

Corporate Parenting Panel

Tuesday, 14 January 2025 at 14:00

County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7QP

AGENDA

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| 1 | Apologies for Absence | |
| 2 | Declarations of Interests by Members and Officers:- (see note below) | |
| 3 | Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 15 October 2024 | 3 - 10 |
| 4 | Foster Carers Liaison Group update – Verbal Report | |
| 5 | Children in Care Council update – Verbal Report | |
| 6 | Update on Nottinghamshire Children’s Residential Homes and Secure Accommodation Service | 11 - 24 |
| 7 | Annual Report of the Strategic Safeguarding Service April 2023 – March 2024 | 25 - 48 |
| 8 | Harmful Sexual Behaviour by Children Annual Review 2024 | 49 - 60 |
| 9 | Managing Allegations Service Annual Report 2023-24 | 61 - 74 |
| 10 | Work Programme 2025 | 75 - 76 |

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 Sarah Ashton (Tel. 0115 977 3962) 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: Corporate Parenting Panel

Date: Tuesday 15 October 2024 (commencing at 2:00pm)

Membership:**COUNCILLORS**

Sinead Anderson (Chairman)

Anne Callaghan BEM
Francis Purdue-Horan
Mike Introna – **Apologies**

OTHER COUNCILLORS IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Tracey Taylor

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Sarah Ashton	-	Democratic Services Officer
Heather Bennett	-	Executive Officer for Children and Families
Amanda Collinson	-	Service Director for Care, Help and Protection
Beth Downing	-	Group Manager for Placements and Commissioning
Sophie Eadsforth	-	Group Manager for Looked After Children
James Lavender	-	Democratic Services Officer
Davinia Lawton	-	Service Manager for Residential and Contact Services
Stephanie McGill	-	Assistant Head of Virtual Schools
Pip Milbourne	-	Business Support Administrator
Paul Thomas	-	Service Manager Secure Accommodation
Matt Wesson	-	Service Manager Fostering Services
Jenny Whiston	-	Group Manager for Fostering, Residential and Secure Accommodation
Ty Yousaf	-	Group Manager for Strategic Safeguarding

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Lauren Monaghan - Notts TV

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Introna with Cllr Taylor substituting.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 2 JULY 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2024, having been circulated previously, were confirmed as correct and signed by the Chairman.

4 FOSTER CARERS LIAISON GROUP UPDATE

Amanda Collinson, Service Director for Help, Protection and Care, and Jenny Whiston, Group Manager for Fostering, Residential and Secure Accommodation, presented the Panel with a regular update on the recent meetings of the Foster Carers Liaison Group (FLAG). The following points were discussed:

FLAG meet every two months; it continues to go well with good attendance and contribution from carers and partners. This has been a significant change in recent months and one that carers are happy about.

The Foster carer Hubs are held regularly and the new Childrens Service Manager has been attending these around the county. Feedback about Foster carers being listened to and included has been positive from recent events held and been acknowledged at FLAG.

RESOLVED 2024/029

That the update be noted.

5 CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL UPDATE

Sophie Eadsforth, Group Manager for Looked After Children, provided an update on the work of the Children in Care Council (CiCC). The following points were discussed:

The last CiCC meeting didn't go ahead due to the young people having other commitments and so the next meeting is scheduled for 2nd December but that professionals continue to seek the views of the children in care Council when needed. The Local Offer for Care Leavers has been launched and is available for anyone to view via the Notts Help Yourself webpage; [Nottshelpyourself](#). We have been working on a specialist Health Local Offer which is currently with the

design and print team and so more information can be shared at the next Corporate Parenting meeting.

RESOLVED 2024/030

That the update be noted.

6 UPDATE ON NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL HOMES AND SECURE ACCOMMODATION SERVICE

Davinia Lawton, Service Manager for Residential and Contact Services, and Paul Thomas, Service Manager for Secure Accommodation, presented an update on the status of children's residential homes and secure accommodation within Nottinghamshire. The following points were discussed:

Ofsted visited at CFH received a 'Good' judgement, with special mentions with regards to the health and protection experience. The inspectors highlighted areas that needed to be improved but these were already in our forward plan, they will continue with regulatory visits going forward. Members recognised the improvements.

CWH, the Registered Manager has retired and the Deputy Manager is temporarily taking on the role, unfortunately they haven't had any success in filling the position permanently. Interviewing early November 2024. They are receiving positive reports from the Regulation 44 (Reg 44) inspectors visits. Members who had visited acknowledged a feel-good factor; the care given was exceptional.

TBH, they are waiting for a further inspection. Their children have bespoke care packages, they have a stable staffing team to deliver their needs. The Registered Manager will be retiring in April 2025, recruitment is ongoing. Members who had visited commented that the staff were wonderful.

OH, following a recent Ofsted visit, the inspectors were very positive.

Members were concerned on how difficult the homes were finding it to recruit people to these demanding roles.

It was discussed that minutes should be formatted in line with Ofsted safeguarding guidelines; therefore, we will continue with abbreviations for our residential homes. It was acknowledged that this was a discrete way to protect the homes.

The Chair had visited several of NCC's residential homes over the Summer:

CWH – was impressed on how individual children's needs were catered for eg raised beds, sensory objects, and the interaction with staff you could see there was a real connection.

LNH – a real nice, homely feel, you wouldn't know it was a residential home it was just like a normal home.

OH – nice home.

RESOLVED 2024/031

That there were no further actions required at this time, that the report be noted.

7 INSPECTION GRADINGS OF 'EXCLUSIVE USE' CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL HOMES – SEPTEMBER 2024

Beth Downing, Group Manager for Placements and Commissioning, highlight various elements of the report, updating the Panel on the current performance of homes.

EC is a recently added home.

All NCC homes have a good or outstanding Ofsted rating.

RESOLVED 2024/032

That the report be noted.

The Panel asked that their thanks were re-laid back to the staff, that they appreciate their commitment to achieve these high standards, what they give every day to Nottinghamshire children in our care is inspirational.

8 PROGRESS OF THE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS 2022-2025

Amanda Collinson, Service Director for Help, Protection and Care, delivered the report into the Partnership Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers 2022-2025, which included the progress and some of the key achievements of the partnership to date since July 2024. The following points were discussed:

The Board have seen a significant increase in the number of children having their health assessments within the designated time periods.

The NTU Annual Conference received excellent feedback, with lots of schools buying into the trauma informed practice.

RESOLVED 2024/033

That there were no further actions required at this time, that the report be noted.

9 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER SERVICE: APRIL 2023 – MARCH 2024

Ty Yousaf, Manager for Strategic Safeguarding, highlighted the reports content into the performance and activities of the Independent Review Officer (IRO). The following points were discussed:

The number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors has seen a rise, the local authority can apply for monies for accommodation and support. The Home Office funds the 1.5 full time posts we have who are responsible for the workload involved.

RESOLVED 2024/034

That there were no further actions required at this time, that the report be noted.

10 VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER'S ANNUAL REPORT

Stephanie McGill, Assistant Head of Virtual Schools, delivered the report on the work and impact of virtual schools for the academic year 2023/2024. The following points were discussed:

Personal Education Plans (PEP) are done 3 times a year, this year has seen the number of completed PEP's within the designated timescale has increased. The capturing of our 'children's voices' within the plans was recognised by Ofsted as a strengthening of the plans.

Members acknowledge the fixed term suspensions up to the September 2024 term and seen a reduction.

The literacy programme 'The Letterbox Club' has proved to be valued and well received by both the children and carers.

RESOLVED 2024/035

That there were no further actions required at this time, that the report be noted.

11 FOSTERING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT FOR APRIL 2023 TO MARCH 2024

Matt Wesson, Service Manager Fostering Services delivered the report on the performance and activities of the Fostering Service from April 2023 to March 2024. The following points were discussed:

Concerns were expressed over the decreasing number of foster cares, caring for Nottinghamshire children. Members discussed the possible reasons

behind this: personal reasons, retirement, becoming 'Special Guardians' difficulties and complexities of the recruitment process, poaching by other authorities who offer a higher fostering allowance. Not helped as there is a national shortage of foster carers.

Nottinghamshire are reviewing their processes to speed up recruitment and are talking to our local authority neighbours about offering the same fostering allowances.

RESOLVED 2024/036

That there were no further actions required at this time, that the report be noted.

12 LOCAL OFFER FOR CARE LEAVERS, SIX-MONTHLY UPDATE

Sophie Eadsforth, Group Manager for Looked after Children Service Director for Help, Protection and Care, updated the committee:

Ofsted did an inspection in May 2024 they were impressed with our Local Offer, they wrote in their report; *The Local Offer is ambitious, accessible and well promoted. It details clearly the support care leavers can receive.*

The Local Offer for care leavers in custody or those who are parents or who were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children ensures they receive clear information and support in line with their specific needs. Care leavers are helped to understand their rights and entitlements by their PAs, who actively promote the services available to them.

RESOLVED 2024/037

That the verbal update be noted.

13 WORK PROGRAMME

Amanda Collinson, Service Director for Help, Protection and Care, presented the Work Programme.

The Government response to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, would be removed from the work programme as a standard item, to be added if needed in the future.

The report from Borough & District Councils on their corporate parenting responsibilities and how they are meeting them had been moved to the January 2025 meeting.

RESOLVED 2024/038

- 1) That the Work Programme be noted.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 3:55pm.

Chair:



14 January 2025

Agenda Item: 6

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, HELP, PROTECTION AND CARE

UPDATE ON NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL HOMES AND SECURE ACCOMMODATION SERVICE

Purpose of the Report

1. The report provides an update on Nottinghamshire children's residential homes.

Information

2. There are five internal children's residential homes in Nottinghamshire, two providing for children with disability and three mainstream homes. Nottinghamshire also has a secure accommodation service, which houses 20 young people who are placed on remand on welfare grounds across England and Wales.
3. The current children's disability homes are CWH and TBH. Whilst the decision was previously taken to undertake renovation work at WV children's home to accommodate the needs of children with disabilities, this is currently being considered in relation to the needs of the children who will potentially be placed in the home and the exact requirements of the service moving forward.
4. Within residential services the specialist social worker who commenced in post in January 2024 has been undertaking and delivering therapeutic work with the children, families, and staff. This has had a positive impact on the children's outcomes, staff development and the quality of care delivered.
5. A new residential improvement board has been developed to create and develop our approach to solve the current challenges to recruitment and retention, to support our workforce planning within this sector.

Children with Disability Homes

TBH

6. TBH is a short break home for children with significant intellectual disabilities. At present the home provides overnight short breaks for 30 children. Each child has a bespoke package of care ranging from 24 overnights to 156 overnights a year. At present, short breaks are being provided for 4 children from out of the County. Allocation is dependent on need and is subject to change dependent on the changing needs of the children.

7. The home continues to be thriving. It provides unwavering levels of care, interaction, stimulation, and opportunities to all children who receive a service from its highly skilled and dedicated staff team. The home is at this time fully staffed with a well-established and experienced staff team.

October's Regulation 44 visit report stated:

Another fabulous visit. The house pristinely clean, new cushions adding to the cared for look and Halloween decorations outside fun and appealing for children. I don't have to look far for excellent evidence. Every aspect of care, maintenance, events seem well planned, practice is proactive, staff enthused and motivated. Hearing about new communication aids for children and seeing the arrival of interactive communication aids that were to go on the wall fills me with pride for this teams' endeavours to make life better for these vulnerable children. Children are having the time of their lives, doing new and interesting stuff. The health and well-being is managed with care and attention to detail. Halloween party was in the pipeline and already Christmas plans are in place. The pace and energy to make sure children have the best time, is to be admired.

8. October half term was extremely busy with all children having lots of fun. The children enjoyed a variety of activities and accessed the community regularly, doing sports and leisure activities including gymnastics, swimming, local parks, pumpkin picking, cinema, trampolining, and visits to the coast. The garden continues to be a big attraction for the children regardless of the weather. After each event/activity the staff complete activity forms and can reflect on how well the outing went, what can be done differently and how children's experiences can be enhanced further moving forward. This ensures a culture of learning, reflection and development in line with the children's needs, wishes and feelings.
9. Staff regularly carry out key work sessions with each child who visits the home. For some of the children who find it difficult to engage or struggle with these sessions, the staff do observational questionnaires. They observe what the child is doing and how they are responding to what is happening and how they are enjoying it. All the sessions are recorded with lots of photographs which encapsulates how happy the children are. To see how much fun the children are having is a delight and very heartwarming. The sessions are excellent examples of child focussed, insightful work that aims to bring out the best in each child who visits TBH.
10. Notwithstanding the fact that some of the children only come to stay a couple of times a month, there is evidence that they are making progress. This is clear in recordings, the shift plans and the child's Measurable Outcomes Plan. Progress is also discussed in team meetings. One child is using more words and responding positively to praise. Another child has grasped the concept of unpacking and packing clothes. Two children have been out for a meal together and 2 other children have been swimming together with excellent peer interactions. This is outstanding progress for all these children, and these are just a few examples of the excellent progress that children are making.
11. The home has recently had its Christmas party. This was attended by children and families as well as children from the other internal homes. There were small animals to pet – which was a great success as well as a snow machine. Santa Claus paid a visit and all children received a gift. The event was extremely successful with parents, children and carers alike.

CWH

12. CWH is registered as a 12 bedded home for children with physical disabilities and associated learning difficulties and health care needs, with 4 residential beds and 8 short break beds. Two of the residential placements are out of County. There are 21 children accessing short breaks, with a variety of packages of between 24 and 150 overnights being allocated on an individual basis, 4 of these come from out of County.
13. The planned move for one of the residents to an adult placement is going well, and it is envisaged the move will go ahead during the first week in January. The home continues to work closely with the child's new team, and staff will be on hand to offer support, advice and guidance once the move takes place.
14. In anticipation of this move another child has joined the residential unit at CWH. Unfortunately, within a short period after they arrived, they were admitted to hospital for two weeks due to an unexpected deterioration in their health. Staff stayed with the child around the clock to ensure that ongoing, nurturing and consistent care was always offered. Consequently the team have worked exceptionally hard involving a range of health professionals in identifying procedures and practices that will assist to manage this child's complex health needs moving forward.
15. The return to school and college went smoothly for those children with new educational placements. Staff did a lot of pre-planning, using social stories and visiting schools before the half term and during the holidays to make sure each transition back to education was as smooth as possible.
16. One child experienced their first holiday with CWH staff, going to Butlins for a long weekend. This child loved the experience so much that upon their return they independently and spontaneously packed a suitcase in anticipation of their next trip. Another child had a city break to London and packed in a visit to Buckingham Palace, the Shrek experience and went to see the Lion King. All these events were thrilling experiences for this child which have made lifelong, lasting special memories for them.
17. There have been several trips out in Autumn, making sure the children have positive experiences of getting out and about. This has included pumpkin picking, attending a Halloween fancy dress party, a garden centre, the air museum, ice hockey to see the Tigers, a firework display, the Hungry Caterpillar show and Disney on Ice. This does not include shopping trips, the cinema and bowling, all of which the children loved. The home celebrated Black History month in October and engaged with a charity that helped put on a carnival, complete with costumes, music and dance at CWH.
18. As the weather turns colder, the home has plans for more indoor activities, making the most of the resources available including the sensory room, waterbed, story room, playroom, art room and space where the children can safely come out of their wheelchairs and develop their physical strength and capabilities.
19. Over Christmas children will attend the pantomime and lightshows. All five residential children will be at CWH on Christmas day and so staff have made sure Santa is bringing what the children have asked for, as well as some very inventive surprises. Staff and

children have matching pyjamas for Christmas eve, with Christmas eve boxes and party games.

20. The established team remain settled, skilled and highly experienced. The management team has worked closely together and remains proactive in their oversight and involvement in everyday practises across the service. The development plan sets out the home's objectives to expand staff knowledge on children's sensory needs and how staff can support children to regulate emotions. The service has used different mediums and engaged with other professionals; as the team upskill it can see by observations and evaluations that its approach is having a beneficial effect on all children.
21. Training and development are part of the home's everyday tasks with the health training team support the residential team. Nurses assess staff competency and are on hand, should staff need advice. Staff refresh their 'moving and handling' training skills annually and have two moving and handling link workers who support staff in-house with workshops and skills assessments.
22. The specialist Social Worker has continued to support the team and the children in therapy and is doing individual sessions with a child and their family to enable them in rebuilding their relationship. The Social Worker will also do refresher workshops in staff meetings that focuses on using a therapeutic approach when supporting children who have experienced trauma, and is proving to be an invaluable asset to the home and to the children.
23. The October Regulation 44 reports include examples of the practices at CWH that reflect the team's values, attitudes and commitment to make sure we are making a difference to the children's lives:

The professional pride of care staff was the first thing I noticed on this visit.

The children's experience at CWH is not in the least 2 dimensional, they get to have dynamic and immersive experiences they wouldn't ordinarily have.

I have to say that the Black History month achieved much more than just being a display board. It fulfilled the manager's expectations of being something more dynamic. Brilliant work!

The review booklets for each child are astounding and represent the strongest and most inclusive preparation for reviews I see across all of the homes I visit. Key workers start preparatory discussions with children weeks before a review meeting and create a booklet that reflects what the child wants and needs. It includes photographs the children have chosen.

The manager is aware that changes in the management of the home may have impacted some but is clear that there continues to be a good level of stability and no change to the commitment the wider team show. She spoke of working to staff strengths and interests and delegating projects pieces that help contribute to maintained motivation and validation.

Mainstream Homes

LD

24. The home has capacity to accommodate 3 young people and had a new child placed in November. The new child has been introduced to the staff team and has been supported to settled and build positive relations at LD.
25. The staff team remain committed to the home and continue to provide a high standard of care. The team build strong and positive relationships, promoting resilience and building children's self-esteem. This ensures living at the home is a positive experience and the children have lasting positive memories.
26. All children at LD attend full time education and are fully supported and encouraged to understand the importance of education. The team has close links with identified staff at each educational setting with daily or weekly feedback, ensuring the children are supported to achieve their full potential socially, emotionally and physically. One child at the home is in year 11. The home has worked very closely with this child's school to create plans to support revision sessions, getting the child ready for their GCSEs. The child who recently moved into LD is attending mainstream school in year 10. This child was on an Education, Health & Care Plan, however school are looking to cease this as they have made so much progress since being in the home. The eldest child in the home attends an alternative provision studying mechanics, mathematics and English. They have been supported to build new relationships and attend education independently, getting ready for their new phase in life.
27. One child continues with support working on independence skills, where they budget their weekly food shopping and cook healthy meals. They are independently using public transport to and from college and continues to build their independence and have free time with their friends. They have been introduced to a Transition Personal Adviser who will provide extra support throughout the transition period for semi-independent living.
28. Physical activities and hobbies are encouraged to promote physical and emotional wellbeing for all the children. The children complete their own plans where they arrange to go the gym, go swimming, bike riding, trampolining, golf, ice hockey and much more. Hobbies are fully supported. One child attends a disability football team and enjoys going on football tournaments with their team. One child has shown keen interest in playing pool, they will play pool with their mum on family time, and with staff and peers in the home, their skills are significantly improving which has in turn increased their self-confidence. Another child has an interest and talent for ice skating and has joined an Ice Hockey team. This child has used 'Know your own mind' funding to purchase the safety equipment for these lessons. During the October half term holiday, the children enjoyed pumpkin picking, decorating the home for Halloween and went out 'trick or treating'. They thoroughly enjoyed attending the Halloween scare fest. Likewise, Bonfire night was a great success with children attending a bonfire display in the village. All the children have also spent a day at the Adventure Mill Base with the youth service.
29. Staff support children to voice their wishes and feelings and support them to make decisions about what they want to happen in their lives. Alongside this staff act as advocates for the children ensuring that children's needs and wants are known and acted

upon. All children are encouraged to attend meetings that relate to them to ensure that they are fully represented. LD also has an independent advocate who visits the home. All children meet the advocate and have the freedom to discuss any concerns and are supported to make complaints if they wish to. The team will encourage children to build positive relationships with social workers who are welcomed to the home, to ensure the children have a variety of people they can express their views to.

30. Carers and managers work closely with children, supporting and building their understanding and knowledge of risks. Managers will use a multi-agency approach to keep children safe when required, creating additional plans such as 'safety plans' when needed. The team works with children to develop their knowledge of the risks they place themselves in and empower children to contribute to their own plans that keep them safe.
31. Weekly plans and activities provide structure and routine for the children. Carers complete keywork sessions with children. Monthly catch-up meetings are planned with taking children outside the home to listen to their wishes and feelings, always ensuring that children feel valued and respected.
32. The home's Specialist Social Worker supports the team to understand children's behaviours, exploring therapeutic approaches, delivering training to support staff to understand trauma and attachment. The Social Worker also offers direct 1-1 sessions with children and continues working with a child to help them make sense of their emotions and feelings about their history and family.
33. The October 2024 Regulation 44 report concluded:

The home is well managed, is adequately staffed and well led by the management team. The children are effectively safeguarded, and their wellbeing is promoted with advice sought from CAMHS and the therapeutic social worker. There continues to be a strong emphasis on advocating children in education and with preparation for independence. Managers continue to provide leadership with out of hours support and with support on shifts. Children's behaviors are understood and supported by staff and family time is supported.

OH

34. OH is a 4 bedded home. However, there are currently only 2 children at the home. The home plan to bring in a third child in the new year once current staffing levels can accommodate this. The home continues to provide a range of care for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties with or without moderate learning disabilities.
35. The managers in the home have continued to develop and improve ways of working at OH. They continually assess risk assessments, baselines, safety plans, positive behaviour support plans and weekly planners with the staff team, ensuring that they are up to date and child centred. This has provided children with well needed routine and structure. Positive, fun activities that help to establish relationships and ensure children are listened to and kept safe are now fully embedded in the home. The children engage in monthly catchups with their key team to ensure their wishes and feelings are captured and the voice of the child is heard. Managers are using the 'matching matrix' to match children to live at

the home. This to date has proved successful and children now have good relationships that are healthy and supportive of each other.

36. The September and October 2024 Regulation 44 visitor reports very positive practice at the home and concludes the following:

'The fabric of this building is very impressive, whilst it has undergone recent refurbishment it has never looked this stunning. The gardens well-kept spaces to eat and relax outside, internally there is something new to look at each visit, framed pictures, new wall hangings, display boards. The soaps and creams and abundance of tissues and toilet paper in the toilets are the kind of details that are so easily overlooked but say something about the people that live and work in this home.

The 'children's' worlds are much more structured and safe, they are being encouraged to succeed and focus. They are doing brilliantly. Staff direction is clear and supportive and where shortcomings identified affirmative action to mitigate risk is taken without delay.

The house looks fantastic, some great examples of strong safeguarding, clearly a team effort to keep the quality of provision high.

It was moving to hear how well staff and children enjoyed their holiday and whilst that is now behind them, there is still much for them to look forward to. Success breeds success and both these 'children' are on their way... Thank you OH for such a great regulatory visit.'

37. The specialist social worker is based at OH and is delivering direct work with the two children to support their emotional needs and to work with the staff team to understand attachment and trauma. Some identified staff have one to one sessions with the therapeutic Social Worker. This intervention is bespoke to them with the clear aim and objective to improve practice and increase their knowledge and understanding of the needs of the children they are working with.
38. All children are enrolled in full time education, one child attends sixth form and has recently undertaken their exams as well as completing coursework towards their A-Levels. Staff have supported the child with their revision and homework tasks in the home. One child is in year 11 at school, they are currently exploring further education options that are specific to and align with their future career aspirations in the hospitality and catering sector. All children's achievements are celebrated to build children's confidence and show each child how proud the staff team are of them.
39. Children are fully involved in planning events. In recent months the home has planned birthday parties, Halloween parties, a MacMillan coffee morning and Children in Need bake sale for family and friends to attend. One child has recently celebrated their 16th Birthday, many family members and friends visited the home to celebrate the occasion.
40. The children have taken an active role in decorating the home for the Christmas period and there are robust activity plans in place for the children over the festive calendar including a multitude of festive activities such as Christmas Markets, Pantomimes, Christmas Lights, Snow Trails and Secret Santa in the home. The children are encouraged

to take part in the activities over the festive period alongside family time, free time in the community and spending time with their friends.

41. Children are also currently planning a festive gathering for their families at the home. They have planned to cook a Christmas meal alongside the gifting of presents and festive games and activities. Both children are looking forward to showing their families their cooking abilities and this is a testament to all their hard work in improving and developing their independence skills.
42. The home continues to encourage children to participate in hobbies and leisure activities that will help their physical and emotional wellbeing. This includes children attending boxing classes, roller skating, attending the gym, trampolining, ice skating, youth club and walks around local country park. The children have enjoyed a wide range of activities including Escape Rooms, Scare Mazes, Pumpkin Picking, Taylor Swift tribute show and watching the England Women's Football team play in an international friendly.
43. The home now has a cultural diversity night once a month, where young people and staff plan an event to showcase different cultures from around the world. The cultural diversity nights facilitate learning about different cultures through the medium of cooking, music, dance, arts and activities, whilst also giving insight and learning about different religious beliefs, cultural dress and ways of life from all around the world. So far, the events have focused on cultural diversity from Nigeria, France, Greece and Brazil, with many more cultures planned to be explored in the future.
44. Both children are currently working on their independence skills. This consists of meal planning, shopping, budgeting, cooking and using public transport. The process has continued to push the children out of their comfort zone and has seen an increase in their confidence and personal independence skills and abilities.
45. The staff team are transparent in their practise and the home has a lovely atmosphere where children and staff work effectively together. Staff have recently taken part in a team building day, which was led by the specialist Social Worker. The day was a huge success and has seen an increase in collaborative working throughout the team and added to the positive working environment at OH.

WV

46. **Paragraph 3** of this report reflects the current plans in respect of WV.

Secure Accommodation

CFH

47. CFH is a secure children's home and is a national resource across England and Wales for children and young people placed on custodial or welfare grounds between the ages of 10 to 18. The service also accommodates young people overnight under the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) legislation, where young people are deemed at risk or vulnerable in Police custody. The home registration enables up to 20 young people to be accommodated but is currently undergoing a major refurbishment programme of two of its house units and so the home is operating two house units and the annex, which is a total

of 14 young people. Twelve beds are part of the Ministry of Justice 'Block Contract' and a further two beds are available for the national Secure Welfare Coordination Unit (SWCU), who commission welfare beds on behalf of the Department for Education nationally.

48. No different to the last report to the Panel, Ofsted last inspected CFH on the 10 September and gave the service 'Good' across all judgment areas e.g. *Leadership and management, overall experiences & progress of children and young people, how well children and young people are helped and protected, children's health and children's education and learning.* An Assurance Visit, which is a one-day inspection, is now awaited in early January 2025 with a full inspection anticipated later on in the year.
49. Senior leaders within the service continue to drive a number of priorities, one being the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) procurement, the current contract was due to expire in September, however, the MoJ extended this by a further three months until the end of December 2025, which includes both the extension and to negotiate the new seven year contract which is currently being supported by the Council's legal, finance and procurement colleagues, and is being led by the Service Director for Commissioning and Resources and senior leaders within Clayfields.
50. The service continues to have robust governance board arrangements to ensure oversight, accountability and to provide a 'check and challenge' to the senior leadership team within CFH. The 'terms of reference' (ToR) of the board, provides a forum to support the senior leadership team and *to ensure young people receive the best possible service, that staff are adequately supported, and that partners work collaborate with CFH.* The ToR also outlines *where there are challenges that avenues are explored to overcome these and that the service provides value for money, at the same time to reinvest back in the service to enable this to be an excellent national resource for young people on remand, sentenced, on welfare and young people placed under Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984.* The board is chaired by the Head of Service for Fostering, Residential and Secure Accommodation and the Service Director for Help, Protection and Care service also attends. The board agenda ensures other activities across the service can be updated through governance meetings, such as the Education Advisory Board, Workforce development, Health and Safety, ICT and infrastructure, Health delivery board, young people forums and stakeholders are provided with an opportunity to feed into the governance arrangements.
51. The independent Regulation 44 visits continues to take place monthly the last visit was on 27 November and some of the summary of the visit is as follows;

The external compliments help reinforce the view I hold about the impact CFS has on children which is, in less than ideal circumstances extraordinary things do happen. Children continue to learning, develop new interests are consulted about almost every practicable aspect of their care. Staff on the whole are committed to CFS and are motivated to connect with young people. It is a tricky time ahead with Christmas on the way, but morale and motivation to make the celebratory period as calm and pleasant as possible was very evident this visit.

The established health team at CFS is a real asset to the service. I observed a mental health nurse providing training to care inductees and raising awareness of their purpose and how to initiate support for children. Similarly to education health professionals are an

integral aspect to case management and morning meetings and all other forums are inclusive of health professionals. I observed a nurse check in with a young person who has just started his ADHD medication, she was sensitive to ensuring the conversation was as private as the child wanted.

Feedback from a staff member:

She acknowledged the effective management of the team and openness to new ideas by her manager. She spoke about young person PS whom she said had presented as chaotic in his thinking but in the lead up to him moving on had been adamant he wanted to write a letter to people that had helped him at CFS. She said that he had made notes to help organise his thoughts and wanted the letter to be typed. She said she felt very emotional when he said in his letter: 'I was a lost cause, but you believed in me. When I refused to accept that I could achieve anything, you never gave up on me'.

PT (the service manager) listens. His approach is to capture ideas and perhaps consider strategic implications before acting. I know that specific appointments are to not necessarily address shortfalls but to strengthen practice areas such as safeguarding. It was a particular highlight this visit to be able to share ideas with the new SLT member. PT shared ideas of restructuring responsibilities which will further strengthen leadership in the home.

52. Safeguarding children and young people remains a priority for all staff and managers, which is why senior leaders' job descriptions have been revised to incorporate safeguarding children and young people. These are key elements alongside their additional safeguarding responsibilities to undertake designated safeguarding lead (DSL) duties, which is a role which all senior and middle leaders now undertake. This enables and promotes that safeguarding young people is at the heart of what we do daily.
53. In terms of enjoy and achieve, young people continue to celebrate their achievements, through everyday life experiences at CFH or through special activities or celebratory events, which are planned. The young people continue to achieve, which was evidenced recently within the exam results below:
- 33% of our young people received grade 4 and above.
 - 66% of our young people received grade 3 and above.
 - 7% of our young people received a grade 1.
 - Maths and English Language is where we achieved our highest numbers.
 - Our children and young people continue to demonstrate success in PE, Art and Science, alongside our vocational offer e.g. catering, hair and beauty, motor mechanic and construction.
54. Compliments are received from stakeholders on a regular basis; one that was recently received was from a mother following her son being discharged back to her care, who summarised her feeling in a card as outlined below:

There are no words that truly describe how it felt to know that your child will be taken into a secure unit. To say I was petrified is an understatement!!

I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you who have shown kindness, empathy, patience when looking after XX.

You have made the unthinkable a positive experience. During XX time at CFH he has found himself again. I see the loving, funny ambitious and capable young person he once was. "Thank You". Doesn't feel like enough but I want you to know that I will be forever grateful.

55. Recruitment continues to be a priority, through the numerous activities identified through the workforce development board, which was started back in December 2023 and is chaired by the Service Manager. There is a workforce development action plan and regular meetings which take place. The board is looking at innovative ways to provide more financial incentives for staff to work within secure accommodation e.g. 'golden hello', annual retention payments and the return of the secure unit allowances for frontline residential staff and managers. As previously mentioned in the last report, this supports the work being undertaken nationally by the Department for Education which has commissioned a research organisation to support with the development of a Target Operating Model for the secure children's homes estate nationally. However, through the pay board, CFH submitted and secured a market factor supplement payment for frontline care staff, which the home hopes to build on by providing other incentives to help recruit and retain staff.
56. As of 30 November 2024, CFH has been operating on bed capacity of 98.2%, with 14 beds night loss in total for year to date. As previously, the bed capacity is calculated on two welfare beds, which has so far been at 100% capacity.
57. The centre continues to operate two house units and the two bed annexe with a maximum of 14 young people being accommodated across the centre. The Department for Education Capital Building Programme continues with the refurbishment of two-house units, as part of a 46-week building programme, which is likely to be extended, but the home remains positive that that the building work will be completed by summer 2025.

Developments

58. CFH outlined in a previous report to the Corporate Parenting Panel that they had been given permission by the Department for Education to undertake an initial feasibility study, which is part of the '*Secure Children's Homes Estate Review – December 2022*' and has been led by Atkins (DfE Architects). The Council's property commissioning team, alongside Arc Partnership, has put in a bid of £17,000, which has been agreed and will increase the administration block by providing a first floor. The consultation work begun with staff in November, with some good ideas coming through staff briefings. Arc Partnership are now finalising their designs and will be submitting some suggestions in the new year for consideration.

Other Options Considered

59. To not bring this report to the Panel: this option is discounted because this report provides information that forms an important part of the Panel's remit in assisting the Council in fulfilling its legal corporate parenting duties and acting as an effective corporate parent.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

60. The report provides an opportunity for the Corporate Parenting Panel to consider any further actions arising from the information contained within the report.

Statutory and Policy Implications

61. 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

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

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the Corporate Parenting Panel considers whether there are any actions it requires in relation to the information contained in the report and provides any feedback.

Amanda Collinson
Service Director, Help, Protection and Care

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Jenny Whiston
Head of Service, Fostering, Residential & Secure Accommodation
T: 0115 9774123
E: jenny.whiston@nottsc.gov.uk

Paul Thomas
Service Manager, Secure Accommodation
T. 0115 9932721
E. paul.thomas2@nottsc.gov.uk

Davinia Lawton
Service Manager, Residential Services
T. 0115 9773354
E. Davinia.lawton@nottsc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (LW 31/12/24)

63. The Corporate Parenting Panel is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments (CDS 17/12/24)

64. There are no financial implications directly 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.

[Update on Nottinghamshire children's residential homes and secure accommodation service – report to Corporate Parenting Panel on 2 July 2024](#)

[Update on Nottinghamshire children's residential homes and secure accommodation service – report to Corporate Parenting Panel on 15 October 2024](#)

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

CF0228



14 January 2025

Agenda Item: 7

**REPORT OF THE INTERIM SERVICE DIRECTOR, COMMISSIONING AND
RESOURCES**

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC SAFEGUARDING SERVICE: APRIL
2023 – MARCH 2024**

Purpose of the Report

1. Members requested an annual report following high profile enquiries into child sexual exploitation and missing children in several local authorities. This report provides an update against the Council's 2023 - 24 priorities and analysis of the statistical data for 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Information

2. Child exploitation and children missing from home and care continue to be priority areas for the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP). The annual report, attached as **Appendix 1**, provides an outline of the progress and challenges within the work being undertaken by the Local Authority and relevant partner organisations to tackle child exploitation and children who go missing from home and care during the last year and the commitments for the following 12 months.

Other Options Considered

3. To not bring this report to the Panel: this option is discounted because this report provides information that forms an important part of the Panel's remit in assisting the Council in fulfilling its legal corporate parenting duties and acting as an effective corporate parent.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

4. The report provides an opportunity for the Panel to consider any further actions arising from the information contained within the report.

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 financial implications arising directly from the report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the Corporate Parenting Panel considers whether there are any actions it requires in relation to the information contained in the report and provides any feedback.

Rachel Miller
Interim Service Director, Commissioning and Resources

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Hannah Johnson
Service Manager, Strategic Safeguarding and Independent Review
T: 0115 8546351
E: hannah1.johnson@nottsc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (CD 13/12/24)

7. The recommendations proposed falls within the remit of the Corporate Parenting Panel by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (CDS 06/12/24)

8. There are no financial implications arising directly from the 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.

CF0225

CHILD EXPLOITATION AND CHILDREN MISSING FROM HOME AND CARE

ANNUAL REVIEW 2024

Purpose of the Report

1. This is an annual report written for the Safeguarding Assurance and Information Group and the lead member for Children and Young People. It provides an outline of the progress and challenges within the work being undertaken by the Local Authority and relevant partner organisations to tackle child exploitation and provides a response to children who go missing from home and care during the last year (April 2023-March 2024). The report concludes by setting out the commitments for the following 12 months.
2. I am the Service Manager with strategic responsibility for child exploitation along with my colleague, Hazel McKibbin. The operational responsibility for work within Children's Social Care sits within the social work teams. Our role includes having strategic oversight and providing support and challenge in respect of tackling child exploitation across the wider system including early help and working with partner agencies.

Strategic Partnerships, Governance and Service Provision

3. The cross-partnership Tackling Child Exploitation Steering Group provides overarching governance for the various work streams for children impacted by exploitation. Work concerning children missing from home and care is overseen by the County Missing Children Steering Group. These groups meet quarterly and take a strategic lead in the coordination of inter-agency work as defined in the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership/Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership joint procedures.
4. Tackling child exploitation requires a different response to a traditional child protection approach which focuses upon the child's safety and wellbeing in relation to their parent's ability to protect and meet their needs. The factors involved with child exploitation include an interplay between child, location, and perpetrator; as harm occurs outside of the home, we need to build upon child protection knowledge to address the motivation and patterns of those who perpetrate and participate in the recruitment, control, and exploitation of children in various contexts.
5. Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City's Safeguarding Children's Partnerships are committed to preventing and protecting children from exploitation through a whole system approach. All partners understand that anyone under 18yrs facing these harms, or causing harm to others, must be seen, and treated as children and young people first. We achieve this through focusing on the four P's; Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare, based on the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2023 and underpin our strategic approach and practice with the Tackling Child Exploitation multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm.

How We Work and What We Do

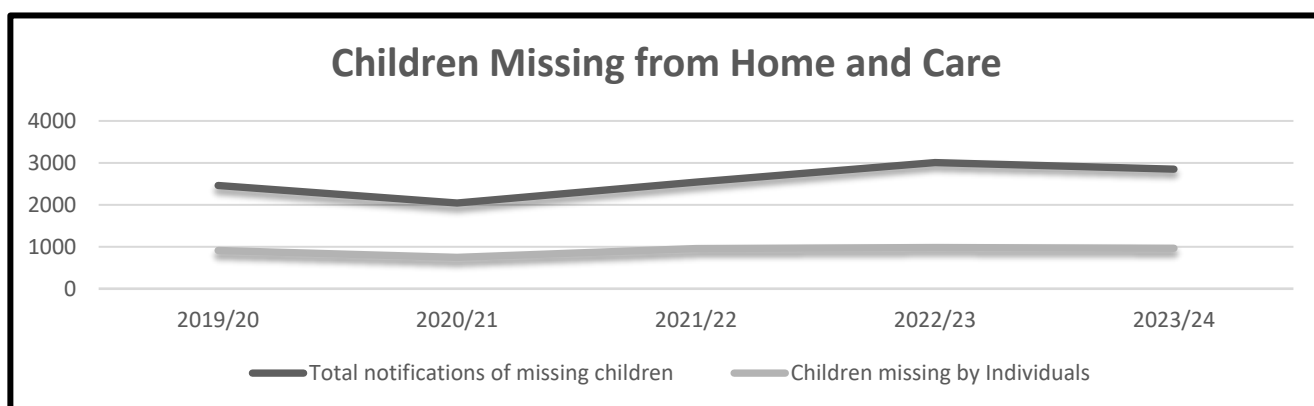
6. At Nottinghamshire County Council, there is a strategic safeguarding team with responsibility for designing and co-ordinating the required response to child exploitation and children

missing from home and care in line with statutory duties, and the mobilisation of the work is completed by operational teams including Children’s Social Care, the Family Service and the Youth Justice Service.

7. When a child is reported missing from home or care, the incident is reported to the Police. The Police Control Room will assess the level of risk attached to a child’s missing incident which triggers a proportionate response from the Police Missing team. Each child’s missing report is shared with the Local Authority Children’s Missing Officer who then alerts relevant operational teams and undertakes the function of tracking and monitoring the child’s missing and found incident. Return Home Interviews are requested for each child’s missing incident and multiple missing incidents prompts a multi-agency response.
8. When a child is identified at possible risk of exploitation via either a new MASH enquiry, current work or through the process of a return home interview, a Child Exploitation risk assessment is considered for completion. This assessment tool develops the narrative around the concerns for child exploitation and initiates a response for the relevant team to come around the child to formulate a plan to protect them and disrupt the harm.
9. There are several multi-agency panels that have strategic oversight of children at the highest risk of exploitation and most frequently missing in the County. These panels are designed to ensure that the partnership is working effectively together to address the needs of these children and hold each other to account where service gaps or deficient service provision are impacting upon plans to protect the child and disrupt any harm.
10. In terms of the wider partnership and whole system approach, we are strongly connected in with partnership forums hosted by Police colleagues called ‘The Concerns Network’ and ‘Neighbourhood Safeguarding and Disruption’ meetings, which bring together more local knowledge about children and locations impacted by exploitation. These meetings are attended by a variety of local partners, link into County and City-wide forums and provide intelligence that supports the early identification of harm and patterns of emerging threats on a local level.

Children Missing from Home and Care

Data and Analysis



11. As can be seen in the table above, the overall number of missing incidents has reduced slightly for the year 2023/24. The detailed data found in Appendix 1 shows the number of individual children these missing incidents relate to has also reduced and notably, there has been a

more significant reduction in individual Looked After Children going missing including children missing from a care placement in Nottinghamshire who are the responsibility of another Local Authority.

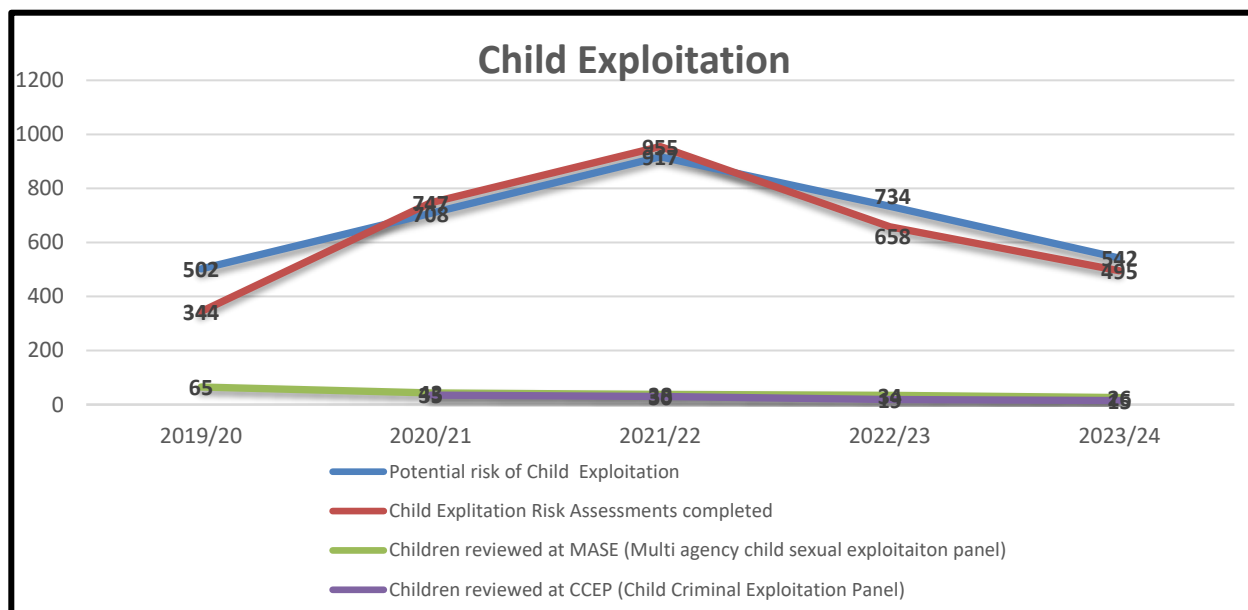
12. A multi-agency Children Missing from Home and Care Audit is scheduled for 2024/25 where we hope to get a clearer understanding of the data, but anecdotally my working assumptions for why less children in care have gone missing for the year 2023-24 are as follows:
 - a. The implementation of the Philomena Protocol in 2022 has improved the response to children missing from care (including other local authority children hosted by Nottinghamshire County Council).
 - b. Strengthened partnership between the Missing Police team and Children's Social Care teams including the part co-location of the Children Missing Officer within the Police Missing team.
 - c. Excellent partnership attendance at our 'Frequently Missing & Hotspots' monthly multi-agency panel and consistent use of missing multi-agency meetings for children missing more than 3 times in 90 days, providing connectivity to other significant risk issues for example, child exploitation or harmful sexual behaviour etc.
 - d. It may be that other social or systemic factors are impacting the data including less children in the care of Nottinghamshire County Council and it being several years post Covid related lockdowns (less need to 'escape' and better access to family, friends or familiar locations without government restrictions).

13. On most occasions, children who go missing are found at the home of a friend or relative, or at a known location and found within 4hrs. Most children are not harmed during their missing episode but a small number of children who go missing are harmed. From information gathered during Return Home Interviews (RHI), the main risk issues identified for children include adults who may pose a risk to children, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and offending behaviour. The main reasons provided by children in care and at home for going missing is due to boundary issues and conflict within family relationships. Return Home Interviews (RHI) are requested for all children after they have been found to establish the reason for their missing incident, and to assess if there have been any additional safeguarding concerns.

14. Multi-agency meetings are requested for children who go missing more than 3 times in 90 days or where there are concerns related to several missing incidents. A monthly 'multiple missing and hotspots' meeting is held to provide strategic oversight for children most frequently missing which includes intelligence sharing of any patterns of concerns around the County. When risks associated with child exploitation are identified, the group will require assurances that the child has plans in place for support and disruption and connect into those plans and multi-agency forums where relevant.

Tackling Child Exploitation

Data and Analysis



15. Data for the year 2023/24 continues to show a steady decline in children impacted by child exploitation (detailed data found in Appendix 1). According to data gathered by Nottinghamshire County Council, lower-level threats of child exploitation have been flagged in all districts of the County. Children at the highest levels of risk from child criminal exploitation are discussed at the monthly Child Criminal Exploitation Panel (CCEP) and those reviewed are in the main from the Gedling and Rushcliffe districts, notably areas that border Nottingham City. Children at the highest levels of risk from sexual exploitation are discussed at the monthly Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) panel and those discussed have primarily been based in the Mansfield and Ashfield areas but with connectivity to Nottingham City and out of county.
16. According to the latest Police Problem Profile 1st Oct 2022 – 30th Sept 2023, 'Crime occurrences' were down slightly and 'Demand occurrences' (safeguarding work) were up slightly for child exploitation. Although this data is a year behind the current reporting period, this is consistent with the Local Authority data seen in Appendix 1. Police systems recorded 373 victims of child exploitation and 196 perpetrators during 2022-23. The Police Protection Notice (PPN) system is designed to ensure that any crime involving a child is brought to the attention of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and monthly meetings between the Police and Strategic Safeguarding cross reference Police and Children's Social Care systems to ensure that any child subject to a crime in relation to child exploitation has received a response to their need for safety and protection.
17. We have recently undertaken a cross partnership audit with Nottingham City. The full audit report has not yet been completed but our preliminary findings indicate that there were examples of proactive work, good communication and multi-agency working and that the language used by professionals was largely strength based and trauma informed. Areas identified for learning were the need for more professional curiosity, some concerns regarding language used to describe behaviours of children at risk of exploitation and the need for more consistent information sharing between organisations. We will develop an action plan from the

audit that will be overseen by the steering group, the SAIG and SLG within the Safeguarding Partnership structure.

Reflecting on our achievements and the impact of this progress

Reflecting on our Achievements

18. This has been an ambitious year for developing our cross-partnership response to tackling child exploitation and progress has been made in several key areas, all with the aim of responding to 'need rather than threshold' and providing children at risk of exploitation in Nottinghamshire with the right support at the right time
19. We have developed a partnership commitment to Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) that has been endorsed by the Strategic Leadership Group (Appendix 2) and borne out by our Child Exploitation Strategy 2024-26 (Appendix 3). These have been collaborative pieces of work involving not only our three statutory safeguarding partners but relevant partners across the County and City who are engaged and committed to improving outcomes for children who are at risk of exploitation. This has enabled work by the partnership to embed our approach to tackling child exploitation through the '4P' Model of Pursue, Protect, Prevent and Prepare; a framework for disrupting harm to children whilst building resilience for individuals and communities through support and awareness, at the same time as seeking to stop the problem at source by tackling child exploitation together as a partnership. The framework is being applied to the action planning of the steering group as well as for individual plans for children impacted by child exploitation.
20. We continue to commission the Children's Society to work with children and families most impacted by child sexual exploitation and they have been instrumental in our recent development work. This service will continue to be funded for at least a further 12mths with contractual options to extend further. The Children's Society have worked with 35 children and 24 parents or carers by way of 1-1 support during the reporting period and in addition has provided online evening workshops to a further 70 parents or carers which have been well received:

"Helpful to talk through and understand and know you are not alone with struggles, Helpful and supportive" – Parent/Carer (13/12/2023)
21. We have launched a Tackling Child Exploitation Practice Network for operational staff in the Family Service, Children's Social Care and Youth Justice Service. This is to embed a consistent strength-based approach to exploitation underpinned by the TCE multi-agency practice principles and Nottinghamshire's practice standards. Within this group we have used an appreciative inquiry approach to review the current risk assessments and our multi-agency meetings. This group is chaired by the Strategic Service Managers who also chair individual reflective reviews for professionals where the risks for the child are particularly challenging.
22. A newly revised multi-agency child exploitation risk assessment and 'One Plan' approach to tackling child exploitation across the whole system is currently under consultation and has been developed in line with the '4P' framework and Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) practice principles launched by the Department for Education in 2023/24. The TCE practice principles compliment the commitment of Nottinghamshire County Council to embrace strength-based practices and a trauma informed response to children and families impacted by abuse and neglect.

23. We have started our strategic self-assessment using the TCE Multi-Agency Practice Principles tool. We have assessed ourselves under the first principle and have an outline plan that is being developed and progressed within the Steering Group. This work is in its early stages, but our ambition is to work alongside parents of children who have been exploited as safeguarding partners and hold an annual Tackling Child Exploitation Conference alongside a focus on prevention and early intervention.
24. Nottinghamshire Police has brought all child exploitation investigations together in the newly established 'Children at Risk of Exploitation' (CaRE) team within the Public Protection Unit; I am now part co-located within the team.
25. Police led 'Neighbourhood, Safeguarding and Disruption' (NSD) meetings are now held monthly in each district of Nottinghamshire. The purpose of NSD meetings is to facilitate a partnership approach to managing and disrupting risk towards children and young people involved in or linked to knife crime, serious violence, child exploitation and urban street gangs. These partnership meetings are chaired by the local Neighbourhood Policing Teams and attended by local partner agencies including youth services, district council community safety teams, district child protection teams, youth justice service, education services, schools' early intervention officers and other relevant third sector providers.
26. The Education Safeguarding, Health and Wellbeing Hub organised a series of 'Harm Outside the Home' training events in each of the seven Nottinghamshire localities between February – March 2024. The target audience for these events were local primary and secondary schools and the purpose was to raise awareness of the threat of child exploitation whilst equipping local areas with an understanding of Nottinghamshire's approach to tackling child exploitation and strengthening relationships within local partners.

Reflection on our commitments from 2022-2023

What we said we would do	What we did
To undertake a self-assessment of CCE in line with the JTAI criteria and the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review: Safeguarding Children at Risk of Criminal Exploitation. We will use this to better understand the developments since the 2021 audit and to drive an action plan for further practice improvements	As set out above, self-assessment work of Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City's approach to tackling child exploitation is now well underway. An action plan has been developed and being progressed in line with the first TCE practice principle by the cross partnership Tackling Child Exploitation Steering Group.
To form stronger strategic relationships and governance with partners and Nottingham City including a re-launch of the cross authority steering group on 4 th July	We have seen the strengthening of these relationships this year which has resulted in a commitment to tackling child exploitation (Appendix 2) and a Child Exploitation strategy 2023-25 (Appendix3) and a relaunch of the cross partnership Tackling Child Exploitation Steering Group.

Consideration of a Police led exploitation team with co-location of partners	Nottinghamshire Police have launched the newly formed Children at Risk of Exploitation team and the ambition is that this becomes a multi-agency hub
To embed the TCE principles that is trauma informed	The TCE principles are an integral part of our commitment and strategy for tackling child exploitation. Work has started at the cross partnership steering group and with operational staff through the Tackling Child Exploitation Practice network to reflect on how the practice principles impact practice.
A commitment to learning from the experiences of children and young people and parents who have experienced exploitation	This remains an area of development for the partnership and is a priority within the action plan. We have an ambition for developing a parents consultation group within the coming year and work is underway within the partnership to consider how best to engage children with lived experiences.
To improve methods of disruption and consistency of practice across district councils	<p>Consistency across the County remains a challenge but there has been some creative thinking around disruption in localities. For example, there was an increase in the number of children listed at MASE from the same district (Ashfield). These children were also excluded from a local school and involved in anti-social behaviour in the local community. Partners came together from place-based organisations and children's support services to form 'Project KIA (Kirkby-In-Ashfield)' with the aim of supporting children whilst increasing safety to local communities and locations. Work to support children and families was brought together with work completed to increase CCTV, lighting in parks and streets, alleyway closures and advice to local businesses as well as a focus upon disrupting individuals seeking to harm children through exploitation. The work is currently being evaluated but believed to have been effective in protecting the identified children and disrupting harm, whilst having a positive wider impact within the locality.</p> <p>As referred to above, the Tackling Emerging Threats to Children team organised a series of 'Harm Outside the Home' training events in each of the seven Nottinghamshire localities between February - March 2024 which was supported by the strategic safeguarding team. The ambition was to bring about a consistent understanding and response to local threats of child exploitation.</p>
A stronger response to children and young people at risk of exploitation at an earlier stage	Work has been undertaken to make progress with this commitment through the Harm Outside the Home events and by the steering group. Our ambition is to make a combined child exploitation risk assessment available for all partners and for these concerns to be triaged by a multi-agency group within the CaRE hub.

Training and Workforce Development

27. Multi-agency training for child exploitation and children missing from home and care is offered via the NSCP and is also available through e-learning packages. Appetite for the training

remains positive from a cross section of partners including children's social care, schools, foster carers, Police and early help services. Continued training for colleagues is an essential element of Nottinghamshire's strategy to 'Prepare' colleagues with the knowledge and skills to respond to child exploitation with understanding and confidence. 572 Colleagues from across the partnership have attended online child exploitation training material and a further 323 have attended child exploitation training events. This training will be reviewed in the coming year to align with our commitment to a joined-up approach to child exploitation by using the 4P model and underpinned by the TCE multi-agency practice principles.

28. As referred to above, we have established a Tackling Child Exploitation Practice Network which meets quarterly to provide support, challenge, and best practice guidance to operational staff. The group also focuses upon colleague care given the complexity and risk involved in supporting families impacted by exploitation.

Evidence of challenges and impact

29. Though there has been much development in work to tackle child exploitation this year, the following challenges require focus within the steering group:

- i. Early identification of child exploitation – testing out of risk assessment triaging to enable children at risk of exploitation to have access to the right help at the right time.
- ii. Work is required to consider more nuanced legal advice and guidance for children at the highest risk of child exploitation. This mirrors the requirement for work to tackle child exploitation to be different from typical child protection responses. Consideration should be given to a combined Police and Local Authority legal advice framework.
- iii. Provision of support to children at risk of criminal exploitation needs to be aligned with the work currently available via the children's society for children impacted by sexual exploitation.
- iv. Further work is required to improve the use of language by all professionals when considering the risk of exploitation to children so that we are not locating the blame of child exploitation upon children. The impact would mean more effective identification of children at risk of exploitation and a greater focus upon disrupting perpetrators.
- v. Using the '4P' framework to drive a more consistent approach across Nottinghamshire County Council to consider more creative methods of disruption for those who seek to harm children through exploitation.

Our commitments for the next 12 months

- Launch the newly revised multi-agency child exploitation risk assessment and 'One Plan' approach to tackling child exploitation.
- Prepare a public awareness campaign and deliver a Tackling Child Exploitation conference in March 2025.
- The steering group will develop a detailed action plan in relation to the ambitions set out above and the measures for progress in line with the work plan from the strategic assessment (Appendix 4).

Hannah Johnson
Service Manager
Strategic Safeguarding and Independent Review
20.06.24

Appendix 1 - Data

Table 1. Children Missing from Home and Care 2023/24

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Total incident reports of children missing	2,462	2,043	2,539	3007	2851
*Relating to individuals	911	747	956	982	964
*Ratio males to females	56:44	55:44	53:47	58:42	49:50
*Peak age range (yrs.)	14-17	15-17	14-17	14-17	14 - 17
Total incident reports of Children missing from home	1,078	802	1138	1276	1369
*Relating to individuals	646	496	655	863	684
Total incident reports of NCC Children missing from care <i>NB includes NCC looked after children missing from out of area</i>	774	857	1017	1194	939
*Relating to individuals	166	180	187	340	206
Other Local Authority Children missing from care in Notts	610	385	360	519	517
*Relating to individuals	124	110	137	205	136

Table 2. Child Sexual Exploitation

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Total children identified as potentially at risk of CSE	502	438	54	399	315
New Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) referrals re CSE	326	308	361	211	158
CSE Risk Assessments completed	344	430	434	335	218
Children considered at Child Protection Coordinator led CSE Multi Agency Meetings	56 + 42 ICPCs	50 + 25 ICPCs	60 + 23 ICPCs	52 + 37 ICPCs	22+19 ICPCs
Peak age range (yrs)	14-17	13-16	13-17	13-17	13-17
Female: Male ratio	89:11	76:24	84:16	81:19	83:17
Children monitored at Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) panel	65	43	38	34	26

Table 3. Child Criminal Exploitation

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Total children identified as potentially at risk of CCE*	270	375	335	227
New Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) referrals re CCE	*report in development	199	144	120
CCE Risk Assessments completed	317	521	323	277
Children considered at Child Protection Coordinator led CCE Multi Agency Meetings	155 (56 initial mtgs and 97 review mtgs)		140 (39 Initial mtgs and 101 review mtgs)	32 Initial CPC mtgs 86 Review CPC mtgs 24 ICPCs, 27 RCPCs
Peak age range (yrs)	*report in development	14-17	14-17	14-17
Female: Male ratio	*report in development	14:86	18:82	17:83
Children monitored at Child Criminal Exploitation Panel (CCEP)	35	30	19	15

OUR COMMITMENT TO TACKLING CHILD EXPLOITATION

FOREWORD

Foreword from Rob Griffin Assistant Chief Constable for Nottinghamshire Police and Strategic Leadership Group Chair for Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council’s Safeguarding Children’s Partnership.

‘Working Together 2023’ highlights that some children experience abuse and exploitation outside the home, often referred to as ‘extra-familial harm.’ Until recently the neighbouring local authorities of Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council have provided their own response to tackling child exploitation alongside their statutory partners. However, as the chair for the Strategic Leadership (SLG) for both Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire I am pleased to introduce Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire’s Safeguarding Children’s Partnerships joint commitment to tackling child exploitation.

The commitment and our practice are underpinned by the multi-agency practice principles for responding to child exploitation and extra familial harm (Research in Practice with The Children’s Society and Safer Lives at the University of Bedfordshire 2023) which are evidence-based drawing on academic research, practice wisdom and lived experience. They also support our partnerships commitments to multi-agency practice that has a shared purpose and direction with a focus on relationships and a strengths-based vision of how we provide the right help, at the right time, to the right children and their families across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire.

Alongside this piece of work within Nottinghamshire Police force we have brought together our child exploitation expertise in to one Children at Risk of Exploitation Team (CaRE) and there is a

commitment to this being a multi-disciplinary team covering both city and county.

This feels like an exciting time for both Safeguarding Partnerships and hopefully one of the first of many opportunities for us to bring together capacity not only in terms of resource but our passion, commitment, and dedication to safeguard children in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County against abuse and exploitation. ‘



[Multi-agency Practice Principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm \(researchinpractice.org.uk\)](https://researchinpractice.org.uk)



ACC Rob Griffin

DEFINITION

Working together to Safeguard Children 2023 advises:

'Some children experience abuse and exploitation outside the home. This is often referred to as "extra-familial harm"⁹⁷. Harm can occur in a range of extra-familial contexts, including school and other educational settings, peer groups, or within community/public spaces, and/or online. Children may experience this type of harm from other children and/or from adults. Forms of extra-familial harm include exploitation by criminal and organised crime groups and individuals (such as county lines and financial exploitation), serious violence, modern slavery and trafficking, online harm, sexual exploitation, teenage relationship abuse, and the influences of extremism which could lead to radicalisation^{98 99}. Children of all ages can experience extra-familial harm.'

VISION

Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council's Safeguarding Children's Partnerships are committed to preventing and protecting children from exploitation.

Our collective aim is to create a whole system response that understands risk, and identifies when exploitation occurs, protects and supports children who are at risk of, or subject to, child exploitation and disrupts and pursues those who target children for the purpose of abusing them through exploitation.

We recognise that identifying, understanding, tackling, and preventing the exploitation of children is a complex task that requires a co-ordinated collaborative approach from partners and work with the victim/survivor, their family, and the community.

All partners understand that anyone under 18 facing these harms, or causing harm to others, must be seen, and treated as children and young people first and foremost and our success in tackling child exploitation and extra-familial harm is evaluated against this foundational Principle.

We will achieve this through focusing on the 4 Ps of **Prepare; Prevent; Protect; and Pursue**, based on the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2023 and underpin our strategic approach and practice with the **Multi-agency Practice Principles for responding to child exploitation and extra-familial harm (researchinpractice.org.uk)**

USE OF LANGUAGE

We need to use appropriate language when working with children and young people who have been exploited or are at risk of exploitation. Language implying that the child or young person is in any way complicit with or responsible for the exploitation that has happened or may happen to them, reinforces the harm they have suffered and must be avoided.

Language should reflect the presence of coercion and the lack of control children and young people have in abusive or exploitative situations and must recognise the severity of the impact exploitation has on the child or young person. Victim-blaming language reinforces messages of shame and guilt from perpetrators and may prevent the child or young person from disclosing their abuse, through fear of being blamed by professionals. When victim-blaming language is used between professionals, there is a risk of normalising and minimising the child's experience resulting in a harmful and inappropriate response.

<https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/child-exploitation-language-guide>

ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

Adolescence, the transition from childhood to adulthood, is a turbulent time for many children and involves rapid development in the physical, intellectual, psychological, emotional, and social aspects of a child's life.

The turbulence of adolescent development can increase a child's vulnerability leaving them open to exploitation and notably, some indicators of exploitation mirror common adolescent behaviours. Such as developing their own identities and gaining autonomy; seeking friendships and acceptance from their peers; developing their skills and abilities and becoming increasingly committed to their own beliefs/values, goals and activities. Young people achieve these tasks through experimenting with self-expression and activities and experiences with different people.

Adolescent risk-taking behaviour, particularly in front of their peers, starts at puberty and increases significantly in the mid to late teens before decreasing in the mid- twenties. The ability to self-regulate and acknowledge consequences however starts in puberty and develops more slowly reaching a peak in the mid- twenties.

The effects of child exploitation can be devastating and have a profound impact on children for the rest of their lives. It is likely to have a significant impact on their physical and mental health and wellbeing, educational outcomes and employment prospects and their relationships with family and friends. Exploitation can affect children in any sector of society and careful assessment by professionals working closely together is key to identifying any risks to a child and disrupting criminal activity.

THE MODEL

To achieve our ambition to tackle Child Exploitation we will:

Adopt the Research in Practice **Tackling Child Exploitation Principles** to underpin HOW we work with children and their families and as a basis for reviewing our strategic oversight and practice within our partnership.

Adopt the **4 Ps**, developed from the Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2023, to underpin our practice, WHAT we do to support children and families at risk of and/or experiencing child exploitation.

Prepare – Tackling child exploitation together.

We will work together to ensure an effective partnership structure, governance and response to child exploitation and prepare our staff across the partnership with the skills and training to respond effectively and collaboratively.

Prevent – Stopping the problem at the source.

We will prevent and reduce the risk of exploitation posed to children by working with partners to identify and support those vulnerable to exploitation at the earliest opportunity. We will raise awareness through a common understanding and approach to recognising and tackling child exploitation.

Protect – Building the highest levels of defence and resilience.

We will protect children, young people and communities from exploitation, violence and abuse and provide support using data and intelligence to inform the local profile and in-depth needs assessments.

Pursue – Relentless disruption and targeted action.

We will work together across the system to pursue those responsible for child abuse in the form of criminal and sexual exploitation through prosecution, disruption, and the use of civil orders to protect the vulnerable.

THE IMPACT OF CHILD EXPLOITATION ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The snapshots below are true accounts from young people and their families - names and identifying details have been changed to protect their identities.

Children/Young People

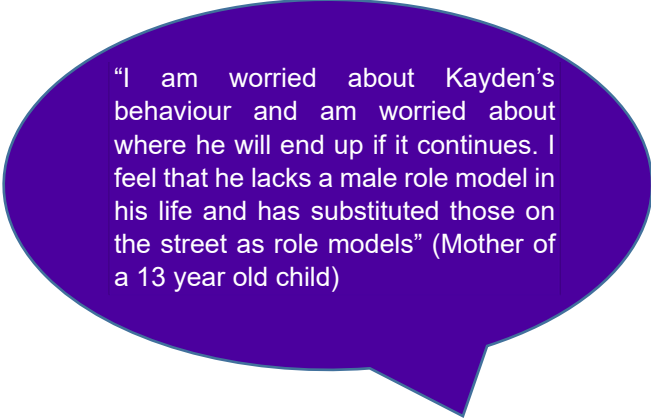
Every aspect of this young person's life was impacted from his physical and mental health to relationships with family, friends and professionals. The exploitation resulted in behavioural changes which disrupted his education and attainment.



“I’m scared, I can’t stay in Nottingham, I’m going to be the next to be stabbed” (quote by a child 16 years of age)

Families/Carers

This young person's mother experienced difficulties with her mental health in response to her child experiencing child exploitation. This impacted on her capacity to respond to her child's needs and in turn on her work life and the economic stability of the family.

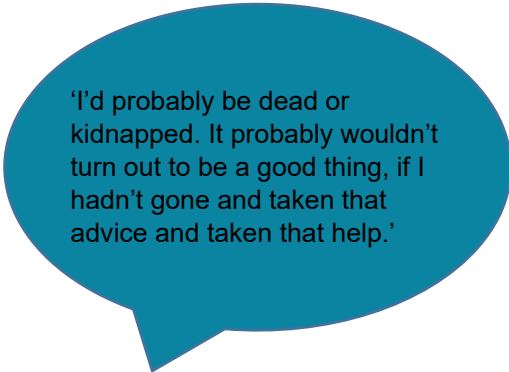


"I am worried about Kayden's behaviour and am worried about where he will end up if it continues. I feel that he lacks a male role model in his life and has substituted those on the street as role models" (Mother of a 13 year old child)



Lauren's* story

At 15yrs, Lauren was groomed online and in her local community by a number of older men. The men grooming Lauren quickly drew her into a situation of abuse and exploitation and isolated her from family. Lauren was regularly going missing and placed in increasingly dangerous situations. Confused, traumatised, and frightened, she felt unable to reach out to her family and tell them what was happening to her. Through frequent missing incidents, Police and Social Services became involved and quickly realised that Lauren needed specialist support.



'I'd probably be dead or kidnapped. It probably wouldn't turn out to be a good thing, if I hadn't gone and taken that advice and taken that help.'

Our Child Exploitation Strategy 2024-26

Our aim

To create a single whole system response, working in partnership to reduce child exploitation and extra familial harm and protect our communities. All partners understand that anyone under 18 facing these harms, or causing harm to others, must be seen and treated as children first and foremost and our success in tackling child exploitation and extra-familial harm is evaluated against this foundational Principle.

Our priorities



Prepare
Tackling child exploitation together



Prevent
Stopping the problem at the source



Protect
Building the highest levels of defence and resilience



Pursue
Relentless disruption and targeted action

Our Objectives

Implementing the below '4 P' approach to work collaboratively with statutory partners and the voluntary sector to enable a multi agency response to safeguarding children at risk of Exploitation.

Prepare



Work together to establish an effective partnership structure, response and resources to tackle child exploitation that delivers the right support at the right time.

Host an annual child exploitation conference and prepare our staff across the partnership with the skills and training to respond effectively to exploitation concerns.

Effective communication strategy to raise awareness in our communities around early identification and spotting the signs of child exploitation.

Commit to being a learning partnership to improve practice by listening and learning from children, parents and carers and embracing culture and diversity.

Prevent



Prevent and reduce the risk of exploitation posed to children by working with safeguarding partners, including parents, to identify and support those vulnerable to exploitation at the earliest opportunity.

Use a range of communication and technology to deliver key messages and create safe physical and virtual spaces in a manner that is most effective and accessible to the community.

Identify and deliver contextual safeguarding in relation to place based risk and high-risk locations by engaging a wide range of partners within local communities with a particular focus on Family Hubs, Schools and local councils.

Raise awareness of child exploitation amongst professionals, public, parents, carers and communities to develop a common understanding and approach and enable effective identification and reporting mechanisms.

Protect



Work creatively and effectively as a partnership using innovative practice to protect children and communities from exploitation, violence and abuse. Including transitional safeguarding.

Protect children and communities from exploitation, violence and abuse. Provide support using data, intelligence and lived experience to inform the local profile and in-depth needs assessments.

Commit to practice that listens to the voices and experiences of children and places them at the centre focusing on a culture of protection and support not blame.

Utilise local and national best practice to maximise opportunities to bring offenders to justice and protect children at risk of exploitation.

Pursue



Work together across the system to pursue those responsible for child abuse in the form of criminal and sexual exploitation through prosecution, disruption, and the use of civil orders to protect the vulnerable.

Ensure good use of all available intelligence including the voices of children, parents and carers to identify, understand and prioritise child exploitation and inform effective decision making.

Effectively target those who exploit and maximise opportunities to disrupt their criminality and bring offenders to justice.

Our Governance

Executive Oversight

Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Senior Leadership Group

Strategic

Nottinghamshire Safeguarding, Assurance and Improvement Group (SAIG) and Nottingham City Business Management Group (BMG)

Tactical

Tackling Child Exploitation Steering Group (Cross Authority and Cross Partnership)

Operational

Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City multi-agency sexual exploitation (MASE), criminal exploitation (CCEP) and missing panels (Hotspots) and neighbourhood safeguarding and disruption meetings (NSD)

Our Performance

Prepare

Deliver annual Exploitation Conference on Child Exploitation Day.

Measure progress against TCE Strategic Self-Assessment Action Plan.

Prevent

Evidence partner and parent confidence in recognising and responding to child exploitation at an early stage through consultation and feedback.

Evidence safe spaces in communities and impact on the reduction of risks.

Protect

Quality assurance of interventions such as panels and risk assessments including the voices of children, parents, and carers.

Individual case studies and reviews that focus on reducing and managing risks including the voices of children, parents, and carers.

Pursue

Monitor the number of convictions and prosecutions for exploitation related offences involving children.

Monitor and increase the use of criminal and civil orders to target and disrupt those who present the highest risk to children in our communities.





Strategic Assessment and Action Plan

The response to child exploitation and extra-familial harm must... put children and young people first.

ACTION

Where are we now:

“Our local strategy, policies and practises for child exploitation and extra-familial harm make it explicitly clear that anyone under 18 facing these harms, or causing harm to others, must be seen and treated as children and young people first and foremost. All partners understand this and our success in tackling child exploitation and extra-familial harm is evaluated against this foundational Principle.”

As a Partnership we: Disagree

We have made a start on this work and we are having conversations at strategic level but we need to embed this principle in our practice across the partnership and within our local communities.

CULTURE

Where we are now:

“Any language that could contribute to labelling or victim-blaming is robustly challenged in our local partnership, and we continuously reflect on how our use of language is interlinked with our perception of children and young people, and how this impacts on the services and support children and young people receive.”

As a Partnership we: Agree but it is a work in progress

This is the area we feel most confident in and we can evidence that we have made a start. Our training focuses on use of language and in our panels and our risk assessments we are careful about the language we use and we challenge when it is inappropriate. Strategically we agree that needs to be one of our primary focuses and this will be evident within our work plan.

BEHAVIOUR

Where we are now:

“We are confident that the child and young person-centred approach is implemented and practised in a consistent way across our partnership. Leaders and staff in all agencies ensure children and young people are not blamed or held responsible for the harm they face. Children and young people are seen holistically.”

As a Partnership we: Agree but it is a work in progress

We feel that we are in a similar situation to the one above. We have a clear commitment strategically to this principle and our strength-based practice approach across both partnerships underpins and creates the foundation for children and young people being seen holistically and not being blamed or held responsible for the harm they face. However we need to continue on changing culture and embedding this into our practice.

MAKING PROGRESS

How this should feel to children / young people:

“I feel understood, believed, and treated like a human being. I feel my worker is interested in me and on my side. I know they don’t judge or blame me.”

Immediate actions

‘Start Small, Start Somewhere’: What swift and meaningful progress can we make for children and young people:

1.	Actions	Owners	Timescales	How will we measure progress?
2.	Agree a mission statement/strap line – use in future public awareness campaign and on all our documents.	TCE Strategic Assessment Group	6 months	Evidence of it being used. Partnership and Individual Audits
3.	Review Partnership Training for CE to include focus on language and putting children and young people first.	Service Managers Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire SCPs	6 months	Specific Question on feedback Training Form

		Dan Evans - Police Children, Young People and Parents and Carers		
4.	Develop a short presentation on the power and use of language to be shared with all partners that can be delivered in team meetings etc	Task and Finish Group – The Steering Group The Children’s Society	6 months (including delivery)	Data collection on how many people have received and read it. Partners to bring evidence to the Steering Group of where is has been shared To be included in inductions.
5.	Agenda for strategy meetings/discussions for children at risk of exploitation, triage in the CaRE Team and partnership risk assessment tool to be jointly developed.	Task and Finish Group Hannah Johnson Hazel McKibbin Claire Wakeman Dan Evans	3 months	
6.	Develop a set of questions for The Children’s Society to use with Parents and Carers and Children and Young People around language to evaluate impact of the action plan.	Hannah Johnson The Children’s Society VRP – Steve Harrison	3 months	
7.	Develop a template for a pen picture/spidergram for individual children and young people to be used at panels.	Task and Finish Group Youth Justice - Rebecca Price (lead) Missing Police Team Exploitation Leads (Hannah, Hazel and Claire) The Children’s Society	6 months	
8.	Develop a suite of resources including short films on child exploitation with and for	The Steering Group VRP (Steve Harrison)	6 months	Collection of data around accessing the

	parents, carers, children, and professionals.	Public Health Engagement of Colleges to design		films and documents
9.	Partnership policies and Procedures to be reviewed with a focus on language and putting children and young people first.	Child Exploitation Leads Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council	6 months	To be signed off by the partnership procedures subgroups

Longer term actions

We will work to realise these goals for children and young people:

10.	Actions	Owners	Timescales	How will we measure progress?
11.	Mapping of services and support – including schools and education providers and family hubs. Strategic Needs Assessment?	TCE Strategic Assessment Group	6 months	Gaps identified to inform further planning.
12.	Partnership Exploitation Conference to be held on Exploitation Day 2024	TCE Strategic Assessment Group	12 months	Feedback from staff groups Feedback from Parents and Carers
13.	Engagement with district and city councils /Safer Notts Board	Claire Sampson John Matravers Paul Lefford Helen Adair Public Health Exploitation Leads	6 months	Brief Chief Executives Meeting or similar. Meetings established with CSPs and evidence of contextual safeguarding practices in local communities.
14.	Launch public awareness child exploitation campaign	TCE Strategic Assessment Group	12 months	Comms Strategy

	at the conference on Exploitation Day 2024 (including virtual safe spaces and use of technology)	Public Health Comms Teams VRP		Feedback from Parents and Carers, children and young people and the public
15.	Individual Organisations to review their documents with a focus on putting children and young people first.	Hannah Johnson Hazel McKibbin Claire Wakeman Dan Evans (others to be confirmed)	12 months	
16.	Work with Ivison and The Children's Society to have an evolving system of feedback from children, young people, parents, and carers to inform practice.	Task and finish group from the Steering Group – led by Exploitation Strategic Leads from LAs	12 months	Data to evidence a system is in place
17.	Brief the Local Family Justice Board/CPS on the work being undertaken.	Claire Sampson John Matravers Paul Lefford Rebecca Price	6 months	Briefing has taken place and produces actions that can influence understanding and practice within the courts.



14 January 2025

Agenda Item: 8

**REPORT OF THE INTERIM SERVICE DIRECTOR, COMMISSIONING AND
RESOURCES**

HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR BY CHILDREN ANNUAL REVIEW 2024

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides an outline of the progress and challenges of the work being undertaken by the Local Authority and relevant partner organisations regarding sexually harmful behaviour by children during the year April 2023 - March 2024 and the commitments for the following 12 months.

Information

2. Nottinghamshire has adopted the NSPCC's definition of harmful sexual behaviour by children:

'One or more children engaging in sexual discussions or acts that are inappropriate for their age or stage of development. These can range from using sexually explicit words and phrases to full penetrative sex with other children or adults.'
3. Nottinghamshire is committed to working together with partners to improve the lives and experiences of children, young people and families by empowering them to make their own choices, being fair, open, and honest and building safe and nurturing relationships.
4. This includes children who display harmful sexual behaviour receiving a consistent multi-agency response focused on achieving the best outcome for the child and their family whilst reducing the risk of any further harmful sexual behaviour and addressing the needs of the child who has committed harmful sexual behaviour and those of the child who is the victim.
5. The full annual report written for the Safeguarding Assurance and Information Group and the Cabinet Member for Children and Families is attached as **Appendix 1**. It contains information regarding the governance of Harmful Sexual Behaviour work in Nottinghamshire, the work being undertaken, as well as reflections upon achievements and areas of challenges and their impact. There are clear ambitions set out for the next 12 months and a plan to achieve these is in the process of being agreed within the Harmful Sexual Behaviour Steering Group.

Other Options Considered

6. To not bring this report to the Panel: this option is discounted because this report provides information that forms an important part of the Panel's remit in assisting the Council in fulfilling its duties in respect of children who sexually harm others.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

7. The report provides an opportunity for the Panel to consider any further actions arising from the information contained within the report.

Statutory and Policy Implications

8. 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

9. There are no financial implications arising from the report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the Corporate Parenting Panel considers whether there are any actions it requires in relation to the information contained in the report and provides any feedback.

Rachel Miller
Interim Service Director, Commissioning and Resources

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Ty Yousaf
Interim Head of Strategic Safeguarding and Independent Review
T: 0115 9772516
E: ty.yousaf@nottsc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (CD 11/12/24)

10. The recommendations proposed falls within the remit of the Corporate Parenting Panel by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (CDS 06/12/24)

11. There are no financial implications arising directly from the 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.

CF0226

HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR BY CHILDREN ANNUAL REVIEW 2024

Purpose of the Report

1. This is an annual report written for the Safeguarding Assurance and Information Group and the lead member for Children and Families. It provides an outline of the progress and challenges within the work being undertaken by the Local Authority and relevant partner organisations regarding harmful sexual behaviour by children during the last year (April 2023-March 2024) and the commitments for the following 12 months.
2. The Service Manager, Strategic Safeguarding and Independent Review, has strategic responsibility for harmful sexual behaviour and manages the Child Protection Co-ordinators who chair the Harmful Sexual Behaviour panels. The operational responsibility for work within Children's Social Care sits within the social work teams. The Service Manager role includes having strategic oversight and offering support in respect of harmful sexual behaviour across the wider system including early help and working with partner agencies.

Information

3. Nottinghamshire has adopted the NSPCC's definition of harmful sexual behaviour by children:

"One or more children engaging in sexual discussions or acts that are inappropriate for their age or stage of development. These can range from using sexually explicit words and phrases to full penetrative sex with other children or adults."

4. Nottinghamshire is committed to working together with partners to improve the lives and experiences of children, young people, and families by empowering them to make their own choices, being fair, open, and honest and building safe and nurturing relationships.
5. This includes children who display harmful sexual behaviour receiving a consistent multiagency response focused on achieving the best outcome for the child and their family whilst reducing the risk of any further harmful sexual behaviour and addressing the needs of the child who has committed harmful sexual behaviour and those of the child who is the victim.

Governance

6. The partnership arrangements for assessment and intervention continue to be overseen by the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP). The Harmful Sexual Behaviour steering group with senior representatives from the involved organisations continues to provide the direct oversight of this work including the Harmful Sexual Behaviour panel, procedures, tools, and training. The panel ensures that there are sufficient trained staff to complete both specialist assessments and interventions as well as commissioned services where required. It considers learning from relevant practice and safeguarding reviews and the support across the system for harmful sexual behaviour in Nottinghamshire. Progress is regularly monitored by reporting to the NSCP Safeguarding, Assurance and Improvement Group (SAIG).

7. The membership of the group consists of a Consultant Paediatrician, Harmful Sexual Behaviour Specialist from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), the Group Manager Education, Learning and Skills, the Police, the Youth Justice Service and the Service Manager for the Safeguarding Partnership. The steering group continues to maintain close relationships with third sector partners who offer support to both children who commit harmful sexual behaviour and those children who are victims although they do not attend every meeting.

How We Work and What We Do

8. Two Child Protection Co-ordinators (CPCs) continue to take the lead for chairing Harmful Sexual Behaviour panels and advising Team Managers whether presentation of a child's circumstances to panel is required. The panel is made up of partner agency representatives.
9. Panel is held monthly as standard and there has not been the need to hold additional panels as there has in previous years. The average wait time is now approximately 7 weeks, from the date it was identified a panel was required to the time a panel is held. This is about the time it takes to undertake a thorough and quality assessment. Some children are waiting slightly longer, but this is usually because of delay in the assessment being completed in a timely manner.
10. The steering group supports effective relationships across the partnership that enables a good partnership working on the panels that meets children's needs. Any difficulties in this respect are addressed through the steering group and keep children at the centre of conversations and decision making. There is good attendance from schools at the panel for individual children.
11. 106 children were assessed in relation to Harmful Sexual Behaviour during 2023-2024 and 72 of these went to panel. This compares with 132 the previous year and 102 going to panel. There has been a year on year decrease in numbers now for the past two consecutive years. This suggests we have returned to the pre-pandemic numbers for this cohort of children.
12. 8% of the children considered at panel received interventions from the preventative team in Youth Justice, 1% from Head2Head, and 1% from the Family Service in the Local Authority. 34% received interventions from Children's Social Care which indicates that there is an increased need for safeguarding support in respect of children presenting with Harmful Sexual Behaviour. Head2Head CAMHS has continued to offer a service to everyone referred, with no waiting list and no restriction on service, despite increased demand. There have been occasions where individual children may have fallen outside the usual Head2Head process and because of the working relationships between Head2Head and Children's Social Care, direct conversations have been able to be held. This ensures this cohort of young people receive the support they need without delay, focusing on their needs rather than being driven by process. This decreases their vulnerability and ensures the safety of others.
13. There are two identified two Lead Social Work Practice Consultants who have developed specialist knowledge in Harmful Sexual Behaviour and are linked to specific social work teams to provide advice, consultancy, and support and to co-work specialist assessments. The lead Child Protection Co-ordinators continue to work closely with the lead Social Work Practice Consultants and panel members to ensure consistency of practice around thresholds and decision making, to ensure information sharing with practitioners is timely and effective, and

to support the development of policy and procedures along with the Harmful Sexual Behaviour steering group.

14. IMARA¹ continue to attend certain panels where it is felt appropriate based on the individual child's circumstances. This also ensures the voices of the victims are being heard, and how the impact upon them is considered and what support is required.

Our Statutory Duties

15. NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellent) guidelines published in 2016 state Children's Social Care should refer children and young people who display inappropriate sexualised behaviour for an early help assessment, in line with local thresholds and referral procedures and coordinate early help and subsequent assessments and develop the care plan to avoid unnecessary or repetitious assessments that may be stigmatising. If harmful sexual behaviour is displayed, professionals should refer to harmful sexual behaviour services, child protection services and the criminal justice system, if necessary.
16. Responsibility for co-ordinating the multi-agency group rests with three safeguarding partners (local authority, clinical commissioning group for an area, and chief officer of police for a police area) who have a shared and equal duty to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area.

Reflecting on the progress of our Commitments

17. We previously made the following commitments for the 12 months from April 2023 to March 2024:-

Commitment 1:-To continue to improve social work practice in respect of timeliness of assessments and panels including improving a child's journey of support for harmful sexual behaviour through the social care system.

18. As noted above children are being heard at panel within less than 12 weeks and we are confident that the right children are being heard and are being heard in a timely way. We have made improvements to the data collated from Harmful Sexual Behaviour Panels and qualitative feedback is provided in respect of the assessments being undertaken to support the improvement in the quality of social work assessments. We can measure the improvement of practice in respect of assessments, in that 92% of the assessments undertaken in the 12 months (where the question was answered) were graded either Excellent or Good.
19. We are currently in the process of developing and commissioning specific training in respect of Harmful and Problematic Behaviour when working with children with neurodiversity as this has been a recognised area for development, as supported by the Needs Assessment. Once this training has been developed, we will then be able to implement the tools needed to assess the specific needs of these young people. The Tackling Emerging Threats Team have been invited to a future Steering Group, and we are looking at how we can link in more effectively with the SEND improvement work.

¹ [Imara](#) is an independent specialist service that supports children, young people and their safe family members following a disclosure or discovery of child sexual and domestic abuse.

Commitment 2:- To consider the recommendations of the needs assessment once completed across the partnership and with Nottingham City and agree a work plan for the steering group. This will help us gain a better understanding of types of harm, and the changing picture of harm, and what this means in respect of outcomes for children.

20. A Needs Assessment undertaken by Public Health has been completed and its findings and recommendations have been presented to and considered by the Steering Group. The Steering Group have formulated a plan in respect of the detailed recommendations regarding practice improvements. This will form a key part of the commitments within the Annual Plan for 2024-2025.
21. The Needs Assessment provided evidence for the anecdotal concern around the increasing numbers of children with neurodiversity being involved with harmful sexual behaviour. Because of this work the commissioning arrangements for the Head2Head contract have been reviewed and a joint arrangement with Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottingham City Council and the Integrated Care Board is now in place. This has allowed for an increase in capacity within the team to support children with neurodiversity and has increased the resilience of the team in the longer term.
22. Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council have met and agree that going forwards we will form a cross-authority steering group and we will develop our joint terms of reference together. This will help improve consistency across the two authorities for partner agencies who work in both areas. Children and Families who may move between the two, can also be reassured of a consistent service.

Commitment 3:- To work with partners (including the third sector) and Nottingham City to improve the early help offer in respect of problematic sexual behaviour particularly within schools.

23. The work provided by the Youth Justice Service, My Futures, continues to be a key intervention for child and young people identified as presenting with problematic or aggressive and violent sexual behaviour at an early stage.
24. The Tackling Emerging Threats Team continue to support local schools, and Designated Safeguarding Leads receive ongoing input and updates through their regular briefings with the safeguarding Children in Education Office supported by Local Authority leads.
25. The Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Partnership continues to offer training in relationship to Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviour.
26. The Local Authority has contributed to an NSPCC project to deliver support to schools in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council around Problematic Sexual Behaviour.
27. Initial conversations have taken place with Violence Reduction Partnership to consider potential opportunities for preventative work.
28. There are ongoing pieces of transformation work in relation to Family Hubs and the remodelling of the front door. The steering group will work closely with these projects to ensure that the needs of children with problematic sexual behaviour are met.

29. Early identification and intervention continue to be a priority for the Safeguarding Partnership for the forthcoming year.

Commitment 4:- To improve the gathering and influence of the voices of children and young people who have lived experience of harmful sexual behaviour.

30. We continue to be committed to improving how we gather the voices of children and young people. This remains an area for development for members of the Steering Group to look at how individualised feedback can be gathered from young people receiving support from CAMHS and Youth Justice.

31. We are confident that social workers undertaking assessments are gathering the wishes and feelings of children and young people, and their lived experience is known. 95% of the assessments presented to panel said that the wishes and feelings were heard.

32. We will begin to develop a 'one minute guide' to be shared with parents and carers on what to expect when being involved with Harmful Sexual Behaviour assessments and panels. We have recently begun to develop feedback forms for other independently chaired meetings, and we will consider how we can replicate this for the Harmful Sexual Behaviour panel. We will also update our public website in relation to Harmful Sexual Behaviour, including useful information and links as well as links to the one minute guides and planned feedback forms.

33. Hearing and responding to the voices of the children and families who access this process is an area we remain committed to and will prioritise over the next 12 months.

Areas of Challenge, and Impact.

34. One of the areas we hoped to undertake relatively quickly had been reviewing the transfer process within Children's Social Care for Harmful Sexual Behaviour assessment to ensure children have a consistent worker. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing work being completed in respect of the needs-led front door it has not been possible to achieve this. This will remain a goal for the coming 12 months.

35. The Harmful Sexual Behaviours procedures, process and terms of reference review remains outstanding. Now the needs assessment has been completed, the recommendations will be considered when the processes and procedures are updated.

36. Unfortunately, there has been a decrease in the number of assessments being completed in a timely way with only 50% of them compared to 59% of the previous year. The number of days, taking a mean average, is 38 working days between the date that a HSB Assessment was agreed and the date it was completed. We had hoped to increase this number by 15% over the last 12 months but this has not been achieved.

37. There continue to be challenges in respect of availability of resources for young people who sexually harm. The Safer Living Foundation has begun accepting some referrals again, having recently secured funding for a further 3 years, however the mentoring programme is not currently available, which was felt anecdotally by panel members to be the most effective of the two interventions being offered.

38. The availability of training in respect of children with neurodiversity is limited and it is proving difficult to resource something which is felt to fully represent the training needs of services. However, this is likely to reflect the lack of expertise and knowledge within this area of practice.
39. The NSPCC work on early intervention in respect of problematic sexual behaviour with a focus on delivering on this work to schools has not yet begun. This is hoped to be operational by late 2024.

Training and Workforce Development

40. The identified Lead Social Work Practice Consultants have continued to deliver three different Harmful Sexual Behaviour focused training sessions on a rolling programme. This is aimed at frontline social work teams.
41. The programme for the NCSP Training for Harmful Sexual Behaviour has two scheduled events at level 1 and two scheduled events at level 2 for the rest of the year. Uptake has continued to be relatively good with several different agencies, including schools, foster carers, Adult Social Care and Early Help services being represented.
42. We have funded 6 individuals to undertake specialised training in respect of AIMS Assessments for children under 12 and technology assisted harmful sexual behaviour across Children's Social Care and Youth Justice. These workers will be available for support and consultation across the teams.
43. There is no proposal to increase the training offer currently. There is a need to ensure that professionals are accessing the available training, particularly within frontline social work teams and this is prioritised and valued. Given some of the challenges around timeliness of assessments, as a steering group we will be looking to promote the available training over the coming 12 months. There is a need to ensure that the uptake is there, how this is then translated in to practice and how we evidence the success and impact of any training delivered in our interventions with children and young people.

Voice and experiences of children, young people and their families

44. As noted under commitment 4, the voices of children and young people presenting with harmful sexual behaviours are being heard by professionals and there is a wider understanding of the issues affecting them. The voices of victims also form part of the holistic assessment.
45. This will be a priority area for development over the next 12 months to better understanding the lived experiences of children and their families accessing our services and to use this to inform improvement and development of practice and services across the system.

What Are Our Ambitions

46. We now wish to build on what the Needs Assessment has told us and start to implement our developed plan in respect of this further. By implementing these comprehensive recommendations, we will contribute to a safer and more inclusive environment for all residents.

47. We will continue to work with our training commissioning partners to develop an appropriate training package which meets the needs of those undertaking assessments and interventions with children who have neurodiversity needs.
48. We will continue to prioritise how we can accurately collate and analyse the experiences of children and their families accessing our services. This will then inform practice and service development. We want to better understand outcomes for children and their families and will use this information, along with 'dip sampling', to help.
49. We will begin to develop our clear identity as a cross authority steering group and develop our terms of reference and joint policies and procedures and undertake an audit of practice.
50. We will work with partners to build on a needs-led service that offers the right support at the right time.

Our Commitments for the Next 12 Months

- *To further develop and execute the detailed plan, as a cross authority group, following the recommendations of the needs assessment.*
- *To further improve and develop practice in respect of Harmful Sexual Behaviour, with particular focus on specific areas of practice including SEND and Tech Assisted Harm.*
- *To work with partners to create a needs-led service that offers the right support at the right time.*
- *To improve the gathering and influence of the voices of children and young people who have lived experience of harmful sexual behaviour.*
- *To evidence the impact of our work focusing on outcomes for children and families.*

The steering group will develop a detailed action plan in relation to the above ambitions and the measures for progress. This will incorporate our ambitions as detailed above as well as the plan developed from the recommendations of the needs assessment.

Jennifer Campbell
Service Manager
Strategic Safeguarding and Independent Review
01.04.2024



14 January 2025

Agenda Item: 9

**REPORT OF THE INTERIM SERVICE DIRECTOR, COMMISSIONING AND
RESOURCES**

MANAGING ALLEGATIONS SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

Purpose of the Report

1. The report provides an update on the performance, activities and challenges faced by the Managing Allegations Service from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Information

2. The Managing Allegations Service undertakes the work of the LADO (Local Area Designated Officer) and addresses concerns and allegations (contemporaneous and non-recent) made against those adults working or volunteering with children in Nottinghamshire. The annual report, attached as **Appendix 1**, covers the statutory duties, governance and scope of the work and how the Managing Allegations Service is arranged.

Other Options Considered

3. To not bring this report to the Panel: this option is discounted because this report provides information that forms an important part of the Panel's remit in assisting the Council in fulfilling its legal corporate parenting duties and acting as an effective corporate parent.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

4. The report provides an opportunity for the Panel to consider any further actions arising from the information contained within the report.

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 financial implications arising from the report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the Corporate Parenting Panel considers whether there are any actions it requires in relation to the information contained in the report.

Rachel Miller
Interim Service Director, Commissioning and Resources

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Hazel McKibbin
CSM Strategic Safeguarding and LADO
E: Hazel.mckibbin@nottscc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (LPW 12/12/24)

7. The recommendation falls within the remit of the Corporate Parenting Panel by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (CDS 06/12/24)

8. There are no financial implications arising directly from the 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.

CF0227

**Children, Families and Cultural Services
Safeguarding, Assurance and Improvement
Service**

Managing Allegations Service End of Year Report 2023/24.

Purpose of the report

1. This is an annual report written for the Safeguarding Assurance and Information Group and the lead member for Children and Young People. It provides an outline of the progress of, and the challenges faced by the Managing Allegations Service during the year April 2023 to March 2024.
2. I am Service Manager for the Managing Allegations Service and the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO). I have line management responsibility for the LADO Allegations Officers and the Team Manager of the Managing Allegations Team of Social Workers and strategic oversight of wider safeguarding concerns related to the children's workforce in Nottinghamshire.

Our Statutory Duties

The statutory duties of the LADO and the corresponding requirements on partner agencies are set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (WT 2023).

3. Local Authorities are required to :
have arrangements to provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations and agencies on how to deal with allegations against people who work with children :
 - have a designated officer, or team of officers to be involved in the **management and oversight of allegations against people who work with children**. Any such officer, or team of officers, should be sufficiently qualified and experienced to be able to fulfil this role effectively, for example, qualified social workers;
 - have appropriate arrangements in place to liaise effectively with the police and other organisations and agencies to **monitor the progress of cases** and ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process;
 - ensure allegations against people who work with children are not dealt with in isolation and that actions are taken to **address the corresponding welfare concerns in relation to the child** or children involved in a co-ordinated manner and without delay.
4. Partner agencies are required to **have clear policies** in place to deal with allegations against people who work with children and arrangements to ensure that any **allegations** about those who work with children **are passed to the designated officer, or team of officers, without delay**. Such policies should make clear distinctions between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice and a complaint e.g. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 for schools.

Governance

5. The Managing Allegations Service reports annually to the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) through the Safeguarding Assurance and Improvement Group. Allegations relating to Nottinghamshire Children in Care are reported directly to a cross-party group of Elected Members.
6. The LADO and LADO Allegation Officers attend a Regional LADO Meeting to share good practice, develop effective cross border communication and maintain a level of consistency in the work undertaken.
7. The new LADO Handbook is with Ofsted and DfE and will be sent out for consultation it is published.

Managing Allegations Service (MAS)

Scope of the work

8. The MAS addresses all allegations and concerns, contemporaneous and non-recent*, made against adults who work or volunteer with children in Nottinghamshire.

*Non-recent abuse refers to an allegation of neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse made by or on behalf of someone who is now 18 years or over, relating to an incident which took place when the complainant was under 18 years old.

9. The threshold for referring an allegation/concern, contemporaneous and non-recent, to LADO is set out in WT 2023 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
 - Behaved in way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
 - Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he may pose a risk of harm to children; or
 - Behaved or may behave in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
10. There are three strands to the management of allegations against adults and volunteers who work with children :
 - Protection of children
 - Criminal investigation
 - Employment/disciplinary process

How we work

11. The Managing Allegations Service offers a comprehensive service to all professionals who work with children and young people, the service is well received and valued by those who have contact with it. Over the last four years there has been a consistent increase in demand particularly for the LADO Allegations Officers but through audit work we are confident that the referrals are appropriate and the work of the LADO Allegations Officers effective. (see paragraph 22).

12. The Managing Allegations Service aims to :
 - provide a proportionate response to concerns referred;
 - gain assurance that the child(ren) linked to the adult of concern are safeguarded;
 - gain assurance that a duty of care is offered to the adult of concern;
 - offer a fair process to the linked children and the adults of concern.
13. The Service works closely with Nottinghamshire and other Local Authorities, Police colleagues and employers and aims to progress referrals in a timely manner. In some situations, lengthy police investigations have resulted in processes continuing for longer than expected, this proves difficult for the child, the adult of concern and the employer and can result in strained relationships. While case by case discussions are routinely undertaken with police colleagues, further exploration through the Partnership may be beneficial.
14. In Nottinghamshire, and nationally, the linked child(ren) and adults of concern do not attend Managing Allegations meetings. The MAS process seeks to mitigate this by allocating a Social Worker both the adult of concern and the linked child(ren) as required. The Social Worker meets with the adult of concern, conveys their views to the meetings and keeps them informed; assessments are undertaken with children and their families should this be required.
15. The Managing Allegations Service is mindful of the impact of an allegation on professionals and volunteers working with children. The Service seeks to work respectfully and sensitively with these adults ensuring they are kept informed of the progress of the process and attempting to answer questions they may have. Of particular note is the Service's awareness of the emotional impact of having an allegation made and adults are helped to identify or are signposted to support services.
16. This is a complex and challenging area of work with the outcome of the process having a significant and potential long-term impact on the adult involved particularly when the allegations are unsubstantiated or unfounded. . The service has previously received a high number of complaints some of which have been complex and protracted. As a result, we have focused on improving practice to ensure the allegations are specific and evidence-based and decision making is clearly recorded. While this area will by nature continue to attract complaints, it is pleasing to note a reduction in complaints in the current period.
17. This year we held the first Managing Allegations Practice day jointly with the Independent Chair's Service during which we looked at shared areas of practice. We plan to continue this development work.

Our achievements and challenges in 2023/24

18. The MAS completed its third full year of operation in 2023/24 and we continue to develop our practice. October 2023 saw our first Managing Allegations Service Day which we used to consider how the service has developed, receive wider children's service updates from Group Manager Claire Sampson, address current practice issues and refine our principles and values.
19. The LADO online Contact Form went live on 4 April 2023, this does not replace contact with the LADO AOs but provides the essential detail required for the LADO AOs to make decisions about LADO involvement and improve efficiency. Overall the form has been welcomed by partners and LADO AOs alike however there remain some issues with the quality of the information received.

- 20. An electronic leaflet explaining the MA service and the Employer’s responsibilities has been developed, this compliments the existing information eleaflet for the adult of concern.
- 21. At the request of the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership, we are undertaking work with partners regarding their practice around the restraint of children (under 18s) seeking assurance the role of the LADO is recognised and concerning restraints are referred appropriately.

Training and Workforce Development

- 22. MAS welcomed a third LADO Allegations Officer to the Service in February 2023, this was in response to the year on year increase in work coming into the LADO Allegations Officers. Coming with LADO experience, she has been a welcome addition to the service and in time this will address the LADO AO workloads.
- 23. The first NSCP Managing Allegations Workshop was held in March 2024 with two more planned for May and November 2024. The workshop was aimed at those partners who have responsibility for referring concerns and allegations to the LADO Allegation Officers and for attending Managing Allegations Meetings. The training was well received and positive feedback was received. This workshop will be held annually. MAS delivers training to ASYEs and Foster Carers annually and role-specific briefings and training is delivered to other Social Work Teams on request.

In July MAS was invited to deliver two training sessions to over 100 Police Officers in the Public Protection Unit and in November to participate in the Early Years Safeguarding Conference delivering a workshop to over 60 nursery managers. MAS will continue to develop our training offer.

Reflection on our commitments from 2022/23

What we said we would do	What we did
<p>1. To address the ongoing impact of the increase of work on the LADO Allegation Officers.</p>	<p>A third LADO Allegations Officer was appointed in February 2024, incoming work and responsibilities are distributed between the three workers and plans are in place to address the backlog.</p>
<p>2. To continue to develop the maturity of the service and what best practice looks like through development days, reflective supervision and evidence-based research and to draw on the expertise of the wider system such as Legal Services, Human Resources and relevant colleagues across the partnership.</p>	<p>We held a joint service Managing Allegations Practice day with the Independent Chair’s service and a Managing Allegations Service day. Bot days allowed discussion on different areas of practice and ways of working. In particularly complex cases we hold reflective discussions with colleagues in Legal Services and Human Resources.</p>
<p>3. To work with the Independent Chair Service to improve the quality of information provided to the adult of</p>	<p>This work with the Independent Chair’s Service is ongoing.</p>

<p>concern on the conclusion of the Managing Allegation Meeting process.</p>	
<p>4. To develop an effective method to gather the voice of the children and adults who experience the Managing Allegations process.</p>	<p>An Adult form has been developed once this is live, it will be sent to those adults who have been through the MAS process. Discussions are underway regarding the standard child and family feedback form used in Children's Services and how this can be developed for use in MAS.</p>
<p>5. To work with NSCP to develop a Multi-Agency Managing Allegations Briefing and to further increase the MAS training offer.</p>	<p>Two NSCP LADO Briefings have been delivered to date, they were well attended and received good feedback. A third briefing is planned for November, it is hoped this will become an annual event.</p>

Commitments for 2024/25

- To work with the Independent Chair Service to improve the quality of information provided to the adult of concern on the conclusion of the Managing Allegation Meeting process.
- To develop an eleaflet for those children and families involved in or linked to the MA process.
- To use the responses provided through the feedback from the adults who experience the Managing Allegations process and the linked children and their families to reflect on and further develop MA practice and the service to better meet the needs of those involved, including those adults with protected characteristics.
- To continue to develop the maturity of the service and best practice through development days, reflective supervision and evidence-based research and to draw on the expertise of the wider system including Legal Services, Human Resources and relevant colleagues across the partnership.

Hazel McKibbin
 Service Manager
 Strategic Safeguarding and Independent Review
 13.08.24

APPENDICES

1. ACTION PLAN :

Managing Allegations Service Commitments for 2023/24	
1. To address the ongoing impact of the increase of work on the LADO Allegation Officers.	
Over the next 12 months	What progress will look like
The LADO AOs workload will return to manageable levels	<p>The data will show :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocations per LADO AO will reduce • Tracking and monitoring numbers per LADO AO will decrease <p>Qualitative data will show</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backlogs in tracking and monitoring will reduce • LADO AOs no longer work excessive additional hours
A third LADO AO post will be agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 12mth temporary post was agreed and recruited to • A business case will be made for this post to be made permanent • Varied LADO AO responsibilities will be agreed to allow distribution of the workload
2. To continue to develop the maturity of the service and what best practice looks like through development days, reflective supervision and evidence-based research and to draw on the expertise of the wider system such as Legal Services, Human Resources and relevant colleagues across the partnership.	
Over the next 12 months	What progress will look like
We will address issues arising to achieve best practice	<p>The data will show :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fewer complaints coming in • complaints received will be resolved at an early stage
We will ensure social work reports express clearly the allegations being considered, provide a clear analysis resulting in an evidence based views regarding harm to the child, risk posed by the adult and a recommended outcome.	<p>Quality assurance of SW reports will show an :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing ability to clearly express the allegations • increasing ability to present a clear analysis • increasing ability to present an evidence based recommendation <p>Quality assurance of MA minutes will show :</p>

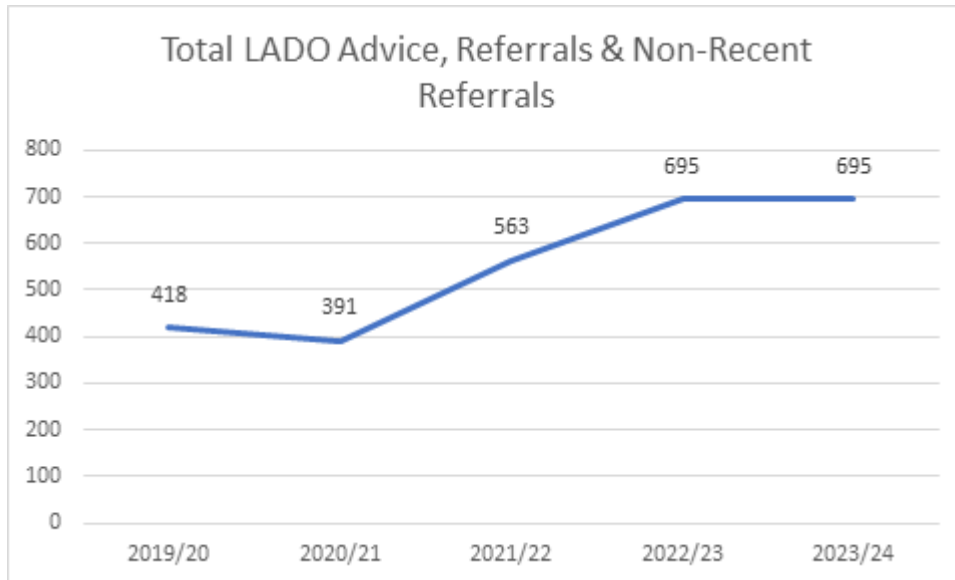
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing clarity in the allegations considered • increasing clarity in the analysis of and rationale for the multi-agency outcome
We will use Team Days and wider MA Practice days to address practice matters and will include relevant colleagues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annual Team Day (October 2023) addressed matters arising and resulted in an action plan • Wider service (MAS and ICS) days will be planned to address practice matters
<p>3. To work with the Independent Chair Service to improve the quality of information provided to the adult of concern on the conclusion of the Managing Allegation Meeting process.</p>	
Over the next 12 months	What progress will look like
A revised method of providing information to the Adult of Concern will be agreed and piloted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A format will be developed in agreement with the ICS service • The agreed format will be trialled before being adopted.
<p>4. To develop an effective method to gather the voice of the children and adults who experience the Managing Allegations process.</p>	
Over the next 12 months	What progress will look like
We will gather individualised information from the children linked to the MA process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will hear the child/ren’s experience and be able to identify and address any gaps
We will gather information from the adults who are subject of the MA process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In keeping with departmental developments, we will develop a tool to capture the experiences of the adult • We will use this information to reflect on and improve service delivery
<p>5. To work with NSCP to develop a Multi-Agency Managing Allegations Briefing and to further increase the MAS training offer.</p>	
Over the next 12 months	What progress will look like
We will develop and deliver training in response to service requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific LADO and/or MAS training will be developed and delivered
We will work with NSCP colleagues to build on the MAS elearning offer and develop a MAS Briefing/Workshop aimed at those colleagues in partner agencies who make referrals and attend MA meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A MAS Briefing/Workshop will be delivered this year and annually • The Briefing /Workshop will be reviewed and adjusted in response to feedback

2. DATA

Key findings 2023/24

1. Work coming into MAS

1.1 Total Advice, Referrals – Contemporaneous and Non Recent work



The total work coming into MAS has stabilised on 2023/24.

LADO Advice by Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
2019/20	70	69	66	95	300
2020/21	58	75	79	53	265
2021/22	103	90	98	127	418
2022/23	112	92	161	164	529
2023/24	135	128	128	148	539

LADO Advice, where the concern is reported to LADO but remains with the employer to address, has increased slightly in this financial year. Most of the Advice relates to colleagues in Education settings followed by Residential, Fostering, Sports and Health.

Referrals (Contemporary) by Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
2019/20	19	19	30	35	103
2020/21	22	24	17	39	105
2021/22	39	27	31	37	134
2022/23	44	46	31	36	157
2023/24	39	27	36	41	143

LADO Referrals have decreased very slightly in 2023/24, the LADO AO tracks all these concerns to employment outcome with the more complex concerns progressing to Managing Allegations multi-agency meetings.

Educational settings account for most of the referrals followed by Residential, Fostering, Health and Sports.

The main reason for a referral to LADO is sexual abuse followed by physical abuse, suitability and emotional abuse. In recent years physical abuse has been the main reason.

Referral (Non-recent) by Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
2019/20	3	5	5	2	15
2020/21	4	7	5	5	21
2021/22	3	3	3	2	11
2022/23		3	3	3	9
2023/24	3	4	1	5	13

Non Recent Referrals to LADO have increased slightly on 2022/23, this is the first increase in non-recent referrals since 2020/21. Most of these Non recent referrals relate to colleagues in an Educational setting followed by colleagues in the Fostering, health, Police, Faith and Sports settings.

The main reason for Non recent referrals remains sexual abuse followed by emotional abuse.

Civil Claims	2018 - 19	2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2022 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
	46	36	28	31	13	14

Annex C	2018 - 19	2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
		82	50	25	6	6

Civil Claims and Annex Cs, linked with Non recent work, have remained consistent with 2023/24.

2. Managing Allegations meetings

2.1 S47 and LADO Strategy Discussions

The decision to convene a Managing Allegations Meeting in both non-recent and contemporaneous cases, is made at a multi-agency Strategy Discussion. In contemporaneous cases, where necessary and possible, the S47 and the LADO Strategy Discussions will be combined, for those cases where children are not open to Children’s Social Care, the MAS Team Manager will chair the S47 Strategy Discussion.

In 2023/24 the MA Service chaired a total of 60 Strategy Discussions, 6 related to Non recent abuse, and attended a further 16 chaired by other Children’s Services Team Managers, this shows a slight decrease on 2022/23.

The LADO AOs attend additional Strategy Discussions.

2.2 Number of MA meetings

The MA service convened a total of 153 meetings, of these, 127 contemporaneous meetings, 40 initial meetings and 87 reviews, these included cases involving foster carers where a couple is considered in one meeting.

A total of 26 non-recent meetings were convened, 6 initial meetings and 20 reviews.

The 2023/24 data shows a reduction in Contemporaneous meetings, this could be a result of decisions made to book meetings in response to when information is available rather than pre-determined time scales. There is an increase in non-recent cases going through the going through the Managing Allegations meeting process when compared to 2022/23 data.

2.2 Work with children linked to the adult of concern

MAS Social Workers are allocated to children linked with the adult of concern, the adult’s own children and the children making allegations, to undertake focused Child and Family Assessments.

Where children do not have an allocated Social Worker, the MAS Social Worker will undertake the Child and Family Assessment and in cases where the child already has an allocated SW, the MAS SW will liaise with the allocated SW to agree how best to obtain the account from and views of the child.

These assessments are focused and proportionate and where a need for ongoing work to support or protect is assessed, the children are allocated to a long term CSC SW team.

There has been a decrease in the numbers of children MAS has worked with in 2023/24.

Children allocated to MAS SWs

Children allocated to MAS SWs	2023/24
MAS contact - no assessment	9*
CAFA	36
Co-allocated - LAC	10
Co-allocated - OLA	20
Co-allocated - CSC	35
Total	110 (30) **

* 9 children’s families were contacted by MAS but no assessment was required

** includes 30 children linked to MAS processes that started in 2022/23

2.3 Work with Adult Complainants making Non recent allegations

During this period, MAS SWs have worked with 6 adult complainants linked to non-recent abuse disclosed in 2023/24. Work continued with a further 6 adult complainants having started in 2022/23.

Additionally, the MAS Team Manager and Social Workers maintain a low level of support for and involvement with some adults who disclosed abuse linked with IICSA. Some of these adults are funded by the local authority to receive counselling and other support services.

2.4 Case Outcomes

A total of 121 Managing Allegations processes were closed, 110 Contemporaneous and 11 Non recent. This is a slight increase in Contemporaneous case closures and a significant increase in Non-recent case closures.

The outcomes available to the Managing Allegations process are prescribed in Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working together to Safeguard Children and include Substantiated, Unsubstantiated, Unfounded, False and Malicious.

In 2023/24 the outcomes for Contemporaneous cases remain largely consistent with 45% Substantiated; 34% Unsubstantiated and 9% Unfounded. Very few cases are considered either False or Malicious.

Of the 11 Non recent cases, 4 were Substantiated, 4 Unsubstantiated, 1 was Unfounded, 1 was False; 1 had no outcome, this can occur given the passage of time and the difficulties in assessing and investigating non recent allegations.

2.5 Police outcomes

Contemporaneous work has seen a slight decrease in no police action, an increase in the police investigation resulting in no further actions and a slight decrease in the police investigations resulting in prosecutions, no cautions were issued in 2024.

The Non recent work saw no police action in 3 cases, police investigations no further action in 8 and there were no prosecutions in 2024.

2.6 Employer outcomes

The LADO AO tracks and monitors the MA process to the Employer outcome.

In Contemporaneous work, 27 colleagues were dismissed, 29 resigned as an alternative to dismissal, 15 received a sanction, 38 were offered additional support or training and 7 received no sanction.

Of those colleagues subject to Non recent allegations, 6 were not employed, 1 received a sanction, 2 received support or training and 1 received no sanction.

2.7 Referrals to DBS and Regulatory Bodies

It is the last employer's responsibility to make referrals to DBS and relevant professional regulatory bodies, this forms part of the LADO AO tracking process.

In 2024, 37 referrals were made to DBS and 6 to professional regulatory bodies related to contemporaneous work.

A further 4 DBS referrals were made and 1 to a professional regulatory body in non recent work.

2.8 Case duration

Keeping Children Safe In Education states LADO processes should be 'thorough and fair' and 'dealt with as quickly as possible' however timescales are no longer specified.

While every attempt is made to address concerns in a timely manner and to resolve cases promptly, timeliness remains a challenge. Of note is the increasing need for the forensic interrogation of electronic devices which can delay processes, additionally the tracking and monitoring of employer outcomes has been delayed as a result of the LADO AO workload .

The data available currently measures the duration of cases from the initial referral to the LADO AO through the Managing Allegations meeting process to the completion of the LADO AO tracking and monitoring of the employment process outcome.

Duration of Closed Contemporaneous referrals	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Less than 1 month	4	2	6	8	5
1 to 3 months	14	18	13	26	16
3 to 6 months	18	20	26	21	20
6 to 11 months	20	30	26	36	39
1 year+	12	17	20	15	31

There has been a decrease in the number of Contemporaneous cases closed within 3 months, before 11 months and an increase in those cases open for more than 12 months. The increase in cases open for longer than a year is a result of the LADO AO backlog in tracking and monitoring, plans are in place to resolve this with the agreement to a third LADO AO post.

The difficulty in assessing and investigating Non recent work accounts for cases being open for longer with 5 open for up to 11 months and 6 open for more than 12 months.

2.9 Complaints

The number of complaints coming to MAS has reduced further in 2023/24 with the complaints being received being resolved at an earlier stage.

During this period, 4 complaints were received and investigated.

Of the 4 investigated, 2 were complaints about the LADO Advice process, one was not upheld and one was partially upheld, learning was identified.

The other 2 complaints were both resolved at Stage 1, one was made by a parent of linked children who felt he had not received sufficient information about the potential risk to his children, learning was identified from this; the other regarded the MA meeting process and was not upheld.

CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL - WORK PROGRAMME 2025

Title	Sponsor/ Report Author
Standing items for each meeting:	
Foster Care (FLAG) items	Jenny Whiston
Children in Care Council items	Sophie Eadsforth
Visits schedule and observations from visits	Amanda Collinson
Update on Nottinghamshire Children’s Residential Homes & secure accommodation service	Amanda Collinson/ Jenny Whiston/ Davinia Lawton/ Paul Thomas
1 April 2025	
Report from Borough & District Councils on their corporate parenting responsibilities	Amanda Collinson/ Theresa Hodgkinson (Ashfield DC)
Inspection gradings of Children’s Residential Homes commissioned solely for Council use (six-monthly)	Rachel Miller/ Beth Downing
Fostering for East Midlands – support to foster carers in D2N2 area	Amanda Collinson
Destinations of Year 12-13 Looked After Young People Cohort 2024-25	Peter McConnochie/ Stephanie McGill
Care Leavers annual report	Amanda Collinson/ Sophie Eadsforth
Local Offer for Care Leavers (six-monthly)	Amanda Collinson/ Sophie Eadsforth
Looked After Children and Care Leavers Board update (six-monthly)	Amanda Collinson/ Heather Bennett
Impact of Social Care reforms	Amanda Collinson
8 July 2025	
Performance of Adoption Services	
To be placed	

