



# Best Start in Life plan for Buckinghamshire 2026-2029



# Our Vision

Every baby, child and family in Buckinghamshire deserves the best possible start in life. Our vision is for a county where families are supported by a joined-up, welcoming and accessible system from pregnancy through to school and beyond. We want every child to develop strong early communication, language, social and emotional skills, because these foundations make a lifelong difference.

We want every parent and carer to feel informed, empowered and confident in supporting their child's early learning at home, so that children can grow, explore and thrive.

Families should always have places they trust to turn to. Wherever they seek support – from a Family Hub, health visitor, early years setting, school, library or community organisation - families should feel listened to, understood and supported by people who can offer guidance, encouragement and hope.

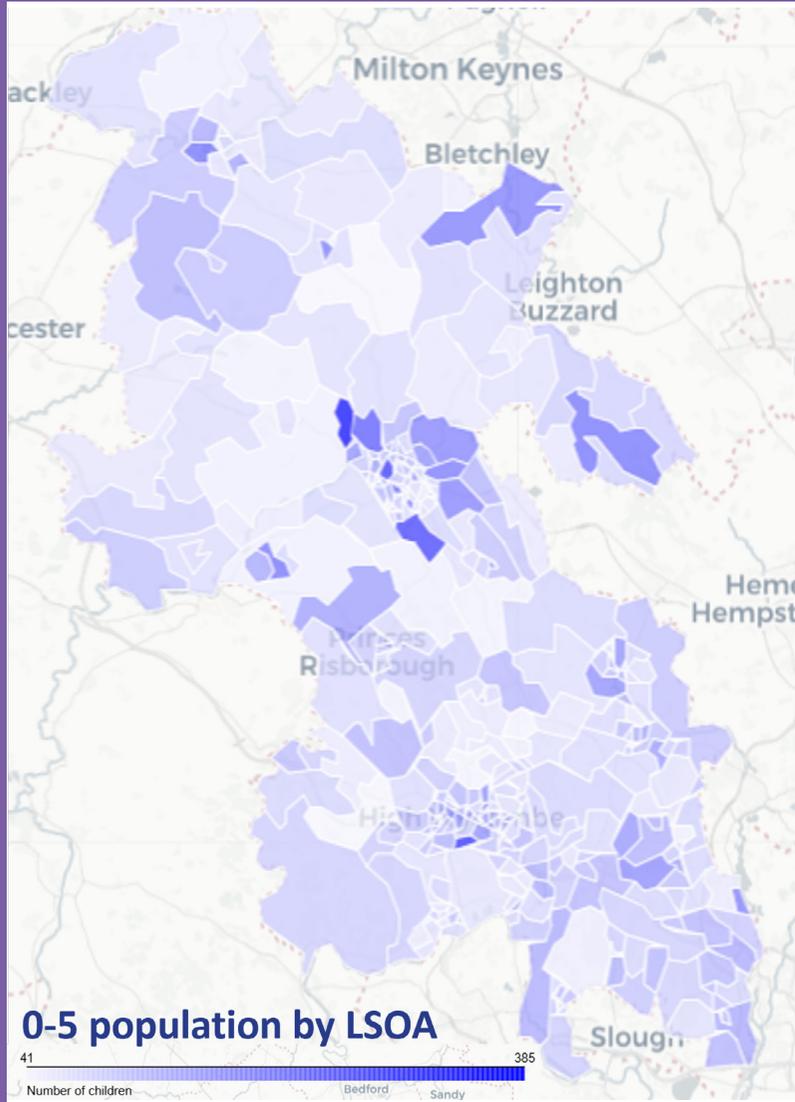
We know that not all families start from the same place, and some face extra pressures or barriers. Reducing inequalities is central to our ambition. We will work together to ensure help is easy to find, easy to access and free from stigma, so that no child is held back by circumstances beyond their control.

By strengthening home learning, improving access to high-quality early education, supporting positive transitions into school, identifying SEND needs earlier, and joining up health and wellbeing support, partners across children's services, health, education, public health, the voluntary sector and local communities will make Buckinghamshire a place where every child truly gets the best possible start in life.

Our aim is simple: for all children in Buckinghamshire to be ready to play, ready to learn and ready to flourish.

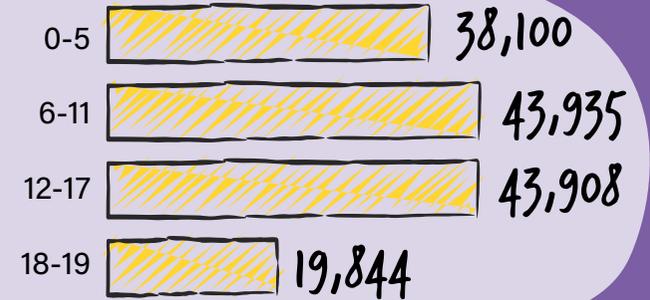


# Buckinghamshire context



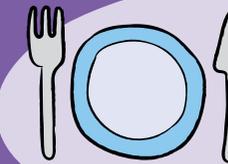
**145,787**

0 - 19 year old population



**10.9%**

children aged 0-19 in absolute low-income families



**15.4%**

state-funded school pupils eligible for free school meals



**23.1%**

homeless households with dependent children

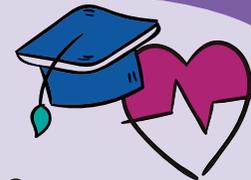
**64.5%**

eligible 2-year-olds registered for the families receiving additional support entitlement



**7,217**

Education, Health and Care Plans maintained



**92.2%**

3 and 4-year-olds registered for funded childcare (universal)



**11,132**

Pupils receiving SEN Support in Buckinghamshire schools (12.3%)

# Outcomes in Buckinghamshire\*



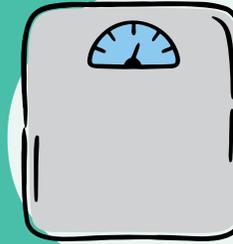
**18.6%**  
5 yrs olds with visual signs of dental decay compared to 23.7% across England



**15.6%**  
of new and expectant mothers screened for poor mental health



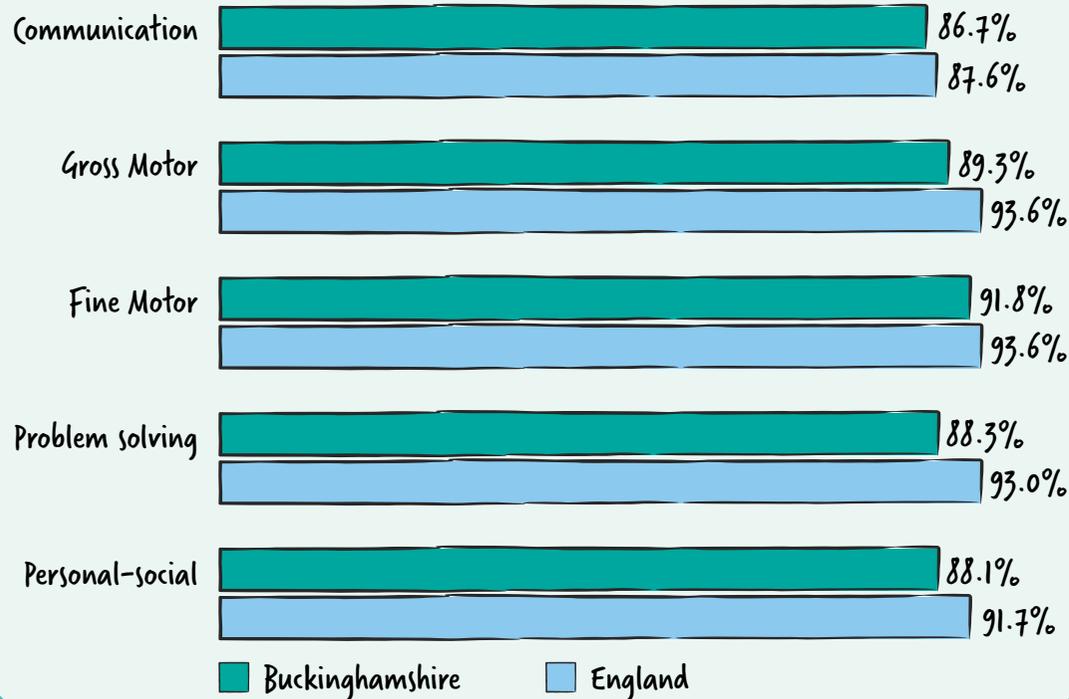
**89.7%**  
MMR vaccination at age 5 (2 doses) compared to 83.7% across England



**77.2%**  
Healthy weight (age 4-5) compared to 74.3% across England

**77.2%**

children in Buckinghamshire were at or above the expected level in all five areas of 2 - 2.5 year development check in 2025, compared to 81.4% across England.



**71.4%**

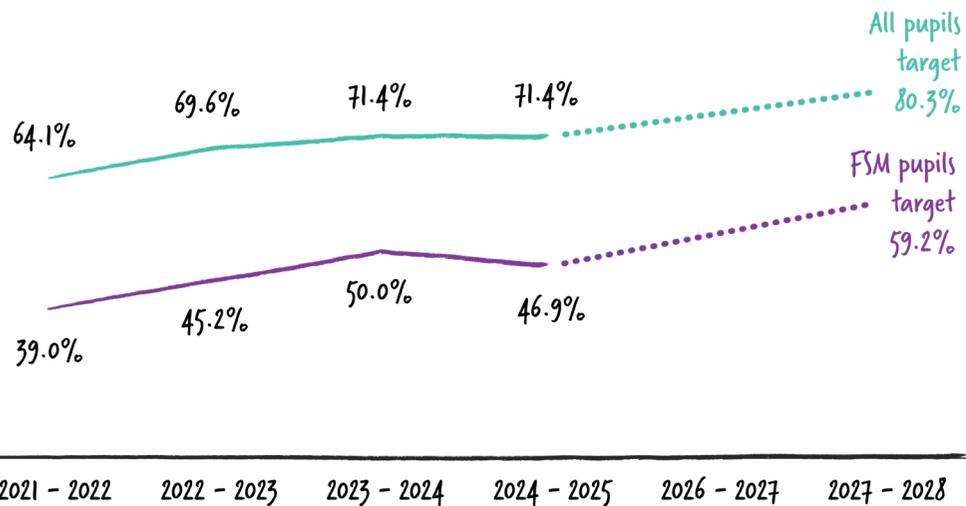
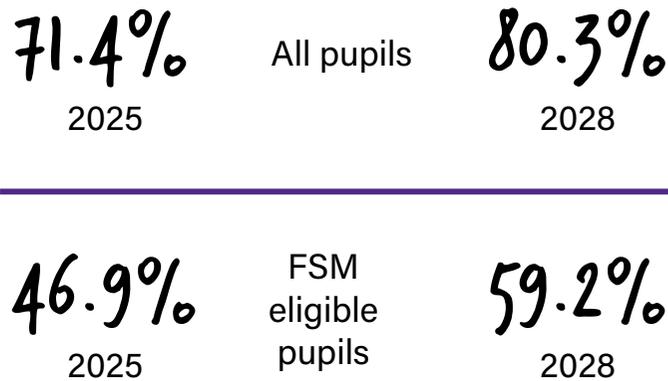
pupils achieved a Good Level of Development at the end of Foundation Stage in 2025, compared to 68.3% across England.



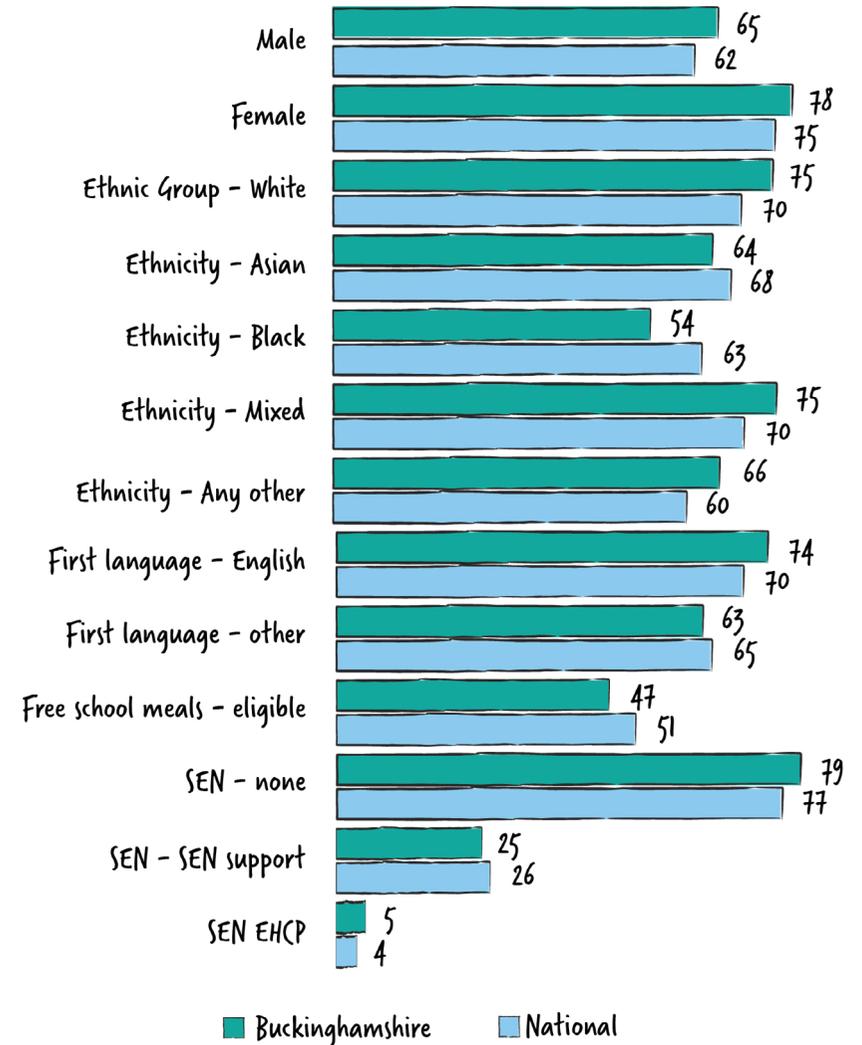
\*Data taken from the most up-to-date source at time of publishing

# Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) outcomes in Buckinghamshire 2025

EYFS outcomes: all pupils and FSM eligible pupils



EYFS outcomes: percentage achieving GLD by pupil group



# Our priorities

These five priorities bring together what families tell us, our local needs analysis, and national Best Start in Life guidance to ensure we are focusing on the areas that matter most for children and families in Buckinghamshire.

The priorities align to those of the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-2035 which have been jointly developed across Buckinghamshire partners. Through the delivery of the Best Start in Life Plan we will ensure co-ordination with the Start Well Action Plan and an integrated approach with the Buckinghamshire Neighbourhood Programme.



Priority 1:  
Strong Home  
Learning



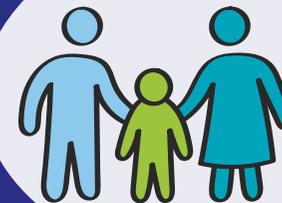
Priority 2:  
High-Quality  
Early Education



Priority 3:  
Positive Start  
to School



Priority 4:  
Early SEND  
Support



Priority 5:  
Healthy, Resilient  
Families



# Priority 1: Strong Home Learning

**We will focus on building parents' and carers' confidence in supporting their child's early communication, language, and social and emotional development, through accessible home-learning ideas and practical parenting support, shaped by families.**

*What we are aiming to achieve:*

1. Families will have access to a range of evidence-based parenting programmes which support building confidence, everyday skills and positive home-learning routines, including offers such as Parenting Puzzle, Nurturing Programme, Making it REAL and Little Talkers.
2. Parents and carers will be able to access clearer and earlier advice on supporting their child's development, with practical ideas they can use at home as part of everyday family life.
3. Outreach approaches will help extend the reach of support, strengthening connections with families who might not previously have engaged with services.
4. Parenting support will continue to develop over time, informed by feedback from parents and carers, so that it remains relevant, accessible and useful.

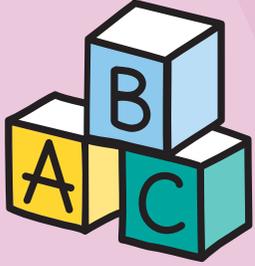
# Priority 1: Strong Home Learning

*How we will measure success:*

**To understand the impact of home-learning and parenting support on families and children's early development, we will monitor:**

1. Parent and carer feedback on their confidence, skills and how useful they found the support.
2. The reach of programmes, both in-person and online, across different communities, including families who might have found support difficult to access previously.
3. Improvements in children's early communication, language and social development where families have taken part in these programmes.





## Priority 2: High-Quality Early Education

**We will focus on improving access to high-quality early education and childcare across Buckinghamshire, particularly in areas of greatest need, so that more children have the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.**

*What we are aiming to achieve:*

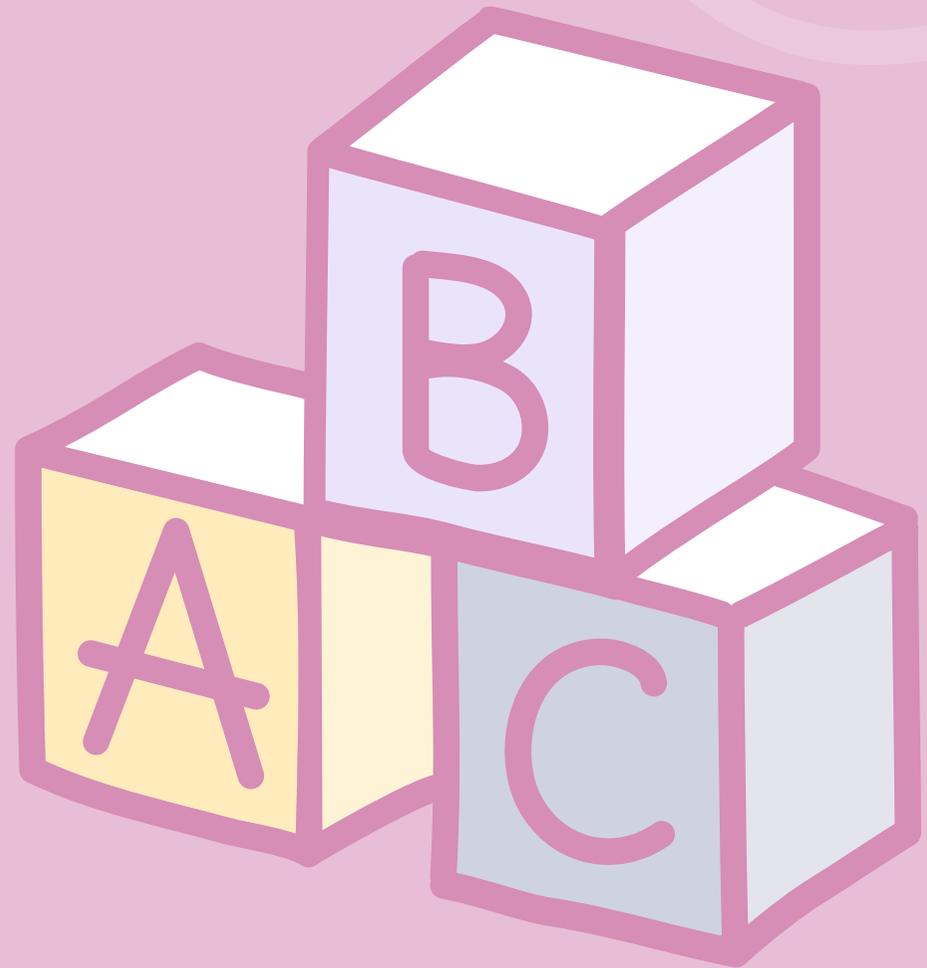
1. Families will have clearer access to funded early education and childcare options, including offers for younger children, supporting earlier engagement where this is most beneficial.
2. Families will be able to access high-quality early years and childcare provision in areas of highest demand, helping more children learn, play and thrive close to home.
3. Early years settings will be supported through practical guidance, training and shared learning, strengthening the quality and consistency of provision across the system.
4. Families will have clearer information and guidance to help them understand and navigate early education and childcare options, supporting confident transitions into childcare.

# Priority 2: High-Quality Early Education

*How we will measure success:*

**To understand how well early education and childcare is supporting children, we will monitor:**

1. Patterns of take-up of funded early education and childcare, particularly in areas where access has historically been lower.
2. The availability of high-quality childcare and early education places across the county.
3. Early years settings showing improvements after receiving support and training.
4. Children are making strong progress in their early development, with the attainment gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers beginning to narrow.





## Priority 3: Positive start to school

**We will focus on strengthening how children are supported to move from early years settings into school, improving information-sharing, transition planning and guidance for families and schools so that more children start Reception ready to play and learn.**

*What we are aiming to achieve:*

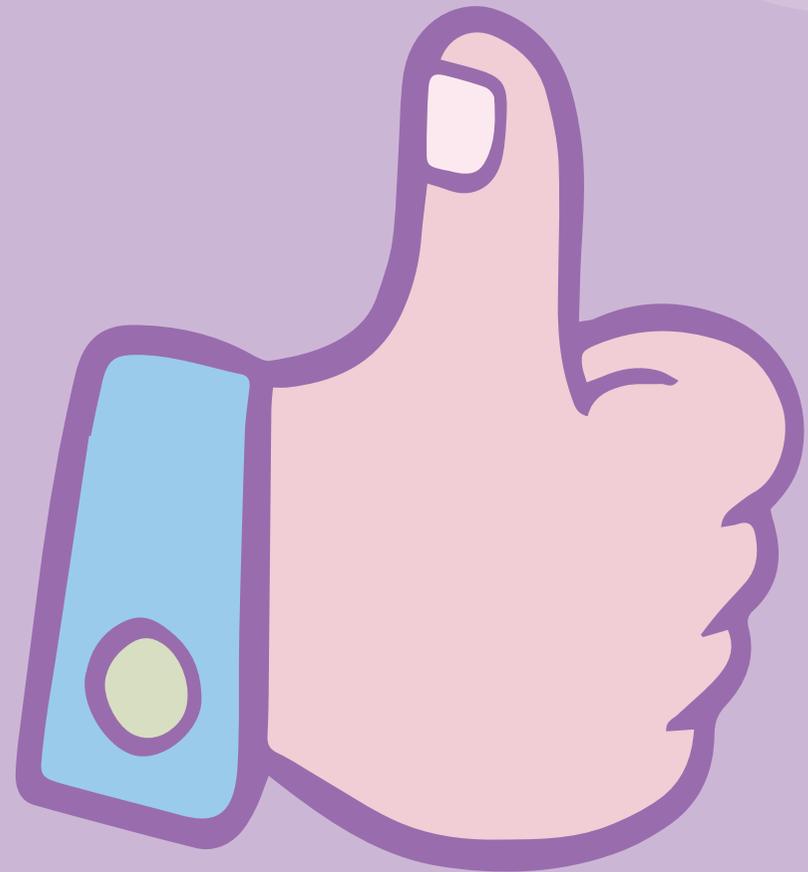
1. Families can expect stronger continuity between early years settings and schools, with clearer and more consistent sharing of information about children's strengths, needs and progress.
2. Children who benefit from additional support during transition will experience more coordinated and planned starts to school, including clearer transition arrangements for groups such as summer-born children, children with SEND, children learning English as an additional language, and those living in areas of higher disadvantage.
3. Schools will be better supported with timely information and shared approaches, helping Reception teachers plan effectively for children's communication, language, self-regulation, literacy and numeracy from the start of the school year.
4. Parents and carers will have clearer guidance and practical advice on how to support their child's readiness for school, helping them feel informed and confident as their child approaches Reception.

# Priority 3: Positive start to school

*How we will measure success:*

**To understand how well children are being supported as they move into school, we will monitor:**

1. The quality and consistency of information-sharing between early years settings, health services and schools.
2. The extent to which planned transition approaches are being used, including warm and guided handovers into Reception.
3. Patterns in the identification of additional needs prior to children starting school.
4. Feedback from schools on how well transition arrangements support them to meet children's needs from day one.
5. Trends in school readiness, particularly in communication, language, and social and emotional development.





# Priority 4: Early SEND support

**We will focus on improving early identification of children's additional needs and strengthening how families access SEND support, by improving connections between early years settings, Family Hubs, health services and specialist teams.**

*What we are aiming to achieve:*

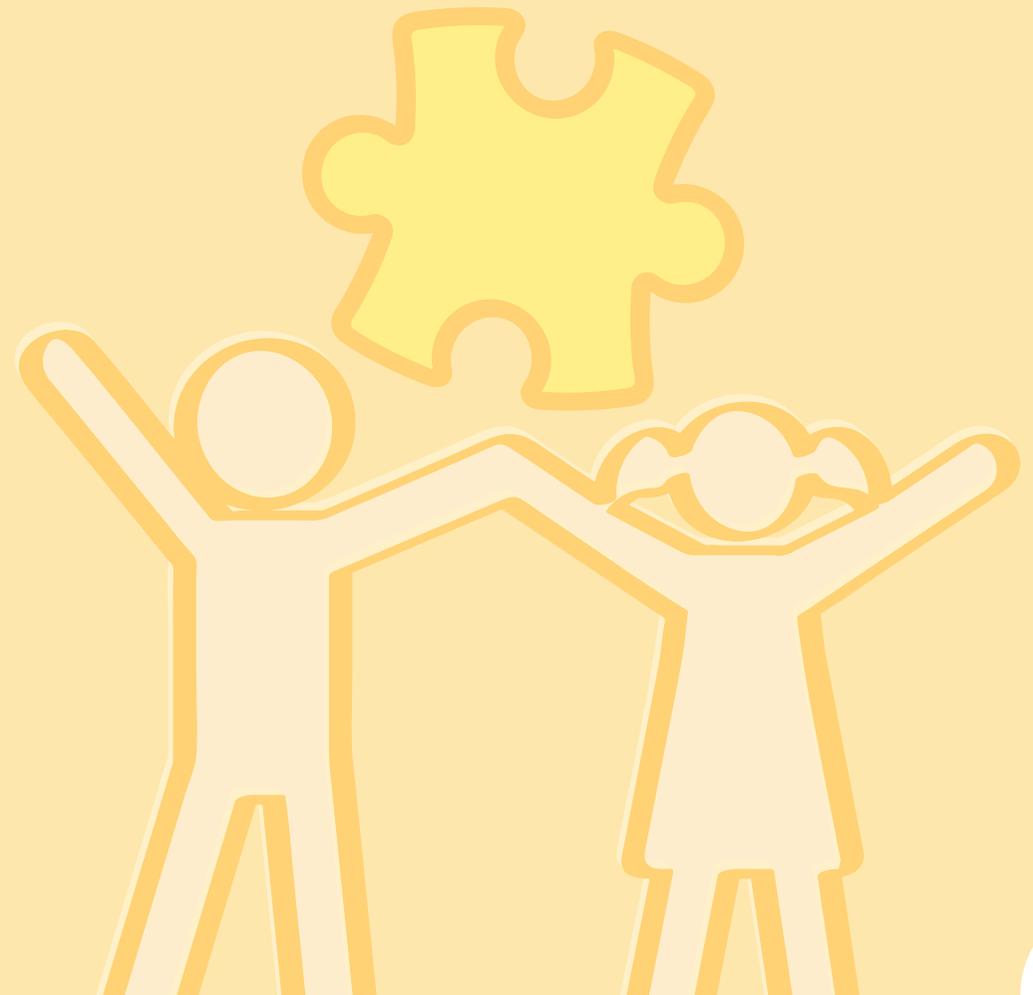
1. Families should experience earlier and clearer conversations about children's strengths, needs and development, helping them better understand what support may be helpful and how to access it.
2. Pathways into SEND advice, therapies and early help will be clearer and more coordinated, supporting more timely guidance, reassurance and next steps for families.
3. Services will work in a more joined-up way, helping families experience clearer routes through support and reducing the need to repeat information or navigate complex systems alone.
4. Parents, carers and professionals will be supported through a clearer and more accessible Local Offer, helping them understand what support, activities and training are available and how to access it.
5. Early years settings and services will continue to strengthen inclusive practice, supporting children and families to feel welcomed, included and valued within universal provision wherever possible.

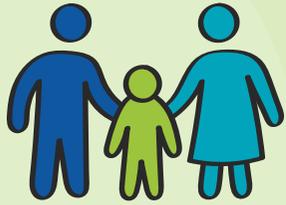
# Priority 4: Early SEND support

*How we will measure success:*

**To understand whether families are receiving clearer and more joined-up SEND support, we will monitor:**

1. Patterns in how early additional needs are identified within a child's early years.
2. The timeliness and quality of assessment and referral pathways into early help, therapies and specialist SEND services.
3. Use of SEND advice and information services, alongside feedback on how clear and navigable support feels for families.
4. Evidence of effective joint working between services, reflected in more coordinated support for families.
5. The extent to which early years settings are embedding the graduated approach, with strong universal support in place and reviewed over time.





# Priority 5: Healthy, Resilient Families

**We will bring together mental health, maternity, health visiting and Family Hub services so families receive clear, joined-up support for their health and wellbeing, including better access to perinatal mental health help and simple digital resources they can use at any time.**

*What we are aiming to achieve:*

1. Families should experience stronger coordination of health and wellbeing support from pregnancy onwards, with services working more closely together to reduce fragmentation and complexity.
2. Families will have greater clarity about what support is available and how to access it, helping build confidence and resilience over time.
3. Digital wellbeing resources will provide more accessible and reliable information, supporting families to find help and guidance at times that suit them.
4. Family Hubs and community-based services will support stronger access to information and practical advice around infant feeding, healthy nutrition and oral health.
5. Delivering maternity and midwifery services in community settings will help bring care closer to families, particularly in areas where access to services can be more challenging.
6. Connections between health visiting and early years services will be clearer and more joined-up, supporting more consistent and coordinated support across a child's early years.
7. Families will be supported to access perinatal mental health help and peer support, strengthening reassurance, understanding and community connections.

# Priority 5: Healthy, Resilient Families

*How we will measure success:*

**To understand whether families are experiencing clearer, more joined-up support for health and wellbeing, and whether this is improving outcomes for children, we will monitor:**

## *Parent, carer and child wellbeing*

1. Patterns of access to perinatal and maternal mental health support, to understand how families are reaching help.
2. Timeliness of support, particularly for families facing additional challenges.
3. Take-up of referrals to mental health services, to understand whether families are accessing appropriate follow-on support.
4. Use of digital wellbeing resources, alongside feedback on how accessible and helpful families find online information.

## *Children's health and early development*

1. Uptake of key maternity and early years health contacts and checks.
2. Indicators of children's healthy development, including immunisation, oral health and infant feeding.
3. Health outcomes across different parts of the county, to understand how support is reaching families in areas of higher need.



# How we will deliver the Best Start in Life

Families have told us they want support which feels joined-up, easy to understand and available early. Our delivery approach starts with families' experiences and is rooted in the communities where they live.

Support will be delivered through a connected network of local services, with Family Hubs playing a key role alongside early years settings, health services, SEND support, voluntary and community organisations and accessible online information.

Family Hubs will be accessible, welcoming places where families can get information, advice and support, while other services continue to support families in settings they already know and use. Together, this means families are listened to, supported and guided to the help that is right for them, whatever their starting point.

We will deliver the Best Start in Life strategy by working together across Buckinghamshire so families experience clear pathways and quicker access to support, and

consistent information they can trust. Behind the scenes, services will work closely together, with staff who feel confident and supported to help families, community spaces which feel safe and familiar, and online information which is easy to find and use.

Through our integrated neighbourhood working and close partnership with local services, we will reach families where they are, build trust and remove barriers to early help. This brings together the people, places and pathways which will help every child in Buckinghamshire have the best possible start in life.



# Family Hubs - support for families in one place

*Building on what's already working -  
a single, trusted point of access for families*

*A universal offer for all families across Buckinghamshire*

Across Buckinghamshire, our Family Centres currently provide a wide range of support for families, many of whom already know and trust these services. Family Centres deliver a mix of everyday and more targeted support, shaped around local need and how communities use services.

- Early years and play activities.
- Health visiting and maternity appointments.
- Parenting advice and support.
- SEND drop-ins and guidance.
- Youth and family activities.
- Community-led groups and local services.

As part of this work, Family Centres will become Family Hubs, building on what already exists and helping services work more closely together so families can find and navigate support more easily.

Family Hubs will continue to reflect the needs of their local communities. Opening times and the way support is delivered may vary by site, depending on local need and the services provided. While each hub might look and feel slightly different, all Family Hubs will follow the same shared principles, so families can expect a welcoming and supportive experience wherever they go.

Alongside this universal offer, we will consider which Family Hub sites are best placed to be designated as Best Start Family Hubs. Those sites will provide an enhanced, more intensive offer for families during pregnancy and the earliest years, particularly in communities where needs are greater.

# Best Start Family Hubs - an enhanced, targeted offer

## *Focused support where it can make the biggest difference*

All Family Hubs provide a universal, welcoming offer for families across Buckinghamshire. Within this wider network, a smaller number of sites will be developed as Best Start Family Hubs.

Best Start Family Hubs are Family Hubs with an enhanced focus on pregnancy and the earliest years, particularly in communities where needs are greater and where earlier, more intensive support can have the greatest impact.

As they develop, Best Start Family Hubs will offer more consistent and flexible access, with extended opening hours across the week, including at weekends. This will provide families with more opportunities to access support in ways which fit around work, caring responsibilities and everyday life.

While not every Family Hub will be formally designated as a Best Start Family Hub, the Best Start principles will guide support across all hubs, ensuring a consistent and supportive experience for families across Buckinghamshire.

## *Best Start Family Hubs will:*

- Bring health, early years and family support more closely together.
- Offer evidence-based parenting programmes which strengthen the home learning environment.
- Provide earlier and more joined-up support for SEND and developmental needs.
- Improve access to services such as midwifery and health visiting.
- Focus on proactive outreach to families who could benefit most from early help.

# Designation of our first Best Start Family Hub

As part of the Best Start in Life programme, Buckinghamshire needed to identify which Family Hub site was best placed to be designated first as a Best Start Family Hub. This was an important early decision, intended to ensure the enhanced Best Start offer could be delivered effectively from the outset.

To support this, a structured options appraisal was carried out across existing Family Hub sites. The appraisal focused on identifying the site that was best positioned to deliver the enhanced Best Start offer, taking account of both local need and readiness to support more integrated working.



*In considering which site should be designated first, the appraisal looked at:*

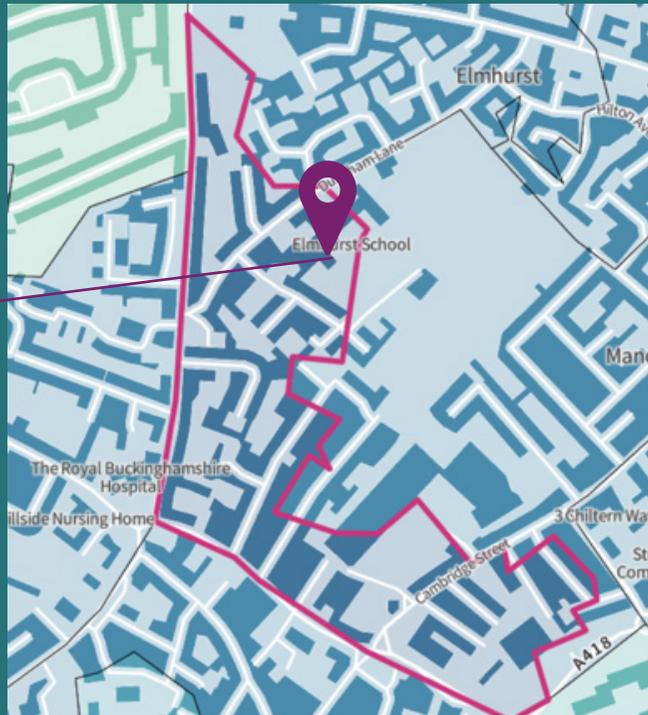
- Capacity to support multi-agency delivery.
- Suitability for clinical and non-clinical activity.
- Accessibility for families experiencing higher levels of need.
- Opportunities for expansion and future development.
- Alignment with wider local priorities, including Opportunity Bucks wards.

On this basis, Elmhurst Family Centre was chosen as Buckinghamshire's first Best Start Family Hub, recognising both local need and the centre's strong foundations for delivering joined-up support for families.

Following this first designation, the Council will consider additional Best Start Family Hub sites over time through a phased, evidence-led approach.

# Why Elmhurst: understanding local need

Elmhurst is within the **Aylesbury North** ward and **Buckinghamshire 015C** Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA).



The LSOA is one of the most deprived areas of Buckinghamshire – in the top 30% most deprived neighbourhoods in England, and ranked 13<sup>th</sup> out of 334 neighbourhoods in Buckinghamshire.



**59%**

Pupils achieving a Good Level of Development in 2025, compared to 71.4% across Buckinghamshire



**23.7%**

Children aged 0-19 in absolute low-income families, compared to 10.9% across Buckinghamshire



**9.4%**

Prevalence of obesity (including severe) in Reception, compared to 7.8% across Buckinghamshire



**18.8%**

People with no qualifications, compared to 13.8% across Buckinghamshire



**6.0%**

Youth unemployment rate, compared to 4.5% across Buckinghamshire  
(18–24-year-olds receiving JSA/Universal Credit)

# Our Best Start Family Hub Elmhurst Offer

Elmhurst will offer a wide range of universal and targeted support, themed sessions, events and training designed to meet the needs of local families.

The hub will be a space where families can access family worker sessions, take part in Family Time Service contact visits, and drop into SEND sessions for advice and guidance. It will also host professional development events for practitioners, primary admissions workshops to help parents navigate the school application process, and a variety of community-led activities, including Community Action Days.

Together, these sessions will ensure that families in Elmhurst can find practical support, specialist guidance and opportunities to connect with others, all in one welcoming place.



**Walk-in help all week:** Families can walk in at any time for information, advice and guidance. If we can't help directly, we'll guide you to the right support.



**Free sessions for babies and young children (0 to 5 years):** These fun sessions help children learn through play; while giving parents the chance to meet others and pick up ideas they can use at home.



**Support for new and expectant parents:** Antenatal support, Midwife drop-ins and appointments, infant feeding clinic, Health Visitor checks and advice.



**Help with early education and work:** Information about childcare options, early education and support with returning to work.



**Targeted programmes:** Evidence-based programmes that strengthen parenting skills and give families ideas for creating a positive home learning environment.



**Support for family wellbeing:** Guidance for emerging SEND support needs, mental health services, help with money, benefits and housing, Elmhurst Hangout Youth Group, ESOL and adult learning classes.

# Our digital offer

We want every family to be able to find help when they need it, in a way that feels simple, clear and supportive. That's why we're strengthening our digital offer as part of Buckinghamshire's Best Start in Life programme. Our Best Start in Life and Family Hub branding will make it easier for families to recognise trusted places, both online and in the community, where they can get reliable information and support. Whether families visit a Family Hub in person or search for help online, they will know they are in the right place.

*Families can already find a wide range of useful information through the Buckinghamshire Family Information Service, including:*

- Pregnancy support.
- Local activities for babies and young children.
- Child development information.
- Help with childcare and early education.

*We are working directly with parents and carers to understand what it is really like to look for help online. Their feedback will guide how we improve our digital offer to ensure that:*

- Information is easy to find.
- Digital platforms feel friendly, welcoming and simple to use.
- Families can quickly get to the services or support they need.
- Resources are clear, practical and relevant to everyday family life.

# Our wider Family Hubs & Family Hub Network offer

## *Local organisations working together to support families*

Alongside Family Hubs, Buckinghamshire has a Family Hub Network made up of local professionals and community organisations who work together to support children, young people and families. The network is not a single service or building and is largely made up of voluntary, community and faith sector organisations, alongside health, education and other local partners. These organisations are places families already know and trust, and where they can:

- Get information, advice and early help.
- Talk to someone they trust about what support they need.
- Be guided and signposted to a Family Hub if more support would be helpful.

## *What is the purpose of the Family Hub Network?*

### *The Family Hub Network helps to:*

- Provide easy-to-reach places where families can get support early.
- Make sure families can access the right support quickly, in places they already feel comfortable visiting.
- Help families find support, whether that support is available locally or through a Family Hub or another service.
- Offer help early, so small issues don't become bigger problems.

Together, the Family Hub Network and Family Hubs help families get the support they need, delivered in the way which works best for them, in places which feel familiar and welcoming.

**Family Hub  
Network**  
Buckinghamshire

# Strengthening community partnerships

## *The organisations behind the Family Hub Network*

Voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) organisations play a vital role in making the Family Hub Network work for families. Many of the trusted local places families turn to first are led by community and voluntary organisations rather than by council services.

Buckinghamshire's Family Hub Network includes over 200 local professionals and community organisations, many from the VCFS, working together to support children and families. These partners help extend the reach of support into local communities and ensure help is shaped around what families say they need.

### *VCFS organisations contribute to key elements of the programme, including:*

- Peer-support groups.
- Home-learning support and activities.
- Parenting programmes.
- Co-production with families.

Family Hub timetables include a wide range of sessions delivered in partnership with local community and voluntary groups, many of which co-locate within Family Hubs, making it easier for families to access joined-up support.

VCFS organisations often have trusted relationships with families who are under-represented or face additional challenges, making them a crucial focus for targeted outreach and early help.

Together, these partnerships ensure support feels trusted, locally connected and shaped by families' real experiences, helping families feel confident and reassured when they seek help.

# A confident and competent Early Years workforce

We will make sure that everyone who works with parents, parents-to-be, carers, children and young people in Buckinghamshire has the skills, confidence and support they need to provide the very best help for families.

*To achieve this, we will:*

1. Ensure we have enough staff across both universal and targeted Best Start services so families can rely on consistent, high-quality support.
2. Build a skilled and confident workforce equipped with the right knowledge and tools to support families during the early years.
3. Promote consistent, joined-up ways of working so families experience seamless support across services.
4. Provide shared training and development, making sure all professionals understand Best Start priorities and use evidence-based approaches.
5. Regularly review workforce capacity, skills and wellbeing, supporting continuous improvement and ensuring staff feel valued and supported.
6. Work with higher education partners to improve access to local Early Years teacher degree apprenticeships and strengthen the long-term pipeline of skilled practitioners.

# Family involvement

For our Best Start in Life programme to truly work for families, it must be shaped with families at every stage. When parents and carers play an active role in designing services, the support we offer becomes more relevant, more practical and far more likely to make a real difference in everyday family life.

Parents and carers are the experts in their children's lives. They know what helps, what gets in the way, and what would make support easier to find and use. Their insight ensures our approach is grounded in real experiences, not assumptions.

We will create Parent Panels where families can openly share ideas, experiences and feedback in a welcoming, inclusive space. By working alongside families, we can build support that feels genuinely helpful, respectful and connected to what matters most to them.

We will also hold regular conversations with voluntary and community organisations who work closely with families every day. Bringing these voices together will help us understand what families need, what's working well and where we can improve.

Together, with families leading the way, we will build a Best Start in Life programme that makes a meaningful difference to their lives and supports what matters most to them.



# How we will measure success

We will know the Best Start in Life programme is making a difference if more children in Buckinghamshire are developing well in the early years, particularly in communities facing greater disadvantage.

## *We will see this through:*

- More children reaching the expected level of development at the 2–2.5 year check, and
- More children achieving a Good Level of Development by the end of Reception, with gaps narrowing between those eligible for free school meals and their peers.

These outcomes reflect the foundations which matter most for children's long-term life chances and are closely linked to our five priorities. To understand progress and keep improving support, we will track a clear set of measures linked to each priority area. These measures will help us see what is improving, where more focus is needed, and whether families are experiencing positive change.

## *Delivery will be supported by:*

- Detailed delivery plans for each priority, developed with partners and setting out clear actions, roles and milestones.
- Named priority champions responsible for coordinating delivery and driving progress.
- Quarterly reviews of progress, using shared data and insight to identify what is working well and where changes may be needed.
- A test-and-learn approach, trying new ideas at small scale, learning from families and practitioners, and expanding what works.
- The Best Start Family Hub in Elmhurst will provide an early example of this approach in practice. Learning from this pilot will inform future developments across the county as the programme continues to grow.

# Key strategies & policy drivers

## National Strategies and Policy Drivers

- Giving Every Child the Best Start In Life
- The best start for life: a vision for the 1,001 critical days
- Road to recovery: the government's 2025 mandate to NHS England
- Healthy Child Programme
- Fit for the Future: 10 Year Health Plan for England
- Every child achieving and thriving
- Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework
- Early education and childcare

## Local Strategies and Policy Drivers

- Buckinghamshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy: Start Well Action Plan
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNA) | Buckinghamshire Council
- Children's Services Strategy
- Tomorrow's World: Director of Public Health's Annual Report 2025/26
- Supporting families to give children the best start in life: Director of Public Health's Annual Report 2024/25
- Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
- Opportunity Bucks
- Side by Side - Providers in Partnership (PiP) programme
- Buckinghamshire Education Strategy 2022 to 2027
- Buckinghamshire SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2025 - 2030
- Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust Strategy 2025-2035

# Programme Delivery Actions (High-Level)

This table sets out the key actions and areas of activity required to deliver the Best Start in Life programme. It provides a high-level view of what needs to happen across the system. Detailed delivery plans, including named leads, timescales and milestones, will be developed and agreed with partners as part of the next phase of work.

Theme	Action	Time-frame	Purpose / What this Delivers
Family Centre transision	Confirm and manage the transition of the existing Family Centres to Family Hubs	Q1 2026/27	Ensure continuity of services, clear messaging for families, and a strengthened, more joined-up way of working
	Agree shared principles and minimum expectations for all Family Hubs	Q1 2026/27	Provide consistency across the county while allowing flexibility based on local need
Best Start Family Hubs	Develop a phased plan for future Best Start Family Hub designations	Q2 2026/27	Support planned, sustainable expansion based on need and readiness
	Define and document the enhanced Best Start Family Hub offer	Q1 2026/27	Clearly articulate what is different about Best Start hubs (early years focus, targeted support, extended access)
Review of the Family Hub Estate	Review the wider Family Hub estate (location, facilities, capacity)	Q4 2026/27	Ensure hubs are in the right places and suitable for integrated delivery
	Identify opportunities for co-location or shared use where this improves access	Q2 2026/27	Strengthen joined-up delivery without reducing local provision
Family Hub Network (VCFS-led)	Expand network membership where there are gaps in reach	Q1 2026/27	Improve access for under-represented or seldom-heard communities
	Clarify and reinforce the role of the Network (information, early help, signposting)	Q1 2026/27	Ensure families and partners understand how the network works alongside Family Hubs
	Use VCFS partnerships to strengthen targeted outreach	Q1 2026/27	Reach families who may not engage with statutory services
	Support co-location of VCFS partners within Family Hubs	Q1 2026/27	Improve access and reduce barriers for families

Theme	Action	Time-frame	Purpose / What this Delivers
Co-production with families	Establish Parent Panels linked to Best Start priorities	Q2 2026/27	Ensure services are shaped by lived experience
	Develop clear ways for Parent Panels to influence delivery plans	Q2 2026/27	Turn feedback into practical service improvements
	Use Parent Panels to test and refine new approaches	Q2 2026/27	Support a test-and-learn culture grounded in family voice
Detailed Delivery Planning	Co-produce detailed delivery plans for each of the five priorities	Q1 2026/27	Translate strategy into clear, actionable steps
	Set out actions, sequencing, roles and responsibilities in each plan	Q1 2026/27	Ensure delivery is realistic, coordinated and owned
	Identify named champions for each priority	Q1 2026/27	Provide clear leadership and accountability
	Develop and maintain a programme risk register	Q1 2026/27	Identify and manage delivery, estate, workforce and reputational risks
Communications & Engagement	Develop a Best Start in Life communications plan	Q1 2026/27	Provide clear, consistent messaging for families, staff, partners and elected Members
	Deliver targeted Member briefings (including ward-level where needed)	Q1 2026/27	Support democratic oversight and local understanding
Digital offer	Strengthen the Best Start / Family Hub digital offer	Q1 2026/27	Make it easier for families to find information and support
	Align digital content with Family Hub branding	Q1 2026/27	Help families recognise trusted information
	Use family feedback to improve digital usability	Q1 2026/27	Ensure digital routes genuinely work for families



 **BEST**  
 **START**  
 **IN LIFE**