

Sefton Children and Young People Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Show and Tell - July 2025

Getting Advice: Combined agency reports

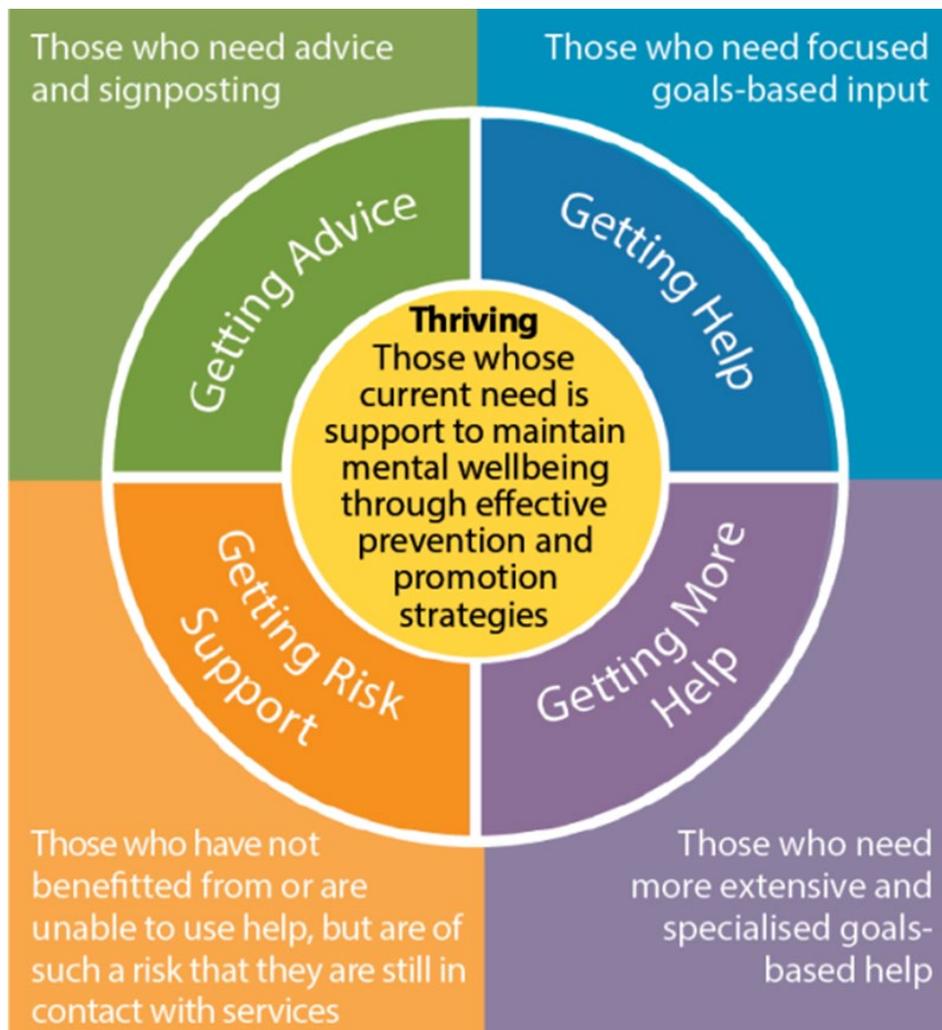


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1. What is currently working well and why?

- **Kooth:** The platform offers a range of forums and articles for individuals to access, as well as the option to reach out for individual chats with practitioners. A key strength of Kooth's service is the range of support options for young people, including self-directed advice and speaking to a practitioner. This flexibility allows young people to get advice in a way that works best for them.
- **Active Sefton:** Aligned with the Thrive Model's theme of "getting advice," demonstrates strong accessibility and inclusivity. By offering a wide range of times and venues for its programmes, the service ensures participants can engage at their convenience, removing barriers to involvement. This flexibility is a key factor in making health and wellbeing opportunities available to all.
The bespoke nature of initiatives such as the 1-2-1 programme and MOVE IT creates a supportive environment tailored to individual needs, helping participants feel valued and receptive to advice. The team's expertise enhances the quality of guidance provided, while educational workshops within Active Schools and Be Active extend this impact to children, fostering peer learning and group discussions that reinforce positive health behaviours.
- **Sefton Sexual Health Service:** Confidentiality is a cornerstone of the service, with clear policies explained at every consultation and reinforced through visible signage. Longer appointments for under-16s, flexible access options, and staff trained in motivational interviewing and trauma-informed care create a safe, respectful space for honest conversations. This inclusive approach, sensitive to LGBTQ+, neurodiverse, and cultural needs, builds trust and encourages young people to share concerns.
Developmental education programmes complement this by addressing topics like body image, consent, and healthy relationships in small groups. These sessions go beyond facts, focusing on communication, empathy, and decision-making skills. Facilitators tailor content to age and needs, allowing deeper discussions and quick correction of misconceptions, helping young people develop confidence and resilience.

- **Rise Up (Substance use service):** The service effectively supports young people and families around substance misuse through strong engagement, evidenced by low drop-out rates, and clear referral pathways to specialist services. Accessible Tier 2 provision enables early intervention, while flexible delivery ensures timely advice. Posters, visual materials, and engaging animations raise awareness in schools, youth hubs, and community settings.

Partnership working with schools, health services, and local groups further strengthens visibility and access. This proactive, multi-channel approach helps the service connect with young people in ways that feel approachable and relevant, ensuring support reaches those who need it most.

- **Education Excellence:** Sefton's School Attendance Support Team (SAST) provides targeted intervention for schools with high persistent absence (PA) through three dedicated attendance workers. They build trust with children and families, address underlying issues quickly, and support schools in maintaining statutory compliance. Formal processes, such as the Local Authority School Attendance Panel, are delivered in a supportive manner, ensuring collaborative action plans. The Sefton Attendance Strategy underpins this work, promoting a graduated response and shared responsibility for attendance across services.

The Inclusion Team offers strategic and practical support to schools through allocated Inclusion Consultants and the Team Around the School (TAS) model. Key initiatives include a comprehensive SEND Support Offer, holistic provision maps co-produced with health and social care, and behaviour pathways linked to trauma-informed practice. Training packages for education, health, and social care partners strengthen understanding of SEND and the graduated approach. Additional resources include Qualified Teachers for sensory impairments, SEMH outreach, and Leading Inclusive Cultures training to embed restorative approaches.

Early Years services complement these efforts by prioritising emotional health and wellbeing (EHWB) through attachment and trauma-informed training for practitioners and leaders. Programmes such as Monkey Bob and the Emotional Health and Wellbeing accredited project build sector knowledge, while collaboration with Dr Jennifer Nock ensures trauma-aware practice across schools and settings. A dedicated Early Years Service Award is in development to embed these principles further, reflecting a growing commitment to supporting young children's

emotional wellbeing and clarifying distinctions between EHWB, attachment, and SEND.

- **0-19 with SEND:** Strong partnerships with Family Wellbeing Centres, Mental Health Support Teams, and Sefton CVS enhance support, including a dedicated perinatal mental health offer. Accessibility is ensured through a single point of contact, universal service reach, and online resources via Mersey Care's 0–19 website. Families are signposted to a wide range of local and online support, including Kooth and community organisations, ensuring timely advice and comprehensive care.
- **Southport Education Group** adopts a whole-college approach to mental health and wellbeing, ensuring all staff are trained to provide advice, signposting, and trauma-informed support. Learners value access to trusted adults who understand and care, as highlighted in a recent survey of 300 students. The curriculum includes resilience, sleep hygiene, and exam stress management, tailored to learner feedback, while partnerships with local agencies deliver workshops and awareness events.

The college offers access to confidential online services such as Kooth and regularly reviews provision through self-assessment. Its commitment is evidenced by achieving the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools Award and being nationally commended by the Association of Colleges. Future improvements include group sessions on communication and safety, broader engagement with the Thrive offer, podcasts via Spark Radio, and advocating for shorter waiting times and universal access to services.

- **Hugh Baird:** The service offers confidential one-to-one sessions in a dedicated space, supporting students with low to medium emotional and mental health needs. Student feedback highlights the comfort and trust built through these sessions and informal drop-ins.

Collaboration with the Safeguarding Manager and wrap-around support from Student Services, including careers advice, safeguarding, and finance, ensures a holistic approach. This integrated model not only addresses immediate wellbeing concerns but also supports students in achieving long-term academic and personal goals.

- **Sefton VCF:** Many of the partners offer advice and signposting to other VCF partners or to statutory services in Sefton. Through the Every Child Matters Forum and Thrive Network, agencies can keep up to date with the broader offer of services in Sefton.

Directory information <https://www.directory.seftoncvcs.org.uk/>

We share information in the ECM Newsletter so that agencies keep up to date with what is available.

At the getting advice stage an example would be signposting to local wellbeing offer Living Well Sefton, MHST, Thrive Network Members, SEAS Partners.

- **Libraries in Sefton:** For families and children, libraries deliver early years sessions such as Story & Rhyme Times and sensory play, distribute Bookstart packs (including additional needs and dual-language versions), and provide Reading Well collections for parents and carers. Libraries also host help desks, information-sharing sessions, and IT support, while serving as Libraries of Sanctuary to assist those with English as an additional language. Initiatives include creative social spaces for sanctuary-seeking women, gifting SIM cards and devices, and practical advice sessions to help with everyday tasks such as GP registration and school admissions. This inclusive approach ensures libraries remain a vital point of access for advice, support, and community connection.
- **Early Help Sefton:** providing a wide range of advice and practical support for families, covering areas such as early years activities, child development, and parenting. Services include stay-and-play sessions, Chatter Time for early language development, health visitor clinics, and breastfeeding support. Staff are PEEP-trained and skilled in offering guidance on play, nutrition, oral health, and reducing parental conflict. Specialist advice is available through drop-in sessions with partners, including DWP for welfare and debt, SWACA for domestic abuse, and legal services for protective orders. Families can also access support for housing, mental health, substance misuse, and SEND, with signposting to local services such as Aiming High and CGL. Advice is delivered through hubs, coffee mornings, online resources, and school-based sessions, ensuring families have multiple access points to tailored support.
- **The Atkinson:** provides access to digital resources, private work pods, and the Southport One Stop Shop, making it a key channel for advice and community engagement. The library hosts consultations, workshops,

and health and wellbeing sessions delivered by council and partner organisations, and manages local information from community groups. The Atkinson complements this by offering an inclusive, accessible online presence and supporting cultural engagement through volunteering opportunities for young people pursuing careers in the museum sector. It also assists local schools with UCAS applications for students interested in museum studies, reinforcing its role in education and community development.

2. What Getting Advice improvements does your organisation want to make? What would help you do this?

- **Kooth:** We want to ensure young people and adults who support young people know about the range of ways to access advice through Kooth, and that more partnership working and opportunities to raise the profile of the service would be great.
- **Active Sefton:** To prevent inappropriate referrals, the service aims to strengthen communication with partner organisations and the public about its offer. Past success has come from networking and delivering presentations at team meetings, which will continue. While staff have strong knowledge of local advice services, this needs ongoing improvement due to turnover and organisational changes. Proposed solutions include developing a training offer for new staff and creating a concise summary document outlining Sefton's key services aligned to the Thrive model.
- **Sefton Sexual Health Service:** Plans are underway to launch the Chat Health facility, providing young people with a confidential, digital platform to access initial clinical advice and guidance. This service aims to reduce barriers to support by offering an option that feels familiar and comfortable for those who may lack confidence in attending clinical settings, improving accessibility and communication.
- **Rise Up, CGL:** The service plans to strengthen its digital offer to better connect with young people through social media, interactive content such as animations, and virtual sessions. This approach aims to promote harm-reduction messages, raise awareness, and provide accessible support to those less likely to engage with face-to-face services. Additionally, a targeted summer outreach programme is planned in partnership with local youth provisions to reach high-need areas and

deliver harm reduction advice. Achieving these goals will require additional resources to support outreach activities.

- **Education Excellence:** The SAST team prioritises communication and advice by creating opportunities for schools to share best practice, network with partners, and build professional relationships. Plans are in place to schedule collaborative events in the next academic year, enabling schools to access multi-agency guidance and improve attendance outcomes for cohorts and individual children.

Additionally, there is a focus on ensuring consistent engagement with the Inclusion Team's offer across education, social care, and health practitioners, driving a unified approach to SEND support across the authority.

- **0-19 with SEND:** The proposed initiatives aim to strengthen support systems for vulnerable pupils during key educational transitions, such as Year 6 to Year 7 and post-16 progression. This includes enhancing collaboration between education leads and health services to ensure effective signposting for emotional health and wellbeing (EHWB) needs. Additionally, efforts will focus on improving integration across local authority, health, and education sectors through co-location of staff within Family Hubs, alongside a review of the 0–19 workforce skill mix to optimise service delivery.

Further actions include developing youth-led wellbeing resources, such as podcasts and animations on emotional management, informed by real questions from clinics and drop-ins. To increase accessibility and engagement, the plan also prioritises strengthening the virtual presence through social media platforms, ensuring that information and support are readily available to young people and their families.

- **Southport Education Group:** A recent mental health and wellbeing survey of 300 college learners highlighted key priorities, including improving communication of thoughts and feelings, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and ensuring personal safety. In response, group sessions will be delivered in collaboration with the Mental Health Support Team (MHST) to complement existing exam stress workshops.

Plans also include hosting a marketplace event during awareness weeks to showcase a broader range of local Thrive services and launching additional wellbeing podcasts for broadcast on Spark Radio, which plays throughout communal areas.

Further recommendations focus on reducing waiting times for Thrive services and making support universally accessible without restrictive criteria. Developing a teenage-friendly Thrive guide detailing all local offers would enhance awareness among learners and staff. Additionally,

proposals include assigning a school nurse to each college and establishing a dedicated team at each college to strengthen integrated support for student wellbeing.

- **Hugh Baird:** A key priority is improving access to external support services within the college to address delays in specialist care for students with complex needs. Current internal resources are sufficient for managing low-level wellbeing concerns but cannot provide sustained, high-level interventions. To bridge this gap, regular on-site drop-in sessions with external agencies—such as mental health services, youth support workers, and counselling organisations—are recommended to provide timely assistance to students awaiting external appointments. Additionally, the absence of an on-site counsellor limits the depth of therapeutic support available. Introducing a trained counsellor, even on a part-time basis, would significantly enhance the college's capacity to support students' mental health and emotional wellbeing. These measures aim to create a more responsive and integrated support system for learners with varying needs.
- **Sefton VCF:** Links into the new Beebot platform that the Sefton Social Care Transformation Team are working on. This promises to be a valuable online resource for families.
- **Sefton Library Service:** A key challenge is maintaining accurate and up-to-date contact information and deliverables from third-party providers. Capacity constraints compound this due to limited staffing resources.
- **Early Help Sefton:** The service aims to enhance co-location with partner agencies, particularly health services, to improve integrated support for families. However, challenges remain due to the condition and presentation of buildings, which must be addressed to create safe and welcoming spaces for both families and staff.

Efforts to strengthen community engagement have included successful initiatives such as free family events during school breaks, which have helped reduce stigma and promote awareness of hub services. Continued focus on improving communication and collaboration between services is essential to support these goals.

- **The Atkinson:** None identified at this time

3. Blue Sky Thinking

- **Kooth:** The service is exploring a targeted, bespoke approach to provide advice for specific cohorts of young people who are disengaged from

school or do not meet thresholds for existing support. This personalised model would operate outside the current specification and enable tracking of individual progress through identifiable metrics, ensuring measurable outcomes for those most at risk.

- **Active Sefton:** The Active Schools programme currently promotes healthy habits and oral health for children aged 4–11. With additional capacity, the programme could incorporate preventative messaging on emotional health and wellbeing. Furthermore, an accessible online resource for families and organisations is recommended to provide advice and clear pathways to further support.
- **Sefton Sexual Health Service:** Alongside the new Chat Health facility and e-Condom app, the service plans to collaborate with young people to review and refine the current developmental programme. The goal is to ensure that relationship and sex education delivery aligns with young people's preferences while complementing the national curriculum.
- **Rise Up, CGL:** The service is considering innovative approaches such as Peer-Led Drop-In Hubs and Young People (YP) Recovery Groups. Under professional supervision, trained young people with lived experience would provide informal advice, harm reduction information, signposting, and recovery-focused group sessions in safe spaces within schools and youth centres.
- **Education Excellence:** SAST proposes developing an interactive digital platform on the Sefton Council website to provide comprehensive information on school attendance, statutory responsibilities, and available support services. The resource would feature visual content, positive messaging, case studies, and peer experiences to promote the benefits of regular attendance and highlight the risks associated with poor attendance.
- **0-19 with SEND:** Proposed initiatives include introducing Parent Digital Mentors—trained volunteers or staff who assist parents with online forms, school communications, and health apps. Additionally, creating parent-focused podcasts or WhatsApp hub groups would provide real-time or on-demand access to trusted advice and support.
- **Southport Education Group:** Learners have expressed a strong preference for more green and quiet spaces, with a Peace Garden proposed as a potential initiative funded through the internal Happiness budget. The success of SWACA's on-site presence, which increased self-referrals, highlights the benefits of collocating local services, such as Thrive, within the college to improve accessibility and engagement.

Notably, learners indicated they do not want additional counselling sessions or psychoeducation on resilience.

- **Hugh Baird:** The service plans to introduce a peer mentoring program where trained student mentors provide guidance and support to their peers. This initiative aims to foster a supportive college community by offering advice, sharing experiences, and providing a listening ear through structured mentoring sessions.
- **Sefton VCF:** Introducing Wellbeing Navigator roles would help guide children, young people, and parents through local support options, addressing concerns about feeling isolated and unsure where to start. Additionally, transport and travel training for young people with SEMH needs is recommended to build confidence in using public transport and reduce travel-related anxiety linked to mental health challenges.
- **Sefton Library Service:** Further information to follow.
- **Early Help Sefton:** The Department for Education funded 75 local authorities to implement the Best Start in Life programme through Family Hubs, but Sefton was not among them. The government has now committed to national funding for Family Hub support by 2026, which will significantly influence future Early Help service delivery in Sefton. Despite the lack of initial funding, Sefton's Family Hubs have aligned with programme expectations, positioning themselves firmly to meet future requirements.
- **The Atkinson:** There is an opportunity to strengthen vocational pathways for young people entering the creative sector, with a focus on theatre technical delivery. This area closely aligns with STEM and digital skills development, suggesting a training-oriented approach to enhance future career prospects.

4. Where is the voice of the child in your service?

- **Kooth:** the engagement team meets young people face-to-face to promote Kooth and gather feedback through sessions and surveys. Feedback is shared with commissioners annually. Recent data shows 89% of Sefton participants felt highly heard, understood, and respected, with ongoing feedback collected throughout service use.

- **Active Sefton:** The service captures children's voices through personalised programmes (MOVE and 1-2-1) with wellbeing forms and feedback, interactive school sessions with verbal and teacher evaluations, and surveys via parents. Additional initiatives include "Be Active" preference surveys and "Youth Voice for the Future."
- **Sefton Sexual Health Service:** Young advisors have provided feedback as "mystery shoppers," with plans to revisit this approach. An audit revealed young people prefer flexible clinic times over dedicated clinics. Service information and sexual health messages are shared via social media, with enhancements planned through an e-condom app launch in 2025 and co-creation of content. Workforce training empowers professionals to engage openly and non-judgementally with young people on sex and relationships.
- **Education Excellence:** SAST engages children early when attendance declines, starting with school-based conversations and, if necessary, home visits. Both child and parent voices are included in action planning and referrals to Early Help, which result in whole-family plans. Direct work by schools and attendance officers focuses on advocacy, support, and positive engagement within required timeframes.
- **0-19 with SEND:** The voice of the child is captured through observation and interaction in home settings, parental feedback in 0–5 services, and health forms during 5–19 School Health contacts. These insights are compiled into case studies and shared with stakeholders.
- **Sefton Education Service:** The college gathers student feedback through regular surveys, student reps, and themed focus groups on topics like safeguarding and mental health. Mental health ambassadors contributed to creating a student-friendly wellbeing policy, ensuring student voice informs improvements.
- **Hugh Baird:** Student voice is central to the service and informs every stage of support, from initial conversations to reviews. Feedback is gathered formally through evaluations and informally via one-to-one discussions, wellbeing check-ins, and drop-in sessions. Insights from non-users are captured through collaboration with tutors and inclusion teams to identify barriers and encourage engagement.

- **Sefton VCF:** Hosts Sefton Young Advisors who lead the 'Have Your Say Sefton' initiative and chairs the Sefton Youth Voice Strategic Steering Group, a partnership of VCF and statutory agencies. The group reports to the CYPPB and Public Engagement Panel and supports collaborative youth participation activities.
- **Sefton Library Service:** Feedback is collected through comment forms and during children's events to ensure their views are heard.
- **Early Help Sefton:** Early Help captures the child's voice through direct work to understand lived experiences and via audit and quality assurance processes. Further development is needed to engage children who do not access the service.
- **The Atkinson:** Gathers feedback through its website and social media channels and offers cultural and creative opportunities for young families and teenagers, such as the New Beginnings project and Young Artist of the Year competition. The Young Curators programme introduces young people to the museum sector, developing creative, digital, and STEM skills through co-produced activities. Strong partnerships with Sefton schools support collaborative projects for informal learning.

5. Does your service have policies and processes for gathering feedback from young service users?

- **Kooth:** Processes are in place; further details on how these can be effectively communicated and shared will be provided.
- **Active Sefton:** All programmes include a mental wellbeing form completed at the start and finish, along with a feedback form. For one-to-one sessions, a progress tracker is maintained, and a feedback or progress update letter is sent to the referral agent. Additionally, case studies are compiled across all programmes to support evaluation and continuous improvement.

- **Sefton Sexual Health Service:** Not specifically for young people, but as a universal service (13+), we collect feedback through the NHS Friends & Family Test.
- **Rise Up:** The service is committed to involving children and young people in shaping decisions that affect them. Rise Up has established steering groups to provide regular opportunities for feedback and influence service development. In April, CGL secured the Liverpool service (now River) and collaborated with the communications team to design tailored consultation questionnaires for children and young people. This consultation was instrumental in shaping the new service to reflect their views and preferences.
- **Education Excellence:** SAST supports schools in developing attendance policies and fostering a whole-school culture that celebrates good attendance through incentives, presentations, and competitions. Children provide feedback on these initiatives, which encourage improvement and reward progress for those previously struggling. Feedback is also gathered from children on Early Help or Pathway to Change plans via champions, case audits, and family conversations. Additional engagement occurs through local offer live events, SPCF coffee sessions, primary and secondary conferences, and collaborative work across teams to capture pupil voice through surveys.
- **0-19 with SEND:** Feedback is obtained through the Friends and Family Test, liaison with Sefton CVS during service changes or developments, and health form responses provided directly by children and young people.
- **Southport Education Group:** A Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy outlines how learner voice is gathered through established processes, including regular student surveys with varied themes, focus groups, and a student council.
- **Hugh Baird:** The service has clear policies and processes for gathering feedback from young people, including structured evaluation forms, wellbeing reviews, annual satisfaction surveys, and informal check-ins. Feedback mechanisms are embedded within safeguarding and wellbeing policies to ensure continuous improvement. While formal consultation on significant service changes is not currently in place, this responsibility typically falls under safeguarding and senior leadership teams. The service collaborates closely with the Safeguarding Manager

to ensure student voices are considered and is committed to strengthening structured consultation opportunities in the future.

- **Sefton VCF:** We do not do this in relation to a particular service as we are a sector, not one agency.
- **Sefton Library Service:** A consultation framework is in place, operated by the Business Intelligence Team, to support structured engagement and feedback processes.
- **Early Help Sefton:** Mental health support for children and young people (CYP) in Sefton is delivered through a range of commissioned services and partnerships. NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB (Sefton Place) commissions specialist provision, including CAMHS, Intensive Support, Home-Based Treatment, Enhanced Support, Eating Disorder and Crisis services (all via Alder Hey), complemented by lower-level interventions such as group and 1:1 therapy from local VCF providers Venus and Parenting2000. Additional support includes national advice via NHS 111, Sefton's 24/7 crisis line, and digital access through KOOTH. Primary Care Networks are piloting new roles to enhance signposting and social prescribing. Sefton CAMHS offers self-referral, triage-based advice, and resources via its website, alongside parent/carer support groups and online communities. Mental Health Support Teams work with most schools to embed whole-school approaches to emotional wellbeing. The Thrive Network, coordinated by Sefton CVS, brings together providers, schools, and commissioners to share best practice and influence service development aligned to the Thrive model.
- **The Atkinson:** Contributed to the four-year regional museum project *Hope Street*, which encouraged young people to share feedback on its offer. Insights from this project informed the development of The Atkinson's Engagement Strategy and Action Plan for Children and Young People, as well as Sefton's Cultural Strategy.

For further information on each service, please see Appendix 1 below.

Appendix 1

Kooth

Kooth is a digital mental health platform designed to provide accessible, anonymous, and clinically governed support for individuals aged 10–25 in Sefton. The platform offers a safe, welcoming space to access free mental health support without referrals, waiting lists, or entry thresholds. Users can access one-to-one text-based sessions with qualified practitioners, participate in moderated peer-support communities, engage with self-help resources, and benefit from a library of therapeutic content. The services are available 24/7, with professional support available every day, ensuring flexibility and timely access to help.

The platforms are built to reduce barriers to mental health support and promote early intervention and prevention. Users can engage with services in ways that suit them, whether through drop-in chats, scheduled sessions, journaling tools, or community forums. All content is clinically moderated to ensure safety and support. The services are evidence-based, aligned with NICE guidelines, and backed by robust outcome data demonstrating improvements in wellbeing, reductions in clinical symptoms, and positive impacts on service users' lives.

Active Sefton:

Active Sefton Development consists of over 20 sport, physical activity, health, and community outreach interventions. Funded through several agencies, including Public Health, the Police and Crime Commissioner, and national funds (such as Sport England), the service is integral to the delivery of a wide range of priority agendas, including health and wellbeing, community safety, and supporting the most vulnerable.

Active Sefton strives to ensure its offer is accessible to all members of the community. To do so, the success of the commercial aspects of the operation enables the section to address broader social agendas in line with the Council's objectives, with delivery ranging from commercial health and fitness to working with the most vulnerable. The service, on behalf of its internal or external partners, uses the theme of sport, physical activity, health, and community outreach to address an array of corporate priorities and local agendas. Projects delivered focus on health and wellbeing; youth diversionary work to address crime and anti-social behaviour; older people; social isolation; worklessness; community safety; education; children and young people's wellbeing; family wellbeing/early help; and homelessness. The team also delivers community initiatives, such as the Be Active school holiday programme and Couch to 5k.

Move It

Move It is a community-based weight management service for children aged 5-18, and their families, who are above their ideal weight or need help with weight maintenance.

The programme aims to treat and prevent obesity in children and young people through healthy eating advice, increasing physical activity and behavioural change.

Whilst also encouraging family involvement, the course motivates children and young people by improving their knowledge and skills to make healthier choices. The programme comprises of three areas:

- Move It Families (5-6 years) - Consists of up to three family-based sessions discussing healthy eating and physical activities available to try at home and in the community.
- Move It Families (7-18 years) - Consists of six family-based sessions over a 6–12-week period for parents/guardians and children aged 7-16 years who require help as a family unit.
- Move It 1-1's (11-18 years) - Consists of six one-to-one sessions over a 6–12-week period.

A well-established exit route is also available into all Active Sefton services in addition to wider community activities, which are promoted to all children and families on completion of the Move It course.

The 121 service is a physical activity programme designed to improve the health and wellbeing of Sefton's young people (aged 11-19) who may need support. The project is designed to use weekly physical activity or sport sessions to have a positive impact on the young person's health and wellbeing, using Development Officers as mentors. The programme aims to increase self-esteem and the health and wellbeing of Sefton's young people who need support, as well as helping them feel able to engage in dialogue about issues affecting them. It is designed to be bespoke to the individual's needs. It will utilise a variety of activities and techniques to motivate the young person and break down barriers, helping them feel supported during the transition to independent participation. It is delivered in Active Sefton leisure centres or secondary schools.

HENRY (Healthy Eating and Nutrition in the Really Young)

HENRY provides a wide range of support for families from pregnancy to age 12, including workshop sessions, an 8-week programme, resources available for families, and online help, covering topics such as Understanding Children's Behaviour, Healthy Teeth, Fussy Eating, Eating Well for Less, Looking After Ourselves, Starting Solids, Healthy Drinks, and Let's Get Active.

Be Active

Be Active is a school holiday programme of activity delivered across the borough, primarily at the six Active Sefton leisure centres, during every school holiday except Christmas. Activities include whole-day sports and games camps, swim-and-splash sessions, or half-day dance workshops. The income generated contributes towards the team income target; however, discretionary free places are offered to those most in need, to provide positive activities during the school holiday period.

Park Nights

Active Sefton delivers a free programme of sport and physical activity sessions in the parks to engage young people and, in turn, prevent crime and antisocial behaviour in the area. Parks are identified in partnership with internal colleagues, such as Area Coordinators and Green Sefton, and through conversations with Merseyside Police. The summer programme runs for 8 weeks during July and August, with Operation Banger running for 2 weeks in October/November. The sessions also provide a safe place for families with young children, who feel more comfortable using other areas of the parks when organised activities are nearby. This is another real positive. In partnership with Sefton Youth Service and local youth organisations, we can also enhance their offers.

Community programmes

Active Sefton provides a community programme of activities to encourage residents to be more physically active. Sessions include a Couch to 5k programme, delivered in 10-week blocks throughout the year, as well as activities such as Active Totz gymnastics and baby ballet. The team also delivers externally funded initiatives in partnership with National Governing Bodies of sport, such as the Active Through Football programme.

Active Schools

The Active Schools programme is carefully designed to deliver essential knowledge on a variety of health topics to children in a fun and engaging way. Delivered by Active Sefton, the programme covers healthy eating, physical activity and oral health. The programme aligns with the National Curriculum, particularly in Science, PSHE and D&T. In addition, children will develop knowledge and understanding of how to lead a healthy and active lifestyle, thereby reducing childhood obesity and improving outcomes later in life.

Sefton Sexual Health Service

Sefton Sexual Health Service is a free, confidential, nonjudgmental NHS service operating across Sefton, providing comprehensive sexual and reproductive healthcare for all ages. Services include:

- STI testing & treatment: In-clinic and home testing kits for chlamydia, gonorrhoea, HIV, syphilis, etc.
- Contraception: Full range of methods (implants, coils, emergency contraception), plus free condoms—including by post for ages 16+.
- Pregnancy support & abortion referral: Pregnancy testing and access to referral services.
- HIV & PEPSE: HIV testing, ongoing treatment, and emergency postexposure prophylaxis within 72 hours.
- Specialist services: Psychosexual therapy and Health Improvement targeted outreach, including tailored support for sex workers/ homeless (STI testing, PrEP information) and targeted education for young people.
- Provision of PrEP
- Vaccinations, including HPV

Rise Up (Substance use service)

CGL (Change Grow Live) - RISE UP – Sefton Young People & Families Service

The service supports young people up to 18 years old, extending to 25 for those in transitional services, who are affected by substance misuse and live in Sefton. It also supports families in Sefton where parental substance misuse is present, or there is a risk of intergenerational substance misuse, with no age limit on parental support.

The service is inclusive and accessible to all, regardless of race, religion, culture, disability, sexuality, or gender identity. It is committed to appropriately responding to young people and families with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), ensuring staff are trained to meet these needs and knowledgeable about effective referral pathways.

To ensure appropriate access to support, the service uses clear referral guidance, including eligibility and exclusion criteria, as well as the identification of priority groups. Referrals can be made by professionals or through open-access self-referral.

A structured screening and assessment process is in place to identify the level of risk and need, helping to appropriately prioritise individuals. During assessment, all service users are provided with detailed information about the service offer—including programme content, session timetables, confidentiality, and information-sharing policies.

All young people and families receiving structured interventions will have a clear care plan. The care plan will cover access and coordination across a comprehensive range of services, including health, social care and criminal justice agencies, where appropriate.

Aims of the Service:

- Reduce substance misuse among young people and its negative impacts.
- Reduce parental substance misuse and its impact on families.
- Provide an integrated, flexible model combining young people's and family-focused services.
- Ensure smooth transitions to adult substance misuse services.

Community Engagement:

- Be visible and accessible to the wider health, care, and community sectors.
- Provide clear information through various media on how to access support and what to expect.
- Tackle stigma and raise awareness around substance misuse.
- Offer advice and resources to service users, families, and professionals.

Collaboration:

- Work closely with Adult Substance Misuse services, Social Care, Early Help, and Family Hubs.
- Offer advisory support for those who don't meet referral thresholds but still need help.

Outreach:

- Engage underrepresented and vulnerable groups (e.g., females, LGBTQ, disabilities, asylum seekers).
- Partner with local community and youth groups to reach those not accessing services.

Hidden Harm:

- Provide therapeutic and targeted support for children and young people affected by parental substance misuse.

Education Excellence

Sefton School Attendance Support Team (SAST) – both supports and challenges children and parents who are not attending school for a myriad of reasons. The challenge arises from statutory duties imposed on the Authority and a set of formal processes that typically culminate in a formal or legal intervention. This only happens when all support offered to them by schools, early help, team around the school, social care, health, and colleagues from the 3rd sector has failed. This follows the model introduced to statutory law in August 2024 by DfE, namely 'Working together to Improve School Attendance', which clearly outlines all steps to take at each stage of attendance concerns. DfE also introduced a new system, IDAMS, to gather data, which provides us with daily updates. The LA uses this as a basis for discussion and as a horizon-scanning exercise during termly targeted support meetings, which are conducted by a 'single point of contact' (SPOC) who is a member of the SAST team allocated to each Sefton School. This meeting analyses data across all cohorts of children within schools, with an emphasis on those who are persistently absent (PA) (10% attendance) and severely absent (SA) (50% attendance). The SPOC will go through each child in both groups with the school and discuss the support and challenges applied at each stage. The SPOC is also the conduit to ensure that each child and their family are being offered the right level of support from the early help system available within the Borough. This support is monitored and tracked by the SAST team, with the overall aim of ensuring that children are in school, where they are safe, happy and achieving.

The Sefton Inclusion Service—also known as the Sefton SEN and Inclusion Service—supports children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Its main aim is to ensure these individuals receive the support they need across education settings whilst working in partnership with children's services.

What the Service Does

The service works with children, families, and schools to promote mainstream inclusion and improve outcomes. It includes several specialist teams:

- Autism Team: Supports mainstream schools in including autistic pupils or those with an autistic profile.
- Complex Needs Team: Helps schools support students with physical and/or medical needs.
- Complementary Education Service: Supports children who cannot attend school due to medical reasons.
- Hearing/Visual Needs Team: Assists with the inclusion of students with hearing or visual impairments on a caseload basis

Inclusion Consultants: Support schools in embedding good SEND practices and supporting transitions.

In addition, the Inclusion Support Service provides:

- Strategic advisory support to schools.
- Help with early identification of SEND.
- Guidance on effective teaching strategies and interventions.
- Support for SENCOs (Special Educational Needs Coordinators).
- Training and professional development for school staff.

These services aim to remove barriers to learning and ensure that all children and young people can thrive in inclusive educational environments.

Early Years Service

Sefton Council Early Years Service sits within Education Excellence in Children's Services. We have Statutory Duties to ensure sufficient childcare for children and families across the Local Authority, and to ensure it is of the highest quality and inclusive, meeting the needs of all children and families.

Early Years Service

We have recently been developing a pathway for our attachment and trauma work. We offer the sector (practitioners and leaders) several training opportunities, e.g., Monkey Bob and the Emotional Health and Wellbeing accredited project, to develop practitioners' and leaders' knowledge of how to support young children's EHWP.

We also ensure that EHWP is a feature of our forums and is included where relevant in our training sessions for providers.

We also commissioned Dr Jennifer Nock to deliver the Attachment and Trauma Award to both Schools and Settings.

As a service, we are currently working with Dr Jennifer Nock on an Early Years Service Award to ensure that all our team are Trauma Aware and Trauma Sensitive.

All of the above are working well, as the sector is increasingly committed to supporting our young children's emotional well-being. We are keen to ensure that practitioners/leaders understand the difference between A&T/EHWP and SEND.

0-19 (25 with SEND)

The 0–19 Healthy Child Programme (HCP), delivered by Mersey Care, is a universal and targeted public health nursing and early help offer for children, young people and families from birth up to 19 years old (25 with SEND). The service includes Health Visiting (0–5), School Nursing (5–19), infant feeding support, and targeted early help interventions delivered through Family Hubs and community settings.

The core aim of the 0–19 HCP is to improve health and wellbeing outcomes, reduce health inequalities, and support children to achieve their potential. The service is delivered through a combination of developmental reviews, emotional and mental wellbeing support, safeguarding work, parenting advice, health promotion, and close partnership work with education, health, social care, and voluntary sector services.

Key functions include:

- Universal health and development reviews at key points of the HCP in Health Visiting and School Health
- Emotional health & wellbeing support/advice for children, young people and families
- School-based support including drop-ins, health assessments, child/parental self-referral and signposting
- Parenting support and 1:1 advice
- Support for vulnerable children including those with SEND, safeguarding concerns, or living in challenging circumstances
- Health promotion and advice across a range of areas dependent upon need
- Signposting families into specialist support where necessary

The service is embedded within a whole-family approach, working collaboratively with Family Hubs, schools, CAMHS, youth services and other local providers to ensure children and families get the right help, at the right time, in the right way.

Southport Education Group

We are a medium-sized FE college Education Group in Southport, based over two sites. Southport College comprises a cohort of learners aged 16-18, apprentices, and adults. KGV Sixth Form College is predominantly 16-18 learners on study programmes. There are approximately 1700 full-time learners and overall, 3000 learners.

Southport Education Group offers a comprehensive mental health and wellbeing support service for its learners, recognising that anyone can struggle at any time. There is On-Campus Support via dedicated teams available to help with a range of issues, including mental health, offering help, advice, and referrals to specialist services as appropriate.

Hugh Baird

Our Health and Wellbeing Service is here to support throughout students' college journey. We offer a safe, confidential space where you can talk openly about anything affecting mental, emotional, or physical health. Whether feeling overwhelmed, dealing with anxiety or low mood, facing personal challenges, or simply needing someone to talk to.

We also provide guidance on healthy lifestyle choices, stress management, self-care strategies, and accessing external support when needed. Our goal is to help you stay well, feel supported, and thrive during your time at college.

Sefton VCF

There are hundreds of organisations across Sefton that support Children and Young People to Thrive.

Thrive Network Sefton brings together some of the agencies focused on emotional health and wellbeing. Active Members include Venus, Parenting 2000, Carers Centre, SWAN, Samaritans, Career Connect, Sefton Carers Centre, Ykids, SWACA, RASA, and Parent Carer Forum.

Sefton Library Service

Sefton Library Service runs 6 libraries across Sefton. In addition to the statutory provisions for free book loan and information provision, the library is also heavily involved in digital inclusion. Each library is a National Databank and issues free SIMs to residents in need. Each library also provides free public Wi-Fi and computer access. A tablet loan scheme is also underway. Some library meeting rooms are available for hire, and an online self-service room booking system is in place via the library service website.

Every library has a weekly story and Rhyme time, as well as a designated space for children and parents. Each library also hosts class visits, and all schools participate in the annual Summer Reading Challenge for children aged 4-12. Child literacy is an area of work that the library service engages in. As well as providing dedicated children's books targeting specific age ranges, the library service also runs creative writing competitions throughout the year.

During school holidays, the library service runs activities to engage children, such as zoo animal sessions, slime sessions, and craft sessions.

As well as having access to 250,000 items of book stock for free, library members also have access to online databases such as PressReader (7000 daily newspapers and magazines from across the world), Transparent Language (learn English in your native tongue) and LOT4Kids (dual-language picture books). There is also free access to Ancestry and Find My Past available on library computers.

Library staff are all Dementia Friendly accredited and are MECC trained, and as such, they provide a referral service to other council services.

Many 3rd party organisations and council departments hold drop-in sessions at libraries or face-to-face consultation sessions.

The library service also hosts and runs the council archive.

Early Help – Sefton Council

Early help encompasses a range of services designed to support children and families when difficulties first emerge. This proactive approach aims to address issues before they escalate, ensuring families receive the assistance they need to maintain stability and well-being. Early help services are voluntary, so families can choose to engage without any obligation. In Sefton, Early Help is encouraged to try to prevent families requiring statutory services in the future; equally, Early Help is offered to families when safeguarding issues have been addressed by the Social Work Teams and the family require ongoing support.

There are a number of teams within Sefton operating under the Early Help umbrella. Sefton also commissions services to support the delivery of Early Help Support to families.

Teams that are managed by Sefton's Early Help provision include;

- FAST – The front door team to Early Help Services.
- Family Hubs – where families can drop in for support and partners deliver services from Hubs based in local communities)
- Family Hub Early Help work teams (holding early help plans)
- Family Hub Intervention Team (Delivering programmes from hubs, such as ACEs, Little Explorers, Little Chefs, a range of activities through school breaks)
- Targeted Family Support Teams (intensive Early Help packages of support for families)
- Springboard – (Early Help Services for families with children over the age of 11)
- Family Time (Supervised sessions for cared-for children to spend time with their families, this operates through family hubs)
- Talking therapies and Well Young Persons Team
- Team Around the School

Atkinson

The Atkinson arts centre in Southport hosts and displays Sefton's fine art collection through its four galleries and museum spaces. It delivers a performing arts programme through its Theatre & Studio. It hosts Southport Library and also the One Stop Shop. Where possible, the Atkinson supports wider cultural delivery across Sefton, often working in partnership with the creative sector and community groups.

Collectively, the service offer seeks to:

- Safeguard and promote the heritage assets of Sefton
- Encourage health and wellbeing via engagement in cultural activity as participant and audience member

- Support the Visitor Economy as a popular cultural destination to Southport
- Provide advice and guidance for people to connect with wider Council and community activity