



Our ambition is to transform the Better Start Bradford area through a powerful, generational change in outcomes for our children.

Pregnancy, birth and the first 48 months of life is an opportunity to affect great change, as pregnancy and the birth of a baby is a critical opportunity when parents are especially receptive to offers of advice and support and evidence shows that the earliest experiences shape a baby's brain development and have a lifelong impact on that baby's mental and emotional health.

We will provide the best start in life for children by offering exciting and imaginative interventions which are based on the best available evidence and science and are driven by the community. To deliver lasting change we will offer advice and support to families very much earlier than is currently the case and will deliver high quality support services; parents will develop more trusting relationships with everyone involved in their support from early in pregnancy until their children go to school.

This will be complemented by a comprehensive programme of community engagement and development, which will include participation in the programme's governance, wide-ranging volunteering opportunities and extensive consultation with parents and residents.

It will also include a programme of workforce development. Behaviour change in families is very closely linked to the skills and competency of the people working with them and so it is critical that we deliver a training and development programme based on the best available and emerging evidence and effective practice. Having a confident, capable and skilled workforce centred on meeting the needs of our children is essential to achieve our vision.

Initially, thanks to investment from Big Lottery Fund and partners, we are focussing our work in the Bowling, Barkerend, Bradford Moor and Little Horton areas of Bradford where the community faces the greatest challenges. The aspiration is to achieve scale (reaching every eligible child or family) and maintain quality across Bradford District by the end of the 10 year programme.

Central to this transformational programme is a strong partnership between the community, public agencies and the Born in Bradford programme as we build a 'community of influence' of those living and working in the area, ensuring that everyone recognises that they have a key role to play in championing early childhood development. Our commitment to working together is manifested in a governance arrangement that shares power and responsibility with the community. We know that it is the quality of our relationships at all levels, information and power sharing that will be critical in making our ambition a reality.

The changes we will deliver for children are:

- More children starting school with the language and communication skills they need to engage in this stage of early learning and to develop effective relationships.

We will use a combination of universal and targeted interventions designed to increase parental confidence with books and language and improve their children's school readiness.

- More families able to provide healthy and nutritious food for their children and encouraging them to be active from an early age.

Healthy family feeding practices and physical activity will be encouraged through a co-ordinated series of interventions. We will work to improve breastfeeding rates, address poor dietary habits and lack of physical exercise.

- More children benefiting from quality play and early learning in settings and in the home and a safe and secure base with strong attachments to key family members.

The social and emotional development of our young children is vital for their future well-being, it is a key area of work. A combination of universal and targeted projects designed to promote effective parenting skills, reduce maternal and child toxic stress, establish effective communication and develop support networks will be made available.

We will change the way we work together so that we get it right for families first time, ensuring that families benefit from smarter, seamless services that recognise and address needs at an early stage. We will have skilled workers and communities to remove barriers to good outcomes and to provide responsive and consistent support. This includes:

- An integrated care pathway developed in partnership, that enables pregnant women and their children to receive a seamless service from midwifery, health visiting and early years services, facilitated by the creation of a new, shared data system.
- Common training for all staff (paid and voluntary) which ensures that everyone understands the importance of early brain development in infants and that keeps staff up-to-date with the rapidly improving understanding of neuroscience.
- Relationships will be put at the heart of practice. Where possible, families will see the same professionals, supporters or volunteers so that they can build a trusting relationship and develop a better engagement with services.
- Services will focus on increasing reach (ensuring every eligible parent receives the help they are entitled to), improving access (changing the location, times and ways that services are offered to better meet families'

needs) and intervening early (getting smart about engaging with women early in pregnancy).

Our timeline

We are taking a staged approach to implementation. With such a complex and ambitious programme, it is vital that we get the implementation of our overarching programme and each individual project right to give it the best chance of having the desired impact.

Our first step has been to ensure that we have the right systems in place to ensure robust leadership, management, monitoring and evaluation of the programme. This means that our infrastructure will support implementation effectively and efficiently.

In addition, we have developed a process of service design to be applied to each project before implementation. This enables us to give due consideration to the evidence that it works, how we will make sure that it reaches everyone eligible or how we will monitor the effectiveness.

Through working with Born in Bradford, we have established the Better Start Bradford Innovation Hub which is monitoring the implementation and facilitating effective evaluation of each project.

Our early projects are:

- Perinatal Support Service which provides emotional support to families during pregnancy and the first year after birth, where a parent is struggling with their emotional health and wellbeing or where they have been diagnosed with a low to moderate level perinatal mental illness.
- Talking Together, a service to support children in their communication and language development. All 2 year olds have an initial language assessment in the home which may be followed by a 6 week intervention delivered in the home for those identified as being at risk of language delay.
- Baby Buddy mobile phone app for parents and parents-to-be with personalised content approved by doctors and midwives that spans from pregnancy right through to the first six months after birth.
- Personalised midwifery care pilot which ensures that women see the same midwife for all their community midwifery appointments throughout their pregnancy and the postnatal period. Appointments are longer and women are supported to make informed choices around the birth of their baby.

Throughout our programme, as new evidence emerges through our work and from that undertaken by colleagues locally, nationally and internationally, we will respond by disseminating the knowledge to ensure our workforce and communities share in the latest evidence and thinking. We will hold an annual conference to facilitate this.



