

# Wirral's First 1001 Days



Strengthening collective action to improve outcomes for Wirral Children, and empowering parents to nurture and support their children to achieve their potential

## Summary Report April 2021 - March 2022



## Introduction

The 1001 Days Programme was funded through the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) & Public Health England's (PHE) "VCSE Health and Wellbeing Fund Starting Well 2020/21", which supported the expansion of existing delivery to improve health outcomes for children from preconception to two and a half years old.

The 1001 Days project is funded to be delivered from April 2021 to March 2023. A final report will be produced accounting for all project activity to March 2023.

While the grant specifically funds some services delivered by Koala NW and the Foundation Years Trust, it has facilitated a cross-agency service redesign that aims to strengthen collective action to empower parents to nurture and support their children to achieve their full potential. 1001 Days is a universal approach across the borough with targeted activities in Wirral's five most deprived wards; Bidston & St James, Birkenhead & Tranmere, Rock Ferry, Seacombe, and Leasowe & Moreton East; and with the BAME community.

Delivery is centred around four goals, each of which included specific outcome indicators:

1. Increase breastfeeding initiation rates
2. Increased perinatal mental health support
3. Improved speech & language by age 2.5
4. Improved health outcomes

Despite challenges in reaching the original project aims, strong progress has been made during the first year of activity.

## Overall Take Up Of The 1001 Days Programme

The target for families who have been referred in was 2,000, and so far a total of 1,930 families had been referred in - representing some 97% performance with a further 6 months of delivery ahead.

Several formal Department Health & Social Care KPIs were established as part of the funding agreement and are measured quarterly:

### April 2021-March 2022

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Wirral Families who have been referred in	271	401	487	771	1,930
Families who have engaged	247	319	460	846	1,872
Families from high deprived areas referred into service	136	223	259	138	756
Families from BAME groups referred into service	6	40	94	33	173
% of families high deprived areas completing programme	11%	23%	20%	31%	31%
% of families BAME groups completing the programme	2%	12%	20%	42%	42%

With a target of 2,000 families, at the end of Quarter 4 a total of 1,930 families had been referred in - representing some 97% performance with a further year of delivery ahead.

At the end of Year 1, a total of 235 children had completed project activities - representing a mix of those who have reached 2.5 years or those who have concluded shorter programmes of support - whilst many others will remain within 1001 Days moving between different types of support.

### **Goal 1: Increase Breastfeeding Initiation Rates**

Feedback data shows that most wards have an increased level of breastfeeding due to 1001 Days (for example an increase from baseline of 20% in Bidston & St James), with only Leasowe & Moreton East experiencing a reduction that indicates a specific focus during Year 2 of activity.

### **Goal 2: Increased Perinatal Mental Health Support**

Feedback evidences that the majority of families report an improvement in the four outcome indicators; 85% of families experienced a decrease in isolation, 83% a reduction in stress/anxiety, 74% improved parent-infant relationship, and 76% improved perinatal mental health. Parents frequently tell us that they don't know if they are 'doing a good job' with their children, which can be a source of stress and an inability to cope. The high percentages indicate that 1001 Days is having the intended impact on parents understanding of their role and their confidence within that role.

### **Goal 3: Improved Speech And Language By Age 2.5**

Feedback demonstrates most families have positive outcomes; 71% report improved children's communication and language, 80% increased parental understanding of early development, 67% increase in parents reading more with their child, 69% increase in parents providing opportunities to enhance development. The fact that a higher percentage of parents report 'increased understanding of their child's early development' than the percentage of those that have changed their behaviour with regards to reading more or introducing more opportunities to enhance learning, is a trend that we often see. Changing habits is a longer-term goal more easily achieved once there is clarity on *why* something is important, which will be a focus in Year 2.

### **Goal 4: Improved Health Outcomes**

In Year 1 there was a lack of consistent data collection on the number of families reached with generic public health messages, and the difference this made. In the last six months, health messaging was focused on the predicted winter RSV surge, which was also an opportunity to share wider health messages. Information regarding RSV was shared with every new parent in the five wards, and with parents with older children 0-2.5 years through promotion at play groups, nurseries, through the wider 1001 Days network. In Year 2 activity will link with public health to ensure that teams are not only providing specific information on priorities such as smoking and obesity during the first 1001 days but that public health messaging is threaded more effectively across the whole 1001 Days programme.

## Project Overview

### Strategic Context

The overall programme enables system partners to work together with the VCSE sector to promote equalities and reduce health inequalities by building the evidence base about good practice, sharing lessons and widening the adoption of interventions with a proven track record. The programme's three objectives are to:

- 1 Encourage co-production in the creation of person-centred, community-based health and care which promotes equality for all
- 2 Enable the voice of people with lived experience and experiencing health inequalities to inform national policy making and shape service delivery
- 3 Build evidence of sustainable, scalable solutions to mitigate and prevent inequalities impacting on health and wellbeing of communities.

### Service Delivery

While the grant from the Department of Health & Social Care specifically funds some services delivered by Koala NW and the Foundation Years Trust, it has facilitated a cross-agency service redesign that aims to strengthen collective action to improve outcomes for Wirral's children, and central to this ambition is empowering parents to nurture and support their children to achieve their full potential.

1001 Days was promoted across Wirral but there was a more targeted focus on support for BAME families, and also targeting Wirral's five most deprived wards:

- Bidston & St James
- Birkenhead & Tranmere
- Rock Ferry
- Seacombe

#### **Voluntary and Statutory Sector Collaboration**

Throughout the development of the PIMHS service Koala NW have had the privilege of building strong working relationships with their clinical partners. Intervention between Koala NW Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) guiders and a VIG practitioner within the health visiting service allowed practitioners to think about encompassing the VIG core skills within their practice and the challenges presented during the pandemic. Staff felt more supported when presented with more complex cases. The Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Health Visitor was a vital source of support providing advice and guidance when staff were supporting women and their families during the perinatal period.

More recently Koala NW's PIMHS Lead and the Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Visitor collaborated to deliver a multi-agency perinatal and infant mental health training session for Koala NW staff and Wirral health visitors. Feedback from participants highlighted the need for more multi agency training and practitioners found this useful particularly when thinking about local perinatal pathways and sources of support in the community.

## Targets

The project has a mix of targets split between; standard DHSC monitoring KPIs, four goals established in the original application form, and a wider ambition the project partners have for systemic change. While DHSC KPIs are reported directly to DHSC every six months, the project goals and partner ambitions are the focus of this report. The impact that the project seeks to deliver within these is summarised below:

### Increase Breastfeeding Initiation Rates

- Increased breastfeeding Initiation Rates
- Increased 6-8 week breastfeeding rate

### Increased Perinatal Mental Health Support

- Decrease in parents experiencing isolation
- Reduction in parents' stress/ anxiety
- Improved parent-infant relationship
- Improved parent perinatal mental health

### Improved Speech & Language By Age 2.5

- Improved children's communication and language
- Increased parental understanding of importance of child's early development
- Increased access to books and resources

### Improved Health Outcomes

- Health promotion messages are shared with families
- Improved parental understanding of relevant public health messages

### Systemic Changes To Early Years System

- Collective services are co-designed with families
- Increased data sharing identifies a child's journey by age two
- Data collection is achievable and efficient
- Improved partnership working across all sectors at all levels

## Community-Based Provision

*“Koala NW welcomed Silver Birches to their Hub. Silver Birches is a maternal mental health service which offers support for individuals seeking support following psychological distress arising directly from experiences within maternity and birch. We hope that offering clinical support in the heart of the community, in venues such as Koala NW will not only be accessible to individuals but help support pathways between services.”*

**Silver Birches Clinical Practitioner**

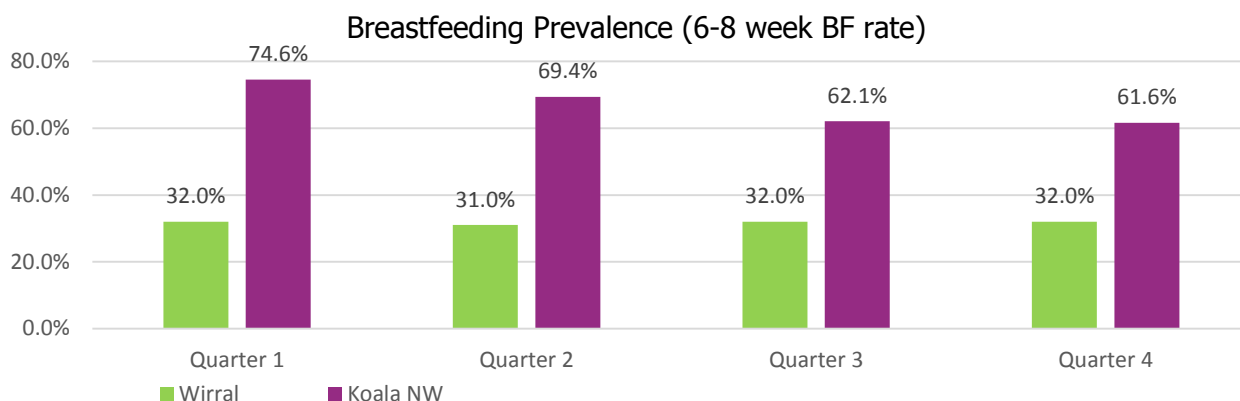
## Outcomes

Between Koala NW, the Foundation Years Trust, and Children Centres common parent feedback questions have been included in our standard questionnaires. However, we have not yet identified the best way to collate the outcomes data from all three organisations and in this report, outcomes data from Koala NW and the Foundation Years Trust only, is used to demonstrate the journey of change for families accessing 1001 Days services. It should be noted that although well over 1800 families have engaged with 1001 Days services across the partnership, a lower number had completed feedback surveys by the time this Year 1 report was written. This was for three reasons:

- Outcomes data from children’s centre is not yet integrated into overall results but we aim to have identified the way to do this over the next year.
- Not all parents that are currently accessing services have reached the stage where they are ready to give feedback.
- Particularly in group-based services, some parents were not available during the assessment period and consequently their feedback was not captured in this reporting period.

### Breastfeeding:

The below chart shows the number of families that had been referred to Koala NW (in plum), against those that had not (in green).



### Perinatal Mental Health:

Ward	Decrease In Isolation	Reduction In Stress/ Anxiety	Improved Parent-Infant Relationship	Improved Perinatal Mental Health
Bidston & St James	34	33	27	27
Birkenhead & Tranmere	39	38	36	38
Leasowe & Moreton East	26	25	22	22
Rock Ferry	24	24	22	23

Seacombe	29	29	25	26
<b>Total (all 5 Wards)</b>	<b>152 (85%)</b>	<b>149 (83%)</b>	<b>132 (74%)</b>	<b>136 (76%)</b>

## Speech &amp; Language:

Ward	Improved children's communication and language	Increased parental understanding of early development	Increase in parents reading more with their child	Increase in parents providing opportunities to enhance development
Bidston & St James	21	31	22	24
Birkenhead & Tranmere	36	38	33	35
Leasowe & Moreton East	25	24	23	22
Rock Ferry	20	22	19	20
Seacombe	24	28	23	22
<b>Total (all 5 Wards)</b>	<b>126 (71%)</b>	<b>143 (80%)</b>	<b>120 (67%)</b>	<b>123 (69%)</b>

The fact that a higher percentage of parents report 'increased understanding of their child's early development' than the percentage of those that have changed their behaviour with regards to reading more or introducing more opportunities to enhance learning, is a trend that we often see. Changing habits is a longer term goal that is more easily achieved once there is clarity on *why* something is important. Having said that, a significant majority of parents are reporting that they are doing more to support their child's development.

*"Both my children have thoroughly enjoyed having Lucy come in to our homes and run the Story Explorer sessions. I found I struggled leaving the house sometimes as I suffer with anxiety and have experienced PND this time around so having Lucy come in to our home to run the sessions was honestly amazing. Lucy was so lovely and the girls just took to her instantly. And for me, I really looked forward to some adult conversation."*

**Parent, Story Explorers**

### Multiple Providers To Support Mental Health

*"Mum has a 1-year-old son, she had a psychotic breakdown after being tortured by her ex-partner. She was not offered any support and her baby was taken into care. She has spent the past 12 months getting mentally healthy and fighting to get full custody of her son.*

*Back in July Mum was attending a group with another organisation, and the Lead was concerned how mum would cope over the summer holidays while the groups were not on, so she contacted me. Mum's son was having a phased return with the goal of having full custody at the end of August, so it was vital that appropriate support remained in place. I offered mum emotional and practical support ... and offered mum the opportunity to attend events over the summer holidays but she did not feel ready to attend any other groups. Mum started attending her original group again in September and she has requested that I maintain the support as well."*

**1001 Days Practitioner**

## Recommendations For Systemic Changes To Systems And Delivery

Learning from the first year of delivery, as well as specific consultation with partners and stakeholders, has identified several recommendations to help shape and inform Year 2:

- **Antenatal Activities;** reiterate with midwifery services the importance of developing a joined-up strategy between all partners and of having representation on 1001 Days strategic board. This should be actively supported by the commissioning service, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the ICP.
- **Breastfeeding;** midwifery agree to data sharing with 1001 Days so Wirral has an opt out service for all pregnant women to receive information about breastfeeding and wider 1001 Days programme.
- **Mental Health;** introduce opportunities for workforce development on supporting mental health and understanding of the pathway available to families, across the 1001 Days partnership's staff. Also that 0-19 Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Visitor to work closely with 1001 Days partners.
- **Speech and Language;** revisit the Speech & Language pathway with staff across the partnership to generate better understanding of what the different programmes offer, including services offered by VCSE partners, and whether they provide a progression for families or are complementary programmes. Also that recognising that services change, a short annex could be added to the core S&L pathway document, and updated through the SLN group. This would also create an accessible document for parents that could be available through local resources such as the Family Toolbox website.
- **Health Messaging;** health messages to be reviewed across the partnership to see where existing provision on health can be better integrated into other service provision, perhaps inviting staff who deliver health messages into other partner's groups.
- **Use of Data As a Tool;** review the data that is collected through the 1001 Days programme and whether the data collected currently is useful to be able to respond to families' needs. The second step would then be to introduce regular data analysis into Ops manager's meetings to better inform service development. This also requires a deeper understanding, and acknowledgement of, the parameters of each partner's data collection. Also that refreshing the parent journey may also benefit a review of the data collected and ensure that all aspects of 1001 Days are linking suitably and that families get a genuinely joined-up service. This could be led through the Early Years Strategy Group.
- **Evidence For Family Access;** case study gathering across the programme is increased where families have accessed a high number of services across 1001 Days, to track their feedback and level of need.
- **Families See One Service;** generate more opportunities for staff teams to present the 1001 Days programme to families, as a collective. This could be promotion events in each Ward



and jointly managed stalls/activities at other events that take place through the year. Also facilitate visits between staff teams to other organisation's groups, so that they can introduce their services in the area and provide contact details. Also ensure senior management are actively supporting and scheduling for these activities. Also that in Year 2 of the programme, a priority should be to bring community midwives and health visitors into shared sessions.

- **Adopting A One Team Approach;** hold an annual face to face review with Ops and Strategic Group to share the findings of the report and to develop the coming year's action plan together, to continue to embed the understanding of 'one team'. Also explore the possibility of developing volunteer opportunities for 1001 Days, across the partnership, which could help to bring the partners together. This could introduce a layer of support that is aware of all aspects of the project and as such can equitably and fully promote the support available to families, or to partners or wider stakeholders. It was reported that a collaboration of Wirral-based voluntary organisations has recently developed a working group to look at a borough wide approach to shared volunteering, which could be beneficial.
- **Acknowledgement of Sectors and Roles;** maximise the opportunity of Ops Managers meetings and an annual face to face review to acknowledge differences and to openly and collectively plan for ways in which staff teams can express their concerns and identify solutions. Previous recommendations will contribute to addressing these concerns, as will recommended ideas to undertake a piece of work to assess the details of the various Language & Communication programmes. This could help to increase the sense of equity between teams.
- **The Need for Greater Strategic Buy-In;** Year 2 presents the opportunity for Health partners to collaborate more regularly at a senior strategic level. Attention should also be paid to ensuring that senior management commitment is demonstrated through facilitating opportunities for operational staff to be actively involved in building partnership with partners. It is true for all partners within the First 1001 Days that to achieve the desired level of collaboration, staff need allocated time to integrate, from senior and management level, to operational level.
- **Specific Needs of BAME Families;** 1001 Days partners to plan and co-design with organisations working specifically with BAME communities, how they can be brought into the strategic development of the 1001 Days programme. This may result in further funding being sought which includes these partners.
- **Locality Meetings;** given this difference in understanding, it may be prudent to review the Terms Of Reference for the Locality Meetings and consider their role in relation to the wider Operational, Manager, and Network meetings that occur. It would be advisable to establish a reporting and communications pathway, so that the objective of the meetings is clear to all.
- **Negative Impact of Covid;** as restrictions have now eased and partners are returning to pre-Covid mode of operation, the opportunity to both bring in Health partners as a priority and to engage more normally with families has returned and planning ahead should

acknowledge that change. Equally, there are opportunities to continue a blended offer to families which is both face to face and virtual and to recognise the value in both approaches.

- **Ensuring Commonality of Terminology;** the Operations Team should review how we collectively brand our programmes and see where we can use the same terminology so that families and professionals are clear about the content and objectives of the various service offers.

**WHY THE FIRST 1001 DAYS ARE SO IMPORTANT...**

The first 1001 days of a child's life, from conception to age 2, is a window of opportunity. It is a time of particularly rapid growth and brain development. Leading child health experts agree that the care given during the first 1001 days has more influence on a child's future than at any other time in their life.

- From around 8 weeks pregnant babies respond to touch
- By 23 weeks pregnant babies can hear sounds from the outside
- By the age of 2 a child's brain is already 85% developed.

To support parents and carers with the important role they play during this time, there are a range of services to try that can help babies to develop.

**"Yeah of course, well any information that is gonna help me have a better bond and relationship with my daughter I'm all ears!"**

**KOALA North West**  
Supporting children & their families

**MY FIRST 1001 DAYS**

0151 608 8288  
koalanw.co.uk  
admin@koalanw.co.uk  
KoalaNorthWest

Koala North West  
Woodchurch Lane  
Birkenhead  
Wirral CH42 9PH

**"I understand him more now and what he likes, we enjoy playing together so much!"**

Registered Charity Number: 1139517, Company Number: 7314767

**My First 1001 Days**  
Explore Your Baby's 1001 Days Pathway

Stages shown in the infographic include: **Drill and Connect**, **Safe and Secure**, **Engage and Explore**, **Learn and Respond**, **Building my Brain**, **Supporting my Parents**, **Engage and Explore**, **Learn and Respond**, **Supporting my Parents**.

**Supporting you to give your child the best start through those first critical 1001 days and beyond. What is your baby entitled to? Join us on the 1001 days journey**

0151 608 8288 admin@koalanw.co.uk

### Case Study Of Family Moving Through A Range Of Services

*"Mum contacted Koala NW in September 2021 having seen a post on social media, shared by Wirral maternity Voices. We phoned to introduce ourselves and our services. She was unable to attend the 'Connecting in Utero' Womb to World session, as it clashed with a prior appointment, so the Koala NW team invited her to a breastfeeding group in her locality at Seacombe children's centre, in which Koala NW presented a 'New Mums frequently asked questions' session, which Mum found very interesting and during which, she was able to meet other local mums and the community staff at the Children's Centre. Mum attended the 'Golden Hour' and the 'Fourth Trimester' Womb to World sessions at Leasowe. She attended with her partner and they were both welcomed warmly into the intimate group. Reporting that after the sessions they felt less 'terrified' and much more 'excited' about the imminent arrival of their first baby. In the baseline assessment Mum reported that she did not know where to access services for herself and her baby, she did not feel confident to help with her child's learning and development and she was not sure if her baby was enjoying their relationship. Following the support from Koala NW and Children's Centres, her answers to all of the above had positively changed. Mum now feels very confident to support her child's developmental journey, and she agrees that she sees the world through her unborn baby's eyes."*

### **3.0 Future Development**