

Nottingham City Council

Corporate Parenting Board

Minutes of the meeting held at Loxley House, Nottingham on 21 November 2022 from 2.00 pm - 3.42 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Maria Joannou (Vice Chair)
Councillor Merlita Bryan
Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark
Councillor Georgia Power
Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos
Councillor Andrew Rule

Absent

Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Councillor Jay Hayes
Councillor Phil Jackson
Councillor Salma Mumtaz

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

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|------------------------|---|
| Colette Elliott-Cooper | - Interim Service Manager, Children in Care and Care Leavers |
| Ailsa Barr | - Director of Children's Integrated Services |
| Mary-Anne Cosgrove | - Head of Children in Care, Care leavers and Regulated Services |
| Sam Flint | - Children in Care Police Officer |
| Jasmin Howell | - Service Manager, Virtual School |
| Peter Ireson | - Venue Director, Theatre Royal Concert Hall |
| David Johns | - Deputy Director of Public Health |
| Lee Kimberley | - Head of Nottingham Catering |
| Nick Lee | - Director of Education Services |
| John Matravers | - Service Manager, Safeguarding Partnerships |
| Phil Wye | - Governance Officer |

20 Apologies for absence

Councillor Cheryl Barnard – leave
Councillor Jay Hayes - unwell
Councillor Phil Jackson – personal reasons
Councillor Salma Mumtaz – other Council business

Kathryn Higgins
Jon Rea
Audrey Taylor
Catherine Underwood

21 Declarations of Interests

In relation to agenda item 5 – Independent Advocacy Annual Report (minute 25), in the interests of transparency Councillor Georgia Power stated that she works for the Children's Society and left the meeting during this item.

22 Minutes

The Board agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2022 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair presiding at the meeting.

23 Reducing Offending Behaviour (Children in Care)

PC Sam Flint, Children in Care Police Officer, introduced the report updating the Board on the published data for 2020-21 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. The following information was highlighted:

- (a) offending behaviour among the Children in care population has reduced to only 2% in 2020-21 and there has been a 5 year trend in reduction;
- (b) the Children in Care Police Officers posts continue to be jointly funded by Nottinghamshire Police and Nottingham City Council. After March 2023 PC Flint will be retiring but will be coming back into the CIC role, which will continue to be jointly funded;
- (c) Children in Care Police Officers, Nottinghamshire Police and the leaving care service senior advisor worked alongside the Crown Prosecution Service, Service Managers for Children in Care and Placements, to develop and implement a Multi Agency Protocol for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. 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;
- (d) Training has been developed for magistrates and police officers to highlight the importance of recognising trauma when dealing with young people in court;
- (e) an arrest screening tool has been developed to identify when a young person in care is arrested. Also, a screening tool was implemented by Nottinghamshire Police which alerts Children in Care officers to every call made by every Children's home or semi-independent home, allowing them to intervene at the very earliest opportunity if any offences have been committed;
- (f) 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;
- (g) the Concerns Network Meeting has relaunched with over 20 agencies keen to meet on a regular basis to share intelligence and implement disruption tactics;
- (h) the Children in Care Police Officers lead a girls-only boxing provision to empower young women. This group has been running every week for 4 years. 2 years funding has been secured from an independent scrutineer NSCP allowing the group to expand the activities available.

During questions from the Board and subsequent discussion, the following information was provided:

- (i) Care Leavers cannot legally be included in figures as they are adults, but the service does work closely with the Care Leaver's Service;
- (j) making referrals of child sexual exploitation can be a long winded process, and the referral form still has some incorrect definitions. It was agreed that this form would be updated;
- (k) it can be a challenge to engage with independent care homes. All homes in Nottingham City come under the service's remit even if they only have children from other local authorities;
- (l) figures in the report do not include children looked after by Nottingham City that have been placed elsewhere. Gaining this information may be possible but would be a manual exercise in contacting different criminal justice agencies. Board Members requested that this information be included in future reports if possible, as children placed out of the area may be more vulnerable.

Resolved to

- (1) note the data regarding reducing offending behaviour within the Children in Care population;**
- (2) recognise the importance of sustaining the work of the Children in Care Police Officers to continue to improve outcomes for Children in Care.**

24 Independent Advocacy Annual Report 2022

John Matravers, Service Manager, Safeguarding Partnerships, introduced the report from the Children's Society and delivered a presentation to the Board, highlighting the following:

- (a) the Independent Advocacy 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;
- (b) Nottingham City 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;
- (c) 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;
- (d) 84% of children and young people feel their emotional wellbeing has been improved following Advocacy, and 73% feel their views are taken into account.

During subsequent questions and discussion the following points were raised:

- (e) overall, the take-up of advocacy services among non-white children and young people is lower. The reasons for this are being investigated, but may be to do with representation among advocates;
- (f) a new provider will be providing the Independent Advocacy service next year, so changes in the reporting requirements can be explored.

25 Performance update

Mary-Ann Cosgrove, Head of Children in Care, Care Leavers & Regulated Services, introduced the performance data as of 30 September 2022 and highlighted the following:

- (a) the number of children in family-based placements has reduced slightly, but stability overall has increased to 72.6%. The number of children who have had 3 moves in the past 12 months has increased, however these moves are sometimes positive;
- (b) the number of up to date Care Plans is below target;
- (c) the number of Foster Carers has increase. However most of these are connected carers. There has been no recruitment in the last quarter and 11 Foster Carers have been lost for a variety of reasons, including becoming adopters and cost of living.

26 Education of children in care- interim report

Jasmin Howell, Service Manager, Virtual School, introduced the 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, highlighting the following:

- (a) 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;
- (b) 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;
- (c) the Virtual School monitors the completion of Personal Education Plans (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%;
- (d) currently unverified data on educational attainment of children in care is showing a drop in reading standards at Key Stage 1, locally as well as nationally. A locally established partnership with Multi Academy Trusts has been established to draw

down additional funding for attendance, exclusions, reading and writing;

- (e) 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 the Board in the Spring term 2023 once the data has been verified.

Resolved to

(1) note the work of the Virtual School;

(2) note and consider the headline educational outcomes of Nottingham City children in care during the 2021-22 academic year, as presented.

27 Children in Care - update

An update was not available and will be provided at the next meeting.

28 Feedback from development session and Board next steps

The development session has been postponed and dates in January are being explored.