

Best Start in Life Implementation Plan 2023-2025 (UPDATED FEBRUARY 2024)

This draft implementation plan has been developed through engagement with the Early Years Group and Children and Young People Partnership, Health & wellbeing board partners, and the voluntary sector. The plan will continue to evolve and develop throughout its life course

Cross-cutting, collaborative actions, required to underpin all transformational developments:

Actions	Target/ review date	Responsible Service(s) and reporting lead(s)	Action Targets	RAG	Progress including risks
A. Ensure cross partner communications plans to promote healthy living messages.	September 2024	Hfds/WVT/ICB/PCNs/CP & CVS/One Herefordshire Communication Group	Healthy living Comms messages where appropriate are joined up with partners		
B. Develop a cross-sector dashboard covering health services, social care, CVS and early years data	March 2024	Hfds council/WVT/ICB/ CVS	To be developed through our strategic partners in the Children and Young people partnership board.		Limited progress to date
C. Ensure that the voices of families and children are incorporated across actions and plans.	June 2024	CVS/all partners	100% of EH assessment of families of 0-5 have the voice of child embedded. 100% of children centres services have the voice of child embedded.		

Actions	Target/ review date	Responsible Service(s) and reporting lead(s)	Action Targets	RAG	Progress including risks

Ambition 1: CHILDREN ENJOY GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Outcome 1.1: Reduction in tooth decay

Actions	Target/review date	Responsible Service(s) and reporting leads	Action targets	RAG	Progress including risks
<p>1.1.1 Continue roll-out of tooth brushing programme to include: SEND/MOD pre-schools and reception classes.</p> <p>Establish brush packs in Health Visitor 2 year review & new pre-school review.</p>	June 2025	Public Health/Wye Valley Trust	<p>40 Schools/EY settings</p> <p>100% of 2 Year Olds (Mandated check)</p> <p>85% of 3 years Olds (non mandated check).</p>		Currently, there are 42 early years provisions taking on supervised toothbrushing, this is a small reduction from previously because of a school withdrawing from the scheme(New teacher thinks that the school supports oral health through play opportunities. However, there are 4 settings due to start the program this term which includes 2 SEND provisions
1.1.2 Roll-out of the 4-6 month oral health & weaning contact (community offer).	June 2025	Wye Valley Trust	50% of all parents attend the 4-6 months community workshop for weaning and oral health.		Health Visiting have now implemented the weaning/dental workshops across the county, and we have had consistent uptake (Q3 data 55% uptake). These are held in various venues across the county and are delivered by our Community Nursery Nurse team.
1.1.3 Work to secure more NHS dentists, so that pre-school children can have regular dental check-ups	December 2024	ICB/ORAL; Health Improvement Board	2 New NHS dental practices established in herefordshire.		2 new dentists are opening in Herefordshire. One already open and taking patients.
1.1.4 Establish Healthy Tots programme & toolkits, including healthy eating and physical activity policy in Early Years settings, including SEND/MOD children	March 2025	Public Health	<p>40 Early years settings /childminders sign up to the framework in the first year.</p> <p>60 of Early Years settings/childminders</p>		There are 38 primary schools signed up to the healthy school program, with the plan that they will then complete healthy tots to support their early years classes. Also, there are 13 private early years settings signed up to the program

Actions	Target/review date	Responsible Service(s) and reporting leads	Action targets	RAG	Progress including risks
			signup to the framework in year 2.		

Ambition 1: Children Enjoy Good Health and Wellbeing
Outcome 1.2: Reduction in obesity of all children

Actions	Target/review date	Responsible Service(s)	Action targets	RAG	Progress including risks
<p>1.2.1 Expand B/F friendly accreditation: In the community eg children's centre services and Community Hubs</p> <p>Maternity: Complete process for Baby Friendly status/accreditation</p> <p>Progress the Infant Feeding Strategy towards implementation</p>	<p>December 2024</p> <p>June 2024</p> <p>March 2024</p>	<p>Midwifery Wye Valley Trust</p> <p>Children Centres</p>	<p>Align Children centre services with the baby friendly accreditation criteria</p> <p>Work towards achieving re-accreditation of the B/F status.</p>		<p>The Maternity services have achieved reaccreditation of their Baby Friendly status.</p> <p>For children centres: Infant feeding accreditation is no longer a target for Children's Centres. The service is currently more targeted, and there are fewer staff so unable to undertake this accreditation. But the children centres align to the Midwifery offer and host:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infant feeding clinic - Share safe sleeping and infant feeding advice at home visit - Offer First steps to first time parents aged 21 or under (practical parenting advice and support, feeding, safe sleeping, attachment, Solihull parenting pre and post birth)

AMBITION 1: CHILDREN ENJOY GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Outcome 1.4: Improvement in health outcomes for all children and seek parity in health for the most disadvantaged children

Actions	Review date	Responsible services	Action targets	RAG	Progress including risks
<p>1.4.1 Develop and roll out training for all 0-5s workers in oral health, healthy weight issues, Solihull and Early trauma.</p> <p>Offer to be promoted to social prescribers, family support workers, Homestart, community development workers, Foster carers, Talk Community volunteers.</p>	April 2025	Public Health	<p>300 of 0-5 yrs workers trained in oral health in year 1.</p> <p>75 of 0-5 yrs workers trained in healthy weight issues in year 1.</p> <p>50 0-5 yrs workers trained in Solihull approach and Early trauma in year 1.</p>		<p>333 workers trained in oral health through face-to-face delivery With an additional 251 completing an online oral health training. Through healthy schools we will be offering 4 training offers to healthy tots and healthy schools.</p> <p>Through healthy schools there will also be a very unique and bespoke offering to healthy eating and healthy weight.</p>
<p>1.4.2 Strengthen reach to families that do not engage with statutory services/who do not seek support eg Gypsy/Roma families and refugees families</p>	June 2025	Children Centres- Wye Valley Trust	<p>Children Centre services & 0-19 service identify and use innovative approaches to engage hard to reach communities.</p> <p>100% of all refugees families with 0-5 children will be seen by a Health Visitor and offered a suitable service.</p> <p>100% of Gypsy/Roma/Traveller families with 0-5 children that are registered with a GP will be seen by a Health Visitor.</p>		<p>Children centres:</p> <p>Overall, 5% of the 0- to 19-year-olds receiving targeted support from a Family support worker are from a minority ethnic background.</p> <p>33% of 0- to 19-year-olds receiving targeted support from a Family support worker, live in a lower Super Output area (SOA)</p> <p>In Ledbury Children's Centre a play and information session is run for families from Afghanistan who have a child aged 5 or under.</p> <p>Wye Valley Trust:</p>

					All families that move into Herefordshire are offered a movement in visit from either the Health Visitor or Community Staff Nurse. All families that register with a Herefordshire GP will be seen by health visiting as we are notified of their movement in by child health. We will continue to work closely with services that support GRT and refugee families.
1.4.3 Sustain support for the poorest families across the county, including holiday activities fund (HAF)	March 2025	Herefordshire council – County Plan, Big Economic Plan/CVS	Aim towards 25% of eligible children to attend and engage with HAF program. Increase engagement with secondary age children and SEND in the HAF program.		27% of eligible children attended in 2024 The number of SEND children attending increased from 102 in 2023 to 254 in 2024

AMBITION 2: Children Are Protected from Harm at Home and in the Community
Outcome 2.1: Reduction in number of children experiencing neglect & unintentional injuries

Actions	Review date	Responsible services	Action targets	RAG	Progress including risks
2.1.1 Note the progress/link with Children's Services improvement plan	Ongoing	Herefordshire council & stakeholders	To link with the Children's Services improvement plan		This work supports the work of the improvement plan and feeds into the CYP Board

AMBITION 2: CHILDREN ARE PROTECTED FROM HARM AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY

Outcome 2.2: Reduction in number of children with experience of trauma / ACEs

Actions	Review date	Responsible services	Action targets	RAG	Progress including risks
2.2.1 Pilot the PH Wales Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs) Enquiry Questionnaire.	June 2025	Wye Valley Trust-Health Visiting service	The roll out of the questionnaire to begin in September 2024 as a pilot		WVT are currently putting a small working group together to look at formulating a questionnaire, this has been delayed due to staffing pressures within the teams.
2.2.2 Broaden 'First Steps' programme to include domestic violence, previous child removal	January 2025	Children Centres	100% of young parents accessing the first steps programme who have been affected by DV or previous child removal are signposted to Womens Aid.		<p>First steps is now a targeted service, so families receiving the service have a level 3 need, some including Domestic Abuse</p> <p>Early Help now have 2 Domestic Abuse partnership workers in the team, who work alongside Family support Workers and offer Domestic Abuse support, advice and signposting as needed.</p> <p>13% of children who Early Help have supported in the last quarter have been affected by Domestic Abuse.</p>

AMBITION 2: CHILDREN ARE PROTECTED FROM HARM AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY

Outcome 2.3: Reduction in number of children taken into care

Actions	Review date	Responsible services	Action targets	RAG	Progress including risks
2.3.1 'Broaden' the early help/Start for Life offer within the community to involve more community hubs, community groups, CVS etc – so that early help is everyone's responsibility	June 2025	Herefordshire council & CVS partners/community stakeholders	To be confirmed		Recruiting to 2 new children's development roles to enhance the early help offer in communities by empowering partner agencies, early risk management with mentoring and support, monitoring intervention effectiveness, and collaborating to deliver accessible, sustainable services for children and families.

AMBITION 2: CHILDREN ARE PROTECTED FROM HARM AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY

Outcome 2.4: Greater numbers of parents are successfully supported to develop healthy parenting routines & behaviours

Actions	Review date	Responsible services	Action Targets	RAG	Progress including risks
2.4.1 Healthy schools/tots programme to include training around Early Trauma Which include settings having established pathways to make referrals to West Mercia Women's Aid, Drug & alcohol service and sexual health identified in their policies supporting Childrens with ACES.	June 2025	Public Health	40 primary schools & EY settings have ACEs policy which includes referral links to Herefordshire West Mercia Womens Aid, Drug & Alcohol Service & Sexual health services.		There is no face to face offer on training around early trauma as of yet. However, there is an online training offer within the Solihull program which is part of the healthy schools framework. We are developing a drug and alcohol training offer to schools through healthy schools training offer.

AMBITION 3: CHILDREN ARE ABLE TO ACHIEVE THEIR EARLY DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

Outcome 3.1: Increase in number of children achieving the appropriate level of development at 2-2½ yrs

Actions	Review date	Responsible services	Action Targets	RAG	Progress including risks
<p>3.1.1 Work towards a consistent universal offer that incorporates joint working between Health Visitors & Early Years. Eg expand the integrated development reviews.</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Wye Valley Trust</p>	<p>30% of 2 year old reviews are integrated</p>	<p style="background-color: green;"></p>	<p>We have seen a positive increase in our integrated 2 year reviews, during Q3 we saw 39% of children through this pathway and we are continuing to support nurseries across the county where support and advice is requested</p>
<p>3.1.2 Work towards fulfilling the statutory duty for providing early years education as set out by DfE.</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Herefordshire Council/ CVS partners/education/ community stakeholders</p>	<p>The quality of Early years education is good or outstanding (Herefordshire children will achieve Good Level of Development in line or above national statistics):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Average number of early learning goals at expected level per child. - Percentage of children at expected level across all early learning goals. - Percentage of children at expected level in communication and language and literacy areas of learning: 	<p style="background-color: green;"></p>	<p>From a cohort of 1757 pupils in Herefordshire assessed using the early years foundation stage profile, 71% are achieving a good level of development (GLD), a total of 1247 pupils. The average total points score in all GLS goals is 22.1 out of possible 24.</p>

			- Percentage of children with a good level of development:		
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AMBITION 3: CHILDREN ARE ABLE TO ACHIEVE THEIR EARLY DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

Outcome 3.2: Identification of those children that don't achieve their milestones and the offer of support

Actions	Review date	Responsible services	Action targets	RAG	Progress including risks
<p>3.2.1 Establish SEND champions from the 0-5 service in each PCN area</p>	June 2025	Wye Valley Trust Health visiting service	By July 2024 there will be champions from the 0-5 service in each PCN area.		We have a small group of SEND champions within the health visiting service, the champions meet on a regular basis and these meetings are led by a Practice Lead. The SEND champions are Health Visitors and Community Nursery Nurses from different teams across the county.
<p>3.2.2 Co-produce a community offer that will extend children's social experiences and support their communication skills</p> <p>Work with CVS to reach and gain the voice of children and families from underrepresented groups, such as Roma/Gypsy/other minority ethnic groups</p>	September 2025	Herefordshire council /Talk Community /CVS / health partners	To be confirmed		No progress to date

AMBITION 3: CHILDREN ARE ABLE TO ACHIEVE THEIR EARLY DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

Outcome 3.3: Children who are experiencing disadvantage have a clear pathway of support

Actions	Review date	Responsible services	Action targets	RAG	Progress including risks
3.3.1 Expand joint Health Visiting clinic with physio/speech therapy for early discussions on potential signs of delay.	June 2025	WVT/Public Health/ICB	To roll out an additional joint clinic with HV, speech and physio in a rural market town		We continue to work with Physio who run their drop-in alongside our Health Visitor clinic at Widemarsh. An initial workshop set up with the Community Nursery Nurses to see how we can work together with SLT to support children with communication difficulties. This has been booked for March 2025.
3.3.2 Roll out 'Dingley's Promise' (SEND) training to early years professionals.	June 2025	Herefordshire council	75% of EY providers are trained in Dingley's Promise		125 settings across Herefordshire have taken up the training including 34 schools that can be identified separately to any nursery also on the school grounds. As of December 2024, there are 416 unique learners across Herefordshire (349 in July 2024).
3.3.3 All parents of SEND children age take up their Early Education Funding (EEF) Entitlement	Sept 2025	Herefordshire council	100% EY Children with SEND take up their EEF entitlement		There are around 209 children known to SEND services in the council. 56% of EY children known to the SEND services take up their full EEF entitlement (as of January 2025). 23% are receiving less than their EEF entitlement. 21% are without a recorded offer.

AMBITION 4: PARENTS ARE WELL SUPPORTED DURING PREGNANCY AND POST BIRTH**Outcome 4.1: Increase in numbers of women experiencing a healthy pregnancy**

Actions	Review date	Responsible services	Action targets	RAG	Progress including risks
4.1.1 Encourage the take up of pre conceptual education through the Solihull parenting programme.	September 2025	Public Health /Education partners.	Reach 580 parents as a total to date target.	Green	The Solihull courses continue to be offered free on line and promoted through a variety of sources. Over 15 courses are now available as part of the FREE offer. To date, there are 2732 actual learners to date

AMBITION 4: PARENTS ARE WELL SUPPORTED DURING PREGNANCY AND POST BIRTH

Outcome 4.2: Reduction in infant mortality rate

Actions	Review date	Responsible services	Action targets	RAG	Progress including risks
4.2.1 Continue to roll-out of 'challenging conversations' training for midwives around healthy lifestyles and expand to health visiting services.	December 2025	Wye Valley Trust	Midwives are trained around challenging conversations.	<div style="background-color: green; width: 100%; height: 100%;"></div>	Round one of the raining has been rolled out to midwives.
4.2.2 Develop community action network meetings within the Community.	December 2025	Talk Community	Engagement, PCN areas, meetings	<div style="background-color: green; width: 100%; height: 100%;"></div>	Community action network meetings happen each month

AMBITION 4: Parents are well supported during pregnancy and post birth
Outcome 4.3: Improvement in antenatal and post-natal mental wellbeing

Actions	Review date	Responsible services	Action targets	RAG	Progress including risks
<p>4.3.1 Continue to deliver Healthy Lifestyle support to identified families as part of the pilot family coaching model in line with the ICB funding (Currently funding until Sept 24).</p> <p>Continue with stop smoking specialist service for pregnant smokers.</p>	<p>December 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p>	<p>Public Health/WVT</p>	<p>All Pregnant women identified at booking by a midwife with a BMI \geq 30 will be referred to the Healthy lifestyle services for support with healthy lifestyle during their pregnancy with signposting into Healthy Family group sessions post pregnancy if required.</p>	<p style="background-color: green; color: white; text-align: center;">RAG</p>	<p>Funding for the pilot family coaching model has ended</p>

AMBITION 4: PARENTS ARE WELL SUPPORTED DURING PREGNANCY AND POST BIRTH
Outcome 4.4: Parents are able to make a confident transition to parenthood

Actions	Review date	Responsible services	Action targets	RAG	Progress including risks
4.4.1 Monitor progress of perinatal Mental Health worker programme – severe Mental Health	June 2024	H & W MH collaborative	For info and to cross reference to good mental health plan	N/A	N/A
4.4.2 Expand the 'First Steps' programme (currently for under 21s) to include all 1st time parents who are vulnerable see Ambition 2)	December 2024	Herefordshire council/ WVT/ CVS	See action 2.2.2		Currently unable to expand the 'First Steps' programme, due to locality restructure and staff capacity. The service will be offered to families who have a needs at level 3. This may include older first-time parents who are vulnerable.
4.4.3 Expand promotion and uptake of Solihull approach online courses for parents (see ambitions 1,2 & 3) and training for 0-5s workers	June 2024	Public Health	An increased uptake of 20% compared to last years figures of parents accessing the Solihull online programme for 0-5		Online FREE courses continue to be promoted across all sectors. Face to face training is currently on hold due to staff sickness of the trainer.

