

Better Start Bradford Innovation Hub

Better Start Imagine (BSI) End of Contract Report - March 2022

This is a report provided by the Better Start Bradford Innovation Hub (BSBIH) for the Better Start Bradford (BSB) and the Better Start Imagine (BSI) team. The document provides an overview of BSI, its performance and findings from the implementation evaluation for the project's contract period between 01.10.2019 - 31.12.2021.

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Manager



Produced for Better Start Bradford

Executive Summary

Project Summary

Better Start Imagine is part of the Language and Communication Workstream. It has two components: 1) a book gifting service, and 2) wrap-around activities (Story and Rhyme Time, and Baby Club). Both the book gifting service and wrap-around sessions are delivered by service providers BHT Early Education & Training. Better Start Imagine book gifting is part of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. This allows all families in the Better Start Bradford reach area to sign up to receive a free book to their doorstep every month from birth of the registered child, until they reach the age of 4.

Wrap-around sessions are delivered as weekly drop-ins for parents to help them get the best out of the books that are delivered. During the most recent contract period, COVID-19 meant wrap-around sessions had to temporarily pause. As restrictions lifted, services slowly resumed to normal, operating in a hybrid format (some sessions online, and some in person) whilst COVID-19 restrictions were intermittently in place. This makes some numbers around service delivery, e.g. estimates of unique children to wrap-around activities, difficult to ascertain correctly, and should be borne in mind whilst reading this report. This report covers an evaluation period of 2 years and 3 months - relating to the period between 01.10.2019 - 31.12.2021.

Project performance

Recruitment



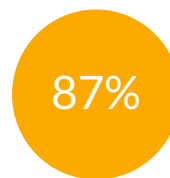
Recruitment targets related to number of children registered to receive book gifting. It was anticipated that 70% of babies born in the BSB area would be registered. This was exceeded with 81% of babies registered (116% of target). The project is in **GREEN** for this progression criterion.

Reach



Asian: Pakistani White British White Other
Targets for reach related to the representativeness of participants of the three main ethnic groups in the Better Start Bradford area. The project reached 94% of their target for Asian: Pakistani families, 84% of their target for White British families and 78% of their target for White: Other families. The project is in **AMBER** for this criterion.

Implementation



Implementation targets related to the number of wrap-around Story and Rhyme Time sessions held per year. It was anticipated that the project would deliver 78 session per year, a total of 175 for the evaluation period. The project delivered 152 sessions (87% of target). The project is in **AMBER** for this criterion.

Satisfaction



Satisfaction targets related to proportion of participants giving a mean satisfaction score of > 4+, with a target of 80%. Nearly all respondents (99%) had a score of 4+, putting the project is in **GREEN** for this progression criterion.

Recommendation

Better Start Imagine and BHT Early Education and Training have continued to deliver services in line with anticipated figures, despite the huge disruption to both families and the service as a result of COVID-19 and the associated social restrictions and lockdowns. High levels of satisfaction suggest that the project is valued by the community and specific feedback may indicate that the project is a visible and identifiable part of the Better Start Bradford programme. On this basis the Innovation Hub recommend that the project is recommissioned.

Project Performance

Data



The project has done well with correcting data quality issues found earlier in the process and explaining the gaps in data which can't be retrospectively filled. It should be noted that the data was provided in a timely manner and we can see the progress the project have made, e.g. fixing date issues etc. However, areas such as the relationship type are still duplicated, and some issues arose because of the difference in SystemOne data and data submitted to the Innovation Hub, whereby we can't work out the difference to calculate true totals. We will work with the project to resolve this for future reporting. Overall, the rating for data from Better Start Imagine is **GREEN**.

Recruitment



81%

of the 2021 birth rate were registered to book gifting

It was anticipated that the project would register 70% of babies born in the Better Start Bradford area for the book gifting service. Across the evaluation period 1816 children were registered on SystemOne to receive book gifting (2.25 years). Given an annual birth rate of 993 births for 2021, on average, the project registered 81% of this birth rate. This puts the project in **GREEN** for this progression criterion. It was also anticipated that 468 people would attend wrap around sessions per year. Across the evaluation period, there were 198 attendees recorded (SystemOne and project data combined) and 343 views of Story and Rhyme Time on online platforms; **however due to the hybrid format of online and in-person sessions, we cannot determine the number of unique participants, so are unable to evaluate the project on this progression criterion.**

Reach



Asian British:
Pakistani



White British



White Other

The project aimed to register children from a representative sample of the three main ethnic groups in the Better Start Bradford area when compared with Health Visiting data.; Asian British: Pakistani (54%), White British (11%), and White Other (9%). The project were close to reaching their targets for for Asian British: Pakistani families (51% - 94% of target, **AMBER**), White British families (9% - 84% of target, **AMBER**), and White Other families (7% - 78%, **AMBER**). Children registered with the service were largely representative of the three main ethnic groups in the Better Start Bradford area.

Implementation



of anticipated Story and Rhyme Time sessions delivered

It was anticipated that the project would deliver 78 Story and Rhyme Time sessions per year - an overall target of 175 over the evaluation period. Despite a pause to service during COVID-19 and despite pandemic-related disruption to families, the project delivered 64 sessions in person and 88 online over the evaluation period: 65 in Year 1 (83% of target), 64 in Year 2 (87% of target) and 23 in Year 3 (3 months only; 118% of target). Overall the project delivered **87%** of anticipated sessions, which puts the project in **AMBER**.

Satisfaction



of participants reported satisfaction with the project

Satisfaction targets related to the proportion of participants who complete a project satisfaction questionnaire and give a mean satisfaction score of 4 or more, with a target of 80%. 124 satisfaction questionnaires were completed and returned. The results of these questionnaires were highly positive; 99% of participants gave a mean score of 4 or more for satisfaction, meaning the project reached a **GREEN** rating for this progression criterion.

Book Gifting: Recruitment

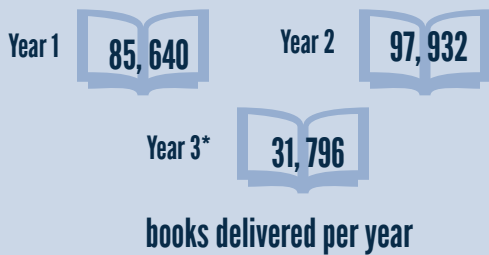
How many families were signed up to receive book gifting?

How many children were signed up to receive book gifting, and how many books were delivered?



A total of 1816 children were recorded as registered to receive book gifting from Better Start Imagine during the current evaluation period. On average, this is 807 children per year.

This accounts for 81% of the birth rate in the Better Start Bradford reach areas over 2021 (993 births; SystemOne data).



A total of 215,368 books were recorded as delivered to children in the Better Start Bradford reach area during the current evaluation period.

*Year 3 only contains 3 months (01.10.2021 - 31.12.2021)

Book Gifting: Reach

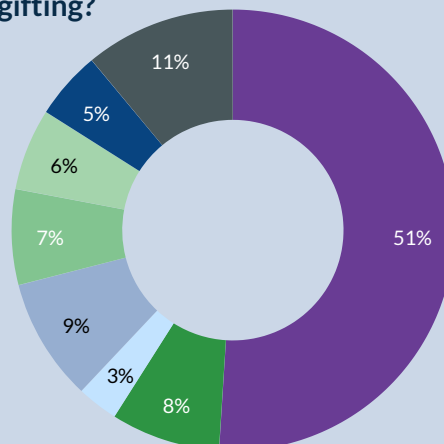
What were the characteristics of the families who received book gifting?

As previously reported (page 2) reach data shows that children registered with the service were largely representative of the three main ethnic groups in the Better Start Bradford area.

More detailed information about ethnicity for book gifting shows that the population for Better Start Imagine is highly multicultural (see figure below). The majority of families registered identify as Asian/Asian British: Pakistani (51%); then White British (9%), followed by Asian/Asian British: Other (8%). For ~11% of families, ethnicity data was not available on SystemOne.

What ethnicity were families who received book gifting?

- Asian/Asian British: Pakistani (51%)
- Asian/Asian British: Other (8%)
- Black/African/Carribbean/Black British (3%)
- White: British (9%)
- White: Other (7%)
- Other ethnic group (6%)
- Mixed ethnicity (5%)
- Not available (11%)



What were the characteristics of the families who received book gifting?

What languages do parents of children receiving book gifting speak?

There were a high proportion of families for whom language was not recorded (SystemOne data, 92% of families). This is because there are multiple referral routes into Better Start Imagine. The project and data team have examined this issue and determined that this item is not always filled in, and that there are also a number of self-referrals, where caregivers do not need to enter 'language spoken' in order to register.

For those whose language was recorded (n = 111), the majority of families spoke English (~50%) or Urdu (~33%). All home languages recorded are shown in Table 1.

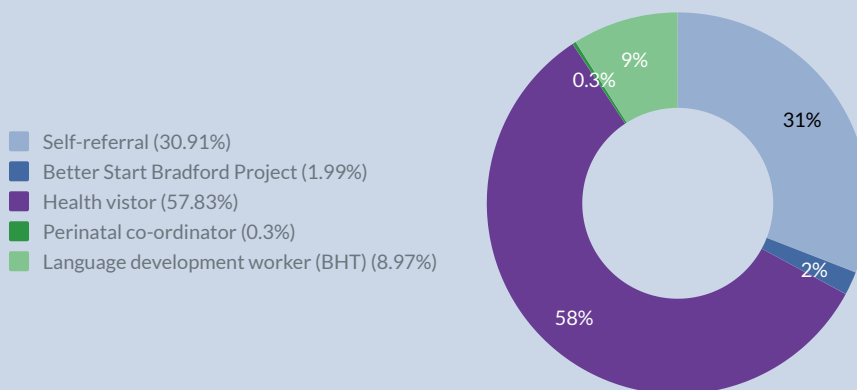
Table 1. Languages spoken

Bengali
English
Farsi
Kurdish
Pashto
Polish
Punjabi
Romanian
Swahili
Urdu
Arabic
Latvian

How old are the caregivers who sign up to Better Start Imagine book gifting, and who are they?

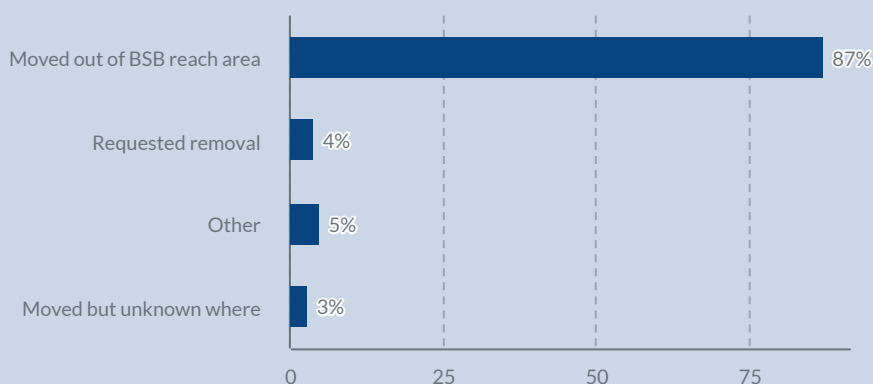
The average age of caregiver who signed up to book gifting was 31.3 years-old (SystemOne data, range: 19 - 55 years). The most common type of caregivers were parents (~86%); other caregivers were aunts, uncles, foster carers, and grandmothers.

How did families get referred to book gifting?



The majority of referrals into the Better Start Imagine book gifting service came from health visitors (58%), were self-referrals (31%), or came through BHT Early Education & Training's language development workers (9%).

Why do families disengage from book gifting?



A total of 68 families were recorded as having disengaged from the project over the evaluation period. The most common reason was that they moved out of the Better Start Bradford reach area and were no longer eligible to receive books (87%). Very few families requested to be removed.

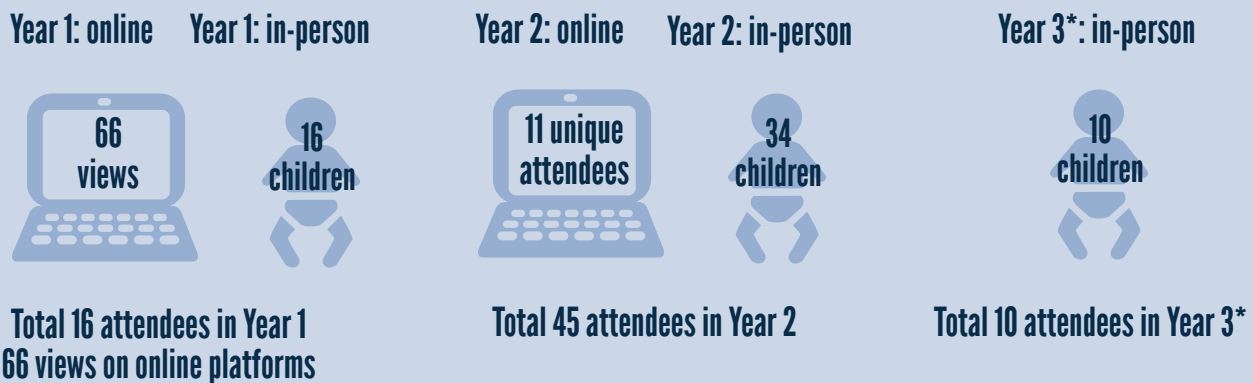
Wrap-around activities

Wrap-around activities include Story and Rhyme Time, and Baby Club (also known as Rhyme, Sign, and Bonding Time/Baby Massage). Due to poor attendance at Baby Club, BHT Early Education & Training were approved to offer more Story and Rhyme Time sessions and less Baby Club sessions during this contract period, with the remaining Baby Club sessions becoming drop-ins. During COVID-19, all wrap-around activities were paused following UK Government restrictions. Some sessions were then offered online, using Facebook Live and Zoom. Due to the nature of these platforms, individual identifiers with sensitive information such as date of birth could not be used to verify unique child participants. BHT additionally submitted project data via Excel to the data team regarding the total number of participants and sessions held, and these numbers combined with SystemOne data are used in the current report. Due to the hybrid format, it means it is not possible to provide accurate numbers on unique attendees (i.e. first-time attendees) for the online sessions. Instead, where possible, a breakdown has been given that includes the number of online views and individual child attendees (some who may have attended before) that were identifiable. These provide an overall estimated number of attendees to Baby Club and to Story and Rhyme Time and online views over the contract period.

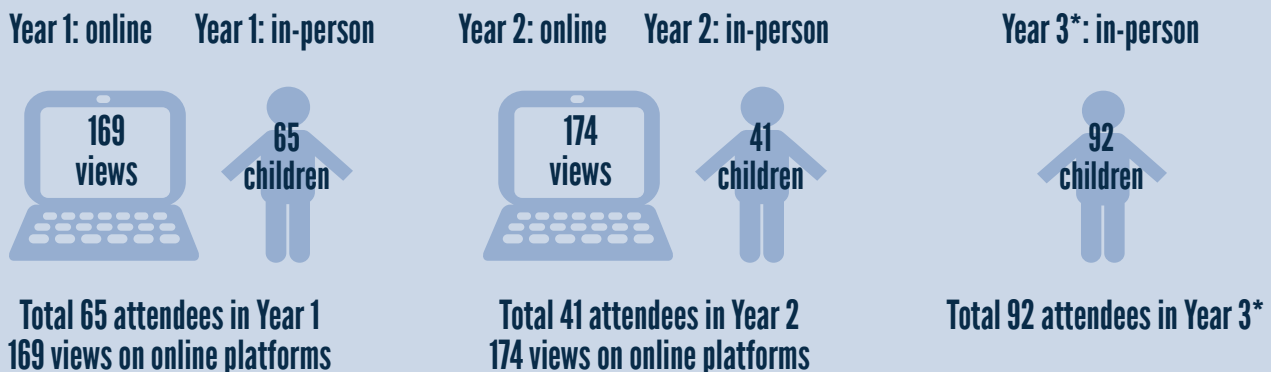
Wrap-around activities: Recruitment

How many attendees were there?

There was an estimated total of 71 attendees to Baby Club and 66 views (online platforms) over the contract period.

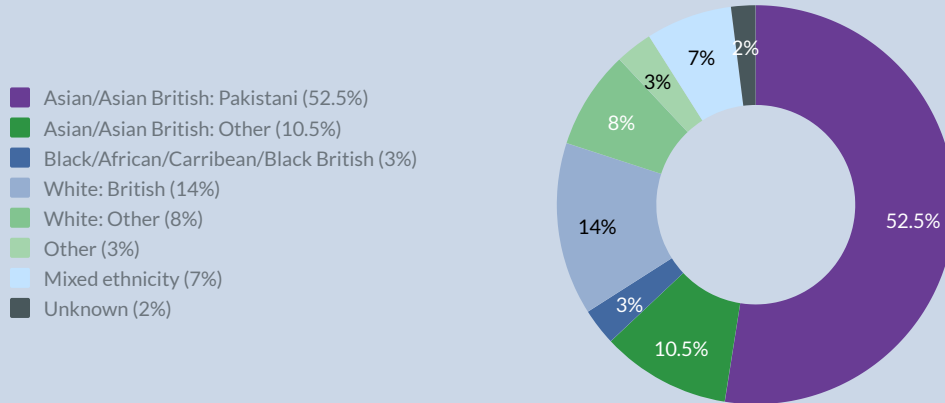


There was an estimated total of 198 attendees to Story and Rhyme Time and 343 views (online platforms) over the contract period.



What ethnicity were families that took part in wrap-around activities?

Only those families attending in person sessions were registered on SystemOne and had ethnicity recorded. This means the data presented here is representative of in-person sessions only. Most attendees were Asian/Asian British: Pakistani (52.5%), White British (14%), or Asian/Asian British: Other (10.5%).

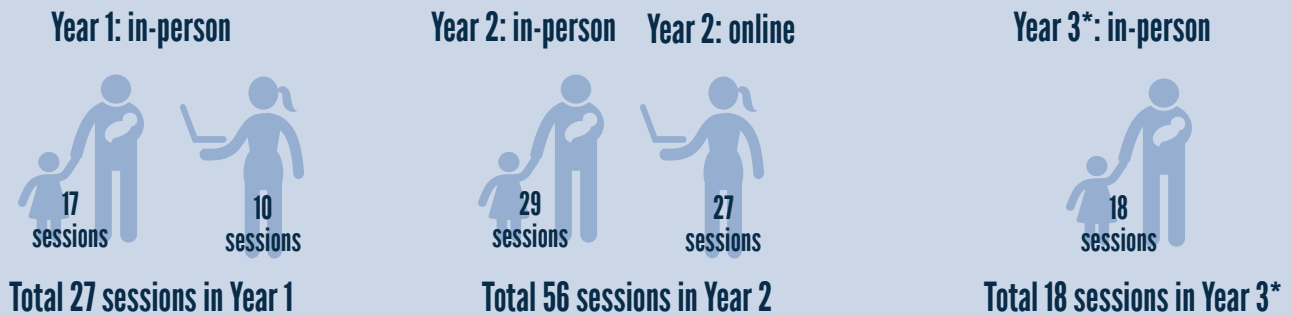


Wrap-around activities: Implementation

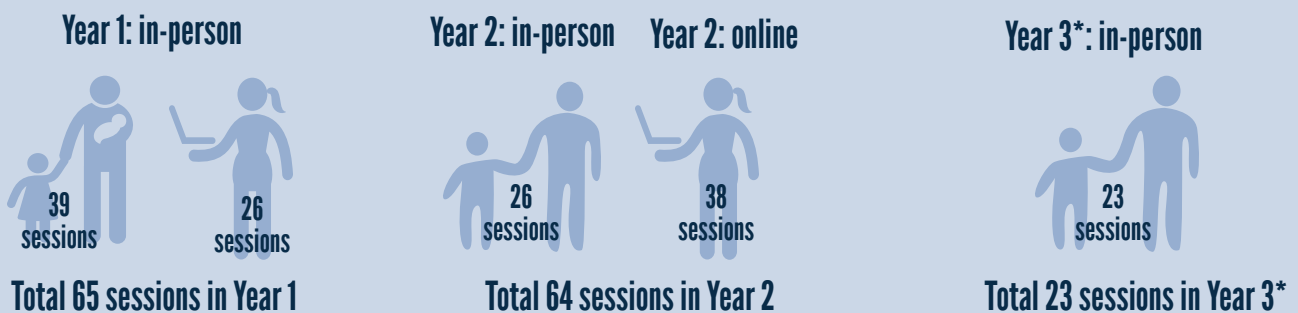
Please note that the total number of sessions held reported here may be slightly under-reported (meaning the number of actual sessions held may be higher) due to the way in which sessions are inputted to SystemOne. The number of Story and Rhyme Time from SystemOne was 68 sessions per year on average, meaning the project delivered 87% of the expected 78 sessions, despite COVID-19.

How many wrap-around sessions were delivered?

There were a total of 101 Baby Club sessions held overall; an average of 45 per year.



There were a total of 152 Story and Rhyme Time sessions held overall; an average of 68 per year.



Satisfaction

What did families think of Better Start Imagine?

A total of 124 families completed satisfaction questionnaires at the BSI wrap-around sessions. These covered both book gifting and the wrap-around activities.



99% of respondents had a median score of 4 or more

99% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the project was helpful to them
n=124

98% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the level of support they received
n=124

98% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the information they received was useful to them
n=124

98% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it was easy for them to access support from Better Start Imagine
n=124

99% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend Better Start Imagine to their friends and family
n=124

99% of respondents were happy with Better Start Imagine
n=124

51% respondents also added comments to the free text box for Better Start Imagine satisfaction questionnaires (covering both book gifting and wrap-around sessions).

A summary of these responses is given on the next page.

Community perceptions of Better Start Imagine

What do the community think of BSI book gifting & wrap-around activities?

Of the 124 people who completed project satisfaction questionnaires at the wrap-around sessions, 63 included written comments about the project. Below are some key findings that illustrate how the community see Better Start Imagine as a whole. The vast majority were highly positive, although one respondent requested less forms to fill in.

1. BHT have a good rapport with the community

The community was highly positive about BHT staff, who are described throughout as "fantastic", "nice", "lovely", "wonderful", "very enthusiastic and accommodating", "very good", "non-judgmental", "friendly", "welcoming", and "supportive". The majority of comments praised and thanked BHT staff by name for the sessions.

2. The community doesn't always differentiate between Better Start Bradford and Better Start Imagine

Some parents mention the Better Start Bradford programme when describing Better Start Imagine, or use 'Better Start Bradford' and 'Better Start Imagine' interchangeably, suggesting they may see the book gifting and wrap-around sessions as synonymous with Better Start Bradford as a whole.

3. Project activities help children to love books

One parent reported "my daughter enjoys reading books as a result", and others find the project (both book gifting and wrap-around) helpful in encouraging their children's love of books.

4. Wrap-around activities are helpful for mental health & bonding (as well as literacy)

Some parents commented that the wrap-around sessions promoted parent-child bonding, helped with maternal anxiety, and /or were motivating and supportive.

5. Both parents AND children enjoy sessions

Parents repeatedly described their children as "enjoying", "loving", or being "very happy with" the wrap-around activities. Parents also described the sessions as "an amazing experience", "enjoyable for mums as well as kids"; "me and my child really like this story time".

6. Desire to increase the reach of Better Start Imagine

Some parents reported wanting both book gifting and wrap-around sessions to be made available to more areas in Bradford (i.e. outside of the Better Start Bradford), so that more people could benefit.

7. Appetite for more and/or longer sessions

Some parents reported that they enjoyed the sessions so much that they wish there were more of them offered. Some ask for longer sessions.

"They helped me every day to motivate myself to come always thought of my anxiety + put my needs first never judging."

"My son enjoys the story telling session a lot and we always look forward to it. It helped with his speech development and his interest on books. Big thank you."

"I think these sessions are great for mums who are struggling, I wasn't aware they existed until my health visitor told me. I know a lot of parents who would benefit massively."

"We have really enjoyed the sessions. Staff really friendly, helpful and welcoming. Thank you."

"Really pleased with how my daughter has developed coming to these sessions."

"Better Start Bradford project is very useful for our community. We will get chance to take our children out and it helps in children's pre school learning and give parents opportunity to socialize as well learn better ways of up bringing their children."

BiBBS cohort data

Extra information about families who take up Better Start Imagine

Born in Bradford Better Start (BiBBS) is a cohort of families from the Better Start Bradford area who have enrolled onto the birth cohort study and therefore provide additional data about their daily lives and health. Some of our BiBBS families also take part in Better Start Bradford projects. We looked at data provided by BiBBS mothers whose children were registered to Better Start Imagine book gifting and compared it with BiBBS mothers whose children were not registered.

The BiBBS data identified that there were no clear differences between BSI registered and non-registered families in terms of levels of employment, deprivation (UK Government indices of deprivation), maternal education, or country of birth. This suggests these factors do not influence who participates in Better Start Imagine book gifting, meaning that the service appears to reach a highly representative proportion of the community.

However, the data do indicate that a higher proportion of BSI registered families have a home language other than English, when compared to those who do not register. This may suggest that these families view Better Start Imagine as particularly valuable.

Comparison with previous contract

Comparisons of contract periods



Last Report
(May 2019)

VS



Current Report



Recruitment to book gifting

In the last contract period, the project successfully registered 67% of the birth rate in the Better Start Bradford area to receive book gifting. This has increased to 81% of the birth rate in the current contract period, exceeding their target.



Reach of book gifting

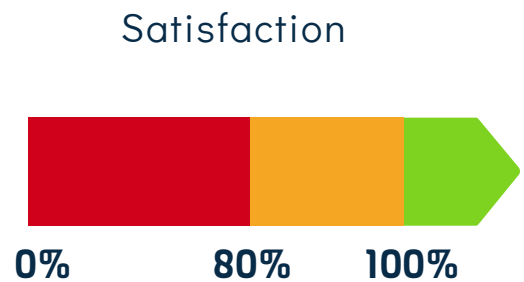
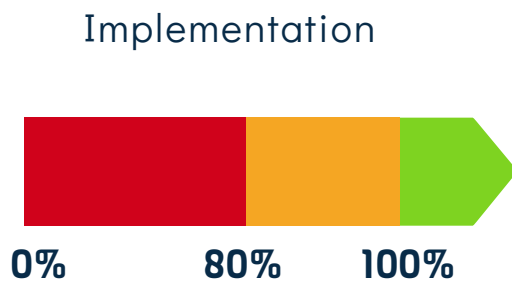
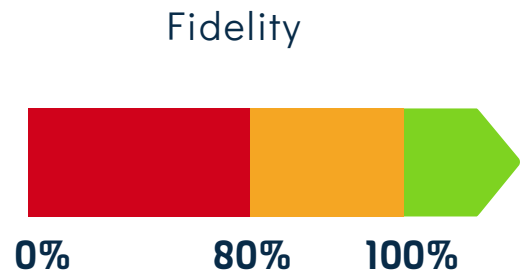
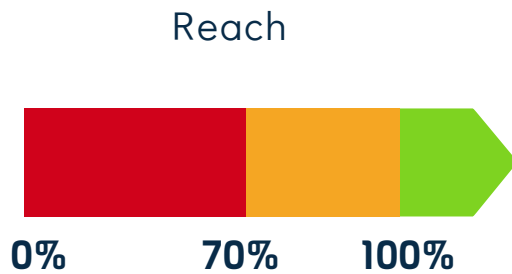
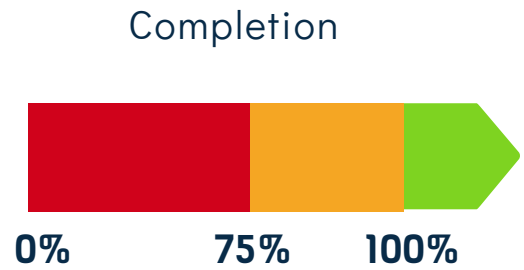
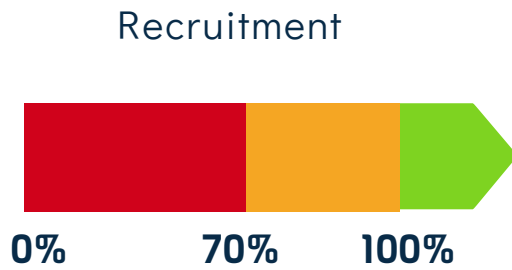
Although the project is still reaching a fairly representative population of families from the Better Start Bradford area, representation of the Asian British Pakistani and White Other families has dropped very slightly. Representation of White British family has slightly increased.



Recruitment to and implementation of wrap-around sessions

In the last contract period, the project delivered 76% of anticipated Storytelling/Story and Rhyme Time sessions with 684 attendees. In the current contract implementation performance has improved with 87% of anticipated sessions delivered despite the impact of COVID-19. It is not possible to fairly compare recruitment because of the introduction of virtual delivery and the difficulty measuring attendance.

Appendix - Progression Criteria Cut-offs



For more information on how progression criteria and associated cut-offs have been developed please see Bryant, et al., 2019 Use of progression criteria to support monitoring and commissioning decision making of public health services: lessons from Better Start Bradford. BMC Public Health