

FAMILIES FIRST PARTNERSHIP

– 'TEST & LEARN' FEEDBACK

WHAT FAMILIES TOLD US AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

Families who provided feedback during the 'Test & Learn' phase (seven families from 16 approached) reflected on their experiences and contact with Children's Services.

Alongside the many areas of strong practice that families praised, they also shared examples of delays, gaps in communication and personal frustrations where the system didn't work as smoothly or as quickly as they hoped.

These insights will shape how we embed the reforms - keeping what matters most to families at the centre.

This summary aims to:

- Reflect families' experiences with honesty and respect
- Celebrate the great work already happening
- Highlight where families feel improvements would make the biggest difference
- Inspire us to embed the recommendations that will strengthen support and improve outcomes for children in South Glos

SUMMARY OF THE FEEDBACK

What families valued most

- Consistency of work (the strongest theme)
 - Families repeatedly said that having the same worker throughout made the biggest difference to their experience.
 - *"I felt a lot more confident ... I didn't have to explain everything from the beginning again."*
- Feeling heard, respected and included
 - Families described the new model as more relational, less judgmental, and more collaborative than previous systems: *"We feel we have more of a voice now."*

SUMMARY OF THE FEEDBACK

Why consistency of worker matters

- Families spoke positively about having the same worker throughout:
 - Stronger relationships and clearer understanding: *"It makes complete sense to have the same person all the way through."*
 - Practical efficiencies: *"By the sound of it, it has saved a lot of our time."*
 - Reduced emotional burden and improved wellbeing: *"I felt a lot more confident... I didn't have to explain everything from the beginning again."*
 - Greater stability for children: *"For the children, keeping that relationship has been important."*

Where families say improvements are needed

- Pace of support and multi agency delays
 - Families often felt processes moved too slowly: *"Sometimes things work slowly... you have to wait for multiple agencies."*
- Inconsistency in education and health engagement
 - Education was the most frequently cited challenge: *"We don't get as much support from school as we should"* with families also unclear about agency responsibilities: *"...school assumed Families Plus would fund it..."*
- SEN
 - Two thirds of families had a child with SEN and described long waits, inconsistent responses and increasing stress - this is a key area where families want earlier, clearer support.

WHAT THIS FEEDBACK MEANS FOR YOU

This feedback is a testament to your skill, compassion and persistence. Families consistently spoke about your commitment and empathy, and they were clear that the Test & Learn model is working because of the people delivering it.

However, they also want **earlier help, clearer pathways and stronger partnership working**.

The report makes several recommendations, including:

- Protect and embed **consistency of worker** - for families, this is the single most important factor in building trust.
- Strengthen **early identification and response to SEN**, with better alignment between Family Help, education and health being essential.
- Increase **pace and clarity in multi agency working**, especially from education partners.
- Expand **community and youth provision** - families see them as essential protective factors.
- Increase **capacity for direct work with children** and practical support – families want more hands-on, child focused work and practical help that strengthens relationships and routines.