

Children's Services

What Medway Council does
for children and where to
go for help



Together
4 children

Medway
COUNCIL
Serving You

Welcome...

..to the directory of Medway Council's Children's Services.

Our ambition is for every child in Medway to lead a healthy and enjoyable life, safe from harm and neglect. Each child will get the support they need to grow in confidence, helping them overcome barriers in their lives. Children will be the very best people they can be. They will learn to help others and develop the qualities they need for a fulfilling and happy adulthood.

This leaflet tells you about the variety of services for children, young people and their families in Medway. We hope you find it helpful.

If you have any questions about this leaflet and you want to speak to someone in your own language please ring **(01634) 335577**

এই লিফলেট সম্পর্কে আপনার যদি কোন প্রশ্ন থাকে এবং এ ব্যাপারে আপনার নিজের ভাষায় কারো সাথে আলাপ করতে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে এই নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন: **331780 (Bengali)**

如果你對這本小冊的內容有任何疑問，且想與會說你的語言的某人談話，請打這個電話號碼 **331781 (Chinese)**

જો તમને આ પત્રિકા વિશે કોઈ પ્રશ્નો હોય અને તમે તમારી માતૃભાષામાં કોઈની સાથે વાત કરવા માંગતા હો તો કૃપા કરીને આ નંબર ઉપર ઠેક કરો **331782 (Gujarati)**

यदि आपने इस लीफलेट के बारे में कुछ पूछना है और उस व्यक्ति के साथ आप अपनी भाषा में बात करना चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निम्नलिखित नंबर पर टैलिफोन करने करें: **331783 (Hindi)**

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਲੀਫਲੈਟ ਉ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੁਝ ਪੁੱਛਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਉਸ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਉ ਨਾਲ ਆਪਣੀ ਫਿਰੀ ਭੀਚ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਨੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਤੋਂ, ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਅੱਗੇ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ: **331784 (Punjabi)**

اگر آپ اس کتابچے کے بارے میں کوئی سوال پوچھنا چاہتے ہیں اور آپ کسی فرد سے اپنی زبان میں بات کرنے کے خواہشمند ہیں تو براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر فون کیجئے۔ **331785 (Urdu)**

Elinizdeki bu yazılı duyuru ile ilgili herhangi bir sorunuz varsa ve dilinizi bilen birisi ile konuşmak istiyorsanız, lütfen 331786 numaraya telefon edin. **331786 (Turkish)**

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Adoption

Adoption is a legal process where children who cannot be brought up by their own parents become a permanent member of a new family.

Contact: Specialist Children's Services 01634 331113

Attendance

Children of school age, must by law receive an appropriate education. It is the responsibility of parents and carers to make sure children attend school unless there is a very good reason, for example illness.

Contact : Pupil & Governor Services 01634 337309

Schools help to keep children safe; if you know of a child without a school place please contact the Truancy Watch Coordinator on: 07740 590306 or 01634 337307 , truancy@medway.gov.uk

Care Leaving Service

The 16+ Care Leaving Service is a specialist service working with 16-21 year olds (24 if in full-time education) that are or have been in local authority care for a period of thirteen weeks since the age of fourteen. The service helps support young people through their transition into adulthood.

Contact: Care Leaving Team 01634 336315

Child protection and safeguarding

Medway Council has a responsibility to help children and young people under 18 who are in need. It also has a responsibility to protect children who are at risk of significant harm. This includes investigating concerns that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm because of:

- physical injury
- neglect
- sexual
- emotional abuse.

If you are worried about a child Medway Council want to hear from you.

Contact Child Protection & Safeguarding 01634 334466.

You can also call the Police (via 999) or the NSPCC help-line on 0808 800 5000 or visit their website at www.nspcc.org.uk.

Childcare

Parents who are working need good quality care for their children. Childcare provision in Medway includes day nurseries, registered childminders and, for school-age children, out of school clubs and holiday play schemes. Medway Council's Children's Information Service can provide parents with up-to-date information and advice about the availability of local childcare.

Contact: Early Years Services 01634 335566 or visit www.childcarelink.gov.uk

Children in need

There are three teams in Medway that provide support for children in need. The services available from these teams include:

- Behaviour support
- Educational psychology
- Education welfare
- Learning support
- Family support
- Home/school support
- Social work
- Care proceedings

Contact: Gillingham Team 01634 338686, Strood/Hoo team 01634 291391, Rochester/Chatham/Walderslade team 01634 337333

Children's information service

This service aims to provide parents and carers with:

- Up-to-date information on local childcare availability;
- Guidance on different forms of childcare and nursery education;
- Impartial advice on childcare-related issues.

It can help parents and carers find:

- Childminders, nurseries, pre-schools, creches and parent and toddler groups;
- Breakfast and out of school clubs;
- Holiday playschemes and leisure clubs;
- Nanny agencies and private nurseries.

It can also provide guidance on:

- free part-time nursery education for three and four year-olds;
- childcare options;
- working tax credit and child tax credit.

For people who would like to work in childcare, it can:

- offer training to help you start your career;
- help you to set up daycare or out of school provision;
- provide you with a list of local job vacancies;
- direct you to training courses from first aid to NVQs.

Contact: Early Years Services 01634 335566

Comments and feedback

If you have any comments or feedback about this booklet or any of our services please contact the Customer Services department.

Contact: 01634 332299 or email childrens.services@medway.gov.uk

Connexions

The Connexions Service (www.connexions.gov.uk) provides information, advice, guidance and access to personal development opportunities for all 13-19 year-olds in England.

By ensuring young people receive the highest quality advice and support, it aims to help them reach their full potential.

There is a network of personal advisers who help young people to get confidential information and advice on a wide variety of subjects. They can help with anything that might be affecting school, college, work, personal or family life. Connexions Kent and Medway (www.connexionskentandmedway.co.uk) is a partnership between Kent County Council and Medway Council. There are four personal advisors who can be contacted via Medway Council's Youth Service.

Contact: Youth Health & Action 01634 332253

Disability

The Disabled Children's Team offers a range of flexible services to allow children with disabilities to remain living at home with their families. The team works in partnership with health and voluntary organisations to offer families appropriate services to meet their individual needs.

Contact: Specialist Children's Services 01634 336227

Fostering

Fostering is about looking after a child or children within your own home, when they are unable to be with their own family. Some children need to stay with a foster family for a short period such as a few weeks or months, while others need longer. In some cases this may mean until they reach adulthood. Children who need fostering are from all ages and backgrounds.

Contact: Specialist Children's services 01634 331235

Governors

Anyone who cares about the schools in their community can become a school governor. A good governing body has people from all walks of life who bring a range of experiences and interests. To find out more, talk to:

- the headteacher at your local school
- a governor of a local school who can tell you what is involved
- the Governor Support Team at Medway Council

Contact: Governor Services: 01634 331027

Healthy schools

Medway Healthy Schools works with the school community to promote emotional and physical well-being and health. They aim to help adults and children feel good, develop self-esteem and resilience and be able to make healthy choices throughout their lives. The team also supports schools and other settings in teaching sex and relationships education and drugs education.

Contact: Youth Health & Action: 01634 331038 or 3312328 or visit www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk

Inclusion

Inclusion is all about extending opportunities for all pupils to be educated together in mainstream schools. This means "a fair deal" in school for every child. This may be difficult for:

- Pupils with disabilities
- Pupils who are gifted and talented
- travellers
- ethnic minority pupils
- young people with medical needs
- young people with special educational needs
- young people with challenging behaviour

Contact: AEN/Inclusion 01634 331940

Looked after children

Looked after means children and young people who are in the care of the local authority. They may be living with foster families or in children's homes.

Contact: Looked After Children: 01634 334466

Medway Drug and Alcohol Action Team

Drug action teams were set up to help deliver the national drugs strategy at a local level. Within the young people's strand of the strategy, Medway Drug and Alcohol Action Team is responsible for delivering young people's substance misuse services. Some of the services delivered in Medway include:

- Prevention, intervention and treatment
- Peer education
- Social inclusion

For more details of services contact: KCA Young Persons' Central Helpline 01227 456744.

Nursery schools

All children in Medway are entitled to a free nursery education place, shortly after their third birthday. Free nursery education is available from nursery classes attached to some primary schools, from around 120 pre-schools, nurseries and with accredited child-minders. For older four year olds it is also available in some primary school reception classes.

Contact: Early Years Services 01634 335566

Out of school hours learning

There are various types of out of school hours learning offered in Medway. These include Medway Children's University and Medway Music.

Contact: Social Inclusion 01634 331610 or your child's school

Parenting support

Details of advice, information and support offered by over 100 local agencies is available from Medway's online service directory at www.medwayppn.org

Pupil referral units (PRUs)

Medway has four PRUs. The pupils attending them have experienced behavioural, emotional or social difficulties and some also have

significant learning difficulties. Many have been permanently excluded from schools, while others have been identified by their mainstream school as being at risk of permanent exclusion.

Contact: Specialist Youth Services 01634 331013

Residential care

There are occasions when it may be necessary for children to be cared for somewhere other than in their own home. Medway Council believe that living with a family is the best way for children to grow and develop, which is why most children looked after are placed with foster families. A few children, due to past experiences and individual needs, may require a more specialist type of care in a residential unit. All homes or residential units where children are placed are registered and inspected to make sure standards are met.

Contact: Specialist Children's Services 01634 336227

Schools

For information about individual schools, including the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) inspection reports, please search the list of schools on the Medway Council's website, visit www.medway.gov.uk/schools-index.asp or visit Ofsted's website at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

School admissions

Choosing a school for your child is an important decision, parents and carers need to consider a number of factors, including how close the school is to home, its location, the size or the values and beliefs of the school. Parents or carers can visit schools by contacting them for an appointment and get further information from the school to help with this decision.

Contact: Admissions Team: 01634 331110

School meals

Medway Council, with staff, parents, pupils and caterers, is working to improve school meals. Menus that highlight healthier food options, plus no salt added in the cooking process and reduced sugar and fat have been introduced. Parents may be entitled to have the cost of school meals paid by Medway Council. Schools work hard to overcome any concerns about free school meals, importantly parents are assured that their child receives a healthy

meal that will provide the energy needed to have fun and learn.
Contact: School Meals 01634 331082 or Free school meals 01634 331132

School transport

Travel assistance is offered for children under the age of eight, if they live more than two miles from the school which the local authority calls the nearest appropriate school. For children aged eight and over the distance is three miles. Distances are measured by the shortest available walking route.

Contact: Transport and Benefits Team: 01634 331155

Surestart

Surestart aims to ensure delivery of early education for all three and four year olds. It can advise on childcare and after school activities in the area, plus offer children's and family support in disadvantaged areas where they are most needed. It works with parents to build aspirations for employment and for their children's education.

Contact: Early Years Services 01634 335566

Student finance

Medway Council's Student Finance Team processes applications for financial assistance that the government provides to students studying courses of higher education.

Contact: Student Finance Team: 01634 332371

Youth offending team

Medway Youth Offending Team (MYOT) is a multi-agency team working with young people aged 10-18 years who have been arrested for a criminal offence. MYOT is divided into two teams.

- Early Intervention Team provides a range of preventative services to those who have not yet formally entered into the criminal justice system, as well as dealing with those young people who have received warnings from the police or have received a first conviction in the Youth Court.
- Youth Court and Supervision Team provides a range of services for young people on bail or remand to the court. They work with young people who are subject to more intense court orders due to their persistent offending behaviour. This group

also includes young people placed in custodial establishments. MYOT also provides a range of support for parents.
Contacts: Early Intervention Team 01634 336289 or Youth Court and Supervision Team 01634 336248

Youth service

Medway Youth Service provides places to go and things to do for young people between 10 – 25 years old, which are exciting, challenging, adventurous and informative. Young people can choose to visit a centre or meet staff in their own environment (detached work) and be guided towards options to participate, gain self-esteem, develop skills or find a platform to voice their opinions.

There is something for all regardless of cultural background, in sports, creative arts, outdoor activities, music, drama, dance all offering appropriate local or national accreditation in whatever they choose. Senior member training, outings or residential experiences are also available.

Contact: Youth Health and Action: 01634 331431, e-mail: youth.enquiries@medway.gov.uk or visit www.medway.gov.uk/youth