



What Works *for* Children's Social Care

Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Company number: 12136703

Charity number: 1188350

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Trustee Report

For the period ended 31 March 2022

Company number: 12136703

Charity number: 1188350

Registered office and operational address: The Evidence Quarter, Albany House, Petty France, Westminster, London, SW1H 9EA

Trustees

- Jenny Coles, Chair
(Appointed 30 May 2021)
- Professor Leon Feinstein - University of Oxford
(Appointed 1 January 2020)
- Professor Elaine Sharland - University of Sussex
(Appointed 1 January 2020)
- Jack Feintuck - Deputy Director, Prime Ministers Implementation Unit
(Appointed 1 January 2020)
- Ailsa Swarbrick - Director, Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust
(Appointed 1 January 2020)
- Fiona Johnson, Director of Communications, Nuffield Trust
(Appointed 1 January 2020)
- Steve Walker, Director, Leeds Relational Practice Centre
(Appointed 30 May 2021)
- Lucy Butler, Executive Director of Children(DCS), West Sussex County Council,
(Appointed 30 May 2021)
- Bev Barnett-Jones, Associate Director, Nuffield Family Justice Observatory Director
(Appointed 30 May 2021)
- Lauren McCann, General Counsel and Monitoring Officer, Kingston-upon-Thames Borough Council
(Appointed 30 May 2021)

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The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.

What Works for Children's Social Care was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 2 August 2019 with Company No. 12136703.

What Works for Children's Social Care was registered as a charity on 4 March 2020. Charity No. 1188350.

Reference and administrative information set out on pages 3-4 form part of this report. The financial statements comply with the current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Background

What Works for Children's Social Care was established by the Department for Education in 2017 to provide a rigorous evidence base supporting good practice in children's social care.

We seek to improve the lives of children and families through setting standards in research and generating the best evidence into what works in children's social care.

Our vision is for a world in which all children thrive, regardless of their early childhood experiences and that children's services improve the lives of children who need support and protection.

Our mission is to improve the lives of children and families through setting standards in research and generating the best evidence into what works for children's social care.

We generate, collate and make accessible the best evidence for practitioners, policy makers and practice leaders.

Engagement is central to our approach and we work in close consultation with leaders, practitioners, children and young people, families and researchers across the sector.

We recognise that in order to improve the lives of all children and families, we need to do work that looks specifically at the needs and experiences of people who are marginalised. Understanding and exposing inequality is an important part of our function because in doing so we can strive to learn what works for all children and families and play a part in redressing inequalities. We believe that engaging with a diverse range of voices and creating opportunities for people from minoritised groups to participate in our work means we are better placed to understand what works for all children and families.

Just over three years since our permanent team began to form, we have launched over 80 new research projects, working in partnership with nearly 150 local authorities across England (almost all local authorities that deliver children's services).

We are an official member of the What Works Network, and we have driven substantial investment into producing high quality research evidence in children's social care.

Objectives

The Articles of Association of WWCSA state that the charity exists to:

- promote the care, safety and upbringing of children and young people;
- relieve the needs of children, young people and families arising as a result of their being at risk or in social care;
- advance the effectiveness and efficiency of public services and the voluntary sector;
- advance education and research; and
- advance any other purposes recognised as charitable in England & Wales for the time being,

In particular (but without limitation) through the research, evaluation and dissemination of practice, policies, resources, and programmes intended to promote best practice and better outcomes in the care of children and young people across the UK and beyond.

Purpose

Our purpose is to improve outcomes for children, young people and families by collating, creating and translating evidence for practitioners and decision makers in the children's social care sector.

We have 5 strategic objectives to help us achieve this purpose:

Generate

We work with stakeholders to identify key priority areas and generate new evidence through trials and evaluations. We have begun more than 80 research studies since our inception to generate new knowledge in the sector. These studies include 32 randomised controlled trials, 8 quasi-experimental impact evaluations, and 25 pilots, and range from pre-birth and infancy support to support for care leavers, and from assessment through to foster care.

Collate

We collate what is already known, and summarise it through our publicly-available evidence store, launched in January 2019. Our evidence store currently has more than 30 entries and has been accessed more than 54,500 times since it was first launched. The store includes summaries of evidence on a range of interventions, going from parenting programmes, to whole system models, and everything in between.

Impact

We embed evidence in practice and champion the application of robust standards of evidence in children's social care policy and research. To reach frontline workers and decision makers, we have training programmes, with more than 400 social workers trained, and our evidence ambassadors programme, as well as regular webinars on research findings.

We include recommendations in our reports to help inform policy and actively engage with policymakers when we have findings and recommendations, so that our evidence translates into change for children and families.

We are also supporting the scaling of promising interventions, through the Social Workers in Schools trial, Supporting Families, Investing in Practice, and our Signs of Potential trials in schools.

Build capacity

We build capacity in the children's social care sector as well as in research communities, to develop and use evidence to inform social work practice and policy. We provide funding and support for researchers studying children's social care through Sparks Grants and funding of PhDs at UCL. Through Sparks Grants, we seek in particular to fund and support researchers and academics early in their careers and from under-represented backgrounds.

We are further building capacity for evidence through our Practice in Need of Evidence (PINE) programme which works with social care organisations with tools, support and resources to begin evaluating their own practice. This year we took an agile approach to enable more organisations to take part and to move through the programme more effectively. We have worked with nine new organisations in this way and have identified some promising practice and partners who are motivated to evaluate their practice. This could lead to larger scale evaluations in the future. Some PINE evaluations will conclude this year and we are exploring options for how we can continue to work with partners to grow the evidence base and move toward evidence of impact on children and family outcomes.

Resilience

We are an independent and sustainable organisation, with a skilled multi-disciplinary team who are committed to our organisational values. We have built a strong and sustainable infrastructure and support staff development and wellbeing through internal programmes. To ensure a consistent focus on Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Equity (EDIE), 3 internal EDIE leads have been appointed who are leading on the development of an EDIE action plan to inform all future work.

Our approach

What Works is based on the principle that good decision-making in public services and policy should be informed by the best available evidence. Where evidence does not exist, high quality research should be carried out or commissioned to find out what works.

Our focus is, as our name suggests, primarily on finding 'what works' - that is, what are the impacts of an intervention, or practice, on outcomes for young people, their families, and social workers. This focus informs both the kinds of interventions that we fund, and the methodological approach we use in our research. In particular, we favour causal research methodologies to find out whether an intervention has an impact, and particularly randomised controlled trials which gives us the best route to establishing the impact of an intervention. To date, we have launched 32 randomised controlled trials (RCTs) in children's social care; a step change compared to previously low use of this approach in social work research. We have also made wide use of so-

called 'quasi-experimental' research designs that try to answer the same questions in circumstances where a RCT is not possible or desirable.

This 'what works' question is not our sole focus, however. We are also interested in the context in which interventions or programmes work, whether they have a different impact on different people and why interventions work or don't. A growing proportion of our work reflects this by considering the effects on different groups, and particularly members of different racial or ethnic groups.

We have also invested heavily in projects that are not yet ready to be implemented at the scale required for a large impact evaluation, funding 25 pilot projects, which look to understand the feasibility; desirability, scalability and challenges of a new idea.

Finally, our research includes analysis of data, both quantitative and qualitative, to better understand the lives and experiences of young people with a social worker, and the system that exists to support them.

All of our research follows four principles:

Impact: Our research should focus, wherever possible, on the impacts that interventions have on outcomes. This focus on working out what change in outcomes is attributable to a particular intervention is key to the 'what works' approach to research.

Nuance: Our research must recognise that young people and their families are unique and experience different circumstances in different ways. Our research, while remaining true to our aims of uncovering impact, should reflect the fact that the world is complex and nuanced, and what works on average might not work for everyone.

Usefulness: We must be able to identify who our research can benefit, and/or who can make use of it, before we embark on a project. Will it help a social worker decide how to work with a family? A manager to know what services to refer families to? A senior leader, or policymaker, decide how to spend money or how to structure their services? Research without this focus on usefulness can be valuable - but it is not for us to conduct or fund.

Empowerment: Social workers are at the heart of much of our research, and our research should aim to empower them. As such, our research should be conducted with social workers; to tackle problems that they have identified; and to help them in their practice.

Public benefit

Trustees have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 and have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission, including their guidance in PB2 (Public Benefit:Running a Charity).

Achievements

a) Sector engagement

Our work over the last two years has generated substantial appetite in and around the sector for engagement with the What Works initiative. To date, 112 local authorities have been involved in some kind of engagement with the centre, of which 100 are actively involved in research projects under the centre's auspices.

Prior to 2019, only two local authorities had been involved in RCTs, and only two such trials had been carried out. By the end of the 2021/2022 financial year, more than half of all local authorities were or have been involved in an RCT. More than 32 RCTs are underway or have been conducted in the sector.

We enjoy positive relationships with stakeholders across the sector, as well as advocacy groups and potential funders who share our ambition of improving practice in the sector and outcomes for children and families. We held a number of roadshows around the country to engage with practice leaders about our work and regularly present at sector conferences and events.

Polling

Over the two years up to March 2021, we have also built up a panel of 750 (and growing) registered social workers who respond to questions on a regular basis. In the year from March 2021 to March 2022 our reach grew to 1461 registered social workers. As well as feeding into our priority setting, polling surveys allow us to take the pulse of the profession ranging from issues of the day to future developments of the sector. For example, from September 2021 to March 2022, the Independent Review of Children's Social Care used the polling site to send surveys to social workers on a number of key areas to feed into their overall engagement with the sector. Going forward, the polling site now sends out surveys to feed into research projects at the point of development.

b) Collation of evidence

Collation of research - drawing together what is known, and summarising it in an accessible way - is an important part of our work at What Works for Children's Social Care. This work takes a number of forms.

Our Evidence Store

Our Evidence Store, hosted on our website, aims to be a one-stop shop for evidence in children's social care. Entries in our evidence store each describe a particular intervention or practice, and what the evidence base currently says about it.

The store hosts more than 30 entries as of March 2022, covering interventions from web-based parenting support to the Signs of Safety practice model.

New systematic reviews

Where a topic has not been systematically reviewed in the past, we will sometimes either conduct or commission a new review ourselves, to help fill this gap. Although the majority of the work we do is 'primary' research, based in the field, we have nonetheless conducted or commissioned several systematic and rapid reviews in the last three years including on:

- the impact of the [Signs of Safety](#) practice model on a range of outcomes, including entry to care;
- the impact of Family Group Conferences on care entry;
- the effectiveness of policies, programmes and interventions to improve outcomes for young people leaving the care system;
- the experiences of young people who experience CSE during/around transition from Children's to Adult Social Care Services;
- [matching in foster care](#);
- [social work practice in safeguarding disabled children and young people](#);
- [the representation and experiences of ethnic minority social workers in England](#)
- [the outcomes of Black children in care](#);
- [the quality of decision making and risk assessment](#);
- [reunification for children who return home from care](#);
- the experience of teenagers in care;
- domestic abuse;
- mental health of care leavers; and
- attendance of children with a social worker.

c) Create evidence & research

Our research is vital to who and what we are as an organisation. We conduct varied research, including randomised controlled trials, implementation and process evaluations, descriptive data analysis or systematic reviews.

Research for the Independent Review of Children's Social Care

WWCSC was appointed as a research partner for the Independent Review of Children's Social Care. As part of this work we produced four new research reports, published four systematic reviews (three of which were externally commissioned) and supported the team's thinking with several rapid evidence summaries. We also polled social workers on questions the Review team were grappling with.

Residential Care

Using national administrative data, we produced a descriptive analysis of the experiences of children who have had a placement in a residential children's home subject to children's homes regulations in England.

Our analysis used individual-level, national data from the Children Looked After Dataset (SSDA903, CLA dataset), linked with extracts of the National Pupil Database (NPD) between 1998/99 and 2019/20. Using descriptive statistics, we summarised the experiences of a snapshot of all children who were living in residential care in 2019/20 and a cohort of children who turned 18 in 2019/20 who had at least one residential care placement during childhood. We also ran regression analyses to identify characteristics of children in care which are associated with the likelihood of experiencing a residential care placement.

We found high levels of need, unstable care journeys and poor outcomes of children who have experience of residential care. Boys and white children tend to be overrepresented in residential care. Instability prior to entering residential care is common, such as multiple placement breakdowns and fixed exclusions from school. This instability continues upon entry to residential care, with most children going on to experience multiple additional placements. Our findings speak to the notion of residential care as a 'last resort' used after foster care and kinship care placements break down. Outcomes for children who have lived in residential care tend to be relatively poor compared to average outcomes for children in care. The report of the analysis of the administrative data is due to be published in May 2022.

Kinship Care

Our research into formal kinship care arrangements in England provided a descriptive analysis of national administrative data focussing on two specific types of kinship care arrangements: kinship foster care whilst in care and Special Guardianship Orders (SGO) granted to kin.

The analysis used individual-level, national data from the Children Looked After Dataset (SSDA903, CLA Dataset), linked with extracts of the National Pupil Database (NPD) between 1998/99 and 2019/20. We summarised the experiences of children who were in kinship care in 2019/20 and those that turned 18 in 2019/20 who have ever been in a kinship care placement using descriptive statistics.

We found a high degree of local variation in the use of kinship foster placements and kinship SGOs across local authorities. The rate of kinship care placements ranges from 4% to 39% across Local Authorities (LAs). The rate of kinship special guardianship ranges from 2% to 27%.

Proportionally more girls live in kinship foster care and kinship special guardianship, relative to their representation in the wider care population. Children from minority ethnic groups, and Black children in particular, are underrepresented among children living in kinship foster care and kinship special guardianship. This is contrary to findings that children from minority ethnic groups are overrepresented in informal kinship care arrangements.

SDQ scores, KS4 school exclusions, and KS4 school attainment for children who ever live in kinship foster care are similar to those for all children who are ever in care. Children who ever leave care to a kinship special guardian typically have lower rates of school exclusions and higher attainment at KS4 compared to all children in care.

The report of the analysis of the administrative data is due to be published later in 2022.

Understanding service provision for children in need

We explored the support offered to the children and their families who have a Child in Need plan across four local authorities, to add to limited existing research about the needs of children who are on these plans.

We carried out a manual review of 82 case files of children with a Child in Need plan and supplemented this with in-depth case discussions with practitioners. We held seven focus groups with 29 social work staff, along with 11 interviews with parents of children with a Child in Need plan.

We found inconsistency across local authorities in how Child in Need plans were used, thresholds for involvement and interventions, and the range of services offered to families in need of support. The findings also reaffirm that there is still much that is unknown about the characteristics and experiences of those on Child in Need plans. The report of our findings is due to be published later in 2022.

Commissioning secure children's home placements

Commissioning secure children's home (SCH) placements is an important area of research given the cost of these placements and the complexity of needs of young people in these settings. We published a thematic analysis of stakeholder views and recommendations.

We reviewed the existing research on secure accommodation provision and SCHs; analysed the most recent data on SCHs and the characteristics of children referred and placed in these facilities; and conducted a thematic analysis of the most recent Ofsted reports (n=13) and 17 in-depth interviews with a total of 24 stakeholders. We invited all SCHs in England to participate in the in-depth interviews, as well as a sample of LA commissioners, representatives from the Youth Custody Service (YCS), Ofsted, the Secure Welfare Coordination Unit and several third sector organisations.

We found broad agreement among stakeholders that in order to achieve improvements, central government should play a bigger role in facilitating coordination, accountability and oversight of referrals and placements in SCHs. Interviewees also felt that occupancy rates alone are not a meaningful indicator of supply, and the needs of children referred to SCHs have become increasingly complex - whilst SCHs have not evolved to meet these increasing needs, including severe mental health difficulties. There is a clear sense from the stakeholders interviewed that the ability of SCHs to meet their original purpose – to safeguard society's most vulnerable children – has been compromised, largely due to sufficiency issues driven by an absence of adequate oversight of the SCH provision. The report of our findings is due to be published in May 2022.

Review of sufficiency strategies

Over the last 10 years, local authorities (LAs) have had to respond to an increasing demand for children's services. Whilst it is known that the number of children in care is increasing and that commissioning practices vary across LAs, the capability and efforts of local authorities to respond to this challenge are less well understood. We carried out an analysis of the available and up-to-date sufficiency reports produced by LAs in England (81 strategies, representing 84 local authorities in England) to better understand this response. We extracted and analysed information related to demand, supply, access, costs, experience and use of commissioning frameworks, and market shaping activities.

Our findings reveal some nationally shared challenges dealing with increasing numbers of children in care as well as changes in children's needs. Coupled with the increasing costs of services and difficulties forecasting future need, our analysis creates a picture of LAs struggling to navigate the marketised system of children's residential care and to provide the quality of services which they strive to achieve.

We found a wide variety of responses to improve commissioning decisions and processes. We concluded that further evaluation of these is needed to understand the outcomes associated with these approaches. However, the diverse needs and characteristics of LAs mean that strategies associated with positive outcomes in one setting will not by default transfer to another. [The report of our findings was published in March 2022.](#)

Evidence summaries

We also [published evidence summaries](#), which provided brief notes intended to give IRCSC a quick overview of some of the evidence on a particular topic or question. They were not conducted or written as rapid reviews, systematic reviews or comprehensive literature reviews. We published nine summaries in total:

1. The long term impact of adversity
2. What is the impact of family support/preventative services?
3. What is the impact of high-quality relationships on the development and outcomes of a child who has experienced adversity and/or trauma?
4. Intergenerational cycles of significant adversity
5. Is there a typology we can apply to children who are in contact with children's social care?
6. Mental health of children and young people in care
7. Direct payments
8. How are non-professional relationships associated with outcomes for children with a social worker?

Kinship care

In addition to the evidence summaries, WWCS was asked to create a policy matrix in order to understand the impact of policy interventions on child maltreatment and children's social care outcomes. The policy matrices provided summaries of individual studies as well as systematic reviews that came from a rapid search of evidence. Headline findings found that general socioeconomic conditions, tax credits, housing, welfare reform, as well as neighbourhood and community level factors have relationships with child maltreatment and children's social care involvement. In particular, removal of cash and tax benefits seem to have a significant relationship with child maltreatment and children's social care involvement.

Safeguarding in Schools

Schools are an appealing site for social care and early help interventions, as they are the closest thing to a universal service for young people. Although this has been disrupted by the 2020/21 COVID-19 pandemic, the role of schools remains central both to a child's education and to their safeguarding. As a result, we have a number of projects focused on safeguarding within schools.

Social Workers in Schools (SWIS) scale-up

This study will evaluate an intervention which bases social workers in schools (SWIS) with the aim that they work more effectively with education colleagues and with children and families. The research design is a RCT and it builds on three smaller feasibility studies which found SWIS to be a promising approach and recommended exploring the intervention further.

Social workers have been working within schools across 21 Local Authorities (LAs) in England, and the study will evaluate the impact of the programme by comparing outcomes between schools that have a social worker and those that continue as normal, without a social worker based on the premises. Schools were selected randomly from a pool of schools put forward by LAs to receive a social worker, this was so we could be confident that any differences observed are due to the intervention and not another difference between the groups.

The primary outcome we have been testing is Child Protection (Section 47) enquiries, but we have also been analysing other social care and educational outcomes to see what impact the intervention has on these.

The time period of the intervention has now been extended until the end of August 2022 with 20 participating LAs, and the COVID-19 pandemic has caused us to change some activities that were planned, which has also changed the nature of some data collection activities. The main changes are:

- Timing of analysis and reporting updated to reflect the extended intervention period (e.g. meaning that the main impact analysis will now be reported in 2022 rather than 2021, along with the domestic abuse analysis and the follow up analysis and final report will now be published in January 2024).
- Changes to the data collection activities in the IPE, to reflect the fact that all case studies were forced online by the pandemic and conducted remotely.
- Additional data collection activities in the two extra terms, e.g. interviews with key decision makers in local authority 'front door' teams.
- The use of the 2018/19 school year as a baseline, rather than the 2019/20 school year as originally planned. This is because the 2018/19 year is the most recent year not affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic and therefore a more realistic baseline to use.
- Changes to the economic evaluation to reflect discounting to costs beyond 12 months from the start of the intervention, to present values using nationally recommended discount rates.

As the intervention comes to a close the SWIS programme has hosted the final Community of Practice (COP) events for Social Workers and Team Managers. Two in-person events were held in London and Manchester earlier this month, as well as a virtual event. This gave an opportunity for Social Workers and Team Managers to come together to reflect on the intervention and celebrate their work, as well as looking at what the future holds for SWIS.

Supervising Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)

The DSL scale-up evaluation aims to establish the impact of providing a designated social worker to supervise DSLs in primary and secondary schools. The programme involves each participating local authority assigning a dedicated social worker to supervise DSLs to support children and families more effectively, with the aim of improving the appropriateness and quality of contacts to children's social care. It is also hoped that the intervention will result in increased confidence in

decision-making and reduced anxiety among DSLs. Supervision is provided in the form of one-to-one sessions, intended to take place on an approximately monthly basis.

The evaluation includes a RCT, along with an implementation and process evaluation, and analysis of costs. The RCT involves half of schools within each local authority being allocated to receive the programme (the treatment group), and half who do not and who continue operating business-as-usual (the control group). Supervision sessions started to be delivered to schools within the treatment group in the school year 2020/21 and, following two extensions to the initial planned delivery periods.

The delivery of the programme will end in July 2022 and we will then be coordinating data collection alongside NIESR until September 2022.

Whole system change

Whole system change in local authorities has been an area of interest for years. In these practice models, there is often training of entire workforces; culture changes; and/or restructuring of the local authority. These models are seen as promising approaches to support struggling local authorities or improve practice within successful authorities. We are currently evaluating four models: Strengthening Families, Protecting Children (SFPC); Family Valued; No Wrong Door and Family Safeguarding. Each practice model is being evaluated using a mixed methods approach, including a stepped wedge randomised trial, a difference in difference analysis and an implementation and process evaluation. We also conducted pilot evaluations which are available on our website. The findings from the impact evaluations are due in 2026/27.

For the Department for Education (DfE)'s SFPC programme, we are evaluating the roll out of three practice models in 14 new local authorities and have agreed to produce interim reports for all three models to support DfE monitoring plans. For family valued, 2 of the 5 local authorities implementing the model have started using it, though data collection for the impact evaluation in Solihull was temporarily paused following the National Safeguarding Panel's review after the murder of Arthuer Labinjo- Hughes. All other evaluation activities have progressed as planned. Implementation and evaluation also continues as planned for no wrong door and family safeguarding.

Targeted interventions

As well as researching whole system models of change, we also fund, and research, more targeted approaches to supporting families and young people in particular circumstances, or experiencing particular challenges. Some of these projects are outlined below.

Supporting Families, Investing in Practice

We have partnered with the DfE to support the expansion of three interventions or models initially funded through the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme, while also further building up the robust evidence base around them. These interventions have been extended to 56 local authorities through this programme, and will produce impact evaluations.

Mockingbird

The Mockingbird Family Model is an innovative approach to foster care using an extended family model that provides sleepovers and short breaks, peer support, regular joint planning and training, and social activities. The programme aims to improve the stability of foster placements and strengthen relationships between carers, children and young people, fostering services and birth families. Seven sites, made up of ten local authorities, are taking part in the scale up of this model. The Rees Centre, University of Oxford are the evaluators, and the final report will be completed by May 2023.

Family Group Conferences (FGC)

FGC are meetings attended by a child's wider family and support network to come together, plan and make decisions for a child who is at risk. Daybreak's model, providing a FGC at the pre-proceedings stage, is being evaluated as a randomised controlled trial, aiming to provide more appropriate support to the child and reduce the need for entry to care. The primary evaluation question relates to care status:

- does referring families for Family Group Conferencing rather than care as usual at the pre-proceedings stage, change the likelihood that children in 22 local authorities in England are in care (looked after), 12 months after the pre-proceedings letter?

There are also four secondary questions, relating to changes in:

1. the perceived inclusiveness of how the local authority worked with the parent(s)
2. sustainment of living arrangement following a court judgement
3. time spent in care, and,
4. the likelihood that court proceedings go ahead.

Coram are the evaluators, and the final report will be completed by October 2022.

Family Drug and Alcohol Courts (FDAC)

FDAC are an alternative to normal family court proceedings, where parental substance misuse is the predominant concern. Alongside the court, a team of professionals with different specialisms – in areas including substance misuse, domestic violence & abuse and mental health — work closely to support the family throughout the court process.

There are three evaluation strands of FDAC:

- Strand 1 - The impact evaluation: a quasi-experimental design, which aims to assess the impact of FDAC on the likelihood that children are reunified with their parents at the end of care proceedings, relative to ordinary care proceedings. This is being led by NatCen Social Research, and the final report will be completed by December 2022.
- Strand 2 - Two feasibility pilots of additional variations of FDAC: (a) parent-mentoring (b) post-proceedings support, to better understand implementation of these components, what these involve, and how acceptable they are to families and practitioners. The University of Sussex is conducting the evaluation of the parent-mentoring component, and King's College London is conducting the evaluation of the post-proceedings support intervention. These reports will both be completed by December 2022.
- Strand 3 - A randomised controlled trial of a light touch service engagement intervention: sharing parent-to-parent letters to increase parental attendance and levels of engagement with the FDAC process. This is being evaluated by the Centre for Evidence and Implementation (CEI), and will be completed by December 2022.

My View - British Refugee Council

This project, led by the British Refugee Council (BRC) and carried out in four areas (London, Liverpool, Leeds and Kent), provides counselling and therapeutic support to unaccompanied asylum seeking children to help improve their mental health and wellbeing, and is being evaluated using a randomised controlled trial.

From April 2021-March 2022, British Refugee Council has been delivering the mental health service for unaccompanied asylum seeking children alongside the evaluation (impact, IPE and cost evaluation) from Ipsos MORI and the Centre for Evidence and Implementation (CEI). Due to the high demand for the service and staff capacity issues, BRC had to close the waitlist for four months. This severely affected the impact evaluation. As a result, it was agreed to extend the project by six months to help reach sample size targets of 280 participants.

No Recourse Early Action Model (NOREAM) - Hackney Council

The NOREAM project in Hackney provides support to families who do not have recourse to public funds. The service works with families who are particularly vulnerable, before their needs escalate, and thus aims to reduce the need for state intervention in their family life. From Feb 2021-March 2022, Hackney London Borough Council has been funded to deliver the NOREAM service alongside funding for a formative evaluation by the CEI and London School of Economics (LSE). Despite considerable challenges to data collection, the final report is set to be published later in 2022.

Prevent, Protect, Repair (PPR)

The London Borough of Lewisham has been funded to deliver their 'Prevent-Protect-Repair' programme, which supports families where there is a risk or history of domestic abuse. The intervention has several strands of work. It includes the training and capacity building of children's social care staff who are not domestic abuse specialists, in order to better identify, record and report domestic abuse; understand the impacts of domestic abuse on children and families; directly offer evidence-based support; and fully consider the role of fathers on risk and protective factors. From February 2021 until January 2022, Lewisham Council was funded to deliver the PPR programme. The Anna Freud Centre was funded to conduct a formative evaluation of the programme, and the final report will be published later in 2022.

We Can Talk About Domestic Abuse (WCTADA)

Wirral Council has been funded to deliver the WCTADA service to families in contact with social services where there is domestic abuse. The programme aims to develop new ways of working to improve the experience of social care processes for families so that they feel believed, supported and empowered, whilst being appropriately safeguarded. A formative evaluation is being carried out by Manchester Metropolitan University and the final report is set to be published later in 2022.

Thriving Babies; Confident Parents

Thriving Babies: Confident Parents is a pilot evaluation run by Manchester City Council and evaluated by Oxford Brookes University that aims to intervene at an early stage to support potentially vulnerable parents of babies and infants pre and post birth. This project works proactively with parents to build upon their strengths and develop understanding to the needs of babies and children; developing their parenting skills, reducing risk, creating family resilience and supporting parents' wellbeing. This work is directed by a named 'key worker' for the family, developing a trusting relationship. The project also aims to wrap other support round the parent

and family, e.g., to help with mental health needs. This is achieved through strong links with the voluntary sector and through deployment of the 'Think Family Coordinator' for individual families.

The evaluation was originally planned to run between April 2021 to June 2022. However, due to challenges recruiting the target sample size, the project was extended for 3 months and is now on track for completion in September 2022. Interim report findings suggest Thriving babies has increased parents' confidence and knowledge about looking after their babies, improved antenatal and postnatal attachment and has improved parenting confidence. There was also early evidence of improved multi-agency working and coordination, along with improved working relationships between partner agencies.

Lighthouse Parenting Programme

The Lighthouse Parenting Programme is an adaptation of Mentalization-Based Treatment (MBT) and has been specifically developed for parents for whom there are serious parenting concerns. It aims to promote safe and sensitive caregiving by helping parents to understand their children's needs and repair the relationship when harmed. The evaluation is a RCT taking place in five local authorities and aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme with regards to the risk of a parent physically abusing their child, and the child's social care status. All local authorities had recruited parents into the programme by Spring 2022, with the evaluation reporting in Spring 2023.

Empowering parents and professionals using video interaction guidance

Video interaction guidance (VIG) is a relationship-based parenting intervention in which a practitioner films a parent and infant dyad interacting in short, one-to-one sessions. By providing supportive feedback on these sessions based on edited clips of better-than-usual moments, VIG aims to promote parental sensitivity, child attachment and longer term social and emotional development. We funded the delivery of this programme and commissioned a full-scale RCT to determine its impact. There were significant challenges with regards to referrals into the programme, which meant the evaluation is no longer viable and the programme was therefore terminated early.

Workforce retention and wellbeing

Workforce retention and wellbeing is a significant challenge in children's social care. The [latest DfE figures](#) show that 15.4% of FTE children's social workers left their role in 2020/21, the highest rate in at least five years (when comparable data collection began). Anecdotally, there is reason to believe that recruitment and retention challenges have worsened following the Covid-19 pandemic. Senior leaders have reported that many social workers want to leave 'stressful' roles in Child Protection. In response to these challenges, LAs have turned to agency staff, who make up 15.5% of the workforce, but these are expensive and an inefficient use of resources. Social worker wellbeing is also linked with the outcomes of the children and families they are working with.

Many social workers and researchers argue convincingly that structural changes - including better pay or lower caseloads (or both) - would help to address the problem. Such changes would be enormously costly and not within the gift of local authorities to change or implement.

While we continue to seek funds to test the impact of such changes, we have focused our work on changes that are within the power of local authorities to administer.

Happier, Healthier Professionals

Our Happier, Healthier Professionals programme designed and evaluated a series of light-touch interventions aimed to improve social worker wellbeing, sickness absence and turnover. The findings suggest that these interventions can be effective in improving social worker wellbeing, but that these effects are likely to wane relatively quickly. As part of this programme, we also conducted an online experiment testing interventions which might reduce racial bias in hiring practices. We also evaluated the introduction of dictation software to aid social workers' reporting, and a flexible working policy implemented in one LA. [The happier, healthier professionals phase two report was published in January 2022.](#)

Symbolic Awards: Messages from Beneficiaries

Social care staff were sent a video of care leavers from their LA talking about their positive experiences with their social worker. We did not observe a significant impact of the intervention on any of our outcome measures. However, during interviews participants were very positive about the intervention, reporting that it had a positive impact on their motivation and well-being. This is supported by exploratory analysis which indicated that the intervention may have been effective in the weeks directly following its launch, before the effects appeared to wane over time.

Social Workers Inspiring the Next Generation (SWING)

Newly qualified social workers and social workers in-training from Frontline received weekly messages, written by Frontline alumni and experienced social workers, reflecting on the challenges they had faced at the start of their career in social work.

The messaging did not have a statistically significant impact on any of our outcomes. Interviews conducted with participants suggest that this could in part be due to general fatigue from the high frequency of well-being related communications they receive, which had increased in intensity over the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants also indicated that they would have preferred more practical advice.

Increasing diversity in social work hiring

This study consisted of two online experiments designed to test interventions that might reduce bias in social worker recruitment processes. For both experiments, participants were asked to evaluate fictitious CVs for a hypothetical managerial position within Children's Services.

In our first experiment, candidates with names typically associated with Minority Ethnic Groups were significantly more likely to be selected to progress in a fictitious hiring process when evaluated alongside another candidate than when assessed individually. They were also significantly more likely to be progressed than the candidates with White British names in this condition. In our second experiment, we observed no differences in the evaluation scores of candidates when they had either a name typically associated with White British or Minority Ethnic backgrounds, or when the name was removed in the 'blinded' condition.

Dictation software (pilot study)

A dictation software app – 'Dragon Anywhere' – was provided to social workers in two LAs. This software allowed social workers to quickly and easily dictate their case notes and reports rather than typing them.

There was high variance in rates of uptake from participants, with some participants regularly making use of the software while others barely used it at all. There was, however, some indication from participants that their usage may have been higher had they had access to the software for a longer period of time. There was also a range of perceptions of the impact of the software. Some participants reported substantial time savings of up to six hours per week, although others saw fewer opportunities to use the software and therefore enjoyed little benefit.

Flexitime (pilot study)

We evaluated a flexible working policy in which social workers are permitted to 'compress' their working hours into fewer days, so that they work either a four-day week or a nine-day fortnight. The flexible working policy was considered by participants to be a more reliable, and therefore preferable, means of redressing their work-life balance than time off in lieu (TOIL). Workload and team managers were also seen as important factors in determining whether participants adhered to their flexible working pattern. Participants were generally very positive about the policy, indicating that it positively impacts motivation and feelings of work-life balance. However, senior staff reported challenges in balancing staff's working patterns with service delivery.

Schwartz Rounds

Schwartz Rounds are an intervention which provides a forum for staff of all levels to share their experiences, stories, and reflections on the challenges of their work. These have been shown to be effective in healthcare and clinical settings, but had not yet been tested in children's social care. The [final report](#) of the randomised controlled trial of Schwartz Rounds was published in September 2021. The study aimed to test whether these open fora have an effect on staff wellbeing and workplace stress. Though not statistically significant, the research found that those who were invited to Schwartz Rounds reported a slightly lower number of sickness-related absences, and had lower average GHQ-12 scores – a widely used measure of psychological distress. The qualitative feedback from those who participated in Schwartz Rounds was almost universally positive, with staff reporting benefits in relation to personal wellbeing, collegiate relationships and their direct work with children and families.

Social work health check

Over the last twelve months we have worked with the Local Government Association and Principal Social Workers in 3 local authorities to develop a new standardised social work health check. We used validation techniques to optimise the survey to accurately measure wellbeing in this context and we now have a product that has the potential to be rolled out across the country.

Direct work with families and young people

Alongside our whole system work, and targeted interventions, we are also testing interventions that aim to improve or enhance the direct work that social workers do with families.

Creative Life Story Work (CLSW)

Life story work is a social work intervention that aims to help children and young people in care to understand and accept their personal history and future. A model of CLSW was implemented by Blue Cabin in three local authorities in North East England, Darlington, Gateshead and South

Tyneside, from April 2021 to March 2022. The CLSW aimed to improve home and school stability, optimism about the future, and improve relationships. 'All about me' creative experiences aimed to benefit looked-after children and young people aged 5 to 17, through six 90-minute sessions delivered by artists, in small groups of up to 6 children or young people over the course of 6 weeks.

This evaluation includes a RCT of the impact of the creative experiences on child outcomes; a process evaluation to gather in depth experiences of those taking part in creative experiences via interviews and a survey, and a cost analysis of the whole CLSW programme. This was the first ever RCT of a life story work intervention in the UK. The report will be published in the autumn of 2022.

Creative mentoring

Creative mentoring is an intervention providing direct mentoring support to young people who are looked after or have left care to build social and personal skills with the aim of reducing the likelihood of young people finding themselves Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET). We funded the delivery of this programme and commissioned a full-scale RCT to determine its impact. There were significant challenges with regards to referral rates and buy-in from sites, which severely affected the evaluation and the programme was terminated early.

Kitbags

This pilot study is being conducted from March 2021 to June 2022 and the report is due to be published in early September 2022. We are working with four local authorities, the University of Sussex and the International Future Forum to test Kitbags - a set of bespoke resources for direct work with children and families. Social workers and family support workers, foster and kinship carers (830 participants in total) are invited to use the Kitbag for direct work with children and young people. Each Kitbag contains a series of cards for activities, calming oil, puppets, and a talking stick to help young people feel heard. It is a resource designed to support the building of emotional literacy and regulation, understand the situation from the child's point of view, to discuss specific issues, and build good relationships - in this case between children, young people, and the social work professionals and carers who care for them. It is also aimed at social workers and family support workers to support themselves, and to be used as part of team meetings to build emotional awareness within the team.

LGBTQ+ Young People in Social Care (LYPSA Study)

We are working with The University of Birmingham on the LYPSA (LGBTQ+ Young People in Social Care) programme. This is a two part study, Study 1 is a qualitative study examining the experiences of LGBTQ+ young people in residential social care, and Study 2 is a RCT of a training programme for social workers aiming to improve their attitudes, knowledge and skills working with and supporting LGBTQ+ young people. The team at Birmingham are continuing with analysis for Study 1, and we are due to receive a draft report at the end of August. Study 2 has now been launched, and recruitment is underway, with the final report due March 2023.

Women in prisons

There has long been concern about the impact of separating children from their mothers when mothers are sent to prison and in 2019, Lord Farmer published a review on strengthening offenders' family relationships to reduce reoffending. As part of this review, he recommended that a case review of children removed from primary carers be undertaken. We have been working with the Chief Social Worker for England to review accepted and rejected applications to Mother and Baby Units (MBUs) in women's prisons in England and explore the social work input and wider decision making process that determines whether to offer an MBU placement to women in prison who applied.

To undertake the case review, we have appointed a panel of eight senior social workers to examine a sub-sample of 50 case files were examined: all 39 rejected applications where the mother and baby were not granted an MBU place, and a subsample of 11 accepted cases, where the mother was granted permission to take up a place in an MBU. There have been some changes in the membership of the review panel due to people moving roles, and Ofsted visits, as well as some difficulties obtaining files from different local authorities Social Care teams. However, all the available files have now been reviewed by the panel, and these findings will be analysed. Alongside this a thematic analysis is also underway which we hope to publish separately to the review.

Women with lived experience have been consulted via a charity called Birth Companions and a further consultation is due to take place over the summer.

COVID-19 report: How LAs have adapted social work practice

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions led to substantial changes in children and families' lives. We worked with the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) to look at how local authorities' children's services adapted in response to the pandemic. We reviewed a wide range of sources to build an understanding of the challenges facing children's services during Covid-19 and then held focus groups with twelve local authorities to identify how their approach has changed. We then worked with six local authorities to develop logic models for new innovations and conducted a light touch implementation and process evaluations for three of these. The recurring themes in local authorities' response to the pandemic were: flexibility over the format of support, with an increased use of virtual support; a focus on multi-agency arrangements and increased data sharing between partners: and an increase in practical help, concentrating on the provision of basics and reduced formality between professionals and families. The [full report](#) of the findings was published in November 2021.

Analysis of Safeguarding Partners' yearly reports

The responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in a local area rests with three Safeguarding Partners (the local authority, health and the police) who have a shared duty to work together to safeguard children. We worked in partnership with the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel to carry out a review of Safeguarding Partners' annual reports. As well as looking at compliance with the reporting requirements in 'Working together to safeguard children', we looked at what areas Safeguarding Partners' are prioritising and how they are sharing and embedding

learning from case reviews. We found that overall the reports suggested that Safeguarding Partners had shown resilience, creativity and adaptability as partners took forward the new partnership arrangements during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there was disparity in the quality of reports, with a need to move away from descriptive accounts that focus on detailing actions taken to focus instead on setting out the evidence behind approaches and their impact. Our analysis suggests the need for yearly reports to have a sharper focus on impact, evidence, assurance and learning. [The full report](#) of the analysis was published in May 2021.

NIHR joint funding - Children and young people's mental health

We have partnered with the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) to fund projects/research into children and young people's mental health. The projects were chosen in November 2021, and projects have begun. The four projects funded are:

1) **Partnership for Change: co production and feasibility randomised controlled trial of Child and Parent Support (CAPS) to improve the mental health of children with a social worker**

Hosted by the University of Glasgow, this project is a feasibility study of CAPS to examine the potential for a future RCT. Families in which children have a social worker will be recruited and, after baseline assessments, randomly allocated to either CAPS or services-as-usual. Quantitative outcomes will be recruitment and retention rates (three and six months post randomisation). A qualitative process evaluation with participating families and stakeholders will examine views of CAPS and research processes. Final report is expected to be completed by June 2023.

2) **Kinship care: an evaluation of whether Kinship Connected improves young people's mental health outcomes**

Hosted by Ecorys, University of Exeter and Kinship, this feasibility study is assessing whether Kinship Connected (a supportive intervention open to all kinship carers and their families in the areas that it runs) improves children and young people's mental health outcomes. The study will also examine the potential for a future pilot RCT and determine what the key design features of such a pilot would look like. Final report is expected to be completed by December 2022.

3) **Watch Me Play! (WMP): a pilot feasibility of a remotely-delivered intervention to promote mental health resilience versus treatment as usual for Children (age 0-8) across UK early years and children's services**

Hosted by the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust, this feasibility study will determine the feasibility and acceptability of delivering WMP for babies and children (age 0 to 8 years) referred to early years and children's services in the UK. The study will assess aspects such as recruitment, randomisation, perceived acceptability, reach, intervention mechanism (theory of change) as part of the feasibility study. Final report is expected to be completed by December 2023.

4) **What child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) interventions predict positive outcomes for which young people with a social worker: A mixed-methods study of clinical support and cost-effectiveness utilising linked operational data**

Hosted by NHS Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group, this project is a secondary data analysis study that aims to address the profiles and trajectories of children and young people with a social worker leading to and following from CAMHS treatment. The study will also explore what interventions and supports are provided, which are linked to positive outcomes, and the lived experience of access to and involvement with these services. In addition, an economic analysis will be conducted to determine the cost effectiveness of CAMHS provision for children and young people with a social worker. Final report is expected to be completed by mid 2024.

Race and equality

The social care workforce and the communities they serve experience individualised and structural racism. We know from existing data that some people with some racial identities are more likely to experience statutory intervention in their family life and we need to better understand the causes and outcomes of this. The social care workforce is one of the most diverse in public services however this is increasing discourse about social workers experiences of racism and the impact of it. We have recently begun a series of projects that aim to build our understanding of racism and its impact, with the ultimate objective of finding what works in anti-racism.

Examining race in all our research

Most impact evaluation, including randomised controlled trials, report average effects for the entire sample of people who received an intervention, compared to their peers who were assigned to a control group (or in quasi-experimental research, where they did not receive the intervention for some other reason).

This approach gives research statistical rigour, but it also means that the research is reporting average treatment effects for a general group, which can potentially mask differential effects for different groups, particularly where they make up a smaller part of the analytical sample. For instance, this approach might not show that an intervention works particularly well or not at all for minoritised communities.

We have drafted Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Equity (EDIE) research guidance that sets out guidance on how to conduct research to ensure EDIE. The guidance details a range of different approaches to ensure race is examined in all our research, including removing barriers to participation, recruitment targets, oversampling, and subgroup analysis.

Exploring anti-discrimination in social care

Social Care Workforce Racial Equality Standards (SCWRES)

We have been supporting the development of the SCWRES and have a member of the Practice Team seconded to the Office of the Chief Social Worker to develop the standards in 18 initial Local Authorities childrens and adult social service departments. We analysed interim data from the initial stage of SCWRES and presented it to the delivery team. We facilitated logic model workshops for the 18 sites to support them to be evidence-minded in their anti-racism work. The secondment has now ended however we are still working with the stakeholders group and await the announcement of next phase of the programme.

Anti-Racism survey

We are members of the Anti-Racist Steering Group, founded by the chairs of the Principal Social Workers Network. The group has representatives from DfE, DHSC and Social Work England and together they work to understand and address racism in the workforce (both children's and adults'). We worked with our steering group colleagues to develop a survey which was distributed via Social Work England to registered social workers. The survey received nearly 2000 responses. Following data analysis, we produced a [full report](#) and published headline findings to coincide with social work week in March 2022. The results were of great concern because they highlighted that racism is commonplace in local authority teams and the impact on social workers' wellbeing and career progression was found to be significant.

We continue to work with the steering group to develop an action plan based on the findings of the survey.

d) Education

The DfE's review of the evidence on educational attainment for children in need found that young people with a social worker (those subject of a child in need plan or child protection plan, as well as those in care), performed less well at GCSE than their peers, with young people with a social worker but not in care performing worst of all. Our work in education works to understand and reduce these attainment gaps.

Signs of potential

We have partnered with the DfE to conduct robust, large scale evaluations of four of trials. These EEF trials have already been re-analysed by WWCS, and we are now evaluating them again in more detail. These are:

Affordable Maths Tuition (AMT)

AMT is an online tutoring programme that aims to reduce the maths attainment gap by recruiting and training maths tutors in India and Sri Lanka to make online one-to-one tuition more affordable to children in English schools.

The evaluation aims to assess the effectiveness of AMT in improving maths attainment for children who have had a social worker in the past six years. The evaluation's original design involved both an impact evaluation and an implementation and process evaluation (IPE). However, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted in-school activities and the primary outcome measure, KS2 SATs scores, was no longer available for the 2020/21 cohort, making the impact evaluation unviable. The IPE was retained as a means of understanding experiences of the AMT programme. However, there were significant barriers to impact brought about by the pandemic which may have been a limiting factor in pupil outcomes. The Pilot Evaluation Of Affordable Maths Tuition Report is due to be published later in 2022.

Our Skills

Our Skills is an online course aimed at parents and carers of children in Reception or Year 1 who have ever had a social worker. It aims to support parents and carers to support their children's reading and learning at home. In the pilot study, we are testing the feasibility of Our Skills online to the intended population; including whether the content and approaches are acceptable and appropriate to parents/carers, whether it has evidence of promise, and whether it is ready for trial.

Our Skills was originally developed for face-to-face delivery and adapted shortly before delivery began for online delivery because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic also posed challenges to reaching the intended audience, and despite intensive activity to recruit schools and families using a range of strategies, take-up by schools and families was very low. The most effective recruitment strategies for both schools and families involved direct contact.

The evaluation will be published later in 2022, and although findings showed evidence of promise for parents/carers who participated fully and received the intended dosage, there were challenges in delivering Our skills online, and questions remain about whether an online programme is feasible for the intended population and content.

Words for All (WfA)

In this study, we are evaluating the WfA intervention, delivered by Whole Education. WfA trains teachers to deliver vocabulary-focused educational enrichment programmes to improve the attainment of pupils who have or have had a social worker. WfA will consist of bespoke enrichment activities developed by Whole Education and groups of three teachers (known as a 'triad') in schools. It will be delivered to eligible pupils, either by withdrawing them from class in groups, or via one-to-one support. The intervention under evaluation is the establishment of a triad of teachers and staff within each school with the resources and training provided by Whole Education.

Intervention delivery will be completed in July 2022 and an evaluation will be published later in 2022.

Embedding formative assessment

A whole school approach to using formative assessment systematically across the school and providing regular feedback to students to help improve grades. This approach, delivered by SSAT, is also one of the EEF's "Promising Projects", and we are collaborating with the EEF to evaluate the impacts of their scale up activity on outcomes for young people with a social worker.

Schools based programmes

Alongside our signs of potential projects, another key finding from our work re-analysing the EEF's trials archive was that on average, educational interventions that improve outcomes overall have smaller effects for young people with a social worker. This has led to another partnership with the DfE, funding a series of pilot studies of new interventions specifically designed to improve outcomes for these groups.

Transition Support

The Transition Support pilot, developed by Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC), provided support to children who were on a Child in Need or Child Protection plan during their transition from primary

to secondary school. The pilot involved training for schools and social workers; providing an administrative tool for schools known as the Transition Planning Profile Tool (TPPT); and Person-Centred Planning (PCP) meetings involving parents/carers, pupils, social workers and primary and secondary school staff. The pilot supported children who were in Year 5 and Year 6; delivery started in February 2021 and will complete in November 2022.

NatCen's evaluation aimed to understand how the pilot was implemented in practice and gather learnings for the planning of a larger evaluation. NatCen adopted a mixed-methods approach consisting of qualitative interviews, a pupil survey and analysis of administrative data. The evaluation only included children who were in Year 6. There were 55 children from 21 schools in the evaluation cohort (this reduced to 47 by the end of the evaluation period due to attrition). The evaluation ran from January 2021 to March 2022.

The pilot was designed in 2019 and took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, which had a significant impact on delivery and the evaluation. The final report will be published later in 2022.

Placing an advisory teacher in children's social care

Placing an advisory teacher in children's social care is a pilot project run by Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) local authority (LA).

The project aimed to raise attainment, attendance and pupil confidence, and decrease school exclusions of a targeted cohort of children on a Children in Need or Child Protection plan in schools across the area. The delivery involved:

- Two part-time advisory teachers (one primary and one secondary specialist) with experience in trauma-informed practice and leadership experience in educational settings, appointed to provide support to individual schools and social care teams
- An educational psychologist recruited to deliver 22 hours of training and support across all schools
- £1,000 per pupil to deliver bespoke interventions where needed, often led by external organisations, such as one-to-one maths tuition or outdoor activities. The funds could also be used for technology or resources to support learning
- Additional support from the LA's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) team.

The project grew out of work in the summer term of 2020 when the Virtual School temporarily expanded to offer additional support to the most vulnerable CIN and CP pupils in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Delivery began in October 2020 and ran until July 2021 and worked with 67 pupils from 35 educational settings. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools were closed to most pupils from January to March 2021.

The project was evaluated as a pilot study by NatCen, as an implementation and process evaluation (IPE) which combined quantitative and qualitative data collection activities to address key IPE dimensions and corresponding research questions. The [final report](#) was published in March 2022.

Behaviour Outreach Support Service (BOSS)

The BOSS programme aims to help schools improve their support to pupils who display challenging behaviour that compromises their learning and attendance. The charity Family Action

delivered the BOSS programme to 77 pupils aged 5 to 11, who have or have had a social worker in the past six years, in eight primary schools in York in the academic year 2020/21.

BOSS consisted of weekly school-based 1:1 sessions between BOSS workers and pupils, of around 45 minutes, for an average of 15 weeks, plus training for school staff and some parents/carers. Family Action had previously implemented the same model in Lincolnshire schools. Coram carried out a mixed methods evaluation of the pilot programme. The [final report](#) was published in December 2021.

TASO joint-funded - Higher Education (HE) analysis

The Rees Centre are conducting a secondary data analysis study that seeks to link national administrative datasets to build a rich picture of progression into higher education (HE) for young people in England who were allocated a social worker at any point after the age of 11. The purpose of the study is to understand how to improve policy and practice to enable more vulnerable young people to access and succeed within higher education. The study will use national administrative data from linked datasets including the National Pupil Database, Individualised Learner Records and the data held by the Higher Education Statistics Agency. The study commenced March 2021. Data linkage activities will start in Summer 2022 and the final report is expected to be completed by mid 2023.

Springboard: Supporting care experienced young people with their next steps in higher and further education

Whilst estimates vary, evidence shows that young people with care experience are underrepresented in higher education (HE). We partnered with the Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (TASO), Become, and the National Association of Virtual School Heads to try to widen access to HE and further education (FE) for care-experienced young people. The low cost programme involved Virtual School Heads sending a letter from a care-experienced young person in further or higher education to 16-18 year olds in care to share their experiences of HE and FE, encourage them to consider it, and signpost them to support. This support included a professional recruited by Become for their helpline, who specialised in FE/HE queries. Virtual School Heads who distributed the letters found the process straightforward and there was positive feedback from young people and professionals who accessed Become's support. Future implementation should consider an impact evaluation. [Report of our findings has been published in October 2021.](#)

Upskilling and investing in the profession

Practice in Need of Evidence (PINE)

It is not enough for WWCS to develop and commission social care research; we must also build capacity in the children's social care sector to launch evaluations and meaningfully incorporate the subsequent evidence into practice. The PINE programme contributes towards this goal by supporting sites to conduct a service evaluation of an intervention or way of working through access to our online PINE portal and regular consultations with the Practice and Research teams - PINE participants learn how to understand and incorporate research while running an evaluation. Furthermore, the PINE programme facilitates WWCS to spot innovative forms of practice

happening around the country, which may require a firmer evidence base, and helps onboard them onto the evaluation pipeline. The Practice team continues to focus on two key workstreams:

- **Supporting the initial PINE sites to complete their self-evaluation by Autumn 2022.** WWCS identified that these sites were pioneering innovative interventions and ways of working in 2020-2021, and they were provided with a high commitment of resourcing and support, including researcher-led evaluation planning and data analysis.
- **Onboarding new PINE sites who are running interventions or ways of working that are in an early stage of their evaluation journey.** These sites receive a slightly different level of support offered to the initial PINE sites - they have full access of the PINE portal and consultations, and they take the lead in drafting their evaluation plan and lead on their data analysis. As well as being more sustainable for WWCS's, this approach stays true to PINE programme's aim of effectively building sites' familiarity with the self-evaluation journey.

Below are a few examples of PINE sites, and the evaluation they're running:

Home-Start Leeds: Home start service

Home-Start Leeds is a voluntary organisation offering community-focused support to families with young children in Leeds. They embarked on the PINE programme in order to develop an implementation and process evaluation assessing the perceived effectiveness of different parts of the Home Start programme, including:

- How helpful sustainability plans are to families
- Whether the training and supervision volunteers receive is adequate
- The views of young people, practitioners, and Home Start volunteers on the programme's impact on young people's access to safe contraception and attitudes towards family planning
- The programme's effects on access to employment and education, engagement with services, personal support networks, and health and wellbeing.

Home-Start collected qualitative data through a series of interviews with young people, practitioners and Home-Start staff members.

North Tyneside Council - Early help Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) service

North Tyneside joined the PINE programme in order to assess the effectiveness of an innovation within their Early Help service - daily triage meetings based in the MASH. The Improvement & Performance team wanted to assess whether there was any evidence that daily triage meeting were affecting outcomes for the families being discussed - whether the model results in a reduction of Child in Need or Child Protection cases, and whether there was a difference in outcomes depending on the referring agency.

Warrington Council - Circle of Change (CoC)

Warrington joined the PINE programme in order to evaluate their multidisciplinary approach to Child Protection Conferences, centred on a 'circle of change' tool which supports professionals to safeguard children in collaboration with families. Warrington developed the model in response to a

review which found that some child protection plans were too generic and complicated to accurately convey to families what they need to do to effect change.

Warrington are relying on the following data in order to evaluate the model:

- A comparison between Warrington and its statistical neighbours regarding the duration of Child Protection and Child in Need Plans, and the percentage of children who become subject to a plan for a second or subsequent time.
- A series of interviews with practitioners, managers, service leads and family members to investigate perceptions around whether circle of change reduces risk, results in sustainable change, and improves care planning.

e) Engagement and training

Our research will be of no value if it cannot or does not change practice and policy. There is much to be done in this area, including explaining to the profession the value of the type of research that we do, and why we do it, as well as teaching them the findings from our research. Training on different types of evidence, and how to spot the differences between high and low quality research is important if we are to improve the way that the profession uses and creates research.

Social Work training - evidence, learning and methods

In 2021 we launched our social work training programme. This programme, which was substantially oversubscribed on the first day that it launched, aims to teach social workers about both research methods, and the findings of impact research in the sector.

The training evolved to consist of three subsequent training sessions to the Evidence, Learning and Methods training: Evidence Journey, Critiquing Evidence, and Evaluating Evidence. Our training programme remains accredited as a source of Continuing Professional Development for social workers, which can be used when registering and re-registering each year with Social Work England.

We held 26 training sessions and trained 296 social workers by April 2022. This included social workers from 54 different local authorities and 16 different organisations. Five local authorities further requested for ELM to be commissioned to be delivered to their staff.

After the success of the Frontline Pathways Leadership Programme, ELM will be integrated into the curriculum. By the close of 2022 ELM will also include a one day consolidated training session that will be taught to the Evidence Ambassadors to deliver in local authorities.

Evidence Ambassadors

Launched in early 2021, 'Evidence Ambassadors' is our flagship engagement programme. We know that the best advocates for evidence, and the best people to know what social workers need and want from their evidence, are social workers themselves.

That's why we initially recruited 6 social workers from front line practice, to be Evidence Ambassadors. Based on the EEF's highly successful 'research schools' model, these ambassadors received training from WWCS and from other evidence-informed organisations.

In September 2021 a further 13 Evidence Ambassadors were recruited nationally to build on the early successes of the first group. Between the period of September 2021 and March 2022:

- 65 events took place nationally
- 1152 social workers attended
- event content ranged from Machine Learning to Signs of Safety reports
- we joined forces with National Institute for Clinical Excellence and Nuffield Family Justice Observatory who presented their research material.
- we delivered monthly briefings

Advisory groups

We have established a number of advisory groups to help with our work. These groups serve a number of purposes; to help us understand the issues facing the sector from a number of perspectives; to help us shape and refine our research projects; and to help us interpret and frame our findings. These groups include:

Stakeholder Advisory Group

Our stakeholder advisory group consists of academics, social workers, system leaders, and family members. This group meets quarterly, and has helped shape our priorities on areas such as poverty and race. The group also advises us on our communications strategy and how we disseminate messages about our work.

Education Advisory Group

Our education advisory group has been established to support our programme of work in and around schools; our Signs of Potential Projects, Social Workers in Schools, and Designated Safeguarding Leads supervision. This group consists of leaders from the worlds of children's social care, education and teaching, and academic research in this area.

Young Advisors Group

Our young advisors group consists of 12 young people with a range of experiences of children's social care. This group meets regularly with senior leadership of the centre to discuss our research priorities and the issues they think our research should focus on. Members of this group also participate in our funding panels, helping decide which projects are taken forward and we often share findings with them ahead of publication to understand what new evidence means to young people.

Research Ethics Committee

The WWCS Research and Ethics Committee (REC) is responsible for reviewing all research conducted by WWCS, as well as any research we commission where there is no suitable alternative research ethics committee. The primary role of reviews carried out by the WWCS REC is to protect the dignity, rights and welfare of research participants. The REC must also consider the safety of researchers. The REC is guided by the WWCS Research Ethics

[Framework](#). The REC is made up of 11 members, all of whom are external to WWCS. REC members hold a range of professional and lived experience in research, ethics, and children's social care. The REC meets semi-regularly, but also reviews applications by correspondence between meetings. WWCS provides the secretariat to the committee.

Evaluation Advisory Group

Our Evaluation Advisory Group has been established to peer review the WWCS's evaluation guidance as well as to make recommendations as to the suitability of organisations who apply to join the Panel of Evaluators. Organisations successful in joining the Panel of Evaluators will be invited to apply to evaluate specific projects which are identified, or directly funded by the What Works Centre. Between meetings, individual group members, or a sub-group based on expertise, may be convened, either in person or remotely to provide recommendations on the suitability of these applications, or other methodological issues.

Expert Advisory Groups

To supplement these advisory groups, we are not creating a number of Expert Advisory Groups to support specific research themes. This will enable us to tap into expert subject knowledge for the entirety of research projects. We are building Expert Advisory Groups to support our research in the coming financial year and intend to convene the groups early in April 2022 to contribute to the design of research projects and to ensure we have a comprehensive understanding of the issues we are working with. Expert Advisory Groups will support our work on five key priority research areas going forward: domestic abuse, children and young people's mental health, residential care, the social care workforce and risk and decision making.

Communications and policy

Over the last year we have explored ways of sharing our research and findings with diverse audiences. Each output is tailored to suit the audience and objective with a focus on making our findings accessible and easy to understand.

We have continued to make use of digital channels including videos, webinars and podcasts, to unpack our findings to a wide audience. We used our website and social media to share our findings, support recruitment to our research projects and remind social workers of the positive impact they have on the lives of the children and young people they work with.

To maximise the impact of our findings, we ensure our reports include recommendations about changes needed to make a real difference to children and families. This year we reached out to targeted policy and decision makers to highlight these recommendations and how we can work together to bring about change. We have also submitted evidence to a number of parliamentary inquiries on areas from children's homes to models of social work. As our body of research grows we will continue to develop our influencing role to ensure that children's social care policy is evidence based, delivering better outcomes for children.

Financial Review

Funding

Since incorporation in 2019 WWCSO has been predominantly funded by the DfE. Without this support we would not be able to operate and we are incredibly grateful for the service contracts and grant funding that they have provided.

Financial Review

In the financial year under review, income including donations and legacies and trading activities was £17,764,111 (2021: £13,236,275).

This included grants from the Department for Education totalling £17,434,343. Total expenditure for the year was £17,408,827 (2021: £12,746,256).

The main reason for the significant variance in income and expenditure is due to a significant uplift in the CiN grant and an additional care review grant in the year.

Total funds were £918,971 as at 31 March 2022 (31 March 2021: £563,507), with £916,526 unrestricted and £2,265 restricted (31 March 2021: £513,507 and £50,000 respectively).

Reserves

The Board reviewed the reserves policy during 2021 in light of the fact that the DfE has committed to fund the charity by payments in advance for the year 2021/22. It was agreed that reserves would not be held in the medium to long term and instead WWCSO has an agreed exit plan, including funding, in place with the Department for Education.

The organisation is exploring possible means of diversifying its sources of funding, and starting to build up a funding reserve.

The trustees have reviewed the charity's financial position, taking into account the levels of reserves, cash, committed income that has not been included in the accounts, future plans and its systems of financial and risk management.

The trustees believe that, with confirmation from DfE of continued funding for the period through to March 2025, as well as further funding for project work, the charity is well-placed to manage operational and financial risks successfully.

Accordingly, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operation for the next 12 months period and consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

The Trustees treat the unrestricted funding as available for activities which forward WWFCSC charitable objectives, including grant making, and for funding the requirements for support costs and governance costs.

Accordingly, the Trustees consider that the current level of free reserves (general unrestricted funds less fixed assets) of £845,286 forms a pool available for supporting WWFCSC activities for a period of at least 12 months from the approval of the financial statements and believe this pool is sufficient to meet the planned expenditure requirements of the organisation for the foreseeable future.

Risk and uncertainties

The major risks to the charity have been identified in a comprehensive risk register and management of these are monitored and reviewed by all trustees as part of the board papers for each board meeting. The trustees have assessed the major risks to which WWFCSC is exposed and are satisfied that systems are established to mitigate the charity's exposure to those risks.

The risk categories identified with the highest scores (both impact and likelihood deemed medium post risk mitigation strategies) are as follows:

- the risks around delays to funding streams for 2023/24 and being over-reliant on one main source of funding;
- underspend or under delivery on grants due to the challenges of running high quality impact evaluations;
- a possible data breach either by ourselves or partners especially in the transfer of special category data.

These risks have been mitigated through the following actions:

- having regular conversations with the DfE grant, commercial and finance teams throughout the funding decision-making process to ensure WWFCSC is in a strong position when funding decisions are made. Closely monitoring our internal finances to ensure that current year targets and timelines are met. Seeking other sources of funding, so that the charity can become less reliant on one main funder over time;
- within the grant giving, programmes division, setting clear timeframes and milestones with project partners. Closely monitoring the deliverables against the grant to ensure partners remain on track. Where delays do occur, discussing and mutually agreeing on a revised action plan;
- implementing a clear data protection framework, ensuring that all employees are fully trained in the processes and have established an easy-to-follow plan in the event of a data breach. Communication has been shared with partners regarding the importance of transferring, potentially sensitive, data securely.

Structure, governance and management

What Works for Children's Social Care, as a company limited by guarantee, is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association, updated on 4 March 2020.

Trustees are recruited by the agreement of the Chief Executive and the Chair, subject to approval by the trustees. Appointed trustees are provided with a background briefing about their responsibilities and the objectives, operations, governance, funding and achievements of the charity.

Our board of trustees has a broad range of relevant skills and experiences. To date, we have recruited trustees with expertise in academic research in social care, practical experience in children's social work both at frontline and strategic leadership level, people with lived experience of care, civil servants past and present, and people with experience of service delivery and communications in other fields. The board of trustees is chaired by Jenny Coles. Ms Coles recently retired after more than a decade as Director of Children's Services in Hertfordshire, and, as President of the Association of Directors of Children's Services, led the organisation through the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns

WWCSC considers each of the trustees to be independent in character and judgement, and understands that they have no relationships that are likely to affect, or could appear to affect, their judgements with regard to the charity. Declarations of interest are required from new Trustees upon appointment and every meeting of the Board requires that any new interests are declared. No remuneration is provided except for reasonable travel and subsistence costs.

Trustees regularly review the progress of the charity and its funding. Trustees are responsible for setting the strategy for WWCSC and securing both the public benefit delivered through its outcomes and impact, as well as the sustainability of the charity.

There are two sub-committees: the Audit and Risk Committee reviews the risks, controls and financial management of the charity. The Grants Committee reviews the open funding rounds and agrees which programmes to fund.

The trustees are also responsible for the appointment of the Chief Executive, to whom they delegate the day-to-day running of the charity.

Staff

As at 31 March 2022 What Works for Children's Social Care had 46 staff members and has continued to grow since then.

Our employees are from a diverse range of backgrounds; drawing together strengths from a number of different fields; data science and econometrics, qualitative research, behavioural science, qualified social workers and affiliated professions, including qualified nurses, programme managers and operational experts. Trustees record their appreciation of the efforts of the staff, who have made an enormous contribution to the success of WWCSC during the year.

The Senior Management Team comprises the Chief Executive, Director of Operations, Director of Programmes, Director of Research, Director of Practice, Director of Policy and the Head of Communications. The Trustees continue to be happy with the management structure. The Director of Operations has particular responsibility for issues relating to governance and for the financial management of the organisation.

During the period October to now WWCSC was without a CEO; the senior management team followed the organisation's Scheme of Delegation to ensure due process and governance. This meant writing fortnightly update reports to the Board of Trustees which led to Directors building closer relationships with Board members and having informal frequent check-ins. The levels of delegation were updated to ensure the organisation could still work effectively at operational level without a CEO to sign off on increased budgets or new projects.

The Senior Management team worked closely together, making decisions as a group rather than appointing a CEO designate. This led to increased collaboration across the organisation and allowed SMT to jointly hold responsibility for the governance of WWCS as well as reassuring the team that their day to day would not change without the CEO. The Board was impressed with how Directors took on the additional responsibility and increased volume of work to continue the smooth running of the organisation during this period.

Pay and remunerations

The trustees review the salary of the Chief Executive. Furthermore, the trustees discuss and agree any “cost of living” increase in salaries which is applied to all WWCS employees. The setting of all other employees’ salaries is delegated to the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team. Increases in salary are dictated by affordability, wider market forces, individual performance and job role.

Auditors

Moore Kingston Smith were re-appointed as the company’s auditors during the period and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Plans for future periods

We are proud of what we have begun, and what we have achieved over the last year. Although there is much still to do, we are, as a team, and an organisation, passionate about that we will do in the future, and believe firmly that through evidence, married to practice and policy, we can achieve real, substantial, and lasting changes to children’s social care, and to the lives of the families and children we serve.

Over the coming months and years, we are committed to expanding the evidence base in children’s social care further - through the projects in this report that are already underway, and through new projects, addressing the most pressing issues facing the sector today. We want to continue working with the sector to identify and evaluate promising interventions to ensure that we are using the most effective means to support children and families.

A major focus for 2022-23 has been the potential merger of WWCS with the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) with the aim of creating a single organisation covering the full range of support for children and families. As a single organisation, we would be better placed to support the direction of travel following the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care and the ambitions to bring together and strengthen direct support available to families across the early help and social work systems. The merged organisation will be able to support the reforms ahead and help create a system that is both evidence-based and evidence-generating.

The two boards each agreed to pursue the merger in June 2022, and this decision was publicly announced in July. EIF and WWCS are undertaking steps towards the legal merger of the two charities, which is progressing well but has not yet been formally agreed.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of What Work for Children's Social Care for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company and charity law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable group for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate and proper accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and the group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Approved and signed on behalf of the trustees by:-


Jenny Coles (Sep 26, 2022 19:10 GMT+1)

Jenny Coles
Chair, Board of Trustees

Date: Sep 26, 2022

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF WHAT WORKS FOR CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of What Works for Children's Social Care ('the company') for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs(UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the audit of financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Corporation in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF WHAT WORKS FOR CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' annual report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and from preparing a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 37, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF WHAT WORKS FOR CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purposes of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

The objectives of our audit in respect of fraud, are; to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses to those assessed risks; and to respond appropriately to instances of fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both management and those charged with governance of the charitable company.

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements applicable to the company and considered that the most significant are the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, UK financial reporting standards as issued by the Financial Reporting Council and UK taxation legislation.
- We obtained an understanding of how the charitable company complies with these requirements by discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We assessed the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, including the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and how it might occur, by holding discussions with management and those charged with governance.
- We inquired of management and those charged with governance as to any known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Based on this understanding, we designed specific appropriate audit procedures to identify instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included making enquiries of management and those charged with governance and obtaining additional corroborative evidence as required.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF WHAT WORKS FOR CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above. We are less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that are not closely related to events and transactions reflected in the financial statements. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company and charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Moore Kingston Smith LLP.

James Saunders (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Moore Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor

9 Appold Street
London
EC2A 2AP

Date: 29 September 2022

What Works for Children's Social Care
Statement of Financial Activities (Including Income and Expenditure account)
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	2022 total £	2021 total £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	5,497,975	11,936,368	17,434,343	13,012,420
Trading activities	4	329,768	-	329,768	223,855
Total Income		5,827,743	11,936,368	17,764,111	13,236,275
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds					
Fundraising expenditure	5	1,624,874	-	1,624,874	1,151,462
		1,624,874	-	1,624,874	1,151,462
Charitable activities	7	3,858,247	11,925,706	15,783,953	11,594,794
Total Expenditure		5,483,121	11,925,706	17,408,827	12,746,256
Net gains/(losses) on investments		-	-	-	-
Transfers between funds		58,397	(58,397)	-	-
Net movement in funds		403,019	(47,735)	355,284	490,019
Reconciliation of funds	20				
Balances at 1 April 2021		513,507	50,000	563,507	73,488
Balances at 31 March 2022		916,526	2,265	918,791	563,507

All amounts relate to continuing activities.

All recognised gains and losses are included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The notes on pages 45 to 57 form part of these financial statements.

**What Works for Children's Social Care
Balance Sheet
as at 31 March 2022**

		2022		2021
		£	£	£
Fixed assets				
Tangible Fixed Assets	14	71,240		64,218
		<u>71,240</u>		<u>64,218</u>
Current assets				
Debtors	15	347,521	515,047	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>1,138,959</u>	<u>2,735,224</u>	
		1,486,480	3,250,271	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	<u>(638,929)</u>	<u>(2,750,982)</u>	
Net current assets/(liabilities)			847,551	499,289
Net assets		<u>918,791</u>		<u>563,507</u>
Funds				
Restricted funds	19	2,265	50,000	
Unrestricted funds		916,526	513,507	
		<u>918,791</u>	<u>563,507</u>	

The financial statements were approved by the Board and authorised for issue on and signed on their behalf by:

Jenny Coles
Jenny Coles (Sep 26, 2022 19:10 GMT+1)

Jenny Coles
Chair, Board of Trustees

Date Sep 26, 2022

What Works for Children's Social Care
Statement of Cash Flows
for the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
Net cash provided by operating activities	22	(1,559,465)	2,761,037
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(36,800)	(56,589)
Net cash (provided by)/used in investing activities		(36,800)	(56,589)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		(1,596,265)	2,704,448
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		2,735,224	30,776
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year		<u>1,138,959</u>	<u>2,735,224</u>
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents			
		2022 £	2021 £
Cash at bank and in hand		1,138,959	2,735,224
Total cash and cash equivalents		<u>1,138,959</u>	<u>2,735,224</u>
Analysis of changes in net debt	As at 1 April 2021	Cash-flows	As at 31 March 2022
	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	2,735,224	(1,596,265)	1,138,959
Total	<u>2,735,224</u>	<u>(1,596,265)</u>	<u>1,138,959</u>

What Works for Children's Social Care
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

1 Accounting Policies

1 Charity Information

What Works for Children's Social Care is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales with the registration number 12136703. The registered office address is Albany House, Petty France, Westminster, London, England SW1H 9EA.

2 Accounting convention

Basis of preparation

These financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis, under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of investments being measured at fair value through income and expenditure within the Statement of Financial Activities.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these financial statements. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) including Update Bulletin 2, (Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. Additional information has been provided where this increases understanding of the figures.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest pound.

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently during the current and previous year.

Going concern

The Trustees have assessed whether the use of going concern is appropriate and have considered possible events or conditions that might cast significant doubt on the ability of the group to continue as a going concern.

The Trustees have made this assessment for the period of at least one year from the date of approval of the financial statements.

Trustees have given due consideration to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has remained an issue in the period between the year end and the signing of the financial statements.

As at 31 March 2022, the charity has total reserves of £918,971 with unrestricted reserves totalling £916,526 and has agreed funding in principle with the Department for Education to March 2025

Discussion between the charity and the DfE are ongoing, and it is anticipated that the DfE will confirm funding after the year end. No formal notification has been made on this to date and this is expected to be confirmed shortly. If core funding is not obtained, the charity has an exit strategy in place.

Based upon this and further funding for project work, the charity is well-placed to manage operational and financial risks successfully for the foreseeable future.

Having reviewed forecasts prepared by management the Trustees are confident that the charity and the group will continue to meet its obligations as they fall due and that therefore the going concern basis continues to be appropriate.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charitable company for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

What Works for Children's Social Care
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

2 Accounting policies (continued)

Income

Income is recognised when the charitable company has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations are recognised on receipt. Donations from fundraising ventures are shown gross, with the associated costs included in fundraising costs. Other income is accounted for on a receivable basis.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charitable company has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both the direct costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them. Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the audit fees, statutory reporting, legal costs and Trustee expenses linked to the strategic management of the charity.

Overhead and support costs have been allocated first between the cost of generating voluntary income, charitable activity and governance. Where overhead and support costs relating to costs of generating voluntary income and charitable activities cannot be directly allocated, these have been apportioned based on the head count for each activity.

Grants are recognised as expenditure in the year when the charity creates a legal or constructive obligation.

An obligation arises, and expenditure is recognised in the financial statements, when a funding agreement has been signed by both parties and evaluations by the charity confirm the milestones set out in the agreement and any other terms and conditions of funding have been satisfactorily met.

Grants payable but unpaid at the balance sheet date are recognised as grant commitments under creditors.

Investments

On the 27/08/2021 the charity incorporated The Evidence Quarter C.I.C, a company without share capital which is a 100% owned subsidiary of What Works for Children's Social Care. During the period of incorporation up to the year ended 31/03/2022 this company was dormant and did not trade.

What Works for Children's Social Care

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

2 Accounting policies (continued)

Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the combined purchase price exceeds £500. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Where assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset will be shown as a revaluation reserve in the balance sheet. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Computer equipment	3 years
Office equipment	5 years
Fixtures and fittings	5 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charitable company reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charitable company has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

Financial instruments

Financial instruments are recognised in the charitable company's balance sheet when the charitable company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest.

Taxation

The charity is a registered company, number 12136703 and is exempt from corporation tax under the provisions of Sections 466-493 of the Corporation Taxes Act 2010.

Leases

Operating lease costs are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities as incurred, on a straight line basis over the term of the lease term.

Pensions

All qualifying employees are invited to join the charitable company's defined contribution scheme. For those employees who are opted in to the defined contribution scheme, the charitable company makes a contribution currently equivalent to 8% of gross salary into the schemes. The charitable company's contribution is charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the financial year. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of these contributions.

What Works for Children's Social Care
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

2 Accounting policies (continued)

Employee benefits

The costs of short term employee benefits are recognised as a liability and an expense.

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charitable company is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense to the Statement of Financial Activities as they fall due.

Deferred taxation

Deferred tax is provided in full in respect of taxation deferred by timing differences between the treatment of certain items for taxation and accounting purposes. The deferred tax balance has not been discounted.

Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charitable company's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

Critical judgements

The following judgements (apart from those involving estimates) have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

(i) Useful economic life of tangible assets

The annual depreciation charge for tangible assets is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic life and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on future economic utilisation and the physical condition of the assets. See note 14 for the carrying value of tangible fixed assets and the accounting policies for the useful economic lives for each class of asset.

What Works for Children's Social Care
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

3 Donations and legacies	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	2022 total £	2021 total £
Donations and gifts	-	-	-	14,185
Grants	5,497,975	11,936,368	17,434,343	12,998,235
	<u>5,497,975</u>	<u>11,936,368</u>	<u>17,434,343</u>	<u>13,012,420</u>
For the year ended 31 March 2021	<u>5,614,185</u>	<u>7,396,235</u>		<u>13,010,420</u>

Grants	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	2022 total £	2021 total £
Core grant	5,497,975	-	5,497,975	5,600,000
CiN grant	-	11,291,242	11,291,242	6,499,691
SFIIP grant	-	142,066	142,066	660,005
HHP grant	-	11,039	11,039	53,727
SFPC grant	-	91,565	91,565	150,562
Sign of safety contract	-	-	-	34,250
Care review grant	-	400,456	400,456	-
	<u>5,497,975</u>	<u>11,936,368</u>	<u>17,434,343</u>	<u>12,998,235</u>
For the year ended 31 March 2021	<u>5,600,000</u>	<u>7,398,235</u>		<u>-</u>

4 Income from other trading activities

	2022 £	2021 £
Rental Income	259,531	175,324
Other income	70,237	48,531
	<u>329,768</u>	<u>223,855</u>

5 Raising funds

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	2022 total £	2021 total £
<u>Fundraising expenditure</u>				
Staff costs	1,621,818	-	1,621,818	1,135,549
Other staff costs	3,056	-	3,056	15,913
	<u>1,624,874</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,624,874</u>	<u>1,151,462</u>

What Works for Children's Social Care
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

6 Charitable activities

	2022	2021
	£	£
Grant funding of activities (see note 8)	14,699,694	10,920,176
Share of support costs (see note 10)	1,016,189	613,706
Share of governance costs (see note 10)	68,070	60,912
	<u>15,783,953</u>	<u>11,594,794</u>
<u>Analysis by fund</u>		
Unrestricted funds	3,858,247	4,232,503
Restricted funds	11,925,706	7,362,291
	<u>15,783,953</u>	<u>11,594,794</u>

7 Grants payable

	2022	2021
	£	£
Grants expenditure: See note 8	<u>14,699,692</u>	<u>10,920,176</u>

8 Grant Expenditure

	2022	2021
	£	£
Care Review Grant	340,849	-
Core grant	2,773,988	3,557,885
CiN grant	11,291,242	6,499,691
SFIIP grant	141,150	660,005
HHP grant	10,900	67,783
SFPC grant	141,565	100,562
Sign of safety contract	-	34,250
	<u>14,699,694</u>	<u>10,920,176</u>

What Works for Children's Social Care
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

9 Grant Expenditure
By institutions

			2022	2021
			£	£
Achieving for Children	CiN	Education Project	24,761	
Affinity	Core grant	Tiny Tots College		17,348
Anna Freud Centre	Core	Prevent/Protect/Repair/Lighthouse	84,404	
Anna Freud Centre	Core grant	Lighthouse Parenting		162,287
Babies First	Core grant	Thriving Babies		117,132
Bath & NE Somerset CC	Core	Lighthouse	81,579	
Behavioural Insight	SFIIP		4,583	10,000
Birkenhead Sixth Form College	CiN	School Based Project	33,307	
Birmingham University	Core	LGBTQ+	58,103	
Blackburn with Darwen Council	CiN	Education Project	32,503	
Blue Cabin	Core	Creative Life Story	107,951	239,411
Brighton & Hove CC	CiN	Education Project	29,354	
British Refugee Council	Core	My View	426,025	
Cardiff University	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	210,981	364,759
Cardiff University	Core	Spark Grant	24,907	
Cardiff University	Core grant	Schwarz rounds		53,392
Cardiff University	Core grant	Social Worker Decision Making		58,055
Catch Up	CiN	Sign of Potential	82,235	
CEI Global UK	CiN	Sign of Potential	33,026	148,317
CEI Global UK	SFIIP		7,473	22,418
CEI Global UK	Core	NOREAM/Rapid Reviews	66,560	
CEI Global UK	Core grant	Systematic Reviews		102,234
CEI Global UK	Core grant	No Recourse to Public Funds		31,845
Coram	CiN	School Based Project	7,804	70,237
Coram	SFIIP		78,000	99,082
Coram	Core	Creative Life Story	32,010	128,958
CSA Centre	CiN	Education Project	56,140	
Cumbria CC	CiN	Education Project	13,992	
Cumbria CC	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	554,287	188,467
Devon CC	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	580,139	
Ecorys	Core	Kinship Care	76,995	
Essex CC	CiN	Education Project	99,432	
Family Action	CiN	School Based Project	45,107	119,894
Gateshead CC	CiN	Education Project	35,235	
Gateshead CC	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	338,703	167,861
GMCA	CiN	Education Project	446,878	142,422
Hartlepool BC	CiN	Education Project	39,464	109,884
Havant and South Downs College	CiN	School Based Project	64,000	
Hertfordshire CC	CiN	Education Project	90,321	
Hull City CC	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	354,279	170,786
IFF Research	CiN	School Based Project	30,000	
IFF Research	Core	My View	61,860	
Institute for Employment Studies	CiN	Sign of Potential	35,000	
Ipsos MORI	CiN	Sign of Potential	87,647	
Ipsos MORI	Core	My View	197,945	
Kings College London	CiN	School Based Project	30,000	
Kings College London	CiN	Sign of Potential	31,600	
Kings College London	Core	Spark Grant	48,299	
Kings College London	CiN	Sign of Potential		131,675
Kings College London	SFIIP			31,224
Kings College London	Core grant	Creative Mentoring		99,585
Kingston University	Core	Rapid Review	39,431	
LB Croydon	CiN	Education Project	25,555	
LB Croydon	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	486,984	138,525
LB Ealing	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	610,814	305,862
LB Hackney	Core	Spark Grant	48,290	
LB Hammersmith & Fulham	CiN	Education Project	17,505	
LB Haringey	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	506,979	307,387
LB Harrow	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	386,601	127,029
LB Hillingdon	CiN	Education Project	22,455	
LB Lambeth	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	312,667	96,844
LB Lewisham	CiN	Education Project	37,418	
LB Lewisham	Core	Prevent/Protect/Repair	28,250	318,750
LB Merton	CiN	Education Project	34,192	
LB Merton	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	425,931	178,236
LB Southwark	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	356,589	120,954
LB Sutton	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	415,561	186,743
LB Tower Hamlets	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	461,359	195,474

What Works for Children's Social Care
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

Leeds Beckett University	Core	Spark Grant	24,367	
Learning Unlimited	CiN	Sign of Potential		171,000
Manchester CC	Core	Thriving Babies	126,580	166,683
Manchester Metropolitan University	Core grant	Domestic Abuse		62,954
National Centre for Social Research	CiN	School Based Project	35,030	135,063
National Centre for Social Research	CiN	Sign of Potential	229	166,133
National Centre for Social Research	SFIIP		11,047	118,168
National Centre for Social Research	Core	FDAC	35,000	
National Inst. for Econ. & Soc. Research	CiN	Education Project		80,606
Newcastle CC	CiN	Education Project	21,456	
Newcastle CC	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	321,021	154,576
NHS Cambs and Peterborough	Core	CAMHS Intervention	100,000	
NIESR	CiN	Education Project	323,329	
NIESR	CiN	Sign of Potential	44,300	
Nottinghamshire CC	CiN	Education Project	26,666	
Nottingham Trent University	Core grant	Systematic Reviews		34,149
Oxford Brookes University	Core	Thriving Babies	69,580	
QA Research	Core		(57,118)	65,452
Rand	CiN	Sign of Potential		61,674
Refugee Council	Core grant	Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking Children		252,963
Salford CC	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	227,186	146,336
Somerset CC	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	303,675	94,464
Staffordshire CC	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	412,408	
Swindon BC	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	473,083	196,218
Tameside	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	456,975	144,465
Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust	Core	Watch Me Play	291,536	
The Manchester Met	Core	Talk About Domestic Abuse	20,985	
The Mighty Creative	Core	Creative Mentoring	(26,631)	176,196
The RTK Ltd	Core	Care Review Teenagers	19,750	
Third Space	CiN	Sign of Potential		60,000
University College London	Core grant	PhD Programme		270,000
University of Birmingham	Core grant	LGBTQ+ Young People in Residential Care		124,929
University of Cambridge	Core	Spark Grant	24,607	
University of Durham	CiN	Sign of Potential	53,539	
University of Glasgow	Core	Partnership for Change	463,077	
University of Oxford	SFIIP		24,432	95,019
University of Oxford	Core	Domestic Abuse Rapid Review	40,000	
University of Oxford	Core grant	Higher Education Rees Centre		102,780
University of Portsmouth	Core grant	Systematic Reviews		42,627
University of Sussex	Core	Kitbag	25,247	
University of Sussex	SFIIP			96,714
University of Sussex	Core grant	Not disclosable		83,087
University of Wolverhampton	Core grant	No Recourse to Public Funds		200,276
Virtual Class Ltd	CiN	Sign of Potential	(17,500)	390,000
Walsall BC	CiN	Education Project	34,094	
Whole Education Ltd	CiN	Sign of Potential	82,400	363,890
Wirral BC	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	313,066	112,006
Wirral BC	Core	Talk About Domestic Abuse	86,573	259,719
Wolverhampton BC	CiN	Social Workers in Schools	402,954	173,736
Wolverhampton University	Core	NOREAM	53,410	
Worcestershire Council	Core grant	Back to School - COVID-19		40,986
Youth in Mind	Core	Kitbag	1,200	
Non-disclosable councils	CiN	School Based Project		130,200
Non-disclosable councils	Core grant	Lighthouse Parenting		244,736
Non-disclosable councils	CiN	Social Workers in Schools		468,577
Salaries Recharged	SFIIP		15,615	187,379
Salaries Recharged	SFPC		141,565	100,561
Salaries Recharged	HHP		-	67,784
Salaries Recharged	Care Review		340,849	34,250
Programme Management	CiN		285,633	179,392
Other Costs	CiN		4,896	
Other Costs	HHP		10,900	
Other Costs	Core Grant		93,219	101,351
			14,699,694	10,920,176

What Works for Children's Social Care
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

10 Support costs

	Support Costs £	Governance costs £	2022 total £	2021 total £
Depreciation	29,778	-	29,778	14,556
Legal and professional	79,459	48,751	128,210	138,831
Other finance costs	874	-	874	380
Office administration	177,531	-	177,531	190,306
Premises costs	663,300	-	663,300	302,012
Marketing and public relations	65,247	-	65,247	16,444
Audit fees - Statutory Audit	-	12,450	12,450	12,000
Audit fees - Other	-	5,400	5,400	-
Accountancy	-	1,469	1,469	89
	<u>1,016,189</u>	<u>68,070</u>	<u>1,084,259</u>	<u>674,618</u>

11 Auditors remuneration

	2022 £	2021 £
Audit of the charity's annual accounts	<u>12,450</u>	<u>12,000</u>
Other audit- related assurance services		
Grant certification	<u>5,400</u>	<u>-</u>
Non- Audit services		
Taxation compliance services	-	-
All other non-audit services	1,469	-
Total Non Audit fees	<u>1,469</u>	<u>-</u>

12 Trustees

None of the trustees or any persons connected with them received any remuneration from the charitable company during the year (2021: £nil).

No Trustess were reimbursed expenses in the year (2021: None).

What Works for Children's Social Care
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

13 Employees

Average monthly number of employees during the year:

	2022 number	2021 number
Chief Executive Officer	1	1
Grant making, evaluation and dissemination staff	33	27
Administration staff	9	8
	43	36

The key management personnel of the charity are considered to be the CEO and the various directors.

The remuneration and employee benefits of key management personnel, amounted to £613,040 in the year under review (2021: £445,438).

Staff costs comprise:

	2022 £	2021 £
Salaries & wages	1,251,428	868,664
Social security costs	203,968	146,173
Other pension costs	166,422	120,712
	1,621,818	1,135,549

The number of employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more were:

	2022 number	2021 number
£60,000 - £69,999	5	-
£70,000 - £79,999	-	1
£80,000 - £89,999	-	-
£90,000 - £99,999	-	-
£100,000 - £109,999	-	1
£110,000 - £119,999	-	-
£120,000 - £129,999	-	-
£130,000 +	1	-

14 Fixed asset investments

The charity holds a 100% investment in a subsidiary undertaking, The Evidence Quarter C.I.C.

This was incorporated on the 27 August 2021 and has remained dormant in the period under review.

15 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computers and IT Equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2021	39,218	45,674	84,892
Additions	17,493	19,307	36,800
At 31 March 2022	56,711	64,981	121,692
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2021	1,675	18,999	20,674
Depreciation charged in the year	10,858	18,920	29,778
Eliminated in respect of disposals			
At 31 March 2022	12,533	37,919	50,452
Carrying amount			
At 31 March 2022	44,178	27,062	71,240
At 31 March 2021	37,543	26,675	64,218

What Works for Children's Social Care
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

16 Debtors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Other debtors	6,086	634
Grants receivable	207,588	483,888
Prepayments and accrued income	133,847	30,525
	<u>347,521</u>	<u>515,047</u>

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade creditors	276,188	1,619,057
Other taxation and social security	-	48,963
Deferred income	67,920	791,366
Other creditors	196,727	64,515
Accruals	98,094	227,080
	<u>638,929</u>	<u>2,750,982</u>

18 Deferred income

	2022	2021
	£	£
Other deferred income	67,920	791,366

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
	67,920	791,366
	<u>67,920</u>	<u>791,366</u>

	2022	2021
	£	£
Deferred income brought forward	791,366	5,600,000
Grants received in the year	16,730,218	8,189,601
Grants recognised in the year	(17,453,663)	(12,998,235)
Deferred income carried forward	<u>67,920</u>	<u>791,366</u>

Deferred income represents grants received in advance. The income is deferred when the grant agreements are subject to conditions which are still to be met and which are outside the control of the charity or when grants or income are received in advance and specified by the donor or other party as relating to specific accounting periods.

What Works for Children's Social Care
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

19 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund.

The charge to SOFA in respect of defined contribution schemes was £166,422 (2021: £120,712).

Contributions totalling £32,510 (2021: £27,566) were payable to the fund at the balance sheet date and are included in other creditors.

20 Movement in funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purpose.

The restricted funds were received for the following projects:

	Movement in funds				
	Balance at 1 April 2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2022
Care review grant	-	400,456	(340,849)	(58,397)	1,210
CiN grant	-	11,291,242	(11,291,242)	-	-
SFIIP grant	-	142,066	(141,150)	-	916
HHP grant	-	11,039	(10,900)	-	139
SFPC grant	50,000	91,565	(141,565)	-	-
Total Restricted Funds	<u>50,000</u>	<u>11,936,368</u>	<u>(11,925,706)</u>	<u>(58,397)</u>	<u>2,265</u>
Unrestricted Funds	513,507	5,827,743	(5,483,121)	58,397	916,526
Total Funds	<u>563,507</u>	<u>17,764,111</u>	<u>(17,408,827)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>918,791</u>

General Funds

These are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted Funds

These are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors. Any unexpended funds are held on trust for those specific purposes. In each of the restricted funds listed, the donor was the Department for Education (DfE). These restricted funds were as follows:

Care review grant

This was for work directed in order to achieve completion of the Independent Care Review. The balance was transferred to general funds as this was the allowable surplus on the project.

CiN grant

This was for specified work on the Children in Need project.

SFIIP grant

This was for specified work on the Supporting Families Investing in Practice project.

HHP grant

This was for specified work on the Healthier Happier Professionals project.

SFPC grant

This was for specified work on the Strengthening Families Protecting Children project. The remaining balance was transferred to general funds in recognition of the fact that this represented a payment for specific work which was done by salaried staff.

Transfers

Transfers represent the net underspends on grants transferred to unrestricted funds in line with grant agreements.

Restricted funds (prior year)

	Movement in funds				
	Balance at 1 April 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfer from Unrestricted Funds	Balance at 31 March 2021
Care Review Grant	-	6,499,691	(6,499,691)	-	-
CiN grant	-	660,005	(660,005)	-	-
SFIIP grant	-	53,727	(67,783)	14,056	-
HHP grant	-	150,562	(100,562)	-	50,000
SFPC grant	-	34,250	(34,250)	-	-
Total Restricted Funds	<u>-</u>	<u>7,398,235</u>	<u>(7,362,291)</u>	<u>14,056</u>	<u>50,000</u>

What Works for Children's Social Care
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

21 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Fund balances at 31 March 2022 are represented by:			
Tangible assets	71,240	-	71,240
Non Current assets/(liabilities)	845,286	2,265	847,551
	<u>916,526</u>	<u>2,265</u>	<u>918,791</u>

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Fund balances at 31 March 2021 are represented by:			
Tangible assets	64,218	-	64,218
Non Current assets/(liabilities)	449,289	50,000	499,289
	<u>513,507</u>	<u>50,000</u>	<u>563,507</u>

22 Net cash provided by operating activities

	2022	2021
Surplus for the year	355,283	490,019
Adjustment for:		
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	29,779	14,556
Movement in working capital:		
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	167,526	5,183,287
(decrease)/increase in creditors	(1,388,607)	1,881,809
Increase/(decrease) in deferred income	(723,446)	(4,808,634)
Net cash provided by operating activities	(1,559,465)	2,761,037

23 Related party transactions

Jonathan Breckon, a trustee of the charity was paid £1,350 (2021: £1,350) for consultancy through Breckon Consulting Limited, a personal service company. This was an arms length transaction made in the ordinary course of business.

Professor Leon Feinstein, a trustee of the charity is also an employee of University of Oxford and Greater Manchester Combined Authority. During the year grants totalling £74,232 and £453,960 were paid to these organisations. (2021: £284,411)

Professor Elaine Sharland, a trustee of the charity is also an employee of University of Sussex. During the year grants totalling £25,247 were paid to this organisation. (2021: £91,745)

None of the above transactions had any security, bad debts, write-offs or guarantees associated with them. All were made in the ordinary course of business and the associated trustees derived no benefit from them.

There were no other related parties in the period under review.

24 Operating lease commitments

The charitable company's total future minimum lease payments under non cancellable operating leases relating to property is as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Within 1 year	278,436	278,436
Between 2 and 5 years	458,465	736,901
Over 5 years	-	-
	<u>736,901</u>	<u>1,015,337</u>

25 Post balance sheet events

On the 7th July 2022 it was announced that the respective board of trustees for What Works for Children's Social Care and Early Intervention Foundation had agreed in principle to merge to create a single What Works Centre. The merger of What Works for Children's Social Care (WWCSC) and the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) will bring together two What Works Centres to create a single organisation covering the full range of support for children and families, including preventative approaches, early intervention and targeted support for those at risk of poor outcomes, through to child protection and children's social care services.

At the date of signing these financial statements the merger had not been officially ratified or signed by both entities. EIF and WWCSC will now undertake steps towards the legal merger of the two charities, which is expected to conclude by spring 2023, after these financial statements are approved.