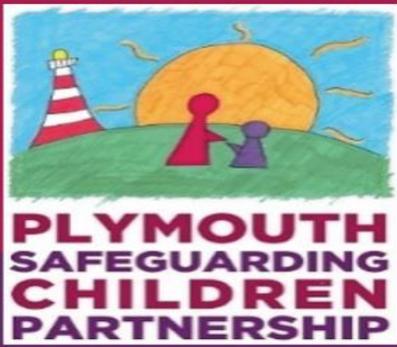


Families First Partnership

Lisa Davies – Service Director for Children & Families (PCC)

PSCP Conference

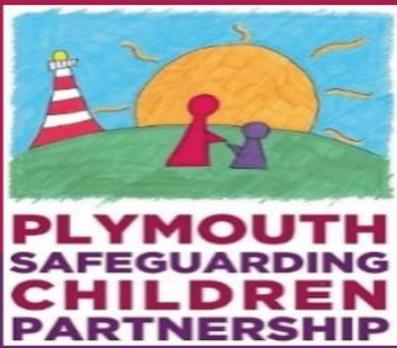
20th November 2025



Aims of today



Establish a shared understanding of the national Families First Partnership reforms and where we are currently.



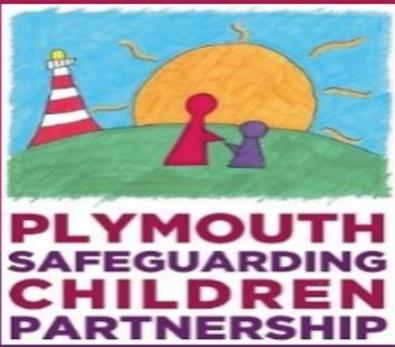
Context of FFP reforms...

What do we know...

How are the
Children?

Not so good
actually....

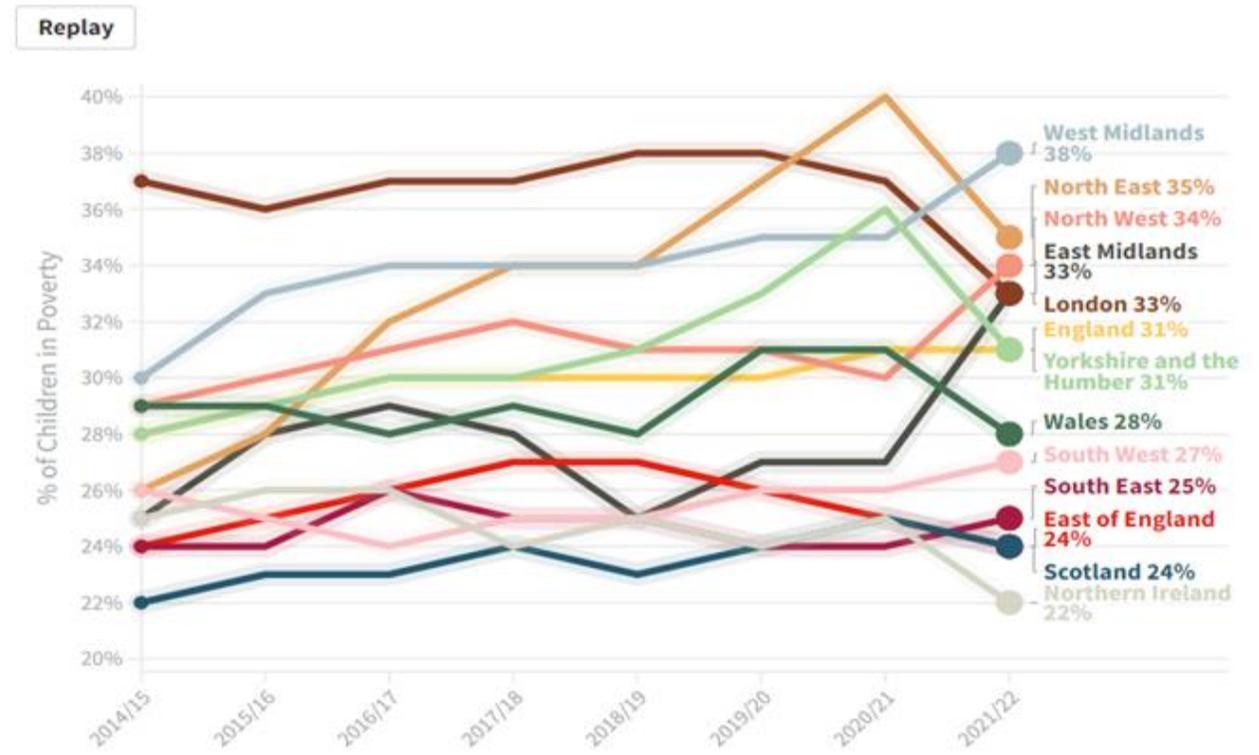




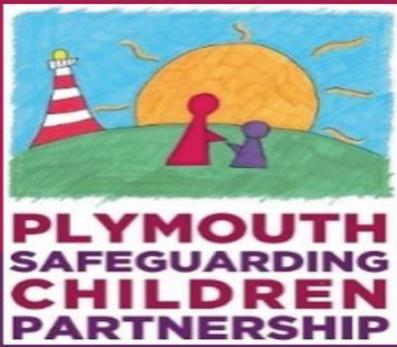
They're more likely to live in poverty

- **4.3 million children** are in poverty across the UK - that's **30% of all children**.
- In the ten years between 2012/13 and 2022/23, the number of children in poverty rose by **700,000** (from 27% to 30%)
- Researchers find that in 16-24-year-olds, **almost half (47%) of young people** are unable, or just about managing to make ends meet each month

Child poverty across nations and regions
2014/15 to 2021/22

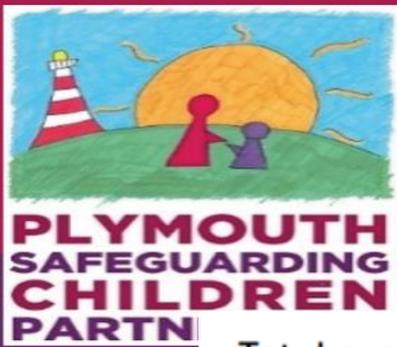


Source: End Child Poverty Coalition



They're facing physical and emotional health challenges

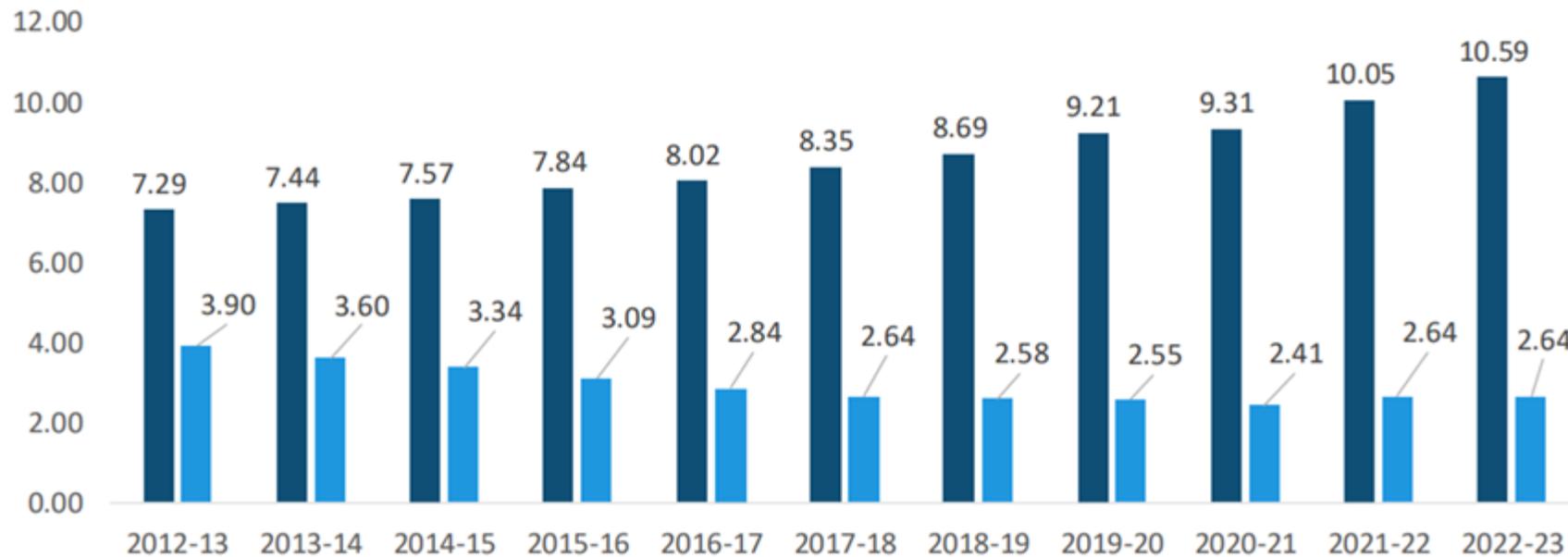
- Infants in the most deprived areas are twice as likely to die in infancy as those in the least deprived.
- Poor housing, air pollution, and second-hand smoke disproportionately affect children in income deprived families.
- Families in poverty are forced to choose between food, energy bills, and hygiene essentials.
- 1 million children had active CAMHS referrals in 2022-23.
- Autism referrals up 27% – many children age out before being seen as almost 40% (372,800) had their referral closed before accessing support

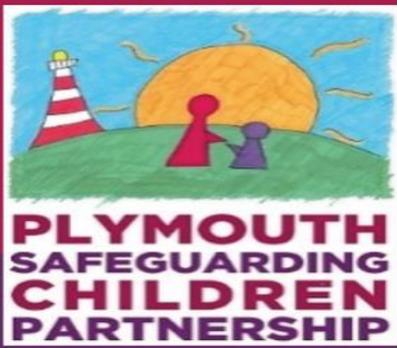


Spending More on Crisis, Less on Prevention

Total spend on children's services has increased but is increasingly dominated by statutory services and not early help and support.

2022-23, real terms, £bn

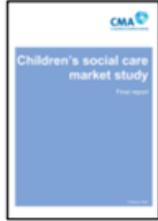




Some are struggling in school & work

- Record school suspensions and exclusions.
 - The 790,000 suspensions in 2022/23 - almost one for every 10 pupils - is 36% higher than the previous record in 2021/22.
 - The 9,000 exclusions - up 44% from 2021/22 - is also a sharp rise on the previous record in 2017/18.
- 627,000 young people aged 16 to 24 were unemployed in Sept 2024, and 2.96 million were economically inactive – close to the highest recorded number since the current series began in 1992.
- In the Youth Voice Census 2023, young people stated their biggest barriers to employment are lack of work experience and skills, and mental health and anxiety.
- High youth unemployment projected to cost £31 billion (2021-2025).

The case for reform



The Competition and Markets Authority study into Children's Social Care Placements

March 2022



National Review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson

May 2022



Safeguarding Children with Complex Health Needs in residential Settings.

April 2023



The Independent Review of Children's Social Care

May 2022



The Report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse

October 2022

Prevent.

1

Children should remain with their families and supported to thrive and be safely prevented from entering the care system wherever possible.

Support.

2

Where children cannot remain at home, we should support children to live with kinship carers or in fostering families. We will also improve support for care leavers.

Fix the market.

3

Placements for children in care should be first and foremost, homes for young people to live in and we must bring a swift end to excessive profit making.

Key enablers.

4

Investing in key enablers which underpin the system – workforce, better data & information sharing, evidence-based programmes and the National Framework.

Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive

Breaking down barriers to opportunity

November 2024

Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill

Policy Summary Notes

March 2025

The Families First Partnership (FFP) Programme Guide

Delivery expectations for safeguarding
partners in England

March 2025

Policy statement published on 18th November 2024

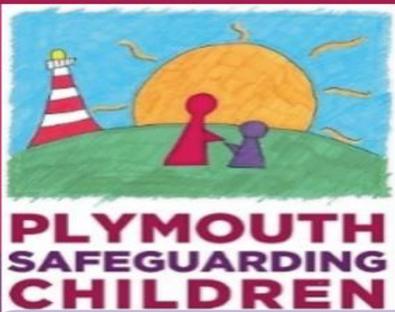
Outlines the Government's vision for the children's social care system and core legislative proposals.

Introduced into Parliament on 17th December 2024, Summary published March 2025

Breaks down the ambitions of the bill in seven parts, centred around keeping families together and children safe.

Programme Guide was published in March 2025

Sets out the delivery expectations for safeguarding partners co-signed by Department for Health and Social Care and Home Office.



Plymouth Families First Partnership Programme Governance

Core Programme Governance

Department for Education

- Oversight of the Families First Partnership Programme
- Quarterly Reporting

Plymouth Safeguarding Children Partnership Board

- Will receive a highlight report from the Families First Partnership Board
- Propose Families First as a standing item at every meeting
- * Quarterly meeting

NEW: Families First Partnership Board – attended by Designated Safeguarding Partners

- Workstream leads to meet fortnightly ahead of Board
- Check in on design progress initially moving to focus on implementation

Refreshed: Workstream Steering Groups

- Initially these meetings will be in the form of Workshops and move to refreshed Steering Groups as design phase progresses

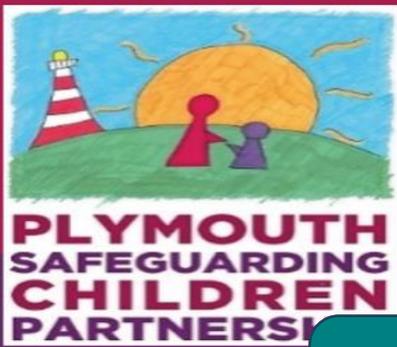
Other governance groups for awareness and programme support

Children's Scrutiny committee – considering appropriate updates

Children's Programme Board

Children's Services Senior Leadership Team - Oversight of the service improvement plans and linked transformation

Lead Safeguarding Partners, Pan Devon Local Strategic Partnerships & Children's Safeguarding Partnership sub- groups



FFP Working Groups

Families First Partnership Board Working Groups Structure

**Oversight Group - reporting to
Families First Partnership Board**

1. Families First Front Door
Chair: Grace Adeusi

2. Family Help and protection
Chair: Danielle Tweedie/Martine Aquilina

3. Family Led Decision Making
Chair: Grace Adeusi

4. Multi-Agency Child Protection Team
Chair: Fran Giblin/Danielle Tweedie

5. Workforce Development
Chair; Fran Giblin

← Child & Family Engagement Impact and Evaluation Communications Plans →

An integrated system of Family Help and Multi-Agency Child Protection

Universal Early Support

- Family Hubs
- Early Help in communities

Targeted Early Help

Child in Need (Section 17)

Child Protection (Section 47)

Children in Care

Single Integrated Front Door

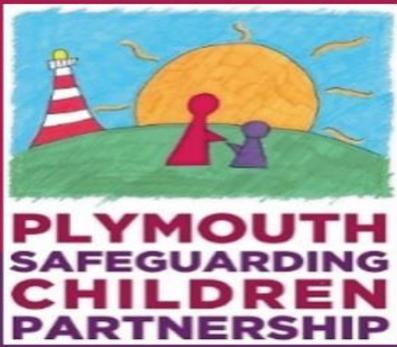
Family Help Lead Practitioners working alongside multi-agency child protection teams as they continue to maintain relationships with the family

Aiming for a seamless model that facilitates dynamic and responsive assessment and planning, rather than a stop/start approach

Family Group Decision Making

FGDM supporting reunification

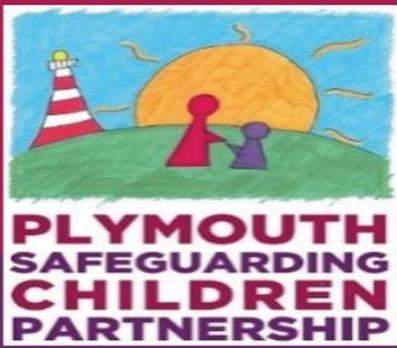
Wrapping help and support around families, adapting as needs change



Family Help

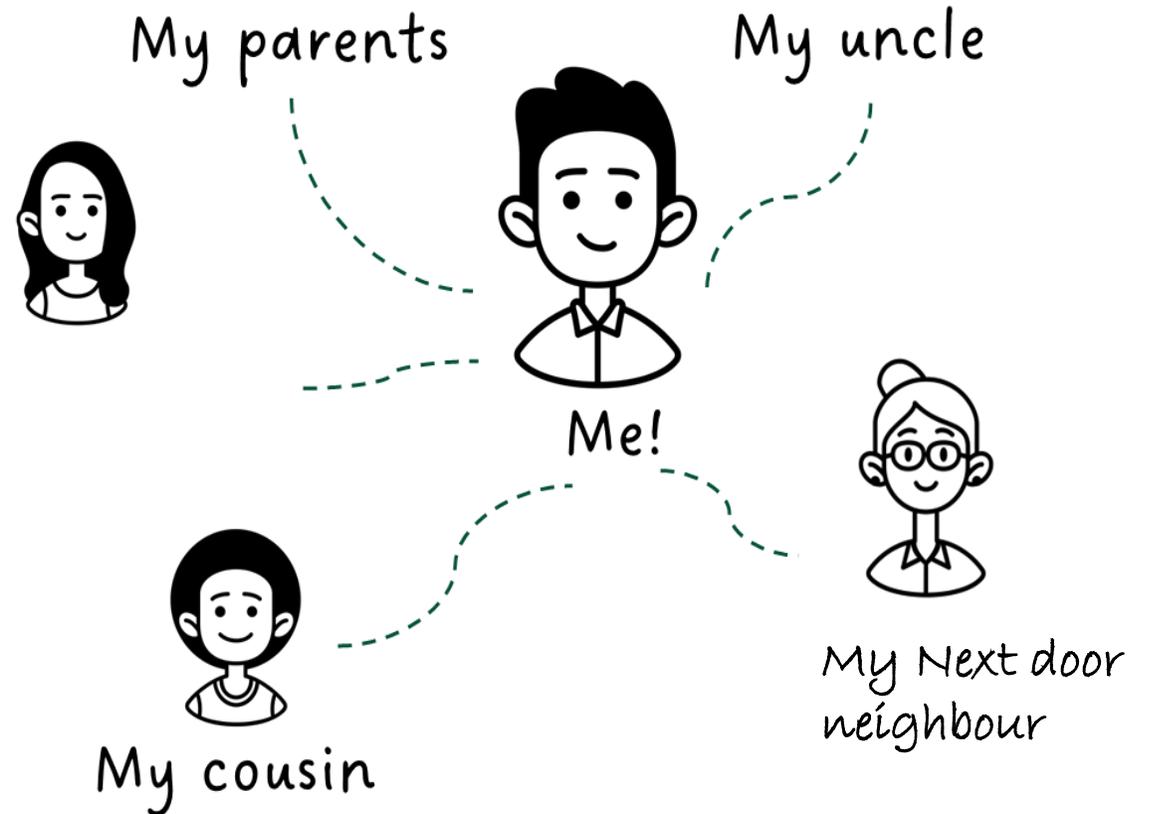
- **Merging Targeted Early Help and Child in Need** work bringing together family support workers and social workers into a single service (from targeted early help through to multi-agency child protection)
- **Community-based, multi-disciplinary teams** that wrap help and support around children, young people and their families and take a whole family approach
- **Family Help teams** will be multi-disciplinary and draw on multi-agency partners building on those already operating in the **early help space** and through supporting families
- We'll also consider how to effectively join up **Family Help with existing SEND services**, to improve access to support for children with special educational needs, and disabilities

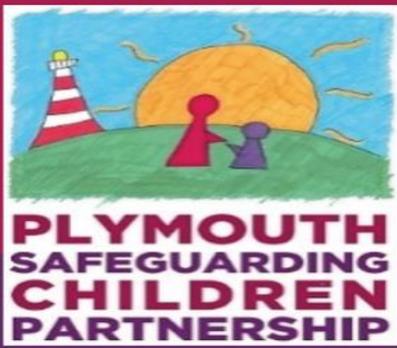
domestic abuse | substance misuse | children and adult mental health | SEND – including the Designated Social Care Officer Role, as encouraged in Working Together | parental conflict | School attendance support teams | prison and probation | public health | youth justice | youth work | adult social care, specifically Safeguarding Adult Boards | Police | victim support including wider sexual abuse support | health visiting | midwives, sexual health and school nursing | employment advisors to support parents who are out of work | homelessness and housing



Family Networks & Kinship

- Families should be supported to enable their children to remain living at home with their birth parents, where it is safe to do so
- **Empowering families** and wider family networks, to make plans to support children and help families stay together safely, is central to the whole family approach in the Families First end to end system reform
- **A family network** may include the child's parents or any other person with parental responsibility for the child, relatives, friends of other people connected with the child.





Multi – Agency Child Protection Teams

Effective multi-agency child protection is where the right decisions are made at the right time to keep children safe.

Families will stay rooted in Family Help, including when child protection action is necessary – the FHLP will continue their relationship with the family, making sure that the day-to-day life and experiences of the child are really understood.

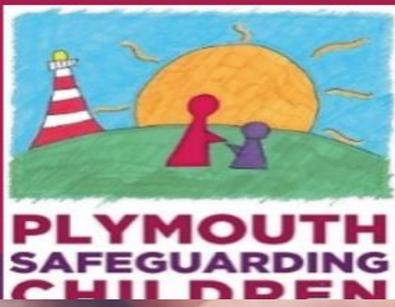
Statutory Safeguarding Partners (Local Authorities, ICBs and Police) are required to establish new, expert led multi-agency child protection teams (MACPTs).

New expert social worker roles, **Lead Child Protection Practitioners** (LCPPs) will be embedded within MACPTs - responsible for statutory child protection decisions, drawing on wider multi-agency practitioners in the team.

MACPTs must include:

- Social Workers (including the new Lead Child Protection Practitioner roles)
- Police Officers
- Registered Health practitioners
- Education

There's also potential to include other agencies such as probation, domestic abuse services and youth workers according to local need.

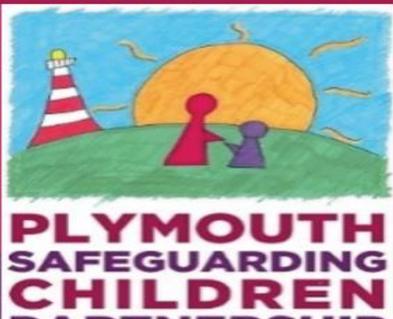


Family Led Decision Making



A voluntary process that enables the family network to come together and make a family led plan in response to concerns about a child's safety and wellbeing, working alongside skilled professionals.

- The plan includes **offering practical support** to parents and carers, whilst prioritising the safety and wellbeing of the child.
- **Helps to ensure a family network is engaged** and empowered to participate in decision making whilst a child and their family is receiving help, support or protection.
- **Family Help Lead Practitioners and Multi-agency Child Protection Teams will play a crucial role** in supporting FGDM as they know the child and family well and are delivering support through an existing plan



Successful partnership implementation - learning from Pathfinders

There has been a strong and consistent level of engagement from the partnership throughout the programme for Wave 1's

Avoid creating silos when establishing additional specific roles, they are a conduit rather than siloed experts.

Safeguarding Partners are crucial to the success of FFCP – need to make sure the programme isn't too LA centred.

Resourcing partners to release capacity for this work including seconding partners into programme teams

Multi-agency partnership arrangements are engaged and visible at every level

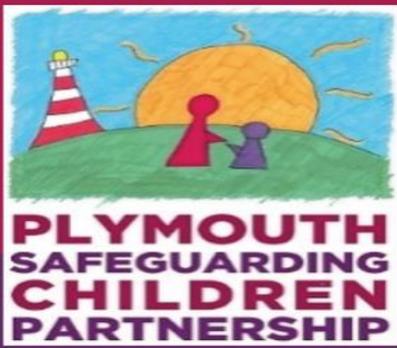
Using creative and innovative practices to strengthen partnership working

Dorset have coproduced a lot of their work/ materials to ensure it is helpful and relevant for the whole partnership

Had to increase messaging about the benefits to the partnership- this is something that they wished they had done earlier on.

The sequencing and flow of comms to the partnership (and beyond is crucial)

Building a bank of FAQs for the partnership to ensure they understand what the questions/ concerns are from different areas of the partnership



Autumn partnership engagement and codesign

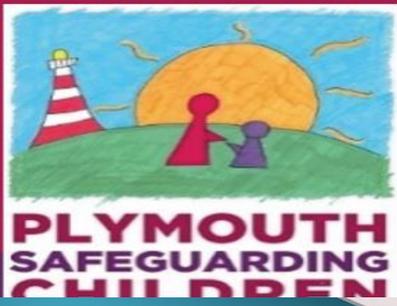
21st Oct; Strategic vision and scene setting – key system leaders from across the partnership.

28th Oct – 4th Dec (9 x 2hr events) to shape how we wish to implement this whole system reform to improve earlier support and improved protection to those children, young people and families in need and at highest risk. An exciting opportunity for all staff and partners to really shape how agencies will work together and deliver services differently.

What are we seeking view on?

- What are the key messages we want to use to describe how we want to work with children and families under the Families First Partnership?
- What will be important for us to consider as a partnership about how we will deliver:
 - Families First Front Door
 - Family Led Decision Making
 - Help and Protection
 - Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams
- We are collating the feedback and emerging themes which will feed into the working groups.
- Please circulate the below link to staff and ask them to book on and contribute.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/families-first-partnership-engagement-events-4718853>



Questions and Reflections

