

**Lucy's Story - October 2022**

**Name of Service:** Health Visiting Team

**Main purpose of service:** Health Visitors are community-based practitioners and work with families in their own homes. However, they can work in other settings, such as healthcare centres and community clinics. They will work with parents who have new babies and children up to the age of 5, although some practitioners are dual qualified so work with children from birth to the age of 19. Health visitors will establish relationships with families, assess children's health needs, provide information, support and advise parents, work with other professionals to protect and safeguard children. A Health Visitor's main aim is to ensure that young children have the best start in life by providing appropriate support to parents and families at the earliest opportunity. They have an important role in education and improving the health and wellbeing of children.

**About Lucy:** Lucy is mum to 9-month-old baby Ezra and despite being a reception early years teacher and having really great support from her partner Tom and her family and friends, in her own words she explains **"I didn't take to motherhood as easily as I thought I would."**

Lucy continues **"When Ezra was born I suffered with an infected C Section wound and Ezra unfortunately struggled with Colic. Because of this I felt stressed, like I had the Baby Blues, and all my anxiety manifested itself into him."** Lucy contacted Locala's Health Visiting Team to ask for help with her mental health and Health Visitor Lindsey King visited her several times at home to offer her support.

**Every step of the way:** Lucy explains **"When Lindsey came to see me, she was really lovely and nice, and she reassured me that everything was ok with Ezra. She visited regularly and was realistic and non-judgmental, so she was able to help me alleviate the stress I was feeling. She listened to me and I was able to ask lots of questions about Ezra. She made me feel that I wasn't a bother and that I had done the right thing asking for support. Lindsey has been the thing that has helped me the most since Ezra was born. I am in a completely differently place because of her."**

**Positive:** Lucy was really happy to share her story in the hope that it helps other parents to feel they can be more open about how they are really feeling. She explains **"Many parents don't feel that they can be open about their mental health struggles after having a baby, so they don't say anything and suffer in silence. Social media sugar coats and presents things very differently. Parents need to see the other side to know that it's ok. I'm really happy to be able to share my experience in the hope that it helps other parents who may be struggling too."**

**Mother and Baby:** Because of the support she received from Lindsey, both mother and baby are thriving. Lucy continues **"Ezra is doing really well, he is hilarious and we laugh every day. Me and Ezra have a lovely time and that's because of Lindsey and the support she gave us."**

Lucy shared her story with Isla from the Engagement Team on 30/09/22 and gives full consent to share her story widely.