

Oldham Council Families First Partnership Newsletter



Welcome to the August edition of our Families First Partnership newsletter! Read on for the latest programme updates, key learnings over the past month, and upcoming events.

Early Help Workshop

To support families in accessing community-based and early intervention services, we recently held an Early Help Workshop focused on strengthening our earliest support offer.

The session brought together practitioners and partners from across the system, including Positive Steps, Family Help, Family Hubs and POINT, to share feedback on the current Early Help offer and identify opportunities for improvement.

The workshop generated valuable insights and constructive feedback, helping us to better understand what's working well and where further development can enhance the earliest support available for families. This feedback will help us shape the future of our Early Help offer, ensuring families can access the right support at the right time.





Oldham Council Staff Engagement Sessions

Families First Partnership Employee Engagement Sessions

We've now held four engagement Q&A sessions for Oldham Council staff across Children's Social Care and Early Help Services, and it's been fantastic to see so many colleagues attending, sharing their thoughts, and asking questions.

There is one final Q&A session scheduled for **Wednesday 2nd September**, which will be a 90-minute session and take place on Microsoft Teams. If you would like to attend, please email **familiesfirstpartnership@oldham.gov.uk** for details.

FAQs

Send Us Your Questions

We want to continue hearing your questions and feedback about the FFP programme. To support this, we've created an anonymous form where you can submit your questions, comments and suggestions.

Your feedback will help shape a new FAQs section in upcoming newsletters, ensuring common questions are answered and shared across the partnership. This is your opportunity to have your voice heard and contribute to the ongoing development of the FFP programme.

[Take survey here](#)

Family Networks Resources

Through our recent Family Networks Test and Learn activity, we have been developing a range of materials, guidance and templates to support the delivery of Family Network Meetings.

As part of this work, we've reviewed resources from other local authorities, including practice guidance, meeting agendas and report templates, to identify best practice and approaches that could strengthen our own offer. These materials are currently being finalised and will be shared with colleagues shortly to support consistent and effective practice across services.

Meet Our New Training Coordinator

We're pleased to introduce James Reid, our new Training Coordinator for the FFP Programme.

James is leading on the development and implementation of a comprehensive multi-agency training and workforce development programme that supports the delivery of the FFP model.

Please join us in welcoming James to the programme and get in touch with him on **James.Reid@Oldham.gov.uk** if you have any ideas or suggestions relating to training and workforce development across FFP.



New team member
Training Coordinator



Training Survey Needs

Training Needs Survey

We're holding a Heads of Service meeting this week to prioritise workforce development activity across Family Help, Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams and Family Group Decision-Making. The outcomes will help identify key training needs and inform the development and delivery of future training opportunities across the FFP programme.

We also have a live Training Needs Survey and encourage colleagues to share any ideas or training needs that would support them in their role. This is a great opportunity to tell us what learning and development opportunities would have the greatest impact on you and the families you support.

Take survey here

Family Group Conference Training

Recently, 15 colleagues from Children's Services attended a three-day Family Group Conference Facilitation Training Course. The training provided participants with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to facilitate effective Family Group Conferences, empowering families to identify solutions and create plans that support positive outcomes.

Building on this, we're working with the Social Work Academy, social work colleagues and our FFP Training Coordinator to develop a dedicated Family Network Meetings Training Programme. This will equip practitioners with the tools and confidence to facilitate Family Network Meetings effectively and support the rollout of Family Networks across Oldham.



New Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Leaflet

We're pleased to share our new Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) leaflet, which is now available for colleagues to use when offering FGDM to families. The leaflet explains the FGDM process and includes a QR code linking directly to a video to help families better understand the support available.

You can download the leaflet [here](#). We encourage colleagues to share the leaflet with families to support their understanding of the FGDM offer.

Contact details:

For more information regarding the Family Group Decision Making service, please scan the QR code below or email:

FamilyDecisionMaking@Oldham.gov.uk

Oldham Council

Family Group Decision Making Meetings in Oldham

Family group decision making can bring positive changes to you and your family!

What is a Family Decision Making Meeting?

A Family Group Decision Making Meeting is a meeting to sort out family problems. This offers family members, including children and young people, a chance to get together to agree a solution.

Why have a Meeting?

We believe that families know more about their situation than professionals and can often make better decisions and plans for their children.

Our aim is to support families in doing this. Family Group Decision making Meetings are a voluntary offer, meaning that it is up to the family to decide if they wish to take part.

How does the meeting work?

Before the meeting, an independent coordinator:

- Will meet each family member to help them prepare for the meeting
- Help the family to decide who should be invited and where and when the meeting should take place
- Will support children and young people to play a central role in the meeting.

Information shared with the coordinator will remain confidential unless it poses a risk to someone.

During the meeting...

Stage 1: Information giving

The workers most closely involved will explain to the family:

- Why they are worried about the child/young person
- What resources and services are available to support the family
- The family may ask for any additional information they may need to help with the plan.

Stage 2: Private family time

This is time for the family to talk in private so that they can:

- Discuss the information given
- Work out and agree a plan
- Decide who will do what
- Decide what support they need
- Decide how they can check the plan is working
- Come up with a contingency plan

Stage 3: Agreeing the plan

Once the family have agreed the plan:

- This is then shared with the co-ordinator and social worker
- The plan will be accepted unless it places the child/young person at risk or does not address the original concerns

There are three stages to Family Group Decision Making Meetings.

MACPT: Multi-Agency Strategy Meetings and Section 47 Pilot

As part of our Families First Partnership Test and Learn activity, we've been piloting a new approach to Multi-Agency Child Protection Threshold (MACPT) Strategy Meetings and Section 47 enquiries. The pilot introduces **Child Protection Chairs** into Strategy Meetings to strengthen multi-agency oversight and decision-making.

Early findings are encouraging, with a reduction in the number of Section 47 enquiries, suggesting that enhanced oversight is helping to ensure enquiries are proportionate and undertaken only where necessary. Feedback from Child Protection Chairs has also highlighted stronger partnership working and more collaborative decision-making.

While we work through some of the learnings identified through the pilot, including capacity pressures, confidence around thresholds and consistency in practice, we are now exploring opportunities to scale the pilot across the districts to maximise benefits for children and families across Oldham.

MACPT Pilot Early Findings

- Reduction in Section 47 enquiries
- Earlier involvement of Child Protection Chairs
- Improved oversight of decision-making
- Stronger multi-agency relationships
- More joined-up and collaborative decision-making
- Exploring opportunities to scale the pilot across Oldham

Job Vacancies

We currently have two exciting opportunities available within Children's Social Care at Oldham Council.

We're looking for a motivated **Purchasing Officer** to join our Children's Strategy and Business Services division, providing high-quality financial support to frontline social workers and managers, and supporting the development of Family Network Support Packages.

We also have an opportunity for an exceptional **Assistant Director for Family Help** to lead the next chapter of Family Help in Oldham. The role will include shaping our Family Help strategy, strengthening partnership working across the system, and supporting a high-performing workforce to deliver excellent outcomes for children, young people and families.

Please share these opportunities with anyone you think would be a great fit.



Thank you for your continued support and dedication to improving outcomes for children and families. If you have any questions or feedback, we'd love to hear from you.