



Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest
to create a better borough

Telford and Wrekin Best Start in Life Plan

2026-2028



Foreword

Our Children & Young People's Strategy, published in February 2025, brought together public health, education and safeguarding agendas under one umbrella, setting clear aims that our children and young people will: **start well, stay well, keep safe and enjoy and achieve**. The vision of the strategy is that **our Borough is home to healthy, safe children who achieve their potential**, and we are on a journey to becoming a Child Friendly Borough. Our commitments include celebrating diversity and being inclusive, taking a whole-child approach to maximise life chances and outcomes for all children, alongside a focus on narrowing the gap for those who are disadvantaged, for whatever reason.

The key areas of focus during 2025/26 were: the implementation of the Families First Partnership and expansion of Family Hubs aligned to the Neighbourhood Health agenda, the development of this best start in life plan and preparation for the SEND reforms. Strong partnership working between the local authority, NHS, education, the community and voluntary sector and police are underpinning these priority programmes. Engagement, participation and co-production with children, young people, parents, carers, families and communities is evolving and is increasingly informing everything we do.

Good Level of Development (GLD) measures were key outcomes set out in our CYP Strategy, and the national Giving every child the best in life strategy published in July 2025, provided the springboard for local planning, partnership working and service transformation. The targets set by the Department of Education for Telford & Wrekin children are challenging and higher than those set for most local authorities. We know that reasons for children that are not reaching their early learning and development goals are varied and include; having special educational needs and disabilities, living in low income families, English being an additional language and being born in the Summer. In 2024/25 67% of our children overall achieved GLD at the end of reception, and the target expected for 2027/28 is 78%, an increase of 11%. This plan sets out clear intelligence-led, partnership action to ensure **all** children get the best start in life, the change needs to be transformational and delivered at pace. Beyond the targets we want to set the aspiration that **"every 5 year old child reaches their development potential"** and we are exploring ways to demonstrate that every child gets the best start giving them every opportunity in their future lives.

'A strong start in life isn't just about learning early – it's about feeling ready, supported and confident. As an apprentice, I see how much easier it is for young people to grow, achieve and believe in themselves when that foundation is there from the beginning'

Liam Bradley
Young People's Voice Apprentice



Jo Britton
Executive
Director,
Children's
Services and
Public Health



Councillor Shirley Reynolds
Children, Young
People, Education,
Employment and Skills



Beyond the targets, we want to set the aspiration that every 5 year old child reaches their development potential.

Partnership Vision – our borough is home to healthy, safe children who achieve their potential

Children live in families, families make communities and communities build our borough



Our partners

These people and services work together as part of our Family Hubs networks across Telford and Wrekin. The Family Hub networks bring together the organisations and services that support families, creating a joined up, 'one stop' approach to accessing help. They provide support from pregnancy, through a child's early years, later childhood, and into young adulthood.



Parents, carers and family members



Early Years and Childcare providers



School and nursery settings



Early Years and Childcare team



Live Well Telford



Family Hubs services



The Breastfeeding Network



Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust including Health Visiting, School Nursing and Family Nurse Partnership, Children's Therapies and the Child Development Centre



Maternity – Shropshire and Telford Hospitals Trust



Healthy Smile team at Shropshire Community Health Trust



Telford Mind



Families in Telford



Talking – Early years and Childcare



SEND Local Offer



Home Start



PODS – Parents Opening Doors



Telford and Wrekin Libraries



Triple P for baby



Triple P Setting Stones



Dandelions Group



Integrated care system - ICB



5 by 5



Healthy Telford



Cranstoun domestic abuse



Business Intelligence Teams



Eatwell

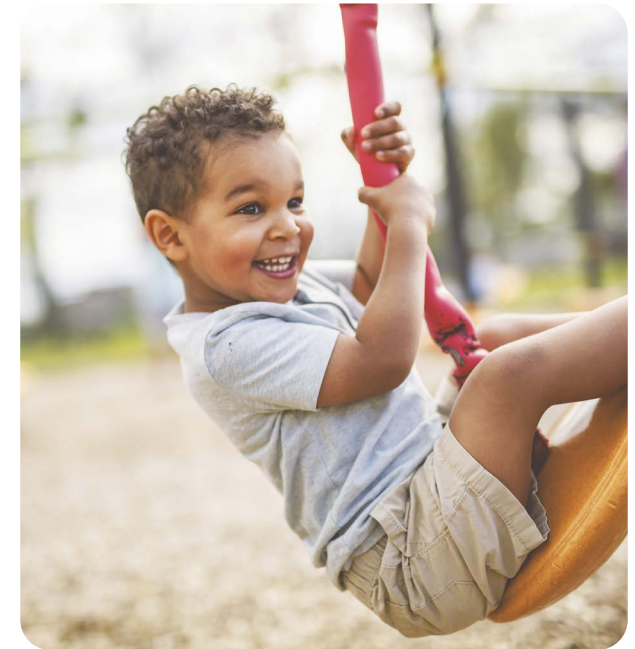
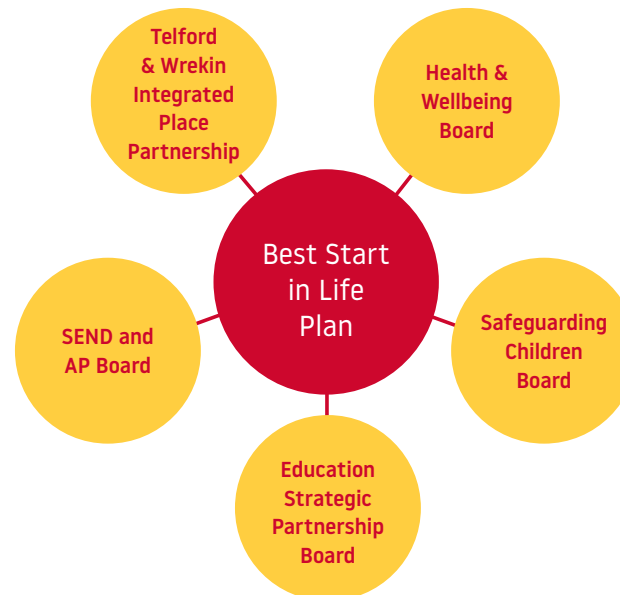


Citizens Advice

Developing our best start in life plan

From September 2025 a working group led by the Director of Public Health, in collaboration with the Director of Children's Safeguarding and Director of Education and Skills has shaped the development of this best start in life plan. Leads from the following Council Teams are core members of the working group: Family Hubs, Early Years and Childcare, Insight, public health commissioning, alongside the NHS Public Health Nursing Service Manager and Clinical Services Manager Children's Therapies and Child Development Centres. Other partners have supported the process, including Home Start Telford & Wrekin and Families in Telford, and Dandelion Parents.

The development of our Family Hubs offer is progressing well, linking tightly to the Family First Partnership. **We are aligning the Families First Partnership with the Family Hubs model to provide coordinated, early support for families, strengthening pathways that help children achieve a good level of development.** Family Hubs transformation is also a key part of the evolution of Neighbourhood Health, which is being steered by Telford & Wrekin Integrated Place Partnership (TWIPP). Improving GLD has been incorporated into the local Integrated Care Board Population Health Improvement Plan.



Part of our already strong universal offer, the highly successful local 5 by 5 programme, established in May 2025, is creating the foundations to help all children be happy, healthy and ready to start school by trying a list of adventures by their 5th birthday. Being part of the Sport England Place Partnership programme means that Family Hubs, community organisations and education settings are coming together with a clear system leadership focus to increase physical activity.

Maximising the impact of the 2-2.5 year checks offered by our Health Visiting Service is a regional workstream being led by the Midlands Director of Public of Health. The regional thematic improvement plan structure is being used to define the proposed action in this plan.

Borough-wide engagement and participation activities with children and families, being drawn together and expanded as part of becoming a Child Friendly borough, this includes co-production with our Dandelion Parents, Lived Experience Apprentices and parents and carers using Family Hubs.

SEND Reforms, driven through the Thrive and Achieve White Paper, will evolve in alignment with this plan over time, with clear shared actions for children to reach their potential on early learning goals.

🗨️ *The national SEND reforms, as set out in the Thrive and Achieve White Paper, will be progressively implemented in Telford and Wrekin ensuring alignment of commitments for both agendas. Within the Best Start in Life Plan, this alignment will be delivered through shared actions across education and health and care partners, embedding an integrated early years approach that prioritises early identification, consistent graduated response and timely access to specialist support for children who need it.* 🗨️

Abi Martin

Strategic Lead SEND/AP Reform

Children and Young People's Strategy 2025-2028 Start Well Objectives

- 1 Enabling children to get the best start in life through universal prenatal, antenatal, postnatal and health visiting services and community based early help services.
- 2 Empowering parents and carers to care for and nurture their children, with early/family help to avoid issues escalating.
- 3 Supporting all children to be ready for school, achieving a good level of development on their language and communication, problem solving and personal-social skills, at home and in early years and community settings.



What does 'Good Level of Development' (GLD) mean?

A **Good Level of Development (GLD)** means that a child is working at the **expected level for their age** by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception year).

When a child achieves GLD, it shows they have a **secure understanding and skills** in the areas that are most important for early learning and for starting Year 1. This includes being able to:

- **communicate and listen** confidently, following instructions and expressing their ideas
- **manage their feelings and behaviour**, work independently, and build positive relationships
- **use language, early reading and writing skills**, such as recognising sounds, forming letters, and using simple sentences
- **use numbers and simple maths**, including counting, recognising numbers, and solving basic problems

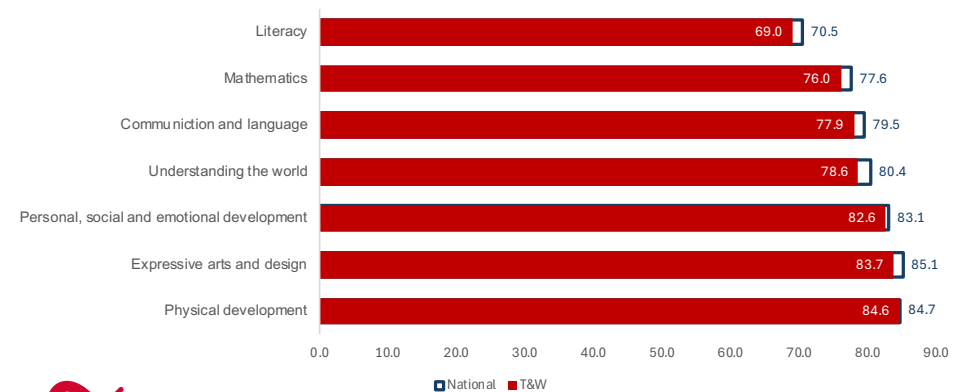
Reaching GLD means your child is developing well and has a **strong foundation for future learning**, though every child continues to grow and learn in their own time.

GLD targets and outcome indicators

Telford & Wrekin Targets for 5 year olds (end of academic year 2027/28)

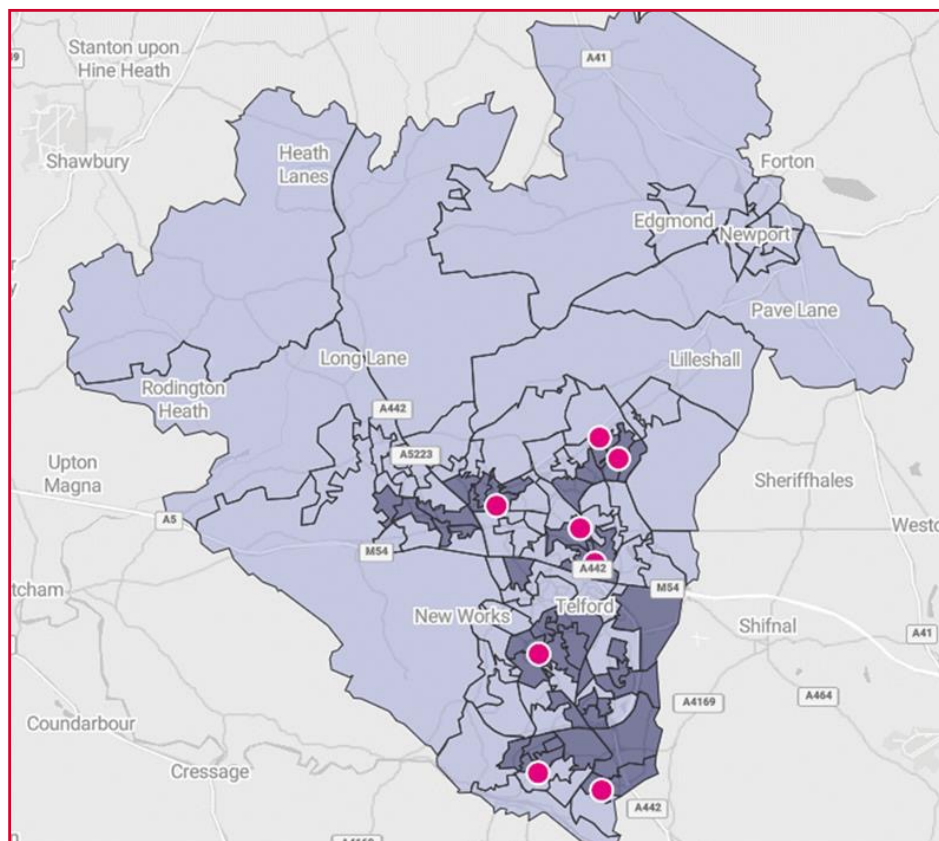
- % of children achieving a Good Level of Development is at least 78%
- % of children eligible for Free School Meals and achieving a Good Level of Development is at least 64.6%

% of children achieving GLD across each area of learning, 2024-25



Beyond the targets, we want to set the aspiration that every 5 year old child reaches their development potential.

Our best start Family Hubs



The dark shading is showing communities that are in the 30% most deprived nationally (using the 2025 Index of Deprivation) and the red dots show the current locations of the Family Hubs.

Our Family Hub locations

Oak Family Hub Theatre Square, Oakengates

Silver Birch Family Hub 103 Southgate, Sutton Hill

Walnut Family Hub Park lane, Woodside

Cherry Blossom Family Hub Hawksworth Rd, Telford

Hazel Family Hub Waterloo Road, Hadley

Evergreen Family Hub 35 High Street, Dawley

Damson Family Hub Lawndale, Wellington Road, Donnington

Damson Family Hub St Matthews Road, Donnington
Wellington (opening Autumn 2026)



www.telfordfamilyhubs.co.uk

Our local picture – GLD focus

Five year old profile, 2024/25

There are on average 2,200 children in Reception class each year, of which approximately:

- 390 have English as an additional language
- 100 have an Education Health & Care Plan
- 270 have Special Educational Needs support
- 440 are eligible for Free School Meals
- 25% are from Black and Minority Ethnic Groups

Achieving a Good Level of Development at age 5:

- 1,480 children achieved a good level of development in 2025 (67.3% of children)
- Around 235 additional children need to achieve a good level of development to reach our target of 78%

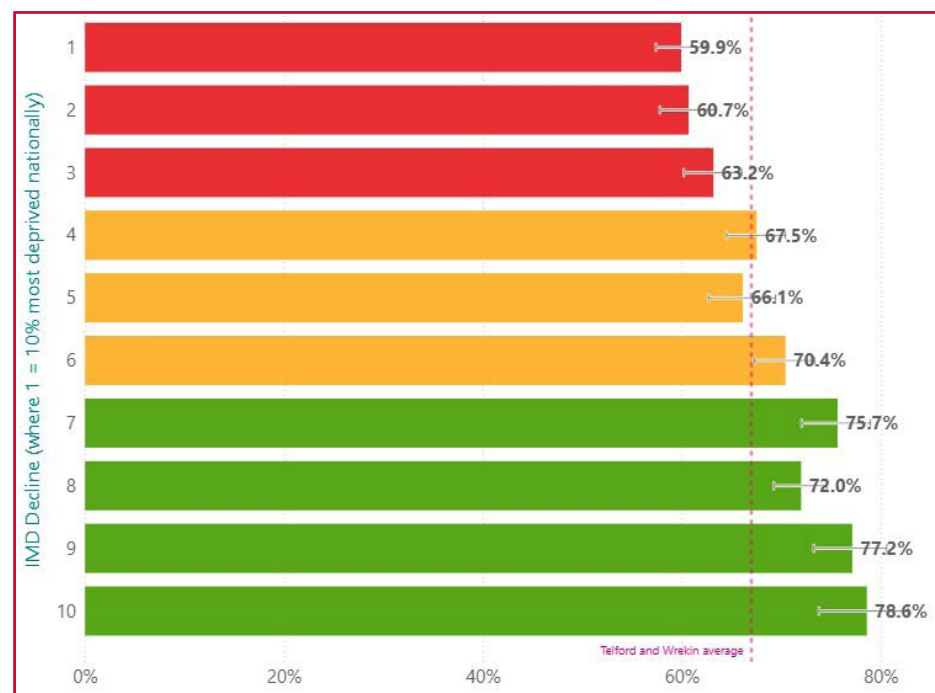
Our target groups:

- Children Receiving Free School Meals (FSM) – 50.6% of children eligible for FSM in 2024/25 achieve a good level of development. Around 60 additional children eligible for FSM would need to achieve GLD to meet our target of 64.6% in 2027/28
- Children living in more deprived areas of the Borough – there is an 18.7 percentage point gap between GLD achievement in the 10% most deprived communities, compared to the 10% least deprived (see chart opposite)

- Boys – around 60.6% of boys achieve a good level of development, compare to 74.4% of girls in 2024/25
- Summer Born Children – there is a 20.2 percentage point gap between GLD achievement for boys born in September (70.1%), compared to those born in August (49.9%), 2023-25

Achievement of GLD across deprivation groups

(Source: GLD performance 2023-2025, by Index of Multiple Deprivation decile of child's home address)



Our local picture – Best Start in Life

13,200 children aged 0-5 in the borough, 2024.

27.1% of children living in relative low income (under 16s) (England 22.1%), in 2023/24.

45.1% of women have early access to maternity care (in 10 weeks) (England 63.5%), in 2023/24.

Birth rate for under 18s of 5.6, higher than England 3.0, 2023.

82.5% children receiving 12 month health visitor review (England 88.4%), in 2024/25.

86.2% of 2-2.5 year olds receiving health visitor review (England 93.9%), in 2024/25.

25.3% Overweight and obesity at the end of reception (England 23.5%), in 2024/25.

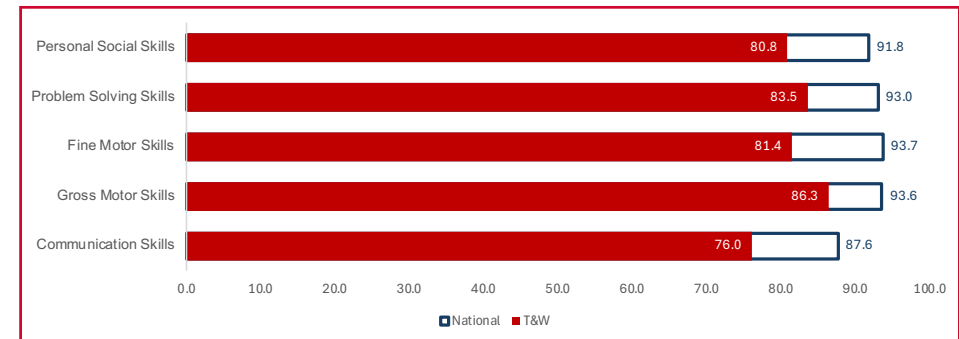
Oral health – 27.0% of five year olds experience visually obvious dental decay at age 5 years. 155 children aged 0-5 were admitted to hospital for dental caries in 3 years (21/22-23/24).

2,785 children aged 0-4 had Emergency hospital admissions (in 2024/25).

87.9% Vaccination coverage MMR 2 dose (England 83.7%), in 2024/25.

94.5% vaccination coverage at age 2 for Dtap IPV Hib HepB (England 92.5%), in 2024/25.

Child Development: % of children achieving the expected level at age 2 to 2 and a half, 2024-25



Overview of our Best Start in Life Plan

Partnership, engagement and co-production
Children, parents, carers, partners and settings

**Maximise the
impact of 2-2.5
year checks**

**Develop and raise
awareness of our
universal offer**

**Expand targeted
support**

**Speech
language and
communication**

Become data and intelligence led

Priorities for 2026/27

- 1** Develop pathways of support for children who are not meeting their milestones.
- 2** Establish an innovative multi-disciplinary team to provide tailored support for those who need it most.
- 3** Communicate our universal and target offers clearly to parents and partners to ensure maximum uptake.

Partnership, engagement and co-production

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
Engagement and co-production with parents			
Strengthen parental engagement and embed co-production across Family Hubs and the Families First Partnership to support children's early development and improve the proportion achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD).	Demonstrable improvements in parents' confidence and ability to support early learning at home, measured through pre- and post-engagement questionnaires, feedback tools, and Family Hub evaluation data.	LA – Family Hubs	The BSFH delivery grant continues to fund the Parent Carer Co-production post in the Voice and Influence Team and supports the budget to enable co-produced work to take place. These targets have been incorporated into their work plan, and they will be able to demonstrate both activity and impact.
Co-producing school-readiness pathways, home-learning resources, and targeted interventions that address local developmental needs.	Increased numbers of parents taking part in co-produced school-readiness activities, workshops, and planning groups, with attendance data and engagement rates monitored quarterly.	LA – Family Hubs	The BSFH delivery grant continues to fund the Parent Carer Co-production post in the Voice and Influence Team and supports the budget to enable co-produced work to take place. These targets have been incorporated into their work plan, and they will be able to demonstrate both activity and impact.
Making it Real Home learning intervention training for all settings, schools and parent events.	Attendance at training. Parents voice captured via pre and post questionnaire and engagement events.	LA – Early Years	Awaiting revised roll out for the Autumn term
Training for partners			
Deliver DfE EYFSP support package to all EYFS teachers 1 per term starting summer 2026: Professional conversations. Formative assessment, Summative assessment.	Increased attendance of schools at training leading to more accurate assessment when submitting GLD.	LA - Early Years and Childcare Team Leader	EYFSP support session delivered Professional Dialogues: 19 schools and 32 EYFS teachers attended
Early Years talk boost training and resources are available termly to support children's speech and language communication.	Number of staff trained. Number of setting delivering targeted intervention. Impact of intervention.	LA - Early Years and Childcare Team Leader	107 individuals trained/302 groups run Impact on slides provided

Partnership, engagement and co-production *continued*

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
Develop and rollout Early Years and Schools Professionals Training/ Webinar Series. to upskill early years and schools professionals on eatwell guide, active learning, talking to young people about weight.	Number of professionals attended training.	Senior Health Improvement Practitioner (Healthy Weight)	Schools webinar series launched September 2025. 30 minute online learning sessions put on for school staff and partners to attend. Eight topics have so far been delivered including Eatwell Plate, Sugar Awareness, Active Breaks, Talking about Weight. 75 attendees have taken part in the webinar series so far. A similar early years programme is in development in partnership with family hubs and early years practitioners hoping to launch late 2026.
Coproduction with SEND parent carer forums and groups is developed through Working together for Parent Participation.	Number of Parent carer groups and reps meeting to work on development of SEND Local Offer and development of communication.	SEND	Participation at monthly SEND Parent carer forum. Including parent carer involvement from EYs Sensory Inclusion Groups, PODs, Dandilions, Challenging perceptions group. SEND coproduction embedded into the SEND Reform planning for role out in September 2026.
SEND Working Together Charter (Coproduction) used with partners and settings through the PINS programme and SEND Experts at Hand offer.	Settings and schools signed up to the working together charter, Settings accessing the PODs support through the PINS model and EAH.	SEND/PCF	Coproduction charter has been implemented in 6 primary schools as part of the PINS programme. With parent carers and schools working with PODs on the Coproduction charter 4 key principles. The WTC is a key part of the SEND reform plan and the principles will underpin the work with settings, partners and families.

Maximise the impact of 2-2.5 year checks

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
Analyse and identify gaps in take up of the 2-2.5 year development review to inform targeting	Increase uptake by supporting families attendance and reduce the number of missed appointments.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHAT – PH Nursing Service Manager	Template improvement plan document being used to analyse and identify gaps in take up of the 2-2.5 year development review.
Communication and engagement: Implement text messaging reminder service for families for the 12 month and 2-2.5 year development reviews.	Increase in attendance at 2-2.5 year development review. Increase percentage of 2-2.5 year development reviews taken place within timeframe.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHAT – PH Nursing Service Manager	Text messaging reminder service implemented for both development reviews (2-2.5 year review – 13 Feb 26, 9-12 month review – 6 March).
Communication and engagement: Proactive engagement with families regarding well baby clinics	Increase in attendance at 2-2.5 year development review. Increase percentage of 2-2.5 year development reviews taken place within timeframe.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHAT – PH Nursing Service Manager	Since Feb '26 there are now four well baby clinics (open clinics) being delivered in Dawley, Donnington, Woodside and Sutton Hill.
Communication and engagement: Proactive engagement with families regarding development clinics	Increase in attendance at 2-2.5 year development review. Increase percentage of 2-2.5 year development reviews taken place within timeframe.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHAT – PH Nursing Service Manager	Synertec to send out appointment letters for development reviews.
Communication and engagement: Scope out a self booking facility for parents to book the 2-2.5 year development review.	Increase in attendance at 2-2.5 year development review. Increase percentage of 2-2.5 year development reviews taken place within timeframe	LA – PH Commissioner SCHAT – PH Nursing Service Manager	To liaise with other services to look at and review self booking facility options.
Improve the quality of the 2-2.5 year development review: Development of Nursery Nurse guidance for completing the 2-2.5 year development review, including guidance for completing Rio for reporting.	Ensure consistent offer to families and families receiving the right support at the right time. Accurate reporting.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHAT – PH Nursing Service Manager	Nursery Nurses deliver universal 2-2.5 year development reviews. Health Visitors deliver targeted and specialist 2-2.5 year development reviews. Nursery Nurse engagement has taken place and guidance is being developed for Nursery Nurses.
Improve the quality of the 2-2.5 year development review: Training needs analysis for Nursery Nurses.	Training to meet the needs of staff and ensure a high standard, consistent offer to families.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHAT – PH Nursing Service Manager	Training needs analysis to be undertaken.
Improve the quality of the 2-2.5 year development review: Health Visitor guidance for completing the 2-2.5 year development review, including guidance for Rio reporting	Ensure consistent offer to families and families receiving the right support at the right time. Accurate reporting.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHAT – PH Nursing Service Manager	Health Visitors deliver targeted and specialist 2-2.5 year development reviews. Health Visitor engagement to take place and guidance developed for Health Visitors.

Maximise the impact of 2-2.5 year checks *continued*

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
Improve the quality of the 2-2.5 year development review: Training needs analysis for Health Visitors.	Training to meet the needs of staff and ensure a high standard, consistent offer to families.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHAT – PH Nursing Service Manager	Training needs analysis to be undertaken.
Support and empower families – distribute or signpost to the ERIC potty training leaflet at development reviews, and promote at the well baby clinics.	Myth busting with parents on potty training and consistent advice to all families.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHAT – PH Nursing Service Manager	The ERIC potty training leaflet is to be introduced at the 12 month development review, and covered again at the 2-2.5 year development review with families.
Support and empower families – explore opportunities to further share public health messages as part of development reviews.	Accurate and consistent advice to all families.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHAT – PH Nursing Service Manager	To explore with partners (for example, Education and Family Hubs) opportunities to share public health messages possible platforms or Padlett's to share information with families.
Support and empower families – distribution of Brushing for Life packs (toothbrush, toothpaste and health promotion leaflet) during 2-2.5 year development check.	Accurate and consistent advice to all families. Number of packs distributed.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHAT – PH Nursing Service Manager	Ensuring practitioners give the packs out to families.
Develop clear system pathway of support for children and families following the 2-2.5 year review outcome.	Provide key development messages to families and systematically offer earlier intervention and signposting to approved interventions.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHAT – PH Nursing Service Manager	Reviewing pathways across all three LA's, but need to create a pathway working with local partners, based on existing child development pathways and local services.

Develop and raise awareness of our universal offer – GLD focus

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
Continuation of the Family Hub Parenting Together which focuses on attachment, communication and reciprocity to support development of early language .	Number of families completing Parenting together.	LA – Family Hubs Group Manager	Over the 12-month period, 276 referrals were received, evidencing strong and consistent demand for services that support children and families to achieve the best start in life. The highest proportion of referrals was within the 6-11 age group (42%), followed closely by 0-5 years (38%), with 12-18 year olds (20%) making up a smaller but important cohort. This reflects a clear focus on early intervention and support during critical developmental stages, particularly across early years and primary age children. Session time preferences were well distributed: • Afternoons (34%) • Mornings (32%) • Evenings (27%) • No preference (7%) This demonstrates the importance of a flexible and accessible offer, ensuring families can engage at times that suit their routines. The strong demand across mornings and afternoons supports delivery aimed at younger children and families, while evening provision enables access for working parents, ensuring no barriers to early help. Summer Term 2025/26 (to date) shows a notable increase in both morning (37) and afternoon (36) attendance, alongside continued high evening engagement (32). This suggests improved reach, increased confidence in services, and strengthening relationships with families.

Develop and raise awareness of our universal offer – GLD focus *continued*

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
Development of Wellington Family Hub and outreach post at Newport to provide a local partnership building for delivery of GLD activities including talking to your baby and the new BSIL DfE activities.	Expansion of offer to more parents. Increase in family Hub users from those with English as an additional Language.	LA – Family Hubs Group Manager	Wellington Best Start Family Hub has progressed and capital programme development has now started – anticipated opening late Sept 2026.
Family Hubs campaign in Telford Town Centre and Social Media promoting the services available for parents.	Increase in Reach and awareness of Family Hubs.	LA – Family Hubs Group Manager	Quotes are being sought for sponsored social media and Electronic screens in Town Centre. The communications Plan has been scheduled into Graphic Design and three Public Health themes selected – Oral Health, Screen Time and Immunisations alongside the Community Based Early Help Offer.
Expansion of Health Visitor Drop-in clinics across Telford and Wrekin, and at Family Hub Events.	Increase the reach of universal Health Visitor contact. Increase in ASQ completion.	SCHT – PH Nursing Service Manager	There are Health Visitor baby weigh drop- in clinics across Telford & Wrekin and appointed clinics for families to access.
Deliver Making it Real home learning intervention training for all settings and schools.	Attendance at training parents voice captured via pre and post questionnaire.	LA – Early Years and Childcare Team Leader	Adapting session to become more accessible for settings in line with NCB guidance, Autumn term new approach will be delivered.
GLD universal offer will ensure children and families receive the right support at the right time. This includes the involvement of SEND Best Start Inclusion Practitioners, who will provide timely, responsive support and adapt interventions quickly as needs change.	Recruitment of SEND Family Hub Practitioners. Number of children and families seen by Family Hubs especially those with emerging SEND needs	FH	Best Start Family Hubs Delivery Grant has been passed by Director for Public Health and is being signed off by Jo Britton on 5th June for timely submission. Any new projects including BSIPs are waiting for approval by DfE and the Start for Life Governance unit. 4.5 posts have been written in, 1.4 per locality or 20 hours per hub.

Develop and raise awareness of our universal offer – wider prevention

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
Building on the success of the TWIPP Healthy Conversations campaign and branding launch, continue to raise awareness for 0-5s and older children (who may have younger siblings too young to have been vaccinated), continue to support EYS and schools both proactively and reactively on infectious disease control.	Increase overall coverage childhood routine and seasonal immunisations in vaccination schedule, particularly MMR.	LA - Health Protection Hub	Regular vaccine educator attendance at Family Hubs and similar community groups to discuss MMRV and other vaccine/health issues. Provision of accessible MMR clinics in the community at convenient times/places including education settings. Clinics preceded by information materials and offers of discussion and support for parents/carers. Promotion of vaccinations through social media and information to parents/carers via schools and EYS. Working with South East Telford Primary Care Network to help them with their project to increase vaccine uptake in 0-5 year olds. Support for EYS with outbreaks and cases of infectious disease to minimise the impact, severity of illness, further disruptions to education and help protect vulnerable children. Proactive provision of information and resources to help settings and parents/carers prevent infectious disease. Production of a bespoke H&S guide for EYS to help them manage H&S effectively and reduce accidents and ill-health. Training session for EYS on H&S. H&S inspections of EYS.
Expand the Brilliant Brushers (Supervised toothbrushing) scheme.	Increase in the number of early years settings participating in the scheme. Increase in the number of children participating in the Brilliant Brushers supervised toothbrushing scheme.	Clare Williams (Public Health Commissioner) Healthy Smile Team, Shropshire Community Health Trust	Currently 33 early years settings participating in the Brilliant Brushers supervised toothbrushing scheme and 2000 children toothbrushing daily.

Develop and raise awareness of our universal offer – wider prevention *continued*

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
Promote the Early Years and Schools Health and Wellbeing Toolkit to provide signposting to information and resources that encourage physical activity and healthy eating.	Toolkit Early Years and Schools Health and Wellbeing usage e.g. number of clicks, % engagement. Case Studies provided.	Senior Health Improvement Practitioner (Healthy Weight)	Early years resources have been added to the Schools Health and Wellbeing Toolkit – an online platform packed with information and resources that professionals working with children and young people can use: Health and Wellbeing Toolkit The most downloaded resource currently is the School Food Standard Early Years Checklist
5 by 5 – Continue to promote and embed the 5 by 5 programme across Family Hubs, libraries, parks and early years settings	Website usage (unique visits, page views) and Adventure Card downloads. Survey responses and social engagement. Attendance at 5 by 5-badged sessions. % parents reporting their child has tried adventures.	Telford & Wrekin Council (Education and Family Hubs) with partners: Libraries, Parks, Early Years providers, Health Visiting, Community & Voluntary sector	Programme live, providing families with simple, low/no-cost activities to support school readiness. Focus on five themes (development, communication, friendships, curiosity, and connections). Strong partnership delivery with early years settings, schools, family hubs and community organisations. Next Steps Increase parent/carer engagement and uptake. Embed delivery across all early years providers and partners. Strengthen links to the 10by10 programme. Monitor impact and refine offer.
Telford and Wrekin to collaborate in a 12-month pilot to co-develop a nurse led pre-conception education programme, training the workforce to enhance reproductive health and reduce disparities across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.	Increased levels of participation within the local community.	ICB Women's Commissioner	A Burdett-funded preconception pilot is training nurses as professional educators to raise the importance of preconception, further recruitment of nurses will take place in Telford and Wrekin

Develop and raise awareness of our universal offer – wider prevention *continued*

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
Bounce and Rhyme – We are increasing the number of sessions taking place across the borough particularly in the south. This will be a mix of staff and volunteer led sessions. National Year of Reading – We are focussing on using this year to increase membership and usage of libraries particularly across target groups of under 1s, boys and disadvantaged families. This includes a Summer Reading Challenge.	Increased levels of participation within the local community.	Library Services – Amy Jones	Postcodes for sessions to be added in. Number of sessions. New session in march 26 in Stirchley, possibility of external sessions from autumn onwards (FH funding). predom south Telford. Southwater and Wellington x2 and Stirchley current sessions. Newport. National year of reading – summer event. Linking the website content to other areas (FH)
Continuation of the school nursing service, supporting children and young people with physical and emotional well-being, and delivering the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP), school drop-in services, and transition support into educational settings.	Continuation of the universal school nurse contract.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHT – PH Nursing Service Manager	The universal offer by the school nursing service is ongoing.

Expand Targeted Support

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
Triple P Stepping Stones to be offered at Cherry Blossom Family Hub.	Number of parents who complete Triple P Stepping Stones training.	LA – Family Hubs Group Manager	Parenting for SEND: Stronger together (Triple P Stepping Stones/Making it Real) in partnership with PODS. This is currently running with good attendance and feedback from Parents. We are working with Nesta (Research and Innovation Foundation) to strengthen Parental engagement and adherence to maximise impact.
Identification and Support of SEND children not accessing childcare places.	Reduction in children who arrive at school without having attended nursery.	LA – Early Years and Childcare Team Leader and SEND Project Lead	Children entering school September 2026 have been identified and support has been put in place. Team are now working with 40 children due to start school in September 2027 to find a childcare place and/or support needs of child and family.
Develop clear pathways of referral support for different groups not reaching their milestones.	Increase the number of children receiving tailored support.	Family Hubs/Integrated Neighbourhood team	Pathways work will be developed by the new integrated neighbourhood team.
Continue the vaccination inequalities programme to target the work of the Vaccine Educator in education settings to improve health literacy and run accessible vaccination clinics in community, school and Early Years settings.	Increase number of children and parents receiving vaccine education session. Increase the number of accessible pop up and catch up clinics in community, EY and education sessions in low uptake areas.	Health Protection Hub, Community Pharmacists	Work to increase health literacy around HPV and MMR vaccinations has been ongoing with both children (HPV) and parents/carers (MMR), focussed on areas with low uptake and multiple deprivation. Contractual arrangements have been put in place to allow the Council to employ pharmacists to run clinics in the community. Accessible MMR clinics have been held in schools and nurseries to offer a convenient route for parents to get children vaccinated.
Establish innovative multi-disciplinary team (MDT).	Number of children supported by the MDT.	LA – Family Hubs Group Manager	School Readiness MDT/Neighbourhood Health has been written into the SEND strand of the Best Start Family Hub Delivery Plan and work has been progressed with Health and SEND colleagues to ensure alignment and fidelity to best practice and Experts at Hand model.
Health Notifications, utilised effectively to identify where children are not accessing EY provision. Target to enable early intervention and to get the right support at the right time for reception.	Data capture number of children and outcome of interventions.	LA – Early Years and Childcare Team Leader	Health notifications have been updated and now provide better information to target needs. This links to row three.

Expand Targeted Support *continued*

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
EYFSP data used effectively to identify schools and linked settings where children have low GLD. Identify Early Learning Goals to target schools/settings to offer support and focused CPD	Increased numbers of children achieving GLD in specific areas. Numbers of schools/settings accessing GLD.	LA – Early Years and Childcare Team and Insight Team	EYFSP data to be returned by schools and data assessed and compared to 2025 data to support intervention.
Early Years and Schools Health and Wellbeing Programme implementation (settings will receive support to complete a self-assessment audit, staff workshop, and action plan).	Number of targeted early years and school settings signed up to the programme. Reduction in overweight and obesity prevalence of Reception aged pupils.	Senior Health Improvement Practitioner (Healthy Weight)	Seven schools and one specialist education college have signed up to the targeted programme. Six have completed a self-assessment audit, four have taken part in a staff workshop. This is to be rolled out to early years settings late 2026. Three early years settings will be identified and targeted using GLD, obesity and deprivation data.
Healthy Families Programme. Provide targeted support to children, and their families, whose BMI centile is above a healthy weight through a 12-week behaviour change programme to embed healthy habits.	Reduction in overweight and obesity prevalence of Reception aged pupils, Number of children and families signed up to the programme. Number of families achieved goals set.	Senior Health Improvement Practitioner (Healthy Weight)	73 families accessed the 12 week Healthy Families programme in 2025/26. The Healthy Families team have supported the Schools Health and Wellbeing Programme and delivered a pilot peer support programme in a targeted school – equipping selected peer champions with knowledge and skills to improve healthy eating and physical activity among their peers.
Take up of Free Education and Childcare for 2 year olds if you get Extra Support. (Talking 2s in Telford).	DfE measure is met 74% expectation or exceeded. Report cards issued.	LA – Early Years and Childcare Team Leader	Awaiting latest score card from DfE last score 71%.
HAHH (HAF) to develop programme across each school holiday period and to bring together Wrap Around and HAF DfE programmes together to develop extended childcare offer for all children.	Number of children attending HHAH provision. Number of settings offering extended childcare across the LA.	LA – Early Years and Childcare Team Leader	Summer programme is about to be launched across the year we have 70 HHAH providers operating. We will start to offer October and February provision alongside Summer, Christmas and Easter Delivery. WA, HHAH, Breakfast Club and Youth provision are now working alongside each other to support Extended childcare of a high quality and where children and young people are safeguarded effectively.
Bookstart Age under 2 and 3s.		Lisa Seymour	Packs delivered to registry office for new borns. Toddler and pre-school packs are distributed to setting sbased upon area of disadvantage.
Increase the uptake of the Healthy Start scheme.	Increasing the uptake of the Healthy Start scheme amongst eligible families.	LA – PH Commissioner SCHT – PH Nursing Service Manager	Review of current Healthy Start scheme offer and pathways.

Speech Language and Communication (SLCN)

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
Early Years talk boost training and resources are available each year to support children's speech and language communication.	Number of staff trained. Number of setting delivering targeted intervention. Impact of intervention.	LA – Early Years and Childcare Team Leader	107 individuals trained/302 groups run Impact on slides provided.
Work up the proposal for 2-year continuation of ELSEC model including support for Early Years Settings to deliver Universal, Targeted and Targeted + interventions including Communication Audits, TalkBoost, Concept Cat, BEST and Early Narrative.	Number of staff trained. Number of setting delivering targeted intervention. % rates of referrals to SLT reduce for this age group/by population. Impact of intervention.	LA – SEND Support Service. ICB. ELSEC Team within the LA/SCHT	10 SLCN Practitioners within Telford and Shropshire, delivering to 14 settings in Wave w and 13 settings in Wave 2. Data collated between LA/Health. SEND Reform plan for TW includes continuation of ELSEC through a locality model of work. Will be rolled out from Sept 26.
Making SLT more accessible: improving referral form, providing advice line and reducing waiting times.	Number of children in EY referred to SLT. Number of children's referrals to SLT rejected as not appropriate. Waiting times and trends for childrens SLT. Number of children referred to SLT Advice line. Feedback about the quality of Advice	Children's SLT and Early Years settings	Kirsty English (Sally Newton). A simlified more accessible referral form has been developed with feedback from referrers and triaging and SLTs providing assessment. An MS Teams version of the referral form is being considered alongside systems which will speak directly to the child's electronic patient record (EPR). A decision about those options is expected summer 26. Go live with amended referral form following feedback for Sept 26 and move to full digital referal system which speaks to EPR from Jan 27 following approval and procurement. Numbers of referrals to children's SLT all ages 2025/26: 2000 (STW data) Numbers of referrals rejected by children's SLT all ages 2025/26: 180 (STW data) Number of referrals to Children's SLT Advice Line all ages 2025/26: 592 (STW data) Numbers of EY (0-48 mths) children referred to children's SLT 2025/26: 1056 (STW data) Waiting times: Longest wait June 26: 48 weeks (Telford)

Speech Language and Communication (SLCN) *continued*

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
Integrating 'how to...' advice given across the system to parents and early years settings re SLCN goal setting and early intervention for children with complex or additional needs.	Completion of an extended early years 'Blue Book' of advice and 'how to...' guidance. Early Year setting satisfaction and confidence in using this tool.	SLCN system workstream	The links are Sally Newton, SLT Advanced Practitioner and Lisa Seymour Telford LA Early Years. Aiming for staggered launch and roll out. Schedule TBC following a series of meetings to moderate the evidence base of the content, use of Neuro affirming language and accessibility of the resources currently identified (>400) summer 26. Piloting with stakeholders of first moderated resources, including parents and early years settings from Sept 26. Amendments to resources that have not met agreed criteria from Jan 27. Gap analysis of areas of development and function where there are insufficient resources for parents and settings and a plan to develop these March 27.
Align Best Start Family Hubs messaging about SLCN across all service commissioners and providers.	Number of public health campaigns , Feedback about the campaign impact.	Family Hubs	SLCN Messaging, including screentime has been included in the year long Best Start Family Hub campaign. Quotes are being sought for sponsored social media and Electronic screens in Town Centre. The communications Plan has been scheduled into Graphic Design and three Public Health themes are currently selected – Oral Health, Screen Time and Immunisations alongside the Community Based Early Help Offer.

Becoming Data and Intelligence-led

Priority action	Measures of impact	Lead organisation/group	June 2026
Create a headline GLD report to describe out local picture.	Ensure starting position is clearly understood and all plans refer to the same data.	LA – Insight Team	Completed and headlines included in Best Start in Life plan.
Undertake detailed multi-variate analysis of GLD data – birth month, ethnicity, school, deprivation, gender, SEND needs.	Targeted interventions can be evidence based, ensuring children get the best support based on their needs.	LA – Insight Team	Completed for 2025 academic year data and findings shared with BSIL Board. Analysis will be undertaken again following the collection of 2026 GLD assessments during the summer.
Bring together wider data and intelligence to inform a Best Start in Life JSNA product.	A clear understanding of all data and intelligence.	LA – Insight Team	Best Start in Life already a chapter of our JSNA products – this will be expanded to cover the wider requirements and aligned to the BSIL Plan measures.
Explore options to have a detailed analysis of 2-2.5 year checks or linkage of child-level data.	Better understanding of circumstances affecting a child's outcomes enables evidence based interventions.	LA – Insight Team and PH Commissioner	Working group in place to explore the options for legally sharing child-level data to enable detailed analysis. Further options to undertake separate analysis of different cohorts of children also being explored if child-level linkage is not possible.
Continue to use data to target wider prevention/ public health interventions – vaccination coverage and NCMP.	Target vaccine educator and pop up vaccine clinics in low uptake areas. Target health families team interventions to settings with highest prevalence of excess weight.	Senior Health Improvement Practitioner (Healthy Weight) LA – Health Protection Hub	HPH – data is continually used to inform education and clinic provision around vaccinations, for example for winter vaccinations fortnightly updates were provided by ICB analysts which guided where we focussed our work. NCMP – 221 families of reception aged children who are above healthy weight contacted via phone/ email/ text and offered Healthy Families programme. Only 8 families engaged with the programme. 541 families of year six aged children who are above healthy weight contact commenced February 2026. 13 families so far engaged with the programme.

Monitoring and tracking progress

We will monitor the successful delivery of this plan primarily using the indicators below. This performance framework will form part of our wider monitoring of outcomes for all children and young people in the borough, including monitoring of the Health & Wellbeing Board strategy, the Children & Young People's Strategy, detailed outcome monitoring to a number of partnership boards, as well as through the Local Outcomes Framework and delivery of the Council's Priorities.

Indicator	Year	Latest value	National average
% achieving GLD at age 5 – First Language is not English	2024/25	60.3%	
Achievement across EYFSP area of learning – physical development	2024/25	84.6%	84.7%
Achievement across EYFSP area of learning – expressive arts and design	2024/25	83.7%	85.1%
Achievement across EYFSP area of learning – personal, social and emotional development	2024/25	82.6%	83.1%
Achievement across EYFSP area of learning – understanding the world	2024/25	78.6%	80.4%
Achievement across EYFSP area of learning – communication and language	2024/25	77.9%	79.5%
Achievement across EYFSP area of learning – mathematics	2024/25	76.0%	77.6%
Achievement across EYFSP area of learning – literacy	2024/25	69.0%	70.5%
ASQ-3 at the 2-2.5-year health review: % achieving expected level of development – communication	2024/25	76.0	87.6
ASQ-3 at the 2-2.5-year health review: % achieving expected level of development – gross motor	2024/25	86.3	93.6
ASQ-3 at the 2-2.5-year health review: % achieving expected level of development – fine motor	2024/25	81.4	93.7
ASQ-3 at the 2-2.5-year health review: % achieving expected level of development – problem solving	2024/25	83.5	93.0
ASQ-3 at the 2-2.5-year health review: % achieving expected level of development – personal-social	2024/25	80.8	91.8
Percentage of children with a good level of development at 5 years old (LOF)	2024/25	67.3%	68.3%
Percentage point difference between the proportion of children eligible or not eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development (LOF)	2024/25	21.1	21.3
Percentage of children achieving good level of development at 2-2.5 year review (LOF)	2024/25	64.3	81.4
Take up rate of 2-year-old disadvantage childcare offer (LOF)	2024/25	69.8	66.6
Take up rate of the 3-4 year-old 15 hour childcare offer (LOF)	2024/25	95.5	92.9

Monitoring and tracking progress *continued*

Indicator	Year	Latest value	National average
% achieving GLD at age 5 – gender	2024/25	Girls 74.4% Boys 60.6%	
% achieving GLD at age 5 – FSM	2024/25	50.6%	51.3%
% achieving GLD at age 5 – SEN without Statement/EHCP	2024/25	29.1%	26.4%
% achieving GLD at age 5 – Ethnicity	2024/25	White 68.9% Mixed 68.6% Asian 56.5% Black 64.4% Chinese 87.5% Other Ethnic 66.7%	White 69.7% Mixed 69.9% Asian 67.7% Black 62.9% Chinese 78.8% Other Ethnic 60.0%
% achieving GLD at age 5 – term of birth	2024/25	Autumn 75.5% Spring 71.0% Summer 58.5%	

Views from our Best Start In Life Partners

“From a social work perspective, supporting children to achieve a Good Level of Development means understanding the whole child within their family, culture and community. A best start in life recognises that children thrive when early support is inclusive, culturally responsive and built on strong, respectful relationships with children and their families. This includes ensuring access to early, coordinated support that recognises individual needs and is responsive in creating the best opportunities for children to grow, develop and reach their potential.”

Louise Spragg

**Principal Social Worker,
Head of Service for Practice**

“Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership (MNVP) are important for good level of development because they ensure families receive safe, responsive, and culturally sensitive care from the very start of life. When women, birthing people, partners, and neonatal families are listened to their lived experiences shape service improvement, local systems are better able to meet needs early, reduce inequalities and strengthen the foundations that support healthy child

development. MNVP's are the 'boots on the ground' feedback loops that ensure this foundation is solid.”

Maria Howe

**Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership
(MNVP) Strategic Lead**

“Childminders are important for Good Level of Development (GLD) because they provide consistent, nurturing early learning experiences that support children's social, emotional, language, and cognitive development, helping to build the strong foundations needed for school readiness; their smaller group sizes also allow more individual attention, which can be particularly beneficial for children with SEND, enabling more tailored support and responsive care.”

Cindy Hayden

CallumBear Childminding

“At our school, we focus on developing great communicators, with a strong GLD outcome in Reception, we are building the foundations for lifelong success.”

Mrs E Solomon

**Head teacher
Wombridge Primary School**

“Good oral health contributes to a child being able to reach a Good Level of Development at the end of Reception. Dental Pain and untreated tooth decay can affect a child's ability to eat, sleep, concentrate, speak and socialise with confidence, all of which are essential for learning and engagement in Nursery and Reception. Children who are free from dental pain are able to participate fully in activities, communicate effectively, develop social skills and establish routines. By providing professionals and families with evidence-based, up-to-date advice and support from infancy, we help prevent pain and reduce health inequalities, ensuring every child is ready to grow, learn, and thrive as part of a strong, shared Best Start in Life.”

Jill

**Oral Health Improvement Service Lead,
Healthy Smile Team**

Tom

Clinical Director, Community Dental Service

“Nurseries support children to transition to school by developing happy, kind, confident, all-rounded children who are eager to learn.”

Theresa Ewin

Playdays Childcare Newport

Views from our Best Start In Life Partners *continued*

At Home-Start Telford & Wrekin, we see every day how early support within the home environment, and through our groups, can transform a child's start in life. By strengthening family wellbeing, and encouraging positive and nurturing routines, we support the development of secure foundations children need to achieve GLD and flourish within their Early Years. 🍌🍌

Amy Moss
Scheme Co-Manager

The Health Visiting, School Nursing and Family Nurse Partnership service play a vital role in supporting a good level of development by delivering the universal Healthy Child Programme, focusing on early intervention to prevent, identify, and address developmental or health concerns. 🍌🍌

Sam Garratt
Public Health Nursing Service Manager
Telford & Wrekin

In our school, GLD represents the point at which children have developed strong foundations that prepare them confidently for the next stage of their education. GLD provides essential data because it reflects children's communication, social, emotional and physical readiness, alongside their early knowledge acquisition, which forms the basis for assessing progress from Year 1 onwards. Without these wider elements, children would not be fully prepared to access the national curriculum. 🍌🍌🍌🍌

Carol McQuiggin
Headteacher
Lawley Primary School

Dental pain and untreated tooth decay can affect a child's ability to eat, sleep, concentrate, speak and socialise with confidence, all of which are essential for learning and engagement in Nursery and Reception. Children who are free from dental pain are able to participate fully in activities, communicate effectively, develop social skills and establish routines. By providing professionals and families with evidence-based, up-to-date advice and support from infancy, we help prevent pain

and reduce health inequalities, ensuring every child is ready to grow, learn, and thrive as part of a strong, shared Best Start in Life. 🍌🍌

Jill
Oral Health Improvement Service Lead
Healthy Smile Team
Tom
Clinical Director
Community Dental Service

PODS (Parents Opening Doors) are important for GLD because Special Educational Needs and Disabilities make it harder for a child to learn or access education compared to their peers of the same age. The GLD for children with SEND is based on a "graduated approach" tailored to specific needs with our support, mainstream schools and other professional involved in a multidisciplinary health team. 🍌🍌

Kelly Lord
Perinatal & Infant Support
Co-Ordinator PODS
(Parents Opening Doors)

Views from our Best Start In Life Partners *continued*

As a Systemic Practice Team our work supports by strengthening relationships, improving emotional wellbeing, and supporting secure attachments within families. By helping families understand patterns of interaction, repair relationships, and create safer, more nurturing environments, we contribute to the foundations children need to develop emotionally, socially, and physically, supporting their readiness to learn and thrive as they grow. 🌱🌱

Daniel Machin

Clinical Lead and Systemic Team Manager

Having GLD in SLCN means children have a solid start in life. Being able to communicate is one of the fundamental principles that underpin early child development, with children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age forming the foundations for language and cognitive development. This begins in the home as a baby and continues throughout life as we grow and develop into adulthood. Achieving GLD in Communication and Language, one of the prime areas of learning, unlocks the

potential to learn successfully alongside peers, supports the development of friendships and relationships and improves life outcomes. For example, research tells us that children with poor vocabularies at 5 years of age had worse outcomes than typically developing peers at 34 across a range of life measures including education, employment and mental health. 🌱🌱

Joanne Preston

ELSEC: Advanced Practitioner for Education

Tracking GLD for Reception children in school is important as it ensures that staff are able to articulate those children who have mastered the essential foundational skills for future learning, and quickly identify those who require additional support to fully thrive in school. Working in this way nurtures the habits, skills, and mindsets that enable all learners to thrive as lifelong learners. 🌱🌱

Jo Duncombe

Headteacher

Woodlands Primary School