

9th January 2026.



Newsletter 3

FAMILIES FIRST PARTNERSHIP Stoke-on-Trent

Welcome to the third edition of our newsletter, keeping you updated on the co-design of the Families First children's social care reforms in Stoke-on-Trent.
What is the Families First Partnership Programme?

The Families First Partnership Programme is a major government initiative to transform how children and families receive support in England. Our main goal is to help more families stay together safely and help children thrive. We do this by providing early, joined-up, and family-focused support to prevent crises and improve long-term outcomes.

We want to build a system where professionals from social work, police, health, and education work together as one team. This means families get consistent, holistic support that adapts to their changing needs. We will do this by having an integrated Front Door: A single referral route for all family help, including multi-agency triage and proportionate response. Family Help Teams with Family Help Lead Practitioner that are QSW and differently qualified professionals supporting families and children end to end with one single assessment; Family Group Decision Making (FGDM): Empowering families, who know themselves best, to contribute to their own solutions. Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams (MACPT): Co-located teams providing expertise, reflection and practice support to significant harm, with shared accountability.



Programme Management Update

Jo Georgiades has now left her position as Programme Manager. We wish her all the best in her next adventure! The Transformation Team will now manage the Families First Programme. For any enquiries, please contact familiesfirst@stoke.gov.uk.

A warm welcome to Jane Stuart, our new Families First Programme Lead for children's services. Jane brings experience from Dorset and other authorities. She will be in the office every Wednesday (first floor by the HoS) and is happy to chat, contact her at jane.stuart@stoke.gov.uk.

What's been happening in 2025?

- Regular Q&A drop-in sessions for staff to ask questions and share feedback.
- Direct feedback from families who have taken part in our new assessment and planning process.
- Service meetings: Six meetings with Principal Managers, Social Workers, and Family Support Workers to discuss the programme and encourage co-design.
- Children and young people's workshops: Two sessions to help design how we engage with young people.
- Feedback from Co-Design Workshops has been gathered. Recent workshops highlighted the need for early, joined-up support from a multi-disciplinary team. Staff want more relationship-based, needs-led approaches and less reliance on thresholds and labels. Families should help shape their own plans, with support that adapts to changing needs. We're also working to reduce the number of professionals involved with each family and improve information sharing.

What's happening in 2026?

- **Upcoming Q&A Drop-in Sessions:** Join us on Teams for our next Q&A sessions, 1–2pm taking place on 9th January, 23rd January, 6th February, 20th February, and 6th March. Please email familiesfirst@stoke.gov.uk for details.
- **Website Launch & Survey:** Our new Families First website is now live! Please visit for updates, resources, families feedback and to take part in our staff survey. Please do start visiting it regularly as we will be adding more information as things move forward. The feedback is for you to tell us what you want or need. Do also use the parents / carers and children feedback to ask them what they need and support their voice being heard. **[Visit the Families First Hub](#)**