

FAIRER, HEALTHIER LEEDS: 0-5 YEAR OLDS

In 2023, the Leeds public health team commissioned the Institute of Health Equity (IHE) to assist in identifying and addressing health inequalities affecting children aged 0-5. The work aimed to evaluate the local processes influencing these inequalities, review existing policies and interventions, and determine the barriers preventing more effective action. The analysis was grounded in the Marmot principles, focusing on improving the social determinants of health in the city.

Discovery and Stakeholder Engagement

This stage of the process was designed to understand the landscape of health inequalities in Leeds. This phase involved:

Interviews

Interviews with key stakeholders from Leeds City Council (LCC), the NHS, the Third Sector, schools, and other public services. These interviews explored their perspectives on health inequalities, current actions, and challenges.

Workshop

A workshop was held in January 2024 with over 50 participants, bringing together stakeholders to discuss health inequalities in 0-5s. The workshop provided a platform for collaboration and highlighted the challenges faced by various organisations, particularly in terms of coordination and communication across sectors.

Review of Existing Strategies and Policies

To assess current efforts in tackling health inequalities, IHE conducted a review of existing strategies and interventions. This involved:

Data Review

Extensive data on the health outcomes of 0-5-year-olds were analysed, focusing on the building blocks or social determinants of health, such as housing, maternal health, and access to services.

- Data were reviewed to understand the impact of deprivation on health outcomes. For instance, more than a third of children in reception live in areas of high deprivation, which is linked to poorer health and development outcomes.
- Particular attention was paid to the health inequalities experienced by children from culturally diverse backgrounds and living in areas of higher deprivation, as these groups face additional barriers, such as implicit racism in access and delivery of services and higher maternal and infant mortality rates.

Health Equity Assessment

A review of the city's policies, programmes, and strategies aimed at reducing health inequalities. This assessment sought to identify gaps, overlaps, and areas requiring further attention and included past interventions.

- Questions were raised about sustainability and the need for long-term, consistent interventions.

The analysis of health inequalities in 0-5s in Leeds was a multifaceted process that involved gathering qualitative insights from key stakeholders, reviewing data on health outcomes, and assessing existing policies and interventions. By identifying gaps and barriers to action, this work aims to provide a clearer path forward for addressing health inequalities in 0-5s in Leeds. Continued focus on integrated service delivery and targeted interventions will be essential in improving health outcomes for 0-5-year-olds in Leeds.

For more information see: [Leeds 0-5s datapack](#) and [Leeds 0-5s recommendations](#).