



**Milton Keynes**  
City Council

# **Milton Keynes Education Toolkit.**

**September 2025**

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## Introduction

The information in this 'toolkit' aims to provide an overview of the education community in Milton Keynes (MK). It outlines the services and support provided by the local authority and the sector led partnerships that support strong engagement and partnership working across the city.

Milton Keynes City Council (MKCC) values its positive working relationship with schools, irrespective of whether they are maintained or part of the academy sector. We are proud of the achievements of all our schools, which are in line with, or above, national. The proportion of schools judged positively by Ofsted is above that seen nationally, and there is an aim within our council plan that there is a "good local school place for every child."

We acknowledge that schools face increasing demands and challenges: as do local authorities. Some of these pressures were heightened, or continue to be impacted by, the Covid-19 pandemic. Our historic role was focussed on challenge and support, but as we move forward, we recognise that our role should take more of a system leadership approach: working with schools and national agencies to co-produce strategies which result in a cohesive, safe community with high aspirations for all.

We look forward to working with you and your school.

**Alison Talbot**

Head of Education Outcomes

## **Part 1:**

### **MKCC Children's Services**

Mac Heath is the Director of Children's Services (DCS) in Milton Keynes.

The directorate work together closely - to secure cohesion across the two 'notional' parts of the service:

- Education and Learning – led by Marie Denny (Assistant Director)
- Children's Social Care – led by Sophie Marshall (Assistant Director)

Partnership working, across and between MKCC teams, ensures that we put children and young people's best interests at the heart of all we do.

### **Education and Learning**

#### **Overview**

The Education and Learning service in Milton Keynes picks up responsibility for:

1. Access to education, employment, and training, from early years to old age
2. Outcomes for children and young people
3. SEND and inclusion
4. SEND partnership working

Unusually this means that one service takes responsibility for learning across all ages. Therefore, whilst the service picks up responsibility around relationships with early years settings and schools, it also delivers on our library strategy and services such as adult education.

There are 114 public schools in Milton Keynes, and this continues to grow. In addition, there are 8 independent schools in Milton Keynes and one college. The change in the national landscape is such that many of these schools are now run by trusts of various sizes, but we also have community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided and foundation schools with increasing autonomy. This means that often the council does not have any of the control or legal levers to intervene when perhaps it might be expected.

Despite the challenging context, it is still our vision to ensure that every school is good or better, and to hold the school system to account to ensure that every child, especially the most vulnerable, has access to a high-quality education.

## Background

### The Education

Learning and Inclusion service in Milton Keynes is overseen by three heads of service, the Head of Education Outcomes, the Head of Children's Sufficiency and for Access to Education, Employment and Training, and the Head of SEND. There is also a SEND Local Area Partnership Manager

To find out more, contact:

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## Education Outcomes Service

### Overview

This service is responsible for securing high quality educational provision across Milton Keynes: provision that leads to strong outcomes. We are committed to championing the best interests of children and young people in all we do.

Our work is underpinned by legal frameworks and a strong understanding of educational research and policy. We focus on always realising high aspirations, with particular emphasis on pupils from potentially vulnerable groups.

When supporting and/or challenging schools and settings, we draw on our strong local knowledge as well as our specialist knowledge, skills, and expertise. We are committed to working professionally with a range of sector partners, as well as our colleagues in wider MKCC services.

### Detail



### School Improvement Service (Strategic Lead for School Improvement – Naima France)

#### Focus

- Delivering de-delegated services to maintained schools (e.g. Annual Evaluations, Safeguarding Audits, Headteacher Performance Management) to ensure that statutory duties are fulfilled.
- Delivering traded school improvement services for maintained schools and academies (e.g. bespoke consultancy, senior leader recruitment, website checks, staff training, and conferences as appropriate) to support schools towards achieving and sustaining high-quality education provision.
- Supporting maintained schools during Ofsted inspections: meeting with lead inspectors on behalf of the Local Authority as required.
- Ensuring that statutory duties are fulfilled in relation to safeguarding complaints and concerns (at LA, Ofsted and DfE level), statutory assessment and moderation, and SACRE.
- Engaging with local safeguarding partners to ensure that safeguarding is strong and effective across MK schools and in line with local arrangements.
- Liaising with local, regional, and national partners/hubs to ensure that schools across MK are signposted to programmes, initiatives, support schemes and resources that support school improvement.

### Early Years Quality Improvement (Early Years Quality Improvement Partner – Belinda Woodcock)

#### Focus

- Providing advice, guidance, and support for Early Years settings to ensure delivery of high-quality early education provision.
- Directly engaging with Early Years settings (as appropriate).
- Co-ordinating local engagement with government support schemes.
- Liaising with local, regional, and national partners/hubs to ensure that settings across MK are signposted to programmes, initiatives, and resources.

### Virtual School (Headteacher of the Virtual School – Katy Enser)

#### Focus

- Promoting the educational achievement of children and young people who are looked after, previously looked after or who have social care involvement.
- Advising, guiding, and training professionals who work with looked after children, previously looked after children or those who have a social worker.
- Supporting schools to develop programmes and systems which will ensure the attainment gap is narrowed between looked after children and all children.
- Offering educational support and advice to parents/carers of children who are looked after.
- The school is 'virtual' because children and young people do not actually attend. They remain the responsibility of the school at which they are enrolled.

<p><u>Leadership and Governance Service (Governor Services Manager – Claire Kitching)</u></p> <p>Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing traded advice guidance and support to governing bodies, head teachers and other stakeholders (professional clerking, training programme, appeal hearing support etc) to ensure that governance arrangements are robust in MK schools and that governors are fulfilling their statutory duties effectively.</li> <li>• Providing governance related advice to other teams within the Education Outcomes service and the wider Education, Learning and Inclusion service.</li> </ul>
<p><u>MK Music Hub (Music Hub and Faculty Manager – Sue Wakley)</u></p> <p>Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivering music services to improve outcomes for children.</li> <li>• Providing advice, guidance, and support to schools to improve curriculum delivery and outcomes for children.</li> <li>• Providing access to music resources.</li> </ul>
<p><u>EMA Network (EMA Improvement Officer – Irem Syed)</u></p> <p>Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing information to support schools, settings, and communities to raise the aspirations and attainment of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) children and young people.</li> <li>• Delivering traded services to schools and settings.</li> <li>• Liaising with supplementary schools that support pupils to learn about faith, religion, and cultural/language heritage.</li> </ul>

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## Children’s Sufficiency and Access to Education, Employment and Training

### Overview

This service ensures the sufficiency of local social care and education placements, leads transformation projects and supports individuals to access education, employment, and training.

We support people to achieve their potential by enabling and supporting them to access high quality education, from the earliest possible time, and all the way through their education and employment careers.

We work collaboratively with education providers, employers and targeted services to deliver inclusive support, advice, and guidance – ensuing universal access whilst prioritising the needs of the most vulnerable.

## Detail

### Children's Services Planning and Transformation (Strategic Lead - Dominic Williams)

#### Focus

- Leading and delivering market analysis, future projections and creation of strategic plans (short, medium and long term) with all internal and external stakeholders to ensure sufficiency duties are met across MKCC Children's Services. This includes access to early years and childcare, mainstream and specialist provision, post 16 education, care placements for looked after children, and holiday activities for disadvantaged children.
- Delivery of time limited transformation projects: identified as priorities across Children's Services.
- Sourcing and securing (or recommending) high quality provision where needed – including leading on the design and delivery of local competitions that align with national policy and legislation.
- Identifying and securing appropriate land and/or funding (capital/revenue) to support the delivery of transformation projects and to meet sufficiency duties. Ensuring that the land/funding is fully utilised in accordance with agreed terms – to best support Children's Services strategies.

### Library Service (Library Service Manager – Viv Tole)

#### Focus

- Ensuring access to education resources (e.g. physical, audio and online books, publications, reference materials, PCs, internet, printing, ancestry, practice driving theory tests) and activities, particularly for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.
- Providing library resources for schools to support delivery of high-quality curriculum.

### Education Access (Strategic Lead – Yewande Shotade)

#### Focus

- Take up of free early years education for 2, 3 and 4 year olds, working in partnership with Family Centres, early years settings, early years quality improvement, and finance colleagues.
- Co-ordinating mainstream school admissions at the normal points of entry (starting school, transferring to junior school, transferring to secondary school)
- Progressing mainstream school placements for 'in-year school' admissions for children moving into and around Milton Keynes outside of the normal transfer

### Children Missing Education and Home to School Transport (Head of Sufficiency and Access to Education, Employment, and Training – Simon Sims )

#### Focus

- Identifying children missing (or at risk of missing) education and ensuring they are supported to access (i.e. LAC admissions, air access admissions, alternative education placements, tracking children missing from role, exclusions, attendance, part time school timetables, home education).
- Ensuring appropriate travel support is provided for those that require it – by directly commissioning provision or providing packages of support that empower families.
- Ensuring safe and high-quality delivery of school transport for eligible pupils.



Community Learning and Employment Support (Strategic Lead – Gayle Fothergill)

Focus

- Partnership working with education providers and employers to ensure sufficient pathways exist for Post 16 and adults seeking to access education, employment and training.
- Employment advice, guidance and support for vulnerable young people age 16+ and vulnerable adults, including those living in deprived communities within MK.
- Direct delivery of high-quality adult education provision where required to support vulnerable groups, in line with ESFA funding requirement

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# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Team

## Overview

The SEND Team delivers all statutory services linked to SEND, ensuring inclusive practice is at the heart of what we deliver in Milton Keynes.

Our aim is to ensure that the children and young people of Milton Keynes get the right support, in the right place, at the right time and as they transition into adulthood have the right support, skills and qualifications to fulfil their adult lives.

The entire team are split into several smaller teams that hold different responsibilities for areas of SEND. Overall governance sits with the SEND Strategic Partnership Board. This consists of all partners within the local area - including Health, Social Care, Education and our Parent and Carer Association (PACA).

## Detail

### EHCP Assessment and Review Team (Strategic Lead – Sarah Ray)

This area consists of two teams:

- EHCP Assessment Team
- EHCP Review Team

#### Focus

- Overseeing the EHC needs assessment process, and ensuring adherence to statutory guidance and timeframes, including disputes and tribunals.
- Overseeing the EHC review process, ensuring adherence to statutory guidance and timeframes, including disputes and tribunals.
- Overseeing the placement of children and young People with an EHCP including Phase Transfer.

### Inclusion Specialist Teaching Team (Service Managers – Amy Segui and Jo Friday)

This area consists of two teams:

- Early Years Specialist Teaching Team
- Inclusion Specialist Teaming Team

#### Focus

- Ensuring the effective inclusion of children and young people with increasingly complex SEND needs in mainstream environments, through the Specialist Teaching Team offering support and intervention.
- Delivering a SEND Support Line for professionals and parents/ carers to provide signposting, advice and support.
- Working in collaboration with health and education services to develop policies and practices to best support children and young people with SEND needs.
- Delivering of training to both professionals and parents.
- Managing the budget for Early Years Inclusion Grant funding and High Needs Top Up Funding.
- Developing and delivering on the Local Offer website,



EHCP Specialist Teaching Team and EHCP Review Team (Service Manager – Jenna Austin (maternity leave) and Sinead Henry (interim maternity cover))

This area consists of two teams:

- EHCP Specialist Teaching Team
- Transitions and Complex Cases Specialist Teaching Team

Focus

- Ensuring the effective inclusion of children and young people with EHCP's in mainstream environments, through the Specialist Teaching Team offer of support and intervention.
- Ensuring that educational packages are in place for children and young people who move into Milton Keynes with an EHCP, or where there is a placement breakdown, until a suitable educational placement is identified.
- Responsibility for ensuring that young people with an EHCP are supported to engage in education and receive the correct support at times of educational transition, especially at Post 16 and Post 18
- Collaborating with health and social care services to ensure that children and young people with an EHCP who have complex health needs receive the support they need to access education.
- Monitoring of children and young people with an EHCP who are educated in independent specialist provisions, including residential settings.
- Overseeing children and young people with an EHCP who are educated other than at school (EOTAS) to ensure appropriate education packages are in place and that progress is being made.
- Delivering training to both professionals and parents.
- Budget management for EHCPs.
- Developing and delivering on the Local Offer website.

Educational Psychology Service (Principle Educational Psychologist – Rachel Caldwell)

Focus

- Responsibility for the strategic approach to inclusion, early intervention and assessment, ensuring best practice and approach to policy and delivery.
- Leading the Education Psychology (EP) Service to provide psychological advice to staff within Children's Services and other agencies.
- Ensuring the EP Service maintains and disseminates consultation, assessment, and intervention work in line with recognised best practice.
- Promoting and facilitating partnership working, early intervention and integrated local solutions, applying psychology to enhance the learning and development of children and young people.

Furze House (Registered Manager – Rosie Jenkins)

Focus

- Delivering overnight and holiday respite for children and young people with an EHCP who are supported by the Children with Disabilities Team.

Short Breaks Team (manager – Mandy Fell)

Focus

- Sourcing and delivering short breaks for children and young people with an EHCP who are supported by the Children with Disabilities Team.

- Liaising with short breaks providers to ensure that provisions are accessible and available to families of children and young people with an EHCP.

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- EHCPs: [EHCP@Milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:EHCP@Milton-keynes.gov.uk)
- Local Offer: [Milton Keynes City Council \(mksendlocaloffer.co.uk\)](http://mksendlocaloffer.co.uk)

## Special Educational Needs Partnership

### Overview

Every local area is required to have a “SEND local area partnership” which brings together education services, schools and settings (including colleges and nurseries), children and adults social care services, health commissioners and health providers, parents and carers, and young people with SEND to plan, commission and evaluate services that achieve good outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Mim’s role (as SEND Local Area Partnership Manager) helps to bring together the services mentioned above: ensuring that we have a robust area SEND action plan jointly owned by leaders across children’s services, adults’ services, health services and schools and settings in the area.

### Detail

#### SEND Local Area Partnership (SEND Local Area Partnership Manager – Mim Kendrick)

##### Focus

- Enabling joint leadership approaches across education, health and care to support children and young people with SEND, including the management of SEND Executive Board and SEND Partnership Board
- Managing activity related to the joint Ofsted and CQC SEND inspection, including resulting action plans
- Managing the SEND Strategy in the area in line with local priorities
- Ensuring that coproduction with parents, carers and young people is embedded into SEND practice at a strategic level
- Communicating the strategy, action plans and achievements across the partnership

**To find out more, contact:**

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# Children's Social Care

## Overview

Children's Social Care in Milton Keynes is a large and growing service, covering early help services through to young people leaving care. The remit of the teams in this area covers 0 – 24-year-olds -with an emphasis on partnership working with both families and other professionals.

The service work as a collective to ensure the best outcomes for our children and young people.

## Background

The social care remit in Milton Keynes is operationally overseen by three heads of service: the Head of Early Help and Protection, the Head of Service for Corporate Parenting, and the Head of Service for Quality Assurance, Performance and Youth Justice. In Milton Keynes the Youth Offending Service also sits in the social care remit.

The golden triangle is at the heart of our approach to working with children, young people and their families. Combining our principals of practice, Signs of Safety and our Child First ethos – while keeping children and young people at the centre of our thinking. The approach ensures a more proactive, child centred role for our social workers to help families to change so that the safety, development, and well-being of children are enhanced.

### To find out more, contact:

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# Early Help and Protection

## Overview

This service ensures the safety and protection of children in Milton Keynes.

This includes Family Centres and Targeted Early Help teams.

Then we have the statutory teams such as the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Family Support Hubs, Contextual Safeguarding, Children with Disabilities (CwD) and Emergency Social Work Team (ESWT). Three Family Support Workers (FSW) support the work of the statutory teams, to ensure the safety and protection of children and young



people. FSW provide various forms of intervention to support parents/carers, and specialist practitioners undertake specialist assessments and interventions to contribute to children's plans. The Family Time service facilitates family time for children who are unable to live with their parents – so they can see them in a safe place.

## **Detail**

### Early Help (Strategic Lead – Garry Lake)

#### Focus

#### Targeted Early Help

- Supporting level 3 families, acting as lead professionals and working with other professionals, practitioners to provide intensive family support to address areas of unmet needs of children and young people.
- Delivering a wide range of one-to-one interventions for parents/carers and their children which range from building on self-esteem, self-regulation to parenting strategies.

#### Family Centres

- Offering support and activities for families from 10 Family Centres across Milton Keynes. These centres are hubs of activities and provide services for families and the local community.
- Offering a range of services for families from 0 – 19 years old and provide courses to equip parents/carers with skills, tools and strategies to enhance their parenting.

#### Family Time Service

- Facilitating supervised family sessions for children and their parents within the following guidelines: Children subject to care proceedings, Children in long term foster care. Children who are part of the Public Law Outline (PLO) process and placed under Section 20 with family/LA foster carers.
- We have 2 dedicated FTS centres but also access the wider communities including: family centres, parks and community activities.

### Healthy Relationships Project (HRP)

- Supporting families effected by Domestic Abuse by facilitating a number of different courses and interventions to children and their parents.
- Programmes include: Freedom Programme, Recover Tool Kit, Escape the Trap, Let's Talk, Drawing and Talking as well as 121 and PMHW support

### Parenting Assessment and Wellbeing

- Providing a range of specialist assessments and interventions including: Parenting+, Just the right state, Play Therapy, Narrative Story Stems and parenting assessments such as Parent Assess and PAMS
- These assessments and interventions are used to support families effected by trauma and can provide Social Workers with a hypothesis to aid and support wider assessments and court plans.

### Youth Participation

- Supporting and aligning with the National Youth Agency (NYA) and National Youth Sector Advisory Board (NYSAB) when it comes to defining youth work.
- Recognising that the age range identified for youth work is predominantly 11-19 and up to 25 depending on the young adult's needs or if they are Care Experienced
- We have dedicated groups that help us including the MK Youth Council, Raise Your Voice (Children in Care Council) and SEND Youth Forum

### Supporting Families

- Helping vulnerable families thrive, building their resilience by providing effective, whole family support to help prevent escalation into statutory services.
- Driving system change locally and nationally, working with partners to create joined up local services, able to identify families in need, provide the right

### Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) (Operations Manager – Oonagh Moriarty)

#### Focus

- Responding to concerns raised about the welfare of children and young people in Milton Keynes. This contact is usually made by members of the public and professionals.
- Undertaking assessments of children and young people to determine the level of support needed.
- Offering advice and may signpost professionals and members of the public to other agencies to access other forms of support should children and young people not require targeted early help or statutory intervention.

### Family Support Hubs (FSH) (Service Manager – Rebecca Taylor)

#### Focus

#### Family Support Hubs

- Should a child or young person be assessed as requiring statutory involvement, which is usually a decision made by MASH, children and young people are referred to the FSH for longer term support.

- Statutory responsibility to ensure the safety and protection of children assessed as Children in Need (CIN), Child Protection (CP) and Children Looked After (CLA) as defined within statutory legislation such as the Children Act 1989.
- Social workers assess children and young people's needs and devise a care plan to mitigate the risks and unmet needs they are facing.
- If a child or young person is at significant risk of harm FSH may instigate public care proceedings to seek agreement of the Family Court to put in place support to mitigate the risks, they may or could be facing.
- The hubs also include Family Support Workers and a Primary Mental Health worker – who provide specialist assessment and intervention to children and their families open to Children's Social Care.
- Contextual Safeguarding Team
- Contextual Safeguarding is a specialist multi-agency team, the focus of this service is to support those who are experiencing harm outside of the family home, this could include exploitation, gang association or involvement in serious youth violence.
- Young people in the team are referred from MASH or the Family Support Hubs, the threshold for support from this service is tier 4 and suitability for allocation is decided by a multiagency panel.

#### Children with Disabilities (CwD) (Service Manager – Kyrene Darko)

##### Focus

- Assessing children with disabilities, devising plans to ensure their needs are being met.
- Implementing care packages of support tailored to each child or young person's needs to ensure they can achieve their potential.
- If disabled children or young people are believed to be at risk of, or suffering from significant harm, instigating child protection enquiries to ensure safety. This could lead to Child Protection plans being put in place. Should these plans not sufficiently safeguard the child/young person, social workers within CwD will instigate public care proceedings to seek the agreement of the Family Court to put in place support to mitigate the risks they may or could be facing.

#### **To find out more, contact:**

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# Corporate Parenting Service

## Overview

This service has corporate parenting responsibilities for all our looked after children in care.

Teams within the service are responsible for ensuring that we meet the needs of all children and young people and that they all reach their full potential. Supporting young people with care experience is also part of our responsibility, as is responsibility for the Fostering Service and Adoption Connects Regional Adoption Agency.

## Detail

<u>Children in Care Team (Team Manager - Claire Fidler)</u> Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working with all children in care following care proceedings aged 0-18.</li><li>• Focussing on: throughput of children who have a plan of adoption, securing permanence for those in long term foster care, rehabilitation homes for those children who have a plan to return home, and transitioning to independence at age 18.</li><li>• Each child has an allocated Social Worker who is responsible for reviewing, assessing and implementing the child's care plan to ensure the needs of the child are met for the duration of the time they are in care.</li></ul>
<u>16 to 25 Team (Team Manager - Katie Connolly)</u> Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supporting all young people aged 16-25 under the Children Leaving Care Act 2000.</li><li>• Supporting all new unaccompanied asylum-seeking arrivals.</li><li>• Ensuring that each young person has a Pathway Plan, setting out how we will be working together to meet the young person's needs.</li></ul>
<u>Fostering Service (Fostering Operations Manager - Alison Miller)</u> Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Responsibility for the recruitment and assessment of all kinship and mainstream carers.</li><li>• Providing support to carers who are unrelated to the child under Private Fostering Arrangements.</li><li>• Supporting and supervising all existing foster carers to ensure that all foster carers (including Kinship carers) meet the National Minimum Standards and Fostering Regulations.</li><li>• Providing comprehensive training to all carers.</li><li>• Supporting special guardians.</li></ul>

Westminster House (Registered Manager - Nicola Davis)

Focus

- Providing care to children and young people who are unable to live at home with their families and have a disability or complex needs.
- There are currently 5 young people living at Westminster House. The staff team provide care to meet these children's needs.
- Ensuring that young people are supported on the road to success. Working with young people to set targets and sharing/agreeing these with families, education, health and social care partners – to enable our young people to progress and learn.

Adoption Connects – Regional Adoption Agency (Service Manager - Nickie Phillips)

Focus

- Adoption Connects is the Regional Adoption Agency for MK. In 2019, Milton Keynes City Council formed a partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council and Adoption Plus.
- Responsibility for recruitment, assessment and approval of people who wish to adopt.
- Providing post adoption support to adopters and their families.
- Managing all letterbox contact between birth families and adopters.

Fostering Panel (Panel Chair – Margaret Attwood and Panel Advisor – Sarah McGrory)

Focus

- Providing and monitoring of foster care for children.
- Responsibility for recommending whether someone is suitable to become a foster carer or the continued approval of a foster carer.
- The Chair of the panel is supported by independent panel members who have relevant knowledge and experience.
- The panel advisor provides advice and guidance. The panel advisor is non-voting and should not contribute to recommendations.

**To find out more, contact:**

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# Quality Assurance Service

## Overview

This service supports the overall effectiveness, curiosity and impact of teams and services within the Children's Services Directorate. This is done through the distribution and analysis of case files and focused audits: coupled with robust governance of data linked to performance. Additionally, the service reviews the care plans for children who are looked after or subject to child protection plans at statutorily defined intervals to ensure plans are meeting presenting need.

The service also includes the Youth Justice Service. This service works with young people who have offended and provides them with guidance and support to help make positive changes in their lives, so they do not re-offend or cause further harm to themselves or others. The team is made up of Youth Justice Officers, A CAMHS worker and a Police Officer. The team is also supported by professionals with expertise in education, speech and language therapists, and substance misuse. The team works closely with community volunteers, Housing, Community Safety Services, Children's Social Care, and the local community and voluntary sector.

## Detail

### Principal Social Worker (Principal Social Worker – Emily Hutton)

#### Focus

- Overseeing training, student development and best practice across the services.
- Overseeing student entry into MKCC and the development, review and commissioning of effective training.
- Delivering the 'Assessed Year in Employment' (ASYE) programme.
- Supporting workforce development and 'Varsity'.
- Reviewing and developing the participation of children and young people in wider community initiatives: hearing their views to support practice development.
- Management of Practice Development Leads – who provide training and support across Children's Social Care to improve practice

### Safeguarding (Safeguarding Manager – Jenny Thomas)

#### Focus

- Overseeing independent reviewing officers (IROs)
- Reviewing and maintaining oversight of children who are subject to Child Protection plans. Making sure that plans are effective and meeting the needs of the children affected by them.
- Reviewing and overseeing Children who are Looked After. Making sure that reviews are held within timescale and that plans are effective in meeting the needs of the children affected by them.
- Developing, distributing and reviewing the monthly audit cycle: enabling Children's Services to think about how practice is developed and what is needed to further enhance practice.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivering training programs to support engagement with the Signs of Safety practice model (refresher training for staff and introductions to the model for new starters)</li> </ul>
<p><u>Family Group Conference (FGC) (Family Group Conference Services Manager – Surjit Bains)</u></p> <p>Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting the development of family plans so that support and guidance can be located informally and reduce the need for longer term statutory intervention.</li> <li>Meetings are chaired by a Social Worker who guides families to think about the</li> </ul>
<p><u>Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) (LADO – Kay Newman, Melanie Perkins and Denise Goodson)</u></p> <p>Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking responsibility for managing allegations against adults who work with children. This involves working with police, children's social care, employers and other involved professionals.</li> <li>The LADO does not conduct investigations directly, but rather oversees and directs them to ensure thoroughness, timeliness and fairness. Ordinarily, to ensure impartiality, the LADO will not have direct contact with the adult against who the allegation has been made, or the family of the child/children involved but will, as part of their role ensure that these have information regarding outcomes.</li> </ul> <p>The LADO must be contacted where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child;</li> </ul>
<p><u>Youth Justice (Youth Justice Operational Manager – Carly Murphy)</u></p> <p>Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting young people engaged in serious youth violence, crime and exploitation through the development of multi-agency plans approved by Youth Justice Panels and the courts.</li> <li>Reducing ongoing engagement in criminality.</li> <li>Working alongside the partnership to review and respond to incidents of serious youth violence.</li> <li>Ensuring that there are sufficient preventative measures in place to support young people engaged in youth crime and to prevent young people susceptible to crime from entering the system.</li> </ul>

**To find out more, contact:**

- Name: Martin Clement
- Contact details: [Martin.Clement@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:Martin.Clement@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

## **Part 2:**

### **Strategic leadership – LA led meetings, events and communications**

#### **Heads Half Hour – briefings for headteachers**

Twice a year, this 30-minute event keeps MK leaders apprised of significant agendas, initiatives, projects and programmes at national, regional and local level. Hosted by the Head of Education Outcomes, the agenda is designed to focus on the most current ‘big ticket items’ so that the whole sector can purposefully engage with these.

Heads Half Hour is virtual. An unlisted YouTube link is shared in advance of the meetings. Leaders can choose to watch the event live or access a recording of it later. The intended audience is CEOs, executive headteachers, headteachers, principals and heads of schools. In 2025-2026, Heads Half Hour will be on:

- October – date TBC via Heads Up
- March – date TBC via Heads Up

#### **Meetings for headteachers of maintained schools**

These events provide a twice-yearly opportunity for leaders of maintained schools to come together and discuss matters that are timely and pertinent to this part of our local education system.

Meetings are hosted by the Director of Children’s Services and the Assistant Director of Education and Learning. The intended audience is Executive headteachers, headteachers and heads of school from maintained schools. As outlined in the Maintained School Protocol, leaders are expected to attend.

Meetings for leaders of maintained schools will be on:

- 11 November 2025 (1.30 – 3.30pm)
- 11 June 2026 (2.00pm – 4.00pm)

#### **Meetings for CEOs of multi academy trusts**

These events provide a twice-yearly opportunity of the CEO’s of MATs operating in MK to come together and discuss matters that are timely and pertinent to the MK academy sector.

Meeting are hosted by the Director of Children’s Services and the Assistant Director of Education and Learning. The intended audience is CEOs – of local, regional or national trusts.

Meetings for CEOs of multi academy trusts will be on:

- 27 November 2025 (5.00pm – 6.30pm)
- 29 June 2026 (4.30pm – 6.00pm)

### **Briefings for Chairs of Governing/Trust Boards**

Free LA briefings for chairs of governing/trust boards are face to face. This is because governors/trustees told us they wanted more opportunities to meet - seeing as they have fewer opportunities to do this than headteachers.

The intended audience is chairs of Trust boards, chairs of governing boards, or co-chairs of boards. As outlined in the Maintained School Protocol, chairs of local authority maintained schools, or vice chairs, are expected to attend.

Meetings dates for 2025-2026 will be shared as soon as they are confirmed, via Heads Up and Governor Hub.

### **Quadrant meetings**

These free events are hosted 4 times a year. They support co-production and whole sector, shared decision making at both city wide and more localised level. Hence the meetings take place at the same time in the North, South, East and West. Agendas are driven by what schools themselves say they want to work on, thus providing a place to focus on local solutions to local problems.

Quadrant meetings are co-chaired. Each quadrant elects a school-based co-chair who works with a LA officer to chair meetings. Co-chairs for 2025-2026 are:

<b>Quadrant</b>	<b>School-based co-chair</b>	<b>LA co-chair</b>
North	Gill Cash (Priory Common)	Simon Sims
South	Samatha Satyanadhan (Lord Grey Academy)	Katy Enser
East	Donna Christy (Langland School)	Alison Talbot
West	Lisa Munro (The Woodlands School)	Victoria Courtis

Quadrant meetings are for CEOs, executive headteachers, headteachers, principals and/or heads of schools. As outlined in the Maintained School Protocol, leaders of maintained schools are expected to attend. Leaders of academies are strongly encouraged to attend too.

Attendance is by email invitation. Meetings for 2025-2026 are planned for:

- 25 September 2025 (10.00am – 12.00pm)
- 27 November 2025 (10.00am – 12.00pm)
- 10 March 2026 (10.00am – 12.00pm)
- 18 June 2026 (10.00am – 12.00pm)

Please note: meetings can be face to face or online as agreed with members of each quadrant. If they choose to meet face to face, Quadrants sometimes plan to meet a bit earlier than the times stated above, to allow colleagues time to network. Please be mindful of this.

### **Heads Up – e-newsletter**

This MKCC communication is issued fortnightly, via email, during term time. It provides a ‘one stop shop’ for busy MK leaders: supporting them to access the right information at the right time. In the words of one headteacher – “I know I won’t miss something important if I make time to read Heads Up.”

The e-newsletter is separated into the following sections, to support effective information sharing and signposting:

- News and Updates
- MKCC Services
- DfE Guidance
- Other info

Heads Up is sent to CEOs, executive headteachers, headteachers, principals or head of schools. It is also sent to chairs of governing boards. We ask that these colleagues share it with their senior leadership teams, school-based colleagues and wider governing board members as appropriate.

Early Years Essentials (EYE) is Heads Up’s sister communication. It is also sent fortnightly, but to early years providers across MK – private, voluntary, independent and childminders. It focusses on the Early Years context.

### **Making Headway Conference**

This is MK’s education conference for senior leaders. It is an opportunity to access high quality professional development at local level. For example, listening to globally renowned keynote speakers, accessing workshops and spending time together with other senior leaders.

Details of conference events are shared in Heads Up. But ‘save the date’ for 29 June 2026!

### **Escalation expectations**

Just like you have expectations about how concerns are escalated within your organisation, we have some too. Please ensure that you (and your team members) discuss any concerns with the relevant officer - before you consider sharing them more widely.

If you, or your team, need to escalate a concern please do so progressively, by contacting people in the order outlined below - only moving on if the issue remains unresolved:

- Specific MKCC officer
- Their team manager – as set out in Part 1
- The Head of Service – as set out in Part 1
- The relevant Assistant Director
- The DCS

Please do not copy in multiple managers or re-send your concerns to multiple people. This creates additional work for everyone and significantly slows down our ability to respond.

## **Part 3:**

### **Special focus leadership –partnerships, networks, forums, and meetings**

#### **Inclusion Partnership (secondary and primary)**

The MK Inclusion Partnership is a collective group made up of LA officers and local leaders/professionals. The panel use an agreed and consistent evidence base to determine and agree:

- a) which pupils should access commissioned places at Bridge Academy
- b) which pupils will be reintegrated into mainstream
- c) how 'hard to place' pupils should be placed across mainstream - in a fair way, whether schools have vacancies or not, through nationally prescribed and locally agreed criteria (see Fair Access section below)

The Partnership establishes transparent systems and protocols (for primary and secondary) regarding places at alternative education provision. Proactive and/or emergency 'dual rolled' placements are used when evidence shows that everything possible has been done at the current school and more support is needed. The duration of the dual placement will be specific to the child's needs: focussed on supporting a successful return to mainstream at the earliest opportunity – usually back to the same school. The partnership also enables and supports managed moves between mainstream schools, where headteachers agree that a 'trial move' to another school may provide a positive outcome for a pupil.

This process of peer support and challenge, and timely re-integrations back to mainstream, ensures that local alternative provision (AP) continues to have capacity to support proactive interventions. Since the creation of the partnership, permanent exclusions have become a rarity in Milton Keynes, which is a significant contrast to the national picture.

The primary and secondary phase panels meet once a month. Meetings are typified by robust, sector led challenge, transparency, and consistency. This supports equity over expectations and decision making and secures a clear audit trail about decisions made.

Panels consist of senior representatives from Stephenson Trust (which operates Bridge Academy), local authority leaders (from SEND, Children's Social Care, and Access to Education, Employment and Training), and senior leaders from both mainstream and special schools. All secondary schools are expected to have representation at each panel meeting. In contrast, the primary panel consists of a core group, with all primary schools encouraged to attend through the year.

For more information, please contact [Kathie Hughes](#) (CEO/Executive Principal of Stephenson Trust and Milton Keynes Partnership Officer)



## Fair Access

The Inclusion Partnership (see above) is also responsible for Fair Access.

This is the protocol used to determine how “hard to place” pupils moving schools ‘in-year’ are equitably distributed across the whole system: as opposed to always going to the schools with vacancies. This includes children moving into Milton Keynes, as well as children who require significant additional support in their current MK school place, but are seeking to switch schools.

The protocol helps to ensure that school placements are promptly secured for our most vulnerable children: so that they can continue to receive the education and support they require. It also shares responsibility across the sector and helps to mitigate against the schools with vacancies facing additional school improvement challenges.

Fair Access is the only way that schools with vacancies can reject mainstream admissions, and it can also legally require schools that are full to admit above their admission number.

To find out more you can visit the [MKCC admissions webpage](#) or email [primaryadmissions@Milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:primaryadmissions@Milton-keynes.gov.uk) or [secondaryadmissions@Milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:secondaryadmissions@Milton-keynes.gov.uk)

## Place Planning Groups (schools and special schools)

These groups have been established with colleagues from the primary, secondary and SEND sectors. They meet on a termly basis to help secure a collaborative and ‘joined up’ approach to place planning and admissions across MK.

The groups focus on ensuring that statutory duties can be met, and that possible demand can be accommodated across MK within local provision. Members work in partnership to consider specific place planning issues: ensuring that matters are strategically and collaboratively considered by the sector.

Whilst the groups make recommendations which have been considered by a variety of stakeholders, individual decisions are ultimately decided on by individual admissions authorities.

The groups are made up of representative leaders from across MK.

Primary Place Planning Group	
Sector-based members	LA member
Mark Sim- Oakgrove	Simon Sims (Head of Children’s Sufficiency and Access to Education, Employment and Training)
Pam McBurnie (Bow Brickhill C of E Primary)	Dom Williams (Strategic Lead – Children’s Services Planning and Transformation)
Glynis Wiles (Giffard Park)	
Vikki Pegg (Watling Primary School)	

Steve Springett-McHugh (Wyvern/Bushfield)	
Philip Gray (Long Meadow)	
Kelly Cursley (Holmwood, Ashbrook & Fairfields)	
Sarah Kotulecki (Cold Harbour CE School)	
Natalie Shanahan (St Monicas Primary School)	

<b>Secondary Place Planning Group</b>	
<b>Sector-based members</b>	<b>LA member</b>
Paul McFadden (Ousedale School)	Simon Sims (Head of Children's Sufficiency and Access to Education, Employment and Training)
Gordon Farquhar (Milton Keynes Academy)	Dom Williams (Strategic Lead – Children's Services Planning and Transformation)
Mark Fell (MK College)	
Helen Fry (Watling Academy)	
Ian Tett (Oakgrove)	
Michael Manley	

<b>Specialist Provision Planning Group</b>	
<b>Sector-based members</b>	<b>LA member</b>
Lisa Munro (The Woodlands School)	Simon Sims (Head of Children's Sufficiency and Access to Education, Employment and Training)
Kathie Hughes (Stephenson Trust)	Dom Williams (Strategic Lead – Children's Services Planning and Transformation)
Jo-Anne Hoarty (St Pauls Catholic School)	Vic Courtis (Head of SEND)
Jim Parker (TOVE MAT)	Jack Lawrence (Business Intelligence Officer)
Phil Webster (Grand Union Partnership)	Katie Burgess (MKCC Finance representative)

Amy Langford (MK College)	Paul Freeman (MKCC Estates Representatives)
<b>PACA Rep - to be determined</b>	Kath Cook/Sarah Bayliss (MKCC Capital Representatives)
Zoe Baines (Slated Row School)	
Sashi Siva (ILF)	

### Finance Forums and Reference Groups

There are three 'groups' in MK that act as advisory and decision-making bodies regarding matters relating to the relevant budgets:

- Schools Forum
- Early Years Reference Group
- High Need Reference Group

Each group provides support, scrutiny, and challenge in relation to financial decision making. Thus, decisions are made in partnership with the sector.

Members, and individuals associated with any of the groups, act in accordance with the seven principles of public life - selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership. Members act as representatives of education sectors across MK.

<b>Schools Forum</b>	
<b>Sector-based members</b>	<b>LA member</b>
Paul Hussey (Inclusive Learning Federation) <b>(Chair)</b>	Alison Talbot (Head of Education Outcomes)
Kate Warren (St Paul's Catholic School) <b>(Vice-Chair)</b>	Simon Sims (Head of Children's Sufficiency and Access to Education, Employment and Training)
Kirk Hopkins (Oldbrook First School)	Victoria Courtis (Head of SEND)
Jake Yeo (The Viaduct Federation)	Cristina Pompa (Lead Finance Manager for Children's Services)
Natalie Fowler (Knowles Nursery)	Katie Burgess (Education Finance Manager)
Paul Herbert (St Paul's Catholic School)	Michelle Hibbert (Schools Funding Accountant)
Lisa Munro (Woodlands School)	
Jess Fellowes (Abbeys Primary School)	
Rob Tite (IFTL MAT)	

Matthew Shotton (Glebe Farm School)	
Phil Webster (Grand Union Partnership)	
James Pilgrim (Kents Hill Park)	
Becky Skillings (Chestnuts Primary School)	
Ian Fraser-Kirkup (The Blue Sky Federation)	
Kathie Hughes (Stephenson Trust)	
Toby Long (Oxford C of E Diocese)	
Jo-Anne Hoarty (Northampton Catholic Diocese)	
Helen Middleton (Early Years Providers representative)	
Amy Langford (Post 16 provider)	
Row Martin (Recognised Teachers' Trade Union representative)	
<b>2x Maintained Primary School Vacancies</b>	
<b>3x Academy Secondary School Vacancies</b>	
<b>1x Academy Primary School Vacancy</b>	
<b>1x Academy Alternative provision Vacancy</b>	
<b>Early Years Reference Group</b>	
<b>Sector-based members</b>	<b>LA member</b>
Anne Ball (Olney Pre School)	Simon Sims (Head of Children's Sufficiency and Access to Education, Employment and Training) <b>(Chair)</b>
Julie Dodds (MK Focus)	Belinda Woodcock (Early Years Improvement Partner)
Helen Middleton (Central England Pre School Learning Alliance)	Julie Godwin (Early Years Payments Officer)
Carol Taylor (Regional Director Childbase)	Joanne Friday (Senior Inclusion Specialist Teacher)
Laura Andrews (Acorn Childcare)	Katie Burgess (Education Finance Manager)

Tracie Bailey (Buttons Pre School)	Michelle Hibbert (Schools Funding Accountant)
Natalie Fowler (Knowles Nursery School)	
Kirk Hopkins (Oldbrook First School)	
Steve Johnstone (Milton Keynes Christian Foundation)	
<b>1x – Maintained School Vacancy</b>	
<b>High Needs Reference Group</b>	
<b>Sector-based members</b>	<b>LA member</b>
Amy Langford (MK College)	Victoria Courtis (Head of SEND) <b>(Chair)</b>
Michelle Bartle (White Spire School)	Simon Sims (Head of Children's Sufficiency and Access to Education, Employment and Training)
Natalie Fowler (Knowles Nursery School)	Alison Talbot (Head of Education Outcomes)
Chris Holmwood (5 Dimensions Trust)	Dominic Williams (Children's Services Planning and Transformation Service Lead)
Lisa Munro (The Woodlands School)	Cristina Pompa (Lead Finance Manager for Children's Services)
Rob Tite( IFTL MAT)	Katie Burgess (Education Finance Manager)
Phil Webster (Grand Union Partnership)	
Aimee Mills (Monkston Primary)	
Sarah Kotulecki (Cold Harbour Primary)	
Jo Macpherson (St Pauls)	
Kate Warren (St Pauls)	
Edel Sewell (Stephenson Academy)	
Liz Stephen (Aspire Federation)	
Carrie Matthews (Willen Primary)	
Louise Archer (MK College)	

### **SENDCo Quadrant Meetings**

These free meetings are held in person, four times a year. (Early years quadrant meetings are held online via MS Teams.) They provide a space for collaborative working, so that schools, settings and wider colleagues within the Local Area can work together to improve outcomes for children and young people. A whole system approach is prioritised. You can find out more on the [MKCC Local Offer Centralised Training webpage](#).

The intended audience in SENDCos – but other leaders may wish to attend, and everyone is welcome.

The meetings are co-chaired. Each quadrant elects a school-based co-chair who works with a LA officer to chair meetings. Co-chairs for 2025-2026 are:

Quadrant	School-based co-chair	LA co-chair
North	Helen Bacon (Ousedale)	Sarah Ray
South	Nicola Bradley (St Pauls )	Amy Segui
East	Lucy Rogers (Oakgrove)	Jenna Austin/ Sinead Henry
West	Sarah Cowper (Giles brook)	Allie Tranter

### **SEND Inclusion Forum**

This forum is held weekly (on Thursday) at Falconhurst School to discuss requests for assessments for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Members include SEND Officers, representatives from health and colleagues from schools and settings. Decisions are made using a multi-agency approach - to ensure that the right decisions are being made.

If your school (or a parent/ carer) submit a request for assessment, your SENDCo will be invited to attend Forum. We welcome staff who work with young people and headteachers.

For more information please visit the [MKCC EHCP webpage](#) or contact [EHCP@Milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:EHCP@Milton-keynes.gov.uk)

### **Contacting the SEND Team**

There are two direct ways of making contact with the SEND Team:

#### Route 1:

For support (including concerns around meeting need), advice and guidance all schools, settings, early years providers, professionals and parents/ carers are requested to email [SENDsupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:SENDsupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk). All emails should be sent to this mailbox. Please do not email individuals as this can cause response delays. Ahead of making general enquiries please refer to the Local Offer - most information can be found on there.

#### Route 2:

For all statutory requests such as requesting an EHC Needs Assessment, Annual Review information and paperwork, and Tribunals – you should email [EHCP@Milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:EHCP@Milton-keynes.gov.uk).

Again, please do not email individuals. Your queries/requests will be signposted to the relevant officer who will make contact with you.

### **Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) Network Meetings and EMA CPD**

These sessions are held online half termly. They are free for schools that have purchased EMA package 1 or 2. Other schools may attend for a cost per delegate: £25 for Network Meetings and £45 for CPD sessions.

Network meetings and CPD sessions provide EMA Co-ordinators (EMACos) with an opportunity to share good practice as well as the chance to learn about the latest EAL initiatives to support learners from the global majority. This includes Refugee and International New Arrivals.

EMACos are the intended audience. Schools that buy traded services are also supported by an e-newsletter during term time. Leaders from any school can access the EMA Diversity Resource Centre – supporting inclusive education. It's full of resources to help celebrate and promote the diversity within MK schools and settings.

EMACos and senior leaders may also be interested in:

- Supplementary school steering group meetings – where community leads from MK supplementary schools discuss the further development of support across MK.
- SACRE meetings – where members from MKC faith communities meet with RE Leads to consider RE education and faith related issues.

For further details, please visit the [MKCC EMA webpage](#) or contact [ema@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:ema@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

### **Designated Teacher (DT) Forums**

These free sessions are facilitated, termly, by colleagues in the Virtual School. They provide an opportunity for designated teachers to share good practice and support one another: at the same time as receiving updates and information from the Virtual School team.

Designated teachers are the intended audience – but other school staff are welcome to attend if this would be helpful (for example: Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) or heads of year).

Dates of DT Forums can be found on the [MKCC Virtual School webpage](#). This is where you'll find everything you need to know about the Virtual School in MK. Additionally, the termly Designated Teacher Newsletter provides key messages from the Virtual School as well as signposting to training and resources.

Did you know that the Virtual School have a governing board? It's chaired by Mac Heath (DCS) with members including councillors, foster carers and representatives from schools, education settings and wider MKCC teams.



The governing board ensures that the Virtual School is held to account, providing support and challenge. If you have any questions about the Virtual School Governing Board or would like to get involved please contact the Virtual School Head, [Katy Enser](#)

## **Part 4:**

### **Sector led groups and partnerships**

#### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Forums**

There are two main DSL Forums in MK: one for secondary schools and one for primary schools, special schools, and alternative provisions. They are both chaired by MK school leaders.

The forums exist to provide support for Designated Safeguarding Leaders across MK through shared discussion about best practice. They provide an opportunity for signposting and information sharing. They also ensure that the views of MK schools are represented on MK Together boards - supporting decisions about safeguarding at local level.

The secondary DSL forum meet once a term via MS Teams. The primary, special and alternative provision forum generally meet as one large group.

DSLs are strongly encouraged to engage with their relevant forum by contacting [Rachel Cooke](#) or [Louise Aird](#).

#### **Mental Health Lead Forum**

This free forum meets online (via MS Teams) once a term. It's chaired by Liz Nightingale from Green Park School.

Meetings support Mental Health Leaders to gain knowledge of local and national initiatives that support the mental health of children and young people. Heads of Service from health, CAMHS, MHSTs and the EP service attend meetings – to support discussion and to share updates. There is also usually a guest speaker to talk about identified areas of interest/need.

Mental Health Leaders are the intended audience, but any teacher or relevant professional can attend from any school or service.

For further details, please contact [Liz Nightingale](#) or [Liz Wilson](#)

#### **Milton Keynes Secondary Heads (MKSH)**

MKSH meet once every half term face to face. The meeting is free to attend but each school makes a small contribution each year for secretarial services.

The meeting is for senior leaders of mainstream secondary schools and alternative provisions across Milton Keynes. Members work collaboratively, across the system: to share effective practices and jointly find solutions to any challenges faced. The group provides a significant support mechanism for one another.

The current Chair of MKSH is [Chris Holmwood](#) (5 Dimensions Trust). You can contact him for further information.

### **Deputy and Assistant Secondary Heads (DASH)**

Like MKSH, DASH meet once a half term face to face. Meetings are free to attend.

The meeting is for mainstream deputy headteachers and assistant headteachers in secondary schools across Milton Keynes. By coming together, these colleagues can work to support one another and find joint solutions to problems and challenges they may face.

For more information about DASH please contact [Mark McGarvie](#) (Kents Hill Park) or [Erin Stewart](#) (Glebe Farm).

### **Milton Keynes Special School Heads (MKSSH)**

MKSSH also meet once every half term face to face. The meeting is free to attend and takes place at The Woodlands School - Hazeley Campus.

Meetings are for the heads of special provisions across Milton Keynes. They provide an opportunity for colleagues to discuss the broad, and sometimes unique, issues that affect special schools and specialist provisions, as well as more specific issues relevant to the Milton Keynes context.

The current Chair of MKSSH is [Zoë Baines](#) (Slated Row). You can contact her for further information.

### **Milton Keynes Education Partnership (MKEP)**

MKEP's work supports collaboration to improve opportunities and outcomes for all learners in Milton Keynes. There is a strong commitment to working together, making use of knowledge, expertise, and resources available in the city and beyond.

MKEP project development or working groups meet face to face or online. Partnership activities also include professional development sessions and conferences. For example, the secondary 'MK Reading for Life' project currently includes two conferences and two online CPD sessions a year, with an online platform sharing resources to support schools.

MKEP is an active member of AEPA (Area Education Partnerships Association): working with and learning from other area-based partnerships. It was involved in the national LocalEd Pilots on 'Developing new Locality Models for English Schools.'

Relevant strategic groups are responsible for oversight and decision-making related to specific projects. At strategic level, a Partnership Board will meet twice every year.

All schools/educational settings and colleges in Milton Keynes can participate in partnership activities and meetings. You can find out more by contacting:

Primary: [Carrie Matthews](#) (Headteacher, Willen Primary School)

Secondary: [Jo-Anne Hoarty](#) (Headteacher, St Paul's Catholic School)

Special: [sashi.siva@ilf.education](mailto:sashi.siva@ilf.education) (Executive Headteacher, Inclusive Learning Federation)

Partnership Lead: [David Balderstone](#)

## Part 5:

### Regional Hubs and Networks

#### **Chiltern Teaching School Hub (including NPQ and ECT information)**

Chiltern Teaching School Hub (CTSH) is part of Chiltern Learning Trust. It is the DfE selected regional teaching school hub for MK.

CTSH signpost, facilitate and deliver outstanding, nationally recognised, CPD programmes - to ensure that schools get the best opportunities for their staff. From initial teacher training to executive leadership, they have developed professional pathways to support everyone.

CTSH receive funding from central government to provide professional development for MK education staff. This supports the national ambition for there to be a "Golden Thread" of opportunity for staff at all stages of their career. You can find out more about the following on the [CTSH website](#):

- Early Career Teacher Programme (ECTP)
- Appropriate Body (AB) service for ECTs
- National Professional Qualifications (NPQs)
- Wider CPD opportunities

You may also want to consider what [MK ECF Partners](#) and [MK NPQ Partners](#) can offer.

#### **Enigma Maths Hub**

The Enigma Maths Hub provides free and funded leadership and professional development activities across MK. All MK schools are automatically part of the Enigma Hub.

Enigma aims to empower schools by providing specialist, collaborative support, and action-based research to improve the enjoyment, engagement, and achievements in mathematics for all.

We are very lucky to have the Maths Hub in MK – so please do remember to make use of the support and expertise available.

You can find out more on the [Enigma Maths Hub website](#).

#### **White Knights English Hub**

White Knights is our local English Hub. They provide free and funded support in relation to increasing reading standards and improving educational outcomes for the most disadvantaged children.

The work of White Knights focuses on: early language development, age-appropriate phonics provision, writing, and promoting a love of reading.

You can find out more on the [White Knights English Hub website](#).

### **Early Years Programmes**

MKCC are committed to supporting the early years sector and actively engage with any DfE and local programmes which will support high quality early years practice. We alert practitioners (providers and schools) to these through the Early Years Essential e-newsletter and other briefings.

The DfE's '[Stronger Practice Hubs](#)' programme provides online EYFS support for early years leaders (including reception leaders) and practitioners.

The BBC's '[Happy Tiny People](#)' initiative supports practitioners (and parents and carers) to help develop language and communication skills in the home learning environment.

'Giving every child the best start in life' is the [UK government's strategy](#) to ensure that children have a positive start in their earliest years through improved family support, accessible and affordable early years education, and better quality early education and childcare settings.

The MKCC Improvement Partner for Early Years, Belinda Woodcock, retains oversight of provision in early years and childcare settings across Milton Keynes. Belinda is supported by an Early Years Quality and Participation Officer and two Early Years Quality Improvement Practitioners (EYQIPs). Together their work complements that of the DfE programmes – to provide support, advice and challenge to early years settings and childminders.

You can contact [Belinda Woodcock](#) for more information.

### **MK Music Service**

Milton Keynes Music Service is an organisation led by MKCC's Music Faculty. It is part of the new BLMK Music Hub. The BLMK Music Hub and the MK Music Service are made up of schools and key partners that are responsible for music and music education.

MK Music Service ensure that all young people can receive an excellent music education and that they have opportunities to develop their music skills through high quality instrumental and vocal tuition as well as progressive wide-ranging musical experiences.

There are range of ways that MK Music Service can support and complement music provision in schools. You can find out more on the [MK Music Hub website](#).

## Part 6:

### Safeguarding

#### **MK Together**

The [MK Together](#) Safeguarding Partnership brings together senior leaders from key agencies across Milton Keynes. Together they agree ways to coordinate local safeguarding services. They also act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others and implementing local and national learning, including from serious child safeguarding incidents.

As part of its work, MK Together develop and publish [policies, guidance and resources](#) to aid the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults across the city.

Members of the sector led DSL Forums, alongside colleagues from MKCC, represent the education sector on MK Together boards.

#### **Levels of Need (LON)**

The MK Levels Of Need (LON) are captured in the [Childrens Social Care \(CSC\) Local Safeguarding Protocol](#). The LON provide guidance for professionals when they encounter a child who may be in need or at risk of harm. There are 4 levels of concern – with 1 being the lowest and 4 being the highest.

As well as containing the LONs, the CSC Local Safeguarding Protocols outlines locally agreed safeguarding approaches in MK. It is important to share this with colleagues.

#### **Early Help and Early Help Advisors**

The responsibility for Universal Early Help sits with you. Your first port of call, to get any help with this, is your local Family Centre. They provide a host of services to support children and families and can signpost you to many more.

If intended outcomes for children and families haven't been achieved through Universal Early Help, you should complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA). The EHA should include information about how the child and family have already been supported and what the impact of this support was. You can download the EHA form from the [MKCC Early Help Directory webpage](#)

You can find more information about Early Help in the Levels of Need (LON) document above.

Two Early Help Advisors (Geeta Masih or Jon Rene) are employed by MKCC to support the Early Help pathway.

### **The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

If you are unsure what to do about a concern, you should contact the [MASH](#) for advice. The MASH manager will help you identify whether the concern should be progressed along the Early Help or the Safeguarding pathway.

If you have concerns at Levels 3 or 4, you should complete a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF).

### **The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

The [LADO](#) oversees the management of allegations against people who work with children. This includes chairing strategy meetings in cases where an allegation requires investigation by the police and/or social care.

The team also provide information and advice to employers about concerns raised in relation to individual cases: including about recruitment matters relating to staff suitability.

The LADOs in MK are:

- Kay Newman
- Melanie Perkins
- Denise Goodson

You can and should contact the [LADO](#) for advice and support as and when necessary.

## Part 7:

### MKCC Traded Services

#### Services available for schools

We're delighted to offer a traded service to schools. You can see the offer for the 2025-2026 financial year on the [Milton Keynes Professional Development Portal \(MKPDP\)](#).

This is where you go to view the full range of services available to schools. This is also where you need to go to order/ purchase services. Our offer includes:

- Advertising: Job Advert Service
- Attendance service
- Ethnic Minority Achievement Service
- Governor Services
- Music Hub services
- Safeguarding Services
- School Improvement Services
- School Library Services

The offer for the 2026 – 2027 financial year will be shared on MKPDP later in the academic year. Look out for the 'launch' in Heads Up.

Services are popular – so we recommend buying the services you want as early as possible.

