

Appendix 1

Best Start Strategy Ambitions Summary of Progress 2022-2023 and Next Steps

	Ambition	Summary of Progress
1.	Prospective parents are well prepared for parenthood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commencement of a Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Maternity and Neonatal System (LMNS) led review to identify opportunities to strengthen the antenatal education offer. Partners from across the Partnership are getting involved in this and includes working with Bassetlaw. • The Children's Centre Service developed new Antenatal BABES groups (virtual and face to face) during the pandemic to ensure expectant parents could access support virtually and face to face. This work is now embedded in the service and enhances key messages re: supporting parents to know their baby, encouraging reflective function relationships and promotion of secure attachment. The service has delivered 35 different groups from April 2022 to the end of February 2023. • One of the Key Performance Indicators identified within the UNICEF Baby Friendly accreditation is that expectant parents are made aware of the services available to them and their baby. During 2022, only 50% of respondents to the audit were made aware of the Children's Centre Service during pregnancy. In the recent inspection this had risen to 66%, on an upward track towards the required level of 70%. A key factor in this has been improved collaboration between Best Start partners. • Relationships and Sex Education in schools and informal settings continues to be used as an opportunity to discuss pregnancy and parenthood with young people including young men. • The Families Information Service have worked with multi-agency partners to enhance the information available on Notts Help Yourself for prospective and expectant parents, as part of development work for the Virtual Family Hub, responding to co-production comments received.
2.	Mothers and babies have positive pregnancy outcomes	<p><u>Substance misuse:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A task and finish group has been established to explore the substance use pathway of support in pregnancy (drugs and alcohol). The substance misuse service, Change Grow Live (CGL), are currently recruiting two female support workers who will work closely with pregnant women and the specialist midwives. <p><u>Healthy weight and nutrition:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements have been made to the healthy weight referral pathway for Bassetlaw women, including improvements to Bassetlaw's maternity IT system to include a prompt screen at booking for midwives. A new nutritional support group has been

		<p>implemented for pre- and postnatal women. The initial pilot is being delivered by Your Health Your Way, the integrated wellbeing service and targeted in Mansfield pending evaluation and expansion if indicated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 'top tips' resource is in development to support professionals to discuss healthy weight and nutrition with families across pregnancy and early years. <p><u>Smoking:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sherwood Forest Hospital's (SFH) in-house Phoenix Team delivers tobacco treatment and support to pregnant women. A successful pilot of an incentive scheme has been delivered by the team and is currently being evaluated by the university. • At Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospital (DBH), a part-time smoking cessation midwife now supports pregnant women to stop smoking, working closely with a support worker from Your Health Your Way, the integrated wellbeing service. • At Nottingham University Hospital (NUH), new smoking cessation advisors should be in post from early Summer of 2023 to work closely with Your Health Your Way, and the equivalent service in Nottingham City, to strengthen the identification and engagement of women in smoking cessation support. <p><u>Vaccination:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A multi-agency children, adolescent and maternity immunisation and vaccination group has been established across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. One of their aims is to deliver a targeted promotional campaign to increase the uptake of vaccination in pregnancy and early years focusing on disadvantaged groups, supported by LMNS funding. • NUH and SFH are currently recruiting dedicated vaccinators to deliver antenatal vaccinations in clinic e.g. flu, pertussis and potentially covid.
3.	Babies and parents/carers have good early relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A targeted parent-infant relationship intervention has been introduced in the Healthy Families Programme, and 109 parents were referred to the parent-infant relationship practitioners in 2022/23. An evaluation of this service offer will be completed in 2023/24, with support from the public health arm of National Institute for Health and Care Research in order to inform future commissioning intentions. • Health visitors in the Healthy Families Programme are delivering a Brazelton New-born Observation to families early in the post-natal period, giving evidence-based brief advice in relation to the quality of the parent-infant relationship to new parents.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Parents Groups were established by the Children's Centre Service and rolled out in 2022. These were developed in response to feedback during the covid period from parents who felt isolated. The groups focus on building positive relationships between parents/carers and their new baby. The Children's Centre Service has delivered 30 different groups from April 22 – end of Feb 23. With 126 children attending from April 22 – end of Feb 23 • Targeted Baby Massage courses have been delivered by the Children's Centre Service throughout lockdown and capacity increased following the lifting of restrictions. Baby massage helps build attachment, sensory stimulation, and healthy development. Referrals and take up data; April 2022 –March 2023: The Children's Centre Service received 1,643 referrals with 83% engaging with the intervention (1,433) - 98% reported feeling closer to their child, 98% Developed a greater knowledge and understanding of their child's development, their needs, and the things they need to help them be healthy and happy and 89% improved their own emotional health and wellbeing. • The Me, You & Baby Too e-learning for parents has been commissioned from One To One, as part of the reducing parental conflict work, led by the Council. To date 112 people have registered for the package directly. In addition, the Children's Centre Service is utilising the some of the tools and activities in the face to face New Parents Groups.
4.	Parents are engaged and participate in home learning from birth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Early Years Attainment group which oversees this priority, is well established and has now created a new Early Years Improvement Plan for 2022-25. • Children's Centre Services introduced PEEP¹ interventions for parents/carers from pregnancy across the early years. They focus on the role of parents as early educators, building positive, sensitive relationships, enhancing home learning environments, and helping babies and children to become confident communicators and learners. Early reporting indicates that parents/carers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge and confidence in how to play and interact with their child / children has increased • have made changes at home to provide a better learning and play environment for their child/children. • have improved their understanding of their child/children's development • Home Learning opportunities continue to be promoted to families through the Children's Centre Service, Families

¹ [peeple learning together programme training | www.peeple.org.uk](http://www.peeple.org.uk)

		<p>Information Service Facebook page, via the Notts Help Yourself website and Inspire Facebook pages, with staff from the Children's Children Service, the Early Childhood Service Quality and Attainment Team and HomeStart working collaboratively with the Families Information Service (FIS) to develop and enhance home learning activity resources, including updating of the Things to Do at Home section of Notts Help Yourself (NHY), encouraging parents to be aware of what areas of child development the activities will impact on. During 2022/23 there were 2,700 hits to the site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bookstart programme delivered by Inspire, with funding support from Early Childhood Services, has been successful in disseminating resources to families through Healthy Family Teams, Early Years providers and Children's Centre Service teams. During 2022/23 7347 Baby Packs were gifted, covering 95% of babies. In addition, 1067 Treasure Gift Packs were delivered and 337 Additional Needs Packs, a total of 8751. • The Bookstart Baby pack continues to be universal for all babies 0-12 months, but during 2022/23 the national Bookstart programme changed to a targeted offer for subsequent gift packs. Colleagues have worked collaboratively to ensure that this targeted offer for 2 – 3-year-olds is delivered in an equitable and non-stigmatising way, with 952 packs delivered during 2022/23. • 600 families accessed the Children's Centre Service 'Let's Play' school readiness intervention provided in the home.
5.	Parents experiencing emotional, mental health and wellbeing challenges are identified early and supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A multi-agency group has been working to strengthen the pathway of care for women with mental health needs in the perinatal period. • Additional training has been delivered to midwives and health visitors and referral pathways to mental health support strengthened. • A new guide to emotions leaflet covering pregnancy and the postnatal period and all levels of emotional and mental health need has been developed. A copy is given to all women at their antenatal booking appointment and is used by Healthy Family Teams. • The Routine Enquiry about Adversity in Childhood (REACH) programme is now fully implemented within the Children's Centre Service and Healthy Family Teams. REACH aims to raise awareness amongst professionals and the public about long term outcomes of childhood adversity and trauma. This is achieved by establishing and supporting organisational practice and culture change by embedding REACH within every appropriate assessment. By using this approach in Family

		<p>Assessments, services have been able to put the right package of support in place, and enabled parents/carers to understand the impact of adverse childhood experiences on children's development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2022/23, 32% of all referrals to the Children's Centre Service focused on emotional health and wellbeing. The Service provides support to parents/carers with low level to moderate emotional health and wellbeing needs via PHEW (Parents Health and Emotional Wellbeing Groups). In 2022/23, there have been 649 referrals, with 566 (87%) taking up the intervention. 93% of those who took part in evaluation (115/124) reported feeling closer to their child and having stronger relationships. 94% reported improvements in their emotional and mental health. • The Community Perinatal Mental Health Team are working closely with partners including Children's Centre Services and local faith groups to increase access into the service. In order to achieve this, they are facilitating the delivery of awareness raising sessions to increase understanding of perinatal mental health and the support available. They have also widened who can refer into the service, so they now accept referrals from for e.g., Social Care and third sector organisations
6.	Children and parents have good health outcomes	<p>There are a range of partnerships whose work aligns with this ambition. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Safer Sleep Steering Group ○ Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Breastfeeding and Infant Feeding Partnership ○ LMNS workstreams <p><u>Safer Sleep</u></p> <p>The multi-agency Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Safer Sleep Steering Group continues to meet quarterly.</p> <p>Key achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Sleep messaging and bulletins shared widely across health and care partnerships in July 2022 (summer message), November 2022 (winter message including links to cost of living support) and March 2023 (safer sleep week). • Extensive mapping has taken place to provide assurance that safer sleep messaging is consistent and continues to be provided by health and care agencies during pregnancy, on discharge from maternity services and in the early days, weeks and months after a baby's birth up until one year of age. A development in 2022 was the East Midlands Ambulance

		<p>Service (EMAS) adding safer sleep advice to the handheld devices used by ambulance crews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From January-December 2022, 190 practitioners completed the 'safer sleeping for babies' e learning. Attendees included foster carers, children's and adult social care teams, charities, Children's Centre Services, private day nurseries and pre-schools, housing support for young people and Youth Offending Team workers. • Level two Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI) and safer sleep training has been delivered by both safeguarding children partnerships (city and county), with wide representation of services attending. Safer Sleep has been included in the workforce development and training matrix for Family Hubs in Nottinghamshire County. • A parent volunteer is a member of the safer sleep group. The group is keen to build on parental engagement and review opportunities for funding to support this. <p><u>Breastfeeding</u></p> <p>The Best Start in Life Breastfeeding Partnership sub-group has met on a quarterly basis over the year progressing several key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a shared data dashboard that is aligned with the LMNS Maternal Public Health Workstream delivery plan • Preliminary data suggests the 2022/2023 breastfeeding rate for Nottinghamshire County declined very slightly but not significantly compared to the previous year achieving a 46.01% breastfeeding rate at 6 weeks. Overall breastfeeding rates in the county are meeting targets and the trend (last 5 years) is increasing and getting better, however, there is still variation at District level and overall rates remain below regional and national. • Working with district and borough councils, the Nottinghamshire Breastfeeding Friendly in the Community initiative has begun to pick up pace since its relaunch in January 2022, with 232 venues being accredited through the scheme, welcoming breastfeeding mums and babies. • Many mothers receive excellent continued support when attending their local BABES (Baby and Breastfeeding Encouragement Support) group which many state enables them to continue to breastfeed to reach their goal. • Nottinghamshire County Council Children's Centre's have achieved and sustained the UNICEF Baby Friendly Gold Standard Award for the third year – supporting breastfeeding parents and promotion of feeding choices.
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7.	Children and parents are supported with early language, speech, and communication	<p>A multi-agency Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) Best Start subgroup oversees this ambition and meets quarterly.</p> <p>Achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ICB is leading a system wide Nottingham and Nottinghamshire SLCN needs assessment, for children and young people from birth to 25 (up to 25 for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities). The Best Start SLCN group is supporting and linking to this work. Development of the Start Talking Together resource on Notts Help Yourself Nottshelpyourself Start Talking Together... part of the Best Start Strategy (receiving 3,852 hits during 2022/23). To be supported by a new hard copy leaflet.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for 32 early years practitioners and 28 Children's Centre staff has been commissioned and delivered focusing on recognising and supporting children with emerging speech, language, and communication needs. • The Wellcomm Speech and Language screening toolkit has been purchased and piloted in 20 nursery/childminder settings, to see if this has a positive effect on identifying and supporting children's speech, language and communication needs. • The Council and Integrated Care Partnership have jointly commissioned speech and language services for children. The Council funds an early help intervention for preschool children (Home Talk). In 2022/23: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 771 children aged 2 – 2½ accessed Home Talk (66% completed the programme). ○ 98% of parents reported an increase in skills and confidence to help improve speech, language and communication following access to the programme. ○ 97% of parents reported that their child increased their ability to listen, understand and talk following the programme. ○ 54% of children were offered a place on the programme within 8 weeks of referral, reducing waiting times is a current priority. • Public Health and Early Childhood Services (Notts CC), the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust have secured Contain Outbreak Management (COMF) funding to address the decline in 2022 of 2-2 ½ year olds meeting the expected level of development and the increased demand on Home Talk. Addressing this was a recommendation within the Pregnancy, Birth and Early Years Nottinghamshire Covid Impact Assessment (CIA). The proposal is for all children aged 2 years four months and upwards on the waiting list for Home Talk and awaiting assessments and treatment from the specialist autism team to receive a face-to-face assessment from a speech and language therapist to determine the best way of meeting their needs. A parents/carers group will also be established.
8.	Children are ready for nursery and school and demonstrate a good level of overall development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The take up rate for vulnerable 2-year-olds continues to increase. At the end of the Spring Term 2023 81% of eligible children were accessing a place compared to 72% nationally. • 66.9% of children achieved a Good Level of Development at the end of the Foundation Stage (compared to national levels of 65.2%). However, children eligible for free school meals remain a priority group as only 50.5% achieved a good level of development compared to 73% of children not eligible for free

		<p>school meals. Nationally 56.4% of children eligible for free school meals achieved a Good Level of Development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> District early attainment meetings were established in Autumn 2022. They focus on local challenges and priorities around 2 year take up and narrowing the attainment gap.
9.	Children have access to high quality early years provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment for 2022 has been completed and highlights that there is currently sufficient high-quality early years provision across Nottinghamshire, in some areas there are surplus places. There are however some localities where childcare provision is reducing, namely through the reduction of childminders. In Nottinghamshire, 86% of Inspected providers have been rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted.
10.	Parents/carers are financially resilient and can access secure employment	<p>Following the Best Start Partnership meeting in October 2022, this ambition has been renamed to include the need for families to also be financially resilient.</p> <p>This ambition is overseen by the Life Chances for Children and Families Strategic Group, which has an action plan detailing where partnership activity can impact on improving aspirations and contribute to ameliorating the effects of child poverty. The Cost of Living challenges during 2022/23 have brought about a renewed focus on this theme, with members of the group being central to the responses provided by the County Council, district/borough councils, health and third sector organisations.</p> <p>Work has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaigns and Cost of Living events, to raise awareness of financial support available to families through childcare funding, Healthy Start, the Household Support Fund etc Delivery of the Household Support Fund for families in immediate need of financial support, including expectant families and families with preschool children. Work and volunteering information on Notts Help Yourself, which has received 4,300 hits during 2022/23. Promoting the Tax-Free Childcare Scheme and Care to Learn childcare Grant for young parents. Recruitment and training of parents with preschool children as volunteers to help deliver services through the Children's Centre Service. In 2022/23, there were 105 active volunteers (nearly 40 volunteers provide breastfeeding peer support). Delivery of work readiness courses for 99 parents in 2022/23 through the Children's Centre Service.

The below is not intended to an exhaustive action plan but instead provides some proposed next steps.

	Ambition	Next Steps
1.	Prospective parents are well prepared for parenthood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop an equitable antenatal education offer that includes preparation for parenthood with a greater focus on relationships and mental health as highlighted within the Nottinghamshire Pregnancy, Childbirth and Early Years Covid Impact Assessment. Implementation of social prescribing link workers within the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LMNS tackling inequities in experience and outcomes based on race and/or social deprivation.
2.	Mothers and babies have positive pregnancy outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To strengthen the early identification of substance use in pregnancy and work to increase access to substance misuse services. To strengthen the healthy weight referral pathway around NUH and continue to increase the number and quality of referrals to weight management services. To expand the pre and postnatal nutritional support group to other areas of Nottinghamshire beyond Mansfield. To launch the top-tips resource with support from the Best Start Partnership and expand to include other 'healthy pregnancy' priorities such as smoking. To further strengthen the pathway of care exploring arrangements for closer working between Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Your Health Your Way around smoking cessation. There are also plans to explore the use of financial incentives. To further strengthen the pathway of care as the smoking advisors at Nottingham University Hospitals come into post and implement 'shared care' arrangements with Your Health Your Way to increase the number of pregnant women engaging in tobacco treatment and support.
3.	Babies and parents/carers have good early relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completing the evaluation of the targeted parent-infant relationship intervention within the Healthy Families Programme. Using this to inform future commissioning.
4.	Parents are engaged and participate in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To continue the roll out and promotion of PEEP² interventions for parents/carers from pregnancy across the early years. This includes a new workshop specifically for foster carers.

² [peep learning together programme training | www.peeple.org.uk](http://www.peeple.org.uk)

	home learning from birth	
5.	Parents experiencing emotional, mental health and wellbeing challenges are identified early and supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further work to strengthen the pathways of support and streamlining referral processes, making it easier for parents to access support. • Raising awareness of support services early on in pregnancy
6.	Children and parents have good health outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building on parents' experience and feedback, to explore options such as production of a local video about safer sleep, designed in partnership with parents. • To review, update and re-launch the safer sleep risk assessment tool in line with national developments and guidance. This tool supports all practitioners working with children and families to identify babies at the greatest risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). It includes an action plan to be discussed, agreed and shared with parents/caregivers. • Developing a joint County/City Infant Feeding Strategy • Developing a joint County/City interactive breastfeeding pathway • Progressing a local breastfeeding promotion project which will be piloted for SFHT/ before learning is shared further • Implement and evaluate the universal vitamins in pregnancy project, in partnership with Nottingham City Council (public health).
7.	Children and parents are supported with early language, speech, and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To undertake a system wide Nottingham and Nottinghamshire SLCN needs assessment, for children and young people from birth to 25 (up to 25 for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities). To update and strengthen the pathways based upon this. • Further work to help reduce waiting times for Home Talk. • Now funding has been secured, to implement plans for children aged 2 years four months and upwards on the waiting list for Home Talk and awaiting assessments and treatment from the specialist autism team to receive a face-to-face assessment from a speech and language therapist and to set up the parents/carers group.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise, consult on and embed a parent resource (leaflet) summarising the universal, targeted and specialist offer available to support speech, language and communication-pre birth to school age.
8.	Children are ready for nursery and school and demonstrate a good level of overall development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the terms of reference for the Early Years Attainment Group which oversees this ambition, to ensure it meets the needs of the Best Start Strategy in the most productive way. To drive forward progress in the Early Years Improvement Plan for 2022-25. To improve the level of development of children eligible for free school meals. To actively target our resources to support children eligible for free school meals to reduce inequalities and improve outcomes.
9.	Children have access to high quality early years provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2023 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment will include more information to help inform plans to implement new Childcare Reforms which include the increase of childcare places for babies from 9 months old for working parents. To plan to implement new Childcare Reforms ensuring funding is available to early years providers to enable them to be create additional childcare places where needed.
10.	Parents/carers are financially resilient and can access secure employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore the options, evidence, and feasibility of developing Baby Banks within Nottinghamshire, particularly in the Mansfield/Ashfield area. Increase promotion of funded childcare entitlements for families in view of recent announcements of new Childcare Reforms.