

# Children and Young People Plan – Key messages from the consultation feedback on the priorities for children and young people, in Sefton.



# Consultation response.

In total there were:

3,102 responses to the SHOUT survey, from 56 schools and colleges.

91 children and young people attended two SEND Youth Conferences.

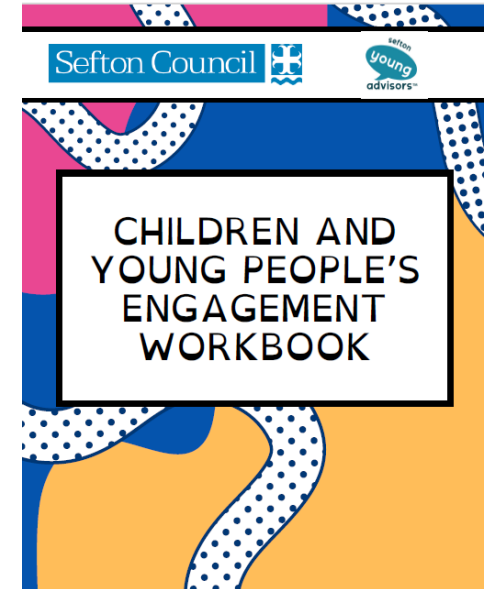
69 children and young people completed the engagement workbook, including young carers, Buddy-Up, youth service.

133 children and young people took part in surveys and research for cared for and care experience.

712 wellbeing and involvement observations of pre-school children.

239 responses to the public survey.

Over 200 views of the consultation video.



Children and young people feel safe at home and younger children value a supportive family. They also feel safe when doing leisure activities. They feel less safe when alone, in the dark, in the park and more police presence and better street lighting would help. Some older young people - 28% of 12 – 16-year-olds and 26% of 17+ also don't feel safe on public transport.

A significant number of children and young people said that they have experienced some form of bullying – verbal, physical and online; 23% of 8 – 11 years olds had experienced some form of bullying and 53% said that it makes them unhappy or sad. Over 38% of children and young people aged 12 – 16 years have experienced verbal bullying and 15% have experienced physical bullying and 24% online bullying, whilst nearly 43% of young people aged 17+ said that they have experienced verbal bullying, with less experiencing online (24%) and physical bullying (20%).

**This aligns to our proposed priority of ensuring that children are safe, and that we protect those at risk of harm.**

Approximately two-thirds of people who completed the public survey feel satisfied that Sefton is a place for children and young people to grow up in and live and is a place that is welcoming and inclusive to all children and young people and 53% believe Sefton is a place where people get on well together. Children and young people also reported that they like where they live as they are near friends, the shops and the park. They say that being with family and friends makes them happy.

**This aligns to our proposed priority to strengthen families and build resilient communities.**

Children and young people are largely positive about the involvement in life decisions and feel listened to, but there are a group who feel that their contributions are not acted upon. They feel annoyed, sad, angry, upset and unhappy if they are not listened to. Involving people with lived experience and including the voice of the parent and carer is important.

**This aligns to our proposed priority of placing children and young people at the core of the decisions we make about them.**

A significant number of children and young people take part in exercise or sports and they like having fun and being active and join leisure and social activities to socialise. In the public survey, a significant number of respondents feel that there should be more free and inclusive activities and investment in parks. 84% of the respondents to the public survey are concerned about the cost-of-living crisis. It is possible that the cost-of-living crisis is impacting on children and young people partaking in leisure activities.

**This aligns to our proposed priority of getting the most out of life by through play, leisure, culture, and sporting activities.**

Sefton is a diverse borough with many communities with different needs and equality of access and opportunity is important to all. As mentioned, respondents to the public survey are very concerned about the cost-of-living crisis and say that this and household income, and having a child with special educational needs or disabilities are reported as contributing factors to the inequity.

Whilst the experience of bullying is high for children and young people, the incidents are higher for children and young people who are Non-binary, Fluid or Transgender; 65% said they have experienced verbal bullying and a higher number of people have experienced both online and physical bullying, implying possible hate crime.

Of the children and young people who said they don't feel safe on public transport, whilst a smaller number are male, 31% of 12 – 16-year-olds and 34% aged 17+ are female. For children and young people who are Non-binary, Fluid or Transgender, this is higher, with 43% of 12 – 16 years old and 41% 17+ saying they don't feel safe, implying possible hate crime.

**This aligns to our proposed priority to protect children and young people from discrimination and advance equality and opportunity for all.**

In the public survey, a cross-cutting theme was emotional and mental health and accessing support, with 73% being concerned about children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing and 74% concerned about accessing support. Mental health and wellbeing services was identified as the main gap when asked about the priorities.

The cost-of-living crisis is a concern for children and young people aged 12+, with 20% of 12 – 16 years and 38% of 17+ say that the cost-of-living crisis is affecting their mental health/emotional wellbeing.

In the public survey, there are reports that family circumstances may be having an impact on family members and children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing. Timely access to a diagnosis and low intensity mental health support for neurodivergent children and young people is important. Talking to someone they trust can help but waiting times for talking therapies is too long.

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Some members of the public and people who work with children and young people are concerned about the waiting times for health services, including dentists, GP's, and hospital appointments, with feedback referring to the long waiting lists having an impact on children and young people, school attendance and family life.

On school days, 76% of 8 – 11-year-olds always eat breakfast and lunch and 20% eat lunch but not breakfast. As children become older more of them skip breakfast with 40% of 12 – 16-year-olds saying that they eat lunch but not breakfast. Notably, 11% of 12 - 16-year-olds don't eat either. Just under half (48%) of 12 – 16-year-olds and over half (52%) of 17+ report they regularly eat junk food.

Half of children and young people aged 12 – 16 years and 41% of young people aged 17+, say that body image causes them anxiety and is affecting their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

**This aligns to our proposed priority to reduce health inequalities and support families to live healthy lifestyles.**



On average, 58% young people aged 12+ feel anxious and worry about tests and exams and 57% of respondents to the public survey are also concerned about tests and exams and the impact on children and young people. There are also a cohort of children and young people who say that attending school and college affects their mental health and wellbeing; 38% of 12 – 16-year-olds and 28% 17+, respectively.

Approximately two thirds (65%) of children and young people aged 8 – 16 years are hopeful about the future, but they are also worried (41% of 8 – 11-year-olds) and anxious (56% of 12 – 16-year-olds) too.

Children and young people have many achievements and are proud of these, and 80% children and young people aged 12 – 16 years and 84% aged 17+ have a plan for when they leave school/college. Preparation for adulthood, managing money, being able to live independently and affordable housing are essential to support this.

**This aligns to our proposed priority of high aspirations, opportunities and achievement for all children and young people.**

# Next Steps

- Report has been presented to the Children and Young People's Partnership Board in August and the Public Engagement and Consultation Panel in November.
- Use the consultation findings to help update the Children and Young People Plan 2024 – 2027 and linked to the Corporate Plan.
- Develop infographics using the feedback from children and young people.
- Develop materials to feedback the findings to children and young people and other stakeholders.
- Using the information to support the Southport Recovery Profile.