

Portsmouth's Best Start in Life Strategy

2026 – 2029



Best Start in Life: Our Shared Ambition



National Ambition

EVERY child has the Best Start in Life.

 Stronger support for families through **Best Start Family Hubs** and integrated local services.

 High-quality **early education and childcare** to support children's learning, development and school readiness.

 Better outcomes and reduced inequalities, with **75% of children achieving a Good Level of Development by 2028**

Good Level of Development

GLD is a national measure, assessing children's development at the end of Reception across:

- communication
- physical
- personal
- social and emotional development
- Literacy
- Mathematics

Children who achieve GLD are more likely to have the foundations they need to learn, thrive and succeed.

Portsmouth's Ambition

 GLD All Children: **65.5% → 74.2%**

 GLD FSM: **48.5% → 62.3%**

From 2024/2025 – 2028/2029

What Will Get Us There?

 **Target Need:** Focus support where need is greatest.

 **Start Early:** School readiness begins long before Reception.

 **Holistic Approach:** Understand the wider influences on school readiness.

 **Shared responsibility:** Everyone has a role in improving outcomes.

Why this matters in Portsmouth?

Population

-  Fewer births
-  Concentrated deprivation
-  Growing diversity

Outcomes

-  School readiness gap (65.5% vs 48.5%)
-  Persistent inequalities
-  Largest gaps in writing, numeracy & fine motor skills
-  Mixed health outcomes

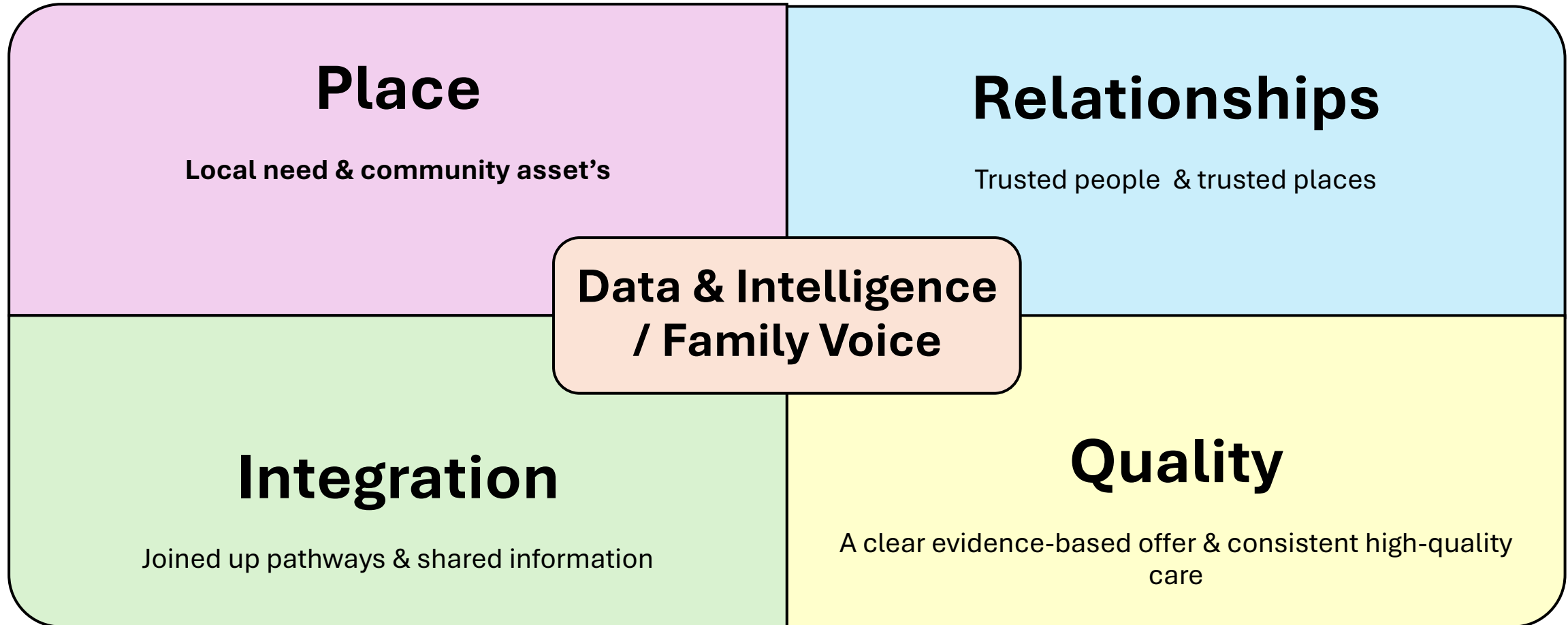
Access & System Demand

-  Rising SEND demand
-  Attendance & engagement challenges
-  Gaps in parenting support

Family & Professional Feedback

-  Clearer pathways to support
-  Trusted relationships matter
-  More equitable access needed

Our Approach to Best Start in Life in Portsmouth



Easy to access - Right Support - Right time - No wrong door

Best Start Family Hubs



Free, welcoming one-stop shops located in communities across Portsmouth, making it easier for families to access the support they need.

Support available through Family Hubs and Network Sites

- Health, maternity and infant feeding support
- Parenting programmes and family activities
- School readiness and home learning support
- SEND, speech and language support (ELSEC)
- Mental health and family wellbeing support
- Advice on childcare, finances and housing

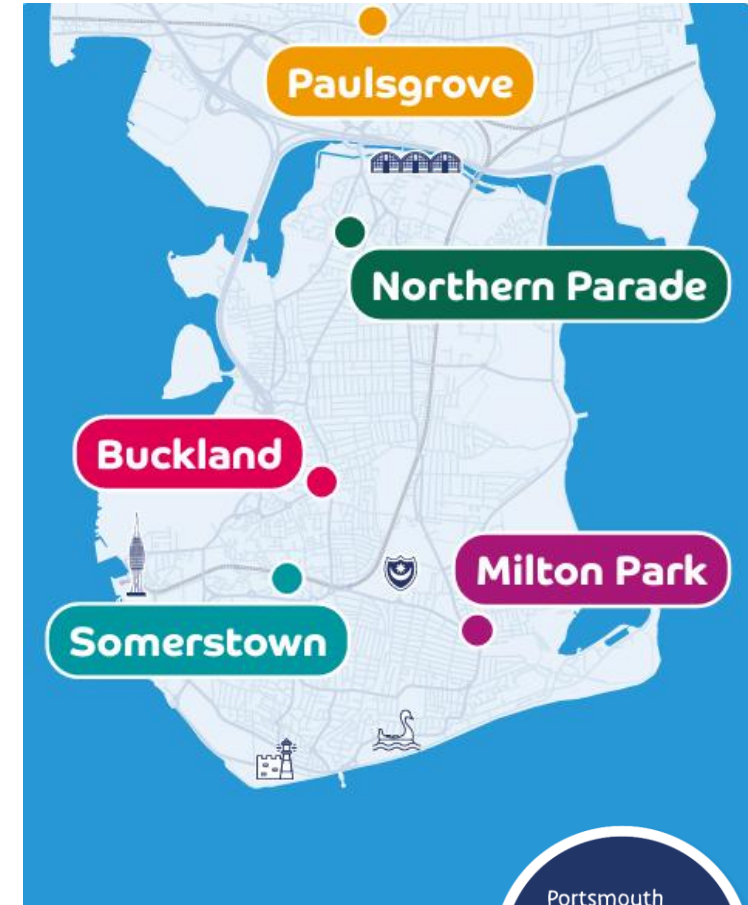
Need help connecting a family?

Each Family Hub has a dedicated **Family Hub Champion** who can help professionals and families access the right support and services. They answer questions, provide information and help connect you with the right services, activities and support.

 familyhubchampions@hsportsmouth.org.uk

 07860 025516

 www.portsmouthfamilyhubs.co.uk



The right support, at the right time, for every family.

Why our Early Years Team Matter to Best Start in Life?



Our Early years professionals are uniquely placed to:

-  Shape children's development from the earliest years
-  Build trusted relationships with children and families
-  Identify need early and act quickly
-  Support development, communication, language and early learning
-  Influence school readiness and transitions
-  Connect families with wider support and services

The Best Start in Life Strategy cannot be achieved without the early years workforce.

What Does Best Start in Life Look Like in Early Years?

Best Start in Life Principle	What This Looks Like in Early Years
 Place	Understanding your community, knowing your vulnerable children and families, targeting support where it is most needed and connecting families to local support.
 Relationships	Building trusted relationships with children and families, supporting engagement and creating a sense of belonging.
 Integration	Working alongside Family Hubs, health services, schools and SEND partners. Sharing responsibility for children's outcomes.
 Quality	Delivering high-quality practice, engaging in workforce development and focusing on school readiness and child development.

Your Role in Delivering Best Start in Life

What Can Early Years Teams Do?

Know Your Children & Families

Identify need early • Target support • Reduce inequalities

Build Strong Foundations

Communication & language • PSED • School readiness

Build Trusted Relationships

Partner with families • Promote attendance & engagement

Connect Families to Support

Family Hubs • Health • SEND • Community services

Champion Quality

Evidence-informed practice • Professional development • Smooth transitions

How will we support you?



Local Support

Family Hubs, Network Sites & Inclusion Practitioners



Joined-Up Working

Cluster approaches, SEND reform & stronger partnerships



Better Information

Data sharing, early identification & integrated pathways



Quality & Workforce Development

ELSEC, My Happy Mind, training & quality support



Family & School Readiness Support

Parenting, home learning & transition support

What We Want You to Leave Thinking and Doing?

Thinking...

- ✓ Best Start in Life is Portsmouth's shared ambition for children and families.
- ✓ It is the framework that connects our work, not another project or initiative.
- ✓ Early years settings play a vital role in improving school readiness and reducing inequalities.
- ✓ Improving outcomes is a shared responsibility across the whole system.

Doing...

- ✓ Share the Best Start in Life vision with your team.
- ✓ Know your children, families and communities and identify need early.
- ✓ Connect families to Family Hubs, community support and wider services.
- ✓ Continue championing school readiness, communication and language, and strong family relationships.
- ✓ Engage with training, resources and support available through the Best Start in Life partnership.