



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Children's Services **Directory**

OUR COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE IN PRACTICE

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES



At the heart of everything we do

Welcome to Bedford Borough Children's Services

Dear Education Partner

As the new Director of Children's Services, I thank you for all your work to date in supporting the children and young people in Bedford Borough to receive an improving quality of Education so that they can achieve well.

We value our partnership working and I am always grateful for feedback that will support us all in making a positive difference to the life chances of our children and young people. In Children's Services we strongly adhere to the open principle of "you said, we did" and therefore I am delighted to share with you the first Children's Services handbook. I hope that you will find this document helpful in navigating support in a system that I know can sometimes feel quite complex. We are looking to produce an updated directory each year and I would welcome any feedback about how we might further support you in accessing the "right help at the right time" in support of all our children and young people.

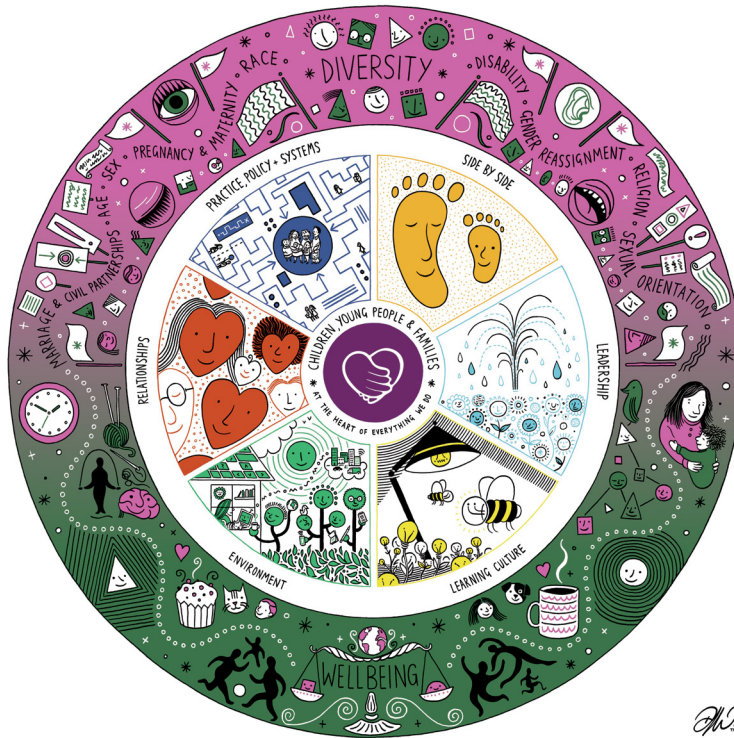
Bedford Borough Children's Services is defined into three key areas - Education Services, Children's Social Care and Children's Early Help and Family Support. Within each of these areas there are a number of teams providing essential services to all families, children and schools across Bedford Borough. All our teams and the services we offer play a key role in the delivery of the Bedford Borough One Children's Services vision.

Bedford Borough Council is committed to working with its communities and partners to improve the local quality of life so that it is a better place to live, learn, work and visit.

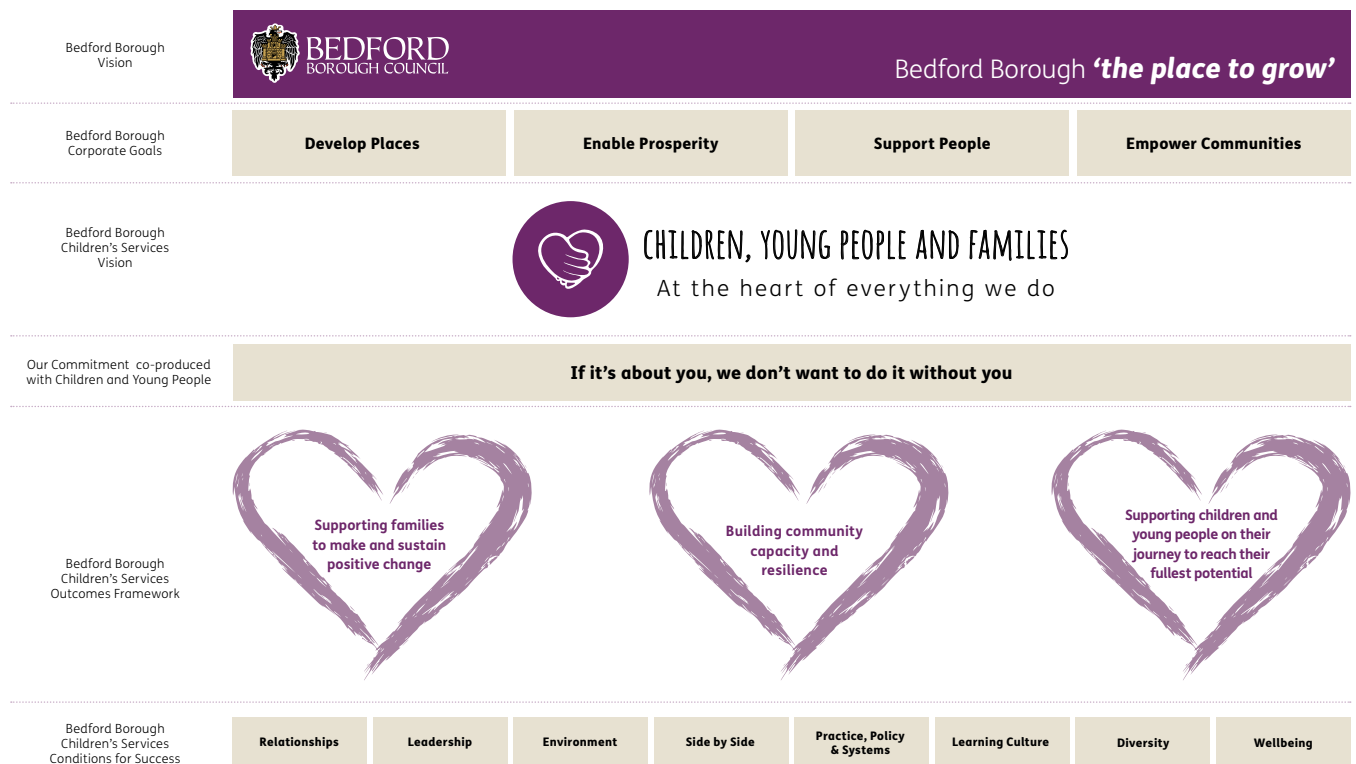
Best wishes

Harmesh Bhogal
Director of Children's Services

The image below illustrates our Conditions For Success and our Practice Framework



This framework shows how the vision links to both corporate vision, our commitment to children and young people our outcomes framework and our conditions for success



Children's Services Senior Leadership Team



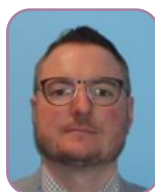
Harmesh Bhogal
Director of Children's Services



Jonathan Churchill
Interim Chief Officer
for Children's Services



**Wendy Beeton
Townshend**
Manager for Early Help
and Families



Chris Morris
Chief Officer for
Education, SEND
and Schools



Christian Weatherley
Manager for Social
Work Practice

Children's Social Care Senior Structure



Jonathan Churchill
Interim Chief Officer for Children's Services



Samantha Gordon
Manager for
Corporate Parenting



Dan Jones
Safeguarding Quality
& Assurance



Patrick Jennings
Manager for
Youth Offending



Elsie Fordham
Manager for Children's
Social Care

Early Help and Intervention Leadership Structure



Wendy Beeton Townshend
Manager for Early Help and Families

Ranjit Sohal
Team Leader
Early Help Quality and
Families First



David Roberts
Team Leader Inclusion
Support and Welfare



Karen Davis
Team Leader
Early Years
Family Support



Christopher Lee
Team Leader
Adolescent
Response Team



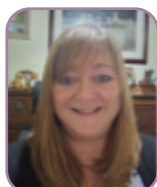
James Braddon
Team Leader
Early Help Hub
IFD



Sam Hammond
Team Leader Early
Help Family Support



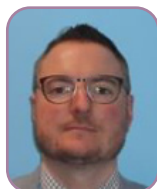
Claire Dempster
Senior Officer Domestic
Abuse Strategy



Christopher Allan
Team Leader
Early Help Hub



Education, SEND and School Infrastructure Leadership Structure



Christopher Morris

Chief Officer for Education, SEND and Schools Infrastructure

Tim Long
Head of SEND and
Schools Support
Services & Principal
Education Psychologist



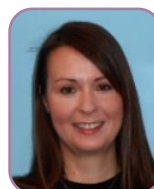
Judith Lovely
Head of School
Improvement Services



Alison Pullen
Head Teacher
Virtual School



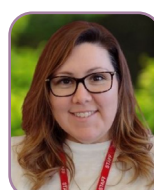
Angela Stango
Team Manager
Statutory Support
Services



Francesca Davies
Manager for School
Organisation and
Admissions



Nicola Ready
Head of SEND
& AP Programme



Alyn Jones
Interim Manager
– Fleet & School
Transport



Charlotte Cotter
Pupil Place
Planning Officer





Teams & Services within Children's Services

Children's Services and Social Care	Early Help and Family Support	Education, SEND and School Infrastructure
Corporate Parenting Fostering and Adoption	Domestic Abuse Strategy	School Improvement
Permanency	Family Support	School admissions
16+ Supporting Families	Early Intervention Hub	School Support Services SEND
Engagement and Development	Inclusion, Support & Welfare	SEND Team
Conference and reviewing	Early Years Family Support	Education Psychology
Youth Offending	Early Years Support Team	SEND Advisory Teams
Children with Disabilities		Music Service
Children's Social Work Academy		Child Missing Education / Child Employment
Assessment		Residential and Support Services
Family Support		Virtual School
Integrated Front Door (IFD)		Home to School Transport
		Statutory Support Services
		Business Support Hub

Who's who and what they do

Integrated Front Door (IFD)

The IFD brings together the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Early Help Hub in one place to facilitate early, better quality information sharing, analysis and decision-making to safeguard children, young people and families more effectively.

The Early Help Hub focuses on partnership working with agencies to provide children, young people and families with early help assessments and intervention to ensure families are able to access services and support at the right time.

If your concern is of an immediate safeguarding nature then please contact the Integrated Front Door on **01234 718700** during office hours (8.45am to 5.20pm, Monday to Thursday; 8.45am to 4.20pm on a Friday) or out of office hours please call the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0300 300 812

If there are no immediate safeguarding concerns, but you are concerned about a child then you complete the referral form here [Children, Young People and Families \(bedford.gov.uk\)](https://www.bedford.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families)

Guidance on referring concerns to Children's Integrated Front door can be found here [LL Children's Portal mini guide \(bedford.gov.uk\)](#)

If you think the child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.

- Or Bedfordshire Police: 01234 841212
- NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000

For more information please visit our [web page here](#)

Children with Disabilities Team

The CWD are a specialist social work team that offers support to children and young people with disabilities aged 0 to 18 and their families.

The service comprises of a team of social workers and assistants. We work in partnership with children, young people, families and other services such as health, education and community organisations.

The role of the team is to:

- assess the needs of children and families and offer support, advice and information and plan a programme of care when needed
- liaise with other agencies such as health to ensure help and support offered to families is coordinated
- provide short break and respite care for children and young people when needed
- support access for disabled children and their families to practical help at home, personal care, play schemes, and support groups
- contribute towards the Education Health Care Plans if appropriate
- provide a duty service for children, young people and families who are open to the Children with Disabilities Team.

The duty service operates Monday to Friday during office hours. The team can be contacted on 01234 718023



If you are making a general enquiry please contact the Integrated Front Door (IFD). To access any of the services below for individual children please contact the named social worker.

Short Breaks Team

The Short Breaks Team is part of CWD Team and offers ongoing support to children and young people with disabilities from the age of 0-18 and their families.

The service comprises of a team of Social Work Assistants and is managed by the Advanced Practitioner. Similarly to CWD, we work in close partnership with agencies such as health, education, and community organisations.

The role of the team is to:

- Review on-going support packages ensuring it continues to meet the assessed needs of the child, young person, and their family.
- Liaise with other agencies to ensure the right levels of support required is being implemented.

Cases are managed within the Short Breaks Team following assessment completed by CWD to ensure there are no safeguarding concerns.

For more information please visit our [web page here](#).

Sunflower House and Foxgloves

Sunflower House provides short breaks for children with physical disabilities and complex health needs.

Children can come to Sunflower House for a variety of reasons. For a child to make new friends, have fun and be given the opportunity to participate in new activities and gain more independence. It is also time for families and carers to have a break.

Staff cater for a wide range of care, medical and dietary needs and are all fully trained in these areas. Everyone works together as a team to offer children individual choice and opportunities. The staffing levels vary depending on the children's needs.

Sunflower House is a purpose built bungalow with five bedrooms, located in a quiet residential area close to local amenities, bus stops and parks. There are spacious bedrooms with an intercom system, lounge/dining room, conservatory, kitchen, bathrooms, toilet facilities and laundry room.

For more information please visit our [web page here](#)

Foxgloves is a large Victorian house located on the north side of Bedford within easy reach of local community facilities, the town centre and bus / train station. Foxgloves also has its own mini bus to support activities in the wider community.

The house has three large bedrooms with en-suite shower rooms, three further bedrooms that are all on the ground floor, with washing facilities and all the bedrooms are close to the many bathrooms. A dining room, sensory rooms, two lounges, one main kitchen and a smaller kitchen for general use

For more information please visit our [web page here](#).

16+ Supporting Futures Team

The 16+ Supporting Futures Team works with young people aged 16 and over who are in Care or are Care experienced. We work with Unaccompanied Asylum seeking children. We work with young people to build independence skills, so they reach their full potential and thrive.

Assessment Team

The Assessment Team work with Children and Families who need support or where there are concerns around harm to a child. The team completes Child and Family Assessments whilst working with families to provide support and safeguard children. After they have completed the assessment, they may refer the family to services that can support the family. If ongoing support is required, the child/children and their family will be transferred to the Family Support Teams.

Family Support Teams

The Family Support Teams work with children on Child In Need and Child Protection Plans. They also undertake Court work. They work with children and their families to ensure children are as safe as they can be and support is provided.

Permanency Team

The Permanency Team work with Children in Care to ensure they are safe and have loving and stable homes. Where possible reunification is prioritised. The teams focus is on permanency, stability and the voice of the child.

Fostering Team

The Fostering Team work to recruit, retain and support foster carers to be the best they can be. This in turn improves outcomes for Children in Care.

Adoption Team

We are 6 social workers, a senior social work assistant, an Advanced Practitioner and a Team Manager, who do a wide range of work including:

- recruiting and assessing prospective adopters
- supporting adopters in being matched with children
- finding adopters for Bedford Borough children where they have or are likely to have a plan for adoption
- managing contact post adoption
- helping adopted adults to access their adoption records

We can provide adoption support after an adoption order has been granted for families who either live in Bedford Borough or who have adopted a Bedford child in the last 3 years

This can include:

- counselling, information and advice on a range of issues linked to adoption, such as anger, self-esteem, identity, behaviour and attachment issues
- parenting support
- help for children to understand how they came to be adopted, through art, talking and play
- support with keeping in touch between adopted child and members of their birth family
- consultation and mediation with other agencies, such as schools and doctors

If you have an adopted child in school who you think needs some additional support due to their early trauma experiences then we are always happy to have a discussion and we have a duty social worker available every morning from 9-12.30pm who you can contact on 01234 718718 or email at adoption. dutydesk@bedford.gov.uk

Special Guardian Support

We have one social worker and a part time social work assistant who offer support to our special guardians after the order has been granted. They also carry out the assessments of special guardians who apply privately for the order rather as part of care proceedings.

The team offer support groups each month (either virtually or face to face, alternating evening and daytime), ongoing training and advice.

They can also complete an assessment of need and if the child was looked after before the special guardianship order was made, they can apply to the adoption and special guardianship support fund for therapeutic support for children and their special guardians. This therapy can help children and young people to understand their early life and issues that can arise around self-esteem, identity, behaviour and attachment.

The Special Guardian support workers can be contacted on 01234 718718.

We also recommend looking at the Kinship website, www.kinship.org.uk for more information.

Early Help Service

The Early Help service has a team of six Early Help Professionals who support schools to co-ordinate early help support for pupils and their families.

The Early Help professionals also provide a range of services and workforce development to schools and other professionals.

The Early Help service has the following teams:

- Adolescent Response Team
- Early Help Hub
- Early Years Hub
- Education Welfare Team
- Family Information Service
- Family Support Hub
- Inclusion Support
- Parenting Team
- Strengthening Families Team

For more information please visit our [web page here](#).

[Link to early help strategy](#)

Adolescent Response Team (ART)

ART work with young people between the ages of 11 and 17 and their families, where the young person/family is at risk of, or currently being exploited, have missing episodes which may lead to significant extra familial harm.

For more information please visit our [web page here](#).

Bedfordshire Youth Offending Service (BYOS)

The BYOS is a multi disciplinary service working with 10-17 year olds and their families, across Bedford & Central Bedfordshire. Majority of referrals stem from an arrest of a child, however we also have an early intervention pathway – Turnaround. Caseload varies from children on voluntary out of court interventions through to supervision of children serving a custodial sentence. This involves undertaking triage assessments when children are arrested or interviewed voluntarily, supporting children through court proceedings, assessments of children and direct work. We deliver HAF programme and have a strong emphasis on children's participation and engagement. The team includes a Victims & Restorative Justice worker, CAMHs nurse, speech and language therapist, police officers, social workers, youth justice practitioners, Nurse and support workers.

Priority of BYOS is to prevent re-offending, prevent first time entrants into the Youth Justice system and reduce the use of custody.

For more information please visit our [web page here](#).



Engagement and Development

The Engagement and Development Team are based within Children's Social Care and aim to focus on the voice, views, opinions, ideas and experiences of children and young people and how these can be used to influence change at an individual and service wide level.

To support this journey the team undertake work on three levels:

1. Facilitation of groups, forums and projects with children and young people (CYP).
2. Support and guidance to staff and teams to develop their practice around voice of the child.
3. Ensuring change and advocating the voice of the child at a strategic level.

The Engagement and Development team support a wide range of forums or projects for children and young people, a majority of our provision is for children and young people known to or open to Children's Services (children looked after, care leavers, those on a child protection or child in need plan, children and young people who have been adopted and those on an Special Guardianship Order (SGO)). We also support children and young people with SEND and those supported by the Children with Disabilities Team. There are a number of 'universal' groups, accessible to all children and young people across Bedford Borough.

The team is available to support staff and teams with the creation of direct working tools, sharing good practise, resources and activities for you to use with children and young people and training on the Lundy Model (Children's Services new model of Participation).

For more information please visit our [web page here](#).



Domestic Abuse Service

The Domestic Abuse Team at Bedford Borough Council work across the Council as opposed to solely within Children's Services and are not client facing staff. We can work with you to provide advice, guidance and support with cases of domestic abuse that you may be working with. Please feel free to make contact with us through DASupport@bedford.gov.uk if you need any advice.

Use this link for information on the [Bedford Borough Strategy to Address and Reduce Domestic Violence](#).

For more information please visit our [web page here](#).

Early Years Family Support

The Early years team have good links with Bedford Borough preschools, nurseries, childminders and children's centres. Through the team parents and carers of children 0-19 (25 with SEND) can find out about all the services that are available including: childcare funding and 0-5 year old services, finding childcare, parenting courses.

The team consists of the Family Information Service, Family Hubs, Children's Centres, Early Years Funding team and the Best Start Bedford and Local Offer websites.

Our full Early Years Strategy 2024-2026 is available [here](#).

FIS

Visit the FIS page for information on all services for parents and carers. You can also contact them on email at: fis@bedford.gov.uk or 0800 023 2057.



iStock[™]
Credit: SDI Productions



Family Hubs Children's Centres

Family hubs and children centres are for parents and carers to access a range of services to support infant feeding, parenting, perinatal mental health and learning in the early years 0-5 years. Family hubs also provide information advice and guidance to families of 0-19 years (25 with SEND). There are differing offers available through the Universal and Targeted offers.

You can find details of the current universal [timetable here](#). The Family Hubs facebook and [Instagram](#) pages are also good sources of information. You can also sign up to the [Your Child and You](#) newsletter which will support your work within Children's Services. For joint targeted support for a family that you are working with, you will need to make a request through the Early Help Panel.

Childcare Funding Support

For families seeking support with child care costs and to see their government entitlements please visit the [Childcare Choices website](#).

Early Years Support Team

A specialist team of Advisory Teachers and Specialist Nursery Nurses, supported by two part time senior caseworkers providing direct support to children under 5 years with SEND, their families, childminders and early years settings (including the private, voluntary and independent sector). We are based at the Child Development Centre in Kempston.

After an initial assessment is received by the team a decision is made on the level of support to be offered and this will differ depending on a child's level of special educational needs but can include regular support at home through home teaching and advice to parents and carers, support in the early years setting to raise the child's achievement and/ or support through specialist groups provided by the team. We may provide ongoing advice and support to the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, depending on the child's individual needs.

We provide bespoke training for providers and parents/carers on behalf of Bedford Borough Council on matters relating to SEND.

For more information please visit our [website here](#).

School improvement

Our team works with and on behalf of schools and early years to ensure high quality education for all children and young people in Bedford Borough from 0 to 19 years. We offer schools and settings the opportunity to talk to our advisers about these services, including how we might tailor and adapt them to the needs of each school or setting.

The School Improvement Team will continue to work within the framework of its statutory responsibilities and the [Bedford Borough Corporate Plan](#).

For more information please visit our [web page here](#).

Virtual School

The Virtual School exists to support and challenge all those involved in the education of children in care. We work in close collaboration with colleagues across the authority and track educational progress, while supporting and monitoring work with children and young people in care.

We are not a teaching tool or environment and the virtual school does not replace the school or educational provision of children in care.

All children in our care, from the age of 2 to 16 and who are in education post-16 (up to the age of 18), are monitored by Bedford Borough's Virtual School.

At the Virtual School our role is to:

- promote high aspiration and raise achievement through challenge, support and targeted intervention
- ensure that children in care access high quality teaching and learning
- work closely with all those involved in the care and education of looked after children providing training and support to help understand the issues and challenges they face
- co-ordinate and quality assure all Personal Education Plans (PEPs)
- monitor and challenge schools to make the most effective use of Pupil Premium Plus Grant (PPPG)
- ensure effective transition is provided between schools or specialist providers
- ensure Special Education Needs or Disability needs are identified and supported appropriately with an integrated plan
- celebrate LAC achievements
- lead training for Foster Carers, Designated Teachers, school governors and bespoke training for educational settings and staff in schools

For more information please visit our [web page here](#).

School Support Services SEND

The SEND Team assess Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs and monitors Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). We offer guidance on the Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment process, and provide information about the services that can support you

We work in partnership with parents, carers, professionals, schools, educational settings and further and higher education providers to ensure the needs of some of the most vulnerable children and young people in our society are met.

- Early Years Support Team supporting pre-school and Reception age pupils
- Sensory and Communication Support Team supporting pupils with hearing and visual impairments
- Autism Spectrum Advisory Teachers supporting pupils with Autism and sensory difficulties
- Psychology Team supporting a wide range of pupils to promote their learning and development

For more information please visit our [web page here](#).

School Admissions Service

Bedford Borough is the admissions authority for all local community and voluntary controlled schools and the Council sets the Admissions criteria for these schools.

The School Admissions Service is responsible for coordinating the annual admissions rounds for children attending mainstream schools that are applying for 'Starting School' (Lower and Primary) and for children 'Transferring' (Middle, Secondary and Upper). The team also coordinate applications for children moving school and/or moving into Bedford Borough 'in-year'.

School Admissions are governed by the Department for Education School Admissions Code 2021

For more information please visit our [web page here](#).

Home to School Transport

Bedford Borough Council coordinates home to school transport provision for statutory school age children and post 16 young people, eligible under our transport policies; this includes transport provision awarded to Mainstream, SEND and Social Care children and young people. The Council's transport policies align to Department for Education statutory guidance Travel to School for Children of Compulsory School Age and Travel Assistance for Post 16 Age Young People

The School Transport Team are responsible for assessing entitlement to transport as well as the commissioning and coordinating of transport arrangements. Transport may be provided through public transport, parental mileage/personal travel budgets, commissioned bus services, internal fleet bus services or taxi services. The Council has a duty to commission transport by the most efficient means possible and the use of taxi 'door to door' transport provision will only be provided where it is absolutely necessary.

For more information please visit our [web page here](#).



Children's Services

Bedford Borough Council
Borough Hall
Cauldwell Street
Bedford MK42 9AP



www.bedford.gov.uk