

Central Bedfordshire Partnership Agreement

Central Bedfordshire Council & BLMK ICB working in
collaboration with SNAP Parent Carer Forum (PCF)

March 2024



SEND | Together is better





1. Introduction

This agreement seeks to provide a framework across Central Bedfordshire for all key strategic partners to work in collaboration to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people and their parent carers.

The agreement is set within the context and principles laid out in the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and in recognition that all Children and Young People's right to participate in decision-making is enshrined in law via [Section 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), the [SEND Code of Practice 2014](#), the [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#), and the [Care Act 2014](#). Most recently, the [SEND Alternative Provision and Improvement Plan \(2023 \)](#) sets out plans to change the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and alternative provision system in England and specifically outlines 'that the national system should be co-produced with families, children and young people.'

In Central Bedfordshire we are committed to co-production being at the heart of all we do, and we believe that 'together is better'. This means working together with SNAP PCF who represent our parent/carer voice at a strategic and operational level within the Local Area. This is to ensure we work consistently and as equal partners when we design, develop, implement, and review services, recognising the value of working together as a way of maximising the opportunities of getting the services right first time.

2. SEND Vision and Professional Values

The SEND Vision

The SEND Vision is a statement that describes a shared ambition for all children and young people with SEND in Central Bedfordshire.

'In Central Bedfordshire, we will strive for every child and young person with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) aged 0-25 years to have the best possible start in life, and a childhood where they feel included and valued for their individuality both at home and within their community. Our ambition is for every child and young person to do well in education, and to fulfil their aspirations as they move into adulthood so that they can take their place in society as healthy, engaging, and contributing members of the community. We commit to a local area with an inclusive culture where professionals and services feel valued, enabling them to build meaningful relationships with families where they can make a difference. Our services will make a difference to the lives of children and young people with SEND by being available and accessible to them at the right time and in the right place.'

For Professionals: Values

The Central Bedfordshire SEND Strategy is underpinned by a shared set of values held by professionals working in services supporting children and young people with SEND, and local area leaders. These values are:

- **Children and young people will be at the centre of all that we do:**

We will listen to the views and experiences of families and will recognise and acknowledge their aspirations and needs so that they feel valued in all that we do. We will work in partnership with SNAP PCF as we work towards positive shared outcomes.

- **We will be transparent:**

We will be honest and share information with parents, carers, children, and young people in a proactive and responsive way.

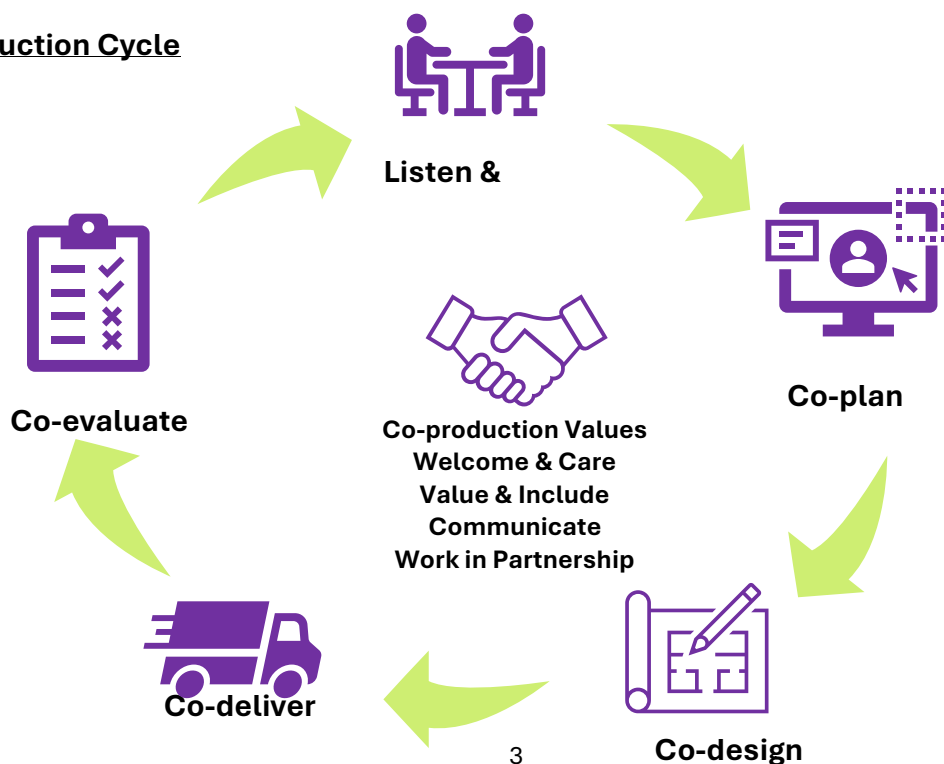
- **We will be reflective:**

We will be accountable and learn from good practice or where processes or services have gone well, as well as poor practice or where services or processes need to be improved. We will be reflective, accountable and embrace opportunities to learn and develop to improve outcomes for children and young people.

- **We will work together effectively:**

We will work together across services in a way which best supports the aspirations of children and young people. We will recognise barriers and work collectively to overcome these so that we can achieve positive outcomes.

The Co-production Cycle



We will continue to develop our co-production practice:

As a Local Area Partnership, we are committed to the development of high-quality coproduction practice. Our commitment to co-production practice development will be demonstrated by a continuous process of developing a consistent culture of co-production across the SEND Area Local Partnership through a process of learning. Embedding of the SNAP PCF Local Area Partnership agreement will bring about transformation at strategic, operation and individual practitioner levels, improving outcomes for our children, young people, and their families.

3. Our Partnership

In Central Bedfordshire, our SEND Partnership Programme includes Local Authority Services, Health services, SNAP PCF, education providers, leisure services and voluntary sector organisations who work together to improve and deliver the best possible services for children and young people with SEND. We will work together to understand the needs of local children, young people, and their families, so that we can commission and provide services that are inclusive and supportive, whilst keeping children and young people and their families at the heart of all that we do.

Working in partnership with SNAP PCF, children, young people, and their families ensures that those using SEND services have equal opportunity to meaningfully participate in the decisions that affect them at individual, operational and strategic levels.

For the purpose of this agreement, the term ‘partnership’ refers to three key strategic partners who continue to work together to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Central Bedfordshire. Central Bedfordshire Council and BLMK ICB commission providers and there is an expectation that those providers adhere to the principles set out within this agreement:

Central Bedfordshire Council

Central Bedfordshire Council is ambitious for its children and young people with SEND and increased vulnerabilities to provide a great education and support strong life outcomes.

Working together with its partners and stakeholders, the Council has a new SEND vision and strategy which sets out plans for improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND. The vision and strategy reflect the priorities and aspirations of our families and partners across the local area, it demonstrates our commitment to continue to work together to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people and their families.

The Council has a statutory role in the development of an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plans. We work collaboratively with our families, partners, and educational settings, to support our children and young people with SEND to thrive and prepare for adulthood.

BLMK Integrated Care Board (ICB)

The ICB provides assurance that health services are meeting their statutory responsibilities. The ICB will drive this work through the Start Well priority and the BLMK Health and Care priority.

We commit to working in partnership with the local authorities, parent/carers groups and NHS health organisations to contribute to the local offer in Central Bedfordshire and improve outcomes for children and young people.

SNAP Parent Carer Forum (PCF)

Recognising the importance of parent carer involvement at a strategic level alongside health, care and education services, the Department of Education provides a grant to facilitate Parent Carer Forums in every local area in England.

SNAP (Special Needs Action Panel) PCF is a pro-active, independent forum of parent carers who all have children and young people with SEND. As members of the National Network of Parent Carer Forum's they support the development of parent carer participation, a process in which parents work together with professionals to make improvements to local services. SNAP PCF act as a conduit for a wide variety of local professionals in their work with children and young people with SEND.

SNAP PCF purpose is to improve the services provided for young people aged 0-25 years old.

SNAP PCF are a parent participation forum enabling parent carers to participate in developing and influencing local services. SNAP PCF work with service providers, individuals, and organisations to bring a real-life perspective and experience to the planning and development of the services that families use. SNAP PCF focus on helping raise the standard of social care, education, and health services in Central Bedfordshire, to ensure these services are provided in a way that meets the needs of all disabled children and their families locally.

'Parent Carer Forums are representative local groups of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities who work alongside local authorities, education, health and other service providers to ensure the services they plan, commission, deliver and monitor meet the needs of children and families.' **The SEND Code of Practice (2015)**

4. Working together

Central Bedfordshire Council and BLMK ICB are responsible for the delivery of services to our community of families with SEND, SNAP PCF provide independent, strategic, and operational steer and feedback to support the SEND Executive Board. BMLK ICB commission health providers to deliver their services, * and with that have the responsibility to ensure their providers are committed to working with SNAP PCF as the strategic voice of parent/carers in Central Bedfordshire of children and young people with SEND. By working together effectively we will deliver the best possible outcomes across our partnership for children and young people and their families. We will do this by sharing ideas and delivering change together, whilst also challenging each other on the journey towards the mutual benefit of a strong partnership that will be evidenced through action.

As equal partners we will share our different perspectives and understanding of the complex and multi-layered challenges that children, young people and their families may experience. We will reflect this in the way that we work together to share the expertise that each partner brings and together unlock creative and innovative ways of improving the experience for children, young people, and families.

As a partnership, we are committed to **co-production** being at the heart of everything we do, and we believe that 'together is better'. This means working together consistently with SNAP PCF, young people, and families as equal partners as we design, develop, implement, and review services, recognising the value of working together as a way of maximising the chances of getting the services right the first time. As partners we each bring different and complimentary expertise. We strive to communicate with and involve families in such a way that children, young people and their parents and carers can have their voices heard.

(* **BLMK Commissioned Health Care Providers include** East London NHS Foundation Trust /Cambridgeshire Community Health Services NHS Trust and Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Bedfordshire Community Health Services are Provided in Partnership by East London Foundation NHS Trust (ELFT) and Cambridgeshire Community Services (CCS))

5. Our Partnership Commitments

What we will do:

a) We will have a consistent approach to co-production: This means that we are committed to co-production at an individual, operational and strategic level.

Examples of good practice that should be embedded include:

Individual Co-production: Supervision should cover co-production and include documented reflective practice demonstrating specific to areas of work i.e. education, health, and care. E.g.: A reflective piece on how co-production practice was demonstrated when setting outcomes or goals for a child young person

Operational Co-production: Demonstrating the impact of co-production with Stakeholders and communicating this e.g. ‘You said , We did’ [Dyslexia Awareness Week 2023 | Central Bedfordshire SEND Local Offer](#) and [Waiting Times for Community Paediatric \(cambcommunityservices.nhs.uk\)](#)

Strategic Co-production: Demonstrating coproduction by sharing strategic decision-making about policies as well as decisions about the best way to deliver services. **E.g.:** [SEND Strategy | Central Bedfordshire SEND Local Offer](#)

Provision of co-production training, co-designed and co-delivered with SNAP PCF at a strategic, operational, and individual practitioner level across the Local Area Partnership. E.g. Co-production Workshops have been delivered by the Co-production & Engagement Lead (CBC) and SNAP PCF to Senior Leaders within Children’s Services, Council Members and the EHC Team and Senior Managers in Children’s Social Care

b) We will work collaboratively to deliver our vision and find ways to produce the best outcomes for our children and young people and their families.

c) Central Bedfordshire Council and BLMK ICB recognise the value of SNAP PCF independence and accept that whilst the Forum will work in partnership with us, decisions made by the Forum are made in the interests of its members first and foremost.

Examples of way SNAP PCF maintain their independence and represent the interests of their members first and foremost include :

SNAP Test The Temperature Surveys

Hosting Information Sessions on specific subjects in partnership with Education, Health, and Care in order to ensure the voice of its members are heard
SNAP PCF also encourage its members to email them directly
All information is recorded anonymously and used to influence and drive SNAP PCF priorities as a forum

d) Representatives for Central Bedfordshire Council, BLMK ICB and the SNAP PCF should adhere to the guidance within the **SNAP PCF Parent Representative Contract** <https://www.snappcf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/SNAP-PCF-Parent-Representative-Contract-with-SNAP-PCF-CBC-and-BMLK-ICB.pdf>

e) Central Bedfordshire Council and the BLMK ICB agree that they will seek the Forum's opinions, views, and involvement regarding any collective 'issues' and 'activities' that concern children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability.

Examples of good practice demonstrating this include:

[Short Breaks Consultation Outcome | Central Bedfordshire SEND Local Offer](#)

[coproduction.pdf \(openobjects.com\)](#)

[Dyslexia Awareness Week 2023 | Central Bedfordshire SEND Local Offer](#)

[Waiting Times for Community Paediatric \(cambcommunityservices.nhs.uk\)](#)

[Bedfordshire and Luton Neurodiversity Support Pack \(cambcommunityservices.nhs.uk\)](#)

[Workshops \(cambcommunityservices.nhs.uk\)](#)

f) SNAP PCF should be involved in activities from the very beginning, with effective coproduction being at the heart of the process. The definition of effective co-production is detailed within the Central Bedfordshire [Co-production Charter](#).

Example of successful co-production practice include Local Offer SEND Information Booklet

The SNAP PCF survey conducted in early 2022 outlined the need for further work to improve the reach of our local offer and as a result Central Bedfordshire agreed steps, as outlined in the SNAP Action Plan, to address this. As a result, Central Bedfordshire Council and SNAP PCF have worked together to Co-produce a Local Offer SEND Information Booklet to share with families. The booklet was content was coproduced from the outset and the draft shared with parent/carers during an Information Session held by SNAP PCF for their members. Valuable feedback was provided, and further changes made to the draft before this was signed off Stakeholders. SNAP PCF also advised on distribution of the booklet in order to extend The Local Offer Reach. The Local Offer SEND Information Booklet is available as an electronic version and has been distributed widely to our colleagues in education, health, care and other third sector partners. Hard copies have been placed in the majority of schools and have already been delivered to early years and children's centres, libraries

along with designated health settings. The local offer SEND Information Booklet can also be found online [here](#).

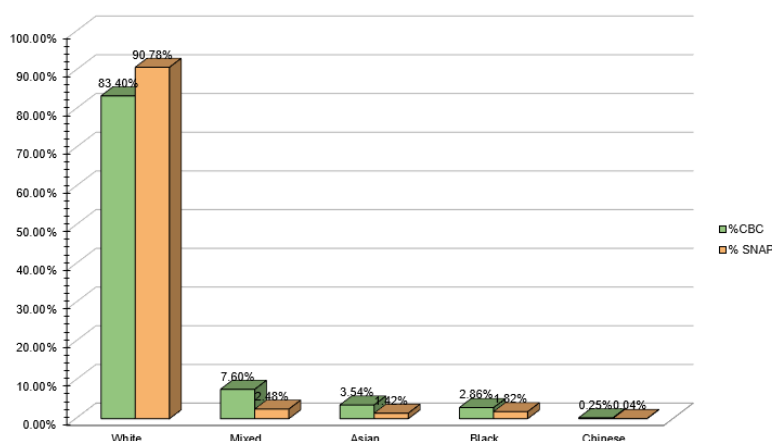
Examples of unsuccessful co-production practice include:

SNAP PCF is not involved from the beginning, in projects / service developments, that have been agreed to be co-produced with Central Bedfordshire Parent / Carers of children and young people with SEND

G) Central Bedfordshire Council and BLMK ICB recognise that SNAP PCF parent representatives involved in strategic or operational projects of work, represent the views of their collective membership.

SNAP PCF Represent the views of their collective membership. Central Bedfordshire council and BLMK Integrated Care Board recognise SNAP PCF's demographic is representative of the population of Central Bedfordshire:

Central Bedfordshire and SNAP PCF Ethnicity Alignment October 2023



SNAP PCF also have a designated Steering Group Member whose responsibility is to ensure Equality and Diversity is represented by their membership. Central Bedfordshire Council and BLMK ICB recognise the responsibility they have in promoting SNAP PCF membership to parent/carers with children and young people with SEND to ensure representation

H) Central Bedfordshire Council and the BLMK ICB will take all reasonable steps to actively encourage parent/carers to join the Forum and will provide all possible practical support to assist the Forum to reach more parents and increase its membership numbers. As of October 2023, SNAP PCF have a membership of 2300

i) Central Bedfordshire Council and the BLMK ICB will ensure all staff that work alongside SNAP PCF will understand the purpose of the forum and how we coproduce to work together as equal partners.

Co-production e-learning

To improve our services, we have been working in partnership with parents and young people. This is called co-production, and we have co-produced an e-learning course in partnership with practitioners and SNAP Parent Carer Forum to help people learn more about it. This training supports everyone to understand the importance of co-production in the lives of young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Central Bedfordshire Council Children's Services staff are required to complete this training on induction. It has also been made available to all staff within the SEND Local Area Partnership, as well as for parent/carers. Details can be found here: [Training Courses and Workshops for Professionals | Central Bedfordshire SEND Local Offer](#)

Co-production Face to Face Learning:

SNAP PCF and The Co-production & Engagement Lead for Children's Services in Central Bedfordshire have co-produced and co-delivered training to date to: Children's Services Extended Senior Leadership Team, Council Members and The EHC Team. Further training sessions are planned for teams within Children's Service.

j) Central Bedfordshire Council and BLMK ICB will include information about co-production, and the SNAP PCF Parent Representative Contract <https://www.snappcf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/SNAP-PCF-Parent-Representative-Contract-with-SNAP-PCF-CBC-and-BMLK-ICB.pdf> in the induction process for all staff that will be working with SNAP PCF and families with SEND.

Examples of good practice include:

All Central Bedfordshire Children's Services Staff on induction complete:

e-Learning: A guide to Co-production training that has been co-produced with SNAP PCF

K) The partnership commits to shared communication when celebrating collaborative achievements that are recognised by all partners.

Examples of good practice include:

During National Co-production week in July 2023, SNAP PCF and Central Bedfordshire Council coproduced communication to celebrate collaborative achievements – this can be found on the Local Offer [here](#)

L) Central Bedfordshire Council and BLMK ICB will value the feedback provided via SNAP PCF and work together to co-produce solutions

Examples of good practice include:

[Our Action Plan with SNAP PCF | Central Bedfordshire SEND Local Offer](#)

The Test the temperature June 2023: [Central Bedfordshire Council news and press releases | Central Bedfordshire Council](#)

M) All Parties agree to open communication with one another, feeding back appropriate information and updates to all members of the partnership and ensuring information is transparent.

Examples of good practice include:

Short breaks : Further information can be found here: [Short Breaks Consultation Outcome | Central Bedfordshire SEND Local Offer](#)

N) Permission will be sought from the relevant organisations where any partner has been cited in a public-facing document

Examples of good practice include:

[Local Offer Annual Reports](#) prior to 2022/2023 Annual report were not coproduced with SNAP PCF and therefore do not contain the SNAP PCF logo.

6. Measuring the strength of our partnership

How will we know if co-production is working?

We will know that true co-production is working in Central Bedfordshire when we can agree with the following statements:

- Everyone across the Local Area SEND Partnership * working with children, young people and families are communicating and working together to achieve the same outcomes
- Everyone across the Local Area SEND Partnership understands what we are trying to achieve and what families are asking for
- Families can see evidence of professionals across the Local Area Send Partnership communicating and working together for the benefit of their child, young person, and other families
- Families can see evidence of a coordinated single approach to achieving best outcomes for children and young people with SEND across the Local SEND Partnership, for example Preparing for Adulthood.

(*The Local Area SEND Partnership:

A Local area SEND partnership' refers to those responsible for the **strategic planning, commissioning, management, delivery, and evaluation of arrangements for children and young people with SEND**. Ofsted and the CQC carry out joint inspections of local areas at the request of the Secretary of State for Education. In Central Bedfordshire the Partnership consists of Central Bedfordshire Council, which also includes Adult & Children's Social Care and BLMK ICB and their health providers – East London Foundation NHS Trust, Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and Cambridgeshire Community Health Services.)

Measures:

1) You Said/ We Did – Published you said/we did activities will demonstrate positive outcomes achieved through the collaboration of this partnership.

- **Examples of Good Practice Include:**
- [Dyslexia Awareness Week 2023 | Central Bedfordshire SEND Local Offer](#)
- [coproduction.pdf \(openobjects.com\)](#)
- [Short Breaks Consultation Outcome | Central Bedfordshire SEND Local Offer](#)
- [Launch of Co-produced Pathological Demand Avoidance E-learning Course for Education, Health and Care Professionals, and Parent/Carers | Central Bedfordshire SEND Local Offer](#)

2) Test the Temperature: The aim of this 'Test the Temperature' survey is to monitor how parent carer experience of the Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process and to check the overall satisfaction with education, health, and social care. The report that followed the survey made a series of recommendations to the SEND Local Area Partnership, many of which are being progressed.

Examples of Good Practice Include:

Recommendation:

Rebrand the send team including renaming to the EHCP team and rewrite parent communication documents using the local offer images on the paperwork

Action being taken by the SEND Local Area Partnership:

We have taken up SNAP PCF's suggestion and have renamed the SEND Team the EHCP Team. We are working with SNAP PCF on updating our paperwork to parent carers and senior staff will meet to review all documents on the Local Offer

3) We will gather feedback to demonstrate how co-production is making a difference and communicate this effectively, for example through parent panels

4) Evaluate - We will gather feedback to ensure that all stakeholders feel that their voices have been heard and that they have been able to make a difference.

Examples of Good Practice Include:

Approval to progress recruitment to a Children and Young People Engagement and participation Officer for SEND:

The appointment of this officer will ensure a more consistent approach to obtaining the views of children and young people with SEND

Adult Social Care:

During the Summer of SEND PFA week in 2023, Adult Social Care provided webinar workshops on the their [Young Adult and Independent Living Team \(YAaIL\)](#) | [Central Bedfordshire SEND Local Offer](#)

5) Making decisions together: We have many mechanisms to collaborate and make decisions together these include:

- The Local Area Partnership SEND Operational Group /SEND Executive Board
- BLMK SEND health meeting
- Joint Commissioning Operational Group
- Co-production Meetings
- Monthly meetings with Cambridgeshire Community Health Services NHS Trust
- SEND Bedfordshire and Luton Operational Meeting
- The Good and Better Board
- East London Foundation NHS Trust Senior Management Meetings
- Transport
- SNAP PCF have also been co-opted to SEND Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6) Accountability

All individuals across The Local Area SEND Partnership have a responsibility for adhering to the principles and practice within this partnership agreement. This partnership agreement should be shared with staff as part of their induction and should be readily available to refer to whilst they are in their role.

If there are any concerns about adherence to this partnership agreement, then parties should be open and communicate these concerns to try and find shared solutions. If a resolution cannot be reached in this manner, then this should be escalated to appropriate line managers across the three organisations. Regular meetings are in place between the SNAP PCF Director, Director of Children's Services (CBC) and Deputy Chief Nurse

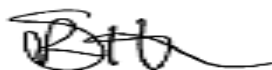
Director of Nursing Safeguarding and Vulnerabilities where any such issues can be resolved appropriately.

This Partnership Agreement will be reviewed on an annual basis (September each year) to ensure it reflects the professional values and practice that supports excellent partnership working across Central Bedfordshire.

Signed by our partnership:



Sarah-Jane Smedmor
Director Childrens Services
Central Bedfordshire Council



Simon Hardcastle-Waugh
Deputy Chief Nurse
Director of Nursing Safeguarding
and Vulnerabilities
BLMK Integrated Care Board

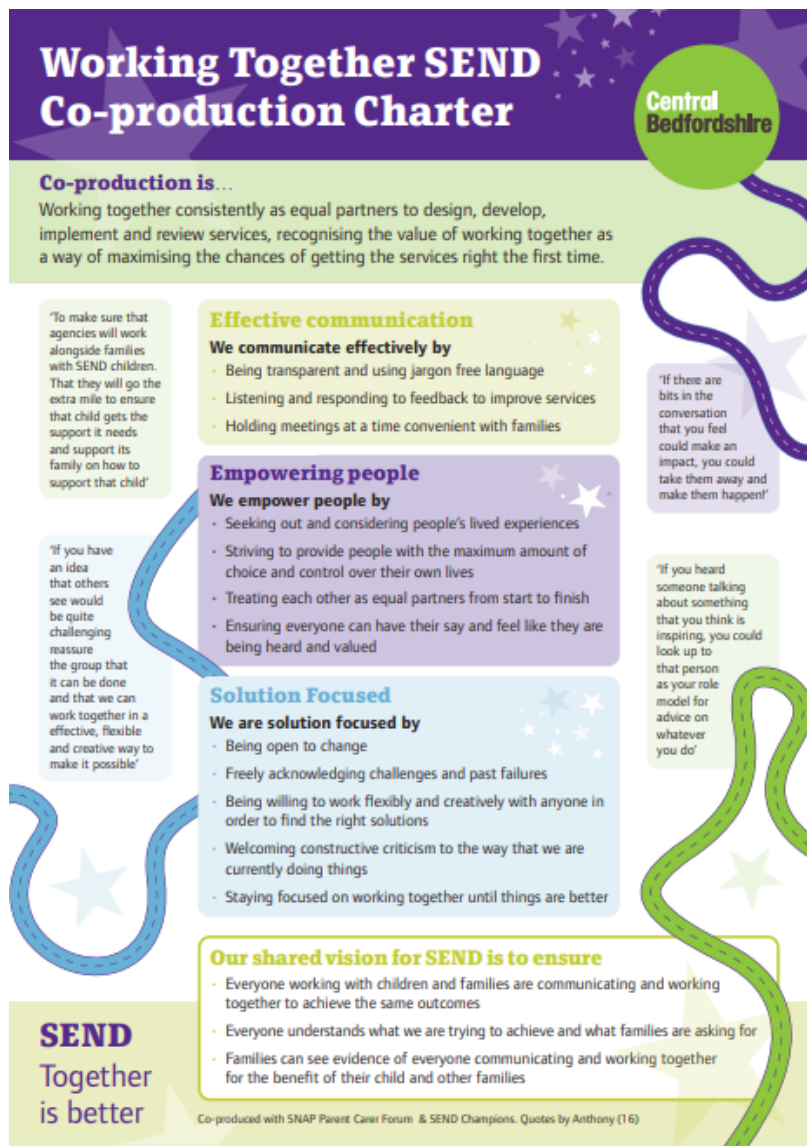


Kirsty Green
Director
SNAP PCF



Appendices:

- [Central Bedfordshire Co-production Charter](#)



- **SNAP PCF Parent Representative Contract** <https://www.snappcf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/SNAP-PCF-Parent-Representative-Contract-with-SNAP-PCF-CBC-and-BMLK-ICB.pdf>
- [Organisational Structure - SNAP PCF - Central Bedfordshire](#)

Version No:	V 2.0
Consultation Groups:	SNAP PCF BLMK Integrated Care Board Central Bedfordshire Council
Approved by:	SEND Exec Board 25.1.2024
Ratified by:	AD SEND, Central Bedfordshire Council
Date Ratified by:	16.1.2024
Job Title of Author:	Co-production & Engagement Lead, Childrens Services, Central Bedfordshire Council
Implementation Date:	April 2024
Last Review Date:	November 2023
Next Review Date:	November 2024
Distribution:	Local Area SEND Partnership Senior Leaders, Strategic Lead, Operational Leads and Clinicians, Practitioners and Officers
Directorate / Services Applicable:	* Local Area SEND Partnership

(*The Local Area SEND Partnership:

*A Local area SEND partnership’ refers to those responsible for the **strategic planning, commissioning, management, delivery, and evaluation of arrangements for children and young people with SEND.** Ofsted and the CQC carry out joint inspections of local areas at the request of the Secretary of State for. In Central Bedfordshire the Partnership consists of Central Bedfordshire Council, which also includes Adult & Children’s Social Care and BLMK ICB and their health providers – East London Foundation NHS Trust, Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and Cambridgeshire Community Health Services.)*