

Locala's Mission to Improve Oral Health in Early Years Settings Across Kirklees

At Locala, we believe that good oral health is fundamental to overall wellbeing. Poor oral health can lead to pain, infections, missed school days, and even hospitalisation for treatment under general anaesthetic. Children in deprived communities are most at risk, which is why Locala has launched a new initiative funded by West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (IBC) to improve oral health in pre-school children across the 10% most deprived wards in Kirklees.

We know that healthy habits formed in childhood are more likely to continue into adulthood. To tackle this, our project focuses on embedding better oral health practices from an early age. Through collaboration with Public Health, Early Years settings, and the wider community, Locala is rolling out targeted interventions to reduce dental inequalities.

What's Involved in the Project

Locala's Kirklees project, integrated with the Calderdale oral health team, runs from November 2024 until March 2026. During this time, we'll be working closely with Public Health to develop healthy eating policies, providing training to the wider workforce (including Community Champions), and promoting sustainable oral health practices via online and digital resources

Central to the initiative is our supervised toothbrushing programme. Locala will provide practical support and resources to early years practitioners in nurseries, schools, and childminders, focusing on children aged 2-4. Toothpaste and toothbrushes will be distributed to support supervised brushing schemes, community activities, and Family Health Team/0-19 Service contacts.

Our 18-month programme ensures that children brush their teeth once a day in their early years setting, with enthusiastic support from their carers. Each setting will receive all necessary resources and training, along with annual quality assurance visits to ensure the programme is delivered to a high standard.



Why It Matters

One of our dental nurses said:



“The project is proving a success. So much so that the childminder has to hide the toothbrush train because the children get so excited to brush, they stop eating their dinner!”

This shows how enthusiastic children can become about positive oral health habits, setting them up for healthier futures. Locala is proud to be leading this initiative, working to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable children in our community. For more information, visit our [Health Inequalities and Inclusion page](#).