

Report of the Director for People and Neighbourhoods

Start Well Strategy 2024-27

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 ***“Our collective vision is by working together with families and communities, all children in Stockport will have the best start in life, be ready for school and become life-long learners. We will be collectively ambitious, and by 2027, we will have narrowed the achievement gap at the end of Reception for children living in poverty, particularly boys”.***

1.2 Recognising how critical the early years are for children’s development and success in later life, the refreshed Start Well Strategy articulates how the Council working with the Foundation Trust and other partners will work together with families and communities to prioritise outcomes for children in the earliest years of life over the next 3 years. The strategy is underpinned by the Healthy Child Programme, a key public health early intervention and prevention policy with alignment to the GM EYs Delivery Model.

1.3 The strategy sets out an ambitious programme of work and aims to provide a comprehensive, collaborative framework that encompasses an integrated approach to supporting optimal child development from pregnancy to age 5. By focusing on **2 strategic goals and 6 key priorities (see Start Well Strategy page)**, this strategy aligns the ‘Best Start for Life: A vision for the 1,001 critical days guidance (2021) and seeks to ensure every child in Stockport has the opportunity to **start well, live well and thrive**.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The Start Well Strategy 2024-2027 is a refreshed version of our previous strategy launched in 2021.

2.2 The strategy contributes to the delivery of the Children and Young People Plan 2024 -2027 which identifies seven Big Ambitions. The Start Well strategy delivers Ambition 2 but also works towards the other 6 Ambitions.

2.3 The process for refreshing the Start Well Strategy has involved a systematic approach to reviewing the original plan, evaluating outcomes, consideration of latest literature and research – local and National, government guidance, stakeholder engagement and learning from the experiences of families. This includes insights and learning from our Nesta Innovation Partnership 2021 – 2024 – A Fairer Start Local Stockport.

2.4 The refreshed strategy builds on the foundations of the last three years. It has been updated and enhanced based on new insights and changing circumstances to ensure it remains effective and relevant in improving outcomes for children in their early years and their families.

By aligning the strategy to the 'Best Start for Life: A vision for the 1001 critical days' and incorporating new and local research, the strategy will have a strengthened focus on the first 1001 days of life, prevention and early intervention, boys living in poverty and other children (Babies/Children in our Care, Special, Educational Needs and Disabilities and ethnically diverse) at risk of disadvantage.

2.5 The strategy acknowledges that progress is being made in supporting children's outcomes in the earliest years of life, however outcomes for children living in poverty (particularly boys) and other disadvantaged children remain challenging to shift. An outcomes framework and scorecard is in the final stages of development – there are a suite of indicators and measures to demonstrate progress against our outcomes. Regular service delivery evaluation will also ensure interventions provided are also evidence based and producing expected outcomes.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECCOMENDATIONS

Children and Families Scrutiny Committee review and comment upon the Start Well Strategy.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Start Well Strategy