



Nottingham City Council Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Date: Thursday, 27 January 2022

Time: 10.00 am (pre-meeting for all Committee members at 9:30am)

Place: Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG

Please see information at the bottom of this agenda front sheet about arrangements for ensuring Covid-safety.

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

Director for Legal and Governance

Senior Governance Officer: Jane Garrard

Direct Dial: 0115 8764315

- | | | |
|----------|--|---------|
| 1 | Apologies for absence | |
| 2 | Declarations of Interests | |
| 3 | Minutes | 3 - 8 |
| | To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2021 | |
| 4 | Ofsted and Care Quality Commission Special Educational and/ or Disabilities (SEND) Inspection | 9 - 32 |
| 5 | Families with No Recourse to Public Funds | 33 - 40 |
| 6 | Work Programme | 41 - 46 |

In order to hold this meeting in as Covid-safe way as possible, all attendees are:

- asked to maintain a sensible level of social distancing from others as far as practically possible when moving around the building and when entering and leaving the meeting room. As far as possible, please remain seated and maintain distancing between seats throughout the meeting.
- strongly encouraged to wear a face covering when entering and leaving the meeting room and throughout the meeting, unless you need to remove it while speaking to

enable others to hear you. This does not apply to anyone exempt from wearing a face covering.

- make use of the hand sanitiser available and, when moving about the building follow signs about traffic flows, lift capacities etc

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. Individuals intending to record the meeting are asked to notify the Governance Officer shown above in advance.

Nottingham City Council

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 25 November 2021 from 10.03 am - 1.12 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Carole McCulloch (Chair)
Councillor Jay Hayes
Councillor Phil Jackson
Councillor AJ Matsiko
Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos
Councillor Ethan Radford

Absent

Councillor Maria Joannou
Councillor Nayab Patel
Councillor Maria Watson

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Liz Anderson	- Djanogly Learning Trust
John Dexter	- Education Director
Jane Garrard	- Constitutional Services
Fiona Gray	-
Sian Hampton	-
Sean Kelly	- Park Vale Academy
Nick Lee	- Director of Education Services
Peter McConnochie	- Head of Access to Learning
Dr Sebrina Turner	- MHST Service Manager
Catherine Underwood	- Corporate Director for People
Janine Walker	-
Helen Watson	- Interim Director of Children's Integrated Service
Phil Wye	- Governance Officer

57 Apologies for absence

Councillor Maria Joannou – personal reasons
Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Lisa Kitto

58 Declarations of Interests

None.

59 Minutes

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2021 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

60 Secondary School Exclusions - discussion with Regional Schools

Commissioner and local Academy Trusts

Peter McConnochie, Head of Access to Learning, delivered a presentation to the Committee:

- (a) Nottingham City's exclusion rate has been higher than most other authorities regionally and nationally for a number of years, with the permanent exclusion rate being twice the England average. Exclusion rates are significantly higher in secondary schools than primary schools;
- (b) the exclusion rate in primary schools has dropped significantly due to the introduction of strategies such as Routes to Inclusion (R2i) and through increased partnership support;
- (c) not all secondary schools are high excluders, with seven of Nottingham's secondary academies not excluding at all for the past five years. 70% of exclusions are by 6 schools. The authority's Inclusion Strategy was set up a number of years ago with the aim to reduce exclusions through partnership working, and in the schools that have signed up this has proven to reduce exclusion rates so work is ongoing to encourage all academies to do so;
- (d) R2i was introduced in 2016 when it was found that good practice was not being shared among primary schools. It provides schools with a systematic graduated approach to identification and intervention. This work is now progressing to secondary schools, but each school requires a tailored approach.

The three Multi Academy Trust (MAT) CEOs present at the meeting introduced themselves and gave an overview of their experiences:

- (e) Djanogly City Academy used to have a high rate of exclusion but this has reduced since it changed to a different Trust and signed up to the authority's Inclusion Strategy. Instead of excluding they have established an internal Alternative Provision (AP) with small nurture groups and an aim to reintroduce all pupils back to mainstream provision;
- (f) Djanogly Sherwood Academy was part of the pilot for R2i and Djanogly City Academy is part of the secondary pilot. This has been a positive experience as schools can share their experience and good practice;
- (g) Archway Learning Trust provides education for just under a third of young people in Nottingham City, covering many deprived areas. They are passionate about inclusion and collaboration but this can be difficult as the current system encourages schools to exclude. Their in-house AP costs around £100,000 a year, the city's AP services have a waiting list and other external AP is variable in quality and difficult to access;
- (h) following a question from a Committee Member on access to the internet for families, the Committee was informed that government provision of laptops and dongles was good during the pandemic. However, some Committee Members reported that they had heard of other schools that did not receive enough. Schools were assessed by their levels of deprivation and some academies topped

up the required funding from their own resources;

- (i) Raleigh Learning Trust has invested significantly in Ambleside Primary to make sure that improvement is long-term and they have opened an enhanced needs centre. Regular assessment of children with special educational needs or identified as at risk of exclusion is important as needs change. Two of the Trust's academies are AP providers, and the proportion of young people in AP that are doing well in English and Maths is actually much higher in Nottingham than nationally, and attendance is also higher.

Carol Gray, Regional Schools Commissioner for the East Midlands, introduced herself and outlined her role as an overseer and deliverer of the academies programme. She monitors and challenges Academy Trusts, and intervenes with under-performing academies including the targeting and commissioning of support for weak schools. She was pleased to hear about the strong and positive partnership between schools, MATs and officers and the positive engagement of MATs in local initiatives allowing the level of exclusions to reduce. She can help to engage with MATS that are not yet part of the Inclusion Strategy.

In response to questions from the Committee and in the subsequent discussion the following points were made:

- (j) following a report from one Committee Member that they know of young people who are not motivated as they are not academic and there is so much pressure on them to do well in their GCSEs, the CEO of Archway Learning Trust reported that they work really hard to build self-esteem and resilience with a number of activities, and educating young people about their wider role in the community. However, schools are judged on their academic performance so there will always be a pressure to perform well academically until this changes;
- (k) following an observation that academies used to 'off-roll' young people in lieu of official exclusion, the Committee were told that this now never happens due to stricter oversight and accountability. The school system in Finland was suggested as more effective than the UK, and it was generally agreed that the laws and regulations for schools and academies in the UK change too regularly with changing governments, which is unhelpful;
- (l) following a suggestion that working with parents is important to reduce poor behaviour and exclusions, the MAT representatives were in agreement and stated that the most difficult cases are where parents do not engage with schools. It was also stated that the judgement of AP needs to change as its purpose is different from that of a mainstream setting and caters for young people with unique circumstances;
- (m) one Committee member suggested that the punitive culture in schools around uniforms and minor behaviour should be looked at, and suggested that alternative intervention such as meditation could work instead of punishment. MAT representatives disagreed and said that young people need routine in order to prepare for life.

61 Children's Integrated Services financial position, budget proposals and

transformation activity

Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People, delivered a presentation on budget proposals for consultation as part of the development of the Council's medium term financial plan which relate to Children's Integrated Services, including:

- ending the grant funding of the youth services and NGY base provided by Base 51;
- reduction of the Play and Youth Service to provide targeted youth provision only. All play services would cease and there will be a reduction in staffing, and associated reduction of buildings;
- operation of the Early Help service from only three Children's Centres, rather than the current 9, across the City, with a reduction in staffing and early help offer to families, along with the closure of 6 Children's Centres;
- the Agency Decision Maker for Adoption and Fostering, currently delivered by an external consultant, would be delivered in house within the senior management team;
- a reduction in management capacity within the Strategy and Improvement section, and reductions business support for the Play & Youth and Children's Centre provision;
- a review and reconfiguration of Targeted Family Support and Edge of Care Services to consolidate and target the offer.

In the subsequent discussion the following points were made:

- (a) citizens must be engaged with properly in consultation. Committee members recommended that the Council considers using communication channels that residents engage with on a daily basis in relation to the services affected. For example, messages could be placed on school websites, libraries and children's centres;
- (b) many citizens lack easy digital access, both in terms of appropriate devices and data, for a significant proportion of residents, especially in more deprived areas who may be more greatly affected by some of the proposals. Consultation should be provided in an alternative format such as on paper;
- (c) information about the proposals in the consultation is too generic, with very little information about the nature of what is being proposed and the impact it will have on service provision and individual citizens. This makes it very difficult for citizens to meaningfully engage with, and unless it is clear that a proposal will directly affect them people are unlikely to engage with the consultation process at all. By the time the full detail of the proposal is communicated it is too late to comment on and influence decisions;
- (d) the proposals relating to Children's Integrated Services present a very real risk to the Council's ability to continue its statutory duties in the medium to longer term. The Council is already struggling to meet demand, in terms of numbers and complexity, for Children in Care. These must be appropriately resourced going forward to avoid an impact both on the ability to deliver statutory responsibilities and services and on the Council's overall financial stability in the future, as reducing early intervention is likely to further increase demand for statutory

services, which the Council is already struggling to meet at current levels;

- (e) reducing school exclusion is a priority area within the Strategic Council Plan (SCP) because of the impact that it has on outcomes for a young person who is excluded, and reducing support for young people on the edge of exclusion does not support this aim within the SCP;
- (f) the Council's ability to deliver statutory services and responsibilities as a result of having to support people with no recourse to public funds, who often have high levels of need, could be at risk, and more understanding is required on this;
- (g) once the buildings in which play services and children's centres are currently provided in have been sold it will make it very difficult to ever recommence delivery of similar community-based services should circumstances allow.

62 Work Programme

The agendas for the rest of the municipal year need to be reviewed to ensure a focus on the Council's Recovery and Improvement activity and to ensure a maximum of two substantive items per meeting, as recommended by the CFGS review of scrutiny.

Resolved for the Chair & Vice-Chair to meet and discuss the January and March agendas prior to the next meeting.

This page is intentionally left blank

**Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
27 January 2022**

**Ofsted and Care Quality Commission Special Educational and/or
Disabilities (SEND) Inspection**

Report of the Head of Legal and Governance

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To consider the findings of, and response to the Ofsted and CQC Inspection of SEND provision in the City.

2 Action required

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to consider whether:
- a) it wishes to make any comments or recommendations; and/or
 - b) any further scrutiny is required, and if so the focus and timescales.

3 Background information

- 3.1 An inspection by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) of how well the City carries out its statutory duties in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) took place in November 2021. The inspection outcome letter was received earlier this month and is attached to this report. The inspection did not identify any significant weaknesses that would require a Written Statement of Action to be issued but, in addition to areas of strength, it did identify some areas for development.
- 3.2 A report on the process for, findings of and response to the inspection is attached, and representatives from the local authority and Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group will be attending the meeting to answer questions from the Committee.

4 List of attached information

- 4.1 Report from the Corporate Director for People and Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People

5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

- 5.1 None

6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

- 6.1 Outcome letter from the Joint Area SEND Inspection in Nottingham available <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50175127>

7 Wards affected

- 7.1 All

8 Contact information

- 8.1 Jane Garrard, Senior Governance Officer
jane.garrard@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
0115 8764315



Meeting Title	Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
Report Title	Ofsted and Care Quality Commission Special Educational and/or Disabilities (SEND) Inspection - To consider the findings of and response to the review of SEND provision in the City
Meeting Date	27 th January 2022

Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People John Dexter, Education Director
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Report author and contact details:	Janine Walker, Head of SEND & Vulnerable Pupils janine.walker@nottinghamcity.gov.uk Sara-Jane Brighthouse, Project Manager Children's Integrated Services & SEND. sara-jane.brighthouse@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Summary of issues:

The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Children's and Young People's Scrutiny Committee the findings of the joint Ofsted and CQC local area inspection of Nottingham City's implementation of the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Reforms which took place between Monday 8th – Friday 12th November 2021.

Recommendation(s):

1. To consider the main findings of the report including the strengths and areas of development
2. To consider the review and continued development of SEND strategic priorities and action plan

1.0 Background/Context

1.1 Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

A child or young person is said to have a special educational need and/or disability (SEND) if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.
- Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

The four areas of need:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and Physical

For children with SEND, this can mean that they find it harder to learn than their peers, they may have difficulties in accessing community activities and require additional support to be more independent, have difficulty finding employment and have poorer health outcomes.

Families of young people with SEND tell us that they find the SEND system overly complex and difficult to navigate. They often feel that they have to ‘fight’ to get the services that they feel their child needs. The additional pressures of supporting a child with SEND can impact on a parent’s career and income and impact of other family members including siblings.

1.2 The Nottingham picture

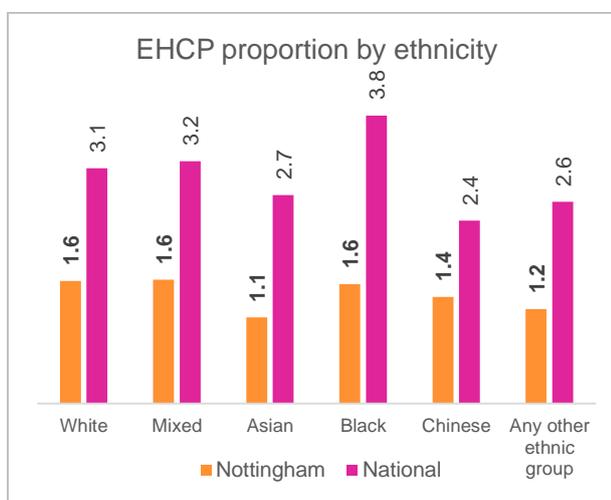
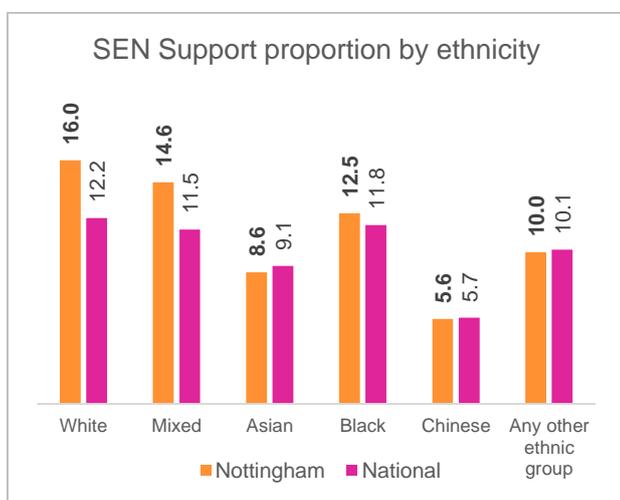
There are 47,335 children and young people in Nottingham schools, 7,418 (15.7% of school population) of whom have a SEND, this is a similar proportion to last year, but a small drop in terms of absolute numbers. (Data, Census January 2021)

Nottingham is a city that celebrates our diversity. 55% of pupils in Nottingham City schools are black, Asian and ethnic minority (BAME), a significant proportion of pupils have English as an additional language, with a significant cohort of refugee and asylum-seeking citizens and families.

Based upon internal census data January 2019, the ethnicity proportions of Nottingham’s SEND Support pupils are broadly similar to those recorded nationally. The major difference in proportions are for SEND Support pupils who are classified as White. In Nottingham 16.0% of all White pupils are SEND Support, nationally this proportion is 12.2%.

Nottingham also recorded a higher proportion than national of pupils of mixed ethnicity with SEND Support. In terms of overall pupil population proportions, Nottingham has a lower proportion of white pupils than national and a higher proportion of mixed ethnicity pupils.

The graphs below highlight the proportions of BAME children and young people with SEND Support and those with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan.



The gender split of children and young people with SEND in Nottingham roughly corresponds with regional and national figures, with boys being twice as likely to have SEND support, and three times more likely to have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan than girls.

Nottingham Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Support proportions have remained at a similar level (around 13.5% of the total school population) over the last four years. Nationally the proportion has been recording a year-on-year rise over the last three years, but has been on average at a lower rate (11.9%).

Nottingham's EHC plan proportions have increased at a similar level to those recorded nationally, although they have been on average lower (1.8% vs. 3.1%).

There remains a link between SEND and deprivation and the more deprived wards in the city have significantly higher levels of children and young people with SEND. Deprivation affects a significant number of families in Nottingham City. Nottingham is the 11th most deprived Local Authority according to Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) average score measure but is 6th most deprived for children according to Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI). 42,000 Nottingham City children live in families where no adults work or where the household income is low. This is equivalent to 64.8% of children, compared with 48% in Greater Nottingham and 43% in England.

Nottingham has high levels of deprivation. In 2020/21, 32.6% of pupils in Nottingham were eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) compared to 20.8% of pupils across England. Pupils with SEND, are more likely to be eligible for FSM than those with no SEND.

919 children and young people in mainstream provision receive targeted high needs funding (top up funding). This includes early years providers, (private voluntary independent settings), schools and schools sixth forms, but excludes further education and training providers.

Young people with SEND attending colleges and other training providers are supported through the high needs funding block.

1281 children and young people 0-25 have an Education, Health and Care plan.

30 pupils are in focus provision (special provision within mainstream school).

26 pupils are placed in independent/non-maintained special schools for educational purposes.

721 are in specialist schools and specialist Further Education provision.

1.3 Our approach in Nottingham

From 2014 – 2018, the Nottingham City SEND Reforms Board delivered the strategic management and oversight of the implementation of the Children & Families Act 2014, Part 3 Children & Young People in England with SEND. The key stakeholders, highlighted below, have worked collaboratively since the introduction of the Reforms to ensure that the local area effectively discharges its statutory duties and continues to

focus on improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

From 1st April 2018, the SEND Accountability Board has strategic oversight for the continued implementation of the reforms and improving outcomes for children, young people with SEND and their families. All partners have representation on the board, which is chaired by the Director of Education. Our local area partnership comprises:

- Rainbow Parent Carer Forum - children, young people and their families
- Information Advice Support & Services (IASS)
- Local authority services: Education services, Children's Integrated services, Whole Life Disability Service (Children's & Adults Social Care), Strategy & Commissioning
- Public Health
- Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- Futures for You (Careers – advice, guidance and practical support)
- Schools and settings

In 2018 Nottingham published the co-produced **SEND Strategy for improving outcomes for children and young people**.

[nottingham city send strategy document final 1.pdf \(openobjects.com\)](#)

[nottingham city send strategic priorities final.pdf \(openobjects.com\)](#)

The strategy identifies six overarching priorities:

Supporting all schools and settings to be inclusive

- To ensure that the majority of children and young people with SEND have their needs met effectively in their local, mainstream school and to ensure city wide agreement on the expectations of schools and settings, recognising the role of all stakeholders and improve academic outcomes by the end of Key Stage 4.

Developing provision

- To ensure there is sufficiency of high quality placements and provision to address the significant increase in numbers of pupils with Autism and to develop therapeutic provision for pupils with Social Emotional & Mental Health needs to achieve our aim of having a quality, effective continuum of provision across the City.

Making transition easier

- To ensure there is more effective sharing of information at key points of transition, including between early years settings, schools and colleges. This will provide a more consistent level of support for transition at all ages and stages of a child and young person's life.

Promoting co-production with children, young people and their families

- To ensure there are well developed principles for co-production which are consistently implemented in all agencies and services to effectively engage with children, young people and their families at a strategic level to shape the services that are commissioned. To publish feedback on how this engagement is influencing services.
- To continue to improve the quality, content, access to and awareness of the SEND Local Offer.

- All services to embed a culture of evaluating the impact of support and systematically monitoring and reviewing the experiences of children, young people and families

Improving links between agencies

- To embed more effective communication between health services, schools/settings and parents and develop a more joined up approach to improve information sharing practices between agencies.

Preparing for adulthood

- To ensure there is a consistent support pathway to enable young people to successfully transition in to adulthood to achieve the best possible outcomes, such as being able to live independently, secure meaningful employment, have good health outcomes and be well prepared for their adult lives.

1.4 Legislation and inspection framework

The Children & Families Act 2014 introduced a series of reforms relating to supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities which local authorities and their partners were required to respond to. The Act introduced a number of significant changes which included:

- Introduction of education, health and care plans
- Extended the age range for young people with SEND from 3-16 to 0-25
- Placed a duty on local areas to publish a local offer
- Right to a personal budget for young people with education, health and care plans
- Co-production and involve children, young people and their families in decision making
- Placed a duty on local areas to make available independent advice, dispute resolution and mediation services
- A clear focus on improving outcomes in the areas of academic attainment, health, social participation and employment
- A requirement for local areas to jointly commission services for children and young people with SEND

The SEND Code of Practice was published May 2015. It sets out the legal requirements and duties of local authorities, health bodies, schools and colleges to provide and improve outcomes for children and young people from birth to 25 years with SEND and their families.

In addition the Children and Families Act 2014, there are other legislative frameworks that place duties on the local area to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. These include:

- The Care Act 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education Act 1996

2.0 SEND Local Area Inspection

The Inspection Framework & Handbook was launched in 2016 and set out the inspection regime to be conducted by Office for Standards in Education Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and Care Quality Commission (CQC) to externally evaluate how well a local area carries out its statutory duties in relation to children and young people with special education needs and/or disabilities in order to support their development.

The local area is the geographical area of the local authority. However, the responsibility of the local area for children and young people who have SEND extends to those who are residents of the local area but attend educational establishments or receive services outside the local authority's boundaries.

The Inspection Framework evaluates the local area's provision through the inspection of the following domains:

- How effectively does the local area identify children and young people with SEND?
- How effectively does the local area assess and meet the needs of children and young people with SEND?
- How effectively does the local area improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND

The inspection looks at the contributions from all partner agencies in particular education, health, social care and gathers the views of children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers. The local area includes the local authority, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), public health, NHS England for specialist services, early years' settings, schools and further education (FE) providers.

The local area has a responsibility to write a **self-evaluation** to assess the effectiveness of its implementation of the SEND Reforms. Nottingham City local area SEND Reforms Board started this process in 2016 and annually review the self-evaluation in partnership with education, health, social care and parent and carers. The self-evaluation informs an action plan. It is particularly crucial that areas have a realistic evaluation of their local progress and an active plan to drive change.

The inspection leads to a published report letter that gives an assessment and narrative judgement about how well the local area has implemented the SEND Reforms and is performing in its delivery of services for children and young People with SEND and their families. The report identifies strengths and areas for development.

The SEND local area inspections have been taking place in each local area of the country since 2016. The vast majority 162 of authorities have now been inspected.

2.1 The inspection process in Nottingham City

The local area is notified five working days before the inspection begins. The inspectors use this time to examine Nottingham City data, published reports and performance indicators and to review the local area's self-evaluation framework.

The inspection team is onsite the following week for five days.

The inspection took place between Monday 8th November and Friday 12th November 2021. The inspectors determined their schedule which included:

- meeting with children and young people
- meeting with parents and carers including Rainbow Parent & Carer Forum
- a focus group with a range of early years providers
- *visits to seven nominated education settings and Nottingham College
- visits to a range of health providers
- a number of focus groups with officers from early years, education, health, social care, Futures, and community providers

*During the visits to education settings inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of education provision and talked to children and families about their day to day experiences and aspirations.

Inspectors used the evidence gathered through their meetings with stakeholders to test out how accurately the local area have assessed they are meeting their responsibilities and understand their strengths and areas that require further development.

2.3 SEND Local Area Inspection Outcome

The SEND local area inspection does not create a graded outcome. However if there are significant areas for improvement then a Written Statement of Action is made. This is a formal requirement for improvement with Ofsted and CQC oversight.

The formal outcome letter is published on the Ofsted website and the Local Authority and CCG are also required to publish it on their websites. Nottingham's inspection outcome letter was received on Tuesday 4th January 2022 and published by Nottingham City Council on Monday 10th January 2022. It is attached at appendix 1.

The letter sets out the strengths and areas for development on each of the three inspection themes: identification, assessing and meeting needs, and improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

The key findings are:

- “Area leaders were quick to respond to the SEND reforms. They undertook significant and timely actions when the reforms were introduced. Education, health and social care leaders and professionals share a common ambition for Nottingham to be a truly inclusive place to live.”
- “Leaders understand the current strengths and areas to improve in Nottingham's SEND arrangements. They know the shortcomings in SEND provision. There is an appropriate strategy in place to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.”
- “Recent, significant changes in the area's leadership have resulted in some disruption to the strategic oversight of the SEND strategy. Leaders are managing substantial organisational changes across services. They are beginning to overcome these challenges.”

- “An external review has made recommendations to improve commissioning arrangements. Leaders have responded to these recommendations by establishing structures to strengthen joint commissioning arrangements. Appropriate plans are in place to develop a joint commissioning strategy in the near future. The current absence of an overall joint commissioning strategy limits the area’s ability to use commissioning as a tool for improvement.”
- “Leaders have developed a coherent plan to support children and young people with SEND to prepare for adulthood. The plan identifies what should happen at each stage of a child or young person’s school life. The pandemic delayed implementation of this new consistent approach. The partnership with ‘Futures’ strongly supports young people with SEND to transfer from schools into further education, employment or training.”
- “Area leaders have not communicated their strategy for identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND clearly enough. A large proportion of parents do not understand or appreciate the strategy. Many do not know where to find information and guidance to improve outcomes for their children.”
- “The online local offer for children and young people with SEND is not well publicised. It does not capture all the services and activities. There is no effective oversight of the local offer website to ensure that it is well maintained and accessible to all parents and carers.”
- “The neurodevelopmental pathway is not communicated well enough to parents. As a result, some parents have unrealistic expectations of what support their children will receive once diagnosis has been confirmed.”

The inspection did not identify any significant weaknesses in Nottingham City that would require them to issue a Written Statement of Action.

It was pleasing that the inspection team recognised Nottingham as an inclusive city and that found evidence of strong inclusive practice in the seven educational settings that they visited. The settings talked positively of the strong partnership working in Nottingham and identified being well supported by local area SEND services.

Children and young people in these settings told the inspectors that they feel safe and well supported in schools and are proud of living in Nottingham. They also told inspectors about their aspirations for the future. At the final feedback session the inspection team described our young people “as a credit to Nottingham City”.

It is clear from the report that Nottingham City local area does not communicate its SEND strategy and services well enough with parents and carers. Parents and carers told inspectors they find it hard to understand the SEND system and that the pathways to access services are too complicated. They also told the inspectors that they do not know where to go to find information and the awareness of local offer is very limited. This is a key priority for the local area to address through its self-evaluation framework and action plan.

Whilst the inspectors acknowledged that outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Nottingham are improving, it is important for the local area to expedite this

progress. Further work to analyse performance data and outcomes will be required to target services and interventions effectively and to measure their impact.

The inspection team highlighted that the current absence of an overall joint commissioning strategy limited the area's ability to use commissioning as a tool for improvement.

Whilst the Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have a long standing partnership in working together to meet needs of children and young people with SEND and their families, new partnership structures are being developed with the emerging Integrated Care System (ICS) which will see Nottingham City Council (NCC) working alongside colleagues in the County and CCG to take a system view to commissioning arrangements, identifying opportunities to improve services together by placing the needs of families and children at the heart of commissioning.

An external review of joint commissioning arrangements was carried out on behalf Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham and Nottinghamshire CCG. The review concluded in July 2021 and resulted in the establishment of a Joint Strategic Planning Group and an Executive Strategic Planning Group for joint commissioning. The first meetings of these groups commenced in September 2021. An initial scoping draft will be presented to the Executive Strategic Planning Group at its January 2022 meeting before a final strategy is approved at its May 2022 meeting. The joint commissioning strategy will encompass a wide range of health, education and care commissioning activity, including SEND.

2.4 Next steps

Leaders in the local area will take on board all the areas for development identified in the report and work with our partners to further strengthen the support in place for children and young people with SEND and their families.

The SEND Accountability Board provides governance and challenge to this area of work. Over the coming months, the Board will:

- Review and finalise the SEND Joint Strategic Needs Assessment initiated prior to the inspection
- Assure the update of the current self-evaluation framework and SEND strategic action plan to incorporate any of the areas for development identified in the inspection report that are not already priorities in the self-evaluation framework
- Hold the local area partnership accountable for delivering the outcomes identified within the revised action plan
- Co-produce a review and refresh of its current SEND strategy and priorities in line with the outcomes of the inspection report

This work will commence in February 2022 following the dissemination of the inspection report findings to all stakeholders.

3.0 Financial Implications

The costs of provision for children and young people with high level SEND are met from the Council's Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funded High Needs (HN) budget. Nottingham City is currently benefiting from ceiling level funding increases under the

National High Needs Funding Formula which determines DSG High needs funding allocations. The increase for 2022/23 is 11% per head of 2-18 population. High needs funding growth is prioritised in line with SEND strategic priorities. A draft outline high needs budget will be presented to Schools Forum on 25 January 2022 as part of the overall 2022/23 Schools Budget Report. A balance of £1.438m has also been identified from DSG reserves as available for consideration in consultation with the Schools Forum sub-group for spend to save initiatives linked to the high needs budget. Expenditure from DSG must fall within the definition of the Schools Budget as prescribed in the Schools and Early Years (England) Finance Regulations.

Kathryn Stevenson, Senior Commercial Business Partner

4.0 Legal and Procurement comments (if applicable) including risk management considerations:

Not applicable

5.0 HR and EDI considerations

The report covers no direct HR and EDI considerations on the workforce.

There is a clear affinity to the council's equality, diversity and inclusion strategy work and the council should ensure this good practice and continued improvement from the SEND inspection is embedded within the Equality objectives, specifically the Accessible Services action plan.

Developing a compelling vision should be further discussed in the partnership space and some conscious thought as to what this means for Leaders and colleagues at the council and the associated behaviours we want our workforce to demonstrate. This will be important to develop a continuous culture of improvement for our Children and Young People with SEN as part of this inspection feedback.

Rachael Morris
HR Business Lead (People)
12/1/22

6.0 Carbon Reduction and Sustainability Considerations

Not applicable

Appendix 1

Background papers

Link to the Nottingham City Joint Ofsted & CQC SEND Local Area Inspection Report Letter

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/80533>

This page is intentionally left blank

Ofsted
Agora
6 Cumberland Place
Nottingham
NG1 6HJ

T 0300 123 1231
Textphone 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/ofsted
lasend.support@ofsted.gov.uk

22 December 2021

Catherine Underwood
Corporate Director for People
Nottingham City Council
Loxley House
Station Street
Nottingham
NG2 3NG

Amanda Sullivan, Clinical Commissioning Group Chief Officer

Sara-Jane Brighthouse, Local Area Nominated Officer

Dear Ms Underwood and Ms Sullivan

Joint area SEND inspection in Nottingham

Between 8 November 2021 and 12 November 2021, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Nottingham City to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.

The inspection was led by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors from Ofsted, with a team of inspectors including an Ofsted Inspector and a children's services inspector from the CQC.

Inspectors spoke with children and young people with SEND, parents and carers, and local authority and National Health Service (NHS) officers. They visited a range of providers and spoke to leaders, staff and governors about how they were implementing the SEND reforms. Inspectors looked at a range of information about the performance of the area, including the area's self-evaluation. Inspectors met with leaders for health, social care and education. They reviewed performance data and evidence about the local offer and joint commissioning.

In reaching their judgements, inspectors took account of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on SEND arrangements in the area. Inspectors considered a range of information about the impact of the pandemic and explored how the area's plans and actions had been adapted as a result.

This letter outlines our findings from the inspection, including some strengths and areas for further improvement.

Main findings

- Area leaders were quick to respond to the SEND reforms. They undertook significant and timely actions when the reforms were introduced. Education, health and social care leaders and professionals share a common ambition for Nottingham to be a truly inclusive place to live.
- Leaders understand the current strengths and areas to improve in Nottingham's SEND arrangements. They know the shortcomings in SEND provision. There is an appropriate strategy in place to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- Recent, significant changes in the area's leadership have resulted in some disruption to the strategic oversight of the SEND strategy. Leaders are managing substantial organisational changes across services. They are beginning to overcome these challenges.
- An external review has made recommendations to improve commissioning arrangements. Leaders have responded to these recommendations by establishing structures to strengthen joint commissioning arrangements. Appropriate plans are in place to develop a joint commissioning strategy in the near future. The current absence of an overall joint commissioning strategy limits the area's ability to use commissioning as a tool for improvement.
- Leaders have developed a coherent plan to support children and young people with SEND to prepare for adulthood. The plan identifies what should happen at each stage of a child or young person's school life. The pandemic delayed implementation of this new consistent approach. The partnership with 'Futures' strongly supports young people with SEND to transfer from schools into further education, employment or training.
- The online local offer for children and young people with SEND is not well publicised. It does not capture all the services and activities. There is no effective oversight of the local offer website to ensure that it is well maintained and accessible to all parents and carers.
- The neurodevelopmental pathway is not communicated well enough to parents. As a result, some parents have unrealistic expectations of what support their children will receive once diagnosis has been confirmed.
- Area leaders have not communicated their strategy for identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND clearly enough. A

large proportion of parents do not understand or appreciate the strategy. Many do not know where to find information and guidance to improve outcomes for their children.

The effectiveness of the local area in identifying children and young people's special educational needs and/or disabilities

Strengths

- Professionals work together effectively across services to identify the needs of children and young people with SEND. This effective work continues during the pandemic.
- Early years provision for children with SEND is strong. Well-established working relationships across all services support the identification of children's needs at an early stage. Education, health and social care colleagues share information. They work together to support families effectively. For example, the 'Small Steps, Big Changes' team supports families. It helps children with SEND to develop their communication skills and understand their emotions and behaviour. The team works closely with health visitors to provide families with further support when needed.
- Children and young people with complex needs benefit from early identification of their needs. Professionals across frontline education, health and social care services work effectively to ensure that children and young people with SEND receive appropriate clinical and medical support from their earliest years. Children and young people with hearing impairment told us how they receive valuable support through the hearing impairment service, speech and language service and teachers of the deaf.
- Ahead of guidance from the government, the Designated Clinical Officer team worked with partners across Nottingham City's and Nottinghamshire's public health teams. They worked with infection prevention control leads to assess and agree interim steps to allow the safe reintroduction of children requiring aerosol generating procedure back to school during the pandemic. Children were able to return in September 2020, with very few staying at home. This included transport to and from school.
- Young people with SEND entering the Youth Justice Service (YJS) receive appropriate support and focused assessments to identify their needs. Professionals work with young people to identify undiagnosed speech, language and communication needs and poor mental health. There is strong provision to support young people with SEND in the YJS through the work of three dedicated nurses.
- Children and young people with SEND have access to a variety of health services, including the school nurse 'Text Health' text service for 11- to 19-year-olds. This service is offered daily to children and young people with SEND to support concerns about their health. Children and young people who

require more intervention are referred to the school nurse. An out-of-hours automated service provides emergency numbers to call. The service is well used and valued by children and young people.

Areas for development

- Leaders have not communicated their strategy for early identification of children and young people's needs well enough. Some parents do not appreciate the range of support that is made available for their children who do not have a formal diagnosis or education, health and care (EHC) plan. Some parents do not understand the purpose of having an EHC plan, believing that having an EHC plan automatically brings additional funding.
- Not all parents understand the system in place to identify and meet the needs of children and young people with SEND. For example, some parents of older young people attending specialist provision expressed their frustration over their child being refused an EHC plan while attending primary school only to have their request processed at a later stage.
- Leaders recognise that support for young people with SEND to transfer from children's services into adult services is an area in need of improvement. They have developed a suitable strategy which they expect to put in place shortly. This strategy is based on an individualised approach to support young people.
- Some children and young people with SEND wait too long for assessments to identify possible autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Some parents do not feel that they or their children are well supported while waiting for these assessments. They feel that the behavioural, emotional and mental health (BEMH) pathway offers only basic support for children with complex needs while they are waiting for a formal assessment. Some consider the thresholds for support and treatment to be too high. Nevertheless, the pathway provides parents and professionals working in schools with appropriate strategies to support children and young people while they wait for a formal assessment of their needs.
- Some parents are frustrated with having to wait for assessments to identify their children's needs. Some are resorting to paying for private assessments and therapies to ensure that their children's needs are met appropriately.

The effectiveness of the local area in meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities

Strengths

- Leaders demonstrate their commitment to inclusion through prioritising funding to meet children and young people's needs at the earliest possible stage and in their own community.

- The quality of EHC plans has improved over time. Recently completed EHC plans accurately capture the views, interests and aspirations of children and young people with SEND. Suggested support and strategies are outlined clearly. Outcomes to prepare children and young people for adulthood are identified in plans.
- Nottingham CityCare Partnership specialist community public health nurses for school health and health visiting deliver the 0 to 19 offer. They work in teams alongside specialist community public health nurses to assess and support the needs of children and young people with SEND.
- The virtual school carefully oversees children and young people with SEND who are also in the care of the local authority. Children and young people benefit from frequent assessments of their education, health and social care needs. Those with EHC plans receive timely reviews so that the requirements of their plans are met.
- Highly effective partnership working through 'Futures' supports young people to prepare for adulthood. 'Futures' provides a range of services for young people with SEND. It offers an individualised approach to support these young people through this key phase in their lives.
- There is a commissioned neurodevelopmental pathway in place. The behaviour and emotional health team ensures that all referrals are screened using a single point of access with the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). Referrals include children and young people experiencing emotional and mental health issues and ASD and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Professionals work together to decide the most appropriate assessment and intervention for children and young people.
- Speech and language therapy (SALT), occupational therapy and physiotherapy services provide an 'opt-in' process for assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND. Parents are supported in this process. SALT provides blocks of therapy and support to children and young people with SEND at the point of need. As a result, children and young people with SEND are assessed in a timely way and waiting times are minimal.
- A well-planned personal budget process provides clear information to parents about what is available to them and how budgets can be spent. For example, leaders have effectively integrated personal budgets with their short-break offer. Additionally, young people with SEND receive targeted support for independent living where this is perceived as a possibility.
- Parents of children and young people with SEND find the advice and support they receive from the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information and Advice Service helpful. Trained advisers work closely with families and support parents well.
- There is wide-ranging support for children and young people's social and emotional well-being and mental health needs. Support is available for

parents and professionals working with the family. Services are innovative and adaptable to the needs of individuals. The effectiveness of the provision is closely monitored to ensure that interventions are working.

- Children and young people with SEND can share their views and have their voices heard. A recent initiative linked to 'Ask Us Nottingham' (Young Reviewers group) involved children and young people with SEND feeding back their views on facilities and services provided in the city. Issues such as how public transport best meets their needs and access to the castle were brought to the attention of leaders. Children and young people with SEND are proud of their involvement in this project.

Areas for development

- There is no collaborative and consistent quality assurance process for EHC plans. The city council has its own process to check the quality of plans but this does not include health colleagues. The designated clinical officer and the SEND health coordinator are currently working towards a single framework which will represent all health services. Plans for the council and health team to work together on a joint quality assurance process are not clear.
- Health and social care contributions to EHC plans are often lacking in detail. Some descriptions of educational needs are overly complex. There is a risk that weaknesses with these aspects of EHC plans may lead to the needs of children and young people with SEND not being met accurately. Leaders know that these parts of EHC plans need further refinement.
- There is extensive published information available for parents, including through the local offer website. However, most parents do not know where to find this information. Many do not know about the local offer website. This is particularly the case for those who speak English as an additional language and for those experiencing digital poverty.
- Until very recently, there were no templates and icons to identify children and young people with SEND, including those with an EHC plan, in electronic health records. This meant that professionals accessing the electronic records were not alerted to a child or young person's additional needs.
- There are significant recruitment difficulties within some therapy teams. This is particularly the case for occupational therapy and physiotherapy teams. Experienced therapists are working longer hours to make up for the shortfall in staffing. This approach is not sustainable. Leaders have designed an appropriate improvement plan but this has not yet been progressed due to leadership changes.
- The BEMH pathway is not communicated well enough to parents. Consequently, many parents have unrealistic expectations about what they will receive once a diagnosis has been confirmed.

- There are limited social and recreational opportunities in the community that children and young people with SEND can access. Those that exist are said by parents to be run by adults who are not sufficiently trained in meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND. A typical example of this was where children with SEND were unable to join a boxing club because the trainers could not manage their needs. Area leaders did start work to improve provision in the area before the start of the pandemic. They have yet to continue with these efforts.
- Recent improvements to the management of resources and funding for CAMHS has yet to make a difference to the sometimes long waiting times for children and young people with SEND.
- The short-break offer does not currently meet the range of diverse needs and disabilities of children and young people and their families. Some parents find it difficult to access the short breaks and respite provision they want. Leaders are working to address the gaps in provision for short breaks.

The effectiveness of the local area in improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities

Strengths

- Outcomes for children with SEND in the early years have improved over time. The targeted support these children receive is appropriately focused on improving their outcomes.
- Settings, schools and colleges, in partnership with area leaders, support children and young people with SEND to make progress. Those with complex needs make strong progress. Education professionals are skilled at supporting children and young people with SEND in having a strong sense of achievement when accreditation in formal examinations is not an option. The progress of children and young people with SEND is closely monitored and adjustments are made to their curriculum when needed.
- Area leaders provide bespoke training for staff working in schools to understand and meet the needs of children and young people well. For example, the educational psychology service tailors training for staff according to children's needs. A recent example given by staff was training to support teenagers with SEND to manage their emotions.
- Despite a shortage of community paediatricians in Nottingham, children and young people with SEND are provided with an effective service to meet their needs well. The large majority of children and young people with SEND referred for assessment are accepted by the service and are fully assessed.
- Young people with SEND are supported to make appropriate choices for their post-16 destinations. Schools manage transition meetings well, working closely with 'Futures' to help young people move on to meaningful education

or training. A large proportion of young people with SEND leave school to attend further education, enter employment or begin apprenticeships. Young people aspire to attain qualifications and to achieve their ambitions.

- Some young people with SEND benefit from respite care. An outreach service is also available for young people. These services are highly valued and well received by young people and their parents. Young people with SEND can build their confidence, develop social skills and make friendships.
- Leaders closely monitor the number of children and young people with SEND who are excluded from schools and colleges. The introduction of the 'Routes to Inclusion' initiative and the work of the Intensive Support Team is having a positive impact on supporting schools and colleges to reduce the use of exclusions. Education professionals feel well supported by the range of strategies available to them to support children and young people with SEND who may be at risk of exclusion.
- Young people with SEND who are known to the YJS receive a comprehensive package of support, including for their speech, language and communication skills and mental health. The number of young people with SEND who reoffend is reducing as a result.

Areas for development

- Some parents of children and young people with SEND described the transition from children to adult health services as like 'jumping off a cliff'. The health services available to adults with SEND are not equivalent in quality to those available to children and young people with SEND.
- Educational outcomes for children and young people with SEND in Nottingham are improving but are still too low. Leaders are driving necessary improvements, including training for staff. Some actions have been delayed by the pandemic.
- Many parents do not understand area leaders' strategy to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND. They do not receive the information they need in this regard.
- There is some considerable dissatisfaction among parents with the quality of SEND provision in the area. This is because leaders have not ensured that key information for parents is widely disseminated and fully accessible. Many parents who responded to the online survey were negative in their opinions. Leaders recognise that they need to engage with the wider community of parents and share more effectively their approach for improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

Yours sincerely

Stephanie Innes-Taylor
Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted	Care Quality Commission
Katrina Gueli HMI Regional Director	Mani Hussain Deputy Chief Inspector, Primary Medical Services, Children Health and Justice
Stephanie Innes-Taylor HMI Lead Inspector	Andrea Crosby-Josephs CQC Inspector
Jane Moon Ofsted Inspector	

Cc: Department for Education
Clinical commissioning group(s)
Director of Public Health for the area
Department of Health
NHS England

This page is intentionally left blank

**Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
27 January 2022**

Families with No Recourse to Public Funds

Report of the Head of Legal and Governance

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To explore what can be done to mitigate the impacts of supporting children and families with no recourse to public funds on the ability to deliver statutory services and responsibilities.

2 Action required

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to consider whether:
- a) to make any comments or recommendations and/or
 - b) if any further scrutiny is required, and if so the focus and timescales.

3 Background information

- 3.1 During consideration of the financial position of Children's Integrated Services and proposals for the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan in November, a Committee member raised concern about the impact on the Council's ability to deliver statutory services and responsibilities as a result of having to support children and families with no recourse to public funds, who often have high levels of need. The Committee commented that it would like the Portfolio Holder to give more explicit consideration to understanding the costs of this to the Council, and use this to 'push back' to Government on the inadequacy of funding to support people currently with this status. The Committee also agreed to look at this issue in more detail.
- 3.2 A report is attached and the Director for Children's Integrated Services and the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People will be attending the meeting to answer questions from the Committee.

4 List of attached information

- 4.1 Report from Corporate Director for People and Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People

5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

- 5.1 None

6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

- 6.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held on 25 November 2021

7 Wards affected

- 7.1 All

8 Contact information

- 8.1 Jane Garrard, Senior Governance Officer
jane.garrard@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
0115 8764315



Meeting Title	Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
Report Title	Families with 'No Recourse to Public Funds' (NRPF): Costs and other impacts of supporting children with NRPF on the ability to deliver statutory services and responsibilities and what could be done to mitigate this.
Meeting Date	27 th January 2022

Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People Ailsa Barr, Director for Children's Integrated Services
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Report author and contact details:	Will Hose, Interim Service Manager for Duty, Children & Families Direct, the Brief Intervention Team and the Emergency Duty Team

Summary of issues:

Parents with 'No Recourse to Public Funds' (NRPF) cannot access welfare benefits, homelessness assistance, social housing and, in some cases, employment.

Families with NRPF are sometimes owed a duty by the Local Authority following an assessment of need. Support may take the form of accommodation and/or financial support and can only be provided to families under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

This report provides:

- A background of the Local Authority's current approach to supporting families who have NRPF.
- An overview of the costs of supporting families with NRPF.
- A review of the impact of supporting families with NRPF.
- A consideration of any possible mitigation.

Recommendation(s):

- 1 Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to consider the report.

1. Background

NRPF applies to people who are subject to immigration control and, as a result of this, have no entitlement to certain welfare benefits, homelessness assistance and an allocation of social housing. The definition of 'subject to immigration control' is set out in section 115 (9) of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, and includes people who require leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom but do not have it, and people who have leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom, but are subject to a condition that they do not have recourse to public funds.

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to assess children and families who may otherwise face destitution due to their NRPF status.

"Assistance provided by local authorities under section 17 has been recognised by the government and courts as being an essential safety net to protect the most vulnerable people from destitution. It is therefore necessary for thorough assessments to be undertaken so that support is provided to eligible families."

'Assessing and supporting children and families who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF)', NRPF Network, 2018

Families who have NRPF come from range of backgrounds and will all have had differing 'journeys' before they request support from the Local Authority. The point at which a family request support tends to follow some change in either their personal circumstances, or their immigration status. For example, we often have families who request an assessment following the ending of a violent relationship, where the mother may have entered the UK on a visitor visa for example. We also have occasions where families' visas have expired, and they no longer have a right to work in the UK.

For children and young people whose parent/s have NRPF, their experiences are also vastly different depending on their journey and lived experiences. We understand however that for all children and young people, the point at which their family requests support can be a frightening and uncertain time, as it is often preceded by some unforeseen change to their routine and living situation. Therefore, when assessing a family for support, we ensure that both a family's basic needs are met, but also that the child's wider needs are considered and addressed. The Child in Need (CIN) Plan considers and sets appropriate actions to ensure a child's needs are met, and will focus on promoting positive access to education, good health and engagement with their community.

The Local Authority currently supports 13 eligible families (21 children) under the NRPF framework. The support offered to these families varies depending on their level of need; some are offered subsistence support in the form of weekly payments, whilst others may be offered accommodation and subsistence support.

Families supported by the Local Authority are also at varying stages of their 'settled status' journey: some may have active applications for 'Leave to Remain' (LTR) with the Home Office and are awaiting a decision, some may be in the process of appealing a refused LTR decision by the Home Office, and some may be in the transition period – whereby they are applying for welfare support after being granted LTR.

The Local Authority employs a NRPF Specialist Family Support Worker, who oversees the majority of NRPF cases. All new cases, whereby a family requests an assessment of need due to their NRPF status, are held in the Duty Team and assessed by a qualified Social Worker. The case will only transfer to the NRPF Specialist Family Support Worker after the assessment is complete, and eligibility for ongoing support is confirmed. There are some cases which, due to additional safeguarding concerns, are rightly held in Fieldwork Teams by a qualified Social Worker. The NRPF Specialist Family Support Worker supports Social Workers with the NRPF elements of these cases however and offers advice and support where appropriate.

The Local Authority is a member of the 'NRPF Connect' Network. All new cases are added to the 'NRPF Connect' system, which alerts the Home Office directly that a family is asking for support. The Local Authority meets every 3 months with other Local Authorities in the East Midlands region who are also members of the 'NRPF Connect' Network; data is shared, difficult cases discussed and updates are provided on new developments within the Home Office and around immigration issues more broadly. As well as having access to legal advice from our own Children's Legal Services, the Local Authority has access, through the 'NRPF Connect' Network, to a specialist immigration solicitor.

All children supported under the NRPF framework are subject to Child in Need (CIN) Plans under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989. This means that their needs are specifically assessed and addressed. CIN Reviews are held at least every six months, unless there is a need to review the case more regularly and are chaired by a Senior Practitioner from the Duty Team.

All NRPF cases are also heard at the 'NRPF Panel', which is held on a monthly basis and chaired by the Service Manager for Duty, Children & Families Direct, the Brief Intervention Team and the Emergency Duty Team. The purpose of the panel is to review any case management issues or potential barriers to families achieving 'settled status'. Every NRPF case is considered at the NRPF Panel at least quarterly, unless there is a need to consider the case more regularly.

2. Costs

The Local Authority receives no specific funding to support children and families with NRPF.

Expenditures from the NRPF budget includes subsistence payments for families (which are in line with the Section 95 Asylum Support payments), accommodation expenses (including utility bills), and other miscellaneous costs, such as housing move costs for example.

Below is a table outlining the NRPF expenditure over the previous four financial years:

Year	Total NRPF Spend
2017/2018	£498,871.00
2018/2019	£401,081.26
2019/2020	£368,705.77
2020/2021	£358,420.39

The number of families who request support under the NRPF framework in Nottingham is broadly comparable to other east midland regions. Although we do not have access to formal comparative data which evidences demand over time, demand is discussed at 'NRPF Connect' meetings, and there is no significant variation between different regional authorities.

The NRPF spend has been reducing year on year since 2017/2018. This is likely due to a reduction in families requiring support under the NRPF Framework, coupled with improving processes to help progress settled status' for families.

The below table sets out the number of families the Local Authority has started to support each financial year, dating back to 2018:

New NRPF Families Supported	
2018/2019	20
2019/2020	21
2020/2021	14

This demonstrates an overall reduction in families requiring support, with a marked decline in 2020/2021.

An annual data report published in 2020 by the 'NRPF Network' concluded that the number of families being supported nationally is reducing. The reduction is mainly attributed to cases being more expediently resolved with the Home Office. The report also noted that most families are granted 'Leave to Remain', demonstrating that case resolution is usually achieved through making successful immigration claims, rather than other outcomes, such as return to country of origin.

3. Impact on Ability to Meet Statutory Duties

The Local Authority currently manages a robust NRPF process, which is subject to regular management oversight to ensure there is no drift or delay in cases.

As the Local Authority employs a NRPF Specialist Family Support Worker, there is little impact on frontline Social Workers in other areas of the service, who might otherwise be expected to hold NRPF cases. This approach also ensures we have access to specialist in-house knowledge regarding NRPF processes and we therefore benefit from swift and responsive case management. The NRPF Specialist Family Support Worker currently holds 82.7% of all open NRPF cases and supports colleagues in Fieldwork Teams with those families that meet the NRPF criteria for support.

The biggest impact in terms of demand can be seen in the Duty Teams, who are required to assess all families who request assessment and support under the NRPF Framework. Not all families who request an assessment will be eligible for support under the NRPF framework however, as circumstances and need vary from family to family.

It should be noted that NRPF cases account for 0.37% of the total number of cases open to the Duty Teams, which is minimal.

5. Possible Mitigation to Reduce Impact on Statutory Services

There does not currently appear to be any additional measures or interventions that could be made, or need to be made, to the management of NRPF cases. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to assess and support families who may face destitution a result of their NRPF status, and so there will always be some degree of unavoidable impact on service capacity.

Having a dedicated NRPF Specialist Family Support Worker however ensures that cases are progressed swiftly and more importantly, that families receive a consistent, high quality service. Duty Social Workers benefit from specialist advice and there is an agreed pathway to progress NRPF cases to ensure there is a positive outcome for families in a timely manner.

We can be assured of value for money due to the measures outlined above. Having a dedicated NRPF Specialist Family Support Worker, whilst also ensuring that all cases are subject to management oversight at NRPF Panel, provides assurances that cases are proactively managed and progressed.

Strong working links with both the Home Office and the 'NRPF Connect' Network also ensures that the Local Authority are up to date with and legislative and policy changes and that appropriate information is shared to support robust service delivery.

This page is intentionally left blank

**Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
27 January 2022**

Work Programme

Report of the Head of Legal and Governance

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To consider the Committee's work programme for 2021/22 based on areas of work identified by the Committee at previous meetings and any further suggestions raised at this meeting.

2. Action required

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
- a) note that the work programme is in the process of being reviewed in line with the recommendations of the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's review of the scrutiny function; and
 - b) comment on how the work programme could be amended in line with these recommendations.

3. Background information

- 3.1 The purpose of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is to provide robust scrutiny of issues and services relevant to the wellbeing and safeguarding of children and young people, in the light of recommendations from the Council's Ofsted Inspection April 2014, and the Jay and Casey Reports (Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham).
- 3.2 The Committee is responsible for setting and managing its own work programme to fulfil this role.
- 3.3 In setting a programme for scrutiny activity, the Committee should aim for an outcome-focused work programme that has clear priorities and a clear link to its roles and responsibilities. The work programme needs to be flexible so that issues which arise as the year progresses can be considered appropriately.
- 3.4 Where there are a number of potential items that could be scrutinised in a given year, consideration of what represents the highest priority or area of risk will assist with work programme planning. Changes and/or additions to the work programme will need to take account of the resources available to the Committee.
- 3.5 The current work programme for the municipal year 2021/22 is attached at Appendix 1.

4. List of attached information

- 4.1 Appendix 1 – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee 2021/22 Work Programme

5. Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

5.1 None

6. Published documents referred to in compiling this report

6.1 None

7. Wards affected

7.1 All

8. Contact information

8.1 Jane Garrard, Senior Governance Officer
Tel: 0115 8764315
Email: jane.garrard@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee 2021/22 Work Programme

Date	Items
27 May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="629 272 1312 336">• Terms of Reference To note the terms of reference for the Committee <li data-bbox="629 376 1877 507">• Primary School Exclusion and Family Support To review current data on school exclusions of primary aged children, the impact on families and support provided, the education provision for those excluded from school and what more can be done to reduce the number of permanent exclusions. <li data-bbox="629 547 1921 646">• Overview of Children in Care/ Child Protection Reviewing Services To consider performance in Children in Care/ Child Protection, with headlines of progress made, changes undertaken, challenges that remain. <li data-bbox="629 686 1037 718">• Work Programme 2021/22
29 July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="629 791 1989 959">• Scrutiny of Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People To focus on improvement and recovery and present in detail on the budget for CYP services and how resources are being managed to reduce spend but achieve positive outcomes for CYP. Budget and spend is touched on in most items the Committee discusses and this will pull everything in relation to resources together in one item. <li data-bbox="629 999 1877 1098">• Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse To review progress in implementing outstanding actions from the action plan arising from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse <li data-bbox="629 1137 1037 1169">• Work Programme 2021/22
30 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="629 1238 1995 1406">• Early Years Entitlement To review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="674 1302 1653 1334">- Sustainability of Early Years providers in light of the Covid-19 pandemic <li data-bbox="674 1334 1137 1366">- Access to Early Years provision <li data-bbox="674 1366 1995 1406">- Take up of Early Years entitlement, with a focus on awareness of opportunities and cultural issues

Date	Items
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on progress to implement the Children’s Integrated Services Improvement Programme To: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review progress in implementing Improvement Programme - consider findings of the Ofsted focussed visit and response to those findings • Work Programme 2021/22
25 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary School Exclusions - discussion with the Regional Schools Commissioner and local Academy • Children’s Services financial pressures and transformation activity To scrutinise action being taken to address in-year financial pressures in relation to Children’s Services; consider proposals related to Children’s Services in the draft MTFP (as part of the consultation on the MTFP); and review progress in undertaking longer term transformation activity. • Work Programme 2021/22
27 January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND Inspection To consider the findings of, and response to the review of SEND provision in the City. • Children with no recourse to public funds To explore what can be done to mitigate the impacts of supporting children with no recourse to public funds on the ability to deliver statutory services and responsibilities. • Work Programme 2021/22
31 March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s Integrated Services Transformation To scrutinise proposals for transformation in Children’s Integrated Services • Work Programme 2022/23

Reserve items to Schedule:

1. Children's Safeguarding

To review specifically (a) the Council's awareness of where children reside in order to ensure children are safeguarded and receive appropriate support and services and (b) Child Sexual Exploitation (referral from Chair of O&S Committee)

2. How the Council works to support children and their parents

To review how well the Council co-ordinates, support for children and their parents across services and the impact on their lives (to include Children's Centres, Small Steps Big Changes, Public Health)

3. County Lines, particularly from an education focus

To consider the impact of County Lines on education (referral from Chair of O&S Committee)

4. Children with no recourse to public funds

To review arrangements in the city for children and young people with no recourse to public funds and to explore support for registering citizenship for children and young people

5. How the Council engages with children and young people from Traveller families

To review how the Council's provides support and works with partners to meet the range of needs of children and young people from Traveller families

This page is intentionally left blank