

<b>Meeting Title</b>	Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership (NCSCP) Annual Report 2023/24</b>
<b>Meeting Date</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2024

<b>Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):</b>	Jill Colbert (OBE), Corporate Director for Children & Education Services Ailsa Barr, Director for Children’s Integrated Services
<b>Portfolio Holder(s):</b>	Councillor Cheryl Barnard
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<p><b>Summary of issues:</b></p> <p>This report is a statutory requirement for the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership (NCSCP) to publish each year.</p> <p><b>Overview</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the annual report of the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership in its delivery model, covering 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.</li> <li>• The strategic lead responsibility for safeguarding is shared between three statutory partners: the Local Authority, Nottinghamshire Police and Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board.</li> <li>• An Independent Scrutineer is in place and provides constructive critical friend challenge to the partnership.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation(s): The Committee is asked to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Agree any comments or recommendations that it wishes to make to the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership</b></li> <li><b>2. Identify any issues or evidence relevant to the Committee’s work programme and the work of the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership and how to take this forward.</b></li> </ol>

## 1. Background

Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership is established in accordance with the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. It provides the safeguarding arrangements under which the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies work together to co-ordinate their safeguarding services, identify, and respond to the needs of children in the city, commission and publish local child

safeguarding practice reviews and provide scrutiny to ensure the effectiveness of the arrangements.

The safeguarding partners responsible for the safeguarding arrangements under the Partnership are Nottingham City Council, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board and Nottinghamshire Police. An Independent Scrutineer acts as a constructive critical friend to the Partnership, encouraging reflection on practice. Other relevant agencies also support the Partnership.

There is a statutory requirement for the Partnership to publish an annual report highlighting work undertaken and plans for the future. The 2023/24 Annual Report is attached and representatives of the three statutory partners and the Independent Scrutineer have been invited to the meeting to discuss its contents with the Committee.

## **2. Information Only:**

This annual report reviews the work of the NCSCP for the period April 2023-March 2024.

This is an important report, as it highlights the work and challenges that we all face in protecting and supporting our Nottingham children.

In 2023/24 the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership (NCSCP) set out its vision in the safeguarding arrangements as: -

- Children and young people are safe from harm, inside their home, outside their home and on-line.
- Children and young people have access to the right help at the right time.
- There is effective partnership working to improve safeguarding outcomes for children, young people, and their families.

The Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership values during this period were:

- To promote, monitor, coordinate and evaluate multi agency effectiveness in safeguarding children across the child's journey
- To strengthen and support a competent and equipped workforce that is committed to learning and developing safeguarding practice with the assurance that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- To evidence the impact of the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership

### **The overarching key strategic priorities of the NCSCP are:**

1. Protecting vulnerable Children and Young People with the objective of minimising the risks of harm to children and young people
2. Learning and improving to ensure that children and young people influence the strategic planning on issues that affect them, that we learn from scrutiny of multiagency practice, and that practitioners have the skills and knowledge to be effective in their practice.
3. Leadership to ensure that NCSCP continuously improves on its effectiveness, has clear lines of communication, works strategically with partners, and has effective governance arrangements in place, which support a robust planned approach to its work.

The annual report details work undertaken, progressed, and achieved throughout the last year.

### **Business Plan Priorities**

The NCSCP identified four priorities in its business plan for 2023-2024 which is a reduction from the seven for 2022 – 2023.

We listened to what children and young people, their parents and carers and our staff were telling us to focus on.

We agreed we would look at keeping children and young people safe from harm outside home – Focus on Exploitation

Keep them safe from harm at home – So we focused on ‘Domestic Abuse.’

Improve on how we work together – So we focused on ‘Making the system Work.’

Work for and with our diverse community – So we focused on ‘Cultural competency and confidence.’

#### **Priority One: Exploitation**

Aim: To improve the effectiveness of multi-agency practice in response to the exploitation of vulnerable children and young people, including child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, County Lines, Children affected by gangs and youth violence, modern slavery and trafficking, honour-based violence, radicalisation, and female genital mutilation.

#### **Priority Two: Making The System Work**

Aim: To improve partnership response and working practices, and ensuring the child and family are our central focus.

#### **Priority Three: Enhancing Cultural Competency and confidence**

Aim: Improving partnership focus on the work we do in the context of equity, inclusion, and diversity.

#### **Priority Four: Domestic Abuse**

Aim: To be assured of a coordinated and coherent inter-agency response to children impacted by domestic abuse and violence in families.

### **Some Highlights of the work undertaken by the partnership in 2023 - 2024**

- Launched our refreshed Threshold of Need Toolkit - This will strengthen the effectiveness of practice and support the need for a child and their family being offered the right support at the right time, without delay. The Threshold of Need has been promoted by a programme of awareness and training sessions supported and delivered citywide. This ensures that there is understanding of what the threshold of

need is and that professionals can seek consultation when they are unclear on how to progress with a child's case.

- Launched a revised Neglect guidance and toolkit and we continued to promote resources and messaging on 'neglect' including the [informative videos](#). Child neglect has a lifelong impact on a person's wellbeing, and it is vitally important that as a Partnership we do all we can to prevent it. Tackling neglect must continue to be a priority if we want to improve our children's life chances and prevent poor outcomes later in life. Neglect featured prominently in the two Rapid Reviews undertaken by the partnership during this period.
- Launched our Early Help website alongside an Early Help Strategy. This 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.- .
- Started a quarterly publication of the NCSCP Newsletter. This is disseminated throughout the partnership with the key aim of informing agencies of the work that the partnership does whilst also promoting key themes which are relevant within each individual partner agency service. We hope by doing this, this will inform areas of practice which may not have been considered within different service areas. This is with the ultimate aim of keeping Nottingham City Children at the front and centre of our work. It is also an opportunity for partners to recognise teams and individuals that have gone 'above and beyond' in their work in supporting children and families.
- Established a dedicated 'Education Subgroup'. In readiness for implementing the changes from Working Together 2023 in bringing Education into the workings of the NCSCP, we established an Education Subgroup. This group has representation from across the education and early years sector as well as from the partnership. The group set's its own work programme, ensuring it is aligned with the NCSCP Business Plan priorities and key performance indicators as well as addressing emerging safeguarding issues affecting the sector. The NCSCP Business Plan priorities also align well with the requirements including proposed changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 24).

All three partners have faced significant challenges in 2023 - 2024. We continue to see high rates of permanent exclusion in schools, high numbers of juvenile first-time entrants into the criminal justice system, high numbers of children being electively home educated to name a few.

The Local Authority have continued to address their financial challenges and continue on their improvement journey which has included 5 encouraging monitoring visits by OFSTED.

Health and the ICB have been dealing with the Donna Ockendon review into Maternity Services at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, and CQC inspections of Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

Nottinghamshire Police and the findings from their inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) which is yet to submit its full findings but has identified two accelerated causes of concern.

All three partners are also under significant financial pressures in line with many other areas but remain committed to ensuring there is adequate support and resources to support our children's safeguarding commitments.

The City of Nottingham faced significant challenges with the awful stabbing incidents that affected us all and we have worked hard to put measures in place to support our residents and vulnerable children.

We accept a lot more work needs to be done around the recurring theme of 'Neglect' and the use of the 'Neglect Toolkit' across the partnership and are committed to giving this area the focus it deserves.

In 2024/2025 we will continue to implement our Business Plan and work to our key priorities as a partnership with an emphasis on scrutiny and improved outcomes in the lived experience for our children, young people, and their families.

The safeguarding of children and young people is an ever-changing environment with new and emerging challenges. The continued work of the NCSCP is critical in driving improved performance and outcomes in the daily lives for all of our children.

### **3. Proposal or Issue:**

This report is for information only as it is subject to the governance arrangements of the NCSCP.

### **4. Financial Implications:**

None

### **5. Legal Comments**

N/A

### **6. Procurement Comments**

N/A

### **7. Risk Management Considerations**

Keeping children and young people safe is a key responsibility of Nottingham City Council and an effective safeguarding partnership is critical to addressing this.

### **8. HR and EDI Considerations:**

NCSCP's 2023-2024 priority three sets out its commitment to ensuring safeguarding addresses the diversity of children in Nottingham.

## 9. Carbon Reduction and Sustainability Considerations:

N/A

## 10. Input from Other Internal Departments: :

N/A

## 11. Next Steps: Looking Forward to 2024/25

We will work to:

- Promote the work of the Partnership ensuring we are clear how our work can support partners.
- Demonstrate how we are sharing learning from reviews and work more closely with the Quality Assurance Subgroup to measure changes to practice as a result.
- Re-focus scrutiny throughout the safeguarding children partnership on the recurring issue of neglect to ensure that learning and key practice skills are embedded.
- Continue to update and review our partnership risk register.
- Implement and embed our new set of key performance indicators.
- Develop the pace and impact of the Learning and Development Subgroup
- We will refresh our website and develop further resources and digital content for the public and practitioners.
- We will develop videos and resources that amplify the voice of the child.
- We will launch our e-training system via a new learning management system.