

Families First Partnership Programme Newsletter



Hello,

Welcome to our Families First Partnership Programme newsletter.

Here you will receive the latest updates taking place across the borough of Rochdale as we deliver on exciting new national reforms taking shape in children's social care.

Thank you.

Latest updates



Heywood chosen as pilot area

Work to prepare for the government's new children's services reforms is moving quickly, and Heywood has been chosen by our partners as the borough's pilot area.

This pilot will initially help us test a new approach to **family help**, making sure the right support reaches families earlier and more effectively.

Most of the pilot activity will be based at **Derby Street Family Hub**, with other parts of the reforms, such as family group decision-making and new multi-agency child protection teams, being introduced at a later stage.

Like other councils across the country, we're starting small so we can learn what works before rolling the changes out boroughwide.

This helps us make sure the new system is safe, effective and designed around what local families truly need before full implementation in April 2026.

Partners begin analysing feedback from recent voice survey

Thank you to everyone who recently took part in our voice workforce and volunteer survey.

Your feedback is incredibly valuable. It helps us better understand how you feel about the support you receive, and what improvements would make the biggest difference to you.

The survey has also given us useful insight into people's past experiences, and these views will directly shape how our future services are designed and delivered.

Partners across the borough are now reviewing all responses to identify the key themes.

These will be used to inform planning and ensure local services reflect what families tell us they need.

Coffee morning to gather feedback from families

Families with previous experience of family group conferencing are being invited to an upcoming coffee morning to share their feedback.

This event, which takes place on Wednesday 18 March at Howard Street Best Start Family Hub in Rochdale, will provide valuable insight to the journeys families have had over the last 12 to 18 months.

As part of the session, families will be asked to take part in a 'Six hats' exercise to explore what makes life easier or better for them when they are supported by local services.

Each hat focuses on a different perspective – such as being positive or negative or answering from a fact-based viewpoint only – with this task helping partners to gain a broader understanding of what works well and what could be improved.

This feedback will be used to help shape future decisions about family group decision making and the wider reforms.

For more information on this and how you can be involved, contact nicholas.callaghan@rochdale.gov.uk.

Let's get our heads around the new terminology

We understand there is a lot of information to understand as part of these reforms, including the introduction of new terminology or phrases that partners and services will use in future as they work to implement these changes.

To help you get to grips with these reforms in more detail, a glossary of useful terms and definitions has been created to guide you through these changes.

Other useful words that are regularly used by services to safeguard children and young people have also been included.

[Visit the glossary on our website.](#)

Contact us

We hope you find this newsletter useful, and we would really appreciate it if you could share this with anyone else who may benefit from this information.

If you'd like to find out more or share your thoughts about Families First, please get in touch.

You can contact us with your views and questions at FamiliesFirst@Rochdale.gov.uk, or [visit our website for more information](#).
