

Consultation Line for Integrated Front Door (IFD)



Introduction

The professional consultation line is an integral component of Bedford's Front Door, also known as the Integrated Front Door (IFD). Our Front Door still comprises of Team Manager, Advanced Social Work Practitioners, Referral and Advice Officers, Police, Health, and Early Help professionals and our collaborative effort is aimed at meticulously screening all incoming contacts and referrals about Bedford children and families, who may need support and intervention from our Early Help Service or a Social Worker.

Our overarching objective is to ensure that children and families receive the right support at the right time – when they need it. The primary function of the professional consultation line is to provide support and guidance to our partner agencies regarding the level of need and identification of the subsequent steps through meaningful and high-quality discussions. It is important to emphasise that the consultation line is not a referral route into the Front Door. However, the outcome of a consultation may be that a referral is appropriate. Adherence to standard safeguarding protocols and procedures remains mandatory.

The professional consultation line is intended solely for discussions and consultations

When you reach out to the professional consultation line, you will be greeted by an Advanced Social Work Practitioner or the Team Leader who will collect essential information.

Your query will be thoroughly discussed, **and all information about children and families will remain anonymous unless the information shared raises clear safeguarding concerns.** In instances where safeguarding concerns are evident, you will be asked to submit an online referral using the online referral form via the portal. If the concerns indicate that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, immediate details will be recorded during the call. Nevertheless, you will still be required to complete the online referral form within four hours of your initial contact.

The new professional consultation line number is: 01234 718 211

Please be aware that the consultation line will not offer a call-back feature and will be accessible during the following hours:

Monday to Thursday (excluding bank holidays), from 9:00am to 4:00pm and Fridays from 9:00am to 3:00pm.

What to do before contacting the consultation line

- If the child has an allocated social worker, you should contact them directly.
- Do consider whether you have the appropriate resources within your own organisation to help and assist the child before contacting the consultation line.

Who to tell

If you think the child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999.

- Or Bedfordshire Police: 01234 841212
- NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000

If the child is not in immediate danger, but you're still concerned about them, please contact us online:

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