



# Sefton Families First Partnership

## Newsletter - April 2026

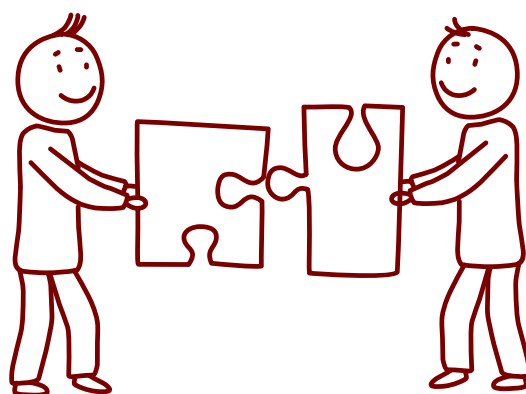
### An Update on National Reforms and Local Progress within Sefton

Senior leaders across Sefton recently came together for a development day focused on how national reforms can work best for local children, young people and families. The session was about pausing, reflecting and looking ahead – ensuring that changes being introduced nationally lead to real improvements for families in Sefton.

#### WHAT ARE THE NATIONAL REFORMS?

Several major reforms are happening at the same time across England, all with a shared aim: earlier support, better coordination and stronger outcomes for children and families. These include:

- **Families First Partnership (FFP)** – the biggest change to children’s social care since the Children Act 1989, focused on earlier help, joined-up services and keeping families together where it is safe to do so.
- **SEND Reforms** – a long-term transformation of support for children and young people aged 0–25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, promoting fairness, consistency and early support.
- **Best Start in Life** – improving support from pregnancy through the early years, giving children the strongest possible foundations.
- **Neighbourhood Health** – bringing health and care services closer to home, focused on prevention and community-based support.







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## WHAT IS HAPPENING IN SEFTON NOW?

Sefton is moving from planning into delivery and testing of new ways of working.

- **A Families First Partnership pilot** has launched in Bootle, bringing together professionals from Children's Social Care and those within Early Help, to work more closely as neighbourhood teams.
- This pilot is helping services learn how to reduce duplication, improve communication and provide earlier, more coordinated support for families.
- **A Single assessment and plan** is being developed to reduce duplication and repeated assessment, meaning one shared plan for families and professionals. This is currently being co-designed with families, young people and practitioners, and will soon be tested through the pilot to support clearer, joined-up planning.
- **The Sefton Family Life Toolkit** is a new virtual resource launching alongside the Best Start in Life offer, marking a key milestone in Sefton's commitment to children and families. The Toolkit brings together trusted information from health, early help, early years, education, community support services, and the SEND Local Offer in one accessible place - linked below:  
<https://www.seftonfamilylife.com>
- Interactive workshops will offer practical insight for professionals and partners.  
 Thursday 21 May 2026 – morning and afternoon sessions available.  
 Sefton PDC, Formby - Book via What's on in Sefton
- Work is also progressing on Best Start Family Hubs, SEND reform planning, neighbourhood health teams and a shared outcomes framework so partners are working towards the same goals.

## WHY THIS MATTERS

Local data shows increasing pressures on children's services, rising demand and growing inequalities. Leaders agreed the system needs to shift:

- From crisis response to prevention and early help
- From fragmented services to joined-up neighbourhood support
- From multiple plans to clear, shared approaches focused on families

At the heart of this work is a shared vision for children in Sefton: to be safe, happy, healthy, heard and achieving, with families supported early so issues do not escalate.



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## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Over the coming months, national reforms will continue to be co-designed, developed and delivered locally in Sefton. Changes will be co-designed, tested and introduced in stages, so learning can shape what happens next.

This work will be taken forward by:

- Working with children and young people, using inclusive and accessible ways to gather views so their experiences shape decisions
- Engaging parents and carers, including families with lived experience, to co-design how support works in practice
- Listening to our workforce, valuing the insight of frontline staff and practitioners to shape practical, workable improvements
- Working closely with partners, including education, health, social care and the voluntary sector, to build shared ownership and reduce duplication
- Taking a fully holistic approach to participation and co-design, ensuring families, staff and partners are involved together – not separately – in shaping change
- Testing new approaches through local pilots, learning from what works before wider rollout
- Design workshops – workforce colleagues will be invited to a series of workshops focused on delivering the MACPT, Universal offer and Family Help.

The shared direction is towards earlier help, stronger relationships and services working together around families, so children and young people get the right support at the right time.

# THANK YOU

**A big thank you to everyone across the workforce, partners, families, and young people who continue to contribute your time, experience and ideas. The work you're doing is helping us build a simpler, more joined-up, more compassionate system for children and families.**

**If you'd like to get involved or have any questions, please contact the Children's Transformation Team:  
[Childrenstransformation@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:Childrenstransformation@sefton.gov.uk).**