

A summary picture of Children & Young People in Birmingham: Starting Well (0-5 Year Olds)

This document provides a summary of the key facts and figures for children aged 0-5 years in Birmingham. For detailed information on a wider range of data (including sources), please see the JSNA Starting Well dashboard.

Click this [link](#) to access the JSNA Starting Well Dashboard.



There are 75,023 under 5s living in Birmingham, with more than half of these children living in the 10% most deprived areas in the country. Many early years indicators are correlated with deprivation, including overweight prevalence and expected development at end of Reception.



Vaccination coverage for babies and young children is of concern as uptake is significantly lower than the national average across all vaccinations on the NHS immunisation schedule for under 5s. It is well below the WHO target of 95%, leaving children in the city vulnerable to preventable infectious diseases.



Infants present more to emergency departments in the city than the national rate. Falls made up 34.5% of all the causes of injuries that led to an emergency admission for under 5s.

How many under 5s live in Birmingham?

About 75,023 children under 5 years old reside in Birmingham: 6.6% of the population. This is 5.8% less 6,787 fewer under 5s than the number recorded in the 2011 Census. Heartlands (9.3%), Tyseley and Hay Mills (9.2%), and Bordesley Green (9.0%), are the wards with the highest proportion of under 5s nearly double the national average (5.4%).

How many under 5s are living in poverty in Birmingham?

Children in Birmingham are significantly affected by poverty. Birmingham is ranked the 7th most deprived city in England and 51% of children (under 16) live in the 10% most deprived areas. For 2021/22, 31.5% (80,142) children aged under 16 in Birmingham were living in absolute low-income families, while 38.6% (98,045) were living in relative low-income families. These rates were significantly higher than the England (15.3% and 19.8% respectively).

How many babies are breastfed in the city?

In 2020/21, 71.5% of babies received breast milk as their first feed, which was similar to England rate of 71.1%. However, only 49.1% of babies at 6-8 weeks were breastfed in Birmingham for 2021/22. This was also close to the England rate (49.2%).

What is the uptake of developmental reviews for young children in Birmingham?

The Healthy Child Programme offers every family information and guidance to support parenting and healthy choices and programme of screening tests, immunisations and developmental reviews. In terms of developmental reviews, in 2021/22, 76% of 6-8-week-old infants were visited on time, 87% received their 12 month review and 78% received their 2-2.5y review all of which were significantly higher than England averages.

What proportion of young children are vaccinated in Birmingham?

Immunisation uptake in Birmingham is lower than the average across England, and significantly lower than targets. As such many children remain vulnerable to infections that are preventable. More than 10% of 5 year olds have not received any doses of MMR which protects against measles, mumps and rubella, and more than 10% have not received 3 doses of the combined 6-in-1 vaccine which protects against diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, Haemophilus influenzae type b (an important cause of childhood meningitis and pneumonia), polio and hepatitis B. Furthermore, the trend shows childhood vaccination uptake getting worse in Birmingham.

Who achieves a good level of development at the end of Reception?

Around 63% of children achieved a good level of development at the end of Reception, (lower than England average of 65%). Fewer children eligible for free school meals achieve a good level of development at the end of Reception (55%) compared to all children in Birmingham but this is significantly higher than the England average (49%). A greater proportion of girls achieve good levels of development compared to boys both locally and nationally.

How does deprivation affect expected levels of early development?

Educational development is negatively correlated with deprivation, with a lower percentage of children living in the most deprived areas achieving the expected level of development than those living in the most affluent areas. This is a pattern that is seen in Birmingham and across England but in Birmingham a larger proportion of children live in the most deprived areas. The fact that across early school development indicators in Birmingham, levels are below England, appears to be driven by the high level of deprivation in the city. When comparing children living in the most deprived areas (decile 1) in Birmingham with national figures for children living in decile 1, the proportion of children achieving the expected level of development in Birmingham is similar to national (63% for girls and 48% for boys in decile 1 areas in Birmingham compared to 61% for girls and 47% for boys in all decile 1 areas).

What is the prevalence of overweight or obesity in Reception children in Birmingham?

In 2021/22, almost a quarter (2,455 or 23.3%) of children in Reception were overweight or obese, which is significantly higher than the England rate (22.3%). This percentage increases to 42.7% by the end of primary school. In addition, 1,765 (12.2%) of reception-age children were classed as obese or severely obese and this was significantly higher than the England rate (10.1%). Overall, 35 of the 69 wards in the city had higher obesity or severe obesity rates than the national rate.



Figure 1. Overweight and Obesity- Reception

How does the prevalence of childhood obesity vary across the city?

Three-year combined data from 2019 to 2022 showed that obesity in reception-age children was almost four times higher in the most deprived wards (Gravelly Hill with 16.9% and Kingstanding with 15.8%) than in the least deprived wards like Sutton Wylde Green with 4.6% and Sutton Trinity with 6%. This variation is in line with national evidence which suggest that childhood obesity is up to four times worse in the most deprived areas in England.

How many under-5s require emergency admission due to injuries in the city?

The crude rate of emergency admissions due to injuries for under 5s was 121.2 per 10,000 population per year (2016/17-2020/21), which is similar to the England rate (119.3). Large variation was seen across the city. The annual rate per 10,000 (2016/17-2020/21) was highest in Shard End (167.6) and Garrets green (163.8) wards, while Bournbrook & Selly Park (72.9), and Sutton Roughley (68.0) reported the lowest rates.

What are the common causes of injuries in under 5s?

The most common cause of injuries that led to an emergency admission for under 5s was falls (34.5% of all admissions 2016/17 - 2020/21). Exposure to animate mechanical forces like furniture, sports equipment or sharp glass, and accidental poisoning make up the second and third most common causes of injuries respectively.

How many infants (less than 1 year old) attend A&E in Birmingham each year?

In 2020/21, there were 17,075 A&E attendances in under 1 year olds (rate of 1,205 per 1000 population which is significantly higher than the England rate of 1,095 per 1000).

How many under 5s are admitted for respiratory tract infections in Birmingham?

In 2021/22, lower respiratory tract infection led to emergency admission of infants (under one-year old) at a rate of 656.4 per 10,000 population in Birmingham, and one-year olds at a rate of 120.2 per 10,000 population: Both significantly lower than the rate for England. However, admission rate of 25.3 per 10,000 population for 2- to 4-year-olds was similar to the England rate (26.8 per 10,000)