

Nottingham City

Early Help Partnership Strategy

2023-25



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Foreword



We are delighted to introduce the new **Early Help Partnership Strategy for Nottingham City**, and would like to thank all our staff, young people, families, and partners who have contributed and worked together to develop this Early Help approach.

Whilst Nottingham has long been recognised as an Early Intervention City, this strategy represents a renewed commitment by partners system-wide to respond to emerging needs early and effectively and to galvanise multi-agency support to ensure that families and young people access and receive the right support at the right time.

The implementation of this strategy is a priority for all of us and will help us to improve how we coordinate and deliver services. The strategy is ambitious and recognises that Early Help is not the domain of one single agency and reflects our shared ambition for an integrated and better co-ordinated approach across all agencies.

The strategy is the beginning of the work that needs to be accomplished and is an important aspect of the opportunities that integrated partnership working will bring to staff, babies, children, young people, families, and partners. We will continue this important piece of work as a partnership, to ensure we embed whole family working and promote a joined-up approach to service delivery. We will develop an effective Early Help framework and support the entire workforce to develop the knowledge and skills to deliver an effective service offer. An offer, that provides the right support at the right time.

Successful implementation of this strategy is dependent on the effort and commitment of the whole Early Help system and workforce. Partners signed up to this strategy are demonstrating their commitment to developing an Early Help system that will enable partnership collaboration and whole family working for the benefit of Nottingham's babies, children, young people, and families.

We look forward to working with you all to achieve our joint aims.

Introduction

The partnership strategy for Early Help Services in Nottingham City is a multiagency approach. Over seventy people, representing forty-three different services and organisations attended the Early Help Partnership Strategy Workshop in Spring 2023. Comments and feedback from parents, partners including academies, Children's Social Care, Department of Work and Pensions, Early Years Services, Health, Housing, Police and Voluntary and Community organisations have helped to shape this strategy.

This strategy lays out five priority areas, which will form a focus for all partners working together to achieve good outcomes for all families over the next two years from 2023 to 2025.

The strategy will be owned by the Early Help Strategic Steering Group which will ensure a joined-up approach across Nottingham City to ensure babies, children, young people and families achieve the best outcomes using the resources available.

In Nottingham our partnership of Early Help services provides a whole family approach so that the right help is provided at the right time. We aim to provide advice, support, and effective evidence-based interventions to prevent or reduce the chance of escalation of need and therefore the involvement of statutory services.

We work with children, young people, and families using strengths-based approaches to empower them to achieve the best outcomes they can. We match services to needs and our range of interventions are informed by evidence-based research which drives the quality of our practice.

We actively engage and listen to parents, children and young people and use their lived experiences and voice to shape our service provision.

Partners thoughts, comments and feedback have helped greatly to shape this document for which we are very thankful.



Rob Griffin
Assistant Chief Constable
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Objectives of this strategy

- ✓ To have a partnership offer with clear referral pathways for when babies, children, young people, and families need support
- ✓ To build resilience in children, young people, and families living in Nottingham City
- ✓ To ensure Early Help offers support and provide information to the whole family when they need it, that is easily accessible so that they can meet their own needs
- ✓ To better join up and embed how all partners work to safeguard babies, children and young people as part of a multi-disciplinary approach
- ✓ To gather feedback from parents/carers, children, and young people to continuously improve our Early Help offer

What is Early Help?

'In Nottingham, 'Early Help is the right help at the right time', delivered through coordinated partnership working. It is informed by the lived experience and voice of children, young people, and families.'

'It enables whole families to become resilient and to reach their full potential.'

'It includes good early years development from pre-birth, through adolescence, getting a good education, improved mental and physical health, good family relationships, living safe from harm and free from crime and substance use.'



Our partnership principles

At the March 2023 partnership workshop, attendees proposed the principles of the Nottingham Early Help Partnership to be:

- ✓ Co-production with children, young people, and families
- ✓ Families are listened to, to understand their needs and to build their resilience
- ✓ The language and offer are accessible and flexible to suit everyone's individual needs.
- ✓ A whole family needs-driven approach is embedded
- ✓ Early Help becomes everyone's responsibility, everyone 'buys in' and works in partnership



Good education and good parenting because what we write on their mind is there for life

Help from the very beginning when you say you are pregnant

Support to improve my behaviour before I do something bad

Listening and learning from other people who have been through the same thing

Noticing me early and not when it's too late

We asked young people and parents, 'What does good early help look like to you?'
This is what they told us...

Supportive, easy to access children's activities and information

Knowing where you can go to make friends with other mums

Being able to detect health development issues early which is better for everyone

Listening without judging

Someone there to support you and give you advice

Someone or some service that is approachable, especially for people who are suffering from poor mental health

Why is Early Help important?



Early Help has numerous benefits to babies, children, young people, and families and offers them the support needed to reach their full potential. Early Help enables families to build resilience as outlined in the diagram below.

Diagram: Building resilience within families



Where are we now?

In 2008, Nottingham City became the UK's first 'Early Intervention City', with the launch of a raft of programmes designed to improve the life chances of its children most in need of additional support. The programmes included a family nurse project to help teenage mums, a mentoring scheme for young people, greater support for victims of domestic violence and initiatives to tackle drug and alcohol abuse.

Nottingham's Early Help offer has been through various transformations over the years, including Sure Start local programmes and Children's Centres. Throughout these changes, there has remained a focus on giving families the tools to build their resilience.

In 2013 Nottingham was awarded funding from the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities to deliver the Priority Families programme, (nationally known as Troubled Families) which became the Supporting Families programme in 2021.

The current programme is focused on embedding the framework and processes for an effective Early Help system, including:

- ✓ Multi-agency collaboration, early intervention and whole family working, to support vulnerable families to thrive and build their resilience.
- ✓ Transformation of services to enable system change locally and nationally, ensuring joined up efficient services.
- ✓ Combining and analysing data that support families and practice and enable a strong evidence base to help support families and commission appropriate services.

In 2015, Small Steps Big Changes (SSBC), hosted by Nottingham CityCare Partnership received significant funding from the National Lottery Community Fund's 'A Better Start' programme. The programme has a focus on prevention and early intervention in early years to test and learn

around early child development, workforce, coproduction and influencing commissioning locally. SSBC has worked across the early help system to empower parents, communities, and workforces to coproduce services and achieve together.

The city has also worked with partners to transform four of its former Children's Centres into Family Hubs, in North, South and Central localities of Nottingham. The Family Hubs provide a range of partnership services for families from pre-birth through to adulthood, ensuring:

1. **Access:** there is a clear and simple way for families with children of all ages to access help and support through a Family Hub building and a Family Hub approach.
2. **Connections:** Services work together for families, with a universal 'front door', shared outcomes and effective governance.
3. **Professionals work together** through co-location, data-sharing and a common approach to their work. Families should only have to tell their story once, the services are more efficient, and families receive more effective support. Statutory services and voluntary and community sector partners work together to get families the help they need.
4. **Relationships:**
 - ✓ The Family Hub prioritises strengthening relationships and builds on family strengths.
 - ✓ Relationships are at the heart of everything that is delivered in Family Hubs.
 - ✓ The Reducing Parental Conflict programme provides support for families experiencing relationship distress.



Our partnership

The Early Help System in Nottingham City includes a range of support and information services, outlined in the image below. These include community support, universal and acute services.



Local context

Nottingham is a young, diverse and vibrant city. It has a resident population of 323,700 people. 48% of residents are aged 30 or under, 27% are under 19 years of age. There are 35,256 households with dependent children and young people aged 0-19 years (Census 2021).

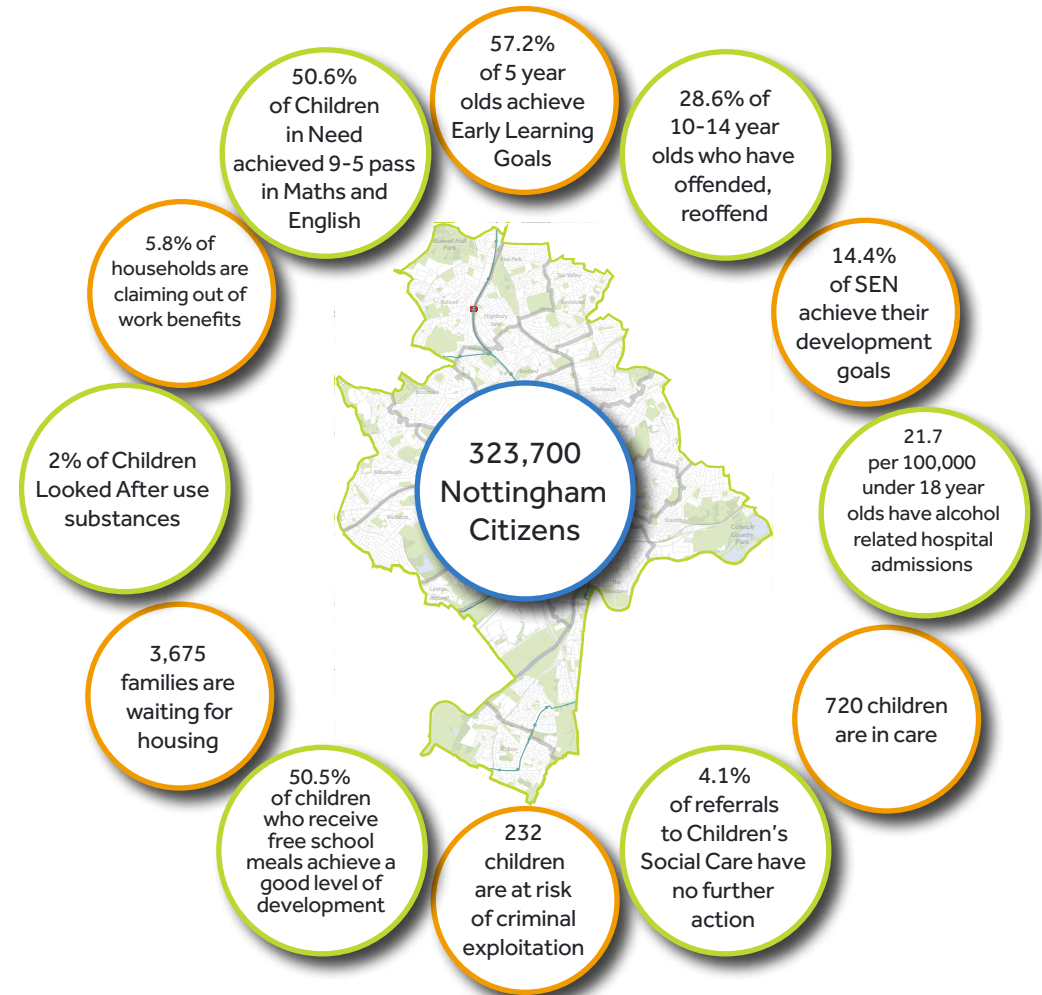
Over one third, 34.1% of its population, identify as non-white compared to 20% for England. Our largest ethnic population is Asian or Asian British, making up 14.9% of the population. This is followed by Black, Black British, Caribbean or African at 10% and Other ethnic groups at 3.3%. The white population of 65.9% includes high numbers of people from Eastern Europe, including Poland and Latvia. Nottingham has also welcomed children and young people seeking asylum, who make up 5% of this group. 33.7% of children and young people in Nottingham speak English as a second language.

In the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, Nottingham ranked 11th most deprived district in England out of 317. One third of children and young people live in workless households. Over one-third, 37.8% of the city's pupils, are eligible for free school meals, higher than the England average of 23.5%. The children and young people who live in absolute low-income families is 33.9%, over double the England average of 15.3%.

Families in Nottingham are also battling with the cost-of-living crisis. The Trussell Trust report shows a 37% increase in use of food banks over the last year. In addition, one-fifth of adults reported borrowing more money than a year ago. This was more common amongst renters, people with dependent children and those living in deprived areas.

The data highlight the challenges faced by families and the Early Help workforce. The development of Early Help system wide will help to reduce those challenges and minimise the impact. It will also allow us to build on

areas that we are doing well. Other key statistics about Nottingham's population are illustrated in the diagram. In green is where Nottingham is achieving better outcomes than the national average.



Our vision

Our vision for Nottingham City, taken from Nottingham's Children and Young People's Plan is: *'A city where every child can enjoy their childhood in a warm and supportive environment, free from poverty and safe from harm; a city where every child grows up to achieve their full potential'.*

Our values & practice principles

As a partnership we have developed these values that underpin all our Early Help work and approaches:

1. Children and young people are at the heart of all that we do
2. We will ensure that children, young people, and families can access the right help at the right time
3. We will work with, not do to, children, young people, and families
4. We will listen to, and act on, the views of children, young people, families, and communities



'Support to improve my behaviour before I do something bad'

Practice principles

In Nottingham we have 5 practice principles across our Children's Integrated Service. They are the core values which underpin our practice.



Our priorities



Our five priority areas over the next two years are outlined below:



Priority 1

Embedding a whole system approach to facilitate Early Help being an integral part of a city-wide service

What we aim to do:

- a) Embed the Whole Family Early Help Partnership Assessment and plan into practice across the Early Help Partnership system
- b) Develop an effective case management system so that partners can access relevant information including referrals, intervention plans and case notes
- c) Review the Threshold of Need document and ensure awareness of this document across all partner agencies and ensure all colleagues and partners are clear on the process
- d) Ensure standardised documentation and a shared language is used across the partnership



Priority 2

Partnership working

What we aim to do:

- a) Ensure partners have access to the case management system (Liquid Logic hosted by Nottingham City Council with a clear GDPR policy and processes to ensure children, young people, and families only tell their story once)
- b) Support partner organisations to develop a collective 'Core Offer' of what Early Help Services are available to children, young people, and families across the City with some neighbourhood variations to reflect local needs, acknowledge and celebrate the City's diversity
- c) Develop 'Family Hubs' partnership offer and ensure they have a whole family working offer
- d) Promote information on all services to children, young people, and families, through AskLion, social media and partner organisations whilst developing the new Early Help Partnership/Family Hubs website
- e) Use the lived experience of local children, young people, and families to shape services based on need and developed and delivered through a co-production approach
- f) Develop toolkits using the expertise of the partners to support professionals working with children, young people, and families, and maintain a regularly updated directory of Early Help services



'Knowing where you can go to make friends with other mums'



Priority 3

Partnership workforce development and structure

What we aim to do:

- Ensure the Early Help partnership structure is aligned and effective ensuring ease of access for children, young people, and families.
- Undertake a language audit to identify gaps and support access for all children, young people, and families (including sign language) through all devices
- Develop and deliver a partnership-wide workforce induction/training/refresher package to ensure staff and system leaders are providing a consistent high-quality service
- Develop a programme of shadowing opportunities to increase knowledge and understanding of partners' offer including peer support and mentoring
- Deliver six-monthly multi-agency partner and practitioner events to embed a collaborate approach



Priority 4

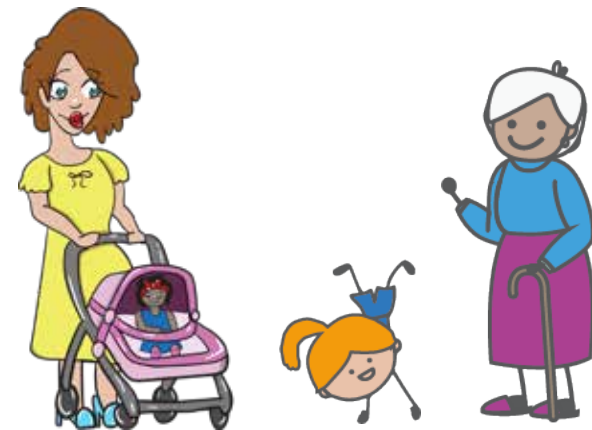
Measure the impact of Early Help

What we aim to do:

- Establish which Early Help Partnership services we want to measure our success against and how these will be measured
- Develop a Quality Assurance Framework with accessible performance dashboards for the workforce to measure success and learning
- Agree Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that deliver tangible benefits to children, young people, and families
- Establish a system to consistently evaluate performance against KPIs to include the voice of children, young people, and families
- Report progress to the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children's Partnership's (NCSCP), Strategic Leadership Group (SLG) and Business Management Group (BMG) as required



'Supportive, easy to access children's activities and information'



How we will work together

Safeguarding

Nottingham Safeguarding Children's Partnership vision is for effective partnership working to improve safeguarding outcomes for children, young people and families and that children and young people are safe from harm, inside their home, outside their home and on-line.

According to statutory guidance, under section 11, of the Children Act 2004, organisations and agencies have a duty to ensure they consider the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people when carrying out their functions and must show independent scrutiny in doing so. The statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 identifies the core legal requirements, making it clear what individuals, organisations and agencies must and should do to keep children safe.

Nottingham Safeguarding Children Partnership has developed the Threshold of Need document, alongside multi-agency partners, for use by practitioners and their managers in agencies working with babies, children, young people, and families in Nottingham.

The aim of the Threshold of Need document is, *'to determine whether the child and family can be appropriately and safely helped by services providing early intervention and support, or whether the level of need and risk is such that statutory social care involvement is required'*.

The Threshold of Need document sets out four levels of need where support and intervention including Early Help may be needed. The intention is that interventions will be delivered by a range of partners and agencies.

Priority 5

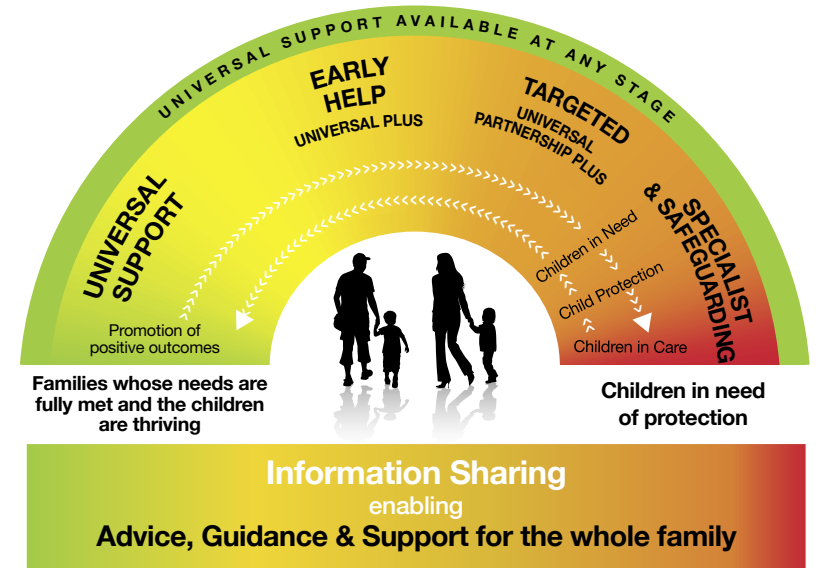
Pool funding and identify sustainability opportunities with the Family Hub and from external funding sources



What we aim to do:

- The partnership will seek out joint commissioning opportunities to enable the planning and delivering of services in a holistic, joined-up way
- Identify and agree opportunities to pool resources for funding, training, and service delivery
- Plan a sustainability strategy for the Early Help Partnership in Nottingham City by March 2025 including utilizing existing funding streams e.g., Family Hubs and Supporting Families
- Actively apply for funding to increase Early Help services and collaborate to maximise available funding streams for Early Help work across the partnership
- Continue to collectively make the case for continued long-term investment in Early Help and prevention as a valued support for babies, children, young people and families that is also effective and efficient

Universal support	Children, young people, and families are doing well and their needs are met within universal services including health development and achievement.
Early Help	Children, young people, and families are experiencing problems requiring universal services to offer additional support or work together with other support services to prevent problems increasing.
Targeted	Children, young people, and families are experiencing a range of increasing problems that require intensive multi-agency support to meet the needs of the whole family and crisis is likely to be prevented.
Specialist & Safeguarding	Children in Need - Children are 'in need' if they are disabled or unlikely to achieve a reasonable standard of health or development unless services are provided (Children Act 1989). Child Protection - Children who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Children in Care & Care Leavers - The family's needs may change over time and their level of support will move between the levels.



When the needs of children, young people, and families are considered to require Early Help, an Early Help Partnership Assessment is completed with the family to identify their specific needs. This is carried out by the Lead professional within the organisation involved with the family who will coordinate a multi-agency response of support. The Early Help Partnership Pathway is then followed.

Information sharing

As a partnership we will work together to enable effective information sharing solutions to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of individuals and families. We will collaborate to ensure that our collective data and resources are utilised to deliver the best possible outcomes, at the earliest

possible opportunity. Our decision-making will be evidence-led and informed by timely and accurate data. Our vision for information-sharing will be ambitious, forward-thinking, and compliant with relevant legislation.

Training

To ensure a consistent and skilled workforce, all professionals across the partnership will have an individual training plan which will include Whole Family Working, Signs of Safety and Trauma Aware practice. Training will be delivered using a partnership approach to assist in creating a sustainable wider integrated workforce. Additionally, resources to support families will be shared across the partnership.



Governance

The Early Help Partnership Strategic Steering Group is a new group, set up to facilitate the development and delivery of an Early Help partnership strategy for partner services across Nottingham City. The strategy is sponsored by Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership's (NCSCP) Strategic Leadership Group (SLG).

The NCSCP provides the safeguarding arrangements under which the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies work together to coordinate their safeguarding services and identify and respond to the needs of babies, children and young people in Nottingham.

Accountability for the effectiveness of safeguarding rests with the safeguarding partners through an established SLG. The SLG comprises of those with lead responsibility from each of the safeguarding partners. The SLG set the strategic priorities for the partnership and is chaired on a rotating basis by the partners.

Delivering this strategy will take work together from across partners in the city. The Early Help Partnership Strategic Steering Group will lead this, with a clear plan for how we progress. It will report to the Business Management Group (BMG) on a quarterly basis. The BMG includes senior managers from the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies that have responsibilities for safeguarding. The BMG scrutinizes safeguarding effectiveness and coordinates improvement activity by developing action plans for themed areas of practice. The BMG also monitor performance information and intelligence provided by NCSCP members and maintain an ongoing assessment of the effectiveness and impact of safeguarding work.



**NCSCP
Strategic Leadership Group**

**Business
Management Group**

**Early Help Partnership
Strategic Steering Group**



**'Someone there to support you
and give you advice'**

Thanks

Thank you to all the partners who attended the workshop and have contributed to the development of this strategy and committed to the ongoing development of Early Help in Nottingham City. These are:

Analysis and Insight, Archway Trust, Behaviour and Emotional Health Team, Blue Bell Hill School, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Change Grow Live, Child Friendly City Team, Children's Integrated Services, City Care, Children's Public Health 0-19 Service, Claremont Primary and Nursery School, Department of Work and Pensions, Early Years, Educational Psychology, Education Welfare Service, Equation, Family Hubs, Family Information Service, Family Intervention Project, Fernwood Academy Trust, Futures for You, Greenwood Trust, Healthy Little Minds, Housing Solutions, Integrated Care Board, Juno Women's Aid, Lead Academy Trust, Milford Academy, Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub, NHS, Nottingham City Council, Nottingham City Council Housing Services, Nottingham Schools Trust, Nottingham Works for you, Nottinghamshire Police, Nova Education Trust, Positive Business Communications, Public Health, Raleigh Trust, Redhill Trust, Small Steps Big Changes, Targeted Healthy Lifestyle Team, Transform Trust, Special Educational Needs Team, St Ann's Advice Centre, Strategy and Improvement, Targeted Family Support Team, Toy Library, Our Lady of Lourdes Multi-academy Trust, Way2Work, Violence Reduction Partnership, Welbeck Primary School, Youth Services, Youth Justice Service and Whole Life Disability Team

For more information about Early Help in Nottingham please visit our website www.earlyhelpnottingham.org.uk

or email us at info@earlyhelpnottingham.org.uk



About the Partnership

Below is a list of our current partners.

If you would like to join our Early Help Partnership then please email us at info@earlyhelpnottingham.org.uk



Appendix 1 Local statistics

Data shown in **red** is where outcomes for babies, children, young people and families are lower than the national average and where there is more work to be done. **Green** is where Nottingham City is achieving better outcomes than national averages.

Indicator	Year and source	Nottm City/ England
Children in absolute low-income families (under 16s)	2021-22 Office for Health Improvements and Disparities	33.9% /15.3%
Pupils receiving free school meals (FSM)	2022-23 DAISI	37.8% /18.3%
White	2021 Census	65.90%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	2021 Census	14.90%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	2021 Census	10.00%
Other ethnic group	2021 Census	3.30%
Pupils who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL)	2021-22	33.7% /20.5%
Achieved 17 Early Learning Goals	2021-22 DAISI	57.2% /63.4%
Children achieving good level of development in Foundation Stage Profile (FSP)	2021-2022 LAIT data	50.60% /49.10%
Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils who achieved 12 Good Learning Development Goals (305 pupils)	2021-22 DAISI	14.4% /22.9%

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)	2022 DFE	5% /7%
Under 18 years alcohol related hospital admissions rate per 100,000	2018-19 to 2021-2022 LAIT	21.74% /29.30%
Children Looked After identified as having a substance misuse problem in the year	2021-2022 LAIT data	2.0% /3.0%
Children at risk of Child Criminal (CCE) Exploitation out of 5383 who were assessed	2021-22	232/no data
Referrals to Children's Social Care with no further action	2021-22 LAIT data	4.10% /7.60%
Proportion of offenders that reoffend aged 10-14 years	2020-21 Ministry of Justice	28.6% /28.9%
Number of families (households with at least 1 under 18) currently on the Housing waiting list in Nottingham City	2023 NCC	3675/no data
Households claiming out of work benefits	2023 NOMIS	5.8% /3.8%



Appendix 2 Links to key documents

- ✓ **Nottingham City Council – Strategic Council Plan 2023**
(nottinghamcity.gov.uk)
- ✓ **Nottingham Safeguarding Children Partnership Threshold of Needs** (nottinghamcity.gov.uk)
- ✓ **Statutory guidance for the Care Act 2014**
(www.gov.uk)
- ✓ **Children Act 2004** (legislation.gov.uk)
- ✓ **Working together to safeguard children** (www.gov.uk)
- ✓ **Supporting Families Programme guidance 2022 to 2025**
(www.gov.uk)
- ✓ **End of Year Stats - The Trussell Trust**
- ✓ **Start for Life offer Nottingham City Start for Life Offer | AskLion - Nottingham City Directory**
- ✓ **The Children & Young People's Plan**
(nottinghamcity.gov.uk)
- ✓ **Family Hubs and Start for Life programme: local authority guide - GOV.UK**
(www.gov.uk)





For more information about Early Help in Nottingham please visit our website www.earlyhelpnottingham.org.uk or email us at info@earlyhelpnottingham.org.uk

Supporting Families: 0115 876 3606

Bestwood Family Hub: 0115 876 1890

Broxtowe Family Hub: 0115 876 3888

Meadows Family Hub: 0115 876 1320

Hyson Green Family Hub: 0115 876 3888

