Centre Plus offer within Children’s Centres in areas of highest need, especially with regard to the introduction of the package of measures branded as <b>Get Britain Working</b>. This includes pre-employment training and work clubs, with this being incorporated into the new specifications for Children’s Centres.</p>
Ensure families in poverty are accessing all available financial assistance so that non-working families move from worklessness into work in the meantime accessing appropriate benefits	
To improve life chances of children and families by intervening early to prevent poor outcomes and raising educational achievements and aspirations so that children from poor households gain better qualifications to ensure their access to the labour market so that the cycle of intergenerational poverty is broken	
Work with colleagues from all sectors and agencies to improve the environmental factors which exacerbate the effects of poverty and harness the resources of the third sector and services across the Council so that poor families develop healthier lifestyles to prolong life expectancy and live in an improve environment	

Ref	Title	Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4	Rag rating
			National	Group	CB						
Local	Proportion of Children who live in relative low income	Low	21.6%	16.85% (East of England)	12.1% (published Aug 2010 for 2008/9)	10% by 2020		13.1% (published Aug 2010 for 2009)			Amber
Local	Percentage of young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)	Low	6.1%		4.63%		3% (as at June)	3.6%			Green
Local	Percentage of Economic Activity – those working and those unemployed but actively seeking work within a given period	High	76.5%	78.8% (East of England)	82.1% (Sept 2010)		81.6% (Oct-Dec 2010)	81.1% (Jan-March 2011)			No rating.

Risks	Actions to mitigate the risk
<p>The ability to sustain a reduction in the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) given the impact of the recession and loss of grant.</p> <p>Rising youth unemployment across UK – likely to be replicated in Central Bedfordshire.</p>	<p>Actions include more effective communication between the Council and the following agencies: schools, colleges, the Job Centre Plus, Training agencies and employers, as well as by the immediate sharing of data with the Commissioning Team once a young person has dropped out or left a positive destination (school, college training place or job). This will enable us to maintain accurate data as well as ensure that the young person is targeted by the appropriate commissioned service provider. In addition the Council is increasing its capacity to track and contact young people who are unknown or about to become lapsed i.e. those young people who are NEET and not contacted within a three month period. The Council needs to confirm that those young people who are on training courses have their status confirmed every 6 months and those in education have their status confirmed every 12 months, other wise these young people become lapsed and join the unknown cohort.</p>

**Priority 4: Targeting the most deprived areas and vulnerable groups to improve children’s emotional and physical health**

Objectives	Commentary
<p>Focus on early intervention including children’s mental health services, childhood obesity, drugs and alcohol and sexual health</p>	<p><b>Healthy weight:</b>                      Compared to the previous year obesity rates have decreased in year R and increased in Year 6 although there is no statistically significant difference. Overall performance against the target is <b>off-track</b>, however the targets were set when participation rates were significantly lower and therefore results were not representative of actual obesity rates, making onward comparison unreliable. Central Bedfordshire rates are below the East of England average for both cohorts.</p> <p>We currently have healthy lifestyles programmes in place to support children and their families in Central Bedfordshire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 families have joined the Beezee Bodies Programme (for 7-15 year olds) in Dunstable. This is a multi-disciplinary intervention giving a total of 30 weeks contact. Families are introduced to healthy eating and physical activity with a focus on fun, localism and long term engagement. Families are supported through the challenges of behaviour change through intensive engagement with trained staff.</li> <li>• The Beezee Tots programme for children aged 2-4 year olds has begun in Dunstable with maximum capacity of 18 families, with a second programme planned to start in October at the Orchard Children’s Centre in Shefford. This programme interacts with families with risk of having overweight or obese children and teaches/supports through healthy living behaviours.</li> <li>• Making the Most of Me (a targeted programme running in schools identified from data profiling) teaching and delivery of physical activity and healthy eating sessions – provision of formatted lesson plans for embedding into the school’s curriculum for year 4.</li> <li>• In addition the Change 4 Life programme is continuously promoted through a range of programmes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Under 18 Conception Rate - Against the newly agreed 2013 target for Central Bedfordshire progress is mixed.</b>                      The latest provisional data (2009 Office for National Statistics) showed a conception rate of 32.5 per 1,000 females under 18 (153 actual conceptions) in Central Bedfordshire. This is a 12.6% reduction from the 1998 baseline rate of 37.2 (158 actual conceptions) and is significantly lower than the national rate in England. The Coalition Government have acknowledged that the previously set target requiring a 50% reduction by 2010 (compared to the 1998 baseline) was unachievable given the complex factors that impact upon teenage pregnancy. Using trend data a new Central Bedfordshire 3 year reduction rate target has been now been agreed to reduce the rate to 30.8 per 1,000 females aged 15-18 by 2013. This would equate to a 5.13% reduction from the 2009 rate.</p> <p><b>Children’s mental health: A local measure to replace the previous self-assessment and track progress is under development. Progress against key objectives is on track.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following a Health needs Assessment in June 2011 a pathway is currently being redesigned to enhance services at all levels for eating disorders</li> <li>• A contract was awarded to CHUMS in July 2011 to deliver a new CAMHS Early Intervention Service and is on track to start in November 2011</li> <li>• An updated draft Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) pathway has been submitted to a clinical reference group and has been signed off</li> <li>• Learning disability CAMHS has been redesigned to ensure further integration with local authority Social Care services, and specialist core CAMHS services</li> </ul> <p><b>Health of looked after children:</b> New local targets have been set for health assessments. Q2 performance is currently <b>mixed</b>, but there have been improvements on Q1 and we expect this to continue over the year as a result of ongoing work at strategic and operational level to improve IT and admin systems between the key Health and Social Care teams. Other key improvements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A designated LAC Nurse who provides support to NHS Bedfordshire commissioners on issues of quality and effectiveness of provision for Looked After Children is now in place. Although funding has been identified funding for designated doctor input, it has been difficult to find an appropriate clinician to undertake this role. A piece of work to help identify some of the key issues related to</li> </ul>

	<p>designated doctor responsibilities will help move the process of recruitment forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A multi-agency LAC Health Improvement Group is now producing Health Packs for Looked After Children. The development of these has been informed by Looked After Children themselves.</li> </ul>
Transform services for disabled children	<p><b>Transforming services for disabled children:</b> The Aiming High for Disabled Children Programme finished at the end of March 2011. The new Break for Carers Act 2010 was implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 and requires local authorities to provide breaks for all carers of disabled children living in their area if needed. The regulations attached to his duty also require the Council to determine a 'local offer' for disabled children and their families, and to publish on their website a short break statement by 1 October 2011. This is available at <a href="http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/parental-support/default.aspx">http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/parental-support/default.aspx</a>.</p> <p>The Special Education Needs (SEN) and Disability Green Paper: 'Support and Aspiration – A new approach to special educational needs and disability' was published for consultation from 9 March to 30 June 2011. This proposes a radical change to the way in which services are delivered to children with SEN and disabilities 0 - 25. The proposals recognise that councils and local health services will play a pivotal role in delivering change for children and young people with SEN or who are disabled, and enabling local professionals to work together to put in place integrated packages of support for families. It is proposed that a new single assessment process and Education, Health and Care Plan (single plan) will replace the statutory assessment and statement by 2014. Families will also have the option of an individual budget by 2014. Any necessary legislative change to enable the changes will be taken forward from May 2012 at the earliest.</p> <p>As reforms of the school system and health services come into effect the role of the council is likely to change and there will be three core features of the role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strategic planning for services that meet the needs of the local communities</li> <li>securing a range of high quality provision for children with SEN or who are disabled</li> <li>enabling families to make informed choices and exercise control over services</li> </ul> <p>The Children with Disabilities Service is currently being reviewed with the recommendations on the 1<sup>st</sup> phase due to be reported by December 2011. The scope of the review is social care provision for children with disabilities and the interface with partner agencies and stakeholders. This will enable the continuation of the transformation of services and lay the foundation for the radical changes needed by agencies in providing services for the future.</p>

Ref	Title	Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	RAG rating	
			National 10/11	Group 10/11	CB 10/11							
Local	Services developed and integrated for children and young people with emerging mental health problems and complex needs						Local measure in development					
Local	Health of Looked After Children (LAC)	% LAC Children receiving their initial Health assessment within 20 working days	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	95%	25%	33%			Red
		% LAC children receiving their review health assessment within the statutory timeframe (every 6 months for those 0-5 yrs and every 12 months for those over 5 yrs.	High	N/A	N/A	N/A	95%	9%	13%			Red
		% LAC Children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months and who had an annual health	High	82.8% (09/10)	83.3% (09/10)	84.7%	85%	70%	77%			Amber

Ref	Title		Good is	Outturn			Target 11/12	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	RAG rating
				National 10/11	Group 10/11	CB 10/11						
		assessment during the previous 12 months										
		% LAC who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months and who have had their teeth checked by a dentist during the previous 12 months	High	82% (09/10)	86.5% (09/10)	87.3%	85%	67.6%	85%			Green
		% LAC up to date on immunisations/vaccinations	High	77.5% (09/10)	68.5% (09/10)	66.3%	Tbc	Reported annually in quarter 4.				Amber
NI 112	Number of conceptions per 1,000 teenage girls		Low	40.5 (2009)	31.4 (2009)	32.5 (2009)	30.8 (2013)	Reported annually in quarter 4. ONS due to release provisional data for 2010 in Feb 2012.				Amber
NI 55	% Obese primary school aged children	in Reception (National averages relate to England, Group comparator is East of England England)	Low	9.8% (09/10)	9.2% (09/10)	8.5% (09/10)	<b>7.2%</b>	8.2% (10/11) Unpublished data – confidence interval 1%				Red
NI 56		in Year 6 (National averages relate to England, Group comparator is East of England)	Low	18.7% (09/10)	16.8% (09/10)	14.3% (09/10)	<b>13.4%</b>	15.4% (10/11) Unpublished data – confidence interval 1.8%				Red

Risks	Actions to mitigate the risks

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## **CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (CAMHS) OVERVIEW**

### **PURPOSE**

1. The report outlines current CAMHS provision in Central Bedfordshire, strategic overview and recent developments.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. For the Trust board to support the strategic principles for future service developments.

**PUBLIC/EXEMPT:** Public

**CONTACT:** Lee Miller – Head of Children's Commissioning NHS Bedfordshire, [lee.miller@bedfordshire.nhs.uk](mailto:lee.miller@bedfordshire.nhs.uk)

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### **BACKGROUND**

3. This report gives an overview of service provision, strategic direction and current service developments.
4. CAMHS are generally described using a four tier model, Appendix 1, describes these tiers and outlines current local services.

### **Context**

5. During the decade up until 2010, CAMHS came under significant national focus. With additional funding provided to both NHS and Local Authorities to improve services. These improvements were assessed by using the following 4 'proxy measures'.

- 1. A full range of CAMH services for children and young people with learning disabilities commissioned.**
- 2. 16 and 17 year olds who require mental health services have access to services appropriate to their age and level of maturity.**
- 3. Arrangements in place to ensure that 24 hour cover is available to meet urgent mental health needs of children and young people and for a specialist mental health assessment to be undertaken within 24 hours or the next working day where indicated**
- 4. Delivery of full range of early intervention support for children experiencing mental health problems.**

6. A review of CAMHS provision in Central Bedfordshire was undertaken by Go-East in November 2009, which agreed with our local self assessment that our services scored 13 out of 16. A score of 16 indicates that all 4 proxy measures are being fully met.
7. Plans were developed and implemented over the following 18 months and by the end of March 2011 Central Bedfordshire and NHS Bedfordshire were able to report a self assessment score of 16.

8. Work is ongoing to continue to strengthen the arrangements covered by the 4 proxy measures, as these continue to remain as priorities. However since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011, there is no longer a requirement to report progress against these measures by either Central Bedfordshire Council or NHS Bedfordshire.
9. Local performance measures are in the process of being developed as a replacement for the previous national measures. These will be outcome focused and it is proposed that these will be based on the outcome measure (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire or SDQ) used by both Tier 2 and Tier 3 providers. Providers are required to assess each client using the SDQ at the start of any intervention and again either on discharge or after 6 months. The difference between the measures is used to indicate improvement in mental health. Additional performance measures will be considered to capture broader outcomes.
10. A number of local service improvements are in development and are based on the strategic principles outlined below. The Children's Trust is asked to consider these principles and support them as central to future service developments.

### **STRATEGIC OVERVIEW**

11. The current principles underpinning service development include:-
  - Providing services closer to home
  - Intervening Early
  - QIPP (Quality, Innovation, Prevention and Productivity)
  - Integration of services
  - Focus on vulnerable groups
12. A Bedfordshire Wide Mental Wellbeing Strategy Group is hosted by NHS Bedfordshire and chaired by Lee Miller, Head of Children's Commissioning, NHS Bedfordshire. All CAMHS service developments are overseen by this group.

### **RECENT/CURRENT SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS**

#### **Home Treatment Team**

13. A Home Treatment Team has been in place since September 2010. This team works intensively with a small group of young people in mental health crisis, who would otherwise be admitted to an inpatient unit. The service was set up because of:-
  - Increasing numbers of admissions to inpatient units.
  - Changes in legislation meaning that 16 and 17 year olds (previously admitted to Adult units) would be expected to be admitted to CAMH units from 2010.
  - A need for children and young people to be treated as close to home as possible.

#### **13.1 Aims of the service**

- To enable as many young people as possible to remain at home/school.
- To provide a community based alternative to Inpatient admission.
- To reduce spend on Inpatient services and reinvest in local provision.

### 13.2 Outcomes

- Since September 2010, there has been a significant reduction in both the number of admissions to inpatient units and the average length of stay.
- Feedback from service users and families/carers is very positive
- Increasing numbers of children and young people have been able to remain in the community, attending school, remaining with their family.
- For an annual investment of £300k across NHS Bedfordshire, the forecast for 2011/12 is for savings of £1m.

### Eating Disorders

14. Whilst there has been a reduction in admissions for the majority of mental illnesses, the numbers of admissions for eating disorders have continued to increase. This includes an increasing number of boys requiring treatment and an increase in severe problems for younger children.
15. A joint QIPP project (with Adult Mental Health commissioners) has been set up to look at reinvesting some of our current inpatient spend in specialist community based eating disorder provision to ensure best use of resources at an earlier stage.

Step 1 of this project has taken place. An additional specialist Eating Disorder post and specialist Dietetic support has been added to the Home Treatment Team, to enable greater resource and expertise to reduce the number of inpatient admissions.

Step 2 is to develop proposals for local specialist services (tier 3)

Step 3 is to work with partners to ensure that appropriate support is provided at tier 1 and 2 services

### 15.1 Intended Outcomes

- To enable intervention at an earlier stage
- To provide intervention Closer to home
- To ensure most effective use of resources

### CAMHS Learning Disability (LD)

16. This specialist service has recently undergone a redesign and is due to become operational in November 2011.

#### 16.1 Key outcomes of the redesign are:-

- To ensure there are no gaps in provision between Core CAMHS and CAMHS LD services
- To broaden the definition of Learning Disability in the teams' referral criteria from one based on IQ to one in line with the accepted Local Authority definition
- To increase integration with Local Authority Social care teams.

### Early Intervention services

17. NHS Bedfordshire has commissioned a new early Intervention CAMH Service using additional funding, which will begin in November 2011. The Contract has been awarded to CHUMS who currently provide Bereavement services across Luton, Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough. Key aspects of the service are:-

- Open to 0-17 year olds
- Open access – No referral is required
- Short term intervention
- Evidence based interventions
- 'No wrong door' policy – meaning that where referrals are made, they will not be 'bounced back' to referrers.
- The service will go to the client rather than expecting the client to come to the therapist

#### 17.1 Intended outcomes

- Improved access to CAMHS
- Improved outcomes for children and young people with mental health problems
- Increased services 'closer to home'
- Long term cost benefits through early intervention.

### CAMHS for Looked After Children

18. Specialist and Targeted CAMHS services for Looked After Children (LAC) are currently being redesigned. An external report in 2010 highlighted gaps in the way services were being provided.

19. The redesigned service will provide additional resources for LAC, with the new services having the following **key outcomes**.

- Early intervention for more LAC than before.
- Specialist support for Foster carers, residential staff and Social Workers
- Specialist CAMHS staff integrated with Social care teams
- Increased levels of short term interventions
- Increased access to full range of therapeutic interventions by specialist Core CAMHS teams
- Improved mental health of LAC

20. It is planned that the new service model will commence in February 2012.

### Mellow Parenting

21. Work is underway to pilot the **Mellow Parenting Programme** in the Houghton Regis / Dunstable area, focusing on antenatal support (Mellow Bumps) and support for mothers and babies aged 0 - 1 (Mellow Babies).

- **Mellow Bumps** is a 6 week antenatal programme targeting parents to be with additional health and social care needs. There is evidence of good engagement of families with additional needs and reduction in antenatal anxiety and irritability.
- **Mellow Babies** is a fourteen week programme targeting mothers with postnatal depression and other social and emotional health needs, including child protection. It has a good evidence base in improving maternal mental health, increasing positive mother-child interaction and decreasing negative mother child-interaction.

**CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS**

22. Significant progress has been made on a number of fronts in the past 18 months, with increased investment in NHS services locally and integration of service provision between NHS Bedfordshire services and Central Bedfordshire Council commissioned provision. Work will continue to take place, via the Mental Wellbeing Strategy Group to strengthen local service provision based on the principles outlined above to reduce inpatient activity where possible, reinvest in local community based provision and integrate services to ensure most effective use of resources to meet local needs.

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## Item 5: Appendix 1 - Overview of local provision

Level of provision	Description	Service overview	Commissioner	Local service detail
Tier 4	Highly specialist services	Mainly inpatient provision	NHS Bedfordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Darwin Centre -Cambridge</li> <li>• Phoenix Centre -Cambridge (Eating Disorders)</li> <li>• Highfields - Oxford</li> <li>• The Sett – Northampton</li> <li>• Forest House – St Albans</li> <li>• The Poplars – Southend</li> <li>• Huntercombe Manor – Maidenhead (secure)</li> </ul>
Tier 3	Specialist services	Specialist community based Mental Health services	NHS Bedfordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core CAMHS Teams – South Bedfordshire and Mid Bedfordshire- for Moderate to Severe mental health problems</li> <li>• CAMHS Learning Disability service- for young people with a learning disability and mental health problem</li> </ul>
Tier 2	Targeted Services	Early intervention Targeted services	NHS Bedfordshire and Central Bedfordshire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CHUMS -Early Intervention service.</li> <li>• CAMHS LAC Service- mental health interventions for LAC</li> <li>• Relate - Counselling</li> <li>• Sorted - Counselling</li> <li>• SMILE – Support for educational settings</li> <li>• Locality Parent Support advisor team – support for children and families</li> </ul>
Tier 1	Universal services	All services working with Children and Young people	NHS Bedfordshire and Central Bedfordshire Council	<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health visiting and School Nursing.</li> <li>• GP's</li> <li>• Schools</li> <li>• Social care</li> <li>• Youth services</li> <li>• Children's Centres</li> </ul>

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## LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN PLACEMENT STRATEGY

### PURPOSE

1. The report outlines Central Bedfordshire Council's strategy in relation to current provision and future need for placements for looked after children

### RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That Board Members note the content of the report
3. That Board Members consider further partnership work to meet the placement needs of all looked after children.

**PUBLIC/EXEMPT:** Public:

**CONTACT:** Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive, Director Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council

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### BACKGROUND

Section 22G of The Children Act 1989 requires a council to take strategic action in respect of those children it looks after. This includes a requirement to take steps, as far as reasonably practicable, that secures accommodation for looked after children within the authority's area and which meets the needs of those children.

4. In 2010 Statutory Guidance on securing sufficient accommodation for looked after children was published by the then Department for Children, Schools and Families. This outlined how councils should carry out their duty under The Children Act which came into force in April 2011. This includes advice that the duty can be implemented most effectively through a partnership between the council and its Children's Trust partners
5. The Placement Strategy is Central Bedfordshire Council Children's Services response to the duty.

### CURRENT POSITION

6. Our current LAC population data and placement provision tells us that:
  - Older teenagers are over represented in the LAC population.
  - Non-white children are over represented compared to the local population.
  - A higher number of children than the England average are placed more than 20 miles away.
  - Girls needing residential care are placed a significant distance away.
7. Gaps in current provision are
  - The overall number and choice of in-house fostering placements.
  - Specialist in-house foster placements for teenagers who have complex needs.
  - Sufficient in-house foster placements for sibling groups and children with disabilities of all ages.

- Provision in the local area for young people with complex needs – those needing therapeutic residential placements or who have experienced multiple placements.
- A mix of local provision for 16 and 17 year olds, particularly hostel accommodation and emergency/homeless accommodation.

**CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS**

8. There is scope to develop the Placement Strategy and Board Members are asked to consider further partnership working which would be of benefit to ensuring the placement needs of all looked after children are met.
9. This Strategy will be kept under review by Children's Services.

# Looked after children Placement Strategy

2011-13

## 1. Introduction

Section 22G of The Children Act 1989 requires a council to take steps, as far as reasonably practicable, that secures accommodation for looked after children within the authority's area and which meets the needs of those children. Councils should consider the number of accommodation providers in their area that is sufficient in the council's opinion, and take account of the range of accommodation in their area capable of meeting different needs.

In 2010 Statutory Guidance on securing sufficient accommodation for looked after children was published by the then Department for Children, Schools and Families. This outlined how councils should carry out their duty under The Children Act which came into force in April 2011.

This strategy therefore sets out the position in relation to placements for looked after children in Central Bedfordshire, including actions needed to ensure sufficient placements to meet future need.

## 2. Looked After Population Data and Trends

### Overall numbers

On 1 April 2009 when Central Bedfordshire Council became a unitary authority the LAC population stood at 132. This represented a rate of 24 per 10 000 population. Our statistical neighbour rate, per 10 000 population, was 38.

The numbers of looked after children have risen significantly over the past 2.5 years and the population at 30 September 2011 stood at 192. This represented a rate per 10 000 population of 34 and a percentage increase of 45%. Over the same period the statistical neighbour rate, per 10 000 population, has risen to 46.

The increase can be attributed to two main factors. Firstly, there has been a national increase in referrals to children's social care services, open cases and statutory intervention in relation to children as a result of the national awareness and response to the Baby Peter case. Secondly, Central Bedfordshire Council has applied more rigour than the legacy authority in applying thresholds and intervening to ensure children are protected from harm.

## Age and gender

The current age profile of the looked after population is as follows:

Age	CBC LAC population (%)			England LAC population (%)
	Male	Female	Total	Total
0-4	10	14	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>
5- 9	5	8	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>
10-14	18	7	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>
15-17	23	15	<b>38</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100</b>	

In comparison with the England looked after population (2010) children aged 5 – 14 are under-represented and young people over 15 are over-represented. In respect of the older age group this may indicate good practice in not seeking to discharge young people aged 16 from care.

## Length of time in care

Data indicates no significant trends in relation to the length of time children remain looked after. In April 2010 59% of children had been looked after for one year or over. This increased to 63% in March 2011 and is currently at 62%.

## Ethnicity

Ethnicity data shows that children from all non-white black and minority ethnic groups are over-represented in the looked after population when compared to both census data and information from Central Bedfordshire Council maintained schools. 18% of looked after children are non-white compared to 8% in the council maintained school population and 4% in the general council population.

## Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

At 30 September 2011 11 of the 192 looked after children were unaccompanied asylum seeking young people. This number has fallen from a peak of 34 in May 2010 and there have been no new children claiming asylum since February 2011. However, it is difficult to predict trends in young people arriving in the council area and claiming asylum.

## **Placement Stability**

In relation to the two measures of placement stability, performance in Central Bedfordshire has improved over the two years. This reflects the national and statistical neighbour picture of overall improvement. Performance in Central Bedfordshire exceeds that of statistical neighbours and nationally. At the end of September 2011 12 children had had 3 or more placements in the previous 12 months. Whilst the percentage in relation to the overall looked after population was low, nevertheless there were a small number of children who had experienced a significant number of placements and/or unplanned moves. All young people were aged over 11, and 62% were male. Five of the young people's last move was into residential care as a result of their complex needs. In addition 3 of the young people were unaccompanied asylum seeking young people whose moves were in relation to their move to independence.

## **Distance from Home**

At March 2011 26 children were placed more than 20 miles away from their home address, representing 14.8% of the looked after population and above the national average of 13%. When analysed 16 of the 26 children placed more than 20 miles away were placed less than 40 miles away.

## **3. Current Placement Provision**

### **Fostering Provision**

Central Bedfordshire Council operates the 'in-house' fostering service providing placements for its own looked after population and to Bedford Borough Council under a service level agreement. At 30 September 2011 the service had 113 approved fostering households, including those caring for friends and family members under a fostering arrangement. 68 Central Bedfordshire looked after children were placed with in-house foster carers. This was an increase in absolute numbers from the 55 children that were placed in-house on 31 March 2010 and 59 that were in placement in March 2011.

The service was inspected by Ofsted in 2008 and judged to be outstanding.

In addition to mainstream foster placements, the in-house service runs a Youth Care scheme providing specialist placements for young people aged 10-18 who have additional or complex needs. In addition to the fostering allowance carers receive a weekly fee, and the service provides additional supervision and support to carers. 14 Youth Care placements are available when the full complement of carers is approved, however the scheme has not been at full capacity since January 2011. Recruitment is ongoing and the scheme will be at full capacity by December 2011.

The number of children in Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements has remained reasonably constant over the last 2.5 years. In April 2009 63 children were placed in IFA placements; in September 2011 the number was 57. Given the rise in overall numbers of looked after children this means that the proportion of children in externally commissioned foster placements has fallen. In the rolling 12 months to September 2011 38 new IFA placements were made. 19 of these were in order to keep sibling groups together, 12 were for children over 10, 3 were for children with particular needs.

The proportion of looked after children who are in foster placements (in-house or IFA) has fallen over the last 12 months from 72 % to 67%.

Places in IFAs are sought on a spot-purchase basis, although a Framework Contract has been developed which will come into effect on 1 November 2011. More detail about this is given below in section 8.

## **Residential Provision**

The legacy authority, Bedfordshire County Council entered into an agreement in 2007 for St Christopher's Fellowship to manage its three children's homes. This arrangement was continued by both new unitary authorities under a Service Level Agreement.

The arrangement provides for 12 places across 3 homes – one in the Bedford Borough Area and two in the Central Bedfordshire area. One home also has one emergency 72-hour bed. All provision is shared with Bedford Borough. The available number of beds has reduced during 2011 with the closure of a four-bed home in the Central Bedfordshire area following an adverse Ofsted inspection. All other provision is rated by Ofsted as outstanding or good with outstanding features. There are proposals to extend the provision offered in one of the homes by an additional two beds.

Overall occupancy in the homes remains high (ranging from 82% to 98% during 2010-11), Central Bedfordshire occupancy of places increased during that period from 47% to 54%. All young people placed at the homes by Central Bedfordshire Council were male.

At 30 September 2011 21 young people were placed in residential provision, including the St Christopher's homes. This is a 17% increase in the last 12 months. The overall proportion of looked after young people in residential provision has also risen steadily from 7% in April 2009 to 11% now.

The profile of young people living in residential care is 71% male; 62% of young people are aged over 15 years. A number of the young people placed in residential provision during 2011 have experienced multiple foster placements or present with behaviour that cannot be managed within a family setting.

Provision in private children's homes is sought on a spot purchase basis. There are no formal arrangements with providers for preferred rates or cost/volume contracts. All young people placed in residential provision other than the St Christopher's Fellowship provision are placed outside the boundary of Central Bedfordshire Council. 6 young people are in placements in neighbouring authorities, but 8 are a significant distance from their home address.

4 young people with disabilities are looked after in 52-week residential school placements. 3 are out of the Central Bedfordshire Council area and all are high cost specialist provision.

## **Secure Accommodation**

In each of the last 3 years Central Bedfordshire Council has sought secure accommodation for one young person for part of the year. There is no secure provision locally to Central Bedfordshire with the nearest provision in Peterborough or Essex.

## **Independent and semi-independent accommodation**

52 of the current looked after population are aged 16 or 17. Young people are supported to remain in foster care or in residential homes where this is consistent with their needs and wishes. However for those young people who wish to move towards independence or for those who become looked after at age 16 or 17 a range of semi-independent and independent living provision is required.

Central Bedfordshire Council operates a Supported Lodgings scheme offering 8 places spread geographically across the council area.

The council also works with two main providers of semi-independent provision, who offer young people housing tenancies and a package of staff support. There are no formal contracted arrangements with the two providers and placements are commissioned on a spot purchased basis.

There is little hostel provision within the Central Bedfordshire boundary. There is one small hostel offering approximately 12 beds located in the south of the council area, but no priority is given to looked after children and applications for places are considered on a needs basis, alongside applications from people from the general population. If hostel provision is needed/sought for young people, hostels in Bedford Borough Council and Luton Borough Council areas tend to be approached.

There is also limited provision for homeless young people in the area. Under the Southwark Judgement, these young people will be considered looked after and the responsibility for their housing and care will be held by children's social care services. There is some provision for homeless people of all ages located in the east of the council area but this is not appropriate for many of the 16 and 17 year old homeless young people who may have additional vulnerabilities. Provision in Luton Borough Council area is used, particularly that provided by one organisation that works with disadvantaged homeless 16-25 year olds.

## **Emergency placements**

Where a child is accommodated or needs a change of placement out of office hours the Emergency Duty Team have responsibility for making arrangements. They have access to the list of in-house carers who have vacancies and who are able to take emergency placements. They also have a list of independent fostering providers who can be approached if no suitable in-house placement is available. One of the St Christopher's Fellowship homes has a 72-hour emergency bed that can be used if available.

## **Provision for Children with Disabilities**

The in-house fostering service has some foster carers with the appropriate skills to care for children with disabilities. Similarly some children are looked after in independent fostering agency placements. The council also has a residential provision for children with disabilities who require shared care or full-time care. 5 places are available for children aged 8 to 18 years.

Whilst the number of looked after children with disabilities is low at 7% of the total LAC population they are more likely to live in residential care or independent provision. Whilst

this may be attributed to the more complex needs that some children present with, in some cases it is due to lack of availability of foster placements.

A review of Children with Disabilities services is taking place in the Autumn of 2011 and will consider placement provision as part of the remit of the review. The review is due to report in January 2011 and its recommendations will form the basis of the strategy for services to children looked after who have disabilities.

## **Costs**

The approximate unit cost of a mainstream in-house placement was calculated in January 2011 as £452 per week.

A youth care in-house placement was estimated at £837 per week.

The average cost of an Independent Fostering Agency placement is £820 per week – this masks the wide variation in individual placement costs depending on the age and needs of the young person.

The average cost of an independent residential placement is £3614 per week – this also masks a wide variation in placement cost.

The current cost of a placement in one of the St Christopher's Fellowship homes, including the specialist solo-placement home is less than independent provision.. When the planned additional beds come on line, the cost will fall further as the additional bed is being provided for very little additional cost. This assumes full occupancy of 7 beds.

## **4. Provision for children on the edge of care**

Central Bedfordshire Council's aim is to support families to care for their own children wherever possible and where this is consistent with their welfare. This is what the majority of families want and will achieve the best for most children.

Where children are determined to be in need or in need of protection a range of support may be identified as needed during assessment to assist with meeting the child's needs or to prevent them from becoming looked after. In Central Bedfordshire requests for support or resources are presented to the Allocation Panel (CBAP), Children with Disabilities Allocation Panel (CDAP) or Joint Agency Panel (JAP) as appropriate. Support or resources may include:

- Services or payments to family members under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to enable them to care for child who otherwise does not need to be looked after by the council
- Childminding or nursery provision
- Services from the Family and Adolescent Support Team (FAST)
- Services from the Family Intervention Service (FIS)
- Crisis or intensive support to assist parents – also known as High Level Family Support Services
- Short breaks or respite breaks for children and their families

The Family Group Meeting service provides assistance in facilitating family meetings where support for the family and arrangements to prevent a child becoming looked after can be agreed from within the family network. Similarly Family Group Meetings can be instrumental in supporting a plan for a looked after child to return to their family – either through identifying family support for the parents or by identifying family members who may be able to care for the child.

## **5. Adoption and Permanence**

The Central Bedfordshire Council adoption service has a recruitment strategy which identifies the number of adopters needed in the next 12 months to enable sufficient placements for children with a plan for adoption. It is anticipated that 26 new adoptive households will be needed to meet the needs of children in Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council.

The in-house fostering service seeks to recruit foster carers who can offer permanent or long-term placements, and in respect of some children has advertised for carers for specific children. The recruitment target for 2011-12 is 40 new households to enable a net increase of carers and range of placements available.

## **6. Principles of good placements**

Where children become looked after a placement within their family or friends network will be sought as a priority where this is consistent with their welfare. As a looked after arrangement, the carer will be assessed and supported as a foster carer.

Where a placement within the child's family or friends network is not available an in-house fostering placement will be sought. Unless it is not safe to do so it is expected that such a placement will be close enough to the child's community to enable them to remain at their school and involved in their networks. It is usual that a child will be placed with siblings wherever possible unless it has been assessed that this is not appropriate.

Where an in-house placement is not available a foster placement from an independent fostering agency will be sought. A placement closest to the child's community will be sought unless this is not consistent with their safety or welfare.

Where the needs of a young person cannot be met within a family environment a residential placement will be considered, with placement within the St Christopher's homes being considered first. Children aged under 12 will not usually be placed in residential homes unless it is clearly demonstrated that this is consistent with their welfare and the only way of meeting their needs.

Any placements will only be made in provision which has been assessed as good or outstanding by Ofsted or the appropriate regulatory body.

Where a highly specialist therapeutic placement or placement in secure provision is assessed as required, this will only be agreed after agreement from the appropriate Joint Agency Panel or Secure Accommodation Panel (and subsequent Court agreement.)

Where children and young people are not able to return to those with parental responsibility planning will take place in a timely way to enable them to move on to permanent families

who can offer them legal and emotional security. For younger children the placement of choice will be adoption. For older children who retain significant ties to their birth family, long-term or permanent fostering may be more appropriate if Special Guardianship is not suitable.

## 7. Assessing Demand

It is not anticipated that increases in national population or local population based on estimates of new local housing provision will make any significant statistical changes to the looked after population in Central Bedfordshire.

Whilst the LAC population rate per 10 000 in Central Bedfordshire Council is lower than the statistical neighbour and national rates it is not anticipated that there will be any significant increase in the LAC population. It should be noted that other factors can have influence on LAC population, such as high media profile cases, judgements in case law and national policy change.

No expansion of the overall placement provision is needed although some remodelling in types of placements will be required to meet need.

Our current LAC population data and placement provision tells us that:

- Older teenagers are over represented in the LAC population.
- Non-white children are over represented compared to the local population
- A higher number of children than the England average are placed more than 20 miles away
- Girls needing residential care are placed a significant distance away

Gaps in current provision are:

- The overall number and choice of in-house fostering placements
- Specialist in-house foster placements for teenagers who have complex needs
- Sufficient in-house foster placements for sibling groups and children with disabilities of all ages
- Provision in the local area for young people with complex needs – those needing therapeutic residential placements or who have experienced multiple placements
- A mix of local provision for 16 and 17 year olds, particularly hostel accommodation and emergency/homeless accommodation.

## **8. Planning for Change**

Key areas for development in 2011- 13 are outlined below with a detailed action plan outlined at Appendix One.

### **Independent Fostering Agency Framework Agreement**

During 2010-11 Central Bedfordshire Council has joined in partnership with Luton Borough Council and Bedford Borough Council to develop a Framework Agreement for the provision of independent fostering agency placements. It was recognised by the partners that a more systematic and holistic approach was required to provide a consistent quality assurance framework, reduce negotiation times, better understand and review pricing structures of placements.

The partnership has tendered a framework agreement with 18 independent fostering agencies. The contract will commence on 1 November 2011 and it is expected to improve the quality of provision and reduce costs of new placements made after that date.

### **Residential Provision**

The Service Level Agreement with St Christopher's Fellowship will continue until 2014. It is proposed to expand the provision offered by one home by two beds. The additional beds will be available to both Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council and as well as increasing available beds will serve to reduce the unit costs of this provision.

The Commissioning team in partnership with operational managers will consider whether formalised arrangements for the provision of local private sector residential placements, particularly for girls will be of benefit in widening choice, enabling young people to remain locally and in managing costs.

### **In house fostering provision**

The recruitment strategy for fostering identifies how in-house capacity will be maximised. This includes a recruitment target for 2011-12 with particular emphasis on attracting carers who can provide for sibling groups, older children and permanent placements.

Recruitment will continue to ensure the Youth Care scheme can offer the full 14 placements. A costed proposal to expand the scheme will be developed by January 2012 with a view to reducing the numbers of children placed in costly IFA or residential provision.

### **Semi independent and independent services**

Work will be undertaken with Housing, Commissioning colleagues and local providers in order to widen the housing and support options in the Central Bedfordshire area for 16 and 17 year olds.

### **Children with disabilities services**

The recommendations of the Children with Disabilities Review will be considered and implemented in line with the scope and reporting of that review.

### **Children from Black and Minority Ethnic groups**

We will continue to explore the reasons why the non-white LAC population is higher than that of the general population to ensure that the specific needs of BME communities are met and that children do not become looked after as the result of unconscious stereotyping, or lack of culturally appropriate support to families or communities. We will ensure that all our placement provision can meet the heritage, identity and cultural needs of children and will seek to increase the diversity of our foster carers and providers.

## Appendix One

Placement Strategy Action Plan						
	Identified Need	Action	Target Date	Lead Officer	Desired Outcomes	Progress
1.	Improve cost framework and quality of Independent Fostering Agency Provision	Implement and monitor Framework Agreement for new IFA placements	1/11/11- implementation 1/4/11 – review	Head of Children's Services Commissioning Head of Adoption and Fostering	Reduce costs on IFA budget  Implement quality framework for IFA provision  Ensure IFA provision can meet needs of CBC children	
2.	Review current provision of residential care, particularly placements outside of the St Christopher's Fellowship contract	Undertake further analysis of the need for local provision for children with complex needs and a commissioning model that could support identified need	31/12/11	Head of Children's Services Commissioning  Head of Safeguarding and Children in Care	Identify whether commissioning activity is required to secure local provision at best value	
		Work with St Christopher's to realise the additional two beds	31/3/12	Head of Children's Services Commissioning  Head of Safeguarding and Children in Care	Increase local residential provision	

		Review St Christopher's contract to ensure it remains fit for purpose and to inform planning for when the contract ends	30/9/12	Head of Children's Services Commissioning	Ensure future provision meets the need of CBC children	
3.	Increase number and availability of in-house fostering placements	Recruit 40 new fostering households in 2011-12 and achieve net increase in fostering placements available	31/3/12	Head of Adoption and Fostering	Increase availability and choice of foster placements Ensure foster placements can meet need	
		Review existing foster carers' approval to ensure maximum flexibility and capacity	31/3/12	Head of Adoption and Fostering	Increase foster care placements and minimise placement moves	
		Recruit to Youth Care Scheme to maximise placements	31/12/11	Head of Adoption and Fostering	Increase available placement to reduce number of placements in IFA or residential provision	
		Complete costed proposal to expand the Youth Care Scheme	31/12/11	Head of Adoption and Fostering	Invest to save – increase youth care placement to reduce IFA or residential placement demand.	

4.	Develop wider mix of provision for 16 and 17 years olds	Undertake liaison and work with housing on establishing homeless and hostel provision	31/3/12	Head of Safeguarding and Children in Care	Increase choice of placement for 16 and 17 years olds	
		Undertake analysis of the benefits of a different commissioning model for semi-independent provision	30/9/12	Head of Children's Services Commissioning Head of Safeguarding and Children in Care	Consider Identify whether commissioning activity is required to secure local provision at best value	
		Continue the expansion of the supported lodgings scheme	31/3/12	Head of Safeguarding and Children in Care	Increase choice of placement for 16 and 17 years olds	
5.	Consider outcomes of Children with Disabilities review	Implement the action plan arising from the review	31/1/12	Head of Children with Disabilities and Child Health	Ensure appropriate mix and choice of placement to meet need and reduce costs where possible.  Increase numbers of foster placements available in-house for disabled children	

## **POSITION STATEMENTS: CHILDREN LIVING WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS AND SHORT BREAKS**

### **PURPOSE**

1. The report provides Trust Board members with information in relation to two recently published position statements.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. That Board Members note the content of the report.

**PUBLIC/EXEMPT:** Public

**CONTACT:** Fiona Mackirdy, Head of Adoption and Fostering, Central Bedfordshire Council

Ken Harvey, Head of Service, Children with Disabilities and Children's Health, Central Bedfordshire Council

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## **POSITION STATEMENT - PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN LIVING WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS CARERS**

3. In March 2011 Statutory Guidance was published which requires the Council to publish a policy by 30 September 2011 setting out its approach towards promoting and supporting the needs of children living with family and friends carers (See Appendix A).
4. In developing the policy it is recognised that the Council has insufficient data about the numbers and demography of children in Central Bedfordshire who are cared for by friends and family. It is recommended that this area is developed as part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

### **CURRENT POSITION**

5. The policy does not materially affect operational practice in relation to children known or referred to social care services. It is not anticipated that the policy will have any impact on the numbers of open cases.
6. The Statutory Guidance requires the Council to consult on the policy. It was not possible to consult prior to the deadline for publishing the policy and a consultation is planned for early January 2012 so that the findings are considered for implementation during an early review of the policy in March 2012. Children's Trust Partners will have the opportunity to participate in the consultation.
7. Alongside consultation, a communications strategy will be developed and implemented to ensure that family and friends carers are aware of the policy and to fulfil the Council's responsibility to make information available to friends and family carers. The Policy has been published on the Central Bedfordshire Council website.
8. Review of the policy is planned for March 2012 to specifically include outcomes and response to the consultation planned for January 2012. This Strategy will be kept under review by Children's Services.

**POSITION STATEMENT: SHORT BREAKS**

9. Paragraph 6(1)(c) of Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989 requires Local Authorities to provide services to assist carers of disabled children that will give them breaks from caring for a disabled child.
  
10. The Duty and the Breaks for Carers of Disabled children Regulations 2011 came into force on 1st April 2011. It requires each Local Authority to produce a *Short Breaks Services Statement* by October 2011. The Statement underpins how these services will be commissioned and delivered by the Local Authority from October 2011.
  
11. This statement is attached at Appendix B for information and the eligibility criteria are included at Appendix C.

## Children's Services



Central Bedfordshire Council  
and Bedford Borough Council

working together

# Promoting and supporting the needs of children living with family or friends carers

<b>Author:</b>	Fiona Mackirdy
<b>Date agreed:</b>	September 2011
<b>Agreed by:</b>	Children's Services Management Team
<b>Date to be reviewed:</b>	March 2012

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In March 2011 Statutory Guidance was published which requires the Council to publish a Position Statement by 30 September 2011 setting out its approach towards promoting and supporting the needs of children living with family and friends carers. This is the statement.

It has been estimated that up to 300,000 children are cared for full time by a relative, friend or other person previously connected with the child. The majority of family and friends carers act informally by agreement with those holding parental responsibility for the children they care for. Most such arrangements remain entirely private without the need for the involvement of children's social care services. Where a child is assessed as being 'in need' support may be provided by the Council under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

In other circumstances family and friends care arrangements may be subject to the requirements of legislation such as that which governs private fostering, residence orders, special guardianship orders or children who are looked after by the local authority and placed with foster carers who are relatives, friends or other persons connected with the child.

This Position Statement sets out the Council's approach to meeting the needs of children living with family and friends carers in the following circumstances:

- In informal arrangements with a relative
- In informal arrangements with friends or other family members which last for a period of less than 28 days
- As a private fostering arrangement
- As a looked after child placed with foster carers who are relatives, friends or other 'connected persons'
- Under a residence order or special guardianship order
- In arrangements which may lead to an adoption order.

Further consultation on this Position Statement will take place via requests for comment on the website and with relevant stakeholders during the autumn of 2011. The Position Statement will be reviewed and updated in light of the consultation findings by March 2012.

The Council is aware that on-going work is needed to continue to refresh data for Central Bedfordshire in relation the numbers and needs of children in the area who are living with family and friends carers

## 2. DEFINITIONS

**Relative.** Under the Children Act 1989 a relative means grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent

**Family and Friends carer.** A relative, friend or other person with a prior connection with somebody else's child who is caring for that child full time. The child may or may not be looked after by the Local Authority.

**Parental Responsibility (PR).** As defined by Section 3 of the Children Act 1989 it is all the rights, duties, powers, responsibility and authority which by law a parent has in relation the child and his property. The mother of a child automatically has Parental Responsibility. Full parental responsibility can be conferred on the father of a child who was not married to the child's mother, by virtue of a Parental Responsibility Order or a guardian appointed by the court (or by a will, known as a testamentary guardian, or if he was present at registration of the birth and is named on the birth certificate.

**Connected Person.** A relative, friend or other person connected with a looked after child. A person in the last category may be someone who knows the child in a more professional capacity such as a childminder, teacher or youth worker, although these are not exclusive categories.

**Private Fostering.** An arrangement where a child who is under 16 (or 18 if disabled) and who has not been provided with accommodation by the local authority, is cared for and accommodated by someone who does not have parental responsibility for him and is not a relative, and the arrangement continues for a period of 28 days or more or is intended to do so.

**Informal arrangement.** An arrangement where a child is living with a family and friends carer who does not have parental responsibility for the child. Informal arrangements do not include arrangements where the child is looked after by the local authority, privately fostered, placed for adoption, or subject to a residence order or special guardianship order.

### 3. PRINCIPLES

Children should be enabled to live within their families unless this is not consistent with their welfare.

Permanence for children will be promoted to enable a child to have a sense of security, continuity, commitment and identity. Where it is not possible for a child to return to their birth parents family and friends care will often provide an alternative route to permanence, particularly where this can be supported by residence order, special guardianship order or adoption.

Children and young people who are unable to live with their parents should receive the support that they and their carers need to safeguard and promote their welfare, whether or not they are looked after by the local authority

Agencies providing family support and early intervention services should be aware of and sensitive to the needs of children who are living with family and friends carers. They should be accessible and welcoming to all generations and offer an appropriate service for people of all ages and with a variety of relationships to the child.

Support will be based on the needs of the child rather than solely their legal status; the individual circumstances of the child and the carer will be considered and where support services are identified as necessary to meet assessed needs these will not be withheld solely because the child is living in an informal arrangement.

In working with children in need the council will ensure that it considers the capacity and willingness of extended family members to care for the child on a short or longer term basis. Voluntary arrangements for the provision of services to children and families, including the consideration of potential alternative carers will always be explored before any steps are taken for the child to become looked after under Section 20 or 31 of the Children Act 1989. The council will assess the suitability of possible arrangements and the most appropriate legal status of such arrangements.

No child will have to become a looked after child under Section 20 or 31, for the sole purpose of enabling financial, practical or other support to be provided to the child's carer. The council will seek to provide any necessary support without the child becoming looked

after unless the child requires accommodation and meets the criteria of Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 or to do so is the most appropriate way to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and promoted

The views of the child, their parents, any person holding parental responsibility and anyone caring for the child will be taken into account in any assessment of need, or plan to provide services.

#### **4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

##### **Living with a relative under an informal private arrangement**

Some children may live with family or friends under an informal and entirely private arrangement which the Council knows nothing about. Unless there are concerns about the child's protection or welfare the Council does not need to be informed of or to assess this arrangement unless it falls within the definition of private fostering (see below).

The Council may be involved with some informal arrangements if the child is deemed to be in need under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, or in need of protection under Section 47. Examples are:

- Where as part of a child protection plan either in an emergency or on a planned basis the parent agrees for the child to live with a close relative while assessments are undertaken.
- As part of a child in need plan, a close relative cares for the child for a fixed short period while assessments are undertaken or as part of a support plan to the parent with parental agreement.

The parent may not be able to make the arrangements directly themselves but if he/she has agreed this, the Council can assist the family to agree and make the arrangements. The Council's role is not to "place" the child, but to support the family in making its own arrangements.

If the Council takes a major role in making arrangements for a child to be placed with a relative or friend, then it is more likely to be exercising its power and duties under Section.20 of the Children Act 1989 and the children would then be regarded as looked after.

The parent retains parental responsibility for the child. The carer does not have any parental responsibility for the child and will therefore be limited in terms of the decisions they are able to make concerning the child.

### **Privately fostered by wider family or a family friend**

A parent may make arrangements for their child to live with a member of the wider family or a family friend. The child is privately fostered if they are under 16 years (18 if disabled) if the placement lasts for longer than 28 days, the carer does not have parental responsibility for the child and falls outside of the definition of a close relative in S.105 of the Children Act 1989 (grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt; whether full blood, half blood or by marriage or civil partnership; or a step parent).

The parent should notify the Council in the area where the child will be living in advance of the arrangement. Alternatively the carer, or any agency who becomes aware this may be a privately fostered child should notify the Council. The Council has a legal duty to undertake an assessment and checks of the suitability of the carer, and carry out regular visits to the placement to check on the child's welfare. In some cases, the child may already be known to children's social care services as a child in need or in need of protection.

### **Appointed as a guardian after the death of a parent**

Where a parent has died and appointed the carer as guardian for the child, and no-one else holds parental responsibility, the carer will have parental responsibility. Where there is another person with parental responsibility, the carer will be treated as looking after the child under a private arrangement and may be a private foster carer. The Local Authority has no role unless the child is determined to be in need or at risk or it is a private fostering arrangement.

### **Residence Order**

A Residence Order is an order made by the Court under section 8 of the Children Act 1989 which specifies with whom a child should live.

A person in whose favour a Residence Order is made will acquire parental responsibility for the child so long as the Order is in force, and this will be shared with those already holding Parental Responsibility.

A Residence Order will normally last until a child is 16 years old although the Court may direct that the Order last until the child is 18, for example where the child is disabled, or where the child was previously looked after by the local authority and his or her foster carers have applied for the Order with a view to providing permanent care for him or her.

When a residence order is in place, the carer is under no duty to notify the council of the placement and the council is under no duty to monitor or assess the placement, unless the child is in need or in need of protection.

### **Special Guardianship Order**

A Special Guardianship Order is an order made by the Court under section 14A of the Children Act 1989. The Order offers an option to provide permanence for children who are unable to live with their parents but for whom adoption is not the right option, for example because of their age and existing attachment to their birth parents. It may therefore be appropriate where a child lives with relatives or friends of the family, or with foster carers who wish to offer a permanent home to the child.

A person in whose favour a Special Guardianship Order is made will become the child's Special Guardian and acquire parental responsibility for the child which he or she can exercise to the exclusion of any other person with parental responsibility.

Parental consent must still, however, be obtained in relation to the child's adoption, change of name or removal from the country for more than 3 months.

A Special Guardianship Order will last until a child is 18 years old. It will not automatically be discharged on the making of a Care Order, although the exercise of parental responsibility will be restricted as a result.

### **Accommodated by the Council**

The council and the child's parents may enter into a voluntary agreement for the council to provide accommodation for the child under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989. The council is under a duty to enable the child to live with a relative or friend unless this would not be reasonably practical or consistent with their welfare.

The parents of the child retain parental responsibility for the child. Any family member or friend caring for the child must be approved by the council as a foster carer as the child is considered to be looked after

### **Looked After by the Council**

A child may be looked after as a result of an interim or full care order (S.38 or Section 31 of the Children Act 1989).

A Court can only make a Care Order if it is satisfied that the child concerned is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of the care being given or likely to be given to him if the Order were not made. The Court must also have regard to a Welfare Checklist and so determine whether making a Care Order is in the child's best interests.

Under a Care Order or an Interim Care Order the council specified in the order acquires parental responsibility for the child, to be shared with the parents and any others who retain parental responsibility, for example Special Guardians. This will restrict the parents' exercise of their parental responsibility to the extent required to safeguard or promote the child's welfare.

Where a court has granted a care order Councils are under a duty to make arrangements to enable a looked after child to live with a relative or friend of the family unless this would not be reasonably practical or consistent with their welfare (S.23(6) of the Children Act 1989). Any family member or friend who cares for a Looked After Child must be approved as a foster carer.

## 5. POSITION STATEMENT

### Information about services and support

The Family and Youth Information Service provided by the Council ensures that information about local services is available to support children. This includes information about early years provision, day care and out of school facilities, health services, leisure services, schools and education. We will ensure this information is appropriate and available for family and friends carers. The Family and Youth Information Service can be accessed via the council's website [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/fyis](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/fyis), by contacting the council on 0300 300 8119 or by email: [fyis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fyis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk).

We will ensure that the information we provide includes details of specialist services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), services for children with special educational needs and those with disabilities.

We will ensure that children's centres, schools, early years settings and other people working with children and young people are aware of how to signpost friends and family carers to services and information. We will ensure that these settings consider their responsiveness to the needs of family and friends carers.

A list of independent organisations who can provide advice and support to family and friends carers is provided at Annex A and we will make sure this information is available via the Family and Youth Information Service.

Where family and friends carers are approved foster carers caring for a looked after child, the Council will pay for membership of the Fostering Network who provide independent advice to foster carers including those caring for a relative.

### Financial support

Family and friends carers may be entitled to state benefits and allowances, such as child benefit and child tax credit. Advice on benefits can be found in libraries, in children's centres and from the local Citizen Advice Bureaux. Contact details for the Citizen Advice Bureaux can be found at Annex B.

### Children in need

Where a child has been assessed by the Council's children's social care services as being 'in need' the council may provide family support services to support family and friends care arrangements.

A child is defined as being in need if:

- S/he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for her/him of services by a local authority or
- Her/his health or development is likely to be significantly impaired or further impaired, without the provision of such services or
- S/he is disabled

This can include assistance in kind, such as provision of furniture or periodic or regular financial support such as contribution to nursery. The council has a Children in Need procedure which gives more detail about the assessment process, eligibility for services

and the arrangements for making decisions about whether financial support will be offered. Financial support will only be provided where the assessment indicates that this is the most appropriate way to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. It is unlikely that ongoing financial support will be paid for a child in need living with family and friends for any considerable length of time. In this situation families will be supported to consider appropriate legal routes to secure the child's permanence within the family, such as residence order, special guardianship or adoption.

If a family and friends carer feels that the child is in need they should contact the Children's Intake and Assessment Team.

### **Private Fostering**

Under a private fostering arrangement the parent of the child remains responsible for the financial maintenance of the child. The council will not usually provide financial support for the arrangement, unless the child is deemed to be in need as detailed in the section above. In exceptional circumstances the fostering service may provide essential equipment to the carer such as a bed to enable them to continue to care for the child.

### **Residence Orders**

Where a family and friends carer has, or is considering applying for a residence order for a child the council has no legal duty to provide financial support and it is provided at our discretion. Under our Position Statement for residence order financial support we may assist with the cost for a relative to make an application for the order. We may also pay a means-tested residence order allowance if the child was looked after prior to the order being granted or without an allowance the child would be at risk of becoming looked after. Please refer to the Residence Order financial support policy for more detailed guidance and criteria. All allowances paid are subject to regular review.

### **Special Guardianship Orders**

Where a family and friends carer has or is considering applying for a special guardianship order for a child the council may assess the needs of the special guardian for support needed to care for the child and can provide a range of support and services, including financial support. However, there is no duty to provide financial support. It is the council's Position Statement only to provide a means tested allowance if the child was looked after prior to the order being granted or where, without an allowance the child would be at risk of becoming looked after. Please refer to the Special Guardianship financial support policy for more detailed guidance and criteria.

### **Children Looked After**

Where a child is looked after either in a voluntary arrangement under Section 20, or due to a Care order made by a court, the family and friends carer will be an approved foster carer and will be eligible for a weekly fostering allowance. Please see fostering policies for more details.

### **Contact**

We recognise that contact between children and their parents is important in helping the child to maintain a sense of belonging and identity unless it is not practicable or consistent with the child's welfare.

Where a child is looked after, the council has a duty to promote contact between the child and their family where they are living away from home unless it is not practicable or consistent with the child's family. This includes where they are living with family and friends carers. The child's care plan will detail how this will be put into practice.

The care plan will take into account the particular difficulties that can arise in family and friends placements. Often the carers will be reluctant, at least initially, to set boundaries on contact. It is important therefore that the child's social worker takes responsibility for this and makes sure that the care plan details what the contact arrangements are. Carers can often come under pressure to increase contact, when this is neither desirable for them nor the child. They may also fail to inform the social worker of any increased or unplanned contact. Contact may change with the child's needs, but this needs to be properly managed and agreed as part of a contact plan.

Where a child is not looked after the council's duties are different. The council has to promote contact between a child who is living away from home and his family where it is necessary to do so to safeguard and promote his welfare. Where the child is in need or in need of protection the council may need to be involved to facilitate or support safe and or appropriate contact.

Where the council is involved in promoting or facilitating contact this is usually by way of referral to an independent contact service provided by a local voluntary organisation.

The council will ensure that the Family and Youth Information Service provides information about local contact services and family mediation services for those family and friends carers who do not have council involvement in contact arrangements.

### **Family Group Meetings**

The council provides a Family Group Meeting service to support families to identify resources and support that they can provide to meet the child's needs, including enabling children to remain living within the family as appropriate.

Meetings are held at early stages in planning for the child to engage family members and to support them in finding solutions to the issues at hand.

The family group meeting service is available to all families involved with children's social care services, although priority will be given to cases where the child is currently or at risk of becoming looked after, or where there are child protection concerns. Referral to the family group meeting service is made by the child's social worker and the family are involved in agreeing which family members will be involved.

### **Private Fostering Arrangements**

The council has a Statement of Purpose, policy and procedures in relation to private fostering which set out how the council implements its duties to assess and visit private fostering arrangements.

Private foster carers have access to the same range of support services as informal family and friends carers.

## Family and Friends Foster Carers

Where a child is looked after by the council either by a voluntary arrangement with the agreement of their parents or because a care order is in place, the council will seek to place the child with family or friends wherever possible.

A looked after child can only be placed with a family and friends carer if they have been given temporary or full approval as a foster carer. In order to be approved as a foster carer the council has to assess the suitability of the carer and their household in line with standards set out in legal regulations.

Family and friends foster carers have equal entitlement to the support, training, advice and allowances available to all other foster carers.

A range of fostering policies, including the procedure for Placing a Child with Family and Friends, gives further detail on the assessment, support and training of family members caring for a child on a planned or emergency basis.

## Complaints

The council has a procedure for dealing with complaints, including those about children's social care.

Any child or family and friends carer who feels they have grounds to make a complaint should let us know by telephoning or writing to the manager of the service they are giving feedback about.

Alternatively the Customer Relations team can be contacted as detailed below:

- **Telephone:** 0300 300 6077 or 0300 300 4995 (please leave a message if the team is not available and they will contact you within 1 working day).
- **Email:** [customer.relations@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:customer.relations@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)
- **Post:** Customer Relations, Strategy and Performance, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Beds SG17 5TQ

## 6. HOW THIS POSITION STATEMENT WILL BE PUT INTO PRACTICE

Regular consultation will take place with the wider community including friends and family carers to inform this Position Statement and its implementation.

A communication strategy will be developed and implemented to ensure that friends and family carers are aware of the Position Statement and that appropriate information is made available through leaflets, information on the council website, via the Family and Youth Information Service and via stakeholder groups.

Briefings will be undertaken with children's services staff to ensure they are familiar with this Position Statement and the Statutory Guidance which outlines the Council's responsibilities to children living with friends and family.

A financial model will be developed alongside the Children in Need procedures to outline clearly the criteria for ongoing financial support under Section 17.

The Council will appoint a lead officer to oversee the implementation of this Position Statement, as required by the statutory guidance. This will be the Head of Safeguarding and Children in Care. The lead office may delegate certain tasks to other officers and will work closely with the Head of Early Intervention and Prevention, and the Head of Adoption and Fostering.

Our commitment is to keep this position statement under constant review to allow us to meet the requirements of the consultation. Therefore, if you have any comments, please email Fiona Mackirdy, Head of Fostering and Adoption at [Fiona.mackirdy@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Fiona.mackirdy@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk).

## APPENDIX A

### Central Bedfordshire Council Children's Social Care Services

Assesses and supports children who are in need, in need of protection or looked after by the Council

**Intake and Assessment Team** – for all initial enquiries about children in need or in need of protection

Telephone: 0300 300 8303

Email: [intake&assessment@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:intake&assessment@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

**Children with Disabilities Team** – for all initial enquiries about children with disabilities

Telephone: 0300 300 6363 or 0300 300 6358

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

**Adoption and Fostering Team** – support for families and friends carers who are foster carers, adopters or special guardians

Telephone: 0300 300 8090

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

### Action for Prisoners' Families

Works to reduce the negative impact of imprisonment on prisoners' families. Produces publications and resources, and provides advice, information and training as well as networking opportunities.

[www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk](http://www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk)

Address: Unit 21, Carlson Court 116 Putney Bridge Road London, SW15 2NQ Tel: 020 8812 3600

E-mail: [info@actionpf.org.uk](mailto:info@actionpf.org.uk)

Advice line: 0808 808 2003

[info@prisonersfamilieshelpline.org.uk](http://info@prisonersfamilieshelpline.org.uk)

### Addaction

Offers a range of support developed for families and carers affected by substance misuse.

[www.addaction.org.uk](http://www.addaction.org.uk)

Address: 67-69 Cowcross Street London EC1M 6PU

Tel. 020 7251 5860

Email: [info@addaction.org.uk](mailto:info@addaction.org.uk)

### Adfam

Works with families affected by drugs and alcohol, and supports carers of children whose parents have drug and alcohol problems.

[www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk)

Address: 25 Corsham Street, London N1 6DR

Tel: 020 7553 7640

Email: [admin@adfam.org.uk](mailto:admin@adfam.org.uk)

### **Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)**

Offers free independent advice and information for parents and carers on a range of state education and schooling issues, including admissions, exclusion, attendance, special educational needs and bullying.

[www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

Address: 1c Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London N5 2DQ

General advice line: 0808 800 5793

Exclusion advice line: 0808 800 0327

Exclusion information line: 020 7704 9822 (24hr answer phone)

## **BeGrand.net**

Website offering information and advice to grandparents, plus online and telephone advice.

[www.begrand.net](http://www.begrand.net)

Helpline: 0845 434 6835

## **British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF)**

Provides information and advice about adoption and fostering and publishes resources.

[www.baaf.org.uk](http://www.baaf.org.uk)

Address: Saffron House, 6-10 Kirby Street, London EC1N 8TS

Tel: 020 7421 2600

Email: [mail@baaf.org.uk](mailto:mail@baaf.org.uk)

## **Children's Legal Centre**

Provides free independent legal advice and factsheets to children, parents, carers and professionals.

[www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)

Address: University of Essex Wivenhoe Park Colchester Essex CO4 3SQ

Tel: 01206 877 910

E-mail: [clc@essex.ac.uk](mailto:clc@essex.ac.uk)

Child Law Advice Line: 0808 802 0008

Community Legal Advice - Education: 0845 345 4345

## **Citizens Advice Bureaux**

Helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice through local bureaux and website.

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

## **Department for Education**

Lists details of telephone help lines and online services to provide information, advice and support on a range of issues that parents and families may face in bringing up children and young people.

[www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families](http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families)

**Family Fund Trust** Helps families with severely disabled or seriously ill children to have choices and the opportunity to enjoy ordinary life. Gives grants for things that make life easier and more enjoyable for the disabled child and their family.

Address: 4 Alpha Court Monks Cross Drive York YO32 9WN [www.familyfund.org.uk](http://www.familyfund.org.uk)  
Tel: 0845 130 4542  
Email: [info@familyfund.org.uk](mailto:info@familyfund.org.uk)

## **Family Rights Group (FGR)**

Provides advice to parents and other family members whose children are involved with or require children's social care services because of welfare needs or concerns. Publishes resources, helps to develop support groups for family and friends carers, and runs a discussion board.

[www.frg.org.uk](http://www.frg.org.uk)

Address: Second Floor The Print House 18 Ashwin Street London E8 3DL  
Tel: 020 7923 2628  
Advice line: 0800 801 0366  
Email: [advice@frg.org.uk](mailto:advice@frg.org.uk)

## **The Fostering Network**

Supports foster carers and anyone with an interest in fostering to improve the lives of children in care. Publishes resources and runs Fosterline, a confidential advice line for foster carers including concerns about a child's future, allegations and complaints, legislation and financial matters.

[www.fostering.net](http://www.fostering.net)

Address: 87 Blackfriars Road London SE1 8HA  
Email: [info@fostering.net](mailto:info@fostering.net)  
Tel: 020 7620 6400  
Fosterline: 0800 040 7675  
Email: [fosterline@fostering.net](mailto:fosterline@fostering.net)

## **The Grandparents' Association**

Supports grandparents and their families, especially those who have lost or are losing contact with their grandchildren because of divorce, separation or other family problems, those caring for their grandchildren on a full-time basis, and those with childcare responsibilities for their grandchildren.

[www.grandparents-association.org.uk](http://www.grandparents-association.org.uk)

Address: Moot House The Stow Harlow Essex CM20 3AG  
Tel: 01279 428040  
Helpline: 0845 434 9585  
Welfare benefits advice and information: 0844 357 1033  
Email: [info@grandparents-association.org.uk](mailto:info@grandparents-association.org.uk)

## Grandparents Plus

Champions the role of grandparents and the wider family in children's lives, especially when they take on the caring role in difficult family circumstances.

Address: Grandparents Plus 18 Victoria Park Square Bethnal Green London E2 9PF

Tel: 020 8981 8001

Email: [info@grandparentsplus.org.uk](mailto:info@grandparentsplus.org.uk)

## Mentor UK

Promotes the health and wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the damage that drugs can do to lives.

[www.mentoruk.org.uk](http://www.mentoruk.org.uk)

Address: Fourth Floor 74 Great Eastern Street London EC2A 3JG

Tel: 020 7739 8494

Email: [admin@mentoruk.org](mailto:admin@mentoruk.org)

## Family Mediation Helpline

Provides information and advice about family mediation services and eligibility for public funding.

08456 026627

[www.familymediationhelpline.co.uk](http://www.familymediationhelpline.co.uk)

## National Family Mediation (NFM)

Provides mediation services to support couples who are separated, and their children and others affected by this.

[www.nfm.org.uk](http://www.nfm.org.uk)

4 Barnfield Hill, Exeter EX1 1SR.

0300 4000 636

[general@nfm.org.uk](mailto:general@nfm.org.uk)

**Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group** Operates helpline and provides a variety of services to support anyone who has a link with someone in prison, prisoners and other agencies.

[www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk](http://www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk)

Address: Valentine House 1079 Rochdale Road Blackley Manchester M9 8AJ Tel: 0161 702 1000

Offenders' Families Helpline Tel: 0808 808 2003

Email: [info@prisonersfamilieshelpline.co.uk](mailto:info@prisonersfamilieshelpline.co.uk)

## **Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT)**

Provides practical and emotional support to prisoners and to their children and families. The Kinship Care Support Service provides support and advice to family members and friends who care for children whose parents are in HMP Holloway.

[www.prisonadvice.org.uk](http://www.prisonadvice.org.uk)

Address: Park Place 12 Lawn Lane Vauxhall London SW8 1UD

Telephone: 020 77359535

## **Parents Against Drug Abuse (PADA)**

Delivers support and services to the families of substance users, including a national helpline.

[www.pada.org.uk](http://www.pada.org.uk)

Address: The Foundry Marcus Street Birkenhead CH41 1EU

Phone: 0151 649 1580

National Families Helpline: 08457 023867

## **Parentline Plus**

Provides help and support in all aspects of family life, including information, an online chat facility and a 24 hour helpline.

[www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

Address: CAN Mezzanine 49-51 East Road London N1 6AH

Tel: 020 7553 3080

24hr Advice line: 0808 800 2222

Email: [parentsupport@familylives.org.uk](mailto:parentsupport@familylives.org.uk)

## **TalktoFrank**

The government's national drugs helpline which offers free confidential drugs information and advice 24 hours a day. Information and advice is also available via the website.

[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

24 hour advice line: 0800 77 66 00

Text: 82111

Email: [frank@talktofrank.com](mailto:frank@talktofrank.com)

## **Voice**

Advocacy organisation for children living away from home or in need.

[www.voiceyp.org](http://www.voiceyp.org)

Address: 320 City Road London EC1V 2NZ

Tel: 020 7833 5792

Young person's advice line: 0808 800 5792

Email: [info@voiceyp.org](mailto:info@voiceyp.org)

## **Young Minds**

Works to improve the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people and empowering their parents and carers.

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

Address: 48-50 St John Street London EC1M 4DG

Tel: 020 7336 8445

Parents helpline: 0808 802 5544

## APPENDIX B

### Mid-Bedfordshire (Biggleswade) Citizens Advice Bureau

Century House  
Market Square  
BIGGLESWADE  
Bedfordshire  
SG18 8UU

Telephone: 01767 601368 appointments line

Web site: [www.midbedscab.org.uk](http://www.midbedscab.org.uk)

### Mid-Bedfordshire (Amptill) Citizens Advice Bureau

The Court House  
Woburn Street  
AMPTHILL  
Bedfordshire  
MK45 2HX

Telephone: 01525 402742 appointment line

Web site: [www.midbedscab.org.uk](http://www.midbedscab.org.uk)

### Dunstable and District Citizens Advice Bureau

Grove House  
76 High Street North  
DUNSTABLE  
Bedfordshire  
LU6 1NF

Telephone: 01582 661384 (advice line)  
01582 670003 (administration line)

Web site: [www.dunstablecab.org.uk](http://www.dunstablecab.org.uk)

### Leighton Linlade Citizens Advice Bureau

Bossard House  
West Street  
LEIGHTON BUZZARD  
Bedfordshire  
LU7 1DA

Telephone: 01525 373878 (Advice Line)  
01525 374589 (Administration only - no advice given)

Fax: 01525 371161

Web site: [www.leightonlinladecab.org.uk](http://www.leightonlinladecab.org.uk)

**Bedford & District Citizens Advice Bureau**

7a St Paul's Square  
BEDFORD  
Bedfordshire  
MK40 1SQ

Telephone: 01234 354384

Fax: 01234 210065

Web site: [www.bedfordcab.org.uk](http://www.bedfordcab.org.uk)

# Central Bedfordshire Short Breaks Statement

## Statement of Purpose.

This Statement is for families who have a child aged 0-18 years with a disability and who live in Central Bedfordshire.

Paragraph 6(1)(c) of Schedule 2 of the Children Act 1989 requires Local Authorities to provide services to assist carers of disabled children that will give them breaks from caring for a disabled child.

To meet the requirements of the Regulations Local Authorities must have regard to the needs of Carers in respect of their capacity to care for, or continue to care for their disabled child, and must provide a range of services designed to meet this need. [*'Carer' means a person who provides care for a disabled child and who is either the child's parent or a person who has parental responsibility for that child. 'Disabled' has the meaning given in section 17(11) of the 1989 Children Act (2)*]

- day care in the child's own home or elsewhere;
- overnight care in the child's own home or elsewhere;
- educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside their own homes; services in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays.

This Duty and the Breaks for Carers of Disabled children Regulations 2011 came into force on 1st April 2011.

It requires each Local Authority to produce a *Short Breaks Services Statement* by October 2011.

The Statement underpins how these services will be commissioned and delivered by the Local Authority from October 2011.

A yearly review and consultation will be undertaken with all partners to ensure that services meets changing needs and that families know what services are available and how they can access them.

This is a partnership document informed through joint work with Children's Services, families, parents, carers, children with disabilities, health workers and schools . The voluntary sector will continue to contribute.

In Central Bedfordshire we will provide the range of short breaks that families need.

## **Definition of Short Break Services.**

Short breaks are opportunities for children and young people with disabilities to spend time away from their primary carers. This will provide opportunities for their parents and carers to have a break from caring responsibilities. Short breaks can include day, evening, overnight, weekend or holiday activities that take place in the home of the child or young person, the home of an approved carer, a residential or a community setting. Short breaks range from supporting children and young people with disabilities to access universal services through to providing specialist services at local or a regional level.

## **Consultation**

The Statement has been informed by partnership consultation events:

- 2009 Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) Parent Consultation. The 2009 AHDC consultation was informed by in-depth consultation with parents through Family Voice. The focus of this included clubs, social activities; communication, information; access and general provision.
- July 2011 – September 2011. The Council consulted with professionals including social workers, early years, health care professionals and voluntary organisations. The views of parents, carers, children and young people were sought. The Register of Children with Disabilities and existing support groups for families, carers and children in Central Bedfordshire contributed to our knowledge.

The content and recommendations are outlined below.

### **What parents told us they wanted in 2009.**

#### **“More activities for teenagers”**

**So....**we have increased the number of activities for disabled teenagers and offered new experiences. We have started 3 new social clubs which offer local provision.

#### **“Respite care during the holidays”**

**So....**we provided additional play scheme placements over the school holiday periods to relieve the pressure on families, particularly in the Biggleswade area where recent lack of provision had an impact on families managing the summer holiday.

#### **“More flexible respite care tailored to the needs of the family”**

**So....**we have worked with families to increase the opportunities offered through direct payments. We are currently working with special schools in Biggleswade and Houghton Regis to ensure that we are able to offer further flexibility to families through a range of outreach services. This is addressing the need for more support in the south of Bedfordshire which was an area of concern for parents.

#### **“Promote and support groups that offer help to families during the holidays”**

**So....**we worked with the voluntary and community sector to provide holiday provision which would improve outcomes for children and young people. This included an opportunity for disabled and young people to participate in theatre productions.

**“More information on short break provision”**

**So....**Family Voice supported the publication of a services directory for families.

**“Have accessible documents which clearly show the criteria for service provision”**

**So....**Family Voice supported the local authority in the rewrite of the eligibility criteria for access to social care support.

In 2009, as part of the Aiming High initiative we directly involved young people in the development of services. Over a 2 week period more than 90 young people gave their views on the future shape of short break services. The children and young people were aged between 4 and 19 and had various disabilities including Autism, Asperger’s Syndrome, Learning Disability, Physical Disability and Down’s syndrome.

They were asked what leisure activities they wanted, where they wanted to do them and who they wanted to do them with.

**What young people told us they wanted in 2009.**

**“Swimming – it’s healthy for you!” and “diving and splashing”**

**So....**Central Bedfordshire introduced a policy which allowed access to free swimming for under 16s for a short period. This was paid for by Central Government and then withdrawn in 2010. In addition we funded additional places for 16 plus year olds. In 2010, some parents carried out a further audit of the local leisure centres to determine whether we were maximising the use of the centres. An action plan was completed and is now being taken forward with leisure providers to further improved access. Play and leisure staff have been trained in disability awareness.

**“Music because it’s fun”**

**So....**we have provided funding for musical instruments in a number of the short break settings to provide the opportunity for children and young people to participate in musical activities.

High on the list were also artistic activities – drawing, acting, dancing, film making and we gave funding to organisations to provide new opportunities. This included them being able to participate in a production of Romeo and Juliet and worked with a theatre group to perform in a public circus performance.

This consultation also demonstrated that children wanted to do these activities with friends and family rather than at school or in residential short break homes and so the emphasis needed to be on after school clubs and weekend activities. There has been a reduced use of residential provision as a result of more community based activities.

We have continued to act on the feedback we have received about the services that you need most.

**The 2011 consultation informed the authority that all partners including parents and children would like to see further improvements:**

They wanted us to:

- Provide information from people who understand the issues for disabled children and their families.
- Increase the number of activities in Biggleswade and Leighton Buzzard.
- Increase activities and opportunities for teenagers which include those designed to develop life skills and independence.
- Increase support for the siblings of disabled children.
- Support families in managing children with challenging behaviour.
- Offer more flexibility in support services, especially at weekends and school holidays.
- Provide suitable transport arrangements for children to access short breaks.

We are committed to ensuring this feedback influences the development of future services.

To demonstrate this short Breaks in Central Bedfordshire now include:

- Holiday activities.
- Out of school social activities during the week and at weekends.
- Sibling Group activities.
- Overnight Short Breaks.
- Support to access the community.
- Assisted leisure activities.
- Direct Payments.
- Day Care.
- Specialist Childminders (up to age 11).

**Access to Short Breaks.**

In Central Bedfordshire there is a document that sets out clearly the eligibility criteria to qualify for access which has been written in partnership with Family Voice.

Families meeting the minimum criteria of a Local Offer can expect access to a short breaks grant. This can be used for play schemes, activity schemes, activity sessions or any other form of short break provision that best suits the child and families needs. Accessing this provision will be at the families' discretion.

These families will be offered a cash sum to pay for a minimum level of activities of £200 per annum.

Families already receiving a service will have their packages adjusted accordingly.

These children and families will not require a social work assessment to access this provision as long as they have met the criteria set.

Some families will require support over and above the local offer. They will remain as subject to a social work assessment.

If the family requires additional specialist short breaks following completion of the social work assessment this will be subject to review. Any packages provided will be reviewed at a minimum six monthly interval to ensure the family is receiving the right level of support.

Families can request a review or a further assessment of needs at any time.

The council proposes that access to the “local offer” will be available to those disabled children in categories A; B & C of the eligibility criteria, as outlined in appendix 1. The service will determine this through consultation with parents.

The children in categories D and E will be signposted to appropriate mainstream services through the Family and Youth Information Service.

### **Reviewing this Statement.**

The council appreciates the importance of consultation to ensure this provision is meeting needs for children with disabilities. It will evaluate the provision and its effectiveness alongside partners.

The first review of this statement will be in April 2012 and annually following this. The outcomes of consultation and reviews will be made available on the Council’s website.

### **Contact us...**

by email: [Christine.Collis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Christine.Collis@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

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

or by telephone: 0300 300 6311

Write to Short Breaks Consultation, Central Bedfordshire Council,

## Eligibility Criteria Table

Disabled children are by definition 'Children in Need' in terms of the Children Act 1989 and entitled to an initial assessment. Additionally, their parents and carers are entitled to a carer's assessment. When we assess the needs of disabled children and young people we take into account the needs of their parents and other children in their immediate family. Children and families are assessed in fixed bands and can move between levels of support if needs change.					
Needs Band	A	B	C	D	E
<p>Disabled child's care needs and social or emotional development</p> <p><i>Examples</i></p>	<p>Services required to prevent immediate risk of substantial impairment or long-term accommodation.</p> <p>Child requires regular physical restraint, behaviour regularly injurious to self or others, requires night-time supervision. Child has physical impairment requiring handling in hoists for all transfers, unable to dress, toilet, bathe or feed themselves. Child with complex medical needs requiring frequent night-time attention for medication, turning and / or intubation.</p> <p>A substantial amount of support is needed to meet siblings' essential care needs.</p>	<p>Child has substantial needs and requires significant and specialist multi-agency services to meet those needs and / or alleviate stress in the family which may lead to A.</p> <p>Child has challenging behaviour, self-injurious behaviour arising from his / her disability. He / she requires a significant amount of supervision. Child has limited self-help skills, needs assistance with toileting, feeding, transferring. Child is a wheelchair user but can weight bear.</p>	<p>Child requires specialised services to promote their health or development and / or alleviate stress in the family which may lead to A or B.</p> <p>Child has general developmental delay and other needs such as hyperactivity, limited sleep pattern, other communication and behavioural problems, obsessions. Child has limited mobility but developed self-help skills.</p>	<p>Child requires advice / support to access local services that are available for all children, to broaden experiences and / or prevent build up of stress in family.</p> <p>Child has some developmental delay and / or behavioural problems. Child has a sensory impairment or learning disability which does not significantly impact on their care needs.</p>	<p>Child leading life as normally as possible and additional care needs easily met by family, some guidance on services available maybe required.</p> <p>Child has diagnosed disability which does not impact on functioning of child or family.</p>
Siblings needs	A substantial amount of support is needed to meet siblings' essential care needs.	A significant amount of care is needed to support all of the siblings' essential needs.	Support is needed to ensure siblings' personal or social needs are met.	Advice needed to broaden sibling opportunities.	Child's care needs do not significantly impact on siblings' opportunities.
<i>Examples</i>	Essential care needs of the disabled child prevents parents from attending to any sibling's essential needs for extended periods of time. Or family is in receipt of assistance in respect of siblings' care needs at Band A or B.	Sibling also has a disability at Band D or E.	Sibling unable to access leisure facilities, clubs, etc due to care needs of disabled child. Or young carer's responsibilities in relation to disabled child. Or social isolation due to sibling's behaviours.	Family unaware of services available to non-disabled child or how to access them. Or family unable to spend quality / individual time with non-disabled child.	
Parents / carers needs	Parents / carers mental or physical health requires substantial support to enable them to meet their child's essential needs and / or there is a substantial risk of family breakdown.	Parents / carers can only meet their child's essential needs at significant cost to their own physical or mental health or there is a risk of family breakdown.	Parents / carers need support to provide care for their other dependants. Parents / carers need support to prevent a significant impact on their personal or social lives.	Parents / carers need advice and support on universal services and activities for their child, to give them a break from their caring responsibilities.	Child's care needs do not significantly impact on parents / carers personal or social lives.
Parenting / caring capacity	Substantial provision of services required to ensure parents / carers provide adequate parental care.	Significant provision of services is required to ensure parents / carers provide adequate parental care.	Support services are required to ensure parents / carers provide adequate parental care.	Parents / carers can provide reasonable care but may benefit from advice / information.	Parents can provide reasonable care within existing support network.
<i>Examples</i>	Parenting capacity seriously affected by mental health, disability, medical issues, serious stress. Other major care responsibilities e.g. another member of the household who has significant disabilities.	Families where main caring falls on one partner who has difficulty coping because of mental health issues, isolation, medical conditions, etc.	Families where there are competing demands of all the children in the family. Some single parents who have individual needs.	Parents / carers who need information and advice who either cannot read or speak English. Families who have other caring roles. Families where there are marital / relationship problems. Parents / carers with financial / housing / other family pressures.	
Accessible Service	Following an assessment of the child and family's needs by a social worker from the Childcare Disability Team, a package of support will be agreed at a multi-disciplinary panel, with the child and parents / carers involving one or more of the following (depending on their individual level of need / family circumstances): Direct Payments, Home Care, Home Based Family Support, Sitting Service, Shared Care Service (overnight and day family based short breaks), Overnight Residential Short Breaks, Specialist Holiday and Weekend Clubs, Specialist After-School Clubs, Transition Planning and Support.	Following an assessment of the child and family's needs by a social worker from the Childcare Disability Team, a package of support will be agreed at a multi-disciplinary panel, with the child and parents / carers involving one or more of the following (depending on their individual level of need / family circumstances): Direct Payments, Home Care, Home Based Family Support, Sitting Service, Shared Care Service (overnight and day family based short breaks), Overnight Residential Short Breaks, Specialist Holiday and Weekend Clubs, Specialist After-School Clubs, Transition Planning and Support.	Following either a referral to a Multi-Agency Family Support (MAFS) Panel or contact with the Disability Information Officer in Luton, the child and family will be signposted and supported to access a range of community and mainstream services. There is not a statutory assessment of the child and family needs, not input from the Social Work team. Accessible services might include: community (specialist) childminding, childcare, holiday clubs and afterschool clubs, leisure and sport activities, educational support, advice and support from a Personal Advisor (PA) and Family Support.		

## Appendices

### **Central Bedfordshire Council’s Eligibility Criteria for short break and social care services for disabled children.**

Disabled children are by definition “Children in Need” in terms of the Children Act 1989 and entitled to an Initial Assessment. Additionally, their parents and carers are entitled to a Carers Assessment. When we assess the needs of disabled children and young people we take into account the needs of their parents and other children in their immediate family.

Those children assessed as having a substantial disability are eligible to support through the Children’s Disability (social work) Team. This may include specialist family support, residential short breaks, family based care or Direct Payments. Families who are not eligible for services through the Children with Disabilities Team may be eligible for services from our Children’s Services Team; or can be supported through advice and guidance to access services locally that are available for all families.

### **What are Short Breaks?**

Short Breaks are designed to support disabled children and their families, enabling children to experience new relationships, environments and positive activities whilst giving families a break from their caring role. They are preventative services that form part of the support received by disabled children. These include day, evening, overnight or weekend activities and take place in the child’s own home, the home of an approved carer, a residential or community setting.

Provision of short breaks and family support is based on an assessment of the whole family, addressing both their personal and social needs; and are part of an integrated programme of support which is regularly reviewed.

Short break and family support services in categories a, b and c of Central Bedfordshire’s (**see Eligibility Criteria Table**) eligibility criteria are additional services required to support disabled children and their families and are over and above the universal services expected and available to families.

## Eligibility Criteria

### Central Bedfordshire's eligibility criteria

- Is informed by the Local Authorities powers to meet the needs of disabled children and their families under the Children Act 1989, and the Disability Discrimination Act 19958 (Section 49A).
- Sets out a fair, understandable and transparent approach that enable short breaks and family support services to be used as a preventative service that does not restrict provision to those threatened by family breakdown or other points of crisis.
- Enables access to a wide range of local short break and family support provision , tailored to families assessed needs and allowing families to move between bands if needs or circumstances change.
- Is based on a staged approach that is informed by an assessment of the child's needs and takes account of parenting capacity; the needs of the child; the environment and other factors; the wishes and feelings of the child and his parents.

There are two key ways that disabled children and their families can receive support:

1. For disabled children and their families the eligibility for specialist social care and short break services is applied for at levels a, b and c on the needs grid following an Initial Assessment of their needs, and if appropriate a more detailed "Core" Assessment. Having completed the assessment, a multi-agency Resource Panel next considers what services or support can be offered.
2. The needs of some children and their families – at levels d and e on the needs grid – will best be met by the provision of information, advice and guidance to families through supporting them to access universal services that are available to all families locally. Central Bedfordshire Council is funding as Disability Information Officer within the Child and Family Information Service whom families with disabled children can contact themselves. Disabled children and their families may also be referred through the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), to a neighbourhood multi-agency family support panel. This allows families to access services in the community without unnecessary assessment and social work activity.

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Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust  
Trust Board Meeting  
1 December 2011

Item 8

## Children's Trust Board: Forward plan

Meeting date	Issue
1 March 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarter 3 performance report</li> <li>• In depth report from one of the Delivery Groups</li> <li>• Report on review of Parenting/Early Intervention</li> <li>• Report from the 14-19 Strategy Group on short and medium term proposals in relation to NEETs and raising the participation age</li> <li>• Skills Shaping: The Role of the Local Authority</li> <li>• Health update – standing item for feedback on the health agenda and the Health and Wellbeing Board when established</li> <li>• Report reviewing the needs assessment, user feedback and results of consultation</li> </ul>
24 May 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Report and revisions to Plan</li> <li>• Health update – standing item for feedback on the health agenda and the Health and Wellbeing Board when established</li> </ul>
To be confirmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Report (September 2012)</li> </ul>

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