



**NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**  
**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**Date:** Friday, 18 January 2019

**Time:** 2.30 pm

**Place:** LH 2.13 - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG

**Councillors are requested to attend the above meeting to transact the following business**

**Corporate Director for Strategy and Resources**

**Governance Officer:** Phil Wye **Direct Dial:** 0115 8764637

- 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**
- 3 MINUTES** 3 - 8  
Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2018, for confirmation.
- 4 FOSTERING AND ADOPTION PANEL CHAIR'S REPORT** 9 - 16  
Report of the Director of Children's Integrated Services
- 5 ADOPTION AND PERMANENCY** 17 - 22  
Report of the Director of Children's Integrated Services
- 6 CHILDREN IN CARE SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS** 23 - 28  
Report of the Director of Children's Integrated Services
- 7 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF CHILDREN IN CARE** 29 - 40  
Joint report of the Director of Education Services and the Director of Children's Integrated Services
- 8 INSPECTION OUTCOME**  
Verbal update
- 9 CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL**  
Verbal update

IF YOU NEED ANY ADVICE ON DECLARING AN INTEREST IN ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA, PLEASE CONTACT THE GOVERNANCE OFFICER SHOWN ABOVE, IF POSSIBLE BEFORE THE DAY OF THE MEETING

CITIZENS ATTENDING MEETINGS ARE ASKED TO ARRIVE AT LEAST 15 MINUTES BEFORE THE START OF THE MEETING TO BE ISSUED WITH VISITOR BADGES

CITIZENS ARE ADVISED THAT THIS MEETING MAY BE RECORDED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC. ANY RECORDING OR REPORTING ON THIS MEETING SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S POLICY ON RECORDING AND REPORTING ON PUBLIC MEETINGS, WHICH IS AVAILABLE AT [WWW.NOTTINGHAMCITY.GOV.UK](http://WWW.NOTTINGHAMCITY.GOV.UK). INDIVIDUALS INTENDING TO RECORD THE MEETING ARE ASKED TO NOTIFY THE GOVERNANCE OFFICER SHOWN ABOVE IN ADVANCE.

**NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Loxley House, Nottingham on 19 November 2018 from 2.30 pm - 4.04 pm**

**Membership**

Present

Councillor David Mellen (Chair)  
Councillor Ginny Klein (Vice Chair)  
Councillor Jim Armstrong  
Councillor Glyn Jenkins  
Councillor Wendy Smith  
Councillor Marcia Watson  
Councillor Cate Woodward

Absent

Councillor Nicola Heaton  
Councillor Sue Johnson  
Councillor Neghat Khan

**Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

Gillian Black	- SOVA
Clive Chambers	- Head of Children in Care
Gabriel Hall	- The Children's Society
Kathryn Higgins	- Greater Nottingham Clinical Commissioning Group
Kelise Knowles	- Care Leaver representative
Alison Smith	- The Children's Society
Claire Tagg	- Greater Nottingham Clinical Commissioning Group
Jordan Whatman	- Project Officer, Children in Care
Phil Wye	- Governance Officer

**30 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Nicola Heaton – work commitments  
Councillor Sue Johnson - unwell  
Councillor Neghat Khan – leave  
Helen Blackman, Director of Children’s Integrated Services  
TM

**31 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

**32 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**33 THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN IN CARE OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY 2017/18**

Kathryn Higgins and Claire Tagg introduced the report providing the second Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Children in Care annual report providing assurances that Nottingham City CCG is fulfilling its statutory responsibilities to children as outlined in the Children Act 1989 and associated guidance. The following information was highlighted:

- (a) the CCG continues to commission two providers to undertake medical assessments of Children in Care in the city. Medical services are provided by the Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust and nursing services are provided by Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. CAMHS services are jointly commissioned by the CCG and Nottingham City Council;
- (b) the CCG also has responsibility for the medical and nursing needs of Looked After Children that are in the care of other local authorities but placed in Nottingham City;
- (c) the Nottinghamshire Children in Care Service Improvement Forum was established in December 2016. It has developed an action plan to look at risks, service gaps and improvements with agreement from city and county local authorities, CCGs and health providers;
- (d) a project is underway to improve the collection and reporting of data on Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Children in Care, following a successful bid to NHS England for funding;
- (e) a Care Leaver workshop was held in July 2017 to review support around health, with a Care Leaver working group being established to review and implement recommendations from the workshop;
- (f) in 2018/19 a priority will be to ensure quality assurance of medical assessments for all Children in Care placed out of the city. There will also be further work to consider young people who do not engage, unaccompanied asylum seeker children and those in secure accommodation.

The following points were raised during the discussion which followed:

- (g) care for Children in Care placed out of area can vary across the country and Nottingham has no jurisdiction over this. In Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City it has been agreed that all children will receive the same standard of care regardless of who the placing authority is;
- (h) there are many factors when deciding where a Child in Care will be placed, not only medical care. However, more robust data will be useful to identify any problem locations so that the council can take a proactive approach to addressing any issues.

**RESOLVED to**

- (1) note that health providers supported by the Designated Professionals will continue to work with the Service Improvement Forum and associated working groups with the aim to improve the health outcomes for Children in**

**Care;**

- (2) note that revised CCG pathways for out of area placements and other local authority placements in the city are to be implemented in 2019;**
- (3) note that health providers supported by the Designated Professionals will continue to work with the Local Authority, other partner agencies and Commissioners in planning for and ensuring adequate health provision for Care Leavers.**

**34 THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY: INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY ANNUAL REPORT 2018**

Alison Smith and Gabriel Hall introduced the report providing an update on the children's advocacy services provided by The Children's Society on behalf of the council. The following information was highlighted:

- (a) The Children's Society is a national charity that works with the country's most vulnerable children and young people and lobbies for national policy change;
- (b) the advocacy service for Children in Care has been jointly commissioned to by Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Councils. The Children's Society provide Advocacy, Residential Visiting Advocacy, Issue Based Advocacy and Independent Persons services;
- (c) across the county and city there is one manager and 5 advocates. All residential units should be visited no less than once every eight weeks. During June, July and August 2018 a total of 79% of all residential homes were visited within this timeframe and this figure is improving;
- (d) there has been an increase in the number of issues raised by young people, such as issues around placements, lack of support from social workers, requests for placement changes and lack of reviews;
- (e) the advocates have been allocated homes to ensure continuity for the young people, and advocates remain the same when a young person is moved between placements, where possible.

The following points were raised during the discussion which followed:

- (f) the reason that young people may want to change placement is that they have been placed outside the city and want to come back. There are also issues with young people feeling that social workers are not seeing them often enough;
- (g) the advocacy is always led by the young person and based on wishes and feelings which may not always be in their best interest;
- (h) if a child wants a new advocate they can be provide, and there is a complaints procedure if they are unhappy;

- (i) referrals are triaged by the manager and allocated appropriately to the advocates. Children and young people should be ideally visited within 72 hours, though this is not always possible if they live far away;
- (j) one of the advocates specialises in children with disabilities and special educational needs.

**RESOLVED to note the contents of the report.**

### **35 INDEPENDENT VISITOR SERVICE – SOVA**

Gillian Black introduced the report introducing the Board to SOVA as a service provider, updating the Board on the Independent Visitor Service since the contract began in November 2017. The following information was highlighted:

- (a) Independent Visitors (IVs) are adult volunteers who serve as positive role models for Children in Care. They meet monthly and take part in activities, chosen by the IV and child together;
- (b) there are currently 19 active matches in place, with 10 children awaiting a best match.

The following points were raised during the discussion which followed:

- (c) if an IV has to stop volunteering due to personal circumstances they are asked to contact the child themselves to discuss and explain the situation;
- (d) volunteers are observed during their training to highlight their areas of interest and they are matched to children by SOVA accordingly. Views of social workers and foster carers are taken into account but it is ultimately the child's decision;
- (e) it would be helpful if the child received an information sheet with a photograph and some basic likes and dislikes prior to meeting their IV.

**RESOLVED to note the contents of the report.**

### **36 CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS STRATEGY 2018 – 2020**

Clive Chambers introduced the report providing an update on the Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy which sets out how the council will meet its responsibilities as the Corporate Parent for Children in Care. Seven strategic priorities (or promises) have been identified that represent areas that require improvement in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for Children in Care and Care Leavers. The following points were raised during the discussion which followed:

- (a) the promises themselves could be made clearer within the document, and in bold. It could also include contact details for Advocacy and Independent Visitor services;

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- (b) the introduction could include more information on how the council aspires to for children and young people in its care;
- (c) the promises are mapped against directorate priorities, what young people have told the council, and statutory guidance.

It was suggested that assessments and Personal Education Plan meetings during school hours can be disruptive to education and cause problems at school.

**RESOLVED to**

**(1) agree the strategic priorities, and accepting them as 'corporate parenting objectives;**

**(2) endorse the Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2018-2020.**

**37 CHILDREN IN CARE SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT: QUARTER 1 / QUARTER 2 2018 - 2019**

Clive Chambers introduced the report providing the Board with the most up to date Children in Care performance data covering the first and second quarters of the 2018-19 financial year.

**RESOLVED to acknowledge the current performance position of the Children in Care service.**

**38 CHILDREN IN CARE COUNCIL**

Kelise Knowles and Jordan Whatman gave a verbal update on recent and upcoming meetings and events of the Children in Care Council. The Council has recently spoken to Ofsted and worked on the Local Offer for Care Leavers. The Big It Up awards will take place soon, and a Christmas meeting is planned with the Sheriff.

**39 CHAIR'S UPDATE**

A report will be published on Nottingham and Nottinghamshire following the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse early next year, with the overall thematic report, focussing on the role of local authorities generally, being published at a later date.

The Local Offer for Care Leavers will be shared with Board Members for their comments and is attached to these minutes.

**40 FORWARD PLANNER**

The forward plan was noted.

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**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – JANUARY 2019**

<b>Title of paper:</b>	Fostering and Adoption Panel Chair's Report	
<b>Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):</b>	Helen Blackman – Director, Children's Integrated Services	<b>Wards affected:</b> All
<b>Report author(s) and contact details:</b>	Audrey Taylor – Service Manager, Fostering and Adoption <a href="mailto:Audrey.Taylor@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">Audrey.Taylor@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a> 01158764526	
<b>Other colleagues who have provided input:</b>	Clive Harrison – Chair, Panel One Phil Rogers – Chair, Panel Two Dagoberto Rojas – Chair, Panel Three Tom Elvidge - Chair, Panel Four Ian Crompton - Panel Advisor	
<b>Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)</b>		
<b>Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:</b>		
Strategic Regeneration and Development		<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools		<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning and Housing		<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Services		<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy, Sustainability and Customer		<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs, Growth and Transport		<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults, Health and Community Sector		<input type="checkbox"/>
Children, Early Intervention and Early Years		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Leisure and Culture		<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources and Neighbourhood Regeneration		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):</b>		
<p>The Panel's primary responsibility is to safeguard children and young people, placed in foster care and adoptive homes / families by Nottingham City and beyond. The Panel takes its responsibility to protect children very seriously and is vigorous in its scrutiny of reports and assessments.</p>		
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		
<b>1</b>	To note the activity of the fostering and adoption panels.	

**1 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 Good practice as suggested by the British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF 2015; 2016) states that an annual report should be prepared detailing the work of the fostering and adoption panels. The report should detail the following:
- the numbers and profiles of foster carers and children
  - strengths and achievements of the service
  - performance targets and measurements and further areas for development

- 1.2 The report should be made available to elected members.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of members of the Board with information pertaining to the activity of the fostering and adoption panel.
- 1.4 In addition, the Panel Chairs are required to provide six monthly performance reports. This report contains a summary of these six monthly reports (see section 2.7).

## **2 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)**

### **Function of Fostering and Adoption Panels**

2.1 The primary functions of the fostering and adoption panels are to:

- Recommend the approval of prospective adoptive parents
- Recommend the approval of prospective foster carers
- Recommend the placing of children with approved adoptive parents (i.e. matching)
- Recommend the approval of adoption plans for relinquished children.

### **Fostering and Adoption Panels**

2.2 The Fostering and Adoption panels continue to make positive progress. As reported January 2016 the number of panels was reduced to three per month with a fourth panel held every quarter. This has enabled Panel to meet as demand requires, affording flexibility and responsiveness to need in a cost efficient manner.

In late 2017 we recruited three new panel members, who replaced those who were not able to commit to the role. The new members included 2 elected members - Councillors who have enhanced the accountability of panels.

In 2018 the Panel Chair's checklist was revised to ensure panel confirmed the timeliness of applications and adoption matches and reports on any concerns regarding delay. Panel also continue to provide considered and detailed feedback to the Agency on the quality of every report and assessment presented to Panel. The Panel Advisor then confirms this feedback to presenting social workers and their manager. There has continued to be noted improvements in the quality of reports presented to Panel throughout 2018, see section 2.6 and 2.7.

The use of the Children in Care Council (CICC) questions that the children felt should be asked of prospective adopters and foster carers has now been in practice for two years. The feedback from applicants continues to be overwhelmingly positive with prospective adopters and foster carers describing how the questions powerfully bring the role of becoming a carer to life in panel. The background to this development, as reported in previous years, was that in 2016 the Children in Care Council ran an interactive workshop around fostering and adoption panels; one outcome of which was questions that the children felt should be asked of prospective adopters and foster carers. Each panel identifies 2 to 3 appropriate questions from the list, produced by the CICC, which are directly asked of prospective adopters and foster carers whose assessments and applications are being considered by panel. There continues to be interest from other Agency's in this innovative way of ensuring that the voice of young people is present when considering prospective foster carers and adopters. This is particularly so from D2N2 - East Midlands Adoption colleagues who have attended our panels to observe how we implemented and develop this practice,

and they have resolved to adopt a similar model in the East Midlands Adoption Panels across the region. The presentation of our First Annual report on Panel to the CICC took place in April 2018, through an interactive workshop including the Panel Adviser and Chairs of Panel, one of whom has previously been a member of the CICC, and was warmly received by the young people. The report included an evaluation of the use of the CICC questions and the young people responded with interesting and constructive advice for future developments; and they reported this in a CICC BLOG. The practice of an annual report to the CICC offers a new layer of accountability and engagement for NCC Panels with young people in care, thereby extending their voice and presence in Panel processes.

2.3 The merging of the Fostering and Adoption panels, which came into effect in September 2013, continues to be effective and offers availability and flexibility in regard to allocating time slots for cases to be heard.

2.4 The following is statistical information detailing the activity of the panel, according to the types of cases that have been presented.

**Fostering and Adoption Panel Activity April – September 2018 (included this year is comparative data for the previous 2 years).**

**Table 1 – Adoption Statistics**

	April 2018 – Sept 2018	April 2017 – Sept 2017	April 2016 – Sept 2016
Applications	9	8	20
Matches (Nottm)	12 children with 11 families	10 children with 10 families	11 Children with 10 families
Matches (Inter- Agency) [IA]	17 children with 12 families	8 children with 8 families	8 Children 5 families
Total matches	29 children with 23 families	18 children with 18 families	19 children with 15 families
Termination of approval	0	1	3

**Table 2 –Fostering Statistics**

	April 2018– Sept 2018	April 2017 –Sept 2017	April 2016 – Sept 2016
Mainstream Applications	<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>
Mainstream Deferral	<b>4 (of the 18)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
FFA /Dual	<b>4</b> (3 ADM approved)	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Connected Persons ( CP)	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>
Connected Persons Extensions	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Annual Reviews	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18</b>
Reviews following concerns	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
FC Notification of Resignation	<b>9</b> (please note that resignations no longer come to panel since august 2018)	<b>4</b>	<b>20</b>
Termination of Approval	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
Change Of Approvals	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>

**Summary of Foster and Adoption Panel Activity April 2018 - Sept 2018:**

- 85 cases presented to Panel April–September 2018 (20 Panels held)
  - 32 Adoption
  - 53 Fostering

## Quality of Reports

- 2.5 The period April 2018 - September 2018 has been a busy period for Panels, with 85 cases being heard at panel. Panel membership has a strong balance of skill and experience representing diverse sectors of the community. The Panel displays a high degree of commitment and enthusiasm to the work, and ensure that high levels of scrutiny are applied to assessments with the focus always being on meeting the needs of children and safeguarding their welfare. The Panel further recognises the responsibility it has in balancing this with a need to ensure that applicants and staff feel welcome and respected by the Fostering and Adoption Panel. The distribution of panel specific introduction booklets and welcome packs to panel attendees, including photos of panel members and brief biographies, continues to consistently receive very positive feedback from panel attendees, both social workers and applicants.

The Fostering and Adoption panel will continue to evolve to accommodate changes in policy, procedure, guidance and legislation. Panel members are provided with regular updates and briefings from the Panel Advisor and a minimum annual panel specific training annually. A significant new initiative currently in the process of development and implementation is the attendance of applicants and prospective adopters throughout the panel process including recommendations by panel members. Previously they only attended to answer questions from panel members and have the opportunity to ask a question of panel; the Chair and Panel Advisor then privately informed them of the outcome of panel immediately following their case being heard by panel. This development will enhance the transparency of the application and panel process.

The Panels as a whole have the opportunity, in addition to the direct feedback to the Agency on the quality of reports presented, to highlight any issues, concerns, themes and acknowledgments of outstanding practice that are then addressed via the panel advisor. Matters that are routinely addressed are the quality of reports to panel and completion of Life Story Books, as well as the robustness of adoption support plans including contact plans; this is in line with the government guidelines that require us to address future support needs of adoptive children.

- 2.6 The quality of reports presented to Fostering and Adoption panels continues to be strengthened along with the quality assurance role of managers prior to the reports being submitted to panel with the introduction this year of a Declaration of Compliance document that has to be completed and signed by the relevant manager. The Panel Advisor provides panels with the consistent quality assurance and advice that panels require in order to make recommendations. The four Panel Chairs and panel members in their annual appraisals, completed autumn 2018, all reported further and consistent improvements in the quality of reports presented to the Fostering and Adoption panels. The feedback to the agency on the quality of reports by individual cases has enabled the Panel Advisor to produce, for both 2017-18 and the first six months of 2018, quantitative and qualitative analysis of these reports. Qualitative feedback identifies reports, in accordance with Ofsted outcomes, as outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate. It is pleasing to be able to report a significant increase in the number of reports that are considered Outstanding or Good by Panel, with 88% of reports presented to Panel 2017-18 considered Outstanding or Good compared to 79% 2016 -17 c.11% increase. Significantly the % of Outstanding reports went from 24% to 31% a 29% increase. In addition, it is particularly pleasing to be able to report continued

progress in the first six months of 2018 with 94.5% of reports presented to panel considered good or outstanding, which included 38% identified as outstanding. However, there is still one or two assessment reports that fall below the expected standard. This continues to be addressed and monitored by the Fostering and Adoption Service and Carter Brown, who have an established good working partnership with the express aim of offering a professional and comprehensive service to citizens applying to becoming either foster carers or adopters. Regular meetings with Carter Brown have gone a long way to ensuring sustained improvement in the quality of output.

## **Summary of Panel Chair's reports**

2.7 As mentioned earlier the Panel Chairs are required to produce a six monthly performance report. The reports of all four-panel chairs have highlighted the following:

### Strengths

- Adoption and Fostering reports are of an increasingly good standard including increasing numbers that are outstanding. Panel Chairs are clear that there has been a significant improvement in the quality of reports and the Chairs have all highlighted the consistency of the high quality of work from the relatively new Permanency Team.
- Agency Decision Maker timescales are being met.
- Child centred services to children and carers.
- Good summary and analysis for matching children with adopters.
- Significant increase in the number of children being matched for adoption.
- Continued improvements in timescales for adoption and fostering assessments.
- Panel Steering Group meet quarterly, and the panel chairs and vice chairs are invited to this meeting along with team managers and senior managers across children's integrated services. It is noted that this is a useful group to drive continued improvements in the service
- Quarterly meetings of the panel chairs, vice chairs and the panel advisor have enabled continued improvement in, and consistency of, panel practices.

### Areas for further development

- Increase in the membership and representation of younger people with care experiences sitting on panels
- The need to move to a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) was outlined in children's social care reform: A Vision for Change (2016) wherein the Government outlined its overarching vision for transforming the quality of children's social care services by 2020. The arrangement for an RAA within our region, namely Adoption East Midlands (comprising Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire), are nearing finalisation. This will include the establishment of a regional adoption agency adoption panel which will mean the disaggregation for Nottingham City of the fostering and adoption panels; and it is anticipated, at the time of writing this report, that this will be operative by the new financial year 2019 - 20.

Overall, Fostering and Adoption panels are working well and the Fostering and Adoption Service are working towards ensuring continuous improvements to the

panel and the processes of panel. Issues raised will continue to be addressed in a timely manner.

### **3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 None.

### **4 FINANCE COMMENTS (INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)**

4.1 None.

### **5 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COMMENTS (INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES, AND LEGAL, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS)**

5.1 None.

### **6 STRATEGIC ASSETS & PROPERTY COMMENTS (FOR DECISION RELATING TO ALL PROPERTY ASSETS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE) (AREA COMMITTEE REPORTS ONLY)**

6.1 None.

### **7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No



An EIA is not required because:

(Please explain why an EIA is not necessary)

Not required as the report does not contain proposals or financial decisions.

### **8 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

8.1 None.

### **9 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

9.1 BAAF, Effective Fostering Panels: Guidance on Regulations, Process and Good Practice in fostering panels in England (updated Fourth Edition) (2015).

9.2 BAAF, Effective Adoption Panels: Guidance on Regulations, Process and Good Practice in Adoption and Permanence Panels in England (updated Seventh Edition) (2016).

9.3 Adoption - A Vision for Change (March 2016). Department for Education.

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**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – 18 JANUARY 2019**

<b>Title of paper:</b>	Adoption and Permanency	
<b>Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):</b>	Helen Blackman - Director, Children's Integrated Services	<b>Wards affected:</b> All
<b>Report author(s) and contact details:</b>	Audrey Taylor – Service Manager, Fostering and Adoption <a href="mailto:Audrey.taylor@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">Audrey.taylor@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Other colleagues who have provided input:</b>	Sharon Clarke – Service Manager, Children in Care	
<b>Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)</b>	18 December 2018	
<b>Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:</b>		
Strategic Regeneration and Development		<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools		<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning and Housing		<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Services		<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy, Sustainability and Customer		<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs, Growth and Transport		<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults, Health and Community Sector		<input type="checkbox"/>
Children, Early Intervention and Early Years		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Leisure and Culture		<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources and Neighbourhood Regeneration		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):</b>		
<p>The report provides an overview of the permanency performance of the Local Authority. The report will primarily focus on adoption activity as this continues to be the plan for a significant number of the Authority's children in care; however, brief reference is made to Special Guardianship Order figures.</p> <p>The report highlights actions that are being taken to address delays.</p>		
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		
<b>1</b>	To note the performance to date in relation to Permanency Planning for Children in Care, which can be in the form of Adoption, Permanent Fostering or Special Guardianship.	
<b>2</b>	To enable the Corporate Parenting Board to consider the Adoption Leadership Board data.	

**1 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 It is important that members of the Corporate Parenting Board are kept informed of the activities being undertaken, to achieve permanency for children that the Local Authority has corporate parental responsibility for.

## **2 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)**

- 2.1 Nottingham City continues to make adoption plans for a significant number of children in our care. Many of these children have complex medical conditions, belong to a sibling group, have a range of disabilities, or have birth parents with complex histories. Adoption plans are made knowing that many of these children are considered “hard to place”, but with a strong belief that if children cannot live with their birth family then a permanency option should be considered.
- 2.2 The Adoption Scorecard (introduced in 2012) allows Local Authorities and other adoption agencies to monitor their performance, and compare it with that of others at critical points in the child’s journey towards adoption. Successfully placing children that are more complex can negatively affect our timelines, which affects our performance in some of the scorecard measures.
- 2.3 The Service Manager for Fostering and Adoption continues to hold regular Adoption Tracking Meetings with Team Managers to progress every child’s adoption plan and minimise delays.
- 2.5. The department continues to make good use of adoption as a permanency outcome for children in care:
- In Nottingham City currently there are
- 93 children with adoption plans
  - 31 children are currently matched with adopters
  - 333 children are being supported by means of a Special Guardianship Allowance.
- 2.6 There have been 37 children adopted so far in this financial year. There are a further 14 more children who are due to be granted adoption orders by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 making a total of 51 adoptions orders granted this financial year.
- 2.7 The authority is currently home finding for 27 children. Data relating to this activity is as follows:

### **Gender**

- 12 of these children are male
- 15 of these children are female

### **Age**

- Under 1 – 2 children
- 1 – 9 children
- 2 – 0 children
- 3 – 4 child
- 4 – 4 child
- 5 – 3 children
- 6 – 2 children
- 8 – 1 child
- 9 – 1 child
- 10 – 1 child

## **Ethnicity**

- White British - 20 children
- White British/Black Caribbean - 4 children
- Black African - 2 children
- White British/Pakistani – 1 child

## **Sibling Groups**

- 4 sets of sibling groups, each with 2 siblings
- 3 sets of sibling groups, each with 3 siblings

2.8 We make strenuous efforts to home-find for children; we do change plans if this will not be achieved within a set timescale. 6 children currently have plans for their adoption plans to be rescinded. This is for children who we have exhausted all possibilities to find an adoptive home. Many of these children will remain cared for by their foster carer in a permanency arrangement.

2.9 For children who we are unable to place with our own adopters, we use Interagency Adopters. For this financial year the cost of purchasing these placements outside of the Local Authority is £277,300. In terms of our approved adopters who have adopted from other Local Authorities, we have received £130,000 in payment. This gives an aggregate cost of £147,300 for the year.

### **2.11 Recruitment**

We have 21 prospective adopters who are being assessed and 43 approved households of which 28 households have children placed and 15 are awaiting a match. 5 of these prospective adopters are foster carers therefore child specific. We are working closely with Adoption East Midlands with our pre approval training. We still hold information evenings at Loxley House every 2 months.

### **2.12 Adoption Support Fund**

The Adoption Support Fund commenced in April 2015. This is a Central Government initiative aimed at offering support to adoptive families by enabling them to access bespoke therapeutic support for their child and the adopters. This financial year we have made 50 applications to the Adoption Support Fund totalling £145,556.27 of which we have received £108,634.01. There are 13 applications submitted which are pending approval totalling £36,922.26. The department has not had any match funding requests in this financial year.

### **2.13 Regionalisation of Adoption / Permanence Team**

In line with the government agenda for the regionalisation of adoption, plans are underway to establish an East Midlands Regional Adoption Agency by 2019. We are one of 9 Local Authorities and 3 Local Voluntary Agencies who will be members of the East Midlands Regional Adoption Agency, the aim of which is to bring adoption resources together across the region leading to improvements in adoption planning for children.

Nottingham City are working with Derbyshire County, Derby City and Nottinghamshire County (Adoption East Midlands) and voluntary agencies to form a regional adoption agency, agreement has been made in principle pending lead members agreement. Staff currently in the adoption and post order team will be TUPE over to Adoption East Midlands. Nottinghamshire County Council are the host

authority. The Adoption team currently works closely with the Permanency team who hold the majority of children who have a plan for adoption and care proceedings have ended. Children who are hard to place such as large sibling groups and older children are discussed regularly in the region with the hope to match and place within the region.

## 2.14 Permanency Panel

Nottingham City Council is committed to permanency planning for children. This can be in the form of Adoption, Permanent Fostering or Special Guardianship Orders. A Permanency Panel has been established in order to ensure proposals made regarding planning meet the needs of children / young people. Proposals are quality assured with safeguarding responsibilities in mind, and the Panel also provides an additional forum to monitor the Local Authority's financial commitments. The Panel ensures compliance in respect of relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

2.15 Under Care Planning regulations, the consideration of permanence for a child should begin if not before, then immediately after a child is accommodated. As such, Social Workers immediately start to care-plan the best route for permanence. The objectives are laid out and viabilities explored, prior to a child's Looked After Review at 20 days. Proposals for a Special Guardianship Order should be presented to the Permanency Panel for scrutiny and approval, before it is confirmed at a Review or submitted to Court. Those children whose plans are to be permanently fostered are agreed at the child's Reviews, prior to being presented to Panel. Those children with a plan of Adoption continue to be subject to Adoption guidance, regulations and processes.

2.16 The Permanency Panel is comprised of Service Managers from Neighbourhood Fieldwork Teams, Children in Care, Fostering and Adoption as well as an Independent Reviewing Officer. Legal advice is also available if required. The Panel reflects upon the proposed plans and ensures that the presented match between the prospective carer and child is viable and appropriate. The Panel considers the information, and measures this against the objective for each child as defined in the Regulations; 'permanence is the long-term plan for the child's upbringing... ensure having a secure, stable and loving family to support them through childhood and beyond to give them a sense of security, continuity, commitment, identity and belonging' (Planning Page 20 Regulations, Vol.2, 2015).

2.17 The Panel makes recommendations, and these are ratified by the Nominated Senior Manager (Head of Service, Children in Care) and the Director of Children's Integrated Services, both in respect of the plan and the financial expenditure it will incur.

2.18 The Panel may not agree to the proposals made, and may either recommend further work or suggest alternative options. It has to be clearly demonstrated that the placement clearly meets the best interests of the child, now and in the future.

2.19 Inevitably, some plans for permanence will require a package of support. When a package has been agreed and scrutinised by the Service Manager (Fostering and Adoption) it will then be reviewed within one year. Packages of support can include a range of options such as therapeutic support and or financial commitment.

## 3 **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 None.

**4 FINANCE COMMENTS (INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)**

4.1 None.

**5 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COMMENTS (INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES, AND LEGAL, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS)**

5.1 None.

**6 STRATEGIC ASSETS & PROPERTY COMMENTS (FOR DECISION RELATING TO ALL PROPERTY ASSETS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE) (AREA COMMITTEE REPORTS ONLY)**

6.1 None.

**7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No

An EIA is not required because the report does not contain proposals or financial decisions.

Yes

**8 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

8.1 None.

**9 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

9.1 Amended Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations (2010), Care Planning and Fostering Regulations (2015), Working Together (2015), Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations (Vol.2, 2015). Planning Regulations, Vol.2, 2015 Adoption Minimum Standards.

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**CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – 18 JANUARY 2018**

<b>Title of paper:</b>	Children in Care Social Care Complaints	
<b>Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):</b>	Helen Blackman – Director, Children’s Integrated Services	<b>Wards affected:</b> All
<b>Report author(s) and contact details:</b>	Patrick Skeete - Social Care Complaints Manager <a href="mailto:Patrick.skeete@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">Patrick.skeete@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Other colleagues who have provided input:</b>		
<b>Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)</b>	18 December 2018	
<b>Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:</b>		
Strategic Regeneration and Development		<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools		<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning and Housing		<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Services		<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy, Sustainability and Customer		<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs, Growth and Transport		<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults, Health and Community Sector		<input type="checkbox"/>
Children, Early Intervention and Early Years		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Leisure and Culture		<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources and Neighbourhood Regeneration		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):</b>		
<p>This report includes a brief summary of the statutory Social Care Complaints procedure, which ensures young people have a robust process to express their dissatisfaction. The report highlights complaints made specifically by Children in Care in accordance with the statutory Social Care Complaints procedure. This report also focuses on the nature of the complaints made and whether the complaints were addressed within the statutory timescales.</p>		
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		
<b>1</b>	That the board continue to support the effective complaints handling of young people in care and understand required duties of corporate parents in relation to addressing the concerns of young people in care.	

**1. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 Nottingham City has a legislative duty to ensure all young people have a robust complaints process to address any concerns that that they are responsible for.

## **2. BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)**

- 2.1 The aim of the Social Care Complaints Team is to resolve service user dissatisfaction and learn from complaints in order to improve service delivery. The complaints service operates a statutory complaints procedure, which includes the production of an annual report on the operation of the complaints procedure.<sup>1</sup>
- 2.2 Complaints which are made and resolved within 24 hours are not logged as complaints. This is in line with national guidance.
- 2.3 The remit of the complaints team is not simply to receive calls. The team is required to check that a person who wishes to make a complaint on behalf of a child has sufficiency of interest in respect of making a complaint: it obtains consent from the citizen/service user, where this is required. In respect of children's complaints, consideration may need to be given as to whether a child is Fraser competent; in other circumstances, consideration will need to be given to determine whether a complaint is being made in the interests of the citizen, where she or he may lack the necessary capacity, as determined under the Mental Capacity Act;. Where a Power of Attorney is raised as a right to make a complaint on another person's behalf, the complaints team has to establish whether such a Power is registered or not
- 2.4 It is only after these matters have been considered that the Social Care Complaints Team asks a Service Manager or Team Manager to provide a written response to a complaint, and to respond to the complaint within the timescales, as defined within the relevant statutory complaints process. At stage 2 of the procedure independent investigators are commissioned by the Complaints Team to investigate complaints and to provide reports to the Authority detailing their findings and recommendations. Where a complainant remains dissatisfied a stage 3 complaints review panel, comprised of three independent people, is asked to review the Authority's response to the complaint as well as the stage 2 findings.
- 2.5 The Complaints Team provides advice to the operational teams on how to avoid unnecessary escalation of complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman. Further support is provided to the Department in managing complaints from the Local Government Ombudsman, along with training for all front line staff.
- 2.6 The Complaints Team has been integral in identifying complaints that have the potential to be escalated to the Local Government Ombudsman; advice is offered to operational staff how to limit the impact of such complaints, thereby reducing any reputational damage to the Authority.
- 2.7 Where a complaint reaches the Ombudsman, the Complaints Team is highly skilled at risk assessing complaints in order to identify potential failings, so that they may be rectified and resolved, before the Ombudsman investigates the complaint, again this helps to avoid reputational damage.
- 2.8 The expectation from Ofsted is that the Local Authority does not operate a one dimensional view of quality & practice. Complaints provide a particular perspective on performance.

## **Children's Statutory Social Care Complaints Procedure.**

- 2.9 Stage 1 – the department is asked to provide a written response within 10 working days, this may be extended to 20 working days
- 2.10 Stage 2 – the complainant, usually where s/he remains dissatisfied following a response at stage 1, may request an investigation of their complaint; this is usually undertaken by an Independent Investigator, overseen by an Independent Person, both commissioned by the department. The stage 2 outcome is provided in the form of an investigation report, which should be available within 25 working days, but this may be extended to 65 working days
- 2.11 Stage 3 – if the complainant remains dissatisfied after receiving the investigator's findings and recommendation, s/he may request that an independent panel (comprised of 3 independent people) review the complaint and investigation. The complainant and any representative, along with a representative from the department, along with the investigator and independent person are invited to the panel too
- 2.12 The relevant director then writes to the complainant to explain if the department accepts the findings and recommendations of the Stage 3 Panel; the director also explains what action plan has been agreed to be put in place so as to complete any recommendations.
- 2.13 Complaints Received from Children in Care 2017-2018

Complainant	Nature of complaint	Days to resolve	Outcome
1 (1)	Attitude or behaviour of staff	4	No findings made
1 (2)	Unwelcome or disputed decision	3	Not upheld
1 (3)	Unwelcome or disputed decision	21	Not upheld
1 (4)	Attitude or behaviour of staff	11	Not upheld
1 (5)	Attitude or behaviour of staff	4	Mostly not upheld
1 (6)	Concern about the quality or appropriateness of the service	16	No findings made
1 (7)	Attitude or behaviour of staff	9	Not upheld
2	Unwelcome or disputed decision	1	Not pursued
3	Unwelcome or disputed decision	2	Not upheld
4	Attitude or behaviour of staff	16	Not upheld
5	Concern about the quality or appropriateness of the service	10	Upheld
6	Concern about the quality or appropriateness of the service	17	Upheld
7	Unwelcome or disputed decision	4	No findings made

8	Concern about the quality or appropriateness of the service	6	Not upheld
9	Concern about the quality or appropriateness of the service	7	upheld
10	Delivery or non delivery of services including complaints procedures	10	Mostly upheld
11 (1)	Unwelcome or disputed decision	2	Mostly upheld
11 (2)	Concern about the quality or appropriateness of the service	1	Upheld
12	Unwelcome or disputed decision	29	Not upheld
13	Attitude or behaviour of staff	10	Not upheld
14	Concern about the quality or appropriateness of the service	1	Upheld
15	Out of jurisdiction	n/a	n/a
16	Attitude or behaviour of staff	13	Upheld
17	Concern about the quality or appropriateness of the service	Stage 2 46 days	Mostly upheld

Complaints received are usually multiple in number, as such, some complaints may be upheld and some not upheld. Therefore, the outcome of the overall complaint may be mostly upheld or mostly not upheld as cited above. In situations where none of the complaints are upheld then the overall complaint is Not upheld, this is similar in cases where all the complaints are upheld.

There are times where there is a 'No Finding' outcome. This is usually where there is no evidence to support a view made or where we are unable to come to a definitive decision.

#### 2.14 Main Points:

- Compared with the previous reporting period the number of complaints increased from 11 to 24.
- 23 of the 24 complaints were resolved at stage 1 of the complaints procedure
- 22 complaints were concluded within the statutory timescale of 20 working days
- 2 complaints were completed outside the statutory timescale, one complaint was 1 day outside the statutory timescale and the other complaint was 9 days outside the statutory timescales.
- 1 complaint was escalated to stage 2 of the statutory complaints procedure and was independently investigated.
- No strong themes were identified as during this reporting period, no two complaints were the same.

#### **Individual complaint synopsis**

The number of complaints for children in care have remained consistent over the past 4 years. The moves and changes experienced by young people are mainly positive when

they are discussed in advance. However, on occasions there may be cause for complaint when something goes wrong for a young person, when this happens the young person/s involved exercise their right to complaint, with support if necessary.

- **Young Person 2:** complained about the lack of support after leaving care, having relocated to London against advice. Several mediation meetings were offered but the young person, supported by his advocate, chose to remain in London and not pursue the complaint.
- **Young Person 7** via MOMO, complained it had been decided she should leave her placement, but no one had consulted her. The response explained why such an urgent move had been necessary in order to safeguard her. The young person, whilst finding the move to a temporary placement difficult, accepted the reasons given and was pleased that assessments would be undertaken to place her with her elder sister.
- **Young Person 8** via MOMO complained the foster carer had made him do the washing up; the complaint wasn't upheld.
- **Young Person 11 (1)** complained that it had been decided that he was to move to another care home without consulting him; he was particularly concerned that he had previously been subjected to racial abuse by one of the residents at the care home he was to move to. The complaint was investigated at stage one and an apology was given in writing, explaining that if staff had known of this then it would not have been decided that he should move to the proposed care home. It was decided, in accordance with the young person's wishes, that he should remain in his existing care home.
- **Young Person 14** complained that the behaviour of another resident was having an adverse effect on him, and that staff were not addressing this fully. The complaint was upheld and addressed.
- **Young Person 16** the social worker had not facilitated sibling contact, but when the complaint was made the matter was quickly resolved as once a risk assessment had been completed, contact would then be and was considered.

### **3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 None

### **4. FINANCE COMMENTS (INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)**

4.1 None

### **5 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES, AND LEGAL, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS)**

- 5.1 The Children Act 1989 (S24D & 26[3] & The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009 require each Local Authority to establish formal procedures for considering complaints in respect of services to children. Government Regulations were introduced in 2006 and the Secretary of State issued statutory guidance under the Local Government Social Services Act 1970. Failure to adhere to timescales could mean maladministration payments being made to the complainant
- 5.2 If the above legislation is not adhered to the Local Authority will fail to fulfil it's statutory duty and this will impact on service delivery to complainants resulting in the involvement of the Local Government Ombudsman with a potential outcome of the Department being requested to make maladministration payments if the LGO feels there has been undue delay in progressing the complaint, this in turn may cause reputational risk to the Department.

**6 STRATEGIC ASSETS & PROPERTY COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (FOR DECISION RELATING TO ALL PROPERTY ASSETS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE) (AREA COMMITTEE REPORTS ONLY)**

- 6.1 None.

**7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No   
 An EIA is not required because the report does not contain financial proposals or decisions.

Yes

**8 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

- 8.1 None.

**9 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

- 9.1 The Children Act 1989 (S24D & 26[3] & The Local Authority Social Services Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 1991 National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2006
- 9.2 Getting the Best from Complaints National Guidance

**Corporate Parenting Board – 18 January 2019**

<b>Title of paper:</b>	Educational Attainment of Children in Care	
<b>Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):</b>	Nicholas Lee- Director, Education Services. Helen Blackman – Director, Children’s Integrated Services	<b>Wards affected:</b>
<b>Report author(s) and contact details:</b>	Jasmin Howell, Acting Head of Virtual School <a href="mailto:Jasmin.howell@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">Jasmin.howell@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Other colleagues who have provided input:</b>		
<b>Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)</b>	Councillor David Mellen – 18 December 2018	
<b>Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:</b>		
Strategic Regeneration and Development		<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Planning and Housing		<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Services		<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy, Sustainability and Customer		<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs, Growth and Transport		<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults, Health and Community Sector		<input type="checkbox"/>
Children, Early Intervention and Early Years		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Leisure and Culture		<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources and Neighbourhood Regeneration		<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):</b>		
This report provides an update of the work of the Nottingham City Virtual School and provides details of attainment in the 2017-18 academic year.		
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		
<b>1</b>	To note and discuss the recent trends and current levels of educational attainment for Nottingham City’s Children in Care (CiC) in comparison to the performance of all children and CIC nationally.	
<b>2</b>	To note the current work and interventions of the Virtual School to promote and support the educational achievement of Nottingham City looked after children and previously looked after children.	

**1. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1. To ensure the Nottingham City Virtual School is discharging the Local Authority statutory duties to promote the educational achievement of its looked after children and previously looked after children.

**2. BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)**

- 2.1. This report will consider the attainment of looked after children during the academic year 2017-18, and the work of the Virtual School to promote and support their education.
- 2.2. The Virtual School has a duty to monitor, track, promote and support the educational achievement and experience of its authority's children in care. From September 2018, the Virtual School's duty was extended to also provide advice and support in respect to the education of previously looked children.

**3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. None

**4. FINANCE COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)**

- 4.1. Not applicable

**5. LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES, AND LEGAL, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS)**

- 5.1. Not applicable

**6. STRATEGIC ASSETS & PROPERTY COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (FOR DECISION RELATING TO ALL PROPERTY ASSETS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE) (AREA COMMITTEE REPORTS ONLY)**

- 6.1. Not applicable

**7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1. Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No



An EIA is not required.

**8. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

8.1 None

**9. PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

9.1. None

**10. INTRODUCTION**

10.1. The Nottingham City Virtual School sits within Nottingham City Council's Education Service and reports directly to the Directors of Education and the Director of Children's Integrated Services.

10.2. The Nottingham City Virtual School team consists of a Virtual School Head, 1 Achievement Consultant, 3 Education Support Officers, 2 Business Support Administrators and 1 Data Lead officer.

10.3. A governing body is in place to scrutinise and consider the Virtual School's arrangements in meeting their statutory duties. The governing body acts as a critical friend supporting and challenging the Virtual School to drive improvements in the educational achievement of children in care and previously looked after children.

10.4. In the 2017-18 academic year 443 compulsory school aged children were on roll at the Virtual School. Of the 443 school age children, 179 (40%) were of primary school age and 264 secondary age (60%).

10.5. Of the 443 school aged children on roll at the Virtual School in the 2017-18 academic year, 187 were receiving education within the Nottingham City boundaries and 239 were receiving education outside of Nottingham. (17 children had no recorded school).

10.6. In the 2017-18 academic year 82 of the children in care on roll at the Virtual School were in schools judged by Ofsted as 'outstanding', 248 were in schools judged 'good', 27 were in schools judged as 'requiring improvement' and 1 child was being educated in a school judged 'inadequate'. The remaining children were either being educated in a recently converted academy and therefore had no judgement or were in Independent Schools subject to a different inspection process or had no recorded school.

**11. Attendance and exclusion of looked after children**

11.1. Welfare Call is commissioned to gather attendance and exclusion data for children in care. Attendance data is updated daily for each child in care on the Virtual School roll and the Virtual School caseworkers scrutinise reports periodically in order to support and challenge social workers, carers and schools where children are identified as having low attendance or where they have been subject to a fixed term exclusion.

11.2. There was a slight drop in the school attendance rate for Nottingham City children in care in the 2017-18 academic year; the percentage school attendance in 2016-17 was

94.6% in 2017-18 academic year percentage attendance was 93.6%, a decrease of 1%.

- 11.3. There have been no permanent exclusions of children in care during the 2017/18 academic year. There were 139 incidents of fixed term exclusion during 2017/18, a decrease from the previous academic year. The table below provides details of the number and types of fixed term exclusions experienced by our children in care in 2016-17 compared to 2017-18:

<b>Exclusion Code</b>	<b>Number of Incidents 2016-17</b>	<b>Percentage of incidents 2016-17</b>	<b>Number of Incidents 2017-18</b>	<b>Percentage of incidents 2017-18%</b>
Bullying	2	1%	2	1.4
Damage	1	1%	3	2.1
Drug and alcohol related	2	1%	4	2.8
Other	84	53%	45	32.3
Persistent disruptive behaviour	15	9%	29	20.8
Physical assault against a pupil	5	3%	14	10.0
Physical assault against an adult	22	14%	10	7.19
Racist Abuse	1	1%	2	1.4
Theft	3	2%	1	0.7
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against a pupil	4	3%	7	5.0
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult	20	13%	22	15.8
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>159</b>		<b>139</b>	

- 11.4. The Nottingham City Virtual School has effective arrangements in place to report, monitor and scrutinise attendance and exclusion data pertaining to individual children in care. Where issues are identified arrangements are in place to challenge, advise and support professionals to consider interventions and strategies to improve low attendance and prevent exclusions.

## **12. Personal Education Plans (PEPs)**

- 12.1. Currently the Nottingham City Virtual School monitors and reports on PEP completion for children in care of statutory school age. PEPs are required to be sent to the Virtual School PEP inbox, an outlook account specifically for PEP submission, for checking and saving to SIMs, this enables the Virtual School to produce weekly PEP compliance reports.

- 12.2. As of week ending October 26<sup>th</sup> 2018 the weekly PEP compliance outcomes was as follows:

- 68% of all the authority's children in care have an up to date PEP completed in the last 6 months.
- 21% of children have had a PEP completed during the last year

- 6% of children have a PEP that is out of date by over a year
- 5% of children have not yet had a PEP completed.

12.3. The current arrangements for completing and reporting PEP compliance requires improvement; the following inefficiencies and barriers have been identified and, in some instances, evidenced through drill downs of PEP breaches (see paragraph 12.5):

- A paper based PEP form requires completion and contribution from a number of professionals (carers, designated teachers, children and social workers), this contributes to a delay in PEP reports being typed and sent to the Virtual School.
- Occasionally PEPs are not sent to the Virtual School inbox, but are instead saved directly to the Social Care case management system, Liquid Logic, and are therefore inaccurately recorded as a 'breach' in reports.
- The current system does not enable reporting on the number of PEPs attended by carers, children or the Virtual School, therefore performance in this area, and the possible impact of attendance on quality, is not currently considered.
- The current system does not enable consideration of any extenuating circumstances for non-completion of PEPs.

12.4. Work is currently underway to develop the electronic PEP in Liquid Logic and for reporting to be completed centrally through the Liquid Logic system.

12.5. The Virtual School carries out termly drill down of cases where there is no recorded PEP or where PEPs are out of date to understand the reasons for non-completion. The last PEP breach drill was completed in October 2018.

12.6. The Nottingham City Virtual School has a quality assurance role in relation to PEPs; Virtual School caseworkers checked the quality of PEPs for their allocated cases as and when received. A formal quality assurance form and accompanying policy has recently been developed; from January 2018 PEPs will be formally quality assured using the QA tool and a judgement made as to the level of quality.

12.7. Once the PEP in Liquid Logic development is completed, PEP quality assurance will form part of that process; all completed PEPs will go the Virtual School 'work tray' in Liquid Logic for quality assurance, if judged as being of quality the PEP will be authorised by the Virtual School and only then will it be officially counted as compliant.

### 13. **Pupil Premium Plus (PPP)**

13.1. A new process for the administration and distribution of Pupil Premium Plus was implemented at the start of the 2017-18 academic year. The new arrangements create a more effective and efficient way for the Virtual School to monitor and distribute pupil premium funding to benefit and support the educational outcomes of its children in care.

13.2. The new PPP process encourages and supports schools to apply for the funding, minimises the potential for underspend, ensures consistency in decisions to approve funding requests and enables schools to apply for additional funds to support children

in care who may require intervention and support over and above the allocation of £1900.

### 13.3. Key changes to PPP from 2017-18 include:

- Schools apply through an online application for the agreed allocation.
- Schools select interventions for which funding is being requested from a drop down of pre-populated interventions.
- Schools provide details of anticipated impact of funding on the education outcomes of the child at the point of applying.
- Funding decisions are inputted into the Virtual School case management system against the child's individual record, contributing to the building of the child's educational 'profile'.
- Schools can apply for additional funds using an Additional Funding Request form, for interventions and strategies that can't be met through the £1900 allocation.

13.4. The Nottingham City Virtual School has effective, clear and efficient arrangements in place to administer PPP funds to schools for the educational benefit of its authority's children in care, in accordance with the latest Conditions of Grant. An up to date Pupil Premium Plus policy is in place detailing these arrangements.

## 14. **Previously looked after children**

14.1. The Nottingham City Virtual School has a policy in place that details its planned arrangements for promoting the education of previously looked after children, the following arrangements are currently in place:

- Since the start of the 2018-19 academic year, all relevant training provided by the Virtual School includes information and advice pertaining to the educational achievement of previously looked-after children.
- A training course specific to promoting the educational achievement of previously looked-after children, aimed at parents of adopted children and special guardians, has been added to the 2018-19 Virtual School Annual Training Programme.
- The Virtual School Head and caseworkers are responding to requests for advice and support pertaining to the education of previously looked-after children.

14.2. Other planned developments to promote the education of previously looked after children are as follows:

- Use the grant funding provided by the DfE to recruit an Education Support Officer with specific responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of previously looked-after children. Duties will include developing and maintaining up to date advice and information in the Virtual School Handbook and website, delivery of training and responding to requests for advice and information.
- Create a web area, within the Nottingham City Council website, with information and advice promoting the educational achievement of previously looked-after children.

- Create a Virtual School handbook (an information resource for professionals and carers) that includes information and advice promoting the educational achievement of previously looked-after children.

## 15. Attainment of children in care 2017-18.

- 15.1. The following 2017-18 attainment data has been obtained through analyses of data on pupils matched via the NCER portal, this data is un-validated at this stage, and as such **MUST NOT** be reported outside of the local authority.
- 15.2. The 2015/16 and 2016/17 past attainment data is reported from data published by the DfE and is available for public use.
- 15.3. The following attainment data relates to looked after pupils who had been in care for at least 12 months as of 31st March each year. Further data will be released at a later time showing outcomes for all looked after pupils, regardless of time spent in care.
- 15.4. Key Stage 1 Analysis - % of pupils reaching expected level

Children in Care for at least 12 months as of 31 <sup>st</sup> March			
Reading	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18 (NCER)
Nottingham CLA	Not available on DfE	41%	54.5%
East Midlands CLA	Not available on DfE	Not available on DfE	41%
National CLA	50%	51%	53%
National All Pupils	74%	76%	75.4%
Writing	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18 (NCER)
Nottingham CLA	Not available on DfE	Suppressed on DfE	54.5%
East Midlands CLA	Not available on DfE	Not available on DfE	33%
National CLA	37%	39%	44%
National All Pupils	66%	68%	69.9%
Maths	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18 (NCER)
Nottingham CLA	Not available on DfE	Suppressed on DfE	45.5%
East Midlands CLA	Not available on DfE	Not available on DfE	41%
National CLA	46%	46%	50%
National All Pupils	73%	75%	76.1%
R/W/M Combined	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18 (NCER)
Nottingham CLA	Not available on DfE	Not available on DfE	36.4%
East Midlands CLA	Not available on DfE	Not available on DfE	29%
National CLA	41%	45%	38%
National All Pupils	66%	72%	65.3%

### Headlines

In 2017/18, more KS1 looked after pupils in Nottingham achieved the expected level of reading and writing, than regional and national looked after pupils. They also performed better than regional looked after pupils in maths and the combined reading/writing/maths measure, but not as well as national looked after pupils.

In 2017/18, fewer KS1 looked after pupils in Nottingham achieved the expected level in maths, compared to those achieving expected levels in reading and writing.

On all measures, looked after pupils locally, regionally and nationally performed significantly below pupils who were not looked after- with the gap being widest in maths.

Although some data was not available/suppressed in the DfE dataset, unverified LA data for 2016/17 reveals an annual improvement in all subjects in 2017/18.

## 15.5. Key Stage 2 Analysis - % of pupils reaching expected standard

### Year on Year Comparisons

Reading	2016/17	2017/18 (NCER)
Nottingham CLA	36%	64.5%
East Midlands CLA	35%	48%
National CLA	41%	51%
National All Pupils	66%	75.3%
Writing	2016/17	2017/18 (NCER)
Nottingham CLA	36%	54.8%
East Midlands CLA	41%	43%
National CLA	46%	50%
National All Pupils	74%	78.3%
Maths	2016/17	2017/18 (NCER)
Nottingham CLA	48%	51.6%
East Midlands CLA	36%	41%
National CLA	41%	47%
National All Pupils	70%	75.6%
R/W/M Combined	2016/17	2017/18 (NCER)
Nottingham CLA	28%	45.2%
East Midlands CLA	22%	31%
National CLA	25%	35%
National All Pupils	54%	64.4%
GPS	2016/17	2017/18 (NCER)
Nottingham CLA	32%	58.1%
East Midlands CLA	34%	46%
National CLA	44%	50%
National All Pupils	73%	77.7%

### **Headlines**

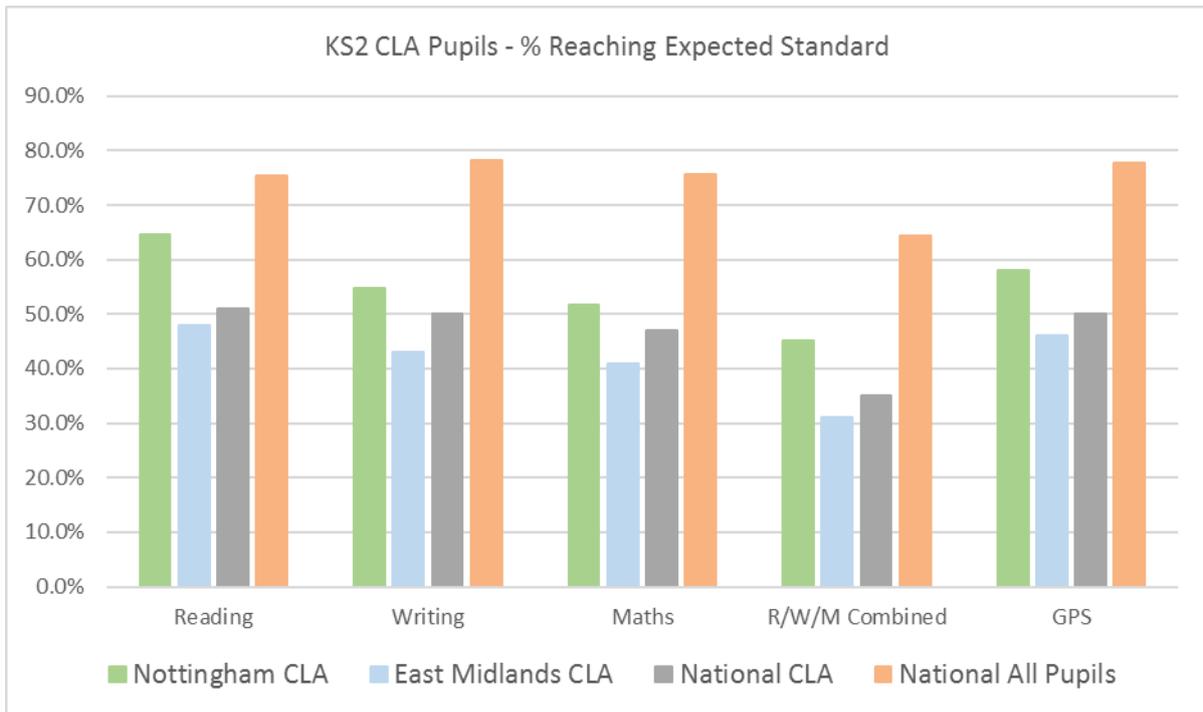
Year on year comparisons of KS2 data reveal an improving picture in terms of the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in all subject.

This data must be taken with some considerable care, as the comparison is made across 2 datasets (DfE and NCER). In addition, changes in cohort size can also lead to significant changes in percentage data and individual year groups can be particularly higher or lower in terms of attainment.

From 2017/18 onwards, we will be using the NCER portal/data to produce reports, and thus consistency in source data will be improved.

### Annual Data

<b>Children in Care for at least 12 months as of 31<sup>st</sup> March</b>				
2017/18 (NCER)	Nottingham CLA	East Midlands CLA	National CLA	National All Pupils
Reading	64.5%	48%	51%	75.3%
Writing	54.8%	43%	50%	78.3%
Maths	51.6%	41%	47%	75.6%
R/W/M Combined	45.2%	31%	35%	64.4%
GPS	58.1%	46%	50%	77.7%



**Headlines**

KS2 data for 2017/18 reveals that more CLA in Nottingham are reaching expected standards in all subjects, compared to regional and national CLA groups. The cohort was particularly strong in reading and the grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) test.

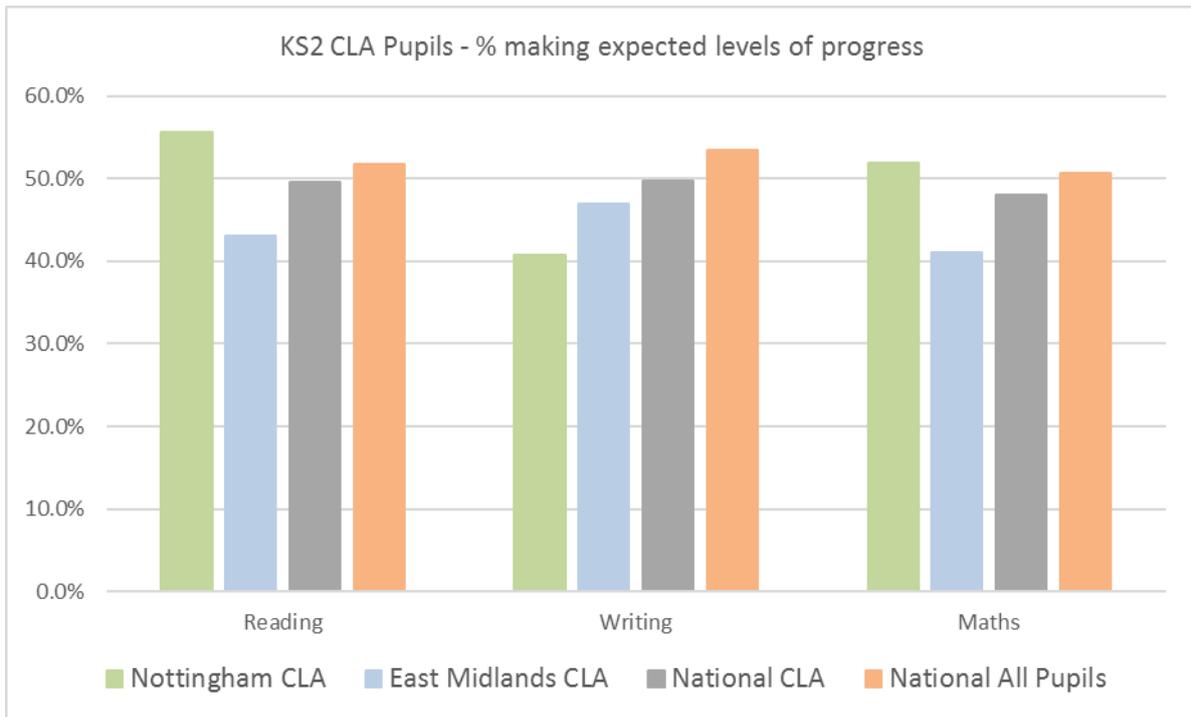
As with the KS1 cohort, fewer CLA pupils in Nottingham reach the expected standard in maths, compared to other subjects.

On all measures, looked after pupils locally, regionally and nationally performed significantly below pupils who were not looked after- with the gap being widest in maths.

**15.6. Key Stage 2 Analysis - % of pupils making expected levels of progress**

Annual Data

<b>Children in Care for at least 12 months as of 31<sup>st</sup> March</b>				
2017/18 (NCER)	Nottingham CLA	East Midlands CLA	National CLA	National All Pupils
Reading	55.6%	43%	49.6%	51.7%
Writing	40.7%	47%	49.7%	53.4%
Maths	51.9%	41%	48%	50.7%



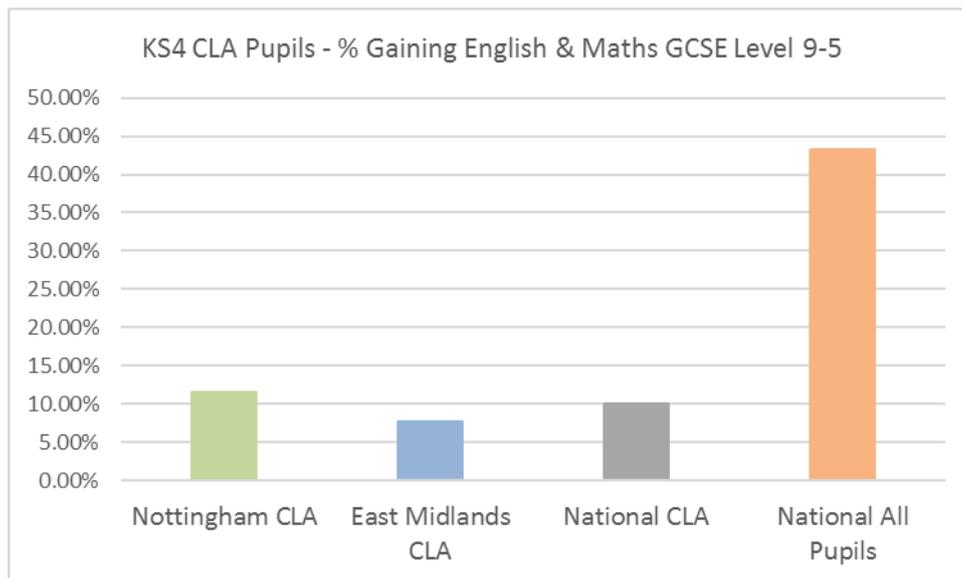
**Headlines**

KS2 data for 2017/18 reveals that more CLA in Nottingham made the expected level of progress in reading and maths, compared to regional and national CLA groups and compared to all pupils (regardless of CLA status).

Progress in writing for the 2017/18 CLA cohort in Nottingham was lower than regional and national CLA groups.

**15.7. Key Stage 4 Analysis**

CLA Pupils 12 Mths+ (NCER)	% Gaining English & Maths GCSE Level 9-5	Progress 8 Average Score	Attainment 8 Score
<b>Nottingham CLA</b>	11.5%	-0.91	25.3
<b>East Midlands Region CLA</b>	7.7%	-1.03	22.4
<b>All CLA Nationally</b>	10.0%	-0.93	24.7
<b>All Pupils Nationally</b>	43.3%	-0.02	46.6



**Headlines**

KS4 data for 2017/18 shows that more CLA pupils in Nottingham gained level 5+ in their English and Maths GCSEs. On this measure, Nottingham CLA performed better than CLA regionally and nationally. However, the gap between CLA and all pupils is still significant.

The average progress 8 score reveals how much progress pupils make, compared to others with the same prior attainment. The 2017/18 data indicates that across all CLA groups (Nottingham, regionally and nationally) CLA pupils achieved around 1 grade lower per subject, than all pupils nationally with the same prior attainment.

The attainment 8 score is an indication of grades received in the pupil's 8 best subjects (weighted, but not exclusive, to EBACC subjects). Again, CLA in Nottingham achieved a higher attainment 8 score, compared to regional and national CLA pupils. The attainment 8 score was significantly below that achieved by all pupils nationally. This may be indicative of CLA pupils gaining lower point scores in their subjects, but may also be due to CLA pupils taking fewer EBACC GCSEs and fewer qualifications in general.

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## Corporate Parenting Board

### Reporting Schedule: Forward Planner

#### 2018 - 2019

Report (Corresponding Strategic Priority Statement)	Report Lead	Draft Report submitted for Advice	Draft Report Submitted for Departmental Sign-off	Draft Report Submitted to Constitutional Services	Chair's Briefing	Final Report Submitted to Constitutional Services	Corporate Parenting Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Quality Assurance Visits of Regulated and Non-regulated Residential Provision</li> <li>▪ Adoption and Permanency</li> <li>▪ Semi-Independence Provision</li> <li>▪ Children in Care Council (Verbal Update)</li> <li>▪ Children and Social Work Act Statutory Guidance (Presentation)</li> <li>▪ Report Forward Planner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kay Sutt</li> <li>▪ Audrey Taylor</li> <li>▪ Mike Rowley</li> <li>▪ Jon Rea</li> <li>▪ Clive Chambers / Nick Lee</li> <li>▪ Cllr Mellen</li> </ul>	2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2018	9 <sup>th</sup> April 2018	16 <sup>th</sup> April 2018	23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2018	9 <sup>th</sup> May 2018	21 <sup>st</sup> May 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy Review</li> <li>▪ Pathway Planning / Transitions</li> <li>▪ Foster Carer Recruitment and Retention</li> <li>▪ CiC Performance Report (Q3/Q4 16/17)</li> <li>▪ Children in Care Council (Verbal Update)</li> <li>▪ Report Forward Planner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clive Chambers</li> <li>▪ Sharon Clarke</li> <li>▪ Audrey Taylor</li> <li>▪ Clive Chambers</li> <li>▪ Jon Rea</li> <li>▪ Cllr Mellen</li> </ul>	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2018	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2018	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2018	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2018	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	16 <sup>th</sup> July 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Care Leavers' Service Annual Report</li> <li>▪ Children in Care CAMHS Team Report</li> <li>▪ Independent Reviewing Officer Service Annual Report</li> <li>▪ Children in Care Council (Verbal Update)</li> <li>▪ Report Forward Planner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lynn Pearce / Your Voice</li> <li>▪ Aileen Wilson</li> <li>▪ Alison Platkiw (Case Studies)</li> <li>▪ Jon Rea</li> <li>▪ Cllr Mellen</li> </ul>	30 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	6 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	13 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	20 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	5 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	17 <sup>th</sup> September 2018

<b>Report (Corresponding Strategic Priority Statement)</b>	<b>Report Lead</b>	<b>Draft Report submitted for Advice</b>	<b>Draft Report Submitted for Departmental Sign-off</b>	<b>Draft Report Submitted to Constitutional Services</b>	<b>Chair's Briefing</b>	<b>Final Report Submitted to Constitutional Services</b>	<b>Corporate Parenting Board</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Physical Health</li> <li>▪ Performance Report (Q1 and Q2 2017/18)</li> <li>▪ Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy Refresh</li> <li>▪ Advocacy Annual Report</li> <li>▪ Independent Visitor Annual Report</li> <li>▪ Children in Care Council (Verbal Update)</li> <li>▪ Report Forward Planner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kathryn Higgins</li> <li>▪ Clive Chambers</li> <li>▪ Clive Chambers</li> <li>▪ Children's Society</li> <li>▪ SOVA</li> <li>▪ Jon Rea</li> <li>▪ Cllr Mellen</li> </ul>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> October 2018</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> October 208</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> November 2018</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> November 2018</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup> November 2018</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fostering and Adoption Panel Chairs Update</li> <li>▪ Adoption and Permanency (2)</li> <li>▪ Complaints Service Report</li> <li>▪ Educational Attainment of Children in Care</li> <li>▪ Children in Care Council (Verbal Update)</li> <li>▪ Report Forward Planner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Audrey Taylor</li> <li>▪ Audrey Taylor / Clare Hewitson</li> <li>▪ Patrick Skeet</li> <li>▪ Jasmin Howell</li> <li>▪ Jon Rea</li> <li>▪ Cllr Mellen</li> </ul>	<b>26<sup>th</sup> November 2018</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018</b>	<b>10<sup>th</sup> December 2018</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup> December 2018</b>	<b>2nd January 2019</b>	<b>21<sup>st</sup> January 2019</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NCSCB Missings Update Report</li> <li>▪ Edge of Care Provision</li> <li>▪ Reducing Offending Behaviour</li> <li>▪ Lord Laming Review</li> <li>▪ Children in Care Council: Have your Say 2018</li> <li>▪ Report Forward Planner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clive Chambers</li> <li>▪ Tracey Nurse / Mark Ball</li> <li>▪ Sam Flint / Natalie Pink</li> <li>▪ Sam Flint / Natalie Pink</li> <li>▪ Jon Rea / CiC-C Member</li> <li>▪ Cllr Mellen</li> </ul>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> January 2019</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> February 2019</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> February 2019</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup> February 2019</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> March 2019</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup> March 2019</b>

- SPS 1: Health
- SPS 2: Permanency
- SPS 3: Resilience and Independence
- SPS 4: Educational Attainment
- SPS 5: Suitable Accommodation
- SPS 6: Offending Behaviour

### **ATTENTION: IMPORTANT CHANGES TO REPORT SUBMISSION**

All\* reports scheduled to be presented to the Board must be produced and submitted through the corporate report management system – see link to access the system and for guidance

<http://gossweb.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/nccextranet/index.aspx?articleid=10263>.

When submitting the report for advice, you will be prompted to select reviewers. The following reviewers should be selected;

- 
- Clive Chambers
- Jordan Whatman

When submitting the report for departmental sign-off, you will be prompted to select reviewers. The following reviewer should be selected;

- Helen Blackman

(\* This only applies to reports produced by local authority staff. External partners should continue to submit reports via email to [jordan.whatman@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:jordan.whatman@nottinghamcity.gov.uk) no later than 10.00am on the date stated.)

Please note that additional reports may be added to the schedule by request of the Chair or other Board Members. Reports are also subject to schedule changes.

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