

TIMELINE

2015/16 to 2025/26



Blackpool Better Start

YEAR 1

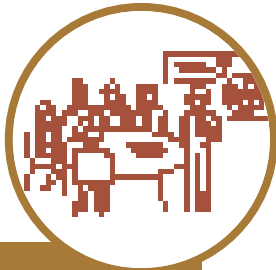
2015/16

Partnerships x 4

Launch of Services x 6

Events x 4

Community Consultations x 5



The first annual conference 'A Better Start for Blackpool' was held in November 2015.

First Annual Conference



Parent-led, activity budget steering groups launched in Children's Centres in June 2015.

Steering Groups

The **Blackpool Centre For Early Child Development** opened January 2015

Partnerships

The **Blackpool Better Start** went live in April 2015

In May 2015 **The Frameworks Institute** delivered training to the partnership around the metaphors of early child development and introduction of a common language between professionals and communities to understand brain science.

In October 2015, Canadian experts from **Alberta Wellness Initiative** visited Blackpool to share learning.

The inaugural **Expert Advisory Group** meeting took place in November 2015.

Launch of Services

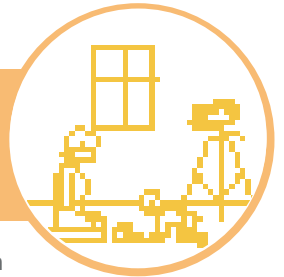
The **Baby Buddy App** launched in April 2015 to all expectant parents in Blackpool as a pregnancy and parenting guide.

Baby Steps antenatal course launched in September 2015 to expectant parents living in Better Start wards.

In September 2015, Better Start investment led to the expansion of the **FNP service** in the town.

Video Interaction Guidance

The NSPCC's Video Interaction Guidance programme was launched in Blackpool in March 2016 to encourage positive communication and reflection with parents by using video clips of family interaction.



In January 2016 **Better Start dads** start working with Lightworks illuminations team to create installations for libraries in Blackpool.

Baby Rover, a clothing recycling scheme, was launched in March 2016 to provide affordable children's clothing for Blackpool families.

Events

Brain Game activity week took place in November 2015 to introduce families to brain science and the impact of early adversity.

In December 2015 the first **Winter Wonderland** advocacy event took place for Blackpool families.

The first **early literacy week** launched in March 2016 with 'Stick Man' activities and events held throughout the town.

Community Consultations

The first **community consultation** took place in August 2015 into the redesign of Revoe Park.

In February 2016, members of the community took part in a consultation to help understand **parents' views** of early child development.

In October 2015 **focus groups** were held with the community on communicating messages around oral health.

In March 2016, consultation with the community about **Mereside at Play** investment began.

YEAR 2

2016/17

Launch of Services x 5

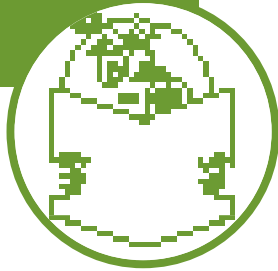
Events x 5

Community Consultations x 3

Launches x 2

Father's Reading Everyday

Fathers Reading Every Day (FRED), a programme to encourage dads to read to their children daily, was delivered to the first group of Blackpool in February 2017.



Health Visiting

A review of health visiting contacts took place in April 2016 through consultations with parents and professionals.



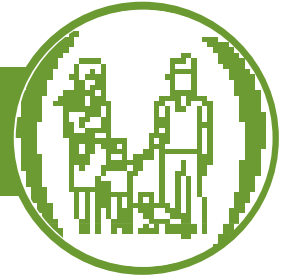
Launch of Services

Parents Under Pressure launched in July 2016 to provide a supportive parenting programme that helps parents with the pressure and stress of looking after a young child whilst managing their drug and alcohol treatment.

A pilot of the **Survivor Mums' Companion** programme also launched in July 2016 to support pregnant women who have a history of childhood trauma and are at risk of, or have experienced, PTSD symptoms during pregnancy.

Safe Care

In July 2016 Safe Care was launched to Blackpool parents to prevent cases of neglect before they escalate into child protection services.



Baby Steps, a perinatal educational programme designed to support expectant parents, was made available to all Blackpool parents-to-be in November 2016.

Events

The second annual conference, '**Implementing Evidence based Interventions in Blackpool**' was held in November 2016.

Two **early literacy weeks** took place during 2016, with activities offered to families in libraries and children's centres. These were themed around 'Under the Sea' and 'Light and Dark'.

Winter Wonderland advocacy event was held in December to offer advice and support to Blackpool families.

In March 2017, Palatine Library launched the **new early years reading area** that contained installations made by Blackpool Better Start dads.

'Focus on Communities', a Better Start five-site event was held in Blackpool in March 2017.

Community Consultations

In October 2016, members of the community took part in a consultation on **breastfeeding**.

Members of the community contributed to a consultation about views on **alcohol exposed pregnancy** campaigns and messages in January 2017.

Launches

Volunteer Academy

The Volunteer Academy was launched in March 2017 to encourage volunteering amongst early years parents and care-givers.



July 2016 saw the opening of re-developed **George Bancroft Park**, and in January 2017 the new outdoor early years play area at **Grange Park** Children's Centre was officially launched.

YEAR 3

2017/18 PART ONE

Launch of Services x 6

Recruitment x 2

Campaigns x 2

Events x 10

Research x 2

Launch of Services

The **Quality Mark accreditation** was launched in April 2017 to Blackpool childcare settings. In February 2018, the first nurseries completed the accreditation.

In April 2017 a **Supervised Tooth Brushing Scheme** was introduced in nurseries and childcare settings to improve oral hygiene in pre-school age children. All children were given a toothbrush, and settings were supplied with toothpaste and toothbrush holders.

Registering births became easier for Blackpool parents in April 2017, when the service was offered at two local Children's Centres.

May 2017 saw the first **Being a Parent course** take place across Children's Centres in Blackpool. The course helps support parent with communicating with their child and offers strategies for dealing with challenging behaviour.

Mellow Dads

Mellow Dads, a targeted programme to support dads to implement parenting strategies, was launched in August 2017.



In October 2017, **Whipper Snapper photography workshops** launched to families in Blackpool.

Recruitment

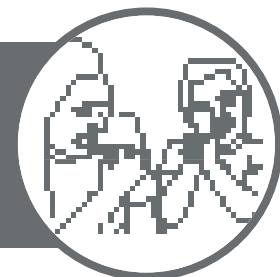
In January 2018 a Blackpool and Fylde College **link worker** was appointed to ensure that the Early Years and Education courses at the college were aligned with Better Start key messages and the common language of Early Child Development.

Campaigns

An **oral health** messaging campaign launched on bus sides in September 2017 and ran for three months across the town.

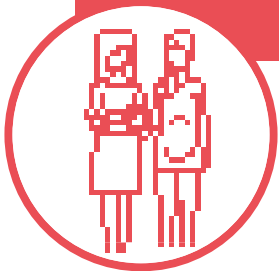
Tooth Brushing

A book to support the oral health messages was created called 'The Sandgroun Family Brush Their Teeth' and was distributed via health visitors in September 2017.



Community Connectors

9 Community Connectors joined Blackpool Better Start in September 2017.



YEAR 3

2017/18 PART TWO

Launch of Services x 6

Recruitment x 2

Campaigns x 2

Events x 10

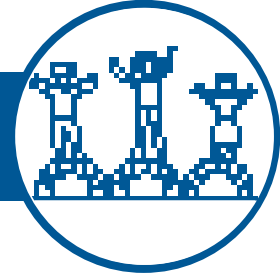
Research x 2

Events

In April 2017 Central Library launched its **early years reading area** including a bookcase installation built by Better Start dads.

Mereside Children's Play Area

Mereside Children's Play Area was opened in May 2017 by NSPCC Trustee, Dame Esther Rantzen.

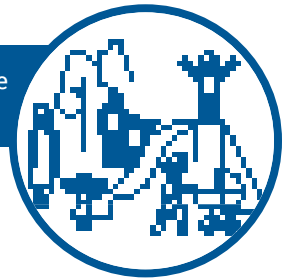


In June 2017, Grange Park Children's Centre welcomed NSPCC Patron, **HRH Countess of Wessex**.

Radio 5 Live hosted **Mum's Take Over** in Blackpool, a live two hour broadcast about maternal mental health. The programme was recorded in front of a live audience, and Better Start was represented on the panel of experts.

Revoe Park Early Years Zone

The grand opening of Revoe Park Early Years Zone took place in June 2017.



Autumn Literacy Week

Autumn Literacy Week took place in November 2017 with themed activities taking place in libraries and children's centres across Blackpool.



The 3rd **Winter Wonderland** was held at the Winter Gardens in December 2017.

In February 2018 The Wellcome Trust's Health Foundation **X Factor** event looked at innovation in research. Merle Davies appeared on a panel alongside the editor of The Lancet and a representative from the WHO.

Training with the police on **ACEs and trauma** was introduced in February 2018.

In March 2018, the **first screening of 'Resilience'** was shown to over 200 members of the Blackpool workforce in the iconic Opera House theatre supported by an international panel of experts.

Research

NatCen **People in the Lead** Community Survey was launched in August 2017. The results of the survey were released in March 2018.

In December 2017 the CECD had their first paper published on **community consultation research methods**.

YEAR 4

2018/19 PART ONE

Launch of Services x 4

Events x 7

Launches x 2

Campaigns x 2

Appointments x 3

Park Rangers

The Park Ranger service started to deliver Forest School in April 2018 at parks and outdoor spaces across the town.



Launch of Services

A new home visiting speech and language service, **Talk with Me**, was introduced in April 2018. The service is offered to families following an assessment by the family Health Visitor.



Enhanced Health Visiting

In April 2018, following two years of consultation and development, the Enhanced Health Visiting Service was launched. This was celebrated with an event at the Winter Gardens.

In January 2019 **Move, Play & Go** was launched to deliver weekly, healthy lifestyle sessions for families.

Events

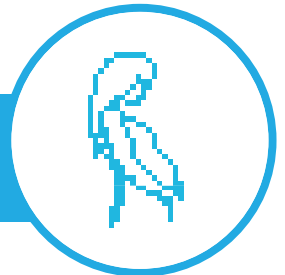
Over 12 months, three **early literacy weeks** took place, with family activities and events held at libraries and children's centres across the town. The themes for the early literacy weeks were Seaside, Journey and Farm Animals.

In June 2018, the first **participatory budget ideas event** was held. These events encouraged local families to suggest ideas for activities they would like to see in their local children's centre.

In August 2018 and November 2018 the CECD welcomed two parliamentary select committees, **Science and Technology** and **1001 days Health and Social Care** to Blackpool to share approaches and learning.

Trauma Informed Blackpool

The 4th annual conference 'Trauma Informed Blackpool' was held at the Winter Gardens in November 2018.



In December 2018 the 4th **Winter Wonderland** advocacy event took place at the Winter Gardens. The event featured cooking on a budget demonstrations by the BBC's Chris Bavin.

In March 2019, Blackpool welcomed a **royal visit** from HRH Duke and Duchess of Cambridge who visited Better Start projects and met CECD staff and community members.

The first **community conference** 'The Town We Want' took place in March 2019 at Blackpool Football Club.

YEAR 4

2018/19 PART TWO

Launch of Services x 4

Events x 7

Launches x 2

Campaigns x 2

Appointments x 3

Launches

Grange Park community farm was completed and launched in March 2019



Early Years Play Area

In April 2018 early years play areas were completed at Thames, Kincaig and Baines. This was followed by the completion of the early years play area at Queens Park in July 2018.

Campaigns

'**Be a Hero, Keep Alcohol at Zero**' public health messaging campaign on drinking alcohol during pregnancy launched across Blackpool in October 2018. The creative campaign was featured on buses, bus shelters and billboards across the town and ran for 12 months.

Big Little Moments

A campaign to promote the parental behaviours important to language, social and emotional development called 'Big Little Moments' was launched in February 2019. The campaign featured on buses and poster sites across Blackpool, as well as through digital promotion.



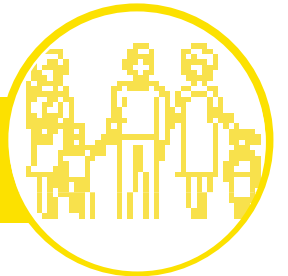
Appointments

Two **workforce development trainers** workforce development trainers were appointed in April 2018 to be based within the LA training team and to work across all partners.

In November 2018, the CECD was appointed by NHS England to produce **trauma informed guidelines** for maternity and perinatal mental health services across England.

Health Connectors

5 Health Connectors were appointed in July 2018 to connect families with health services in the town.



YEAR 5

2019/20

New Services x 5

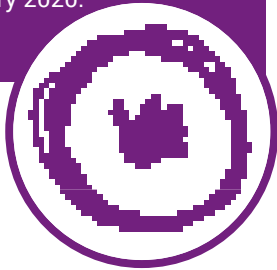
Events x 5

Launches x 6

Accreditations x 2

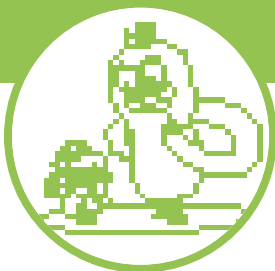
For Baby's Sake

For Baby's Sake – a service to support expectant parents with a history of domestic violence – launched to Blackpool families in February 2020.



Big Little Moments

Big Little Moment packs were launched to the community in July 2019, and distributed to families via nurseries, health visitors and birth registrars.



New Services

Learning to Feed service was launched in April 2019. Volunteer supporters received training to deliver messages to parents about safe and responsive infant feeding.

The Blackpool Park Rangers started to deliver **Dad's Forest School** in August 2019 as part of the dad's engagement strategy.

Blackpool Sling Library

In May 2019 the Blackpool Sling Library service began. This service was held at various children's centres in Blackpool, to encourage parents to try baby carrying through renting slings for a subsidised, minimal cost.



In January 2020 Jamie Oliver's **Ministry of Food** course was delivered to a group of dads for the first time.

Events

In June 2019, a national **'Talking Dads'** conference took place in Blackpool.

CECD hosted the Palix Foundation and Oxford University in October 2019 to deliver a **learning event** to early years workforce in Blackpool.

5th annual conference **'Transforming Blackpool Together'** took place in November 2019.

In December 2019 the 5th **Winter Wonderland** advocacy event took place.

Community Voice

Community Voice held their first event with a family Beach Party in July 2019.



Launches

Better Start e-learning module was launched in November 2019 to BCC staff, Housing, Libraries, Foster Carers, Childminders, Early years Nursery Nurses, Early years tutors and students. NHS staff, HV, Midwifery, paediatric teams, and speech and language therapists.

In November 2019 a trauma informed workforce **development approach** was formed.

In January 2020 a **High 5 for Year 5** campaign was launched on social media to promote 5 years of Blackpool Better Start.

In February 2020 the **MIRROR volunteer development pathway** was launched by early years Volunteer Academy.

Work on **green spaces** at Talbot and Brunswick Children's Centre and Grange Park completed in March 2020. The capital development of The Volunteer Centre commenced.

Accreditations

In September 2019 the Blackpool **Safe Care** programme delivery team was accredited by Safe Care.

In December 2019, the CECD was confirmed as a Harvard University's **'Frontier of Innovation'** for the Community Connector initiative.

YEAR 6

2020/21 PART ONE

New Services x 5

Events & Training x 3

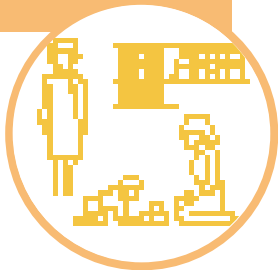
Campaigns x 3

Launches x 8

Recruitment x 3

Training Courses

In October 2020 Blackpool and Fylde College launched an **Early Years Apprenticeship** and **Early Years and Education Level 3** course which included Better Start messages and content.



New Services

Virtual **Speech and Language Triage Panel** was established in April 2020 to ensure children receive appropriate SLC services and support.

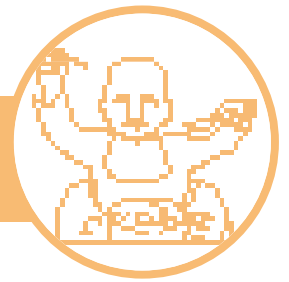
The Park Rangers launched an **online service to parents** in May 2020.

Holiday Hunger voucher scheme was offered to families in October 2020.

A new service for women experiencing postnatal depression, **Behavioural Activation** was launched in December 2020.

HENRY

Infant feeding service, HENRY, launched in January 2020



Events and Training

In May 2020 there was a screening of the film **Resilience** to Blackpool REACH schools as part of trauma-informed approach training.

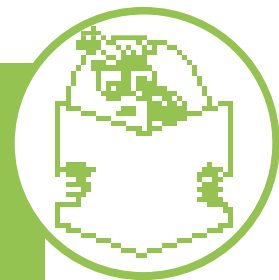
The Better Start **annual conference** was delivered virtually for the first time in November 2020. The First Five Years and the Next Five Years was attended by over 300 delegates from across the UK.

Campaigns

In May 2020, a film was created in partnership with University of Oxford Video about **how to talk to really young children about Coronavirus**.

School Readiness Campaign

To help children transition to primary school, a **school readiness campaign** was launched in July 2020. all Blackpool Parents received a book and checklist to support transition. Parents in the Better Start Wards received a resource pack. A social media campaign was aired on Facebook.



In December 2020 a **Christmas campaign** offering advice and support to families ran throughout the month. This was supported with Christmas resource packs that were delivered to over 600 families.

YEAR 6

2020/21 PART TWO

New Services x 5

Events & Training x 3

Campaigns x 3

Launches x 8

Recruitment x 3

Launches

In May 2020 **Lockdown Street to Scale** community funding boxes were launched to Blackpool community groups.

Talking Dads

The first **Talking Dads** episode was streamed live on Facebook in May 2020.



In June 2020 Baby Rover launched a **lockdown delivery service** for families.

Talbot and Brunswick opened **two play areas** and a **community garden**, and a **new park development** was completed in Clifton.

August 2020 saw the relaunch of the **Park Ranger face-to-face outdoor activities**.

In September 2020 **New Baby resource packs** were created and launched to the community.

In January 2021 **Toddler resource packs** were launched to families in Better Start Wards.

In February 2021, CECD published **Good Practice Guidelines to Support the Implementation of Trauma-Informed Care in the Perinatal Period** for NHS England.

Recruitment

In November 2020 two **Dad's Community Connectors** were recruited to support male carers.

A new **Speech, Language and Communication Home Visiting Support Team** launched in August 2020.

Early Years Settings Workers

Early Years Settings Workers were also recruited in August 2020, supporting nurseries to improve quality of provision.



YEAR 7

2021/22 PART ONE

New Services x 5

Events & Training x 9

Launches x 8

Campaigns x 8

Recruitment x 6

New Services

In April 2021 a new speech and language group called **Little Explorers** was launched to deliver weekly activities to families from community venues.

Library Early Years Engagement Workers began visiting early settings in August 2021 to deliver speech and language activities.

Trauma Informed Maternity and Perinatal Mental Health Services Training (TIMPS) was launched with Lancashire Midwifery in October 2021 with **Organisational Readiness Workshops**.

Free grotto visits for families in Blackpool were launched to families in December 2021 at three community venues across the town. Families were invited to meet Father Christmas and receive a book gift, while also enjoying festive crafts and activities.

Supervised Toothbrushing

In January 2022 the scheme was relaunched with early years settings in Blackpool.



Events and Training

In April 2021 **NHS England Trauma Informed Maternity and Perinatal Improvement Guidelines** were presented to professionals.

June 2021 was a busy month for **virtual conferences** including World Association for Infant Mental Health (WAIMH) and Trauma Summit. CECD also presented the Health Visitor ACEs routine enquiry work as part of the trauma and Health Visiting work.

Representatives from CECD presented at the **British Psychological Society Conference** in September 2021.

In October 2021, the CECD held their **annual conference** 'Rebuilding the Future: Putting Children and Babies First' for 500 virtual delegates.

iHV Fathers and Perinatal training took place in November 2021.

Early Years Mental Health Summit

CECD presented at the Summit in February 2022 about Blackpool Better Start Community Approaches to Pregnancy and Early Years.



Commissioner Visit

The CECD was visited by the new Children's Commissioner for England, Dame Rachel de Souza, in July 2021. The visit included meeting families in Revoe and a roundtable discussion with senior leaders.



In December 2021, the CECD attended Manchester University to present a seminar on **'Place Based Approaches'**.

March 2022 saw the national NCB 'A Better Start – Reducing Inequalities' conference take place, with **presentations from the CECD** on co-production, data and workforce development.

YEAR 7

2021/22 PART TWO

New Services x 5

Events & Training x 9

Launches x 8

Campaigns x 8

Recruitment x 6

Activity Programme

A town-wide early years timetable was launched in March 2022 to inform local families of all activities taking place at Family Hubs, and in community venues throughout the town.



Launches

Blackpool Council launches an **Early Years Communications Offer** as part of the SEND offer in May 2021.

Blackpool Sling Library

Following a year of virtual appointments, Blackpool Sling Library reverts to delivering face-to-face appointments in June 2021.



In October 2021 the **Early Years Strategy Partnership** was formed to review and renew local early years strategy.

The scale-up of **Video Interactive Guidance** (VIG) service with Blackpool Council launched in October 2021.

A new **Money Saving Connector** role was launched in December 2021 to support parents through the food/fuel poverty and cost of living crisis.

January 2022 saw the launch of the **Blackpool Together Integrated Care** pilot.

In March 2022 a new working group **The Pregnancy and Early Years Partnership** was launched to merge the Healthy Child Working Group with the Early Years Strategic Group.

Campaigns

As part of the 'Get Blackpool Reading' campaign, **book drops** took place in local parks and community venues in April and June 2021.

To encourage take-up of the Covid19 vaccination, the Community Connector team supported the **Covid19 Vaccine Bus** in Blackpool locations in September 2021.

Superbabies

In June 2021 the new 'Superbabies' campaign was launched on buses and on social media. The campaign highlighted the benefits of not drinking alcohol during pregnancy on the unborn baby.



A targeted offer from the **Book Trust** was launched to young parents in September 2021.

In November 2021 **literacy activities and sessions** around the theme 'Out and About in Autumn' were delivered to families.

YEAR 7

2022/23 PART THREE

New Services x 5

Events & Training x 9

Launches x 8

Campaigns x 8

Recruitment x 6

Campaigns

As part of the **Christmas campaign**, a free, personalised letter from Father Christmas was distributed to families in November 2021.

In December 2021 a **campaign** highlighting services available for families to help with food and fuel poverty was launched.

Healthy Start Campaign

To encourage take-up of the Healthy Start scheme, a campaign was created to inform parents of the benefit in February 2022.



Recruitment

In April 2021 new **Library Early Years Engagement Officers** were recruited.

A new **Evaluation Officer** joined the CECD team in May 2021.

The new **CECD Director**, Clare Law, was in position by July 2021.

November 2021 saw an increase of staff within the **Speech and Language Home Visitor team**.

A new **Development Support Officer** in the area of Diet and Nutrition was appointed in January 2022.

Connector Roles

Additional Community Connector positions of Health Connector and Dad's Connector were filled in June 2021.



YEAR 8

2022/23 PART ONE

New Services x 4

Launches x 10

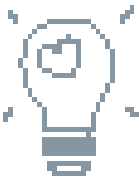
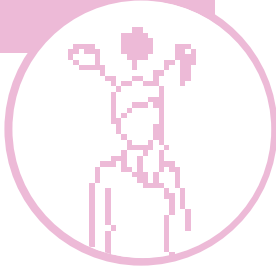
Events and Training x 19

Recruitment x 2

Campaigns x 5

Trailblazer Sites

In December, Blackpool was confirmed as one of the 14 trailblazer sites for the perinatal mental health and parent-infant relationship support strand of the Family Hub & Start for Life programme.



PIF

The Parents Ideas Factory was launched to the community in May to encourage families to vote for activities they would like to see in their communities. The suggestions made by families are then taken to a parent's panel who decide which activities are funded by Blackpool Better Start.

New Services

In April, a new **Co-Production Group** was formed with a team of lived experience sessional workers with the aim to reduce the number of babies removed from parents at birth and ensure parents feel safe within the system.

Blackpool was confirmed as one of the 75 pre-selected **Family Hub and Start for Life programme sites** in October and was awarded £2.7 million for investment into early years programmes and services.

Blackpool was confirmed as a **Starting Well site** by NHS England and work commenced to reduce oral health inequalities and improve oral health for children aged 0-2 in November.

Launches

May saw the launch of the **Family Hubs timetables** for North, Central and South areas of Blackpool. The family-friendly timetables bring together all the early years activities and groups from across the town.

New weekly **Baby Sensory Group** and early years **Stay and Play sessions** launched in June.

In July, the team, as part of the school readiness work, launched targeted 'Getting Ready for School' **early years sessions** to help support and prepare families for the transition to starting Reception class.

The latest Better Start and Family Hubs **early years activity timetables** was launched in September, allowing families to view all term-time activities for 0-4s across the town.

As part of Blackpool Together pilot, **new preventative oral health sessions** were launched in October with dental nurses for babies, young children, and their families.

A pilot offering **swimming sessions** for dads and their children launched in partnership with Active Blackpool in October. The sessions were created following 'Dad's Play Day' when dads were given the opportunity to suggest activities they would like to do with their children.

Cost of Living Roadshow

The first Cost-of-Living roadshow took place in November giving families the opportunity to speak to 'Money Saving' Community Connectors and other service providers about support and services available to them.



Measuring What Matters scoping review was published in January. This report looks at the current use of outcome measure in parent-infant relationships and helps other areas in the design of their services

Borrow it Blackpool – a community powered membership scheme to loan out community-donated items launched in March.

YEAR 8

2022/23 PART TWO

New Services x 4

Launches x 10

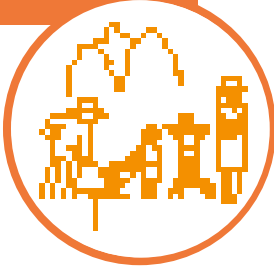
Events and Training x 19

Recruitment x 2

Campaigns x 5

Jubilee Events

June saw the Park Ranger service hold Jubilee Events for families in parks and open spaces and a commemorative Jubilee activity card was created.



Events and Training

Conferences attended in May included The Royal Society of Medicine to present **Blackpool's approach to trauma informed work**. Team members also attended the Health Policy Influencing Group.

In June, the team delivered **workforce training** during Infant Mental Health Week on 'Understanding Early Trauma; Why infant health matters and how we can support it'.

In July, members of the team took part in the Parent-Infant Foundation **peer learning event** 'Parental Engagement in Parent-Infant Relationship Services.'

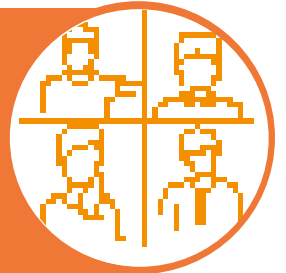
In July, team members presented at the Nuffield Foundation Conference on 'Early Childhood – What Needs to Change' and took part in the Kindred Squared **Roundtable to discuss improving outcomes** of early years children.

The Big Family Play Day saw families enjoying the sunshine at Revoe Park in August while engaging in free, fun activities and a picnic for all the children who registered to attend. The event supported the Family Hubs relaunch.

Team members **presented at conferences** including Anna Freud's national conference, The Institute of Health Visiting conference, and International MARCE Society symposium in September.

Annual Conference

The seventh annual Blackpool Better Start conference took place in October, attracting over 800 registrations from a national audience. Tackling Poverty, Changing Childhoods included speakers Dame Andrea Leadsom, Dame Rachel de Souza and Carey Oppenheim and was chaired by Sir Peter Wanless. The CECD team presented 'Learning from A Better Start'



In November, members of the team presented on the current use of **outcome measures in parent-infant relationships** at a Parent-Infant Foundation's webinar. The CECD also presented at Lancashire Warm Homes event to highlight cost-of-living work.

The Blackpool Better Start For Baby's Sake team won the Children and Young People Now **Safeguarding Award** at the national award ceremony in London in November.

The **Blackpool Better Start Expert Advisory Group** met in December to discuss the sustainability of Better Start and the Centre for Early Child Development.

The Behavioural Activation **research study** to support women with postnatal depression ended in December. The learning from the pilot is being shared with Health Visitors for wider scale up.

YEAR 8

2022/23 PART THREE

New Services x 4

Launches x 10

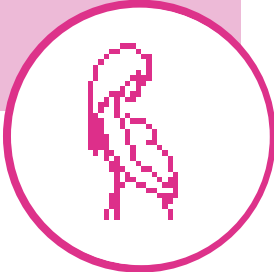
Events and Training x 19

Recruitment x 2

Campaigns x 5

Baby Week

Baby Week was launched in June to support Infant Mental Health Awareness Week. The campaign included a book for parents to read to their unborn baby, and activity cards with bonding activities during Baby Ranger sessions.



A **partnership group** supporting the inclusion of fathers in services had its first meeting in December.

In January the team presented at The National Lottery Community Fund's **insight session** about the Community Connector team.

Other events attended by the team in January included iHV Fathers & Perinatal Mental Health **conference** and Neonatal Partnership **workshops**.

February saw the completion of **Trauma Informed Maternity and Perinatal Services training** with Lancashire and Cumbria NHS Trust which was delivered to 223 staff.

The Blackpool Better Start Director took part in a **family policy roundtable** in March with the Cross-Government Advisory Group.

Recruitment

A new **Service Manager** was appointed by HENRY in August, to manage the infant feeding offer in Blackpool.

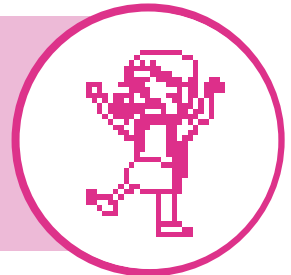
Four **Community Connectors** and a **Research and Evaluation Officer** joined the CECD team in September.

Campaigns

In May, The CECD team supported NSPCC's '**Fight for a Fair Start**' campaign in Parliament, to ensure perinatal mental health support is available for every family and is not dependent on where you live.

Starting School

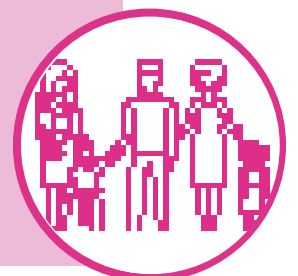
A Starting School campaign was launched on social media in July. The eight animations gave practical advice to parents about what activities to practise at home to help support their child to be ready to start school.



A **Christmas campaign** ran throughout the month of December, offering a free personalised letter from Father Christmas, a free visit to a grotto and cost-of-living advice for families. The campaign reached 942 families through the letters, 228 families attended the grottos and extra support was provided to 112 families.

Healthy Start

Healthy Start Scheme uptake data was released in February showing a 10% increase in Blackpool over a six-month period. The methods for the successful increase were shared via blogs and a shared learning report with local authorities and relevant charities. Press coverage of the increase was achieved in local broadcast and print media.



YEAR 9

2023/24 PART ONE

Events x 15

Training x 6

Accreditations & Awards x 2

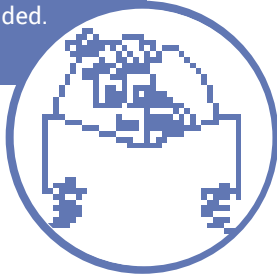
Launches x 17

Recruitment x 1

Campaigns x 4

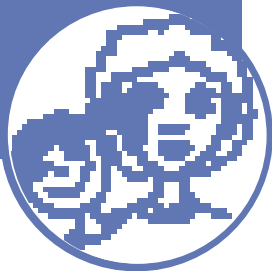
Storytelling Festival

5 day **Storytelling Festival** took place during Literacy Week in October. The launch event at Central Library welcomed over 100 babies and young children attended.



Annual Conference

The 8th annual conference, **Sharing the Science of Early Childhood** took place in November.



Events

In June, three **Baby Showers** took place during Baby Week to celebrate Infant Mental Health Awareness Week. Families received a free baby bump photography session, goodie bag, advice and support. The events were also a chance to meet other parents-to-be.

The team presented at the **NSPCC 'How Safe' Conference** in June.

In July, team members presented at the **18th World Association for Infant Mental Health (WAIMH)** event to highlight the breadth of the systems-wide approach to scaling up services in Blackpool.

In September members of the team presented at the **Institute of Health Visiting (IHV) Evidence-Based Practice Conference** on Behavioural Activation.

Cost of Living Roadshows took place in September and February providing a free play session for 0-4s whilst parents could access local offers, advice and support available to them.

Presentation about the Blackpool Better Start partnership, Family Hub and Start for Life 0-5 mental health pathway in the **NHS England 0-5 Mental Health Shared Learning webinar** in October.

In November, members of the team attended an event for **International Men's Day** at Blackpool Football Club.

Members of the team presented at the **Northwest Speech, Language and Communication 'Big Conversation'** in November.

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

In December, the team presented at conferences including the **NEA Conference** and the **GL Assessment Annual Conference**.

Conference

Team members presented the School Readiness work at **BECERA Conference** in February.



The team presented at the **Children and Young People's Impact and Evidence conference** in March on data informed decision making.

Smoking and Vaping Cessation in Pregnancy: **Workforce Insight Workshops** took place in March.

YEAR 9

2023/24 PART TWO

Events x 15

Training x 6

Accreditations & Awards x 2

Launches x 17

Recruitment x 1

Campaigns x 4



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

Text Teeth Service

Early Years Sessions

In August, the **Babbling Babies, Talking Tots, and Chatting with Children** sessions started in Family Hubs.



Training

In April the launch of the Institute of Health Visiting - **Fathers and Perinatal Mental Health training** for the Blackpool Workforce.

Team members presented at the **International Maternal and Infant Nutrition and Nurture (MAINN)** event on infant feeding and parent infant relationships.

Engaging Dads

Engaging Dads Training Programme, co-delivered with Blackpool Dads, launched in October.



Healthy Start Webinar available to support other areas of the workforce to increase uptake of the scheme took place in May.

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.

Fatherhood Institute: Introduction to Working with Fathers training for the Blackpool Workforce was launched in September.

Accreditations & Awards

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

Blackpool **SafeCare Accreditation** received in February.

Launches

Parent Panels established in April across the Family Hubs.

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

In June, the **Community Family Starting School Sessions** launched.

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

July 2023 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.

Borrow it Blackpool loaning scheme opened in September.

Talking Dads Peer Support Groups available in Family Hubs in September.

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

YEAR 9

2023/24 PART THREE

Events x 15

Training x 6

Accreditations & Awards x 2

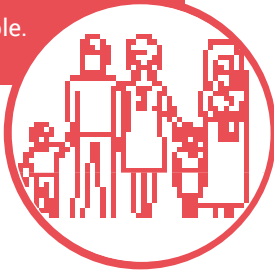
Launches x 17

Recruitment x 1

Campaigns x 4

Community Engagement

In December, a Community Connector started **working with asylum seeking families** in the Metropole.

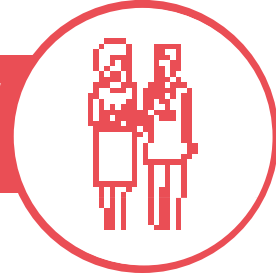


Establishment of the multi-agency **School Readiness Strategic Working Group** launched in November.

Save and Play sessions launched in January at the Family Hubs.

Maternity Engagement

October was the start of the Community Connectors providing **engagement directly on Maternity Wards**.



Book Trust **Book Gifting** in Universal sessions launched in February.

In March, as part of the Born into Care project, a **parent facing tool** was co-produced with parents with lived experience and professionals to support understanding.

Baby Hands Up group launched in March to universally support attachment and attunement.

Recruitment

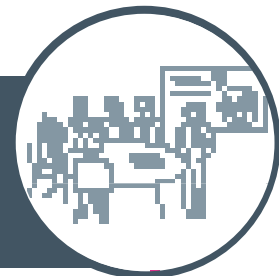
In July, **three Early Years Practitioners** were appointed.

Campaigns

May saw 1572 **School Ready Books** and 'Things to Do Before You Start School' resource distributed to all children starting school in September.

Co-production Sessions

Initiated **co-production sessions** with parents to develop our Early Child Development Campaign which took place in June and September.



In August the team launched a **School Ready Social Media campaign** helping families get ready to start Reception.

MMR vaccination campaign to increase uptake took place in January.

YEAR 10

2024/25 PART ONE

Events x 12

Training x 3

Accreditations & Awards x 2

Launches x 8

Campaigns x 3

Commissioner Visit

Better Start launched the **Building Systems for Early Childhood Development** report in November.



Events

In April, the team took part in a round table with House of Lords for the **Childhood Obesity Committee**.

Consultation with community members took place in May to understand barriers and challenges to smoking in pregnancy and accessing services.

In June, the team were involved in **A Better Start (ABS) Conference 2024**, 'Collective Change: Learning from A Better Start, doing things differently, together, for babies, children and families.'

The team hosted a collaborative workshop **sharing the learning** from Blackpool at the AVIGuk International Conference in Blackpool in June.

In July, members of the team presented the 3-year review work at the **iHV Evidence-Based Practice EECERA Conference 2024**.

The EECERA Conference took place in September where members of the team travelled to Brighton to present **School Readiness research**.

October saw the first **Early Years Marketplace** event delivered by the School Readiness Partnership Group.

In November, our annual conference, "**More Than a Village** - What does it take to really change childhoods?" took place.

During December, the team welcomed families to meet Santa, enjoy some festive activities and make keepsakes at the **Christmas Grottos**. Families also received a free letter from Santa.

In February 2025, the ABS annual conference celebrated the impact of **10 years of A Better Start** on early years practice & policy.

Training & Development

Training and audits took place in April for stage 2 of the **UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative Awards**.

In May, the **team were commissioned** by the London Borough of Redbridge to help them review their early years system based on the work undertaken in Blackpool.

Development

In May, **workforce development days** were undertaken with those providing stop smoking services to explore the ICB level challenges and barriers to smoking in pregnancy.



In September, the **team were commissioned** to work with Carmarthenshire County Council to share learning from Blackpool, which led to a 6-month contract.

YEAR 10

2024/25 PART TWO

Events x 12

Training x 3

Accreditations & Awards x 2

Launches x 8

Campaigns x 3



Ready Steady School sessions started in September which we delivered universally in Family Hubs.

Ready Steady School

Train the Trainer for the Brain Architecture Game was launch in January.

January saw the launch of the **Oral Health Training** for Early Years Practitioners.

Awards

In July, the Early Parenthood Service was shortlisted for **Nursing Times Awards** in four categories: Children's services, Community Services, HRH Prince of Wales award for integrated care and Team of the Year award.

The team were successful at the **Children and Young People Now Award** winning the Early Years Award for the Community Connectors.

Launches

Map My Journey was launched in April to support parents through the complicated process of pre-birth risk assessments.

In April, a **Ready Steady School Practitioner Toolkit** was developed for Early Years Settings.

Agreement between Midwifery and Family Hubs to **share live birth data** to support early Infant Feeding in May with Family Hubs to support earlier infant feeding support for all women.

Ready Steady School sessions started in September which we delivered universally in Family Hubs.

UNICEF and NSPCC **Accessing Early Childhood Services for Families Impacted by Poverty Evaluation Report** was launched in December.

March saw the launch of the **Blackpool Parent-Infant & Early Years Relationship Strategy** as part of the Family Hub and Start for Life programme.

Campaigns

The team was involved in **Infant Mental Health Awareness Week** Speak up for Babies' which took place in June.

Oral Health

July saw the development of **Early Years Oral Health** messages with communities and practitioners.



In March, the **Shaping Us Framework** film for The Royal Foundation launched featuring Blackpool Better Start.

YEAR 11

2025/26 PART ONE

Events x 9

Training & Development x 3

Accreditations & Awards x 2

Launches x6

Recruitment x 1

Campaigns x 4

Conference 2026

In March, we held the Better Start 11th annual conference in-person and attracted nearly 300 early years practitioners, academics and system leaders to Blackpool.

The conference brought together experts in science, policy and child development, alongside the voices of parents, to explore the latest evidence, innovations and approaches shaping early years practice across the UK.



Events

As part of Infant Mental Health Awareness in June, our **Think Baby: capturing the voice of babies in practice** webinar attracted hundreds of attendees from around the UK.

The **NSPCC Childhood Day fundraising event** at Stanley Park took place in June. It included a sponsored track activity for toddlers, family play and advocacy opportunities.

In June, we also hosted a visit from the **House of Commons Health and Social Care Select Committee**, contributing to national discussions on the First 1000 Days.

A celebration event in October, marked **five successful years of our Speech, Language and Communication Pathway and Early Communication Home Visiting Team**. It brought together families past and present, to recognise the service's impact and how strong relationships have been built over time.

The popular **Early Years Marketplace** evening events returned in October, sharing our Ready Steady offer with settings.

In November, we attended and presented at the UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Conference, showcasing **Blackpool's breast pump loan scheme**.

Our annual **Christmas Grotto events** brought delight to over 200 babies and children for another year, with 434 personalised letters from Santa also distributed.

Our Community Connectors were invited to **No. 11 Downing Street** in early 2026, by the Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP to celebrate the work of the team towards eradicating child poverty.

Training & Development

In April the **Early Years Partnership Team** expanded delivery of our Ready Steady School approach across early years settings and schools.

Family Hubs recommitted and sustained the **Enhanced Infant Feeding** pathway.

The Early Communication Team participate in **Video Interaction Guidance training** in November, to enhance their practice in promoting attuned parent and child relationships.

Development

December saw the launch of the Partnership's **Oral Health Awareness Training** for the early year's workforce.



YEAR 11

2025/26 PART ONE

Events x 9

Training & Development x 3

Accreditations & Awards x 2

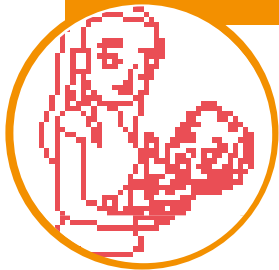
Launches x 6

Recruitment x 1

Campaigns x 4

Think Baby

The first phase of the Think Baby Toolkit was launched. Developed to support anyone working with babies to embed the voice of the infant into everyday practice.



Accreditations & Awards

In October we were thrilled to achieve **UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative accreditation** across Early Help, Health Visiting and Neonatal services, recognising high-quality, consistent infant feeding support for families.

Shortlisted for the **Children & Young People Now Partnership Working Award**, recognising a decade of strong cross-sector partnerships supporting early child development in Blackpool.

Launches

In April we relaunched our **Community Development Strategy**, refining and recommitting to our work with Blackpool's families and wider community.

In Summer, we launched the **'How Babies Learn to Talk' project** alongside Blackpool Libraries and Family Hubs. The session was co-delivered by Blackpool Better Start and Speech and Language UK,

In early 2026 the test phase of the **co-produced Dads Inclusion Toolkit** was launched with local service delivery teams.

In February, a research programme was initiated with Blackpool Family Hubs, for the **pump loan scheme**. This included focus groups and interviews with foster carers and professionals.

In Winter, we launched a test phase of a new **Social Value project**, linking businesses social value budgets with community led activity or initiatives.

Recruitment

In February, two University of Manchester students had the opportunity to help shape real-world practice. In their 12 week research placements they supported literature reviews of our Pump Loan Scheme and Community Connectors.

Campaigns

In May we launched our co-produced **parent-facing early child development campaign** with Blackpool parents, promoting the value of everyday moments through relatable, non-judgemental messaging delivered via digital channels.

Our innovative partnership approach to tackling health inequalities was featured in a piece in **The Guardian** in June.

In July we submitted to the government **call for evidence** on the Men's Health Strategy, which we saw our inputs reflected in a section on Fatherhood.

In August, a **digital campaign around infant feeding** was delivered during World Breastfeeding Week. It addressed common worries, used relatable imagery and provided signposting to local and national services.