

# ANNUAL REPORT

A review of  
the last year



**#TEAM**

**Together Everyone Achieves More**



**KERRI  
RENNIE,  
CHAIR**

## **PLEASE TAKE A FEW MOMENTS TO READ AND SHARE OUR REPORT**

We are pleased that we have been able to gather the experiences of Parent Carers in Bedford Borough and give your feedback to all relevant services throughout the last year.

We will continue to strive for improvements for all of the Bedford Borough SEND Community, working to achieve outcomes and aspirations for all our children and future generations.

Please keep engaging with us. Your experience matters to us to ensure that all areas of SEND are represented.

## 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 made up of all of 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.

BBPCF have a representative from the forum in both the NNPCF and ERPCF.

## What is Parent Carer participation?

Parent carers can help pinpoint 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 that make the best use of people's time and money.

**'If you want to know how well a pair of shoes fit you ask the person wearing them not the person who made them, or paid for them'**



# Who we are

We are the voice for Parent Carers of children & young people 0-25yrs with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities in Bedford Borough. BBPCF work alongside Bedford Borough Council (BBC), and the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG) 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.



# We are not...

We are not a support group



We are not a protest group



We cannot advocate for individual cases



But....



Without your feedback we cannot represent your voice



# OUR MEMBERS

Members  
1177



912  
Followers



981  
Followers



201  
Followers

Over 700 Parents attended our events in 2020/2021

The forum runs regular get togethers, events and training, in the last year these have continued although we have switched to online.



10  
Parent Reps

28  
Focus Group  
Reps

10  
Steering  
Committee  
Members

720  
Participation  
Meetings

# How do we get the voice of the parent carer?

We do this by giving parent carers the opportunity to participate in a number of ways such as coffee events, conferences, Facebook, Twitter, Email and focus groups. This feedback can then be used to co-produce and work at a strategic level with the Local Authority and the CCG.

Our regular monthly get togethers are always a great way to get feedback from parent carers on how services are working for them. We invite guest speakers along based on who parents are asking us to invite. This is an opportunity for the guest speakers to tell us more about their service but also for parents to ask them questions face to face. We have also arranged training sessions in the last year hosted by ADHDwise, British Dyslexia Association, Down's Syndrome Association, Bedford SENDiass and we hosted our own Personalisation Training.

**Covid-19** – Over the last year we have continued to adapt our service to ensure we can still hear the parent voice, despite not being able to meet up face-to-face. More parent carers have been able to interact with us as a result of us going 'virtual' and moving forward we intend to offer a mixture of face-to-face and virtual events.

Over the last year we have had the following services join us at our Get Togethers:

SALT, SENDiass, Educational Psychology, Early Help, CAMHS and School Improvement Team Attend, Royal Society for Blind Children, Whole School SEND, . We have also arranged training sessions in the last year on ADHD and Dyslexia/SPLD. We have also arranged two online wellbeing sessions for parent carers hosted by the Bedfordshire Wellbeing Service.

We always like to hear feedback from parents as to who else they would like us to have speaking at our Coffee Mornings so if you have any suggestions please feel to email them to us  
[communications@bbpcf.org.uk](mailto:communications@bbpcf.org.uk)

## 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.

**'Just wanted to send a quick note to say thank you!**

**Tonight's talk was just what I needed.'**

**'Thank you to you and all the team for supporting us and our parents. Your presence and expertise has definitely supported building relationships. The training is fantastic.'**

## Outcomes Framework Questionnaire

Following the OFSTED inspection early in 2018, BBPCF put together an Outcomes Survey. This is a tool we use to measure how well Bedford Borough Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group are looking after children and young people (age 0-25) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

We now carry out an annual survey to all of our members which goes out via email, social media and through various events. Our last survey was completed by over 550 parent carers which gave us a rich amount of data to share with the local authority and CCG. Through this we have created our annual outcomes report which we have shared on our website.

[www.bbpcf.co.uk/reports](http://www.bbpcf.co.uk/reports)

# What do we do with your feedback?

We attend many boards and meetings within the local authority and the CCG to represent our parents experiences and themes that we have picked up on through our Coffee Morning, surveys and other events that we run throughout the year...

**'I am better informed for the information that you have provided through the Forum'**

Over the last year these are some of the meetings we've attended to represent the parent voice:

SEND Panel	Speech, Language and Communication Needs
SEND Improvement Board	Bedfordshire Therapy Meetings
Local Offer	Child Health and Wellbeing Partnership
Early Years Reference Group	E-Learning
CAMHS Stakeholders	Bedfordshire Children and Young People's
Multi-Agency Panel	Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing
SEND Quality Assurance Board	Group
School Improvement	Counselling Collective
Social Care	Preparing for Adulthood Joint
Neuro Developmental Disorder Pathway	Commissioning Group
Quality Assurance Audits	Personal Budget Group
SEND in early years	Cambridge Community Services Meetings
SEND in education	Bedford An Inclusive Town
Bedford An Inclusive Town	Palliative Care Team
Complex Care Team Meetings	Post-18 Provision



# What have we done with your feedback?

Following your feedback, the meetings and involvement we've had with the Local Authority and Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, we have managed to make changes and improvements in the following areas over the last year:

- Worked with the local authority by providing FAQ's from your feedback which is now on the local offer and in the regular SEND Matters newsletter
- Working with the two School SEND advisors and enabling open discussion with parent carers
- We work with the co-production lead for Cambridge Community Services to ensure there is clear co-production
- Ongoing input and regular consultation with parents to ensure local offer is kept up to date and relevant and significant improvements have been made
- Outcomes report produced from our outcomes survey where we had over 550 responses
- We have been involved in many more meetings, especially during the covid period
- Involvement in complex needs provision within Bedford Borough
- Providing more focused training and information for parent carers and practitioners
- Facilitated meetings with parents, local authority and schools to seek solutions

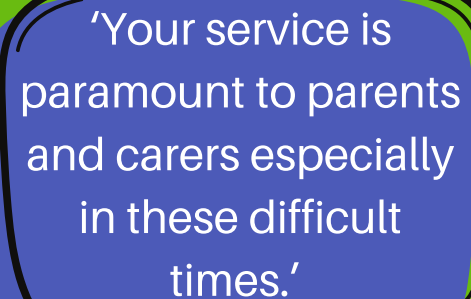
These are all positive developments that families have welcomed.

There have been some more positive experiences but many families still express concerns in the following two areas:

- The experience of children with SEND in mainstream schools is too varied and often poor.
- Parents continue to express real frustration with access to key medical services

# Our Achievements This Year

- Increased our membership to over 1000 including all areas of the SEND Community
- We have adapted to 'virtual' working and this has enabled us to engage with more parent carers than ever before
- FREE membership to Operation Diversity for parent carers
- Maintained positive relationships with the voluntary sector
- A greater focus on quality assurance
- Free ADHD and Dyslexia Training
- Attended keeping in touch schools SENCO events
- Raising the profile of BBPCF within Education, Health and Social Care
- Facilitating various focus groups to ensure the parent carer voice is heard
- We hosted various events with representatives from education, health and social care to speak to families
- Facilitated various wellbeing sessions for parent carers
- Attendance at our regular events continues to grow and we've increased our engagement with parent carers
- Co-producing activities for summer of SEND
- Co-produced the SEND Matters Magazine




'Your service is paramount to parents and carers especially in these difficult times.'

# What has changed as a result of our work?

As a result of us facilitating the ADHD workshop and Dyslexia workshop we are now part of a Steering Group with the Local Authority to get more information, provision and school training in place. The CCG have asked ADHD wise to do some work with them following our feedback.

# What will we be pushing for over the coming year?

Children with SEND must have the right environment for learning and reasonable adjustments made to meet their needs. This is something we will keep pushing for.



'Just wanted to say thanks so much for this morning. I thought it was extremely helpful and look forward to joining future events. Many thanks for your help at such short notice'

# Co-Production Charter

## 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 centred 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 centred approach
- Operational—we deliver services in a way that works for the community
- Strategic—we take all big decisions in partnership



**BEDFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group



# Priorities

**Based on our Member's feedback, we will be focusing on the following in the upcoming year:**

Focus on preparing for adulthood

Raise awareness of all areas of SEND

Bullying and Loneliness

Raising awareness of all neuro-divergent conditions

Increased engagement with seldom heard communities

Monitoring the ongoing situation with therapies and waiting lists

Working with our members and all partner agencies to keep the focus on SEND

Continue to promote and support the local offer#

Continue to work with SENDiass (Information and Advice Support Service)

Participation in discussions and meetings and feedback to parent carers

Continue to provide training and wellbeing sessions for parent carers

Co-production charter

Continue working with Operation Diversity to provide parent carers with a variety of platforms to seek advice and support

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



# If you would like to know more about BBPCF or become a member please contact us:

[www.bbpcf.co.uk](http://www.bbpcf.co.uk)  
[communications@bbpcf.org.uk](mailto:communications@bbpcf.org.uk)  
07943 524553

Find us on:



@bedsboroughpcf

'Thank you for your work,  
compassion and wise support  
that has made a great  
difference to parents, carers  
and children and school  
teams. '

'You really do a sterling  
job for the parent forum,  
and the courses you offer  
parents are really good'