

Oldham Council Families First Partnership Newsletter



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

South Pilot Coffee Afternoon

It was great to bring together colleagues from Children's Social Care, Early Help, Positive Steps, Health and Education earlier this month for our first FFP Family Help Coffee Afternoon with the South Family Help Team.

The afternoon began with a South Family Help Pilot update from Team Managers Amy Edwards (Assessment & Intervention) and Lesley Tindall (Early Help). They shared their joint vision for Family Help and reflected on the successes and learning from the pilot journey so far.

Colleagues also received an update on the South Multi-Disciplinary Team from Holly Edwards-Meagher (Positive Steps), who demonstrated how collaborative working is already making a real difference to outcomes for families.

A key takeaway from the afternoon was the value of bringing partners together to share experiences, discuss challenges and identify solutions collectively as we continue to develop Family Help.



Central Pilot Development

We've been making great progress with our Central District Pilot, with the vision quickly becoming a reality. The pilot focuses on Holts, Alt and Roundthorn, bringing together partners from education, health and the VCFSE sector to strengthen multi-agency working and enhance early intervention and support for families.

A key part of this work has been our learning circles, where we've heard from colleagues who are deeply embedded within these neighbourhoods. Their insights have helped us better understand the challenges families and young people face, ensuring the pilot is shaped around real community needs.

What's next?

Over the coming months, we'll be:

- Improving information sharing by creating a directory for professionals, bringing together details of services and support available to families
- Strengthening partnership working by exploring the introduction of regular multi-agency meetings
- Developing accessible resources, ensuring that families can easily find and access information
- Enhancing the way we signpost families, so they're more aware of the help and services available
- Identifying gaps in existing provision and exploring opportunities to further strengthen community help for families and young people





Family Networks Meeting Confidence Survey

Family Network Meetings Confidence Survey

We're keen to understand your experiences and views on Family Network Meetings across Oldham.

To support this, we've launched a short survey to gather feedback on your understanding of Family Network Meetings, your experience of facilitating them, confidence levels, barriers to implementation, and future training and support needs.

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey and answer as honestly as possible. Your feedback will be essential in shaping future training, resources and support, ensuring colleagues feel confident and equipped to make the most of Family Network Meetings moving forward.

[Take survey here](#)

Meet Our New Communications Officer

We're pleased to introduce Alesha Sinclair, our Communications Officer for the FFP Programme.

In this role, Alesha will lead on programme communications and support engagement across the partnership, helping to ensure colleagues, partners, children and families are kept informed and involved as our work continues to develop.

Please join us in welcoming Alesha to the programme. If you have any ideas about how best to share FFP information and updates, please get in touch at Alesha.Sinclair@Oldham.gov.uk



New Team Member
Communications Officer

Family Network Support Packages

One of the key developments within the FFP Programme is the introduction of Family Network Support Packages (FNSPs).

These are designed to help children remain safely within their wider family networks by providing practical support that removes barriers to family members stepping in to help.

While packages are flexible, any support provided should be sustainable, avoid duplicating existing funding, and not affect a family's benefits or entitlements.

What support could be available?

Support will be tailored to individual circumstances and may include:

- Furniture or essential household items
- Transport costs
- Minor adaptations to the home
- Activities that support a child's wellbeing
- Short-term financial support that enables a family member to provide care

We've now established a working group to explore how FNSPs will be implemented in Oldham, and we'll share further updates as this work progresses.





Oldham Council Staff Engagement Sessions

Families First Partnership Staff Engagement Sessions

We're hosting a series of engagement and Q&A sessions for staff across Children's Social Care and Early Help Services throughout August and September.

These sessions will provide an update on the FFP programme, including a reminder of the national reforms, learning from our pilots, plans for embedding the approach in practice, and our vision and future operating model for Family Help in Oldham. We'll also share updates on the FFP Training Roadmap, new roles and what colleagues can expect over the coming months.

The 90-minute sessions will be held online via Microsoft Teams and we'll share more details soon.

Interested in attending? Email familiesfirstpartnership@oldham.gov.uk with your chosen session date and we'll send you an invite.

Session dates:



Tuesday 4 August, 10am to 11:30am



Monday 17 August, 1:30pm to 3pm



Wednesday 2 September, 1:30pm to 3pm



Monday 10 August, 1pm to 2:30pm



Monday 24 August, 1:30pm to 3pm



Local Harms Confidence Survey

Local Harms Confidence Survey

As part of the FFP Programme, we're developing a multi-agency Workforce Development Plan to strengthen our response to local harms.

We're asking practitioners to complete a short 'Types of Harm Practitioner Confidence Check-In Survey' to help us understand your confidence in identifying different types of significant harm, responding to safeguarding concerns, and the areas where additional training or guidance may be needed.

Your feedback will directly inform future workforce development activity across the partnership.

[Take survey here](#)



Strategy Meeting and Section 47 Survey Results

We received feedback from practitioners across social care, education, health and police, helping us understand what's working well and where improvements can be made.

Feedback highlighted the value of strategy meetings in supporting information sharing, multi-agency discussion and collaborative decision-making to safeguard children and young people.

Practitioners also identified opportunities to strengthen practice, including ensuring the child's voice is central to discussions, improving information sharing and meeting preparation, increasing partner attendance and representation, and developing greater consistency around roles, thresholds and decision-making.

The findings will help shape the next phase of our Strategy Meeting and Section 47 test-and-learn activity, and we'll continue to share progress and learning as this work develops.

What you told us

What's working well?

"Getting professionals together to share information."

"All agencies are able to share information and there are clear actions decided from the meetings."

"Professionals go away with clearly defined actions. Feels collaborative."

"When everyone is in attendance, they work well."

Key Challenges

1. The child's voice is not always heard clearly enough

"The child's voice is never really taken seriously and it is more focused on the incident."

"Often there is little information provided on how the child feels and what their views are."

"Child's voice is rarely captured at the strategy meetings."

2. Information sharing and preparation

"Police information prior to strategy meeting would be more helpful."

"I don't feel that sufficient information is shared prior to the meeting."

"More background information provided."

3. Attendance and representation

"We struggle with health attendance and declined invites from police."

"A lot of meetings often have professionals not in attendance."

"Ensuring the right people are in attendance and we have the right information."

4. Understanding roles, thresholds and decision-making

"A clear understanding of thresholds to be shared with professionals."

Updated Thresholds and Continuum of Need Guidance

Oldham's Continuum of Need and Thresholds Guidance has been refreshed and republished on the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP) website to reflect current local and national safeguarding expectations, including developments arising from Families First Partnership Programme, CSC National Framework and the latest Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance.

The document provides a shared framework to help professionals identify levels of need, assess risk and determine the most appropriate support and intervention for children, young people and families. Developed through multi-agency collaboration and endorsed by safeguarding partners, it aims to support consistent decision-making across the partnership.

The refreshed guidance includes clearer information on thresholds, pathways and available support, helping practitioners make timely and informed decisions for children and families.

We encourage all professionals to familiarise themselves with the updated guidance and use it as the current reference point when assessing need and considering referrals.

[Read the updated guidelines here](#)

Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership



Oldham Refreshed Continuum of Need

Our Approach to Effective Support and Help Framework, for
Children, Young People and Families in Oldham

Shared guidance to help all practitioners working with children,
young people, families and carers to provide additional family
help, intensive and specialist support.



Working with Education Partners

We recently attended the Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP) Working Together Task and Finish Group, where we shared an update on the Families First Partnership Programme with colleagues from education settings across Oldham.

The session provided an opportunity to discuss progress to date, including programme achievements, engagement with children and young people, partnership working, developments within MASH, and future opportunities for education involvement.

Since then, the MACPT Education Lead job description has been drafted and submitted for job evaluation, with recruitment expected to begin shortly. We have also met with colleagues from Blackburn with Darwen to share learning and explore approaches to strengthening education engagement.

Looking ahead, we're planning a series of education-focused engagement sessions in the South during September and will share further details once arrangements have been confirmed.

2026/27



Planning Ahead

Following an excellent year of co-design, collaboration and development, we are focused on progressing plans for FFP implementation throughout 2026/27, informed by test and learn activity, audits and evaluations.

Over the coming months, we'll continue shaping our delivery plans, key priorities and milestones for the year ahead. We'll also be developing our future workforce operating model and organisational structure, alongside engagement and consultation activity with colleagues and partners.

There's lots happening across the FFP programme, and we'll continue to share further updates as our plans develop.

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.