

Annual Dashboard Report

YEAR 9 2023-24



Blackpool Better Start

Blackpool Better Start Year 9

Highlights of the year

Year 9 has been a year of multiple successes, scaling up our tested approaches and implementing some of our long-term developments including:

- The enhancement (in conjunction with Start for Life) of the HENRY infant feeding pathway, providing more contact with parents from pregnancy to starting infants on solid foods.
- Full delivery of the specialised Parent Infant Relationship Service (PaIRS).
- Launch of the co-produced and delivered Fathers Inclusive Practice Training.
- Introduction of Save and Play sessions and expansion of universal Home Learning Environment groups into Family Hubs.
- Community Connector support available on Maternity Wards for new parents and within resettlement accommodation for Asylum seeking families.
- The launch of the new Early Parenthood Service and 1001 Days Multi-agency Triage Panel.
- Another widely acclaimed conference with large national reach and providing the local workforce with a huge shared learning opportunity.

1244

Pregnant women reached

6901

Children 0-3 reached

Through

23

Services

Blackpool Better Start Year 9

Highlights of the year

Working co-productively with communities on service development, design and implementation has always been at the centre of the Blackpool Better Start approach. This year two key pieces of co-production and co-design have been undertaken:

- Working with parents with lived experience of removals at birth, a tool has been developed to support parents and professionals to understand the complex systems around their journey. This map has been well received by both professionals and families as it provides a way to talk to families about the possible outcomes and what to expect.
- In addition, working with Blackpool parents, a campaign on understanding how babies and children develop has been underway which is due to be launched in January 2025 celebrating the everyday activities parents do with their children which supports their growth.

The team has continued to share the learning from Blackpool widely, presenting at numerous national and international conferences, including the international Maternal and Infant Nutrition and Nurture, Institute of Health Visiting, World Association for Infant Mental Health, NHS England and Children and Young People Now Impact and Evidence Conference.

Over the year the newly established Sustainability Board has supported discussions on the transition of services long-term. This board has reviewed services and funded activities, to consider the impact for communities and looked for realistic options where the benefits of continuation of the approach are clear.

Cumulative Impact

Over **40** funded services | **FREE** for families with 0-4 year olds



4435
children on average per year (Y4-9) benefitting from

Enhanced Health Visiting Service

Minimum 8 contacts per family, 3 more compared to most of England.

Increased contact helps to: build relationships and trust and better meet individual family need.

Antenatal & Infant Feeding Support

Delivered across Blackpool and accessed by

4285
families

Baby Steps universally delivered town wide since 2021

43.3% of pregnant women reached with antenatal provision since Yr1



Social and Emotional Development

Targeted skill-building to empower parents

853

Families accessing parenting support



2835

Children receiving support with developing their

Speech and Language Skills



7510
parents engaged with **Community Connectors** since Y3

52% living in the most deprived households (IMD1)

NOTES ON DATA:
Related to Y1-Y9 on the Better Start Project April 2015-April 2024. The £45 million investment from the National Lottery Community Fund is being used to improve speech and language, diet and nutrition, and social and emotional development of 0-3's across Blackpool. The 9 years have seen a total of 30,889 children 0-3 and 7,695 pregnant women benefiting from the enhancements to the universal health visiting programme.

Blackpool Better Start Year 9

Beneficiaries & Activities



Beneficiaries & Activities Year 9

144

Families attending
Baby Steps

820

Families supported by our
Community Connectors

56

Couples accessing
'For Babys' Sake'

1096

Individuals receiving
Infant Feeding Support

382

Children attending
Home Learning Environment
Sessions

29

Parents receiving support
from the Parent Infant
Relationship Service

25

Parents receiving support from
the new Early Parenthood
Service

982

Children supported through the
Speech and Language pathway

37

Parents attending EPEC
'Being a Parent' course



Beneficiaries & Activities Year 9

289 Parents Ideas Factory events

581 Early Years Sessions in libraries

84 Community Speech, Language and Communication groups

108 Children supported by the Speech and Language Home Visiting service

47 Parent-Infant relationships supported by the PaIRs service

8 Free Christmas Grottos

23 Funded services

46 Community Connector drop-in sessions on Maternity Wards

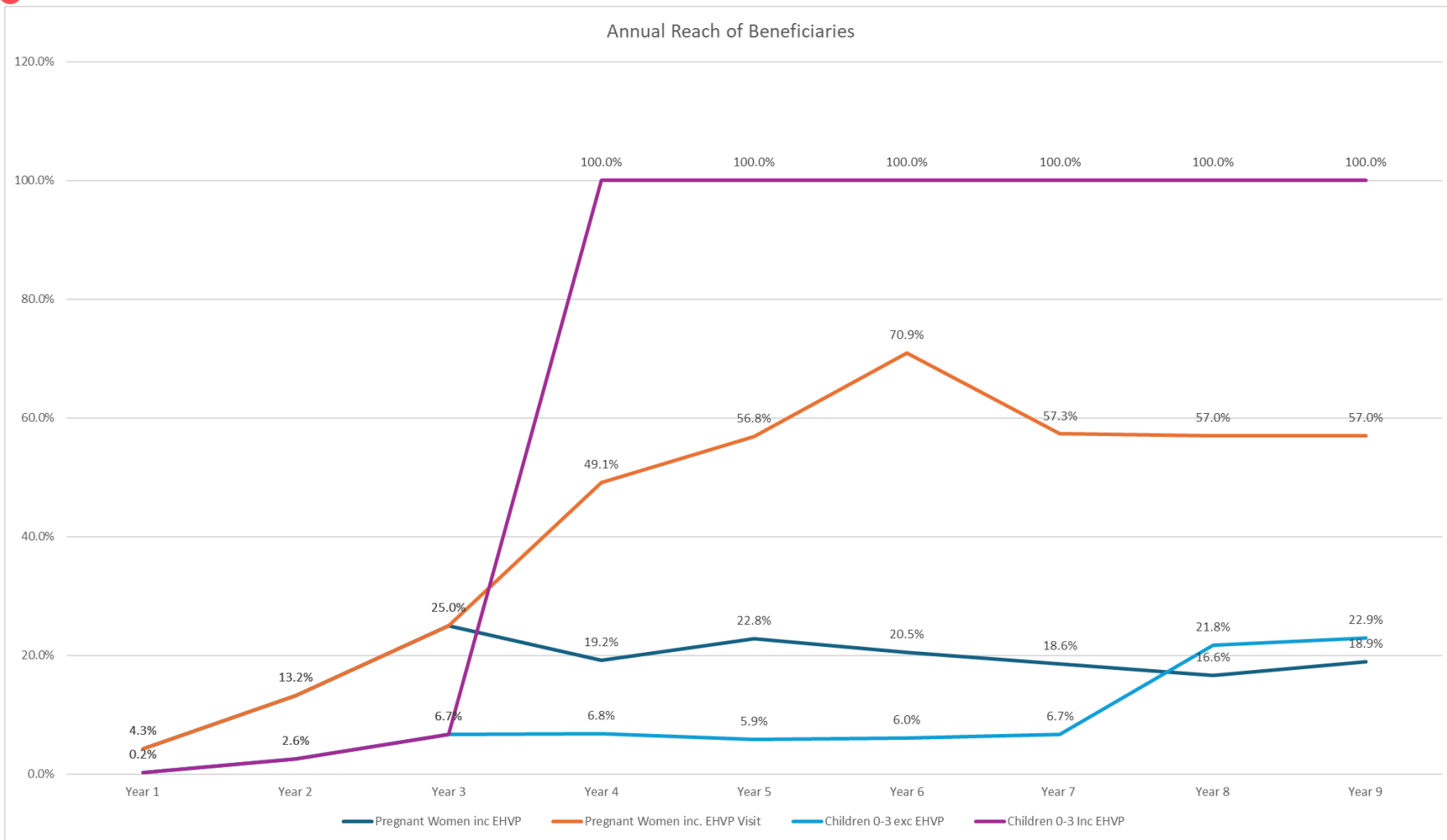
207 Early Talk, Stay and Play groups

219 Early Years Park Ranger sessions

99 Early Years Settings engaged with

3 'Cost of Living' events and
19 'Save and Play' sessions

Beneficiaries & Activities Year 9



The reach of services to pregnant women, excluding Health Visitor contacts, has increased in Year 9 following a dip seen since Year 5. This has been supported by the introduction of the new Early Parenthood Service and the growth of the specialised Parent Infant Relationship Service.

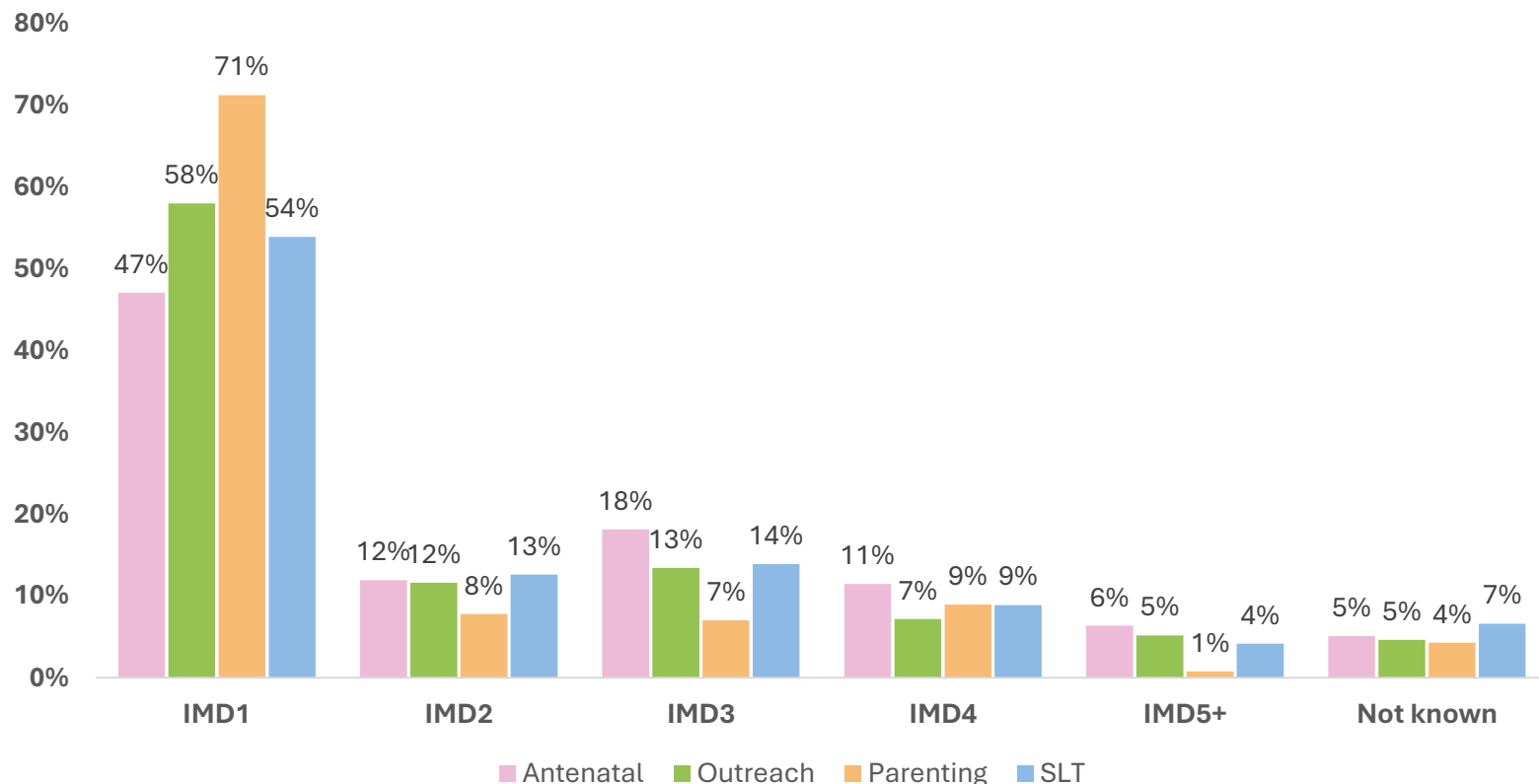
The number of pregnant women receiving the antenatal contact in Year 6 is affected by Covid. These contacts were virtual and more women engaged with the visit. The rate of women that now receive the contact is slightly higher than the pre-covid rate.

The number of children receiving direct support, excluding Health Visitor contacts, has continued to increase due to the scale up of services and recording possible on Community Connector support.

In addition, in comparison to Year 8, **27% more** children have accessed a targeted speech and language service, and **22% more** parents have accessed EPEC 'Being a Parent Parenting Course'.

Beneficiaries & Activities Year 9

Individuals accessing services by household IMD ranking - Year 9



Over Year 9, **2,548 individuals** have accessed a service in addition to the universal delivery of the Health Visiting service.

Over **53% of beneficiaries reside in households with an IMD1**, indicating the most deprived households.

Looking at the breakdown of this across service types, attendees of parenting support services has the highest reach to individuals living in the most deprived households.

The parenting offer includes both targeted and universal provision delivered through Family Hubs, Early Help, and Health. The new 1001 Days Multi-agency Triage Panel refers families to some of this support, including Early Parenthood Service, PaIRs and SafeCare. This suggests the panel is ensuring that the right families are receiving the more targeted support.

Of the parents that attended universal Baby Steps, **35% of parents reside in households ranked IMD1**.

Baby Steps

Baby Steps is a manualised antenatal education programme, developed by the NSPCC, which promotes positive parent-child relationships and supports parents through the transition to parenthood. From April 2017, the groups have been promoted to all Blackpool parents as the universal offer and, from April 2021, it has been delivered by the NHS as part of the universal Health Visiting Service.

Since launch, there have been 340 groups delivered, attended by **2,190 mothers**, who have had **1,523 babies**. Of those that start Baby Steps, 59% complete the programme postnatally. 57% of those that have attended lived in households classed as the most deprived (IMD1-3) in Blackpool.

"I attended Baby Steps when I was expecting my second child. I had a lot more anxiety around my second pregnancy and going to the Baby Steps sessions went a long way to help me with my concerns. The workers were supportive and knowledgeable. I feel I learnt a lot despite this not being my first pregnancy it was also a great opportunity to meet other new mums and I am still in touch with them now."

Parent of two (Brunswick Ward)

"It is often said that there's no handbook for parenting. In Blackpool, we know that an instruction manual isn't what's really needed. Baby Steps provides new parents to respond to their baby's needs, see the world through their eyes and build secure relationships from which they can develop and thrive."

Baby Steps Family Engagement Worker

Mothers who have attended
19% increase
in breastfeeding initiation

6% decrease
in babies born pre-term

(2019-2023)



For Baby's Sake

For Baby's Sake has been delivered in Blackpool since January 2020, the innovative team deliver the evidence-based approach to delivering a whole-family approach to supporting both parents to understand and address previous unresolved trauma and ensure supportive attuned care to their baby. The team work intensively with the family, over up to two years, to support parents to meet the needs of their baby but also build parental capacity to recognise their own strengths and ability to parent and support to therapeutically heal from previous trauma.

Since launch, there have been **120 Families** supported by the team, attrition is low with **85%** maintain engagement with the programme. Data suggests that, of those that engage with the service, **85%** have had no repeat domestic abuse-related police call-outs, and there is a **48%** reduction in families requiring high level Social Care involvement.

"I know myself better now and I like myself; I'm not beating myself up and stuck in the past. I can see what I have, the value of that and I won't ever let that go. It's everything to me. Home and family; the things I always wanted but couldn't always see. I see them now. I can't believe how lucky I am. I got a second chance and I'll be grateful for that ALWAYS."

Parent

"For Baby's Sake has been absolutely wonderful for this family...together with the pre-birth assessment work and social care intervention...when we get the timing and support right, it really does change lives."

Social Worker

93%

of Baby's reach age-related expected levels of communication development using the ASQ

(2020-2024)



Parent Infant Relationship Service

The service has been fully operational since March 2023, offering direct therapeutic interventions with **72** families, **93** consultations for professionals, overview training to over **800** staff, and specialist training to **46** practitioners. Blackpool Better Start funded the pilot of the programme for a period of 18 months and following this, with money from Start for Life and Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board, the services has been sustained.

Investment in parent-infant relationships and improving attachment, reduces behaviour problems and the risk of later mental health issues. It is estimated that for every £1 invested in parent-infant relationship teams, an estimated £13 is saved in public costs and £59 saved in social value over the life course of the infant.

"You also see the benefits not only to the mum or the dad, you see the baby and the sibling and everything, you know, it's come together. You're not just working with one person; you're working with the whole family, and you can see the family coming together which is really lovely."

Practitioner in PaIRs Service

"I feel in a lot better place, I wouldn't have had as much of a bond if it wasn't for the service."

"I now feel like I know my baby, can articulate what she needs and understand what she is trying to tell me."

Parents

The Service in 2024 have been shortlisted for a **Children and Young People Now Award** in recognition of the commitment to raising awareness of infant mental health



Blackpool Better Start Year 9

Community Activities



Community Activities Year 9

987 contacts by Community Connectors
with **820** parents

4977 families accessing early years sessions
at **581** library events

1727 children attending
219 Early Years Park Ranger activities

2925 individuals attending
289 Parents Ideas Factory Events

263 children attending
8 Christmas Grottos

1071 children benefiting from
Supervised toothbrushing in **33** nurseries

1128 families received resource packs

1146 books gifted to families

1585 getting Ready for School packs
distributed to the September 2023 intake

602 individuals using Text Teeth resulting in
628 Children receiving
early dental access support

Community Connector Outreach

The Community Connector role is designed to fill the gaps between families and services. The paid peer support model provides critical support to parents who may have barriers to accessing services or have a lack of understanding early child development. The Community Connector can understand these challenges and build relationships with families providing support in a non-judgemental and non-professionalised way.

Community Connectors deliver outreach support across the town, **23%** of parents with a child 0-3 have accessed Community Connector support since service launch. The support ranges from providing practical resources, completing applications for national and local support schemes with parents, signposting to services, and empowering parents to access and maintain engagement with services.

“The support from the community connector and the items I have received have given me a chance to take the children out and when X in nursery I can spend time with the other children. In September when X starts school I will be able to do even more and learn about England and what it is like to live here.”

Asylum seeking parent living in Metropole

“I spoke to a Community Connector a few weeks ago regarding Healthy Start Scheme and Child Benefit. I managed to apply and was successful.

I am entitled to £12.15 a week through Healthy Start and £14.45 a week through Child Benefit. That’s an extra £106.40 a month! Thank you so much.”

Parent

4363

Individuals Supported

81.7%

live in households with IMD ranking of 1-3

(2017-2024)



Universal Oral Health Improvement

Oral health of children across the town is a key concern for Blackpool Better Start. The association of tooth decay with deprivation and lack of adequate dental access across the town has led to children living in Blackpool having higher levels of decay.

Since 2017, Blackpool Better Start has implemented a strategy to address oral health inequalities in Blackpool which focusses on behaviour change and the prevention of poor oral health.

It has achieved;

- Distribution of **15,447** oral health resources.
- Supervised Tooth Brushing scheme across **72** early years settings benefiting **5,813** children.
- Workforce development on consistent language and oral health messages.
- Early Dental Access Scheme offering **213** preventative examinations to under 5s.

In 2022/23 **only a third** of Blackpool's children were seen by a dentist, compared to almost half across England.

31.2% of five-year-olds have dental decay, this is higher than the national average of 23.7% (2021/22)

Find a dentist



to **07717 535 180**

"I'd not been able to get a dentist for my daughter, I'd tried but no one was taking on. I like how I could just text in rather than having to fill out complicated forms."

Parent

Between 2015 and 2021 there has been a **11.3% decrease** in the number of 5-year-olds with obvious dental decay in Blackpool.

Nationally there has been a **1% increase**



Blackpool Better Start Year 9

Workforce Development



Workforce Development Year 9

152

Training Events

3498

Total Attendees

1888

Individual Learners

118

Individuals accessing
infant feeding training

1111

Attendees across
Trauma Training

861

Registrations for our
Annual Conference

530

Registrations with
Brain Certification Training

181

Attendees across 'Dads Informed
Workforce' Training

We have a vision that everyone across the Early Years' Workforce, and parents, understands the importance of the first 1001 days of life, the developing brain, the importance of resilience, and the potential impact of trauma. This year, the current workforce and the workforce of the future accessed over **120 face-to-face training** events, and digital resources have been accessed over **100 times**.

Highlights of the training approach include working with **over 500 Early Years and Education Students** at Blackpool and the Fylde College, and the work with UCLAN to train student Social Workers, Paramedics, Paediatric Staff, Health Visitors and Nurses.

Of the **1,888 individual learners** who have attended training content this year, **23%** have been students, **18%** Local Authority employees and **14%** health employees. The remainder of attendees come from across the early years sector, including settings, voluntary and education.

Brain Story Certification

The Brain Story Certification online course, developed by the Alberta Family Wellness Initiative and supported by Oxford University, provides a deep understanding of brain development and its consequences for lifelong health. The free course contains content from leading international academics on the science of early brain development and its connection to future physical and mental wellness. The course is within the suite of resources around trauma delivered to the workforce including; The Brain Game, ACE and Trauma Awareness, Resilience Film, Trauma Informed Care and organisational readiness training.

The course, promoted since 2016 by Blackpool Better Start trainers and through partners, colleges and universities, has had 2,117 registrations from members of the Blackpool Workforce. This is 36% of the total registrations across the UK.

"The Better Start Trainers deliver the early child development overview and brain game to our students. The Alberta modules are embedded in this delivery and each student is provided with an opportunity to sign up, it is slow process but those that start the course value the content and it enriches their learning experience."

Tutor 19+ (Blackpool and the Fylde College)

"I understand how adverse experiences shape and affect the development of the brain and how much early support means in children's life."

"We need to support a child as early as you can."

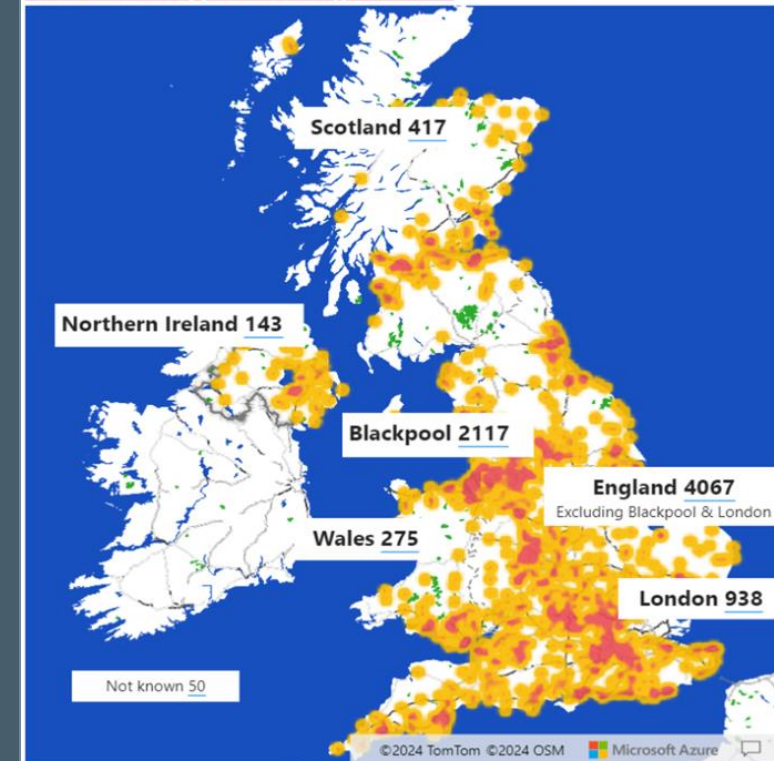
"I have more confidence in delivering the key messages to families."

Course Participants

Since 2016,
37%

of total course completers
in England are from the
Blackpool Workforce

Cumulative Registrations by Location



Father Informed Workforce

The Blackpool Better Start dads' engagement programme started in 2015. The programme had the aim of increasing dads' attendance within early years services and support, and to provide support for male mental health. The approach of offering groups and activities solely for dads was quickly, through consultation, understood not to be the challenge. Dads told us that the challenge was not the number of activities on offer but that they didn't feel welcome in the space and wanted to feel included not excluded.

In response to this, the Fathers Inclusive Practice group was developed. Through training packages, the workforce is provided with understanding of the challenges facing fathers and critically provides attendees with the opportunity to reflect on their practice and how their own services include dads. One key element of this is the co-produced and co-delivered Engaging Dad's Training.

"Establishing the Fathers Inclusive Practice Group has brought together 25 local services all with the drive to ensure that Dads are not forgotten and that the experiences of the whole family are considered when designing and delivering services. The group have developing Dad's champions who will in their organisations challenge and change practice"

Development Manager

"Personally, I felt that this training gave me more insight and information that other courses I have attended on the topic of Dad's and their involvement with their children. I have more confidence to push forward in ensuring that Dads are included in my teams work."

Participant on Engaging Dad's Training

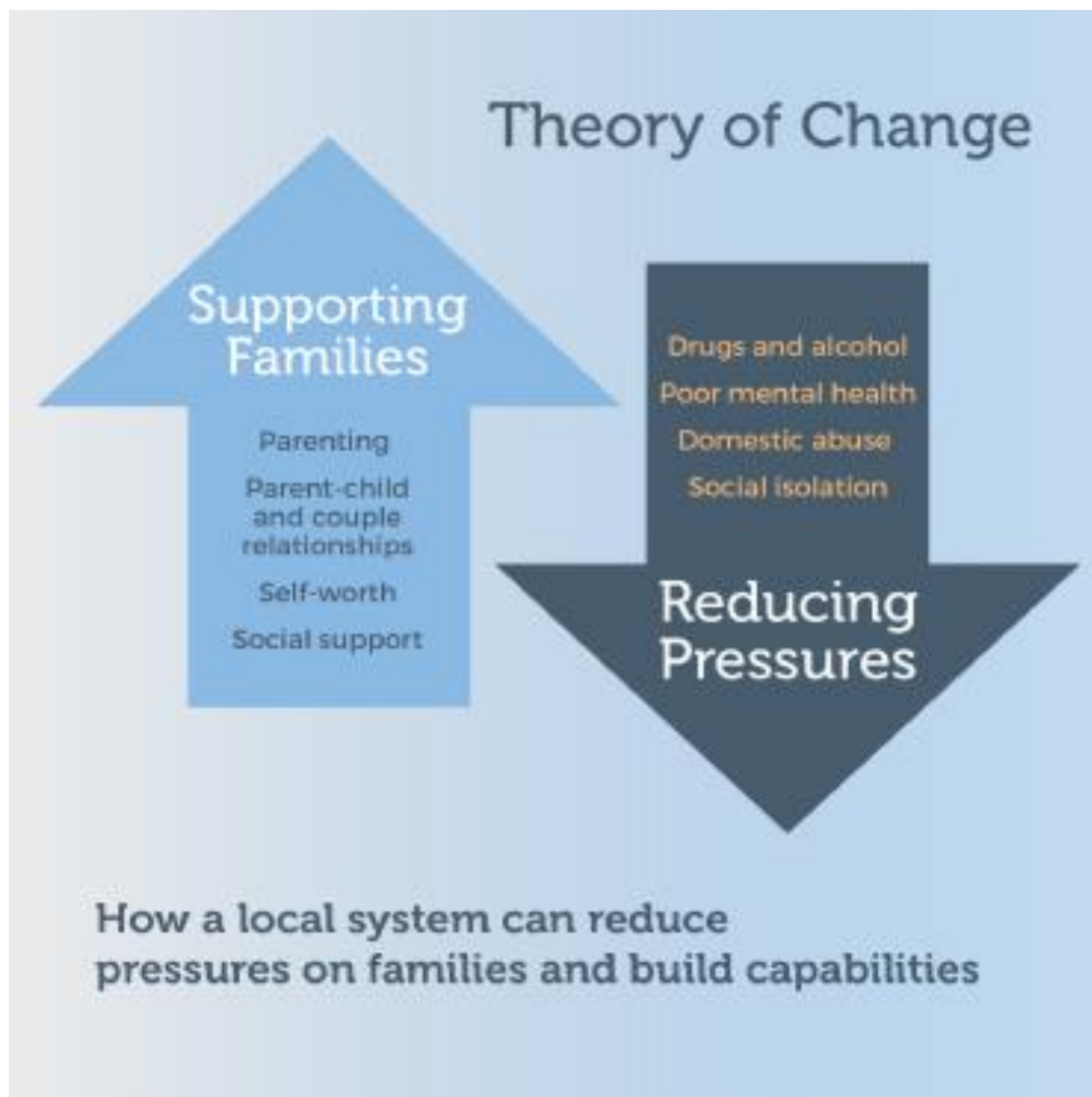
Across the workforce
there have been
30 Sessions
with
535 Attendees

(2022-2024)



Blackpool Better Start Year 9

Outcomes & Drivers



Blackpool Better Start is based on a simple theory of change, if we support parents and families, increasing their capacity and capabilities whilst also reducing the critical pressures, then behaviour change is possible.

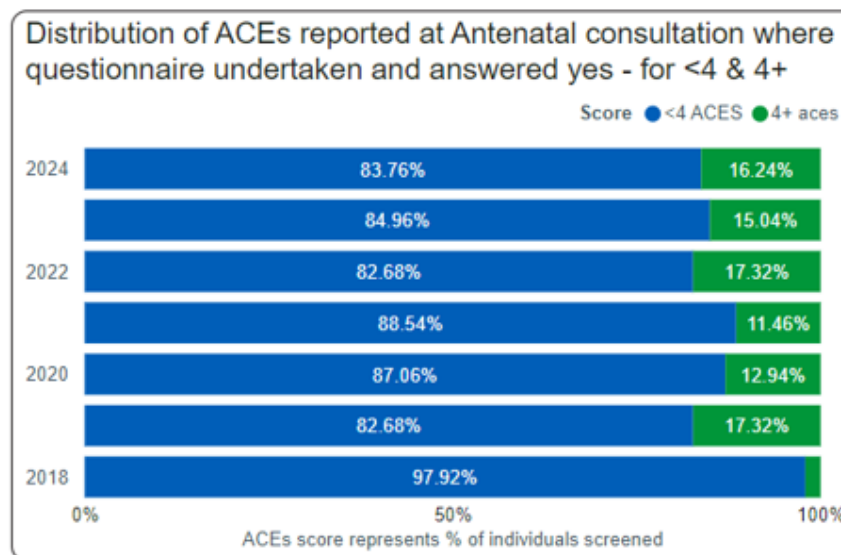
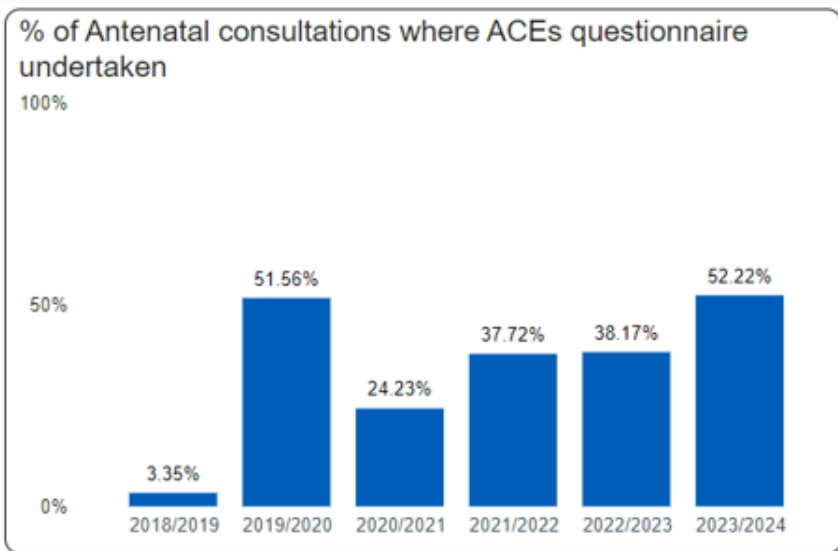
To measure change at population level through our data warehouse, housed by Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, administrative data has been collected across the population since 2015. With this data we can look at and analyse changes across metrics which are both locally and nationally comparable.

During the time where data has been collected there have been some external influences on the comparability of the data, including the introduction of new recording software, the pandemic and national changes to measures.

Despite this, the data gives us an insight as to where change can be seen, the impact of new services, and where additional focus needs to be maintained.

Pregnancy

Maternal Adverse Childhood Experiences



Health Visitors ask about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) at the antenatal contact, this has been in place since 2018.

The questions are in relation to mother's previous experiences and gives insight into adversity that mothers may have previously had and starts a conversation on how this may impact on them through their pregnancy and parenthood journey.

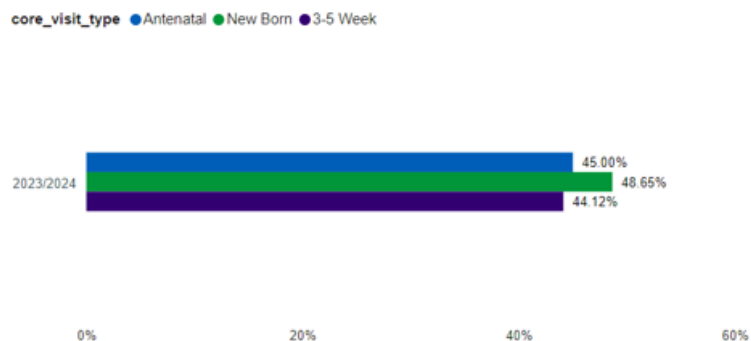
This was undertaken at 52% of consultations in Year 9, which is an increase of 14% from Year 8. Of those that undertook the survey, 16% had a score of 4 or more, which is thought to more likely to impact negatively on health and behaviour.

Having these conversations early with mothers enables a conversation to both understand mother's own previous trauma, and the ways parents can mitigate risks to their babies.

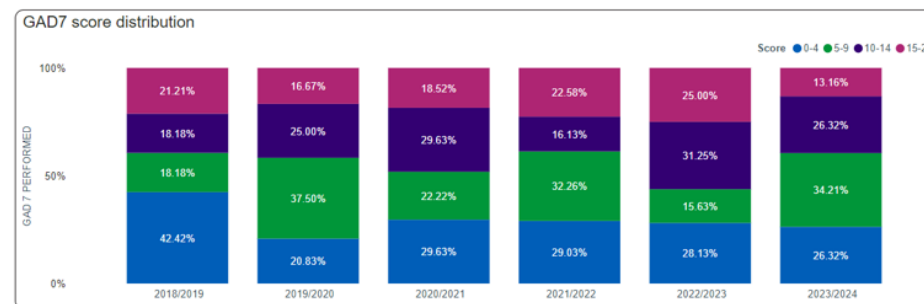
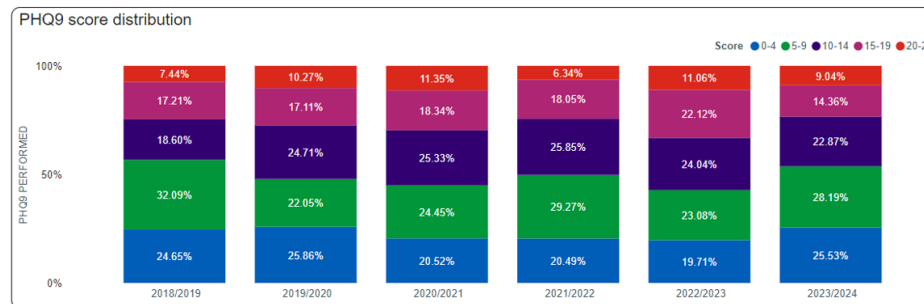
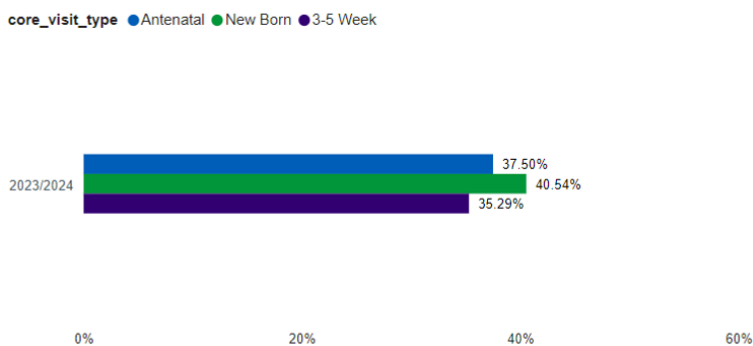
Pregnancy

Maternal mental health

% of patients with a positive whooley score that proceeded to have a PHQ9



% of patients with a positive whooley score that proceeded to have a GAD7



Health Visitors use the Whooley screening tool with mothers at the antenatal contact and then repeat at each contact to determine if further depression or anxiety screening should be undertaken (GAD7 and PHQ9).

In Year 9, this was undertaken at 92% of contacts. 10% of screenings were positive which then led mothers having either the GAD7 (anxiety) or PHQ9 (depression).

At the three key contacts of antenatal, newborn, and 3-5 weeks, more women identify potential need in the newborn contact than the other two checks. This shows the critical importance of regular contact with mothers post birth.

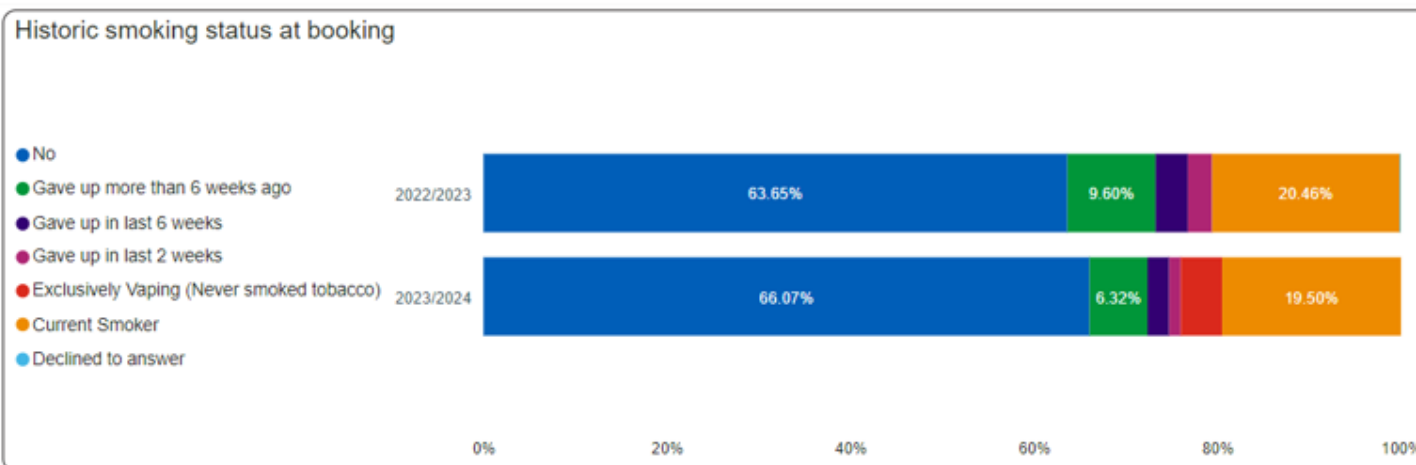
Since 2018, there has been a positive increase in the number of women returning a low score on both the PHQ9 and the GAD7. This would indicate that levels of anxiety and depression, although still present, are reducing in levels of severity.

PHQ9 and GAD7 score distribution is from all contacts (Antenatal, New born and 3-5Week)

On the PHQ-9 a score of 14-19 would indicate mild depression, 20-28 moderate depression and above 29 severe depression. On the GAD-7 a score of 5-9 mild anxiety, 10-14 moderate anxiety and above 15 severe anxiety

Pregnancy

Smoking in Pregnancy



Average birthweight in grams by mother smoking status at delivery

Scope of mothers includes only those who recorded an answer Yes/No for current smoker at delivery



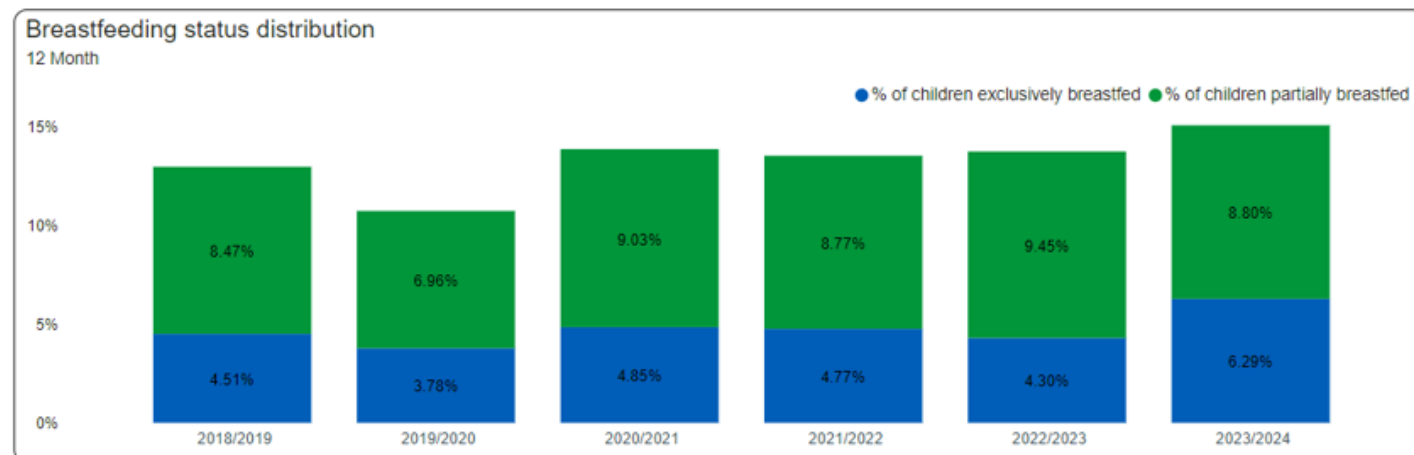
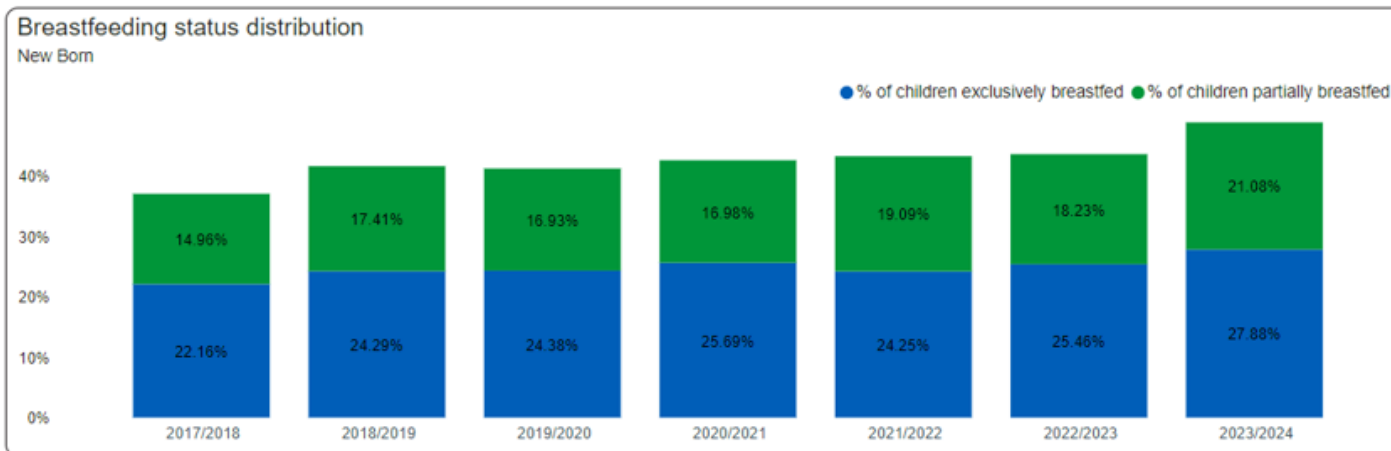
At booking, midwives enquire about the current and historic smoking status of mothers. In Year 9, 19% of mothers were still smoking cigarettes at booking. This has reduced slightly. However, it's now possible to extract data on those that vape – this will be important to monitor over the next few years.

At the point of delivery, this changes very little with 18% of mothers still being recorded as smokers, however there's some question as to whether this is a new response or the old response recorded again. Data is comparable since 2018/19 and over this time there has been a **7% reduction** in the number of women smoking at delivery.

Impact on birth weight of baby can be seen due to the lower average birth weights of the mothers who are recorded as smoking at time of delivery.

Child Health

Breastfeeding



Mothers breastfeeding at birth is recorded both by Health Visitors and Midwives. Midwifery records indicate that in Year 9 68% of women initiated feeding. This has increased over the funded period from 60% in Year 2.

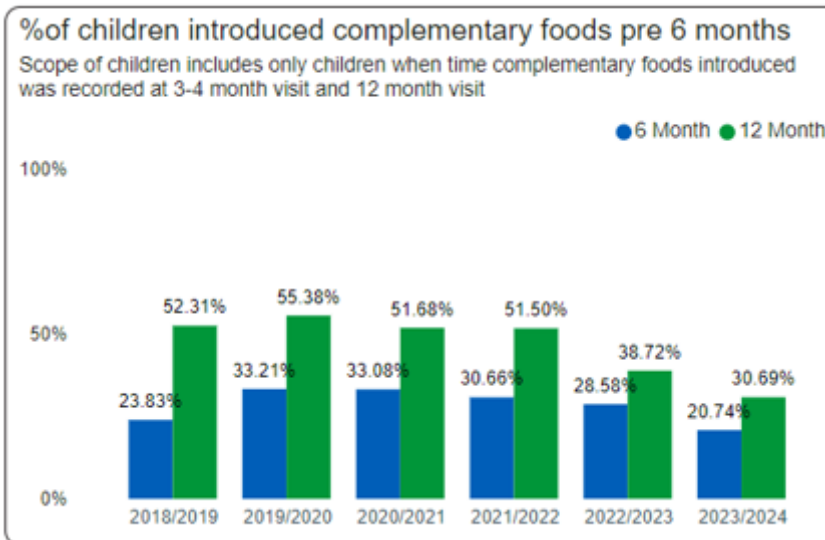
Mothers breastfeeding partially and Mothers breastfeeding status is consistently well recorded by Health Visitors on records up to the 12-month visit, 90% of records have a response.

At the newborn visit, the number of babies partially and exclusively breastfed has increased from 37% in Year 2 to 49% in Year 9. This is a **12% increase**.

At the 12-month check, the number of babies that received breastmilk either partially or exclusively up to or beyond 6 months has also risen. There has been a **3% increase** since Year 2.

Child Health

Weaning

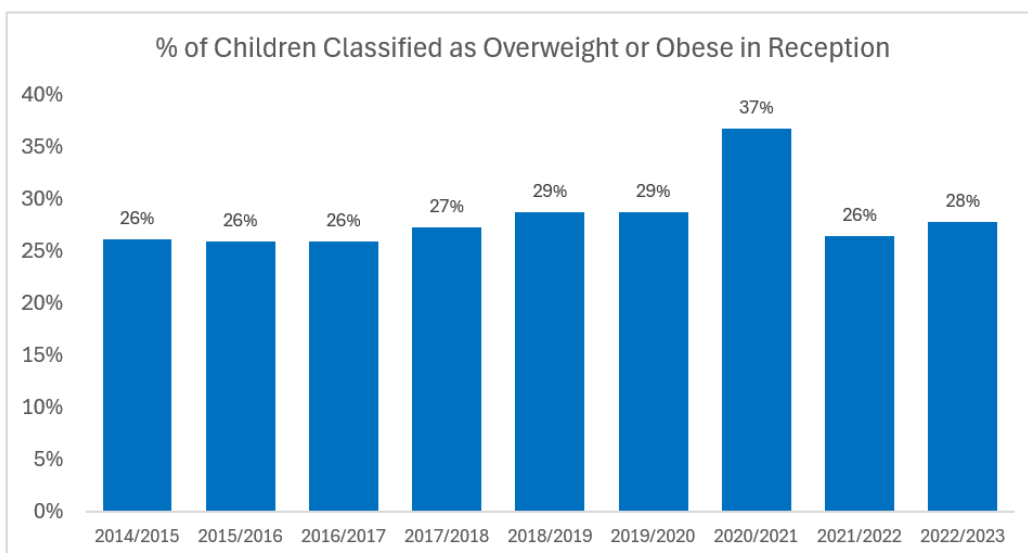


At the 3-4 month and 12-month visit, parents are asked when complementary foods (solids) have been introduced - in Year 9 this was asked at 93% of visits.

Of those that indicated that they introduced solid foods prior to 6 months, there has been a reduction over the funded years.

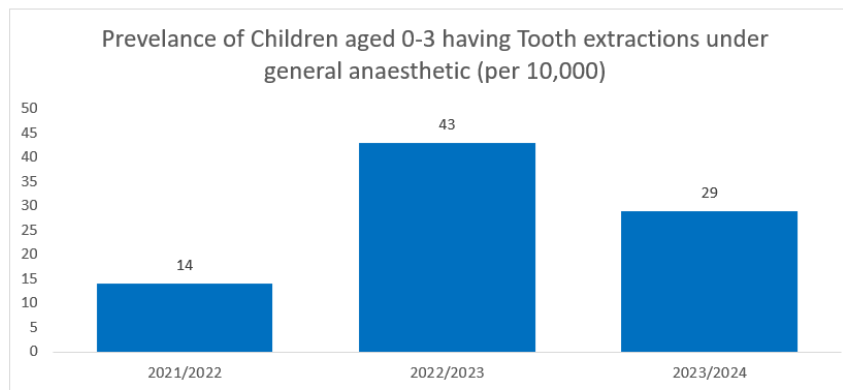
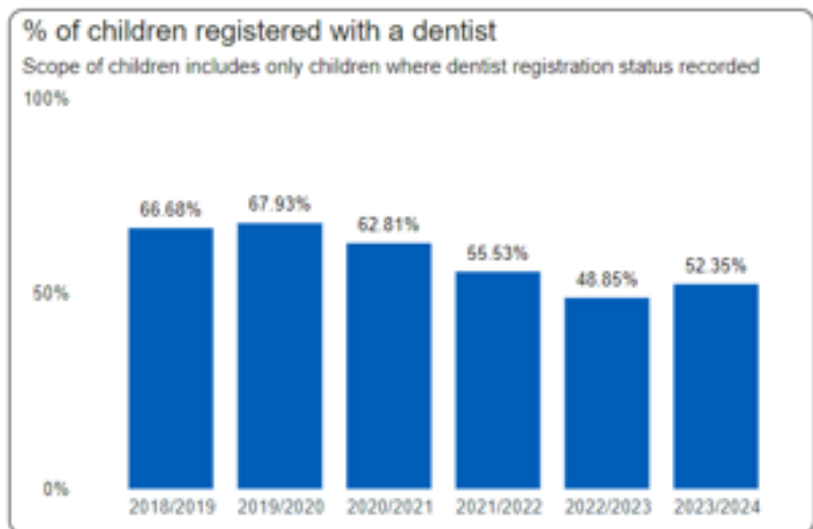
Since Year 2, there has been a 3% reduction in those that disclose at the 3-4 month visit that they have introduced solids. At the 12-month visit, the rate of decline is much steeper with a **23% reduction**. This is positive given that the early introduction of solid foods can be linked to future excess weight.

The National Weight and Measures (NCMP) data would indicate that the weight of children remains fairly static. However, the recent reduction in introduction of solid foods which coincides with the HENRY infant feeding commission will still take up to two years to show in the NCMP data.

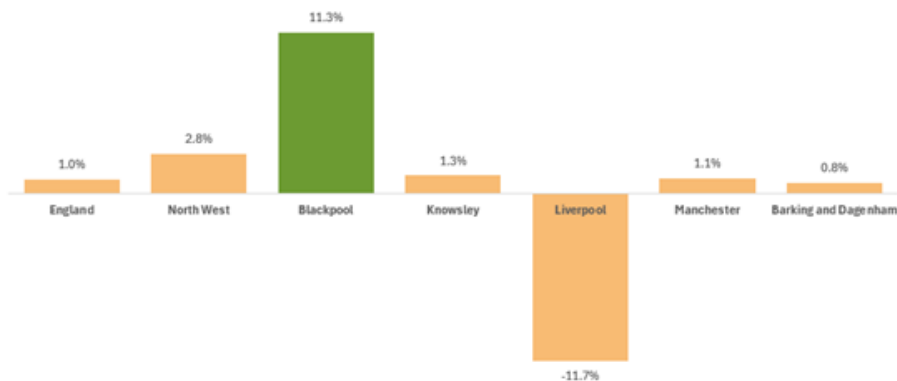


Child Health

Oral Health



Oral Health Survey at 5 Years – Children with obvious dental decay
% change in 5 most deprived authorities.



Enquiry is made at Health Visitor contacts whether the child is registered with a dentist and if the child’s teeth are being brushed. This has always consistently been recorded on more than 90% of records, and more than 90% of those asked about brushing their child’s teeth.

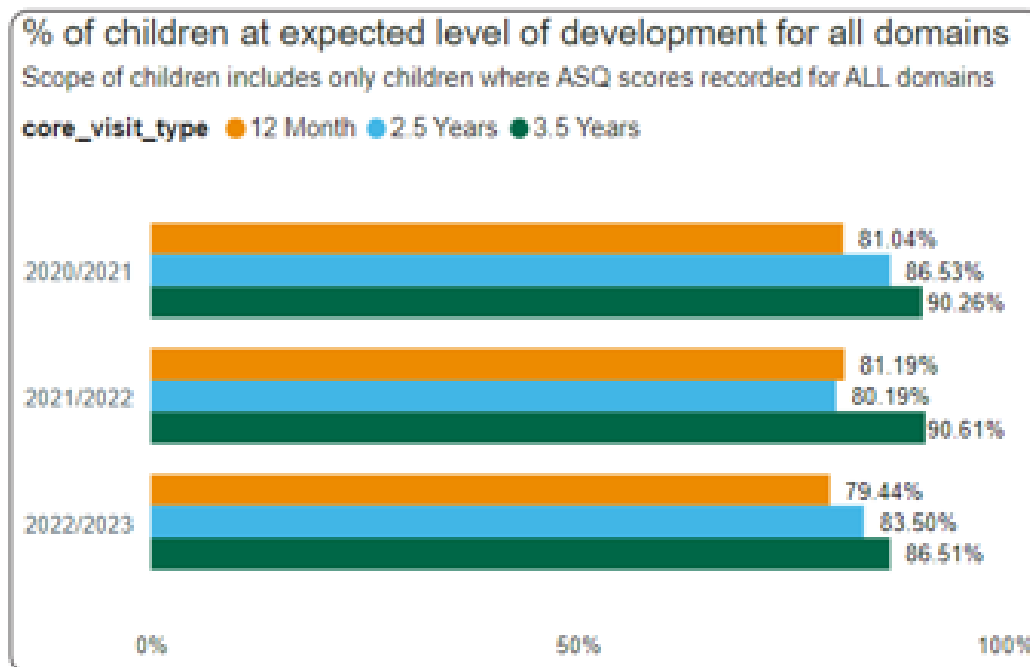
The percentage of children who are registered with a dentist has declined, expected to be in line with the national crisis on availability of NHS dentists. However, the expansion of the Text Teeth scheme and working with national bodies on the Starting Well programme has led to an increase in Year 9.

After a dramatic increase of extractions under general anaesthetic, following potential limited appointments during Covid, there has also been a **32% decrease** in the number of extractions in hospital.

A national survey is undertaken on 5-year-olds which examines a sample of children for obvious dental decay, this was last undertaken in 2021/22. Since 2011/12 Blackpool has seen the greatest improvement when compared to the five most deprived Local Authorities.

Child Developmental Measures

Ages and Stages Questionnaire



The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) is undertaken to understand which children are meeting the expected level of development, which children need review and monitoring, and which children should be referred for additional support.

Since Covid, when comparing the data across all domains, there is a slight reduction in Year 9 of children meeting the expectations.

When looking at the domains, there are more issues identified in the gross motor skills domain at the 12-month check, communication domain at the 2.5 Year check and 3.5 Year check.

Nationally, the ASQ is reported at 2.5 Years. There has been a decrease in the number of children reaching a good level of development, since 2017/18 by 3.7%.

In Blackpool, this decline is also seen but only by 3.3%, which indicates more stabilisation of need.

Child Developmental Measures

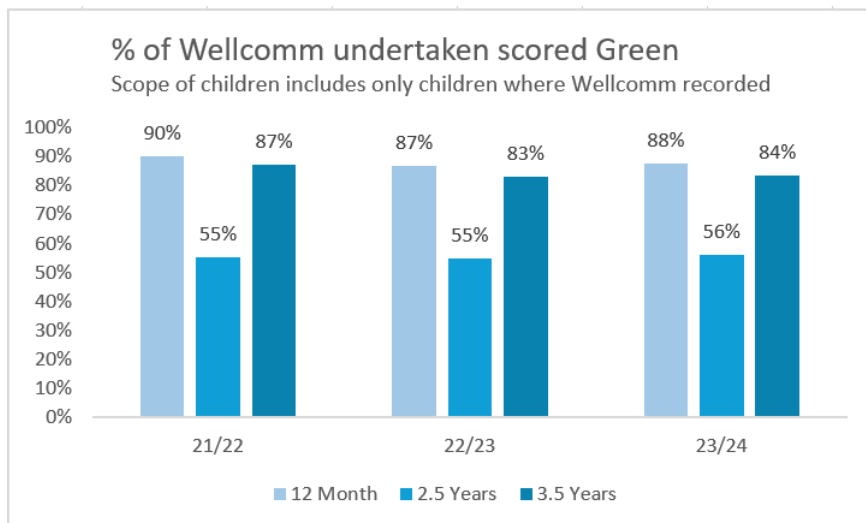
Wellcomm Assessment of Speech and Language

The Wellcomm assessment was introduced in 2018/19, by Blackpool Better Start, as an additional measure for children's language development. The measure is undertaken at the 12-month, 2.5 Year, and 3.5 Year check. The measure is now undertaken at 83% of the checks.

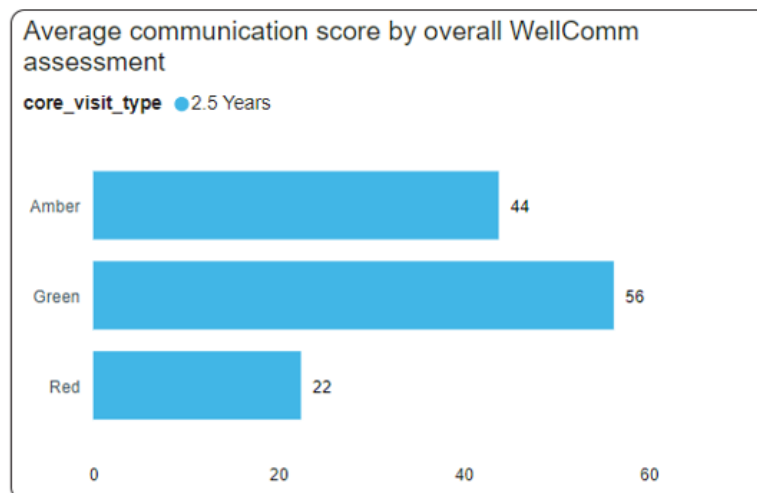
There are differences in the proportions of children who are reaching the expected level of development, scored green, over the time points. Children scoring amber would be referred to the Multiagency Speech, Language and Communication triage panel.

More children are identified as requiring additional support at the 2.5 Year check, highlighting this critical time point to assess children.

When looking at the average ASQ score of those children scoring amber at the 2.5 Year check (44) this is within the monitor and review category, the cut off for referring for additional support being 34. This highlights the value of this additional screening and getting children support earlier before issues escalate.



Health Visitor recording of Wellcomm at 12 month, 2.5 Year and 3.5 Year check.

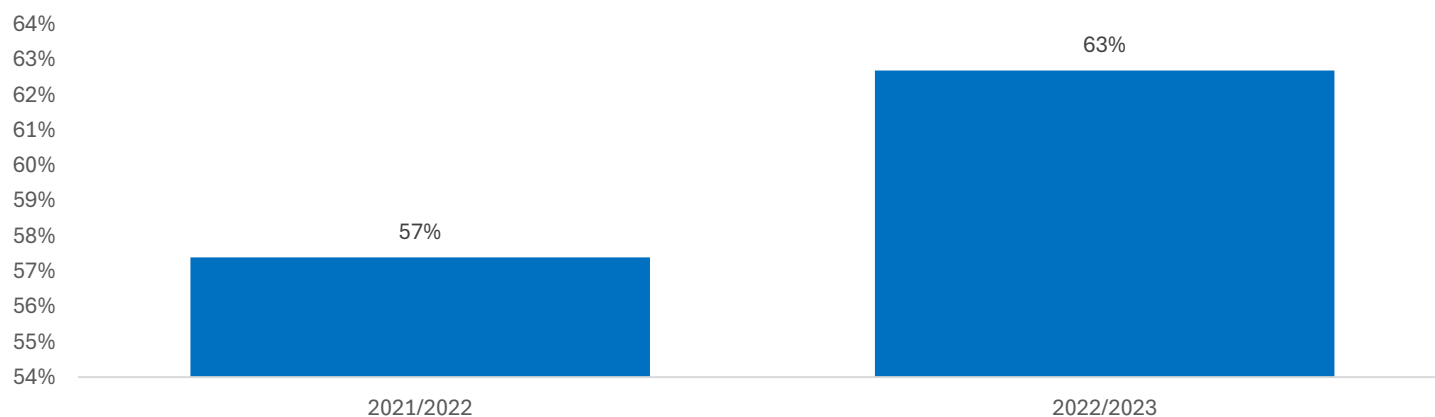


Breakdown of score on WellComm (Green, Amber, Red) against the average communication score at the same time point on the ASQ.

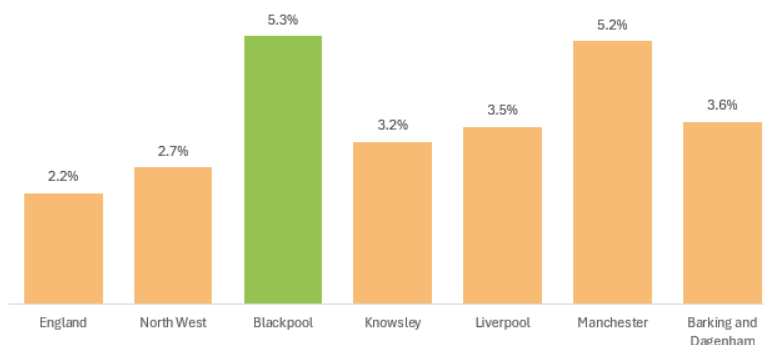
Child Developmental Measures

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

% of children reaching expected level of development across all Early Learning Goals



Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
% change between 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 in the most deprived authorities



The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) is undertaken at the end of reception year with children as a measure of their level of attainment. The measure is intended to inform the transition to Key Stage 1, but it's the only measure nationally comparable for us on children's development and learning.

The EYFSP changed in March 2021, this does mean that comparability to years prior to this is not possible.

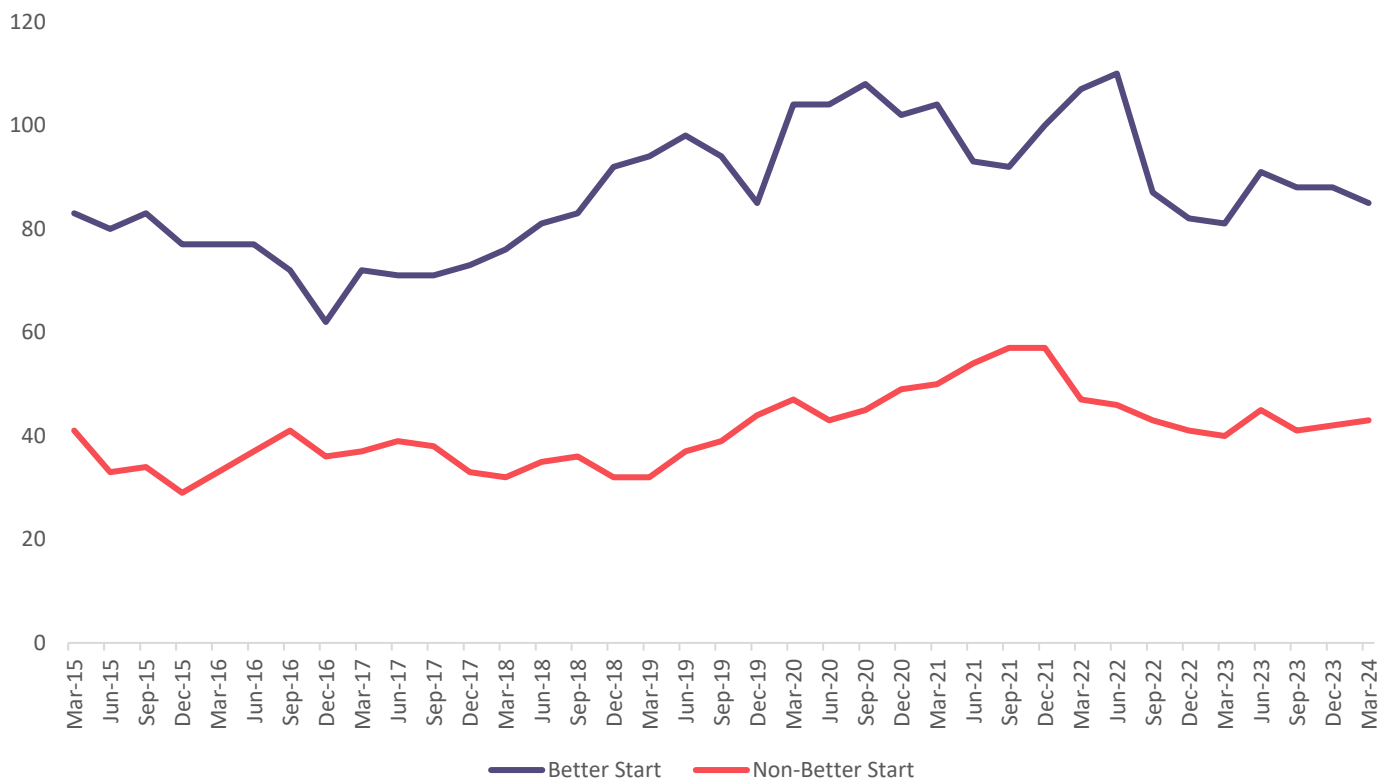
In the two years where the new measure has been used, there has been a **5.3% increase** in the number of children reaching the expected level of development. In England, there has only been a **2.2% increase** and the North West a **2.7% increase**.

The average increase across the 10 most deprived authorities in England is 3.6%.

Blackpool, therefore, has seen a much sharper increase compared to comparable Local Authorities.

Social Care

Our Children total numbers (0-5)



We have reviewed over the funded period the number of children, both under 5 and over 5, subject to Child in Need plans, Child Protection plans, and numbers of Our Children (looked after).

Over this time, there has been a 25% increase in the annual number of children of all ages subject to a Child in Need Plan across Blackpool. The number of children subject to Child Protection Plans has not increased (all ages) although there have been some fluctuations, particularly during Covid.

The increase in the number of children on Child in Need Plans could be an indication that more families are supported through Early Help and de-escalated from higher social care need.

The number of Our Children has increased since 2015 across the town, the increase being steeper in over 5's than under 5s. When looking at the ward of residence, in all ages there has been a 6% increase in the Better Start Wards and a 36% increase in the Non-Better Start Wards.

Blackpool Better Start Year 9

Timeline Highlights

YEAR 9

2023/24

Events x 16

Training x 5

Accreditations & Awards x 2

Launches x 17

Recruitment x 1

Campaigns x 4



Christmas Grottos Week 211 families met Father Christmas, received a book and enjoyed festive activities. New additions of 'quiet' sessions for children with SEND.

Nominated for two Children and Young People Awards for Oral Health and Cost of Living work in November

Early Talk training delivered to Family Hub Team, Better Start Early Years Team and Home Visiting Team to ensure a consistent approach to supporting early language development took place in August.

Engaging Dads Training Programme, co-delivered with Blackpool Dads launched in October. Talking Dads Peer support groups available in Family Hubs in September.

Parent panels established in April across the Family Hubs

In May, the Blackpool Super Six Speech, Language and Communication Strategies co-produced with partners.

YEAR 9

2023/24

Events x 16

Training x 5

Accreditations & Awards x 2

Launches x 17

Recruitment x 1

Campaigns x 4



Text Teeth service expanded across Blackpool in conjunction with National Smile Month which takes place in May.

Early Parenthood Service to provide additional support to parents in pregnancy and the early postnatal period launched in July.

July saw the launch of 1001 Days Family Hub multiagency triage panel ensuring families get the right support, at the right time, by the right person.

In October, launch of the Hope Boxes for families separated at birth to help maintain the bond between babies and parents.

Save and Play sessions launched in January at the Family Hubs