

Walsall Children & Young people Alliance



Walsall Council

Key Headlines



The Infant Mortality Rate in Walsall is the highest in the country, with **7** in every **1000** live births dying before their 1st birthday.¹¹



The uptake of routine childhood vaccinations in Walsall is **decreasing** in trend, and is below the national ambition.¹⁴

Abuse and Neglect is the most common presenting need in Walsall Children's Service support programmes, and this is proportionally **higher** in 0-2 year olds than in the overall cohort.²³



Blakenall and Darlaston South have the **highest number** of families with children aged 2 and under that are claiming Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit. These wards also have the highest number of these families that are in Council Tax Arrears.²¹

There was a **22.7% increase** in the number of Children in Care who are aged 2 and under, between 2019 and 2020. This number has since remained stable.²³



The number of children aged 2 and under who are subject to Child Protection Plans and Early Help has **decreased** significantly since 2019.²³



The percentage of 2-2.5 year olds reaching the expected level of development at the Healthy Child Programme review is **decreasing** in trend and is significantly lower than the national rate.¹⁷

0-2 year old Population in Walsall



In **2020**, there were **11,600** 0-2 year olds living in Walsall.¹



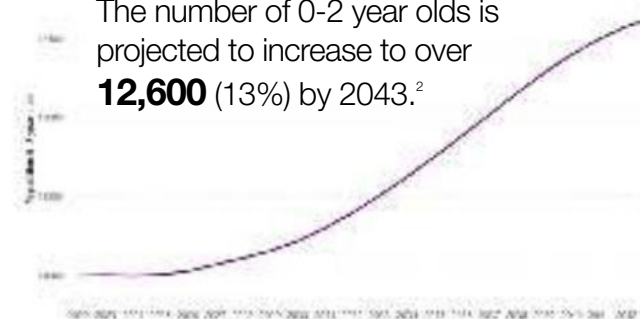
Wards in the South and West of the borough have the **highest numbers** of 0-2 year olds, particularly Blakenall, Darlaston South and Palfrey, each with about **900** 0-2 year olds.

Ward Name	Pop	%
Blakenall	1,000	8.62%
Birchills Leamore	900	7.76%
Darlaston South	900	7.76%
Palfrey	900	7.76%
Pleck	900	7.76%
St. Matthews	800	6.90%
Willenhall South	800	6.90%
Bentley and Darlaston North	700	6.03%
Doxwich East	600	5.17%
Aldridge Central and South	500	4.31%
Aldridge North and Walsall Wood	500	4.31%
Doxwich West	500	4.31%
Brownhills	500	4.31%
Paddock	500	4.31%
Rushall-Sheffield	500	4.31%
Willenhall North	500	4.31%
Pelsall	400	3.45%
Phessey Park Farm	400	3.45%
Short Heath	400	3.45%
Shirby	400	3.45%
Total	11,600	100.00%

11,600



The number of 0-2 year olds is projected to increase to over **12,600** (13%) by 2043.²

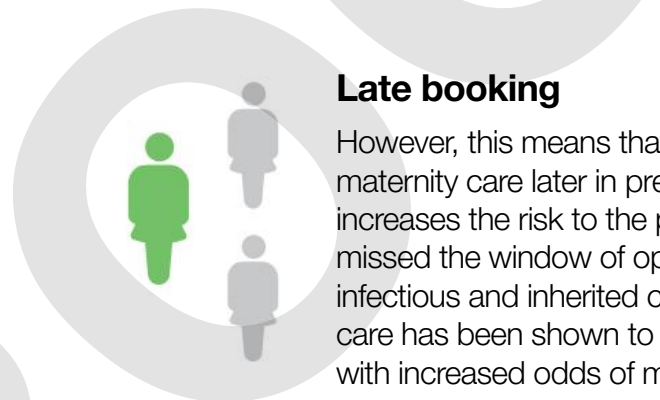


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Healthy Pregnancy



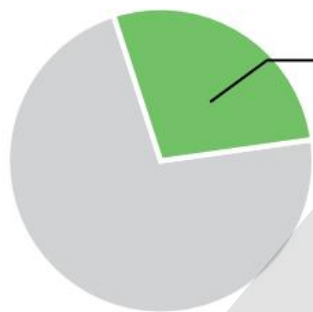
In **2018/19**, **68.5%** of pregnant women accessed early maternity care, which is higher than the England rate (**57.8**).³



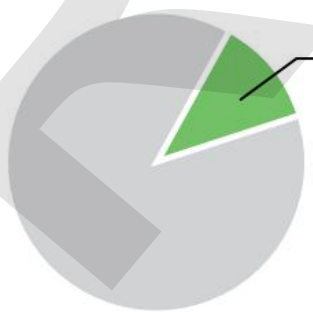
Late booking

However, this means that about **1 in 3** women access maternity care later in pregnancy. Late access to maternity care increases the risk to the pregnancy, as they have potentially missed the window of opportunity for screening for particular infectious and inherited conditions. Inadequate use of antenatal care has been shown to be strongly independently associated with increased odds of maternal death.³

In Walsall mothers;



• **27.9%** were obese in early pregnancy in 2018/19.⁴



• In **2017/18** – about **12%** of mothers had social complex factors.⁵



18.7% were smokers in early pregnancy in **2018/19**³

While **13.5%** were smokers at time of delivery in **2020/21**.⁴

*Complex social factors as defined by NICE guidance (CG110): Domestic abuse; Recent migrants (women who moved to the UK within the previous 12 months); Substance misuse (alcohol and/or drugs). See NICE guidance CG110 for detailed definition.

Healthy Births



In 2020, there were **3,402** live births in Walsall.⁶



39 of these births were to mothers aged under 18 years.⁷

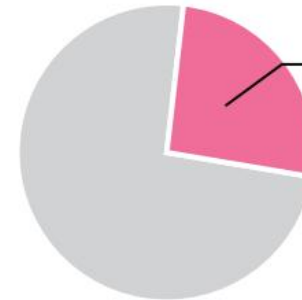


At a rate of **62.9** live births per 1000 women aged 15-44 in Walsall, which is higher than the England rate (55.3).⁹

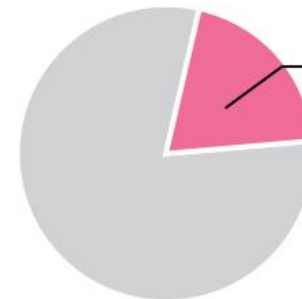


Walsall has the highest infant mortality rate in the country with **7** in every **1000** live births dying before their first birthday.¹¹

4.2% of full-term babies were born with a low birth weight, which is significantly higher than both the West Midlands regional (**3.1%**) and the national (**2.9**) rates.⁴



25.9% of babies born in Walsall were born to non-UK born mothers.¹⁰



20.1% of Walsall babies were born to Black and Minority Ethnic mothers*.⁷

*BAME Mothers - The Infant Feeding Survey 2010 found that mothers from all minority ethnic groups were more likely to breastfeed compared with White mothers.⁸

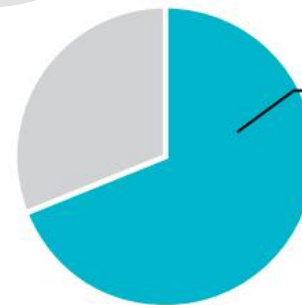
Healthy Start



Breastfeeding initiation – **52.2%** of babies born in Walsall in 2018/19 had a first feed of breastmilk.⁴



Almost **1 in 3** children under 5 years old experience visually obvious dental decay.¹²



69% uptake of Healthy Start Vouchers by eligible people in Walsall.¹³

Vaccinations:



90% of eligible children in Walsall have received one dose of the MMR vaccine by age 2 in **2020/21**, lower than the national ambition of **95%**.¹⁴

94.1% of 2 year old children in Walsall have received the DTaP/IPV/Hib vaccine in **2020/21**, higher than the national average (93.8), but lower than the ambition of **95%**.¹⁴



The rate of A&E attendances for **0-4** year olds in Walsall was **562.8** per 1000 population, which is lower than the national rate of **659.8**.¹⁵

Healthy Development

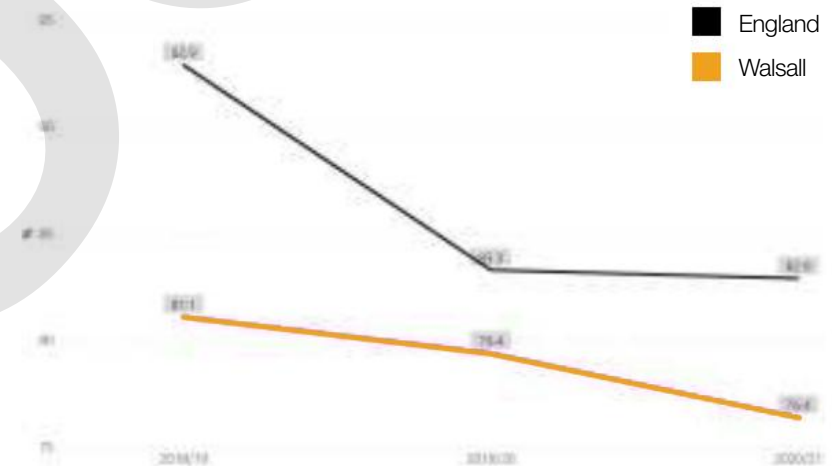


Disparities in child development are recognisable in the second year of life and have an impact by the time children enter school. If left unsupported, these children are more likely to fail to achieve their full potential. All children in England are eligible for development review around their second birthday as part of the national Healthy Child Programme.

The domains of development which are tested include communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving and personal-social skills. These indicators measure important outcomes which will drive school readiness and longer-term outcomes in later life such as education, employment and life chances.

In 2020/21, **82.5%** of children received a 2-2.5 year development review. However, this means that there were **556** children in Walsall who did not receive this development review in 2020/21.¹⁷

The percentage of 2-2.5 year olds children reaching the expected level of development:



Communication Skills: 89.8%
(England 86.8)



Social/Personal Skills: 86.4%
(England 90.2%)



Fine Motor Skills: 91.8%
(England 92.0%)



Problem Solving Skills: 94.5%
(England 91.9)



Gross Motor Skills: 93.5%
(England 91.8)

Living Well



Where children live – the condition, location and stability of their accommodation – has a wide ranging impact on their early health and development.¹⁸

Childhood poverty can lead to premature mortality and poor health outcomes for adults. Reducing the numbers of children who experience poverty should improve these adult health outcomes and increase healthy life expectancy. There is also a wide variety of evidence to show that children who live in poverty are exposed to a range of risks that can have a serious impact on their mental health.






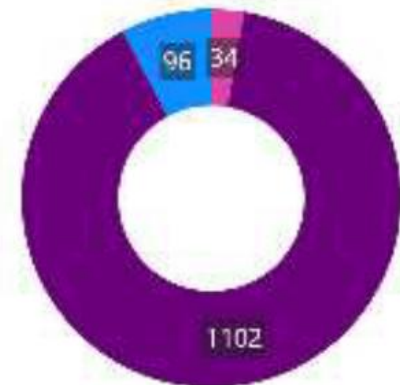
Around **1 in 3** (32%) children and young people in Walsall live in **Low – Income families.**¹⁹



Number of Families with under 2's claiming Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefits in Walsall

Benefit Type

-  Housing Benefit
-  Council Tax Reduction
-  Both



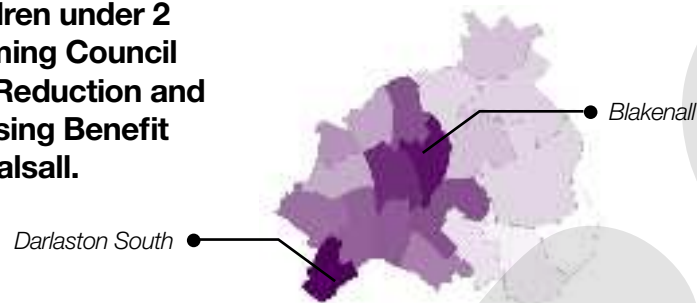
In 2021, **8** in every **1000** children in Walsall are **Homeless***, which is a significantly lower rate than nationally (11).²⁰

There are **1232** Walsall families with children under 2 in the household who are low-income and claiming Housing Benefit and or Council Tax Reduction, which is around **4.5%** of the total number of people in receipt of these benefits.²¹

*Homelessness –defined as households with dependent children owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act.

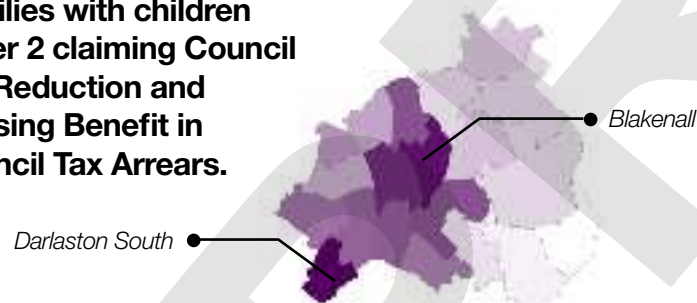
Living Well

Families with children under 2 claiming Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit in Walsall.



Darlaston South and **Blakenall** have the highest number of families with children aged 2 and under claiming Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit in Walsall.

Families with children under 2 claiming Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit in Council Tax Arrears.



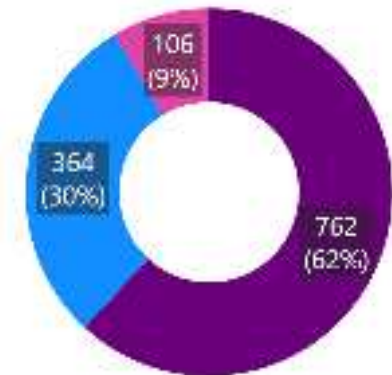
The **highest number** of families claiming these benefits who are in Council Tax Arrears, are also in **Darlaston South** and **Blakenall**.

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Account Status of Families with under 2's claiming Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefits in Walsall

Account Status

- In Arrears
- Paid
- In Credit



Of those **1232** families with children 0-2 who are claiming these benefits, 762 (62%) are in Council Tax Arrears, at an average of £615.

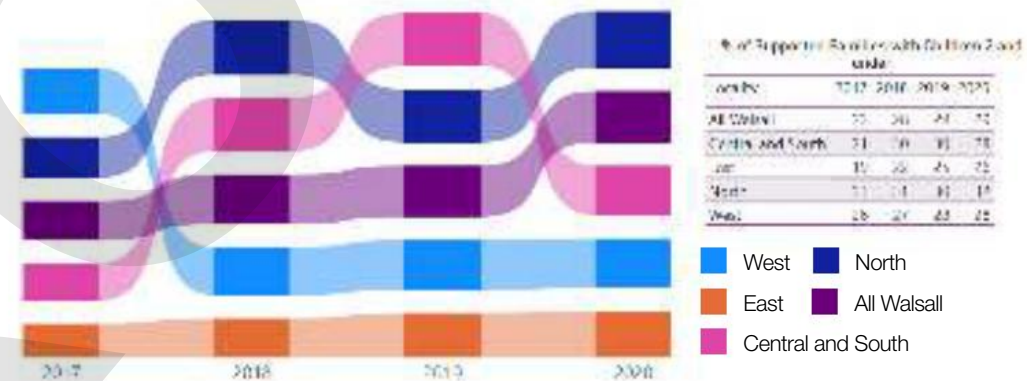
Vulnerable Children

The Supporting Families programme focusses on building the resilience of vulnerable families.



It uses multi-agency local partnerships to identify families in need and provide the right support at the right time, using a **“whole-family”** approach. Evidence shows that this programme reduces the number of children who need to be taken into care.²²

Proportion of Supported Families with children aged 2 or under by Locality



In Walsall, the proportion of Supported Families with children aged 2 and under increased from **22-29%** between 2017 and 2020.

Over this time period, this proportion was consistently **highest** in the Central & South and North Localities.

The **East** and **West** localities have a lower proportion of supported families with children 2 and under than the Walsall average.

Between 2017-2020, around **33%** of **families** who achieved sustained change* as part of the supported families programme, were those with at least one child under 2 years old.

*Sustained change is defined as the point when the family has made sufficient improvement in accordance with the Supporting Families Outcomes Plan, and a successful claim made to Government for Payment by Results. It generally takes a minimum of 12 months from identification to claim.

Vulnerable Children

There are currently **107** 0-2 year old Children in Care in Walsall, which represents **16%** of the total cohort of Children in Care.²³

Children in Need:

330 Children in Need in Walsall are 0-2 years old, which **18%** of the total cohort of Children in Need.

There has been a **24% decrease** in the number of (CiN) between 2019 and 2022, although there has been a significant increase in 2022 compared to the previous year.

Children in Care:

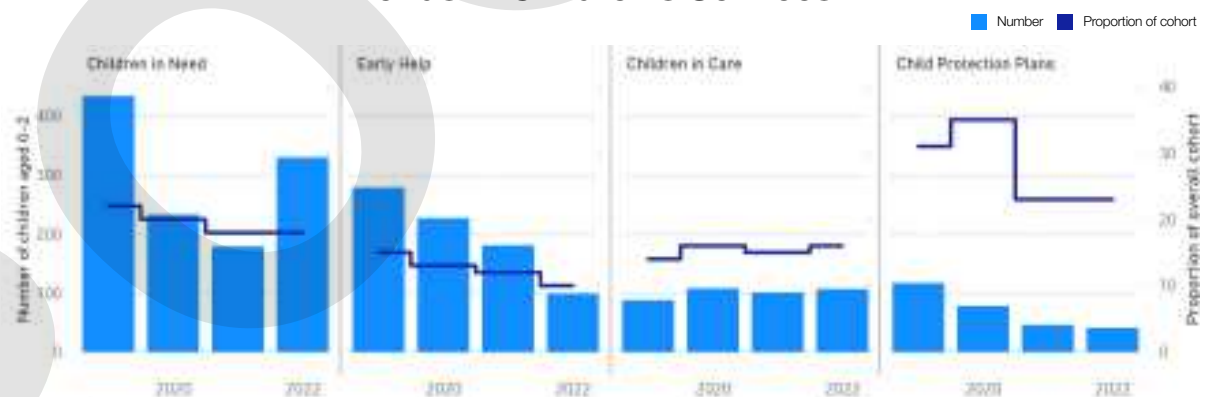
There was a **22.7%** increase in the number of 0-2 year olds in care between 2019 and 2020 (from 88 to 108), however, this number, as well as the proportion of the overall cohort (14-16%), has remained stable since.

Early Help:

There are currently **99** children open to Early Help in 0-2 year olds in Walsall, which is 10% of the total Early Help Cohort.

There has been a **65% decrease** in 0-2 year old Early help Children between 2019 and 2022, with the proportion of the total cohort also decreasing from **15 to 10%**.

Trends in Children's Services



Child Protection Plans:

There are **41** 0-2 year old children in Walsall with a Child Protection Plan, which is 23% of the overall cohort.

There has been a **65% decrease** in the number of 0-2 year olds with a (CPP) between 2019 and 2022, with the proportion of the total CPP cohort also decreasing from 31% to 23% in this period.

Vulnerable Children

In **2022**, in each of the different types of support programmes in Walsall Children's services, the most common presenting need was **abuse and neglect**, in both the 0-2 and the overall cohorts.²³

Moreover, in every one of the support programmes, abuse and neglect needs accounted for a **higher proportion of 0-2** year old cohort when compared to the overall cohort.

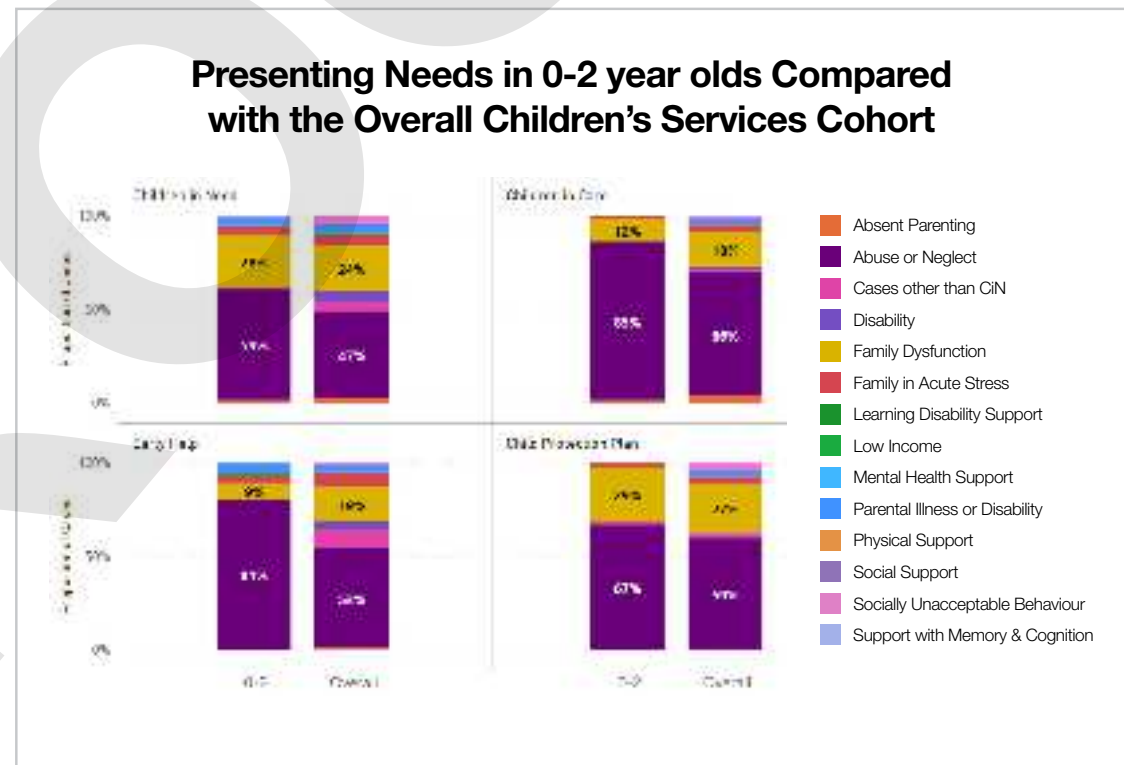
In fact, in Children in Care and in Early Help, more than **8 in 10** children presented with abuse and neglect needs.

Family Dysfunction was the 2nd most common presenting need in each of the different support programmes, in both the 0-2 and the overall cohort. Family Dysfunction is a particularly prominent need in the Children in Need and the Child Protection Plan programmes.

In the Early Help and Children in Care programmes, family dysfunction represent a **higher proportion** of the overall cohort than in 0-2 year olds.

In each of the different type of support programmes, **Abuse and Neglect** and **Family Dysfunction** have been the 2 most common presenting needs in every year between 2019 and 2022.

Presenting Needs in 0-2 year olds Compared with the Overall Children's Services Cohort



Vulnerable Children

In 0-2 year olds, the percentage of children with Abuse or Neglect needs has shown an **increasing** trend in 2022 compared with the previous year. This increase has been particularly apparent in Early Help – with a **21%** increase (from 60-81%) since last year. This trend is not reflected in the overall cohort.²³

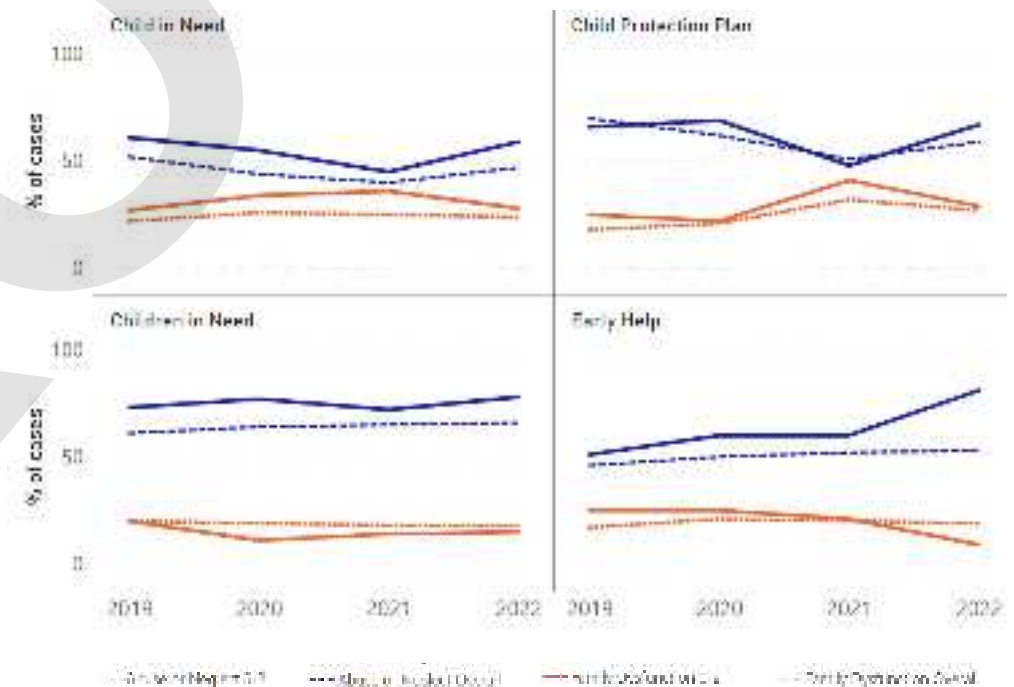


Family dysfunction in both 0-2s and the overall cohort have remained stable since 2019 in each of the service types, with a slight decreasing trend between 2021 and 2022.²³



This potentially suggests a proportional increase in more acute needs i.e abuse and neglect in this younger cohort which is not seen in the cohort overall.

Trends in presenting Needs in Children's Services



School Ready



In 2022, **72%** of eligible 2 year olds in Walsall were benefiting from funded early education. This is a 16% increase from the previous year when and is now the same as the national rate.²⁴

There are currently **1063** Walsall 2 year olds are attending early years provision in Walsall, 23 of whom are eligible for the funding due to being Children in Care or adopted from care.

40 children aged 2 or below currently receive SEN Support in Walsall.

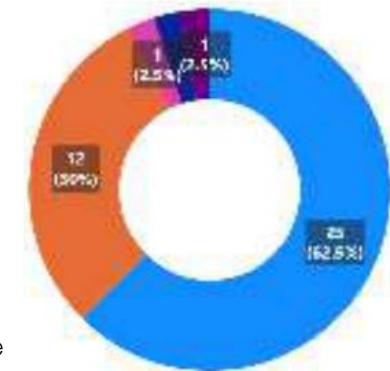


Of these, **96%** are receiving early education from a **Good** or **Outstanding** provider.²⁴



Of those 0-2 year olds in Walsall receiving SEN support, **30%** need support with speech, language or communication.

Needs of 0-2 year old Children Receiving SEN Support



- No recorded need
- Speech, Language & Communication
- Hearing Impairment
- Moderate Learning Disability
- Other Difficulty/Disability

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