

Application Instructions and Form – The Best Start in Life: Grant 1

Overview and Funding Criteria

Medway Council has been allocated funding for the Best Start in Life Programme, and this is one of 2 small grants available to improve the school readiness of children.

Grant 1 supports parents by helping to fund training for groups and organisations to identify perinatal mental health issues and to reduce the impact of perinatal mental health.

The purpose of this grant is to reduce the stigma surrounding perinatal mental health for mothers, fathers and other non-birthing partners. It is set to equip peers to have open conversations about parental mental well-being.

The funding is available through the Social Impact Gateway, and applicants can apply for up to £5,000 (this can be a total amount per organisation across the two available grants).

All grants will be assessed by a panel to determine successful applicants

You may apply for this grant if your organisation:

- Operates within Medway
- Works with parents of children aged 0–4
- Has experience delivering community-based activities or peer support

To meet the funding criteria, any applications must ensure that proposed projects/initiatives:

- Train at least 2 peers to identify perinatal mental health concerns and signpost to support in Medway
- Have a strong focus on reducing the stigma surrounding perinatal mental health for parents and peers
- Host a parent and child event that promotes the importance of good perinatal mental health
- Build links with local services (for example: Family Action, Midwifery, Health Visitors, Family Hubs, NHS Talking Therapies)
- Have the ability to engage with the parents of Medway in situations, but not limited to Family Action, Midwifery, Health Visitors, Family Hubs and NHS Talking therapies
- Engage with the following objectives based on the 5 ways to wellbeing:
 - Build friendship, make connections and give a sense of belonging
 - Involve face-to-face activity with an element of play and movement
 - Teach new skills e.g. craft, play, music,
 - Peer support with care and kindness
 - Fun, enjoyment and mindfulness

The grant may not be used for counselling, therapy or other mental health conditions

Successful applicants should be aware that:

- Mandatory meetings for all successful grantees will include information and guidance on completing reporting templates and networking support.
- A reporting template will be provided to ensure the desires for the grant have been met. More information on this will be provided by MVA.

Application process

Click the link here to fill out the application form

[Grant 1 - Best Start in Life Funding Application \(Medway\) – Fill in form](#)

The closing date for applications has been extended to Friday **17th April 2026**.

If you're not already signed as a SIG Affiliate, then you can do this by visiting: [Medway Voluntary Action | MVA's New Social Impact Gateway Programme](#)

We also offer an appeals process where required; plus provide signposting to alternative funding and MVA's 1:1 and Funding Club support for unsuccessful applicants.

For any further queries of this grant and specification, please contact **kate@mva.org.uk**