

Families First Partnership Newsletter



June 2026

What is the Families First Partnership?

The Families First Partnership (FFP) is a national Department for Education (DfE) programme designed to transform how local areas support children, young people and families. It brings together services across social care, health, education, police and the voluntary sector to create earlier, more co-ordinated and family-centred support.

The Programme is continuing at pace:

- Worked with local leaders and district level data on scoping a pilot in Central Oldham - please let us know if you'd like to be involved.
- Sourced specific training for Family Group Decision Making for LA Employed staff to help us refine our practice and training offer on empowering family networks - talk to your manager if you're interested.
- Developed tools to support consistency across child protection practice: standardised communications about strategy meetings; how we structure strategy meetings; a leaflet providing advice to parents and carers about Section 47 and related processes - send us an email if you'd like to view and comment on any of these drafts!
- Engaged with a range of colleagues across child protection, family help district teams & public health nurses
- Engaged with families and young people about their experiences and views on the children's services partnership
- Assessing partnership confidence identifying and responding to local harms
- Continued work co-designing how we capture families' stories of their strengths and where they would benefit from support

CSC Reset Implementation Plan

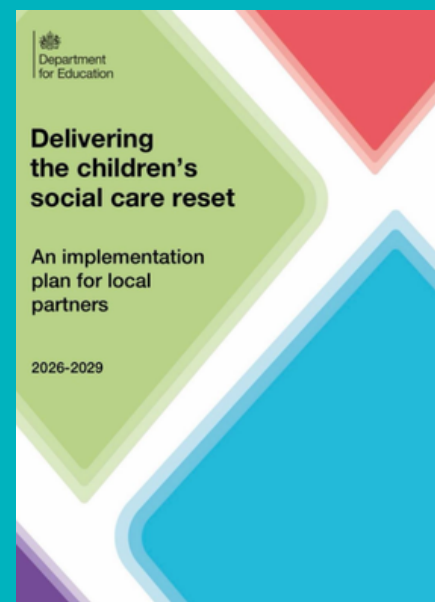
The Children's Social Care Reset Implementation Plan (2026–2029) sets out the Department for Education's vision for a system built on strong, lasting relationships and earlier support for families. It focuses on helping children stay safely with those who matter most, and where that isn't possible, ensuring they experience stable, loving care. The plan is a practical roadmap for how this change will be delivered locally over the next three years.

What the plan sets out:

- Earlier support for families to prevent issues escalating
- Joined-up working across services around the whole family
- Greater involvement of family networks in decisions
- Improved, stable care for children who cannot live at home
- A skilled workforce supported to deliver consistent, high-quality practice

Please take time to read the document and reflect on the reset it calls for—not just at a system level, but in how we work every day. Each of us has a role to play in embedding these reforms, shaping practice, and strengthening the relationships that make the greatest difference to children and families.

[Access the guidance here](#)



Engagement Activity

Celebrating our Co-Design and Co-production

Since October 2025, we have delivered 19 co-design events, including:

- 5 Family Help District Co-design Events
- 5 Family Help District Focus Groups
- 1 Family Networks Focus Group
- 1 Multi Agency Child Protection Team Focus Group
- 1 Multi Agency Child Protection Team Co-design Event
- 1 Health Focus Group
- 1 Central Pilot Launch Event
- 4 Family Activity Days

This commitment to hearing the voices of practitioners and families is a core principle of Oldham's Families First Programme and a point of pride.

Across these activities, we have engaged with over 500 professionals across the partnership with partners from Children's Social Care, Health, Education, Police and the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector.

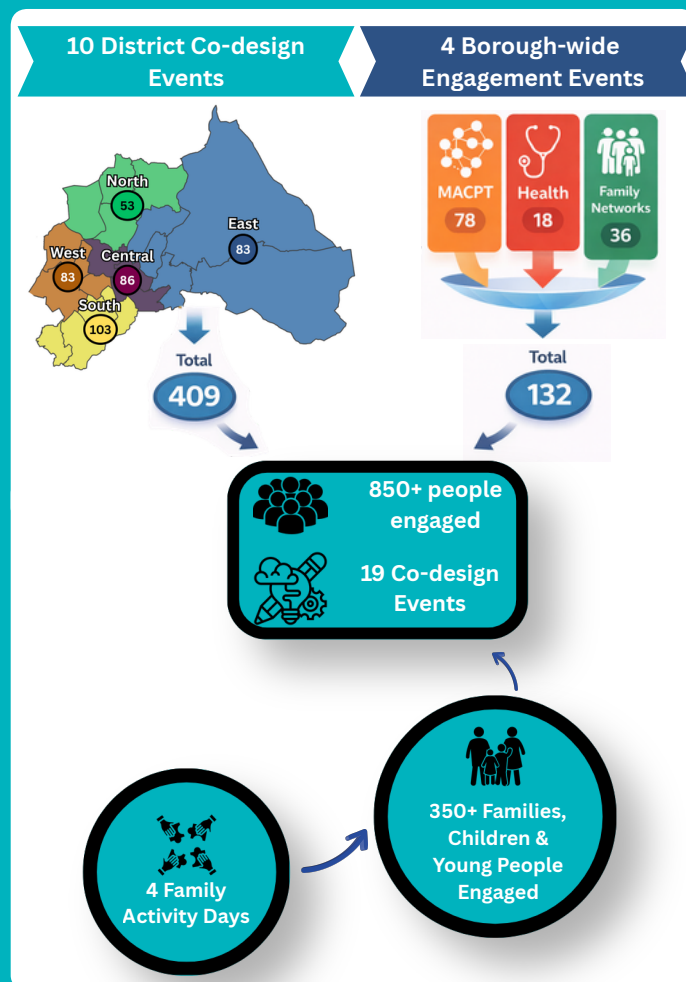
Our thanks go to everyone involved in planning and delivering these events, and to all participants who generously shared their time, experiences, and insights.

As we move forward, we are committed to continue listening to the voices of those with lived experience and insight from delivering Children's Services. Insights gathered are already being used to shape our priorities and plans.

We will also continue to share this learning back with partners and participants, ensuring transparency and ongoing collaboration.

A fantastic achievement—thank you to everyone who has contributed to making this possible.

**Click here to see
all the findings
from our Family
Activity Days**



Family Activity Days

Our four Family Activity Days have been an incredible success, bringing together over 350 families, children and young people from across the South, East, Central and West districts of Oldham.

Each event was filled with energy, connection and positivity, with children, young people and families sharing overwhelmingly encouraging feedback about their experiences. It was truly inspiring to see communities come together, have fun, and make their voices heard.

Through a series of creative and interactive workshops, we created safe, welcoming spaces where families could openly share their thoughts, ideas and experiences. These activities didn't just engage — they empowered participants to shape conversations and influence the way support is delivered.

From these sessions, we gained powerful insights into what really matters to children and families.

To explore the full findings and view the visuals created from these days, please click the button on the left.

We hope these learnings inspire and support you in your day-to-day work with children, young people and families—helping to create even stronger, more responsive services across Oldham.

Safe & Comfortable Space

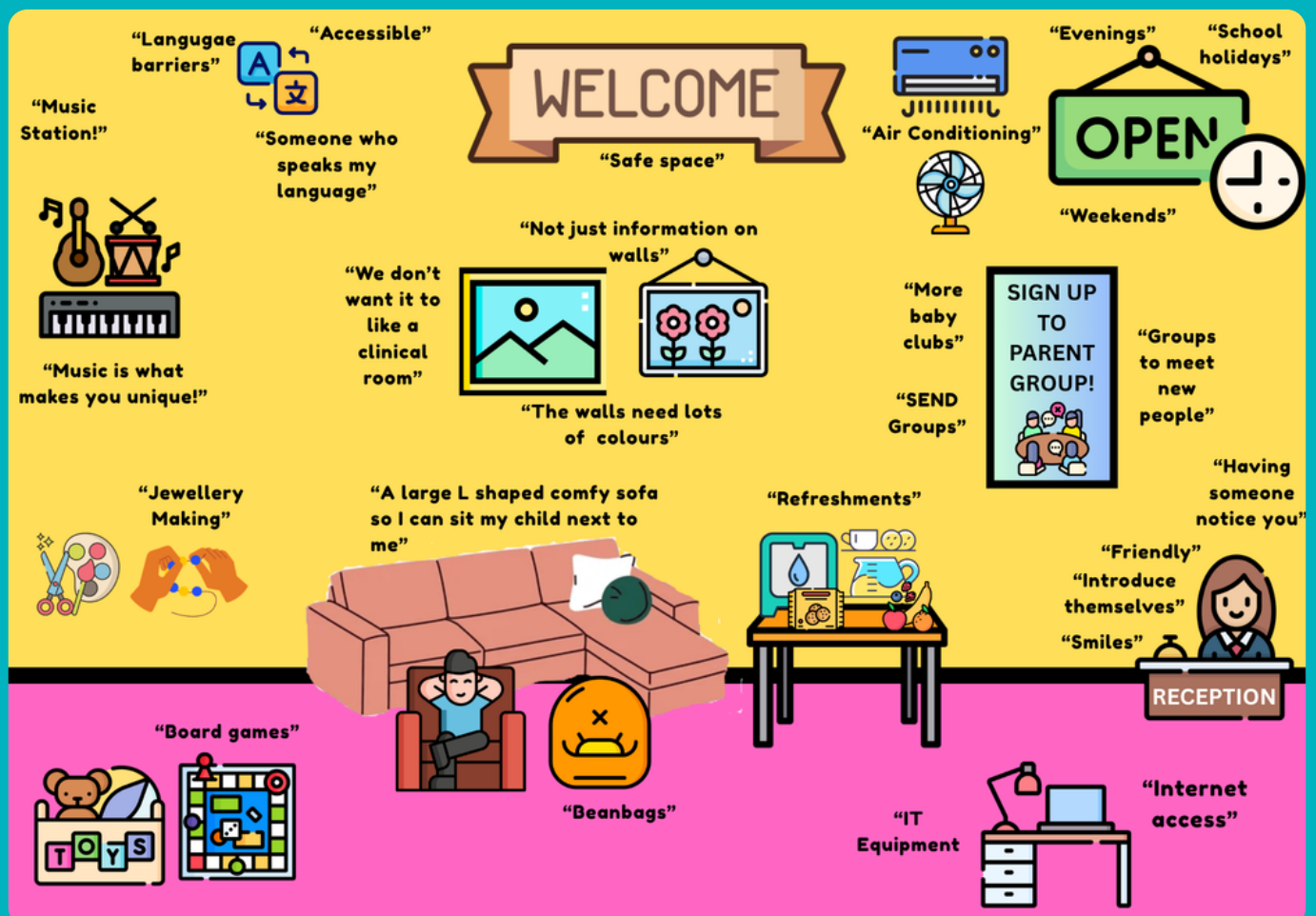
In our last two Family Activity Days, we focused on gathering feedback from children, young people and families about what would make a service space feel safe and comfortable. We encouraged creativity, inviting them to draw both practical ideas and things they would personally like to see. We also asked them to describe, in their own words, how these spaces should feel, capturing key characteristics of the room and building.

We would like to say a huge thank you to our fantastic partners at Positive Steps for helping to facilitate these workshops and for engaging so positively with children, young people and families on the day. Your enthusiasm truly shone through and made a real difference, clearly reflected in the feedback shared below.



The visuals reflect what children, young people and families told us matters most in creating a safe and comfortable space. Feedback highlights the need for welcoming, inclusive environments that feel friendly rather than clinical, with features such as comfortable seating, colourful surroundings, accessible communication, and opportunities for creativity and connection.

These insights will help shape our ongoing work, ensuring future spaces and services are designed around the needs, experiences and voices of the families we support.



What have we been up to?

Central District Pilot

The Central Pilot is starting to take shape, with a real focus on bringing services together and making it easier for families to get the right support, in the right place, at the right time. Work started by listening to practitioners across the system who have experience delivering high quality services across neighbourhoods — and where there are opportunities for going further through multi-agency working.

What's been happening

We've been laying the foundations by understanding local needs, connecting with people, and having meaningful conversations across teams and partners.

- Agreed key priorities with Central leaders
- Built a clearer picture of services and connectivity through mapping work
- Identified priority areas: Holts, Alt & Roundthorn, and Coldhurst
- Brought partners together through the first Learning Circle to share ideas and insight

What's next

We're now moving from insight to action — focusing on simple, practical changes that will improve how support is delivered locally.

- Sharpen our understanding of local needs
- Expand Learning Circles into Coldhurst
- Identify and act on quick, visible improvements
- Develop a clearer, more accessible local offer for families



Strategy Meetings & Section 47 Baseline Survey

We've now launched our baseline survey as part of the Strategy Meeting and Section 47 Test & Learn and have already received a strong number of responses — thank you to everyone who has taken part so far.

We're now looking to gather a few more responses to further strengthen the data and ensure we have a well-rounded picture of current practice.

The survey captures how Strategy Meetings and Section 47 processes are working day-to-day, including what's working well and where there may be challenges.

This insight will directly shape the pilot and ensure any changes are grounded in real experience.

If you have been involved in these processes, we would really value your input. We're particularly keen to hear from all partners to better understand the full range of experiences.

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey — your feedback will play an important role in shaping what comes next.

**Click here to complete the
Strategy Meetings & Section
47 Baseline Survey**



What you can do to help



Child Protection Local Harms Confidence Check-in

As part of the Families First Partnership, we are expected to ensure that our Child Protection staff - whether working for GMP, the council, in an education setting or for the NHS - are equipped, trained and confident at responding to local harms.

DfE explain this as, local partnerships are “equipped to **identify**, **understand** and **respond** effectively to all significant harm, inside and outside of the home and online.”

We want to take this opportunity to check-in with the partnership around the confidence in responding to different types of local harms. The list has been created from local themes identified by the brilliant work of the OSCP and from Oldham’s action plan to implement Working Together 2026.

Please take five minutes to fill out this survey on your confidence in identifying, understanding and responding to local harms.

Your responses will be the starting point for our Multi-agency Child Protection Team Workforce Development Plan

[Click here to complete Child Protection Types of Harms Practitioner Confidence Check-in](#)



South District Pilot

In February, the Assessment and Intervention Teams began working in districts. The feedback we have received across the borough is colleagues are enjoying building relationships in communities with schools and other community touchpoints.

Leading the way with Families First Partnership is colleagues in the South across Targeted Early Help, Assessment and Intervention, Positive Steps and Child Protection Chairs. These teams are working closer together - in the ethos of Families First - to test the delivery of joined-up working.

While we have already begun to see the benefits of this working, our ambition is to continue going further.

Failsworth District Town Hall Coffee Afternoon

On 1st July, the Families First Partnership have booked Failsworth Town Hall for a Coffee afternoon from 13:30 until 15:30. The time is reserved for practitioners that help families across South Oldham to come together to meet each other face-to-face and share a little bit about themselves, their experience working in South Oldham and grow the relationships that will enable us to work well together.

Feel free to pop in to hear how the South Pilot is going and put a face to the email addresses we know so well!

A screenshot of a survey titled "Types of Harm Practitioner Confidence Check-in". The survey is part of the Families First Partnership Programme. It asks practitioners to co-produce a Workforce Development Plan based on Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and responding to local harms. The survey is the first step to helping develop the partnership's workforce development plan. The form includes a disclaimer: "When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself." There are two main sections. Section 1: "Which safeguarding partner do you represent?" with radio button options for Education, Police, Social Care, and Health. Section 2: "To what extent do you agree with the following statement: 'Working with partners, I am able to **identify** whether a child is at risk of significant harm relating to _____.'" Below this, there is a table for "Child Sexual Abuse" with response options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

Test & Learn Activity

We're continuing to test new ways of working, with a focus on what makes the biggest difference for children, young people and families. These pilots are helping us learn quickly, strengthen how we work together, and build a more joined-up, accessible system of support.

At the heart of this is a simple aim: making it easier for families to get the right help, earlier, and from the right people without having to navigate multiple services.

What we're testing

- **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub Review** – improving how families are supported at the front door
- **Central Pilot** – strengthening community-based support and access through local partners
- **South Pilot** – joint working between Targeted Early Help and Social Work, moving towards a single approach
- **Multi-Agency Strategy Meetings & Section 47** – strengthening joint decision-making in child protection
- **Transitional Safeguarding (FGDM)** – helping young people build stronger support into adulthood
- **Neighbourhood Working** (in development) – bringing services together more locally
- **Family Network Meetings** (in development) – making better use of family and community networks
- **Family Network Support Packages** (in development) – testing practical support to help families stay connected



What this will help us achieve

Through test and learn activity planned, we can quickly explore what works, adapt in real time and make meaningful improvements based on feedback from our partners and children, young people & families. This approach enables us to trial ideas, build evidence and make changes with confidence, while strengthening collaboration across teams and the partnership.

This will help us to:

- Provide earlier support, closer to home
- Reduce duplication and improve how services work together
- Strengthen relationships across teams and the partnership
- Build a clearer, more confident way of working

We will continue to use these insights to shape and refine our programme, ensuring we are responsive to the needs of our communities.

If you would like to get involved, please email FamiliesFirstPartnership@oldham.gov.uk

Useful resources

National Updates

Finding your way through all the resources on Knowledge Hub (K-Hub) can be overwhelming. To make things easier, we've created a handy guide that saves you time and explains what each document is for so you can access the information you need, quickly and confidently.

 [Click here to access our K-Hub Index.](#)

Our Dedicated FFP Oldham Padlet

- ✓ Key DfE Policy Documents & Presentations
- ✓ District demand and data profiles

This is your go-to resource for everything Families First in Oldham! [Click here to access it!](#)

Stars of the Month

Each month, we want to recognise colleagues who have gone above and beyond in supporting the FFP Programme. Thank you to everyone who continues to give their time, ideas and energy — it makes a real difference.

Our Stars of the Month:

- **Nicky McCarthy & Positive Steps** – for their fantastic support at our Family Activity Days, and for championing the voice of the programme through their ongoing work.
- **Zubair Seedat** – for bringing valuable insight to our Central Pilot development meetings and helping us build connections with key partners.
- **Mel Jones & Shirley Valentine** – for their brilliant facilitation and energy at Medlock Vale Family Hub, helping deliver a highly engaging Family Activity Day.
- **Jenny Clarke & Sarah Melia** – for creating an equally engaging and successful Family Activity Day at Spring Meadows Family Hub through their excellent support and delivery.
- **Our partners at SPARK & Calm Ahead** – for enriching our Family Activity Days with food and enjoyable activities for children and families.
- **Anna Tebay** – for her work in connecting us with Public Health Nurses and ensuring their valuable perspectives help shape the programme.

Thank you for being our Stars of the Month — your hard work and commitment do not go unnoticed.



Thank you for your incredible engagement — we're excited to share more updates soon.

 Forward this newsletter to anyone who might be interested and encourage them to sign up to our mailing list.

