

Corporate Parenting Board January 16 2023

Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report 2021/2022



Nottingham
City Council

Roles and Responsibilities

- Monitor the performance of the Local Authority and their function in relation to the child's case.
- Participate in any review of the child's case.
- Ensure that any ascertained wishes and feelings of the child are given due consideration by the appropriate authority.
- Perform any other function, which is prescribed by the regulations.



Children in Care Data 2020/21

- The Children in Care population for 2020-21 within Nottingham City Council was 724 (684). This shows an increase of 5.8% from the previous year. The East Midlands has also seen an increase in this population ranging from 4% -10%.
- Caseloads are within the upper limit specified in the IRO handbook, which denotes a caseload of 50-70 per IRO as being manageable. At present IRO's hold an average caseload of 65. This shows progress over the previous years.



Children in Care Data 2020/21

- Stability of placement is an important factor for children in care and a key performance indicator. In Nottingham 72% (64%) of our children in care have remained in the same placement for at least 2 years or more.
- Reviews within timescale were at 92% (95%) which shows a slight decline against the previous year.
- Child participation in their review was 95% (92%). This shows a slight improvement against the previous year. This is strong performance given the obvious challenges presented by the pandemic over the last two years.



Inspection of Nottingham City local authority children's services

- The review of children's plans mostly takes place within statutory timescales, and minutes are sensitively written to children to help them understand the outcomes and plans. Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) do not consistently monitor children's circumstances in between reviews. Escalation processes are currently not effective in demonstrating impact or positive change for children because of concerns raised by the IROs.



Priorities for 2022/23

- Ensure every child has a mid-point review undertaken by the IRO and evidenced on child's record.
- Rewrite the previous Dispute Resolution Policy and rebrand as Practice Resolution Protocol and this to be reportable on Liquid Logic.
- To ensure the IRO's footprint is clearly evidenced in the child's records.
- Consultation documents to be reviewed, refreshed and then shared with children and carers 30 days before the next review.
- Performance Framework dashboard to be developed and implemented through an IRO specific analysis and insight report to monitor outcomes.
- Improved collaboration with all parts of Childrens Services ensuring the IRO offers high support and high challenge in meeting expectations for our children.



QUESTIONS



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