

IMPROVING TRANSITIONS - READY STEADY STOKE

Year Two Delivery Implementation and Process Evaluation

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Executive summary

Background

Thrive at Five is a place-based initiative that helps children to develop strong foundations for life and learning in the early years. The initiative's first site is in Abbey Hulton and Bentilee in Stoke-on-Trent, where the work has been organised into a suite of interrelated workstreams. This evaluation report focuses on the implementation and early effectiveness of our work to improve transitions into primary school which sits within the Abbey Hulton and Bentilee local programme.

The work to improve primary school transitions (aka Ready Steady Stoke) was first introduced in response to concerns raised by local school staff about the difficulty many children have with adjusting to new school environments. It was also recognised that transition helped teachers with early identification and helped build initial relationships between parents and teachers/schools.

In the first year of delivery (summer 2022), the work had three components - summer term Stay and Plays in schools, Community Events (one in Abbey Hulton and one in Bentilee), and Summer Holiday sessions in schools. These components were underpinned by Mouse Club: an intervention developed by the Parent Engagement Network to foster stronger partnerships between home and school at the point of primary school transition.

In the second year of delivery, schools took on greater responsibility for planning and delivering the sessions and we adopted clearer goals around positive transitions¹. The components were refined and re-ordered and we retained the emphasis on Mouse Club as an underpinning theme. There was also increased emphasis on encouraging sustained engagement from families with most to benefit, with each school being asked to pay particular regard to this aspect of the work. This is important because, in our evaluation last year, teachers confirmed that (1) attendance limited to single sessions or events was unlikely to result in 'significant and meaningful' change and (2) this work therefore needed to encourage and facilitate sustained engagement wherever possible (especially for families with most to benefit). As such, we positioned sustained engagement as a key mechanism of change for improving transitions.

Through our transitions work, we want more children to settle quickly at nursery and reception, paving the way for quality teaching and learning to commence early after the start of the September term. To achieve this, we expect to see positive impacts from the various transition sessions on children, parents, and school staff, and these positive impacts need to be felt at scale.

Evaluation Methods

Given this was only the work's second year of delivery, the main focus of this evaluation remained on strengthening implementation. In evaluation parlance, this was therefore, primarily, an Implementation and Process Evaluation. To answer the evaluation questions, we undertook a document review², conducted a set of interviews, administered a Parent Survey, and analysed the quantitative delivery data to identify trends. Alongside implementation, we were also looking for evidence of early effectiveness and progress towards the outcomes described above.

¹ The goals were a) helping children become more familiar and comfortable with the school environment; b) fostering good relationships between parents and teaching staff, parents and other parents, and children in the same class; c) ensuring parents have a positive connection with teachers and the school; d) helping children adapt to the routines of a typical school day; and e) instilling skills, confidence, and behaviours in children that are conducive to learning.

² We reviewed all the key documentation related to the work's second year of delivery, including planning documents, delivery records, correspondence with schools, promotional materials, and meeting notes.

Implementation

Delivery Execution

Looking first at delivery execution, headline monitoring data indicates that the work was delivered broadly as intended. All seven partner schools participated, which represented a combined nursery and reception intake of 473 children³. Every school designed activities that were in line with their timetables and capacity. The schools used our three components (a transition event, summer term Stay and Plays, and summer holiday sessions) as an implementation guide, though they flexed this model with some smaller schools preferring a personalised induction to a large-scale transition event. Schools used the work to target children entering both nursery and reception (with regard to reception, they targeted children who were new to their school/not transitioning into reception from their school nursery).

Compared to delivery in Year One, schools had increased ownership of the transitions work, and they demonstrated this by showing a great deal of commitment. They took the lead on planning and executing sessions, communicating with parents, and liaising with their feeder private and voluntary sector nurseries. Thrive at Five played a supportive role in the background, providing additional resources and capacity, alongside expertise around delivery and session content through our Early Years Development Lead. Maintaining and building on this level of buy-in from schools will be critical to ensuring the work's sustainability.

Child and family engagement

Looking at child and family engagement, we get a more mixed picture. Engagement was stronger in the summer term when most families engaged with at least one session (in three schools, engagement on this metric was above 80%). In the summer holidays, average engagement at school sessions ranged from 9% of invited attendees to 42% of invited attendees. The highest number of families attending a summer holiday session was seventeen at one session (Eaton Park). The lowest level of attendance was two families at one session held at Abbey Hulton. Approximately 20-30% of invited children engaged across the transition work components in most schools. Clearly, it remains a challenge to engage families in a sustained way throughout the pre-transition months and (given sustained engagement is a key mechanism in our theory of change) this should be a driving focus for the work going forwards.

Implementation Strengths and an Implementation Weakness

The evaluation identified several implementation strengths. These included a better balance [than last year] of ownership and support between schools and Thrive at Five which will be key for the work's future sustainability. The quality of sessions was also a strength. Feedback from parents and staff was that, while the content of the sessions varied, they were well-organised, and activities were designed to be engaging and inviting for both children and parents. Building on this point, the sessions provided key spaces for one-on-one conversations between teachers and children, teachers and parents, and children and their prospective classmates. Also, there were examples of really thoughtful and creative use of Mouse Club.

The evaluation also conducted a deep dive on the key implementation weakness; namely the challenge of engaging families in a sustained way throughout the pre-transition period. The reasons given for this proving to be such a challenge included siblings as a cause of non-attendance, parental

³ This is a slight increase on 2022, when we worked with six partner schools, which represented a combined nursery and reception intake of 442 children.

discomfort at being in school settings, communications and marketing issues, and the busy schedules of parents.

Early indications of effectiveness

Our interviews with key stakeholders highlighted several early indications of effectiveness.

For children, there were indications that participation in the sessions could help them become better prepared for school (i.e., confident in their new environment and able to settle quickly into the rhythms of school life). There was also a perception (articulated by teachers) that children benefited from having seen school staff interacting positively with their parents as this built trust and helped them feel more comfortable.

For parents, there was indicative evidence that the work could help create stronger relationships with school staff and other parents, and could help develop parental confidence around the transition. There were also some indications that parents who attended [the sessions] felt more at ease leaving their children at school, knowing they had already built an initial relationship with staff and had meaningful conversations with them. This, in turn, boosted parental confidence in the school's care.

For staff, the sessions enabled them to better understand the needs of (incoming) children and their families. By identifying needs early, staff can tailor their activities to meet these needs and can source specialist support where it is needed.

Results from the Parent Survey also showed the sessions had been well received by respondents and useful with regard to the transition. The majority of parents who attended at least one session felt confident about their child starting school (91%) and felt they knew about helping their child with their learning (91%). All parents who answered felt their child was ready for school (100%) and the majority felt they [their child] settled in well (92%). Parents also felt like they had a lot of support with the transition (92%).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The work to improve primary school transitions in Abbey Hulton and Bentilee in Stoke-on-Trent has, once again, been well received. Data from interviews with teachers and wider project staff point to a range of benefits for children, parents, and school staff, and our parent survey provides further evidence that the sessions were regarded positively. The key remaining challenge is to engage more families in a sustained way throughout the pre-transition period (we see this as a key mechanism of change for this work).

To strengthen delivery next year, we have made a series of recommendations. These include: -

- 1) Local agreement on the six or seven key transition experiences that we want every local family to have (i.e., time for children to get familiar with their new classroom and school environment, time for children to get to know their new classmates, an opportunity for parents to discuss any concerns with their child's new classroom teacher etc). These experiences do not each require a separate touchpoint, as several experiences can be achieved at the same sessions, but they will likely require engagement on multiple occasions during the pre-transition months.
- 2) Development of a clearer approach for assessing the success of this work. This could include using the annual Parent Survey to measure the extent to which experiences (see above) have been achieved and/or asking teachers to reflect directly on the engagement of children who struggle most and least with the transition.

- 3) Communications support for schools to better promote transition sessions.
- 4) Some limited additional capacity from Thrive at Five's Peripatetic Support Staff to better target families in PVI settings and strengthen links between PVIs and schools.
- 5) Childcare options for siblings during transition sessions.
- 6) An exploration of how incentivisation could help with the push for sustained family engagement.
- 7) Forums to promote the sharing of learning and best practice between schools (particularly around the application of Mouse Club).

In line with Thrive at Five's model of working, we will now turn our attention to how these recommendations could best be translated into delivery next year.

In this opening section, we provide the background to 'Improving Transitions - Ready Steady Stoke'. This includes describing Thrive at Five's overarching approach and introducing our local programme in Abbey Hulton and Bentilee in Stoke-on-Trent. It also includes recapping what has happened so far with regards to the above local programme's transitions work (aka Ready Steady Stoke). This background information is the foundation from which we consider - in the sections that follow - the workstream's implementation and early effectiveness during its second year of operation.

1.1 About Thrive at Five and our local programme in Stoke-on-Trent

Thrive at Five is a place-based initiative that helps children develop strong foundations for life and learning in the early years. We work in localities where there is a co-occurrence of concentrated social disadvantage and poor children's outcomes at age five. Our aim is to achieve sustainable improvements in early years outcomes, with more children reaching a "good level of development" in the Early Years Foundation Stage by the end of reception as a basis for their longer-term success and wellbeing.

To achieve these aims, we focus on: -

- 1. Engaging parents and helping them to be the best first supporters of their children's development.*
- 2. Increasing capacity for impactful collaborative action across the public, private and voluntary sectors.*
- 3. Fostering the effective use of evidence, data, and science.*

Underpinning all the above, we also place a strong premium on building and strengthening relationships between (a) communities and services, (b) local professionals, and (c) the public sector and private and voluntary sectors.

By taking this approach⁴, Thrive at Five - working in concert with a wide range of local stakeholders - ensures children and families have access to a pathway of holistic services and supports from pregnancy to the end of reception. We are setting out to strengthen the ecosystem around the developing child and their family.

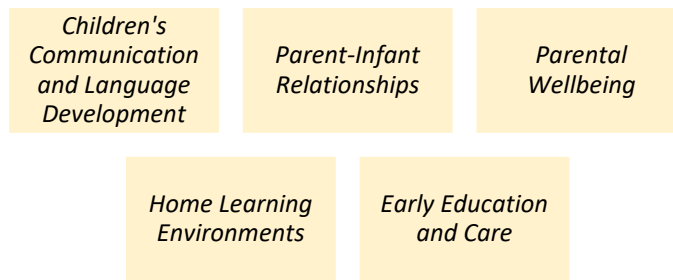
To make sure this pathway of services and supports is as effective as possible, we: -

- Anchor collective efforts in each locality around a set of prescribed intermediate outcome areas (see Figure 1 on the page overleaf) which evidence suggests are critical to positive early development.
- Address these prescribed outcome areas simultaneously in each locality as a package of workstreams and a multi-layered approach that responds to local need⁵;
- Monitor and refine implementation to ensure support is responsive to and embedded within local contexts.

⁴ Work is carried out in small areas (neighbourhoods or clusters of neighbourhoods) where there are concentrations of social disadvantage. The first site (local programme) is in Abbey Hulton and Bentilee in Stoke-on-Trent. In September 2023, we commenced work in our second site within Redcar & Cleveland.

⁵ Thrive at Five's approach is underpinned by Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 1986; 2000) which posits that children's development is shaped by multiple interconnected social environments. We believe that sustainable improvements in (particularly disadvantaged) children's outcomes are most likely to be achieved through multi-layered strategies, where improvements made in one aspect of a child's life are reinforced by improvements made in other aspects of their life.

- **Figure 1 - Intermediate Outcome Areas**



Thrive at Five's first site covers Abbey Hulton and Bentilee, situated on the eastern edge of Stoke-on-Trent. These adjoining areas are home to approximately 2,500 children aged five and under. Through a collaborative process of Discovery and Co-Design, Thrive at Five has organised efforts in Abbey Hulton and Bentilee into a suite of interrelated workstreams, including family engagement which encompasses our work on improving transitions⁶.

1.2 The background to Thrive at Five's work on improving transitions

This evaluation report focuses on the implementation and early effectiveness of the Stoke local programme's work on improving transitions, during its second year of delivery⁷. The work aims to improve children's transition into primary school. It involves a set of staggered transition-related activities which span the months before children start in nursery or reception.

Through this work, we want to help children settle quickly into their new school environments, so that (a) learning gets underway as soon as possible in September and (b) strong parent-school relationships are established at the earliest opportunity. The work is therefore strategically positioned to help create the conditions necessary for improvements in Thrive at Five's intermediate outcome areas to be achieved and sustained. Specifically, it creates the conditions for high-quality early education and care, quality home learning environments, and children's early communication and language development.

Why was this workstream introduced?

A key challenge consistently raised by local school staff is the difficulty many children face when adjusting to new classroom environments. Adapting to school routines, getting accustomed to a new teacher, and forming new friendships can all involve a lengthy process, sometimes taking several weeks. Children also need to develop independence and confidence, performing tasks on their own like putting on their shoes and coats, using the toilet, and managing their belongings. As a result, the first few weeks - sometimes months - of the school year require a significant focus on smoothing this transition, which in turn delays the pace at which educational content is introduced and learning gets underway. This work was introduced to help address these issues by improving the transition process and ensuring children settle quickly.

⁶ As an emerging programme, there will likely be some limited flux in the short-term around how we describe the work.

⁷ The work on improving transitions was first delivered in Summer 2022. The evaluation of Year One delivery can be found here - https://thriveatfive.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Ready-Steady-Stoke-Evaluation-Report_Thrive-at-Five_November-2022.pdf

Transition activities are also important for educators as they help them assess a child's developmental progress and identify any potential challenges or special needs before a child starts in September. This early assessment can pave the way for timely interventions and support from early in the school year.

For parents, transition activities can play a significant role in establishing effective communication with teachers and school staff. They provide a platform for parents and caregivers to share information about their child's needs, interests, and any concerns. These activities also assist parents in adapting to the new routine and gaining a better understanding of what their child's school experience will entail. This, in turn, helps alleviate parental anxiety and fosters continuity and helpful links between home and school.

What Happened in the first year of delivery?

In the first year of delivery (Summer 2022), the workstream comprised three components that scaffolded the transition into nursery and reception. These components were: -

1. *Summer Term Stay and Plays*: These sessions took place within schools and supported children and parents to engage in activities and preparations for the upcoming transition.
2. *Flagship Community (Big Play) Events*: These transition-themed community events created opportunities for children, families, and schools to come together in a community setting.
3. *Summer Holiday School-Based Stay and Plays*: These sessions followed the school term, providing additional support and activities during the summer break.

Schools also utilised 'Mouse Club', an initiative developed by the Parental Engagement Network⁸, to connect and underpin the above components. Mouse Club aims to facilitate positive learning partnerships between families and early years professionals by giving every child a toy mouse as the basis for modelling what it means to get ready for school (i.e., children, parents and professionals talk about getting the mouse ready for school as a way of preparing the child). Additionally, a coordinated communications campaign was employed to reach families, offering tips about positive transitions and the broad skills that children need to help them transition well.

The first year yielded positive feedback. Six out of seven partner schools participated to at least some degree in delivering Summer Term and Summer Holiday Stay and Play sessions, along with Big Play events. Qualitative evidence suggested that the work was positively received by families and teachers alike. However, the pilot year evaluation also identified (most notably through our interviews with classroom teachers) that some of the most vulnerable children did not attend. It was acknowledged that there was potential for greater impact by reaching and engaging more of the most disadvantaged families and maintaining their engagement throughout the summer.⁹

⁸ In August 2023, the Parental Engagement Network closed its operations.

⁹ The evaluation report is available here: [Ready-Steady-Stoke-Evaluation-Report_Thrive-at-Five_November-2022.pdf](https://thriveatfive.org.uk/Ready-Steady-Stoke-Evaluation-Report_Thrive-at-Five_November-2022.pdf) (thriveatfive.org.uk)

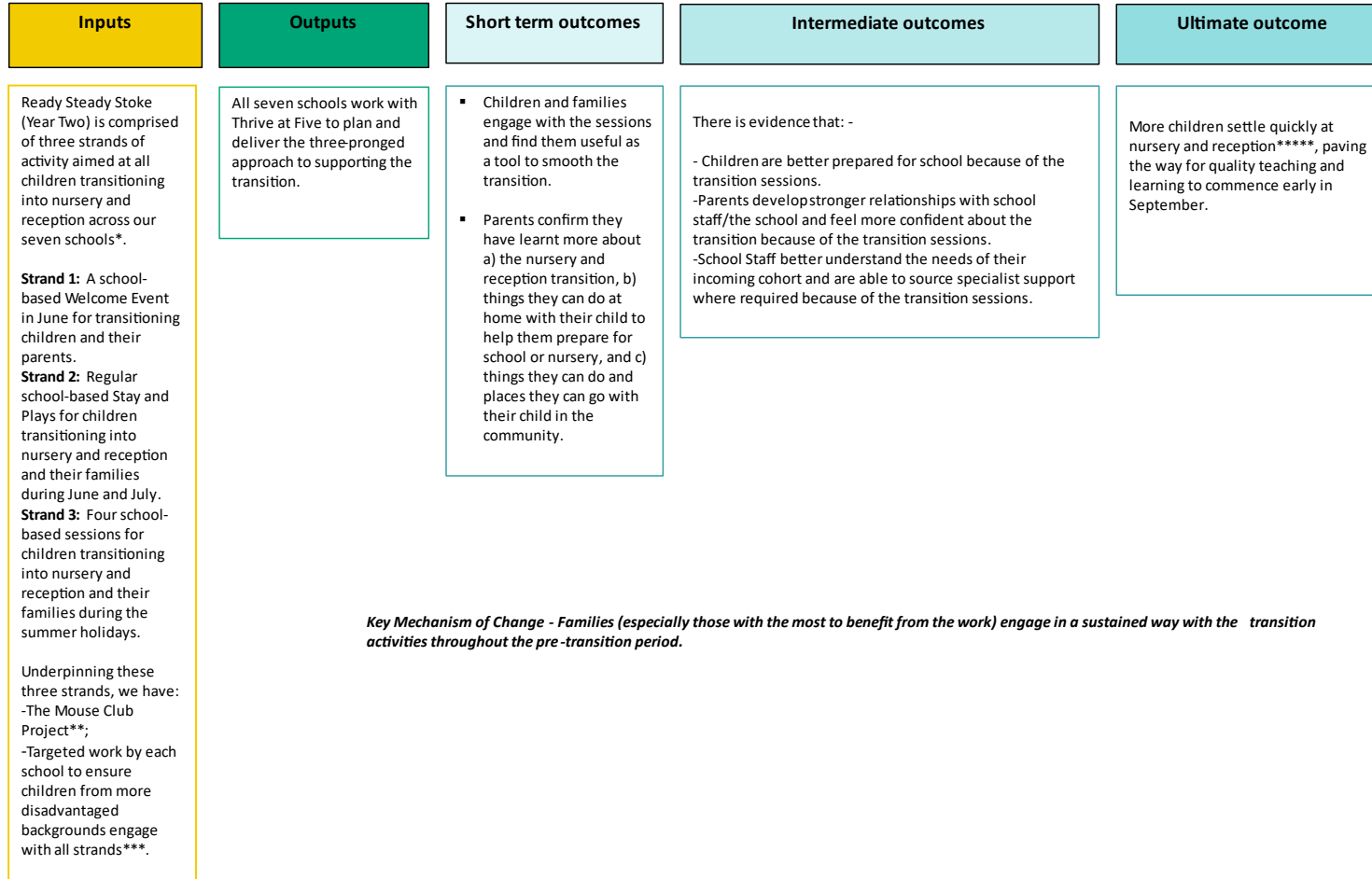
What were our expectations around delivery in Summer 2023?

After the first year of delivery, changes were made to the work, informed by recommendations from our pilot year evaluation. These changes included: -

- *Organisational Changes:* Schools assumed greater responsibility for planning and delivering the three components from their premises in the hope of making the work more sustainable and achieving fuller engagement from all seven local primary schools.
- *Clearer, More Achievable Aims:* We acknowledged that - as relatively light-touch interventions limited to the months preceding the transition - the work was unlikely to directly have a significant impact on children's developmental outcomes. Instead, we required aims that were commensurate with the nature of the activities and an understanding of how this work supported our wider goal to improve child-level outcomes. The reconfigured aims included: -
 - a) helping children become familiar and comfortable with the school and classroom environment.
 - b) fostering good relationships between parents and teaching staff, parents and other parents, and children in the same class.
 - c) ensuring parents have a positive connection with teachers and the school.
 - d) helping children adapt to the routines of a typical school day.
 - e) instilling skills, confidence, and behaviours in children that are conducive to learning.
- *Refining and re-ordering the components:* The Big Play community event was merged into the school-based schedule of activities as a way of starting the conversation about transition and promoting the other activities. This event was re-imagined as an engaging event for families with a carousel of participation opportunities, in contrast to the more didactic transfer of information to parents that had often characterised the sessions in previous years. We introduced some limited guidelines around the implementation of Mouse Club, including an expectation that the concept was explained to every parent. We did not deliver the communications campaign given that capacity to drive this aspect of the work was limited. This issue has now been resolved through the recruitment of a dedicated Communications Lead in Thrive at Five's local team.
- *Targeting the Most Disadvantaged Families:* While the workstream remained open for all local children in these year groups, we concluded that it was essential to ensure children at the greatest risk of not making a good transition received additional support and encouragement across the three components.

These changes are summarised in the revised Theory of Change on the page overleaf. On the left-hand side of the diagram, we show the inputs and outputs, and on the right-hand side we show the short-term, medium-term, and ultimate outcomes.

Ready Steady Stoke Theory of Change (Year Two)



Key Mechanism of Change - Families (especially those with the most to benefit from the work) engage in a sustained way with the transition activities throughout the pre-transition period.

In Section One, we reviewed the background to the delivery of the Stoke local programme's work on improving transitions. We also summarised the headline findings from last year's evaluation [of this work] and outlined the changes to delivery in Year Two that resulted from these findings. In the next section, we describe the methods used in this year's evaluation.

Section Two

Evaluation Methods



In Section Two, we provide a brief summary of how we designed and delivered the second-year evaluation of Thrive at Five's work to improve primary school transitions in Abbey Hulton and Bentilee in Stoke-on-Trent and the methods employed to conduct the evaluation. We describe the overall evaluation approach and set out the evaluation questions that were addressed. Also, we outline the methods used to gather and analyse data.

2.1 Approach to the evaluation

Given the work to improve transitions was only in its second year of delivery, the main focus of this evaluation remained on strengthening implementation and assessing early indications of effectiveness. In evaluation parlance, this was therefore, primarily, an Implementation and Process Evaluation. As is typically the case with the evaluation of developing work, our expectations were higher in Year Two than in Year One. We were looking for signs that the work had progressed and was moving (even incrementally) in the direction of a steady state where the fundamentals of the approach were largely settled.

2.2 Questions that were addressed

In line with the details given above, there were three principal evaluation questions covering implementation, indications of early effectiveness, and recommendations for improvement. The questions were: -

- 1. To what extent was the work to improve transitions implemented as intended during the second year of delivery, and what were the implementation strengths and weaknesses?*
- 2. Were there any early indications that the work to improve transitions was effective?*
- 3. How could the work to improve transitions be further strengthened next year?*

By answering the questions above, we aimed to gather material that supported and helped drive the continued iteration and improvement of the work.

2.3 Methods used to gather and analyse data

To answer the evaluation questions, a mixed methods approach was employed which included: -

A Document Review: We reviewed all the key documentation related to the work's second year of delivery, including planning documents, delivery records, correspondence with schools, promotional material, and meeting notes.

A set of Interviews: In-depth interviews were conducted in September and October 2023, with participants selected through a purposive sampling approach. Interviews involved members of the Core Project Team and Early Years Teachers, with a total of six interviews conducted¹⁰. In total, there were eight interview participants. Interviews were either face-to-face or online via the MS Teams platform. Interview data was subjected to analysis using the Framework Method (Ritchie et al., 2014). Additional details regarding the interviews are provided in Table 1.

¹⁰ Three schools did not take part in the interviews.

Table 1 - Summary of interviews conducted

Participant Group	Type of Interview	Total Participants	Topics Covered
Core Project Team	2 Interviews (Online)	3	What happened in the different sessions? Who attended the sessions? What were the barriers to attendance? What worked well? What did not work well? What were the impacts for parents and children? What were the impacts on working relationships? What could be done differently next year?
Teaching Staff	4 Individual Interviews (Online)	5	What happened in the different sessions? Who attended the sessions? What were the barriers to attendance? What worked well? What did not work well? What were the impacts for parents or children? What were the impacts on working relationships? What could be done differently next year?

A Parent Survey: A survey was administered to parents via schools to understand how they [parents] felt about their children starting school and how this related to their attendance at transition sessions. Parents with children starting in nursery or reception in Abbey Hulton and Bentilee were invited to participate. Some parents completed the survey online and others on paper. In total 69 surveys were returned, and 46 of these parents had attended at least one of the sessions. This equates to 15% of the total nursery and reception cohort across our seven target schools. The findings should therefore be treated with some caution. In Figure 2 below, we show an extract of the Survey Form. The full Survey Form is available at Appendix 2.

Figure 2: An extract from the Survey Form

7. Thinking about how you felt about your child starting school please tell us how much you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I felt confident about my child starting school.					
I felt like I knew the teachers.					
I knew a lot about preparing my child for school.					
I knew about helping my child with their learning.					
I knew other parents who had children going to the school or nursery.					
I felt like I had a lot of support.					

Some Descriptive Quantitative Data Analysis: Data on attendance at events and activities was collected from all schools. Descriptive Quantitative analysis was used to identify trends, and this data was triangulated with the qualitative data to help produce insights.

In this section, we introduced the design and methodological thinking that underpinned the evaluation of the work to improve primary school transitions. In Section Three, we address the first of our evaluation questions around the extent to which the work was implemented as intended in Year Two and the associated implementation strengths and weaknesses.

Section Three

Implementation

To what extent was the work to improve transitions implemented as intended during the second year of delivery, and what were the implementation strengths and weaknesses?



In Section Three, we consider the degree of alignment between Thrive at Five's intended implementation [of the work to improve transitions] during the second year of delivery and the way implementation transpired in practice. We approach this from two distinct perspectives - first we explore delivery execution and second, we interrogate child and family engagement. We then identify a range of implementation strengths, and we carry out a deep dive into what appeared to be the key implementation weakness, namely a lack of sustained engagement. Throughout, we consider whether the implementation issues that arose last year were satisfactorily resolved by the adjustments made or whether further recalibration is necessary to optimise the work and its likely effectiveness.

3.1 Delivery Execution

Headline monitoring data indicates that the work to improve transitions was delivered broadly as intended. Regarding Thrive at Five inputs: -

- the Thrive at Five Development Lead worked closely with schools around session planning.
- we provided additional capacity through our Peripatetic Support Staff and wider staff team.
- we invested resources to support session delivery and met the costs of teachers being in school during the summer sessions.

All seven partner schools participated, which represented a combined nursery and reception intake of 473 children. Every school designed activities that were in line with their timetables and capacity, and most schools delivered provision that spanned the three workstream components (i.e., an opening Transitions Event, Summer Term Stay and Plays, and summer Holiday sessions). In the text below (and in Table 2 on the following page), we provide a more detailed overview of the activity that took place: -

- *Opening Transition Events:* Four out of seven schools conducted opening transition events (three events were held in June and one in July). The remaining schools believed their cohorts were small enough to handle these transition introductions in a more personalised manner rather than gathering all families together in one session.
- *Summer Term Stay and Plays:* Towards the end of the summer term, children were invited to transition-focused stay and plays alongside their parents. All schools delivered some form of summer term stay and play sessions. However, the approach varied widely between schools. For example, some schools invited both nursery and new reception children to the same sessions, other schools held separate sessions for each group, and one school held a single session exclusively for nursery children. There was also variation in the quantity of sessions, with one school holding a single summer term stay and play (alongside a transition event) and another school holding eight summer sessions.
- *Summer Sessions:* All schools organised either three or four summer holiday sessions featuring activities and food, but the schools employed different strategies around when exactly these were scheduled. For instance, one school front-loaded the sessions into the first weeks of the summer holidays whereas most schools offered the sessions during the latter weeks of the summer holiday. Most schools staggered the sessions whereas one school ran all three sessions on consecutive days. Content of the sessions at all the schools was based around familiarisation with the school environment, building relationships (with teachers and other children), and developing school readiness skills but teachers had the flexibility to tailor their exact approach to the needs of their incoming cohort.

All transitioning children received the Mouse Club pack (including the toy mouse). Again, there was wide variation in how schools used Mouse Club, with some using this as a connecting theme to all transition activities and carrying this on into the autumn term and others focusing more on giving children a focus during the first few days of the new school year.

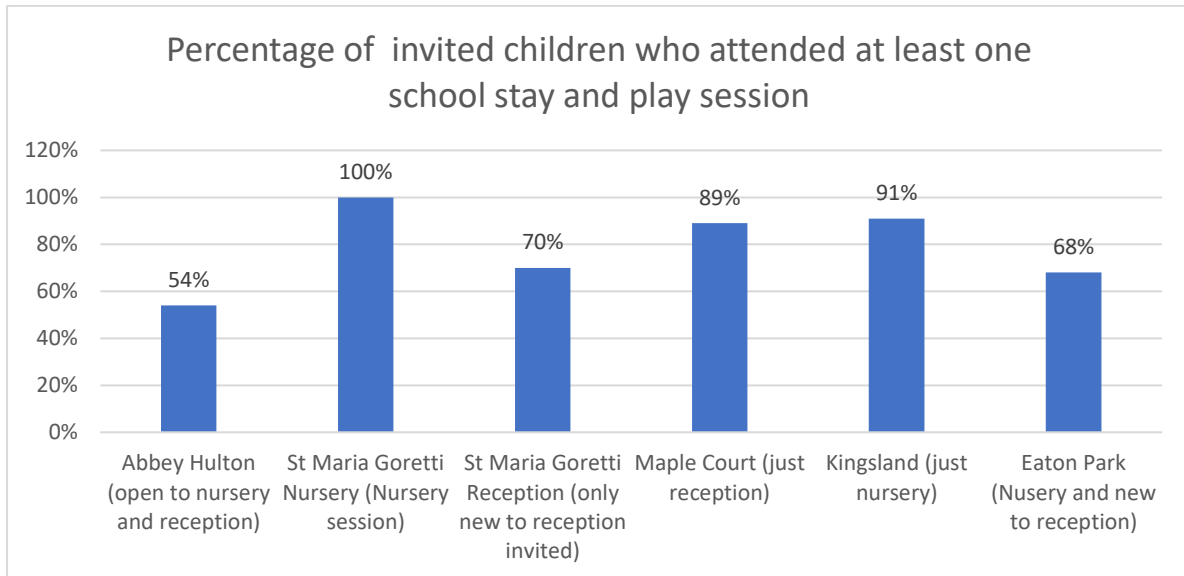
Table 2: Summary of transition sessions that were delivered across all schools

School	Transition Event	Stay and Plays	Summer Holiday Events
Abbey Hulton		8 sessions in June and July for an hour at the school	4 sessions (1 in July 3 in August).
Carmountside	Transition session in June	Weekly on Thursdays starting from 20th July.	4 Sessions (3 in August 1 in July).
Eaton Park	Transition session in June	3 nursery stay and play, 2 reception stay and play	4 summer sessions in August.
Kingsland	Nursery transition session - July	1 stay and play in July	4 summer holiday sessions in August.
Maple Court	Transition session - June (Nursery) New to Reception to be invited into school to join in with whole school transition	Every Friday morning for new nursery children and Tuesdays after school throughout July	4 summer sessions (2 in July, 2 in August).
Maria Goretti		Every Tuesday afternoon from 6th June. Small group sessions.	4 summer sessions (3 in July, 1 in August)
Our Lady and St Benedict Catholic Primary School			3 in August on consecutive days

3.2 Child and family engagement

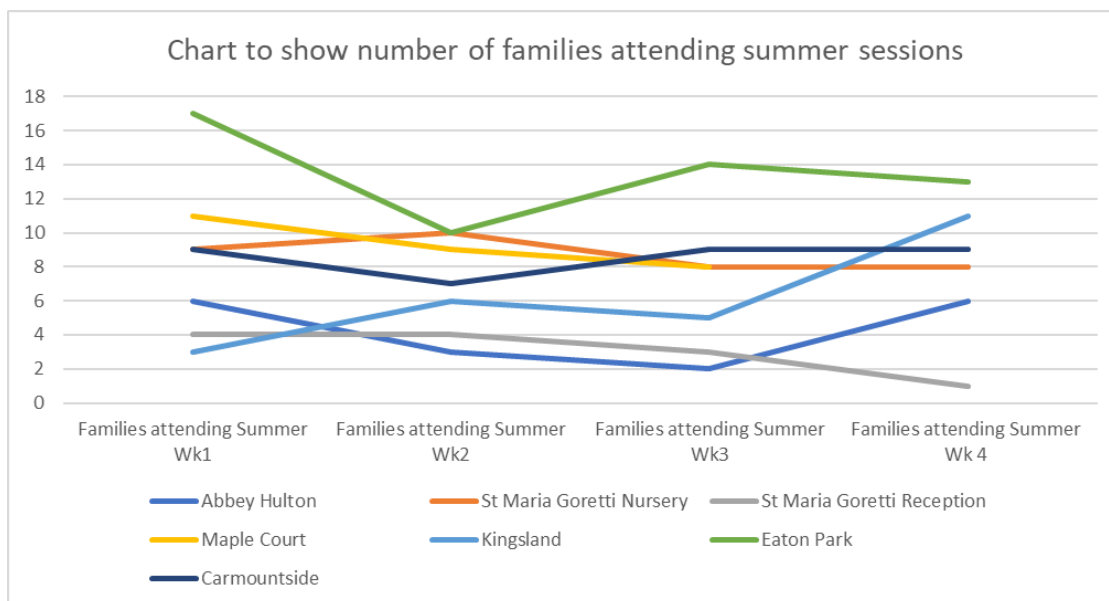
In the case of summer term stay and plays, these sessions were well-attended in most schools. As shown in Chart 1 below, in all schools (with full data) over 50% of all eligible invited children attended at least one session and, on this metric, three schools achieved over 80% attendance.

Chart 1: Chart to show the percentage of invited children who attended at least one summer term stay and play



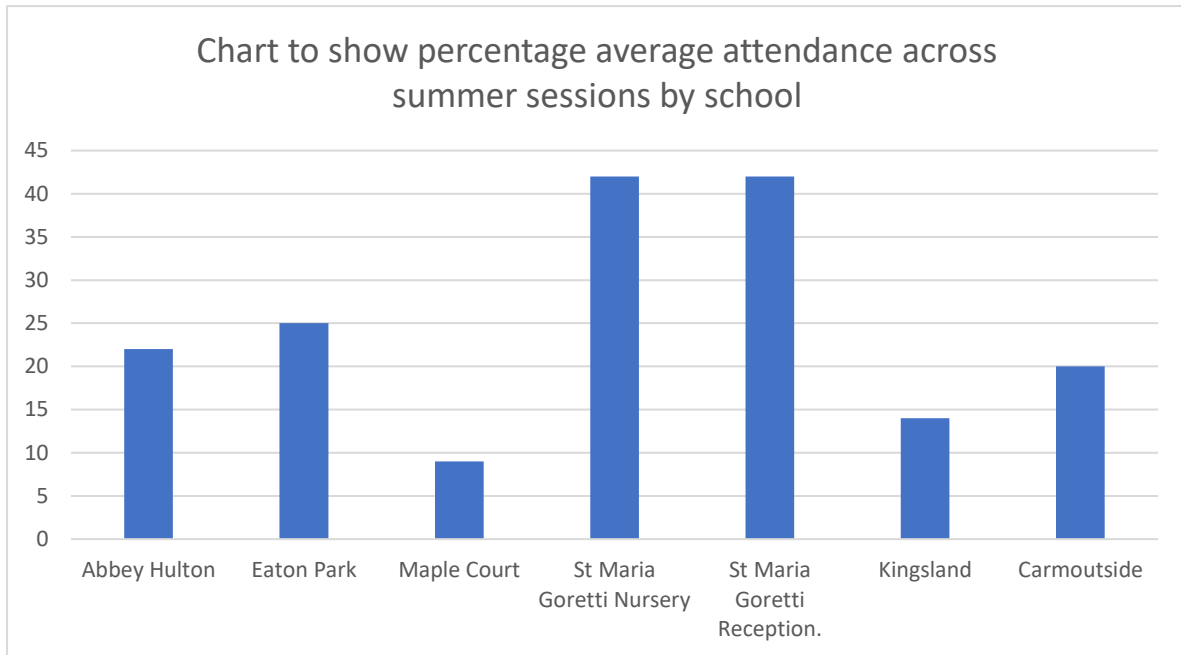
Summer Holiday sessions were less well attended¹¹ (as can be seen in Charts 2 and 3 below). Six schools ran four sessions across July and August and one school ran three sessions. The highest number of families attending a session was seventeen families at one session which equated to 29% of potential eligible families (Eaton Park). The lowest level of attendance was two families at one session (Abbey Hulton). The most common number of families to attend sessions were eight families.

Chart 2: Chart to show the number of families attending summer sessions



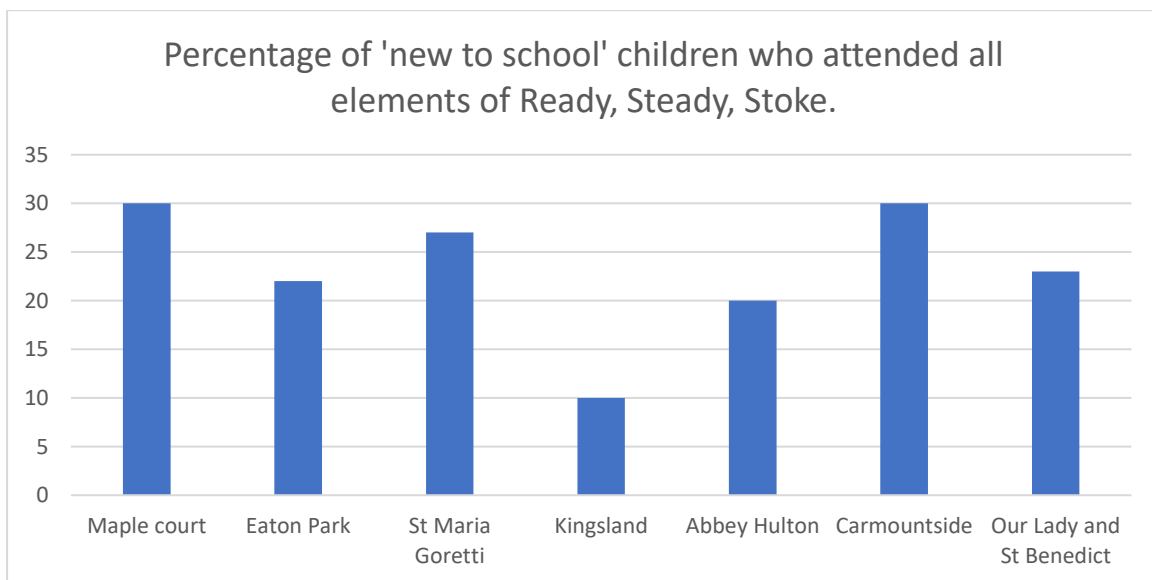
¹¹ This is a similar pattern to the first year of the work, with school term stay and play sessions well attended and summer holiday sessions less well attended.

Chart 3: Chart to show the percentage average attendance across summer holiday sessions by school



In Chart 4 below, we show the percentage of 'new to school' children who engaged (even if only attending once) with each component or element of the transitions work. As can be seen, around 20 to 30 percent of invited children engaged across the separate components in most schools.

Chart 4 - Chart of show the percentage of 'new to school' children who attended all elements of the work



From the data above, it is clear that there remains a challenge around engaging with families in a sustained way across the months preceding the primary school transition (and this is important, as it directly relates to our mechanism of change for this work).

2.3 Implementation Strengths and an Implementation Weakness

Implementation Strengths

Interviews with teaching staff and members of the Core Project Team surfaced a great deal of positive feedback about the work. Below, we identify and explore the key implementation strengths that, according to the conducted interviews, likely contributed to the work's early indications of effectiveness.

- *School-level ownership with Thrive at Five playing a supportive role:* In line with the recommendations from the pilot year evaluation, schools had increased ownership of the transitions work, and they responded to this by showing a great deal of commitment to the work. They took the lead on planning and executing sessions, communicating with parents, and liaising with their feeder private and voluntary sector settings. Thrive at Five played a supportive role in the background, providing additional resources and capacity, alongside expertise around delivery and session content through our Early Years Development Lead. This blended approach was clearly a source of strength for the work.

"I've enjoyed working with Thrive at Five. It's been great to have resources on hand and ready-made packs to give out. I think the children have had lots that's been given to them before the summer, or over the summer. We've had engaging sessions, and it has all been free of charge for the families so to be able to offer that is great."
(Early years teacher)

This model of working also feels sustainable over the longer-term given the vital role played by schools and the potential to embed these enhanced approaches into standard school transition practices.

- *Engaging and Well-Organised Sessions:* A recommendation from the previous year was that activities and sessions had more of an explicit focus on facilitating positive transitions including familiarising children with their school environment and developing relationships. Feedback from staff and parents was that, while the content of the sessions varied, they were well-organised, and activities were designed to be engaging and inviting for both children and parents. All schools had activities designed to help children become familiar with their surroundings, including the classroom, cloakroom, and outdoor area. For example, children had the opportunity to explore the environment, locate the toilets, and identify where to hang their coats. The sessions also offered valuable opportunities for parents to understand the importance of their role in supporting their children at school. They were encouraged to engage in activities (such as sharing nursery rhymes) that fostered the development of good communication. This underlines the importance of parents and children attending together.

"We used a play dough session in there to show them how to make play dough and explained the benefits of using play dough at home for physical skills and all of those things."
(Early years teacher)

"If we said to parents to come and see how we teach something or come and learn about the curriculum you'd be lucky if two would come in! But the second we say come and see your children performing elements of the curriculum our take up is much better."
(Thrive at Five Development lead)

Some schools also distributed resource packs for children to use at home. These packs contained essential items like scissors, glue sticks, playdough, pencils, crayons, and name writing activities. These resources were intended to help children achieve important milestones before starting school in September.

- *Creative and thoughtful use of Mouse Club:* Mouse Club can - on the basis of the intelligence gathered through our interviews - serve as a valuable tool for introducing essential skills to children preparing for the transition to school or nursery. School staff appreciated the flexibility it offered, allowing them to adapt the resources to suit their school's requirements. In one school, Mouse Club was first introduced during the Summer Term Stay and Play sessions. Children were encouraged to take a mouse home from these sessions and bring it back to the Summer Holiday transition sessions, where activities were centred around the Mouse Club resources. According to one staff member: -

"And then to finish our Stay and Play sessions we launched the mouse club. And we set activities within the booklet for the children to be getting on with at home to prepare them for school. After the stay and plays we then went into the summer transition sessions. We had four sessions that were held over two weeks and the children were invited to come in and these were themed again around mouse club. "... So, we chose the most appropriate activities from the booklet and ordered the resources around this and that's what structured our session."

(Early years teacher)

At this school, Mouse Club activities continued into the school term with *Mouse Club Monday*. Each child received a home learning task to complete with their mouse over the weekend. These tasks were uploaded to the school's communication platform and then discussed and completed on Mondays.

In schools with lower attendance at sessions, teachers had to be creative in introducing Mouse Club. In one such school, the mouse was employed during summer sessions to motivate children to gather at the carpet. The mouse was given a name and used to emphasise the importance of early bedtimes and reading. However, the children did not take the mouse or the pack home; instead, they received the mouse packs just before starting school. The children were then encouraged to bring the mouse to school in September.

"That worked extremely well. We probably had 80% of the cohort bringing that mouse back and we've probably got a good 7 or 8 of them that come to school with that mouse now. So, on Monday we tend to talk a little bit about what's your mouse been doing, trying to keep it going a little bit. It's worked as a transition type toy/object as well as giving us the opportunity to slip some of those messages in."

(Early years teacher)

Again, this is further evidence that Mouse Club and the related resources can - if deployed thoughtfully and creatively - be a useful tool to help children, families and schools navigate the transition into nursery or reception. Going forwards, we need to consider how best practice can be better shared between schools and whether a more consistent Mouse Club offer across schools in Abbey Hulton and Bentilee would be desirable.

- *One-on-One Conversations:* The sessions during the summer term and the summer holidays also created a platform for parents to have one-on-one conversations with staff, which proved more effective than traditional didactic formats where teachers stand at the front of a room and lecture. The presence of multiple staff members, often supported by Thrive at Five staff, facilitated these personal interactions. Some schools also had family support

workers available at [the summer term and summer holiday] sessions to help parents if they had any specific concerns.

“So, there was only a maximum of five children and parents. It allowed the parents to have conversations amongst themselves. It allowed me and the other staff to be able to have one to one conversations with parents instead of me sort of being at the front telling you lots of things and then not having the chance to have a one-to-one conversation with everyone. So, transition week is really good for that - the relationship building.”
(Early years teacher)

This notion of increased personal contact with teachers in a more informal environment also came up strongly as a benefit of the transition sessions in last year’s evaluation.

An Implementation Weakness - Engaging families in a sustained way over the pre-transition months

Despite the positives outlined above, the data we presented around child and family engagement showed that it remains challenging to engage families in a sustained way throughout the pre-transition months (this sustained engagement is the mechanism through which we expect change to be achieved). In the following section, we conduct a deep dive into this key implementation weakness and unpack the reasons that may have contributed to this.

- *Siblings as a reason for non-attendance:* One reason for non-attendance that was raised consistently in our interviews was the restriction on bringing siblings to the sessions. Schools had instigated this policy because of concerns about numbers of children and families attending and because of wanting to maintain the focus of the session on children that were part of the transition process. For some parents, this may have made it difficult for them to attend, particularly if they had other children at home and could not arrange alternative childcare. This could also go some way to explaining why there is better attendance in term time sessions as parents have childcare for older children, even though it may remain challenging for younger children. Some schools did change this approach over the summer when it became clear it was an issue for some parents, by allowing younger siblings to attend and (in some instances) by linking with existing school-based holiday activities for older children.

“I think with the community that we are in a lot of parents have got children that have siblings, younger, and I think when they have those younger siblings it makes it harder to engage. There was a parent who came. She didn’t come for many of the sessions because she had a younger daughter and then when the younger daughter came along as well, she did start engaging but she had missed quite a lot of it”.
(Early years teacher)

- *Parental discomfort in school settings:* Another related challenge was that some parents would have preferred to leave their children at the sessions rather than stay with them. This could be explained by the fact they were looking after other siblings (see section above), but it may also be because parents feel uncomfortable in school settings. Staff reflected that past negative experiences with the school or a lack of trust in the educational system can deter parents from participating in school events.
- *Not knowing about the sessions:* The parents survey also confirmed that some parents did not know about the sessions, despite the efforts of schools to communicate dates and times.

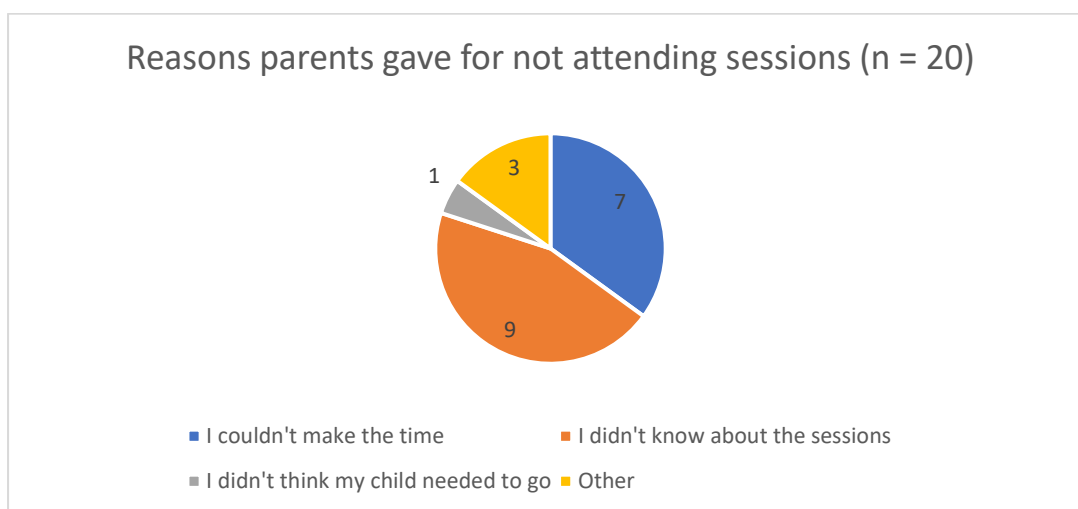
Given the long summer holidays, it could be that we need to find ways of sending timely reminders to families, to help keep the sessions front-of-mind during the summer.

“If we could find a way of sending parents a night before reminder, that could potentially be quite effective.”

(Thrive at Five Early Years Development Lead)

- **Busy Schedules:** In the survey parents also indicated that one of the reasons for not attending was that they could not make the time (see Figure 4 below). Many parents may have work obligations that prevent them from attending daytime events. They may not have the flexibility to take time off or rearrange their work schedules to participate.

Chart 5: Chart to show the reasons parents gave for not attending sessions.



We shall have to accept that there will always be some parents who do not have the capacity to bring their children to summer stay and play sessions (because of busy schedules with work or other competing pressures). Where the pressure is the need to look after siblings, there is scope for more thought about how those siblings might be accommodated. For parents who simply do not know about sessions or who are distrustful of schools the answer may reside in better communication. Some schools tried various strategies to engage parents beyond sending out letters. For instance, schools reached out to private and voluntary sector nurseries to encourage parents and sent flyers to encourage attendance at the sessions. However, teachers reflected that success was limited.

“As we were approaching summer, we called to say are you going to come along and went out to the nurseries to meet the children. We’d sent flyers to the nursery of things that were going on and asked them to ask the parents. And said can you give them a nudge so that they’ll come along - we’ve got a session on Friday. And towards the end we did get a few more different parents but again they might come once and then they don’t come again”.

(Early years teacher)

A key takeaway from this is that we may need to be more proactive around communications and encouraging attendance at the sessions and perhaps even consider incentivising sustained engagement.

To summarise, Section Three considered implementation under the headings of delivery execution and child and family engagement. Headline monitoring data on delivery execution indicates that the

work was implemented broadly as intended. For example, all schools participated in and showed commitment to the work and Thrive at Five played a supportive background role, adding capacity, resources, and expertise. When we consider child and family engagement, we get a more mixed picture. Engagement was stronger during the summer term when most families engaged with at least one session and in three schools, engagement on this metric was above 80%. In the summer holidays, average engagement at school sessions ranged from 9% of invited attendees to 42% of invited attendees. Clearly, it remains a challenge to engage families in a sustained way throughout the pre-transition months. This is important because a key insight from teachers last year was that attendance limited to single events or sessions was unlikely to result in ‘significant and meaningful change’ and that instead we should aim to encourage and facilitate sustained engagement throughout the project period. Accordingly, we have positioned sustained engagement as our mechanism of change. In the remainder of the section, we identified a range of implementation strengths, and we conducted a deep dive into what appeared to be the main implementation weakness, namely this lack of sustained engagement. In section four, we move our focus onto early indications of effectiveness.

Section Four

Early evidence of effectiveness

Were there any early indications that the work to improve transitions was effective?

To assess early indications of effectiveness, we used qualitative information from the interviews conducted with local staff and the core project team. The survey we conducted with parents also allowed us to better understand the perspective of parents on a range of statements designed to assess if the aims of the work had been achieved.¹²

4.1 **Impacts for Parents**

Below, we outline the key points that emerged with regards to impacts for parents.

- *Stronger Relationships with school staff and other parents:* As referred to in the section above, and in line with findings from last year's evaluation, there was some evidence to suggest that transition sessions helped parents to establish relationships with school staff. The informality of the sessions, and particularly the relaxed atmosphere during the summer holidays, proved a good environment for breaking down barriers between parents and teachers and addressing any parental concerns.

"I think being less formal was a big success and the children engaged well and parents enjoyed the relaxed approach to it, and it meant that it freed up staff ... to address any concerns that they'd got for their child starting school and allowed for those relationships to be developed sooner."

(Early years teacher)

Equally, by attending the sessions, parents had the opportunity to meet and connect with other families who would be part of their child's cohort, which also laid the foundation for stronger relationships between parents.

- *Developing parental confidence around the transition and trust in schools:* There were also some indications that parents who attended [the sessions] felt more at ease leaving their children, knowing they had already built an initial relationship with staff and had meaningful conversations with them. This, in turn, boosted their confidence in the school's care.

"For the parents who attended those [sessions], I think they were more at ease bringing their children in and leaving them knowing that they've got to know us. They've had those conversations and I think they felt secure in the fact that they were going to be well looked after."

(Early years teacher)

The suggestion is that transition sessions served to increase parental confidence in the transition by reassuring parents about the school and the welfare of their children.

4.2 **Impacts for Children**

Here, we set out the most notable impacts for children.

- *Better Prepared for School:* Teachers also reported a link between children who attended transition sessions (particularly regular attendees) and children who made a positive transition at the start of the school year. According to the interviewed teachers, these children [those attending transition sessions] were more likely to adapt quickly to school

¹² While this information is interesting, it does not allow us to say whether Thrive at Five directly contributed to the way parents felt about their children's school readiness.

routines as they had already developed relationships with staff and familiarised themselves with the school environment.

“It’s not coming into a strange place because you’ve already had lots of contact with them, especially for those children who came regularly. I think for those children who didn’t attend as regularly as others that relationship wasn’t as well formed, and parents found that more difficult. I think overall most of the staff in EYFS already knew the children before they came ... that’s been much more successful than in previous years.”

(Early years teacher)

There was also a perception that children benefited from having seen school staff interacting positively with their parents as this built trust and helped children feel more comfortable.

“the ones that came to the sessions, they came running in and they have been ready to start to follow the routines quite quickly because they’ve already started to make those relationships and spent time with us and with their parents. So, they have realised that we are ok people because mum and dad have been with these people”.

(Early years teacher)

One teacher emphasised (very much in line with our previous findings) that it was continuous support and engagement that was likely to make the most difference and that there we could improve more with this.

“I believe we need more regular contact for the knowledge to become ingrained, and to be more explicit about what we are asking parents to do.”

(Early years teacher)

To summarise, our interviews with teachers provided some indications that the sessions played a positive role in smoothing children’s transitions and showed that, in the view of many of our interviewed teachers, more engagement was likely to lead to greater positive effects.

4.3 Impacts for School Staff

In the text below, we describe the key impacts of the work for school staff.

- *Enhanced Knowledge of Child Needs:* The primary benefit of the sessions for school staff was that they enabled staff to better understand the needs of the children and their families. For example, in cases where children had Special Educational Needs, staff had early awareness and could take necessary steps for a smoother transition.

“We did meet a child there that we were a little bit concerned about, so we were able to have some of those initial conversations with the carer at the time and build up that relationship prior to him beginning school and obviously we have now moved forward with that.”

(Early years teacher)

The interviews also provided an insight into the range of needs that children can present with in any given year and the importance of early intelligence gathering.

“This is our second intake of nursery children, and it has been significantly different from the first intake. The needs of the children are quite diverse. So, having more insight into this would guide us better in planning the transition for the next year and conveying the right messages to parents.”
 (Early years teacher)

This early intelligence gathering can be particularly valuable where a significant specific need is identified.

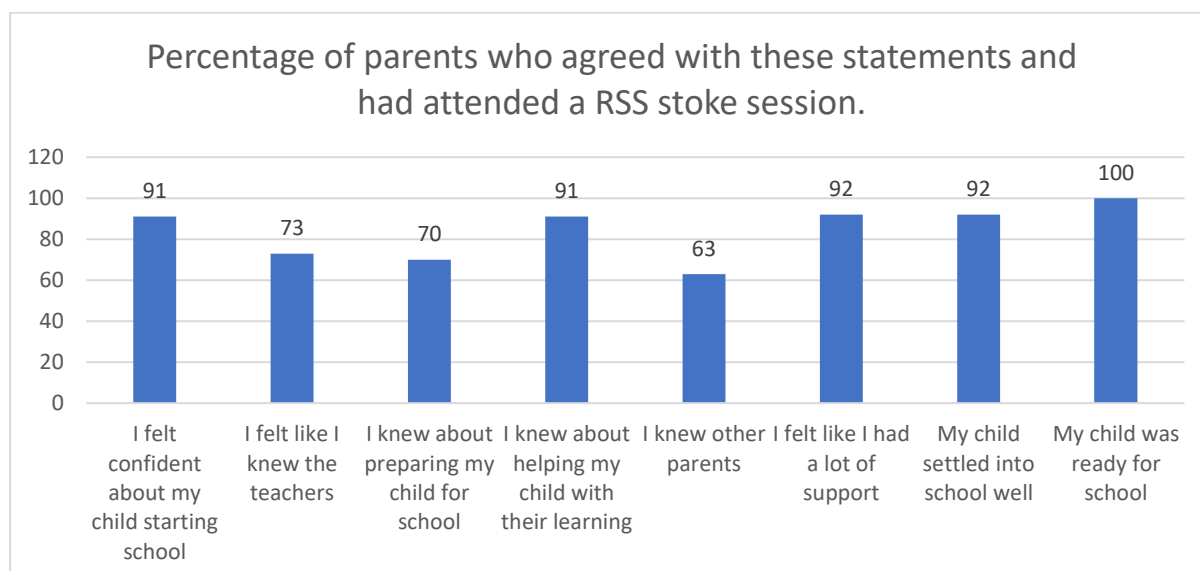
“This year, toilet training has been a major concern. Many children were not toilet trained, and we adapted the Mouse Club resources to suit them. We created a reception pack for reception children and a nursery pack for nursery children. In cases where children were not toilet trained, we provided information along with their Mouse Club pack.”
 (Early years teacher)

By identifying needs early, school staff can tailor their activities to meet these needs and can source specialist support where it is needed.

4.4 Findings from the Parent Survey

Parents were also asked to complete a survey where they were given a range of statements designed to measure whether the aims of the work - i.e., for children to make a positive transition into nursery or reception - had been achieved. In total 46 parents who had attended at least one session (of any type) completed the survey. Looking at the 46 parents who had attended any kind of session there were high levels of agreement with all the ‘school readiness’ statements, as shown in Chart 5¹³.

Chart 6: Percentage of parents who agreed with school readiness statements and attended at least one session (n= 46)



¹³ While these survey findings are interesting and encouraging, we cannot say to what extent parental responses were directly related to input from the Transitions Workstream. However, when combined with qualitative feedback from staff, they indicate that parents and children were benefiting from the sessions.

The majority of parents (91%) who attended at least one session felt confident about their child starting school and felt that they knew about helping their child with their learning (91%). All parents who answered felt that their child was ready for school (100%) and the majority felt they settled in well (92%). Parents also felt like they had a lot of support (92%). Parents were less likely to feel like they knew teachers (73%) and other parents (63%) and that they knew about preparing their child for school (70%).

Section Four sets out an encouraging picture around early indications of effectiveness. Based on data gathered from our interviews and the Parent Survey, there did appear to be a range of positive benefits associated with the work for parents, children, and school staff. This is important, and points to the promise inherent in building more positive transitions. However, the work has the potential to make a greater positive difference, particularly if it can find a way of encouraging and supporting sustained engagement from families (especially those families with the most to benefit) across the months preceding the start of the new school year.

Section Five

Conclusions and Recommendations

How could the work to improve transitions be further strengthened next year?

In this final section, we make some brief concluding remarks before outlining a set of recommendations to further strengthen delivery going forwards. Continuous adaptation and refinement are an important feature of the emerging Thrive at Five model. As part of this model, we also acknowledge that the evaluation of practice and the related development of recommendations is only part of the story. Beyond this, we need to be equally focused on the successful translation of these recommendations into delivery next year.

5.1 Concluding remarks

The 'Improving Transitions - Ready Steady Stoke' work in Abbey Hulton and Bentilee in Stoke-on-Trent has, once again, been well-received, but there is potential for it to be even better.

Looking at delivery execution, headline monitoring data indicates that the workstream was implemented broadly as intended. Each of the seven 'Thrive at Five' schools demonstrated their commitment to supporting the area's youngest children, by proactively planning and delivering a set of sessions to guide families through their children's transition into nursery and reception. The sessions themselves were engaging and welcoming, and also thoughtfully choreographed to familiarise children with their new school environments. They [the sessions] had a strong emphasis on establishing early relationships between children and teachers, parents and teachers, and children and other children in their cohort and on introducing new routines and behaviours.

Looking at child and family engagement, we get a more mixed picture. Engagement was stronger during the summer term when most families engaged with at least one session, and in three schools, engagement on this metric was above 80%. In the summer holidays, average engagement at school sessions ranged from 9% of invited attendees to 42% of invited attendees. Clearly, it remains a challenge to engage families in a sustained way throughout the pre-transition months. This is important because a key insight from teachers last year was that attendance limited to single events or sessions was unlikely to result in 'significant meaningful change' and that instead we should aim to encourage and facilitate sustained engagement throughout the project period. In turn, this became our key mechanism for change with this work.

For those families who did engage on a sustained basis, there were clear early indications of effectiveness. For children, there were indications that the work helped them become better prepared for school. For parents, there was evidence of stronger relationships with school staff and increased trust and confidence in the school. For school staff, there were indications that the sessions helped them better understand the needs of their incoming cohort as a strong basis for early action.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings in this evaluation report, here are our recommendations as to how the work could be further strengthened next year.

- 1** *Agreement across schools about the six or seven key transition 'experiences' that we want every child and family to have as an entitlement:* In the first year of delivery, there was wide agreement that the work's focus on improvements to child-level outcomes (measured via the local Early Communication Screen) was not realistic given the light-touch and short-term nature of the activities being offered. This year, we coalesced around a high-level aim of positive transitions. Going forwards, Thrive at Five should consult with Early Years Foundation Leads at every local school to co-design a set of transition experiences that should form entitlements for children and families. These should be specific child or parental

experiences such as ‘meeting other children from my class’, ‘going on a mini tour of the school’ or ‘having a conversation with my child’s new teacher’. These experiences should then be widely publicised and used as a framework to help structure transition sessions and the parent survey. Each experience will not require a separate touchpoint. However, the achievement of the full set of experiences will likely require engagement on multiple occasions during the pre-transition months.

- 2 Linked to the point above, we need to find a clearer way of assessing progress towards achieving our goals. One approach could be to use the annual parent survey to assess the extent to which families have benefited from the intended transition experiences. Another approach, that could be tried in some schools, would be to ask teachers to consider who has made the most and least positive transitions and whether (and to what extent) those families engaged with the organised transition sessions.
- 3 *Communications support for schools:* Thrive at Five now has access to in-house and external communications expertise. Next year, we should explore what type and level of support we could offer to schools around transition session publicity, with a particular focus on presenting the sessions at each school as a connected and coherent whole (as opposed to isolated events).
- 4 *Additional, defined capacity from Thrive at Five’s Peripatetic Support Staff:* Thrive at Five has recruited two full-time staff to work across the primary schools in Abbey Hulton and Bentilee. Most of their time is already accounted for through supporting the delivery of other workstreams, but there is a limited amount of time remaining and this should be dedicated to the transitions work. To take this forward, Thrive at Five should work with the schools to define a specified transitions role for the Peripatetic Support Staff. This could involve acting as a *Transitions Guide* between local PVI nurseries and schools, getting to know parents (particularly those with the most to benefit), and encouraging and supporting attendance at school-based transition sessions.
- 5 *Childcare options for siblings during transition sessions:* Thrive at Five and schools should work together to consider how best to accommodate the childcare of siblings during transition sessions. We need to be able to offer high-quality care and productive activities for siblings, whilst giving parents a window of time to focus on their transitioning child.
- 6 *Incentivising sustained engagement:* Workstream leaders should also explore creative approaches to incentivising sustained family engagement across the summer term and summer holiday sessions. Some kind of reward system that totalled up the number of sessions attended could be a powerful lever for the work.
- 7 *Forums to promote the sharing of learning and best practice:* For next year’s delivery, it will be important to review how we can make communication between transition leaders across different local schools as straightforward as possible. For example, several schools are using Mouse Club very creatively and are having success doing so, and this learning should be shared more widely.

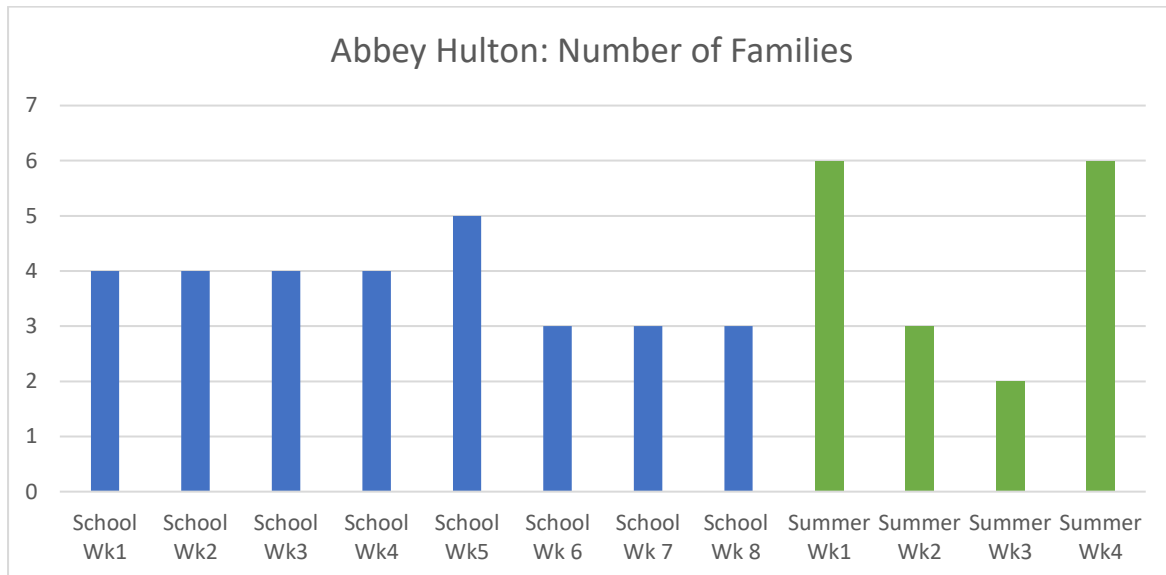
In line with Thrive at Five’s model of working, we will now turn our attention (over the coming months) to how these recommendations could best be translated into delivery next year.

Appendices

Appendix 1

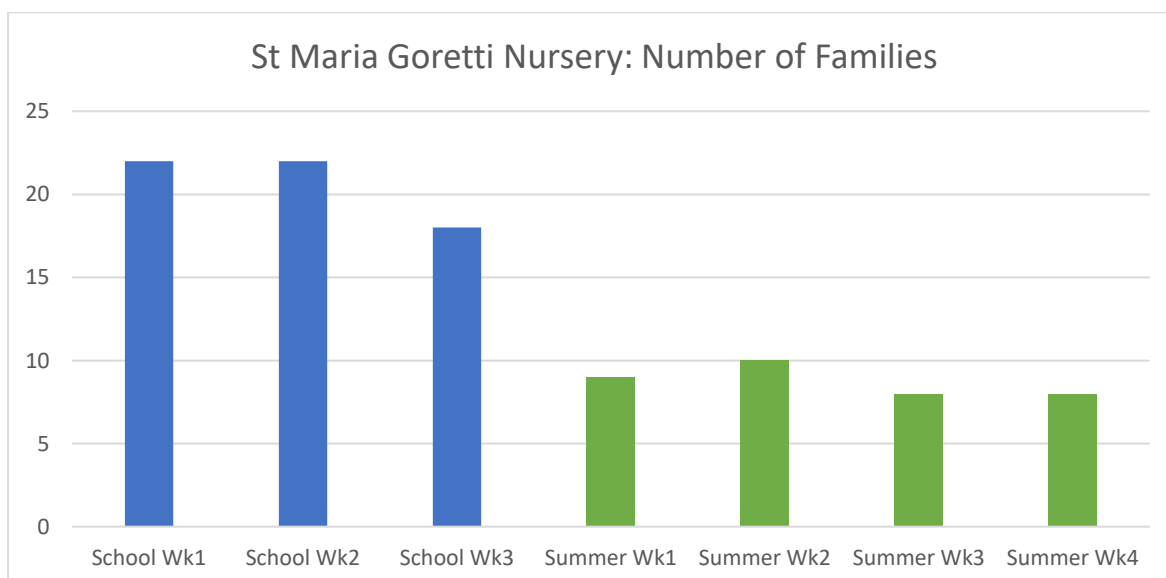
Charts to show attendance at school sessions and summer sessions

Abbey Hulton Nursery and Reception



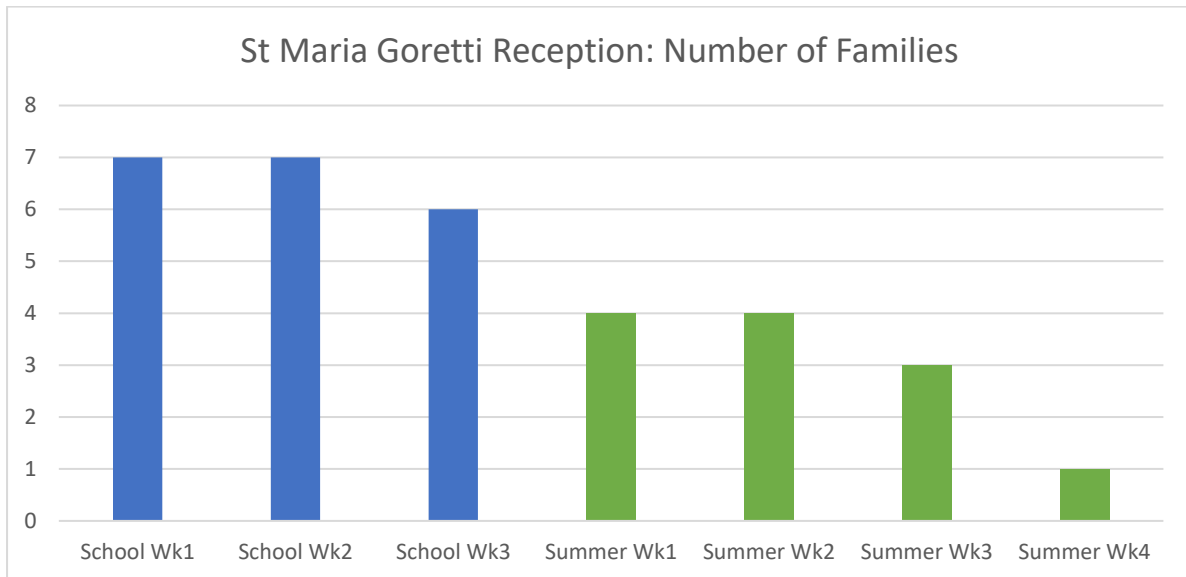
Abbey Hulton school sessions were open to Nursery and Reception children. 30 children entered Abbey Hulton's Nursery in September 2023 and 18 children entered Abbey Hulton's Reception. Summer sessions were open to nursery children and session 4 was also open to reception in children.

St Maria Goretti Nursery



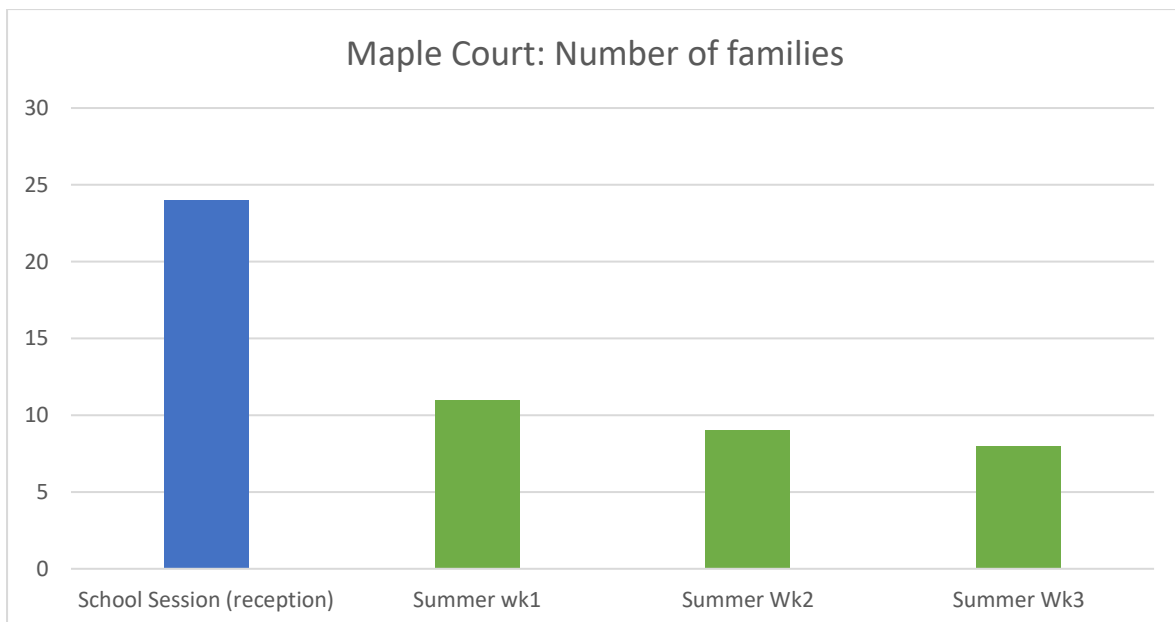
22 children started at St Maria Goretti's Nursery in September 2023.

St Maria Goretti Reception



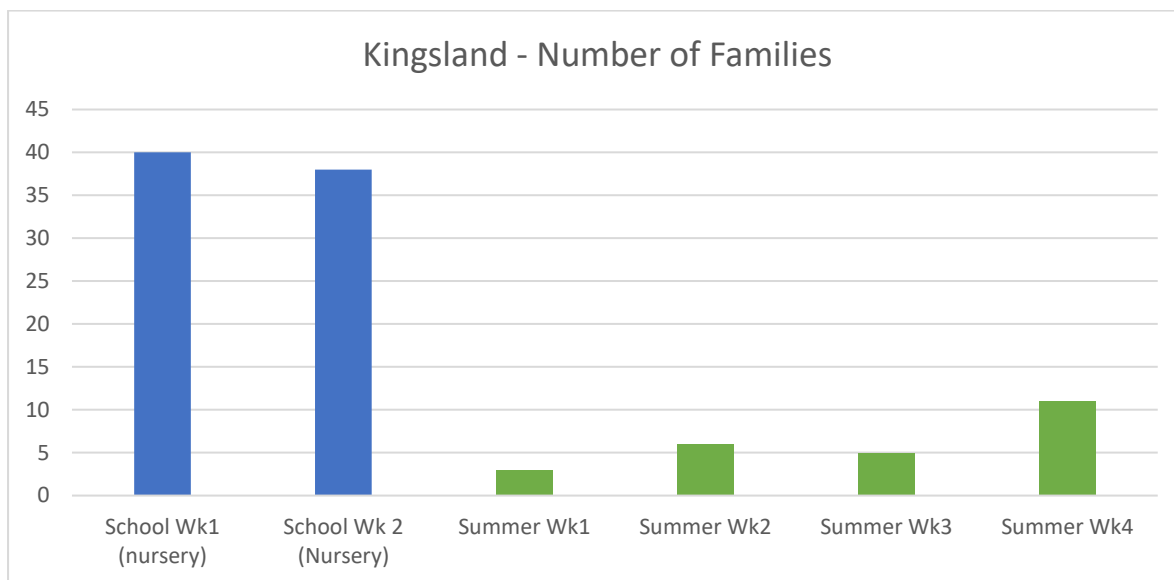
30 children entered St Maria Goretti’s Reception in September 2023 with 10 children who were new to the school.

Maple Court Nursery and Reception



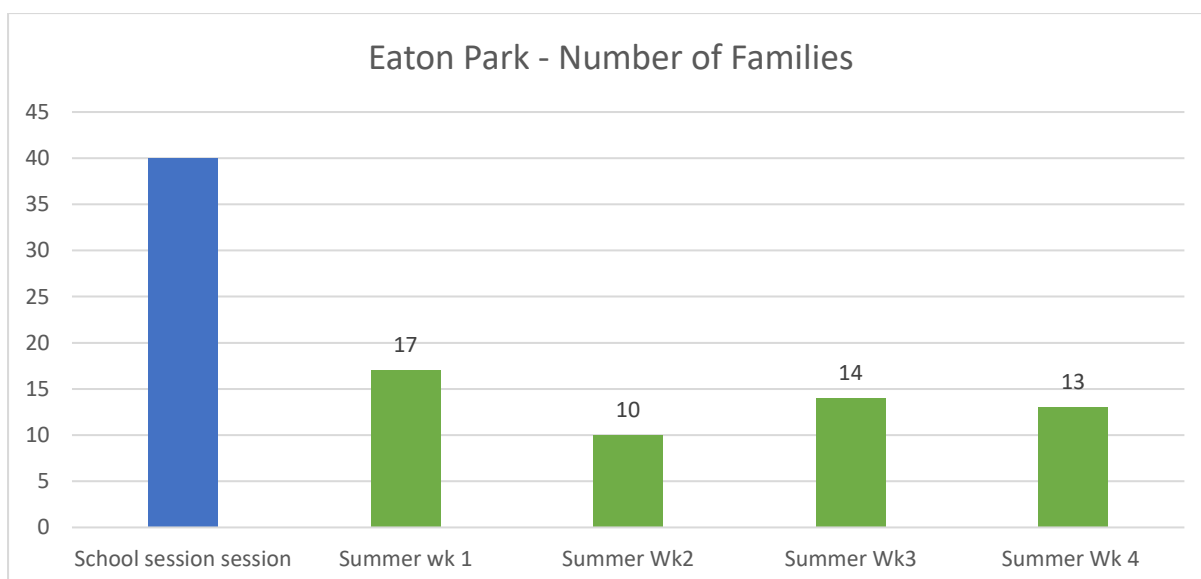
26 children entered Maple Court’s Nursery in September 2023 and 54 children entered Maple Court’s Reception (27 of these children - those new to the school - were invited to the Reception sessions).

Kingsland Nursery and Reception



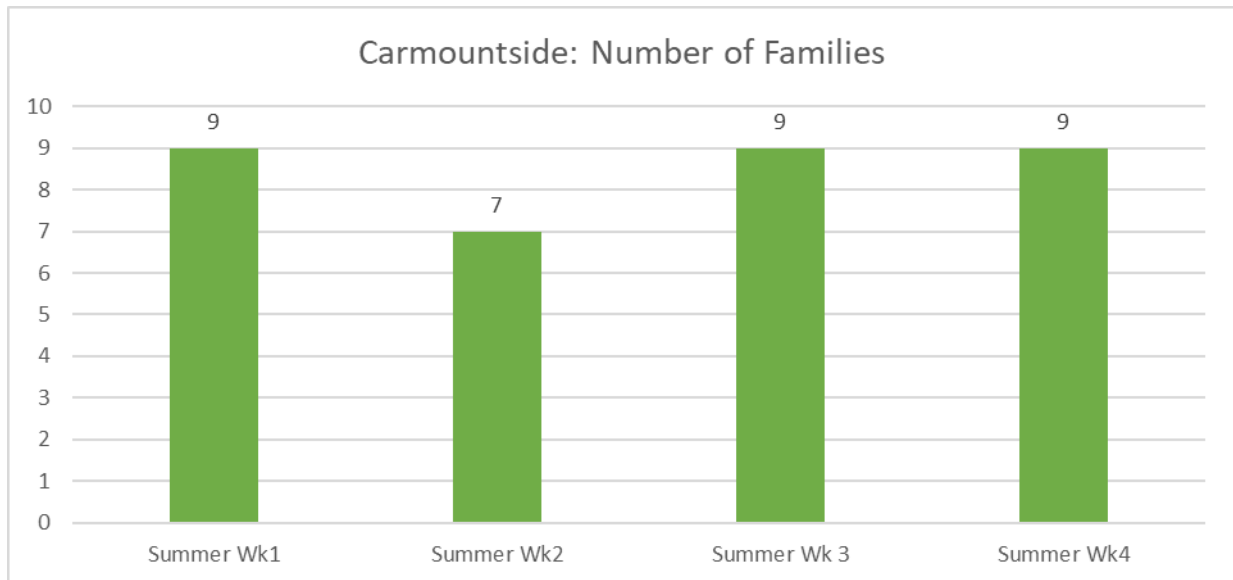
43 nursery children entered Kingsland's Nursery in September 2023 and 60 children entered Kingsland's Reception.

Eaton Park Nursery and Reception



45 children entered Eaton Park's Nursery in September 2023 and 59 children entered Eaton Park's Reception. The summer sessions were open to the 45 new Nursery children and 14 Reception children who were new to the school.

Carmountside Nursery and Reception



Appendix 2 - Parent Survey Form

Thrive at Five Early Years Parents Survey

We'd like to hear your views on how well your child has settled into school or nursery. This will help us to understand if sessions and activities to support you, and your child, are helpful.

We'd like your feedback if your child settled quickly or if they found it more difficult, so we can understand everyone's experience. We won't ask for your name so anything you tell us will be confidential. The survey will only take 2 minutes to complete.

1. Has your child just started in nursery or reception?

Nursery Reception

2. Please tell us which school your child is attending.

Abbey Hulton Primary
Carmountside Primary School
Kingsland C of E Primary Academy
Eaton Park
Maple Court Academy
Our Lady and St Benedict Primary
St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary

3. If your child is in reception did, they attend nursery at the same school?

Yes
No, they attended a different nursery.
They didn't attend nursery.
They are just starting at nursery.

4. Before your child started at school did you attend any of these activities or events. (Please tick all that you went to)

An event at the school for parents and children who were starting in reception or nursery.
A Stay and Play at the school where you left your child so they could get used to the school or nursery.
A school 'summer session' with activities and food
I didn't go to any sessions.

5. If you didn't attend any of these things, please can you tell us why (please tick all that apply)

I couldn't make the time the sessions were on
I didn't know about the sessions.
I didn't think my child needed to go.
I didn't think I needed to go.
Other

PLEASE TURN OVER

6. Did you have a visit from the nursery or reception staff before your child started school?

Yes No Not sure.

7. Thinking about how you felt about your child starting school please tell us how much you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I felt confident about my child starting school.					
I felt like I knew the teachers.					
I knew a lot about preparing my child for school.					
I knew about helping my child with their learning.					
I knew other parents who had children going to the school or nursery.					
I felt like I had a lot of support.					

8. Thinking about your child. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
My child settled into school well.					
My child was ready for school.					

9. Would you have liked any more support getting your child ready for school?

Yes No Maybe.

If yes, please tell us what support you would have liked?

10. Please tell us how old your child is?

11. What month were they born in?

12. Is your child a boy or a girl?

Boy Girl Prefer not to say.

Thankyou for completing the survey if you have any questions please e-mail:
denise.coster@thriveatfive.org.uk

