



Nottingham City Council Corporate Parenting Board

Date: Monday, 21 November 2022

Time: 2.00 pm

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

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

Director for Legal and Governance

Governance Officer: Phil Wye

Direct Dial: 0115 876 4637

- 1 Apologies for absence**
- 2 Declarations of Interests**
- 3 Minutes** 3 - 30
Meetings held 16 May and 18 July 2022 (for confirmation)
- 4 Reducing Offending Behaviour (Children in Care)** 31 - 36
Joint report of Director for Children's Integrated Services (NCC) &
Superintendent James Woolley, Nottinghamshire Police
- 5 Independent Advocacy Annual Report 2022** 37 - 48
Report of The Children's Society
- 6 Performance update** 49 - 50
Report of Director of Children's Integrated Services
- 7 Education of children in care- interim report** 51 - 56
Joint report of Corporate Director for People and Director of Education
Services
- 8 Children in Care - update**
Verbal update by Engagement and Participation Lead Officer
- 9 Feedback from development session and Board next steps**
Discussion item

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

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

Corporate Parenting Board

Minutes of the meeting held at Loxley House, Station Street, NG2 3NG on 16 May 2022 from 2.00 pm - 3.55 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Maria Joannou (Vice Chair)
Councillor Merlita Bryan
Councillor Georgia Power
Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos
Councillor Ethan Radford

Absent

Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Councillor Jay Hayes
Councillor Phil Jackson
Councillor Zafran Nawaz Khan
Councillor Andrew Rule

Councillor Roger Steele

(substitute for Councillor Rule)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Mary-Anne Cosgrove	- Head of Children in Care, Care Leavers & Regulated Services
Mark Leavesley	- Governance Officer
Treza Mann	- Service Manager, Children in Care and Care Leavers
Lynn Pearce	- Team Manager, Care Leavers
Cayetana Baena Quiralte	- Senior Business Support Officer
Lorraine Sudlow	- Project Manager, Barnardo's Central Region
Audrey Taylor	- Service Manager, Fostering and Adoption
Catherine Underwood	- Corporate Director for People

1 Appointment of Vice-Chair

Resolved to appoint Councillor Maria Joannou as Vice-Chair for the municipal year 2022/23.

At this point, in the absence of Councillor Barnard, Councillor Joannou assumed the Chair for the meeting.

2 Apologies for absence

Councillor Barnard	-	leave
Councillor Hayes	-	unspecified
Councillor Jackson	-	personal
Councillor Rule	-	work

Ailsa Barr
Kathryn Higgins
Jasmine Howell
Jon Rea

3 Declarations of Interests

In the interests of transparency, Councillor Power declared that she is employed by The Children's Society as its Local Public Affairs Manager.

This did not preclude her from taking part in discussion or voting on any item on the agenda.

4 Minutes

The Board agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2022 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair presiding at the meeting.

5 LGA Peer Review - progress update

Mary-Anne Cosgrove, Head of Children in Care, Care Leavers and Regulated Services, updated the Board on a recent LGA Corporate Parenting Board Peer Review, which was part of a wider package of support to develop the effectiveness of the Corporate Parenting Board.

Ms Cosgrove stated the following:

- (i) the package included:
 - peer interviews with key officers and Councillors to understand the approach to corporate parenting;
 - a Corporate Parenting Board observation - which took place in January 2022;
 - development of key areas and aspects for improvement;
 - a bespoke development programme for the Corporate Parenting Board;
- (ii) the review, undertaken during 5 days in April 2022, was based on national Corporate Parenting Principles, was not an inspection, rather the Peer team (which included Councillor Antoinette Bramble, Hackney Council, and Su Turner, independent Governance Specialist) were invited in as 'critical friends', and the information was confidential and non-attributable;
- (iii) the peer diagnostic considered the following themes:
 - health and wellbeing of children in care and care leavers;
 - the voice of children in care and care leavers;
 - aspiration and achievement;
 - quality, planning, stability and permanence;
 - care leavers and transition;
 - Governance and Board effectiveness;
- (iv) the Review highlighted strengths, such as:

- there appeared to be a commitment across the council to corporate parenting, and an increased understanding of what that means by those not working in children's services;
 - there was a strong culture of focusing on the child, and the Corporate Parenting Board was keen to examine ways to effectively engage with children in care and care leavers;
 - recent interventions had seen improvements to services for children in care and care leavers;
 - the Corporate Parenting Board met 6 times per year, and members are committed to attending and asking questions;
 - key partner were now attending Corporate Parenting Board meetings;
- (v) the review did, however, highlight some areas for consideration, such as:
- whilst commitment to children in care and care leavers was voiced by all interviewed, there did not seem to be a single coherent aspiration or vision that could be articulated, and the council's pledge or promises to the children was not mentioned by most in the interviews;
 - the Corporate Parenting Board met in public, which was quite unusual. This can stifle board discussions and deeper conversations regarding key aspects of services for children in care and care leavers. It also prevented those children in care who wished to attend from doing so, and meant holding a separate private meeting;
 - the reviewers felt that whilst the council had made improvements to services for children in care and care leavers, it felt that these had been done in silos, and the Corporate Parenting Board could act as the bridge to improve services;
 - the Corporate Parenting Board appeared to operate as a scrutiny committee, and whilst key members championed the needs of children in care, this leadership dynamic could be enhanced;
 - membership of the Corporate Parenting Board was unclear. Partners attended, but were unsure of their role;
 - meetings were dominated by lengthy reports and presentations from officers. Whilst there was good agenda management by the Chair; reports and presentations could prevent important discussions;
 - the Board was keen to hear the voices of children, however this needed to be explored carefully, and the Board adopting a variety of means, not just children in care and care leavers attending board meetings;
- (vi) in light of the above, it was proposed that the following development sessions were held:

- **CPB1:** a session specifically for the Corporate Parenting Board that focussed on leveling understanding of corporate parenting and how they can be the champions for children;
- **CPB2:** a session specifically for the Corporate Parenting Board focussed on how to listen effectively to the voices of children, and how the work programme can be developed to support this;
- **All City Councillors:** a development session for the whole council and senior managers that focussed specifically on what corporate parenting was and how they can all be effective corporate parents.

During discussion, the following comments were made:

- the children needed to be more involved in compilation of 'Pledges', and the pledges need to be more specific so that they can be monitored;
- the 'care leaver offers' needed to be more visible/accessible on the website;
- all council departments should have a representative at Corporate Parenting Board meetings;
- there seemed to be a crossover between Corporate Parenting Board and children's scrutiny.

6 Children in Care / Leaving Care - 2021/22 Q4 performance

Treza Mann, Service Manager, Children in Care / Leaving Care Services, and Audrey Taylor, Service Manager, Fostering and Adoption, presented the report, which updated the Board on the Q4 2021/22 performance data for children in care and leaving care.

During discussion, the following was stated:

- due to recruitment and retention issues in regards to Children's Social Workers, some children do not have a single-point contact;
- **Pathway Plan (95% target)** – Children in Care has seen a drop from 90% in March 2021 to 79% in March 2022 of children eligible for a Pathway Plan having had a plan authorised during the last 6 months. Care leavers with an authorised plan has seen a drop from 92% in March 2021 to 82.2% in March 2022, the narrative for that being high levels of long-term sickness, staff moving on to other employment and vacancies within the team. Now that the staff team are on full form, the figure will increase as staff start to progress Pathway Plans with Carer Leavers.
- **Personal Education Plans (PEP) compliance** - PEP performance for the Spring 2022 term was 86%, this being a slight drop from the previous term's 88% (although that was a marked improvement from the status of PEP compliance prior to them becoming electronic updates).

Resolved that the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee be requested to consider:

- (i) recruitment and retention in respect of children's Social Workers;**
- (ii) Pathway Plan and Personal Education Plan compliance.**

7 Integrated Care Partnership - Care Leavers Project

Lorraine Sudlow, Project Manager, Barnardos Central Region, presented the report and gave a presentation to the Board (a copy of the slides for which are appended to these minutes).

The Board stated that the collaboration with Barnardos was working well and all members wished for it to continue.

8 Work Plan

The Board noted the work plan, and added an item in respect of the Adoption Service to the January 2023 meeting.

9 Dates of future meetings

The Board agreed to meet at 2.00pm at Loxley House on the following Mondays:

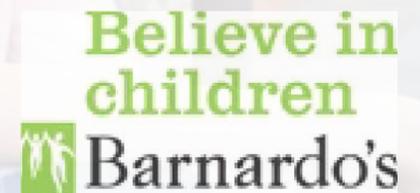
<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
18 July	16 January
19 September	20 March
21 November	

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BARNARDO'S - NOTTINGHAM LEGACY & NOTTINGHAM CITY - LEAVING CARE SERVICE

Where we are now and our future vision

Sameer Patel, Lynn Pearce, Lorraine Sudlow



BARNARDO'S - NOTTINGHAM LEGACY

- * Significant legacy left to Barnardo's by a supporter
- * Only conditions were to use the funds in Nottingham City or Nottinghamshire County to benefit children and young people
- * Agreement reached to work with care experienced young people in Nottingham City
- * Working with Nottingham City Council and Nottingham City Integrated Care Partnership now known as City Place-Based Partnership

WHAT WE'RE FOCUSED ON

*** Mental Health ***

*** Accommodation ***

*** Positive Destinations ***



MENTAL HEALTH

BEFRIENDING SERVICE

A service set up by Barnardo's to pair care experienced young people with a volunteer

Aims to support the young people as they leave care and learn to live more independently, with a focus on reducing isolation and escalation to statutory mental health services

Page 13

Volunteers support 16-25 year olds to help them learn new skills, get a job, a house etc.

Currently recruiting volunteers and setting them up with training





ACCOMMODATION

SUPPORTED LODGINGS

Provides safe accommodation for 16-21 year old CEYP and UASC

Barnardo's are working with the Placement Service and Fostering team in NCC

'Hosts' offer a spare room in their house to help young people learn to live independently

Barnardo's are recruiting, training and supporting hosts who provide the accommodation

Barnardo's conduct thorough suitability checks including Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) and reference checks, Health & Local Authority checks



POSITIVE DESTINATIONS



ASPIRATION CHAMPION NETWORK

Care experienced 14-24 year olds

Mentoring support for education/career pathway

Bespoke one-to-one support

Access to the Aspiration Champion's knowledge, experience (and contact list!)

VOICE & INFLUENCE OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Care experienced young people part of the Supported Lodgings panel

Young person employed through the Kickstart scheme in Barnardo's

Involvement with the Children in Care Council

Nottingham City Council young people survey and local offer feedback

Feedback from the You Know Your Mind evaluation

Joint reviews of Supported lodgings placements – Leaving Care & Barnardo's

NOTTINGHAM LEGACY & LEAVING CARE SERVICE NEXT STEPS

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NEXT STEPS

Looking at 'experts' embedded within the Leaving Care team

- **Tutor offering bespoke one-to-one support**
- **Two Accommodation Project Workers**
- **Two Mental Health Practitioners**

Evaluation



THANK YOU ANY QUESTIONS?

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Nottingham City Council

Corporate Parenting Board

Minutes of the meeting held at Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 18 July 2022 from 2pm – 3.25pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Cheryl Barnard (Chair)
Councillor Merlita Bryan
Councillor Jay Hayes
Councillor Phil Jackson
Councillor Maria Joannou (Vice Chair)
Councillor Salma Mumtaz
Councillor Georgia Power
Councillor Andrew Rule

Absent

Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark
Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Mary-Anne Cosgrove	- Head of Children's Regulated Services
Treza Mann	- Interim Service Manager for Children in Care and Leaving Care Service
Sameer Patel	- Team Manager for Leaving Care Service
Jon Rea	- Engagement and Participation Lead Officer
Audrey Taylor	- Service Manager, Fostering and Adoption
Kate Morris	- Governance Officer

10 Change in Membership

The Board noted the appointment of Councillor Eunice Campbell- Clark and Councillor Salma Mumtaz and the resignation of Councillor Ethan Radford.

11 Apologies for absence

Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark – On Leave
Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos - Unwell

Alison Platkiw – Principal Manager (IRO Team)
Catherine Underwood – Corporate Director for People

12 Declarations of Interests

In the interests of transparency, Councillor Power declared that she is employed by The Children's Society as their Local Public Affairs Manager.

This did not preclude her from taking part in the discussion or voting on any item on the agenda.

13 Children in Care Council Workshop

Jon Rea, Engagement and Participation Lead, gave an update to the Committee on the Workshop held at the Children in Care Council meeting in June combining agenda items 4 and 5. The Workshop looked at education, and Jacki Blossom from the Virtual School attended. The following points were highlighted:

- (a) The session focused on the thoughts and experiences of the group around the Pupil Premium Plus (PPP) the Personal Education Plan (PEP) and the support available to children in care around accessing Education;
- (b) Council members talked about how the PEP was introduced to them, how they were engaged with their plans and the its ongoing management;
- (c) The group was a mix of young people both in care and care leavers and the feedback around the PEP was generally positive. The young people did not like the rating system used, which they felt needed to be more meaningful, however they reported that workers engaged well with them and over all they liked the plans;
- (d) The young people offered challenge around hybrid working and moving to a more electronic based way of working. Members of the group preferred a paperless system but recognised that some people may find a system with paper copies of work more accessible. Finding a balance and tailoring the work for individuals to access is key;
- (e) Nottingham City Council is introducing the Lundy Model of participation to help engage young people with their PEP more effectively. This model centres around 4 chronological elements, space, voice, audience and influence;
- (f) The PPP totals £500 per young person in care per term. It can be used to fund a variety of things, including activities to boost self confidence and resilience, staff training, and many other things to facilitate learning. Examples given were a purchase of a trumpet and music lessons, purchase of a laptop to facilitate remote learning, and a trip to France;
- (g) Not enough young people or their carers know about the PPP and the benefits it can bring to a young person's education. Young people in the group who had received the PPP commented that it was an opportunity for them to really consider what would help them, and felt like it was an investment in their future and their own outcomes;
- (h) Better ways of communicating information about the PPP to young people and carers need to be considered;
- (i) There was further conversation with the group about support post 16, and onward, from school into university;
- (j) The Virtual School team took away a number of good suggestions and both the school and the Council group agreed to continue to work closely together to further develop the good relationship.

Following questions and comments from Board members the following points were discussed:

- (k) A more child friendly way to communicate important information about the PPP is needed. This can go into the monthly Virtual School Bulletin, and consideration will be given on how best to spread the information in an accessible way to both young people and carers;
- (l) Momentum has been building around the Lundy Model which was first developed in 2007. It is developing more traction and works well with established trauma informed practice. The Council is aiming to develop champions in the method to encourage its use more widely and this practice will develop to suit the City and the young people it supports. Region wide training is taking place in the near future;

The Board thanked Jon Rea for his updated.

14 Pathway Plan for Care Leavers

In a change to the order of the published agenda and with the agreement of the Chair the Board took item 9, Pathway Plan for Care leavers as the next item.

Treza Mann, Interim Service Manager for Children in Care and Leaving Care Service, and Sameer Patel, Team Manager for Leaving Care Service gave a verbal update to the Board to address issues raised at the last board meeting (minute 63 Children in Care / Leaving Care - 2021/22 Q4 performance Report). They highlighted the following points:

- (a) Pathway plans are created in collaboration between a young person and their Social Worker when a young person is aged 15/16 and puts in place plans to support that young person into independence. It is reviewed on a 6 monthly basis, or sooner if a young person's circumstances significantly change. Once the young person leaves care the plan is transferred to the Personal Advisor in the Leaving Care Team;
- (b) At the last Corporate Parenting Board in May 2022, concerns were raised that only 76% of plans were being reviewed within the 6 month target. Target performance for this figure is 95%;
- (c) The primary reason for the drop off in performance is staff absence, with the team operating with reduced numbers of Social Workers due to long term sickness until very recently. Although there is still absence within the team this is now much reduced. This long-term absence has had a knock on effect on the reviews in terms of capacity of the remaining team members;
- (d) Agency staff were recruited to create more capacity, however many young people prefer to engage with workers they are familiar with when planning for their future, and Pathway Plan reviews can be a sensitive and personal process they are unwilling to engage with, with workers they are unfamiliar with;
- (e) Between February and March in 2022 the performance increased to 82.2%, which has since increased to 86% as of the date of this meeting. It is taking

time for young people to feel comfortable and bond with new workers, but progress is being made;

- (f) The Leaving Care Team is focusing on regaining stability and increasing capacity. Specialist workers, such as Housing and Mental Health specialists are now working within the team, directly with young people to provide specific and expert advice in a timely manner. This creates additional time for Personal Advisors. This place based work is funded through a number of different streams including the Levelling Up fund, the Staying Close fund and funding from Banardo's; (is this right - my notes aren't 100% clear, sorry.)
- (g) Now that the Pathway plans are an embedded process and with increased capacity within the team there is an opportunity to focus on the quality of the plans, progress around performance targets will be monitored closely;

Committee members asked a number of questions, and during discussion the following points were made:

- (h) The structure of the Leaving Care team is being carefully considered to ensure that the resources are in place to allow workers to fully support young people. Workers are being allocated to young people 6 months before their transition to the Leaving Care Team to allow time for the work and the young person to form a relationship;
- (i) The additional funding used to facilitate the place based work is only short term. Moving forward the posts will be funded through the savings they generate elsewhere within the service. The 2 years funding gives an opportunity to assess the impact and outcomes for young people and to further develop Partnerships with other agencies;
- (j) The target of 95% of Pathway Plans being reviewed every six months should be achieved by autumn time. The team are all working hard to achieve this, and will continue to work hard to maintain that performance;
- (k) It is important that Pathway Plans are relevant, and meaningful to the young person. Plans are completed where possible with the young person and are written in the young person's words. They focus on areas where additional support is needed to help the young person to move to independence;
- (l) Where young people are not engaging with the Plan they are developed so that should the young person choose to reengage there is foundation to work on;
- (m) There is a set of standard information that is required in each Plan to ensure that the focus is in the right areas.

Committee members thanks Treza and Sameer for their report and asked for a written report to be circulated.

Audrey Taylor, Service Manager for Adoption and Fostering presented the Annual Fostering Service report for 2021/22. She highlighted the following points:

- (a) There has been a slight reduction in the number of carers, including mainstream and connected persons, from the previous year, down by 50. Of those who left, 24 were due to positive outcomes;
- (b) In the period covered by the report there were 7 allegations made against carers, 4 of these were referred to the Fostering Panel to review their fostering approval status, 2 resulted in no further action, 1 was to progress with monitoring. 3 applications were referred for independent review, all three of those were upheld;
- (c) The cohort of connected persons continues to grow with 97 children placed in 71 families. Work continues to take place with the D2N2 partnership to upskill foster carers and provide training pre approval and includes details of Therapeutic Parenting. Connected Carers also have a specific support group as well as access to other support groups across the service;
- (d) Further work is focusing on the recruitment strategy and is being undertaken as part of the Council's Transformation Programme. Investment and technical support are needed to ensure a modern recruitment process;
- (e) The Service continues to work with carers, offering support groups monthly, and further support meetings every 6 weeks. These meetings and groups take place at a variety of times of the day to ensure everyone is able to access them. These continue to be virtual at the moment and are working well. Carers have feedback that they feel more able to attend virtual groups as there is no need for travel and it is easier to access;
- (f) There is a monthly newsletter that goes to all carers which advises of upcoming and available training and support, staffing changes and events run by the service;
- (g) 2021/22 was a challenging year in terms of fostering, particularly as a result of Covid with a number of foster carers resigning after they put their caring status on hold during the pandemic.

Board members asked a number of questions and commented on the content of the report. The following points were highlighted:

- (h) The fall in the number of carers can be seen in many local authorities and is a national trend;
- (i) The process of applying to be a foster carer can feel invasive and very personal. Potential carers will be asked about their own childhood, and as part of the application ex partners can be approached but this is all important information to assess Safeguarding. Carers often find it a difficult process to go through with some feeling left unsupported. Support Social Workers are allocated to the prospective carers and feedback on the process is always welcomed;

- (j) Where carers resign, reasons are recorded. For many carers it is because of a change in circumstances, work or family related. The population of current carers is getting older and many are retiring through age;
- (k) Recruitment is still taking place virtually. Face to face events have been trialled post lockdown but with very little attendance and often no one who expressed an interest going forward to apply. To be more resource effective the recruitment strategy is looking at targeted advertising via social media and through community groups reaching into different communities with a focus on BAME foster carers are needed. There is extensive evidence that this targeted method is more resource effective than the large scale face to face events previously held;
- (l) There has been an issue around the stability of provision of support social workers, however the team has recruited experienced staff and work to stabilise the team is well under way. A stable relationship with the support social worker is necessary for potential carers to engage well with them;
- (m) The current conversion rate of people expressing an interest in fostering to becoming a carer is around 12%, which is good.

The Board thanked Audrey Taylor for her updated.

Resolved to note the recruitment and retention performance of the Fostering Service and the activities undertaken by the service to recruit and support foster carers.

16 Fostering Panel Chair's Report 2021/22

Audrey Taylor, Service Manager for Adoption and Fostering presented the Fostering Panel Chair's report 2021/22 which details the numbers of foster carers and children, strengths and achievements of the service and performance targets and measures. She highlighted the following points

- (a) Fostering Panels have been running virtually since the start of the pandemic and the national lockdown in March 2020. Both panel members and applicants have provided feedback that they like the virtual format as it makes participation easier and more convenient. This feedback is typical of that across the country;
- (b) There has been a drop in applicants from 2020/21 to 2021/22 with a reduction in mainstream applicants and an increase in 1st annual reviews, as there had been some back log due to the pandemic. There was also an increase in the number of reviews as a result of concerns; the number of terminations of approval stayed stable;
- (c) The Panel have commented that reports they receive are of a good standard, and decision have been made within timescales;
- (d) Areas identified for improvement include increased members from under represented communities and to increase diversity on panels to be more representative of the community and service users;

Resolved to note the activities of the Fostering Panels

17 Unregulated and Unregistered Placements - Children in Care

Mary-Anne Cosgrove, Head of Children in Care, presented the report detailing the key issues in relation to unregulated and unregistered placements for Children in Care and local processes as requested by the Board at its meeting in March 2022 (Minute 57). She detailed the difference between unregulated and unregistered settings and outlined the following points:

- (a) Unregistered provision is when a child/young person who is being provided with some form of 'care' is living somewhere that is not registered with Ofsted, this is not a legal placement. All placements of this nature must be reported to Ofsted;
- (b) It has been a challenge for local authorities across the country to establish sufficient placements for young people and many are staying in unregulated placements, which means that the placement is not inspected by Ofsted, although this will change in the future;
- (c) Where 16 and 17yr olds are placed in supported accommodation, this is not regulated. This is not an ideal placement but where the young person is assessed as being able to live in semi independence it is a legal placement. Such placements come with additional support and visits from key workers to help the young person settle into independent living by establishing routines. Throughout their time in these unregulated placements Social workers will be searching for more regulated placements;
- (d) These placements, although unregulated by Ofsted are lawful;
- (e) In Nottingham City there is a small number of young people in this type of placement, the published report states 6 but this has reduced since the agenda was published;
- (f) There is daily work to ensure that young people are not in unregulated care settings as long term arrangements. A weekly report is shared with the Director for Integrated Children's Service and the Corporate Director for People detailing unregulated placements and the efforts to find alternative provision. There are very clear and detailed safety plans in place which are regularly monitored to ensure the unregulated placement continues to be safe.

Board members asked a number of questions and the following details discussed:

- (g) Unregulated placement of young people into semi-independent living only happens if they are assessed as ready for it, and only happens on the rare occasion that a regulated placement cannot be found;
- (h) Searches for regulated provision take place daily. For a small number of young people it can be difficult to find regulated placements, but Social Workers work with the young person on behaviour and routine that helps them to adapt to the semi independent living model or to find regulated placement;

- (i) Concerns were raised about a specific case in Birmingham where a 2 children had dies in an unregulated provision. Young people from Nottingham had also placed there, and the Board sought assurance that this placement was appropriate. In response the Director of Integrated children's Services informed the Board that Local Authorities share information with each other when a child moves out of the area. Where children are placed outside Nottingham City checks with the local authority are done to ensure there are no safeguarding issues. Details of new placements are shared with regional and neighbouring authorities and wherever the young person is placed there will be additional oversight and visits by the Social worker just as there in when they are placed within the City;
- (j) Where a placement has failed an inspection Ofsted will inform local authorities, and their reports are published on the intranet so checks on out of city placements can be done easily and where a care setting is deregistered by Ofsted they write out to all Directors responsible for children in care to advise them of the deregistration;
- (k) Within the East Midlands there is a semi-independent living framework so new setting are asked to join that before a young person is placed there. Most regional areas have this kind of framework and so if a provision is not part of it then additional checks are initiated;
- (l) There is a network of commissioners for the D2N2 area that work closely with children's services to ensure provision is appropriate. This framework has been developed and provision is fully checked and due diligence completed before they are accepted. It allows block contracting and this is bolstered by te provision from Barnardos supported lodging. Mock inspections of provisions do take place;
- (m)Board members gave positive feedback following a recent a visit to one provision within the city;

Resolved to note the different types of placement arrangements and the processes in place to ensure management oversight.

18 Work Programme 2022/23

The Board noted the work programme going forward.

19 Dates of future meetings

The Board noted the next meeting day Monday 19 September 2022 at 2pm.

Agenda Item 4
Corporate Parenting Board - 21 November 2022

Title of paper:	Reducing Offending Behaviour (Children in Care)	
Director:	Ailsa Barr: Children's Integrated Services (NCC) Supt James Woolley - Nottinghamshire Police	Wards affected: All
Report author(s) and contact details:	PC Sam Flint BEM - Children in Care Police Officer, Nottinghamshire Police Sam.flint@nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk PC Rebecca Dalby – Children in care Police Officer, Nottinghamshire Police Rebecca.dalby@nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk	
Other colleagues who have provided input:	Natalie Pink – Leaving Care Service Jonathan Hurst – Data Analyst	
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder	N/A	
Relevant Council Plan Key Outcome:		
Clean and Connected Communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Keeping Nottingham Working	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Carbon Neutral by 2028	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Safer Nottingham	X	
Child-Friendly Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Healthy and Inclusive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Keeping Nottingham Moving	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Improve the City Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Better Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial Stability	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Serving People Well	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):		
To update the Board on the published data for 2020/1 regarding reducing offending behaviour within the Children in Care population, and on the activity of the Children in Care Police Officers, working together to reduce offending and safeguard Children in Care.		
Recommendations:		
1	To note the data regarding reducing offending behaviour within the Children in Care population.	
2	To recognise the importance of sustaining the work of the CiC Police Officers to continue to improve outcomes for Children in Care.	

1. **Reasons for recommendations**

1.1 This information is provided to the Board annually.

2. **Other options considered in making recommendations**

2.1 None

3. Consideration of Risk

- 3.1 PC Sam Flint retires from Nottinghamshire Police in 2023. There is a proposal for PC Sam Flint to return to post part time.

4. Background (including outcomes of consultation)

- 4.1 National reporting data is submitted annually, based on the Children in Care population whose home Authority is Nottingham City, who have been in care for a year or more, are aged 10-17, and have received a Youth Caution, Youth Conditional Caution, or conviction within the year.
- 4.2 Up until (and including) the year 2016/17 we were able to report a 5 year trend in reducing offending behaviour within the Children in Care population. In 2017/18 we maintained our performance in terms of the numbers of children in care who offended.
- 4.3 At 2020/21 we are reporting a figure of 2%. This figure is now so low that we cannot analyse the figure itself. It is positive to note the overall reduction in the percentage over time.

4.4 Table 1 (Children's Social Care Benchmarking Tool)

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Nottingham	6%	6%	5%	6%	3%	4%	2%
East Midlands	5%	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Statistical Neighbours	6%	7%	6%	5%	5%	4%	3%
England	5%	5%	5%	4%	3%	3%	2%

- 4.5 Specialist roles: Children in Care Police Officers posts continue to be jointly funded by Nottinghamshire Police and Nottingham City Council. After March 2023 it is proposed that PC Flint will be retiring from the Police Service as a Police Officer but will be coming back into The CIC role, which will continue to be jointly funded.
- 4.6 Multi Agency Protocol: Children in Care Police Officers, Nottinghamshire Police and the leaving care service senior advisor worked alongside the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Service Managers for Children in Care and Placements, to develop and implement a protocol for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. This was with a view to reducing the criminalisation of Children in Care. We are now lucky enough to have a Children in Care equivalent who covers the County. This streamlines joint working when city children are placed within the county and vice versa.
- 4.7 This Protocol was originally ratified in 2017 prior to the national protocol on reducing unnecessarily criminalisation of looked after children and care leavers in November 2018. The national protocol asks, "would this [response] be good enough for my child?"
- 4.8 Both protocols were reflective of each other which prompted a Multi-Agency review. It is recognised that the Reducing Offender Behaviour protocol is a fluid document and continual consultation is crucial.

In 2022 an updated version of the protocol was signed off by all agencies. Consultation has also taken place in relation to the 10 Point checklist, to possibly reduce this to a 5-point checklist. Nottingham have led with the consultation with the CPS regarding this.

- 4.9 A renewed focus was placed upon the completion of the (current) 10 point checklist, to provide information to the Prosecutor/Out of Court Disposal Panel, to ensure the most appropriate action is taken (if any), following offending behaviour by a Child in Care. This focus has also included awareness training for magistrates to highlight the importance of recognising trauma when dealing with young people in court.
- 4.10 Nottinghamshire Police, Children in Care Police Officers for City and County, representatives from the City and County Youth Justice Services and CPS, meet virtually to share information, develop services, identify, and address any issues for offending behaviour by children in care across Nottinghamshire.
- 4.11 Children in Care Arrest Screening: The difficulty of early and effective identification of Children in Care on arrest has always been a concern. Due to this, together with partners we devised an arrest screening tool to identify when a young person in care is arrested. Further to that in 2022 a screening tool was implemented by Nottinghamshire Police which alerts Children in Care officers to every call made by every Childrens home and semi-independent home. This allows them to intervene at the very earliest opportunity if any offences have been committed or even to prior to this to problem solve as issues arise. Children in Care officers have worked closely with crime recording teams in using different outcomes to prevent criminalisation of children in care.
- 4.12 Multi Agency Working: Children in Care officers liaise on a daily basis with all Childrens homes, semi-independent providers and foster carers where needed. Officers support and guide, advise on safeguarding, implement protocols and promote the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) toolkit. They liaise with the sexual exploitation unit and CCE coordinators. Children in Care officers provide up to date knowledge, promote and share several positive resources for children in care and carers, offering education, work opportunities, preventative resources and packages for key work sessions. They provide up to date knowledge and share any new resources that are available.
- 4.13 Children in Care officers are also in direct contact with Ofsted.
“The dedicated children in care Police Officers successfully support restorative justice interventions, and there have been impressive reductions in offending rates.” (Ofsted 2018) “Really appreciate your input and insight, it is priceless” (Ofsted July 2021)
- 4.14 Children in Care Officers maintain their accessibility for young people to contact them. This remains a very important part of the role. Children in Care officers also have access to specialist careers advisors and engagement officers who continue to focus on those young people who need extra support. These specialists can support young people to become part of the police cadets and have also helped support one of our young people who will be joining Nottinghamshire Police as a police officer in October 2022.
- 4.15 The Children in Care Police Officers have created an awareness video package which is presented to all new police recruits to promote trauma informed practice and the vulnerabilities of working with children in care. This has resulted in much discussion and awareness raising. Nottinghamshire Police have now recognised the importance of Police staff being trauma informed and using a trauma informed lens when working with young people.
- 4.16 The Concerns Network Meeting has relaunched going from strength to strength and better than ever, with full support of the sexual exploitation unit. We expect this to continue to grow. We still have over 20 agencies keen to meet on a regular basis to share intelligence and implement disruption tactics. This is now hosted by Basford Hall College.

4.17 The Children in Care Police Officers lead a girls-only boxing provision in collaboration with Jawaid Khaliq, World Champion boxer, to empower young women. This group has gone from strength to strength and has been running every week for 4 years. 2 years funding has been secured from an independent scrutineer NSCP. This has allowed the group to expand the activities available, which has been greatly beneficial to the young people.

4.18 Restorative Approaches: The Youth Justice Service has an Out Of Court Disposal Triage system and this Panel meet every week in an effort to reduce the numbers of young people entering the Youth Justice System. The Children in Care Police Officers are invited to attend the Panel when a child in care is discussed. There are established protocols and working practice guidelines with Victim Care to ensure all 'person's harmed' have a voice.

5. **Finance colleague comments**

5.1 The CIC Police Officers are jointly funded by Nottinghamshire Police and Nottingham City Council. Reduction of offending and missing reports have both a short and long term financial benefit across the authority and partners, as well as safeguarding Children in Car and improving outcomes.

5.2 "The rate at which a minority of children move from care into the criminal justice system is not inevitable....."Good practice can dramatically reduce the long term costs that arise when young people get sucked into the criminal justice system unnecessarily – one study calculated a return of £3.41 for every £1 invested." (In Care, Out of Trouble 2016)

6. **Legal colleague comments**

None.

7. **Other relevant comments**

None.

8. **Crime and Disorder Implications (If Applicable)**

N/A.

9. **Social value considerations (If Applicable)**

N/A.

10. **Regard to the NHS Constitution (If Applicable)**

N/A.

11. **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

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

12. **Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)**

12.1 A DPIA is not required.

13. Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA)

13.1 A CIA is not required.

14. List of background papers relied upon in writing this report (not including published documents or confidential or exempt information)

14.1 Joint Protocol Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire.

15. Published documents referred to in this report

15.1 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-protocol-on-reducing-criminalisation-of-looked-after-children>

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Nottingham

City Council

Independent Advocacy

Annual Report: October 2021 to August 2022

Area Manager: Gabriel Hall

Service Manager: Alison Smith

Introduction

The Children's Society is commissioned by Nottingham City Council to deliver an independent and confidential Advocacy Service for all Children in their care. The Advocacy Service promotes children's rights and provides advocacy in line with the Local Authority's statutory duty.

The Children's Society's practice is underpinned by the National Standards for the provision of Children's Advocacy Services (2002).

The service aims to empower children and young people ensuring their rights are respected and that their views and wishes are heard in decision-making processes. The service provides independent;

- Information
- Advice
- Advocacy
- Representation
- Support

The Advocacy process is led by children and young people and advocates follow the core principles below;

- *Advocates work for children and young people and no one else.*
- *Advocates value and respect children and young people and challenge discrimination.*
- *Advocates support children in care to understand what is happening to them and to ensure they have a voice in decisions made about them.*
- *Advocates help children and young people to raise issues and concerns about things they are unhappy with. This includes making informal and formal complaints under section 26 of the Children's Act 1989.*

Advocacy for young people is based on the principle that all young people have a right to be involved in the decisions that affect their lives. The distinctive nature of advocacy is that it is led by the views and wishes of young people and always uses a child-centered approach. Advocates act on the permission and instructions of young people even when these are not the advocate's view of the young person's best interests.

Nottingham City Advocacy Service

Advocacy services are available for children and young people up to the age of 18 years or up to 25 years of age for those with a disability or in higher education. The Children's Society provides a free and confidential phone messaging service (available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week) for children and young people to make contact with the advocacy service.

Residential Visiting Advocacy

The Children's Society is contracted to provide Residential Visiting Advocacy to all children and young people in residential care, at a minimum of once every twelve weeks. This includes all residential homes that are Local Authority maintained, private and secure accommodation throughout the UK.

Issue Based Advocacy

The Children's Society provide issue based advocacy representing children and young people who have specific concerns that they wish to be supported with. This work has no specific time frames however the advocates aim to resolve issues quickly. Once resolved the work is closed and if young people have subsequent issues these are raised as new pieces of work.

The service aims to achieve that;

1. Young people feel that their views, wishes and opinions are listened to
2. Young people feel confident to speak out and self-advocate
3. Young people understand their rights and the decisions made about their lives
4. Young people have improved wellbeing
5. Young people have more control over the decisions made in their lives

Non- Instructed Issue Based Referrals

The advocate's role is to ensure that the young person is at the center of all decisions being made about them. If a young person is unable to communicate their views, then the advocate will make it clear that they do not know what a young person wants, and that they are therefore using a non-instructed approach.

The non-instructed advocacy referral primarily involves observation, questioning, information gathering and being clear on what rights the young person has. In practice non-

The Children's Society

instructed advocacy usually involves a combination of these techniques to ensure the rights of the young person are upheld, decisions are made in a child-centered way and as far as possible, the young person has input into the decisions affecting their lives. First and foremost, it has to be the needs of the young person that dictate the form of advocacy used.

It is important to keep an open mind and consider all forms of communication that a young person may be able to use to instruct, for example symbols/signing & PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System – using cards with pictures to express wishes and feelings). This may involve working with key professionals involved in the young person's life to gain a better understanding about what the young person wants to communicate

Independent Persons

An Independent Person is provided to all eligible children and young people subject to current Secure Accommodation Orders. As an Independent Person, the Advocate is to be an active member of the decision-making panel, which decides whether the criteria for keeping a young person in secure accommodation continue to apply, ensuring that children's rights and entitlements are upheld and that decisions are appropriate

Promoting the service & networking

To raise awareness of the Advocacy service The Children's Society has produced promotional flyers which have been distributed across Children in Care services including social work teams, residential units, semi-independent providers, secure accommodation and foster carers networks. To support an understanding of advocacy provision the service manager has attended a range of meetings and networking events including;

- Social Work team meetings
- Foster Carer Support meetings with the National Fostering Agency
- Foster Carer business meetings
- PoWer – Independent Visiting Service
- Young people's Refugee Forum and youth group
- Residential Provider visits

The Children's Society has promoted equal access and inclusion, through providing interpreting services with young people who have English as a second language and through producing material in different languages including Arabic, Pashtu and Farsi.

Performance overview

Chart 1 shows that between October 2021 and the end of August 2022 a total of 379 contacts have been made to the Residential Homes.

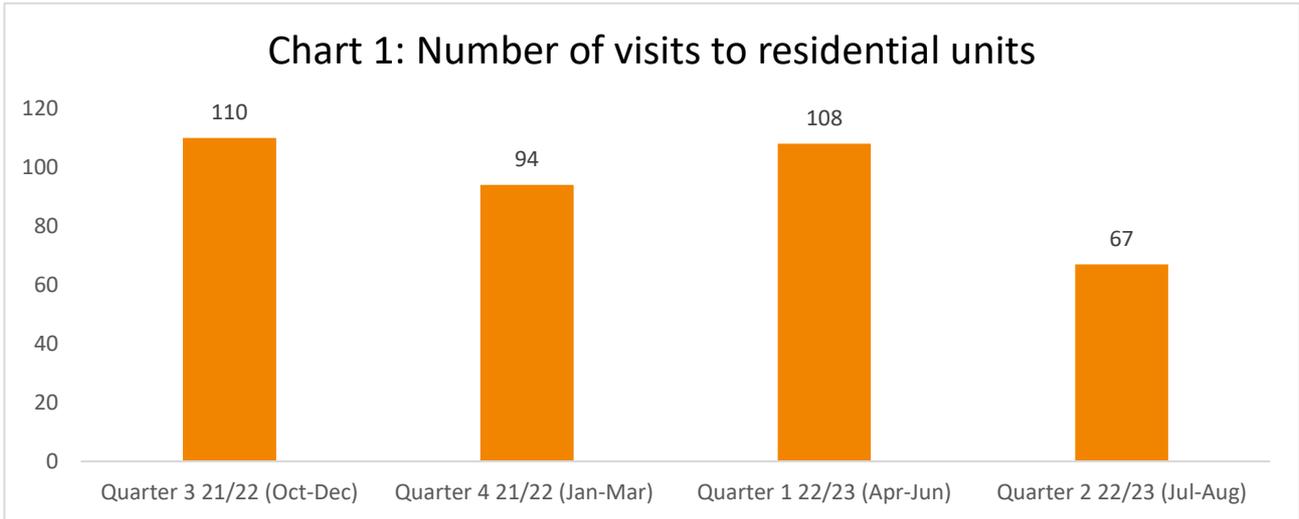
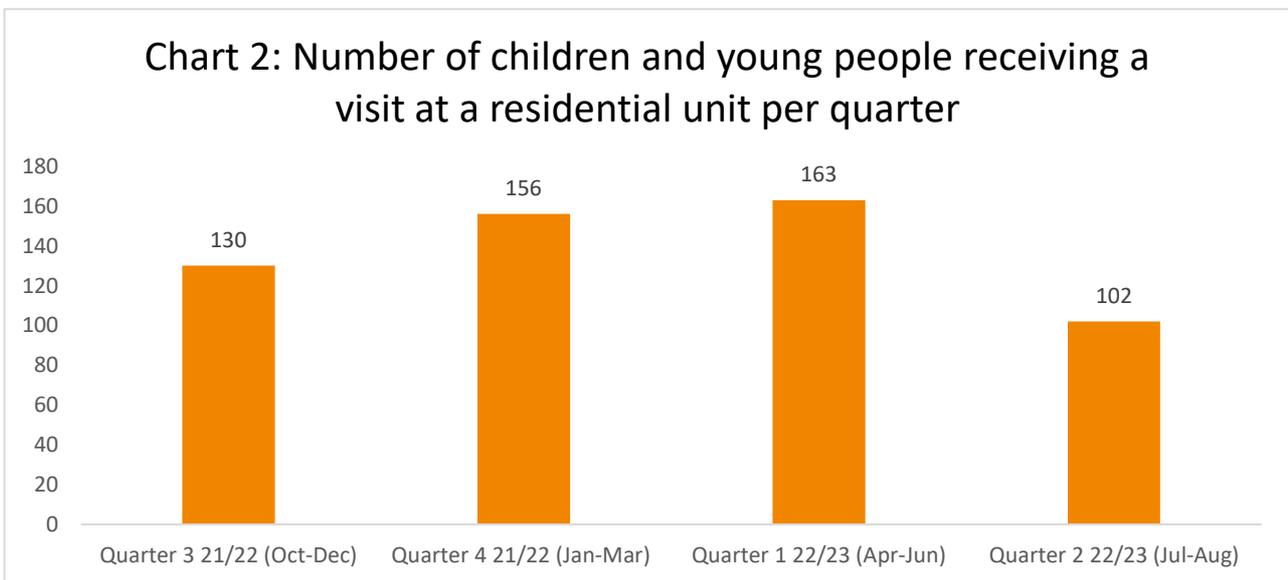


Chart 2 shows the number of young people having contact with their Advocate over each quarter.



During quarter 3 the service saw a reduction in Advocacy staff capacity due to the service moving away from a previous joint commissioning arrangement with Nottinghamshire County.

Chart 3 illustrates the percentage of young people receiving a visit every twelve weeks against the benchmark 80%. The table shows that the target was exceeded in each quarter. This reflects the movement toward delivery being primarily provided over phone and digital platforms.

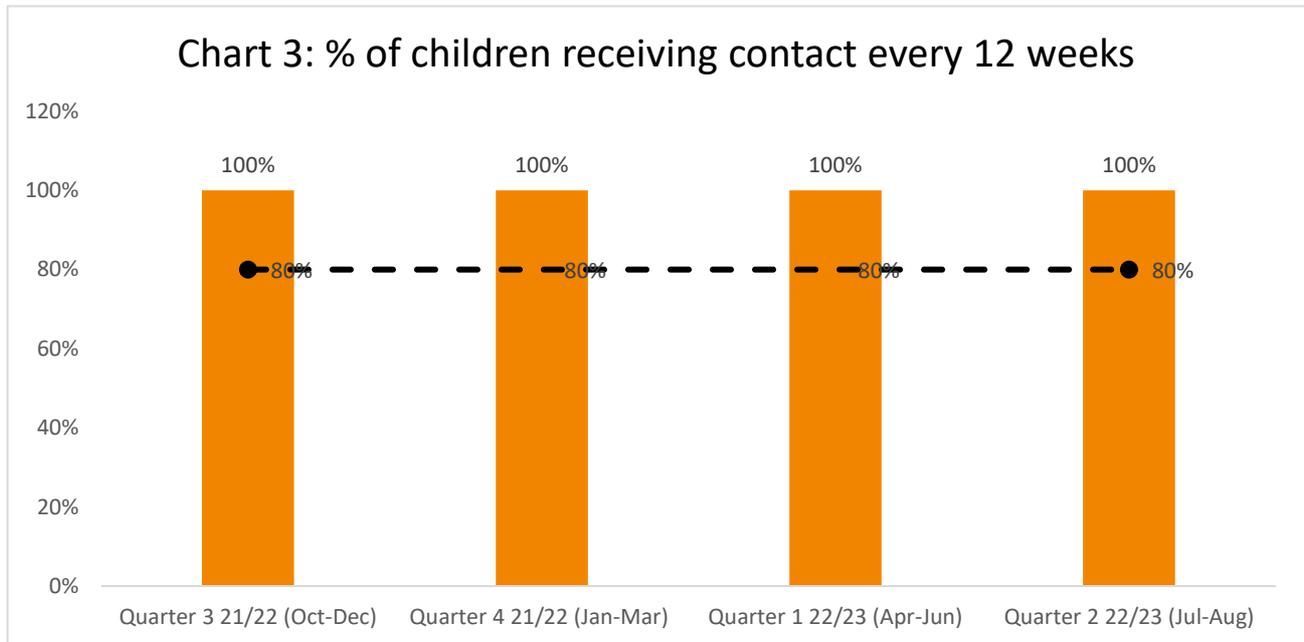


Chart 4 illustrates the number of young people supported with issue-based advocacy.

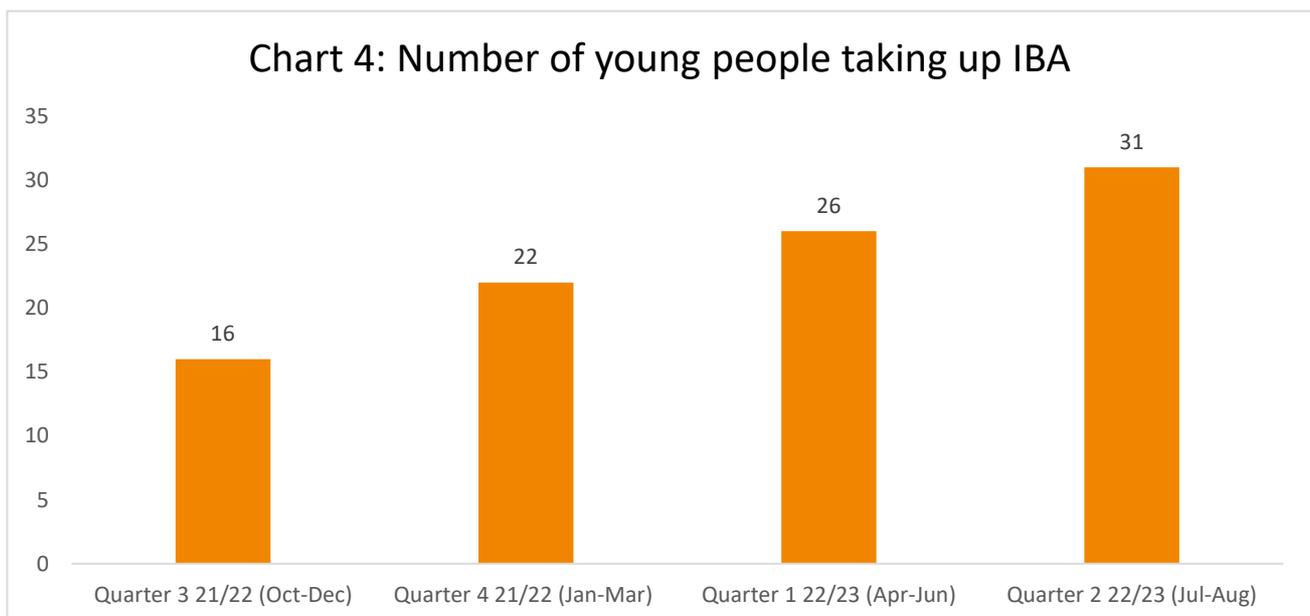
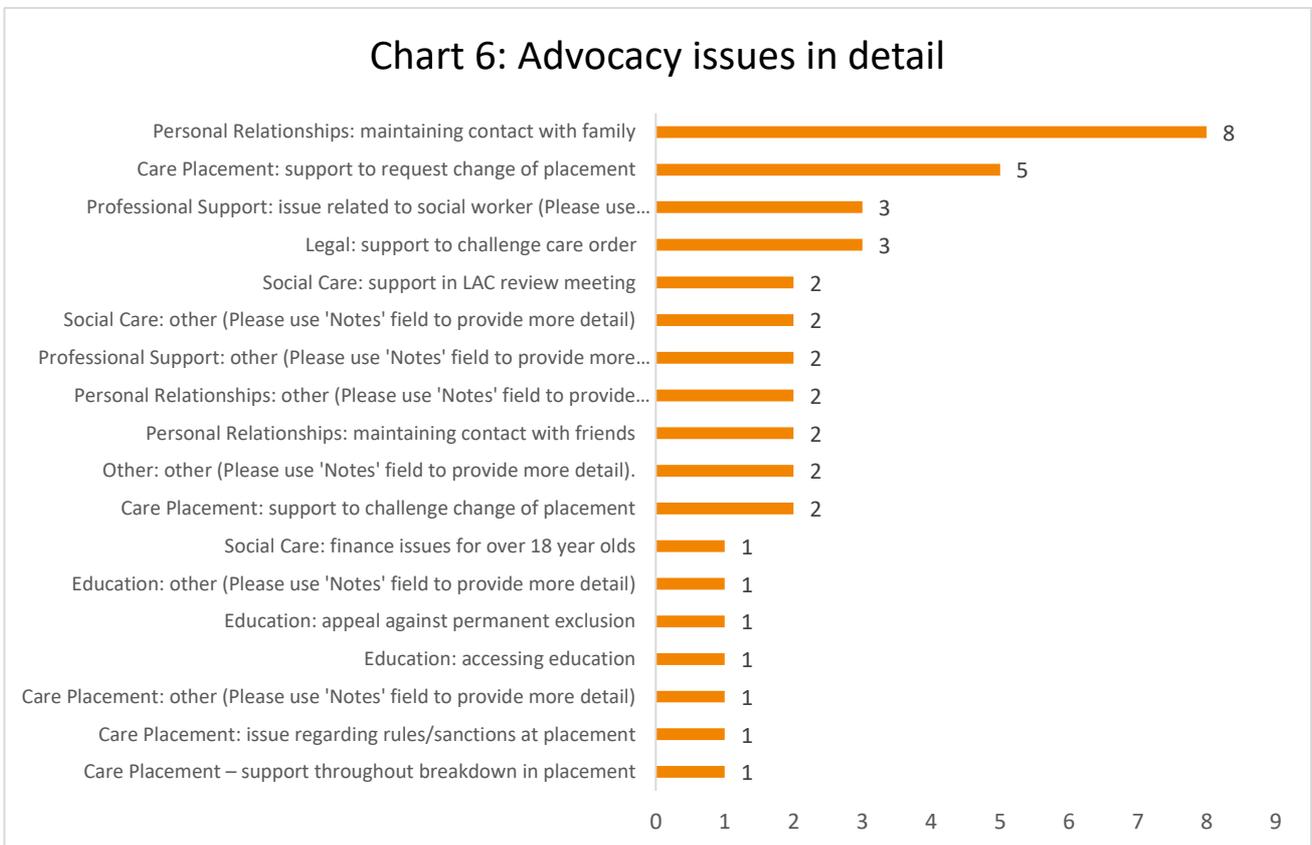
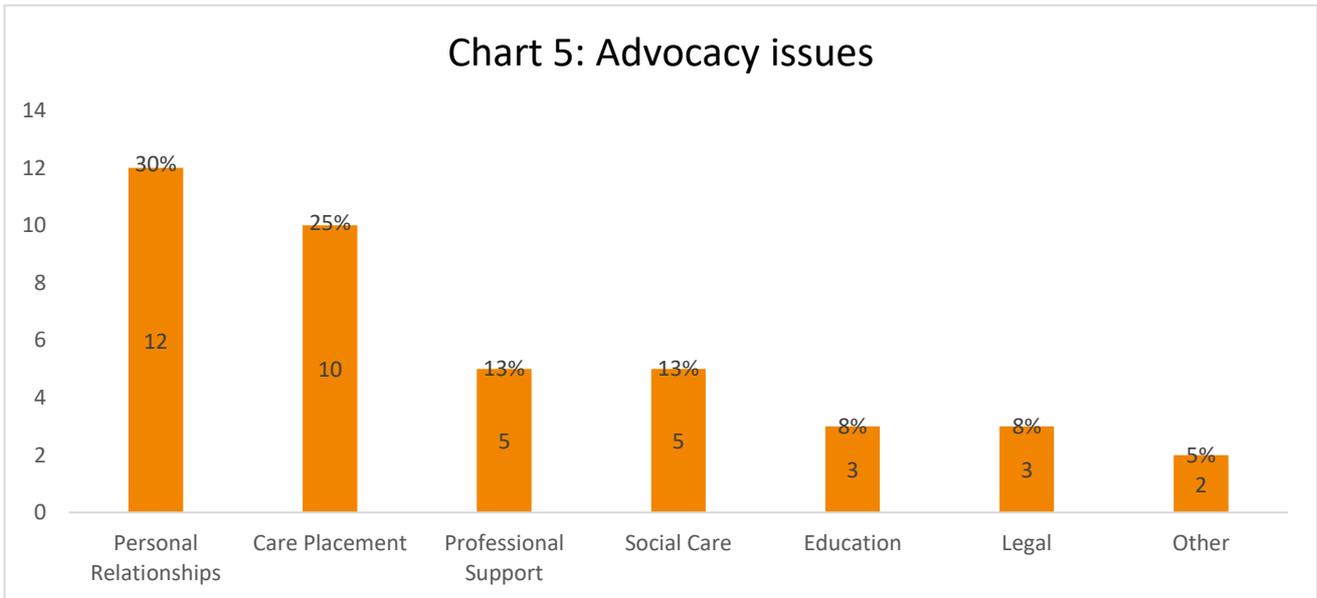
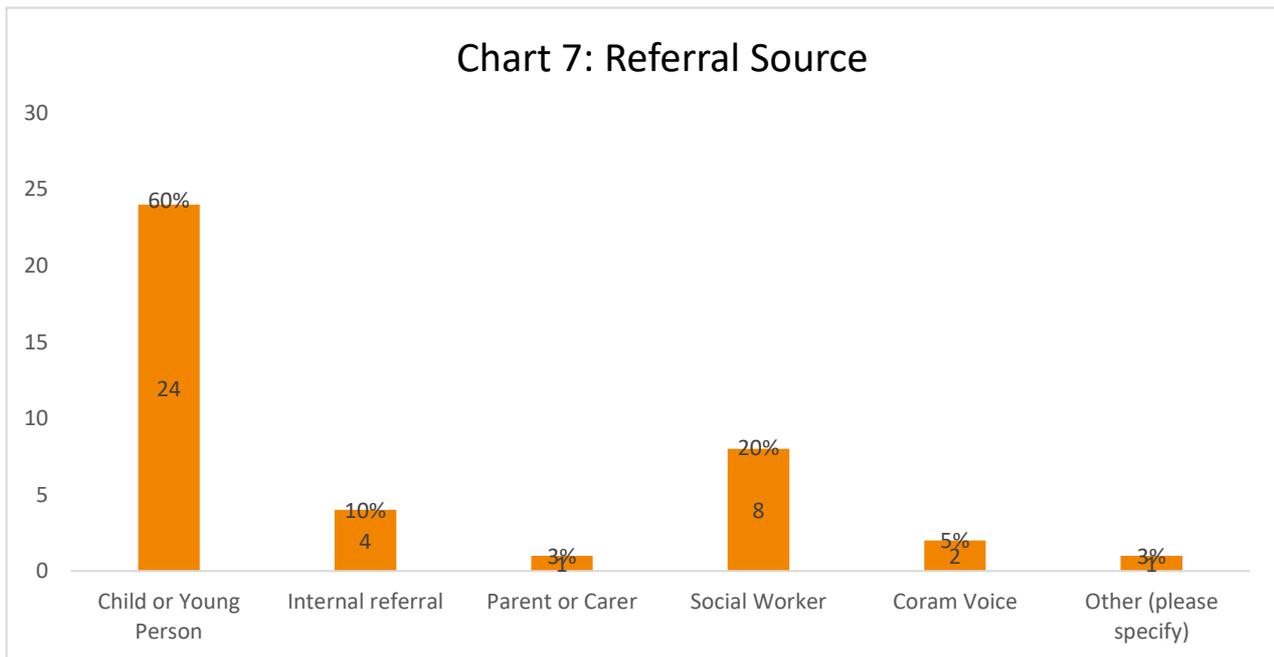


Chart 5 shows nine broad areas that young people required advocacy support for, with the majority being in relation to *care placement*, followed by *personal relationships*. A more detailed breakdown of issues can be seen in Chart 6 (p.12) with full descriptions located in the appendix section of this report.



Referrals for Issue Based Advocacy

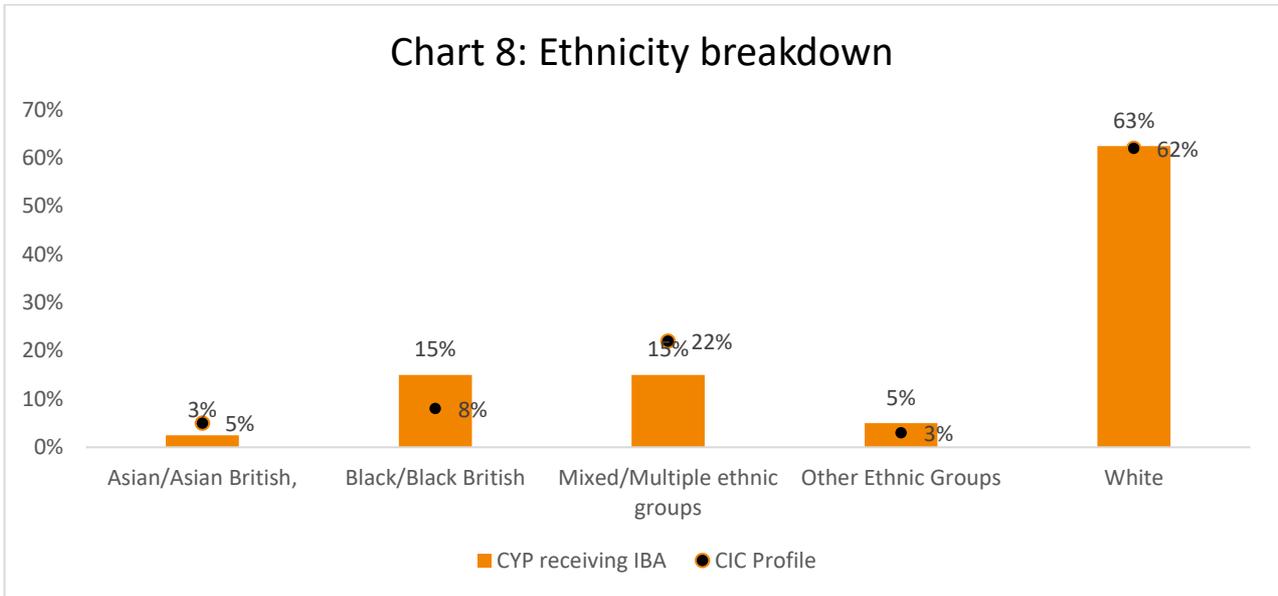
The Advocacy service receives referrals from a range of sources including young people, parents/carers, social workers and other professionals. The largest proportion of referrals at 50% have come directly from young people (last year the figure was 52%), 26% have come via social workers with 17% being made by parents or carers. Referrals from education shows the lowest rate, at 1%.



Demographic data - Ethnicity

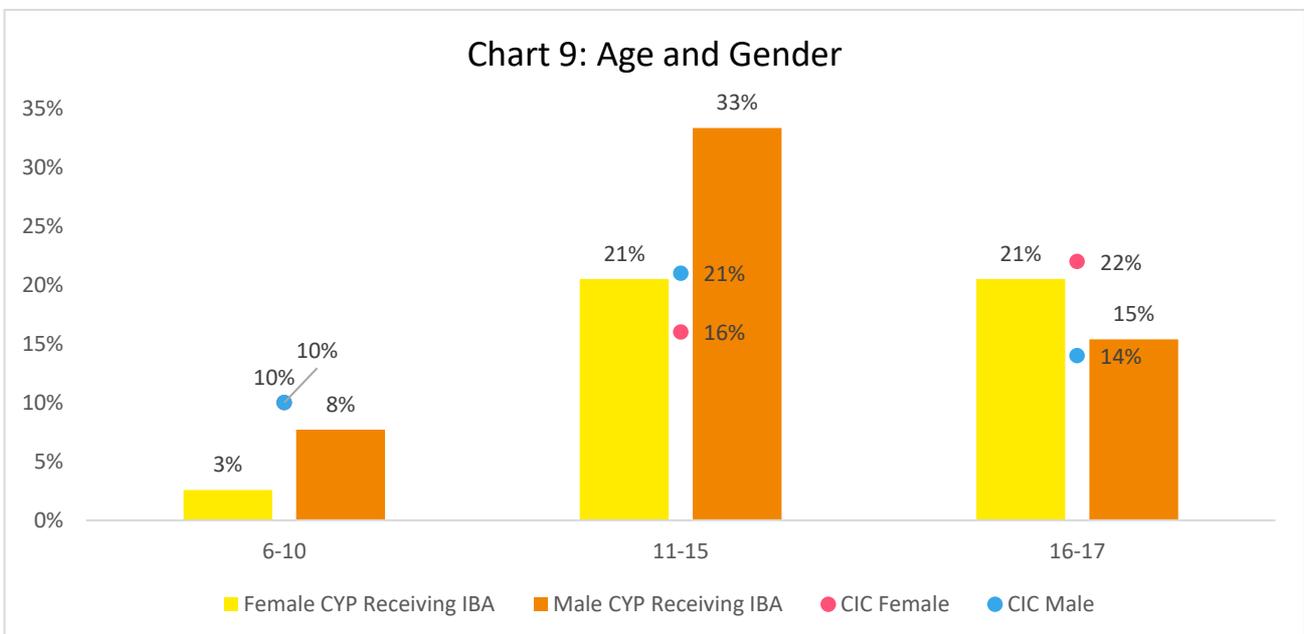
Chart 8 shows children and young people accessing Issue Based Advocacy by ethnicity compared to the Children in Care population.

The largest group taking up advocacy at 63% were White British compared to the Children in Care (CiC) population of 62%. Black and Black British young people show 15% accessing provision – against 8% CiC population. While 15% of Mixed and Multiple Ethnic groups received advocacy support compared with a CiC population of 22%.



Demographic data - Gender and Age

When comparing the age and gender of Children in Care with those receiving Issue Based Advocacy (IBA), we can see that the 11-15 group at 54% (combined females 21% and males 33%) has the highest access rate.



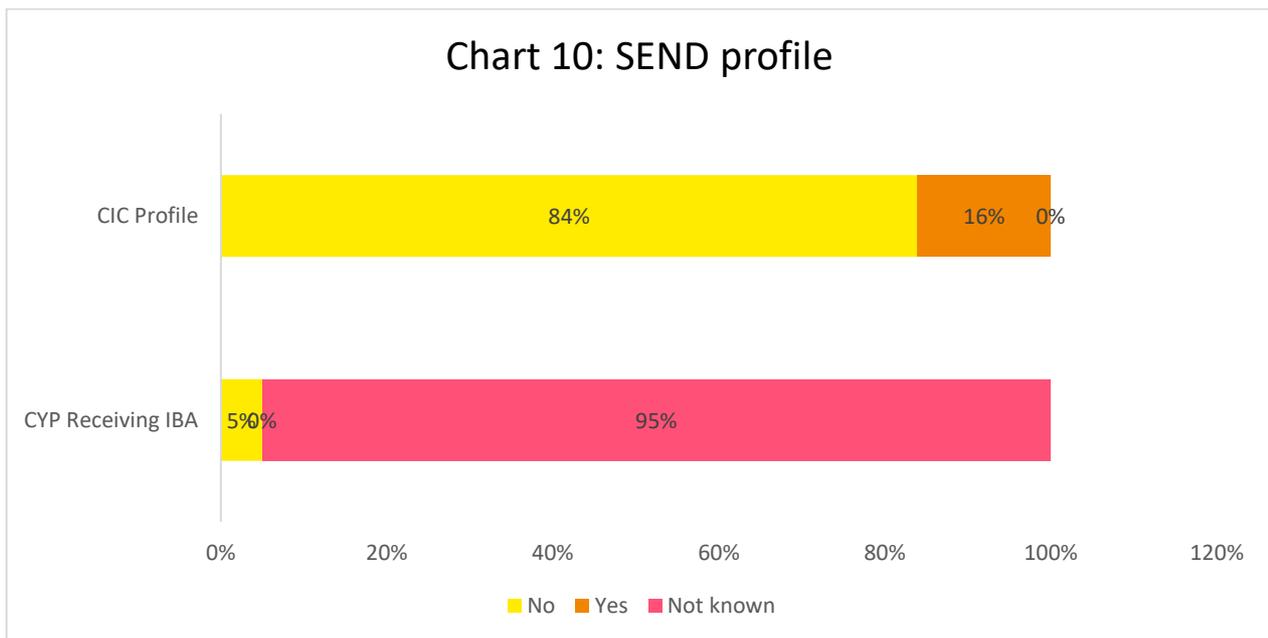
Females aged 16+ years (21%) and males aged 16+ (15%) were the second and third largest groups to access advocacy. Young people aged 6-10 years make up 10% of the CIC profile, which compares well to those that received IBA at 11%.

Special Needs and Disability

The Children's Society provide a dedicated advocate whose focus is to work with Children in Care who have special needs and disability. The Advocate outside of COVID restrictions undertakes regular visits to The Big House, Minster View, and Caudwell House plus a number of private residential settings who provide care for children with special needs and disability.

When appropriate the service will provide non-instructed advocacy to support children who lack capacity to make decisions. In these cases, the advocate spends time getting to know the child, observing them in their environment in order to develop an understanding of how they communicate. Through this process (and through talking to parents/cares) the advocate builds up a picture of the young person's wishes and feelings.

Chart 10 show that 16% of Children in Care have a recognised disability or special need. However the Advocacy service did not receive any IBA referrals for children within this group.

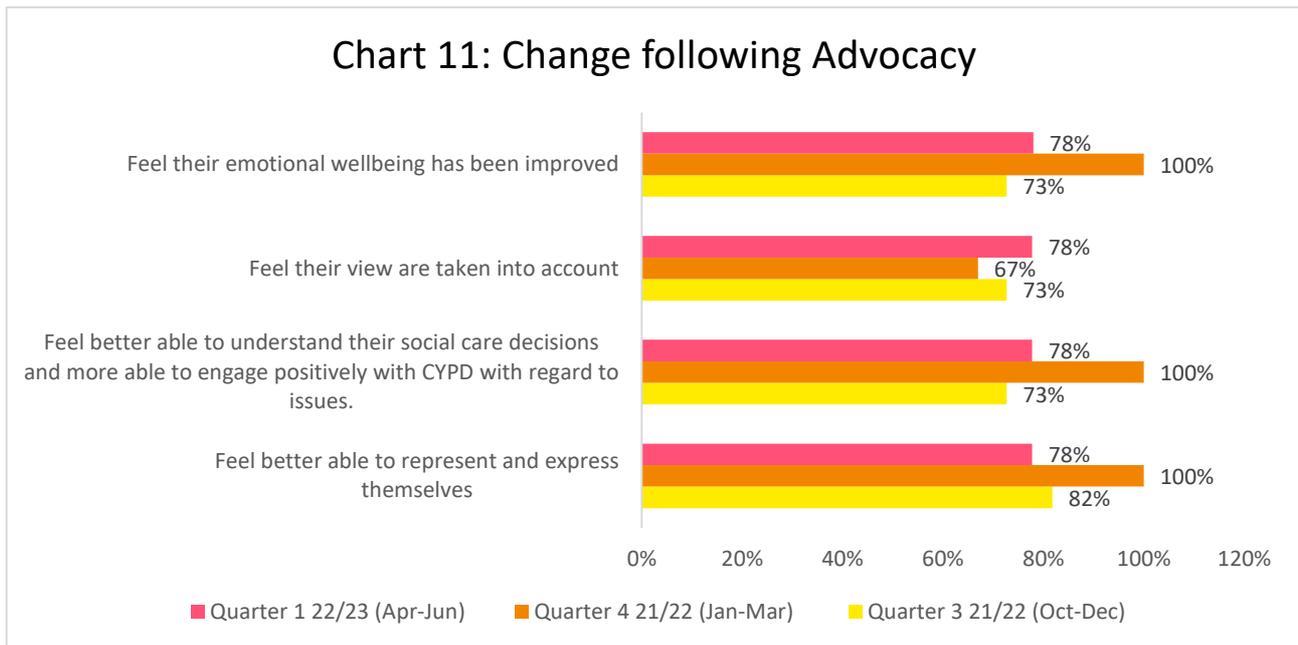


Children and Young People's Feedback (Issue Based Advocacy)

The service has developed an outcomes tool which is designed to track children and young people's views in relation to the resolution of issues they have raised. It needs be noted that Advocates have difficulty in obtaining feedback from young people once advocacy work has

concluded. Anecdotal feedback (from advocates, professionals and young people) suggests that this is largely because young people consider that the advocacy process has finished, and therefore they feel they do not need to engage further with advocacy staff.

Chart 11 shows that 100% of respondents indicated they understood what was happening (with their care) and why. While a further 100% 'felt confident to say what they wanted' and 'felt listened to by adults making decisions' which is a 9% increase on last year.



Conclusion

Independent advocacy and support for children and young people has been consistent and regular over the past year despite Covid restrictions and changes in staffing due to restructure following the change in commissioning arrangements. Over this period Advocacy provision has by-and-large been provided through phone and digital platform. With advocates continuing to undertake face-to-face visits where required, in response to children and young people's needs.

The change in delivery toward digital and phone platforms has enabled the service to extend its reach to residential units. And this flexible approach to delivery (digital and face-to face) has been well received by young people (evidenced through the service user feedback seen above).

Children and young people continue to raise issues directly (50% all referrals) with advocates, demonstrating the value of ongoing advocacy contact with residential homes. There have been a number of compliments and thanks to the advocacy service made from

residential units, praising the standard of advocacy provision and the quality of relationships held with young people.

The service continues to work collaboratively with young people and professionals, ensuring children's rights and entitlements are upheld within decision making processes.

Appendix 1: Detailed breakdown of Advocacy Issues

Row Labels	Count
Care Placement – support throughout breakdown in placement	1
Care Placement: issue regarding rules/sanctions at placement	1
Care Placement: other (Please use 'Notes' field to provide more detail)	1
Education: accessing education	1
Education: appeal against permanent exclusion	1
Education: other (Please use 'Notes' field to provide more detail)	1
Social Care: finance issues for over 18 year olds	1
Care Placement: support to challenge change of placement	2
Other: other (Please use 'Notes' field to provide more detail).	2
Personal Relationships: maintaining contact with friends	2
Personal Relationships: other (Please use 'Notes' field to provide more detail)	2
Professional Support: other (Please use 'Notes' field to provide more detail)	2
Social Care: other (Please use 'Notes' field to provide more detail)	2
Social Care: support in LAC review meeting	2
Legal: support to challenge care order	3
Professional Support: issue related to social worker (Please use 'Notes' field to provide more detail)	3
Care Placement: support to request change of placement	5
Personal Relationships: maintaining contact with family	8
Total	40

Performance on a Page
As of 30 September 2022 (Q2 22/23)

PLACEMENTS				IN-HOUSE FOSTERING				HEALTH				CARE LEAVERS			
FAMILY BASED				NO. FOSTER CARERS				IHA IN TIME				NO. CARE LEAVERS			
Sep-22	70.3%	▼	DEC. ppts -1.5	Sep-22	242	▲	IMP. 14.7%	Sep-22	8.0%	▲	IMP. ppts. 1.0	Sep-22	314	▼	DEC. -3.4%
Jun-22	71.8%			Jun-22	211			Jun-22	7.0%			Jun-22	325		
STABILITY (LAST 2 YRS)				APPROVED				UP TO DATE HA				CIC PATHWAY PLAN AUTH. (LAST 6 MTHS)			
Q2 22/23	72.6%	▲	IMP. ppts. 1.9	Q2 22/23	0	▼	DEC.	Sep-22	74.3%	▼	DEC. ppts -6.2	Sep-22	82.2%	▲	IMP. ppts. 1.0
Q1 22/23	70.7%			Q1 22/23	4			Jun-22	80.5%			Jun-22	81.2%		
3 MOVES (LAST 12 MTHS)				DE-REGISTERED				RHA in TIMESCALE				LCS CL PATHWAY PLAN AUTH. (LAST 6 MTHS)			
Q2 22/23	8.1%	▲	DEC. ppts. 1.3	Q2 22/23	11	▲	DEC. 37.5%	Sep-22	44.0%	▲	IMP. ppts. 5.0	Sep-22	86.0%	▲	IMP. ppts. 1.6
Q1 22/23	6.8%			Q1 22/23	8			Jun-22	39.0%			Jun-22	84.4%		
								UP TO DATE DENTAL				SUITABLE ACCOMMODATION			
								Sep-22	82.5%	▲	IMP. ppts. 0.5	Q2 22/23	96.2%	▲	IMP. ppts. 0.8
								Jun-22	82.0%			Q1 22/23	95.4%		
												EET			
												Q2 22/23	70.4%	▲	IMP. ppts. 2.5
												Q1 22/23	67.9%		

ADMISSIONS			
Q2 22/23	50	▼	IMP. -28.6%
Q1 22/23	70		



CARE PLAN				ADOPTIONS				REVIEWS & VISITS				DISCHARGES FROM CARE			
UP TO DATE PLAN				NO. ADOPTED				REVIEWS IN TIME				NO. DISCHARGES			
Sep-22	87.0%	◀▶	NO CHANGE ppts 0.0	Q2 22/23	7	◀▶	NO CHANGE 0.0%	Q2 22/23	88.0%	▼	DEC. ppts -0.7	Q2 22/23	45	▼	DEC. -34.8%
Jun-22	87.0%			Q1 22/23	7			Q1 22/23	88.7%			Q1 22/23	69		
				A10*				UP TO DATE VISITS				SGOs			
				Q2 22/23	625	▲	DEC. 52.4%	Sep-22	83.0%	▲	IMP. ppts. 5.0	Q2 22/23	2	▼	DEC. -88.9%
				Q1 22/23	410			Jun-22	78.0%			Q1 22/23	18		
				A2*				EDUCATION PLANS							
				Q2 22/23	238	▲	DEC. 78.9%	ePEPS COMPLETED							
				Q1 22/23	133			Spr 22	86.0%	▼	DEC. ppts -2.0				
								ePEP QUALITY (GOOD)							
								Spr 22	90.0%	▲	IMP. ppts. 1.0				
								Sum 21	89.0%						

RED ARROWS: DECLINING PERFORMANCE
GREEN ARROWS: IMPROVING PERFORMANCE
AMBER ARROWS: NO CHANGE

* A10 - Ave time (in days) between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family adjusted for foster carer adoptions
* A2 - Ave time (in days) between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family

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Corporate Parenting Board - 21 November 2022

Title of paper:	Education of children in care- interim report	
Corporate Director/ Director:	Catherine Underwood – Corporate Director, People Nicholas Lee – Director, Education Services	Wards: all
Report author and contact details:	Jasmin Howell. Jasmin.howell@nottinghamcity.gov.uk	
Other colleagues who have provided input:		
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder		
Does this report contain any information that is exempt from publication? No		
Relevant Council Plan Key Outcome:		
Clean and Connected Communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Keeping Nottingham Working	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Carbon Neutral by 2028	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Safer Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Child-Friendly Nottingham	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Healthy and Inclusive	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Keeping Nottingham Moving	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Improve the City Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Better Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial Stability	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Serving People Well	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):		
<p>The Nottingham City Virtual School works to promote, support and improve the educational outcomes of all Nottingham City children in care.</p> <p>This report provides an update on the work of the Virtual School and headlines of the educational outcomes of our children in care during the 2021-22 academic year.</p> <p>Some outcome data, for example attainment data of children in care and attendance rates nationally and regionally for the academic year 2021-22 has not yet been published/verified, a full report will therefore be provided to the Board in the spring term 2023 once all outcome data has been released and verified.</p>		
Recommendations:		
1	To note the work of the Virtual School.	
2	To note and consider the headline educational outcomes of Nottingham City children in care during the 2021-22 academic year, as presented.	

1. Reasons for recommendations

1.1 The Nottingham City Virtual School Head has a statutory duty to have arrangements in place to promote and improve educational outcomes of its authority's children in care.

2. Other options considered in making recommendations

2.1 None.

3. Consideration of Risk

3.1 None.

4. Background (including outcomes of consultation)

4.1 Attendance: the Virtual School commission Welfare Call to collect attendance and exclusion information for our children in care. Attendance and exclusions reports are downloaded and monitored weekly to enable the Education Support Officers to intervene early where concerns are identified.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 (running total as of October 2022)
Attendance rate (stat school age)	90.93%	84.79%	89.40%	89.50%

4.2 Attendance rates dropped significantly in the 2020/21 academic year, at the height of the pandemic, but increased again during the 2021/22 academic year and is currently on a trajectory for continued improvement this academic year.

4.3 Suspensions and exclusions: the number and rate of suspensions have increased significantly over the last two academic years, some schools have cited the pandemic and subsequent lockdown as having a significant impact on children's wellbeing and consequently the display of disruptive behaviour leading to exclusions.

4.4 The Virtual School continue to commission interventions to support children with difficulties as a means of trying to prevent exclusions from occurring and reduce the risk of further exclusions.

Suspensions	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 running total at October 2022
No of pupils	43	65	82	23
No of suspensions	109	147	236	44

4.5 Personal Education Plan (PEP) completion statutory school age: the Virtual School monitors the completion of PEPs for all children in care and quality assures all completed PEPs. The introduction of the ePEP system in the Spring Term 2021 has significantly improved PEP completion and quality, with PEP completion rates increasing from 60% to over 85%.

	Autumn 2020	Spring 2021	Summer 2021
Total Cohort	412	437	466

Compliant	239	58%	378	86%	410	88%
Non-Compliant	173	42%	59	14%	56	12%

- 4.6 Post-16 children in care: The Virtual School post-16 Education Support Officer continues to monitor, track and support educational outcomes of post-16 children in care.

2021/22	Compliant PEPs	% Compliant PEPs
Autumn Term	49	34.8%
Spring Term	27	20.6%
Summer Term	93	88.6%

- 4.7 Improvements in our arrangements for the completion of PEPs for post-16 children in care was identified as requiring improvement following a peer-review, significant developments have been made in this area over the last year.
- 4.8 Work of the Virtual School: Each child in care is allocated an Education Support Officer within the Virtual School Team. The role of the Education Support Officers is to monitor and track the educational outcomes of children they are allocated and intervene where support is required. The Education Support officers also provide advice, training, support and challenge to education providers, carers, social workers and independent reviewing officers in respect to the education of children in care to support and improve outcomes.
- 4.9 In the 2021-22 academic year the virtual school commissioned the following interventions aimed at improving educational outcomes:

Health Mentor

The Mentor supported 17 of our children in care identified as requiring support with engagement and motivation.

Education Psychologist

60 hours of support from the Education Psychology Service was commissioned in the 2021/22 academic year. This service is used to provide advice and intervention in respect to children in care requiring additional support.

Behavior Support Team (BST)

The Virtual School commissioned 20 hours of support from the Behaviour Support Team to provide advice and training to schools with children displaying challenging behaviour.

Rewards and Certificates

The Virtual School recognises and rewards the educational achievement of its children in care, through the provision of WHSmith vouchers and certificates termly. In the summer term, 57 young people were nominated and received a reward, as follows:

Reward Categories	Total
Academic Achievement	14
Attendance	8
Effort / Attitude to Learning	16
Positive Engagement	10
Extracurricular activities	7
Other	2
TOTAL	57

Tuition

Where our children in care are without a school place, are unable/refusing to attend school or require additional support in order to achieve, the Virtual School sources and funds one to one tuition.

Unlock

We ran two Unlock Raising Aspirations and Motivation programmes, one for post-16 children in care (working with Nottingham College) and the other for children in care attending special schools (working with Raleigh Trust). Both of these projects were successful in introducing young people to local and national business leaders and providing them with opportunities of work experience.

Digital Inclusion Project

Over 60 children in care in years 9-11 received a laptop funded by the Virtual School in the 2021/22 academic year.

4.8. Virtual School training: the Virtual School has an annual training programme for key professionals with responsibility for promoting the education of children in care, below are details of the training provided in the 2021/22 academic year:

- **Social Worker training** was eight participants
- **Designated Teacher training** was fourteen participants
- **Designated Teacher Briefing** was nineteen participants
- **EPEP training** was twenty-eight participants
- **Residential Social Care Training** was six participants
- **Foster Carer Training** was eleven participants

The total number of participants that accessed training ran by the Virtual School was 79.

4.9. A data dashboard and full report detailing the educational outcomes of all the authority's children in care during 2021/22, and the arrangements of the Virtual School in promoting and supporting outcomes will be provided to Corporate Parenting Board in the Spring term 2023 once the data has been verified.

5. **Finance colleague comments (including implications and value for money)**

5.1 Not applicable.

6. **Legal colleague comments**

6.1 None.

7. **Other relevant comments**

7.1 Not applicable.

8. **Crime and Disorder Implications (If Applicable)**

8.1 Not applicable.

9. Social value considerations (If Applicable)

9.1 Not applicable.

10. Regard to the NHS Constitution (If Applicable)

10.1 Not applicable.

11. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

11.1 An EIA is not required because this report is to provide an update on the work of the Virtual School in the academic year 2021-22 and to provide an overview of the educational outcomes of Nottingham City children in care in that year.

12. Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

12.1 A DPIA is not necessary because this report is to provide an update on the work of the Virtual School in the academic year 2021-22.

13. Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA)

13.1 A CIA is not required because it is not applicable.

14. List of background papers relied upon in writing this report (not including published documents or confidential or exempt information)

14.1 None.

15. Published documents referred to in this report

15.1 None.

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