

Annual Report

A review of the
last year

July 2024



A word from our Chair Kerri Rennie...

It's that time of year again! I hope you and your families are all safe and well.

We have had a very busy year at Bedford Borough Parent Carer Forum (BBPCF). I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our members for their contributions. Your engagement supports the continuing, important work of the forum by keeping the needs of our families at the forefront of everything we do. Your feedback informs service providers and organisations, including Bedford Borough Council, Cambridgeshire Community Services and NHS Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes ICB.

This Annual Report (July 2024) provides information on BBPCF's work throughout the year. I hope you will take a few minutes to look at all the different ways we have actively represented the local SEND community.

In my role as BBPCF Chair, I have the opportunity to hear many different views and experiences, motivating me to seek further improvements in all areas of support for our SEND community. BBPCF aim to create a culture of participation and co-production with all stakeholders in Bedford Borough.

At the centre of this is the SEND community voice which must be heard to create real, effective improvement, which is why we now have more parent representatives than ever before, working out and about in the SEND community, and engaging with our parent carers.

With continued regard for the work the forum has done and a focus on what we have still to do, I ask you all to keep supporting your local forum, so that the 'Lived Experience' of families continues to improve both for now and for future generations.



What is a Parent Carer Forum?

A parent carer forum is a group of parents and carers of children with a special educational need and/or disability, who work with local authorities, education settings, health providers and other providers to make sure the services they commission, plan and deliver meet the needs of SEND children and families in the local area.

The National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) is composed of all the parent carer forums from across England. The NNPCF ensures that local parent carer forums are aware of national developments. It promotes opportunities for the voice of parent carers to influence at a national level.

The NNPCF works closely with the Department for Education, the Department of Health, and other partner organisations to improve outcomes for children and young people with disabilities or additional needs and their families.

BBPCF is a member of the Eastern Region of Parent Carer Forums (ERPCF). The Eastern Region consists of 11 forums covering Peterborough, Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough, Luton, Hertfordshire, Cambridge, Suffolk, Norfolk, Southend, Essex and Thurrock. Representatives from each forum meet 3 times a year and look at local and national developments, and there is an opportunity to feedback to the regional representative of the NNPCF and the Regional Adviser from Contact.





What is Parent Carer Participation?

Parent carers can help highlight problems frequently experienced by families with SEND children. This knowledge is essential to practitioners to help them improve how children's services are planned and delivered so they better meet families' needs.

Parent carer participation is when parents and practitioners work together, recognising each other's expert knowledge, to make informed decisions about children's services to ensure the best possible outcomes.

CLEARING A PATH
FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
CLEARS THE PATH FOR EVERYONE!

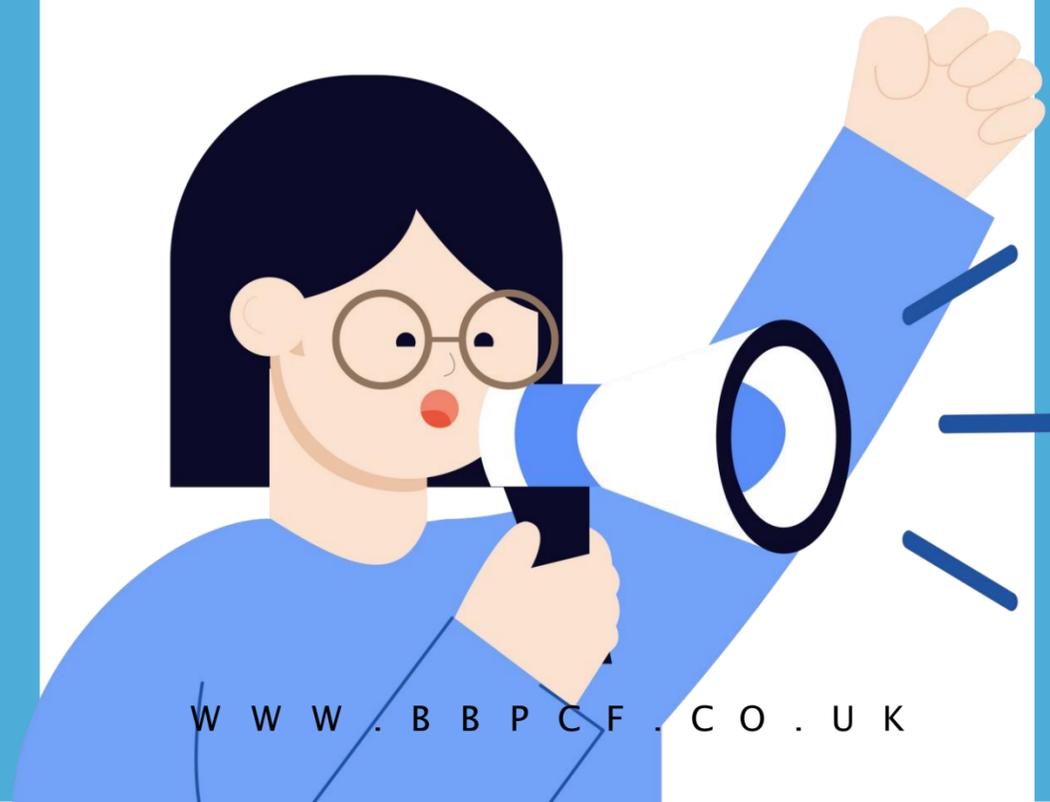
Who we are

We are the voice for Parent Carers of children & young people 0-25 yrs with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities in Bedford Borough. BBPCF work alongside Bedford Borough Council (BBC), and the integrated Care Board (ICB) as a strategic partner representing our parent carers and working alongside services when key decisions are being made.

We are passionate about raising aspirations and improving outcomes for our children & young people and keep this at the heart of everything we do.

We have built strong working relationships, and have a trusted role as parent carers of children and young people with SEND. We are experts by experience and as such, have a unique understanding of how challenging life can be raising a child or young person with SEND.

Your
**VOICE
MATTERS**



W W W . B B P C F . C O . U K

We are not

We are not a support group



We are not a protest group



We cannot advocate for individual cases



But



We need your continued feedback to represent your voice

OUR REACH



1800
Members

2,200
Facebook Followers

1082
X Followers

447
Instagram Followers

83
LinkedIn Followers

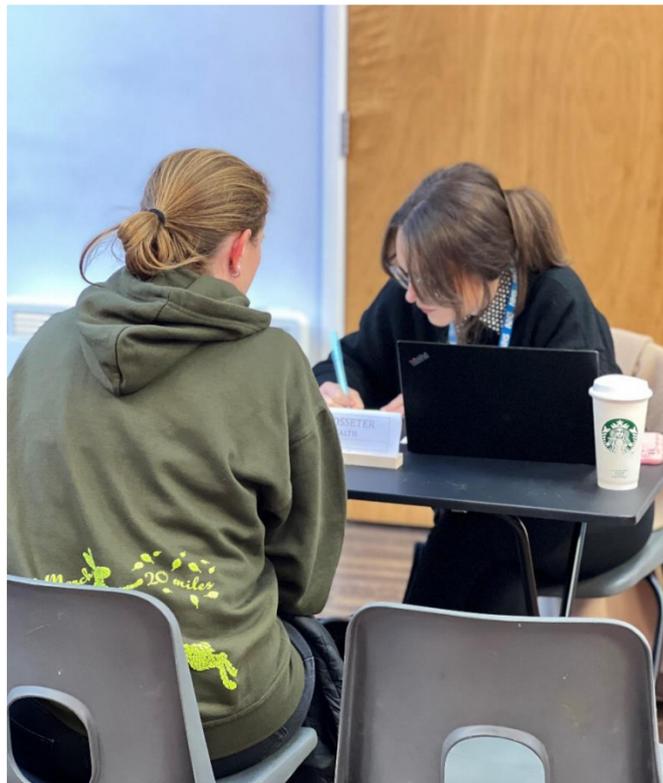
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Steering Group Members

250
Parent Participation

Over 4000 parents attended our events in 2023/2024. The forum runs regular get-togethers, events, and training.

How do we ensure we hear the voice of the parent carer?

We do this by giving parent carers the opportunity to participate in several ways such as get-togethers, training, social media, email, and focus groups, both online and face-to-face. This feedback can then be used to co-produce and work at a strategic level with the Local Authority and the ICB.



Our regular events are always a great way to get feedback from parent carers on how services are working for them. We introduced SEND Forum Ten-minute bookable slots which allow parent carers to meet with professionals and service providers to discuss their individual cases. Over the past year, we've had the following services attending our SEND Forum bookable slots;

Tim Long (Head of School Support Services)

Chris Morris (Chief Officer-Education, SEND& School Infrastructure)

Christian Weatherly (Principal Social Worker)

Michelle Docking (SEND Team Manager), among others.

We also launched stronger beginnings which are drop-in sessions tailored to strongly signpost and support families that are just starting out in the complex world of SEND or those who have some concerns about their child's development.

We always like to hear feedback from parents as to who else they would like to attend our events so if you have any suggestions, please email us communications@bbpcf.org.uk

The Healthy Parent Carer Programme

we've had over 100 parents access the programme since 2022.

The healthy parent carer programme is designed to improve parent carers' health and wellbeing by promoting emotional balance through understanding, empowerment, confidence, and resilience.

If you are interested please email us to register your interest communications@bbpcf.org.uk



“The strategies I learned from the HPC program have enabled me to better support my well-being. I am forever grateful!”

“I would highly recommend this program for anyone looking to better their well-being.”

I wasn't sure what to expect from this program but it's quite relaxed and I learned a lot!

Our family participation Events



We had several family participation events including a family fun day at Bedford Athletic Stadium which was attended by over 1000 members.

Some activities included bouncy castles, face painting, sensory journey, arts and crafts, fitness and exercise, train, crazy golf and many more.

Other family participation events we had included cookie decoration, and Christmas bauble decoration.



The Local Offer



We continue to monitor the Local Offer and feedback to the Local Offer Officer, Sorcha O'Loughlin on what our members are saying and we meet regularly to ensure it is kept up to date.

Sorcha has continued to attend our events over the last year to speak to our members and gain their feedback on the local offer so that it is being co-produced with those who use it.

<https://localoffer.bedford.gov.uk/>

Our Annual Survey

BBPCF continues to run our annual survey. This is a tool we use to measure how well Bedford Borough Council and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) are meeting the needs of children and young people (age 0-25) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Our last survey was completed by over 650 parent carers which gave us a rich amount of data to share with the local authority and ICB, this feedback links directly into the SEND Strategy in Bedford Borough and informs our focus groups and priorities. From this we have created our annual outcomes report which we have shared on our website.

www.bbpcf.co.uk/reports



HERE ARE SOME OF THE MEETINGS/ WORKING GROUPS WE'VE ATTENDED OVER THE LAST YEAR TO REPRESENT THE PARENTS VOICE:

SEND Panel	SEND Improvement Board	Local Offer	SEND Quality Assurance Board
Early Years Reference Group	CAMHS Stakeholders	Multi-Agency Panel	School Improvement
Social Care	Quality Assurance Audits	SEND in Early Years	SEND in Education
Speech, Language and Communication Needs	Child Health and Wellbeing Partnership	E-Learning	Beds CYP Mental Health and Wellbeing Group
Counselling Collective	Preparing for Adulthood Joint Commissioning Group	Personal Budget Group	Cambridge Community Services Meetings
Neurodevelopmental Pathway	Bedford AnInclusive Town	Palliative Care Team	Post-16 Provision
	Post-18 Provision	SEND in Schools	

What we do with your feedback...

We attend many boards and meetings within the Local Authority and the ICB to represent our parents' experiences and themes that we have picked up on through our get togethers, surveys and other events that we run throughout the year...

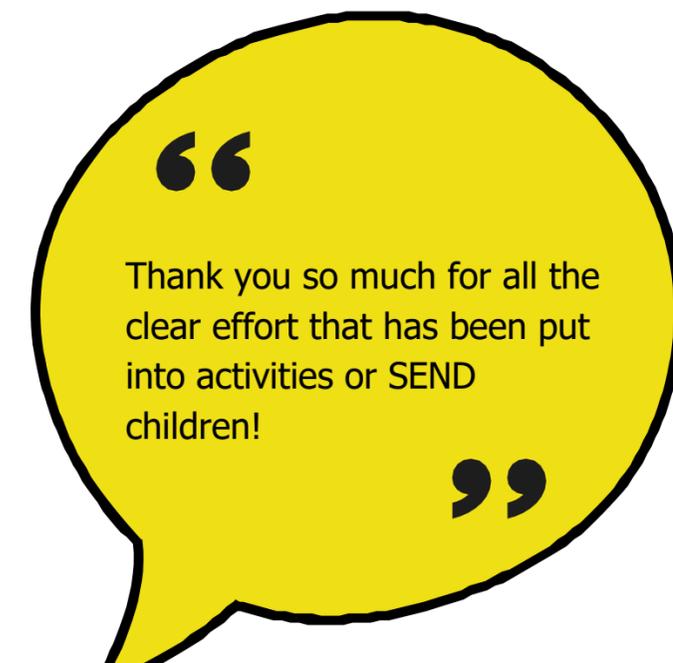
What have we done with your feedback?

Following your feedback, the meetings and involvement we've had with the Local Authority and the Integrated Care Board we have done the following:

- We have started running ten-minute bookable slots with practitioners so that you can discuss your individual concerns.
- We have continued to run various activities and training to support parent carers wellbeing as you have told us this is important to you.
- An Outcomes report has been produced from our annual survey over which we received over 650 responses. This was shared with the Local Authority who delivered a partnership response. We work with the co-production lead for Cambridge Community Services to ensure there is clear co-production and your voices are heard.
- We had representation from the Local Offer at several of our events so that they can hear your feedback regarding the content.
- Representation from SENDiass at our regular SEND Forum events so that you have an opportunity to seek information, advice and support from them.
- Worked with the Local Authority to support us to provide whole family inclusive events.
- We launched Stronger Beginnings sessions to support parent carers who have just started investigating concerns around their child's development.

These are all positive developments that families have welcomed. However, families are still reporting issues in these main areas (taken from our Annual Survey 2022):

1. Children with EHCPs in mainstream schools show significantly worse scores than those in special schools.
2. The older children and young people get, the lower their average scores
3. Parents of Children and Young People with EHCPs were significantly more worried about their ability to be independent
4. Many families mentioned access to leisure facilities as an issue





Our Achievements This Year

- Running another 5 Healthy Parent Carer Courses (we have now completed courses with over 100 participants)
- Facilitated a craft wellbeing workshop for parent carers
- Increased our membership to over 1800 including all areas of the SEND Community
- A variety of FREE training (Sleep Training, ADHD Training, IPSEA, Anxiety, and much more)
- We co-produced the supporting your Neurodiverse child booklet (NDD) to support parent carers
- Attended keeping in touch schools SENCO events
- Continued promotion of BBPCF within Education, Health and Social Care
- Hosting various focus groups to ensure the parent carer's voice is heard
- Our coffee mornings changed to SEND Forum ten-minute bookable slots and information sessions
- Organized Family Participation events that were attended by over 1000 families



“

Stronger Beginnings: I now have some clarity on the next steps to take to support my child. I'm so glad I attended this drop-in session. Thank you for all the resources!

”

Parent Carer Feedback

“

Fun day: It was so well organised, with such a huge variety of activities for families to choose from.

”



“

Sleep workshop- For the first time in many months if not years, my daughter has fallen asleep before 1 am. Even one night is a miracle so thank you!

”



“

Ten-minute bookable slots- My daughter and I gained so much from the chat we had with practitioners .

”



Bedford Borough's Co-production Charter

for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities

What is co-production?

Co-production means working with people who use services as equal partners in design, development, commissioning, delivery and review of services to create better outcomes.

There are lots of reasons why we should co-produce:

- It leads to better services that improve people's lives
- It creates more effective and efficient services that save money
- There is a legal requirement to co-produce in the Children and families Act, the Care Act and in the NHS Constitution.

This co-production charter lays out five principles that all parties will use to work together in the right way.

We listen to everyone

We take the views of all parents, children, young people and practitioners seriously.

No-one should feel that they have to fight to be heard.

We empower people

We share the information everyone needs to know to take part in decision making.

We provide support and advice where needed.

We co-produce from start to finish

We set the scope, agenda, key decisions and review progress together. Everyone is invited to the right meetings and made to feel welcome.

We are person centered and solution focused

We do not put barriers in the way of good ideas and do not hide behind policy and protocol for reasons why things cannot be done.

Everyone is enabled to take part

We make sure that everyone can participate: meetings are held at convenient times, accessible venues are used, interpreters are arranged.

Co-production should happen at all levels of service delivery:

- Individual- we **take** a person-centered approach
- Operational- we deliver services in a way that works for the community
- Strategic- we take all big decisions in partnership



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Integrated Care Board



Priorities

- Organising family participation activities
- Preparing for Adulthood
- Participation in discussions and meetings and feedback to parent carers
- Ensuring SEND is everyone's business
- Facilitate more direct discussions between parents and practitioners
- Bullying and Loneliness
- Raise awareness of all areas of SEND
- Ensuring parent carers are treated as equal partners
- Monitoring waiting lists for therapy services
- Continue to provide training and well-being sessions for parent carers based on parent carer feedback
- Increased engagement with all communities
- Refreshing and promoting the Co-production charter

We are constantly engaging with, and listening to our members, to ensure that our priorities remain current throughout the year.



Natasha
BBPCF Rep

MEET OUR PARENT REPRESENTATIVES



Taffy
BBPCF Rep



Michelle
BBPCF Rep



Sehrish
BBPCF Rep

MEET OUR PARENT REPRESENTATIVES



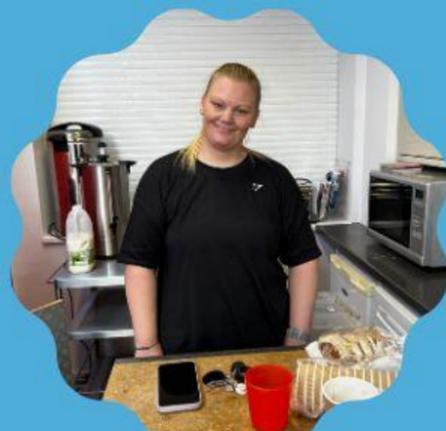
Laura
BBPCF Rep



Minda
BBPCF Rep



Sam
BBPCF Rep



Serena
BBPCF Rep



Maxine
BBPCF Rep



Jess
BBPCF Rep



If you'd like to be a parent representative Email us at;
communications@bbpcf.org.uk



ET OUR
ERING
UP



Karen Russell
Steering Group
Member



Lee Robinson
Steering group
Treasurer



MEET THE
OPERATIONS TEAM

Bedford Borough
Parent Carer
Forum (BBPCF)



Al Sisodia
Steering Group
Member



Jo Jones
Steering group
Member



Paul James
Steering group
member



Kerri Rennie
Chair



Val Pendall
Coordinator



Trish Otoa
Communications Lead



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