

4.1.15 Early years and Early Learning

The overarching focus of the national Early Years Plan is on **children's development in the early years**, so that by the age of five, children are ready for school, and strong foundations have been laid down for good longer-term achievements. The Government plans to:

- increase the number of health visitors to deliver the universal Healthy Child Programme
- introduce a revised and leaner Early Years Foundation Stage from September 2012
- retain the national network of Sure Start Children's Centres
- extend free early education to the most disadvantaged two year olds
- revise the Code of Practice for early education to increase flexibility and reduce bureaucracy and promote quality and diversity across early education and childcare.

Research consistently highlights that families are the most important influence in a child's early development and prevention and early intervention to support families is crucial for good health and social care outcomes by the age of 5 (Marmot 2010, Allen 2011, Field 2011, Munro 2011, Tickell 2011). The key national document 'Supporting Families in Foundation Years' (Dept of Education & Dept of Health 2011) describes the Government's vision for the system of services to support children up to aged five and their families. This document also provides the Government's response to the following reviews cited above. Key strands of 'Supporting Families in the Foundation Years' are:

- To support families by introducing new arrangements for more flexible parental leave, flexible childcare so that parents can balance work/family and supporting the provision of online and helpline support services
- Increasing take-up of parenting, relationship programmes and family learning education and childcare
- The intention to make the most of opportunities for early intervention in the foundation years by helping professionals to use all contact with families as opportunities to identify and address additional needs
- A focus on a well-qualified and motivated workforce and stronger partnerships between health and early years services and better information sharing
- A continuing strategic role for local authorities in securing sufficient early years provision and championing the needs of vulnerable children and families
- Clarifying how outcomes in the early years are best measured and promoting a strong role for private, voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations.

In addition the Munro report, recommends a duty to ensure partners work together and provide families with an 'early help offer' (Munro, 2011) - in development in Bradford District in the first half of 2014-15.

Local Position:

Early Childhood Services in Bradford district are responsible for the following:

- Lead on delivery of the statutory duties within the Childcare Act 2006
- Make available effective provision of early childhood services across the District which improve outcomes for young children and reduce inequalities through early and targeted identification and intervention
- Improve children's early learning and development opportunities and their readiness for school

- Enable parents to have access to the support and services they need to improve children's well being, to be involved and influential in their children's learning, to develop their own skills, confidence and qualifications in order to work.
- Ensure provision of accessible, inclusive, high quality services for children and families
- Enhancing extended service provision for children and young people aged 5 to 11 years
- Support development of effective leaders and managers and the early years workforce so that skilled, qualified and informed staff are shaping and enhancing services and support so that it is responsive to children, families and communities needs.
- Maintain the statutory sufficiency assessment of the local childcare market.

Bradford has a network of 41 Children's Centres. As of December 2013, 28 of our 41 centres have been inspected by Ofsted. 22 (79%) of our centres have been given an outcome of good or outstanding.

Data published on the Ofsted website Dataview, details inspections up until the 30/06/2013. At this point in time Bradford (83%) is performing above national (69%) and regional (72%) rates for good or outstanding. Across the 15 authorities in the Yorkshire & Humber region, Bradford is the 5th highest performing for % of good or outstanding inspections.

The free offer entitlement to all 3 and 4 year olds continues and the Department for Education is still supporting its plan to introduce free early education for disadvantaged two year olds. In spring term 2014 2400 two year olds accessed a funded place. In September 2014, when the new entitlement is fully implemented, 5,200 or 59% of Bradford two year olds will have an entitlement to a funded place.

National and local targets

Nationally:

- NI 72: A pupil has achieved a Good Level of Development (GLD) if they have achieved the Expected or Exceeding Level in all Early Learning Goals (ELG's) between 1 and 12.
- NI 92: Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest

Locally the following service delivery targets have been defined in addition to targets above:

- Children's centre registration, reach and participation
- Early Education take up

Relevant health targets for smoking, breastfeeding and childhood obesity for Early Years:

- NI53a (VSB11) Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks from birth
- Reduce the percentage of women who are smoking at time of delivery (local NHS target)
- NI55a (VSB09a) Obesity among primary school age children in Reception Year
- Infant mortality rate reduction as part of Every Baby Matters Strategy and Action Plan

Relevant strategies and local documents

National

- Marmot (2010) Fair Society, Healthy Lives –Strategic review of health inequalities in England post-2010.
- Field F (2010) The Foundation Years: Preventing poor children becoming poor adults: The report of the Independent Review on Poverty and Life Chances
- Allen, G (2010) Early intervention: the next steps - an independent report to Her Majesty's Government by Graham Allen MP.

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- Munro, E (2011) " The Munro Review of Child Protection Final Report : A child centred system
- A Call to Action -Health Visitor Implementation Plan, Department of Health.
- Tickell, C (2011) The Early Years: Foundations for Life, Health and Learning. An independent report on the Early Years Foundation Stage to Her Majesty's Government.
- DfE, DH (2011) Supporting Families in Foundation Years, Department for Education and Department of Health.

Local

- Early Learning Strategy 2012-15
- Children and Young People's Plan 2011-14 Children's Trust Bradford District.
- Every Baby Matters Strategy and Action Plan 2011-12.
- Transformation and Integration Strategy for Children's Services : Early Years and Health Visiting Integrated Care Pathway working sub group.
- All to Play For: a strategy for children's play in Bradford District 2013 to 2016
- Bradford District's Early Help Strategy 2013-14
- Bradford District's Child Poverty Strategy 2014-17

What do the data tell us?

Population:

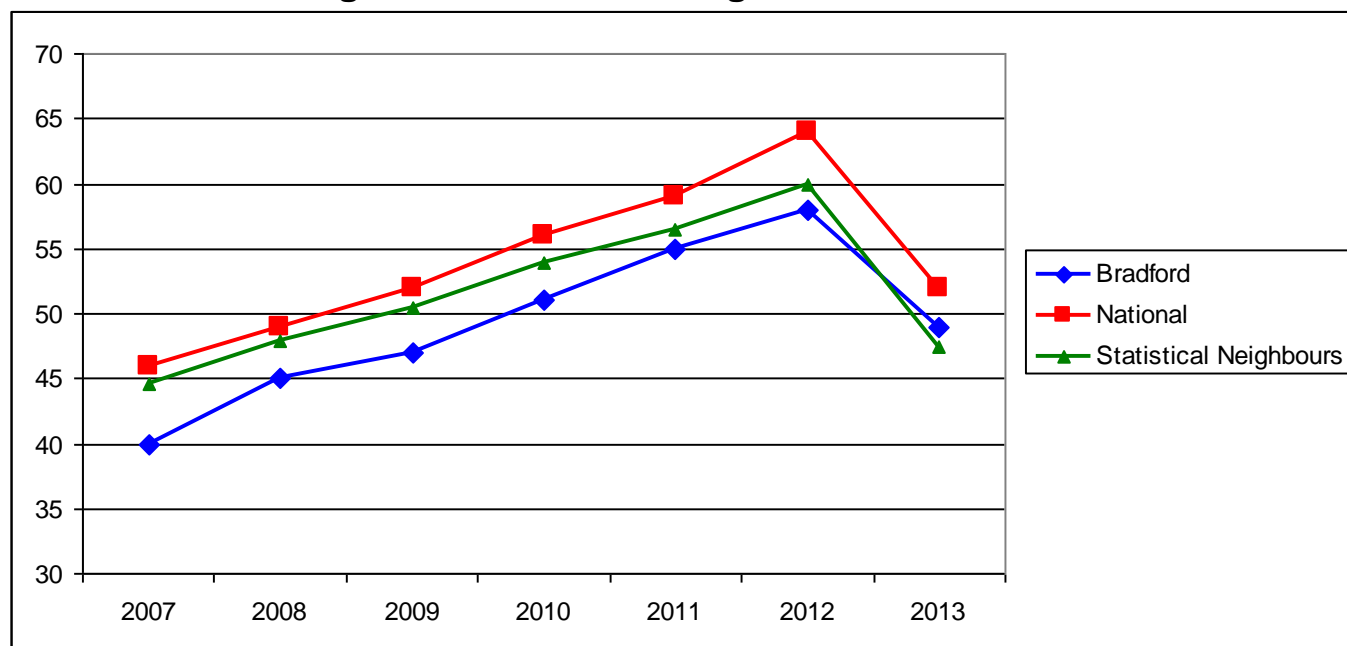
- The 0 – 4 population taken at August 2012 showed that there were 41,828 children aged 0 – 4, a 0.7% decrease from the previous year (Children's Centre Demographic Data Report 2013).
- 67% of children aged 0 – 4 live in areas of the District that are in the 30% most deprived areas nationally. 22% of children live in the 5% most deprived areas. (IMD 2010).
- 44% of young children are from a White British background, 38% are of Pakistani ethnic origin, 2.7% are Bangladeshi, 2.0% Indian, and 4.4% White Other (Children's Centre Demographic Data Report, Reception year cohort 2013).
- Disability and SEND - collation of data from various council held dates bases identified a total of 1020 children aged 0-4 with SEN or a disability, this equals 5.3% of the cohort of just over 19,219 0-25s. During the academic year 2012-13 437 children aged 0-5 years were referred to Education under the system of EA1 notifications for children with confirmed or emerging disabilities or SEN.
- There were 180 looked after children aged 0 – 4 (June 2013), a decrease from 207 in June 2012. 188 children had a child protection plan (August 2013), an increase from 158 in July 2012.
- In 2013, 59.6% of the Bradford cohort completing the Foundation Stage came from homes in the 30% most deprived wards in the country. This is a decrease on the proportion in 2012 (65.0%). 42% of these children achieved the new Good Level of Development measure compared to 44% nationally and 40% in our statistical neighbour (SN) authorities.
- The 3818 (39.6%) Bradford children, living in the 70% least deprived wards, outperformed similar children nationally and in our SN authorities (Bradford 61%, National 56%, Statistical neighbours 58%).
- There is no national data available for the mean average points score measure for deprivation. However in Bradford children from the 30% most deprived wards averaged 29.3 points compared to those children in the 70% least deprived wards achieving 33.5 points. The Bradford average is 31.0 points.
- Over a quarter of 5-10 year olds live in five of the most deprived of the 30 wards in the District.

Outcomes:

A total of 40% of all infants were breast feeding at 6-8 weeks stable but lower than national, 15.7% of mothers were smokers when their babies were born in Bradford district in 2012/13 (higher than national). Overall 9.8% of all Reception children were identified as obese, and above the national average of 9.3% (NCMP data 2012/13) with a very slight closing of the gap since 2011/12. A fifth of reception age children are obese or overweight (21.6%).

Early Years Foundation Stage:

Percentage of children attaining a Good Level of Development compared with national averages and statistical neighbours



% Achieving GLD	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Bradford	40	45	47	51	55	58	49
National	46	49	52	56	59	64	52
Statistical Neighbours	45	48	50	54	56	60	47

In 2013 the way EYFSP is scored changed resulting in a downturn in results, nationally, locally and for our statistical neighbours.

A new framework for Foundation Stage Profile was introduced for 2013. 49% of Bradford's reception children achieved a good level of development (GLD), just 3 percentage points below the national average of 52%. Bradford is now ranked 90th out of 152 local authorities compared with 124th last year.

The national gap - This is a measure used at a national and local level to focus attention on the progress of the lowest achieving children in order that the gap between them and the rest of the population is reduced. It is the percentage gap in achievement between the lowest 20% of achieving children in a local authority (mean), and the score of the median child in the local authority expressed as a percentage of the median score.

The percentage attainment 'gap' for the lowest achieving 20% of five year olds in Bradford in 2013 is 42.6% which is greater than the national gap of 36.6%. 91 Local Authorities have an achievement gap which is less than the national figure; the remaining 61 are above.

Children's centre reach and participation:

Almost 92% of 0 – 4s (38,437) had registered with a children's centre in 2013 –2014, with just over 55% of 0 – 4s being seen at least once. Just over two fifths of 0 – 2s had 3 or more contacts with a centre.

Of the 28,015, 0 – 4s who live in the 30% most deprived areas (IMD 2010), 60% have been seen at least once, with 44% being seen 3 times or more.

Early Education:

Around 93% of 3 year olds and 98% of 4 year olds in Bradford accessed an early education place in January 2013. The national figures are 94% and 98% respectively. Overall 67% of 3 year olds and 90% of 4 year olds took up their place in a school nursery class. 33% of 3 year olds took up their place in a private, voluntary and independent sector (PVI) provision, in a day nursery, pre-school playgroup, independent school or with a childminder. (DfE, 2013)

Childcare:

In September 2013 there were 804 registered childcare providers across the District (593 childminders and 211 day nurseries and pre-school playgroups), offering 11,181 registered childcare places. The number of places has increased by 3.9% since March 2011. (Source: Registered childcare providers and places in England - September 2013)

The % of childminders achieving a good or outstanding Ofsted outcome has been slowly increasing over the past 5 years. Currently 66% of our childminders achieve a good or outstanding Ofsted, below the regional figure of 71% and the national figure 74%.

The percentage of group based settings achieving a good or outstanding Ofsted outcome has been increasing significantly over the past 5 years. Currently 81% of our group-based settings achieve a good or outstanding Ofsted compared to a regional figure of 80% and national figure of 82%.

Early Help Assessments: CAFs and Family Support Plans

173 common assessments (CAFs) were confirmed for 0 – 4s in 2012-13. Detailed analysis of CAF data for the previous year showed that the main initiators of CAFs for all ages were Children's Centres, NHS Bradford and Airedale Child Health Services, primary schools, special schools and secondary schools. The District has seen a decline in the number of CAFs in the past two years alongside a rapid growth of multi-agency planning through Family Support Plans. 1,591 plans were opened during 2011-12, a large majority on 0-4s.

Future needs and gaps in provision

- Over 2,000 additional early education places will be required to meet the needs of the district's 25% most disadvantaged 2 year old children.
- Develop clear integrated pathways between agencies with effective workforce deployment for most effective use of resources to improve outcomes for children. Work has started with Health on this area. Work is well underway with plans for implementation of the Integrated Care Pathway early in 2014-15.
- The historic fragmentation of early years services for children with disabilities and special educational needs will be addressed through implementation of the 0 -7 SEND pathway and development of the SEND offer.
- Lack of accessible public play facilities / services that are inclusive of all children
- Share expertise in delivery of the free early education entitlement across different support routes to maintained settings and private, voluntary and independent settings.
- Review performance management arrangements for commissioned services to ensure they are sufficiently robust and challenging.
- Ensure expectations of providers are clear and targets are challenging, reaching and agreeing on the most vulnerable – using cross agency approaches and documented using the threshold of need.
- Approaches to improvement – ensure support is provided proportionate to need focused on settings with greatest need to improve, with 'whole workforce, all setting' elements
- Share and reward expertise from high quality settings to improve practice in other settings through: setting to setting support and peer mentoring, exchange visits, staff release, training, quality awards, practice tools, centres of excellence eg Children's Centre Plus.
- Smarter more focused, training for early years workforce in all settings. Reflective practice and reporting on impact/changes in practice to be standard and integral. Recognise differing levels of need and expertise.
- Better use of data including Cost Benefit analysis in children's centres

- Improved communication across partners and stakeholders (common vision, language and set of expectations)
- Embed collaborative work across children's centres and early education providers to ensure effective support for children's development. Review children's centre management and affiliate childcare settings to children's centres as hubs of early childhood services within local communities.

Summary of priorities

- Improve the health and well-being of young children overall and reduce health and well-being inequalities between young children
- Ensure early childhood services are provided in an integrated manner with local authority, health and other key partners working together via agreed care pathways to ensure improved outcomes for all children and especially for those at higher risk of health inequalities
- Secure sufficient Children's Centres
- Ensure delivery of HV Plan 2011-15 with additional investment in Health visitors and full implementation of the healthy child pathway as specified in the Plan
- Provide information, advice and assistance to parents and prospective parents
- Secure sufficient childcare for working parents, so far as is reasonably practicable
- Provide information, advice and training to childcare providers
- Secure prescribed early years provision free of charge including expanding free two year old provision;
- Develop and enhance quality and inclusive play opportunities across the district
- Registered early years providers to implement Early Years Foundation Stage
- Increase uptake of free early education in low uptake areas and among vulnerable groups;
- Ensure sufficiency of early education capacity in areas of shortage
- Recruitment and development of childminders and ensuring sufficiency of age-appropriate out-of-school childcare, holiday care and play opportunities
- Meet the needs of disabled children through inclusive childcare services
- Consolidate learning and delivery approaches to ensure working practices are as effective as possible (evidenced based practices, sharing of learning)
- Ensure a flexible workforce – able to work with both providers and parents

Education priorities

- Ensure all providers implement the coordinated Early Learning Strategy to provide consistently high quality provision for 0 to 5 year olds with a coherent and consistent approach to accelerate children's early learning and reduce the impact of limited early childhood educational experiences and the impact of transfer between schools and settings
- Continue to improve outcomes for all children on the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile to close the gap to the national average, and maximises each child's performance. Ensure that assessment of the revised EYFS Profile is accurate.
- Increase the skills of the workforce to understand child development, provide high quality adult engagement and learning environments
- Develop leadership capacity in primary schools, nursery schools and early years settings to ensure all school leaders are well informed about good EYFS practice and developments, and are able to evaluate the quality of provision so that they can plan effectively for further improvement
- Close the gender gap by developing strategies to further support boys' improvement without detriment to the development of girls and minimise variance in the performance of different ethnic groups and particularly of Pakistani heritage children
- Share good practice of induction procedures for children and families with a particular focus on the induction of summer born children.

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- Marmot (2010) Fair Society, Healthy Lives –Strategic review of health inequalities in England post-2010
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