

## Children and Families Select Committee

**Monday, 07 October 2024 at 10:30**

County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7QP

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### AGENDA

- |   |                                                                                                                                                           |          |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Minutes of the last meeting held on 15 July 2024                                                                                                          | 3 - 16   |
| 2 | Apologies for Absence                                                                                                                                     |          |
| 3 | Declarations of Interests by Members and Officers:- (see note below)                                                                                      |          |
| 4 | Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP)<br>Progress on Priorities and Annual Report 2023-24                                              | 17 - 36  |
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| 7 | Children and Families Departmental Performance, Risks and<br>Financial Position – Quarter 1 - 2024 25                                                     | 65 - 82  |
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### Notes

- (1) Councillors are advised to contact their Research Officer for details of any Group Meetings which are planned for this meeting.
- (2) Members of the public wishing to inspect "Background Papers" referred to in the reports on the agenda or Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act should contact:-

Customer Services Centre 0300 500 80 80

- (3) Persons making a declaration of interest should have regard to the Code of Conduct and the Council's Procedure Rules. Those declaring must indicate the nature of their interest and the reasons for the declaration.

Councillors or Officers requiring clarification on whether to make a declaration of interest are invited to contact James Lavender (Tel. 0115 854 6408) or a colleague in Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

- (4) Councillors are reminded that Committee and Sub-Committee papers, with the exception of those which contain Exempt or Confidential Information, may be recycled.
- (5) This agenda and its associated reports are available to view online via an online calendar - <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/dms/Meetings.aspx>

Meeting: Children & Families Select Committee

Date: Monday 15 July 2024 (commencing at 10:30am)

**Membership:****County Councillors**

Mike Introna (Chairman)

Francis Purdue-Horan (Vice-Chairman)

Anne Callaghan BEM

Robert Corden

John Cottee

Debbie Darby

Errol Henry (apologies)

John Lee

Mike Quigley MBE

Nigel Turner

Michelle Welsh (apologies)

**Education Representatives**

Nigel Frith

James McGeachie

**Substitute Members**

Cllr Creamer for Cllr Henry

Cllr Foale for Cllr Welsh

**Other County Councillors in attendance**

Councillor Sam Smith - Cabinet Member for Education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Councillor Tracey Taylor - Cabinet Member for Children and Families

Councillor Nigel Moxon - Deputy Cabinet Member for Education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

**Officers and colleagues in attendance:**

Amanda Collinson - Service Director for Help, Protection and Care

Peter McConnochie - Service Director for Education, Learning and Inclusion

Colin Pettigrew - Executive Director for Children and Families

Martin Elliott - Senior Scrutiny Officer

Katherine Harclerode - Democratic Services Officer

Andrew Wells - Group Manager, Youth and Families

**Others in attendance:**

Rosa Waddingham - Chief Nurse, NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board

**1. TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLOR MIKE INTRONA AS CHAIRMAN AND COUNCILLOR FRANCIS PURDUE-HORAN AS VICE CHAIRMAN OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SELECT COMMITTEE AT FULL COUNCIL ON 16 MAY 2024**

The appointments of Councillor Mike Introna as Chairman and Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan as Vice-Chairman of the Children and Families Select Committee for the 2024/25 municipal year were noted.

**2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SELECT COMMITTEE FOR THE 2024/25 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

The membership of the Children and Families Select Committee for the 2024/25 municipal year was noted as: Councillors Anne Callaghan BEM, Robert Corden, John Cottee, Debbie Darby, Errol Henry JP, John Lee, Mike Quigley MBE, Nigel Turner, and Michelle Welsh

Education Representatives: Nigel Frith And James McGeachie.

**3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 15 April 2024, having been circulated previously, were confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

**4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Welsh (other reasons) and Councillor Errol Henry (other reasons).

**5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**6. DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2024-25**

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People who was joined by the Executive Director of Children and Families, Service Director for Education, Learning and Inclusion, Group Manager, Youth Justice and Early Help Services and the Chief Nurse, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board. The report provided an overview of the progress that had been made in implementing the Youth Justice Plan and also provided a summary of the identified priorities within the Plan. The following points were highlighted:

- Priorities had been considered alongside feedback to the Youth Justice Partnership Board.
- The Youth Justice Service was inspected in October 2023 and was rated 'good' by the HMIP, with seven recommendations requiring consideration regarding improved governance, data sharing mechanisms, Police secondment

arrangements, monitoring of out-of-court disposal decision-making, and post-court casework management oversight.

- Regarding improved Youth Justice Partnership Board governance, the Executive Director for Children and Families as the new Chair of the Board, had been overseeing measures to improve partner accountability and engagement.
- Regarding the need to establish improved data sharing mechanisms, a Youth Justice Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) had been completed with further activity being planned to follow on from completion of the Youth JSNA. This activity, alongside greater involvement of partners in performance reporting of Key Performance Indicators would support improvement in this area.
- A review had been completed which had led to the implementation of a revised model which promised greater capacity and more effective deployment of Police staff.
- Improved monitoring of out-of-court disposal decision-making was underway with a thorough review of processes and monitoring in place through the Youth Justice Partnership Board.
- Improved quality of post-court casework and management oversight had been progressed since the inspection. There had been a robust programme of improvement activity with improvements being reported to the Board on a quarterly basis through quality assurance feedback.
- The priorities for 2024/2025 were:
  - Education to be an increasingly protective factor for children: working with schools and settings to make sure children get the right support at the right time. Improve the health outcomes for children working with the Youth Justice Service.
  - Work with partners to identify and meet the needs of children in the community reducing vulnerability.
  - Ensure that children who are subject to bail and remand processes receive a high quality of service.
  - To develop and implement a diversity strategy and framework to support staff in assessing and delivering interventions that reflect children's protected characteristics.
- Two further priority areas featured in the revised Youth Justice Plan for the year ahead related to the further embedding of commissioned healthcare services and the implementation of a diversity strategy and framework. These areas were already being progressed.

In the discussion that followed, members raised the following points and questions:

- Interest was expressed in receiving the full inspection report as a background document for additional context.
- It was noted the areas of improvement that had been identified should correspond to the key priorities.
- Members sought further clarity around whose responsibility it was to ensure that scrutiny was in place and to provide evidence of partners holding each other to account. Further clarification was also requested as to who was responsible for ensuring that improvements were made.
- Additional details were sought around the timescales for completion of the diversity strategy and framework.
- Clarification was requested regarding the two areas for improvement that were not fully within the Council's responsibility to improve.
- Assurances were requested that the priorities relating to improved access would lead to delivery of additional provision and timescales were requested as to when those waiting for provision would receive it.
- More information was requested regarding the changes being made to ensure children were having their health needs assessed consistently.

In relation to the points raised by the Committee, the Cabinet Member for Children and Families and officers provided the following responses:

- Members had seen the full inspection report when this had been made available following the inspection.
- The importance of linking priorities to the areas of improvement was acknowledged as being part of the work of the Partnership Board to build confidence in how this was approached as a leadership team.
- The 'golden thread' of diversity within educational needs and mental health needs was being tracked through the Youth Justice Board. Multiple workstreams came through this Board and were scrutinised by the Board that was Chaired by the Executive Director for Children and Families.
- The scrutiny activity that had been carried out by members prior to the Cabinet decision was noted as having been valuable.
- Consideration had been given to the circumstances of some partners within the partnership that were currently struggling with waiting lists, quality, and reputation; therefore, the Executive Director for Children and Families had agreed to chair the Youth Justice Partnership.

- Whilst there had been an inadequate area of activity highlighted from the inspection as well as and some areas that required improvement, there were also two outstanding areas of activity, with the overall rating of the service being rated as 'Good'. The assessment within Court Disposals was a sub-judgement that did not say that the Service is inadequate. Rather, the report usefully highlighted the weaker areas within the Service. The partnership performance overall was what was needing improvement. This was not in the Council's gift alone to improve.
- There were clear areas of improvement tracked by the Board and a KPI framework to hold partners to account. Improvements in KPIs capturing and reporting using data dashboards to improve knowledge and oversight was also a key area of work. Alongside work on the diversity framework there was also a workstream around police secondment arrangements for the youth intervention section of the police working with the Youth Justice Team.
- There was more to do in terms of improvement, but there was confidence that this was being well addressed as described in the action plan. A report would be submitted to Cabinet with an action plan strengthened by members' comments through scrutiny. A further update to scrutiny was offered to provide assurance of the completion of the work.
- Ultimately, the Council's leadership was responsible to address the partnership challenges and it was the responsibility of the Executive Director of Children and Family Services to ensure that the required improvements were achieved.

The Chairman noted the clear actions being taken and thanked the Cabinet Member for Children and Families, the Executive Director of Children and Family Services, the Service Director for Education, Learning and Inclusion and the Group Manager, Youth Justice, and Early Help Services for attending the meeting and answering members' questions.

#### **RESOLVED 2024/014**

- 1) That the progress of implementing the 2024/25 Youth Justice Plan and its identified priorities be noted.
- 2) That a progress report on the delivery of the Youth Justice Plan be considered for inclusion in the Children and Families Select Committee's 2024/25 Work Programme.

#### **7. PARTNERSHIP PROGRESS IN IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCES AND OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES – UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Cabinet Member for Education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who was joined by the Executive Director for Children and Families Services and the Chief Nurse, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board that provided an update on

the progress made by the Nottinghamshire local area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Partnership in implementing improvements to the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.

The following points were highlighted:

- Two priority areas for action had been progressed positively as part of this Plan. Leaders, NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board and education, health and care providers would cooperate to urgently identify, assess, and provide for the needs of children and young people with SEND. This included assessment of needs, timely issuing of Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans and holistic oversight of these plans through annual reviews.
- Leaders, including commissioners and providers, would also identify and address any delays and gaps in access to some health services, particularly speech and language therapy, neurodevelopmental pathways and equipment services, and ensuring that they used available performance data to identify where gaps exist and whether actions taken to address these are effective.
- Progress against each of the six key outcomes was described and had been reviewed by the DFE and NHS England through a deep dive exercise in March 2024. The Partnership was now responding to the feedback received.
- Improvements that had been made included a continued increase in the proportion of new Education Health and Care Plans that were issued within statutory timescales. An 87% increase in timeliness of assessments had been achieved despite a 100% increase in requests. These improvements were achieved through increases in investment resource, capacity, and efficiency and through stronger partnership working to enhance outcomes for children and young people and families, for example through links with local Family Hubs.
- Although there were several areas of further work to undertake, the Partnership would continue to explore new ways to build stronger relationships with families. An action plan had been developed in response to areas for development which were being embedded within the SEND Improvement Programme. Strategic reviews of progress continued on a six-monthly basis prior to the joint CQC/Ofsted Monitoring Visit in Autumn 2024.

In the discussion that followed, members raised the following points and questions:

- Additional assurances were requested that there were adequate resources to achieve the improvements that had been highlighted by the inspection.
- Members requested further information regarding waiting times for assessments for EHCPs. Members agreed that families who had not received their assessment on time may not be satisfied with the service that they were receiving.
- Members noted that when parents and carers were dissatisfied with the service that they received then they shared their feedback, however positive feedback was rarely given when good service had been provided. It was also noted that



the Service communicated by letter when there was a delay to explain the reasons for the delay. Members noted that Whereas there had been many complaints about EHCPs in the past, there appeared to be a reduction in the number of complaints received regarding EHCPs in the last six months which was positive.

- Members requested further information around anticipated levels of demand for services and EHCPs in the future. Members also sought further information on the outcomes of the stocktake that had been carried out in June 2024.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the experience of families who did not get the support that they felt could be delivered if their child had an EHCP in place.

In relation to the points raised by the Committee, the Cabinet Member for Education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and officers provided the following responses:

- Requests for EHCPs had increased substantially with there being more demand for assessments. Improvements however could be seen from this time last year in the number of plans assessed. It was considered noteworthy that although there were more requests now, the Service was still responding to 92 percent within two weeks, as opposed to 42% during the previous year.
- For those children who did not have an EHCP in place it could be difficult to assess their satisfaction with the Service. However it was important to ensure that those who went through the process were satisfied with the level of service that they received. In late autumn 2024, a full inspection was scheduled to take place. Part of the assessment would be looking what parents and carers had said about their experience of the Service.
- Most of the people who accessed the service and who had provided feedback felt that services were delivered in a timely way.
- Communication was felt to be key in the work of the SEND Improvement Board. To address delays in communication, the Council had employed several support officers to ensure that families had the support they needed as they went through the process. These communications were complex; therefore steps had been taken to improve communication so that families did not become dissatisfied.
- There was increased partner representation on the Board and closer monitoring of the dataset, with all parts of the Partnership sharing their issues. The SEND improvement Board had been designed to deliver effective challenge to partnership performance.
- The areas of activity that were the highest priority for improvement of the Service had been set out in the CQC inspection.
- There would continue to be increased demand for services into future years. This was the direction of travel nationally and also in Nottinghamshire. It was therefore important to continue to focus utilising available resources as

effectively as possible to have the maximum impact on improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND. Having come from a very low baseline, this progress needed to be maintained, which could only be done with investment from the Council and its partners.

- The first stocktake that had been completed had shown that positive progress in delivering the required improvements had been made. The June stocktake had also demonstrated evidence of progress regarding governance and reporting around EHCPs. The partnership's commitment to co-production and work toward a self-evaluation framework had also been highlighted as good areas of progress.
- Assurances were provided that there was a strong graduated response in place in Nottinghamshire so that families could still access funding, resources and a SEND action plan coordinated by the SENDCO without an EHCP being in place. In some places nationally, there was no funding available or support without an EHCP, but in Nottinghamshire this was not the case.
- The Nottingham and Nottinghamshire SEND Joint Commissioning Strategy 2024-2027 would be circulated to Members for their information.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member for Education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, the Executive Director for Children and Families and the Chief Nurse for attending the meeting and answering members' questions.

#### **RESOLVED 2024/15**

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That a further progress report on Partnership progress in improving the experiences and outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities be received at the October 2024 meeting of the Children and Families Select Committee.
- 3) That the following issues raised by the Committee in its consideration of the report be progressed:
  - a) That future reports should, where possible, present information in whole numbers, rather than in percentages.
  - b) That once available, that the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire SEND Joint Commissioning Strategy 2024-2027 be circulated to the members of the Children and Families Select Committee.
  - c) That the Executive Director - Children and Families, discusses further with the Chair of the Children and Families Select Committee the possibility of inviting the Chair of the Nottinghamshire SEND Partnership Improvement Board to a future meeting.

## **8. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY PROVISION AND SUFFICIENCY**

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Cabinet Member for Education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities who was joined by the Executive Director for Children and Families; the Service Director for Education, Learning and Inclusion; and the Group Manager for Youth and Families. The report identified pressures in the SEND System across England and Nottinghamshire, including a growing number of children and young people with SEND and the impact of Government legislation on how support is provided and accessed. The following points were highlighted:

- The effects of pressures on SEND Education provision and sufficiency were significant across England and in Nottinghamshire.
- The Council had developed fair, proportionate, and transparent arrangements for additional SEND funding over many years predating the introduction of EHC Plans. These arrangements allowed the professionals working the closest to the child or young person to be involved in any decision-making regarding support or changes to provision. In 2024- 2025, a total of £22.190m would be devolved to schools from the High-Level Needs, Additional Family Needs and Family Network Fund budgets. This is an increase from £21.026m in 2023-2024. These budgets were in addition to the national expectation that schools would provide the first £6,000 spend on any targeted provision for a child or young person with SEND.
- In addition to other factors that the Service considered as part of formulating forecasts around future pupil needs, the School Capacity (SCAP) survey was a statutory data collection exercise that assisted the Council in providing pupil projections to estimate the likely future demand for school places. The County Council's response to the headline requirements resulting from the SCAP survey was set out in the Nottinghamshire SEND Place Planning Strategy 2021-2026. As part of this response, additional specialist placements had been delivered and there were several current projects were underway. Two further projects were planned.
- The Council had been successful in its bid to build another 166-place school funded by DFE. The Council was writing to the new Government to seek their confirmation of their commitment to this build. Upon successful completion of all projects, the number of places created would exceed the number of places identified in the Strategy. Developer contributions to SEND Provision through Section 106 agreements and other associated financial implications was also acknowledged.
- There were also ambitions for alternative provision as part of a Framework for new Independent Non-maintained Specialist Schools.
- Currently many children and young people continued to wait too long for EHCP assessments and appropriate specialist provision to meet their needs.

In the discussion that followed, members raised the following points and questions:

- Further information was sought regarding the numbers of children and young people from outside of Nottinghamshire who accessed services in the county and asked whether there was additional funding available to ensure that this did not negatively impact on the number of places available for Nottinghamshire children.
- More information was requested regarding the completion dates on the delivery of the projects that were underway to deliver additional special school places across Nottinghamshire.
- Members asked whether there had been a noticeable change in the number of requests for EHCP assessments compared to before the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Members noted that Council had made good progress in ensuring that there would be sufficient provision of SEND places in the future but agreed that greater SEND provision would still be needed to ensure that there was sufficient specialist educational provision for young people in Nottinghamshire in the future.

In relation to the points raised by the Committee, the Cabinet Member for Education and SEND and officers provided the following responses:

- The Council focussed on how many children that there would be in Nottinghamshire and how many places would therefore be needed in future years. This was a process set by the Department for Education. The Service remained mindful of how many children were placed out of County.
- Funding for specialist education provision was separate to the from the EHCP process to help reduce some of the bureaucracy which was in place due to a historic lower proportion of children with EHCPs. The recalculation of funding was based on a number of factors, including where children with higher levels of needs were moving between provision.
- Information was provided on how children from outside of the County impacted on the funding and delivery of specialist school places.
- 92 additional specialist school places had been delivered by working with partners. More work was ongoing to create another 260 places. The Service worked very hard alongside colleagues in the property department to ensure regular updates were received.
- There had been a change of policy by the Government around how support was provided to parents and carers. The volume of children with lower level SEND issues had increased over recent years. This need would always aimed to be met by the graduated approach that had been used in Nottinghamshire

for many years that aimed to support children in mainstream schools and that provided additional support whether or not an EHCP was in place or not.

- It was noted that the Covid-19 pandemic had had a lasting impact on school attendance. Across the country one in five children had not returned to normal levels of school attendance and were regularly absent from school. A peak in non-attendance between years 6 and 7 had been seen and higher anxiety levels among these children had been observed.
- The Cabinet Member, the schools could not be built quick enough to meet the need, but funding had been increased by over one million this year to do even more work to address the need.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member for Education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); the Executive Director for Children and Families; the Service Director for Education, Learning and Inclusion; and the Group Manager for Youth and Families for attending the meeting and answering members' questions.

#### **RESOLVED 2024/16**

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the following issues raised by the Committee in its consideration of the report be progressed:
  - a) That once available, the upcoming Local Government Association/County Council Network report on SEND be circulated to the members of the Children and Families Select Committee.

#### **9. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES' DEPARTMENTAL PERFORMANCE, RISKS AND FINANCIAL POSITION – QUARTER 4 2023-4**

Consideration was given to a summary report in respect of Children and Families Department's performance against the Ambitions set out in the Annual Delivery Plan. The report also summarised key departmental risks and the Department's financial position for the current financial year. The report was presented by the Cabinet Member for Children and Families. The presentation highlighted the following points:

In the discussion that followed, Members raised the following points and questions:

- The gap between disadvantaged children was narrowing, and this was seen as a positive and welcome improvement.
- Additional assurances were requested regarding children's attainment rates on exams.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the high number of SEND children who were excluded from schools. The rate of exclusion was five times what it was

the previous year. Members sought to understand more about plans to improve inclusion.

- Child protection case review statistics were below the national average, and more information was requested around actions taken to address this.

In relation to the points raised by the Committee, the Cabinet Member for Children and Families and officers provided the following responses:

- Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, exams had not been taken with grades assessed by teacher assessments. With the return to exam assessment now having resumed, exams grades nationally had lowered and returned to pre-pandemic levels.
- There had been an increase in suspensions and exclusions. The decision to exclude or suspend a child or young person was made by the Head Teacher of the school. The Service maintained the position that there should be the lowest levels of exclusions possible. Officers worked with schools on a number of local authority exclusions cases to address these challenges.
- The Service Director for Help Protection and Care assured members that steps had been taken regarding child protection case reviews to ensure these were being carried out with all relevant professionals were in attendance, even if this meant missing time delivery targets slightly as this approach would support the better delivery of outcomes for children and families.

## **RESOLVED 2024/17**

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That a further report on the Children and Families Department's performance, risks and financial position be received at the October 2024 meeting of the Children and Families Select Committee.
- 3) That the following issues raised by the Committee in its consideration of the report be progressed:
  - a) That a breakdown of the information on the "Percentage of pupils in primary, secondary and special schools permanently excluded" be circulated to the members of the Children and Families Select Committee.

## **10. WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to a summary programme of scrutiny work for the municipal year 2023-2024. This was the last meeting included in this work programme. There would be a meeting for committee members held the following day at 1.30pm to develop the work programme for the coming year.

## **RESOLVED 2024/18**

- 1) That the Children and Families Select Committee's Work Programme be noted.
- 2) That Committee members make any further suggestions for items for inclusion on the Work Programme for consideration by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member(s) and senior officers, and subject to the required approval by the Chairman of the Overview Committee.
- 3) That the following items be considered for inclusion in the Children and Families Select Committee's Work Programme:
  - The potential impact on demand for school places around changes to VAT on private school fees.

The meeting closed at 12.36 pm.

**CHAIRMAN**







**7 October 2024**

**Agenda Item: 4**

## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

### **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) Annual Report 2023-2024, attached as **Appendix 1**, sets out what the NSCP has achieved over the 2023-24 reporting period and is provided for the Committee to scrutinise and to provide assurance that the NSCP is fulfilling its duties.

#### **Information**

2. The NSCP provides the safeguarding arrangements required under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018'. The statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023' was published in December 2023 and therefore the reporting period covered falls under both documents. The purpose of safeguarding arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The NSCP is required to prepare an annual report and to submit this to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel. The Annual Report has been approved by the NSCP Strategic Leadership Group and will be published on the NSCP website and submitted to the national panel by 30 September 2024.

#### **Financial Implications**

3. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### **Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications**

4. This report demonstrates how the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements have impacted on the safeguarding of children and young people in Nottinghamshire in the 2023-24 reporting period.

#### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the Select Committee considers the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) Annual Report 2023/24, attached as **Appendix 1**, and advises of any further assurance required.

**Colin Pettigrew**  
**Executive Director, Children and Families**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Sam Harris  
Service Manager – Partnerships and Planning  
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**Constitutional Comments (GMG 09/09/24)**

5. This report falls within the remit of the Children and Families Select Committee for consideration under Section 6, Part 1, paragraph 4(a) of the Council’s Constitution at p.91.

**Financial Comments (CDS 09/09/24)**

6. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 – HM Government, December 2023](#)

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

CFS0027



# Annual Report 2023 – 2024

## Foreword from the NSCP Strategic Leadership Group Chair

I am pleased to introduce the NSCP annual report for 2023 – 2024 which outlines the continued progress we have made this year across the safeguarding partnership.

The NSCP Learning and Workforce Development Group's commitment allows us to have an expert local training pool, supported by knowledgeable practitioners from across the partnership which allows us to have extensive training offer (pg. 14). One of many training opportunities included "When we are scared: An Introduction to Trauma", supporting staff to keep the experiences of the children as central to what we do.

I also highlight the work of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group (pg.11), which has worked to complete rapid reviews where required, where the National Panel consistently agree with the recommendations for further review. The group continues to progress on its commitment to ensure the learning from reviews is shared widely across the partnership.

I have reflected on the comments by the Independent Scrutineer within this report which outlines his view that safeguarding in Nottinghamshire remains strong, dynamic and focused on the best possible outcomes for our children. This is a view I share, and I am pleased to outline the progress made on the NSCP business plan and the outline of how we as a partnership continue to meet the commitments we have made to Nottinghamshire children and families.

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## Introduction

Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) provides the safeguarding arrangements required under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'. In the period covered by this report the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 was in place until its update to the current guidance in December 2023. The purpose of safeguarding arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Partnership set out its vision in the safeguarding arrangements: -

***'That children and young people in Nottinghamshire grow up in a safe and stable environment and are supported to lead healthy, happy, and fulfilling lives.'***

The Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership will:

- Work effectively as a partnership to protect children from harm.
- Build working relationships between partners which support a culture of high challenge and high support.
- Be transparent and self-critical.
- Learn from local and national safeguarding practice and improve the way children are safeguarded.
- Listen and respond to children and young people and adult victims and survivors of child abuse to guide how services are delivered.
- Ensure services for children and families in Nottinghamshire support children and young people to stay safe, healthy, and happy.
- Ensure services for children and families in Nottinghamshire support parents and carers to provide the best possible care for their children.

This report sets out what the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership has achieved over the past year, including the following:

- An update on progress in relation to the safeguarding priorities for 2023 - 2017 and the key areas of work to take forward.
- A summary of the decisions made in relation to local case reviews and the learning, and actions taken from those reviews and national reviews.
- The effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in practice.
- Evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families from early help to looked-after children and care leavers.
- Examples of the ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision.

The safeguarding arrangements in Nottinghamshire are fully detailed in our document published in line with national requirements, and available on the NSCP website <https://nscp.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/about-the-partnership/>. The arrangements were last updated in January 2020. They include details of the partners to the arrangements and explain how the functions of the Partnership are carried out through several different groups and led by the Strategic Leadership Group (SLG).

Safeguarding Partnership activities and progress

The partnership business plan has been updated to cover the 2023- 2024 period. For each action to meet the commitment, an initial 12-month period of work has been identified. Work on the commitments below began in December 2023, and so the priorities identified below are in progress with a view to completion of these by December 2024. Therefore it is important to note that the updates only cover the 2023/24 reporting period.

<b>Commitment 1: We will work together to keep young people safe in their homes and communities</b>	
<b>Over the next 12 months</b>	<b>What we have done over the first 6 months</b>
<p>Children at risk of or experiencing exploitation will be supported through a joined-up response from the partnership. Children and young people will feel supported, safer and heard and parents and carers will be valued partners in our work to keep children safe from exploitation</p>	<p>The Police CARE (children at risk of exploitation) team has been implemented since November 2023 embedding the focus on wider child exploitation including both sexual and criminal exploitation of children. The implementation of a safeguarding and disruption team within the CARE model has aided in improved communication with partners. The reinvigoration of Operation Striver/ concerns network meetings has also been commenced and currently an intelligence officer post is being advertised within the CARE team to improve the intelligence and analytical capability.</p> <p>A TCE (Tackling Child Exploitation) Cross Authority subgroup has been created with representation from police, health, social care as well as the voluntary sector. Through this forum a joint exploitation strategy has been created and signed off by SLG and an agreement for an annual Nottinghamshire Child Exploitation conference hosted at Police HQ (Confirmed for 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025).A child exploitation annual review has been completed by children’s social care, a first child exploitation problem profile is due in November 2024 and work is ongoing to seek a peer review from the College of Policing of the CARE team within its first 12 months.</p>
<p>Children with emotional or mental health difficulties will receive joined up support. Children with special educational needs and disabilities and their families will receive earlier intervention about identified safeguarding risks. Children showing their distress through severe self-harm will receive a more</p>	<p>The Tackling Emerging Threats to Children have provided multi-agency training which reference the different types of online risks/harms and specifically reference children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities as well as recommending specific resources designed to be used with these children, carers and family. The Nott Alone website now has pages about Social Media and Online Safety. Schools are supported to increase online safety information for parents in their communications, and the TECT team have offered consultation to school about individual children many of whom have diagnosed, or believed to have additional needs. Training continues to be offered around areas such as Radicalisation, and harms outside the home to maintain a high level of understanding across the partnership of understanding in relation to these risks.</p>

<p>timely response in the right setting for their needs.</p>	<p>Work has been ongoing to develop an integrated care system (ICS) pathway for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people presenting to an emergency department with mental and emotional health needs</li> <li>• Children and young people admitted to an acute medical trust with complex emotional/mental health needs where discharge to a more appropriate setting is delayed</li> </ul> <p>Unfortunately, there are difficulties in creating ICS pathways across trusts as there is currently nowhere to store the pathways and there are difficulties with governance arrangements. We therefore asked trusts to adopt the proposed ICS pathway as a trust pathway and manage under their own governance arrangements. This also allowed trusts to make links in the pathway to their own relevant guidelines (e.g. admission policies, restraint and rapid tranquilisation etc). These pathways have had multidisciplinary input and outline the roles and responsibilities of all agencies throughout the pathways, including the medical team, Trust safeguarding teams, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), social care, look after children teams and the police. The pathways also reference the ICS escalation meeting, which is facilitated by the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and has also been instrumental in helping to resolve barriers and support in finding children and young people the right support in the right place, in a more timely manner.</p> <p>The pathways reflect the ethos that the mental health, safeguarding and emotional wellbeing of children and young people are everyone's business. It also guides and reminds all partners that children and young people's needs are central to the process and cooperative multi-agency working is often required in these cases which frequently combine a complex pattern of social, emotional and health factors. Service boundaries should not get in the way of appropriate care and vigilant safeguarding. It aims to ensure that children and young people's acute needs are met in the best way possible whilst the system comes together to find the most appropriate setting to manage the needs longer term.</p> <p>The pathways are currently going through multiple governance groups at Nottinghamshire University Hospitals and are due to be ratified shortly (at the time of writing this has been completed - ratified as of July 2024). Sherwood Forrest Hospitals have not agreed to the pathway and we are</p>
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	<p>awaiting a meeting to discuss this further and understand what alternative assurance/pathway they will be able to offer.</p> <p>Bassetlaw does not have inpatient facilities and so the pathway would need to be adopted across 2 ICS' which makes things more difficult. CAMHS would offer the same parallel assessment and Bassetlaw will need to liaise with Doncaster regarding in patient admission.</p>
<p>Schools, colleges and alternative education providers will become an integral part of the partnership. This will enable exploration of how the partnership can better work to meet the safeguarding needs of children in their education space.</p>	<p>Working Together 2023 provided some additional guidance to partnerships about the voice of education as follows:  <i>create an environment which enables all schools (including independent schools and academy trusts), colleges, early years, and other education and childcare providers in the local area to be fully engaged, involved and included in local safeguarding arrangements. This means making sure that the views and contributions of education and childcare providers are articulated at the highest level of decision-making.</i> Over the 2023/24 period engagement work is planned with education sector leaders to hear from them how this can best be achieved, and whether a sub-group as signposted in the business plan is the best way to achieve what Working Together guidance suggests. As part of the updating of the partnership's safeguarding arrangements by December 2024 this work will be underway so that the arrangements can outline the agreed plan.</p>
<p>We will review our neglect strategy and toolkit to make sure it helps professionals and families understand when things are going wrong and see what the data tells us about whether it is working.</p>	<p>The toolkit has been reviewed and amended to reflect the use of strengths-based language. The shortened version for health professionals is still in progress. A partnership audit took place which unfortunately did not identify effective use of the toolkit across the system. Sadly, there have also been CSPR's where neglect has been a significant factor. This is also the case in Nottingham City. These concerns have been discussed with both Independent Scrutineers and at the joint SLG and there is a cross partnership meeting planned in August to consider how to support the consistent and effective use of the toolkit so that it helps professionals and families understand when things are going wrong and to reassure ourselves through our data that it is working.</p>

<b>Commitment 2: We will work together to ensure each child who needs support or help receives the right service at the right time for them and their family</b>	
Over the next 12 months	What we have done over the first 6 months
We will stop talking about ‘thresholds’ and instead talk about what children and families need and how to provide it.	Staff across Social Care have been trained in strength based practice with more specific training in the MASH and Early Help Unit to reduce the focus on threshold and encourage a greater focus on the needs of the child and family. Sections of the <i>Pathway to Provision</i> have been redrafted using a strength based approach, updating the language and shifting the emphasis away from thresholds and towards needs. These sections are being piloted with a group of referrers as part of a wider test. Briefings on the proposed changes have been held within <i>Safeguarding Children Today</i> and changes to other aspects of the partnership training offer are being planned. Taken together these activities will help to embed cultural change across the partnership.
We will create a new front-door, with a greater focus on early help. Within this re-design, we will work together to think about how many referrals for children are made and whether some of these needs could be better met in the community or by early help	Extensive work has been undertaken over the past year to develop and implement a new model for the front door of children’s services. Ofsted commented that, “The front door change programme has significantly transformed the multi-agency safeguarding hub, where practice is collaborative, focusing on earlier help for children and families through the multi-agency partnership. This is ensuring that children get the right help at the right time.” An iterative approach is being taken, undertaking tests before implementing effective elements. This has resulted in a number of changes – increased focus on early help support; professionals from different disciplines working together in sub-teams; greater partnership involvement in decision making; improvements to the way Police Public Protection Notices are handled – all of which form a foundation for other changes as testing progresses. Referrers from across the partnership have been engaged throughout the programme to ensure that their needs will be met. Additional support for referrers is being piloted in two areas, with Early Help Advisers providing support in the community, aligned with Family Hubs, and Social Workers available via phone for coaching conversations as well as for receiving referrals. The change programme will continue, reducing referrals that result in no further action, embedding a reimagined front door and fostering a culture of support for professional referrers.

<p>Too many children in Nottinghamshire have child protection plans. We will rethink how we work together and with families to avoid so many situations reaching a child protection plan.</p>	<p>Over the year April 2023 – March 2024, the numbers of children subject to a Child Protection Plan steadily reduced from 669 to 513. This is a significant reduction of just under 15%. Children’s social care have been requesting fewer Initial Child Protection Conferences over the year – 123 in Q4 of 2022/23, compared to 73 in Q4 of 2023. We know that a lot of work has been undertaken in relation to ensuring that decisions are needs led, rather than solely threshold based, to dispel the view amongst professionals that children cannot be supported to a high level under a Child in Need Plan where a family are agreeing to work with us, and strengths based practice has continued to be further embedded into the way we work with families. All of these areas are likely to account for the reducing Child Protection plan numbers. Practice reviews and ongoing audit work has demonstrated that Child Protection Coordinators continue to make appropriate decisions when making children subject to Child Protection plans or ending those plans. The numbers of children becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time fluctuated throughout the year, and overall sat at 24.1%, with 10.4% of those having had their prior plan ended in the last 2 years. These figures suggest that the Local Authority and our partners still have work to do in ensuring that moving on plans following the end of a child protection planning period are suitably robust to ensure that families are better supported to sustain positive changes they have made and that risks continue to be minimised.</p>
<p>We will improve the quality, attendance and timeliness of strategy discussions and make sure that the needs of all of the children relevant to the discussion are considered</p>	<p>The cross authority established safeguarding children partnership audit group have completed four audits as requested by the joint Senior Leadership Group of the partnerships. The audit themes focussed key areas identified through local issues but replicate many national drivers too, one of which was around strategy discussions and Section 47 enquiries.</p> <p>The Section 47 Strategy discussion audit day is now complete with an initial draft report in progress. From the audit day recommendations were considered and noted there is some further work required to enhance the strategy discussion process to continue to work to safeguard children and young people who require support across the partnership area. The findings identified some further learning to progress into recommendations and action plan which will remain under review.</p>

<b>Commitment 3:</b> We will work together to ensure the partnership reflects, learns from and acts on the experiences and feedback from children, young people and their families.	
<b>Over the next 12 months</b>	<b>What we have done over the first 6 months</b>
In developing these commitments, we asked some of Nottinghamshire’s children and parents/carers what they thought. We will build on so that we can keep listening to as many voices as possible.	Links are being made across the partnership including with groups representing young people, parents and carers and participation groups via the ICB. The aim is the share the updated safeguarding arrangements with them in 2023 – 24 to ensure their views remain heard, however the partnership does have an awareness that there is still work to do to integrate the views of children, parents and carers more widely into the partnership/
We will focus on making the recommendations from our statutory reviews as clear and SMART as possible and address any themes reviews reveal. We will make sure what is learned in reviews is available to everyone working with children in Nottinghamshire.	The Child Safeguarding Practice Review group, who are responsible for statutory reviews are continuing to review their recommendations and actions to improve how effective they are. This is considered quarterly and is facilitated by an updated action tracker which has been developed to identify themes and areas of emerging risk. There has been progress in this area evidenced by there now not being any review actions over six months in age before completion which is an aim of the group and was not being achieved previously.  Learning briefings are now developed for rapid reviews so that learning can be shared via partners but is also accessible on the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Website to anyone who would find this learning useful. There is a commitment to continue to review how learning is shared for each review, and based on feedback from a survey of the partnership we will hold a workshop with the independent author of the current Local Child Safeguarding Practice review to share the learning and allow for practitioners to ask questions and deepen the impact of the learning.
We will develop an NSCP understanding of what trauma informed practice means and develop a plan to integrate this into practice	Ten events around Trauma “When we are Scared: An Introduction to Trauma” were offered during this reporting year with 286 employees attending, with a view to improving knowledge and focus on this area across the partnership. Feedback from these events found the attendees could identify how this could directly improve their practice with children and families. This is an area where further work is required in the 12-month period, to develop a plan to integrate this into practice in broader way across the partnership.

## Case reviews

There is a statutory requirement on safeguarding partners to conduct a 'Rapid Review' when serious child safeguarding cases are identified. The reviews should be completed within 15 working days and a report provided to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (National Panel). The NSCP remains committed to gathering as much learning as possible during the rapid review process and to only progressing to a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) where necessary.

There have been four rapid reviews completed in the 23-23 period, two of which met the timescales and two which did not. Where reviews have been out of timescale, this has been due to panel member availability and leave. The decision of the panel has been that consistency and knowledge around the reviews and learning has been important in order to maintain the standard of work. On those occasions an initial meeting has been held where immediate safeguarding actions could be considered. Timeliness remains an area for improvement and the CSRPG members have now ensured they have deputies identified where possible, to improve contingency in the group.

### *Rapid Reviews*

A rapid review has been completed following the death of a five-month-old baby, where she had been co-sleeping with her mother and two older siblings. Although safer sleep messages had been delivered, work around ensuring more vulnerable families heard the safer sleep messages was identified. In late 2023, the safeguarding children partnership approved a refreshed safer sleep risk assessment toolkit developed by the safer sleep steering group. The toolkit contains information for practitioners about increased risk factors for SIDS, as well as tools for families such as a hazardous co-sleeping checklist and links to Lullaby Trust resources. This has been included in the child health and development record 'red book' used by health practitioners. Work has taken place to raise awareness of the risk assessment toolkit with services working with families where the risk of SIDS is greater and to embed safer sleep as 'everyone's business'.

**The National Panel agreed with the decision of the review not to initiate an LCSPR.**

A rapid review was completed in relation to a six-week-old baby after parents called an ambulance after she was reportedly choking. Due to the account not being felt to be consistent with the injury a child protection medical was undertaken and further evidence emerged of sustained and frequent abuse of the baby. The rapid review identified good practice from agencies, where professional curiosity and critical thinking following the ambulance being called safeguarded this child from likely future serious harm. Good multi-agency working was noted. An LCSPR was not recommended.

**The National Panel responded, "We thought your rapid review was good and identified relevant learning".**

A rapid review was completed in relation to a 5-month-old baby girl. She was born prematurely, at 27 weeks and complex health needs, and remained in hospital until she was 4 months of age, when she was discharged to her mother's care. She was open to social care on a Child in Need plan following a referral which highlighted some concerns about the suitability of mothers housing, support needed for her to meet her child's needs, and some concerns about mothers' presentation at the hospital including her interactions with staff. Mother required an interpreter to be used at times as English was not her first language. The baby was presented to hospital with a number of non-accidental injuries after a short period at home, which mother admitted causing.

The review found that the safeguarding response from partners followed procedure and showed some good practice. An LCSPR was not recommended, the National Panel agreed with this outcome. A specific action was identified, to explore the work completed with families of preterm infants with complex health needs prior to discharge and this is now underway.

**The National Panel agreed with this outcome.**

The fourth rapid review completed was following the death of a young person by suicide which she was in an inpatient setting out of area. Following her death, it was also identified that there was concerning content being shared by her peer group. The recommendation from this review was that an LCSPR should be commissioned. In addition to the specific experiences of the child, the focus will also be on broader thematic learning around some of the specific points identified in the rapid review, to include information sharing and linking 'known' children in shared communities and primary to secondary school transition support for vulnerable children and those previously known to children and family social care services.

**The National Panel responded, "We thought this was a clearly written review that identified and distinguished between immediate actions the safeguarding partnership would take forward, and areas you can further learn from".**

### *Other reviews*

The partnership has also contributed to two out of area reviews, where the concerns related to the mental health of young people. In addition, the partnership are contributing to a Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) for a young person, who died by suicide at 19 years of age, as part of the progress to recognise the journey for this young person and support services having started when they were a child. The NSCP has also been asked to contribute to the National Review into Child Sexual Abuse within the Family environment, by facilitating a practitioner event following a previous rapid review undertaken by Nottinghamshire in 2022.

In this reporting period, of note is the partnership progress in looking at alternative forms of learning which may not meet the criteria for statutory review. We have held a practitioner event to look at the experiences of a Looked After young person where there had been increasing concerns about exploitation from the professional group, and understanding alongside those practitioners what learning could be gained in other similar situations. A learning review has been undertaken for a young person whose parent died by suicide, as although partners felt it was appropriate to examine their experiences and gain any learning. The group are building on this willingness to look at the need for a review or learning to be gained, rather than the threshold for the statutory review alone to be the deciding factor in whether a learning event takes place.

### Multi-agency training, guidance and procedures

During 2023-24, 7,100 eLearning courses have been completed, in addition to 3,032 practitioners attending our face to face/virtual training events which means a total of 10,132 workforce training opportunities have been accessed during the year across the Partnership. This has decreased slightly by 1,497 compared to the previous year and is due to the E Learning statistics.

We have offered 60 events which is slightly higher than previous year (54 events). Five face to face events have been offered. Overall attendance at our training events has remained approximately the same. We offered 5 Safeguarding Children Today seminars over the last year which provide an essential update for managers and staff whose roles and responsibilities involve safeguarding children. This event is often used as an opportunity to meet the requirement of refreshing inter-agency training. Its aims to increase understanding of the national and local context for the safeguarding agenda, refresh and up-date knowledge on safeguarding issues and themes currently affecting practice in Nottinghamshire and specifically to share learning identified from Rapid Reviews and Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPR).

Professional curiosity was identified as a theme which was a key area of improvement in both practice and partnership work in last year's annual report. As such we have shared this learning in a variety of ways; within our Safeguarding Children Today seminars, an article in our NSCP Newsletter on Professional Curiosity and included more content around this within our face-to-face course on Decision making and Disguised Compliance.

A new e-learning course has been authored. The new course offered was Child Protection Conferences and Looked After Children Reviews. This module is suitable for staff in a variety of roles who work with children, young people, and their families and who may at some point be invited to a Child Protection Meeting or Looked After Children review which is convened by Childrens Social Care. It includes the newly updated report templates and gives examples of completed report templates and guidance for practitioners to use. This course went live on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023 and since then we have had 128 course completions so far.

Individual organisation attendance varies across the partnership. In relation to the three safeguarding children partners statistics, there has been a slight decrease in attendance from Nottinghamshire County Council staff from 1,868 to 1,680. In comparison we have seen a significant rise in attendance from Police colleagues from 32 in the previous year to 111 attendees this reporting year. In relation to Health attendance, we have also seen a significant increase from 209 to 372, but this is more representative of what we would usually expect each year in comparison to 2022-23 when numbers were low due to the

knock-on effect of Covid and capacity issues. Attendance from other relevant partner agencies including foster carers and schools/colleges has remained approximately the same, which again is positive.

The delivery of this offer is greatly assisted by outstanding support from across the partnership. Over the last year we have had 50 partners support us with delivering our annual training programme. We have also commissioned 6 external training providers with specialist knowledge to enhance our training offer.

Feedback from participants is valued and continues to inform continuous development of the offer. All feedback is considered and areas for improvement or to make the training more accessible for practitioners is used to improve the provision. Views are sought three months post training, to build an understanding of the impact of the training on practice. When attendees were asked *Has the training changed or improved your practice?* 95.5% of respondents said it had. The responses provided by practitioners gives some insight into the direct impact on children and families.

### *Training feedback*

#### **Safeguarding Children Today**

“The Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews were of particular interest to me, and I have begun to read them since the seminar.”

“Extremely well put together presentation, some of the content and local statistics were very thought provoking and will impact on my future practice and how I see things.”

#### **Working Together to Safeguard Children**

“I have a clearer understanding of procedures, know who can help and in what situations, clearer viewpoint of my role and responsibilities.”

#### **Professional curiosity**

“Professional curiosity will be at the heart of all the work I do. Additionally, I will use my managerial role to support staff to look for the information that disproved what they are thinking first.”

#### **When we are scared: An Introduction to trauma.**

“All the children I currently have allocated have experience some trauma and so now I am more aware of this and how to provide better support to these children now I have a better understanding of trauma.”

“During my job, I refer to trauma and it has now made me consider hope and resilience with young people more and how we can build this with our work.”



## Reflections, next steps and priorities

This year has seen continued progress for the partnership, with a more needs led approach for the Child Safeguarding Practice Review group in relation to learning events and with an expanded training offer which continues to receive good feedback from attendees. Areas for development have been identified in the report which will be a focus for the coming year alongside the implementation of the requirements of the new statutory guidance Working Together 2023, which will be outlined in the updated safeguarding arrangements. The business plan priorities are still ongoing until December 2024, however the updates reflect that for the majority of the actions significant progress has already been made. Continued progress on these actions will be made, with a view to ensuring the partnership commitments are met.

### *Priorities for 2023- 2024*

The Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership priorities for next year will be to continue to work towards the commitments identified in the business plan.

**Commitment 1:** We will work together to keep young people safe in their homes and communities.

**Commitment 2:** We will work together to ensure each child who needs support or help receives the right service at the right time for them and their family.

**Commitment 3:** We will work together to ensure the partnership reflects, learns from and acts on the experiences and feedback from children, young people and their families.

Additionally, the annual report for 2024/25 will also include the Working Together 2023 defined information regarding partnership funding and data.

## Independent Scrutineer Overview

This year has been a particularly important one in relation to the NSCP as the cycle of external inspection for Police, Health and latterly the OFSTED inspection of Children's Services has come to a conclusion.

At the inception of the present arrangements for safeguarding, following the review undertaken by Sir Alan Wood, in 2019. The pre-existing inspectoral arrangements for Police (HMICFRS) Health (CQC) and Children's Services (OFSTED) were left unchanged. With suggestions that the safeguarding function of the new statutory partnerships should be inspected across the piece, either by one of the existing inspectoral bodies, or by a new and specific organisation deemed (I would guess) either unnecessary or else overly complicated.

As the Independent Scrutineer for NSCP the resulting inspectoral arrangements have always been, in my opinion, something of a compromise with regard to safeguarding. As none of the inspectoral bodies has a remit to fully consider the effectiveness of our Partnership in the round. Rather by following the 'breadcrumbs' from each stand alone inspection it is to some extent possible to read across, and get some insight and evaluation as to how we are doing.

Many of you will have heard me say on numerous occasions that in orientation to my role as Scrutineer I have seen this as not being just another layer of inspection. My view has been that statutory partners are already inspected enough, and that in all likelihood the very last thing the Partnership needs is an Independent Scrutineer taking a 'finger wagging' stance, and focusing on errors and omissions, as opposed to opportunities to make advances that bring our considerable resources and energies together.

But this non-inspectoral orientation on my part does potentially leave the door open to not establishing a sufficiently high challenge/high support safeguarding environment if, as I suggest above, the three stand alone inspectoral bodies do not do this externally and routinely.

So how does this 'square' for NSCP, and how can I say with any evidence and authority that our Partnership remains strong, collegiate across the different agencies and open to both reflection and learning?

Well firstly I keep a very close eye on the process of making Serious Incident Notifications, whereby safeguarding incidents that meet specified criteria are referred to OFSTED and the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

Despite the criteria mentioned above for making Serious Incident Notifications, it is evident that considerable discrepancy remains nationally between Authorities, even where demographic and other comparative criteria are similar. Unsurprising perhaps given that however clearly criteria are set out, some degree of interpretation and discretion is required to come to a final view as to what is and what is not a circumstance requiring formal notification.

But my interest is not in how other Authorities approach this task, but rather how this works in Nottinghamshire and whether a fair and consistent approach is taken to notification.

Here I can confirm that whilst the statutory responsibility for Serious Incident Notifications rests in the Local Authority, delegated to the Director of Children's Services, I have found that the approach taken is indeed fair and consistent, even if this at the early stage of my time as Scrutineer meant that Nottinghamshire made very slightly more notifications than our statistical comparator Authorities.

Where Serious Incident Notifications are made this triggers a requirement to complete a Rapid Review within fifteen working days. With the subsequent report then sent to OFSTED the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

Secondly, I keep a very close eye on the process of writing Rapid Reviews, and the degree to which the agencies making up our Partnership contribute to and learn from the conclusions reached. As the completed Rapid Reviews go to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel who comment on the quality of the work done, it is not just my opinion that the NSCP is strong in this area, but this is also the overwhelming view of the Panel.

But some degree of external inspection is still required and, despite my argument above that none of the existing bodies has oversight of the safeguarding function of the Partnership in the round, it is OFSTED inspection, through their responsibilities across Local Authorities, that perhaps comes closest to giving an overview and some evaluation of direction of travel and progress.

Nottinghamshire has recently been visited by OFSTED and as you may have seen in the press, the outcome was very positive, especially with regard to those 'joined up' aspects of inspection relating to Partnership and Safeguarding.

This is a terrific achievement, and everyone involved has every reason to be proud of a job well done, with a clear and positive result for Nottinghamshire.

So overall an important year for safeguarding in Nottinghamshire, and one in which I feel empowered to draw together the evidence I have seen for myself, and also that ratified through inspection, to come to the view that safeguarding has been and remains strong, dynamic and focused on the best possible outcomes for our children.

Our safeguarding Partnership works as well as it does because of the energy, commitment and skills that you all bring to the table. I see that, and thank you all for it.



7 October 2024

Agenda Item: 5

## **REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES**

### **PROGRESS WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update on progress with the recommendations arising from the Children and Families Select Committee's review of Education, Health and Care Plans.

#### **Information**

2. At the meeting of Cabinet on 21 December 2023, the 11 recommendations made by the Select Committee were approved.
3. Updates on the progress to date in relation to the 11 recommendations are set out in the table at **Appendix 1**.

#### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

4. To update the Children and Families Select Committee on the progress to date in relation to the 11 recommendations arising from the Committee's review of Education, Health and Care Plans.

#### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

5. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

#### **Financial Implications**

6. There are no direct financial implications relating to the recommendations of this report.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) That the Children and Families Select Committee considers and comments on the progress that has been made in implementing the recommendations from the scrutiny task and finish review of Education, Health and Care Plans (as detailed at **Appendix 1**).

**Councillor Sam Smith**  
**Cabinet Member, Education and Special Educational Needs & Disabilities**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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**Constitutional Comments (EKH 25/09/24)**

7. This report falls within the remit of the Children and Families Select Committee.

**Financial Comments (SS 19/09/24)**

8. There are no direct financial implications relating to the recommendations of this report.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act.

[Response to the recommendations from the scrutiny review of Education, Health and Care Plans – report to Cabinet on 21 December 2023](#)

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

CFS0030

## Appendix 1

### Updated response to the recommendations arising from the Children and Families Select Committee review of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

Overview Committee recommendation	Cabinet Decision	Original action (December 2023) to be taken (if any) and timescale for completion	Updated position as of September 2024
<p>1. That the Select Committee receives progress reports on the implementation of the activities being delivered to address the Areas for Improvement and Priority Action identified by the Area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities SEND Inspection of the Nottinghamshire Local Area Partnership.</p>	<p><b>Accept</b></p>	<p>The SEND Improvement Board are overseeing the progress of activities being delivered to address the Areas of Priority Action. Monthly updates are being provided to Select Committee members through Stakeholder Briefings following each SEND Improvement Board. Regular reports can also be received by Select Committee.</p>	<p>This regular oversight via Stakeholder Briefings continues and is shared regularly online <a href="#">Stakeholder Briefings</a></p>
<p>2. That the Council should take all available steps to maximise its partnership working with schools to ensure that mainstream educational settings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. participate fully in the early intervention agenda,</li> <li>ii. take advantage of the available support to achieve educational environments</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accept</b></p>	<p>Outcome 3 in Priority Area 1 of the SEND Improvement Priority Action Plan is dedicated to this recommendation. <i>‘Children and young people with additional needs, but without an EHC Plan, have their needs identified, met, and monitored effectively.’</i> A programme of work is planned and underway led by Dr. Órlaith Green, Group Manager, Psychology and Inclusion Services.</p>	<p><b>Better reporting data systems</b> are now in place to track outcomes and cohort data for children who have SEND but do not have an EHC Plan. This cohort is identified as SEN K or SEN Support and are mostly educated in mainstream schools, with additional support. Data for the SEN K cohort is now included in the <i>Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) SEND Monthly Report</i> and shortly will be included in the new NCC-Integrated Care Board (ICB) shared data dashboard <i>Children &amp; Young People [SID 2024]</i>.</p>

<p>that are as inclusive as possible for the widest range of children,</p> <p>iii. integrate children with SEND effectively and flexibly so that they do not experience periods of being outside school, and</p> <p>iv. maintain implemented SEN provision where it is required, to give parents and carers confidence that this provision will not be discontinued if a child accessing it does not have an EHCP.</p>	<p>Within the academic year 2023-2024 actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Piloting of a SEND funding tracker tool</b> with 2 families of schools (Started Nov 2023). This tool will help schools and NCC colleagues to track the allocation of High Level Needs (HLN) and Additional Family Needs (AFN) funding within mainstream schools.</li> <li>- <b>Multi-agency review of the Nottinghamshire Graduated Response</b> to include health, social care and early help colleagues (Action to start January 2024). School and settings representatives will be involved in this work.</li> <li>- <b>Direct work with District, Family and School SENCOs</b> to re-build confidence in the Nottinghamshire Graduated Response (Started November 2023).</li> </ul> <p>Group Managers from Education Learning and Inclusion are also working with NCC and ICB colleagues and educational setting representatives (Schools and Private, Voluntary and Independent Settings) to review and summarise the local <b>Early Years</b></p>	<p><b>New SEND funding strategies</b> are in place for mainstream schools as of September 2024, as per <a href="#">Changing the allocation process for delegated Additional Family Needs (AFN) SEND top-up funding to families of mainstream schools</a></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SEND funding tracker tool and fairer allocation of Additional Family Needs (AFN) funding to families of schools.</li> <li>2. Early Years Bridging funding – additional funding to support children with SEND transitioning into school from childcare and nursery settings.</li> </ol> <p><i>Family and School Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinators, SENCOs who were involved in piloting the SEND Funding tracker tool shared the following feedback 'Our inclusive schools will be able to provide more funding for children with SEND, in line with expectations across the county. The funding will more closely match the pupils in the school and support the inclusivity of that school. Ultimately, this will help to improve outcomes for our children with SEND.'</i></p> <p>During the academic year 2023-2024, 3 multi-agency deep dives of the local graduated response led to the creation of our new <b>SEND Journey Map - 'A guide to local support for children and young people with SEND in Nottinghamshire'</b>. This interactive map of local SEND processes across education, health and care will shortly be live on <a href="#">NottsHelpYourself, our Local Offer</a>.</p>
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			<p><b>Inclusion Processes</b> to clarify the support available to early years settings to support children with SEND who do not have EHC Plans as well as support more effective information sharing during transitions (Action already underway, to be completed by the end of January 2024).</p>	<p><i>As part of this outcome, school staff, parents/carers and young people have shared their experiences and ideas for improvement on the graduated response to supporting children with SEND in Nottinghamshire. 'It's a valuable resource... If I'd had this earlier, I'd have been armed with so much more information.'</i> (Parent of a Child with SEND)</p> <p>In June-July 2024, leaders and team members of the Educational Learning and Inclusion Department, Nottinghamshire County Council invited <b>school leaders from Nottinghamshire mainstream and special educational settings to join discussions about inclusive practice within our local educational provision.</b> The key review question was - <i>What are our school leaders' views and ideas to support inclusive practice for children and young people in our Nottinghamshire schools?</i> We facilitated 7 in-person workshop events at community venues in each of our Nottinghamshire Districts. Over 250 educational leaders attended to discuss what inclusive practice means to them, the current challenges they face in leading inclusive practice and ideas on how to address these challenges at a local, district level. <i>School leaders reported that they felt 'hopeful' and 'heard' as part of the ongoing collaborative engagement work.</i></p> <p>The summary report provides a summary of the views of educational leaders across Nottinghamshire, to inform strategic planning</p>
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				within the local area, including within the <a href="#">Local Area SEND Improvement Plan</a> . This report will also be formally presented to the <a href="#">Nottinghamshire SEND Partnership Assurance and Improvement Group</a> .
3.	That, as a result of the internal review of the Council's SEND offer, the appropriate measures and allocation of resources should be implemented to ensure that future service provision is sustainable in the context of increasing demand.	<b>Accept</b>	The service resource requirements have been increased to reflect increased demand and this will be monitored and reviewed through the budget setting cycles.	Funding review pending in Report of the Executive Director Children and Families – Resourcing to support improvements in the outcomes and experiences of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, 23 July 2024.
4.	That the Council engages with the local authorities that participated in the benchmarking exercise that are undertaking transformation activity for the improved delivery of EHC Assessments and Plans, to consider any further measures or approaches that could also be used effectively in Nottinghamshire.	<b>Accept</b>	As part of the SEND Improvement Plan there is a commitment to learn from other local authorities especially regarding timescales for new EHCPs, the Council has already engaged with several local authorities.	Ongoing support and guidance from other local authorities is being included in SEND Improvement work via <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local Authority SEND Regional Group</li> <li>- East Midlands Principal Educational Psychology Group and East Midlands Service Directors for Education Group</li> <li>- Regular guidance from Regional Department for Education SEND Advisor 'Nottinghamshire Integrated Children's Disability Service EHCP Assessment Team &amp; Educational Psychology Summary Report' 6.2.2024.</li> </ul>
5.	That the effectiveness and sustainability of the current cap on the time that Educational Psychologists	<b>Accept</b>	Current arrangement for Educational Psychology Service (EPS) capacity reviewed and validated via a new EPS activity audit completed in September	Ratio of EPS activity is regularly under review for effectiveness. The previously detailed arrangements continue to be moderated nationally and regionally through East

<p>employed directly by the Council spend on carrying out statutory assessments is reviewed, to ensure that it is set at the right level.</p>	<p>2023. Ratio of statutory work to early intervention work has been moderated nationally.</p> <p>Current ratio of EPS activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% Statutory Casework (New EHCP Assessments 45% and Other Statutory Assessments including tribunals and annual reviews 5%)</li> <li>• 35% Early Intervention School Casework (25% core and 10% traded)</li> <li>• 15% Essential Professional Requirements (e.g. Psychological Supervision, Continuing Professional Development, Supervising Trainee EPs)</li> <li>• Critical Incident support offer to all schools and educational settings continues to be a priority area of service delivery which is delivered immediately when required.</li> </ul> <p>Current strategy ensures 100% of available time allocated to EHC assessments, without reducing our core offer to schools and essential professional requirements for EPs to practice. The issue now is one of capacity, which will be addressed by the extension of the EPS establishment and additional use of locum EPs</p>	<p>Midlands Principal EP network. Ratio of core staff and locum working also moderates against our statistical neighbours in the region e.g. Derbyshire.</p> <p>Current impact data shows that the number of Educational Psychology EHC needs assessments continues to increase with additional capacity and streamlined processes, while the full range of EP early intervention work is valued and appreciated by schools and EPs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The number of children and young people waiting for educational psychology EHC needs assessments reduced from 359 in December 2023 to 265 in July 2024.</li> <li>- There is a significant increase in the number of educational psychology assessments completed each month; on average 124 children received an assessment each month in 2024 to date compared to 72 in 2021/22</li> <li>- Qualified and Trainee Educational Psychologists have all now been appointed for the service expansion of 9 Full Time Equivalent EPs by 2026. We continue to attract assistant and trainee EPs to our service. Staff retention also remains high, we have had only one EP leave our service this past academic year, due to a</li> </ul>
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			<p>Impact of our current strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% staff retention in the academic year 2021-2022. Our EPS is fully staffed. This compares well to our regional neighbours, some of whom are carrying 50% vacancies.</li> <li>• Protected EP time for early intervention work in schools to support confidence in the graduated response, inclusion in mainstream schools and schools' ability to meet needs outside of the EHCP process (SEND Improvement PAP - Outcome 3).</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Hartlepool Area SEND Inspection Outcome - Positive</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>'The educational psychology team is a strength of the area. The team provides school leaders with valuable advice, support and training. This directly contributes to the accurate assessment of children and young people's education, health and care needs.'</i></li> <li>• <i>'Leaders have made a significant investment in the educational psychology provision for the area. This investment means that children and young people benefit from accurate identification of needs and timely support'</i></li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Page 44 of 110</a></p>	<p>professional promotion not available to her in Nottinghamshire.</p>
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			<p>Sustainability of Impact: Our strategy is to increase efficiency of EP assessments and maintain EPS capacity for early intervention work in schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36% Increase in EP EHCP assessments completed by our core staff this year, without a staffing increase</li> <li>• New efficient assessment and report writing processes with 96% of internal EPS deadlines being met.</li> <li>• We are also using agency/locum EPs to reduce the backlog of 400+ assessments. Working on advice from Derbyshire EPS who cleared a similar backlog using locum staff. Additional locum contract with Skylakes/Sanctuary agency has been secured.</li> </ul>	
6.	That, to manage the demand for EHC Assessments effectively, consideration should be given to an increase in resources within the Educational Psychology Service for the provision of additional Educational Psychologists, to enable further early support to be implemented within mainstream educational settings.	<b>Accept</b>	<p>Expansion of our Educational Psychology Service has been approved – Cabinet Report: CF0078 EPS capacity 15.09.2023. The increase is planned as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional 9 Full Time Equivalent EPs – 3 per year for 3 years</li> <li>• Additional Trainee EP (TEP) placements aiming towards 3 x Year 2 TEPs and 3 x Year 3 TEPS asap. Recruitment</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Page 45 of 110</a></p>	<p>Qualified and Trainee Educational Psychologists have all now been appointed for the service expansion of 9 Full Time Equivalent EPs and 6 Trainee EPs by September 2026.</p> <p>Full details are contained in the decision report <i>Building and Securing the Future Capacity of the Council's Educational Psychology Service – Update April 2024.</i></p>

			processes are currently underway.	
7.	That effective assurance and audit processes should be maintained to ensure that all statutory assessments and EHC Plans are produced to a high standard and within the required timescales.	<b>Accept</b>	Senior practitioners with the EHC assessment team carry out quality assurance checks of all new draft and amended EHCPs. This is done by using a digital form that collates strengths and areas for improvement.	<p>Independent SEND consultants are currently supporting the NCC Integrated Children's Disabilities Service leadership to review efficacy of our quality assurance and quality control processes. A new report is in preparation, presenting a process review and suggested improvements.</p> <p>Further improvements in the quality of our EHC Plans is needed; quality control and quality assurance pose an increasing challenge with increasing numbers of EHC Plans. This process needs full engagement from all professionals across education, health and care services who contribute to the EHC assessment and review process.</p>
8.	That it should be ensured that schools, parents and carers are communicated with regularly, clearly and in good time by the Council during the EHC Assessment and Plan development process (making full use of the EHC Hub), particularly if it becomes apparent that an EHC Assessment or Plan will not be completed within the statutory deadline.	<b>Accept</b>	At the point of an EHC Needs Assessment being agreed the EHC assessment team explains in writing that there may be a delay in completing the statutory assessment due to current capacity issues within the Educational Psychology Service (EPS). Further communication is sent at 8 weeks and 20 weeks if required.	This additional communication with parents and carers relating to delays in EHC assessments continues. As waiting times have reduced, services report reduced numbers of complaints from parents and carers relating to EHC assessment delays.
9.	That parents and carers should have a clear and	<b>Accept</b>	The local authority has established SEND education pathway officers who	SEND Education Pathway Officers are now in place. They have been having structured

	accessible point of contact at the Council for queries and support during the process of applying for an EHC Plan.		make contact with parents and carers when they apply for an EHC Needs assessment. These posts have been created to ensure children and young people receive the right support at the right time. When an EHC Needs assessment is agreed, children and young people are allocated to an EHC Co-ordinator who will oversee the process for parents and carers. They make contact, by telephone or email, to explain the next steps in more detail.	conversations with education settings 95% of the time to date, at the point at which a request for an EHC assessment is received. Structured conversations have also been recorded for parents/carers since June 2024. For decisions due in July 2024, conversations with parents/carers were held 93% of the time. Monthly figures will fluctuate at times, due to school holidays.
10.	That the Council should work closely with individual educational settings to ensure that the EHC Plan annual reviews are carried out with the right level of participation from health partners, other professionals and the relevant Council officers, and are completed within the required deadlines.	<b>Accept</b>	Annual review dates are available on the EHC Hub. All educational settings are contacted to remind them of their responsibility to complete the annual review within timescale. An escalation process, providing support and challenge has been established for settings that miss key deadlines. Further workstreams regarding participation are due to be reviewed as part of the priority action plan.	To improve annual review performance, the local authority will be using additional resources to continue to improve partnership working and offer support and challenge to educational settings to ensure that the annual review timescales are met.  Between April-May 2024, 20% of families involved in an Annual Review responded to a survey. 48% felt the right people attended the Annual Review of their child's EHC Plan.
11.	That, where an annual review concludes that the EHC Plan should be updated, the Council ensures that the amended EHC Plan is completed in a timely way.	<b>Accept</b>	There has been a significant investment to secure additional EHCP writers in the EHC assessment team. These have been secured to ensure that the local authority can meet the 12-week timescale for amendments to take place.	Improvements are underway; in June 2023, the local authority secured 6 EHC plan writers in to carry out the amendments to EHCPs following their annual review. In 2023, 2005 EHCPs required amendments and 76.4% have been amended and finalised within 12 weeks of the annual review meeting compared to 55% in 2022. 100% of agreed EHC plan amendments following annual review have been completed in timescale in the month of July 2024.





7 October 2024

Agenda Item: 6

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
AND THE CHIEF NURSE, NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE  
INTEGRATED CARE BOARD**

**PARTNERSHIP PROGRESS IN IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCES AND  
OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL  
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES - UPDATE**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update to Committee on the progress made by the Nottinghamshire local area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Partnership in implementing improvements to the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.

**Information**

2. Progress reports were presented to Committee on 16 October 2023, 5 February 2024, 15 April 2024 and 15 July 2024, outlining the activity of the Nottinghamshire Local Area Partnership to deliver the joint SEND Improvement Plan, which was developed in response to the [findings](#) of the Ofsted/CQC local area SEND inspection that took place in January/February 2023.
3. 'Local area partnership' refers to those in education, health and care who are responsible for the strategic planning, commissioning, management, delivery and evaluation of arrangements for children and young people with SEND who live in a local area. This therefore includes the local authority and integrated care board (ICB), as well as wider partners, such as local health and education providers.
4. Per the SEND Improvement Plan, there are six key outcomes that the Nottinghamshire Local Area Partnership is seeking to achieve, split across two 'Areas for Priority Action':
  - a. *Area for Priority Action 1 (APA1): Leaders, NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board and education, health and care providers should cooperate to urgently identify, assess and provide for the needs of children and young people with SEND. This includes assessment of needs, timely issuing of Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans and holistic oversight of these plans through annual reviews.*
    - Outcome 1: Children and young people with SEND in Nottinghamshire have their needs identified and assessed in a timely way through statutory processes.

- Outcome 2: Ensure our children and young people with SEND receive robust and consistent support through their EHC Plans, which have the right input, at the right time and from the right place.
  - Outcome 3: Children and young people with additional needs, but without an EHC Plan, have their needs identified, met, and monitored effectively.
- b. *Area for Priority Action 2 (APA2): Leaders, including commissioners and providers, should act urgently to identify and address the delays and gaps in access to some health services, particularly speech and language therapy, neurodevelopmental pathways and equipment services. They should also ensure that they use available performance data to identify where gaps exist and whether actions taken to address these are effective.*
- Outcome 4: The needs of children and families with SEND are clearly understood so that immediate and long-term changes to health service provision can be made through effective joint commissioning.
  - Outcome 5: Children and young people receive timely assessment and treatment offer for assessment by the Neurodevelopmental Support Team Service (NST) (formerly known as the Neurodevelopmental Behaviour Service).
  - Outcome 6: Children, young people and families with SEND experience services that are easy to navigate, free from duplication and are adaptive to their needs.
5. These outcomes are underpinned by additional requirements for the Partnership to ensure there is a stronger focus on embedding data, quality assurance, co-production and shared leadership and governance across all SEND improvement activity.

### **Local Area SEND Inspections**

6. As outlined in Part 3 of the [area SEND inspection framework](#), local areas judged to have widespread and/or systemic concerns following a full inspection will receive a monitoring inspection by Ofsted and the CQC around 18 months after the publication of the initial inspection outcome letter. For Nottinghamshire, this was anticipated to be during the second half of the Autumn Term. However, following an [announcement](#) by Ofsted on 3 September 2024, regulators are undertaking a review of the current area SEND inspection framework and will therefore be pausing all monitoring inspections until this review has been completed. Nottinghamshire can expect to meet with regulators in the autumn term, where further guidance on plans for monitoring inspections can be expected. A full reinspection will still be due within 3 years, anticipated to take place in early 2026.
7. The local area partnership remains committed to timely improvement and robust inspection readiness, in spite of Ofsted's recent announcement. A range of activity has been underway to prepare for inspection, including:
- The development of a self-evaluation framework, enabling the partnership to assess both the achievements and ongoing areas of improvement;
  - Routine scrutiny and review of progress against each Outcome across APA1 and APA2, ensuring there is a clear narrative across the Partnership of the improvement journey to date;
  - The ongoing collation of evidence, demonstrating the progress made against each domain of the Priority Action Plan;

- Evaluation processes have been undertaken for both the SEND Partnership Improvement Board and SEND Executive Leadership Group, to understand their effectiveness and opportunities to strengthen their governance arrangements. There is an ambition to extend this process further to the Partnership Assurance and Improvement Group (PAIG);
- A focussed 'inspection readiness' session was held by representatives of the local area partnership on 14 August 2024, facilitated by the Independent Chair of the SEND Partnership Improvement Board;
- The Department for Education and NHS England (NHSE) led on a local area 'Deep Dive' on 06 September 2024, enabling the partnership to prepare for scrutiny conversations regarding progress to date. The DfE and NHSE will provide written feedback, due in late September, to support inspection readiness and ongoing improvement.

## **SEND Stocktake**

8. As part of routine assurance and oversight processes, the DfE and NHSE undertook a six-monthly Stocktake with the Partnership on 07 June 2024, which involved a strategic review of progress and assessment of the partnership's governance arrangements. Stocktake feedback was received on 2 July 2024:
  - a) Improvements in the governance structures and programme reporting has enabled greater monitoring, oversight and evidence of trajectory of progress across the local area SEND system;
  - b) Leaders have committed to additional investment to support improvements to education, health and care plan (EHCP) assessment process. More children and young people are now receiving EHCP within 20 weeks despite an increase in the number of requests;
  - c) The local area partnership are utilising data more efficiently to understand local context and performance, in order to identify where gaps exist and whether actions taken to address these are effective. Leaders can demonstrate improvements with waiting times for Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and some Neurodevelopmental and Community Paediatrician services;
  - d) Co-production continues to improve with collaborative working between leaders and the Parent Carer Forum, in addition to the new SEND parent carer reference group, Young Pioneer's links and engagement events attended by leaders and local families. This has enabled stronger co-production to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND;
  - e) There is further work for the Partnership to undertake in relation to: the partnership's SEND communication and engagement strategy; recovery plans for Speech and Language Therapy; timeliness and quality assurance process of annual reviews; consolidation of learning by the Partnership ahead of future inspections.

## **Partnership Progress To Date**

Outcome 1 (APA1): Children and Young People with SEND in Nottinghamshire have their needs identified and assessed in a timely way through statutory processes

9. The demand for statutory Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessments continues to increase, both locally and nationally.

- a. **Nottinghamshire:** Between January-July 2024, 1,081 requests for an EHC assessment were received, which is 21.2% higher than the 892 requests received between January-July 2023.
- b. **National:** there was a 20.8% increase in the number of initial requests for an EHC plan during 2023, compared to 2022. This aligns with the 11.4% increase in the number of children and young people with an EHC Plan in January 2024 compared to 2023, with annual increases reported nationally since 2014.

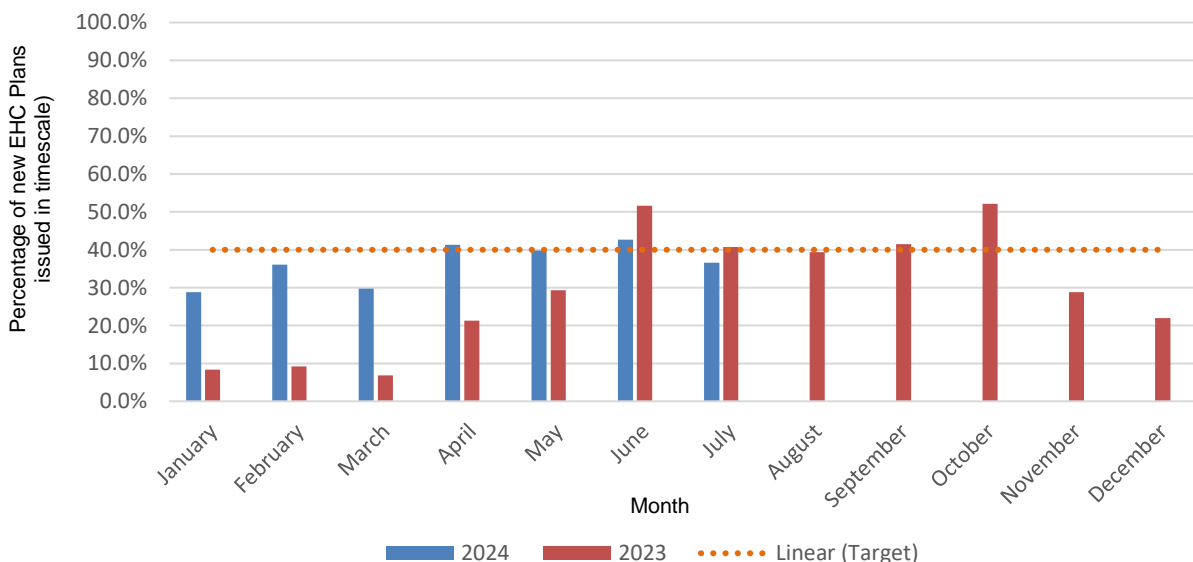
10. The proportion of new Education, Health and Care Plans issued within statutory timescales (20 weeks) continues to increase in Nottinghamshire, in line with the national picture:

a. **Nottinghamshire:**

- i. New EHC plans issued in timescale during a calendar year has improved significantly in the first 7 months of 2024 compared to 2023, up from 21.23% from January-July 2023 to 35.97% from January-July 2024. This falls just short of Nottinghamshire’s aim to issue 40% of new EHCPs on time by July 2024.
- ii. By comparison, Nottinghamshire issued just 4.5% of new EHCPs within 20 weeks during 2022.

Figure 1: Percentage of new EHC Plans issues in timescale in Nottinghamshire (excluding exceptions) – 2023 and 2024 (year-to-date)

Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
2024	28.8%	36.1%	29.7%	41.3%	39.8%	42.7%	36.6%						36.0%
2023	8.4%	9.2%	6.8%	21.3%	29.3%	51.6%	40.7%	39.4%	41.5%	52.1%	28.8%	22.0%	24.8%



- b. **National:** in 2023, 50.3% of new EHC plans were issued within 20 weeks. This is an increase compared to 2022 when the figure was 49.2%.

11. In turn, our statutory SEND services have issued an additional 288 EHCPs (63.0% increase) between January-July 2024 compared to the same period in 2023. This has been supported by the additional, temporary capacity within services to enable more plans to be issued.

12. We are completing more assessments, more quickly and waiting times have reduced. Performance and output have increased significantly. However, there is further work to do to manage the rising demand and continue to strengthen service performance. Activity is underway to address this:
- a. Support from SEND sector-specialists, providing additional leadership around SEND improvement for a 6-month period. Nationally recognised SEND consultants commenced in August 2024 to review internal processes, undertake thematic analysis, review the quality of plans and assess the capacity of the service;
  - b. Undertaking a full-service review of statutory SEND services from Quarter 2 2024/25, seeking to embed a more strengths-based relational approach, with a greater focus on providing the right support at the right time for children. A full review of the service model is anticipated to enable better organisational resilience, thus improving our ability to meet changes in demand and improve families' experience (reduced complaints and tribunal activity and improved satisfaction ratings). This review includes working closely with health provider colleagues, who contribute to the EHCP process;
  - c. Progressing an Educational Psychology Service (EPS) contract extension with Skylakes until the end of this financial year (31 March 2025). A longer-term contract from April 2025 onwards is also being explored in conjunction with the forecasted demand for assessments and the optimum acceptable waiting time. This extension will support the timeliness of EHC needs assessments, providing additional capacity for the Educational Psychology Service to meet rising demand;
  - d. Improving understanding, public confidence and application of the 'graduated approach', primarily in education settings. The graduated approach seeks to ensure families, children and young people receive the right support at the right time prior to applying for an EHC assessment;
  - e. Ensuring that local authority decision-making as part of the EHCP process is more effective.

Outcome 2 (APA1): Ensure our children and young people with SEND receive robust and consistent support through their EHC Plans, which have the right input, at the right time and from the right place

13. Following EHC needs assessment - and where the establishment of an EHC plan has been deemed appropriate - Annual Reviews are completed to ensure the children and young people continue to have the correct provision in place.
14. 'Right Input, Right Place': Annual Reviews are centred around the child or young person and depend on multiple agencies interacting effectively. Improvement activity has been underway to strengthen relationships and understanding across partners who contribute to effective Annual Reviews.
- a. Plans for improvements to local quality assurance testing, including activity to review the quality of plan writing and training requirements, are underway. Changes to the NCC sample selection and actions to support embedding the framework more widely across health are also being considered.

15. 'Right Time': Annual Review performance:

- a) Over the last six years the number of EHCPs that the Local Authority maintains has increased significantly. As the number of EHCPs grow, so therefore does the number of Annual Reviews.

Figure 2: Active EHC Plans and Active EHC Plans rate per 10,000 (0-25 population)

**Active EHC Plans**

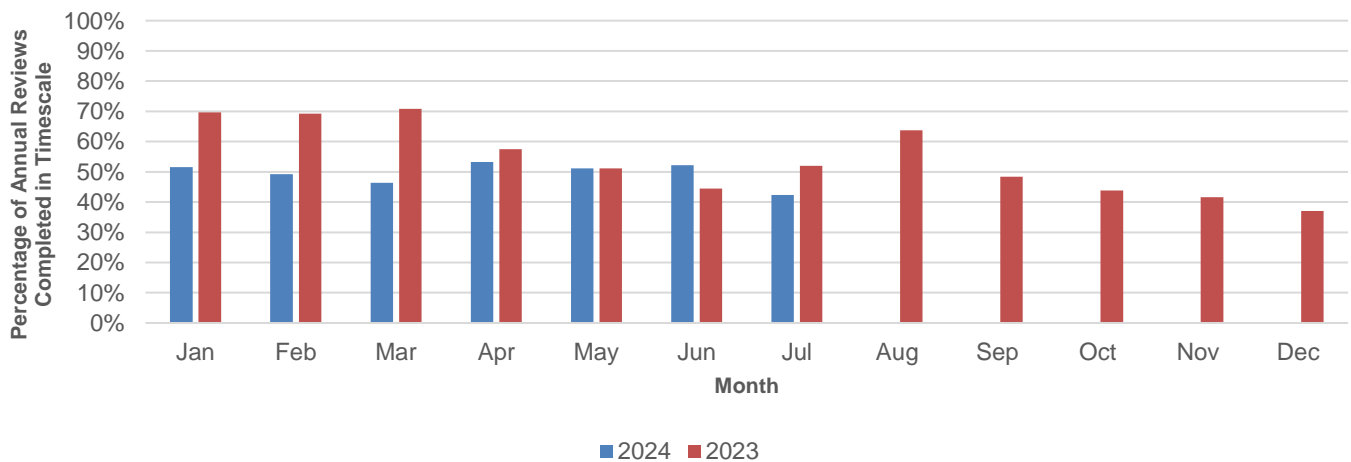
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 year-to-date
Nottinghamshire	2825	2991	3033	3360	3741	4859
Statistical Neighbours	52528	57159	63445	69326	74959	
England	353995	390109	430697	473255	517026	

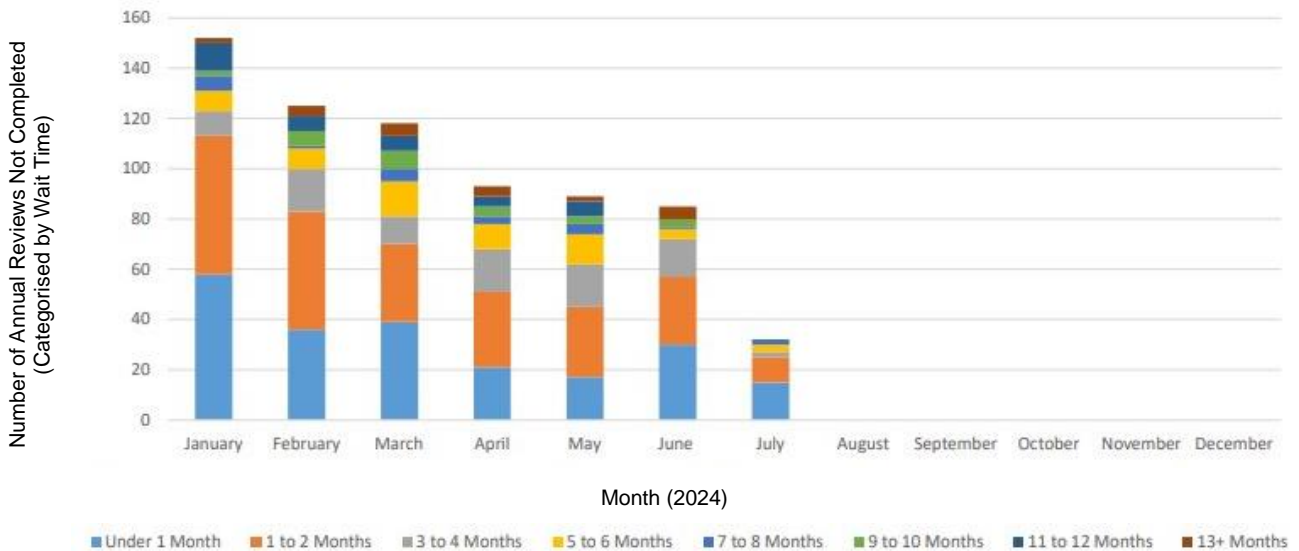
**Active EHC Plans Rate per 10,000 0 to 25 Population**

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 year-to-date
Nottinghamshire	123.0	130.2	132.0	146.3	162.8	211.5
Statistical Neighbours	215.1	234.1	259.8	283.9	307.0	
England	206.4	227.4	251.1	275.9	301.4	

- b) Between January-July 2024, 2680, Annual Reviews have been due for completion, compared to 2169 between January-July 2024 (an increase of 23.56%).
- c) The number of annual reviews completed in timescale are lower in 2024 compared with 2023, with an average of 46.1% completed in time between January- July 2024 compared to 52.7% during the same period in 2023.

Figure 3: Percentage of Annual Reviews completed in timescale





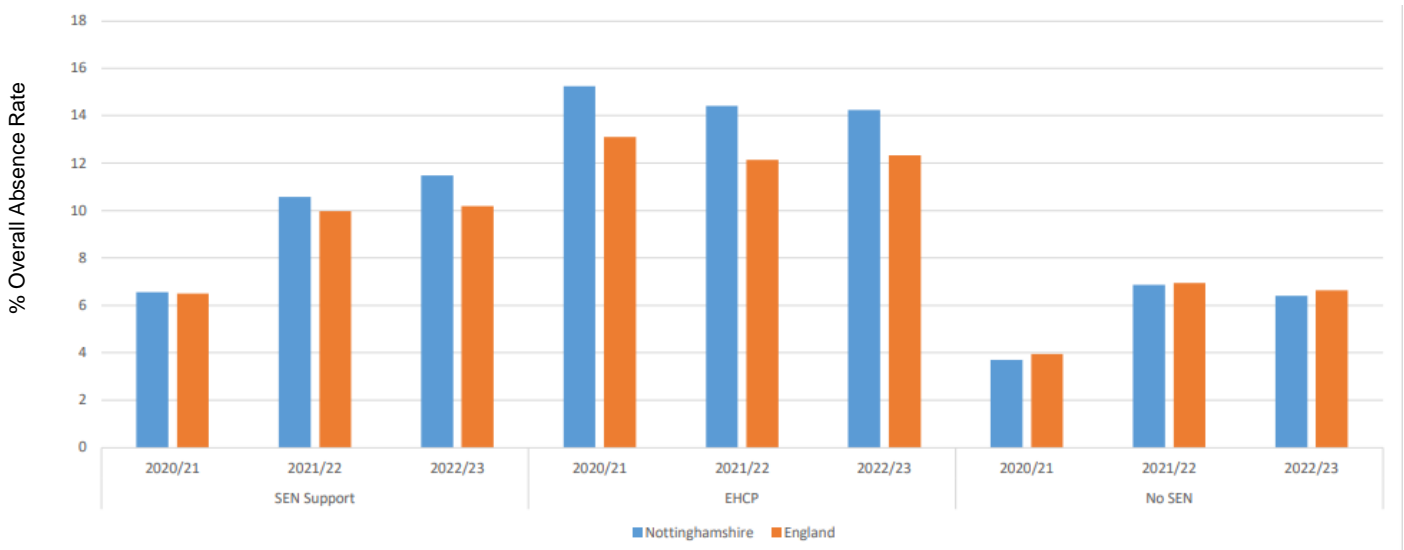
d) The 2024 year-to-date performance of 46.1% is almost half of the committed target of 80%. This is also down compared to 2023, where the average percentage of completion was 53.3%.

- Activity to better engage partners in the Annual Review process is ongoing, with work underway to explore new quality assessment tools. There remains a focus on measuring the impact of improvement activity, particularly the impact on the experiences of children, young people, and families.

Outcome 3 (APA1): Children and young people with additional needs, but without an EHC Plan, have their needs identified, met, and monitored effectively.

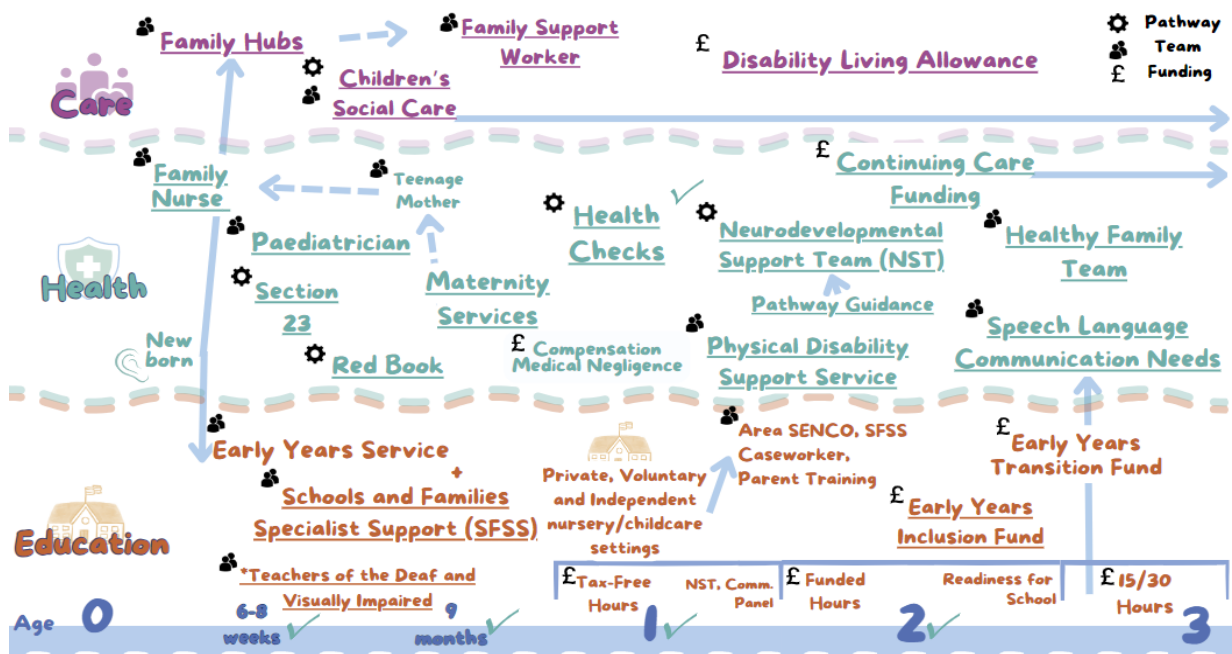
- Children and young people receiving SEN support (but without an EHC Plan) account for around 80% of our overall SEN population. EHC Plans utilise statutory processes to formalise the assessment and provision of support to our children and young people with SEND. For many years, children and young people in Nottinghamshire have been able to access additional support in educational settings (e.g. additional funding, input from specialist services) without the need for an EHC Plan, resulting in us having a lower number of EHC Plans when compared nationally.
- We now have better shared systems to jointly track and monitor the SEN Support cohort of children and young people across our Local Area Partnership. SEN Support cohort descriptors and outcome data is now shared regularly through our SEND Monthly report and included in our quarterly SEND Intelligence report.
- An example of one of these new datasets is shown. It enables us to better understand the SEN Support cohort progress alongside our other cohort of children.

Figure 5 - Overall absence rate for pupils with SEN Support / EHCP / No SEN



20. Our multi-agency deep dives of the graduated response have led to the creation of our new SEND Journey Map - 'A guide to local support for children and young people with SEND in Nottinghamshire'. This interactive map of local SEND processes across education, health and care is to be live on NottsHelpYourself, our Local Offer. 43 parents, carers and young people have been directly involved in shaping our SEND Journey Map. As part of this outcome, school staff, parents/carers and young people have also shared their experiences and ideas for improvement on the graduated response to meeting SEND in Nottinghamshire.

Figure 6 - Excerpt from the new SEND Journey Map, to be available on NottsHelpYourself



21. Activity remains ongoing to ensure that the impact of improvement activity is being measured, including the impact on the experiences of children, young people and families.



22. School engagement events have taken place in all 7 districts to develop an action plan that promotes inclusive practice. School leaders feel 'hopeful' and 'heard' as part of the ongoing collaborative engagement work around supporting inclusive practice in our local education settings. Over 250 school leaders attended 7 in-person events hosted by NCC Education Learning and Inclusion in June-July 2024.

Outcome 4 (APA2): The needs of children and families with SEND are clearly understood so that immediate and long-term changes to health service provision can be made through effective joint commissioning

23. Collaboration between the Partnership and local providers and services continues to facilitate the development of a centralised SEND System dataset, allowing for regular reporting of key metrics to relevant boards and subgroups, detailing local understanding of services and experiences for children, young people and their families with SEND in Nottinghamshire. A SEND data dashboard has been also developed, bringing together data and intelligence from across the Partnership to enable a better understanding of the local SEND population, providing oversight and assurance of provision and of experiences. It also provides an evidence-base to inform future commissioning intentions. A governance structure to ensure this is utilised and is meaningful has been identified. The SEND dashboard will be accessible to Nottingham and Nottinghamshire system partners, enabling them to see regular updates in relation to performance and outcomes and ensure that any emerging issues are identified and escalated promptly.
24. A system-wide Nottingham and Nottinghamshire SEND Joint Commissioning Strategy 2024-27 has been developed and was approved by Cabinet in July 2024; this sets out the local area partnership's vision, outcomes and key actions to improve the lived experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families. Publication of the Strategy is expected in September 2024, pending approval from Nottingham City Council. A governance route for the annual delivery plan to be reviewed has been agreed. New opportunities for joint commissioning will be identified utilising an evidence-based approach through the SEND Data Dashboard and feedback from children, young people and families.
25. Changes have been made in relation to Partnership-held contracts to ensure that SEND quality and performance is reported against both numerically and in relation to the experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families. Reports for 2024/25 have so far been received during Quarter 2 for Community Specialist Therapy Services and are expected in Quarter 4 for all services. Reports are expected to be shared bi-annually thereafter.
26. Work continues to be undertaken in relation to the embedding of our quality assurance frameworks with health providers, in line with contractual requirements. A Partnership-developed Quality Assurance Outcomes Framework is being utilised by health providers. This is aligned with what is utilised by statutory services within the local authority.
27. 'Vital signs' are being co-developed between the partnership and those with lived experience to provide 'at a glance' reporting, which will be shared through identified governance routes to highlight areas of challenge and opportunity, and to inform more in-depth data deep dives where required.

28. Engagement with families continues to be undertaken to understand, from the perspective of those with lived experience, areas of concern and challenge so that improvement measures can be put in place that are reflective of their voice.

Outcome 5 (APA2): Children and Young People receive timely assessment and treatment offer for assessment by the Neurodevelopmental Support Team (NST)

29. Development and improvement activity in relation to the review of the neurodevelopmental pathway continues to focus on ensuring improved experiences for children, young people and their families. The work undertaken to date to support the neurodevelopmental pathway has cumulated in a reduction in average wait times from 68 weeks in December 2023 to 54 weeks in July 2024 for NST.
30. Activity includes:
- a. An extensive review of the neurodevelopmental pathway, which has led to the recruitment of additional staff to the NST. As a result, children and families are now experiencing shorter wait times for assessments - average waiting times have steadily decreased in the last year from 62 weeks in July 23 to 54 weeks in July 2024, surpassing the planned trajectory of 59 weeks for July 2024 by 5 weeks. Notably, the current wait time of 54 weeks is a significant reduction since the peak in referrals in December 2023, which resulted in average wait times of 68 weeks at that time. Based on the current progress, the assessment waiting time is therefore expected to be below the planned trajectory of 50 weeks by the end of December 2024.
  - b. Significant engagement with families, children and young people has informed a broader understanding of the lived experience of people accessing these services. Feedback has resulted in children and families now being supported through the introduction of resources to ensure they can 'wait well', along with the introduction of referral pathway infographics and monthly newsletters providing the latest wait times and resource support information.
  - c. Implementation of the e-referral process to facilitate direct onward referrals from NST to Community Paediatrics has commenced, reducing wait times for families and unnecessary GP appointments.
  - d. A joint case review with CAMHS/NST has been implemented to ensure the primary need of the child/young person is identified promptly, be it a neurodevelopmental or mental health need. This approach helps to prevent the child or young person from being passed between different services, thereby ensuring they receive the appropriate care more efficiently.
  - e. Young people (17+) transitions to adults services have been addressed; previously, this cohort could not access either Community Paediatrics or the adult service due to their age. This gap in provision has now been addressed and these young people are now transitioned to the adult service at 17+, maintaining their position on the wait list and preventing them from falling to the bottom of the adult service wait list at 18 years and a subsequent extended wait time.

- f. A Notts Care Record access pilot within NST has commenced, with phase one giving NST access to GP records; this is speeding up the assessment process and reducing waiting times by eliminating inappropriate or duplicated referrals.
  - g. The implementation of the Vanderbilt Questionnaire as part of the pre-assessment process to reduce waits further (impact to be monitored).
  - h. Some of the key priorities and implementation of the neurodevelopmental pathway review recommendations throughout 2024/25 are to include:
    - A review of demand & capacity within Community Paediatrics across Nottingham University Hospitals, Bassetlaw Hospitals and Sherwood Forest Hospital.
    - An in-depth review of the neurodevelopmental services within Doncaster & Bassetlaw HealthCare Trust.
    - A review of the Tics & Tourette's service for children and young people.
    - A review of pre-and post-diagnostic support across neurodevelopmental services.
    - Community and Primary Care education - implement awareness campaigns within the community across Nottingham & Nottinghamshire to inform families, educators, and healthcare providers about early signs of neurodevelopmental concerns and the pathway process.
31. Improvements continue to be made to communications with children, young people and families who are waiting. Information detailing support for families is sent at the point of referral receipt, again at point of triage and via monthly newsletters.
32. The NST improvement plan is available upon request, outlining ongoing and planned actions as part of the neurodevelopmental pathway review.

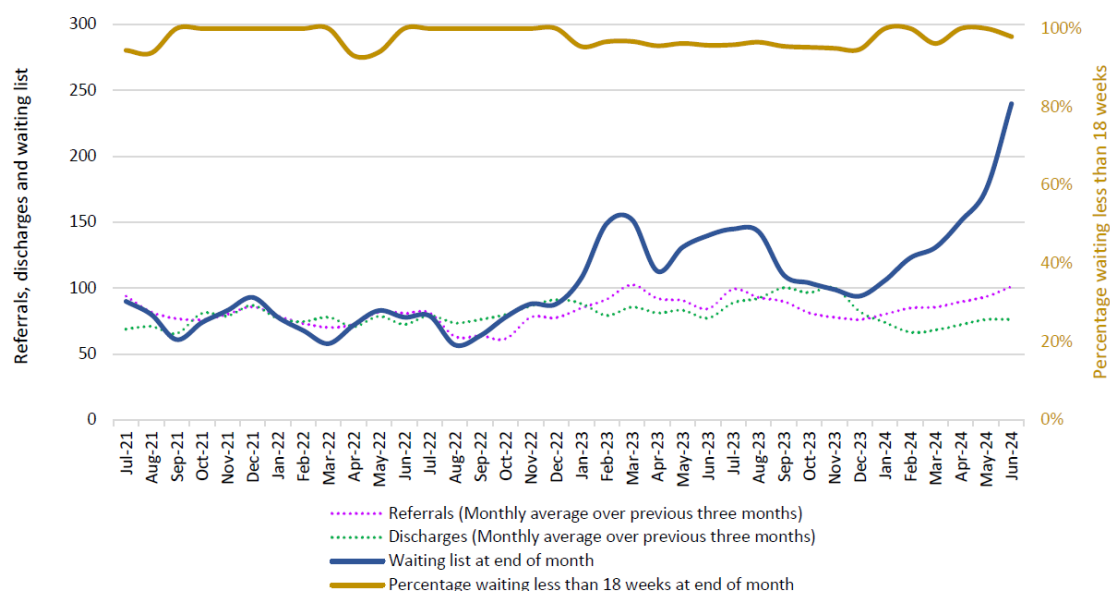
Outcome 6 (APA2): Children, young people and families with SEND experience services that are easy to navigate, free from duplication and are adaptive to their needs

33. A redesign of local Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) Specialist Services has reduced wait times to below 18 weeks in the Complex Care Pathway and the Community Care Pathway and to below 40 weeks in the Autism Pathway. Additional capacity has been recruited to support families during their wait time, through the implementation of a dedicated advice line (live from 1 July 2024), and drop-in sessions held in Family Hubs (sessions held weekly from 1 July 2024). This is in line with recommendations made by families accessing or waiting to access service provision.
34. Demand continues to outstrip capacity within the Autism Pathway of the Specialist SCLN services; total referrals in April 2024 (534) are 21.9% higher than in April 2023 (438). Discharges are lower (4.1%), meaning caseloads are considerably higher. To support the service, additional therapists have been recruited utilising short-term funding to support in this area, and a review of the current pathway from a whole-system perspective is being undertaken by an external speech and language therapist (SLT) consultant, with recommendations for change expected in September 2024. These recommendations will

be triangulated with the recommendations made by those with lived experience to support the redesigned service from April 2025 (in line with contractual start dates).

35. Following formal approval by Cabinet in July 2024 of recurrent funding being available for a period of four years, the Partnership is working towards the development of a locality-based, needs-led SLCN service. This service will be designed utilising a robust data evidence base, the recommendations made by families and professionals, and the recommendations made by the SLT consultant-led review. All current local SLCN service contracts come to an end in March 2025. The new, jointly commissioned service will be implemented in line with the new contract development.
36. Following recommendations made by families during extensive engagement, a training offer has been developed to support education colleagues identify speech, language and communication needs at the earliest opportunity.
37. Wait times for Specialist Occupational Therapy (OT) remain under 18 weeks and the waiting list at the end of March 2024 (121) is 19.1% lower than at the end of March 2023 (150)<sup>1</sup>.

Figure 7 – Combined view of average monthly referrals, average monthly discharges, month end waiting lists and percentages at month end waiting less than 18 weeks

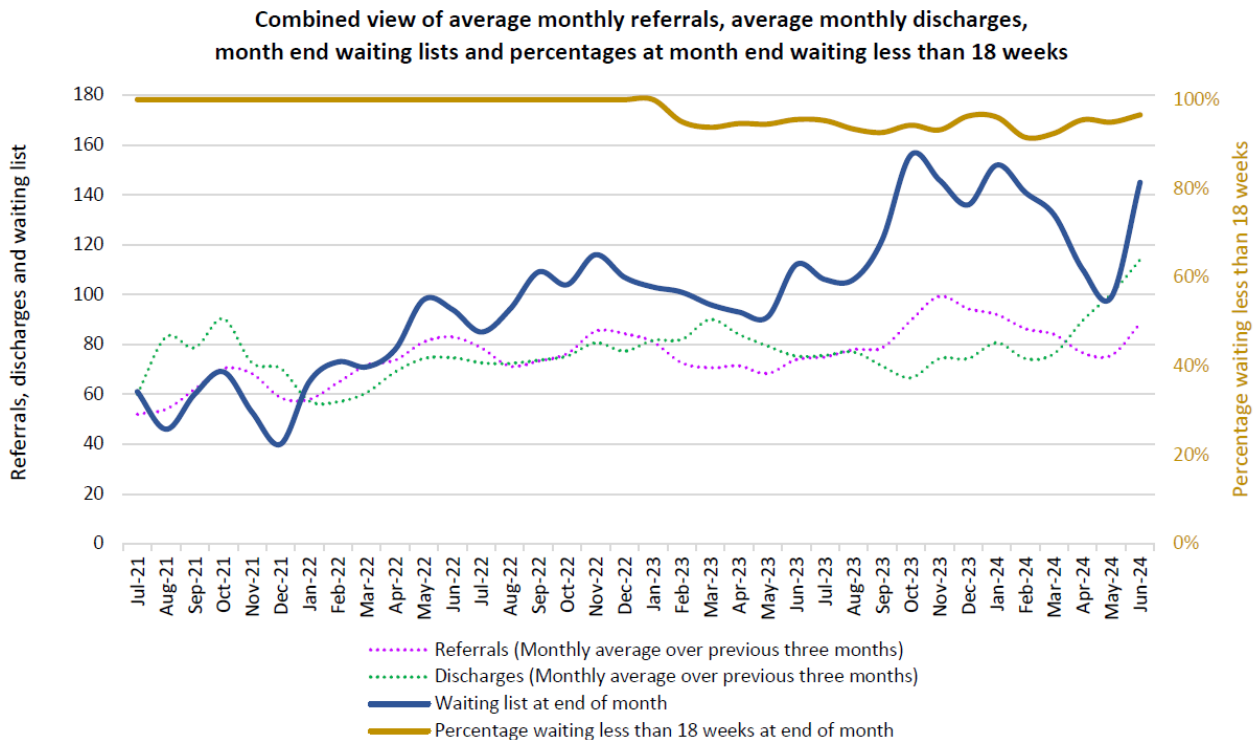


38. Wait times for local authority OT services (ICDS) remain long. A service review is being undertaken, with the view to recommendation being developed for a full-service redesign. This will take feedback from families, children and young people into consideration, specifically around the number of contacts with therapists to reduce duplication.
39. Following engagement with families and professionals, a mapping exercise was undertaken to support the broader understanding of the different services available to support children and young people with SEND OT needs in Nottinghamshire. An infographic has been developed that outlines the differences in roles and responsibilities

<sup>1</sup> This refers to health commissioned services. A data review for County Council commissioned services is underway and expected for completion by the end of June 2024

of OTs within the system, and signposts to the most appropriate services for an individual's needs. This will be shared widely with families and professionals in Nottinghamshire, alongside wider system mapping work.

40. Wait times for Specialist Physiotherapy services remains under 18 weeks. The number of children and young people waiting over 13 weeks at the end of March 2024 (5) is 50.0% lower than at the end of March 2023 (10).



41. Following feedback from young people having gone through transitions processes, a framework has been developed and is being embedded within Trusts to ensure there is a smooth transition from paediatric to adult services that is as positive an experience as possible.
42. Following feedback from young people - both at the time of inspection and during regular engagement since - there has been a focus with health providers on ensuring a smooth and positive experience when transitioning from paediatric health services to adult services. To support this, a health-focused Transitions Network is under development to maintain oversight of transitions from this perspective, with remit to expand this once developed to encompass all 'preparing for adulthood' activity. The first meeting will be held in September 2024 and will focus on the drafting of a system-wide Transitions Strategy. A quality outcomes framework for providers supporting young people to transition from paediatric health services to adult health services has been developed and is currently in use by community providers. Work is underway to embed this into acute providers as a contractual requirement.
43. Through engagement with families, a gap in current provision for SEN children and young people was identified; funding was therefore secured to support the development of an integrated sleep pathway across Nottinghamshire, free from duplication and gaps in offer. A service model has been agreed and will go live from October 2024. This model includes amendments to referral pathways to support timelier access to sleep support, additional

specialist sleep practitioner capacity within acute trusts, the implementation of a sleep support helpline and a system-wide training contract being implemented with nationally recognised experts. It is anticipated that this service will reduce the cost of training local professionals in sleep support by 15%, as well as supporting earlier identification of sleep disturbances and earlier, enhanced intervention. The service will be community focused, accessible and aim to de-medicalise sleep issues in children and young people by reducing the use of melatonin as the first line intervention.

### Leadership & Strategic Development

44. The [Nottinghamshire SEND Strategy](#) has now been published, following approval at Cabinet on 25 July 2024. A communications plan has been developed to support the launch and roll out of the strategy for September 2024. The Strategy is underpinned by an annual delivery plan, running initially for the period August 2024 – March 2025. The draft delivery plan will be considered by the Nottinghamshire SEND Partnership Assurance and Improvement Group on 30 September 2024.
45. The Nottinghamshire SEND Local Area Partnership continues to work collaboratively to undertake a self-evaluation and analysis of the partnership's progress, as well as understanding the impact of work being driven forward to meet the needs of our SEND population. A self-evaluation framework (SEF) enables the partnership to identify current strengths and areas for development as part of a continuous cycle of monitoring improvements and seeking assurances, when meeting the need of our children and young people with SEND. Timescales to deliver and co-produce the SEF are being agreed to support a first draft by the end of September 2024.

### **Other Options Considered**

46. No other options have been considered.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

47. The local area partnership is committed to improving the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND and will continue to focus on implementing the improvement plan and wider improvement arrangements moving forwards.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

48. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Financial Implications**

49. Local authority costs associated with the improvement programme and associated partnership governance arrangements have been subject to the relevant approvals in line with financial regulations.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That the Children and Families Select Committee:

- 1) consider and comment on the content of the report in relation to progress with the required improvements.
- 2) agrees to receive a further update on progress on SEND improvement activity in December 2024.

**Colin Pettigrew**  
**Executive Director, Children and Families**

**Rosa Waddingham**  
**Chief Nurse, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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## **Constitutional Comments (LPW 25/09/24)**

50. The recommendations fall within the remit of the Children and Families Select Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

## **Financial Comments (SS 24/09/24)**

51. Local authority costs associated with the improvement programme and associated partnership governance arrangements have been subject to the relevant approvals in line with financial regulations.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

[Improving the experiences and outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities](#) - report to Cabinet on 25 May 2023

[Progress in Improving the Experiences and Outcomes for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities](#) – report to Cabinet on 22 June 2023

[Partnership Progress In Improving The Experiences And Outcomes For Children And Young People With Special Educational Needs And Disabilities](#) – Report to Children and Families Select Committee on 16 October 2023

[Partnership Progress in Improving the Experiences and Outcomes for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities](#) – Report to Children and Families Select Committee on 5 February 2024

[Partnership Progress in Improving the Experiences and Outcomes for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities](#) – Report to Children and Families Select Committee on 15 April 2024

[Partnership Progress in Improving the Experiences and Outcomes for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities](#) – Report to Children and Families Select Committee on 15 July 2024

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

CFS0028





7 October 2024

Agenda Item: 7

**REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND  
THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL  
NEEDS AND DISABILITIES**

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENTAL PERFORMANCE, RISKS AND  
FINANCIAL POSITION – QUARTER 1 2024-25**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide the Committee with a summary of Children and Families Department's performance against the Ambitions set out in the Annual Delivery Plan.
2. To provide the Committee with a summary of Children and Families Department's key departmental risks.
3. To provide the Committee with a summary of the Children and Families Department's financial position for the current financial year.

**Information**

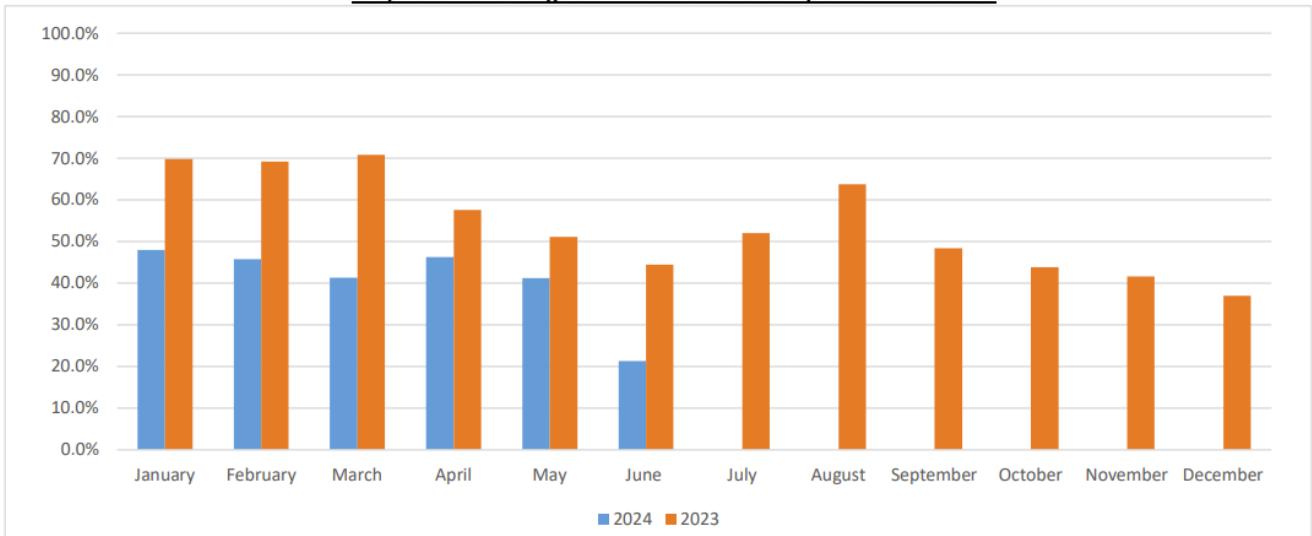
**Performance against the Ambitions set out in the Annual Delivery Plan**

4. Following feedback at the Children and Families Select Committee meeting of 14 April 2024, the format of **Appendix 1** has been amended to better show performance for each measure as follows:
  - The 'best to be' column shows whether good performance is shown by either a high value or a low value.
  - The 'direction of travel' indicator looks at the long-term trend for the measure and whether the direction of travel is upwards, downwards, or stable. Performance for some measures can fluctuate from quarter to quarter due to a number of factors. This may not be indicative of a change in overall performance, so a longer-term view has been taken in the consideration of this.
  - A new column has been added to show whether performance is improving, stable or deteriorating based on this long-term trend.

## Annual Delivery Plan Ambition 2 - Supporting Children and Families

5. More than 1 in 4 assessments undertaken for children and young people and their families continue to be a targeted early help assessment by children's centres and the family service, rather than a social care assessment and 29.6% of children who have started a child in need (CIN) plan or child protection plan (CPP) this year received one of these targeted assessments in the previous two years.
6. The proportion of children starting on a CIN or CP Plan who had received a targeted early help assessment in the previous two years continues to increase, up more than ten percentage points since last year. This means more families are accessing early support, but the ambition is to increase this further. The Department is working with partners to support children and families at the right time and at the right level and to provide help at the earliest opportunity based on need rather than an application of threshold. Support is provided through early help services where it is appropriate to do so, increasing the number of families receiving support and reducing the number who experience social work assessments that do not result in meaningful support. The Needs Led Front Door and Early Help Redesign transformation programmes are at the forefront of making these changes.
7. There is compelling evidence that early help is effective in Nottinghamshire because the percentage of families supported making significant sustained progress through the Supporting Families programme remains high, at 83.6% for the year to date. This means that more than eight out of ten families supported by early help have made and sustained significant progress in all identified areas of need for six months after closure, with more making progress against some areas.
8. The proportion of new Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued in timescale for the calendar year stands at 43% compared with just 4.5% at the end 2022. This is despite the number of plans issued for each of the three months being higher than at the same point last year. Performance continues to be on track to achieve the targets set out in the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) improvement plan.
9. There have been further reductions in the proportion of annual reviews completed in timescale, as can be seen in the chart below. This reduction is partly attributable to delays in the recording of annual reviews once completed, so this is expected to improve in later quarters, as it has for the previous quarter. The Local Authority's annual review performance relies on educational settings and partners to ensure that annual reviews are held on time and reported in a timely manner. To improve performance the Local Authority will be using additional resources to improve partnership working and offer support and challenge to educational settings to ensure that the annual review timescales are met. This will include the Local Authority seeking direct confirmation that annual reviews have been arranged and have taken place.

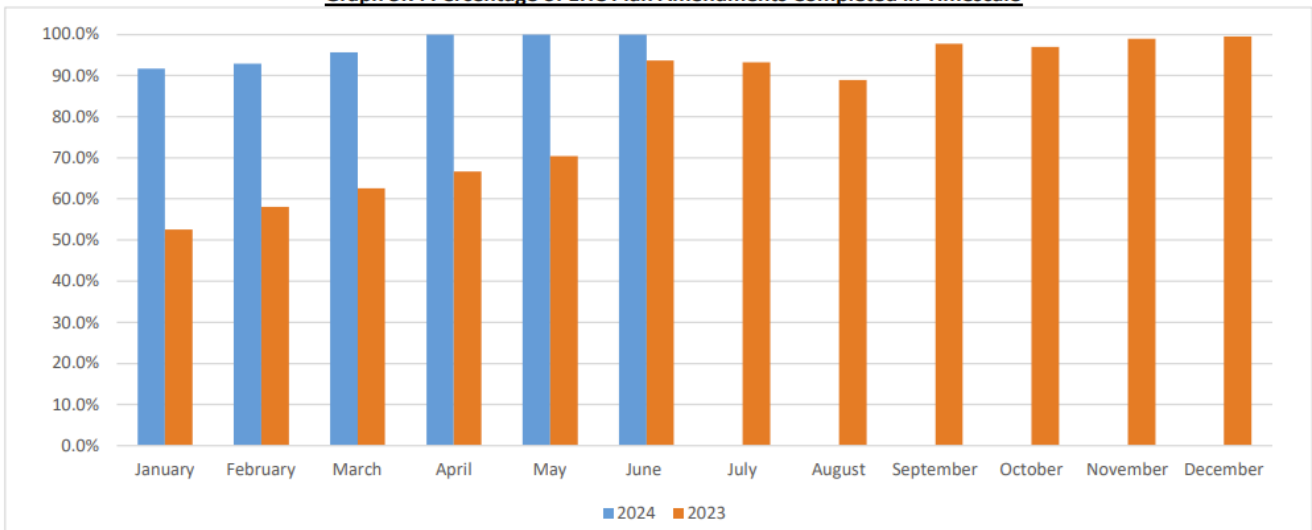
**Graph 5.3: Percentage of Annual Reviews Completed in Timescale**



Data Source: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Key Performance Indicators Report – June 2024

- Of the cases reviewed where amendments were necessary, 100% resulted in amended EHCPs being issued within 12 weeks in the last quarter. This is a significant improvement in performance compared with the same period last year and is due to the recruitment of dedicated plan writers in June 2023. The chart below shows the improvement made in this measure since last year.

**Graph 5.7: Percentage of EHC Plan Amendments Completed in Timescale**

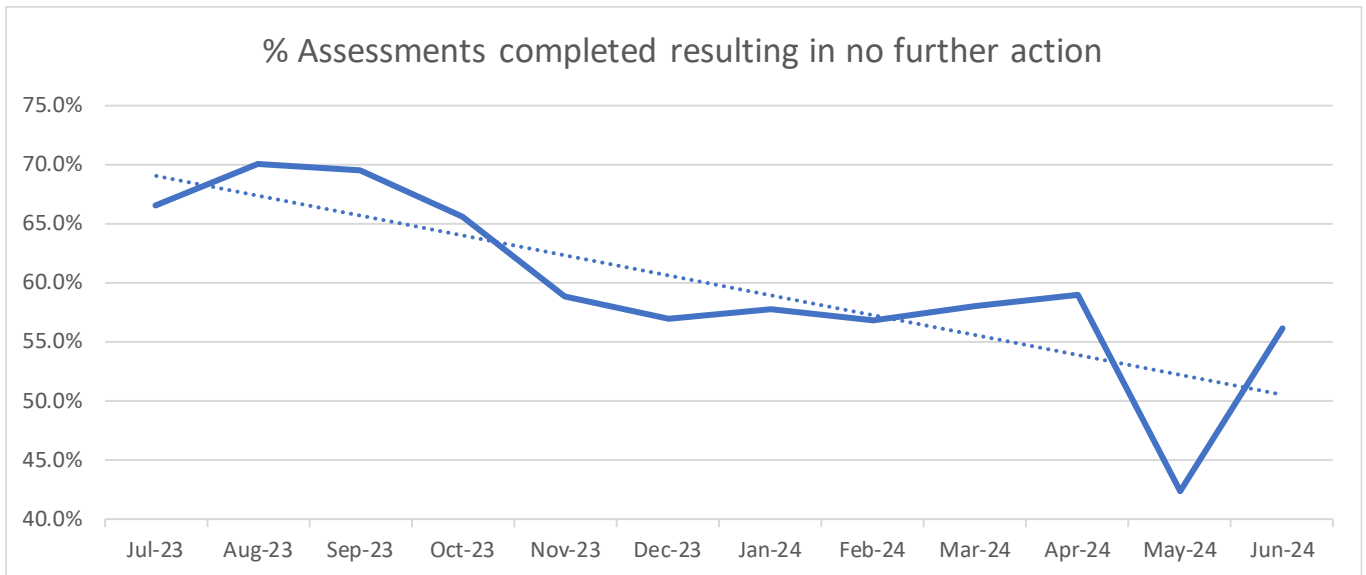


Data Source: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Key Performance Indicators Report – June 2024

**Annual Delivery Plan Ambition 3 - Keeping children, vulnerable adults and communities safe**

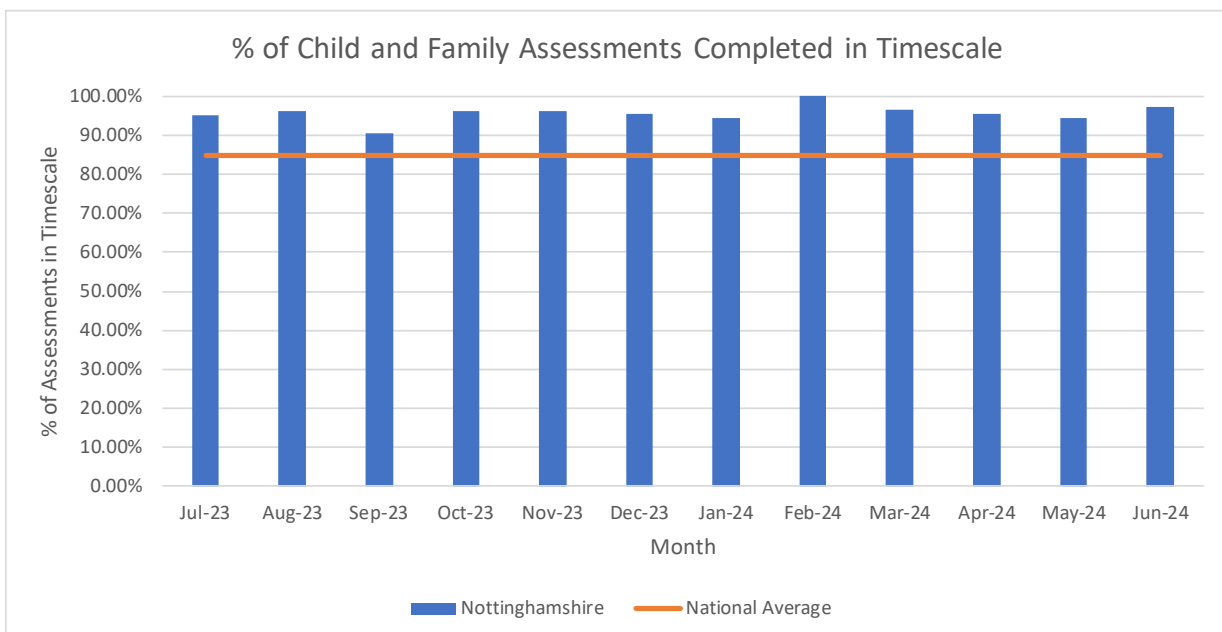
- The proportion of child and family assessments completed which do not result in ongoing children’s social care involvement has reduced by more than ten percentage points since the last quarter. This is due to the work taking place at the front door to ensure the appropriateness of referrals and to provide the right support at the right time. The overall trend over the last 12 months is downward, as can be seen in the chart below, because

the improvement work being undertaken with partners through the Needs Led Front Door and Early Help Redesign is starting to have an effect. These transformation programmes will support children and families at the right time and at the right level and to provide help at the earliest opportunity based on need rather than an application of threshold.



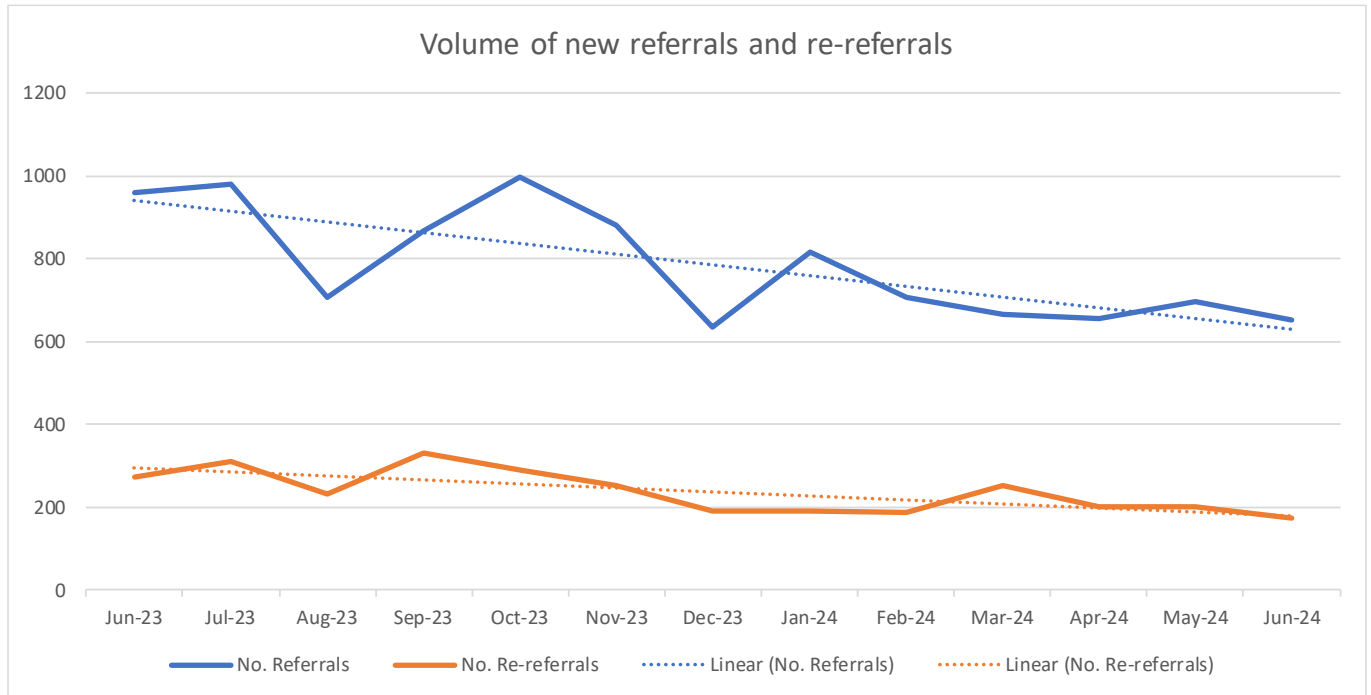
Data Source: Children’s Social Care Core Performance Measurement Set Monthly – June 2024

- The proportion of child and family assessments completed in timescale remains high, with 97.2% of assessments completed within the statutory timescale of 45 days for quarter 1, as can be seen in the chart below. This is twelve percentage points above the England average for 2022/23. Whilst a review is planned on the way that access to a range of children and family services works, there is confidence that when a child needs a social work assessment, they get one because of the high number of assessments that are completed in a timely way.



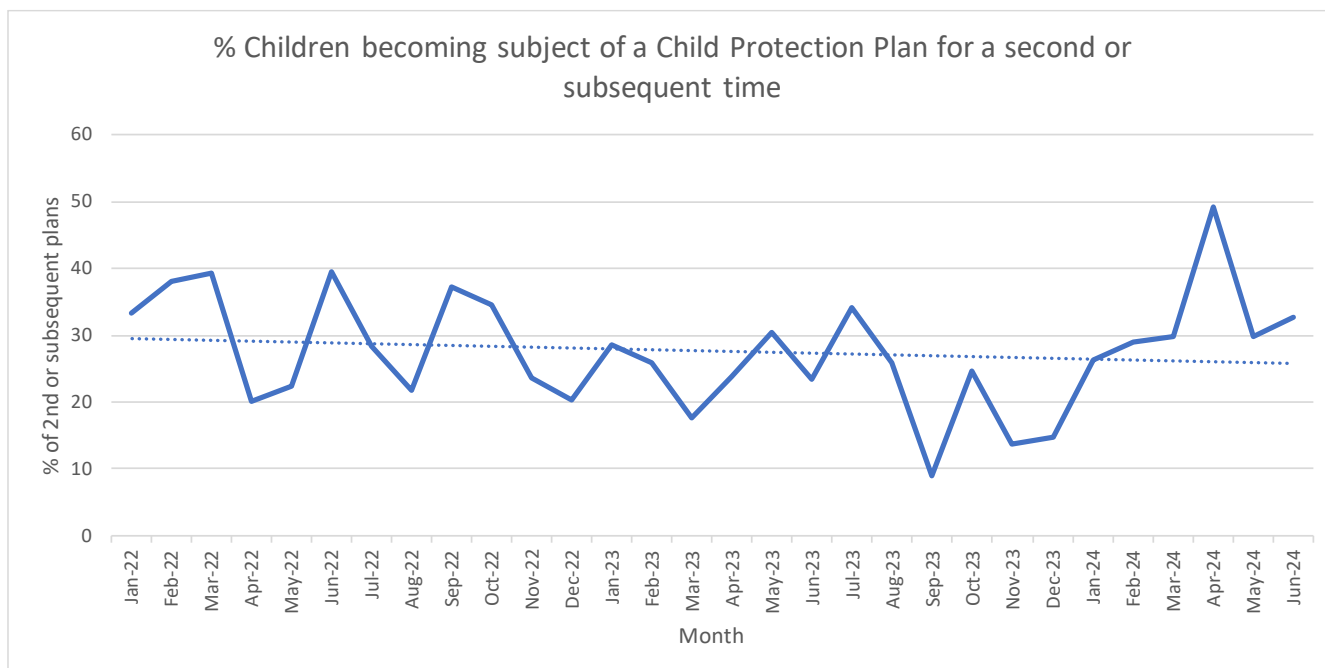
Data Source: Children’s Social Care Core Performance Measurement Set Monthly – June 2024

13. There has been a slight decrease in the proportion of referrals which were a second or subsequent referral within 12 months this quarter. The rate still remains higher than last year, but this is due to the reduction in overall referral numbers as we seek to provide the right support at the right time. The number of re-referrals is decreasing, as shown in the chart below, evidencing that the way that the service is dealing with referrals and assessments is increasingly providing help when it is needed.



Data Source: Children’s Social Care Core Performance Measurement Set Monthly – June 2024

14. The proportion of children becoming subject of a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time has increased again this quarter as can be seen in the chart below. Detailed analysis has been undertaken and has identified a spike in the number and proportion of new repeat plans and an audit is currently underway to understand the reasons for this.

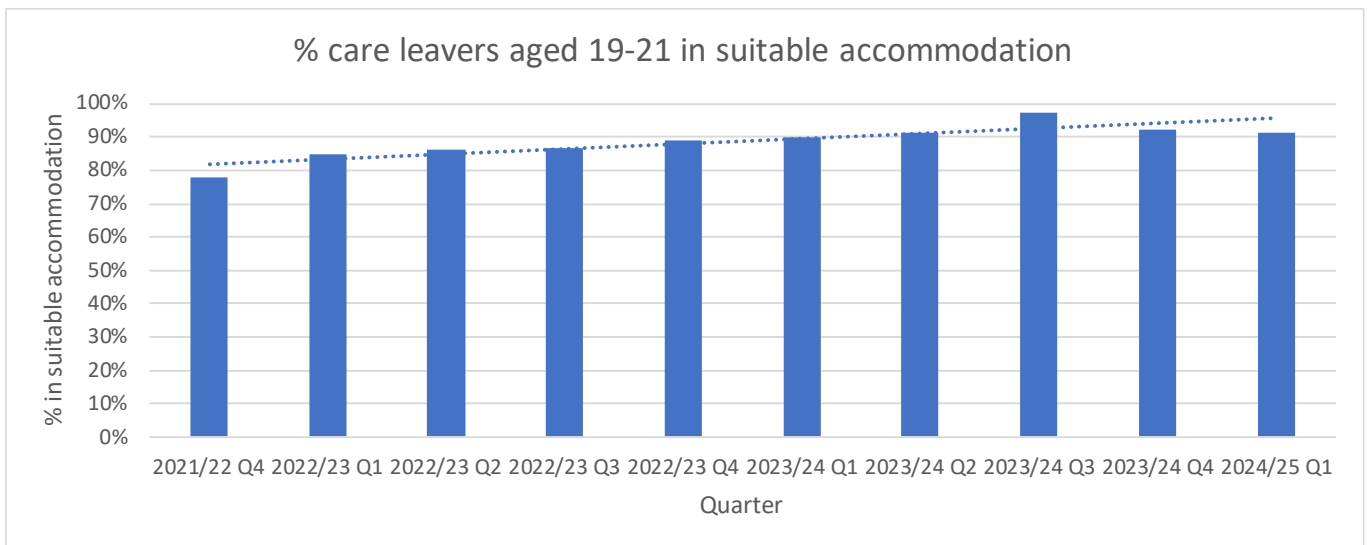


Data Source: Children's Social Care Core Performance Measurement Set Monthly – March 2024

15. There proportion of children on child protection plans lasting over 2 years remains low and below the previous year's annual performance. The numbers have reduced due to plans coming to an appropriate end through de-escalation of concerns, or through children becoming accommodated via the care proceedings process. There is monitoring of this cohort of children at around 15 months, to ensure that children's plans are being progressed appropriately prior to reaching the 2-year mark. At 2.3% this is in line with the England average.
16. At 96.3%, the proportion of child protection cases reviewed in timescale has improved by ten percentage points since the last quarter. This is better than both the England and statistical neighbour averages.
17. 8.8% of children in care currently reside in kinship placements, that is fostering placements with family and friends. This is below the target of 12% of all children in care but is in line with performance last year showing stability in arrangement of kinship placements. Performance in this measure is adversely affected by an increase in special guardianship and child arrangement orders which offer permanence and stability for the child but means the kinship placement ends as the child ceases to be looked after. There continues to be a focus on young people remaining local to and living with family members as kinship placements are an essential plank of Nottinghamshire's placement sufficiency.
18. The proportion of children who leave care subject to a special guardianship order or child arrangement order has increased this quarter and at 18% is above both the latest national average of 17% and Nottinghamshire's statistical neighbour average of 14%. An approach is being developed to support improved family and extended family engagement for children in care through Family Networking and tracking of potential Special Guardianship Orders and rehabilitation to parents/family via a panel.
19. 64.6% of children in care currently reside in a family-based setting which remains the ambition for children wherever possible. This includes fostering placements and

placements with family and friends. This is an increase of 6.5 percentage points since 2022/23.

20. Currently 24% of children are placed 20 miles or more away from home. This is in line with performance at the end of last financial year but is six percentage points higher than the latest England and statistical neighbour averages. The majority of these family-based placements are in independent fostering agency and external residential placements as availability of suitable fostering and residential placements more locally remains a challenge.
21. 65% of children in care remain in long term placements – that is in the same placement for more than two years, an increase of thirteen percentage points over the last six months. The majority of Nottinghamshire children in care experience stable placements over the longer term. However, the placements for older children, especially for those who enter the care system for the first time as a teenager, can get disrupted more frequently. Moreover, when young people attain their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, they undergo changes of placement as part of their normal care plan.
22. Approximately 40% of Nottinghamshire children in care are aged 15 or older. Therefore this managed transition into independent adulthood that evidently benefits many of our children in care carries with it the unintended consequence of distorting the overall data around long-term placement stability as computed by the performance indicator above. The same data issue can also occur for younger children who may come into care via the court process and also for those children who become adopted, in so far as both of these processes can also involve necessary changes of placement as part of fulfilling the child's care plan towards a positive outcome.
23. At 91.5%, the proportion of care leavers aged 19-21 identified as being in suitable accommodation this quarter remains above the national and statistical neighbour average. As can be seen in the chart below, this has been an improving trend for the last two years. The Council continues to expand and improve its Supported Accommodation Provision (including the specialist provision for former Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children care leavers which is continuously expanding to meet demand). This has become slightly more challenging and so might account for the slight drop in suitable accommodation this quarter.
24. The Council has been working closely with our supported accommodation partners to ensure that our provision is suitable and meeting the needs of care leavers which has contributed to the good performance. Work continues with district and borough councils to reduce the numbers of homeless young people and the Council has re-recruited to the post of the Homelessness Prevention Personal Adviser. Care Leaver Emergency Accommodation (CLEA) provision is being used and expanding it to the south of the County to prevent street homeless young people is being explored. Those in HMOs (House in Multiple Occupation) are officially identified as being unsuitable which affects the figures but includes student accommodation shared houses which the young person wishes to reside in and is suitable in meeting their needs. For those in custody the Council has launched its new Local Offer for those in Custody to help ensure suitable accommodation plans upon release.



Data source: Children's Social Care Core Performance Measurement Set Quarterly – Quarter 1 2024/25

25. There has been a slight decrease in the numbers of young people aged 19-21 in employment, education and training in quarter 1 but this is expected as many young people are approaching exam times and end of courses. For some young people they choose to change or leave their course at the end of the Easter term and then are not able to start a new programme until September 2024. As such, they are recorded as being not in employment, education and training but do have EET (employment, education and training) plans in place for the start of the new term. This can affect figures of EET during this period and so it is good to see that this has only decreased slightly. There is often a rise in EET figures from September due to people engaging with more courses.
26. First time entrants to the youth justice system remains stable at 26 admissions in quarter 1 compared with 22 in the previous quarter. The reoffending binary rate also remains low at 17.6% currently compared with an average of 31% nationally and for Nottinghamshire's statistical neighbours. This is down two percentage points since the last quarter.

#### **Annual Delivery Plan Ambition 4 - Building skills that help people get good jobs**

27. Final figures show that 45% of pupils in Nottinghamshire schools obtained 9-5 grades (a strong pass) in English and mathematics at key stage 4 last year, up from 44.6% included in provisional figures released last quarter. This is a reduction of 5.9 percentage points on the previous year as grade boundaries were brought back in line with pre-pandemic levels and mirrors the reduction seen nationally as this change was made. Latest performance is above Nottinghamshire's statistical neighbour average of 43% as it has been over the last 5 years.
28. There has been a slight narrowing of the gap in the proportion of disadvantaged pupils (those who have received free school meals in the last six years) who have achieved grades 9-5 in English and mathematics, down from 32% to 29.5%. This is still higher than the national average of 26.7% but shows improvement in this area.
29. Ofsted has made the decision to cease to publish single work judgements on schools following the tragic death of headteacher Ruth Perry following an inadequate judgement. As such, these measures will no longer be updated.



## Departmental Risks

30. The department continues to manage key risks as reported at quarter two. The table below describes these risks and the mitigating actions being undertaken:

Risk ID	Risk Category	Risk Description	Risk Mitigations
C01	Service Delivery	<p><u>Placement Sufficiency</u> The ambition is to have more children and young people able to live in family-based placements, close to home. However, the context is a local and national shortage of suitable placements, particularly foster care. This impacts both on the types of placements that can be matched with and whether placements are close to home.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work is continuing across D2N2 to increase recruitment of foster carers and holistic care packages to retain them.</li> <li>- The service has focused on kinship, family and friends, Special Guardianship/Care Arrangement Orders to keep young people within their own networks.</li> <li>- The number of children that are coming into local authority care is being reduced through the above and robust arrangements for supporting families in difficult circumstances.</li> </ul>
C07	Reputation	<p><u>SEND Area Inspection</u> Nottinghamshire's SEND Area Inspection outcome was poor, so significant improvements are needed in the short and medium term as part of post-inspection monitoring arrangements. The main challenge is around pace of improvements having a tangible impact on the experience of SEND children and their families in the short-term.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The partnership is working to an approved improvement plan that is monitored regularly through governance arrangements.</li> <li>- A longer-term SEND Strategy is being developed collaboratively to ensure the partnership can sustain improvements.</li> <li>- There are workstreams focused on working with children and their families to ensure their experiences are improving.</li> </ul>
C17	Workforce	<p><u>Workforce Recruitment and Retention</u> There are particular areas of the workforce where recruitment and retention are difficult both locally and nationally. This includes social workers, which impacts on the quality of practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The department has continued with the success for routes into social work and is building on this to try to retain social workers as they progress through their careers.</li> <li>- There is a focus on supporting the training and development of practitioners and to do well in the annual wellbeing check.</li> <li>- A social work academy arrangement is being</li> </ul>

Risk ID	Risk Category	Risk Description	Risk Mitigations
			considered as part of longer-term planning.

### Summary Financial Position – Period 12 2023/24

31. The overall Children and Families Department Revenue expenditure is forecast to be overspent by £1.2m after planned use of reserves but excluding any redundancy costs.
32. The Children & Families Portfolio is currently forecast to overspend by £0.6m (0.4%), and the Education and SEND Portfolio is forecast to overspend by £0.6m (2.0%).

#### ***Children and Families Portfolio***

The Care, Help & Protection Division is forecast to underspend by £1.9m (2.9%), of which £1.2m is due to declining numbers within internal fostering, which inevitably contributes to increased demand for more costly commissioned external placements.

The Commissioning & Resources Division is reporting a net forecast overspend of £2.5m (2.3%) owing to a continued increase in external placement costs partly offset by continued underspends in Children’s Centres/Family Hubs staffing costs arising through vacancies.

The Transformation & Improvement Division has now been disbanded with most of the services transferring into Commissioning & Resources.

#### ***Education and Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Portfolio***

The Education, Learning & Inclusion Division is forecast to overspend by £0.6m (3.7%). £0.4m is as a result of pressure on the Pre-16 EHCP Assessment Team budget, due to high staff levels and agency staff to manage the increasing and high numbers of EHCPs. This is a major priority for the Local Authority following the inspection on SEND Services.

**Table 1 – Summary Revenue Position**

Change in Variance £000	Period 02 Under(-) / Overspend Variance £000	Division	Annual Budget £000	Actual to Period 03 £000	Year-End Forecast £000	Under(-) / Overspend Variance £000	Variance as % of Budget %
		<b>Children and Families Portfolio</b>					
151	(2,023)	Care, Help and Protection	64,576	22,602	62,703	(1,873)	2.90
155	2,318	Commissioning & Resources	105,781	15,154	108,254	2,473	2.34
5	0	Capital & Central Charges	1,342	564	1,348	5	0.40
311	295	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>171,699</b>	<b>38,321</b>	<b>172,305</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>0.35</b>
		<b>Education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Portfolio</b>					
(459)	1,010	Education Learning & Inclusion	14,719	4,075	15,270	551	3.74
0	0	Commissioning & Resources	186	0	186	0	0.00
0	0	Capital & Central Charges	12,332	0	12,332	0	0.00
(459)	1,010	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>27,237</b>	<b>4,075</b>	<b>27,788</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>2.02</b>
		<b>Traders</b>					
0	0	Clayfields	(199)	89	(199)	0	0.00
(148)	1,305		198,737	42,484	199,894	1,157	0.58
0	0	Transfer to/(from) ear marked reserves	0	0	0	0	
0	0	Transfer to/(from) grant reserves	(549)	0	(549)	0	
0	0	Transfer to/(from) Traders reserves	(362)	0	(362)	0	

## Children and Families Portfolio

### Care, Help and Protection Division

33. The division is forecasting an underspend of £1.9m versus budget, which is increase in costs of £0.2m in the month. The contributing factors behind this underspend are as follows:
34. £1.2m underspend (£1.0m in period 2) on Internal Residential and Fostering. The ongoing decline in our Internal Foster Carer numbers is the driving force behind the lower costs and more than negates the annual inflationary increase in the Basic Fostering Allowance rates, which was also built into the budget for 2024/25. Information contained in LAC Today reports indicate that numbers of children placed reduced by eight in the month. The flip side to this decline is the increased demand for costly external placements as mentioned in the Commissioning and Resources section below.

35. £0.6m underspend (£0.5m in period 2) on Leaving Care Support. This is mainly due to lower leaving care support costs of £0.6m. Some of the growth built into the budget in 2023/24 for the 'Home Establishment Grants' (£0.3m) and University fees (£0.1m) has not materialised, and the continuation of the Leaving Care Allowance grant (£0.2m) from the Department for Education, which has not been built into the budget.
36. £0.4m underspend (£0.5m in period 2) on social worker staffing. This includes £1.3m of temporary budget. In period 3 there was a £0.2m reduction made to the social worker staffing budget, to mirror the reduction in the Local Government Pension Scheme contribution, which changed from April 2024. This reduction in cost was built into the forecast from period 1, without realising the budget would follow suit. Therefore, the actual underlying movement in the month is a decrease in costs of £0.1m rather than an increase of £0.1m. Council staff costs are underspent by £2.6m, offset by an overspend of £2.2m on Agency costs.
37. The full year forecast on agency spend across all teams is £5.9m which is £1.1m lower than the £7.0m spent in 2023-24. It is hoped that this will reduce further as the year progresses, with the expectation that some of the vacant roles covered by agency staff will soon be replaced by Council staff. As at period 3 there are 78 FTE agency Team Managers and Social Workers and 23.6 FTE non-social work qualified agency workers.
38. £0.2m underspend (£0.2m in period 2) on Adoption/Kinship due to staffing vacancies.
39. £0.1m underspend (£0.2m in period 2) in the Contact Service due to delays in recruitment. The movement in the month is due to the extension of agency staff covering vacancies.
40. £0.2m overspend on Early Help (in line with budget in period 2). As per the social working staffing budget there has been a reduction of £0.1m to the pension budget which was not factored into the previous forecast. There is also £0.1m of staffing costs in the Early Help Unit team for 'front door' staff for the second half of the year, which are not covered by the current budget.
41. £0.2m overspend (£0.3m in period 2) in Looked After Children placements. This is attributable to £0.3m overspend in Looked After Children support costs for Children with Disabilities (only around a third of our costs funded by the ICB) and a £0.1m overspend on Looked After Children contact travel costs, offset by £0.2m lower personal allowance payments for Looked After Children aged 16/17 living independently.
42. £0.2m net overspend (£0.1m in period 2) on 'Other' budgets. There is a £0.3m overspend on social worker staffing expenses, a £0.1m overspend on section 17 family support costs and a £0.1m overspend on travel costs (mainly taxis costs for Looked After Children), partially offset by a £0.3m underspend on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children due to the funding we receive being higher than the costs we incur. The movement in the month is due to the staff travel budget reduction which was part of the Local Authority savings target.

### **Commissioning and Resources Division**

43. The division is reporting a forecast overspend of £2.5m (£2.3m period 2) after use of reserves. The main variances are as follows:

44. £3.0m forecast overspend (£3.0m period 2) on External Looked After Children Placements, after taking account of a £1.0m temporary virement from West View residential home which is currently closed and recent £1m permanent budget correction virement from (unrelated) agency staff budget in Care, Help & Protection.
45. Whilst overall Looked After Children numbers appear to have stabilised at around 960, there continues to be increasing pressure on external provision and more specifically the cost of residential placements. This was particularly evident in the last quarter of 2023-24, with additional costs emerging for extra staffing, voids within block provision, complex needs and general market driven price increases. Inevitably, most of these commitments carry into 2024-25, hence the overspend. This pattern continues with 1 (net) additional placement costing more than £10,000 per week.
46. At Table 1 there is a 'LAC Today' summary and external placements graph. This also includes a note of the residential placements over £10,000 per week and an indication of likely Health contributions.
47. The 'LAC Today' figures indicate that the number of children in internal foster care reduce by an average of 4-5 per month, with June being no exception. As a reminder, two children were transferred from internal residential (Oakhurst) to external placements earlier in the year, adding £0.9m to the overspend, with no corresponding saving in Care, Help & Protection for this as costs are largely fixed.
48. External Looked After Children numbers reduced by 13 in the month (contrasting with last month's increase of 14). The resultant mix was however more favourable: residential placements reduced by 6 (now 183) and semi-independent spot by 1 (now 16), whereas IFAs reduced by 3 (now 304) and cheaper semi-independent block contract reduced by 3 (now 64).
49. To sum up, external placement numbers to the end of June reduced from 580 to 567 and are still projected to be 575 at the end of March, hence little change to the bottom-line forecast. The weighted average cost of current external placements is now £142,000 versus £124,000 a year ago.
50. £0.2m overspend (£0.2m period 2) on the Independent Chair Service due to the budgeted Vacancy Level Turnover and use of agency staff.
51. £0.7m underspend (£0.9m period 2) on Children's Centres/Family Hubs due to continued high levels of vacancies. The change in the month was due to budget reductions (£0.1m for pensions and mileage) and salaries forecasts refinements, in particular inclusion of replacement Service Manager post (South).

## **Education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Portfolio**

### **Education, Learning & Inclusion Division**

52. The division is reporting a forecast £0.6m overspend. This represents a decrease of £0.4 million from period 2. The main variances are as follows:

53. The previously forecast overspend on pension enhancements for former teachers (£0.45m period 2) has been removed. It will be requested that a technical adjustment is made to offset the forecast overspend. This is subject to elected member approval.
54. £0.4m forecast overspend (£0.5m period 2) on ICDS Pre-16 EHCP Assessment Team, after use of £0.7m earmarked reserve funding identified for SEND Improvement activity. The overspend is due to high staff levels (permanent and two-year fixed term) and agency staff to manage the increasing and high numbers of EHCP's. Non-recurrent funding (COMF £0.9m) was provided in 2023/24 to support service improvement but will not be available in 2024/25. Further funding options are being considered to sustain the SEND improvement activity priorities. Around £0.1m of the forecast overspend relates to an increasing number of compensatory payments due to high number of appeals and tribunals.
55. There are a number of smaller variances across the division including an overspend of £0.3m on support to school's services and a forecast underspend of £0.2m on the Specialist Support Team within ICDS (this is much lower than previous years which experienced continued recruitment difficulties).

### Potential Future Expenditure Not Included in Period 3 Forecast

56. The list below shows items that have been identified by Finance Business Partners as being potential future costs that are not included in the period 3 forecast.

Division	Description	Value	Additional Information
Care, Help and Protection	Increase in Apprentices salaries following the increase in ASCH	£150k	Pending formal decision. £150k Includes back dating to April if agreed.
Care, Help and Protection	Stronger Families additional staff	£90k	Pending Committee Paper Approval
Care, Help and Protection	Front door staff extension in MASH to end of year	£100k	Budget Pressure agreed for April 24 to September 24. Additional cost relates to October to March if continued.
Education, Learning and Inclusion	Sanctuary/ Skylark Contract extension - Educational Psychologists agency staff	£700k	Costs to June are in forecast but costs may continue for a further six months. COMF funded available in 2023/24 has ceased.

### Financial Implications

57. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Children and Families Select Committee considers and comments on:

- 1) the summary of Children and Families Department performance against the ambitions in the Annual Delivery Plan.
- 2) the summary of Children and Families key departmental risks.
- 3) the financial position of the Children and Families Department.

**Councillor Tracey Taylor**  
**Cabinet Member for Children and Families**

**Councillor Sam Smith**  
**Cabinet Member for Education and SEND**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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**Constitutional Comments (CM 20/09/2024)**

58. The report falls within the terms of reference of the Children and Families Select Committee.

**Financial Comments (JG 25/09/24)**

59. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None.

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

CFS0029





Key Performance Indicator	Paragraph in Main Report	Nottinghamshire						Vital Signs		Comparator Data				
		Current Value	Best to be	Direction of Travel	Performance is	Current Reporting Period	Previous Value	Previous Reporting Period	Vital Sign Measure?	RAG Rating	Previous Annual Performance	National Average	Statistical Neighbours	
<b>Annual Delivery Plan Ambition 2 - Supporting Children and Families</b>														
Will	Early years foundation stage attainment (Reaching a 'Good Level of Development' - at least expected in all early learning goals in all prime areas and in the specific areas of literacy and mathematics)	-	67.5%	High	↔	Stable	2022/23 Academic	66.9%	2021/22 Academic			66.9% (21/22 Academic)	67.2% (22/23 Academic)	67.4% (22/23 Academic)
Dave	% assessments completed which were a targeted early help assessment	5	27.2%	High	↑	Improving	2024/25 Q1	23.4%	2023/24 Q4	Y	Amber	24.9% (2022/23)	-	-
Dave	% children becoming subject of a CIN or CP Plan who had a targeted early help assessment in the previous 2 years	6	29.6%	High	↑	Improving	2024/25 Q1	18.9%	2023/24 Q4	Y	Amber	17.3% (2022/23)	-	-
Tom	Percentage of families supported making significant sustained progress through the Supporting Families programme	7	83.6%	High	↔	Stable	2024/25 Q1	84.5%	2023/24 Q4			-	-	-
Tom	% of new EHCPs issued within 20 weeks (exc. exceptions) **	8	43.0%	High	↑	Improving	2024 Q2	28.4%	2023 Q1	Y	Yellow	4.5% (2022)	50.7% (2022)	47.8% (2022)
Tom	% of EHCP Annual review amendments issued within 12 weeks **	9	100.0%	High	↑	Improving	2024 Q2	93.7%	2023 Q2	Y	Red	55.3% (2022/23)	-	-
Tom	% EHCP annual reviews completed within 12 months **	10	21.3%	High	↓	Deteriorating	2024 Q2	44.5%	2023 Q2	Y	Amber	77.0% (2022/23)	-	-
<b>Annual Delivery Plan Ambition 3 - Keeping children, vulnerable adults and communities safe</b>														
Bridget	% Child and Family Assessments resulting in NFA (cumulative for the year)	11	52.9%	Low	↓	Improving	2023/24 Q4	64.3%	2023/24 Q4	Y	Red	55.4% (2022/23)	29.9% (2022/23)	32.9% (2022/23)
In deve	Average Social Worker Caseload - A NEW METHOD OF REPORTING THIS MEASURE IS CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION	-		N/A						Y		-	-	-
Tom	Child and Family assessments for Children's Social Care carried out within statutory timescales	12	97.2%	High	↑	Improving	2024/25 Q1	95.2%	2023/24 Q4			97.4% (2022/23)	84.5% (2022/23)	87% (2022/23)
Bridget	Re-referral rate	13	30.5%	Low	↓	Improving	2024/25 Q1	31.1%	2023/24 Q4	Y	Red	24.8% (2022/23)	22.4% (2022/23)	20.2% (2022/23)
Tom	Children becoming the subject of a child protection plan on more than one occasion	14	32.6%	Low	↓	Deteriorating	2024/25 Q1	24.1%	2023/24 Q4	Y	Red	26.2% (2022/23)	23.6% (2022/23)	23.9% (2022/23)
Tom	Children who are subject to a child protection plan for 2 years or more	15	2.3%	Low	↔	Stable	2024/25 Q1	1.6%	2023/24 Q4			3.1% (2022/23)	2.2% (2022/23)	1.8% (2022/23)
Tom	Percentage of child protection cases reviewed within timescale	16	96.3%	High	↑	Improving	2024/25 Q1	86.3%	2023/24 Q4			87.8% (2022/23)	88.1% (2022/23)	91.5% (2022/23)
Bridget	% children looked after in kinship placements	17	8.8%	High	↔	Stable	2024/25 Q1	8.7%	2023/24 Q4	Y	Amber	9% (2022/23)	-	-
Bridget	% children who leave care subject to an SGO or CAO	18	18.0%	High	↑	Improving	2024/25 Q1	16.9%	2023/24 Q4	Y	Green	22% (2022/23)	15% (2022/23)	17% (2022/23)
Bridget	% of children looked after in family-based setting	19	64.6%	High	↔	Stable	2024/25 Q1	65.4%	2023/24 Q4			58% (2022/23)	-	-
Bridget	No. of children in care placed in unregulated placements	-	24	Low	↑	Deteriorating	2024/25 Q1	23	2023/24 Q4	Y	Red			
Tom	Percentage of children looked after placed 20 miles or more from home	20	23.2%	Low	↑	Improving	2024/25 Q1	24.1%	2023/24 Q4	Y	Green	23.0% (2022/23)	17.0% (2022/23)	17.0% (2022/23)
Tom	Percentage of children looked after remaining in long-term placements*	21 - 22	65.3%	High	↑	Improving	2024/25 Q1	61.3%	2023/24 Q4			82.0% (2022/23)	69.0% (2022/23)	67.7% (2022/23)
Tom	Percentage of care leavers aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation	23-24	91.5%	High	↔	Stable	2024/25 Q1	92.4%	2023/24 Q4			89.0% (2022/23)	88.0% (2022/23)	90.4% (2022/23)
Tom	Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (EET) aged 19-21	25	50.5%	High	↓	Deteriorating	2024/25 Q1	54.1%	2023/24 Q4			53.0% (2022/23)	56.0% (2022/23)	53.8% (2022/23)
Tom	First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17 (per 100,000)	26	26	Low	↔	Stable	2024/25 Q1	22	2023/24 Q4	Y	Green	130 (2022)	144 (2022)	108 (2022)
Tom	Re-offending binary rate	26	17.6	Low	↓	Improving	2024/25 Q1	19.6	2023/24 Q4	Y	Amber	10.2 (2022/23)	31.2 (2021/22)	30.9 (2020/21)

Key Performance Indicator	Paragraph in Main Report	Nottinghamshire							Vital Signs		Comparator Data			
		Current Value	Best to be	Direction of Travel	Performance is	Current Reporting Period	Previous Value	Previous Reporting Period	Vital Sign Measure?	RAG Rating	Previous Annual Performance	National Average	Statistical Neighbours	
<b>Annual Delivery Plan Ambition 4 - Building skills that help people get good jobs</b>														
Will	Percentage of pupils achieving 9-5 grades in GCSE English & maths at KS4	27	45.0%	High	↓	Deteriorating	2022/23 Academic	50.9%	2021/22 Academic			50.9% (21/22 Academic)	45.5% (22/23 Academic)	43.0% (22/23 Academic)
Will	Percentage of children looked after achieving 9-5 grades in GCSE English & maths at KS4	-	12.40%	High	↑	Improving	2021/22 Academic	9.6%	2020/21 Academic			9.6% (20/21 Academic)	11.0% (21/22 Academic)	-
Will	Attainment gap at age 16 between pupils taking free school meals and the rest (FSM during past six years) 9-5 grades in GCSE English & maths	28	29.5	Low	↓	Improving	2022/23 Academic	32.0	2021/22 Academic			32.0 (21/22 Academic)	26.7 (22/23 Academic)	-
Will	% Primary schools judged by Ofsted as good or outstanding	29	92.5%	High	↑	Improving	2023/24 Q3	92.1%	2023/24 Q2			90.0% (2022/23 Q4)	90.8% (2023/24 Q3)	89.2% (2023/24 Q3)
Will	% Secondary schools judged by Ofsted as good or outstanding	29	80.0%	High	↔	Stable	2023/24 Q3	80.0%	2023/24 Q2			77.8% (2022/23 Q4)	82.7% (2023/24 Q3)	81.4% (2023/24 Q3)
Will	Percentage of pupils in primary, secondary and special schools classed as persistent absentees	-	19.7%	Low	↓	Improving	2022/23 Aut & Spr term	21.2%	2021/22 Aut & Spr term			21.3% (21/22 Academic)	21.2% (22/23 Aut & Spr)	20.8% (22/23 Aut & Spr)
Will	Percentage of Children Looked After classed as persistent absentees	-	19.2%	Low	↓	Improving	2021/22 Academic	29.6%	2020/21 Academic			29.6% (20/21 Academic)	19.1% (21/22 Academic)	18.9% (21/22 Academic)
Will	Percentage of pupils in primary, secondary and special schools with at least one suspension	-	1.71%	Low	↔	Stable	2022/23 Autumn term	1.26%	2021/22 Autumn term			2.95% (21/22 Academic)	1.61% (22/23 Autumn)	1.62% (22/23 Autumn)
Will	Percentage of Children Looked After with at least one suspension	-	11.85%	Low	↔	Stable	2020/21 Academic	11.41%	2019/20 Academic			11.41% (19/20 Academic)	9.80% (20/21 Academic)	9.75% (20/21 Academic)
Will	Percentage of pupils in primary, secondary and special schools permanently excluded	-	0.05%	Low	↔	Stable	2022/23 Autumn term	0.01%	2021/22 Autumn term			0.05% (21/22 Academic)	0.04% (22/23 Autumn)	0.05% (22/23 Autumn)
Will	Percentage of Children Looked After permanently excluded	-	0.00%	Low	↔	Stable	2021/22 Academic	0.00%	2020/21 Academic			0.00% (20/21 Academic)	0.06% (21/22 Academic)	0.00% (21/22 Academic)
Tom	Percentage not in education, employment or training (NEET) aged 16-17	-	1.7%	Low	↔	Stable	2023/24 Q3	2.1%	2022/23 Q1			2.0% (2022/23)	-	-

\* In year for this measure is not comparable with the benchmark data as this excludes placement changes where the same provider continued to provide the care.

\*\* EHCP Performance is reported on a calendar year basis in line with statutory reporting to the DfE.

7 October 2024

Agenda Item: 8

## **REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SELECT COMMITTEE**

### **OUTCOMES TO THE REVIEW OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPIL PLACE PLANNING**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To share the findings arising from the scrutiny task and finish review of secondary school place planning with the Children and Families Select Committee.
2. To seek the Select Committee's endorsement for the review's recommendations to be submitted to Cabinet.

#### **Information**

##### **Background**

3. At its meeting on 20 March 2023, the Children and Families Select Committee considered a report on Secondary School Place Planning. The report set out the position of secondary school place planning in Nottinghamshire in relation to both the overall sufficiency of school places and in terms of specific year group place pressures, and to enable the Select Committee to monitor the Council's discharge of its statutory duty in this area.
4. As part of their discussions, members noted that the Council's Children and Families department was responsible for assessing the future school place requirements, while the delivery of the needed places was then carried out by the Place department. Members considered that it was vital for the Children and Families and Place departments to work together closely for the effective delivery of the needed school places within the required timeframe. As a result, the Committee resolved:

***“That members of the Committee carry out a task and finish review on how the Children and Families and Place departments can best work together on projects being implemented to deliver additional school places”.***

##### **Review Scope**

5. Subsequent work was carried out to “scope” the review. This work was carried out by the Chairman of the Children and Families Select Committee, in consultation with the Service

Director for Education, Learning and Inclusion, the Service Director for Green Growth, Investment and Assets, and other officers. This work identified key objectives of the review as well as the strategic and legislative context in which the issues involved would be considered.

6. The key objectives set out for the review were:

- To review the methodology used by the Council to project the future demand for secondary school places across Nottinghamshire.
- To review how the potential delivery options are appraised when a need for additional secondary school places has been identified.
- To review how the current organisational processes, structure and capacity at the Council are used to deliver additional secondary school places.
- To review how the potential funding options are considered and utilised to ensure that the additional secondary school places delivered are sustainable and in the right places.
- To review how the Council engages with the Department for Education, academies and other key partners in the effective delivery of additional secondary school places.

### **Links to Council Priorities – The Nottinghamshire Plan 2021 – 2031**

7. The Nottinghamshire Plan 2021 – 2031 is an ambitious plan for the County Council that sets out the Council's strategic vision for the future of Nottinghamshire and the local authority. The activity in the Nottinghamshire Plan is built around achieving a bold 10-year vision for a 'healthy, prosperous and greener future for everyone'. This vision is supported by nine ambitions which will act as a framework for all County Council activity. The scoping of the review identified that the review would support the following ambitions that supported the overall vision of the Plan:

- Supporting communities and families
- Keeping children, vulnerable adults and communities safe
- Building skills that help people get good jobs
- Making Nottinghamshire somewhere people love to live, work and visit

### **The Review Process**

8. Two information gathering meetings took place on Tuesday 14 May and Tuesday 11 June 2024 involving the following Members of the Children and Families Select Committee:

Councillor Mike Introna  
Councillor Francis Purdue-Horan  
Councillor Anne Callaghan BEM  
Councillor Nigel Turner  
Councillor Michelle Welsh  
James McGeachie – Co-opted Member

Councillor Sam Smith, the Cabinet Member for Education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) attended the first meeting of the Review Group.

9. The following council officers attended these sessions:

Wayne Bexton – Service Director for Green Growth, Investment and Assets

Martin Elliott – Senior Scrutiny Officer

Neil Gamble – Group Manager for Property Asset Management

Katherine Harclerode – Democratic Services Officer

Karen Hughman – Group Manager for Education Access Standards and Safeguarding

Steve Holland – Senior Pupil Place Planning Practitioner

James Lavender – Democratic Services Officer

Will Lawrence – Developer Contributions Practitioner

Peter McConnochie – Service Director for Education, Learning and Inclusion

Mike Sharpe – Place Planning and Admissions Team Manager

### **Council's Statutory Responsibilities**

10. Local Authorities (LAs) are responsible for providing sufficient school places to meet the needs of the local population as per the requirements of Section 14 of the Education Act 1996. The Department for Education (DfE) requires this function to be discharged through planning areas. The DfE defines planning areas as '*mutually exclusive groups of schools that represent admissions patterns and reasonable alternatives to one another. We would usually expect this to mean geographic clusters of schools within reasonable travel distance of one another*'.

11. Planning areas are administrative entities that enable school place sufficiency to be assessed and for appropriate mitigations to be put in place. Planning areas must be approved by the DfE and should be reviewed every five years to ensure that they continue to allow accurate projections of future place sufficiency.

### **Methodology and Context**

12. The annual pupil projections are submitted to, analysed, and approved by the DfE through the School Capacity Survey (SCAP). The methodology used by the County Council is like those used by other Councils in England and is agreed by the DfE. The projections are submitted to the DfE in relation to planning areas and are 'best estimates' that reflect a range of factors, including previous school intakes. These pupil projections compare two key elements: the demand for school places (the number of pupils that are likely to require school places) and the supply of school places (the capacity of schools to accommodate those pupils).

### **Pupil projections - Demand**

13. The factors that influence projected demand for secondary school places include:

- Historical patterns of pupil transfers from primary to secondary schools.
- Recruitment from out of catchment/out of county.
- The existing primary school-age population (via the school census).
- In-year pupil movements between schools and planning areas.

- In-year arrivals in and departures from schools and planning areas.
- For year 7, actual allocations made by the June of the current admissions round.
- Office of National Statistics (ONS) core population estimates.
- The number of new housing commitments that are identified by district and borough councils. In accordance with DfE guidance, only developments with a high probability of delivery within the next seven years may be reflected in secondary pupil projections. Such developments typically will have been granted planning permission.

14. At county level, estimated pupil numbers for the first year of the projections period are generally 97-99% accurate. At planning area level, accuracy varies but small over-estimates are common. Due to the range of variables involved, particularly the delivery and occupation of new housing, projected pupil numbers get less accurate the further into the future that they look. There are also certain unforeseen factors which can impact on the pupil place projections, for example, the increase of immigration of Hong Kong citizens to the UK and the arrival of Ukrainian refugees that can impact on the estimates around pupil numbers. Pupil place planning is also determined by general population numbers, which are anticipated through the analysis of GP registration data and the schools' census. Nottinghamshire's pupil projections methodology automatically takes account of cross-border pupil movements, whether that is between planning areas or between local authorities, such as Nottingham City-based pupils studying in county schools and Newark-based pupils studying in Lincolnshire schools. Data sharing between the County Council, and district and borough councils, around housing is crucial for the accuracy of projections.

15. Emphasis is placed on how the SCAP Survey is an estimated projection of school places over the next several years. The DfE provides formulas to assist with the determination of whether a school can meet pupil place capacity, but they also sign off on the methodology used by the Pupil Place Planning (PPP) Team to determine the number of pupil places per school. Overall, there is strong confidence in the accuracy of the model used by the Council in determining pupil place capacity.

### **Pupil Projections – Supply**

16. For projections purposes, the supply of secondary school places can best be understood in terms of net capacity; in other words, the physical capacity of schools to meet projected demand.

17. As all but one of Nottinghamshire's secondary schools are academies, their capacities can only be calculated based on one of two measures:

- The figures stated in academy funding agreements.
- A calculation based on the current year's Published Admission Number (PAN), which refers to the number of places that a school has agreed to make available to applicants. This can only be used where an academy's PANs and Numbers on Roll (NoR) have clearly and consistently exceeded the capacity stated in their funding agreement.

18. There can however be difficulties with using the academy funding agreements as many of these are over ten years old. Experience suggests that neither measure accurately represents the potential actual capacity available.

19. The DfE has begun a programme to assess the capacity of all secondary schools. However, this will not be completed in time to respond to current challenges around the provision of sufficient school places. In the meantime, the Arc Partnership Ltd have been commissioned to undertake independent net capacity assessments of some secondary schools, which have revealed potentially greater capacity than is formally recognised.

### **Addressing insufficiency**

20. Academy trusts, as independent bodies, can have priorities that may not always align with those of the Council. This means that the Council has less influence over creating additional pupil capacity within secondary schools than they do with primary schools, many of which are LA-maintained.

21. The secondary school curriculum and nature of secondary education also requires more infrastructure than needs to be provided in primary schools, for example, specialist teaching facilities, IT rooms, science labs, parking, pick-up and drop-off facilities. As such, it is more costly to expand existing or build new secondary schools than it would be for primary schools.

22. Some secondary schools are included in the DfE's School Rebuilding Programme. Whilst this is welcome, the rebuilt schools will be completed too late to address the current increase in pupil numbers. It would also not be an effective use of limited resources to add permanent capacity at a school that was due to be demolished and rebuilt.

23. An insufficiency of places in statutory year groups can be masked by spare capacity in post-16 places. The DfE has advised that under or un-used post-16 capacity should be made available where necessary for statutory place provision, however some academy trusts are reluctant to release this capacity without additional capital or revenue funding being made available.

24. Where pupil projections indicate an insufficiency of school places in a planning area, the PPP Team may submit a Project Initiation Document (PID) to the Strategic School Place Planning Board (SSPPB). The SSPPB comprises representatives from the Arc Partnership Ltd, PPP, various teams with expertise in property and planning, and Legal Services. The Board includes service directors.

Each PID includes a proposal informed by a range of factors including:

- projected level of need.
- the potential for further housing, including after the projections period.
- patterns of recruitment from outside the planning area.
- current school oversubscription criteria.
- existing school capacity.
- the ability of existing schools to expand (as identified by independent assessments by Arc Partnership Ltd).
- land availability.
- available funding.

SSPPB members examine each PID and, where appropriate, recommends the proposed approach. This recommendation is then discussed with the lead member for schools who, with support from senior officers determines the next steps.

Where there is a larger number of pupils in certain year groups, secondary schools may be able to admit more pupils, most commonly in Year 7, than is suggested by their PAN.

### **Academy Admission Criteria**

25. Catchment areas for Nottinghamshire schools are arrived at through consultation. In almost every instance the catchment areas of schools stay within the Council's boundaries. Many academies however have link primary schools outside of Nottinghamshire. These arrangements boost out of county recruitment. The County Council cannot prevent academies from creating links with any school. Whilst pupils cannot be rejected based on the grounds of whether they live outside of Nottinghamshire, the admissions criteria can be amended to benefit pupils based within the county. If the Council is of the view that an academy is not providing sufficient pupil places for Nottinghamshire-based pupils, they can object to the process through the Office for Schools Adjudicator. As of August 2023, Nottinghamshire was a net importer of pupils from out of county: over 1500 applications were received from residents outside of Nottinghamshire for Nottinghamshire school places.

### **Permanent or temporary expansions**

26. The most effective long term solution to accommodate additional pupils is for a permanent expansion to an existing school, as this can meet a long-term projected need for pupil places within a shorter construction timeframe than a new build solution. Many Nottinghamshire secondary schools sit on sites which allow for expansion. Permanent expansions build on the performance and reputation of existing schools, and only Ofsted-rated Good and Outstanding schools are usually expanded. Temporary classrooms are commonly used when there is a short-term larger number of pupils in a year group during the secondary phase. This is also an interim solution if the school is already subject to the DfE's School Rebuilding Programme.
27. Examples of recently completed secondary school expansions include Carlton le Willows Academy, where 28 new classrooms and associated circulation space were constructed at a cost of £14.1 million. Rushcliffe Spencer Academy has also had a new teaching block constructed and two teaching blocks remodelled at a cost of £27 million. Other examples of recent secondary school expansions include South Notts Academy, South Wolds Academy, Manor Academy and Carlton Academy.

### **Construction of new secondary schools**

28. In certain circumstances, the construction of a new secondary school may be a better option. This would be the case if some existing schools have reached their limit in terms of expansion. The scope for expansion is not limitless and is governed by legislation, particularly that relating to the loss of playing fields. Such concerns are often identified through the ongoing programme of site assessments by Arc Partnership Ltd.
29. A new school would be most appropriate where there is a high level of probability that a large housing development will be built in an area and where demand for places is already high and existing schools cannot expand to the required size. A new school may also be considered if the Council is confident that the new school will serve a specific local community of Nottinghamshire residents. This would mostly be the case only for major new housing



developments, for example, the Gamston-Tollerton housing development, which is in an area where existing schools are already full and where it would be difficult to expand when the school expansion projects already being undertaken and/or considered have been completed.

30. Building a new secondary school also allows for new design and technologies to be utilised, particularly with the schools designed to achieve Net Zero. These new builds would also not require maintenance for the first 10-15 years of their operation and would not have issues with the removal of old building materials such as asbestos that can be an issue on existing school sites. Due to the size of the site required for building new secondary schools, there would also be room for them to expand if needed.

### **Utilisation of land for new secondary schools**

31. The Council's Place department has considered various Council-owned sites for new special schools. However, after detailed site analysis the majority of these were eliminated as unsuitable.
32. The Council, when confronted with the place sufficiency implications of large housing developments, must examine a range of options. In Rushcliffe, the Council has arrived at a mixed approach; at Rushcliffe Spencer Academy, Toot Hill in Bingham and at South Wolds Academy the cost benefit analysis indicated that expanding existing schools was the best approach. However, in the Gamston/Tollerton area where there is a 4,000 dwelling settlement being proposed there is a plan in place to deliver sufficiency through a new school. Decisions like these are taken giving due consideration to cost, the existing school estate and the timeframes involved.
33. In most cases of projected pupil place expansion, a new secondary school is seldom the preferred solution because of the following considerations:
- More than 6 hectares of land would be needed. Generally, a bigger site would be preferred to allow for future expansion, so an 8-hectare site would probably be considered as a minimum. Such parcels of land are very rarely available. Housing developers are very reluctant to make them available, given the residential land value which would be lost.
  - New secondary schools are very expensive. A typical example of costs is that for every form of entry, a cost of £10m could be seen as a benchmark. As secondary schools of 4FE (600 places + 6th form) are considered a minimum sustainable size, £40m could be seen as a starting point. Nottinghamshire's Developer Contributions Strategy would be likely to generate a maximum of only £15m-£20m. Therefore, alternative funding streams would be required to deliver new secondary schools. Additional costs would also be incurred if the project overran.
  - A new school would require public consultation, to which existing schools would be likely to respond negatively due to concerns about their own viability.
  - It would probably be subject to a planning inquiry, which would need to establish that there was no alternative to a new school.

- Projected insufficiencies in most planning areas are usually below the level that would necessitate a new school (a shortage of 600-750 places, plus post-16 capacity).
- Lead/delivery times mean that the County Council would need a high level of certainty regarding demand in five years' time and beyond. Given the range of variables, that can rarely be a given.

### **Capital projects – processes.**

34. Once a proposed solution, either an expansion, temporary classrooms, or a new school, has been recommended by SSPPB, the proposed project then progresses through internal and external processes/procedures. Nottinghamshire's internal processes recognise the importance of accountability, evidenced decision-making, and a clear audit trail. However, these processes take time. The process steps include:

- Step 1 - Approval from Cabinet Member (CYP) and the Economic Development and Asset Management Committee (EDAM)
- Step 2 - Outline and full business cases
- Step 3 - Liaison with schools/trusts
- Step 4 - Feasibility and cost estimation
- Step 5 - Scrutiny of feasibility reports and costs
- Step 6 - Detailed design (often including Grant Funding Agreements)
- Step 7 - Applications for planning permission
- Step 8 - Construction
- Step 9 - Informal consultation and Free School Presumption (new schools only)
- Step 10 - Private Finance Initiative

Once SSPPB have identified potential school extension or new school construction opportunities, the Planning and PPP Teams collate information into a detailed progress flow chart to identify the timeframes for the delivery of such projects. The progress flow chart is reviewed every six months. Comparisons are made with partners and other local authorities in order to capture best practice and refine and review the process flow chart.

### **Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy contributions and challenges within the planning process**

35. The financial mechanism which is most utilised by the County Council to contribute towards the cost of pupil places is through Section 106 (s106) agreements. As per Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, a s106 agreement allows a LPA to enter into a legally binding agreement or planning obligation with a landowner/applicant as part of the granting of planning permission. Such planning obligations can include asking the applicant to provide financial contributions towards school places, particularly if the planning application was for a large-scale residential development.

36. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a mechanism that allows local planning authorities to request property developers to contribute part of the cost of an approved development towards improvements to the wider local community, which can include money towards additional primary and secondary school places. For example, CIL payments worth £4 million from developments in Bassetlaw were used to expand Portland Academy in Worksop and £1.5 million was used from developments in Newark and Sherwood to expand

Joseph Whitaker Secondary School in Rainworth. However, it is a discretionary mechanism so not all local planning authorities in Nottinghamshire have a CIL in place.

37. In some instances, both CIL and s106 payments can be utilised together to pay for more pupil places, for example, whilst CIL payments from developments in Newark and Sherwood were used to fund pupil places at Joseph Whittaker Secondary School in Rainworth, S106 payments from developments in Mansfield were also used.

## **Review activity and recommendations**

### **Admissions criteria**

38. Members of the review group noted that there are surplus and deficits of school places in distinct planning areas within the districts and boroughs within Nottinghamshire, usually tied to local property development. For example, in Bassetlaw, where there is a surplus of places in Retford, there is a deficit of places in Worksop. The options used to address the deficit of secondary school places within a planning area include temporary and permanent school extensions, as well as negotiating with academy trusts to reintroduce catchment areas, which would give children living within the catchment area a higher priority within the oversubscription criteria than children living outside these catchment areas. There is no guarantee of a place for children resident within a catchment area or for children who subsequently move later.
39. Part of the Council's statutory responsibility is to check that the admission arrangements for all own admission authority schools in Nottinghamshire comply with the Code and the Admissions Team review these annually and raise any concerns about non-compliance with the admission authority and refer to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) as necessary. Members of the review group agreed that it is beneficial for joint working between the Council and academy trusts around admissions criteria to help address deficits in secondary school pupil places within local planning areas of Nottinghamshire. It was noted that the County Council could recommend amendments to the criteria, including the introduction/reintroduction of catchment areas where this is considered to be unfair for families in certain areas.

### ***Recommendation One (a):***

***That the Admissions Team continues to work in partnership with academy trusts to ensure the admissions criteria for all schools are fair, clear and objective.***

### **Pupil Place Planning Data Sources**

40. Annual school census data enables Nottinghamshire to identify the geographical areas from which each academy has recruited its pupils. It was noted that there was cross local authority movement from of pupils between Nottinghamshire and surrounding local authorities.
41. Members of the review group welcomed the wide variety of data sources that are used in determining the number of pupils for a secondary school, including GP registration data that enabled the projections that were made around pupil numbers to be as accurate as possible. Members agreed that to ensure that projections were as accurate as possible that as wide range as of data sources should be used to ensure that they were as accurate as possible.

They also noted the specific formulas used by the PPP Team which were developed in conjunction with the DfE.

**Recommendation One (b):**

***That the Pupil Place Planning Team continues to utilise data from other sources to ensure the accuracy of the SCAP Survey.***

**Recommendation One (c):**

***That all Members receive an annual update from the Pupil Place Planning Team about the surplus and deficit of pupil places per planning area within Nottinghamshire, with the specific purpose of identifying areas which are experiencing a deficit of places and to investigate appropriate actions to remedy the deficit of places.***

**Academy Funding Agreements**

42. As noted, many of the Academy Funding Agreements that are an important factor in the calculations that are used to determine the delivery of school places were over ten years old. Members of the review group agreed that it was essential that these funding agreements were up to date when they played such an important role in funding the delivery of the required number of school places.

**Recommendation Two:**

***That the Children and Families Department, together with academy trusts, works with the Department for Education on updating Academy Funding Agreements for secondary schools within Nottinghamshire.***

**Use of s106 monies**

43. Members of the review group recognised the use of monies from a s106 agreement as part of a planning permission as a source of funding for secondary school places. The County Council may modify the purpose of a planning obligation where the s106 has prescribed that the monies must be spent at a specific school and it has become impossible to spend the contribution at the named school due to, for example, feasibility constraints or operational issues such as inadequate performance ratings by Ofsted. The County Council may also seek to modify the purpose of an obligation where the need for school places has changed over time and the original purpose has become obsolete, for example where the deficiency in local school places has moved from the primary education phase to the secondary education phase.
44. In these circumstances, the County Council would need to agree an alternative school with the developer and the LPA for inclusion in the amended s106. Such negotiations are led by the County Council's Planning Policy Team and, where a formal planning application is required by the LPA, the team will prepare and submit the application on behalf of the Council.
45. The difficulty with seeking a modification to a s106 is that it requires mutual agreement with all parties and there is no guarantee that all parties will agree to the proposed amendment.

There are also costs incurred in this process through legal fees, which would typically need to be covered by the County Council where the requested amendment is in its favour. The process can be resource intensive, especially where the County Council is required to submit a planning application, as a robust evidence base is necessary. The negotiations can be lengthy and become protracted.

46. A successful example of the reallocation of s106 monies to fund secondary school places include a recent application by the County Council recently applied to Gedling Borough Council (GBC) to redirect the contributions for a new primary school onsite associated with the Chase Farm Development (known as Park View) to a secondary education contribution. This application was approved by GBC and the contributions will be used to provide additional capacity (150 places) at the Carlton Academy.
47. To minimise the need to modify s106 agreements, the County Council seeks to maximise flexibility within the s106 from the outset. In accordance with its Developer Contributions Strategy (adopted 2021), the County Council will request that the education contribution is used within the 'pupil planning area', rather than any named school. This is to provide the County Council with the flexibility to spend the contribution at more than one school in the locality and respond to changing circumstances, such as school performance indicators or detailed feasibility work, as well as allowing contributions to be pooled towards holistic projects that meet the needs of more than one development. Where appropriate, and often in relation to large scale housing developments, the County Council may seek to include review clauses within the s106 which could enable the obligation to be reviewed and, if necessary, reallocated for a different purpose at a certain point within the development. For example, a s106 could include multiple options, with an option to fund an offside school expansion or a new school onsite, depending on future needs.

***Recommendation Three:***

***That the Planning and Pupil Place Planning Teams continue to refine the mechanisms which allows housing developer contributions to be reallocated to planning areas where there is a deficit of pupil places.***

**Pupil Planning Process**

48. As part of the review, members learnt about the processes that are used to manage the delivery school capital projects from initial analysis of potential demand for school in a planning area through to the delivery of a new school/existing school expansion. These project management tools are relatively new and is still being further developed and refined.
49. Members of the review group welcomed the introduction of these processes and how they were being used to deliver projects at pace by keeping activities on track and identifying which activities could be carried out simultaneously. Currently these processes are being used on individual development projects and did not allow for numerous projects to be tracked on the same chart. Members agreed that there was potential for its use and scope to be extended to manage multiple projects in one place that enable the timeframes of several projects to be monitored side by side. This would enable projects to be managed in the most timely way and would also support in further identifying potential short-term surplus and deficits within Nottinghamshire.

#### **Recommendation Four:**

***That the process management tools used for school capital projects continues to be refined to accommodate numerous school capital projects. The process should also be further developed using best practice from other local authorities.***

#### **Partnership working**

50. Officers noted that the SSPPB and the Arc Partnership Ltd worked with secondary schools to best utilise the land available on the school's grounds for anticipated expansions in pupil numbers. As most secondary schools in Nottinghamshire sit in plots with large parcels of land available for development, the Arc Partnership Ltd works with secondary schools to identify which parts of the land new classrooms and other school buildings can be built on. The SSPPB can then identify which schools are anticipating an increase in pupil places, which the school and the Arc Partnership Ltd can explain how they could accommodate this increase in pupil places through a school expansion. The recent school expansions of Carlton-le-Willows and Rushcliffe Spencer Academies are examples of this approach. Members of the review group were supportive of this approach as it helped schools utilise the space which they possessed to accommodate increases in pupil numbers within Nottinghamshire by using the existing secondary school infrastructure.

#### **Recommendation Five:**

***That work continues between the Strategic School Place Planning Board, Arc Partnership Ltd and secondary schools in Nottinghamshire to ensure the academy trusts are best utilising space with the potential of future development in anticipation of rises in demand for pupil places.***

#### **School governance arrangements**

51. Members of the review group noted that due to the independence of academy trusts, who had developed close ties with the Department of Education, the educational ambitions of the Council were not always as well aligned with those of academy trusts as they could be. Members agreed that the relationship between the Council and academy trusts is most beneficial where there are elected members of the Council sitting on the Board of a MAT or SAT, as they could use their knowledge of county council's educational ambitions and processes to provide opportunities for academies to grow and expand.

#### **Recommendation Six (a):**

***That the Children and Families Department continues to build closer working relationships with academy trusts in Nottinghamshire so that shared goals and support for secondary education can be achieved together.***

#### **Recommendation Six (b):**

***That Members be encouraged to express an interest in taking up a role on the Board of a local multi-academy trust or single-academy trust where a vacancy is advertised.***

52. Summary of recommendations:

	<b>Recommendation</b>
1.	<p>a) That the Admissions Team continues to work in partnership with academy trusts to ensure the admissions criteria for all schools are fair, clear and objective.</p> <p>b) That the Pupil Place Planning Team continues to utilise data from other sources to ensure the accuracy of the SCAP Survey.</p> <p>c) That all Members receive an annual update from the Pupil Place Planning Team about the surplus and deficit of pupil places per planning area within Nottinghamshire, with the specific purpose of identifying areas which are experiencing a deficit of places and to investigate appropriate actions to remedy the deficit of places.</p>
2.	That the Children and Families Department, together with academy trusts, works with the Department for Education on updating Academy Funding Agreements for secondary schools within Nottinghamshire.
3.	That the Planning and Pupil Place Planning Teams continue to refine the mechanisms which allows housing developer contributions to be reallocated to planning areas where there is a deficit of pupil places.
4.	That the process management tools used for school capital projects continues to be refined to accommodate numerous school capital projects. The process should also be further developed using best practice from other local authorities.
5.	That work continues between the Strategic School Place Planning Board, Arc Partnership Ltd and secondary schools in Nottinghamshire to ensure the academy trusts are best utilising space with the potential of future development in anticipation of rises in demand for pupil places.
6.	<p>a) That the Children and Families Department continues to build closer working relationships with academy trusts in Nottinghamshire so that shared goals and support for secondary education can be achieved together.</p> <p>b) That Members be encouraged to express an interest in taking up a role on the Board of a local multi-academy trust or single-academy trust where a vacancy is advertised.</p>

**Acknowledgements**

53. The Chairman and members of the review group would like to express their thanks to Peter McConnochie, Service Director for Education, Learning and Inclusion, Wayne Bexton, Service Director for Green Growth, Investment and Assets, and the service officers for their support provided during the review process.

## **Other Options Considered**

54. None. The recommendations of the review, if approved and to comply with the requirements of the Constitution are required to be submitted to Cabinet for their consideration.

## **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

55. To comply with the requirements of the Constitution that the findings of a scrutiny review are submitted to the Cabinet for their consideration.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

56. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Financial Implications**

57. There are no direct financial implication relating to the recommendations in the report.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) That the recommendations of the scrutiny task and finish review of secondary school pupil place planning be endorsed and referred to the Cabinet.

**Councillor Mike Introna**  
**Chairman of the Children and Families Select Committee**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

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- James Lavender, Democratic Services Officer, [james.lavender@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:james.lavender@nottsc.gov.uk)

## **Constitutional Comments (LPW 12/09/24)**

58. The recommendations fall within the Children and Families Select Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

## **Financial Comments (SH 11/09/24)**

59. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.



## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- [Children and Families Select Committee, Monday 20 March 2023 – Agenda Item 5: Secondary School Place Planning](#)

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All



**7 October 2024**

**Agenda Item: 9**

## **REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SELECT COMMITTEE**

### **WORK PROGRAMME**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To consider the Children and Families Select Committee's work programme.

#### **Information**

2. The work programme (attached as Appendix 1 to the report) assists in the management of the Committee's agenda, the scheduling of its business and its forward planning.
3. The work programme was developed through the use of a workshop session where committee members and other non-Cabinet members had the opportunity to learn about the work and priorities of the department in advance of making suggestions for items for inclusion.
4. The work programme has been approved by Overview Committee and will be reviewed regularly with the Chairman and at each Committee meeting, where any member of the Committee is able to suggest items for possible inclusion.

#### **Other Options Considered**

5. To not produce a work programme: this option is discounted as a clear work programme is required for the effective management of the Committee's agenda, the scheduling of its business and its forward planning.

#### **Reasons for Recommendations**

6. To assist the Committee in preparing its business effectively.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

6. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Financial Implications**

7. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) That the Children and Families Select Committee's work programme be noted.
- 2) That Committee members make any further suggestions for items for inclusion on the work programme for consideration by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member(s) and senior officers, and subject to the required approval by the Chairman of the Overview Committee.

## **Councillor Mike Introna, Chairman of the Children and Families Select Committee**

### **For any enquiries about this report, please contact:**

Martin Elliott, Senior Scrutiny Officer  
[Email: martin.elliott@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:martin.elliott@nottsc.gov.uk)

## **Constitutional Comments (HD)**

8. The Committee has authority to consider the matters set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

## **Financial Comments (NS)**

9. There are no direct financial implications arising from the contents of this report. Any future reports to Committee on operational activities and officer working groups will contain relevant financial information and comments.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

10. Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- All



**WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25 – CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SELECT COMMITTEE**

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Responsibility</b>	<b>Purpose of the report</b>	<b>Issue raised by</b>	<b>Nottinghamshire Plan Ambitions</b>
<b>7 October 2024</b>	Outcomes and Experiences of Children and Young People with SEND – Progress Report	Cabinet Member - Education and SEND	To examine the progress made by the Nottinghamshire local area SEND Partnership in implementing improvements to the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.	Committee meeting	Supporting communities and families
	Performance, Finance and Risk Update	Cabinet Member - Children and Families/Cabinet Member - Education and SEND	To provide a progress report on departmental performance, risk and financial position.	Committee meeting	Supporting communities and families  Keeping children, vulnerable adults, and communities safe
	Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs)	Cabinet Member - Education and SEND	To receive a progress report on the activity that has been carried out since the completion of the task and finish review of EHCPs. Also to cover the upcoming contract in for assessments in support of EHCPs	Committee meeting	Supporting communities and families
	Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) – Progress Report on Priorities and Annual Report 2023/24	Cabinet Member - Children and Families	To receive the NSCP Annual Report.	Annual item	Keeping children, vulnerable adults, and communities safe
	Outcomes of the review of secondary pupil place planning		To consider the findings of the scrutiny review of secondary pupil place planning.		Supporting communities and families

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<b>2 December 2024</b>	Outcomes and Experiences of Children and Young People with SEND – Progress Report	Cabinet Member - Education and SEND	To examine the progress made by the Nottinghamshire local area SEND Partnership in implementing improvements to the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.	Committee meeting	Supporting communities and families
	Child Exploitation Support	Cabinet Member - Children and Families	To examine the Council’s approach to tackling child exploitation.	Work Programming session	Keeping children, vulnerable adults, and communities safe
	Youth Services/ Local Authority Approach to Youth Provision in Nottinghamshire	Cabinet Member - Children and Families	To examine the provision of Youth Services.	Work Programming session.	Supporting communities and families
	Early Years Provision of Childcare	Cabinet Member – Children and Families	Resolved at February 2024 meeting “That a further report on the Early Years and Childcare Sector in Nottinghamshire be received at the January 2025 meeting of the Children and Families Select Committee.”	Committee meeting	Supporting communities and families
	Outcomes of the review of fostering recruitment and retention		To consider the findings of the scrutiny review of fostering recruitment and retention		Supporting communities and families



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<b>17 March 2025</b>	Outcomes and Experiences of Children and Young People with SEND – Progress Report	Cabinet Member - Education and SEND	To examine the progress made by the Nottinghamshire local area SEND Partnership in implementing improvements to the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.	Committee meeting	Supporting communities and families
	Performance, Finance and Risk Update	Cabinet Member - Children and Families/Cabinet Member - Education and SEND	To provide a progress report on departmental performance, risk and financial position.	Committee meeting	Supporting communities and families Keeping children, vulnerable adults, and communities safe
	Children not in school/Elective Home Education	Cabinet Member - Education and SEND	To examine activity around the new requirements to maintain a record of all children not in school. Also to consider issues relating to children to why children are withdrawn from school	Work Programming session	Supporting communities and families
	Family Hubs	Cabinet Member – Children and Families	To examine the delivery of Family Hubs. Site visits in advance of the meeting.	Work Programming session	Supporting communities and families
	Impact of VAT on private school fees on school places.	Cabinet Member - Education and SEND	To examine whether there has been an impact on demand for school places due the introduction of VAT on private school fees.	Work Programming session	Supporting communities and families

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<b>14 July 2025</b>	Outcomes and Experiences of Children and Young People with SEND – Progress Report	Cabinet Member - Education and SEND	To examine the progress made by the Nottinghamshire local area SEND Partnership in implementing improvements to the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.	Committee	Supporting communities and families
	Workforce recruitment and retention	Cabinet Member - Education and SEND	To examine the issues and activity being carried out around workforce recruitment and retention.	Work Programming session	Building skills that help people to get good local jobs  A forward looking and resilient council
	Youth Justice Plan	Cabinet Member – Children and Families	To examine the delivery of the Youth Justice Plan.	Work Programming session	Keeping children, vulnerable adults, and communities safe
	Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) – Annual Report	Cabinet Member - Education and SEND	To receive the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) – Annual Report	Annual item	Supporting communities and families
	Developing the approach to meeting children's needs through the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub	Cabinet Member – Children and Families	To receive a progress report on the approach to meeting children's needs through the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub	Committee meeting	Keeping children, vulnerable adults, and communities safe

**WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25 – CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SELECT COMMITTEE**

**Items pending scheduling or removal.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Responsibility</b>	<b>Purpose of the report</b>	<b>Issue raised by</b>	<b>Nottinghamshire Plan Ambitions</b>

**WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25 – CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SELECT COMMITTEE**

**Reviews**

<b>Project Start Date</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Responsibility</b>	<b>Purpose of Review</b>	<b>Issue raised by</b>	<b>Nottinghamshire Plan Ambitions</b>
September /October 2024	Fostering recruitment and retention	Cabinet Member - Children and Families	Agreed during 2023/24. Scope has been drafted.	Committee	Supporting communities and families
TBC	Transition of Service Users from Children and Families Services to Adult Social Care Services  (Joint item with the Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee)	Cabinet Member - Children and Families  Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health	To examine the current procedures surrounding the transition of service users from Children’s to Adult Services.  To make recommendations on how procedures could be developed to ensure the best possible transition for each service user.	Committee	Supporting communities and families  Keeping children, vulnerable adults, and communities safe

## WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25 – CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SELECT COMMITTEE

### Items to be scheduled for 2025/26

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Responsibility</b>	<b>Purpose of the report</b>	<b>Issue raised by</b>	<b>Nottinghamshire Plan Ambitions</b>
Small Schools Sustainability Strategy	Cabinet Member - Education and SEND	Strategy being considered by Cabinet September 2024. To be considered for scheduling for 2025/26.	Work Programming session	Supporting communities and families

### Items for information briefings for committee members

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Responsibility</b>	<b>Purpose of the report</b>	<b>Issue raised by</b>	<b>Nottinghamshire Plan Ambitions</b>
Child Exploitation	Cabinet Member - Children and Families	To receive a briefing note on Child Exploitation.	Work Programming session	Keeping children, vulnerable adults, and communities safe

