



## Children Looked After Governance Board

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### 1 Background

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On 21 June 2021 the Children and Young People's Committee agreed a recommendation that the Children's Homes Governance Board should be reconfigured to provide an oversight of all places where our children who are looked after live and with a focus on safety and those aspects of children's wellbeing that have a direct impact on their safety. The revised Children Looked After Governance Board is not a sub-committee and does not have any of the delegated decision-making powers.

### 2 Purpose and Objectives

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**The purpose of the Children Looked After Governance Board will be:**

1. To provide an oversight of the safety of all places where our children who are looked after by Nottinghamshire County Council live. This would include those children's homes, foster placements and supported accommodation directly provided by the Local Authority and those commissioned from external providers including the Youth Custody Service
2. To scrutinise information relating to children in care missing from home or education and to recommend any improvements
3. To scrutinise information relating to children in care who are alleged victims of physical abuse, sexual abuse, at risk of sexual exploitation or who commit sexually harmful acts whilst in a care setting and to make recommendations for any improvements
4. To scrutinise information on children in care's emotional and mental health and the quality of services they receive and to make recommendations for any improvements
5. To consider issues relating to the criminalisation of children in care
6. To consider any relevant recommendations from academic research, national reviews, rapid reviews and practice reviews to inform our strategic approach to keeping children in care safe
7. To ensure that the views of children and young people receiving care and, where relevant, their parents or carers, foster carers and residential staff are taken into account in the development of safe services.

### 3 Accountability and Challenge

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The Chair of the Governance Board will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the Board meets its objectives
- Ensuring the Board remains focused, has clear authority, and that work is actively managed
- Ensuring that decisions requiring formal agreement are referred to the relevant Committee in line with the Council's constitution.

### 4 Core Membership

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Core members will include:

- Vice-Chairman (social care) of the Children and Young People's Committee (Chair)
- An additional three Elected Members representing each of the parties who sit on the Children and Young People's Committee
- A further Elected Member representative not on the Children and Young People's Committee (to be offered to non-aligned Independents)
- Service Director, Youth, Families and Social Work
- Service Director, Commissioning and Resources
- Group Manager, Regulated Services
- Group Manager, Looked After Children
- Group Manager, Safeguarding, Assurance and Improvement
- Group Manager, Commissioning

Other attendees may be asked to attend as and when required for one-off meetings, or for a specific period of time. This might include the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Fostering Liaison Group (FLAG). The Service Managers for Residential Services, Clayfields House, Fostering, Placements and Youth Offending will provide professional and technical advice to the Board.

Membership of the Board may change as it becomes more established and the role of specific representatives are defined more clearly.

### 5 Scope & Responsibilities

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- ❖ Considering relevant observations and recommendations from Ofsted inspection and Regulation 44 reports.
- ❖ Considering local and national reports that make recommendations about practice and strategy in relation to the safety of looked after children
- ❖ Receiving data reports that can be used to formulate questions and investigations into different aspects of the safety and wellbeing of children in care
- ❖ Taking an active interest in the services delivered by health, justice and school/education partners for children in residential settings.

## 6 Frequency and Format of Meetings

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**The Governance Board will be held on a quarterly basis.** Meetings will not be open to the public and minutes and papers will not routinely be published and may be protectively marked if they contain sensitive information.

The final agenda will be set in consultation with the Chair and will be circulated, with accompanying papers, to members a minimum of five clear working days before the meeting. Any late papers will normally be tabled.

Agreed action points will be provided to members within a week of each meeting.

## 7 Ways of Working

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Members should endeavour to read agenda papers in advance of meetings to allow for informed discussion.

Members will identify a suitable deputy to attend in their absence as an exception.

Members will be expected to lead regular visits to care settings in line with local guidance accompanying as appropriate other Elected Members beyond membership of this Board.

Members should upon invitation attend the Children in Care Council meeting to gain views directly from children and young people.