



# The Role of The Health Visitor in Kirklees

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# Role of a Health Visitor in Kirklees

The role of the Health Visitor follows the national Healthy Child Programme but is delivered through a fully integrated 0–19 service, with a strong focus on prevention, early intervention and supporting families from pregnancy to school age

## 1. Lead the Healthy Child Programme (0–5 years)

- Health Visiting teams deliver universal schedule of contacts,
- Provide additional targeted support for families with greater needs.

## 2. Promote Health, Wellbeing and Child Development

- Support parents and carers with:
  - Infant feeding (breastfeeding and bottle feeding)
  - Safe sleep advice (e.g., ICON, safer sleep guidance)
  - Child growth, nutrition, and healthy weight
  - Speech, language and communication development
  - Behaviour, sleep routines and parenting strategies

## 3. Support Parental and Infant Mental Health

- Assess parental wellbeing antenatally and postnatally
- Support bonding and early attachment
- Identify perinatal mental health concerns and refer to appropriate services

## 4. Identify Need Early and Provide Targeted Support

They assess family circumstances and identify risks such as:

- Domestic abuse
- Substance misuse
- Housing issues
- Social or financial difficulties
- Developmental concerns
- Safeguarding risks
- They offer extra visits, care planning, referrals to specialist services

## Role of a Health Visitor in Kirklees Continued...

### 5. Safeguard Children

- Health Visitors are key safeguarding professionals:
  - Participate in multi-agency safeguarding work
  - Lead assessments for children under 5
  - Provide evidence for child protection planning
  - Work closely with social care, GPs and early help services

### 6. Work in Partnership Across Kirklees

- The service is highly partnership-focused ensuring joined up care for families throughout antenatal and postnatal journey. Health Visitors collaborate with:
  - Maternity services
  - GPs
  - Change, Grow, Live (CGL)
  - Home-Start
  - Fresh Futures
  - LS2Y and early help teams
  - Mental health services
  - Peer supporters and community champions

### 7. Promote Equity and Reduce Health Inequalities

- Health Visitors use equity data (deprivation, ethnicity, ward-level needs) to:
  - Identify gaps in access or uptake
  - Shape targeted interventions
  - Ensure services reach families who need them most
  - Deliver proportionate universalism across Kirklees

### 8. Community Health Leadership

- They provide:
  - Public health advice
  - Community intelligence
  - Support for local initiatives (infant feeding groups, peer support)
  - Training for partners on topics such as safer sleep, feeding, ICON

# Focus on partners through the antenatal/postnatal journey

The Kirklees 0–19 Service is a **fully integrated service** that works closely with partners such as maternity services, Change, Grow, Live, Home-Start, Fresh Futures, LS2Y, Auntie Pams, GPs and mental health services to support families throughout the antenatal and postnatal journey.

Through effective data and information sharing between 0-19 and **key partners** such as maternity and primary care, we ensure the service aligns with proportionate universalism, targeting families most in need while remaining equitable across the Kirklees population.

We also **share learning** and provide training to partners on key topics such as safer sleep, infant feeding, and ICON, enabling consistent, evidence-based support for both mothers and partners from pregnancy through early childhood.

**Peer supporters and community champions** play a vital role in delivering key health, wellbeing and safety messages, as well as providing infant feeding support and access to baby-weighing facilities. Our **expert practitioners** support the training and development of these peer supporters and volunteers, who are embedded within the local community. Their contribution is essential in sharing advice, promoting local services, and influencing added-value activity through their insight and understanding of **local community needs**.

# What role does a Health Visitor play in Antenatal Care

- Health Visitors play a key role in antenatal care as part of the **Healthy Child Programme (HCP)**.
- They promote **early intervention** and support family wellbeing from pregnancy to age 5.
  - Around **28–32 weeks**, they conduct an antenatal contact to:
    - Build an early relationship with parents.
- Complete a **holistic assessment** of health, wellbeing, environment, and support needs.
- Provide guidance on:
  - Preparing for parenthood.
  - Infant development, safe sleep, and feeding.
  - Parents' mental health.
- Identify vulnerabilities and arrange **extra support** if needed.
- Coordinate care with **midwives, GPs, and other services** for timely help.
- Their role supports HCP goals: **prevention, early identification of need, and positive health outcomes** for families.

**All primip (first time parents) or targeted families receive this contact as a home visit. For universal multiparous parents, a virtual contact is offered.**

# Purpose of the Contact

- Identify family health, wellbeing, and social needs early.
- Detect vulnerabilities or risks and put support in place before birth.
- Build a trusting relationship with parents ahead of postnatal visits.
- Provide information on newborn care, feeding, safe sleep, bonding, and infant development.
- Support parental emotional and mental health.
- Promote healthy pregnancy and help reduce health inequalities.
- Signpost to local services and community support.
- Coordinate care with midwives, GPs, and other teams for joined-up support.

# How often are visits undertaken

Health Visitor contacts follow the Healthy Child Programme (HCP) schedule. These are not weekly visits but a series of key developmental checks and support contacts from pregnancy to age 5.

## 1. Antenatal Contact

Around 28–32 weeks of pregnancy.

## 2. New Baby Review

10–14 days after birth, usually at home.

## 3. 6–8 Week Visit

Focuses on parental wellbeing and early infant development.

## 4. 1-Year Review

Around 9–12 months.

## 5. 2–2½ Year Review

Between 24–30 months.

## Additional Visits

Health Visitors may offer extra visits if a family needs more support, for example with:

Feeding

Maternal mental health

Safeguarding

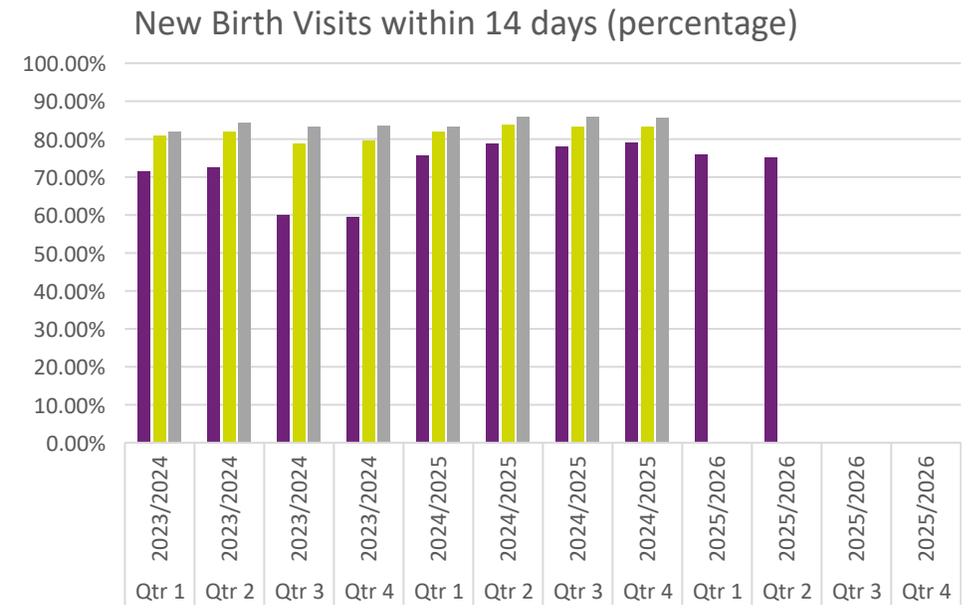
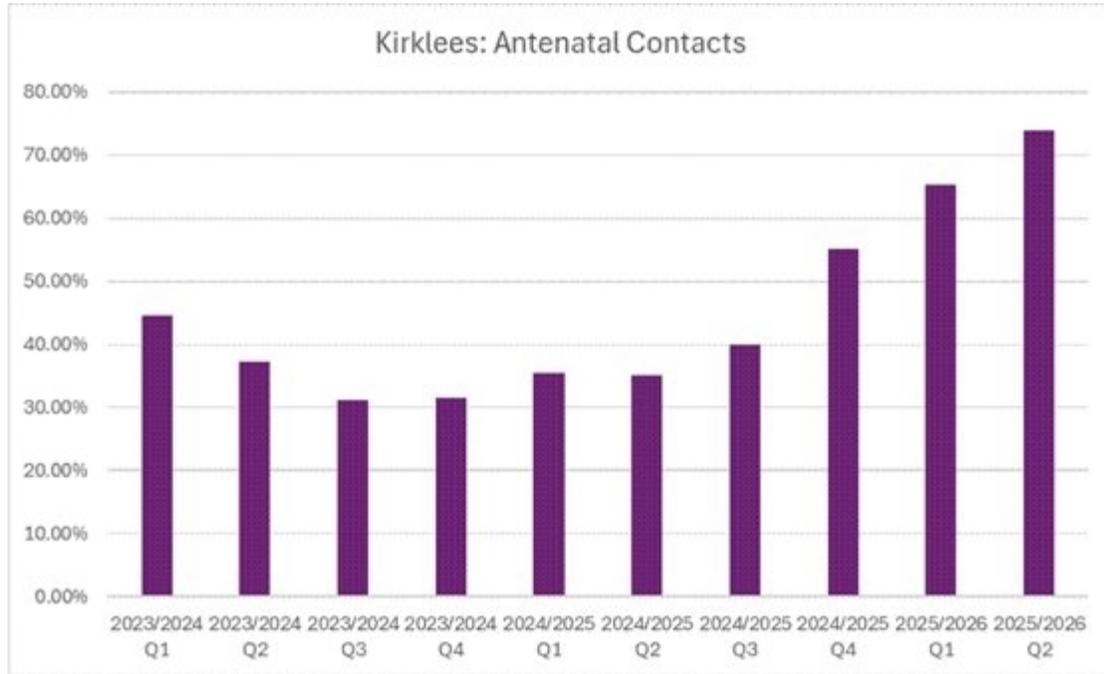
Housing or social challenges

Infant development concerns

These extra visits are based on assessed need rather than a fixed schedule.

Families can utilise digital and virtual support tools through the 0–19 app, Locala website, social media channels, ChatHealth text service, Solihull parenting courses online, and the Health and Social Care Hub available as required.

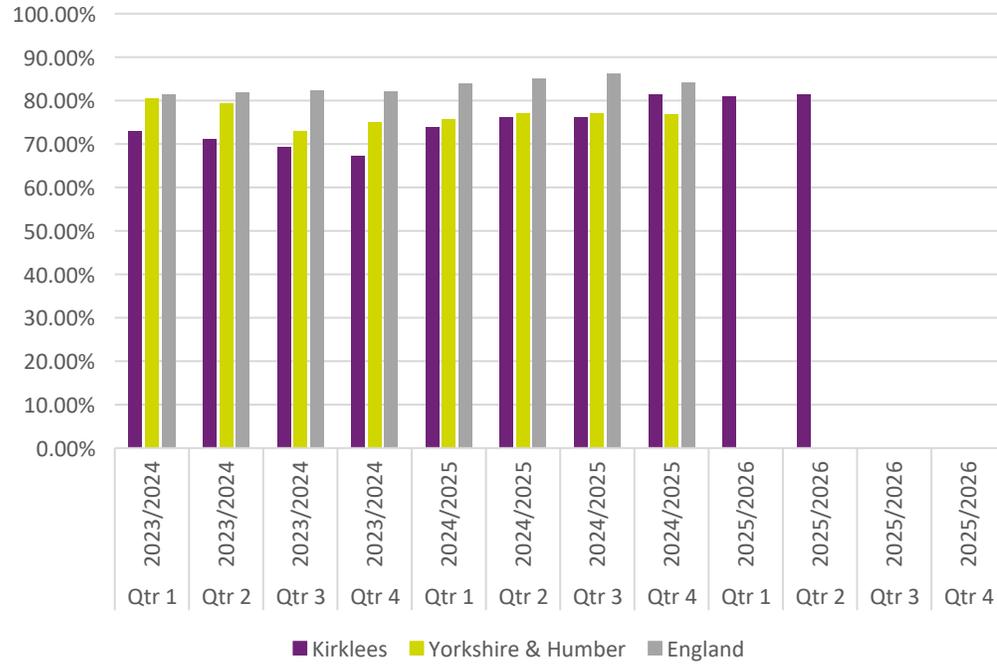
# Kirklees Data



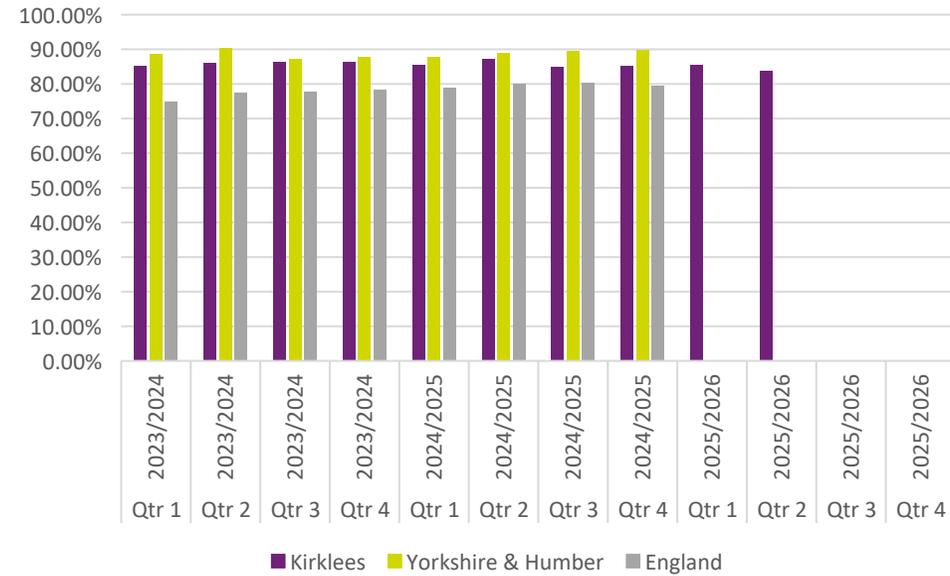
■ Kirklees ■ Yorkshire & Humber ■ England

# Kirklees Data

6 to 8 week reviews (percentage)

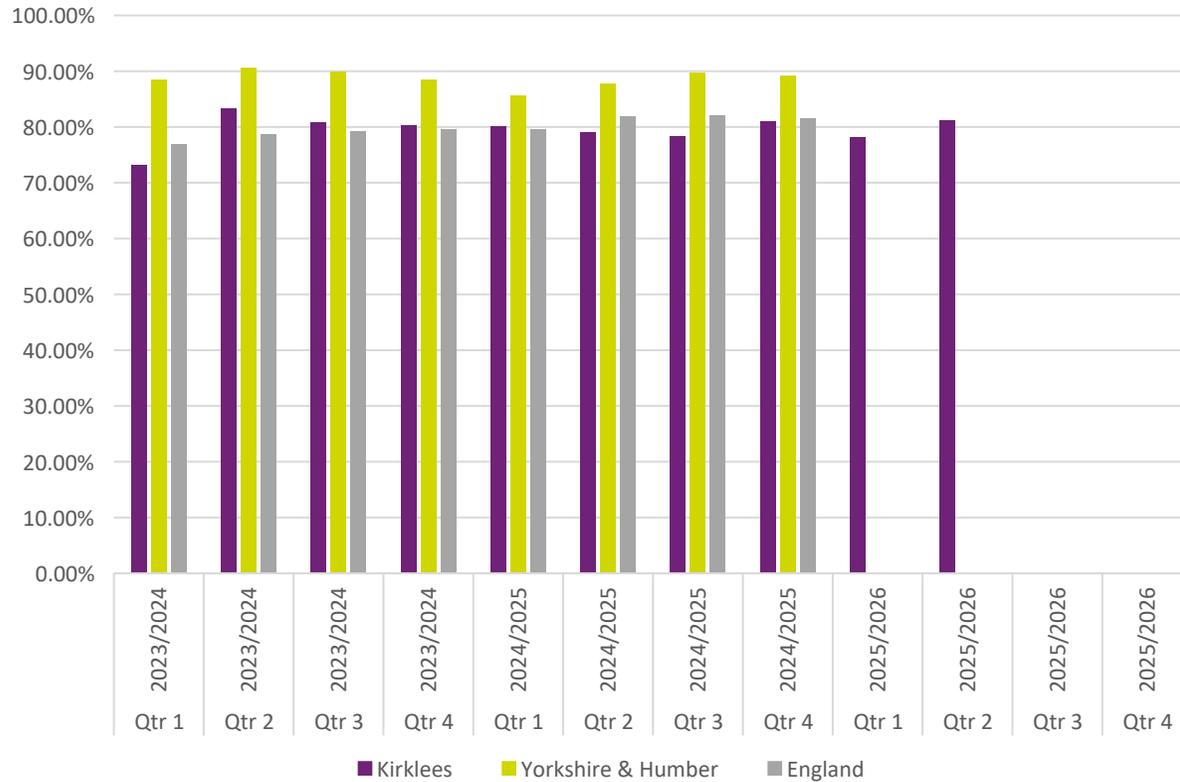


12 month reviews by 12 months (percentage)



# Kirklees Data

2 to 2½ year reviews (percentage)



Equity data is analysed to ensure our service meets the needs of the population and addresses gaps in access or uptake. This allows us to tailor service delivery and contact methods effectively. Equity data is categorised by deprivation deciles, ethnicity, and ward areas. Our latest reports indicate that we are delivering an equitable service across the Kirklees locality.

Locala collect exceptions data to monitor and understand uptake of our services. This data is categorised into areas such as: no access, patient declined, missed notification, late visit, premature delivery, and patient still in hospital. Analysing this information allows us to identify why certain women do not engage and who they are. For example, we have observed that multiparous antenatal women are less likely to participate in antenatal contacts.