



# Dashboard Report

## YEAR 10 2024/25



## Blackpool Better Start Year 10

# Highlights of the year

Year 10 marks a significant moment in the delivery of Blackpool Better Start. After a decade of collaborative working across the town many of the funded interventions, through review at the sustainability board, have been scaled up, sustained, or ended. As the partnership moves into the final two funded years of delivery, the early years landscape across Blackpool has been transformed and many of the successful approaches are now embedded into offers for parents.

- 8 services scaled up by the partnership
- 14 services sustained by the partnership

Working alongside partners the expansion of the early dental access and Text Teeth scheme to include three more dental surgeries has been an example of how the benefits of commissioners and providers thinking and working differently can support more families to access critical health services. Over the year, working alongside communities and professionals, oral health messages for early years families have also been refined and training packages developed for professionals around promotion of positive oral health practice.

The annual conference in Year 10 launched the Better Start Systems Building Report and was an opportunity to celebrate - with over 900 delegates - the decade of funding and the learning of how working through the partnership and systems has transformed childhoods in Blackpool.

# Cumulative Impact

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



**6500**

children on average per year (Y4-10) benefiting 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

**8103**

families

Baby Steps universally delivered town wide since 2021

47.2% of pregnant women reached with antenatal provision since Yr1



## Social and Emotional Development

Targeted skill-building to empower parents

**922**

Families accessing parenting support



**3620**

Children receiving support with developing their

## Speech and Language Skills



## 7979 parents engaged with Community Connectors

since Y3

53% living in the most deprived households (IMD1)

NOTES ON DATA:  
Related to Y1-Y10 on the Better Start Project April 2015-April 2025.

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 10 years has seen 17,021 children 0-3 and 5,627 pregnant women benefiting from the enhancements to the universal health visiting programme.

Blackpool Better Start Year 10

# Beneficiaries & Activities



## Beneficiaries & Activities Year 10

18

Funded Services

875

Universal contacts with pregnant women by their Health Visitor

6,679

Universal contacts with children by their Health Visitor

1,568

Individuals receiving Infant Feeding Support

716

Children supported with their Speech and Language

549

Families receiving antenatal support

101

Parents receiving parenting support

820

Families supported by our Community Connectors

907

Fathers and Male Carers supported



## Beneficiaries & Activities Year 10

**126** Parents receiving support from Early Parenthood Service

**63** Couples supported by For Baby's Sake

**109** Community Speech, Language and Communication groups with **559** children attending

**81** Children supported by the Speech and Language Home Visiting service

**941** Children referred to the Speech and Language Triage Panel

**36** Families attending It takes Two to Talk Groups

**353** Parents attending Baby Steps

**61** Ready Steady School sessions with **240** children attending

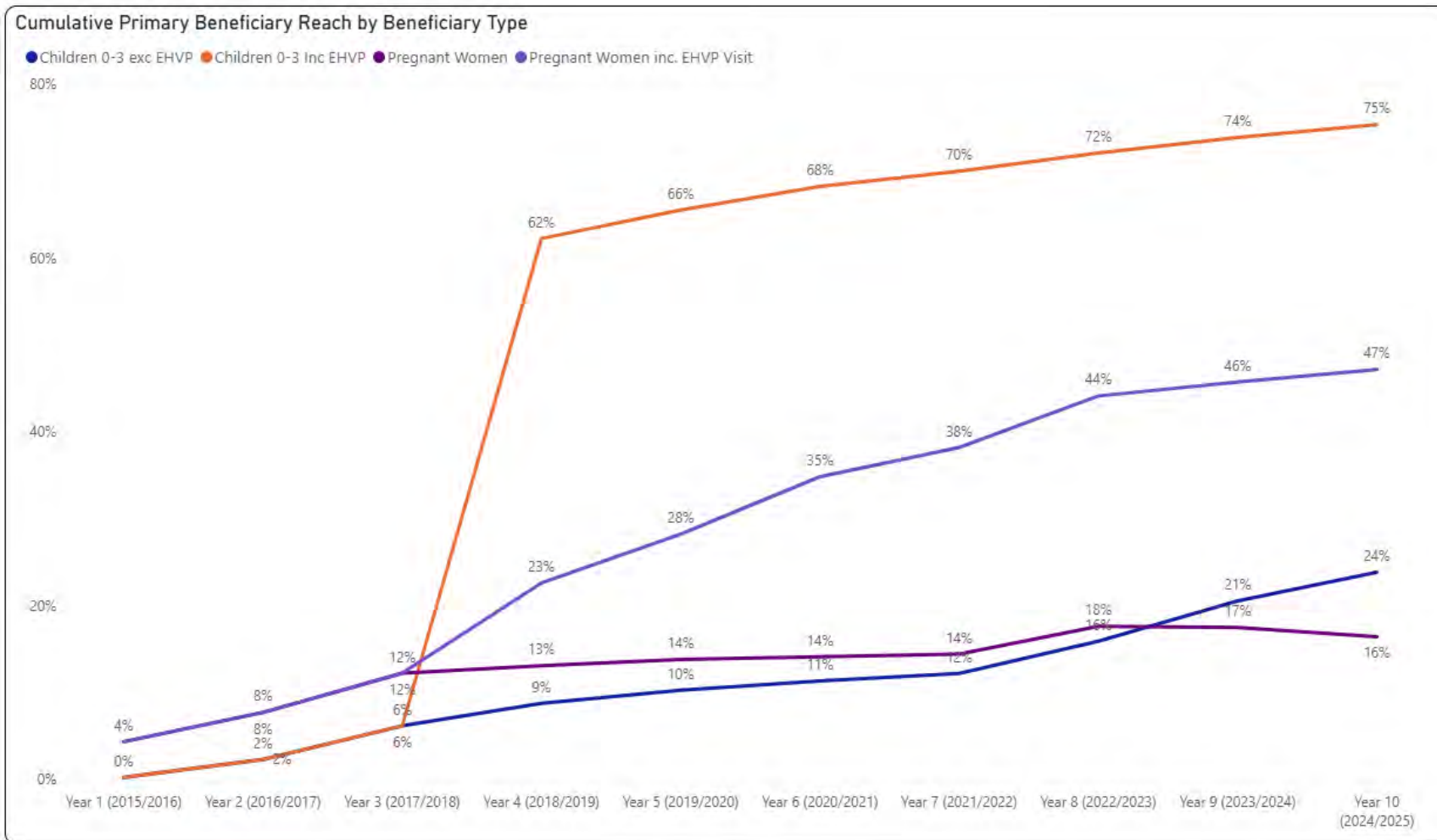
**322** Children attending Home Learning Environment Groups

**15** Parents attending Being a Parent parenting groups

**42** Parents receiving VIG in relation strengthening parent-infant relationships

**44** Families receiving the Safe Care intervention

# Beneficiaries & Activities Year 10

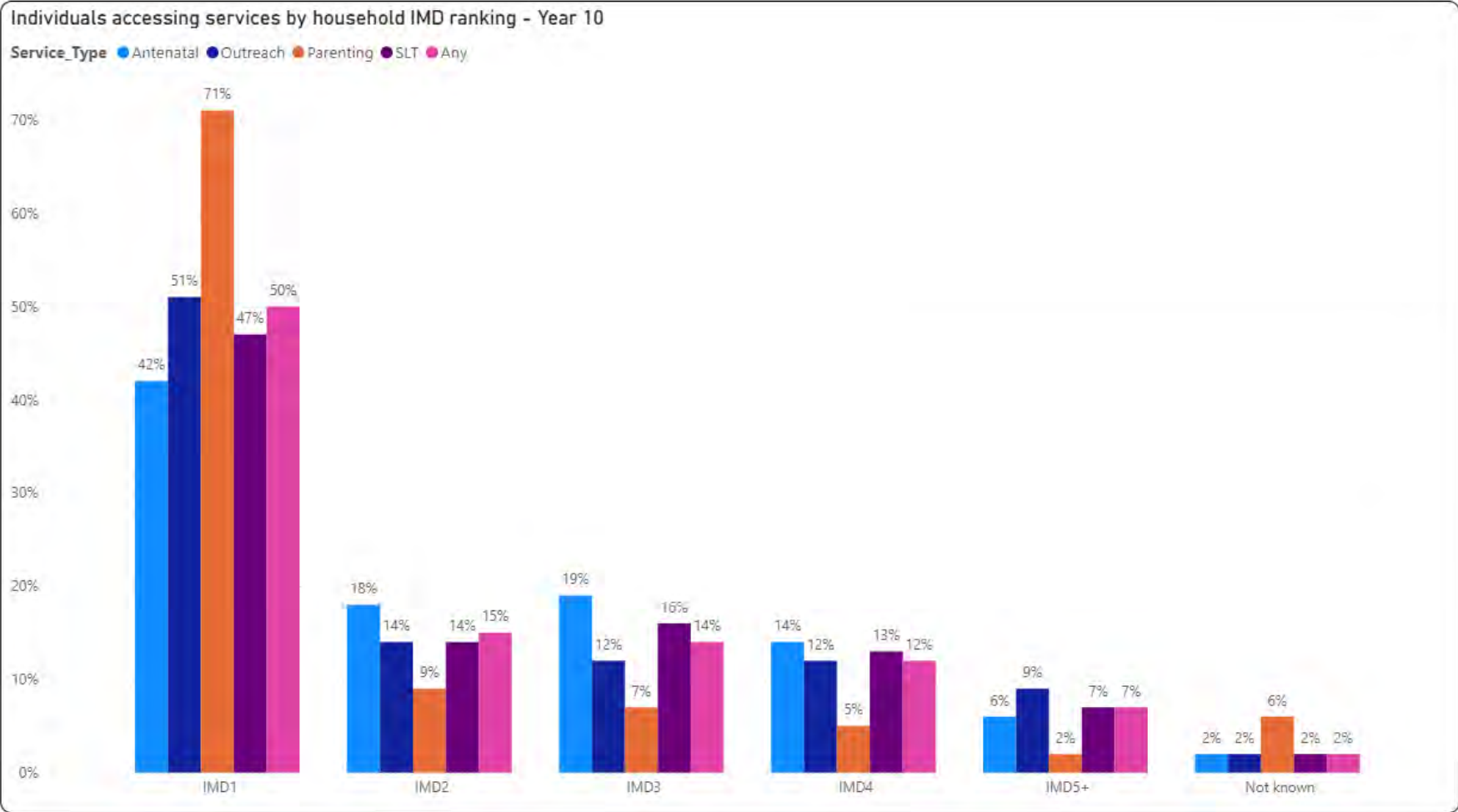


The reach of services to pregnant women, excluding Health Visitor contacts, has decreased in Year 10. This is due to the sustainability of services through the partnership and the data no longer being included.

The reach of women receiving the additional antenatal contact from Health Visitors has however increased in Year 10. As has the proportion of children receiving universal contacts.

The number of children receiving direct support, excluding Health Visitor contacts, has continued to increase. The scale up of services in Early Help and the increased reach of the Speech and Language offer has impacted on this increase.

# Beneficiaries & Activities Year 10



Over Year 10, **1,820 individuals** have accessed a service in addition to the universal delivery of the Health Visiting service. The IMD of these individuals is shown.

Over **50% of beneficiaries reside in households with an IMD1**, indicating the most deprived households. 41% of households in Blackpool are ranked as IMD1.

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 services of Early Parenthood Services, EPEC Being A Parent, SafeCare, Survivor Mums, For Baby’s Sake and VIG all had over 70% of their beneficiaries residing in households categorised as IMD1.

## Targeted Services

Since April 2022, the Blackpool Early Help and Support Service have been delivering the evidence-based interventions of Video Interaction Guidance (VIG), SafeCare, and Survivor Mums' Companion (SMC) within their model of family support. Previously delivered by the NPSCC Delivery Team in Blackpool, the interventions were evaluated to deliver positive outcomes. Practitioners have been trained in the models and are able to deliver the intervention to families both on their case-load and through referrals from the multi-agency triage panel.

Practitioners have reflected that being trained in the interventions has been positive to their work, enabling them to be more reflective in their practice with parents and giving them additional skills to meet the needs of families.

Since launch, there have been **39 Practitioners** trained in the interventions. Some of these practitioners are now undertaking coaching, trainer and advanced practitioner training to enable them to supervise and train new staff supporting the sustainability of the model post National Lottery Community Funding.

*"The family have benefitted from the early help as it has stopped an escalation for more intensive support. They have been to access regular support to work through different parenting strategies to find ones that work best for them as a family"*

**Reflections on SafeCare**

*"With every family I have worked with a lot of them were a little apprehensive about taking part, especially the idea of being filmed. However, after sharing the lovely, attuned moments that I captured they saw the benefits. I love how it makes them feel empowered"*

**Reflections on VIG**

*"This gave the mum the opportunity to work through their emotions and experiences, it gave them the words to describe what had happened and what was going on for them"*

**Reflections on Survivor Mums'**

# 216

Families have received targeted parenting support.

# 70%

Of these families live in the most deprived households in Blackpool

(2022-2025)



## Multi-agency Triage Panels

Early identification of need and ensuring there are integrated care pathways are key factors in supporting children and families and reducing the need for later, more costly interventions. In Blackpool, two multi-agency triage panels have been established to support early years families; The Multi-agency, Post Wellcomm Speech and Language Triage Panel, and the Family Hub Triage Panel.

The Post Wellcomm Speech and Language panel provides a co-ordinated approach to reviewing and allocating services to children with an identified need on the Wellcomm assessment. Community Connectors support the families through the referral process and signpost the family to universal support whilst they are awaiting services.

The Family Hub triage includes representatives from services that support parents-to-be and families with babies aged 0–2 years. This includes our Early Parenthood Service, an intensive, nurse-led home visiting programme for parents facing challenging circumstances that may affect their ability to parent.

The triage panels are examples of how early intervention and prevention and collective decision making around children and families' needs ensures that families receive the right support at the right time.

The Speech and Language Triage Panel has since January 2020 assessed

**2,615 Children**

The Early Help Triage panel has since July 2023 supported

**994 Individuals**



Blackpool Better Start Year 10

# Community Activities



## Community Activities Year 10

**588** contacts by Community Connectors  
with **469** parents

**2,402** families accessing early years sessions  
at **301** library events

**2,781** children attending  
**440** Early Years Park Ranger activities

**1,392** individuals attending  
**179** Parents Ideas Factory Events

**336** children attending Christmas Grottos  
and **222** Letters from Santa sent

**813** children benefiting from  
Supervised toothbrushing in **26** nurseries

**283** Parents supported on Maternity Wards

**1,001** books gifted to families

**1,600** getting Ready for School packs  
distributed to the September 2024 intake

**422** individuals using Text Teeth resulting in  
**55** Children receiving  
early dental access support

# Community Budgeting

Giving the community capacity and voice within decision making has always been a key outcome of the Better Start Partnership. Participatory Budgeting is a process where power is passed to the community to choose activities, which are delivered in their communities. The aim being to build co-productive relationships and engage more families in early years activities and ultimately wider services.

The approach has been iterative, initially being delivered through Children Centres and then developed to include innovative approaches of Street to Scale and The Parents Ideas Factory with the aim to engage a wider range of parents including those not currently engaging with services. The range of activities selected has been varied, from resources for sensory play or crafts, sports activities, litter picking and gardening, story trail development, adult support groups and theatre and zoo trips.

The iterative development has allowed for the improved inclusion of more parents, with 57% of families that attend activities living in the most deprived households in Blackpool (IMD1) and 10% of those attending not being current Family Hub users.

*"I could not believe this was a free event; my child loved this experience, and I did not know that there was so much on offer at my Family Hub."*

**Parent attending a mobile farm event**

*"In my view, I find arts and crafts a lifesaver. No matter how bad my mental health is, by the time I leave I feel more relaxed, and not as stressed, worried or angry"*

**Parent attending funded art session**

**1,090**

Activities chosen by the community which have been attended by

**12,950**

Children 0-3 and their families

(2015-2025)



Blackpool Better Start Year 10

# Workforce Development



## Workforce Development Year 10

143

Training Events

3,081

Total Attendees

1,811

Individual Learners

90

Individuals accessing  
perinatal mental health  
training

512

Attendees received an  
introduction to ACE's and  
Trauma Informed Care

963

Registrations for  
our 10th  
Annual Conference

566

Completing the Brain Game Training as  
part of the Trauma Pathway

216

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**.

Over Year 10 to reach more learners and support the sustainability of the approach e-learning training packages have been developed. This includes online and pre-recorded content which will be available over Year 11 and 12 and beyond.

Of the **1,811 individual learners** who have attended training content this year, **24%** have been students, **19%** Local Authority employees and **15%** health employees. The remainder of attendees come from across the early years sector, including settings, voluntary and education.

## Brain Architecture Game

The Brain Architecture Game, Developed by Dr Judy Cameron, is an interactive and dynamic training session which allows groups of people to understand the impact of adversity and trauma on early childhood experiences. Delivered as part of the Trauma Informed Pathway in Blackpool it supports and enables the workforce to integrate the theory and science of early adversity into policy and practice.

In Year 10 to ensure the sustainability of this key training element we have developed a train the trainer course. This has been delivered to key individuals who will be able to champion and deliver the training within their organisations over Year 10, **111** individuals have received this training. The training has also been filmed to enable further cascade and sustainability of the training within early years and wider across Blackpool.

*“Knowing more about how ACE’s and Trauma can affect into adulthood has been very helpful to me when working with parents and offered me greater insight. I am more aware and conscious of the language that I use.”*

Participant on Brain Game

*“I can see from my own lived experience how lucky I was having great parents, but equally I can now recognise how some of my peers without positive experiences in childhood have not done well re health, education and social outcomes, it’s made me self-reflect and will make me a better future Doctor”*

Participant on Brain Game

Across the workforce as part of the Trauma Informed Pathway there have been

**237 Sessions**

with

**3,028**

**Attendees**

(2016-2025)



Blackpool Better Start Year 10

# Outcomes & Drivers

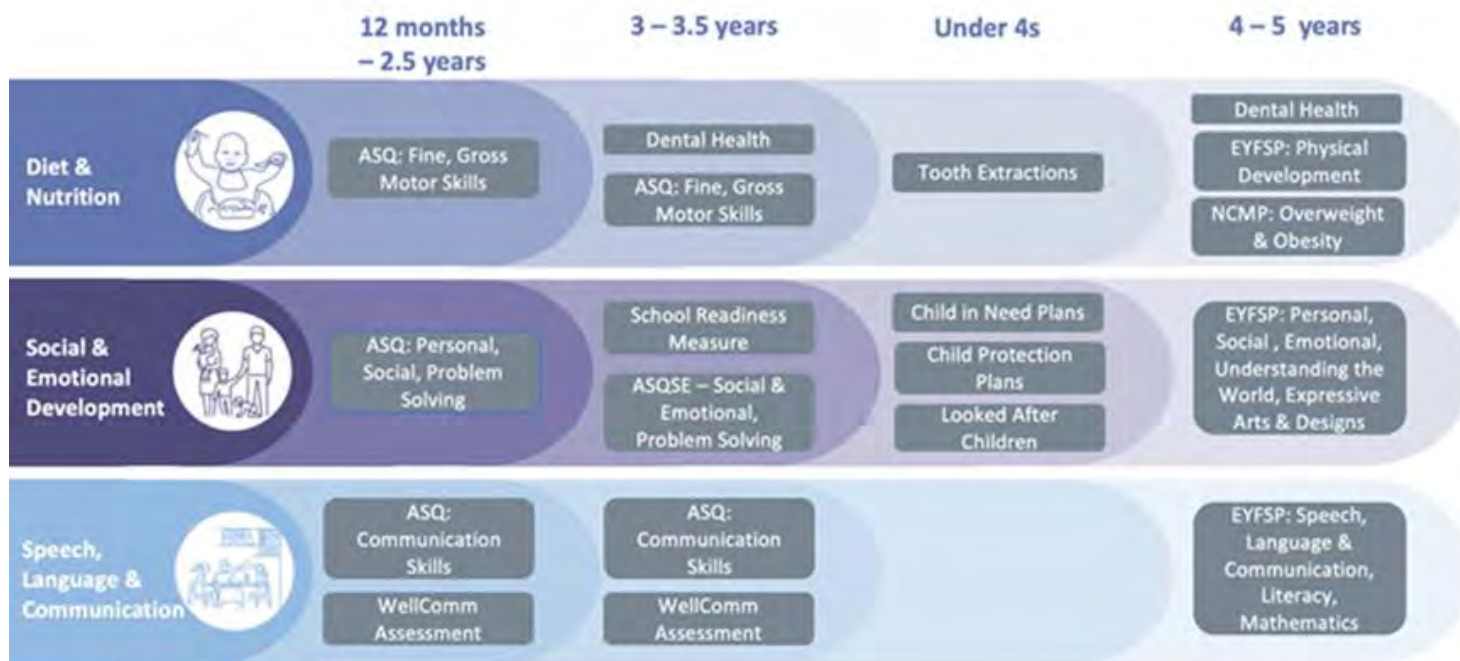
## Outcomes & Drivers



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.

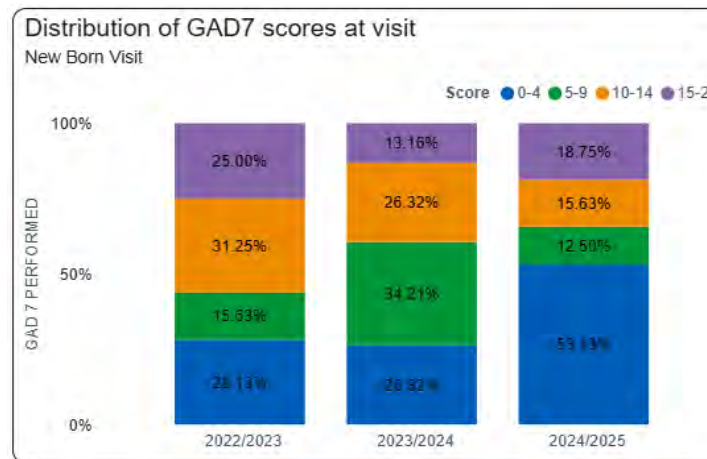
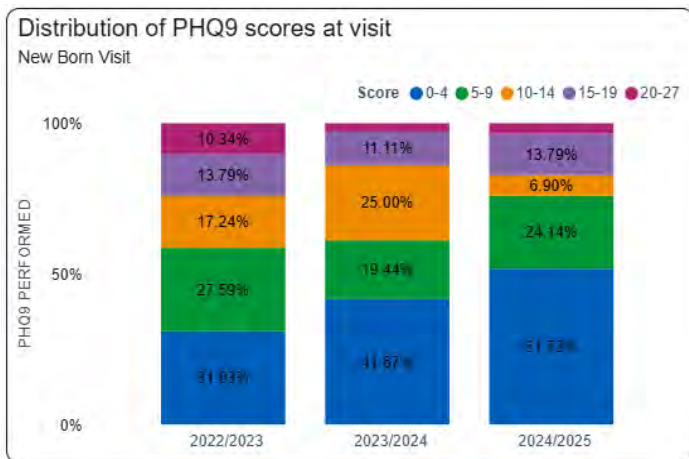
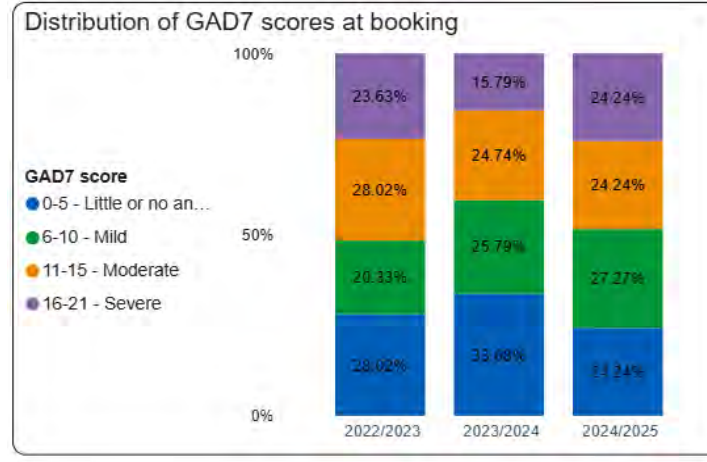
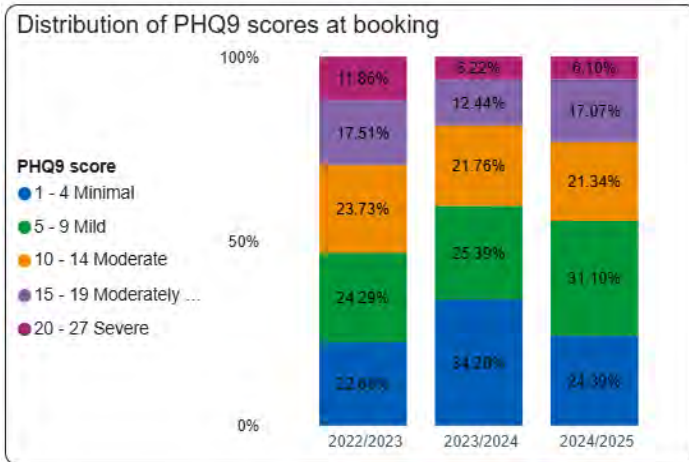
To measure change at population level through our data warehouse, housed by Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, administrative data has been collected across the population since 2015. With this data we can look at and analyse changes across metrics which are both locally and nationally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

Unless otherwise stated the data shown is taken directly from local data held within the data warehouse which is collected from health systems of Badger Net (Maternity) and EMIST Community (Health Visiting).



# Pregnancy

## Maternal mental health



Midwives use the Whooley screening tool with mothers at the booking appointment to determine if further depression or anxiety screening should be undertaken (GAD7 and PHQ9).

In Year 10 13% of screenings were positive which then led mothers having either the GAD7 (anxiety) or PHQ9 (depression).

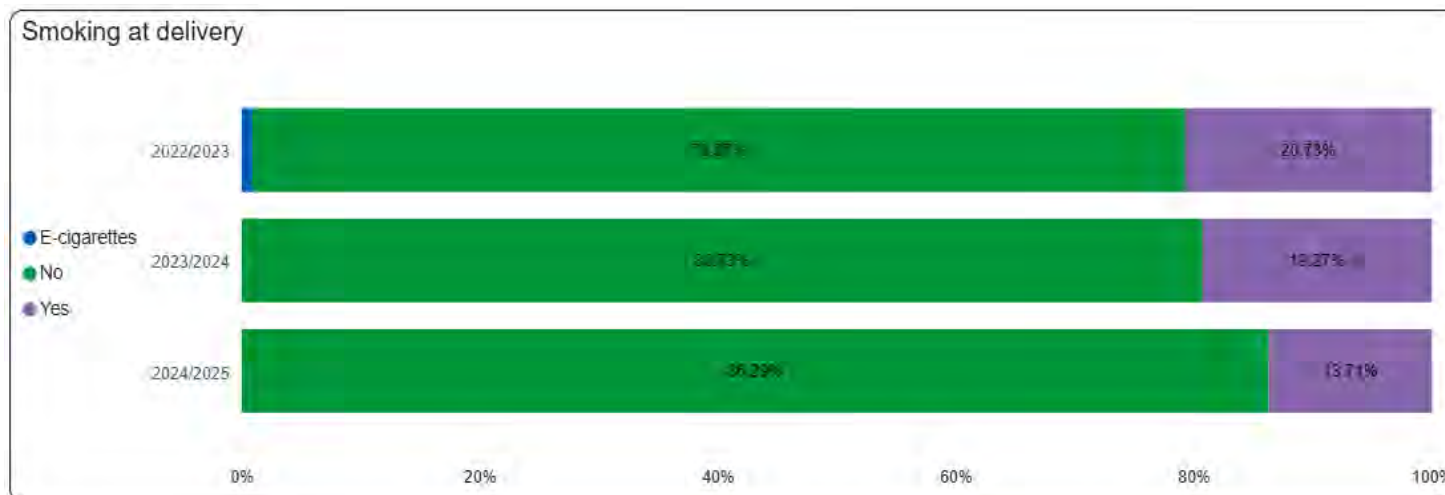
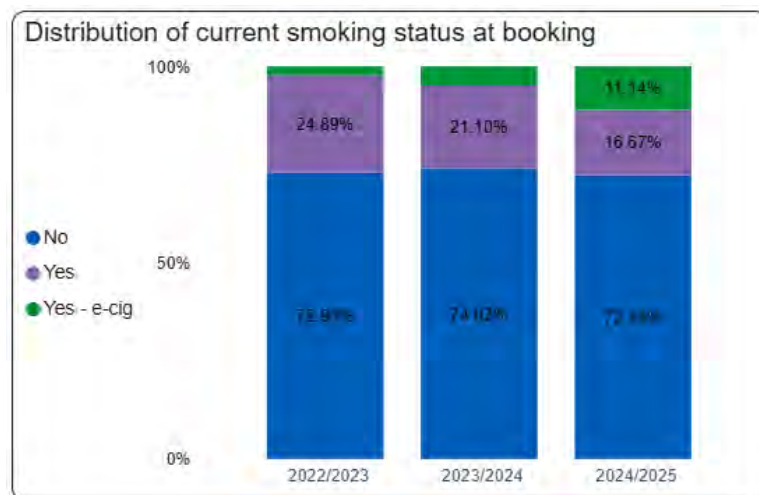
The number of women experiencing more severe symptoms is increasing. This is an indication of higher needs for mothers.

However, through the same screening process in Health Visiting at the Newborn visit 8% of mothers are offered the PHQ9 or GAD7.

The severity of need following screening has also decreased over the last three years, and this could be an indication of the positive impact of the increased support available for mothers during their pregnancies.

# Pregnancy

## Smoking in Pregnancy



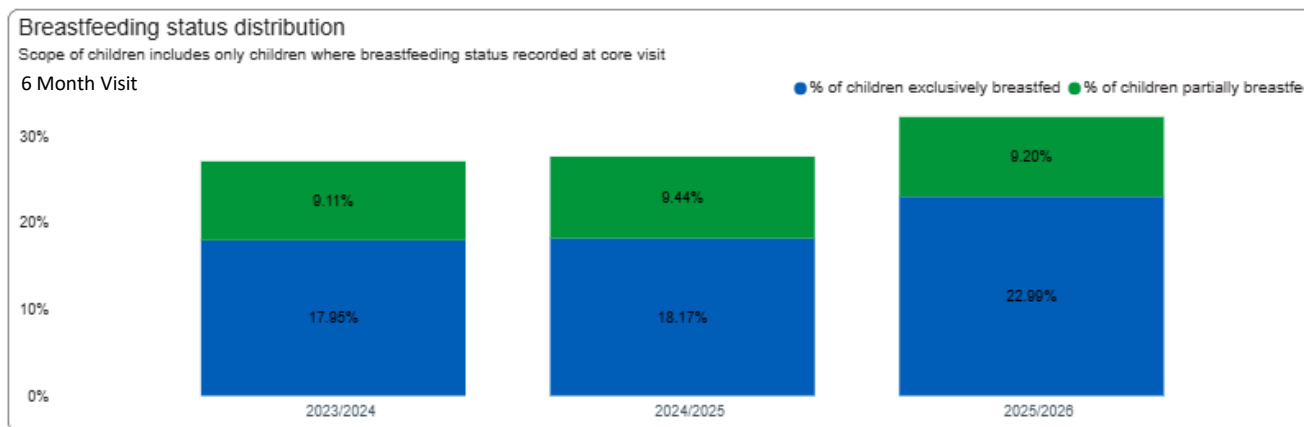
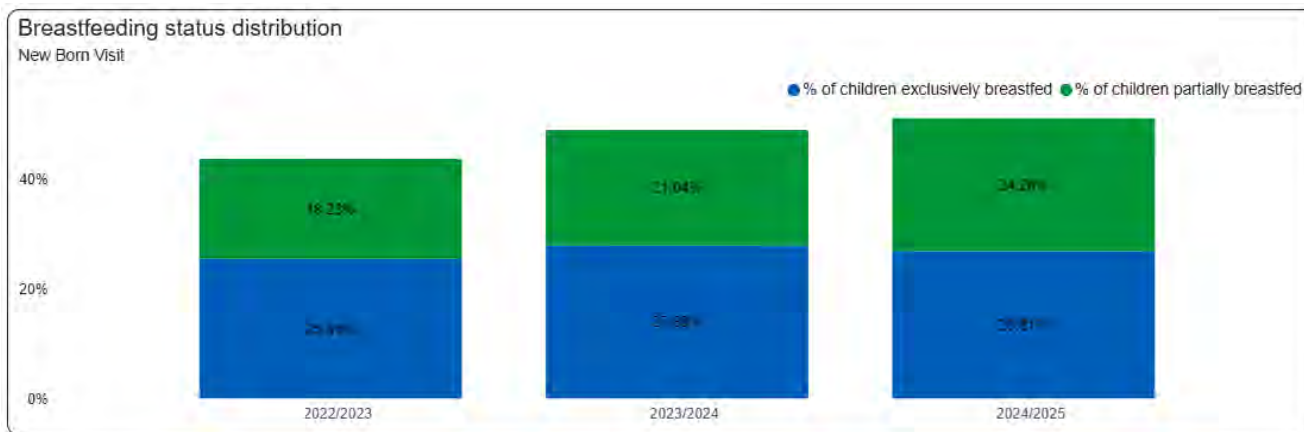
At booking, midwives enquire about the current and historic smoking status of mothers. In Year 10, of those records where a response was recorded, 17% of mothers were still smoking cigarettes at booking. Over the last three years this has been reducing. Since 2022 vaping/e-cigs has also been recorded and the number of women vaping has been increasing.

At the point of delivery, this changes very little with 14% of mothers still being recorded as smokers. Data collection around vaping at time of delivery appears to be patchy and some more work is needed to ensure this field is collected accurately.

Data has been monitored since 2018/19 and over this time there has been a **7.7% reduction** in the number of women smoking at delivery.

# Child Health

## Breastfeeding



Mothers breastfeeding at birth is recorded by Midwives. Midwifery records indicate that of those women where data has been recorded in Year 10 **69%** of women initiated feeding within 48 hours of birth. This has increased over the funded period from 60% in Year 2.

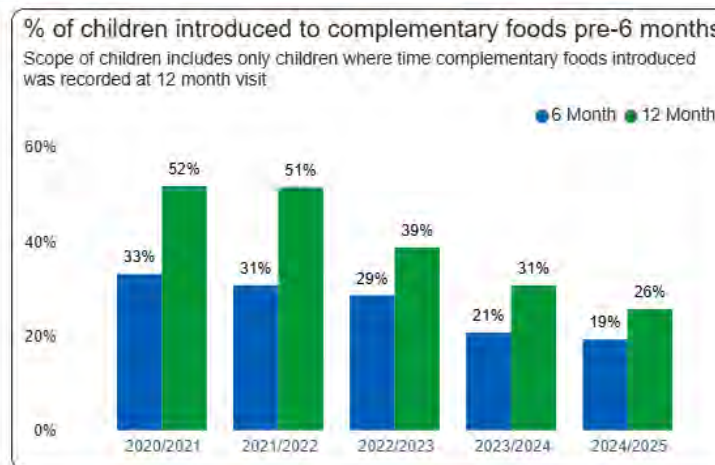
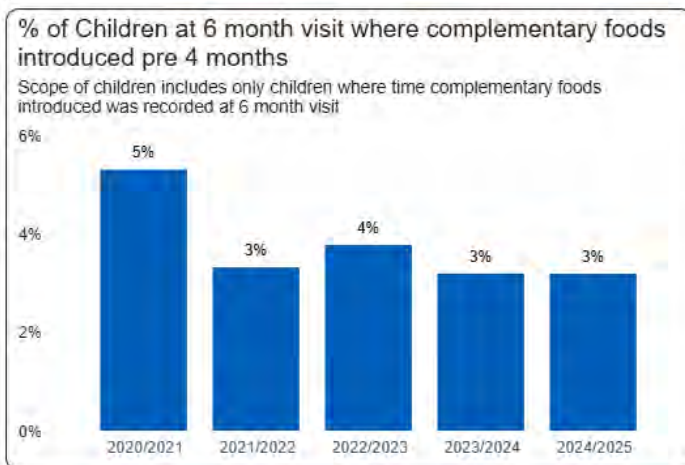
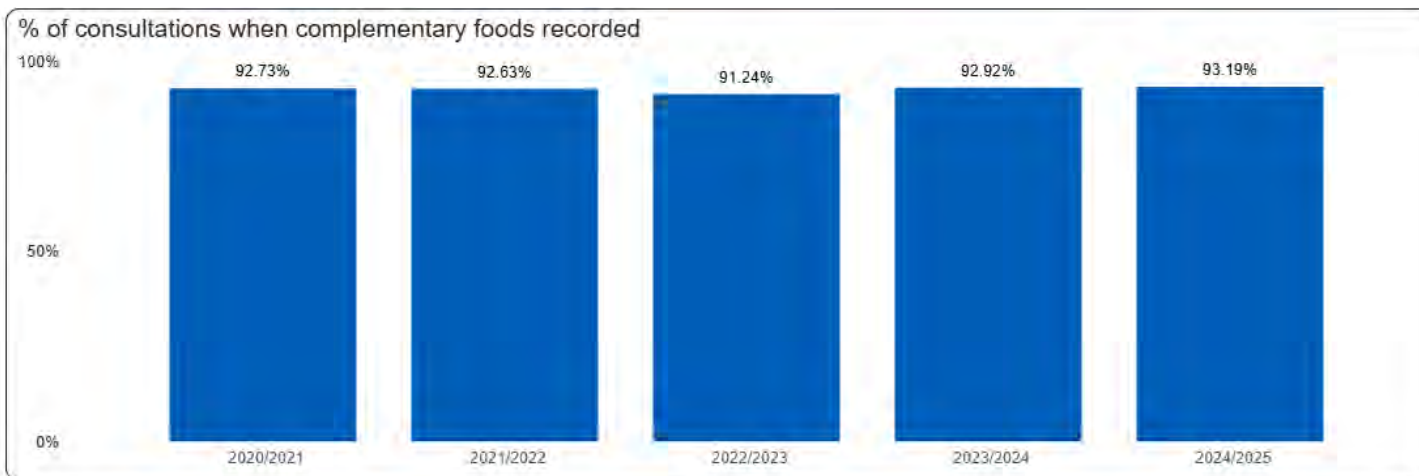
Mothers' breastfeeding status is recorded by Health Visitors at universal contacts up to and including the 12-month visit. 88% of these records have a response.

At the newborn and 12-month visit, the number of babies partially and exclusively breastfed has increased steadily.

Since data was available in Year 2, we have seen a **16% increase** in mothers breastfeeding at the newborn visit, a **9% increase** in mothers breastfeeding at the 6-month visit, and **4% increase** in mothers still breastfeeding at 12-months.

# Child Health

## Introduction of complementary foods



At the 6-month and 12-month visit, parents are asked by their Health Visitor when they have introduced their infant to complementary foods (solids), this recording has been consistently high.

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

Since 2020/21, there has been a 3% reduction in those that disclose at the 6-month visit that they have introduced solids prior to 4 months.

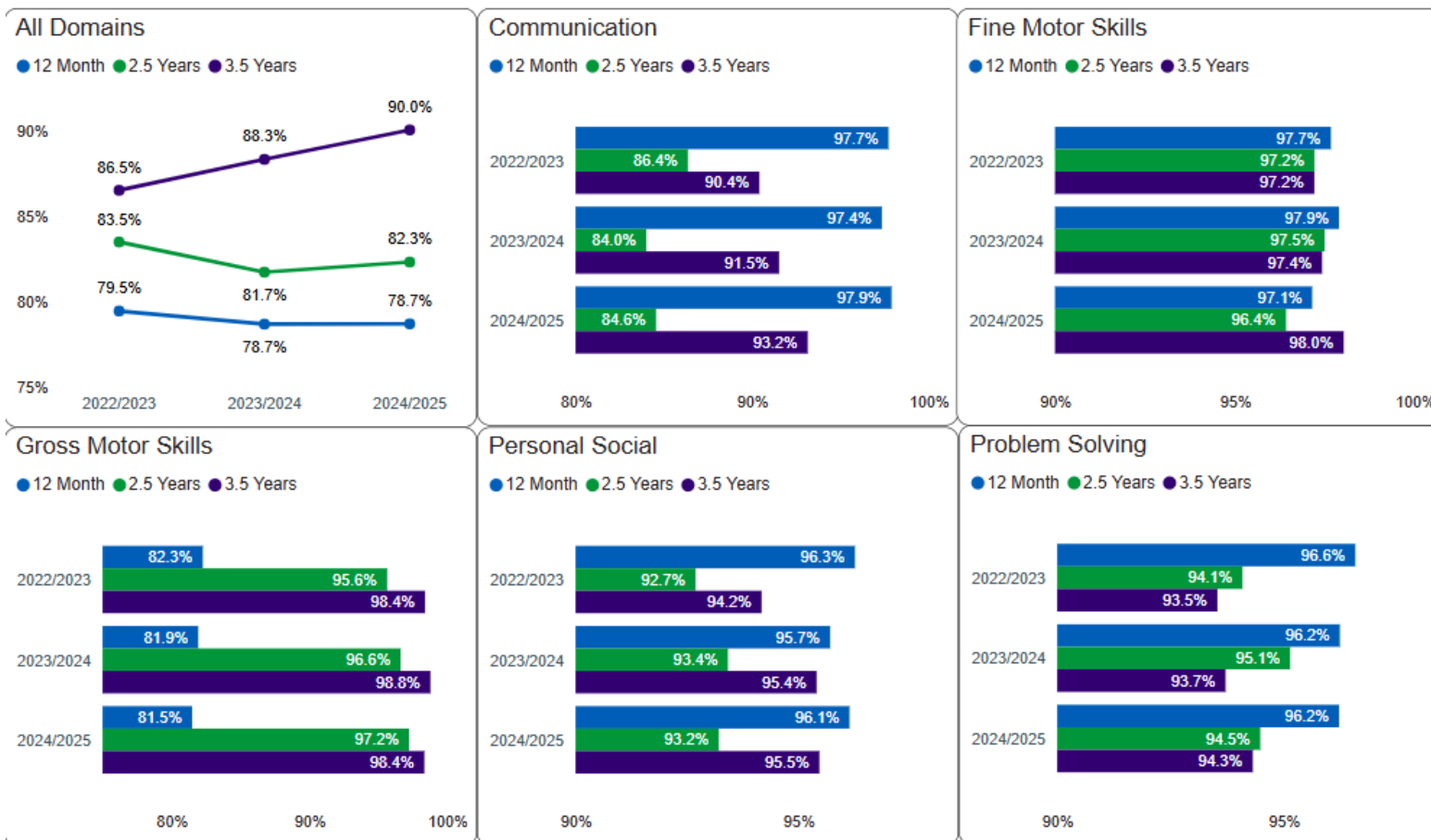
At the 12-month visit, the rate of decline is much steeper, with a **14.5% reduction** in solids being introduced prior to 6 months.

# Child Developmental Measures

## Ages and Stages Questionnaire

### % of Children Reaching the expected level of development scope of children

*Includes only those where ASQ data is recorded*



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.

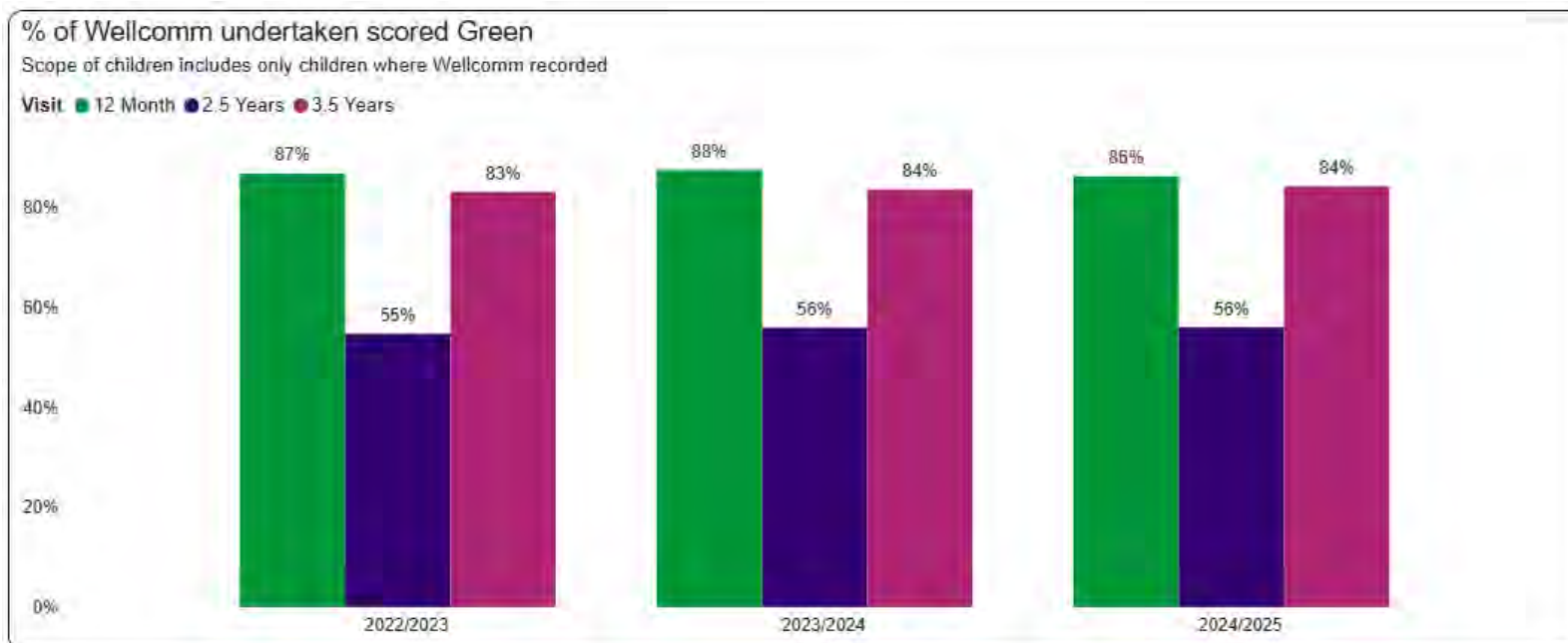
In Blackpool, this is collected at three time points. Nationally, this measure is reported at age 2.5 Years, where 80.4% of children are at the expected level of development in all 5 domains. Data suggests that children are more likely to achieve a good level of development if they live in a less deprived area. Since 2014, 10% more children in Blackpool live in relative low-income families.

However, despite this, Blackpool children are exceeding the level of development of their national peers, with 82% of children reaching the expected level of development across the 5 domains at 2.5 Years.

When looking at the breakdown of the children in each of the domain areas and at the additional time points, we get a richer picture of where continued focus needs to be made.

# 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 checks. The measure is completed at 84% of eligible contacts.

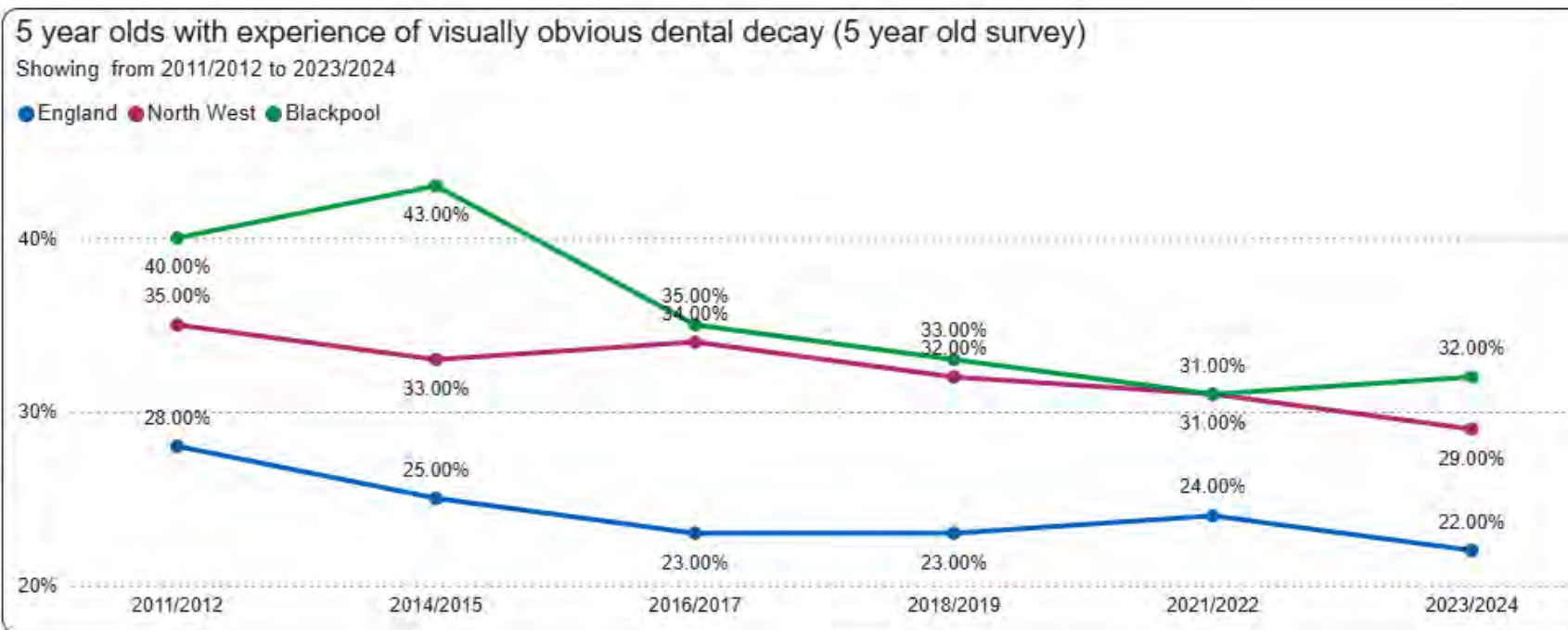
There are differences in the proportions of children who are reaching the expected level of development - scored green - over the time points where the measure is used. Children are referred to the multiagency SLC triage panel when they are identified as requiring additional support.

It is possible that delays in languages are most noticeable at the 2.5-year check, at this time point families will then be signposted to both universal provision and targeted support.

The number of children reaching the expected level of development by the 3.5-year check increases. This indicates that universally children who may have been behind their peers when starting school have developed more key language skills.

# Child Health

## Oral Health



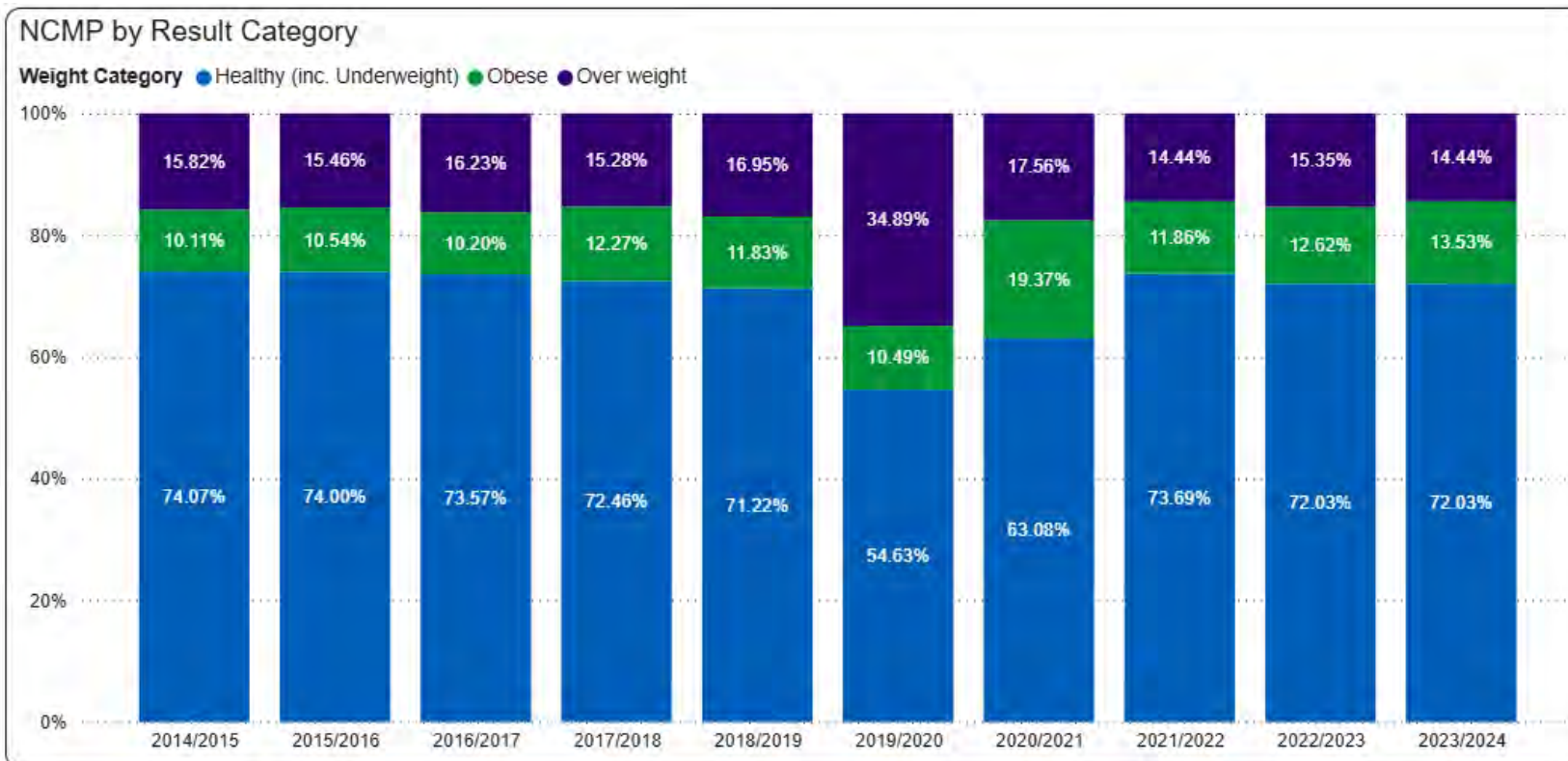
Enquiry is made at Health Visitor contacts whether the child is registered with a dentist and if the child's teeth are being brushed. This was recorded in Year 10 on 94.4% of records. Of those asked 91.5% of parents reported brushing their child's teeth as per the guidelines, which is an increase of 2% from last year.

The percentage of children who are registered with a dentist has remained constant with last year at 53% of children. The expansion of the preventative oral health appointments offered through Text Teeth will hopefully impact positively on more children being able to source NHS dental care.

A national survey is undertaken on 5-year-olds which examines a sample of children for obvious dental decay, this was last undertaken in 2023/24. Since 2011/12 Blackpool has seen 20% less children surveyed having obvious dental decay and the rate of improvement is higher than average across the 10 most deprived authorities.

# Child Health

## National Child Measurement Programme



A part of the National Child Measurement Programme, children are weighed and measured at school in Reception and again at Year 6 annually. The data collection undertaken in Covid was of a smaller sample and therefore nationally thought to contain errors.

The data provides an indication of the number of children in an area who are of a healthy weight (including underweight), overweight and obese.

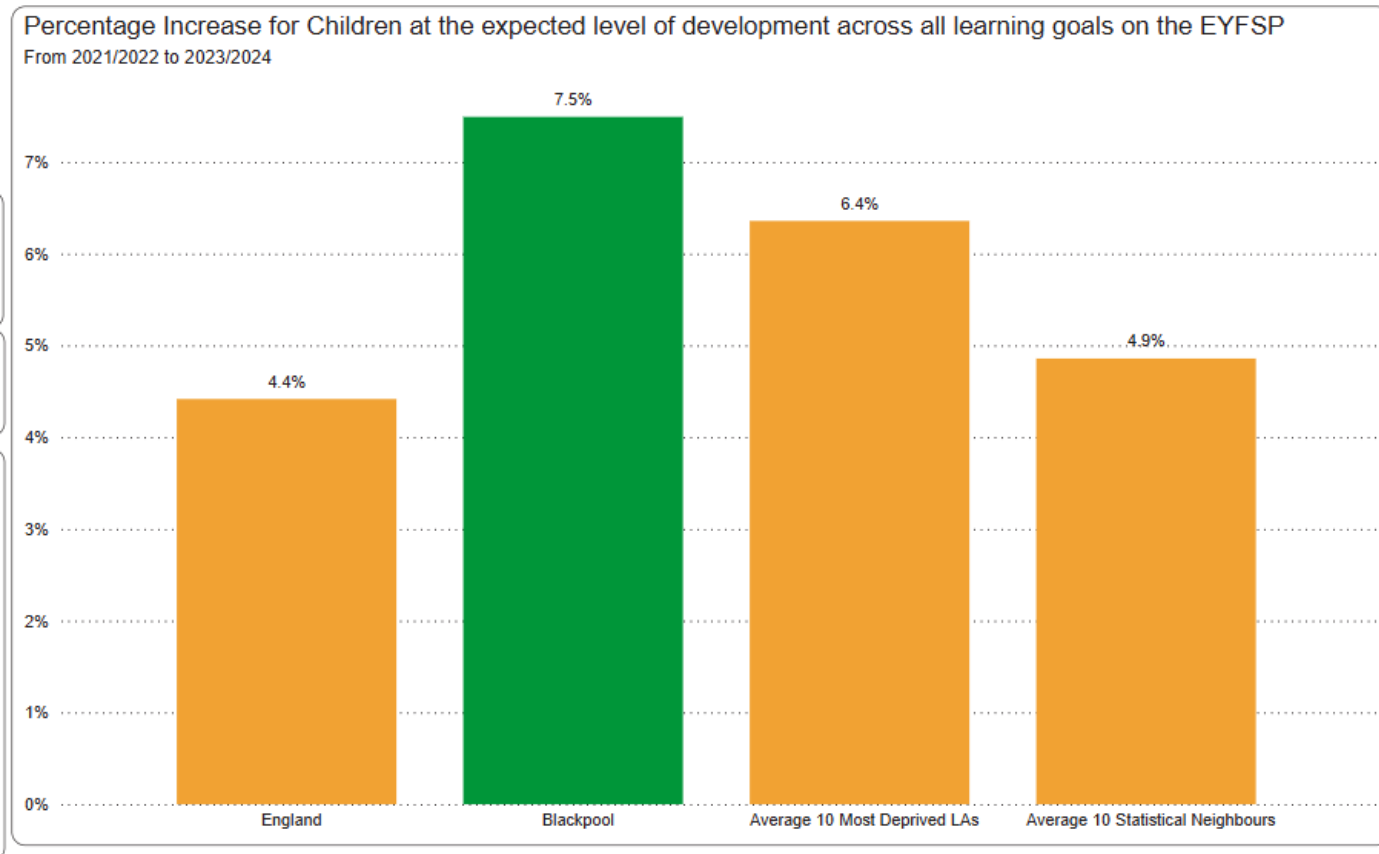
The national data indicates that 4 in 5 children in Reception are of a healthy weight and this decreases to 2 in 3 by Year 6.

In Blackpool in Year 10, 64.6% of children are at a healthy weight in reception. By Year 6 this decrease to 58.6% of children. Highlighting the need for further intervention across childhood.

The rates of healthy weight in reception however have returned to the pre pandemic levels in Blackpool, which is in line with the national trend.

# Child Developmental Measures

## Early Years Foundation Stage Profile



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.

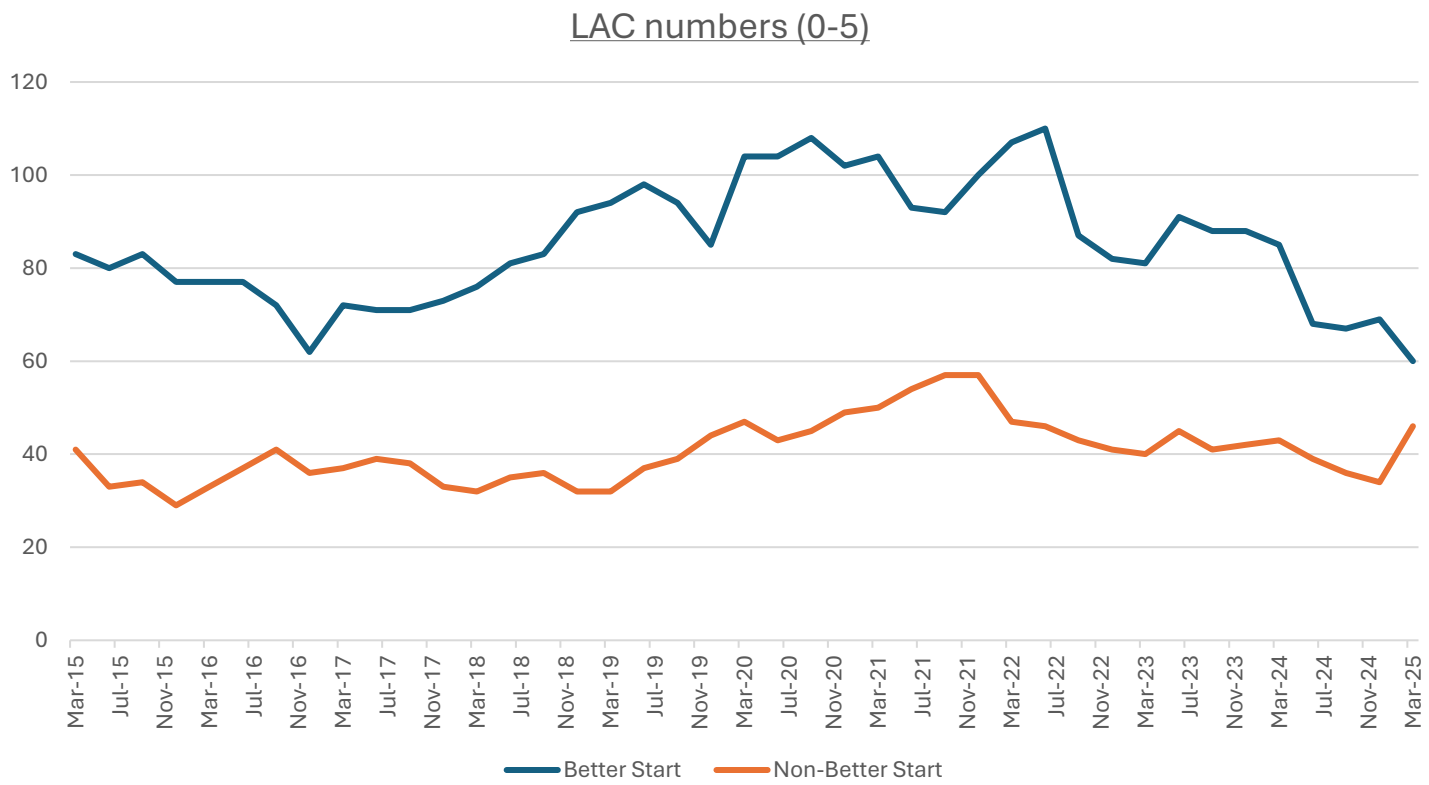
The EYFSP changed in March 2021, meaning that comparability to years prior to this is not possible, we have compared the % increase over these years

In the three years where the new measure has been used, there has been a **7.5% increase** in the number of children reaching the expected level of development across all Early Learning Goals in Blackpool. This is higher than the England rate of increase.

The increase is also greater than that seen in the average increase in the 10 most deprived authorities and statistical neighbours.

This is a positive change. However, more Blackpool children are under the expected level of development than their national peers.

# Social Care



The total number of Our Children has increased since 2015 across Blackpool by 44%. The authority remains the corporate parent to the highest number of children in England.

However, the increase since 2015 has been seen in the over 5s with a decrease in the numbers under 5s by 16%.

Looking at the difference between the seven Better Start Wards and the non-Better Start Wards, there has been a steeper decrease in the number of children going into care. This equates to a 7% difference over the 10 years

Looking at this difference, this is estimated to be around 73 children with an estimated cost saving of approximately £6 Million, over the decade of delivery.

Blackpool Better Start Year 10

# Timeline Highlights

# YEAR 10

2024/25 PART ONE

Events x 12

Training x 3

Accreditations & Awards x 2

Launches x 8

Campaigns x 3



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

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.

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

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.

# YEAR 10

2024/25 PART TWO

Events x 12

Training x 3

Accreditations & Awards x 2

Launches x 8

Campaigns x 3



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

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

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

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