

# NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU

England & Wales · Charity number 258825

## Details

---

**Other names** NCB

**Status** Registered

**Legal form** Charitable company

**Company number** [00952717](#)

**Registered** 1969-06-12

**Register** [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

## Contact

---

**Address** National Children's Bureau  
23 Mentmore Terrace  
London  
E8 3PN

**Phone** 02078436000

**Website** [www.ncb.org.uk](http://www.ncb.org.uk)

## Activities

---

**Objects:** TO ADVANCE THE WELL-BEING OF ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN PARTICULAR BY (BUT NOT LIMITED TO):(A) RELIEVING POVERTY, SICKNESS AND DISTRESS;(B) SAFEGUARDING AND MAINTAINING HEALTH AND WELL-BEING;(C) ENCOURAGING POSITIVE AND SUPPORTIVE FAMILY AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE;(D) ADVANCING EDUCATION AND TRAINING;(E) REDUCING INEQUALITIES; AND(F) ENSURING THAT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A STRONG VOICE IN ALL MATTERS THAT AFFECT THEIR LIVES.

**Activities:** The National Children's Bureau is a leading charity that for 60 years has been improving the lives of children and young people, especially the most vulnerable. We work with children and for children, to influence government policy, be a strong voice for young people and practitioners, and provide creative solutions on a range of social issues.

## Classification

---

- **How:** Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Disability, Economic/community Development/employment
- **Who:** Children/young People, People With Disabilities

## Geography

---

- Northern Ireland
- Throughout England

## Finances

---

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£15,777,000	£16,002,000	£8,177,000	206
2024-03-31	£12,751,000	£13,296,000	£8,402,000	147
2023-03-31	£10,910,000	£11,130,000	£8,942,000	114
2022-03-31	£12,393,000	£12,939,000	£4,943,000	113
2021-03-31	£16,239,000	£16,169,000	£1,495,000	107

## Trustees

---

Name	Role	Appointed
<b>Sarah Margaret Mullen</b>	Chair	2022-01-01
Bethan Myfanwy Hoggan		2022-01-01
Dr Catriona Lucy Hugman		2022-01-01
Dr Dominic Martin McSherry		2024-07-03
Emma Margaret Beeden		2022-01-01
Jadesola Chiamaka Oluwatobiloba Olusanya		2022-01-01
Kathryn Elizabeth Pugh		2022-01-01
Marjorie Ann James		2024-01-01
Nainan Shah		2020-09-23
Onder Beter		2025-01-01
Professor Neal Hazel		2024-01-01
Sarbjit Rana		2024-01-01
Steven Crocker		2024-01-01
Tayo Leigh		2025-01-01

## Linked charities

---

- [KELLMER PRINGLE FELLOWSHIPS \(258825-1\)](#)

**NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU**

England & Wales - Charity number 258825

---

# Accounts

---



# UNITED FOR A BETTER CHILDHOOD

Annual report and  
accounts 2024-25



NATIONAL  
CHILDREN'S  
BUREAU



**In memory of Laura McFarlane**

**1960–2025**

**Director of the Lambeth Early Action  
Partnership**



It is with deep respect and sorrow that we dedicate this report to the memory of Laura, our dear colleague and friend, who died shortly after her retirement from LEAP. Her work on behalf of children and families, deeply rooted in her dedication to the Lambeth community, was a source of inspiration to the many lives she touched. She will be sorely missed by her family, friends and colleagues.



## Thank you to our supporters

We'd like to say a special thank you to the trusts, foundations, statutory bodies and organisations that make our work possible through their support, partnership and funding. Alongside those who wish to remain anonymous, we are grateful to:

- Kusuma Trust UK
- The J P Jacobs Charitable Trust
- The Matthew Elvidge Trust
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Prudence Trust
- The Segelman Trust
- The True Colours Trust
- Youth Endowment Fund

© National Children's Bureau 2025

Registered charity No. 258825. Registered in England and Wales No. 952717.

Registered office: National Children's Bureau, 23 Mentmore Terrace, Hackney, London E8 3PN. A Company Limited by Guarantee.

---



# Contents

<b>Forewords</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>In loving memory of Laura McFarlane</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Bright beginnings for our seventh decade</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>The NCB family</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Our achievements in 2024-25</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>Our plans for 2025/26</b> .....	<b>47</b>
<b>Trustees' annual report</b> .....	<b>49</b>
<b>Financial review</b> .....	<b>58</b>
<b>Statement of responsibilities</b> .....	<b>66</b>
<b>Independent auditor's report</b> .....	<b>68</b>
<b>Financial statements</b> .....	<b>75</b>



# Forewords

## From our Chair

**D**espite this being a year overshadowed with sadness following the untimely death of our dear colleague Laura McFarlane, NCB has achieved much to be proud of.



We have consolidated our position as one of the leading organisations driving positive change for children in the UK, while building exciting new areas of impact.

From uniting health sector organisations to develop a roadmap for NHS reforms, to providing children, young people, and parents with a platform to engage directly with political parties in the run-up to the election, NCB has built on its many strengths over the past 12 months.

Our position has been further enhanced by integrating Research in Practice into NCB, welcoming over 70 new staff members with diverse expertise into our charity, united by shared goals and ways of working. This has enriched our offer and strengthened further our reach, particularly with local authorities and local systems.



These achievements would not have been possible without a robust governance structure and a dedicated board of trustees guiding our efforts.

We continued to strengthen our diverse board with the appointment of three new trustees, Dominic McSherry, Onder Beter, and our new Treasurer, Tayo Leigh. Tayo brings over 20 years of experience in financial leadership across various industries.

I was also particularly pleased that the Board published an updated [commitment](#) to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and oversaw the development of an ambitious [new multi-year plan](#) to advance DEI right across the organisation.

We have also implemented measures to ensure NCB can fully realise its five-year strategy, Building Brighter Futures. This includes embedding an assurance model to support strong governance and reviewing, improving, and streamlining our structures, processes, and programmes.

The skills and expertise of our board, combined with the passion of NCB's staff, have enabled us to achieve so much. In this report, you will see the significant progress we have made.

**Alison O'Sullivan**  
**Chair of the Board of Trustees**



## From our CEO: A year of change and sad news

**A**s we were writing this report, NCB was shocked and saddened to learn of the death of Laura McFarlane, a valued and much-loved colleague whose longstanding contribution to the Lambeth Early Action Partnership and the community it serves had recently been celebrated at an event in the borough (find out more about Laura's work on page 9).

The unwavering dedication of people like Laura is needed now more than ever to meet the challenges facing children and families. In 2024/25, rising levels of child poverty impacted almost every aspect of children's lives—from education to health, housing quality, and mental wellbeing. As families struggled, the services they rely on faced tightening budgets and a decade-long squeeze on early intervention spending.

Against this backdrop, our work has never been more crucial.

We had to navigate substantial changes in the external environment with care and insight. The General Election of 2024 saw our central policy team and thought leaders in our NCB family members working swiftly to build relationships with new parliamentarians, Ministers and officials. Through events, letters, roundtables, and briefings, we shared our expertise and insights with policymakers.

Our hard work saw important breakthroughs. Alongside our part in the evaluation of the Families First for Children



pathfinders programme, we saw its national rollout backed by significant Government investment. Our lobbying efforts also contributed to continued funding for the Start for Life and Family Hubs programmes.

There have also been significant changes within NCB.

The end of the ten-year Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP) marked a significant milestone where we celebrated the achievements of both the programme and Laura McFarlane following her retirement from longstanding role as Director.

It is a fitting tribute to both LEAP and Laura's legacy, that NCB continues to draw on their innovative approach to the early years to shape policy and practice. By sharing learning from LEAP and the other A Better Start partnerships, for example, we were able to advocate for a single unique identifier on children's records, a measure adopted in the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill. Furthermore, the rollout of Best Start Family Hubs announced by Government in July 2025, is modelled on the community-based ethos of A Better Start and its focus on supporting disadvantaged communities.

We also saw exciting new developments, particularly the integration of Research in Practice into the NCB family. One collaboration is the [Working Together with Parents Network](#), supporting professionals working with parents who have learning difficulties and learning disabilities.

As times change, NCB continues to evolve to meet new challenges. We hope you enjoy finding out more about what we have achieved.

**Anna Feuchtwang**  
**Chief Executive**



# In loving memory of Laura McFarlane

A cherished colleague, devoted mother, and tireless advocate for children and families.

Before we celebrate the achievements of the LEAP programme (p 17), we must express our sorrow and gratitude for Laura McFarlane, the Lambeth Early Action Partnership's much loved Director. Her untimely death has devastated all who knew her. Her dedication to the children, families, and communities of Lambeth was not just a career—it was a passion.

Laura's career in community service began at just 16, when she first stepped into community work at the Caribou Centre. Even then, her passion for supporting young people was unmistakable, and she took this work forward working with NSPCC.

Her love for the Lambeth community only deepened as she raised her family on the Tulse Hill Estate. When she returned to work in Lambeth in the early 2000s it marked the beginning of a transformative chapter. Through her leadership of the Sure Start programme in Larkhall, she not only shaped services but redefined what community support could look like. As Head of Family Support, she revitalised Lambeth's One O'clock Clubs and helped establish children's centres that became lifelines for countless families.



But Laura was never content to lead from behind a desk. She was a constant presence in the community—face-painting at the Lambeth Country Show, forging partnerships, and always listening, always caring.

In 2012, she became one of the Heads of Service for Lambeth's multi-agency teams, and in 2013, she began what would become the defining chapter of her career: the development of the LEAP programme. By 2015, as Director of LEAP, Laura brought her vision, compassion, and energy to a role that would touch thousands of lives.

Under her guidance, LEAP became a beacon of hope and innovation—improving early childhood development, addressing health inequalities, and supporting families with empathy and excellence. Laura's ability to unite teams, build trust, and champion early intervention made LEAP a model not just for Lambeth, but for communities across the country.

One example of her lasting impact is how the ethos that LEAP championed, of early years services being embedded in the local communities they serve, has been echoed in the roll-out of Best Start Family Hubs across the country, targeting support at the most disadvantaged.

But Laura's legacy is not only in the programmes she built or the policies she helped to shape—it lives on in the children who now have brighter futures, in the families who found support when they needed it most, and in the colleagues who were inspired by her strength, warmth, and unwavering belief in the power of community.

We will miss you, Laura.



# Introduction

**W**elcome to the National Children's Bureau's Annual Report and Accounts for 2024–25, a year that has been of particular importance for children, families, and the systems that support them. As we enter our seventh decade, the National Children's Bureau (NCB) continues to champion the rights of children and young people across the UK, driving change based on evidence, innovation, and collaboration with experts by experience.

This year, we have faced unprecedented challenges, from rising child poverty to tightening budgets for essential services. Yet, amidst these difficulties, NCB has stood firm, delivering impactful initiatives that amplify the voices of children and families, influence national policy, and strengthen local systems. From shaping the national rollout of elements of the Families First for Children Pathfinders, to securing continued funding for Start for Life and Family Hubs, our work has been pivotal in creating brighter futures.

The integration of [Research in Practice](#) into the NCB family has enriched our expertise, enabling deeper collaboration and new approaches to complex issues. Whether it is supporting professionals working with parents with



learning disabilities or conducting groundbreaking research on safeguarding pressures, we've expanded our reach and impact.

Our achievements are underpinned by a commitment to co-production, ensuring children, young people, and parents are at the heart of decision-making. From hosting the annual Youth Voice Matters conference to influencing party manifestos through the Children at the Table campaign, we've empowered the young to shape the future.

This report highlights the progress we've made across our six strategic goals, from amplifying voices to generating evidence that counts. It also celebrates the legacy of programmes like LEAP, which have transformed lives and left lasting impacts on policy and practice.

As you explore this report, you'll discover the passion, dedication, and innovation that drive NCB's mission. Together, we are united for a better childhood – one where every child has the opportunity to thrive. Dive in and be inspired by the stories, achievements, and vision that define our work.

**Note: in this document we often use the term children to describe babies, children and young people.**



# Bright beginnings for our seventh decade

## Building Brighter Futures

As NCB enters its seventh decade, we have seen significant progress across the six strategic goals of our [Building Brighter Futures](#) strategy.

We've enabled a deeper engagement with experts-by-experience in research, policy and practice, and been a thought leader at both a local and national level.

To achieve this, we've evaluated and researched the evolving needs of children and families and used this as the basis for meeting the challenges that

children face. Whether its understanding innovation in the early years, creating the datasets that illuminate better mental health pathways for children with social workers, or evaluating new ways of providing children's social care, we operate at the cutting-edge of research and learning.

This work has only been possible by also strengthening NCB's own culture and organisational processes, making sure we have the best people for the challenges ahead.

Together, these efforts have collectively made progress possible and helped us move towards our strategy's vision of a better and brighter future for children and families.



## Research in Practice's first full year as NCB's newest family member

Research in Practice has now been a part of the NCB family for over a year. During this time, we have been working across the organisation to learn from new colleagues, draw on expertise, and work together in new areas.

Collaborating on exciting new programmes of work has made not just made NCB bigger, but also better. For example, a research project by Research in Practice for the Department for Education (DfE) on improving the outcomes of looked after children and

young people in complex situations with multiple needs, at risk or subject to a Deprivation of Liberty.

By working together, we were able to strengthen our understanding by drawing on findings from other related pieces of work currently taking place. This included NCB research for them on the drivers behind high-cost placements for children in care.

By pooling our understanding of complex needs and social care procurement, coupled with deeper insights into the increasing complexity of children's needs, we were better able to identify missed opportunities in earlier interventions and suggest ways to prevent children from suffering further trauma.



## Working with adults

NCB works for babies, children, young people... and beyond.

We know that the lives of the people we serve do not neatly cut off at 18 or 25, so we don't put this constraint around ourselves either. We take a wider view of whole course of a person's life, with an understanding of the fundamental ways that childhood shapes this.

No one who works with children can afford to ignore the adults in their lives – the parents, carers, wider families and of course professionals they rely on for a good childhood. Looking at support for adults can give us a richer perspective on how to support children and young

people. Our recent article on [Promoting wellbeing through intergenerational solidarity](#) from Research in Practice Deputy Directors highlights key issues, such as transitioning from childhood to adulthood, and reforming social care.

We are therefore proud to have become the new home for the [Working Together with Parents Network](#).

Supporting professionals working with parents with learning disabilities and learning difficulties, and their children, this UK-wide network seeks to engage with key stakeholders. This includes adults and children's social care, health, education, legal and independent advocacy sectors to work towards a common vision and effective ways of joint working.

Following 18 years at the



School for Policy Studies at Bristol University and with over 1,000 members, the network aims to raise awareness of the issues that parents face and improve ways that parents with learning disabilities and learning difficulties are supported.

[Research in Practice](#), as a subsidiary of NCB, continues to deliver a range of impactful work aimed at improving support for adults. This includes offering a programme of events and learning resources on key topics, such as [safeguarding](#), [trauma-informed practice](#), and [more](#).

Highlights in 2024–25 included:

- [Equity: Change Project](#): This open-access resource supports individuals and organisations

in addressing DEI, intersectionality and justice within adult social care.

- [Adult Social Care Leadership Programme](#): Commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care, this programme supports Principal Social Workers, Practice and Operational Team leads, and Approved Mental Health Professional leads in adult social care, while nurturing aspiring Black and Global Majority leaders.
- [Second National Analysis of Safeguarding Adult Reviews](#): Published in April 2024, this executive summary marks our second involvement in this critical analysis, in collaboration with the Local Government Association.



## Pride and sadness: farewell to the Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP)

[LEAP](#) came to an end in March 2025 and its incredible journey, led from inception to completion by [the late Laura McFarlane](#), is a proud achievement in NCB's rich history.

From winning long-term funding from The National Lottery Community Fund — and becoming one of five A Better Start partnerships testing new ways of making support and services for families stronger — we have built partnerships, invested in infrastructure, adapted to local needs, trained workforces, embedded evidence-based models, and

navigated the impacts of the pandemic and cost of living crisis.

Crucially, local parents have been part of every step of the journey, co-producing the design and delivery of support, and being part of the governance of the partnership.

Shared learning has been central to the LEAP vision. As well as leaving a legacy of services and support to give children a better start in life, we wanted robust evidence to share our findings with others. This culminated in several eye-catching reports, showcased at our final conference, ['10 Years of LEAP'](#).

The findings emphatically confirmed the positive impact of the programme on pregnant women and people, babies, and young children:

- 2.5-year-olds, who engaged with LEAP, were 40% more likely to



reach expected levels of development than their non-engaged peers.

- Parents' and carers' mental health and wellbeing improved by 12% (with the greatest gains in the most deprived areas).
- Parents' and carers' knowledge, skills, and behaviour increased by 5%.

LEAP's success hinged on how effectively its holistic practice connected different parents and carers to the support they needed and wanted, provided them with choices, and facilitated relationships with other parents and carers.

Racially minoritised groups, refugees, immigrants, and those experiencing deprivation — especially inadequate housing — often face systemic barriers that limit the impact of holistic practice. LEAP made it a

priority to reach out to these underserved groups.

At a national level, NCB supported LEAP and the other four A Better Start sites to influence policy development, including the design and implementation of the Family Hubs and Start for Life programmes.

Going forward, NCB is synthesising learning from A Better Start to ensure it continues to influence policy and practice, leaving a lasting legacy.

None of this could have been achieved without the dedication, determination, and resourcefulness of the LEAP team, led from the outset by Laura McFarlane, who co-produced support with local parents and community members.

We'd like to thank them for everything they've achieved.

**Find out more at:**  
[leaplambeth.org.uk](https://leaplambeth.org.uk)



## Valuing diversity, promoting equity, and improving inclusion

At NCB, we are committed to creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organisation that reflects the society we serve.

Our [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion \(DEI\) strategy](#)

is not just an add-on; it is embedded throughout our work and backed by a commitment to being an anti-racist organisation. We are driving meaningful and lasting change both within our organisation and through our external work.

Guided by our new five-year strategy, [United for a Better Childhood: Building Brighter Futures](#), we aim to ensure that every child, young person, and family feels

included and supported.

Improving DEI is a continuous journey, and we are proud to take a proactive, long-term approach. Our DEI strategy for 2024–2029 builds on the successes of our previous plan, while addressing areas where we can do better. We are committed to fostering a culture of belonging, where representation is matched by true inclusion. This means creating an environment where all staff feel valued and empowered to contribute to our mission.

### Internal progress

In 2024–25, we made significant strides in advancing DEI across NCB. Internally, we have increased the representation of Black and Global Majority staff, particularly at mid-level roles, and are working to improve diversity at senior levels. We also began development of a programme for Black and



Global Majority staff to prepare them for leadership roles and reduce turnover rates. This work was supported by a clear DEI vision from our board of trustees, which set out its priorities in a [statement of intent](#), and by the recruitment of a DEI lead to drive change.

### External influence

As part of our commitment to being an anti-racist organisation, we are working to advance equity throughout our work, whenever we can — recognising that many Black and Global Majority children and young people face intersecting inequalities.

Our Special Educational Consortium and Council for Disabled Children successfully influenced government policy and local practice to better reflect the needs of disabled children and young people, and those with special

educational needs.

We also began a collaboration with King's College London and other partners on the PATHWAYS trial, which aims to improve evidence-based interventions for gender-diverse young people.

### Listening and learning

Our DEI strategy was developed through extensive consultation with staff, trustees, and the children, young people, and families we work with. We conducted our first DEI staff survey, established three staff networks (Black and Global Majority, Disability & Neurodiversity, and LGBTQ+), and created platforms to ensure diverse voices are heard. This collaborative approach, coupled with a strong focus on measuring our success, has helped us identify priorities and shape actions that are both ambitious and achievable.



# The NCB family

We bring people and organisations together to drive change in society and deliver a better childhood across the UK.

Within the NCB family, seven specialist networks draw partners together to drive change in key areas where we need to make lives better – from conception to adulthood.



The Anti-Bullying Alliance's vision is to stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

## Highlights in 2024–25 included:

- Providing CPD to over 20,000 participants, which included a new course about the difference between banter and bullying.
- Delivering [Anti-Bullying Week](#) and Odd Socks Day, reaching 7.5 million children with 80% of schools taking part.

- Expanded our list of patrons to include Manchester City defender Rúben Dias, Chris 'Woody' Wood, drummer from the popular band Bastille, and influencer and BSL expert Eve from 'Let's Make a Difference'.
- Establishing a new programme to improve belonging in schools, Belonging Matters.
- Established a new working group of organisations to tackle racist and faith targeted bullying.

Find out more about our work at:  
[anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)



The Childhood Bereavement Network brings together those working with bereaved children and young people and those caring for them, underpinning our members with essential representation and support.

#### Highlights in 2024–25 included:

- Establishing our Young People's Advisory Group of nine young people from across the UK
- Supporting MPs to table amendments to the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill in support of grieving children

- Delivering a successful [Children's Grief Awareness Week](#) on the theme of #TheShapeofYourSupport
- Securing funding for a large pan-sector evaluation of child bereavement services
- Running focus groups with practitioners and managers to inform guidance on supporting children bereaved by suicide.

Find out more about our work at: [childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk](https://childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk)



The Council for Disabled Children drives change in society to deliver a better childhood for disabled children and those with special educational needs (SEND).

### Highlights in 2024–25 included:

- Nearly 100 disabled young people and those with special educational needs attended our [Youth Voice Matters](#) conference, supported by around 50 adults, making it the largest gathering of its kind.
- We worked with over 40 local area partnerships to deliver strategic interventions for system change and improvement.
- As a leading member of the Reaching Excellence and Ambition for all Children ([REACH](#)) consortium we provided support to Change Programme Partnerships to implement changes to local SEND & alternative provision systems.
- Our work on behalf of the [What Works in SEND](#) Programme saw

us develop and publish 13 case studies and five research reports, and reach 348 practitioners through seminars and events.

- Through our role as [Strategic Reform Partner to DfE](#), we conducted extensive research and stakeholder engagement on inclusive practice in mainstream settings. This included surveys on national standards, engagement sessions with young people and parents and carers, feedback events for the Neurodiversity Task Group, and data collection on the Specialist SEND Teacher and Speech and Language Therapy Workforce.
- As part of the [Research and Improvement for SEND Excellence \(RISE\)](#) partnership, we delivered 55 training sessions, two national events, and two webinars, engaging over 2,300 workforce members. We also delivered training to 148 kinship carers on EHCPs and the SEND system.

Find out more about our work at:  
[councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)



LEAP worked to give thousands of children aged 0–3 living in parts of Lambeth a better start.

### Highlights in 2024–25 included:

- LEAP successfully delivered a series of celebratory events marking the end of the programme. These included the LEAP and Me photography exhibition celebrating the experiences and contribution of local families and children.
  - We continued to advocate for service sustainability locally, to embed our innovative practice into the local system, securing ongoing funding from NHS trusts and the local authority.
  - With an enhanced focus on evaluating and documenting the impact of the programme in the final year, we published several 'learning journeys', documenting service development and implementation as well
- as the extent of our reach and engagement.
- The service evaluations we undertook delved deep into process and impact, using robust methods to evidence change. These reports provided clear recommendations for future practice and have supported the ongoing sustainability of services locally.
  - Our collective impact evaluation evidenced the positive change LEAP had on the lives of babies, children and their families. It also documents our approach to holistic support, relational commissioning, and capacity to influence local practice and national policy.
  - The LEAP learning conference was attended by 170 participants across the health, education, and community sector. We shared our learnings and called on local stakeholders to set actions for continued collaboration locally.

Find out more at: [leaplambeth.org.uk](https://leaplambeth.org.uk)



## research in practice

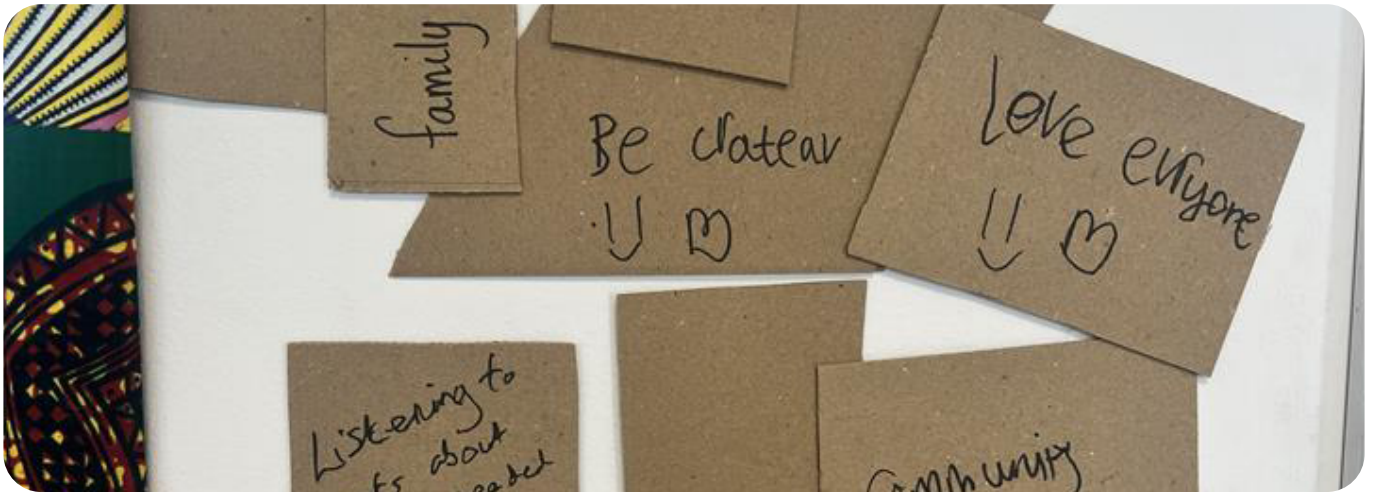
[Research in Practice](#) works with and for professionals in the social care, health, criminal justice, and higher education sectors offering resources, learning opportunities and specialist expertise. We aim to support their learning to enable people – children, young people, families, adults, carers, and communities – to live good lives.

### Highlights in 2024–25 included:

- Working closely with our [partner network](#) of over 210 local, national, and voluntary organisations and universities.
- Delivering an extensive programme of online, face-to-face, and national learning and networking events and learning resources on key social care topics.
- Becoming the new home for the [Working Together with Parents Network](#) that supports professionals working with parents with learning disabilities and learning difficulties, and their children.
- Bringing together experts from practice, academia and those with lived experience to create extensive learning resources such as:
  - [Pre-birth: Change Project](#)
  - [Reflective supervision: Learning Hub](#)
  - [Staying in touch: Contact after adoption](#)
- Delivering the [Child Safeguarding](#)



- [Practice Reviews – Learning Support Project](#) exploring how high-quality learning can be gained from serious incidents to better protect children and young people.
- Delivering the [Safeguarding Pressures 9 report for the Association of Directors of Children's Services](#), providing evidence on the current safeguarding pressures for children's services.
  - [Helping Ofsted meet the needs of 'vulnerable' children, young people and learners](#), for consideration in inspection and regulatory work
- in education and children's social care.
- Leading a partnership to [deliver several DfE reforms to social work](#). This work includes the National Workload Action Group, resources to support adherence to the social work employer standards, and tools to support local authorities to engage agency social workers.
  - Working with Social Work England to [understand the emerging use of AI in social work practice](#) and social work education.
- Find out more at: [researchinpractice.org.uk](https://researchinpractice.org.uk)



## **SCHOOLS WELLBEING PARTNERSHIP**

The Schools Wellbeing Partnership is an influential and effective national network of over 230 member organisations from the education, health and wellbeing, and children's sectors.

### Highlights in 2024-25 included:

- A successful event with the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition on whole school approaches to mental health and wellbeing

- Growing our membership by 21%
- Running a parliamentary drop-in for Children's Mental Health Week with Place2Be
- Responding to consultations on the Curriculum and Assessment Review, NHS 10-Year Plan consultation, as well as briefing parliamentarians on the importance of a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Find out more about our work at:  
[schoolswellbeing.org.uk](https://schoolswellbeing.org.uk)



## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL CONSORTIUM

The Special Educational Consortium, convened by CDC, is a group of 45 organisations who protect and promote the rights of disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs. SEC's membership includes the voluntary and community sector, education providers, professional associations and parent carer groups.

### Highlights in 2024–25 included:

- SEC developed a comprehensive response to DfE's Curriculum and Assessment Review, with input from 25 members and the FLARE young people's advisory group, advocating for a more flexible and person-centred framework.
- SEC strengthened its relationship with Ofsted through a number of meetings in early 2025 to ensure the new inspection framework includes the experiences of disabled children and young

people, particularly those missing school or excluded.

- We successfully pushed for the guidance on restrictive interventions to include practices beyond physical force, leading to the updated title 'Use of Reasonable Force and Other Restrictive Interventions'.
- SEC, in collaboration with the Disabled Children's Partnership, influenced the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, ensuring it considers the wellbeing of disabled children and their families. We also organized a roundtable with Peers to discuss key priorities.
- This year SEC expanded its membership, welcoming Action Cerebral Palsy, PRUsAP, Candle, and Kids, strengthening its collective voice.

Find out more about our work [here](#).



# Our achievements in 2024–25

Each member of the National Children's Bureau family takes action on specific issues undermining children's health, development, and happiness. But the core work of NCB is equally important to young lives and beyond.

Over the following pages we set out our achievements organised around each of the six strategic goals in our strategy [Building Brighter Futures](#):

- Amplifying the voice of children, young people and families
- Driving change in the local and regional systems children rely on
- Driving change in national policy and legislation
- Generating evidence that count
- Making sure children have the workforce they need
- Building respect and trust as a pioneering and high-performing charity.



## Amplifying the voice of children, young people and families

When the voices of children and families are heard, policies are more relevant, and services meet needs more effectively.

We co-produced numerous activities with children, young people, and parents and carers across a broad range of themes during the year, enabling them to share their views and first-hand experiences on SEND, mental health, education, social care, and other pressing issues.

### Key highlights included:

#### Young people in policy

- Our [FLARE](#) group of disabled children and young people continued to partner with DfE providing valuable feedback in the development of policy on SEND. The FLARE group also supported the What Works in SEND programme's work to establish criteria for effective co-production, worked with the RISE programme in developing tools to promote local participation work, and developed and delivered the seventh national Youth Voice Matters conference providing a space for nearly 100 young people from across the country to engage with policymakers and a broad set of practitioners.
- We gave parents and carers with experience of SEND a platform to share insights directly with DfE. Through several sessions, the group focused on improving the annual review process for education health and care plans process, providing feedback on personal experiences, identifying challenges, and proposing solutions. The meetings offered precious opportunities for parents and carers to influence SEND policy development.
- As part of the [Children at the Table](#) campaign, five Young NCB members participated in Labour and Conservative party conferences, sharing their views directly with policymakers and manifesto writers. They developed agendas, selected policy topics, and delivered speeches at reception events. This included questioning ministers and ensuring



youth perspectives influenced discussions.

### Young people in practice

- CBN launched a new Young People's Advisory Group to shape its "What's Working for Bereaved Young People" project and other activities. This initiative aims to amplify the voices of bereaved children and young people, ensuring their perspectives inform CBN's work.
- NCB actively supported kinship carers by delivering training sessions focused on getting the most from the Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) process, helping nearly 150 kinship carers to understand the support available for disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs.
- Our Seldom Heard Network provided support to its membership of over 500 parents and carers of disabled children, amplifying their voices so that their perspectives can shape policy and practice. This work

included initiatives like the Kingston Transitional Safeguarding project, which uses a multi-method approach to inform safeguarding strategies, and the Conceptualizing Vulnerability and Inclusion project for Ofsted, which explores how a better understanding of vulnerability can improve inclusive practice.

- The Research in Practice Parent Network supported professionals working with children, young people, and families by fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing. This year, the network provided resources, training, and evidence-based tools to enhance practice and improve outcomes. Areas of focus include workshops on safeguarding pressures, child development, and systemic inequalities, as well as events focused on professional resilience and wellbeing. The network also facilitated learning exchanges, such as those between A Better Start Directors and Early Years Funders, promoting effective partnership approaches.



## Powerful voices in Westminster

In April, nearly 40 children, young people, and parents came together with over 150 representatives from across the children's sector at a special All-Party Parliamentary Group for Children (APPGC) event convened by NCB. The experts-by-experience shared priorities with representatives from all major political parties and Dame Rachel de Souza, the Children's Commissioner, influencing discussions on manifesto priorities just days before the election was called.

The event inspired Liberal Democrat spokesperson Munira Wilson to demand for a leadership debate in the run-up to the election with a particular focus on children and young people, boldly challenging other parties to follow suit.

Repeatedly, children and young people speaking at the event, expressed frustration at not being involved in decision-making. "Raising the importance of youth voice has



become a broken record" when it is not followed up with action, said one young person.

The event ended with a warm tribute from Baroness Tyler to Tim Loughton, the former Children's Minister who has resolutely championed children's rights during his long service as an MP in Parliament and co-chair of the APPGC.

Following the election, NCB re-launched the APPGC, ensuring early parliamentary engagement on the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, and welcomed four new officers, including Co-Chairs Jess Asato MP and Munira Wilson MP.





## Driving change in the local and regional systems children rely on

Increasingly, the decisions that matter most to children are taken locally or regionally rather than at a national level and we are experts in supporting the redesign of local systems around the outcomes that matter most to children and families.

### Key highlights included:

#### Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

- We worked with over 40 local area partnerships to deliver strategic interventions for system change and improvement, including developing outcomes frameworks, SEND strategies, and redesigning services.
- Our [SEND Information, Advice, and Support Services network](#) of vital sources of support for families saw an increase in funding for the sector of 9% due to dedicated work with commissioners.

- As a leading member of the [REACH](#) consortium we provided support to Change Programme Partnerships to implement changes to local SEND & alternative provision systems. As well as convening two ministerial roundtables providing feedback on SEND policy and sharing the sector's views with DfE as their Strategic Reform Partner for SEND.

#### Early years

- The [Early Years Stronger Practice Hubs](#), which we coordinate on behalf of DfE, saw their valuable work recognised with an extension of funding to 2026. The 18 Hubs (two in each of region of England) improved quality in early years settings by sharing good practice and offering evidence-informed professional development for early years educators in each of their target areas.

#### Young people

- In Northern Ireland, the Empowering Young People



programme came to an end this year. The Lottery-funded programme, which NCB supported through the [LINKS network](#), has helped more than 150 projects in the region over almost 10 years. These projects have given young people in Northern Ireland the opportunity to develop skills to cope with difficult times in their lives, from mental health to disability, finding work to coping with serious illness.

## Social care

- In 2024, we concluded work on behalf of DfE that led the [supported accommodation sector](#) across the country on a transformative journey. Supported accommodation is a form of accommodation which provides supported, semi-independent living for 16- and 17-year-olds who are ready to start living with more independence. As we helped local providers to adopt new Quality Standards and prepare for Ofsted-led registration and inspection,

we worked with more than 1,000 providers, with in person and virtual community of practice and knowledge sharing events for local authorities across all nine regions in England.

- [Fostering Connections](#) offers training and support to help social work teams, working with young people in foster care, and their foster carers understand and use trauma-informed practices. Through the programme, our social care team delivered impactful training and workshops to hundreds of social workers, foster carers, and local authorities across England.

## Bereavement support

- CBN published national [Bereavement Support Service Standards](#), enabling better support for grieving children and families. As part of this work, we hosted well-attended sector webinars and recruited 11 local services to a Community of Practice.



## Driving change in national policy and legislation

Our long-established expertise in developing policy, based on the best available evidence and the views of children and young people, helped set the agenda during the general election year and for the new government.

We acted as a critical friend to all the political parties, speaking out about the things that needed changing, from poverty to social care, disability support to mental health. We convened the children's sector around crucial issues to magnify our collective impact on party manifestos and worked at pace with the new government when it was elected.

### Key highlights included:

- A primary focus has been the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill. The Bill contains many measures that we have long called for. These include improved information sharing between agencies, a new duty

on safeguarding partners to establish multi-agency child protection teams, and a register for children who are not in school. From the onset, NCB worked with sector partners to provide robust evidence-informed information to government officials that successfully improved elements of the bill, particularly in areas related to social care, child poverty, mental health and wellbeing and the use of a Single Unique Identifier on children's records.

- As the new government pledged to raise the healthiest generation of children, the [Children and Young People's Health Policy Influencing Group \(HPIG\)](#), which NCB and CDC convene, published a [roadmap for policymakers](#), showing how children and families must be made a central pillar of the forthcoming NHS Ten-Year Plan.
- NCB played a pivotal role in influencing the new government's emerging strategy on child poverty by leading the End Child Poverty Coalition's policy development in vital areas. We developed and published the Coalition's [eight tests for the government's Child Poverty](#)

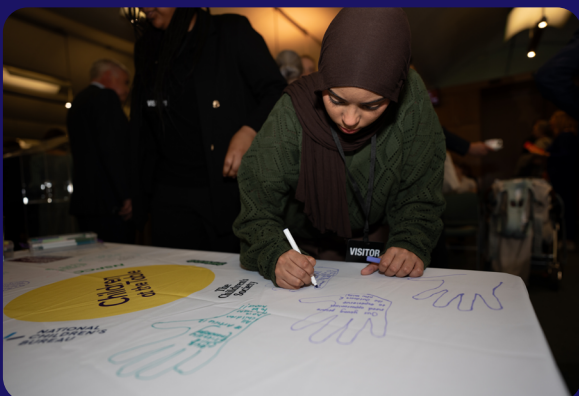


## Children at the Table

Ahead of the general election in July 2024, the UK's five leading children's charities – the NCB, Action for Children, Barnardo's, The Children's Society, and NSPCC – came together with the support of nearly 200 organisations from the voluntary and community sectors to make sure the next government had a plan to put Children at the Table.

The campaign successfully influenced political party manifestos, securing commitments such as a cross-government child poverty strategy and a commitment to improve mental health support in schools.

Children at the Table engaged



directly with decision-makers, including meetings with MPs, events at Labour and Conservative Party Conferences, and a petition handed-in at Downing Street signed by 30,000 people.

The campaign secured impressive national and sector media coverage reaching a combine audience of 1.8 billion, while the hashtag #ChildrenAtTheTable was viewed 56.4 million times across social media.

Building on this work, CDC collaborated with the Disabled Children's Partnership to create a Disabled Children at the Table report. It highlighted the persistent challenges faced by disabled children in accessing inclusive education, high-quality care, and accessible activities. It called for urgent action to make disabled children and their families central to government policymaking and emphasised the need for well-resourced, coordinated services.





[Strategy](#), establishing consensus across over 120 organisations. NCB presented these tests to senior Cabinet Office officials and included the voices of young people impacted by poverty in parliamentary discussions.

- We successfully campaigned for both the Start for Life and Family Hubs programmes to be continued. NCB convened over 40 organisations to campaign for the extension and full rollout of these initiatives. This included creating joint statements, social media campaigns, and private correspondence to ministers, presenting a unified sector response. NCB also lobbied government officials across DfE and Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), emphasising the importance of these programs remaining central to improving early childhood outcomes and family support systems.
- As part of our long-running work on rebalancing children's social care towards prevention and early intervention, NCB was pivotal in securing a new [£270m Children's Social Care Prevention Grant for local government](#). This investment

was part of the roll-out of the Families First Programme. NCB supported the programme through our role in the evaluation of the [Families First Pathfinders](#). It is also the culmination of impactful reports by the [Children's Services Funding Alliance](#), highlighting the need for increased investment in early intervention services.

- NCB provided secretariat for The Reimagine Children's Collective, a group of major charities working together to respond to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services in Northern Ireland (NI). In our [policy paper](#), we called for effective implementation of the Independent Review's recommendations. This year the Collective developed a 'Reset and Rebalance' workstream, in partnership with the Department of Health, to promote greater collaboration and mutual support between the statutory, voluntary and community sectors. A co-produced ['Foundations for the Future'](#) conference, alongside the Department of Health, brought together cross-sectoral stakeholders, alongside young people, parents and carers, to



discuss progress and future direction of children's social care reform in NI. The group maintains ongoing engagement with Prof. Ray Jones, Independent Reviewer, alongside the NI Commissioner for

Children and Young People, British Association of Social Workers, and NI Public Service Alliance, to share the Collective's priorities and concerns.

## Generating evidence that counts

NCB excels in generating learning and evidence through delivering a broad range of different programmes and our skilled research team. We leverage our extensive networks of practitioners, commissioners, and policymakers, coupled with insights from children, young people, and families, to identify evolving needs and develop robust solutions.

### Key highlights included: Children's social care

- Integrating the voices of children, young people, and families with experience of disability or social care has been central to [Living Assessments](#), our five-year collaboration with the University

of Cambridge and the University of Kent, funded by the Wellcome Trust. This programme, in conjunction with the APPGC and the British Association of Social Workers, has produced a wealth of research and insights.

- One notable programme of work, [COACHES](#) (CAMHS support for children and young people with social work involvement), is examining mental health support for children with social workers. Early findings reveal significant disparities in access to mental health support, particularly for children from deprived backgrounds, whose lives are often considered too unstable to engage with mental health teams.
- To celebrate the culmination of Living Assessments, we hosted [two days](#) of lectures and



discussions, concluding with a theatre performance by young people with lived experience of disability, social care, or insecure immigration status.

- NCB started work with Kingston University and Ofsted to investigate the effectiveness of care provided in children's homes in a new study. Outcomes for those in children's homes currently lag behind those of other children in care and means they are at greater risk of going missing, being involved in the youth justice system and experiencing mental health difficulties.
- NCB played an ongoing role in the [Families First for Children Pathfinders](#), an evaluation of pilot programmes focused on early intervention, family help, family-first models, and multi-agency child protection teams. Our work included stakeholder engagement, expert consultations, and communicating findings, ensuring a robust methodology

that prioritised the voices of children and families. The findings significantly influenced DfE thinking, leading to the national rollout of elements of the Pathfinders, emphasizing the importance of consulting family networks and multi-agency collaboration.

### Early years

- NCB's strength in early years research and policy has been immensely enriched by the evidence and learning we have gained both as the lead partner of [LEAP](#) and through our role delivering [a learning and development programme](#) across all five of the [A Better Start \(ABS\) partnerships](#) funded by The National Lottery Community Fund.
- As part of this work, we published a new [report](#) summarising findings from our A Better Start national conference. Despite significant change and challenge in the early years landscape over the last 10 years, the five ABS partnerships have:
  - Supported over 88,000 pregnant women and people, babies and toddlers



- Developed and delivered over 250 services to families
- Provided workplace training to almost 25,000 practitioners
- Involved more than 2,600 volunteers
- Worked with over 200 partner organisations.
- We now have started delivering our extended contract to support the continued roll-out of evidence, practice and systems change from the ABS learning until December 2026.
- Our evaluations of innovative test-and-learn early years support developed by LEAP demonstrated the positive impacts of place-based services on early childhood development and family support. We examined two programmes that grew out of [LEAP: the Parent and Infant Relationship Service \(PAIRS\)](#) and [Natural Thinkers](#). PAIRS enhanced professional awareness of infant mental health, built capacity in the local early years ecosystem, and supported diverse families facing disadvantages. Our research confirmed that Natural Thinkers improved communication and language skills in pre-school children, with 96% of practitioners

recommending the program.

### Suicide bereavement

- CBN conducted extensive research on suicide bereavement, including submitting a proposal to Swansea Medical School's ethics committee to explore the support needs of children and young people bereaved by suicide. CBN presented findings at the European Grief Conference, covering suicide bereavement support, sector standards, and policy progress, while recruiting 11 UK services to a Community of Practice aimed at improving evaluation practices in child bereavement services.

### Preventing children's involvement in crime and violence

- NCB contributed significantly to the [Youth Endowment Fund's \(YEF\) evidence toolkit](#) by producing three reports focused on: equity, diversity, inclusion; evidence



security; and cost ratings for interventions. Additionally, NCB supported the YEF's Supportive Home Project, which seeks to prevent youth involvement in violence by applying evidence-based interventions at home.

- We also worked with the [Sussex Violence Reduction Partnership](#) to evaluate programmes including the Brighton and Hove Boxing Gym Programme. This involved conducting a survey of young people participating in the gym, qualitative case studies, and quantitative analysis of project monitoring data. The evaluation aimed to assess the programme's impact, providing insights into its effectiveness in reducing violence and supporting young people.
- We also conducted the 'Brighton Streets' evaluation, which involved on-site observations, focus groups and case studies from a programme which provided 'on-street' support to children and young people in areas classed as hot spots for crime and violence.

## SEND

- Through our role as [Strategic Reform Partner to DfE](#), we conducted extensive research and stakeholder engagement on inclusive practice in mainstream settings, including surveys on national standards, engagement sessions with young people and parent carers, feedback events for the Neurodiversity Task Group, and data collection on the Specialist SEND Teacher and Speech and Language Therapy Workforce.
- The [What Works in SEND](#) programme is an ambitious learning and innovation programme designed to generate high-quality evidence of what works (and what doesn't) in SEND systems improvement and showcase effective practice models. In 2024–25, the Council for Disabled Children ran a series of seminars and focus groups to facilitate knowledge-sharing among practitioners, enhancing understanding and implementation of evidence-informed practice across education, health, and care sectors.



## Making sure children have the workforce they need

One of NCB's greatest strengths is delivering engaging, evidence-informed training and development opportunities to a whole range of different professionals. Our work helps not just to increase skills, but to shift thinking about what is possible for services, drawing on the experiences and challenges faced by communities across England.

### Key highlights included:

#### SEND workforce

- CDC has continued to enhance the skills and effectiveness of the SEND workforce in supporting children and young people.
- As part of the RISE partnership, we delivered 55 training sessions, two national events, and two webinars, engaging over 2,300 workforce members. We also delivered training to 148 kinship carers on EHCPs and the SEND system.
- The Information, Advice and

Support Services Network (IASSN) delivered 44 training events and offered 1,309 training spaces to SENDIAS staff, ranging from in-person events to online workshops and legal training.

- Additionally, we developed a variety of resources, including a business case for the Designated Social Care Officer role and a new Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) handbook. This was done in collaboration with NHS England, DCOs, and the Heads of SEND from Integrated Care Boards.
- Our SEND training for the early years workforce (EYSEND) included 'Making it REAL' sessions sharing effective strategies to enhance early literacy development and improve the home learning environment. Delivered by NCB's Early Childhood Unit, a programme of webinars, conferences, and strategic planning sessions, gave SEND practitioners the tools to improve early achievement in reading and writing.

#### Social care workforce

- Research in Practice has continued to focus on supporting social



- workers nationally through a range of initiatives aimed at enhancing their professional development and practice.
- This included delivering workshops on critical topics such as child development, housing-related inequalities, analytical skills, professional curiosity, and resilience.
  - We also supported social workers in meeting Social Work England's CPD requirements by creating resources, content and [campaigns](#), including a video highlighting the [impact of CPD on children and families](#).
  - Research in Practice also contributed to the British Journal of Social Work with research on school exclusion gaps for children with social work involvement.
  - We launched the [Contact after adoption hub](#), providing materials for training social workers and adopters, emphasising flexibility in responding to children's changing circumstances and maintaining significant relationships safely.
  - We also led the [Safeguarding Pressures 9 report](#) with insights into systemic challenges such as housing concerns, health delays, and the impact of COVID-19, while showcasing the benefits of sustained early help investment.

### Education staff

- In June 2024, ABA started delivering the 18-month [Belonging Matters programme](#), funded by the Kusuma Trust, in 10 schools in London. This pilot programme is aimed at mainstream schools, special schools, and alternative provision, across both primary and secondary phases.
- With increasing concerns about barriers to school attendance, rising mental health difficulties amongst pupils, and school access to early help and specialist services in limited supply, Belonging Matters supports school staff to develop and enhance their universal offer of inclusive education so it benefits all pupils, particularly disabled pupils and



those with special education needs who face significantly more barriers to accessing school life.

### Early years practitioners

- Since 2022, our Early Childhood Unit has proudly served as the Delivery Partner for the Department for Education's [Early Years Stronger Practice Hub programme](#). Through this role, we support 18 Hubs across England to share evidence-based best practice with early years settings.
- We provide expert guidance via webinars, one-to-one and group sessions, a peer support framework, and monthly newsletters. This work has strengthened the skills of Hub teams and, through their wider networks, enhanced the knowledge and confidence of staff in over 10,000 early years settings nationwide.
- Our Early Childhood Unit continues to strengthen the early years

workforce through two key programmes: [Making it REAL](#) and [Natural Thinkers](#).

- Making it REAL has equipped over 800 practitioners in the last academic year alone with practical strategies to support early literacy and language development. The training also boosts confidence in engaging parents and enriching children's home learning environments.
- Through Natural Thinkers, NCB has trained practitioners to use outdoor learning to support children's development and embed the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) through nature-based experiences. This training, originally developed and delivered just in Lambeth through LEAP, is an example of how NCB is taking the legacy of the learning and success of LEAP and growing delivery at a national scale.



## Building respect and trust as a pioneering and high-performing charity

We are proud of the culture we have built at NCB and collectively we want to run a modern, highly effective charity, attracting fantastic new talent and creating opportunities for development. Central to this is work across NCB to value diversity and promote equity and inclusion. We also have strong financial management, recognising that with so many issues to tackle, it is essential that every pound we spend achieves the greatest impact possible.

### Key highlights included:

#### Strengthening processes and procedures

- NCB has focused on supporting its growth as

an organisation with approximately 200 employees.

- A new risk assurance model has been embedded to ensure strong governance, with training rolled out to all staff.
- A range of work to improve IT and information security has been started, including rolling out phishing simulations and associated awareness training.

#### Organisational integration and culture

- A new Senior Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Lead was recruited, and a four-year [DEI plan](#) was created with the aim of making NCB a more diverse, inclusive and equity-focussed organisation (see page 16).
- NCB has worked to harmonise the cultures of Research in Practice and NCB, fostering collaboration and improving internal communication. Integration work includes Research in Practice 'core' teams joining NCB's, and incorporating Research in Practice into impact reporting.
- Collaboration between existing



NCB staff and their new Research in Practice colleagues has borne fruit with joint working on multiple bids and projects.

- A salary and benefits assessment was undertaken to align all Research in Practice staff with NCB's salary structure. This was finalised in the autumn of 2024.

### Safeguarding improvements

- NCB has reviewed its safeguarding approach to ensure a system-wide model that supports distributive leadership and professional confidence. Safeguarding champions will be established across teams to reflect the organisation's growth and diverse portfolio. A draft safeguarding policy and role descriptor were developed, alongside infrastructure improvements using Salesforce for recording. The new policy and processes will be implemented in the new financial year.

### Governance enhancements

- NCB has strengthened its governance by recruiting three new trustees, including a new

Treasurer, to bolster leadership and oversight.

### Communication and engagement

- NCB has enhanced its external profile through increased engagement metrics, including website visitors and social media interactions. The charity's main LinkedIn account has added 3,775 followers over the last year and now has over 11,000. The account achieved an average of 352 weekly page views during the last financial year, growth of 34% on the previous year. Meanwhile, an average engagement rate with our posts of 7% between November 2024 and June 2025 compares with an engagement rate of just 1.8% on NCB's X account over the same period.



# Our plans for 2025/26

This year promises to be another exciting chapter for NCB, as we build on the achievements outlined in this report and the momentum generated by welcoming Research in Practice into the NCB family.

Our key areas of focus include:

- **Amplifying the voice of children, young people and families** – We will continue to centre the views of children, young people, parents and families in our evidence work, providing them with platforms to call for change directly to those in power. This will include a specific initiative to further improve the diversity of the children and young people involved in our work.
- **Driving change in the local and regional systems children rely on** – We are focussed on expanding our support to local areas through professional learning and service design. We will help areas navigate complex legislative and policy changes while harnessing our world-class expertise in bringing the lived experiences of those most affected into these conversations.
- **Driving change in national policy and legislation** – We will influence key Government initiatives by convening alliances across sectors and combining lived and learned experience. We will play a central role in influencing the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, the Child Poverty Strategy, reform of the SEND system, the NHS 10-year plan, and the Government's Opportunity Mission – among much else.
- **Generating evidence that counts** – We will continue to grow our focus on children at



risk of or involved in the youth justice system, combining our insights with our expertise in other systems such as SEND, education, and children's social care – intersections that are often overlooked but deeply important.

- **Making sure children have the workforce they need** – We will continue to implement our new early years strategy, including an important strand on supporting good practice across the diverse early years workforce. We will advocate for this vital group of professionals to be better valued and supported through government policy. Additionally, we will develop training on anti-bullying support in the context of

race and faith-based bullying.

- **Building respect and trust as a pioneering and high-performing charity** - 2025/26 is the first year of our ambitious new action plan to improve diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) at NCB. As the section above shows, DEI is threaded through many of our initiatives for the coming year. Alongside this, the plan focusses on key enablers, such as building strategic partnerships with other organisations and internal initiatives such as a development programme for Black and Global Majority staff.



# Trustees' annual report

Incorporating the Directors' Strategic Report and Administrative Report for Companies Act Purposes.

The Trustees of the National Children's Bureau present their Annual Report for the Year Ended 31st March 2025 under the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006, including the Directors' Report and the Strategic Report under the 2006 Act, together with the audited financial statements for the year.



## Administrative information

### Board of Trustees

Alison O'Sullivan	Chair
Sarah Mullen	Vice-Chair
Robert Whelan	Treasurer (to 31 December 2024)
Tayo Leigh	Treasurer (from 1 January 2025)
Emma Beeden	
Onder Beter	
Steven Crocker	
Professor Neal Hazel	
Bethan Hoggan	
Dr Catriona Hugman	
Marjorie James	
Fergal McFerran	(to 3 July 2024)
Dr Dominic McSherry	(from 3 July 2024)
Jadesola Olusanya	
Kathryn Pugh, MBE	
Sarbjit Rana	
Nainan Shah	

Members of the Board of Trustees under charity law are also Directors of the charitable company for the purpose of company law.

### Independent committee members

Claire Burgess	People & Culture Committee
Adam Land	People & Culture Committee
Judith Worthy	Finance, Risk & Audit Committee



## Strategic leadership team

Anna Feuchtwang	Chief Executive
Amanda Allard Programmes	Strategic Director – Practice and
Dez Holmes Programmes	Strategic Director – Practice and
Phil Anderson	Strategic Director – External Affairs
Rachel Rand	Chief Operating Officer

## Advisors

### Auditors

Sayer Vincent LLP  
110 Golden Lane  
London  
EC1Y 0TG

### Bankers

Barclays Bank PLC  
1 Churchill Place  
London E14 5HP

### Investment managers

CCLA Investment Management Ltd  
80 Cheapside  
London EC2V 6DZ

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) was registered as a charity in 1969 (charity number 258825), although it was founded in 1963 as the National Bureau for Cooperation in Child Care. NCB is also a company limited by guarantee (registration number 952717) and has a subsidiary charity NCB RiP (registration number 15336152, charity number 1211290) and a subsidiary trading company, National Children's Bureau Enterprises Ltd (registration number 2633796).



NCB's Registered Office is at 23 Mentmore Terrace, Hackney, London, E8 3PN.

NCB was established for the public benefit in order to advance the well-being of children and young people in particular by (but not limited to):

- Relieving poverty, sickness and distress
- Safeguarding and maintaining health and well-being
- Encouraging positive and supportive family and other environments for children and young people
- Advancing education and training
- Reducing inequalities
- Ensuring that children and young people have a strong voice in all matters that affect their lives.

For the purposes of carrying out these objects, NCB's Articles of Association expect it to promote and organise cooperation and partnerships and to influence and inform policy, practice and service development by bringing together voluntary organisations, statutory authorities, individual professionals and all those concerned with the well-being of children and young people.

The liability of members in respect of the guarantee, as set out in the Articles, is limited to £1 per member of the company.

## Governance and management

The Board is ultimately accountable for NCB's strategic and financial sustainability and growth and that this is achieved through an organisational culture based on integrity, accountability and transparency. With this, NCB is committed to upholding its organisational culture and values in-line with the seven principles of the Charity Governance Code (updated 2020):

- Organisational purpose
- Leadership
- Integrity
- Decision making, risk and control
- Board effectiveness
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Openness and accountability

NCB's Board of Trustees and Strategic Leadership Team reflect these standards across practices, function and behaviours, conscious of the fact that the organisational culture is influenced and embedded



from these levels. The Governance Code is also embedded across NCB particularly with regard to setting the foundations for the governance objectives and outcomes in the organisational strategy 2024–2029.

As set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, NCB's Board of Trustees comprises a maximum membership of fifteen, including the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer and at least two Trustees must be under the age of 25 years at the time of appointment to fulfil NCB's young governance requirements. The maximum size of the Board of Trustees exceeds the Governance Code's recommended maximum in recognition of the fact younger trustees are at a stage in life where they typically have less control over their time so are less likely to be able to attend all meetings.

Each Board member serves a maximum of two terms each of three-years, with the possibility of a one-year extension at the end of their second term in exceptional circumstances, and Honorary Offices allowed to serve a maximum of nine years. At the request of the Board, Alison O'Sullivan has agreed to extend her term in office and tenure

as Chair up to 31 December 2026. This provides a period of stability as the strategic opportunities of Research in Practice are explored as well as time to recruit and induct the next Chair. Alison O'Sullivan will step down from the Board once her successor is in place.

At Year-end 31st March 2025, the Board membership was fifteen with the above requirements met.

The Board remains fully committed to promoting an inclusive approach recognising that a more diverse Board better supports its leadership, effectiveness and decision making from harnessing a broader range of perspectives and that lived experience is as equally valuable as professional expertise. The Board seeks to continuously develop and enhance its structures and ways of working to support inclusivity. As part of the process, the Board periodically reviews its collective membership and individual expertise, lived experience and development requirements. Annual one to ones are held with each Trustee and either the Chair or Vice-Chair, an annual appraisal of the chair is performed, and all Board members sign the Trustee Code of Conduct. External



effectiveness reviews are undertaken periodically to obtain independent assessment and advice.

The Board has continued to seek ongoing improvement through the year investing in external facilitation of the annual Trustee Strategy Day to focus on developing the group leadership skills of the Board. This development focus will continue through the year ending 31 March 2026.

The Finance, Risk and Audit Committee (FRAC) ensures that NCB is compliant in its financial obligations, auditing standards and legal requirements of regulatory bodies, including the Charity Commission, through an appropriate framework of policies, processes and controls. A focus of FRAC through the year has been the documentation of our Risk Assurance Framework.

The People and Culture Committee is focused on all matters pertaining to 'people' including Board membership, succession planning, Trustee recruitment, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and delivery of key strategic objectives. The development and approval of our second five-year DEI plan has been a

priority this year.

The Board may establish advisory groups to support the development of strategic objectives. The Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) continues its work with focus on delivery against our strategy.

### Senior pay

NCB aims to ensure that all staff are paid on a grade appropriate to the nature of the work and the experience, knowledge and skills needed to carry out the job within the organisation.

NCB also aims to ensure that all jobs are at a pay level which is reasonable when compared with the external market pay ranges for the charity and civil service sectors. The grades of all roles are assessed as part of NCB's job evaluation process, with the exception of the Chief Executive's and Directors' salaries which are proposed by the People and Culture Committee of the Board of Trustees for determination by the Board of Trustees.

### Fundraising

NCB has not contracted the services



of professional fundraisers or commercial participants.

NCB benefits as one of four recipients from donations secured by Childlife, a consortium charity whose methods include door-to-door, street fundraising and payroll giving. All activity lines are rigorously observant of industry recognised, best practice in ethical fundraising.

We delegate our low-level individual giving because our work does not lend itself to a large scale, fundraising opportunity with the general public. Accordingly, the advice we give to those wishing to fundraise on our behalf, is offered on a case-by-case basis, with Institute of Fundraising best practice in mind.

NCB and Childlife are registered with the Fundraising Regulator. No complaints have been received about our fundraising activities.

## Risk and internal control

The Trustees continue to review the risks facing NCB group, controls in place and mitigating actions being taken using the organisation's general statement of risk appetite with its corresponding set of principles around generally acceptable levels of risks.

The Trustees remain of the view that appropriate control procedures are in place to manage risks and that the systems of financial control comply in all material aspects with the guidelines issued by the Charity Commission. NCB's approach to management of risk is set out in a Risk Assurance Framework that is regularly reviewed and updated.



Risk	Key mitigating actions
<p><b>People – Organisational Change Capacity</b></p> <p>The need to respond to changes in the political and economic landscape, the desire to maximise on the strategic opportunities of the transfer in of Research in Practice a year ago and the need to continue integrating operational models across the larger organisation could overload staff resulting in lower levels of engagement and increased levels of staff turnover.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Extensive project prioritisation, detailed monitoring of project progress and regular review of priorities</li><li>• Annual staff survey amended to six-monthly pulse surveys for two years to enable more detailed monitoring of engagement rates</li><li>• Improved monitoring of staff utilisation rates to ensure early identification of inappropriate workloads in particular areas of the organisation.</li></ul>
<p><b>Financial – Working Capital</b></p> <p>The scale and breath of the organisation's work has grown significantly over the past few years. During the time the level of income received in advance of delivery has reduced which increases working capital requirements. If the working capital needs are not met it could result in failure to meet payment terms, inability to capitalise on opportunities and, in extreme circumstances, result in insolvency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Timely invoicing and credit control</li><li>• Detailed, routine budget monitoring</li><li>• Detailed, regular cashflow forecasting updates</li><li>• Active cash management</li><li>• Overdraft facility established</li></ul>



Risk	Key mitigating actions
<p><b>Delivery – Economic and Government Environment:</b></p> <p>The change in Government during the year, ongoing changes to the structure of public bodies and the 2025 comprehensive spending review create a sense of uncertainty, especially around future income, and makes longer term planning challenging.</p> <p>This is coupled with a challenging economic environment with cost inflation changeable and staffing costs rising significantly with National Insurance increases.</p> <p>The quality and breadth of work we can deliver for beneficiaries is at risk of being reduced due to rising cost pressures whilst income is increasingly harder to secure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Executive and trustees building and maintaining strong relationships with key stakeholders, including those in all political parties</li><li>• Contract managers prioritising relationship building/ maintenance and highly detailed contract management</li><li>• Plurality of income sources, enhanced with the addition of Research in Practice, provides a level of resilience to inherent levels of volatility</li><li>• Robust level of reserves held, above policy minimum, to allow for tiding over, maintaining continuity of programmes.</li></ul>



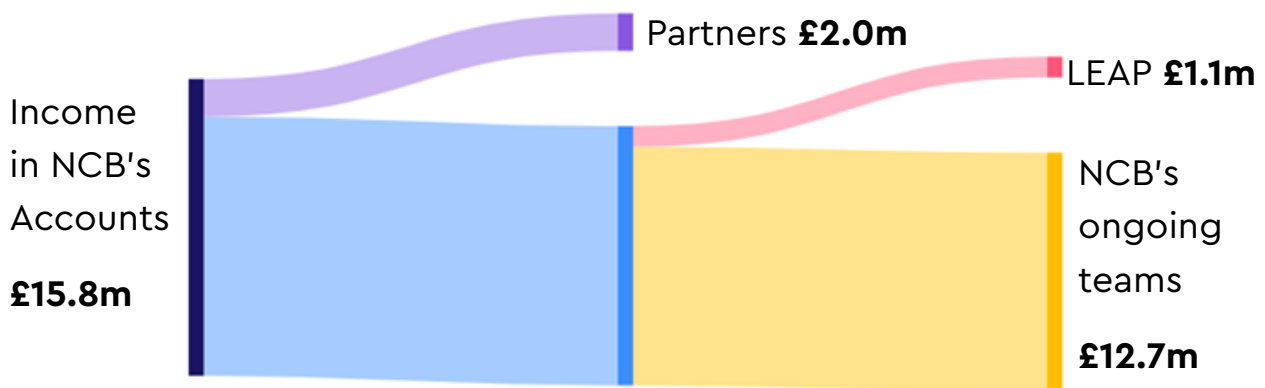
# Financial review

## Understanding NCB's finances

### Leading partnerships

We are entrusted by our funders to convene and lead many programmes in partnership with other organisations. To simplify how these larger projects are managed, funders often require that we receive and disburse income to partners.

Crucially, this means that just £13.8m this year goes to NCB's core activities, and £12.7m of that to ongoing areas of work. LEAP is a 10-year, timebound programme which ended in 2024/25.



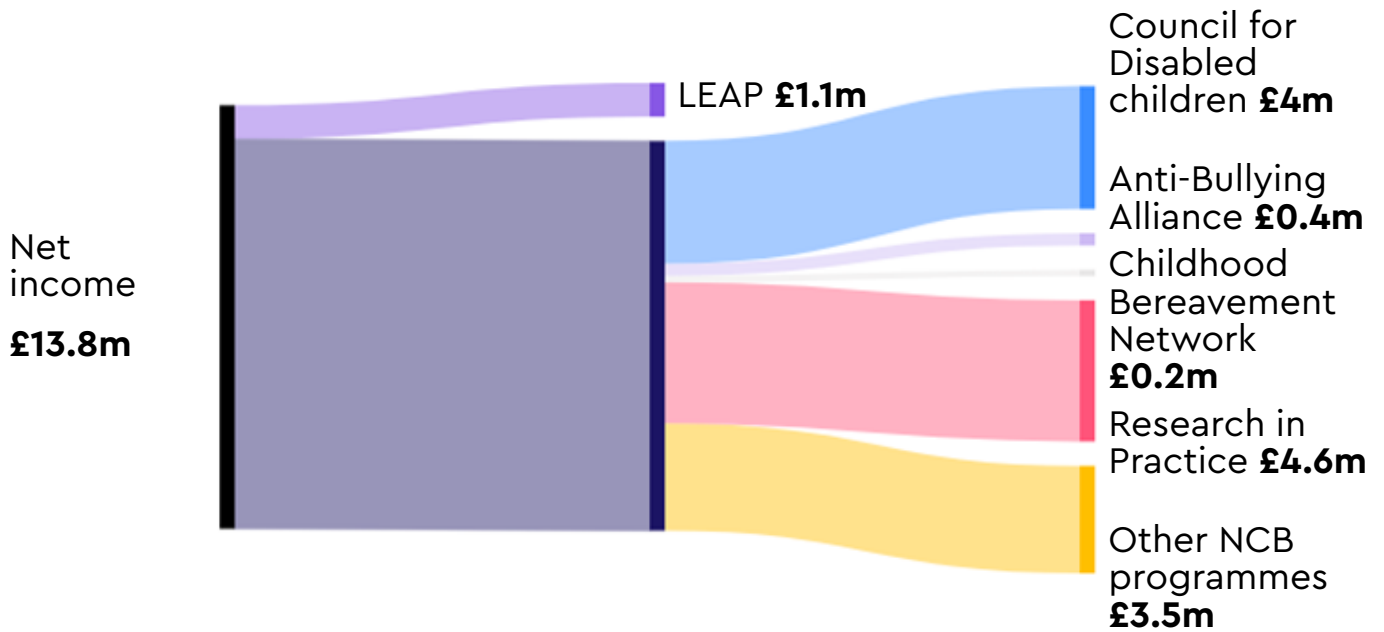
All income received that we manage must, for technical accounting reasons, be classed as NCB's own income – even though much of it is not ultimately spent by NCB. Our income figure may therefore give an overly inflated perspective of how much funding we can truly spend at our discretion.



## NCB's structure

NCB is a unifying voice in the sector and our core family of membership networks play a vital role to help us achieve our charitable mission.

The £13.8m 2024/25 net income is broadly broken down as follows:



## NCB's unrestricted income

Our accounts show £10.9m of "Unrestricted" income this year. Counter-intuitively most of the income labelled "Unrestricted" is not at our discretion to spend, as it relates to contractual income for specific services, where all the costs of delivery must be met from this income. Accounting standards dictate that these very real limitations on discretion to spend do not constitute 'restrictions' for accounting purposes.

While this may give the impression that we have a large sum of money

to cover discretionary costs or projects we choose to undertake, this is not the case. Only £133k (1% of our income) was given to us with free choice as to how we spend it, which when combined with interest earned on cash deposits (£150k this year), gives us around £283k of truly unrestricted income.

## NCB's reserves and reserves policy

NCB's Trustees maintain a reserve policy in line with the Charity Commission's best practice.



## Risks and Requirements

The Trustees have adapted a benchmarked framework to assess risks to the organisation, informed by the organisation's risk register, and considered the possible financial impacts that these may have, alongside anticipated proactive requirements to spend funds. The most material items are:

- Cessation of, or delays or cuts to, funding including at short notice. These could arise from disruption to government spending plans or change of funder priorities and require NCB to cover staff and other continuity costs.
- A need to invest in new products, services and income streams, and methods of delivery thereof, to continue meet emerging and evolving policy aims and societal needs. The costs of this are often not recoverable through our grant and contract funding.
- Adverse events that require unbudgeted payments, such as failure of compliance, cyber-attack or other business distraction, despite controls and insurance cover.

- Costs associated with closing the charity down, e.g., ensuring the continuity of services, administrator costs, redundancies. (This is not even perceived as being remotely likely or needed but it is considered prudent to hold funds to meet what we assess to be potentially significant costs, given the complexity of NCB.)

## NCB's Current Reserves

Trustees consider £1.5m of free reserves a minimum, reflecting the size and complexity of the organisation, and we would explain here if reserves fell below this. Our reserves are currently safely above this. We have grown significantly in the last year through the full-year impact of the acquisition of Research in Practice's activities, which are subject to an ongoing integration programme. Our largest programme, LEAP, concluded in 2024/25 and we are investing in some transition, legacy and knowledge management over the next few years. We expect the funding climate to remain challenging, including disruption following the general election, meaning covering necessary in-year costs fully may be difficult. In this



new context, and with a new five-year strategy and multi-year income plan now underway, trustees are comfortable with the current level of reserves. Trustees will use the next period to review whether some further reserves can be safely utilised for investing in NCB's strategy and long-term future. We will continue to seek funding for all programmes, including funding for developing new solutions to emerging needs.

Most of our free reserves are from a one-off event, being the net proceeds from selling our previous freehold office; unlike some charities, the funds are not from donors who expect these to be spent to achieve impact swiftly. With only around £100k of truly unrestricted income each year (plus interest earned from time to time), it is also extremely difficult to rebuild any reserves that are spent. As NCB's mission involves systemic improvement across a wide range of themes, we do not have an ambition to spend reserves to "complete" this mission at any foreseeable point in the future. Trustees therefore take a prudent view on retaining these free reserves where possible. Free reserves currently stand at £2.7m and are held to cover the risks and

requirements set out above, over a practically unlimited time frame.

The remaining, and majority of, reserve funds shown are then not free reserves. The value of our office property and other fixed assets (£4.3m); this value is tied up in the property, providing office space and reducing our running costs, and not available as cash to use. We have designated funds where we expect upcoming obligations, commitments or plans; currently to cover strategic investment in delivering our new strategy, meeting evolving needs, as well as to continue to improve our delivery, quality and consistency, all during an uncertain political and economic period, as well as for VAT and other costs relating to the property purchase (all totalling £0.8m). The £0.4m of restricted funds held are merely funds given in advance, and ring-fenced, by funders for agreed projects.



## Summary for the year under review

2024/25 sees the start of a new five-year strategy. We have developed a new five-year financial model and development plan, as we enter a new strategic period. The plan is designed to grow and strengthen the diversity of income as we meet evolving and emerging needs, maintaining economies of scale and value. The focus on financial balance has seen us achieve an operational break-even this year (as in previous years), matching unrestricted income and expenditure, and maintaining our strong reserves. Our aim is to continue to do so in future years.

The result seen in the financial statements can be broken down as follows:

There was a small operating surplus on unrestricted funds of £10k (2024 £9k surplus), before taking into account exceptional expenditure, representing an important continuation of broadly running at break-even whilst maintaining investment in income generation for future years.

Exceptional expenditure of £8k gives an overall surplus on unrestricted funds of £2k.

Net expenditure on operational restricted funds was £0.2m, reflecting merely the timing of spend on grant funded projects.

This resulted in NCB's net assets and overall funds reducing to £8.2m (2024 £8.4m), in line with the planned use of restricted programme funds and exceptional expenditure, and free reserves strengthened to £2.9m (2024 £2.5m), having used some designated funds. NCB is therefore in a strong financial position, with free reserves above the policy minimum set out above, a significant property asset and a strategic plan for income generation to continue this strong financial performance in the years ahead.



## Financial performance

### Income

As expected, overall income increased during the year from £12.8m in 2023/24 to £15.8m. Unrestricted income increased to £10.9m (£7.2m in 2023/24), mainly reflecting a full year of Research in Practice's partnership network. Restricted income lessened from £5.5m to £4.9m, reflecting particularly the expected change in activity in our LEAP 'A Better Start' programme for National Lottery Community Fund. Outside of these the charity continues to hold a number of government contracts for the future and has secured significant grants for its projects and research from a range of government, trust and other sources.

### Expenditure

Expenditure increased in line with the changes in activity mentioned above, from £13.3m last year to £16.0m this year.

### Financial position

NCB's total reserves decreased from

£8.4m at the start of the year to £8.2m at the end of the year. NCB has a strong general funds position (£2.7m) retained in line with the reserves policy by virtue of the break-even performance in the year, alongside further funds designated to meet specific needs or risks in the near future. In addition, the total net assets of £8.2m (£8.4m 2024), includes the funds invested in our main London office.

## Other matters

### Going concern

As is normal in the preparation of accounts, Trustees are required to determine whether the accounts are to be compiled on a going concern basis.

The sale of the freehold property, and subsequent investment in a new property put NCB in a strong reserves and cash position, maintained by several subsequent years of break-even financial performance.

NCB currently holds £2.7m of free reserves (in excess of designated funds), which meets the reserves policy set out above, assures the



Board of Trustees we can meet any risks that become issues, and puts NCB in a good position for the coming period.

Taking all these factors into consideration Trustees believe it is reasonable to expect that NCB will generate sufficient resources to finance its operations for the foreseeable future and believe there are no material uncertainties that call into doubt the charity's ability to continue. Accordingly, the accounts have been prepared on the basis that the charity is a going concern.

### Subsidiaries

NCB RiP, a charitable subsidiary, undertakes the activities of Research in Practice. These were merged into NCB's group from 1st February 2024 and provide learning opportunities to professionals in social care, health, education and criminal justice, to improve outcomes. The subsidiary produced a break-even result for the year under review, keeping funds within the limit of the on-demand facility agreement with NCB.

National Children's Bureau Enterprises Ltd exists to manage, as and when appropriate, conference and lettings

programmes, various funding activities and support services for other charities. The majority of work has largely been stopped, and the residual, incidental trading activity handled within the charity itself, resulting in no turnover or profit in the company for the year, as was the case in the prior year. The company was dormant throughout the financial year. Any profit made by NCB Enterprises' is gift-aided to the charity.

### Joint Venture

Childlife is a joint venture between four charities, with NCB therefore having an equal 25% share of voting rights. NCB recognised income of £115k from Childlife in the year.

### Investment policy

NCB's investment policy is to limit investment in more volatile assets and to keep key reserves in cash deposits. The Trustees continue to monitor this approach to investment, to ensure the best use of the significant funds from the sale of the freehold property. This is the role of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee which is chaired by the



Treasurer, with the Chair attending as an observer, and with the Chief Executive and the Chief Operating Officer in attendance.

The Committee advises the Board on investment policy to ensure risk, return and liquidity are balanced in the best interests of the charity and, where necessary, will seek independent external advice. In addition, it recommends to the Board the proportion of its investments to be held in longer term funds against maintaining prudent cash, or cash equivalent, balances, or retaining for use directly on charitable activities, infrastructure and operations.

The risk appetite of the policy above makes it unlikely we will invest significantly in this area, but for any future investment in equities and other financial products, the charity will continue with an ethical investment policy, including avoiding companies with more than 50 per cent of their turnover in gambling, tobacco or armaments. The Committee will also advise the Board on maintaining a reasoned ethical approach, and will seek to take external advice to set this against the need for proper returns on new funds.



# Statement of responsibilities

**T**he Trustees are responsible for preparing the Strategic Report, the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards) and applicable law. 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 its net incoming resources 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
- make judgments and estimates

that are reasonable and prudent

- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue to operate.

The trustees are responsible for keeping 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the



prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Insofar as each of the trustees of the company at the date of approval of this report is aware there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the company's auditor in connection with preparing the audit report) of which the company's auditor is unaware. Each trustee has taken all of the steps that he/ she should have taken as a trustee in order to make himself/ herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information.

## Compliance with statutory requirements

The financial statements have been prepared in compliance with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (SORP FRS 102) issued under the auspices of the Charity Commission.

## Funders, stakeholders and sponsors

We would like to express our grateful thanks to government departments, charitable bodies, companies and individuals for their considerable support in financing NCB's activities.

## Auditors

Sayer Vincent LLP has indicated its willingness to be reappointed statutory auditor. This Annual Report of the Trustees, under the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006, was approved by the Board of Trustees on 2nd July 2025, including approving in their capacity as company directors the Strategic Report contained therein, and is signed as authorised on its behalf by:

**Alison O'Sullivan**

**Chair**

**National Children's Bureau  
Company Number: 952717**



# Independent auditor's report to the members of National Children's Bureau

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of National Children's Bureau (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiary (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the consolidated statement of financial activities, the group and parent charitable company balance sheets, the consolidated statement of cash flows and the 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 Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally

Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of the group's 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
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.



## 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 the group financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group and parent charitable company 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 National Children's Bureau'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 trustees 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 trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, other than the group financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the group 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. Our responsibility



is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the group financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of 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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the group financial statements themselves. 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.

## 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, including the strategic report, for the

financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements

- The trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, 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 group and the parent charitable company and their environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept by the parent charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not



- visited by us; or
- The parent charitable company 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.

## Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the parent 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 group's and the parent 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 group or the parent 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

We have been appointed auditor under the Companies Act 2006 and section 151 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with those Acts.

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 the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

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 are set out below.

## Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and

regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the group's policies and procedures relating to:
  - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the group operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements



or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the group from our professional and sector experience.

- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.

In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the

normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

## 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 and section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable 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 anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

**Joanna Pittman (Senior statutory auditor)**

**17 July 2025**

**for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor**

**110 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TG**

Sayer Vincent LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006



# Financial statements

## Consolidated statement of financial activities

(incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

Year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	Restricted Funds £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	1 & 2	157	133	290	276
Charitable activities		4,700	10,632	15,332	12,272
Other activities		-	5	5	5
Income from investments		-	150	150	198
<b>Total</b>		<b>4,857</b>	<b>10,920</b>	<b>15,777</b>	<b>12,751</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	1, 3 & 6				
Fundraising		-	48	48	34
Charitable activities		5,084	10,862	15,946	13,096
Exceptional expenditure	13	-	8	8	166
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,084</b>	<b>10,918</b>	<b>16,002</b>	<b>13,296</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(227)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>(225)</b>	<b>(545)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
Total funds brought forward		615	7,787	8,402	8,947
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>388</b>	<b>7,789</b>	<b>8,177</b>	<b>8,402</b>

Notes 1 to 19 form part of these financial statements

Full comparative figures are shown in note 18.



## Balance sheets

As at 31 March 2025

	Notes	Group		NCB	
		2025 £'000	2024 £'000	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Fixed assets:</b>					
Tangible assets	1 & 6	4,317	4,466	4,317	4,466
Shares in subsidiary undertaking	9	0	-	0	-
<b>Total fixed assets</b>		<u>4,317</u>	<u>4,466</u>	<u>4,317</u>	<u>4,466</u>
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Debtors	11	3,910	4,264	2,340	3,092
Notice deposits	8	-	2,000	-	2,000
Cash at bank		4,375	2,740	3,732	2,494
<b>Total current assets</b>		<u>8,285</u>	<u>9,004</u>	<u>6,072</u>	<u>7,586</u>
<b>Liabilities:</b>					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>(4,425)</u>	<u>(5,068)</u>	<u>(1,887)</u>	<u>(3,324)</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>3,860</u>	<u>3,936</u>	<u>4,185</u>	<u>4,262</u>
<b>Total net assets</b>	16	<u>8,177</u>	<u>8,402</u>	<u>8,502</u>	<u>8,728</u>
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>					
Restricted Funds	1 & 14	388	615	362	589
General Funds (Free Reserves)	1 & 15	2,702	2,531	3,053	2,883
Designated Unrestricted Funds	1 & 15	5,087	5,256	5,087	5,256
<b>Total charity funds</b>	18	<u>8,177</u>	<u>8,402</u>	<u>8,502</u>	<u>8,728</u>

Notes 1 to 19 form part of these financial statements

The net result for the period ending 31 March 2025 was a deficit of £0.2m (2024 deficit of £0.5m).

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the trustees on 27 June 2025 and were signed on their behalf by:

**Alison O'Sullivan**

**Chair**

**National Children's Bureau**

**Company number: 952717**



# Consolidated cash flow statement

for the year ended 31 March 2025

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>	<u>(457)</u>	<u>(717)</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Interest from investments	150	198
Purchase of leasehold property and equipment	(58)	(252)
<b>Net cash provided by investing activities</b>	<u>92</u>	<u>(54)</u>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</b>	(365)	(771)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	4,740	5,511
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>	<u>4,375</u>	<u>4,740</u>
<b>Analysis of cash and cash equivalents</b>	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Cash in hand	4,375	2,740
Notice deposits	-	2,000
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<u>4,375</u>	<u>4,740</u>
<b>Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities</b>	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Net expenditure for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	(225)	(545)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	207	240
Decrease in creditors	(643)	2,256
Decrease (Increase) in debtors	354	(2,470)
Interest receivable	(150)	(198)
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>	<u>(457)</u>	<u>(717)</u>



# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 March 2025

## 1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### Statutory information

National Children's Bureau (NCB) is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, incorporated in the United Kingdom. The registered office address and principal place of business is 23 Mentmore Terrace, London, England E8 3PN.

### Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 (FRS 102) – Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the Trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects the current and future periods.



Details of the main accounting estimates can be found in the notes to the accounts.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

### Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

### Going Concern

After making enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate

resources to continue its activities for the foreseeable future. Accordingly they continue to adopt the

going concern basis in preparing the financial statements as outlined in the Statement of Trustees'

Responsibilities.

### Group accounts

Group financial statements have been prepared on a line by line

consolidation basis in respect of NCB, its wholly owned subsidiary National Children's Bureau Enterprises Ltd and its subsidiary charity NCB RIP. No separate statement of Financial Activities has been presented for NCB alone as permitted by Section 408 of Companies Act 2006.

NCB has taken advantage of the exemptions in FRS 102 from the requirements to present a charity-only Cash Flow Statement and certain disclosures regarding NCB's financial instruments.

### Consortium charity

NCB is one of four charities in the field of childcare which receive grants from the consortium undertaking, Childlife. The grants are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities with Donations and appeals. The accounts of Childlife are considered not material for the purpose of consolidation. Financial details are set out in note 10.

### Income

Income is recognised when the charity 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.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

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

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably

by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

### Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

The strategic priorities fund and the building fund are expected to be utilised by 31st March 2026.

### Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

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:

- Expenditure on Raising funds



relate to the staff costs and other expenditure incurred by the charity in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose

- Expenditure on Charitable Activities includes staff costs and other expenditure undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs

NCB is a partially-exempt body for VAT purposes. Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

### Delivery Partners

Expenditure subcontracted, or managed on, to partners is recognised to the same policy as expenditure above, or when funds are passed on, as a grant, as agreed.

### Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary

and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on a basis consistent with the budgeted use of the resources. Support services are allocated by income or by full-time equivalent staff.

Support services includes chief executive office, facilities, finance, human resources and equipment depreciation.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities including trustees, audit and general legal expenses.

### Operating leases

Rental costs under operating leases are charged to the SOFA in equal amounts over the period of the leases.

### Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500. Depreciation costs are



allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

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:

Leasehold property	100 years
Fitting out costs	20 years
Furniture and IT equipment	3 to 5 years
Software	7 years

## Investments

Investments in subsidiaries are at cost.

## Cash at Bank and In Hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term liquid investments with a short maturity of one month or less from the date of acquisition or opening of deposit or similar account.

## Notice Deposits

Notice Deposits are liquid investments with a notice period greater than one month.

## Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due 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 group 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. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

## Financial instruments

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 their settlement value.



## Pension costs

Employers' contributions are made to a defined contribution scheme, managed by Standard Life, and employees' personal pensions. These are charged in the year in which they become payable.

## 2. INCOME

	Restricted £'000	Unrestricted £'000	2025 £'000	Restricted £'000	Unrestricted £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Donations and legacies</b>	157	133	290	172	104	276
<b>Charitable activities</b>						
Government grants	651	-	651	924	-	924
National Lottery Community Fund grants	1,855	-	1,855	3,301	-	3,301
Other project grants	2,193	-	2,193	1,117	-	1,117
Contract income	-	6,845	6,845	-	6,170	6,170
Memberships	-	2,484	2,484	-	27	27
Other income	-	1,303	1,303	-	732	732
<b>Other activities</b>	-	5	5	-	5	5
<b>Income from investments</b>						
Bank and other interest receivable	-	150	150	-	198	198
	<u>4,856</u>	<u>10,920</u>	<u>15,776</u>	<u>5,514</u>	<u>7,236</u>	<u>12,750</u>

Government grants are for project delivery work secured by a bidding process. Significant items are shown in note 14.



### 3. EXPENDITURE

	Staff £'000	Delivery partners £'000	Other expenses £'000	Support services £'000	2025 £'000
<b>Raising funds</b>					
Fundraising	48	-	-	-	48
<b>Charitable activities</b>	8,864	1,969	3,137	1,976	15,946
Support Services	702	-	1,187	(1,889)	-
Governance costs	-	-	87	(87)	-
<b>Exceptional expenditure</b>	-	-	8	-	8
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>9,614</b>	<b>1,969</b>	<b>4,419</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>16,002</b>

#### Comparative figures for the prior year

	Staff £'000	Delivery partners £'000	Other expenses £'000	Support services £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Raising funds</b>					
Fundraising	33	-	1	-	34
<b>Charitable activities</b>	6,365	2,636	2,390	1,705	13,096
Support Services	517	-	1,092	(1,609)	-
Governance costs	-	-	96	(96)	-
<b>Exceptional expenditure</b>	10	-	156	-	166
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>6,925</b>	<b>2,636</b>	<b>3,735</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13,296</b>

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Support Services</b>		
Facilities and IT	1,034	901
Human resources	347	236
Finance	362	344
Management	146	128
	<b>1,889</b>	<b>1,609</b>

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Governance costs</b>		
Trustees' expenses	5	3
Auditors' remuneration (excluding non-governance services listed below)	42	30
Internal Audit	0	15
Other meeting costs (including virtual)	14	16
Trustee Recruitment	18	27
Other expenses	8	5
	<b>87</b>	<b>96</b>

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Expenditure includes</b>		
Depreciation	207	240
Auditors' remuneration - Statutory audit current year provision	42	30
- Statutory audit prior year	-	-
- Project audits prior and current years	2	6
- Other work	-	-



Non-staff expenditure on governance and support services (including auditors' remuneration) shown includes partially irrecoverable VAT (where charged by suppliers) according to the balance of business and non-business, and exempt activity supported. For 2024–25 58% of this VAT was irrecoverable (2023–24 49%), ie adding 11.5% (2023–24 9.8%) to relevant costs.

#### 4. DELIVERY PARTNERS

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
LEAP (Lambeth Early Action Partnership)	716	1,938
Early Years SEND Partnership	329	306
RISE partnership - Targeted Support	480	247
Fostering Connections	395	113
Other	49	32
	<u>1,969</u>	<u>2,636</u>

NCB works in partnership to achieve the aims of its programmes; amounts shown here are subcontracting, or passing on and over-seeing the use of funding, where there is a high degree of visibility for other organisations to the ultimate funder. NCB worked with 38 organisations in this way in the year (2024: 55).



## 5. STAFF AND TRUSTEES

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Group &amp; NCB Staff costs</b>		
Salaries and wages	8,079	5,933
Social Security costs	845	623
Staff pension costs	552	369
Redundancy costs	138	-
	<u>9,614</u>	<u>6,925</u>

	2025 number	2024 number
<b>Group &amp; NCB Average head count staff numbers</b>		
Full-time staff	154	119
Part-time staff	52	28
	<u>206</u>	<u>147</u>

<b>Staff earning over £60,000</b>		
between £60,000 and £70,000	14	9
between £70,000 and £80,000	4	-
between £80,000 and £90,000	2	1
between £100,000 and £110,000	-	1
between £110,000 and £120,000	1	-
	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>

The key management personnel of the Charity, comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer, two Strategic Directors – Practice & Programmes Director and Strategic Director – External Affairs. The total employee remuneration and benefits received by the five key management personnel were £551k (2024: four £407k).



In compliance with recommendations for disclosure from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), NCB have chosen to disclose the full-time equivalent, gross salaries of the senior leadership team at 31 March 2025, which were:

<b>Role</b>		2025		2024
Chief Executive	£	116,218	£	111,427
Chief Operating Officer	£	86,085	£	82,775
Strategic Director - Practice & Programmes	£	86,085	£	82,774
Strategic Director - Practice & Programmes	£	86,085	£	82,775
Strategic Director - External Affairs	£	86,085	£	82,774

No remuneration is payable to trustees. Travel and accommodation expenses totalling £4,763 (2024: £2,616) were reimbursed to 8 trustees (2024: 8 trustees).

Trustee Indemnity Insurance £896 (2024: £896) was purchased in the year.

£138k redundancy costs were incurred and paid during the year (2024: None).

## 6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Leasehold property	Furniture and equipment	Total
<b>Group and NCB</b>			
<b>Cost</b>			
Cost as at 1 April 2024	4,677	807	5,484
Additions	11	47	58
Disposals	-	-	-
Cost as at 31 March 2025	<u>4,688</u>	<u>854</u>	<u>5,542</u>
Depreciation as at 1 April 2024	447	571	1,018
Charge	101	106	207
Disposals	-	-	-
Depreciation as at 31 March 2025	<u>548</u>	<u>677</u>	<u>1,225</u>
<b>Net book value as at 31 March 2025</b>	<b>4,140</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>4,317</b>
Net book value as at 31 March 2024	4,230	236	4,466



## 7. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

The Group has annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases expiring as follows:

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Due within one year</b>		
Land and buildings	13	7
Equipment	5	-
<b>2 to 5 years</b>		
Equipment	11	3
	<u>29</u>	<u>10</u>

Lease payments recognised in the year amounted to £51k (2024: £14k).

## 8. NOTICE DEPOSITS

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Group and NCB</b>		
<b>Notice deposits</b>		
Barclays	<u>-</u>	<u>2,000</u>



## 9. SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKING

NCB RIP was incorporated on 23 December 2023 as a company limited by guarantee, and is a charity registered at 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. The directors are Anna Feuchtwang, Phillip Anderson and Rachel Rand (until 21st May 2025).

On 1 February 2024 The Dartington Hall Trust transferred its Research in Practice activities to NCB RIP, and as such the periods covered in the below table are 12 months to 31st March 2025 and 2 months to 31st March 2024. NCB has consolidated the results of NCB RIP on a line by line basis.

The value of assets and liabilities acquired by NCB on transfer of NCB RIP was nil.

	Restricted Funds £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Income from:</b>				
Charitable activities	110	4,826	4,936	423
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>4,826</b>	<b>4,936</b>	<b>423</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
Charitable activities	110	4,825	4,935	754
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>4,825</b>	<b>4,935</b>	<b>754</b>
<b>Net income (expenditure)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(331)</b>



Included within Charitable activities is a management charge of £655k from NCB.

The aggregate of the assets, liabilities and reserves was:

	2025
	£'000
Assets	2,570
Liabilities	(2,901)
Reserves	<u>(331)</u>
Liabilities include:	
Income received in advance	(2,171)
Amount due to NCB	<u>(358)</u>

Shares in subsidiary undertaking represents NCB's holding of 100 ordinary shares of £1 each, which is a 100% interest, in the share capital of National Children's Bureau Enterprises Limited, a company registered in England and Wales (no. 2633796) and a wholly owned subsidiary of the charity. Financial statements are filed with the Registrar of Companies.

The company has been dormant for the whole financial year. The net assets brought and carried forward are £5k, with the debtor due from the charity, NCB. An audit was not performed.

Activity may start up again in future, through letting of the new office, or from other emerging fundraising approaches.

The parent charity's gross income and net expenditure for the year are disclosed as follows:

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Gross income	10,841	12,328
Net (expenditure)	<u>(226)</u>	<u>(214)</u>



## 10. JOINT VENTURE

Childlife is a joint venture between four charities, with NCB therefore having an equal 25% share of voting rights. The information below shows the full activities, liabilities and assets, of which NCB has a 25% interest. The 25% share of these amounts are not consolidated into NCB's financial statements. NCB recognised income of £100,000 from Childlife in the year. Notes 1 and 13 provide further information on our relationship.

	2025	2024 restated
	£'000	£'000
Income	1,356	1,310
Expenditure	707	673
Net income	649	637
Distribution to member charities	(450)	(410)
Net movement in funds	199	227

The aggregate of assets, liabilities and funds was:

Assets	873	838
Liabilities	(57)	(221)
Net assets	816	617
Total funds	816	617

## 11. DEBTORS

	Group		NCB	
	2025 £'000	2024 £'000	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Trade debtors	2,638	2,551	901	1,358
Other debtors and prepayments	92	177	64	111
Amount due from subsidiary undertaking	-	-	358	323
Accrued income (unrestricted)	761	947	598	711
Accrued income (grants due for projects)	419	589	419	589
	3,910	4,264	2,340	3,092

NCB and NCB RiP entered into an on-demand facility agreement dated 30 January 2024 under which RiP may borrow from NCB funds up to the total value of £500,000.



## 12. CREDITORS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	Group		NCB	
	2025 £'000	2024 £'000	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Trade Creditors	445	1,013	249	841
Social Security and other taxes	660	762	553	697
Pension contributions	76	135	76	135
Amount due to subsidiary undertaking	-	-	5	5
Other creditors and accrued charges	823	1,157	755	966
Income received in advance	2,421	2,001	249	680
	<u>4,425</u>	<u>5,068</u>	<u>1,887</u>	<u>3,324</u>

	B/fwd 1 Apr 2024 £'000	Received 2025 £'000	Income 2025 £'000	C/fwd 31 March 2025 £'000
Income received in advance in respect of 2024/25				
Services and other income	2,001	11,340	10,920	2,421
	<u>2,001</u>	<u>11,340</u>	<u>10,920</u>	<u>2,421</u>

## 13. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

NCB Enterprises Ltd (a wholly owned subsidiary of NCB, also registered at 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN) did not trade in 2024–25.

The amount owed from the parent company at 31st March 2025 was £5,374 (2024: £5,374).

Further details are shown in note 9.

NCB RiP was incorporated on 23 December 2023 as a company limited by guarantee, and is a charity registered at 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. The directors are Anna Feuchtwang, Phillip Anderson and Rachel Rand (until 21st May 2025).

On 1 February 2024 The Dartington Hall Trust transferred its Research in Practice activities to NCB RIP. NCB has consolidated the results of NCB RIP on a line by line basis.



NCB and NCB RiP entered into an on-demand facility agreement dated 30 January 2024 under which NCB RiP may borrow from NCB funds up to the total value of £500,000.

Exceptional costs were incurred in the transfer:

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Due Diligence, legal & tax advice	8	102
IT migration	-	27
HR migration	-	16
Finance migration	-	4
Staff	-	10
Other	-	7
	<u>8</u>	<u>166</u>

Lawrence Walker was a trustee of **Childlife**; a consortium which donated £115,000 to NCB for 2024–25 (2023–24: £100,000). No donations were received from any other related parties.



## 14. RESTRICTED FUNDS

		B/fwd 1 April 2024 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	C/fwd 31 March 2025 £'000
Project and Unit funds	Funder				
Project					
Early Years SEND	Department for Education	-	581	(581)	-
Other Grants from Government Departments		10	70	(60)	20
Lambeth Early Action Partnership	National Lottery Community Fund	132	1,855	(1,938)	49
REAL in Lewisham	Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	93	-	(93)	-
Anti Bullying Week fundraising	Various	137	73	(157)	53
Toolkit and Synthesis Partner Review	Youth Endowment Fund	5	436	(441)	-
Fostering Connections	Youth Endowment Fund	36	760	(714)	82
Other grants and income		176	972	(990)	158
<b>NCB - restricted funds</b>		<b>589</b>	<b>4,747</b>	<b>(4,974)</b>	<b>362</b>
Other grants and income		26	110	(110)	26
<b>Subsidiaries - restricted funds</b>		<b>26</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>(110)</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Group - restricted funds</b>		<b>615</b>	<b>4,857</b>	<b>(5,084)</b>	<b>388</b>

### Comparative figures for prior year

		B/fwd 1 April 2023 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	C/fwd 31 Mar 2024 £'000
Project and Unit funds	Funder				
Project					
Early Years SEND	Department for Education	-	533	(533)	-
United Against Bullying	Department for Education	-	346	(346)	-
Other Grants from Government Departments		36	45	(71)	10
Lambeth Early Action Partnership	National Lottery Community Fund	660	3,301	(3,829)	132
REAL in Lewisham	Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	193	-	(100)	93
Anti Bullying Week fundraising	Various	51	104	(18)	137
Other grants and income		142	1,155	(1,080)	217
		<b>1,082</b>	<b>5,484</b>	<b>(5,977)</b>	<b>589</b>

All restricted funds represent grants for specific projects, as agreed with the funder in an application process and carried forward to continue the agreed project, with the exception of the £157k of donations shown on the Statement of Financial Activities and Note 2 (2023–24: £172k), which were mainly given by individuals in response to our Anti-Bullying Week campaign, or by organisations to our Special Education Consortium or Health Policy Influencing Group.



## 15. UNRESTRICTED OTHER FUNDS

	B/fwd 1 Apr 2024 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	Allocations and Transfers £'000	C/fwd 31 March 2025 £'000
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Fixed asset fund	4,468	-	(207)	58	4,319
Strategic priorities fund	500	-	(190)	190	500
Capital Goods Scheme fund	220	-	-	(52)	168
Building fund	68	-	-	32	100
	<u>5,256</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(397)</u>	<u>228</u>	<u>5,087</u>
General Funds (Free Reserves)	2,883	6,094	(5,696)	(228)	3,053
<b>NCB - unrestricted funds</b>	<u>8,139</u>	<u>10,920</u>	<u>(10,918)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,140</u>
General Funds (Free Reserves)	(352)	4,826	(4,825)	-	(351)
<b>Subsidiaries - unrestricted funds</b>	<u>(352)</u>	<u>4,826</u>	<u>(4,825)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(351)</u>
<b>Group - unrestricted funds</b>	<u>7,787</u>	<u>10,920</u>	<u>(10,918)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,789</u>

### Comparative figures for the prior year

	B/fwd 1 Apr 2023 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	Allocations and Transfers £'000	C/fwd 31 Mar 2024 £'000
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Fixed asset fund - designated element	4,455	-	(240)	253	4,468
Strategic priorities fund	324	-	(220)	396	500
Capital Goods Scheme fund	272	-	-	(52)	220
New building fund	68	-	-	-	68
	<u>5,119</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(460)</u>	<u>597</u>	<u>5,256</u>
General Funds (Free Reserves)	2,741	6,844	(6,105)	(597)	2,883
<b>NCB - unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>	<u>7,860</u>	<u>6,844</u>	<u>(6,565)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,139</u>
General Funds (Free Reserves)	5	392	(749)	-	(352)
<b>Subsidiaries - unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>	<u>5</u>	<u>392</u>	<u>(749)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(352)</u>
<b>Group - unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>	<u>7,865</u>	<u>7,236</u>	<u>(7,314)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,787</u>

The Fixed asset fund represents the net book value of tangible fixed assets; our office building and its contents, as well as our laptops and systems.

The New building fund is set aside to fund the remaining costs for the fit-out, maintenance and enhancement of our main London office property over the next twelve months, subject to contractor capacity and resources.

The Capital Goods Scheme fund is set aside for any additional expense of recovered VAT during the ten year period of the Capital Goods Scheme that NCB is required to run regarding expenditure on the new leasehold property. This represents NCB's full exposure through the period.

The Strategic Priorities Fund is set aside for investment in the coming year



(or just beyond) in the transition, knowledge management and legacy of our 10 year LEAP programme as it starts to come to an end, enhancing our digital capabilities and programme management, strengthening the diversity and scale of our income, adapting to new needs for our expertise and celebrating and involving children and young people in NCB's 60th anniversary, as well as continuing to manage the cost of inflationary pressures.

General funds represent the net of accumulated surplus and deficits of income and expenditure after transfers to designated funds.

## 16. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Tangible Fixed Assets £'000	Net Current £'000	Total £'000
Restricted Funds	-	388	388
Unrestricted - Designated funds	4,319	768	5,087
- General funds	-	2,702	2,702
Group Net Assets	<u>4,319</u>	<u>3,858</u>	<u>8,177</u>

### Comparative figures for the prior year

	Tangible Fixed Assets £'000	Net Current £'000	Total £'000
Restricted Funds	-	615	615
Unrestricted - Designated funds	4,466	788	5,256
- General funds	-	2,531	2,531
Group Net Assets	<u>4,466</u>	<u>3,934</u>	<u>8,402</u>



## 17. PENSION ARRANGEMENTS

The disclosures set out below relate to pension arrangements to which contributions are made by the charity.

### Defined contribution scheme

The charity participates in a defined contribution scheme independently managed by Standard Life. Contributions to the scheme are charged to the statement of financial activities as they become payable. NCB makes twice the employees' percentage contribution, up to a maximum of 10% (2024: 10%A=) of pensionable salaries. The cost of NCB's contributions for the year ended 31 March 2025 was £540k (2024: £355k).

## 18. CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES WITH COMPARATIVES

	Notes	Restricted Funds £'000	Unrestricted Pension Reserve £'000	Unrestricted Other Funds £'000	2025 £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Unrestricted Pension Reserve £'000	Unrestricted Other Funds £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Income from:</b>									
Donations and legacies	1 & 2	157	-	133	290	172	-	104	276
Charitable activities		4,700	-	10,632	15,332	5,343	-	6,929	12,272
Other activities		-	-	5	5	-	-	5	5
Income from investments		-	-	150	150	-	-	198	198
<b>Total</b>		<b>4,857</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,920</b>	<b>15,777</b>	<b>5,515</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,236</b>	<b>12,751</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>									
Raising funds	1, 3 & 6								
Fundraising		-	-	48	48	-	-	34	34
Other trading activities		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities		5,084	-	10,862	15,946	5,982	-	7,114	13,096
Exceptional expenditure		-	-	8	8	-	-	166	166
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,084</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,918</b>	<b>16,002</b>	<b>5,982</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,314</b>	<b>13,296</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(227)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>(225)</b>	<b>(467)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(78)</b>	<b>(545)</b>

## 19. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

At the balance sheet date the group held Financial assets at amortised cost of £3,848k (2024 £4,154k) and Financial liabilities at amortised cost of £1,268k (2024 £2,170k).



NATIONAL  
CHILDREN'S  
BUREAU



ANTI-BULLYING  
ALLIANCE



CHILDHOOD  
BEREAVEMENT  
NETWORK



COUNCIL  
FOR DISABLED  
CHILDREN



SCHOOLS'  
WELLBEING  
PARTNERSHIP



SPECIAL  
EDUCATIONAL  
CONSORTIUM



WORKING  
TOGETHER WITH  
PARENTS NETWORK

LEAP

research  
in practice

## About the National Children's Bureau

For over 60 years, the National Children's Bureau has worked to champion the rights of children and young people in the UK. We interrogate policy and uncover evidence to shape future legislation and develop more effective ways of supporting children and families. As a leading children's charity, we take the voices of children to the heart of Government, bringing people and organisations together to drive change in society and deliver a better childhood for the UK. We are united for a better childhood.

[ncb.org.uk](http://ncb.org.uk)

**NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU**

England & Wales - Charity number 258825

---

# Accounts

---

# UNITED FOR A BETTER CHILDHOOD

Annual report and  
accounts 2023–24



NATIONAL  
CHILDREN'S  
BUREAU



UNITING  
PEOPLE FOR  
60 YEARS



© National Children's Bureau 2024

Registered charity No. 258825. Registered in England and Wales No. 952717.

Registered office: National Children's Bureau, 23 Mentmore Terrace, Hackney, London E8 3PN. A Company Limited by Guarantee.

Cover photo credits. Right: Image by [Alisa Dyson](#) from [Pixabay](#). Left: Canva



---

# Contents

<b>Foreword</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>The NCB family</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Trustees' annual report</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Our achievements in 2023–24</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Influencing policy and making evidence count .....	13
Amplifying the voices of children and families to make policy more relevant and to improve services .....	17
Bringing organisations together .....	19
Developing the workforce.....	21
Growing respect and trust as a pioneering and high performing charity .....	23
<b>Administrative information</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>Financial review</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>Statement of responsibilities</b> .....	<b>37</b>
<b>Independent auditor's report</b> .....	<b>39</b>
<b>Financial statements</b> .....	<b>44</b>



# Foreword

## From our Chair

With so much conflict and upheaval across the globe, 2023–24 was an unsettling year for many children and young people.

Steering a course through such uncertainty requires a sure and steady hand.

At NCB that manifests as a clear and consistent strategy that helps us to meet our stated objectives as a registered charity and, most importantly, to make a real difference to the lives of children, young people and their families.

Between 2018–23, United for a Better Childhood provided a framework to underpin our award-winning and life-changing work.

This report provides evidence, alongside our previous annual reports, of our excellent progress in meeting the goals we laid out in this strategy, which has now run its course.

But NCB continues to strive to go further and do better to keep pace with the growing and intersecting challenges facing children

and young people today.

This year, we launched **United for a Better Childhood: Building Brighter Futures**, which as well as

continuing, strengthening and extending the good work of our previous strategy, sets a new course for NCB for the next five years.

The Board of Trustees has a vital part to play in delivering this work by bringing skills, experience and challenge to NCB. Our expanded and more diverse board helps us to bring wider perspectives to creating better childhoods for the nation's children.

I invite you to discover more about our new strategy at [strategy.ncb.org.uk](https://strategy.ncb.org.uk) and learning about the fruits of our endeavours.



**Alison O'Sullivan**  
Chair



## From our CEO

In this country we see the challenges facing children growing year-on-year, whether that be poverty, mental health, or the inability to access support when they need it, children need strong charities like NCB to meet these issues.

For more than 60 years, NCB has listened and learned, uniting people across the children's sector. We've built partnerships, shaped legislation, and advocated for a whole-child approach, all the while amplifying the voices of those with lived experience.

To recognise that children and young people have always been and will always be at the heart of our work, and that we have continued to be inspired by their energy as we innovate and encourage cooperation across sectors, we chose the theme "60 years old. Forever Young." for our 60th anniversary celebrations during 2023.

We embarked on a series of important communications events and activities, including co-creating with young people and researchers from University of Kent an immersive and interactive online journey following NCB and its impact on the sector from 1963 to 2023 – [explore it here](#).

In early 2024, we cemented another major milestone in our history when Research in Practice became part of the NCB family.

Bringing Research in Practice into the NCB family pools collective expertise in developing practice and policy within social care, safeguarding, youth justice, SEND and health; strengthening sector leadership and maximising impact.

We have a proud history of bringing together sector specialists, including the Council for Disabled Children, the Anti-Bullying Alliance, and the Childhood Bereavement Network – Research in Practice will be another exciting chapter in this tradition.

Collaboration is a key element in delivering our ambitious new five-year strategy and we are excited by the prospect of Research in Practice collaborating on a shared commitment to improve lives.

I hope you enjoy reading about our achievements over the past year in the pages that follow.



**Anna Feuchtwang**  
Chief Executive



# Introduction

## A special year

### 60 years old, but forever young

With children today facing challenges of an unprecedented variety and scale – including discrimination, stretched public services, an explosion in the numbers experiencing mental health issues, and increasing child poverty – our work is more important than ever.

Throughout our long history, NCB has risen to meet challenges like these.

So as NCB celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023, it was a chance to take stock of the impact we've had on children and families over the last six decades and share our many successes.

We worked with researchers at the University of Kent and members of Young NCB to curate a fascinating [interactive timeline](#), peppered with video clips, audio recordings and archive photos, showing how NCB's work has evolved to meet the unique challenges of each of the past six decades.

We also worked with young people to co-create an exciting programme of other activities including:

- Special messaging and branding for our 60<sup>th</sup> year
- A powerful four-minute video that sums-up what we're all about, presented by a young member of our FLARE group who explores ['60 Years of Driving Change'](#)
- An extensive social media campaign.

Note: in this document we often use the term children to describe babies, children and young people.



## Building Brighter Futures

As our anniversary year came to a close at the beginning of 2024, NCB looked to the future by publishing our new five-year strategy, United for a Better Childhood: Building Brighter Futures, which sets out how we'll take forward our mission to improve childhoods for every child.

To guide our journey, we have identified six goals:

1. **Amplifying the voice of children, young people and their families.**
2. **Driving change in the local regional systems children rely on.**
3. **Driving change in national policy and legislation.**
4. **Generating evidence that counts.**
5. **Making sure that children have the workforce they need; and**
6. **Building trust and respect as a pioneering and high-performing charity.**

Our impact has been built on our ability to learn and evolve and this new strategy lays out how we will push further and do better.

You can explore a digital interactive version of our strategy [here](#).

## Welcoming Research in Practice into the NCB family

We published our new strategy in February as we became a larger more impactful organisation by welcoming [Research in Practice into the NCB family](#).

Research in Practice aims to support learning to enable people – children, young people, families, adults, carers and communities – to live good lives. They have nearly 30 years' experience working with and for professionals in the social care, health, criminal justice and higher education sectors.

Our strategy sets out some of the key synergies between Research in Practice and other parts of NCB and the opportunities this unlocks. With both Research in Practice and NCB holding specialist expertise in developing practice and policy we can bring together our experience, strengthen our sector leadership and maximise impact.

Find out more about this exciting collaboration in a [conversation](#) between the Director of Research in Practice, Dez Holmes, and our CEO, Anna Feuchtwang.

You can also learn more about Research in Practice on pages 10 and 18.



# The NCB family

We bring people and organisations together to drive change in society and deliver a better childhood across the UK.

Within the NCB family, six specialist networks draw partners together to drive change in key areas where we need to make childhood better.



The Anti-Bullying Alliance's vision is to stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

#### Highlights in 2023–24 included:

- Providing CPD to over 20,000 participants, which included a new course about bullying and perceived difference.
- Delivering Anti-Bullying Week and Odd Socks Day, reaching 7.5 million children with 80% of schools taking part.
- Awarding 296 schools with our United Against Bullying Award.
- Establishing a new United Against Bullying Plus programme.
- Extending our work across Northern Ireland.

Find out more about our work at: [anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)



The Childhood Bereavement Network is the hub for people supporting grieving children and those caring for them across the UK. We underpin our member's work with essential support and representation.

#### Highlights in 2023–24 included:

- Providing rich content and learning opportunities to our network of over 1,300 people.
- Supporting parliamentarians to address the needs of bereaved babies, children and young people in debates and draft legislation.
- Coordinating Children's Grief Awareness Week across the sector.
- Championing the work of bereaved young people campaigning for better support for their peers.

Find out more about our work at: [childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk](https://childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk)



**The Council for Disabled Children drives change in society to deliver a better childhood for disabled children.**

**Highlights in 2023–24 included:**

- As part of the [REACH consortium](#), working with the DfE and local areas to test the proposed changes to the SEND and Alternative Provision system, as set out in the Government's Improvement Plan.
- Supporting 28 local areas and 1,940 practitioners attending our national workforce development sessions through the DfE-funded [RISE programme](#).
- [FLARE](#) winning the Children's Achievement Award at the CYP Now Awards. The award provides recognition for those working to improve the lives of children and families.
- Delivering the first national Designated Clinical Officer/Designated

Medical Officer conference after the pandemic, and helping to establish and deliver a National Network of Keyworking Leads and Allied Health Professionals Community of Practice.

- Delivering 49 training sessions to [SENDIAS](#) services with a 97% satisfaction rate.
- Launching the Special Educational Consortium [manifesto](#), highlighting key priorities that we would like the next government to focus on.
- Supporting Plymouth to develop their early years ordinarily available provision document.
- Launching the What Works in SEND Effective Practice Evidence Framework providing a way of capturing, validating and sharing examples of effective practice through the DfE-funded RISE programme.

Find out more about our work at: [councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)





LEAP works to give thousands of children aged 0–3 living in parts of Lambeth a better start.

#### Highlights in 2023–24 included:

- LEAP's latest data shows that over the lifetime of the programme LEAP has reached a total of 15,374 families.
- Securing a smooth transition for the majority of LEAP services which from April 2024 will be delivered by London Borough of Lambeth, NHS, and others.
- Our webinar and report 'Community Engagement in a diverse inner-city area' shared best practice from LEAP's successful community engagement programme.
- Supporting 10 local community groups to form a new consortium 'First5Lambeth' to deliver activities for families with young children.
- The 'Maternity Disadvantage Tool' developed by LEAP to help midwives identify social risk factors, is now widely available from the Royal College of Midwives.
- LEAP's evidence and expertise in maternity, infant feeding, communication and language, social and emotional development and community activity and nutrition services were shared at a range of workshops and conferences.

Read LEAP's Learning Reports: [story-of-leap.leaplambeth.org.uk](https://leaplambeth.org.uk/story-of-leap)

## research in practice

**Research in Practice** works with and for professionals in the social care, health, criminal justice and higher education sectors offering resources, learning opportunities and specialist expertise. We aim to support their learning to enable people – children, young people, families, adults, carers and communities – to live good lives.

#### Highlights in 2023–24 included:

- Working closely with a [Partner network](#) of over 210 local, national, and voluntary organisations and universities.
- Delivering over 800 online, face-to-face, and national learning and networking events for the the children & families and adults' sector.
- Over 100 dedicated learning resources on key social care [topics](#), including publications, podcasts, videos, case law, policy and tools.
- Bringing together experts from practice, academia and those with lived experience to create extensive learning resources such as the [Co-producing a brighter social care future: Evidence Review](#), [Equity: Change Project](#) and [Families and homes: Change Project](#).
- Supporting the Principal Social Workers (PSW) Networks in their vital practice leadership role.
- [Working closely with five local areas](#) across England and Wales, supporting



them in developing their multi-agency partnerships and innovative approaches to addressing youth violence.

- Leading local and national targeted projects and programmes, such as delivering the Department of Health and Social Care [adult social care leadership programme](#); [supporting Department for Education reforms to the social worker workforce](#); and learning from local children's safeguarding partnerships to inform and improve safeguarding reviews.

Find out more about our work at: [researchinpractice.org.uk](https://researchinpractice.org.uk)



## SCHOOLS WELLBEING PARTNERSHIP

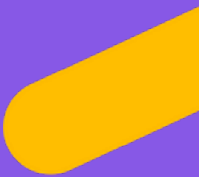
**The Schools Wellbeing Partnership is a national network of more than 100 organisations working together to make mental health and wellbeing a strategic priority for both the government and educational settings.**

### Highlights in 2023–24 included:

- A new strategy to ensure that the voices of children and young people are continually placed at the forefront of our work.
- Joint member event with the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition, highlighting the voices of young people back to policy and decision makers.
- Seizing opportunities to influence policy via consultations and targeted work supporting parliamentarians on key debates about children and young people's mental health.

Find out more about our work at: [schoolswellbeing.org.uk](https://schoolswellbeing.org.uk)

# Trustees' annual report





# Our achievements in 2023-24

Each member of the National Children's Bureau family takes action on specific issues undermining children's health and happiness. But the core work of NCB is equally important to young lives.

In the following section we set out our achievements organised under each of the strategic goals in our previous strategy which concluded in March 2024:

- Influencing policy and making evidence count
- Amplifying the voices of children and families to make policy more relevant and to improve services
- Bringing organisations together
- Developing the workforce
- Growing respect and trust as a pioneering and high performing charity

## Influencing policy and making evidence count

**Decisions affecting children and young people must be based on robust research about what works. That's why our sector-leading researchers work hand-in-hand with our policy, public affairs, and campaigns team. The results illustrate our far-reaching and evidence-informed impact on young lives.**

### Key highlights included:

#### Social care

The record number of children who are now looked after by the state, the horrific killings of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes, Star Hobson and other young children, and the abuse of disabled children uncovered in residential settings in Doncaster, are powerful

reminders of the urgent need for sustained reform to children's social care.

- Having provided extensive evidence to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care in 2022, we then fed into the consultation that shaped the Government's response, Stable Homes Built on Love. We wanted to ensure



this once-in-a-generation opportunity was both evidence-informed and implemented with urgency.

- We joined forces with other leading children's charities to commission advanced data experts Alma Economics to analyse how delays in implementing social care reforms could cost the Government an additional £1 billion over the coming decade. We then started work with Verian and Alma Economics in a five-year independent evaluation of pioneering reforms to family help and children's social care. The findings of the evaluation will influence future national strategy on how best to meet the needs of the nation's most vulnerable families and children.
- This year also saw Dame Christine Lenehan conclude her review for the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel into abuse within residential settings in Doncaster of children and young people with disabilities and complex health needs. The final report, building on the evidence we had previously published, urged government departments to work together to transform the education, health, and care offer for these young people.



## Youth justice

- We continued to grow our understanding of youth justice, improving child outcomes in order to prevent offending, and creating safer communities. We published a large-scale evidence review of the implementation of youth diversion interventions. This showed how these programmes can reduce reoffending by diverting children away from formal criminal justice processes and outcomes, through alternative community-based solutions.
- We also continued evaluations of violence reduction interventions on behalf of Sussex Violence Reduction Partnership, and in the East Midlands, we continued work in several secure children's homes and a youth offender institution.
- In March, we were delighted to become the Youth Endowment Fund's evidence synthesis and toolkit partner – leading on all their youth justice evidence-generation work and making this accessible to the youth justice sector and staff across the wider children's workforce.





## Health and wellbeing

- In the first research of its kind, we highlighted inconsistency in addressing the needs of babies, children, and young people in local NHS health plans, showing the need for stronger guidance from national government. Our report – on behalf of the Children and Young People's Health Policy Influencing Group (HPIG) – analysed numerous strategies and plans published by Integrated Care Systems, new health commissioning structures introduced by the Health and Care Act 2022.
- We evaluated a mental health training programme in three pilot areas in England (Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Southampton) aimed at staff across the wider children's workforce. Our report showed the impact of the training in developing staff's knowledge, skills, and practices in their work to improve the mental health of children and young people.
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance extended its work in Northern Ireland (NI) by establishing a dedicated steering group. We launched policy recommendations for NI and a 'Reach out to your MLA' campaign to promote it. We also grew our membership, launched a participation scheme for children in NI, and delivered another influential Anti-Bullying Week campaign.

local children's diet and nutrition, social and emotional development, and speech, language, and communication. To support this work, NCB is delivering an ambitious programme of shared learning and development support. Our aim is to amplify the impact of these programmes by embedding a culture of learning within and harnessing the best available evidence about what works in improving outcomes for children. Building on our successes, we secured additional funding from The National Lottery Community Fund to expand our policy engagement work for A Better Start. Our policy team share the extensive evidence emerging from the programme, and the innovative new ways of working that have developed, with those developing early years policy across different Government departments. This included meetings with DHSC, DfE, Cabinet Office and Royal Foundation.

- NCB brought together organisations from across the early years sector to speak with one voice on potentially damaging changes proposed on reducing the qualification requirements on staff in early years settings. We leveraged our relationship with the Department for Education (DfE) to bring senior officials and the sector together in an open and constructive dialogue about the impact of the changes. In response, DfE dropped these proposals.

## Early years

- Working with local parents, the five A Better Start partnerships are improving

## Bereavement benefits

- After years of campaigning by the Childhood Bereavement Network, we secured changes to the eligibility criteria



for bereavement benefits, allowing unmarried cohabiting parents and carers to claim. We followed this policy win up by campaigning for eligible parents to make a claim, appearing regularly in the media to highlight the issue including interviews with Radio 4's Moneybox which appears across radio and TV news on the BBC.

## Other research highlights this year included:

- This year, we also conducted extensive research on behalf of the Department for Education considering the recruitment, retention, qualifications, and training of staff working in children's homes across England.
- The National Children's Bureau, alongside its partners (Queen's University Belfast and SJC Consultancy) has been commissioned to undertake an evaluation of the Limavady Shared Education Campus. This large-scale five-year longitudinal evaluation will help to build a picture of how the campus has impacted on children, young people, families and the wider community, and built better community cohesion.
- In Northern Ireland, we also undertook on a scoping study on behalf of the Department of Education exploring how pre-school education can be standardised so that every child is able to access similar support prior to starting school.





## Amplifying the voices of children and families to make policy more relevant and to improve services

When the voices of children and families are heard, policies are more relevant, and services meet needs more effectively.

We make sure that children and young people's views, experiences, and energy, inform every aspect of our work because we recognise that they are experts in their own lives. Similarly, we also work directly with parents and carers drawing on their insights and experiences to make our work more effective.

### Key highlights included:

- FLARE – which stands for 'Friendship, Learning, Achieve, Reach and Empower' - is a diverse group of disabled young people and young people with special educational needs (SEN) coordinated by the Council for Disabled Children. FLARE works together to share their views and experiences with the Department for Education and other organisations, helping them understand how disabled children and young people and children and young people with SEN want to receive the support and services they need. In 2023, the FLARE group won the Children's Achievement category at the Children and Young People Now Awards, collecting their prize at a glittering event in London.
- On behalf of the Department for Education, in December 2023 we launched a new Children and Young People's Advisory Board to provide valuable input on the government's implementation of its children's social care strategy 'Stable Homes, Built on Love'. The new Advisory Board, made up of groups of children and young people aged 11–17 and 18–25 with direct experience of children's social care in England, will bring together those with lived experiences of the system to play a part in ongoing reforms at a national and local level.
- *What does home mean to you?* As part of the Living Assessments project in collaboration with the University of Kent and the University of Cambridge, NCB ran an art competition encouraging disabled children and young people and those with lived experience of children's social care to express themselves creatively. In January we held the awards ceremony for the first theme, "Home?", in London, where we awarded the winners and celebrated everyone who took part.
- The Council for Disabled Children hosted the sixth annual Youth Voice Matters Conference for disabled children and young people and / or those with



special educational needs. Over 110 disabled children and young people, and children and young people with special educational needs, from across England came together to develop their participation skills and to recognise the impact they can have when taking part in strategic participation. This event is held as part of the Department for Education funded national programme Making Participation Work. The Youth Voice

Matters conference is designed and delivered by young people for young people, and campaigns for their right to participate to be enshrined in law.

- For the first time, we delivered training aimed at parents and carers setting out the legal requirements on early years and educational settings relating to the Equality Act, empowering families to better understand their rights.

## Welcoming Research in Practice to the NCB family

Our annual report comes at a moment of change for the whole country – and no doubt for the sector. We are hopeful for what the future holds and welcome the next government's commitment to children and young people, families, adults and communities.

Research in Practice [joined](#) the National Children's Bureau family in early 2024. We are excited about how much more we can achieve together, and we are already collaborating on some exciting areas of work.

It has been an extremely busy year for Research in Practice as we continue to deliver high-quality and evidence-informed learning resources and opportunities to our vibrant network of Partners. This has included bringing together experts from practice, academia and lived experience to create extensive learning resources such as the [Co-producing a brighter social care future: Evidence Review](#), [Equity: Change Project](#) and [Families and homes: Change Project](#).

We have developed a new [Learn and Deliver programme](#) designed to support individuals providing learning and development in organisations. Our [membership engagement programme](#) has also expanded with monthly Practice Pointers, Engagement Support, and How to use Research in Practice sessions for access to learning and development opportunities and peer-to-peer learning.

We have also been leading valuable national projects. The [adult social care leadership programme](#) is supporting the supervision

and development of leaders. The [National Workload Action Group](#) is developing recommendations and solutions to ensure a strong children's social care workforce. And learning from local children's safeguarding partnerships aims to inform and improve safeguarding reviews.

NCB and Research in Practice both hold deep specialist expertise, some that overlaps and all of which complements the other and, crucially, both organisations hold shared values and missions. Bringing the two organisations together has increased our expertise and is combining our reach across the sector.

As the country moves into a new era, so do we. Full of hope for what we can achieve together, and full of pride to be supporting the sector to improve people's lives.

**Dez Holmes, Director of Research in Practice**  
**and Anna Feuchtwang, Chief Executive Officer at National Children's Bureau**





## Bringing organisations together

In 1963, one of our founding principles was to foster communication and collaboration among all the professionals and service providers specialising in childhood development. That principle remains at the heart of NCB's DNA today, as we unite those people, services, and organisations who are best placed to improve the lives of children and families.

### Key highlights included:

#### Children at the Table

- Children deserve safer, happier, and healthier childhoods. And children deserve adults who can be champions to fight for their rights. Unfortunately, successive Governments have failed to prioritise the needs of children.
- This is why we need to make sure the next Prime Minister and Chancellor are up for the challenge. Working with four other leading children's charities – Action for Children, Barnardo's, NSPCC, and The Children's Society – we set up Children at the Table, campaigning for children, and the issues they care about, to be at the heart of the next Government's policies.
- The campaign started by publishing a [roadmap](#) to make that aim a reality. We partnered with the Institute for Government and Alma Economics, and brought together leading thinkers, policy leaders and organisations, to publish an in-depth analysis of how policy could change so that children, young people and families are fully involved in the decisions that shape their lives.
- So far, the campaign has won the support of nearly 200 organisations across the sector, and over 25k members of the public.

#### Dame Christine Lenahan's valedictory lecture

- Over 200 guests from across the children's sector gathered in Westminster in September 2023 to hear Dame Christine Lenahan give a stirring valedictory address to mark her retirement after nearly 40 years of tireless





work to create an inclusive society for all children and young people.

For more details, see "Dame Christine Lenehan's valedictory lecture" on page 24.

### Reaching Excellence and Ambition for all Children (REACH)

- The government's vision for disabled children and those with special education needs, as set out in the SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan, is to create a more inclusive society through a system built around providing the right support at the right time based on high aspirations for all children and young people.
- NCB and the Council for Disabled Children are helping to realise this vision through our work as part of the REACH consortium. We are working with DfE and local areas to test changes to the SEND system so that children's potential is fulfilled, with parents experiencing a fairer, more-easily navigable system, that is properly resourced.

### Early years SEND

- The Council for Disabled Children secured funding to continue its work leading the [EYSEND Partnership](#) until 2025, working with our partners: nasen, Speech and Language UK, Contact, and Dingley's Promise. The extra funding will allow us to continue to provide training and support to

professionals and parents across all nine English regions.

### The LINKS Network of Support in Northern Ireland

- LINKS offers support to organisations grant-aided by The National Lottery Community Fund under its Empowering Young People's Programme in Northern Ireland. The aim is to foster greater collaboration between grant holders to better meet the needs of young people. In the past year:
  - Over 40 organisations benefited from different workshops on themes such as measuring impact, influencing change and youth work practice with the LGBTQIA+ community.
  - 20 organisations attended three Cluster Group Meetings, sharing what worked well in their projects, challenges they faced and explored solutions to these challenges.



## Developing the workforce

An up to date and skilled workforce is vital if we are to achieve lasting changes for children and families.

Where children need help, they deserve to receive it from a professional who is qualified and confident to provide it, aware of the latest evidence and techniques. One of NCB's greatest strengths is delivering engaging, evidence-informed training and support to a whole range of different professionals that helps not just to increase skills but to shift thinking about what is possible for local services.

### Key highlights included:

- From April 2023 to March 2024, NCB developed and delivered a wide range of support to inform and prepare providers and commissioners for new quality standards, registration, and regulation relating to supported accommodation for young people aged 16 and 17 who are in or leaving care.
- Supported accommodation is a form of accommodation outside of regulated children's homes, kinship care and foster care, which provides supported, semi-independent living for 16- and 17-year-olds who are ready to start living with more independence.
- NCB's offered a wide range of different engagement, learning and development opportunities for staff in varying roles across the country, based closely on the needs of the sector. After surveys, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and engagement monitoring we found a positive impact on the sector's confidence, awareness, understanding, and preparedness for the new inspection system overseen by Ofsted.
- Early Years Stronger Practice Hubs provide advice, share good practice and offer evidence-based professional development for early years practitioners. As DfE's delivery partner for the programme, NCB continued to lead the relationships with the 18 Hubs (two in each region of England), supporting them to co-produce support for local practitioners.
- In 2023, we created a new online home for the programme, allowing early years practitioners to easily connect with their local Hub and access the latest information, upcoming events and development programmes, as well as tried and tested resources and approaches.
- Over 200 delegates attended the Early Years Stronger Practice Hubs National Shared Learning and Dissemination



- event in March. The event began with an address by the Children's Minister thanking the 7,000+ early years settings now signed up as part of their local hub's network membership.
- We continued to support the parenting and infant mental health agenda in Northern Ireland. This work included:
    - Delivering a large, online conference to 500 local practitioners and policy makers, focused on the evidence on bonding and attachment.
    - Collating case studies from across the region on good practice in infant mental health and parenting support.
    - Facilitating access to professional development, networking and supervision opportunities for practitioners delivering the evidence-based Incredible Years parenting programmes.
    - Supporting improved impact reporting practice for service delivery organisations through bespoke training and tool development.
  - As part of the Research & Improvement for SEND Excellence (RISE) programme, our workforce survey gathered the views of stakeholders across education, health and care services in 153 local authority areas in England. The results identified local and national challenges, allowing us to create tailor-made national training, local interventions, events, webinars and e-learning opportunities based on the challenges identified by service leaders and practitioners.
  - In partnership with Anna Freud and the Charlie Waller Trust, we completed delivering Wider Workforce Mental Training in three areas on behalf of NHS England. The aim was to design, deliver and test the impact of training that positioned mental wellbeing as "everyone's business" in a similar way to safeguarding, in order to maximise the role that those in the wider children's workforce can play in supporting the mental health of children, young people and their families. We then published an evaluation of the training programme in February which found over 95% of attendees reported being either satisfied or very satisfied with the content, facilitation, and the opportunity to engage and have their questions answered.
  - On behalf of NHS England, we convened three engagement sessions for health service leads on new core standards for key working services across England.





## Growing respect and trust as a pioneering and high performing charity

Our greatest strength at NCB is the credibility and authority of our staff on a range of different issues, from SEND to social care. Collectively, we also want to have equal authority on running a modern, highly effective charity. With so many issues to tackle, it is essential that every pound we spend achieves the greatest impact possible.

### Key highlights included:

#### Building our reputation

In 2024, our reputation as one of the prominent children's charities in the UK was amply illustrated by the numerous awards we received.

Our collaboration with Dr Barry Coughlan from the University of Cambridge won the prestigious Vice Chancellors Award for Research Impact and Engagement for groundbreaking work in addressing the experiences and mental health needs of children and families with social work involvement, including attention to important issues of suicidal distress and self-harm.

LEAP's Parent Infant Relationship Service won an Association for Infant Mental Health

award for its significant contribution to meeting the emotional needs of infants in their community.

At the highly regarded Children and Young People Now Awards, our FLARE group of disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs, won the 'Children's Achievement Award' for its work advising the Department for Education.

LEAP were also finalists in the partnership working category of the Children and Young People Now Awards for its CoCreate Fund, supporting organisations to work collaboratively with local people to develop initiatives that benefit pregnant women or children aged 0-5.

#### A high performing charity

We invested a lot of energy into ensuring our new five-year strategy, [Building Brighter Futures](#), closely reflects the concerns of our many stakeholders, including through close consultation with staff, trustees and Young NCB members.

Onboarding over 70 members of staff from Research in Practice into NCB drew on the

extensive expertise of many parts of our charity, including our Digital, People and Culture, and Finance teams, to ensure a seamless transition.

The vital oversight provided to NCB by its board and senior leadership team by recruiting five new trustees and a new Vice-Chair. We also created our first Trustee Code of Conduct to provide guidance on



how board members can fulfil their many responsibilities to a high standard.

NCB's commitment to support the mental health needs and neurodiversity of all its employees was enhanced through the introduction of MIND's mental health awareness course for all staff. This self-guided online learning course enables staff to increase their understanding of mental health and wellbeing at work and includes advice on personal wellbeing as well as supporting others.

To manage projects more effectively and mitigate risk, we rolled out a new organisational-wide project management system, providing training for all staff backed by a suite of templates and resources and tools ensure our project work is of the highest calibre.

We were able to continue to grow and diversify our income, allowing us to deliver more excellent work for babies, children, young people and their families (see Financial section starting on page 25 for details).

## Dame Christine Lenehan's valedictory lecture

Dame Christine Lenehan formally stepped down from her roles as Director of the Council for Disabled Children and Strategic Director of Practice and Programmes at the National Children's Bureau in September 2023.

Friends and colleagues gathered at a packed event in Westminster to reflect on a career that has had a profound and lasting impact on the lives of many children and young people and the systems that support and surround them.

A hugely influential champion of the rights and needs of children and young people, particularly those with special educational needs and disabilities, Dame Christine has been a key figure in the development and impact of CDC and NCB as well as being one of the most respected social workers in the country.

She became Director of CDC in 2003, and was awarded an OBE in 2009 and a Damehood in 2016 in recognition of her outstanding work.

The concluding words of her speech were greeted with a rousing standing ovation from the audience that included current and former Ministers, civil servants, parliamentarians, funders, supporters, colleagues past and present, young people, and friends and family.

Christine's unique contribution has been built on her ability to bring different people and different parts of the system together to create real change in the lives of children and families.

Christine's stewardship of the Council for Disabled passed into the capable hands of its new Director, Amanda Allard.

You can view her speech [here](#).





---

# Administrative information

Incorporating the Directors' Strategic Report and Administrative Report for Companies Act Purposes.

The Trustees of the National Children's Bureau present their Annual Report for the Year Ended 31st March 2024 under the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006, including the Directors' Report and the Strategic Report under the 2006 Act, together with the audited financial statements for the year.

## Board of Trustees

Alison O'Sullivan	Chair
Elizabeth Railton, CBE	Vice-Chair (to 31 December 2023) (appointed as Vice-Chair from 1 January 2024)
Sarah Mullen	
Robert Whelan	Treasurer
Rose Akinsulire	(to 20 September 2023)
Emma Beeden	
Yvonne Campbell	(to 31 December 2023)
Ajit Dhaliwal	(to 31 December 2023)
Bethan Hoggan	
Dr Catriona Hugman	
Fergal McFerran	
Jadesola Olusanya	
Kathryn Pugh, MBE	
Shubni Rajnish	(to 23 September 2023)
Nainan Shah	
Steve Crocker	(from 1 January 2024)
Professor Neal Hazel	(from 1 January 2024)
Marjorie James	(from 1 January 2024)
Sarbjit Rana	(from 1 January 2024)

Members of the Board of Trustees under charity law are also Directors of the charitable company for the purpose of company law.



## Independent committee members

Sheena Parker	Finance, Risk & Audit Committee (to 15 November 2023)
Laura Sercombe	People & Culture Committee
Judith Worthy	Finance, Risk & Audit Committee

## Strategic leadership team

Anna Feuchtwang	Chief Executive
Dame Christine Lenehan	Strategic Director – Practice and Programmes (to 29 September 2023)
Amanda Allard	Strategic Director – Practice and Programmes (from 2 October 2023)
Dez Holmes	Strategic Director – Practice and Programmes (from 1 February 2024)
Phil Anderson	Strategic Director – External Affairs
Rachel Rand	Chief Operating Officer

## Advisors

### Auditors

Sayer Vincent LLP  
Invicta House  
110 Golden Lane  
London EC1Y 0TG

### Investment managers

CCLA Investment Management Ltd  
80 Cheapside  
London EC2V 6DZ

### Bankers

Barclays Bank PLC  
1 Churchill Place  
London E14 5HP

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) was registered as a charity in 1969 (charity number 258825), although it was founded in 1963 as the National Bureau for Cooperation in Child Care. NCB is also a company limited by guarantee (registration number 952717) and has a subsidiary trading company, National Children's Bureau Enterprises Ltd (registration number 2633796).

NCB's Registered Office is at 23 Mentmore Terrace, Hackney, London, E8 3PN.



NCB was established for the public benefit in order to advance the well-being of children and young people in particular by (but not limited to):

- Relieving poverty, sickness and distress
- Safeguarding and maintaining health and well-being
- Encouraging positive and supportive family and other environments for children and young people
- Advancing education and training
- Reducing inequalities
- Ensuring that children and young people have a strong voice in all matters that affect their lives.

For the purposes of carrying out these objects, NCB's Articles of Association expect it to promote and organise cooperation and partnerships and to influence and inform policy, practice and service development by bringing together voluntary organisations, statutory authorities, individual professionals and all those concerned with the well-being of children and young people.

The liability of members in respect of the guarantee, as set out in the Articles, is limited to £1 per member of the company.

## Governance and management

The Board is ultimately accountable for NCB's strategic and financial sustainability and growth and that this is achieved through an organisational culture based on integrity, accountability and transparency. With this, NCB is committed to upholding its organisational culture and values in-line with the seven principles of the Charity Governance Code (updated 2020):

- Organisational purpose
- Leadership
- Integrity
- Decision making, risk and control
- Board effectiveness
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Openness and accountability

NCB's Board of Trustees and Strategic Leadership Team reflect these standards across practices, function and behaviours, conscious of the fact that the organisational culture is influenced and embedded from these levels. The Governance Code is also embedded across NCB particularly with regard to setting the foundations for the governance objectives and outcomes in the organisational strategy 2024–29.

As set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, NCB's Board of Trustees comprises a maximum membership of fifteen, including the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer and at least two Trustees must be under the age of 25 years at the time of appointment to fulfil NCB's young governance requirements. The maximum size of the Board of Trustees exceeds the Governance Code's recommended maximum in recognition of the fact younger trustees are at a stage in life where they typically have less control over their time so are less likely to be able to attend all meetings.

Each Board member serves a maximum of two terms each of three years, with the possibility of a one-year extension at the end of their second term in exceptional



circumstances. Fergal McFerran has agreed to extend his second term in office, which would normally have expired on 31 December 2023, for up to 12 months until a replacement trustee representing Northern Ireland is recruited. In addition, at the request of the Board, Alison O'Sullivan has agreed to extend her second term in office and tenure as Chair by 12 months to 31 December 2025. This provides a period of stability following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and allows the next Treasurer whose appointment will be effective from 1 January 2025 to benefit from Alison's experience through their first year in the role. At year-end 31st March 2024, the Board membership was 14 with the above requirements met.

The Board remains fully committed to promoting an inclusive approach recognising that a more diverse Board better supports its leadership, effectiveness and decision-making from harnessing a broader range of perspectives and that lived experience is as equally valuable as professional expertise. The Board seeks to continuously develop and enhance its structures and ways of working to support inclusivity. As part of the process, the Board periodically reviews its collective membership and individual expertise, lived experience and development requirements. Annual one-to-ones are held with each Trustee and either the Chair or Vice-Chair and external effectiveness reviews are undertaken periodically to obtain independent assessment and advice.

The Board has continued to seek ongoing improvement

through the year, formalising the annual appraisal of the Chair and developing a Trustee Code of Conduct that all Board members has signed.

The Finance, Risk and Audit Committee (FRAC) ensures that NCB is compliant in its financial obligations, auditing standards and legal requirements of regulatory bodies, including the Charity Commission, through an appropriate framework of policies, processes and controls.

The People and Culture Committee is focused on all matters pertaining to 'people' including Board membership, succession planning, Trustee recruitment, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and delivery of key strategic objectives including the integration of Research in Practice.

The Board may establish advisory groups to support the development of strategic objectives. The Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) continues its work with focus on delivery against our strategy.

### Senior pay

NCB aims to ensure that all staff are paid on a grade appropriate to the nature of the work and the experience, knowledge and skills needed to carry out the job within the organisation.

NCB also aims to ensure that all jobs are at a pay level which is reasonable when compared with the external market pay ranges for the charity and civil service sectors. The grades of all roles are assessed as part of NCB's job evaluation process, with the exception of the Chief Executive's and Directors' salaries which are proposed by the People and Culture Committee of the



Board of Trustees for determination by the Board of Trustees.

## Fundraising

NCB has not contracted the services of professional fundraisers or commercial participants.

NCB benefits as one of four recipients from donations secured by Childlife, a consortium charity whose methods include door-to-door, street fundraising and payroll giving. All activity lines are rigorously observant of industry recognised, best practice in ethical fundraising.

We delegate our low-level individual giving because our work does not lend itself to a large scale, fundraising opportunity with the general public. Accordingly, the advice we give to those wishing to fundraise on our behalf, is offered on a case-by-case basis, with Institute of Fundraising best practice in mind.

NCB and Childlife are registered with the Fundraising Regulator. No complaints have been received about our fundraising activities.

## Risk and internal control

The Trustees continue to review the risks facing NCB group, controls in place and



mitigating actions being taken using the organisation's general statement of risk appetite with its corresponding set of principles around generally acceptable levels of risks.

The Trustees remain of the view that appropriate control procedures are in place to manage risks and that the systems of financial control comply in all material aspects with the guidelines issued by the Charity Commission.



<b>Risk</b>	<b>Key mitigating actions</b>
<p><b>Organisational Growth – People:</b> The transfer in of Research in Practice increased NCB staff numbers significantly. This could result in an erosion of NCB's integrated ways of working and dilution of NCB culture leading to reduced levels of engagement, productivity and adherence with organisation policies and procedures, which could result in increased levels of staff turnover and incidents of non-compliance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed post-merger implementation plan developed and KPIs being set against which progress will be regularly monitored by senior executives and trustees.</li> <li>• Harmonisation of pay and benefits and HR policies across the larger organisation.</li> <li>• Systematic review of processes, refreshing each as befits our larger organisation.</li> <li>• Focus on ongoing clear two-way communication with staff ensuring feedback from staff is considered at all stages as well as extended reporting on staff turnover, exit interview findings and induction experiences to inform decision making on implementation of integration plan.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Organisational Growth – Financial:</b> The greater scale of the organisation increases working capital requirements which, if not met could result in failure to meet payment terms, inability to capitalise on opportunities and, in extreme circumstances, result in insolvency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timely invoicing and credit control</li> <li>• Increased budget monitoring</li> <li>• Increased frequency of cashflow forecasting updates</li> <li>• Active cash management</li> <li>• Overdraft facility established</li> </ul>
<p><b>Delivery – Economic and Government volatility:</b> The general election during NCB's next financial year brings the possibility of both threats and opportunities, but the interim uncertainty and slower decision making brings the risk of delays to commissioning and delivery that can result in work having to be paused, or stopped, with negative impact on the end beneficiaries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive and trustees building and maintaining strong relationships with key stakeholders, including those in all political parties</li> <li>• Contract managers prioritising relationship building/maintenance and highly detailed contract management</li> <li>• Plurality of income sources, enhanced with the addition of Research in Practice, provides a level of resilience to inherent levels of volatility</li> <li>• Robust level of reserves held, above policy minimum, to allow for tiding over, maintaining continuity of programmes.</li> </ul>



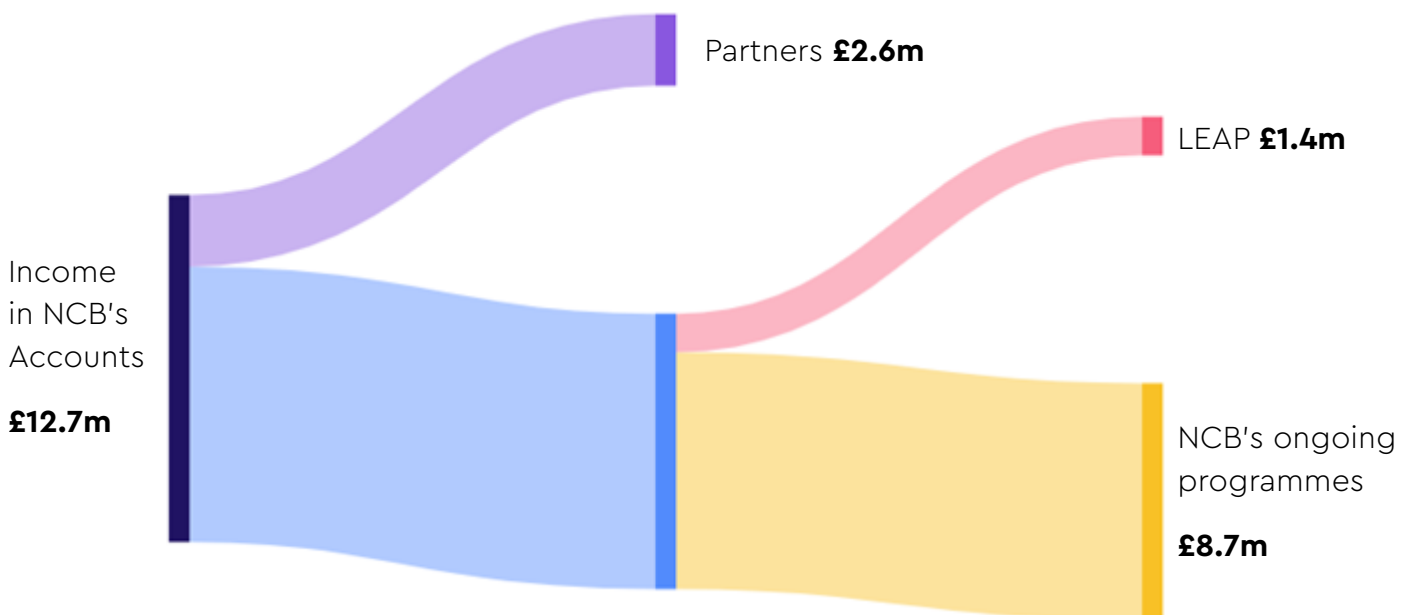
# Financial review

## Understanding NCB's finances

### Leading partnerships

We are entrusted by our funders to convene and lead many programmes in partnership with other organisations. To simplify how these larger projects are managed, funders often require that we receive and disburse income to partners.

Crucially, this means that just £10.1m this year goes to NCB's core activities, and £8.7m of that to ongoing areas of work. LEAP is a 10-year, timebound programme which ends in 2024/25.



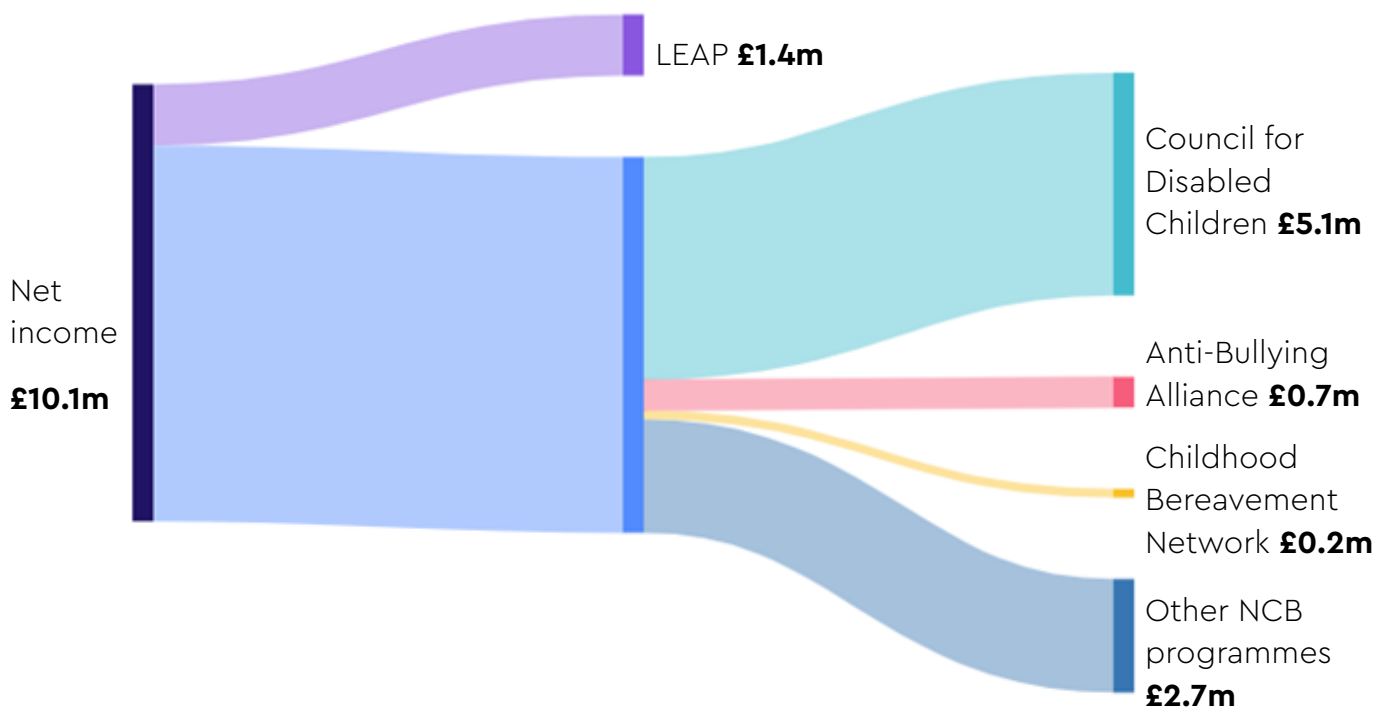
All income received that we manage must, for technical accounting reasons, be classed as NCB's own income – even though much of it is not ultimately spent by NCB. Our income figure may therefore give an overly inflated perspective of how much funding we can truly spend at our discretion.



## NCB's structure

NCB is a unifying voice in the sector and our core family of membership networks play a vital role to help us achieve our charitable mission.

The £10.1m 2023/24 net income above is broadly broken down as follows:



## NCB's unrestricted income

Our accounts show £7.2m of "Unrestricted" income this year. Counter-intuitively most of the income labelled "Unrestricted" is not at our discretion to spend, as it relates to contractual income for specific services, where all the costs of delivery must be met from this income. Accounting standards dictate that these very real limitations on discretion to spend do not constitute

'restrictions' for accounting purposes.

While this may give the impression that we have a large sum of money to cover discretionary costs or projects we choose to undertake, this is not the case. Only £104k (1% of our income) was given to us with free choice as to how we spend it, which when combined with interest earned on cash deposits (£198k this year), gives us around £300k of truly unrestricted income.



## NCB's reserves and reserves policy

NCB's Trustees maintain a reserve policy in line with the Charity Commission's best practice.

### Risks and requirements

The Trustees have adapted a benchmarked framework to assess risks to the organisation, informed by the organisation's risk register, and considered the possible financial impacts that these may have, alongside anticipated proactive requirements to spend funds. The most material items are:

- Cessation of, or delays or cuts to, funding including at short notice. These could arise from disruption to government spending plans or change of funder priorities and require NCB to cover staff and other continuity costs.
- A need to invest in new products, services and income streams, and methods of delivery thereof, to continue meet emerging and evolving policy aims and societal needs. The costs of this are often not recoverable through our grant and contract funding.
- Adverse events that require unbudgeted payments, such as failure of compliance, cyber attack or other business distraction, despite controls and insurance cover.
- Costs associated with closing the charity down, e.g., ensuring the continuity of services, administrator costs, redundancies. (This is not even perceived as being remotely likely or needed but it is considered prudent to hold funds to meet what we assess to

be potentially significant costs, given the complexity of NCB.)

### NCB's current reserves

Trustees consider £1.5m of free reserves a minimum, reflecting the size and complexity of the organisation, and we would explain here if reserves fell below this. Our reserves are currently safely above this. We have grown significantly in the last year, organically and through the acquisition of Research in Practice's activities, which are subject to an ongoing integration programme. Our largest programme, LEAP, is due to conclude in 2024/25 and will drive some transition, legacy and knowledge management costs over the next few years. We expect the funding climate to remain challenging, including potential disruption following the upcoming general election, meaning covering necessary in-year costs fully may be difficult. In this new context, and with a new five-year strategy and multi-year income plan now underway, trustees are comfortable with the current level of reserves. Trustees will use the next period to review whether some further reserves can be safely utilised for investing in NCB's strategy and long-term future. We will continue to seek funding for all programmes, including funding for developing new solutions to emerging needs.

Most of our free reserves are from a one-off event, being the net proceeds from selling our previous freehold office; unlike some charities, the funds are not from donors who expect these to be spent to achieve impact swiftly. With only around £100k of truly unrestricted income





each year (plus interest earned from time to time), it is also extremely difficult to rebuild any reserves that are spent. As NCB's mission involves systemic improvement across a wide-range of themes, we do not have an ambition to spend reserves to "complete" this mission at any foreseeable point in the future. Trustees therefore take a prudent view on retaining these free reserves where possible. Free reserves currently stand at £2.5m and are held to cover the risks and requirements set out above, over a practically unlimited time frame.

The remaining, and majority of, reserve funds shown are then not free reserves. The value of our office property and other

fixed assets (£4.5m); this value is tied up in the property, providing office space and reducing our running costs, and not available as cash to use. We have designated funds where we expect upcoming obligations, commitments or plans; currently to cover strategic investment in delivering our new strategy, meeting evolving needs, as well as to continue to improve our delivery, quality and consistency, all during an uncertain political and economic period, as well as for VAT and other costs relating to the property purchase (all totalling £0.8m). The £0.6m of restricted funds held are merely funds given in advance, and ring-fenced, by funders for agreed projects.

## Summary for the year under review

2023/24 sees the end of a five-year strategy. We have developed a new five-year financial model and development plan, as we enter a new strategic period. The plan is designed to grow and strengthen the diversity of income as we meet evolving and emerging needs, maintaining economies of scale and value. The focus on financial balance has seen us achieve an operational break-even this year (as in previous years), matching unrestricted income and expenditure, and maintaining our strong reserves. Our aim is to continue to do so in future years.

The result seen in the financial statements can be broken down as follows:

There was a small operating surplus on unrestricted funds of £0.09m (2023 £0.03m surplus), before taking into account exceptional expenditure, representing an important continuation of broadly running at break-even whilst maintaining investment in

income generation for future years.

Exceptional expenditure of £0.17m was the budgeted cost of the acquisition of Research in Practice in the year, producing a small, expected deficit on unrestricted funds of £0.08m.

Net expenditure on operational restricted funds was £0.5m, reflecting merely the timing of spend on grant funded projects.

This resulted in NCB's net assets and overall funds reducing to £8.4m (2023 £8.9m), in line with the planned use of restricted programme funds and exceptional expenditure, and free reserves moved to £2.5m (2023 £2.7m), having bolstered some designated funds. NCB is therefore in a strong financial position, with free reserves above the policy minimum set out above, a significant property asset and a strategic plan for income generation to continue this strong financial performance in the years ahead.



## Financial performance

### Income

As expected, overall income increased during the year from £10.9m in 2022/23 to £12.7m. Unrestricted income increased to £7.2m (£4.6m in 2022/23), reflecting mainly an increase in larger contracts held. Restricted income lessened from £6.3m to £5.5m, reflecting particularly the expected change in activity in our LEAP 'A Better Start' programme for National Lottery Community Fund. Outside of these the charity continues to hold a number of government contracts for the future and has secured significant grants for its projects and research from a range of government, trust and other sources.

### Expenditure

Expenditure increased in line with the changes in activity on our major contracts and grants, as well as the onboarding of Research in Practice's activities from 1st February, from £11.1m last year to £13.3m this year.

### Financial position

NCB's total reserves decreased from £8.9m at the start of the year to £8.4m at the end of the year. NCB has a strong general funds position (£2.5m) retained in line with the reserves policy by virtue of the break-even performance in the year, alongside further funds designated to meet specific needs or risks in the near future. In addition, the total net assets of £8.4m (£8.9m 2023), includes the funds invested in our main London office.

## Other matters

### Going concern

As is normal in the preparation of accounts, Trustees are required to determine whether the accounts are to be compiled on a going concern basis.

The sale of the freehold property, and subsequent investment in a new property put NCB in a strong reserves and cash position, maintained by several subsequent years of break-even financial performance.

NCB currently holds £2.5m of free reserves (in excess of designated funds), which meets the reserves policy set out above, including in light of the impacts from the Covid-19 disruption described above, and assures the Board of Trustees we can meet any risks that become issues, and puts NCB in a good position for the coming period.

Taking all these factors into consideration Trustees believe it is reasonable to expect that NCB will generate sufficient resources to finance its operations for the foreseeable future and believe there are no material uncertainties that call into doubt the charity's ability to continue. Accordingly, the accounts have been prepared on the basis that the charity is a going concern.

### Subsidiaries

National Children's Bureau Enterprises Ltd exists to manage, as and when appropriate, conference and lettings programmes, various funding activities and support services for other charities. The majority of work has



largely been stopped, and the residual, incidental trading activity handled within the charity itself, resulting in no turnover or profit in the company for the year, as was the case in the prior year. The company was dormant throughout the financial year. Any profit made by NCB Enterprises' is gift-aided to the charity.

NCB RiP, a charitable subsidiary, undertakes the activities of Research in Practice. These were merged into NCB's group from 1st February 2024 and provide learning opportunities to professionals in social care, health, education and criminal justice, to improve outcomes.

### Joint Venture

Childlife is a joint venture between four charities, with NCB therefore having an equal 25% share of voting rights. NCB recognised income of £100,000 from Childlife in the year.

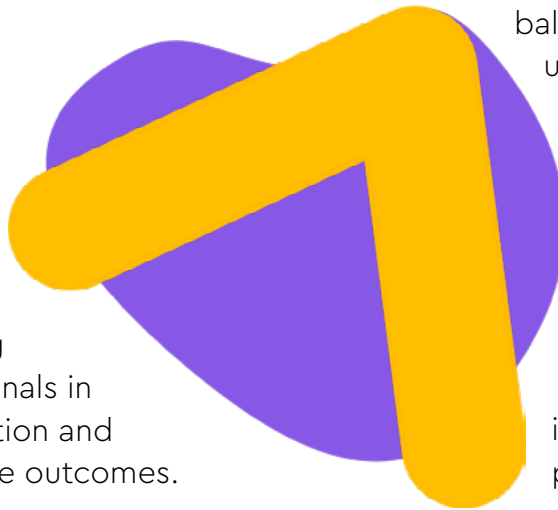
### Investment policy

NCB's investment policy is to limit investment in more volatile assets and to keep key reserves in cash deposits. The Trustees continue to monitor this approach to investment, to ensure the best use of the significant funds from the sale of the freehold property. This is the role of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee which is chaired by the Treasurer, with the Chair attending as an observer, and with the Chief Executive and the Chief Operating Officer in attendance.

The Committee advises the Board on investment policy to ensure risk, return and

liquidity are balanced in the best interests of the charity and, where necessary, will seek independent external advice. In addition, it recommends to the Board the proportion of its investments to be held in longer term funds against maintaining prudent cash, or cash equivalent, balances, or retaining for use directly on charitable activities, infrastructure and operations.

The risk appetite of the policy above makes it unlikely we will invest significantly in this area, but for any future investment in equities and other financial products, the charity will continue with an ethical investment policy, including avoiding companies with more than 50 per cent of their turnover in gambling, tobacco or armaments. The Committee will also advise the Board on maintaining a reasoned ethical approach, and will seek to take external advice to set this against the need for proper returns on new funds.





# Statement of responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Strategic Report, the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards) and applicable law. 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 its net incoming resources 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;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue to operate.

The trustees are responsible for keeping

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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Insofar as each of the trustees of the company at the date of approval of this report is aware there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the company's auditor in connection with preparing the audit report) of which the company's auditor is unaware. Each trustee has taken all of the steps that he/ she should have taken as a trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information.

## Compliance with statutory requirements

The financial statements have been prepared in compliance with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the



Statement of Recommended Practice  
'Accounting and Reporting by Charities'  
(SORP FRS 102) issued under the auspices of  
the Charity Commission.

### Funders, stakeholders and sponsors

We would like to express our grateful  
thanks to government departments,  
charitable bodies, companies and  
individuals for their considerable support  
in financing NCB's activities.

### Auditors

Sayer Vincent LLP has indicated its  
willingness to be reappointed statutory  
auditor. This Annual Report of the Trustees,  
under the Charities Act 2011 and the  
Companies Act 2006, was approved by the  
Board of Trustees on 3 July 2024, including  
approving in their capacity as company  
directors the Strategic Report contained  
therein, and is signed as authorised on its  
behalf by:

Alison O'Sullivan  
Chair

National Children's Bureau  
Company Number: 952717



# Independent auditor's report

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of National Children's Bureau (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiary (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the consolidated statement of financial activities, the group and parent charitable company balance sheets, the consolidated statement of cash flows and the 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 Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of the group's 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
- Have been prepared in accordance with

the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011

## 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 the group financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group and parent charitable company 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 National Children's Bureau'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 trustees 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 trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, other than the group financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the group 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. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the group financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of 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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the group financial statements themselves. 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.

### 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, including the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements
- The trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, 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 group and the parent charitable company and their environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept by the parent charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The parent charitable company 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

### Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the parent 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 group's and the parent 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 group or the parent 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

We have been appointed auditor under the Companies Act 2006 and section 151 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with those Acts.

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 the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

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 are set out below.

### Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the group's policies and procedures relating to:
  - Identifying, evaluating, and



complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;

▫ Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;

▫ The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.

- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the group operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the group from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we

tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

### 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 and section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable 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 anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Sayer Vincent LLP

Joanna Pittman (Senior statutory auditor)

15 July 2024

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP,  
Statutory Auditor

110 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TG

Sayer Vincent LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006



# Financial statements

## Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities

(incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

Year ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	Restricted Funds £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Income from:</b>	1 & 2				
Donations and legacies		172	104	276	237
Charitable activities		5,343	6,929	12,272	10,582
Other activities		-	5	5	4
Income from investments		-	198	198	87
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,515</b>	<b>7,236</b>	<b>12,751</b>	<b>10,910</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>	1, 3 & 6				
Raising funds					
Fundraising		-	34	34	39
Charitable activities		5,982	7,114	13,096	10,347
Exceptional expenditure	13	-	166	166	-
Operating pension scheme movements in year	17	-	-	-	744
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,982</b>	<b>7,314</b>	<b>13,296</b>	<b>11,130</b>
<b>Net (expenditure)</b>		<b>(467)</b>	<b>(78)</b>	<b>(545)</b>	<b>(220)</b>
<b>Other recognised gains / (losses):</b>					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension scheme	17	-	-	-	4,219
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(467)</b>	<b>(78)</b>	<b>(545)</b>	<b>3,999</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
Total funds brought forward		1,082	7,865	8,947	4,948
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>615</b>	<b>7,787</b>	<b>8,402</b>	<b>8,947</b>

Notes 1 to 19 form part of these financial statements  
Full comparative figures are shown in note 18.



# Balance sheets

As at 31 March 2024

	Notes	Group		NCB	
		2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Fixed assets:</b>					
Tangible assets	1 & 6	4,466	4,454	4,466	4,454
Shares in subsidiary undertaking	9	-	-	-	-
<b>Total fixed assets</b>		<u>4,466</u>	<u>4,454</u>	<u>4,466</u>	<u>4,454</u>
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Debtors	11	4,264	1,794	3,092	1,794
Notice deposits	8	2,000	522	2,000	522
Cash at bank		2,740	4,989	2,494	4,989
<b>Total current assets</b>		<u>9,004</u>	<u>7,305</u>	<u>7,586</u>	<u>7,305</u>
<b>Liabilities:</b>					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>(5,068)</u>	<u>(2,812)</u>	<u>(3,324)</u>	<u>(2,817)</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>3,936</u>	<u>4,493</u>	<u>4,262</u>	<u>4,488</u>
<b>Total net assets</b>	16	<u>8,402</u>	<u>8,947</u>	<u>8,728</u>	<u>8,942</u>
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>					
Restricted Funds	1 & 14	615	1,082	589	1,082
General Funds (Free Reserves)	1 & 15	2,531	2,746	2,883	2,741
Designated Unrestricted Funds	1 & 15	5,256	5,119	5,256	5,119
<b>Total charity funds</b>	18	<u>8,402</u>	<u>8,947</u>	<u>8,728</u>	<u>8,942</u>

Notes 1 to 19 form part of these financial statements

The net result for the period ending 31 March 2024 was a deficit of £0.5m (2023 surplus of £4.0m).

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the trustees on 3 July 2024 and were signed on their behalf by:

*Alison O'Sullivan*

Alison O'Sullivan  
Chair

National Children's Bureau  
Company Number: 952717



# Consolidated cash flow statement

for the year ended 31 March 2024

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>	<u>(717)</u>	<u>(251)</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Interest from investments	198	87
Purchase of leasehold property and equipment	(252)	(53)
<b>Net cash provided by investing activities</b>	<u>(54)</u>	<u>34</u>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</b>	(771)	(217)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	5,511	5,728
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>	<u>4,740</u>	<u>5,511</u>
<b>Analysis of cash and cash equivalents</b>	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Cash in hand	2,740	4,989
Notice deposits	<u>2,000</u>	<u>522</u>
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<u>4,740</u>	<u>5,511</u>
<b>Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities</b>	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Net expenditure for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	(545)	(220)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	240	212
Decrease in creditors	2,256	(495)
Decrease (Increase) in debtors	(2,470)	(405)
Interest receivable	(198)	(87)
Pension reserve net expense, excluding actuarial gains	-	744
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>	<u>(717)</u>	<u>(251)</u>



# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 March 2024

## 1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### Statutory information

National Children's Bureau (NCB) is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, incorporated in the United Kingdom. The registered office address and principal place of business is 23 Mentmore Terrace, London, England E8 3PN.

### Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 (FRS 102) - Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the Trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are

continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects the current and future periods. Details of the main accounting estimates can be found in the notes to the accounts. The valuation of the defined benefit pension scheme is in note 17.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

### Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

### Going Concern

After making enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue its activities for the foreseeable future. Accordingly they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements as outlined in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities.



## Group accounts

Group financial statements have been prepared on a line by line consolidation basis in respect of NCB, its wholly owned subsidiary National Children's Bureau Enterprises Ltd and its subsidiary charity NCB RIP. No separate statement of Financial Activities has been presented for NCB alone as permitted by Section 408 of Companies Act 2006.

NCB has taken advantage of the exemptions in FRS 102 from the requirements to present a charity-only Cash Flow Statement and certain disclosures regarding NCB's financial instruments.

## Consortium charity

NCB is one of four charities in the field of childcare which receive grants from the consortium undertaking, Childlife. The grants are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities with Donations and appeals. The accounts of Childlife are considered not material for the purpose of consolidation. Financial details are set out in note 10.

## Income

Income is recognised when the charity 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.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised

and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

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

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

## Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.



## Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

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:

- Expenditure on *Raising funds* relate to the staff costs and other expenditure incurred by the charity in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on *Charitable Activities* includes staff costs and other expenditure undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs
- NCB is a partially-exempt body for VAT purposes. Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

## Delivery Partners

Expenditure subcontracted, or managed on, to partners is recognised to the same policy as expenditure above, or when funds are passed on, as a grant, as agreed.

## Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead

costs of the central function, is apportioned on a basis consistent with the budgeted use of the resources. Support services are allocated by income or by full-time equivalent staff.

Support services includes chief executive office, facilities, finance, human resources and equipment depreciation.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities including trustees, audit and general legal expenses.

## Operating leases

Rental costs under operating leases are charged to the SOFA in equal amounts over the period of the leases.

## Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

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:



Leasehold property	100 years	can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.
Fitting out costs	20 years	
Furniture and IT equipment	3 to 5 years	
Software	7 years	

### **Investments**

Investments in subsidiaries are at cost.

### **Cash at Bank and In Hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term liquid investments with a short maturity of one month or less from the date of acquisition or opening of deposit or similar account.

### **Notice Deposits**

Notice Deposits are liquid investments with a notice period greater than one month.

### **Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due 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 group 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

### **Financial instruments**

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 their settlement value.

### **Pension costs**

Employers' contributions are made to a defined contribution scheme, managed by Standard Life, and employees' personal pensions. These are charged in the year in which they become payable.

For part of the comparator year 22/23 NCB was an admitted body of the South Yorkshire Pension fund (SYPF), which is a defined benefit scheme. On 30 November 2022 the charity closed to the defined benefit scheme, managed by the South Yorkshire Pension Authority (SYPA), to future accrual. An actuarial valuation of the charity was carried out to determine the assets and liabilities of the SYPF in respect of the charity's current and former employees, as required under Regulation 64 of the LGPS Regulations 2013, as at 30th November 2022. Based on the Fund's cessation approach, the valuation report confirmed in March 2023 that no cessation debt is due from the charity, and no exit credit is payable to the charity.



## 2 INCOME

	Restricted £'000	Unrestricted £'000	2024 £'000	Restricted £'000	Unrestricted £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Donations and legacies</b>	172	104	276	135	102	237
<b>Charitable activities</b>						
Government grants	924	-	924	1,087	-	1,087
National Lottery Community Fund grants	3,301	-	3,301	4,546	-	4,546
Other project grants	1,117	-	1,117	527	-	527
Other income	-	6,929	6,929	-	4,422	4,422
<b>Other activities</b>	-	5	5	-	4	4
<b>Income from investments</b>						
Bank and other interest receivable	-	198	198	-	87	87
	<u>5,514</u>	<u>7,236</u>	<u>12,750</u>	<u>6,295</u>	<u>4,615</u>	<u>10,910</u>

Government grants are for project delivery work secured by a bidding process. Significant items are shown in note 14.



### 3 EXPENDITURE

	Staff £'000	Delivery partners £'000	Other expenses £'000	Support services £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Raising funds</b>					
Fundraising	33	-	1	-	34
<b>Charitable activities</b>	6,365	2,636	2,390	1,705	13,096
Support Services	517	-	1,092	(1,609)	-
Governance costs	-	-	96	(96)	-
<b>Exceptional expenditure</b>	10	-	156	-	166
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>6,925</b>	<b>2,636</b>	<b>3,735</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13,296</b>

#### Comparative figures for the prior year

	Staff £'000	Delivery partners £'000	Other expenses £'000	Support services £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Raising funds</b>					
Fundraising	33	-	6	-	39
<b>Charitable activities</b>	4,742	2,675	1,659	1,271	10,347
Support Services	478	-	764	(1,242)	-
Governance costs	-	-	29	(29)	-
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>5,253</b>	<b>2,675</b>	<b>2,458</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,386</b>

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Support Services</b>		
Facilities and IT	901	675
Human resources	236	183
Finance	344	266
Management	128	118
	<b>1,609</b>	<b>1,242</b>

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Governance costs</b>		
Trustees' expenses	3	2
Auditors' remuneration (excluding non-governance services listed below)	30	25
Internal Audit	15	-
Other meeting costs (including virtual)	16	-
Trustee Recruitment	27	-
Other expenses	5	2
	<b>96</b>	<b>29</b>

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Expenditure includes</b>		
Depreciation	240	212
Auditors' remuneration - Statutory audit current year provision	30	25
- Statutory audit prior year	-	-
- Project audits prior and current years	6	6
- Other work	-	-
	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>



Non-staff expenditure on governance and support services (including auditors' remuneration) shown includes partially irrecoverable VAT (where charged by suppliers) according to the balance of business and non-business, and exempt activity supported. For 2023–24 49% of this VAT was irrecoverable (2022–23 62%), ie adding 9.8% (2022–23 12.4%) to relevant costs.

## 4 DELIVERY PARTNERS

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
LEAP (Lambeth Early Action Partnership)	1,938	2,285
Early Years SEND Partnership	306	376
RISE partnership - Targeted Support	247	-
Other	145	14
	<u>2,636</u>	<u>2,675</u>

NCB works in partnership to achieve the aims of its programmes; amounts shown here are subcontracting, or passing on and over-seeing the use of funding, where there is a high degree of visibility for other organisations to the ultimate funder. NCB worked with 55 organisations in this way in the year (2023: 89).



## 5 STAFF AND TRUSTEES

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Group &amp; NCB Staff costs</b>		
Salaries and wages	5,933	4,372
Social Security costs	623	485
Staff pension costs	369	396
	<u>6,925</u>	<u>5,253</u>

	2024 number	2023 number
<b>Group &amp; NCB Average head count staff numbers</b>		
Full-time staff	119	91
Part-time staff	28	23
	<u>147</u>	<u>114</u>

<b>Staff earning over £60,000</b>		
between £60,000 and £70,000	15	7
between £70,000 and £80,000	3	1
between £80,000 and £90,000	3	-
between £100,000 and £110,000	-	1
between £110,000 and £120,000	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>

The key management personnel of the Charity, comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer, Strategic Directors – Practice & Programmes Director and Strategic Director – External Affairs. The total employee remuneration and benefits received by the four key management personnel were £407k (2023: four £357k).

In compliance with recommendations for disclosure from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), NCB have chosen to disclose the full-time equivalent, gross salaries of the senior leadership team at 31 March 2024, which were:

Role	2024	2023
Chief Executive	£ 111,427	£ 106,689
Chief Operating Officer	£ 82,775	£ 79,640
Strategic Director - Practice & Programmes	£ 82,774	£ 78,701
Strategic Director - External Affairs	£ 82,774	£ 80,363

No remuneration is payable to trustees. Travel and accommodation expenses totalling £ 2,616 (2023: £2,326) were reimbursed to 6 trustees (2023: 5 trustees).

Trustee Indemnity Insurance £896 (2023: £896) was purchased in the year.



## 6 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Leasehold property	Furniture and equipment	Total
<b>Group and NCB</b>			
<b>Cost</b>			
Cost as at 1 April 2023	4,643	589	5,232
Additions	34	218	252
Disposals	-	-	-
Cost as at 31 March 2024	<u>4,677</u>	<u>807</u>	<u>5,484</u>
Depreciation as at 1 April 2023	346	432	778
Charge	101	139	240
Disposals	-	-	-
Depreciation as at 31 March 2024	<u>447</u>	<u>571</u>	<u>1,018</u>
<b>Net book value as at 31 March 2024</b>	<b>4,230</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>4,466</b>
Net book value as at 31 March 2023	4,297	157	4,454

## 7 OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

The Group has annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases expiring as follows:

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Due within one year</b>		
Land and buildings	7	2
Equipment	-	-
<b>2 to 5 years</b>		
Equipment	3	3
	<u>10</u>	<u>5</u>

Lease payments recognised in the year amounted to £14k (2023: £14k).

## 8 NOTICE DEPOSITS

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Group and NCB</b>		
<b>Notice deposits</b>		
Barclays	<u>2,000</u>	<u>522</u>



## 9 SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKING

**NCB RIP** was incorporated on 23 December 2023 as a company limited by guarantee and is also registered at 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Anna Feuchtwang and Rachel Rand were appointed directors of the company in December 2023.

On 1 February 2024 The Dartington Hall Trust transferred its Research in Practice activities to NCB RIP. NCB has consolidated the unaudited results of NCB RIP for February and March 2024 on a line by line basis.

The value of assets and liabilities acquired by NCB on transfer of NCB RIP was nil.

	Restricted Funds £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	2024 £'000
<b>Income from:</b>			
Charitable activities	31	392	423
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>423</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Charitable activities	5	749	754
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>749</b>	<b>754</b>
<b>Net income (expenditure)</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>(357)</b>	<b>(331)</b>

Included within Charitable activities is a management charge of £20,546 from NCB.

The aggregate of the assets, liabilities and reserves was:

	2024 £'000
Assets	1,419
Liabilities	(1,750)
Reserves	<u>(331)</u>
Liabilities include:	
Income received in advance	(1,322)
Amount due to NCB	<u>(323)</u>

Shares in subsidiary undertaking represents NCB's holding of 100 ordinary shares of £1 each, which is a 100% interest, in the share capital of National Children's Bureau Enterprises Limited, a company registered in England and Wales (no. 2633796) and a wholly owned subsidiary of the charity. Financial statements are filed with the Registrar of Companies.

The company has been dormant for the whole financial year. The net assets brought and carried forward are £5k, with the debtor due from the charity, NCB. An audit was not performed.

The parent charity's gross income and net expenditure for the year are disclosed as follows:

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Gross income	12,328	10,910
Net (expenditure)	<u>(214)</u>	<u>(220)</u>



## 10 JOINT VENTURE

Childlife is a joint venture between four charities, with NCB therefore having an equal 25% share of voting rights. The information below shows the full activities, liabilities and assets, of which NCB has a 25% interest. The 25% share of these amounts are not consolidated into NCB's financial statements. NCB recognised income of £100,000 from Childlife in the year. Notes 1 and 13 provide further information on our relationship.

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Income	1,319	1,292
Expenditure	<u>686</u>	<u>925</u>
Net income	633	367
Distribution to member charities	<u>(410)</u>	<u>(400)</u>
Net movement in funds	<u>223</u>	<u>(33)</u>

The aggregate of assets, liabilities and funds was:

Assets	844	505
Liabilities	<u>(231)</u>	<u>(115)</u>
Net assets	<u>613</u>	<u>390</u>
Total funds	<u>613</u>	<u>390</u>

## 11 DEBTORS

	Group		NCB	
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Trade debtors	2,551	823	1,358	823
Other debtors and prepayments	177	109	111	109
Amount due from subsidiary undertaking	-	-	323	-
Accrued income (unrestricted)	947	393	711	393
Accrued income (grants due for projects)	<u>589</u>	<u>469</u>	<u>589</u>	<u>469</u>
	<u>4,264</u>	<u>1,794</u>	<u>3,092</u>	<u>1,794</u>



## 12 CREDITORS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	Group		NCB	
	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Trade Creditors	1,013	458	841	458
Social Security and other taxes	762	548	697	548
Pension contributions	135	35	135	35
Amount due to subsidiary undertaking	-	-	5	5
Other creditors and accrued charges	1,157	1,274	966	1,274
Income received in advance	2,001	497	680	497
	<u>5,068</u>	<u>2,812</u>	<u>3,324</u>	<u>2,817</u>

	B/fwd 1 Apr 2023 £'000	Received 2024 £'000	Income 2024 £'000	C/fwd 31 March 2024 £'000
Income received in advance in respect of 2024/25				
Services and other income	497	8,740	7,236	2,001
	<u>497</u>	<u>8,740</u>	<u>7,236</u>	<u>2,001</u>

## 13 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

NCB Enterprises Ltd (a wholly owned subsidiary of NCB, also registered at 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN) did not trade in 2023–24.

The amount owed from the parent company at 31st March 2024 was £5,374 (2023: £5,374). Further details are shown in note 9.

**NCB RIP** was incorporated on 23 December 2023 as a company limited by guarantee and is also registered at 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Anna Feuchtwang and Rachel Rand were appointed directors of the company in December 2023. On 1 February 2024 The Dartington Hall Trust transferred its Research in Practice activities to NCB RIP. NCB has consolidated the unaudited results of NCB RIP for February and March 2024 on a line by line basis.

Exceptional costs were incurred in the transfer:

	£'000
Due Diligence, legal & tax advice	102
IT migration	27
HR migration	16
Finance migration	4
Staff	10
Other	7
	<u>166</u>

Lawrence Walker was a trustee of Childlife; a consortium which donated £100,000 to NCB for 2023–24 (2022–23: £100,000). No donations were received from any other related parties.



## 14 RESTRICTED FUNDS

Project and Unit funds		B/fwd 1 April 2023 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	C/fwd 31 March 2024 £'000
Project	Funder				
Early Years SEND	Department for Education	-	533	(533)	-
United Against Bullying	Department for Education	-	346	(346)	-
Other Grants from Government Departments		36	45	(71)	10
Lambeth Early Action Partnership	National Lottery Community Fund	660	3,301	(3,829)	132
REAL in Lewisham	Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	193	-	(100)	93
Anti Bullying Week fundraising	Various	51	104	(18)	137
Fostering Connections	Youth Endowment Fund	-	292	(256)	36
United Against Bullying Plus	Education Endowment Foundation	-	177	(177)	-
Other grants and income		142	686	(647)	181
<b>NCB - restricted funds</b>		<b>1,082</b>	<b>5,484</b>	<b>(5,977)</b>	<b>589</b>
Other grants and income		0	31	(5)	26
<b>Subsidiaries - restricted funds</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Group - restricted funds</b>		<b>1,082</b>	<b>5,515</b>	<b>(5,982)</b>	<b>615</b>

### Comparative figures for prior year

Project and Unit funds		B/fwd 1 April 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	C/fwd 31 Mar 2023 £'000
Project	Funder				
Early Years SEND	Department for Education	-	657	(657)	-
United Against Bullying	Department for Education	-	230	(230)	-
Other Grants from Government Departments		35	200	(199)	36
Lambeth Early Action Partnership	National Lottery Community Fund	96	4,546	(3,982)	660
	London Borough of Lambeth	117	-	(117)	-
REAL in Lewisham	Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	150	121	(78)	193
Anti Bullying Week fundraising	Various	36	66	(51)	51
Other grants and income		158	475	(491)	142
		<b>592</b>	<b>6,295</b>	<b>(5,805)</b>	<b>1,082</b>

All restricted funds represent grants for specific projects, as agreed with the funder in an application process and carried forward to continue the agreed project, with the exception of the £172k of donations shown on the Statement of Financial Activities and Note 2 (£135k in 2022-23, shown in note 18), which were mainly given by individuals in response to our Anti-Bullying Week campaign, or by organisations to our Special Education Consortium or Health Policy Influencing Group.



## 15 UNRESTRICTED OTHER FUNDS

	B/fwd 1 Apr 2023 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	Allocations and Transfers £'000	C/fwd 31 March 2024 £'000
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Fixed asset fund	4,455	-	(240)	253	4,468
Strategic priorities fund	324	-	(220)	396	500
Capital Goods Scheme fund	272	-	-	(52)	220
New building fund	68	-	-	-	68
	5,119	-	(460)	597	5,256
General Funds (Free Reserves)	2,741	6,844	(6,105)	(597)	2,883
<b>NCB - unrestricted funds</b>	<b>7,860</b>	<b>7,236</b>	<b>(7,314)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,139</b>
	5	392	(749)	-	(352)
General Funds (Free Reserves)	5	392	(749)	-	(352)
<b>Subsidiaries - unrestricted funds</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>(749)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(352)</b>
	7,865	7,236	(7,314)	-	7,787
<b>Group - unrestricted funds</b>	<b>7,865</b>	<b>7,236</b>	<b>(7,314)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,787</b>

### Comparative figures for the prior year

	B/fwd 1 Apr 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	Allocations and Transfers £'000	C/fwd 31 Mar 2023 £'000
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Fixed asset fund - designated element	4,613	-	(212)	54	4,455
Strategic priorities fund	400	-	(76)	-	324
Capital Goods Scheme fund	323	-	-	(51)	272
New building fund	68	-	-	-	68
Pension fund	647	4	(78)	(573)	-
	6,051	4	(366)	(570)	5,119
General Funds (Free Reserves)	1,775	4,611	(4,215)	570	2,741
<b>NCB - unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>	<b>7,826</b>	<b>4,615</b>	<b>(4,581)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,860</b>
	5	-	-	-	5
General Funds (Free Reserves)	5	-	-	-	5
<b>Subsidiaries - unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5</b>
	7,831	4,615	(4,581)	-	7,865
<b>Group - unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>	<b>7,831</b>	<b>4,615</b>	<b>(4,581)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,865</b>

The **Fixed asset fund** represents the net book value of tangible fixed assets; our office building and its contents, as well as our laptops and systems.

The **Pension fund** was used to support funding the agreed annual deficit recovery contributions to the defined benefit pension scheme, as well as other small ad hoc pension costs.

The **New building fund** is set aside to fund the remaining costs for the fit-out, maintenance and enhancement of our main London office property.

The **Capital Goods Scheme fund** is set aside for any additional expense of recovered VAT during the ten year period of the Capital



Goods Scheme that NCB is required to run regarding expenditure on the new leasehold property. This represents NCB's full exposure through the period.

The **Strategic Priorities Fund** is set aside for investment in the coming year (or just beyond) in the transition, knowledge management and legacy of our 10 year LEAP programme as it starts to come to an end, enhancing our digital capabilities and programme management, strengthening the diversity and scale of our income, adapting to new needs for our expertise and celebrating and involving children and young people in NCB's 60th anniversary, as well as continuing to manage the cost of inflationary pressures.

**General funds** represent the net of accumulated surplus and deficits of income and expenditure after transfers to designated funds.

## 16 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Tangible Fixed Assets £'000	Net Current Assets £'000	Pension Scheme Liability £'000	Total £'000
Restricted Funds	-	615	-	615
Unrestricted - Designated funds	4,468	788	-	5,256
- General funds	-	2,531	-	2,531
Net Assets before Pension Reserve	<u>4,468</u>	<u>3,934</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,402</u>
Pension Reserve	-	-	-	-
Group Net Assets	<u>4,468</u>	<u>3,934</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,402</u>

### Comparative figures for the prior year

	Tangible Fixed Assets £'000	Net Current Assets £'000	Pension Scheme Liability £'000	Total £'000
Restricted Funds	-	1,082	-	1,082
Unrestricted - Designated funds	4,454	664	-	5,119
- General funds	-	2,742	-	2,742
Net Assets before Pension Reserve	<u>4,454</u>	<u>4,488</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,943</u>
Pension Reserve	-	-	-	-
Group Net Assets	<u>4,454</u>	<u>4,488</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,943</u>



## 17 PENSION ARRANGEMENTS

The disclosures set out below relate to pension arrangements to which contributions are made by the charity – a defined contribution and individual personal pension arrangements.

### **Defined contribution scheme**

The charity participates in a defined contribution scheme independently managed by Standard Life. Contributions to the scheme are charged to the statement of financial activities as they become payable. NCB makes twice the employees' percentage contribution, up to a maximum of 10% (2023: 8%) of pensionable salaries. The cost of NCB's contributions for the year ended 31 March 2024 was £355,299 (2023: £215,085).

### **Personal pension plans**

Payments can also be made to employees' personal pensions which are charged in the year in which they become payable. NCB matches employees' contributions up to a maximum of 10% (2023: 8%) of pensionable salaries. No contributions were made for the year ended 31 March 2024 (2023: nil).

### **Defined benefit scheme**

On 30 November 2022 the charity ceased to be an admitted body to the South Yorkshire Pension Fund (SYPF), which is a defined benefit scheme, managed by the South Yorkshire Pension Authority (SYPA). The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity by South Yorkshire Pensions Authority.

An actuarial valuation of the charity was carried out to determine the assets and liabilities of the South Yorkshire Pension Fund in respect of the charity's current and former employees, as required under Regulation 64 of the LGPS Regulations 2013, as at 30th November 2022. Based on the Fund's cessation approach, the valuation report confirmed in March 2023 that no cessation debt is due from the charity, and no exit credit is payable to the charity.



## 18 CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES WITH COMPARATIVES

	Notes	Restricted Funds £'000	Unrestricted Pension Reserve £'000	Unrestricted Other Funds £'000	2024 £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Unrestricted Pension Reserve £'000	Unrestricted Other Funds £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Income from:</b>									
Donations and legacies	1 & 2	172	-	104	276	135	-	102	237
Charitable activities		5,343	-	6,929	12,272	6,160	-	4,422	10,582
Other activities		-	-	5	5	-	-	4	4
Income from investments		-	-	198	198	-	-	87	87
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,515</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,236</b>	<b>12,751</b>	<b>6,295</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,615</b>	<b>10,910</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>									
Raising funds	1, 3 & 6								
Fundraising		-	-	34	34	-	-	39	39
Other trading activities		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities		5,982	-	7,114	13,096	5,805	-	4,542	10,347
Exceptional expenditure		-	-	166	166	-	-	-	-
Operating pension scheme movements in year	17	-	-	-	-	-	744	-	744
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,982</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,314</b>	<b>13,296</b>	<b>5,805</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>4,581</b>	<b>11,130</b>
<b>Net (expenditure)</b>		<b>(467)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(78)</b>	<b>(545)</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>(744)</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>(220)</b>
<b>Other recognised (losses) / gains:</b>									
Actuarial gains / (losses) on defined benefit pension scheme	17	-	-	-	-	-	4,219	-	4,219
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(467)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(78)</b>	<b>(545)</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>3,475</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3,999</b>

## 19 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

At the balance sheet date the group held Financial assets at amortised cost of £4,154k (2023 £1,687k) and Financial liabilities at amortised cost of £2,170k (2023 £1,737k).



**NATIONAL  
CHILDREN'S  
BUREAU**



**ANTI-BULLYING  
ALLIANCE**



**CHILDHOOD  
BEREAVEMENT  
NETWORK**



**COUNCIL  
FOR DISABLED  
CHILDREN**



**SCHOOLS'  
WELLBEING  
PARTNERSHIP**

**LEAP**

**research  
in practice**

## **United for a better childhood**

For over 60 years, the National Children's Bureau has worked to champion the rights of children and young people in the UK. We interrogate policy and uncover evidence to shape future legislation and develop more effective ways of supporting children and families.

As a leading children's charity, we take the voices of children to the heart of Government, bringing people and organisations together to drive change in society and deliver a better childhood for the UK. We are united for a better childhood.

Let's work together: 020 7843 6000 | [info@ncb.org.uk](mailto:info@ncb.org.uk) | [www.ncb.org.uk](http://www.ncb.org.uk) | [@NCBtweets](https://twitter.com/NCBtweets)

London: 23 Mentmore Terrace, London, E8 3PN

Belfast: The NICVA Building, 61 Duncairn Gardens, BT15 2GB

© National Children's Bureau 2024

National Children's Bureau is registered charity number 258825 and a company limited by guarantee number 00952717. Registered office: 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

**NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU**

England & Wales - Charity number 258825

---

# Accounts

---

# United for a Better Childhood

Annual report & accounts 2022-23



Company Number : 00952717

[www.ncb.org.uk](http://www.ncb.org.uk) /  
@NCBtweets

# Contents

Foreword .....	3
Introduction.....	5
The NCB family .....	6
Our achievements in 2022-23 .....	9
Looking ahead .....	13
Trustees' annual report .....	15
Financial review.....	21
Statement of financial activity.....	33
Notes to the financial statements .....	36

© National Children's Bureau – June 2023

# Foreword

## From our Chair



As the National Children's Bureau celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> year, I have a deep sense of pride in everything our charity has achieved since it was set up by our founder Mia Kellmer Pringle in 1963.

While this report looks at what we have achieved in the last year, and our anniversary gives us the opportunity to celebrate improving outcomes for children over 60 years, the job of the NCB board is to remain steadfastly focused on how we are improving childhoods today and how we will evolve to meet fresh challenges in the coming years.

In 2022-23 there were a number of important milestones for NCB in our mission to promote the wellbeing and rights of children across the country.

We played an important part in reforms to children social care, supported better practice in SEND provision, and we won a Children and Young People Now Award for our work with the Raising Rochdale Integrated SEND Team.

The golden thread running through our achievements has been the voices and experiences of children, young people and families themselves. One notable example was facilitating a meeting between care-experienced young people and the Secretary of State for Education, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, and the Children's Commissioner for England.

We also started the process of developing our strategy to take NCB forward over the coming years, using our expertise and evidence to decide what our priorities must be to address the multifaceted challenges faced by children, recognizing the increasing complexities of their lives in an ever-changing world.

This strategy, and the work detailed in this annual report, emphasise that NCB is as relevant today as it has ever been.

**Alison O'Sullivan**  
**Chair**

## From our CEO



Our recent work has all taken place in the shadow of a cost-of-living crisis, ongoing recovery from COVID restrictions and the ever-increasing pressures on the systems that are struggling to provide services facing inflationary costs on top of cuts. All these factors present enormous challenges to babies, children, young people and their families.

We know that in times of financial hardship, these services are more important than ever, so we have strived to enable more efficient ways of delivering support, based on the best available evidence.

Our rapid review of research relating to early help, strenuously made the case for early intervention social care services as a means of both improving outcomes and saving money in long-term. The report featured prominently in the once-in-a-generation review of children's social care conducted by Josh MacAlister.

And as that Review gathered evidence, we convened sector leaders, the Minister for Children and Families, senior officials, and care experienced young people at a meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Children to galvanise support for Family Help for vulnerable children and families.

Of course, high-quality services are only possible with a high-quality workforce to deliver them. Our support for the people working in the children's sector included important work with the RISE Partnership to develop the What Works in SEND Knowledge Hub, ensuring that evidence on effective approaches drives the delivery of SEND services.

One of our specialist membership groups, the Anti-Bullying Alliance, has provided continuing professional development opportunities to over 45k participants, significantly improving their ability to respond to bullying amongst children.

Our work on behalf of Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP), working with parents and young children in some of the poorest parts of the London Borough of Lambeth, has engaged with thousands of families through local community events, including support with the rising costs of living.

I hope you enjoy reading about these achievements in the pages to follow.

**Anna Feuchtwang**  
**Chief Executive**

# Introduction

In 2023, the National Children's Bureau (NCB) celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Founded by Mia Kellmer Pringle in 1963, her vision was to bring people and organisations together to drive change in society and deliver a better childhood for the UK. Working on the fundamental principle of radical co-operation, Mia gathered health services, education providers, children's services – everyone with a stake in the care of neglected children – to share insights and make things work better.

This simple, powerful approach still defines us today.

We identify the most serious issues putting our children and young people at risk, and we bring people and organisations – from Parliament to the playground, grass roots organisations to national charities, academics and policymakers – together to drive change in society and deliver a better childhood.

We interrogate policy, uncover evidence and develop better ways of supporting children and families. We work in every local authority in England and across the sector in Northern Ireland. We are experts in place-based system change, where we work intensively in a defined geography to drive improvements in outcomes for children.

These ways of working are part and parcel of NCB's identity, and they are written large in both our achievements in 2022-23 and our plans for taking our work forward in the coming years as we create a better childhood for all children.

This Annual Report details our achievements and aspirations, we hope you find reading about them inspiring for your own work and encourages you to engage with us in our shared mission to improve the lives of babies, children, young people and families.

## The NCB family

Every member of the NCB family unites people and organisations to drive change on particular issues and help deliver a better childhood for the UK.

### Anti-Bullying Alliance

The Anti-Bullying Alliance's vision is to stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

#### Highlights in 2022-23 included:

- Providing CPD to over 45k participants, which included a new course about appearance-targeted bullying with Dr Martens Foundation.
- Delivering Anti-Bullying Week and Odd Socks Day, reaching 7.5 million children with 80% of schools taking part.
- Awarding 217 schools with our United Against Bullying Award.
- Establishing a new School and College Membership.

Find out more about our work at: [anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

### Childhood Bereavement Network

The Childhood Bereavement Network is the hub for people supporting grieving children and those caring for them across the UK. We underpin our member's work with essential support and representation.

#### Highlights in 2022-23 included:

- Securing an extension of bereavement benefits worth around £10,000 a year for families where the parents were cohabiting but not married, with retrospective payments for around 21,000 families who missed out.
- Working with partners to steer the work of the independent UK Commission on Bereavement leading to its landmark report *Bereavement is Everyone's Business*.
- Coordinating Children's Grief Awareness Week across the sector.
- Giving presentations at the inaugural European Grief Conference.

Find out more about our work at: [childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk](https://childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk)

## Council for Disabled Children

The Council for Disabled Children drives change in society to deliver a better childhood for disabled children.

### Highlights in 2022-23 included:

- Supporting 21 local areas through the DfE-funded RISE programme.
- Our EYSEND programme being shortlisted for a [nasen award](#) for early years provision.
- Winning the Public Sector Children's Team category at the CYPNow Awards, for our work with the Raising Rochdale Integrated SEND Team.
- Giving oral evidence from the Special Educational Consortium at an Education Select Committee [session](#) on the SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan.
- Supporting DfE's launch of the SEND and Alternative Provision Green Paper and subsequent Improvement Plan, including delivery of four consultation events and a literature review to support policy development for National Standards.
- Enabling 69% of SENDIAS services to be jointly commissioned – an achievement made possible through direct support from the IASSN.

Find out more about our work at: [councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)

## Lambeth Early Action Partnership

The Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP) works to give thousands of children aged 0-3 living in parts of Lambeth a better start.

### Highlights in 2022-23 included:

- Our Annual Learning Report showed LEAP reached over 14,200 children and families by April 2021.
- Working in partnership with Dartington Service Design Lab on a local evaluation of the programme.
- Strengthening partnership working with the London Borough of Lambeth and others, particularly on the development of Start for Life and Family Hubs.
- Engaging with nearly 7,000 families attending our community engagement events, including support with the rising costs of living.
- Successful partnership work with 14 local community groups, through our CoCreate Fund.
- Promoting LEAP's work in maternity, including delivering a webinar for the Parent Infant Foundation and presenting LEAP's work to the Maternity Stakeholder Council.

Find out more about our work at: [leaplambeth.org.uk](https://leaplambeth.org.uk)

## Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum

This year saw the closure of the longstanding Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) following the end of our funding from the Department of Education.

For 18 years, this unique partnership has brought together statutory and voluntary sector organisations to co-create campaigns, resources, and training to help reduce bullying.

### **NIABF's many achievements include:**

- Reaching over 90% of schools in NI through annual Anti-Bullying Week campaigns, raising awareness of bullying and its impact.
- Playing a key role in the implementation of the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (2016).
- Promoting best-practice to a wide range of staff working with children and young people.

Find out more about our work at: <https://www.ncb.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are/our-ncb-family/northern-ireland-anti-bullying-forum>

## Schools Wellbeing Partnership

The Schools' Wellbeing Partnership is a national network of more than 50 member organisations working together to improve the wellbeing and mental health of all children in education.

### **Highlights in 2022-23 included:**

- Convening two joint member events in partnership with the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition, with a focus on the needs of children and families, and supporting the children's mental health workforce.
- Growing our membership and schools' forum.
- Working with partners to develop responses to key consultations and advocating for a holistic approach to mental health in schools.

Find out more about our work at: [schoolswellbeing.org.uk](https://schoolswellbeing.org.uk)

# Our achievements in 2022-23

## Making evidence count

Ensuring decisions affecting children and young people are based on sound research about what works is one of our top priorities. Through our leadership role in the sector, NCB made a far-reaching and demonstrable impact on children's lives through our policy, public affairs and campaigning activity.

### Key highlights included:

- NCB's Living Assessments research - [\*Supporting and Strengthening Families through Early Help - Rapid Review of the Evidence\*](#) was extensively cited in the Independent Review of Children's Social Care [\*Final Report\*](#), directly shaping future government policy.
- NCB worked in partnership with the University of Cambridge on an umbrella review focusing on the association between child maltreatment and mental health difficulties, the largest ever study of its kind. The pre-publication paper was disseminated to around 100 members of the sector, as well as Department for Education, NHS England, Department for Health and Social Care, and Home Office. Around 30 sector representatives and the senior representatives from each Government department helped to co-produce the policy recommendations.
- In our role as Secretariat for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Children, NCB delivered a high profile face-to-face parliamentary event on Family Help for vulnerable children and families. Timed to co-inside with the Government response to the Independent Review of Children Social Care - this event attracted an audience of over 100, including senior representatives from the children's sector and Whitehall. The impressive line-up of speakers included Claire Coutinho - the newly appointed Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing - children and parents with experience of social care, leaders from the Department for Education, Ofsted and the Association of Directors of Children's Services, and the shadow Children's Minister. Speakers, including the Minister, confirmed their commitment to improving children's social care and family help.

### Our research highlights this year included:

- Fieldwork and analysis on a three-year evaluation of projects supporting care leavers with insecure immigration status, funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. This involved more than 70 interviews with projects, local authority staff and young people, as well as an analysis of costs associated with providing support.

- Dartington Service Design Lab produced a report for LEAP identifying the 'mechanisms of change' between LEAP activities and improving outcomes. That is, how LEAP families and other beneficiaries engage with and experience LEAP activities and how this leads to positive change. This work is important for LEAP and the wider early year sector because it adds to the evidence base on what creates change.
- NCB led the work to deliver high levels of engagement on a social media campaign to launch the findings from our Northern Ireland shared education impact evaluation. The estimated impact of #SharedEducation (the amount of time the hashtag appeared on social media feeds) numbered 465,000 including LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram. There were around 200 posts using #SharedEducation, 150 organic views and 1,038 organic impressions of the campaign video.

## **Amplifying the voices of children and families to make policy more relevant and to improve services.**

Overall, NCB has increased the amount of work we deliver, and the number of children and young people we work with, as well as their families, and built a strong position for 2023-24.

### **Key highlights included:**

- NCB coordinated a high-level meeting between the Secretary of State for Education, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, the Children's Commissioner for England and four care-experienced young people. Another NCB young person took part in a parliamentary roundtable with Will Quince MP (then Children's Minister), the Children's Commissioner and Josh Macalister (chair of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care).
- In LEAP, new Community Researchers completed their initial research project "Pathways to Connection" - exploring how parents form connections in their community - in particular the work looked at fathers and Eritrean and Ethiopian communities. The study interviewed 32 fathers and 12 community members, with interviews taking place across a variety of sites in Lambeth including playgrounds, churches, mosques, cafes and markets.
- NCB delivered a series of focus groups with young people and practitioners as part of an ongoing piece of work for Health and Justice commissioned by NHS England. The project aims to understand the views of young people with SEND who have experiences of education and health provision in youth justice settings, and will develop training for staff and resources for young people based on focus groups and interviews.

## Bringing organisations together

NCB has used its convening power to unite all those who can help us put the best interests of children first. We have continued to convene key opportunities for collaboration both through the development of informal cross-sector-partnerships, as well as more formal specialist membership groups on: mental health and wellbeing; anti-bullying; special educational needs and disabilities; bereavement; vulnerable children; and the early years.

NCB has led the way in facilitating information and innovation sharing between stakeholders at all levels including communities of practice, online forums for those working on specific areas, and regional action learning sets focused on building capacity and developing stakeholder relationships at a local level.

### Key highlights included:

- NCB's Anti-Bullying Alliance launched a new type of membership called 'School and College Members'. This is to better tailor our information sharing and we will create an online group where these schools and colleges can connect, network and share.
- Following successfully amending government legislation, we have introduced a new funding model for the running of the Children and Young People's Health Policy Influencing Group, a network of around 70 organisations working together to influence children's health policy.
- Schools Wellbeing Partnership joint members event held with DfE and DHCS in attendance. The event facilitated consultation with members on the DHSC 10-year mental health plan and we subsequently wrote up and submitted the consultation to DHSC.

## Developing the workforce

We are determined to train and equip an up-to-date and skilled workforce to deliver a better childhood throughout the UK. This year, NCB has provided expert advice and training for the children's workforce, equipping people and services with the knowledge and skills to deliver the changes that make childhood better.

### Key highlights included:

- Developing and launching the new What Works in SEND programme and knowledge hub.
- Delivering training on learning disability and autism to the health and justice workforce in the Midlands region.

- Delivering a review of services for children and young people with a learning disability and/or autism in Midland's Liaison & Diversion Services and Werrington Young Offenders Institute.
- Winning the best Public Sector Children's Team category at the CYPNow Awards, for the Council for Disabled Children's work with the Raising Rochdale Integrated SEND Team.

## **Growing respect and trust**

Our work puts into practice our core governance principles of leadership, integrity, transparency and accountability.

### **Key highlights included:**

#### **Strong governance**

- Trustee's links with NCB Specialist Membership Groups (SMGs) were established, but need further development. This link between the SMG Advisory Boards and Board of Trustees will strengthen NCB's governance framework and deepen the understanding of the breadth of NCB delivery at Trustee level.
- Governance disclosures in the 2022/23 Trustees Annual Report were updated in line with recommendations made in the external Board Effectiveness Review to ensure compliance with the Code of Charity Governance's 'apply or explain' recommendation.
- For the first time since pre-pandemic, we returned to full in-person Board of Trustee meetings.

#### **Flexible and supportive culture**

- Our hybrid working policy was finalised and communicated with all staff.
- Our Cycle to Work scheme was set up.

#### **Financial responsibility**

- Training and roll-out to Development and Finance teams of a new forecasting and monitoring tool for statutory, trust and foundation income. This is a new Salesforce-based system to replace separate Finance & Fundraising systems with unified system and process, providing us with a single source of truth.

## Looking ahead

The challenges facing babies, children, young people and families are as pressing today as they were when NCB was founded in 1963. Consequently, the National Children's Bureau's is busy planning its work for 2023-24, in order to further its aim to improve childhoods. These plans are centred around the five strategic outcomes that constitute what we do.

### Outcome 1: Influencing legislation, policy and practice to ensure it's based on high quality evidence about what works for children

- We will strengthen and grow our programmes, evidence base and influencing work relating to early intervention in youth justice.
- We will expand our programming and external influence using the evidence and learning from the Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP) and A Better Start.
- We will provide external leadership to the sector, and take a coordinated approach across the NCB Family, to impact party manifestos and the next programme for government in the interests of children.

### Outcome 2: Enabling children and young people to actively participate in decision making and influence change

- We will grow our understanding of, and engagement with, children and young people and families from minoritised and racialised communities.
- We will convene organisational expertise, including children and young people themselves, to develop a framework to monitor, evaluate and communicate the impact of youth voice work.
- NCB will proactively promote its expertise in the field of children and young people's participation and coproduction to generate new opportunities.

### Outcome 3: Bringing organisations together to put the best interests of children first

- We will provide leadership across sectors, convening a range of coalitions to improve outcomes for children and young people, including creating new partnerships that strengthen our anti-bullying work in Northern Ireland and growing our role in supporting the development of the NHS key-working services.
- We will deliver a range of new programmes in partnership where this maximises impact and reach.

- We will develop and deepen our specialist membership organisations to increase their impact and diversify our networks and engagement.

#### **Outcome 4: Developing a workforce that is knowledgeable and skilled to make positive changes for children**

- We will build on our tools and resources for key professional groups so that they are more confident and better equipped to support children and young people and their carers.
- We will further extend our reach to the universal workforce so that they are better placed to understand children's needs and signpost for support where more specialist input is required.
- We will develop our evidence-based workforce development training and evaluated CPD approaches and improvement work, giving leaders confidence about what works in improving and upskilling the workforce.

#### **Outcome 5: Building respect and trust as a pioneering and high-performing charity**

- We will develop and launch our new strategy, creating a shared vision of strategic direction internally and externally through high levels of staff engagement and external communications.
- We will evolve our operating model to optimise how we work now and align with our new strategic direction; this will incorporate how we best use our people, technology, time allocation and project management.
- We will deliver a compelling external facing campaign to celebrate our 60th anniversary, showcasing our evidence base and thought leadership, engaging existing and new audiences.

# Trustees' annual report

Incorporating the Directors' Strategic Report and Administrative Report for Companies Act Purposes.

The Trustees of the National Children's Bureau present their Annual Report for the Year Ended 31st March 2023 under the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006, including the Directors' Report and the Strategic Report under the 2006 Act, together with the audited financial statements for the year.

## Administrative information

### Board of Trustees

Alison O'Sullivan	Chair
Elizabeth Railton, CBE	Vice-Chair
Robert Whelan	Treasurer
Rose Akinsulire	
Emma Beeden	
Yvonne Campbell	
Ajit Dhaliwal	
Bethan Hoggan	
Catriona Hugman	
Fergal McFerran	
Sarah Mullen	
Jadesola Olusanya	
Kathryn Pugh	
Shubhi Rajnish	
Nainan Shah	

Members of the Board of Trustees under charity law are also Directors of the charitable company for the purpose of company law.

## Independent committee members

Marjorie James	People & Culture Committee
Sheena Parker	Finance, Risk & Audit Committee
Laura Sercombe	People & Culture Committee
Judith Worthy	Finance, Risk & Audit Committee

## Strategic leadership team

Anna Feuchtwang	Chief Executive
Dame Christine Lenehan	Strategic Director - Practice and Programmes
Celine McStravick	Strategic Director – External Affairs (to December 2022)
Phil Anderson	Strategic Director – External Affairs (from March 2023)
Rachel Rand	Chief Operating Officer

## Advisors

### Auditors

Sayer Vincent LLP  
Invicta House  
108-114 Golden Lane  
London  
EC1Y 0TL

### Bankers

Barclays Bank PLC  
1 Churchill Place  
London E14 5HP

### Investment managers

CCLA Investment Management Ltd  
80 Cheapside  
London EC2V 6DZ

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) was registered as a charity in 1969 (charity number 258825), although it was founded in 1963 as the National Bureau for Cooperation in Child Care. NCB is also a company limited by guarantee (registration number 952717) and has a subsidiary trading company, National Children's Bureau Enterprises Ltd (registration number 2633796).

NCB's Registered Office is at 23 Mentmore Terrace, Hackney, London, E8 3PN

NCB was established for the public benefit in order to advance the well-being of children and young people in particular by (but not limited to):

- Relieving poverty, sickness and distress
- Safeguarding and maintaining health and well-being
- Encouraging positive and supportive family and other environments for children and young people
- Advancing education and training
- Reducing inequalities
- Ensuring that children and young people have a strong voice in all matters that affect their lives.

For the purposes of carrying out these objects, NCB's Articles of Association expect it to promote and organise cooperation and partnerships and to influence and inform policy, practice and service development by bringing together voluntary organisations, statutory authorities, individual professionals and all those concerned with the well-being of children and young people.

The liability of members in respect of the guarantee, as set out in the Articles, is limited to £1 per member of the company.

## Governance and management

The Board is ultimately accountable for NCB's strategic and financial sustainability and growth and that this is achieved through an organisational culture based on integrity, accountability and transparency. With this, NCB is committed to upholding its organisational culture and values in-line with the seven principles of the Charity Governance Code (updated 2020):

- Organisational purpose
- Leadership
- Integrity
- Decision making, risk and control
- Board effectiveness
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Openness and accountability

NCB's Board of Trustees and Strategic Leadership Team reflect these standards across practices, function and behaviours, conscious of the fact that the organisational culture is influenced and embedded from these levels. The Governance Code is also embedded across NCB particularly with regard to setting the foundations for the governance objectives and outcomes in the organisational strategy 2018-2023.

As set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, NCB's Board of Trustees comprises a maximum membership of fifteen, including the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer and at least

two Trustees must be under the age of 25 years at the time of appointment to fulfil NCB's young governance requirements. The maximum size of the Board of Trustees exceeds the Governance Code's recommended maximum in recognition of the fact younger trustees are at a stage in life where they typically have less control over their time so are less likely to be able to attend all meetings.

Each Board member serves a maximum of two terms each of three-years, with the possibility of a one-year extension at the end of their second term in exceptional circumstances. At Year-end 31st March 2023, the Board membership was fifteen with the above requirements met.

Over the reporting period there has been no change in the membership of the Board.

The Board remains fully committed to promoting an inclusive approach recognising that a more diverse Board better supports its leadership, effectiveness and decision making from harnessing a broader range of perspectives and that lived experience is as equally valuable as professional expertise. The Board seeks to continuously develop and enhance its structures and ways of working to support inclusivity. As part of the process, the Board periodically reviews its collective membership and individual expertise, lived experience and development requirements. Annual one to ones are held with each Trustee and either the Chair or Vice-Chair and external effectiveness reviews are undertaken periodically to obtain independent assessment and advice.

A detailed independent assessment of board effectiveness was completed last year that concluded that NCB demonstrates an impressive breadth and depth of compliance with the recommendations held within the Charity Governance Code for Board effectiveness.

The Board has continued to seek ongoing improvement through the year, implementing a number of the minor recommendations made in the independent assessment report including updates to committee terms of reference and formalising the recruitment of chairs of sub-committees.

Operating virtually in response to the COVID-19 pandemic confirmed that the Board could work effectively in this way whilst acknowledging not all benefits of spending time together in person can be fully replicated in an online environment. After a thorough review of its arrangements the Board has adopted a hybrid model in future with sub-committee meetings and half of full Board meetings being held virtually to improve accessibility, reduce time commitments and minimise costs.

The Finance, Risk and Audit Committee (FRAC) ensures that NCB is compliant in its financial obligations, auditing standards and legal requirements of regulatory bodies, including the Charity Commission, through an appropriate framework of policies, processes and controls.

The People and Culture Committee is focused on all matters pertaining to 'people' including Board membership, succession planning, Trustee recruitment, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and delivery of key strategic objectives set out in NCB's People Plan. .

The Board may establish advisory groups to support the development of strategic objectives. The Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) continues its work to support the diversification of NCB's income generation.

## Senior pay

NCB aims to ensure that all staff are paid on a grade appropriate to the nature of the work and the experience, knowledge and skills needed to carry out the job within the organisation.

NCB also aims to ensure that all jobs are at a pay level which is reasonable when compared with the external market pay ranges for the charity and civil service sectors. The grades of all roles are assessed as part of NCB's job evaluation process, with the exception of the Chief Executive's and Directors' salaries which are proposed by the People and Culture Committee of the Board of Trustees for determination by the Board of Trustees.

## Fundraising

NCB has not contracted the services of professional fundraisers or commercial participants.

NCB benefits as one of four recipients from donations secured by Childlife, a consortium charity whose methods include door-to-door, street fundraising and payroll giving. All activity lines are rigorously observant of industry recognised, best practice in ethical fundraising.

We delegate our low-level individual giving because our work does not lend itself to a large scale, fundraising opportunity with the general public. Accordingly, the advice we give to those wishing to fundraise on our behalf, is offered on a case-by-case basis, with Institute of Fundraising best practice in mind.

NCB and Childlife are registered with the Fundraising Regulator. No complaints have been received about our fundraising activities.

## Risk and internal control

The Trustees continue to review the risks facing NCB group, controls in place and mitigating actions being taken using the organisation's general statement of risk appetite with its corresponding set of principles around generally acceptable levels of risks.

The Trustees remain of the view that appropriate control procedures are in place to manage risks and that the systems of financial control comply in all material aspects with the guidelines issued by the Charity Commission.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Key mitigating actions</b>
<p><b>Financial:</b> Cost inflation, rising energy prices and rising employment costs will all put pressure on operating margins, especially in multi-year contracts where increased costs cannot be passed on to the funder. NCB's financial operating model requires the organisation to be of a certain size to cover fixed operating costs. A failure to secure a sufficient level of funding and a lack of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Retention of financial planning with extended, five-year, time horizons.</li><li>• Staff pay bands linked to benchmark reflecting triennial market rate analysis.</li><li>• Multi-year development strategy in operation to focus on areas with most potential for income growth and diversification.</li></ul>

<p>diversification of income increases the risk of operating deficits eroding free reserves.</p>	
<p><b>Delivery:</b> As we have moved beyond the initial reliance on virtual delivery necessitated by the pandemic a significant proportion of virtual delivery has continued with funders and end users becoming more discerning. We must continuously evolve our digital offer to ensure we maintain delivery of the highest quality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated Digital team expanded to support in selection, integration and adoption of digital solutions as well as providing ongoing support of current digital tools.</li> <li>• Project costing tools regularly revised and updated to accurately reflect the costs of high-quality virtual delivery.</li> <li>• Detailed evaluations undertaken to establish impact of delivery as well as reach.</li> </ul>
<p><b>People:</b> Success in securing a number of significant new pieces of work in the last months of 2022/23 brings great opportunities but also presents risks including insufficient resourcing and over-utilisation of our staff leading to reduced wellbeing, burn-out, increased staff turnover and erosion of workplace culture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall headcount growing with resource in the People &amp; Culture team increased to support the high level of recruitment.</li> <li>• Ongoing clear two-way communication with staff ensuring feedback from staff is considered at all stages as well as staff being made aware of the range of support available to them from regular meetings with line managers through to the Employee Assistance Programme</li> <li>• Extended reporting on staff turnover, exit interview findings and induction experiences.</li> <li>• Planned development and implementation of a detailed recruitment and retention strategy to improve efficiency and effectiveness, ensuring levels of flexibility that match our emerging operating model.</li> </ul>

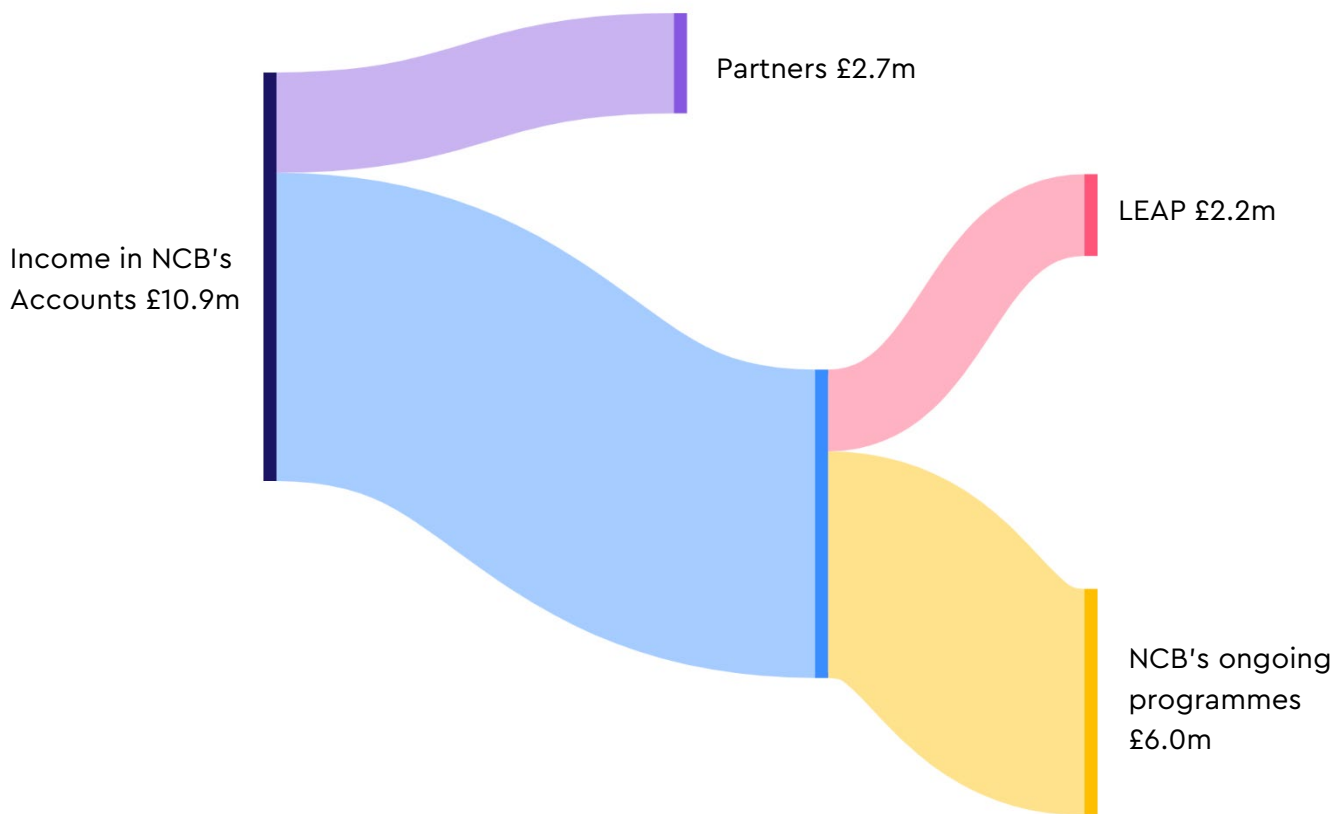
# Financial review

## Understanding NCB's finances

### Leading partnerships

We are entrusted by our funders to convene and lead many programmes in partnership with other organisations. To simplify how these larger projects are managed, funders often require that we receive and disburse income to partners.

Crucially, this means that just **£8.2m** this year goes to NCB's core activities, and £6.0m of that to ongoing areas of work.

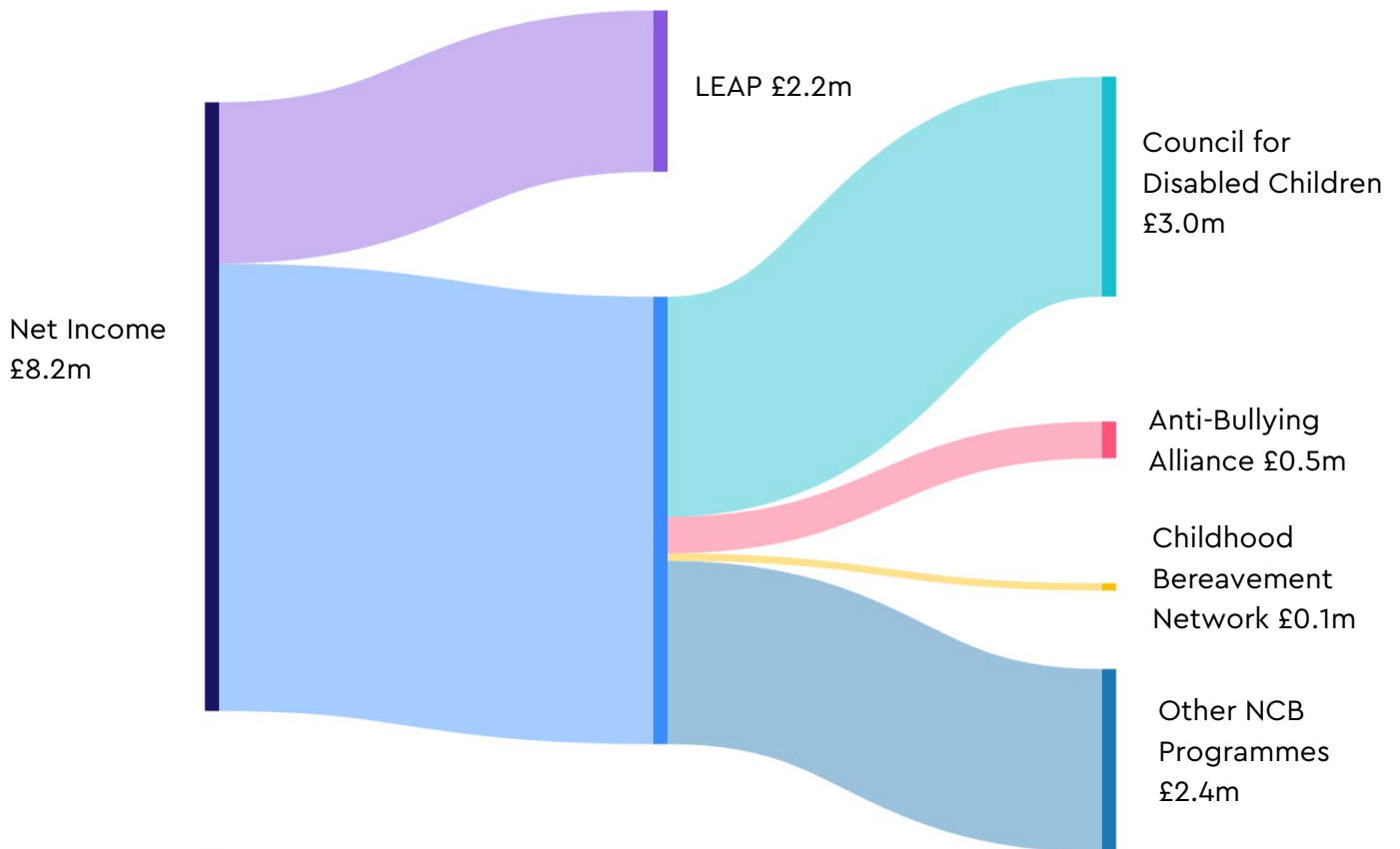


All income received that we manage must, for technical accounting reasons, be classed as NCB's own income - even though much of it is not ultimately spent by NCB. Our income figure may therefore give an overly inflated perspective of how much funding we can truly spend at our discretion.

## NCB's structure

NCB is a unifying voice in the sector and our core family of membership networks play a vital role to help us achieve our charitable mission.

The £8.2m 2022/23 net income above is broadly broken down as follows:



## NCB's unrestricted income

Our accounts show £4.6m of "Unrestricted" income this year. Counter-intuitively most of the income labelled "Unrestricted" is not at our discretion to spend, as it relates to contractual income for specific services, where all the costs of delivery must be met from this income. Accounting standards dictate that these very real limitations on discretion to spend do not constitute 'restrictions' for accounting purposes.

While this may give the impression that we have a large sum of money to cover discretionary costs or projects we choose to undertake, in fact, only £102k (1% of our income) was given to us with free choice as to how we spend it, alongside £87k of investment income generated.

## NCB's reserves and reserves policy

NCB's Trustees maintain a reserve policy in line with the Charity Commission's best practice.

## **Risks and Requirements**

The Trustees have adapted a benchmarked framework to assess risks to the organisation, informed by the organisation's risk register, and considered the possible financial impacts that these may have, alongside anticipated requirements to spend funds. The most material items are:

- Cessation of, or delays or cuts to, funding including at short notice. These could arise from disruption to government spending plans or change of funder priorities and require NCB to cover staff and other continuity costs.
- A need to invest in new products, services and income streams, and methods of delivery thereof, to continue meet emerging and evolving policy aims and societal needs. The costs of this are often not recoverable through our grant and contract funding.
- Adverse events that require unbudgeted payments, such as failure of compliance with HMRC or GDPR, despite controls and insurance cover.
- Costs associated with closing the charity down, e.g., ensuring the continuity of services, administrator costs, redundancies. (This is not even perceived as being remotely likely or needed but considered prudent to meet what we assess to be potentially significant, given the complexity of NCB.)

## **NCB's Current Reserves**

The £1m of restricted funds held are merely funds given in advance, and ring-fenced, by funders for agreed projects. The majority of our reserve funds shown are the value of our office property and other fixed assets (£4.5m); this value is tied up in the property, providing office space and reducing our running costs, and not available as cash to use. We have designated funds where we expect upcoming obligations, commitments or plans; currently to cover strategic investment in meeting evolving needs, as well as to continue to improve our digital delivery, quality and consistency, and for VAT and other costs relating to the property purchase (totalling £0.7m).

Most of our free reserves are from a one-off event, being the net proceeds from selling our previous freehold office; unlike some charities, the funds are not from donors who expect these to be spent to achieve impact swiftly. With only around £100k of truly unrestricted income each year (plus interest earned from time to time), it is also extremely difficult to rebuild any reserves that are spent. As NCB's mission involves systemic improvement across a wide-range of themes, we do not have an ambition to spend reserves to "complete" this mission at any foreseeable point in the future. Trustees therefore take a rightly prudent view on retaining these free reserves where possible. Free reserves currently stand at £2.7m, and are therefore to cover the risks and requirements set out above, over a practically unlimited time frame.

Trustees consider £1m of free reserves an absolute minimum and we would explain here if reserves fell below this. Our reserves are currently safely above this. Our largest programme, LEAP, is due to conclude in 2024/25 and will drive some transition, legacy and knowledge management costs over the next few years. We expect the funding climate to remain

challenging, meaning covering necessary in-year costs fully may be difficult. The defined benefit pensions scheme closed towards the end of this year, removing a very large financial risk from NCB. In this new context, and with a new five-year strategy being developed, trustees will use the next period to review whether some further reserves can be safely utilised for investing in NCB's long-term future. We will continue to seek funding for all programmes, including funding for developing new solutions to emerging needs.

## Summary for the year under review

2022/23 sees NCB come towards the end of a five-year strategy. We have developed a new five-year financial model and development plan, as we move towards a new strategic period. The plan is designed to grow and strengthen the diversity of income as we meet evolving and emerging needs, maintaining economies of scale and value. The focus on financial balance has seen us break-even this year (as in the previous three years), matching unrestricted income and expenditure, and maintaining our strong reserves. Our aim is to continue to do so in future years.

The result seen in the financial statements can be broken down as follows:

There was a small operating surplus on unrestricted funds (excluding the pension scheme) of £0.03m (2022 £0.1m), representing an important continuation of running at break-even whilst maintaining investment in income generation for future years.

Net income on operational restricted funds was £0.5m, reflecting merely the timing of spend on grant funded projects.

This resulted in the net of NCB's assets and current liabilities being strengthened to £8.9m (2022 £8.4m) and free reserves strengthened to £2.7m (2022 £1.8m), which included the release of the remaining designated pension reserve no longer required. NCB is therefore in a strong financial position, with free reserves above the policy minimum set out above, a significant property asset and a strategic plan for income generation to continue this strong financial performance in the years ahead.

Alongside this positive result and position, NCB's overall net assets increased from £4.9m to £9.0m due to the elimination of the long-term pension liability (2022 £3.5m) on exiting the scheme.

## Financial performance

### Income

As expected, overall income decreased during the year from £12.4m in 2021/22 to £10.9m. Unrestricted income reduced to £4.6m (£5.7m in 2021/22), reflecting mainly the ending of the IASP contract. Restricted income lessened from £6.7m to £6.3m, reflecting particularly the change in activity in our 'A Better Start' programme for National Lottery Community Fund. Outside of these the charity continues to hold a number of government contracts for the

future and has secured significant grants for its projects and research from a range of government, trust and other sources.

## Expenditure

Expenditure decreased in line with the changes in activity on our major contracts and grants, as expected and outlined above, from £12.9m last year to £11.1m this year. Following a review of planned expenditure in the final two years of the ten-year LEAP programme, a financial shortfall was identified. Trustees agreed to allocate an additional £550k of expenditure to unrestricted funds in the year, to ensure that the desired outcomes of the programme can be achieved in full.

## Financial position

NCB's total reserves increased from £4.9m at the start of the year to £8.9m at the end of the year. NCB has a strong general funds position (£2.7m) retained in line with the reserves policy by virtue of the break-even performance in the year and the release of designated funds after the removal of pension risk, alongside further funds designated to meet specific needs or risks in the near future. In addition, total assets, less current liabilities of £8.9m (£8.4m 2022), includes the funds invested in our main London office.

## Other matters

### Leasehold property

Trustees have retained a small amount of designated funds to allow for some necessary enhancements to our main London office, as set out in note 16 to the accounts.

### Pension fund

As at 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 NCB closed its defined benefit pension scheme to future accrual. This impacted 17% of staff, but enabled us to proceed with an overall exit from the scheme, operated by South Yorkshire Pension Authority. In line with the scheme rules this triggered a cessation valuation and in the actuary's assessment, and as agreed to by both parties, no further payment was due to or from either party on closure. NCB no longer has any obligation to the scheme, with no active employee members, and the scheme responsible for meeting all obligations to pensioners and deferred members. The scheme actuary's assessment was based on the valuation at 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022, was agreed by both parties in March, and paperwork formally signed-off in May 2023.

### Going concern

As is normal in the preparation of accounts, Trustees are required to determine whether the accounts are to be compiled on a going concern basis. All organisations will be placing

increased scrutiny on this exercise in light of the impact and future economic influences caused by the Covid-19 virus.

The sale of the freehold property, and subsequent investment in a new property put NCB in a strong reserves and cash position. This took place alongside restructuring, subsequent years of break-even financial performance in running our charitable activities and the establishment of a medium-term financial strategy to strengthen the diversity of our income while continuing to break-even each year. This plan began to strengthen our finances in 2022/23 and will do so further in the years ahead.

NCB currently holds £2.8m of free reserves (in excess of designated funds), which meets the reserves policy set out above, including in light of the impacts from the Covid-19 disruption described above, and assures the Board of Trustees we can meet any risks that become issues, and puts NCB in a good position for the coming period.

Taking all these factors into consideration Trustees believe it is reasonable to expect that NCB will generate sufficient resources to finance its operations for the foreseeable future and believe there are no material uncertainties that call into doubt the charity's ability to continue. Accordingly, the accounts have been prepared on the basis that the charity is a going concern.

## Subsidiary

National Children's Bureau Enterprises Ltd exists to manage, as and when appropriate, conference and lettings programmes, various funding activities and support services for other charities. The majority of work has largely been stopped, and the residual, incidental trading activity handled within the charity itself, resulting in no turnover or profit in the company for the year, as was the case in the prior year. The company was dormant throughout the financial year. Any profit made by NCB Enterprises' is gift-aided to the charity.

## Joint Venture

Childlife is a joint venture between four charities, with NCB therefore having an equal 25% share of voting rights. NCB recognised income of £100,000 from Childlife in the year.

## Investment policy

NCB's investment policy is to limit investment in more volatile assets and to keep key reserves in cash deposits. The Trustees continue to monitor this approach to investment, to ensure the best use of the significant funds from the sale of the freehold property. This is the role of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee which is chaired by the Treasurer, with the Chair attending as an observer, and with the Chief Executive and the Chief Operating Officer in attendance.

The Committee advises the Board on investment policy to ensure risk, return and liquidity are balanced in the best interests of the charity and, where necessary, will seek independent external advice. In addition, it recommends to the Board the proportion of its investments to

be held in longer term funds against maintaining prudent cash, or cash equivalent, balances, or retaining for use directly on charitable activities, infrastructure and operations.

The risk appetite of the policy above makes it unlikely we will invest significantly in this area, but for any future investment in equities and other financial products, the charity will continue with an ethical investment policy, including avoiding companies with more than 50 per cent of their turnover in gambling, tobacco or armaments. The Committee will also advise the Board on maintaining a reasoned ethical approach, and will seek to take external advice to set this against the need for proper returns on new funds.

## Statement of responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Strategic Report, the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards) and applicable law. 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 its net incoming resources for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue to operate.

The trustees are responsible for keeping 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Insofar as each of the trustees of the company at the date of approval of this report is aware there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the company's auditor in connection with preparing the audit report) of which the company's auditor is unaware. Each trustee has taken all of the steps that he/ she should have taken as a trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information.

## Compliance with statutory requirements

The financial statements have been prepared in compliance with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (SORP FRS 102) issued under the auspices of the Charity Commission.

## Funders, stakeholders and sponsors

We would like to express our grateful thanks to government departments, charitable bodies, companies and individuals for their considerable support in financing NCB's activities.

## Auditors

Sayer Vincent LLP has indicated its willingness to be reappointed statutory auditor. This Annual Report of the Trustees, under the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006, was approved by the Board of Trustees on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023, including approving in their capacity as company directors the Strategic Report contained therein, and is signed as authorised on its behalf by:



Alison O'Sullivan  
Chair  
National Children's Bureau  
Company Number: 952717

# Independent Auditor's Report

Independent auditor's report to the members of National Children's Bureau

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of National Children's Bureau (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including 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 Republic of 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 2023 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
- 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 the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company 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 National Children's Bureau'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 trustees 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 trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. 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. 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 course of 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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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.

## **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, including the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, has 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 charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report including the strategic report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which 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.

## Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, 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 the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

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 are set out below.

## Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
  - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the

financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.

- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

## 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 charitable 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 anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Joanna Pittman (Senior statutory auditor)

12 July 2023

For and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor

Invicta House, 108-114 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TL

# Statement of financial activity

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

	Notes 1 & 2	Restricted Funds £'000	Unrestricted Pension Reserve £'000	Unrestricted Other Funds £'000	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Income from:</b>						
Donations and legacies		135	-	102	237	209
Charitable activities		6,160	-	4,422	10,582	12,178
Other trading activities		-	-	4	4	4
Income from investments		-	-	87	87	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,295</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,615</b>	<b>10,910</b>	<b>12,393</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>						
Raising funds	1, 3 & 6					
Fundraising		-	-	39	39	35
Charitable activities		5,805	-	4,542	10,347	12,555
Operating pension scheme movements in year	17	-	744	-	744	349
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,805</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>4,581</b>	<b>11,130</b>	<b>12,939</b>
<b>Net income (expenditure)</b>		<b>490</b>	<b>(744)</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>(220)</b>	<b>(546)</b>
<b>Other recognised gains / (losses):</b>						
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension scheme	17	-	4,219	-	4,219	3,999
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>490</b>	<b>3,475</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3,999</b>	<b>3,453</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>						
Total funds brought forward		592	(3,475)	7,826	4,943	1,490
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>1,082</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,860</b>	<b>8,942</b>	<b>4,943</b>

Notes 1 to 19 form part of these financial statements

Full comparative figures are shown in note 18.

## Balance sheet

As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

	Notes	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Fixed assets:</b>			
Tangible assets	1 & 6	4,454	4,613
Shares in subsidiary undertaking	9	-	-
<b>Total fixed assets</b>		<u>4,454</u>	<u>4,613</u>
<b>Current assets:</b>			
Debtors	11	1,794	1,389
Notice deposits	8	522	512
Cash at bank		4,989	5,216
<b>Total current assets</b>		<u>7,305</u>	<u>7,117</u>
<b>Liabilities:</b>			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>(2,817)</u>	<u>(3,312)</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>4,488</u>	<u>3,805</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		8,942	8,418
Defined benefit pension scheme liability		-	(3,475)
<b>Total net assets</b>	16	<u>8,942</u>	<u>4,943</u>
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>			
Restricted Funds	1 & 14	1,082	592
General Funds (Free Reserves)	1 & 15	2,741	1,775
Designated Unrestricted Funds	1 & 15	5,119	6,051
		<u>8,942</u>	<u>8,418</u>
Unrestricted pension reserve	18	-	(3,475)
<b>Total charity funds</b>		<u>8,942</u>	<u>4,943</u>

Notes 1 to 19 from part of these financial statements. The net result for the period ending 31 March 2023 was a surplus of £4.0m (2021 surplus of £3.5m). The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the trustees on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and were signed on their behalf by:

*Alison O'Sullivan*

Alison O'Sullivan, Chair  
National Children's Bureau  
Company number 952717

## Cash flow statement

For year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>	<u>(251)</u>	<u>(1,656)</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Interest from investments	87	2
Purchase of leasehold property and equipment	(53)	(156)
<b>Net cash provided by investing activities</b>	<u>34</u>	<u>(154)</u>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</b>	(217)	(1,810)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	<u>5,728</u>	<u>7,538</u>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>	<u><u>5,511</u></u>	<u><u>5,728</u></u>
	2023	2022
<b>Analysis of cash and cash equivalents</b>	£'000	£'000
Cash in hand	4,989	5,216
Notice deposits	522	512
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<u><u>5,511</u></u>	<u><u>5,728</u></u>
	2023	2022
<b>Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities</b>	£'000	£'000
Net expenditure for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	(220)	(546)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	212	205
Decrease in creditors	(495)	(1,599)
Increase in debtors	(405)	(63)
Interest receivable	(87)	(2)
Pension reserve net expense, excluding actuarial gains	744	349
Net cash used in operating activities	<u><u>(251)</u></u>	<u><u>(1,656)</u></u>

# Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

## 1. Accounting policies

### Statutory information

National Children's Bureau (NCB) is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, incorporated in the United Kingdom. The registered office address and principal place of business is 23 Mentmore Terrace, London, England E8 3PN.

### Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standards applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the Trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects the current and future periods.

Details of the main accounting estimates can be found in the notes to the accounts. The valuation of the defined benefit pension scheme is in note 17.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

### Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

## Going Concern

After making enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue its activities for the foreseeable future. Accordingly they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements as outlined in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities.

## Consortium charity

NCB is one of four charities in the field of childcare which receive grants from the consortium undertaking, Childlife. The grants are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities with Donations and appeals. Under the SORP the accounts of Childlife do not have to be consolidate. Financial details are set out in note 10.

## Income

Income is recognised when the charity 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.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

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

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

## Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

## Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

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:

- Expenditure on Raising funds relate to the staff costs and other expenditure incurred by the charity in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on Charitable Activities includes staff costs and other expenditure undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs

NCB is a partially-exempt body for VAT purposes. Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

## Delivery partners

Expenditure subcontracted, or managed on, to partners is recognised to the same policy as expenditure above, or when funds are passed on, as a grant, as agreed.

## Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on a basis consistent with the budgeted use of the resources. Support services are allocated by income or by full-time equivalent staff.

Support services includes chief executive office, facilities, finance, human resources and equipment depreciation.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities including trustees, audit and general legal expenses.

## Operating leases

Rental costs under operating leases are charged to the SOFA in equal amounts over the period of the leases.

## Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

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:

- Leasehold property 100 years
- Fitting out costs 20 years
- Furniture and IT equipment 3 to 5 years
- Software 7 years

## Investments

Investments in subsidiaries are at cost.

## Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term liquid investments with a short maturity of one month or less from the date of acquisition or opening of deposit or similar account.

## Notice deposits

Notice Deposits are liquid investments with a notice period greater than one month.

## Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due 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 group 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. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

## Financial instruments

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 their settlement value.

## Pension costs

For part of the year NCB was an admitted body of the South Yorkshire Pension fund (SYPF), which is a defined benefit scheme. Employer's contribution to the pension scheme, which are made in accordance with consulting actuaries' periodic calculations to spread the cost of pensions over the employees' working lives, are charged in the year in which they become payable.

A cost of pension is calculated by the actuaries to comply with the accounting standard FRS 102 allocated to activities in proportion to employer contributions.

Employers' contributions are also made to a defined contribution scheme, managed by Standard Life, and employees' personal pensions. These are charged in the year in which they become payable.

## 2. Income

	Restricted £'000	Unrestricted £'000	2023 £'000	Restricted £'000	Unrestricted £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Donations and legacies</b>	135	102	237	78	131	209
<b>Charitable activities</b>						
Government grants	1,087	-	1,087	1,053	-	1,053
National Lottery Community Fund grants	4,546	-	4,546	5,104	-	5,104
Other project grants	525	-	525	472	-	472
Other income	-	4,422	4,422	-	5,549	5,549
<b>Other activities</b>	-	4	4	-	4	4
<b>Income from investments</b>						
Bank and other interest receivable	-	87	87	-	2	2
	<u>6,293</u>	<u>4,615</u>	<u>10,908</u>	<u>6,707</u>	<u>5,686</u>	<u>12,393</u>

Government grants are for project delivery work secured by a bidding process. Significant items are shown in note 14.

### 3. Expenditure

	Staff £'000	Delivery partners £'000	Other expenses £'000	Support services £'000	2023 £'000
<b>Raising funds</b>					
Fundraising	33	-	6	-	39
<b>Charitable activities</b>	4,742	2,675	1,659	1,271	10,347
Support Services	478	-	764	(1,242)	-
Governance costs	-	-	29	(29)	-
Expenditure before					
pension scheme movements	<u>5,253</u>	<u>2,675</u>	<u>2,458</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,386</u>

#### Comparative figures for the prior year

	Staff £'000	Delivery partners £'000	Other expenses £'000	Support services £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Raising funds</b>					
Fundraising	33	-	2	-	35
<b>Charitable activities</b>	4,845	5,027	1,423	1,260	12,555
Support Services	514	-	704	(1,218)	-
Governance costs	-	-	42	(42)	-
Expenditure before					
pension scheme movements	<u>5,392</u>	<u>5,027</u>	<u>2,171</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,590</u>

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Support Services</b>		
Facilities	675	657
Human resources	183	174
Finance	266	251
Management	118	136
	<u>1,242</u>	<u>1,218</u>

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Governance costs</b>		
Trustees' expenses	2	-

Auditors' remuneration (excluding non-governance services listed below)	25	22
Other expenses	2	20
	<u>29</u>	<u>42</u>
	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure includes</b>		
Depreciation	212	205
Auditors' remuneration - Statutory audit current year provision	25	23
- Statutory audit (over) provision prior year	-	(1)
- Project audits prior and current years	6	4
- Other work	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

Non-staff expenditure on governance and support services (including auditors' remuneration) shown includes partially irrecoverable VAT (where charged by suppliers) according to the balance of business and non-business, and exempt, activity supported. For 2022-23 62% of this VAT was irrecoverable (2021-22 58%), i.e. adding 12.4% (2021-22 11.5%) to relevant costs.

#### 4. Delivery partners

	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
LEAP (Lambeth Early Action Partnership)	2,285	2,582
IASP (Independent Advice and Support Partnership)	-	1,892
Early Years SEND Partnership	376	553
Other	14	-
	<u>2,675</u>	<u>5,027</u>

NCB works in partnership to achieve the aims of its programmes; amounts shown here are subcontracting, or passing on and over-seeing the use of funding, where there is a high degree of visibility for other organisations to the ultimate funder. NCB worked with 89 organisations in this way in the year (2022: 202).

## 5. Staff and trustees

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Staff costs</b>		
Salaries and wages	4,372	4,499
Social Security costs	485	471
Staff pension costs	396	422
	<u>5,253</u>	<u>5,392</u>

	2023 number	2022 number
<b>Average head count staff numbers</b>		
Full-time staff	91	92
Part-time staff	23	21
	<u>114</u>	<u>113</u>

<b>Staff earning over £60,000</b>		
between £60,000 and £70,000	7	5
between £70,000 and £80,000	1	1
between £100,000 and £110,000	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

The key management personnel of the Charity, comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer, Strategic Director - Practice & Programmes Director and Strategic Director - External Affairs (only part of the year). The total employee remuneration and benefits received by the four key management personnel were £357k (2022 five £435k).

In compliance with recommendations for disclosure from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), NCB has chosen to disclose the full-time equivalent, gross salaries of the senior leadership team at 31 March 2023, which were:

Role	2023	2022
Chief Executive	£ 106,689	£ 105,196
Chief Operating Officer	£ 79,640	£ 78,196
Strategic Director - Practice & Programmes	£ 78,701	£ 77,038
Strategic Director - External Affairs	£ 80,363	£ 65,597

The Strategic Director - External Affairs role was relocated to London during the year and appointed at the 23/24 salary level. The other Strategic Director and Chief Operating Officer's salaries were also aligned to this point on 1st April 2023.

No remuneration is payable to trustees. Travel and accommodation expenses totalling £ 2,326 (2022: none) were reimbursed to five trustees, reflecting an increased return to in-person meetings in London.

Trustee Indemnity Insurance £896 (2022: £896) was purchased in the year.

## 6. Tangible fixed assets

Cost	Leasehold property	Furniture and equipment	Total
Cost as at 1 April 2022	4,628	645	5,273
Additions	15	38	53
Disposals	-	(94)	(94)
Cost as at 31 March 2023	4,643	589	5,232
Depreciation as at 1 April 2022	247	413	660
Charge	99	113	212
Disposals	-	(94)	(94)
Depreciation as at 31 March 2023	346	432	778
<b>Net book value as at 31 March 2023</b>	<b>4,297</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>4,454</b>
Net book value as at 31 March 2022	4,381	232	4,613

## 7. Operating lease commitments

The Charity has annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases expiring as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Due within one year</b>		
Land and buildings	2	2
Equipment	-	2
<b>2 to 5 years</b>		
Equipment	3	-
	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>

## 8. Notice deposits

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Notice deposits</b>		
Barclays	<u>522</u>	<u>512</u>

## 9. Shares in subsidiary undertaking

This represents NCB's holding of 100 ordinary shares of £1 each, which is a 100% interest, in the share capital of National Children's Bureau Enterprises Limited, a company registered in England and Wales (no. 2633796) and a wholly owned subsidiary of the charity. Financial statements are filed with the Registrar of Companies.

The company has been dormant for the whole financial year. The net assets brought and carried forward are £5k, with the debtor due from the charity, NCB. An audit was not performed.

Activity may start up again in future, through letting of the new office, or from other emerging fundraising approaches.

## 10. Joint venture

Childlife is a joint venture between four charities, with NCB therefore having an equal 25% share of voting rights. The information below shows the full activities, liabilities and assets, of which NCB has a 25% interest. The 25% share of these amounts are not consolidated into NCB's financial statements. NCB recognised income of £100,000 from Childlife in the year. Notes 1 and 13 provide further information on our relationship.

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Income	1,290	1,174
Expenditure	918	945
Net income	372	229
Distribution to member charities	(400)	(320)
Net movement in funds	(28)	(91)

The aggregate of assets, liabilities and funds was:

Assets	506	478
Liabilities	(111)	(55)
Net assets	395	423
Total funds	395	423

Prior year figures are restated, with no impact elsewhere in these accounts.

## 11. Debtors

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Trade debtors	823	662
Other debtors and prepayments	109	17
Accrued income (unrestricted)	393	292
Accrued income (grants due for projects)	469	418
	1,794	1,389

## 12. Creditors falling due within one year

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Trade Creditors	458	946
Social Security and other taxes	548	612
Pension contributions	35	16
Amount due to subsidiary undertaking	5	5
Other creditors and accrued charges	1,274	1,461
Income received in advance	497	272
	<u>2,817</u>	<u>3,312</u>

	B/fwd 1 Apr 2022 £'000	Received 2023 £'000	Income 2023 £'000	C/fwd 31 March 2023 £'000
Income received in advance in respect of 2022/23				
Services and other income	272	4,840	4,615	497
	<u>272</u>	<u>4,840</u>	<u>4,615</u>	<u>497</u>

## 13. Related party transactions

NCB Enterprises Ltd (a wholly owned subsidiary of NCB, also registered at 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN) did not trade in 2022-23.

The amount owed from the parent company at 31st March 2023 was £5,374 (2022: £5,374). Further details are shown in note 9.

Celine McStravick was a director of Childlife to December 2022 and Lawrence Walker was a director from March 2023; a consortium which donated £100,000 to NCB during 2022-23. No donations were received from any other related parties.

## 14. Restricted funds

Project and Unit funds		B/fwd 1 April 2022	Income	Expense s	C/fwd 31 March 2023
Project	Funder	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Early Years SEND	Department for Education	-	657	(657)	-
United Against Bullying	Department for Education	-	230	(230)	-
Other Grants from Government Departments		35	200	(199)	36
Lambeth Early Action Partnership	National Lottery Community Fund	96	4,546	(3,982)	660
	London Borough of Lambeth	117	-	(117)	-
REAL in Lewisham	Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	150	121	(78)	193
Other grants and income		171	541	(542)	170
		569	6,295	(5,805)	1,059
Other funds		23	-	-	23
		592	6,295	(5,805)	1,082

### Comparative figures for prior year

Project and Unit funds		B/fwd 1 April 2021	Income	Expense s	C/fwd 31 Mar 2022
Project	Funder	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Early Years SEND	Department for Education	-	772	(772)	-
United Against Bullying	Department for Education	-	146	(146)	-
Other Grants from Government Departments		160	135	(260)	35
Lambeth Early Action Partnership	National Lottery Community Fund	55	5,104	(5,063)	96
	London Borough of Lambeth	117	-	-	117
REAL Programme	Education Endowment Foundation	221	50	(260)	11
REAL in Lewisham	Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	113	116	(79)	150
Other grants and income		227	384	(451)	160
		893	6,707	(7,031)	569
Other funds		23	-	-	23
		916	6,707	(7,031)	592

All restricted funds represent grants for specific projects, as agreed with the funder in an application process and carried forward to continue the agreed project, with the exception of the £135k of donations shown on the Statement of Financial Activities and Note 2 (£78k in 2021-22, shown in note 18), which were mainly given by individuals in response to our Anti-Bullying Week campaign, or by organisations to our Special Education Consortium.

## 15. Unrestricted other funds

	B/fwd 1 Apr 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	Allocation s and Transfers £'000	C/fwd 31 March 2023 £'000
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Fixed asset fund	4,613	-	(212)	54	4,455
Strategic priorities fund	400	-	(76)	-	324
Capital Goods Scheme fund	323	-	-	(51)	272
New building fund	68	-	-	-	68
Pension fund	647	4	(78)	(573)	-
	<u>6,051</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>(366)</u>	<u>(570)</u>	<u>5,119</u>
General Funds (Free Reserves)	1,775	4,611	(4,215)	570	2,741
<b>Group - unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>	<u>7,826</u>	<u>4,615</u>	<u>(4,581)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,860</u>

### Comparative figures for the prior year

	B/fwd 1 Apr 2021 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	Allocation s and Transfers £'000	C/fwd 31 Mar 2022 £'000
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Fixed asset fund - designated element	4,661	-	(205)	157	4,613
Strategic priorities fund	400	-	-	-	400
Capital Goods Scheme fund	375	-	-	(52)	323
New building fund	68	-	-	-	68
Pension fund	416	4	(44)	271	647
	<u>5,920</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>(249)</u>	<u>376</u>	<u>6,051</u>
General Funds (Free Reserves)	1,779	5,682	(5,310)	(376)	1,775
<b>Group - unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>	<u>7,699</u>	<u>5,686</u>	<u>(5,559)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,826</u>

**The fixed asset fund** represents the net book value of tangible fixed assets; our office building and its contents, as well as our laptops and systems.

**The new building fund** is set aside to fund the remaining costs for the fit-out, maintenance and enhancement of our main London office property.

**The capital goods scheme** fund is set aside for any additional expense of recovered VAT during the ten-year period of the capital goods scheme that NCB is required to run regarding expenditure on the new leasehold property. This represents NCB's full exposure through the period.

**The strategic priorities fund** is set aside for investment in the coming year (or just beyond) in the transition, knowledge management and legacy of our 10 year LEAP programme as it starts to come to an end, enhancing our digital capabilities and programme management, strengthening the diversity and scale of our income, adapting to new needs for our expertise and celebrating and involving children and young people in NCB's 60th anniversary, as well as continuing to manage the cost of inflationary pressures.

**General funds** represent the net of accumulated surplus and deficits of income and expenditure after transfers to designated funds.

## 16. Analysis of net assets / (liabilities) between funds

	Tangible Fixed Assets £'000	Net Current Assets £'000	Pension Scheme Liability £'000	Total £'000
Restricted Funds	-	1,082	-	1,082
Unrestricted - Designated funds	4,455	664	-	5,119
- General funds	-	2,741	-	2,741
Net Assets before Pension Reserve	4,455	4,487	-	8,942
Pension Reserve	-	-	-	-
Group Net Assets	4,455	4,487	-	8,942

### Comparative figures for the prior year

	Tangible Fixed Assets £'000	Net Current Assets £'000	Pension Scheme Liability £'000	Total £'000
Restricted Funds	-	592	-	592
Unrestricted - Designated funds	4,613	1,438	-	6,051
- General funds	-	1,775	-	1,775
Net Assets before Pension Reserve	4,613	3,805	-	8,418
Pension Reserve	-	-	(3,475)	(3,475)
Group Net Assets	4,613	3,805	(3,475)	4,943

## 17. Pension arrangements

The disclosures set out below relate to pension arrangements to which contributions are made by the charity - a defined benefit scheme, a defined contribution scheme and individual personal pension arrangements.

### Defined benefit scheme

On 30 November 2022 the charity closed to the defined benefit scheme, managed by the South Yorkshire Pension Authority (SYPA), to future accrual, which impacted 19 members of staff. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity by South Yorkshire Pensions Authority. Contributions to the scheme were charged to the Statement of Financial Activities so as to spread the cost of pensions over the employees' working lives with the charity. The cost of NCB's contribution to SYPF for the period ended 30 November 2022 was £124,433 (2022 £195,548).

### Cessation valuation

An actuarial valuation of the charity was carried out to determine the assets and liabilities of the South Yorkshire Pension Fund in respect of the charity's current and former employees, as required under Regulation 64 of the LGPS Regulations 2013, as at 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022. Based on the Fund's cessation approach, the valuation report confirmed in March 2023 that no cessation debt is due from the charity, and no exit credit is payable to the charity.

Set out below are disclosures required for the purposes of FRS 102.

The fair value of assets in the scheme and the expected return were:

	<b>Nov 2022</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Assets		
Equities		27,964
Government & other bonds		10,169
Property		3,813
Cash		424
Other		-
Total market value of assets	42,783	42,369
Present value of scheme liabilities	(42,783)	(45,844)
(Deficit) in the scheme	-	(3,475)

	<b>Nov 2022</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>Assumptions</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>	<b>Assumptions</b>
<b>The major assumptions used by the actuary were:</b>					
Increase in salaries	2.9%	4.2%	3.0%	3.4%	2.8%
Rate of increase in pensions	2.3%	3.2%	2.8%	2.2%	2.3%
Discount rate	3.0%	2.7%	2.1%	2.4%	2.4%
Inflation assumption	9.9%	3.7%	2.7%	2.1%	2.2%
	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Analysis of the amount charged to operating result</b>					
Current service cost	856	378	321	370	347
Past service cost		-	-	306	-
Administration expenses	3	5	5	5	5
Curtailement loss		-	-	150	-
<b>Total operating charge</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>352</b>
<b>Analysis of other finance (expense) income</b>					
Expected return on pension scheme assets		821	805	862	933
Interest on pension scheme liabilities		(973)	(982)	(1,075)	(1,106)
<b>Net (expense) income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(152)</b>	<b>(177)</b>	<b>(213)</b>	<b>(173)</b>
<b>Analysis of remeasurements - liabilities and assets</b>					
Remeasurements - assets		2,911	5,738	(2,324)	1,100
Remeasurements - liabilities		(176)	996	2,282	-
Change in assumptions	4,219	1,264	(6,108)	2,090	(3,228)
<b>Net (loss) / gain</b>	<b>4,219</b>	<b>3,999</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>2,048</b>	<b>(2,128)</b>
<b>Movement in (deficit) during the year:</b>					
Deficit in scheme at beginning of year	(3,475)	(7,125)	(7,446)	(8,885)	(6,570)
Movements in year					
Operating charge	(859)	(383)	(326)	(831)	(352)
Employer contributions	115	186	198	435	338
Other finance expense	0	(152)	(177)	(213)	(173)
Remeasurements (loss) gain - liabilities and assets	4,219	3,999	626	2,048	(2,128)
<b>Deficit in scheme at end of year</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(3,475)</b>	<b>(7,125)</b>	<b>(7,446)</b>	<b>(8,885)</b>

## Defined contribution scheme

The charity participates in a defined contribution scheme independently managed by Standard Life. Contributions to the scheme are charged to the statement of financial activities as they become payable. NCB makes twice the employees' percentage contribution, up to a maximum of 8% of pensionable salaries. The cost of NCB's contributions for the year ended 31 March 2023 was £215,085 (2022: £199,814).

## Personal pension plans

Payments can also be made to employees' personal pensions which are charged in the year in which they become payable. NCB matches employees' contributions up to a maximum of 8% of pensionable salaries. No contributions were made for the year ended 31 March 2023 (2022: £3,015).

## 18. Statement of financial activities with comparatives

	Notes	Restricted Funds £'000	Unrestricted Pension Reserve £'000	Unrestricted Other Funds £'000	2023 £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Unrestricted Pension Reserve £'000	Unrestricted Other Funds £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Income from:</b>	1 & 2								
Donations and legacies		135	-	102	237	78	-	131	209
Charitable activities		6,160	-	4,422	10,582	6,629	-	5,549	12,178
Other trading activities		-	-	4	4	-	-	4	4
Income from investments		-	-	87	87	-	-	2	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,295</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,615</b>	<b>10,910</b>	<b>6,707</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,686</b>	<b>12,393</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>	1, 3 & 6								
Raising funds									
Fundraising		-	-	39	39	-	-	35	35
Other trading activities		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities		5,805	-	4,542	10,347	7,031	-	5,524	12,555
Operating pension scheme movements in year	17	-	744	-	744	-	349	-	349
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,805</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>4,581</b>	<b>11,130</b>	<b>7,031</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>5,559</b>	<b>12,939</b>
<b>Net (expenditure)</b>		<b>490</b>	<b>(744)</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>(220)</b>	<b>(324)</b>	<b>(349)</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>(546)</b>
<b>Other recognised (losses) / gains:</b>									
Actuarial gains / (losses) on defined benefit pension scheme	17	-	4,219	-	4,219	-	3,999	-	3,999
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>490</b>	<b>3,475</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3,999</b>	<b>(324)</b>	<b>3,650</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>3,453</b>

## 19. Financial instruments

At the balance sheet date the group held financial assets at amortised cost of £1687k (2022 £1372k) and financial liabilities at amortised cost of £1737k (2022 £2412k).

Workings:		2023	2022
		£'000	£'000
<b>Current assets:</b>			
Debtors	11	1,794	1,389
exclude prepayments		(107)	(17)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		1,687	1,372
		<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Liabilities:</b>			
Creditors: due within one year	12	2,817	3,312
exclude: Social Security etc		(548)	(612)
exclude: Pension		(35)	(16)
exclude income recvd in adv		(497)	(272)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		1,737	2,412
		<hr/>	<hr/>

## United for a better childhood

For 60 years, the National Children's Bureau has worked to champion the rights of children and young people in the UK. We interrogate policy and uncover evidence to shape future legislation and develop more effective ways of supporting children and families.

As a leading children's charity, we take the voices of children to the heart of Government, bringing people and organisations together to drive change in society and deliver a better childhood for the UK. We are united for a better childhood.

Let's work together: 020 7843 6000 | [info@ncb.org.uk](mailto:info@ncb.org.uk) | [www.ncb.org.uk](http://www.ncb.org.uk) | [@NCBtweets](https://twitter.com/NCBtweets)

London: 23 Mentmore Terrace, London, E8 3PN

Belfast: The NICVA Building, 61 Duncairn Gardens, BT15 2GB

**NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU**

England & Wales - Charity number 258825

---

# Accounts

---



**NATIONAL  
CHILDREN'S  
BUREAU**



# **Building Back Childhood**

Annual report and accounts 2021-22



Company Number: 952717

## Contents

Foreword .....	3
Introduction .....	5
NCB's strategic priorities.....	9
1. Making evidence count.....	9
2. Involving children and young people.....	11
3. Bringing organisations together.....	12
4. Developing the workforce.....	13
5. Growing respect and trust .....	14
Trustees' annual report.....	16
Financial review .....	23
Summary for the year under review .....	27
Financial performance .....	27
Statement of financial activities .....	38

© The National Children's Bureau (NCB) – 2022.

Registered charity number 258825.

NCB's Registered Office is at 23 Mentmore Terrace, Hackney, London, E8 3PN

# Foreword

## From our Chair



The most important questions for any charity board of trustees are does our charity still have a purpose? And are we still as relevant now as we were when we were established?

NCB celebrates its sixtieth anniversary in 2023, at the same time we come to the end of our current five-year strategy. So, it seems like the right time to be asking our stakeholders these questions.

Their answers are affirming. NCB was established to bring the sector together, from Parliament to the playground, grass roots organisations to national charities, academics and policymakers. We are still seen as vital conveners, and as a pillar of the children's sector.

Our activities over the last year confirm our relevance. Alongside our challenging and successful programme delivery and influencing we have worked hard to secure our future.

I am particularly proud of the way we influenced the NHS England strategy so that children are prioritised, and by the honour awarded to Alison Penny MBE, our Director of the Childhood Bereavement Network.

Our future has been strengthened by reducing our core costs which has sadly meant losing some staff. But we also developed a strong five-year financial model, bringing in new funds in a highly competitive environment; recruited new trustees – four of whom are under 25 years old; and commissioned an independent review of our board's effectiveness.

NCB is as vital today as it was in 1963, the challenges and opportunities ahead remain critical to children and families, but I am confident that NCB will rise to meet them.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alison O'Sullivan".

**Alison O'Sullivan – Chair**

## From our Chief Executive



This has been a year of endings and beginnings.

Firstly, we said goodbye to our Independent Advice and Support Programme run through local authorities in England for families of children with special education needs and disabilities (SEND). Our role in establishing these advice services has been completed but we are still involved in supporting local authorities to run them effectively.

Secondly, our work with The National Lottery Community Fund's Head Start programme, working on mental health and wellbeing in schools, came to a finish. However, our work supporting learning and development within this programme complemented

and inspired one of our beginnings: the establishment of our newest specialist membership group, the Schools Wellbeing Partnership.

In another year disrupted by Covid-19, we began to restart face-to-face work and were happy to be back in our offices in Hackney, Lambeth and Belfast.

And we have responded to a busy government agenda, helping to shape new pieces of legislation and contributing to reviews of SEND, education, and social care. And the focus could not be more needed.

The system which children and families rely on for education, support and wellbeing is not fit for purpose. Rising insecurity, debt, homelessness and hunger is not the context in which families can be strengthened and children kept safe.

The increasing strain on family budgets will undoubtedly push more babies, children and young people into precarious situations. NCB will continue to make the case for investment in children, and we will hold to account those who have the power to change the system.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna Feuchtwang". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Anna Feuchtwang - Chief Executive**

## Introduction

**This annual report sets out the progress we've made during 2021-22.**

It provides a close look at how we have been building back childhood after the pandemic, and the difference we made together.

From research on the impact of the pandemic on children with special educational needs and disabilities, to bringing policy makers and services together to hear from children and young people throughout the UK, we have brought every inch of our policy and practice expertise to bear on strengthening systems and empowering children and young people to reach their full potential.

While adapting and responding to emerging needs, we've not missed a beat in our work to keep delivering the changes that make childhood better: driving improvements to the services children count on and gathering intelligence about work on the ground to influence decision-making.

We hope you enjoy finding out more about NCB's work to create a better childhood for every child.

## The NCB family - working together to deliver better childhoods

Every member of the NCB family brings people and organisations together to drive change on particular issues and help deliver a better childhood for the UK.

### Anti-Bullying Alliance

The Anti-Bullying Alliance brings together organisations and individuals working together to achieve our vision to stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

2021-22 highlights include:

- Providing CPD to over 14,977 participants, which included a new course to help schools reduce bullying of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children.
- Establishing a steering group in Wales.
- Delivering Anti-Bullying Week, reaching 7.5 million children with 80% of schools taking part.
- Establishing our new whole-school programme, United Against Bullying.

Read more about our work: [anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

### Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum brings together over 20 statutory and voluntary sector organisations committed to stopping the bullying of children and young people in our schools and communities.

2021-22 highlights include:

- Delivering a successful Anti-Bullying Week in NI, providing anti-bullying activities and resources to all schools in NI.
- Celebrating our Anti-Bullying Week Creative Art Competition and starting our School Staff Award.
- Developing our first Young Advisors group who presented to NI policy makers.
- Supported implementation of the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act.

Read more about our work: [endbullying.org.uk](https://endbullying.org.uk)

## Childhood Bereavement Network

The Childhood Bereavement Network brings together those working with bereaved children, young people and their families across the UK.

2021-22 highlights include:

- Working with partners to steer the work of the UK Commission on Bereavement, investigating the experiences of bereaved people and making recommendations for improving support
- Bringing bereavement professionals and volunteers together in a community of practice with 1200 attendances at our monthly webinars
- Coordinating the sector in responding to policy consultations such as the Terms of Reference of the Covid-19 Public Inquiry

Read more about our work: [childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk](https://childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk)

## LEAP

The Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP) unites local services to improve social and emotional development, communication and language development and diet and nutrition for 0 to 3-year-olds in areas of Lambeth.

2021-22 highlights include:

- An operational data platform that links person-level data across services and provider organisations.
- A shared measurement framework underpinning our collective impact evaluation.
- Appointment of Dartington Service Design Lab as our local evaluation partner.
- Successful development of our community engagement programme through an approach based on seasonal campaigns and co-creation with our partners.
- Completion of 11 capital programmes.

Find out more: [leaplambeth.org.uk](https://leaplambeth.org.uk)

## Schools' Wellbeing Partnership

The Schools' Wellbeing Partnership is a national network of more than 50 member organisations working together to improve the wellbeing and mental health of all children in education.

2021-22 highlights include:

- Convening two joint member events in partnership with the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition, with a focus on ensuring a better systemic response to children and young people's mental health in schools.

- Growing our membership and schools forum.
- Working with partners to develop responses to key consultations including the DfE Behaviour guidance review.

Read more about our work: [schoolswellbeing.org.uk](https://schoolswellbeing.org.uk)

## **Council for Disabled Children**

The Council for Disabled Children is the umbrella body for the disabled children's sector bringing together professionals, practitioners and policymakers.

2021-22 highlights include:

- Delivering consultancy, training, resources and events which bring together key stakeholders at the local, regional and national levels.
- Sharing good practice and working collaboratively to overcome challenges related to the implementation of the SEND reforms.
- Ensuring a focus on achieving positive outcomes through effective and well evidenced joint commissioning.
- Working in partnership to improve access and inclusion for young children with SEND.

Read more about our work: [councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)

## NCB's strategic priorities

NCB work to improve children's lives is founded on five strategic priorities:

1. Influencing legislation, policy and practice to make sure it's based on high quality evidence about what works for children.
2. Enabling children and young people to actively participate in decision-making and influence change.
3. Bringing organisations together to put the best interest of children first.
4. Developing a workforce that is knowledgeable and skilled to make positive changes for children.
5. Building respect and trust as a pioneering and high-performing charity.

Further details on each of these priorities is provided below.

### 1. Making evidence count

#### **Ensuring decisions affecting children and young people are based on sound research about what works.**

Through our leadership role in the sector, NCB made a far-reaching and demonstrable impact on children's lives through our policy, public affairs and campaigning activity.

Based closely on evidence of need, we led the development of a cross-sector vision for the three-year Spending Review, uniting over 150 organisations in a series of campaign actions calling on government to #BuildBackChildhood and put #ChildrenAtTheHeart of their long-term spending plans in England. This significantly influenced the Treasury decision to invest over £500m in additional services for children and families this year.

Taking the lead in the children's sector, NCB delivered a programme of work to put children's needs at the heart of new NHS structures in England, securing a number of amendments to primary legislation included in the Health and Care Bill and embedding a new appreciation within Whitehall of the benefits of integrating services for children. The incredibly busy policy agenda has proved challenging, with NCB also playing a key role in providing evidence, based on the views of those with lived experience, to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, the Leadsom Review, the SEND Review, and the development of Family Hubs.

Our research highlights this year included publishing a report on the impact of Covid-19 on children with SEND which attracted significant attention from the media and NI Assembly. We also delivered our third annual evaluation report on embedding trauma-

informed practice across the workforce in Northern Ireland. We also completed our fieldwork evaluating the work of four projects in England that support care leavers with insecure immigration status, and we continued to ensure that young people and families inform the research work of our academic partners.

In our role as learning and development partner for the National Lottery Community Fund's A Better Start early years programme, we published and disseminated four thematic reports and brought practitioners together in more than 20 online forums to share learning, make connections and develop knowledge. Our success this year culminated in our second annual learning event for A Better Start opened by Minister Will Quince and attended by more than 600 people from across the early years sector.

Our challenges this year were mostly internal with the integration of the NI and London research teams and the recruitment of new team members impacting on our capacity. These issues have been addressed through capacity building work across the research team including embedding high quality project management processes and recruiting a new team member to support our growth opportunities within the academic sector.

## 2. Involving children and young people

### **Amplifying the voices of children and families to make policy more relevant and to improve services.**

NCB's work amplifying the voice of children and young people has faced some significant challenges this year, while also achieving significant successes. Overall, we have increased the amount of work we deliver, and the number of children and young people we work with, and built a strong position for 22/23.

We continue to grow youth voice and put it at the centre of NCB's work. We delivered an NCB-wide social media day that was co-designed with our three long-term youth advisory groups. We developed a youth-led podcast series and built on the number of young people writing blogs on a range of topics. Our Young NCB group has directly contributed to our thinking about the new NCB strategy.

Strategically, we worked with NCB's SLT to develop a safeguarding and consent document to support NCB's staff to plan and deliver safe youth engagement, and we continued to support a number of teams and SMG's to engage with young people, either through direct planning and delivery, or advice and resource development. There has been a significant rise in the number of teams delivering against outcome two in their workplans which really demonstrates the way in which participation is becoming truly embedded across the organisation from data to fundraising.

This year saw the merging of our London and Belfast participation teams into one cross-organisation team. A team working across two jurisdictions has brought exciting opportunities for sharing expertise and bringing together different perspectives. We have said goodbye to participation staff whose expertise has been key in helping us meet targets and expectations, but we have also been able to recruit some highly skilled staff in their place who will support us in broadening our capacity and our ability to take on future work.

This year we successfully bid for and won a three-year extension (with the possibility for a further two years) for the Making Participation Work programme, which is our biggest participation contract. We also won work to become NHS England's strategic children and young people partner for the Learning Disability and Autism Programme until March 2024. This is the first time we have successfully won a multi-year participation contract from NHS England. This funded work has allowed us to put children's voices at the heart of local service delivery.

### **3. Bringing organisations together**

#### **Using our convening power to unite all those who can help us put the best interests of children first.**

Despite the challenges of moving to virtual delivery precipitated by the pandemic, NCB has continued to successfully convene diverse groups of organisations, practitioners and wider stakeholders, channelling their expertise and support into enhanced reach and influence.

We have developed creative and sustainable online engagement opportunities, harnessing new technologies to create new virtual ways of working across NCB teams and the wider specialist networks that make up the NCB family.

NCB has led the way in facilitating information and innovation sharing between stakeholders at all levels including communities of practice, online forums for those working on specific areas, and regional action learning sets focused on building capacity and developing stakeholder relationships at a local level.

We have continued to convene key opportunities for collaboration both through the development of cross-sector-partnerships such as the Children's Service Funding Alliance and the Health Policy Influencing Group, as well as less formal communities of practice in mental health and wellbeing; anti-bullying; special educational needs and disabilities; bereavement; vulnerable children; and the early years.

We have taken particular care to actively engage with children, young people and the organisations representing them, to understand the impact of Covid-19 and to inform recovery planning through convening and amplifying the voice of the sector.

## 4. Developing the workforce

### **Training and equipping an up-to-date and skilled workforce to deliver a better childhood throughout the UK.**

This year, NCB has provided expert advice and training for the children's workforce, equipping people and services with the knowledge and skills to deliver the changes that make childhood better.

Across NCB, we have developed and delivered 42 separate programmes of training, coaching and facilitation, often delivered multiple times across different localities and jurisdictions. In total, we have delivered 577 workforce development events and activities and reached 57,877 individuals. Across all our programmes, our training was rated as 'good' or 'excellent' by 89% of attendees, and 93% said they had improved their skills and knowledge.

We have extensive geographical reach, with our EY SEND Partnership bringing about strategic and cultural change in 72 local authority areas in England, securing local ownership of the change needed. Our Delivering Better Outcomes Together programme worked with 85 local areas to support them with their most pressing issue of concern around delivering services to children and young people with SEND.

Through LEAP in Lambeth, we also support the workforce on a very local basis. The LEAP Team supported one of its providers, The Breastfeeding Network, in delivering a study day with esteemed speakers including Dr Jack Newman and Nakisha Killings discussing infant feeding. The study day was attended by 390 practitioners and parents and was our most popular LEAP event to date.

The leading themes for our workforce development activity are: improving services for children with SEND, preventing and tackling bullying, early years, and supporting multi-agency working.

The majority of our delivery on outcome four is now online. We have continued to develop our digital offer, receiving excellent feedback on the quality of our events.

This year also saw us successfully secure a number of long-term contracts with the Department for Education to support the SEND workforce in future years.

We also secured funding for, and launched, our new online whole school anti-bullying programme 'United Against Bullying', which will support schools to tackle bullying of children with protected characteristics and other at-risk groups.

## 5. Growing respect and trust

**Putting into practice our core governance principles of leadership, integrity, transparency and accountability.**

### **Strong governance**

We successfully recruited seven new trustees - four of whom are aged between 18 and 25 - and one independent board member, filling all our trustee and independent member posts.

This recruitment has significantly diversified our leadership, increasing representation of disability, ethnicity, youth, and lived experience of the care system at a board level.

Furthermore, all our sub-committee positions have been filled and all additional roles appointed, including our equality, diversity and inclusion champion, and the special membership group leads.

To further enhance our trustees' contribution, we commissioned an external consultant to conduct a review of how our board's effectiveness could be improved.

### **Flexible and supportive culture**

We established and implemented our 'Ways of Working' policy to support all our staff to work flexibly whilst recognising the value of face-to-face interpersonal connections and collaboration.

NCB also took important steps to support our team's wellbeing, creating a mental health framework and plan in close collaboration with staff. We also joined MIND's Workplace Wellbeing Index and ran a wellbeing staff survey at the end of the year with results expected in early 2022/23.

### **Delivering the digital strategy**

Our digital strategy moved forward significantly during the year helped by the development of clear governance processes that allow our senior leadership team to approve and prioritise projects and regularly report on progress.

Other achievements included piloting a new event management system, developing end-to-end income tracking in Salesforce, and ongoing testing to support the selection of a new learning management system.

### **Financial responsibility**

To protect NCB during a time of financial uncertainty, we developed a five-year financial model to support longer-term strategic decision making and to provide early warning of

financial challenges ahead. NCB also reduced annual central costs by approximately 15%, as the not-for-profit sector adjusts to economic pressures.

### **Thinking strategically**

To ensure NCB's effectiveness and financial resilience, we established an annual plan aligning planning and reporting processes with clear read across to the annual budget, quarterly re-forecasts, income growth plans, operational plans, and quarterly impact reporting. We also undertook a six-month project to explore the potential of the schools market and revised our research strategy with a focus on clearer links with academic institutions, increasing opportunities for larger, longer-term pieces of work.

### **Improving tools and systems**

NCB introduced an integrated HR and payroll system increasing staff's ability to 'self-serve' and providing better data and more powerful reporting tools. An upgrade of our finance system was also started to ensure seamless provision, and all staff laptops and mobile phones were updated to ensure effective working.

# Trustees' annual report

Incorporating the Directors' Strategic Report and Administrative Report for Companies Act Purposes.

The Trustees of the National Children's Bureau present their Annual Report for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 under the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006, including the Directors' Report and the Strategic Report under the 2006 Act, together with the audited financial statements for the year.

## Administrative information

### Board of Trustees

Alison O'Sullivan	Chair
Elizabeth Railton, CBE	Vice-Chair
Robert Whelan	Treasurer
Yvonne Campbell	
Ajit Dhaliwal	
Fergal McFerran	
Thivya Jeyashanker	(to December 2021)
Clare Laxton	(to September 2021)
Page Nyame-Satterthwaite	(to December 2021)
Shubhi Rajnish	
Nainan Shah	
Kathryn Pugh	(from January 2022)
Jadesola Olusanya	(from January 2022)
Sarah Mullen	(from January 2022)
Catriona Hugman	(from January 2022)
Rose Akinsulire	(from January 2022)
Emma Beeden	(from January 2022)
Bethan Hoggan	(from January 2022)

Members of the Board of Trustees under charity law are also Directors of the charitable company for the purpose of company law.

### Independent committee members

Marjorie James	People & Culture Committee (from March 2022)
Sheena Parker	Finance, Risk & Audit Committee
Laura Sercombe	People & Culture Committee
Judith Worthy	Finance, Risk & Audit Committee

### Strategic leadership team

Anna Feuchtwang	Chief Executive
Annamarie Hassall MBE	Strategic Director of Practice and Programmes (to September 2021)
Dame Christine Lenehan	Strategic Director - Practice and Programmes
Celine McStravick	Strategic Director - External Affairs
Rachel Rand	Chief Operating Officer

### Advisors

#### Auditors

Sayer Vincent LLP  
Invicta House  
108-114 Golden Lane  
London  
EC1Y 0TL

#### Bankers

Barclays Bank PLC  
1 Churchill Place  
London E14 5HP

#### Investment managers

CCLA Investment Management Ltd  
80 Cheapside  
London EC2V 6DZ

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) was registered as a charity in 1969 (charity number 258825), although it was founded in 1963 as the National Bureau for Cooperation in Child Care. NCB is also a company limited by guarantee (registration number 952717) and has a subsidiary trading company, National Children's Bureau Enterprises Ltd (registration number 2633796).

NCB's Registered Office is at 23 Mentmore Terrace, Hackney, London, E8 3PN

NCB was established for the public benefit in order to advance the well-being of children and young people in particular by (but not limited to):

- relieving poverty, sickness and distress
- safeguarding and maintaining health and well-being
- encouraging positive and supportive family and other environments for children and young people
- advancing education and training
- reducing inequalities
- ensuring that children and young people have a strong voice in all matters that affect their lives.

For the purposes of carrying out these objects, NCB's Articles of Association expect it to promote and organise cooperation and partnerships and to influence and inform policy, practice and service development by bringing together voluntary organisations, statutory authorities, individual professionals and all those concerned with the well-being of children and young people.

The liability of members in respect of the guarantee, as set out in the Articles, is limited to £1 per member of the company.

### **Governance and management**

The Board is ultimately accountable for NCB's strategic and financial sustainability and growth and that this is achieved through an organisational culture based on integrity, accountability and transparency. With this, NCB is committed to upholding its organisational culture and values in-line with the seven principles of the Charity Governance Code (updated 2020):

- Organisational purpose
- Leadership
- Integrity
- Decision making, risk and control
- Board effectiveness
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Openness and accountability

NCB's Board of Trustees and Strategic Leadership Team reflect these standards across practices, function and behaviours, conscious of the fact that the organisational culture is influenced and embedded from these levels. The Governance Code is also embedded across NCB particularly with regard to setting the foundations for the governance objectives and outcomes in the organisational strategy 2018-2023.

As set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, NCB's Board of Trustees comprises a maximum membership of fifteen, including the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer and at least two Trustees must be under the age of 25 years at the time of appointment to fulfil NCB's young governance requirements. The maximum size of the Board of Trustees exceeds the Governance Code's recommended maximum in the recognition of the fact younger trustees are at a stage in life where they typically have less control over their time so are less likely to be able to attend all meetings.

Each Board member serves a maximum of two terms each of three-years, with the possibility of a one-year extension at the end of their second term in exceptional circumstances. At Year-end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, the Board membership was fifteen with the above requirements met.

Over the reporting period, three Trustees retired from the Board upon conclusion of full term of services. Seven new Trustees, including four under the age of 25 years, were successfully appointed through a wide reaching, transparent and robust recruitment process supported by Inclusive Boards.

New Trustees were provided with a full induction programme introducing the role of the charity Trustee, NCB leadership, governance, finance, development, core delivery programmes and have a buddy system in place for further support in navigating the Board's business and the work for NCB.

The Board remains fully committed to promoting an inclusive approach recognising that a more diverse Board better supports its leadership, effectiveness and decision making from harnessing a broader range of perspectives and that lived experience is as equally valuable as professional expertise. The Board seeks to continuously develop and enhance its structures and ways of working to support inclusivity. As part of the process, the Board periodically reviews its collective membership and individual expertise, lived experience and development requirements. Annual one to ones are held with each Trustee and either the Chair or Vice-Chair and external effectiveness reviews are undertaken periodically to obtain independent assessment and advice.

A detailed independent assessment of board effectiveness was commissioned and undertaken in the year. The report concludes that NCB demonstrates an impressive breadth and depth of compliance with the recommendations held within the Charity Governance Code for Board effectiveness. In the spirit of continued development, the Board has prioritised areas for further improvement over the next period.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board swiftly and effectively moved its arrangements online. The Board is currently reviewing its arrangements with an expectation of adoption of a hybrid model in future.

The Finance, Risk and Audit Committee (FRAC) ensures that NCB is compliant in its financial obligations, auditing standards and legal requirements of regulatory bodies, including the Charity Commission, through an appropriate framework of policies, processes and controls.

The People and Culture Committee is focused on all matters pertaining to 'people' including Board membership, succession planning, Trustee recruitment, equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) and delivery of key strategic objectives set out in NCB's People Plan. The Committee oversaw the recruitment and induction of seven new Trustees in the year, bringing the Board to full strength.

The Board may establish advisory groups to support the development of strategic objectives. The Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) continues its work to support the diversification of NCB's income generation.

## Senior pay

NCB aims to ensure that all staff are paid on a grade appropriate to the nature of the work and the experience, knowledge and skills needed to carry out the job within the organisation.

NCB also aims to ensure that all jobs are at a pay level which is reasonable when compared with the external market pay ranges for the charity and civil service sectors. The grades of all roles are assessed as part of NCB's job evaluation process, with the exception of the Chief Executive's and Directors' salaries which are proposed by the People and Culture Committee of the Board of Trustees for determination by the Board of Trustees.

## Fundraising

NCB has not contracted the services of professional fundraisers or commercial participants. NCB benefits as one of four recipients from donations secured by Childlife, a consortium charity whose methods include door-to-door, street fundraising and payroll giving. All activity lines are rigorously observant of industry recognised, best practice in ethical fundraising.

We delegate our low-level individual giving because our work does not lend itself to a large scale, fundraising opportunity with the general public. Accordingly, the advice we give to those wishing to fundraise on our behalf, is offered on a case-by-case basis, with Institute of Fundraising best practice in mind.

NCB and Childlife are registered with the Fundraising Regulator. No complaints have been received about our fundraising activities.

## Risk and internal control

The Trustees continue to review the risks facing NCB group, controls in place and mitigating actions being taken using the organisation's general statement of risk appetite with its corresponding set of principles around generally acceptable levels of risks.

The Trustees remain of the view that appropriate control procedures are in place to manage risks and that the systems of financial control comply in all material aspects with the guidelines issued by the Charity Commission.

The Trustees note the following specific areas that give rise to the potential major risks for the next financial year:

Risk	Key mitigating actions
<p>Financial:</p> <p>Cost inflation, rising energy prices and rising employment costs will all put pressure on operating margins, especially in multi-year contracts where increased costs cannot be passed on to the funder.</p> <p>NCB's financial operating model requires the organisation to be of a certain size to cover fixed operating costs. A failure to secure a sufficient level of funding and a lack of diversification of income increases the risk of operating deficits eroding free reserves.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retention of financial planning with extended, five-year, time horizons.</li> <li>• Significant central cost reduction exercise undertaken in late 2021/22 with changes fully embedded for 2022/23.</li> <li>• Staff pay bands linked to benchmark reflecting triennial market rate analysis.</li> <li>• Multi-year development strategy in operation to focus on areas with most potential for income growth and diversification.</li> </ul>
<p>Delivery:</p> <p>The move to wholly virtual delivery was a required response to the pandemic. As restrictions lift, we engage with the challenge of determining which elements of digital delivery to retain and where is best to return to an in-person model.</p> <p>A higher proportion of digital delivery will continue for the long-term so we must ensure correct resourcing and cost modelling is in place with suitable systems in operation to support our work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early engagement with funders over preferred methods of delivery with evidence-based recommendations relying on the experience of recent years.</li> <li>• Detailed evaluations undertaken to establish impact of delivery as well as reach.</li> <li>• Project costing tools regularly revised and updated to accurately reflect the costs of high-quality virtual delivery.</li> <li>• Dedicated Digital team now established to support in selection, integration and adoption of digital solutions as well as providing ongoing support of current digital tools.</li> </ul>

People:

The ongoing establishment of a hybrid model of working brings many positives for our people but also presents risks including a more fragmented workforce, reduced capacity for creativity and diluted professional relationships.

Conversely, a failure to achieve a sufficiently flexible working culture and provision of a working environment supportive of more digital delivery in the long-term could negatively impact on our ability to retain or recruit staff.

- Ongoing clear two-way communication with staff ensuring feedback from staff is considered at all stages and the evolution in working practices is established as transparently as possible.
- Recognition that we are operating in a changing environment so an ongoing process of assessment, consultation and review will be appropriate.
- Increased automation of recruitment processes to improve the experience, efficiency and reporting capabilities.
- Extended reporting on staff turnover, exit interview findings and induction experiences.

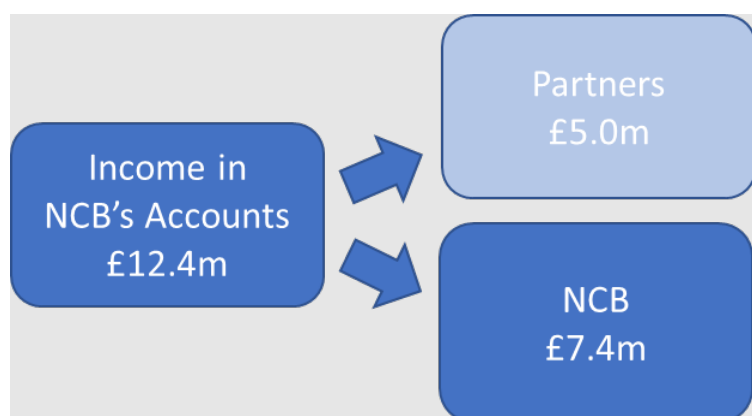
# Financial review

## Understanding NCB's finances

### Leading partnerships

Income shown in our accounts is £12.4m. However, this is inflated by £5.0m of funding that is received by NCB, but is passed on to partner organisations, leaving a core income of £7.4m.

£1.9m of the funds managed on to partners is under the Information, Advice and Support Programme (IASP) we run on behalf of the Department for Education and £2.6m to partners in the Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP), a 10-year programme funded by the National Lottery Community Fund as part of their A Better Start initiative.



One of our great strengths is convening the children's sector and therefore we are often asked, by Government and others, to lead partnerships. Part of our role, for the funder's convenience, is to receive, distribute and steward funding among partner organisations involved in a particular programme.

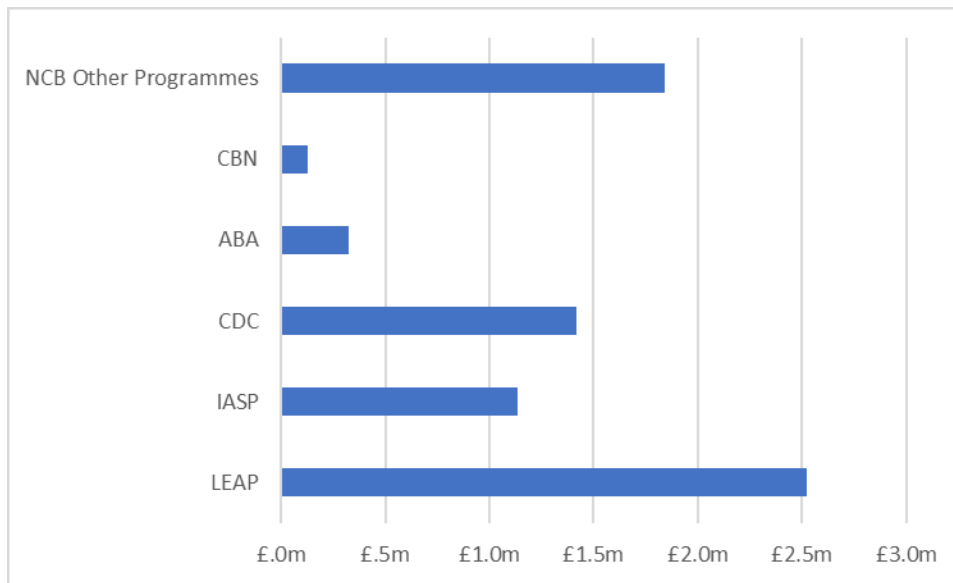
We still recognise this as income in our accounts, despite not funding NCB activity, for two reasons:

- We are required to by accounting standards, as we oversee and direct the funds.
- It helps ensure our budget holders have ease of visibility of all their financial transactions, helping strong financial management.

### NCB's structure

NCB is a family, bringing together expert membership networks to provide a unifying voice in the sector, including the Council for Disabled Children, the Anti-Bullying Alliance and the Childhood Bereavement Network.

The £7.3m 2021/22 net income (i.e. excluding money to partners) can be broken down as follows:



### **NCB's unrestricted income**

NCB's accounts for 2021/22 show unrestricted income of £5.7m. It is important to understand that, according to charity accounting rules, this must include income earned by NCB through contracts and the sale of training and memberships, even though this income merely covers the unavoidable cost of delivering those contracted services. Only the £131k shown as unrestricted donations and legacies was genuinely given to NCB with free choice as to how to use it.

### **NCB's reserves and reserves policy**

In line with the Charity Commission's best practice, NCB's Trustees maintain a reserves policy. Whilst we would otherwise spend our funds on achieving charitable impact, we retain sufficient free reserves (ie unrestricted funds, excluding those tied up in our property or set aside to be spent soon, and excluding the pension deficit), to protect against the impact of volatility in future funding, disruption to operations and other risks, and to invest in adapting and evolving our services, to ensure we sustain our impact for future beneficiaries.

NCB's trustees have adapted a standard, benchmarked framework to assess the reserves required to safeguard the charity against future risks and provide for future opportunities. In their assessment, the trustees review the organisation's risk register and consider the possible financial impacts of those risks, of which the following are considered material:

- NCB may need to cover costs and ensure continuity of impact and, ultimately, solvency in the case of changes (including abrupt changes) to funding over the coming years.

- Government funding, specifically, could be delayed or significantly changed, initially due to disruption to spending plans, requiring NCB to cover staff and other costs in an interim period.
- The defined benefit pension scheme is valued on a triennial basis. We do not require input from reserves in the immediate period, but expect to in the very near future. Macro-economic conditions, scheme risk-management, membership or proactive assessment by NCB could increase the need for additional funding in future, which could be significant in value.
- We will need to continue to make cyclical investment in new products and services, to meet emerging policy aims and societal needs and generate the next income streams for NCB to sustain the charity. This may not be recoverable through funding and selling.
- Other adverse events could require unbudgeted payment, such as failure of compliance with HMRC or GDPR.
- Costs would need to be met in the event of closing the charity down, e.g. ensuring the continuity of services, administrator costs, redundancies. (While this is not remotely perceived to be needed, it is prudent to set this aside at all times and we assess that this would be significant, given the complexity of NCB.)

NCB typically only receives around £100k of donation-type income each year, with all other income tied closely to delivery expenditure. This means it is difficult to rebuild free reserves after they are spent, which encourages NCB to take a more conservative approach to retaining these funds for adverse events. The current free reserves have been built primarily from the recent sale of freehold property (net of reinvestment in the new London office), meaning Trustees consider there to be less pressure to promptly spend these funds than if they had been donated with the expectation of achieving timely impact. NCB anticipates that the need for its system improvement work, to continue delivering a better childhood across a wide range of themes, will evolve but continue to exist for the foreseeable future. So, there is no impetus to spend down reserves to 'complete' our mission.

Trustees regularly review in-year and multi-year financial forecasts, including the impact on free reserves, and consider the need for adaptive action to maintain sufficient reserves. The significant IASP contract ended in March 2022 and our LEAP programme is scheduled to end in its current form in 2025. NCB has good plans for development of future funding, for programmes that meet emerging needs in society, and trustees are conscious of the risk of funding shortfall in our plan and financial models, for which we need to earmark reserves.

Trustees assess that NCB should generally hold a minimum of £1m at any time, and we would expect to explain here our reasoning and plan, should reserves fall below this. In considering the risks at present and in our near future, as set out above, Trustees are also comfortable that reserves significantly higher than this also represent an appropriate balance between using funds for impact and maintaining organisational integrity to ensure NCB continues to be a reliable partner to funders and to meet the

anticipated need to improve childhoods for years to come. This considers that the risks above are extremely unlikely to all be of imminent concern at any one time. Should free reserves exceed £2m, we would expect to explain here our plan for investing some of these, or our reasoning for retaining the full amount at that time.

Current free reserves are £1.8m (with a further £1.4m designated against specific risks and plans), in line with this policy and rightly at the higher end in light of the need to continue to manage through some disruption ahead due to evolving our portfolio of projects, as well as economic and conditions and uncertainties. As is outlined elsewhere in this report this disruption will impact funding across multiple years, but this is not anticipated to be severe, still leaving appropriate reserves to cover the other needs and risks listed. NCB's operational budget is to break even, matching income and expenditure, while delivering across this strategic period and therefore maintain these reserves. In addition to this aim, our agreed budget for 2022/23 anticipates a small deficit, as we continue to deliver the full breadth of our core activities, underwriting these where funding is difficult to find, and invest in our future development to grow our scale and evolve to meet emerging needs, including strengthening our ability to deliver our impact digitally. £0.4m of the designated funds mentioned above are for this investment. We will therefore continue to look for external funding for all our programmes and investment funding to help us develop new solutions to meet these emerging needs.

In addition to our free reserves, we have a leasehold property asset (£4.4m). This asset primarily represents an investment in reducing running costs and provides value for money to our funders, but it could also provide further liquid reserves if required in the future, or security against risk and volatility in, say, our pension scheme. We have designated less than £0.1m of funds at this year-end to cover planned additions to the property, and £0.3m for potential further VAT costs under the capital goods scheme. Designated funds total £1.4m and £6.1m including the fixed asset fund.

NCB also has a long-term pension deficit, which is managed via an agreed, standard recovery plan and not likely to crystallise as a liability in the near future (**and against which we designate a small amount of reserves to help meet periodic changes in the recovery plan**), and restricted project funds of £0.6m (2021 £0.9m) received in advance and strictly ring-fenced for delivery of the projects agreed with the funders. The total funds held by the charity therefore stand at £4.9m (2021 £1.5m)

## Summary for the year under review

2022/23 sees NCB come towards the end of a five-year strategy. We have developed a new five-year financial model and development plan, as we move towards a new strategic period. The plan is designed to grow and strengthen the diversity of income as we meet evolving and emerging needs, maintaining economies of scale and value. The focus on financial balance has seen us break-even this year (as in the previous three years), matching unrestricted income and expenditure, and maintaining our strong reserves. Our aim is to continue to do so in future years.

The result seen in the financial statements can be broken down as follows:

There was a small operating surplus on unrestricted funds (excluding the pension scheme) of £0.1m (2021 £0.2m), representing an important continuation of running at break-even whilst maintaining investment in income generation for future years.

Net expenditure on operational restricted funds was £0.3m, reflecting merely the timing of spend on grant funded projects.

This resulted in the net of NCB's assets and current liabilities being strengthened to £8.4m (2021 £8.6m) and free reserves maintained at £1.8m (2021 £1.8m). NCB is therefore in a strong financial position, with free reserves above the policy minimum set out above, a significant property asset and a strong, strategic income generation approach to continue the strong financial performance in the years ahead.

Alongside this positive result and position, NCB's overall net assets increased from £1.5m to £4.9m due to a significant decrease in the actuarial valuation of the liability in our defined benefit pension scheme from £7.1m to £3.5m. Whilst we must show the valuation according to FRS102 methodology in our accounts, this is a very long-term liability. NCB manages this in a long-term approach with the fund, meeting all funding requirements set out by the fund's actuaries every three years and the latest valuation for contribution purposes showed the fund in surplus. Our continuing break-even result for this year is strong evidence that we will continue to sustainably meet any pension fund requirements.

## Financial performance

### Income

As expected, overall income decreased during the year from £16.2m in 2020/21 to £12.4m. Unrestricted income reduced to £5.7m (£8.2m in 2020/21), reflecting mainly the funder-planned reduction in subcontracts and funding passing through to partners on our IASP contract. Restricted income lessened from £8.0m to £6.7m, reflecting the change in activity in our 'A Better Start' programme for National Lottery Community Fund and some other programmes being smaller. Outside of these the charity continues to hold a number of government contracts for the future and has secured significant

grants for its projects and research from a range of government, trust and other sources.

## **Expenditure**

Expenditure decreased in line with the changes in activity on our major contracts and grants, as expected and outlined above, from £16.2m last year to £12.9m this year.

## **Financial position**

NCB's total reserves increased from £1.5m at the start of the year to £4.9m at the end of the year. NCB has a strong general funds position (£1.8m) retained in line with the reserves policy by virtue of the break-even performance in the year, alongside further funds designated to meet specific needs or risks in the near future. In addition, total assets, less current liabilities of £8.4m (£8.6m 2021), includes the funds invested in our main London office. Whilst the lessened deficit in the pension fund (£3.5m, £7.1m 2021) is still significant, this is a long-term liability subject to fluctuations in economic conditions at the balance sheet date and is being managed and paid off under a standard recovery plan, with annual contributions managed comfortably within our annual budgeting.

## **Other matters**

### **Leasehold property**

After disruption due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we are delighted to be back in our offices and working together. Trustees have retained a small amount of designated funds to allow for some final works to enhance the space, delayed due to Covid-19 restrictions, as set out in note 16 to the accounts.

### **Pension fund**

The valuation of NCB's defined benefit pension scheme as at 31 March 2022 (under FRS102 principles) has seen a decrease in the scheme deficit to £3.5m (from £7.1m in 2021), mainly due to change in inflation assumptions and the discount rate used to measure the future liabilities. Estimates used by the actuary in the calculation of this accounting deficit valuation have been benchmarked by the Trustees and are considered appropriate. Further details are shown in Note 18 to the accounts.

NCB closed its defined benefit scheme to new entrants in 2012/13 and now runs a defined contribution scheme for new starters. NCB continues to meet and monitor its annual obligations to the scheme, including the repayment of the deficit, as agreed with the scheme provider. The latest triennial valuation (as at 31st March 2019) calculated that no deficit recovery contributions were required for the next three years. NCB continues to hold funds to meet future increased obligations over the long term, and to allow proactive and responsive management of the scheme as it evolves, including in light of the impact of macro-economic factors.

## **Going concern**

As is normal in the preparation of accounts, Trustees are required to determine whether the accounts are to be compiled on a going concern basis. All organisations will be placing increased scrutiny on this exercise in light of the impact and future economic influences caused by the Covid-19 virus.

The recent sale of the freehold property, and subsequent investment in a new property has put NCB in a strong reserves and cash position. This took place alongside restructuring, three subsequent years of break-even financial performance in running our charitable activities and the establishment of a medium-term financial strategy to strengthen the diversity of our income while continuing to break-even each year. This plan began to strengthen our finances in 2021/22 and will do so further in the years ahead.

NCB currently holds £1.8m of free reserves (in excess of designated funds), which meets the reserves policy set out above, including in light of the impacts from the Covid-19 disruption described above, and assures the Board of Trustees we can meet any risks that become issues, and puts NCB in a good position for the coming period.

Taking all these factors into consideration Trustees believe it is reasonable to expect that NCB will generate sufficient resources to finance its operations for the foreseeable future and believe there are no material uncertainties that call into doubt the charity's ability to continue. Accordingly, the accounts have been prepared on the basis that the charity is a going concern.

## **Subsidiary**

National Children's Bureau Enterprises Ltd exists to manage, as and when appropriate, conference and lettings programmes, various funding activities and support services for other charities. The majority of work has largely been stopped, and the residual, incidental trading activity handled within the charity itself, resulting in no turnover or profit in the company for the year, as was the case in the prior year. The company was dormant throughout the financial year. Any profit made by NCB Enterprises' is gift-aided to the charity.

## **Investment policy**

NCB's investment policy is to limit investment in more volatile assets and to keep key reserves in cash deposits. The Trustees continue to monitor this approach to investment, to ensure the best use of the significant funds from the sale of the freehold property. This is the role of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee which is chaired by the Treasurer, with the Chair attending as an observer, and with the Chief Executive and the Chief Operating Officer in attendance.

The Committee advises the Board on investment policy to ensure risk, return and liquidity are balanced in the best interests of the charity and, where necessary, will seek independent external advice. In addition, it recommends to the Board the proportion of its investments to be held in longer term funds against maintaining prudent cash, or cash equivalent, balances, or retaining for use directly on charitable activities, infrastructure and operations.

For any future investment in equities and other financial products, the charity will continue with an ethical investment policy, including avoiding companies with more than 50 per cent of their turnover in gambling, tobacco or armaments. The Committee will also advise the Board on maintaining a reasoned ethical approach, and will seek to take external advice to set this against the need for proper returns on new funds.

## Statement of responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Strategic Report, the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards) and applicable law. 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 its net incoming resources for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue to operate.

The trustees are responsible for keeping 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Insofar as each of the trustees of the company at the date of approval of this report is aware there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the company's auditor in connection with preparing the audit report) of which the company's auditor is unaware. Each trustee has taken all of the steps that he/ she should have taken as a trustee in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information.

### Compliance with statutory requirements

The financial statements have been prepared in compliance with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (SORP FRS 102) issued under the auspices of the Charity Commission.

### Funders, stakeholders and sponsors

We would like to express our grateful thanks to government departments, charitable bodies, companies and individuals for their considerable support in financing NCB's activities.

## Auditors

Sayer Vincent LLP has indicated its willingness to be reappointed statutory auditor.

This Annual Report of the Trustees, under the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006, was approved by the Board of Trustees on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022, including approving in their capacity as company directors the Strategic Report contained therein, and is signed as authorised on its behalf by:

Alison O'Sullivan

Chair

National Children's Bureau

Company Number: 952717

# Independent Auditor's Report

Independent auditor's report to the members of National Children's Bureau

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of National Children's Bureau (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including 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 Republic of 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
- 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 the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company 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 National Children's Bureau'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 trustees 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 trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. 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. 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 course of 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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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.

## 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, including the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, has 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 charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report including the strategic report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which 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.

## Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, 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 the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

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 are set out below.

## Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
  - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

## 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 charitable 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 anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Joanna Pittman (Senior statutory auditor)

7 July 2022

For and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor

Invicta House, 108-114 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TL

## Statement of financial activities

### (incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

Year ended 31 March 2022

	Notes	Restricted Funds £'000	Unrestricted Pension Reserve £'000	Unrestricted Other Funds £'000	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Income from:</b>	1 & 2					
Donations and legacies		78	-	131	209	163
Charitable activities		6,629	-	5,549	12,178	16,070
Other trading activities		-	-	4	4	4
Income from investments		-	-	2	2	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,707</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,686</b>	<b>12,393</b>	<b>16,239</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>	1, 3 & 6					
Raising funds						
Fundraising		-	-	35	35	31
Charitable activities		7,031	-	5,524	12,555	15,833
Operating pension scheme movements in year	18	-	349	-	349	305
<b>Total</b>		<b>7,031</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>5,559</b>	<b>12,939</b>	<b>16,169</b>
<b>Net income (expenditure)</b>		<b>(324)</b>	<b>(349)</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>(546)</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Other recognised gains / (losses):</b>						
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension scheme	18	-	3,999	-	3,999	626
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(324)</b>	<b>3,650</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>3,453</b>	<b>696</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>						
Total funds brought forward		916	(7,125)	7,699	1,490	794
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>592</b>	<b>(3,475)</b>	<b>7,826</b>	<b>4,943</b>	<b>1,490</b>

Notes 1 to 20 form part of these financial statements.

Full comparative figures are shown in note 19.

## Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2022

	Notes	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Fixed assets:</b>			
Tangible assets	1 & 6	4,613	4,662
Shares in subsidiary undertaking	10	-	-
<b>Total fixed assets</b>		<u>4,613</u>	<u>4,662</u>
<b>Current assets:</b>			
Debtors	12	1,389	1,326
Notice deposits	9	512	512
Cash at bank		5,216	7,026
<b>Total current assets</b>		<u>7,117</u>	<u>8,864</u>
<b>Liabilities:</b>			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	(3,312)	(4,911)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>3,805</u>	<u>3,953</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		8,418	8,615
Defined benefit pension scheme liability		(3,475)	(7,125)
<b>Total net assets</b>	17	<u>4,943</u>	<u>1,490</u>
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>			
Restricted Funds	1 & 15	592	916
General Funds	1 & 16	1,775	1,779
Other Unrestricted Funds	1 & 16	6,051	5,920
		<u>8,418</u>	<u>8,615</u>
Unrestricted pension reserve	18	(3,475)	(7,125)
<b>Total charity funds</b>		<u>4,943</u>	<u>1,490</u>

Notes 1 to 20 form part of these financial statements

The net result for the period ending 31 March 2022 was a surplus of £3.5m (2021 surplus of £0.7m).

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the trustees on 29th June 2022 and were signed on their behalf by:

Alison O'Sullivan, Chair

National Children's Bureau, Company number: 952717

## Cash Flow Statement

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
<b>Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities</b>	<u>(1,656)</u>	<u>(808)</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Interest and dividends from investments	2	2
Purchase of leasehold property and equipment	(156)	(46)
<b>Net cash provided by investing activities</b>	<u>(154)</u>	<u>(44)</u>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</b>	(1,810)	(852)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	<u>7,538</u>	<u>8,390</u>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>	<u><u>5,728</u></u>	<u><u>7,538</u></u>
<b>Analysis of cash and cash equivalents</b>	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Cash in hand	5,216	7,026
Notice deposits	<u>512</u>	<u>512</u>
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<u><u>5,728</u></u>	<u><u>7,538</u></u>
<b>Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities</b>	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	(546)	70
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	205	192
(Decrease) / increase in creditors	(1,599)	(1,905)
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	(63)	532
Interest and dividends receivable	(2)	(2)
Pension reserve net expense, excluding actuarial gains	349	305
<b>Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities</b>	<u><u>(1,656)</u></u>	<u><u>(808)</u></u>

# Notes to the financial statements

for the year ended 31 March 2022

## 1. Accounting policies

### Statutory information

National Children's Bureau (NCB) is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, incorporated in the United Kingdom. The registered office address and principal place of business is 23 Mentmore Terrace, London, England E8 3PN.

### Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 (FRS 102) - Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the Trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates.

"Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects the current and future periods.

Details of the main accounting estimates can be found in the notes to the accounts. The valuation of the defined benefit pension scheme is in note 18."

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

### Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

### Going concern

After making enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue its activities for the foreseeable future. Accordingly

they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements as outlined in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities.

### **Consortium charity (Joint venture)**

NCB is one of four charities in the field of childcare which receive grants from the consortium undertaking, Childlife. The grants are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities with Donations and appeals. Under the SORP the accounts of Childlife do not have to be consolidated. Financial details are set out in note 11.

### **Income**

Income is recognised when the charity 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.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

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

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

### **Fund accounting**

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

### **Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT**

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:

- Expenditure on Raising funds relate to the staff costs and other expenditure incurred by the charity in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on Charitable Activities includes staff costs and other expenditure undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs

NCB is a partially-exempt body for VAT purposes. Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

### **Delivery Partners**

Expenditure subcontracted, or managed on, to partners is recognised to the same policy as expenditure above, or when funds are passed on, as a grant, as agreed.

### **Allocation of support costs**

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on a basis consistent with the budgeted use of the resources. Support services are allocated by income or by full-time equivalent staff.

Support services include the chief executive office, facilities, finance, human resources and equipment depreciation.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities including trustees, audit and general legal expenses.

### **Operating leases**

Rental costs under operating leases are charged to the SOFA in equal amounts over the period of the leases.

### **Tangible fixed assets**

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

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:

- Leasehold property                      100 years
- Fitting out costs                          20 years
- Furniture and IT equipment              3 to 5 years
- Software                                      7 years

## **Investments**

Investments in subsidiaries are at cost.

## **Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term liquid investments with a short maturity of one month or less from the date of acquisition or opening of deposit or similar account.

## **Notice Deposits**

Notice Deposits are liquid investments with a notice period greater than one month.

## **Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due 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 group 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. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

## **Financial instruments**

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 their settlement value.

## **Pension costs**

NCB is an admitted body of the South Yorkshire Pension fund (SYPF), which is a defined benefit scheme. Employer's contribution to the pension scheme, which are made in accordance with consulting actuaries' periodic calculations to spread the cost of pensions over the employees' working lives, are charged in the year in which they become payable.

A cost of pension is calculated by the actuaries to comply with the accounting standard FRS 102 allocated to activities in proportion to employer contributions.

Employers' contributions are also made to a defined contribution scheme, managed by Standard Life, and employees' personal pensions. These are charged in the year in which they become payable.

## 2. Income

	Restricted £'000	Unrestricted £'000	2022 £'000	Restricted £'000	Unrestricted £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Donations and legacies</b>	78	131	209	39	124	163
<b>Charitable activities</b>						
Government grants	1,053	-	1,053	1,658	-	1,658
National Lottery Community Fund grants	5,104	-	5,104	5,504	-	5,504
Other project grants	472	-	472	812	-	812
Other income	-	5,549	5,549	-	8,096	8,096
<b>Other activities</b>	-	4	4	-	4	4
<b>Income from investments</b>						
Bank and other interest receivable	-	2	2	-	2	2
	<u>6,707</u>	<u>5,686</u>	<u>12,393</u>	<u>8,013</u>	<u>8,226</u>	<u>16,239</u>

Government grants are for project delivery work secured by a bidding process.  
Significant items are shown in note 15.

### 3. Expenditure

	Staff £'000	Delivery partners £'000	Other expenses £'000	Support services £'000	2022 £'000
<b>Raising funds</b>					
Fundraising	33	-	2	-	35
<b>Charitable activities</b>	4,845	5,027	1,423	1,260	12,555
Support Services	514	-	704	(1,218)	-
Governance costs	-	-	42	(42)	-
Expenditure before pension scheme movements	<u>5,392</u>	<u>5,027</u>	<u>2,171</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,590</u>

#### Comparative figures for the prior year

	Staff £'000	Delivery partners £'000	Other expenses £'000	Support services £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Raising funds</b>					
Fundraising	30	-	1	-	31
<b>Charitable activities</b>	4,440	8,315	1,961	1,117	15,833
Support Services	459	-	623	(1,082)	-
Governance costs	-	-	35	(35)	-
Expenditure before pension scheme movements	<u>4,929</u>	<u>8,315</u>	<u>2,620</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,864</u>

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Support Services</b>		
Facilities	657	551
Human resources	174	162
Finance	251	225
Management	136	144
	<u>1,218</u>	<u>1,082</u>

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Governance costs</b>		
Trustees' expenses	-	-
Auditors' remuneration (excluding non-governance services listed below)	22	23
Other expenses	20	12
	<u>42</u>	<u>35</u>

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Expenditure includes</b>		
Depreciation	205	192
Auditors' remuneration - Statutory audit current year provision		
	23	21
- Statutory audit (over) under provision prior year	(1)	1
- Project audits prior and current years	4	3
- Other work	0	1
	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>

Non-staff expenditure on governance and support services (including auditors' remuneration) shown includes partially irrecoverable VAT (where charged by suppliers) according to the balance of business and non-business, and exempt, activity supported. For 2021-22 58% of this VAT was irrecoverable (2020-21 54%), ie adding 11.5% (2020-21 10.8%) to relevant costs.

#### 4. Delivery Partners

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
LEAP (Lambeth Early Action Partnership)	2,582	2,971
IASP (Independent Advice and Support Partnership)	1,892	4,604
Early Years SEND Partnership	553	648
Other	-	92
	<u>5,027</u>	<u>8,315</u>

NCB works in partnership to achieve the aims of its programmes; amounts shown here are subcontracting, or passing on and over-seeing the use of funding, where there is a high degree of visibility for other organisations to the ultimate funder. NCB worked with 202 organisations in this way in the year (2021: 199).

#### 5. Staff and trustees

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Staff costs</b>		
Salaries and wages	4,499	4,113
Social Security costs	471	431
Staff pension cost	422	385
	<u>5,392</u>	<u>4,929</u>

	2022 number	2021 number
<b>Average head count staff numbers</b>		
Full-time staff	92	87
Part-time staff	21	20

	113	107
<b>Staff earning over £60,000</b>		
between £60,000 and £70,000	5	5
between £70,000 and £80,000	1	2
between £100,000 and £110,000	1	1

The key management personnel of the parent company, the Charity, comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer, Strategic Director External Affairs and two Strategic Directors of Practice & Programmes (one only part of the year). The total employee remuneration and benefits received by the five key management personnel were £435k (2021 £471k).

In compliance with recent recommendations for disclosure from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), NCB have chosen to disclose the full-time equivalent, gross salaries of the senior leadership team at 31 March 2022, which were:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Salary</b>
Chief Executive	£105,196
Chief Operating Officer	£78,916
Strategic Director of Practice & Programmes	£77,038
Strategic Director of External Affairs	£65,597

No remuneration is payable to trustees. No trustees were reimbursed (2021: one) for travel and accommodation expenses which therefore totalled £0 for the year (2021: £106).

Trustee Indemnity Insurance £896 (2021: £896) was purchased in the year.

£70k redundancy costs were incurred in the year (2021 £22k), of which £22k is unpaid at the year end (2021 £6k).

## 6. Tangible fixed assets

Cost	Leasehold property	Furniture and equipment	Total
<b>Group and Charity</b>			
Cost as at 1 April 2021	4,616	501	5,117
Additions	12	144	156
Cost as at 31 March 2022	<u>4,628</u>	<u>645</u>	<u>5,273</u>
Depreciation as at 1 April 2021	148	307	455
Charge	99	106	205
Depreciation as at 31 March 2022	<u>247</u>	<u>413</u>	<u>660</u>
<b>Net book value as at 31 March 2022</b>	<b>4,381</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>4,613</b>
Net book value as at 31 March 2021	4,468	194	4,662

In March 2018 NCB exchanged contracts to purchase a 250 year lease on a property as a new London office, completed the purchase in March 2019 and completed office fit-out works and began using the office in September 2019. Amounts already paid are capitalised above and now include all retention payments. Trustees have set aside funds for some final costs, as set out in note 16.

## 7. Capital commitments

Amounts contracted for but not provided in the financial statements, all relating to the future property purchase, amounted to £nil (2020 £0.03m).

Further details of planned expenditure are also set out in note 16.

## 8. Operating lease commitments

The Group has annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases expiring as follows:

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Due within one year</b>		
Land and buildings	2	2
Equipment	2	4
<b>2 to 5 years</b>		
Equipment	-	2
	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>

Lease payments recognised in the year amounted to £21k (2020: £135k).

## 9. Notice deposits

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Notice deposits</b>		
Barclays	<u>512</u>	<u>512</u>

## 10. Shares in subsidiary undertaking

This represents NCB's holding of 100 ordinary shares of £1 each, which is a 100% interest in the share capital of National Children's Bureau Enterprises Limited, a company registered in England and Wales (no. 2633796) and a wholly owned subsidiary of the charity. Financial statements are filed with the Registrar of Companies.

The company has been dormant for the whole financial year. The net assets brought and carried forward are £5k, with the debtor due from the charity, NCB. An audit was not performed.

Activity may start up again in future, through letting of the new office, or from other emerging fundraising approaches.

## 11. Joint venture

Childlife is a joint venture between four charities, with NCB therefore having an equal 25% share of voting rights. The information below shows the full activities, liabilities and assets, of which NCB has a 25% interest. The 25% share of these amounts are not consolidated into NCB's financial statements. NCB recognised income of £80,000 from Childlife in the year. Notes 1 and 14 provide further information on our relationship.

	2022	2021
	£'000	£'000
Income	1,174	998
Expenditure	1,257	904
Net income	<u>(83)</u>	<u>94</u>
Net movement in funds	<u><u>(83)</u></u>	<u><u>94</u></u>

The aggregate of assets, liabilities and funds was:

Assets	479	568
Liabilities	<u>(46)</u>	<u>(53)</u>
Net assets	<u><u>433</u></u>	<u><u>514</u></u>
Total funds	<u><u>433</u></u>	<u><u>514</u></u>

## 12. Debtors

	2022	2021
	£'000	£'000
Trade debtors	662	479
Other debtors and prepayments	309	248
Accrued income (grants due for projects)	418	599
	<u><u>1,389</u></u>	<u><u>1,326</u></u>

### 13. Creditors falling due within one year

	2022 £'000	2021 £'000
Trade Creditors	946	1,726
Social Security and other taxes	612	1,084
Pension contributions	16	44
Amount due to subsidiary undertaking	5	5
Other creditors and accrued charges	1,461	1,806
Income received in advance	<u>272</u>	<u>246</u>
	<u><u>3,312</u></u>	<u><u>4,911</u></u>

	B/fwd 1 Apr 2021 £'000	Received 2022 £'000	Income 2022 £'000	C/fwd 31 March 2022 £'000
Income received in advance in respect of 2022/23				
Services and other income	<u>246</u>	<u>5,712</u>	<u>5,686</u>	<u>272</u>
	<u><u>246</u></u>	<u><u>5,712</u></u>	<u><u>5,686</u></u>	<u><u>272</u></u>

### 14. Related party transactions

NCB Enterprises Ltd (a wholly owned subsidiary of NCB, also registered at 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN) did not trade in 2021-22.

The amount owed from the parent company at 31st March 2022 was £5,374 (2021: £5,374). Further details are shown in note 10.

Annamarie Hassall was a director of Childlife until September 2021, and Celine McStravick was a director from October 2021; a consortium which donated £80,000 to NCB during 2021-22. No donations were received from any other related parties.

## 15. Restricted funds

Project and Unit funds		B/fwd 1 April 2021	Income	Expenses	C/fwd 31 March 2022
Project	Funder	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Early Years SEND	Department for Education	-	772	(772)	-
United Against Bullying	Department for Education	-	146	(146)	0
Other Grants from Government Departments		160	135	(260)	35
Lambeth Early Action Partnership	National Lottery Community Fund	55	5,104	(5,063)	96
	London Borough of Lambeth	117	-	0	117
REAL Programme	Education Endowment Foundation	221	50	(260)	11
REAL in Lewisham	Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	113	116	(79)	150
Other grants and income		227	384	(451)	160
		893	6,707	(7,031)	569
Other funds		23	-	-	23
		916	6,707	(7,031)	592

## Comparative figures for prior year

Project and Unit funds		B/fwd 1 April 2020	Income	Expenses	C/fwd 31 Mar 2021
Project	Funder	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Early Years SEND	Department for Education	-	918	(918)	-
	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport	-	191	(191)	-
Other Grants from Government Departments		43	549	(432)	160
Lambeth Early Action Partnership	National Lottery Community Fund	57	5,504	(5,506)	55
	London Borough of Lambeth	117	-	-	117
Jersey Early Childhood Development	UBS Optimus	16	85	(101)	-
REAL Programme	Education Endowment Foundation	231	159	(169)	221

REAL in Lewisham	Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	-	113	-	113
Other grants and income		224	494	(491)	227
		688	8,013	(7,808)	893
Other funds		23	-	-	23
		711	8,013	(7,808)	916

All restricted funds represent grants for specific projects, as agreed with the funder in an application process and carried forward to continue the agreed project, with the exception of the £78k of donations shown on the Statement of Financial Activities and Note 2 (£39k in 2020-21, shown in note 19), which were given by individuals in response to our Anti-Bullying Week campaign.

## 16. Unrestricted other funds

	B/fwd 1 Apr 2021 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	Allocations and Transfers £'000	C/fwd 31 March 2022 £'000
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Fixed asset fund	4,661	-	(205)	157	4,613
Strategic priorities fund	400	-	-	-	400
Capital Goods Scheme fund	375	-	-	(52)	323
New building fund	68	-	-	-	68
Pension fund	416	4	(44)	271	647
	5,920	4	(249)	376	6,051
General Funds	1,779	5,682	(5,310)	(376)	1,775
<b>Group - unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>	<b>7,699</b>	<b>5,686</b>	<b>(5,559)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,826</b>

	B/fwd 1 Apr 2020 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	Allocations and Transfers £'000	C/fwd 31 Mar 2020 £'000
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Fixed asset fund - designated element	4,808	-	(192)	45	4,661
Strategic priorities fund	-	-	-	400	400
Capital Goods Scheme fund	413	-	-	(38)	375
New building fund	100	-	-	(32)	68
Pension fund	192	4	(21)	241	416
	5,513	4	(213)	616	5,920
General Funds	2,016	8,222	(7,843)	(616)	1,779

<b>Group - unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>	7,529	8,226	(8,056)	-	7,699
--	-------	-------	---------	---	-------

**Comparative figures for the prior year**

The **Fixed asset fund** represents the net book value of tangible fixed assets.

The **Pension fund** is used to support funding the agreed annual deficit recovery contributions to the defined benefit pension scheme, as well as other small ad hoc pension costs. At present this is in light of an approaching new triennial valuation period, driving updated cash contribution requirements.

The **New building fund** is set aside to fund the remaining costs for the purchase (and all associated fees), fit-out and move to the new London office property. For the costs already recognised see note 6 and for those committed to see note 7.

The **Capital Goods Scheme fund** is set aside for any additional expense of recovered VAT during the ten year period of the Capital Goods Scheme that NCB is required to run regarding expenditure on the new leasehold property. This represents NCB's full exposure through the period.

The **Strategic Priorities Fund** is set aside for investment in the coming year (or just beyond) in enhancing our digital capabilities, strengthening the diversity and scale of our income, and supporting our core work (for which we aim to find, but do not assume, external funding during the year ahead). Use of this fund was delayed in 2021-22 due to Covid recovery, change of staffing and delays in successful procurement of partners.

**General funds** represent the net of accumulated surplus and deficits of income and expenditure after transfers to designated funds.

## 17. Analysis of net assets/(liabilities) between funds

	Tangible Fixed Assets £'000	Net Current Assets £'000	Pension Scheme Liability £'000	Total £'000
Restricted Funds	-	592	-	592
Unrestricted - Designated funds	4,613	1,438	-	6,051
- General funds	-	1,775	-	1,775
Net Assets before Pension Reserve	<u>4,613</u>	<u>3,805</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,418</u>
Pension Reserve	-	-	(3,475)	(3,475)

Group Net Assets	4,613	3,805	(3,475)	4,943
------------------	-------	-------	---------	-------

### Comparative figures for the prior year

	Tangible Fixed Assets £'000	Net Current Assets £'000	Pension Scheme Liability £'000	Total £'000
Restricted Funds	-	916	-	916
Unrestricted - Designated funds	4,662	3,037	-	5,920
- General funds	-	1,779	-	1,779
Net Assets before Pension Reserve	4,662	5,732	-	8,615
Pension Reserve	-	-	(7,125)	(7,125)
Group Net Assets	4,662	5,732	(7,125)	1,490

## 18. Pension arrangements

The disclosures set out below relate to pension arrangements to which contributions are made by the charity - a defined benefit scheme, a defined contribution scheme and individual personal pension arrangements.

### Defined benefit scheme

The charity is an admitted body to the South Yorkshire Pension Fund (SYPF), which is a defined benefit scheme, managed by the South Yorkshire Pension Authority (SYPA). The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity by South Yorkshire Pensions Authority. Contributions to the scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities so as to spread the cost of pensions over the employees' working lives with the charity. The cost of NCB's contribution to SYPF for the year ended 31 March 2022 was £195,216 (2021 £197,644).

There are two different valuations which are relevant to the scheme.

### Triennial valuation

A full triennial actuarial valuation is carried out every three years. This is used to determine the funding position of the scheme and calculate the cash contributions to the scheme to close the deficit position if one exists.

Following the March 2019 valuation, the contribution rate was increased to variable rates between 24% and 28% of pensionable salaries from 1 April 2020. This includes the contribution from the employee. There is no deficit recovery payment due across this triennial period.

The actuarial method in use at the most recent triennial valuation was the Projected Unit method.

### Accounting valuation

The charity is required to comply with the full requirements of FRS102 in valuing the scheme for the annual accounts. A further valuation of the scheme for accounting purposes as at 31 March 2022 was therefore undertaken by a qualified independent actuary. This valuation is undertaken using a series of assumptions and judgments which are agreed by Trustees. The valuation of the scheme is very sensitive to these assumptions and thus there is a significant risk that this valuation will change materially during the coming year, as it has in past years.

The deficit decreased from £7.1m to £3.5m during the year. The key assumptions and results of the valuation are shown below.

Set out below are disclosures required for the purposes of FRS 102.

The fair value of assets in the scheme and the expected return were:

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Assets		
Equities	27,964	19,449
Government bonds	in below	5,347
Other bonds	10,169	3,248
Property	3,813	3,605
Cash	424	555
Other	0	7,407
Total market value of assets	<u>42,369</u>	<u>39,611</u>
Present value of scheme liabilities	<u>(45,844)</u>	<u>(46,736)</u>
(Deficit) in the scheme	<u><u>(3,475)</u></u>	<u><u>(7,125)</u></u>

	2022 Assumptions	2021 Assumptions	2020 Assumptions	2019 Assumptions	2018 Assumptions
<b>The major assumptions used by the actuary were:</b>					
Increase in salaries	4.2%	3.0%	3.4%	2.8%	2.8%
Rate of increase in pensions	3.2%	2.8%	2.2%	2.3%	2.2%
Discount rate	2.7%	2.1%	2.4%	2.4%	2.7%
Inflation assumption	3.7%	2.7%	2.1%	2.2%	2.1%
	<b>2022 £'000</b>	<b>2021 £'000</b>	<b>2020 £'000</b>	<b>2019 £'000</b>	<b>2018 £'000</b>
<b>Analysis of the amount charged to operating result</b>					
Current service cost	378	321	370	347	408
Past service cost	-	-	306	-	-
Administration expenses	5	5	5	5	5
Curtailed loss	-	-	150	-	0
Total operating charge	<u>383</u>	<u>326</u>	<u>831</u>	<u>352</u>	<u>413</u>
<b>Analysis of other finance (expense) income</b>					
Expected return on pension scheme assets	821	805	862	933	943
Interest on pension scheme liabilities	(973)	(982)	(1,075)	(1,106)	(1,138)
Net (expense) income	<u>(152)</u>	<u>(177)</u>	<u>(213)</u>	<u>(173)</u>	<u>(195)</u>
<b>Analysis of remeasurements - liabilities and assets</b>					
Remeasurements - assets	2,911	5,738	(2,324)	1,100	461
Remeasurements - liabilities	(176)	996	2,282	-	377
Change in assumptions	1,264	(6,108)	2,090	(3,228)	-
Net (loss) / gain	<u>3,999</u>	<u>626</u>	<u>2,048</u>	<u>(2,128)</u>	<u>838</u>
<b>Movement in (deficit) during the year:</b>					
Deficit in scheme at beginning of year	(7,125)	(7,446)	(8,885)	(6,570)	(7,163)
Movements in year					
Operating charge	(383)	(326)	(831)	(352)	(413)
Employer contributions	186	198	435	338	363
Other finance expense	(152)	(177)	(213)	(173)	(195)
Remeasurements (loss) gain - liabilities and assets	3,999	626	2,048	(2,128)	838
Deficit in scheme at end of year	<u>(3,475)</u>	<u>(7,125)</u>	<u>(7,446)</u>	<u>(8,885)</u>	<u>(6,570)</u>

## Defined contribution scheme

The charity participates in a defined contribution scheme independently managed by Standard Life. Contributions to the scheme are charged to the statement of financial activities as they become payable. NCB makes twice the employees' percentage

contribution, up to a maximum of 8% of pensionable salaries. The cost of NCB's contributions for the year ended 31 March 2022 was £199,814 (2021: £181,479).

### **Personal pension plans**

Payments are also made to employees' personal pensions which are charged in the year in which they become payable. NCB matches employees' contributions up to a maximum of 8% of pensionable salaries. The cost of NCB's contributions for the year ended 31 March 2022 was £3,015 (2021: £6,030).

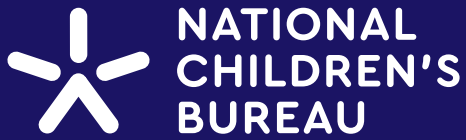
## 19. Statement of financial activities with comparatives

	Notes	Restricted Funds £'000	Un- restricted Pension Reserve £'000	Un- restricted Other Funds £'000	2022 £'000	Restrict- ed Funds £'000	Un- restricted Pension Reserve £'000	Un- restrict- ed Other Funds £'000	2021 £'000
<b>Income from:</b>									
Donations and legacies	1 & 2	78	-	131	209	39	-	124	163
Charitable activities		6,629	-	5,549	12,178	7,974	-	8,096	16,070
Other trading activities		-	-	4	4	-	-	4	4
Income from investments	3	-	-	2	2	-	-	2	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,707</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,686</b>	<b>12,393</b>	<b>8,013</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,226</b>	<b>16,239</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>	1, 4 & 7								
Raising funds									
Fundraising		-	-	3	3	-	-	31	31
Other trading activities		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities		7,031	-	5,557	12,588	7,808	-	8,025	15,833
Restructure	6	-	-	-	0	-	-	0	0
Operating pension scheme movements in year	18	-	349	-	349	-	305	-	305
<b>Total</b>		<b>7,031</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>5,560</b>	<b>12,940</b>	<b>7,808</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>8,056</b>	<b>16,169</b>
<b>Net (expenditure)</b>		<b>(324)</b>	<b>(349)</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>(547)</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>(305)</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Other recognised (losses) / gains:</b>									
Actuarial gains / (losses) on defined benefit pension scheme	18	-	3,999	-	3,999	-	626	-	626
Gain on sale of fixed assets		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(324)</b>	<b>3,650</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>3,452</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>696</b>

## 20. Financial instruments

At the balance sheet date, the group held financial assets at amortised cost of £1372k (2021 £1284k) and Financial liabilities at amortised cost of £2413k (2021 £3537k).

Workings:		2022	2021
<b>Current assets:</b>		£'000	£'000
Debtors	12	1,389	1,326
exclude prepayments		(17)	(42)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		1,372	1,284
<b>Liabilities:</b>			
Creditors: due within one year	13	3,313	4,911
exclude: Social Security etc		(612)	(1,084)
exclude: Pension		(16)	(44)
exclude income recvd in adv		(272)	(246)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		2,413	3,537



## United for a better childhood

The National Children's Bureau brings people and organisations together to drive change in society and deliver a better childhood for the UK. We interrogate policy, uncover evidence and develop better ways of supporting children and families.

Let's work together: 020 7843 6000 | [info@ncb.org.uk](mailto:info@ncb.org.uk)

London: 23 Mentmore Terrace, London, E8 3PN

Belfast: The NICVA Building, 61 Duncairn Gardens, BT15 2GB

Part of the family

**NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU**

National Children's Bureau is registered charity number 258825 and a company limited by guarantee number 952717. Registered office: 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PR.

**NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU**

England & Wales - Charity number 258825

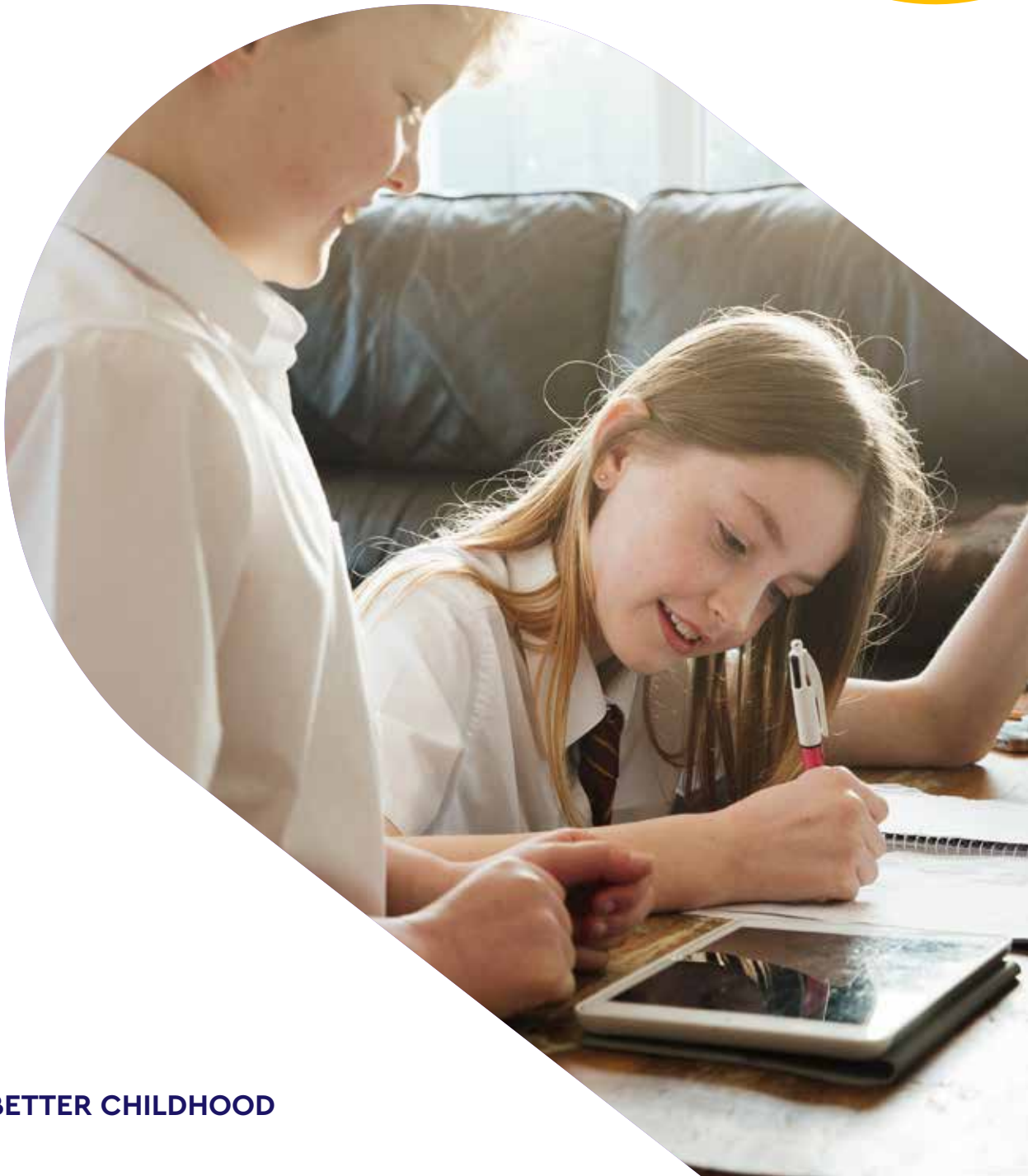
---

# Accounts

---

# Children at the Heart

Annual report & accounts 2020-21



# Contents

## **Annual report & accounts 2020–21**

Introduction	4
Working together	6
How we drive and deliver change	8
Making evidence count	10
Children at the heart	12
Interview with young people	14
Involving children & young people	18
Young governance	20
Bringing organisations together	22
Working together with schools	26
Developing the workforce	28
Responding to Covid-19 in Lambeth	32
Growing respect and trust	34
<b>Trustees Annual Report</b>	<b>37</b>
Financial review	41
Statement of Trustees' responsibilities	47
Independent auditor's report	48
Statement of financial activities	51
Balance sheets	52
Cash flow statement	53
Notes to the financial statements	54

## **Our 2018–23 strategy focuses on five priorities for delivering a better childhood:**

1. Influencing legislation, policy and practice to make sure it's based on high quality evidence about what works for children.
2. Enabling children and young people to actively participate in decision making and influence change.
3. Bringing organisations together to put the best interests of children first.
4. Developing a workforce that is knowledgeable and skilled to make positive changes for children.
5. Building respect and trust as a pioneering and high-performing charity.

**This annual report sets out the progress we've made during 2020–21.**



# Chair's introduction

What makes NCB unique is our capacity to bring people together to bring about the best for children and young people.

This has never been more apparent to me than in July 2020, when our *Children at the Heart* campaign brought children and young people together with a whole host of partner organisations in England and Northern Ireland to share evidence with the All Party Parliamentary Group for Children.

Combining the voices and experiences of children and young people with research evidence and intelligence from front-line services, we were able to set out, with authority as well as with passion, key evidence to guide the response to the pandemic and set out a positive vision of childhood to unite behind.

My role as Chair of Trustees is essentially to direct NCB towards achieving that vision, through good governance, clear strategies and effective leadership. I would like to thank my fellow Trustees as well as NCB's strategic leadership team for their resourcefulness and support in pursuing that vision over the last year, making good progress in the most challenging of circumstances.

We are crystal clear that we can only achieve our vision through strong networks of organisations working together. During the year, we established new governance arrangements for our Specialist Membership Groups (SMGs), the Anti-Bullying Alliance, Childhood Bereavement Network and now the Schools' Wellbeing Partnership. These arrangements unite us more closely as an NCB family, with stronger links with the Board of Trustees.

Having been part of the NCB Family for 34 years, the Sex Education Forum took the exciting step of becoming an independent charity on 1 April 2021. We achieved a lot together in that time, including the game-changing campaign to make relationships and sex education a statutory requirement. NCB will now work as one of several partners to support the newly-formed charity to ensure the statutory requirement delivers the education our children need.

We know too that we can only achieve our vision through sound strategy and governance,



addressing structural issues that hold us back and responding rapidly to the world we're operating in.

Two crucial areas of development over the last year have been in relation to ethnic diversity and digital capability. We worked with Inclusive Boards to recruit three new Trustees with this in mind. Welcoming Nainan Shah, Ajit Dhaliwal and Shubhi Rajnish enables us to strengthen our digital leadership and accelerate our ongoing effort to ensure an inclusive culture flows from the Board of Trustees through every part of the organisation.

Above all, we cannot achieve our vision without being powered by the voices and experiences of children, young people and families. As Bethan explains later in the report, over the last year we've seen technology bring a new dimension to our work taking children's voices to the heart of Government.

I'd like to thank our Young Representatives Tutu Mukelabai, Bethan Hoggan and Sienna James, and the many more children and young people who have worked with us this year. Beyond the virtual boardroom, they've given evidence to Select Committees, braved media interviews, taken on fundraising challenges, written blogs, published articles and a whole lot more. Having young people at the heart of our organisation strengthens our ambition to work together for a better childhood for the UK.

I am delighted to introduce this year's report to you and proud that we have continued to work in the interest of children in so many rich and diverse ways. It is especially impressive given the difficulties caused for everyone by the pandemic and I would particularly like to thank our brilliant staff team who keep going, no matter what!

**Alison O'Sullivan**

# Chief Executive's welcome

From conducting research on the impact of the pandemic on babies in Lambeth to bringing policy makers and services together to protect our most vulnerable young people throughout the UK, over the last year we have brought every inch of our policy and practice expertise to bear on stopping childhoods from being disrupted and life chances from being derailed.

While adapting and responding to emerging needs, we've not missed a beat in our work to keep delivering the changes that make childhood better: driving improvements to the services children count on and receiving intelligence about work on the ground to influence decision-making.

As well as being dominated by the pandemic, the last year has been defined by ground-shaking moments where underlying structural inequalities have burst to the surface. As a charity we have been working through the aftershock of the murder of George Floyd, determined to engage with openness and wisdom to examine our own organisation as well as the world around us. So far this has included recruiting Black board members, forming an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion staff group powered by Black voices, and intensifying our work to tackle racist bullying.

Everyone's Invited was another seismic moment, when thousands of women and girls shared their experiences of sexual violence and harassment in schools. Through the Anti-Bullying Alliance, we have launched new training and guides to help schools tackle sexual bullying, alongside our wider work to help create a whole-school culture where children are safe, where they feel able to share concerns about abuses of power and gender dynamics, and where their wellbeing is prioritised.

A scandalous photograph of a lockdown 'lunch' provided in lieu of free school meals strengthened the campaign to tackle child hunger, but the longer battle to address the causes and far-reaching consequences of rampant child poverty continues. We brought 80 organisations together through the End Child Poverty Coalition to set out the evidence and call for decisive action.

Pressure on young people's mental health has

been building and building, even before the pandemic piled on a heap of new challenges. Research we published in partnership with UCL showed that one in six 17-year-olds report high levels of psychological distress. We have worked collaboratively to influence policy makers, launching the first youth mental health charter for Northern Ireland and strengthening our Schools' Wellbeing Partnership to drive changes in education and connect schools with the tools they need.

Through the Council for Disabled Children we know the pandemic has been particularly difficult for children with special educational needs and disabilities. Service provision and quality was already patchy, and the system was not delivering the best outcomes. Sudden disruptions in routine, withdrawal of support and anxiety about safety have had an immense impact, on top of financial insecurities and health concerns. We've brought the disabled children's sector together with policy makers at the highest level to share information and improve support.

On 23 March we joined the National Day of Reflection led by Marie Curie, where we reflected not only on our personal losses, but those experienced by thousands of grieving children. Through the Childhood Bereavement Network, we've helped services to adapt and respond effectively to support these children.

This year has painfully exposed and accentuated the vulnerabilities and the fault lines that we already knew were there in the system. Now we must fix them.

**Anna Feuchtwang**  
Chief Executive



# Working together to deliver better childhoods



The Anti-Bullying Alliance brings together organisations and individuals working together to achieve our vision to stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

2020–21 highlights include:

- Providing CPD training to over 17,000 participants, developing a new CPD course to help schools reduce sexual bullying, and working with partners to develop a sector-wide better understanding of racist and faith targeted bullying.
- Delivering Anti-Bullying Week, reaching 7.5 million children with 80% of schools taking part.
- Celebrating the impact of the All Together Anti-Bullying Programme, with 71% of schools reporting a fall in bullying as a result.

Read more about our work:  
[anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)



The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF) brings together over 25 regional statutory and voluntary sector organisations committed to stopping the bullying of children and young people in our schools and in our communities.

2020–21 highlights include:

- Delivering Anti-Bullying Week in Northern Ireland.
- Celebrating together through our Anti-Bullying Week Creative Art Competition, engaging with schools throughout Northern Ireland on the theme of United Against Bullying.

Read more about our work:  
[endbullying.org.uk](https://endbullying.org.uk)



The Childhood Bereavement Network brings together all those supporting bereaved children, young people and their families across the UK.

2020–21 highlights include:

- Equipping and guiding a national network of bereavement services to provide the services children and families count on, at a time of great upheaval and tremendous need, including bringing 2,000 professionals together in a series of lunchtime seminars.
- Working with partners to generate evidence on the impact of the pandemic on grieving children and bereavement services, calling together for Government support.

Read more about our work:  
[childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk](https://childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk)



Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP) unites local services to improve social & emotional development, communication & language development and diet & nutrition for 0–3 year olds in four South London wards.

2020–21 highlights include:

- Generating research on the impact of the pandemic on early childhood, to share throughout the sector and guide our own service provision.
- Adapting to the pandemic to find new ways to deliver the services local children and families needed, including tools to ensure those most in need receive support at a crucial time.

Read more about our work:  
[leaplambeth.org.uk](https://leaplambeth.org.uk)



The Schools' Wellbeing Partnership is a national network of more than 50 member organisations working together to improve the wellbeing of all children in education.

2020–21 highlights include:

- Producing Recovery Toolkits to help schools look after the wellbeing of staff and pupils in the return to education.
- Working collaboratively with the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition on a joint statement on mental health and education during Covid-19.
- Appointing our first independent Chair and becoming a full NCB specialist membership group, leading the charity in the development of mental health and wellbeing in schools.

Read more about our work:

[schoolswellbeing.org.uk](https://schoolswellbeing.org.uk)



This year we prepared for an exciting new chapter in the story of the Sex Education Forum, which became an independent charity in April 2021, having been part of the NCB family for 34 years. We worked together for a smooth transition while running a conference, delivering a busy training programme, equipping schools to deliver quality relationships, sex and health education and engaging with a vital national conversation on gender and power dynamics.

NCB is proud of having brought the Sex Education Forum to this point and excited at the prospect of working in partnership with the newly-established charity.

Visit the Sex Education Forum website:

[sexeducationforum.org.uk](https://sexeducationforum.org.uk)



The Council for Disabled Children is the umbrella body for the disabled children's sector bringing together professionals, practitioners and policy-makers.

2020–21 highlights include:

- Delivering consultancy, training, resources and events which bring together key stakeholders at the local, regional and national levels.
- Sharing good practice and working collaboratively to overcome challenges related to the implementation of the SEND reforms.
- Ensuring a focus on achieving positive outcomes through effective and well-evidenced joint commissioning.
- Working in partnership to improve access and inclusion for young children with SEND

Read more about our work:

[councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)

**Every member of the NCB family brings people and organisations together to drive change on particular issues and help deliver a better childhood for the UK.**



# How we drive and deliver change to improve childhoods

This is a snapshot of our work over the past year. Identifying, influencing, implementing and improving; this cycle shapes every aspect of our work to drive and deliver change based on evidence about what works.

## IDENTIFY

**Through large-scale research projects, we investigate the needs of children and young people, uncovering evidence and insights that inform major changes to policy and practice that improve children's lives.**

During 2020–21:

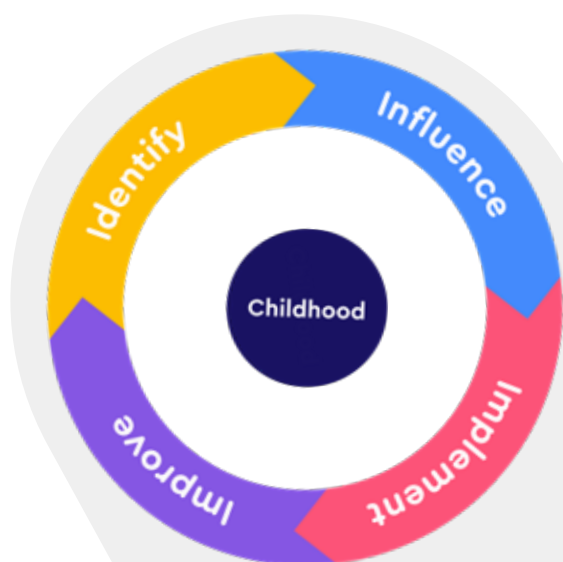
- We produced **44** research reports on topics ranging from infant mental health to race and faith-targeted bullying.
- We worked collaboratively to generate research evidence to understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on early childhood, bereavement services, experiences of bullying, SEND support, and more.
- In Northern Ireland we worked with young people to create and promote the *Our Minds Our Future* charter based on our research to inform the Department of Education's Children & Young People's Emotional Health & Wellbeing in Education Framework.
- We pushed forward with our Living Assessments research project to improve the decision-making process for providing social care support to children and families.

## INFLUENCE

**Our research and partnerships give us authority and credibility with policy makers, enabling us to influence legislation at the highest levels in the interests of children and young people.**

During 2020–21:

- We've worked both deeply and extensively across Government to inform the response to Covid-19 and reflect feedback from the children's sector.
- We produced **67** policy briefings on subjects ranging from overarching principles for Covid-19 recovery planning to the strategic priorities for responding to childhood trauma.
- We published **18** consultation responses and were mentioned at least **14** times in official Government policy and strategy documents.
- We delivered **5** Learn – Explore – Debate events throughout England to bring the early years sector together with Government.
- From the All Party Parliamentary Groups for Children and Bullying to SEND Roundtable events, we brought young people, partners and senior Parliamentarians together on **5** separate occasions to influence policy making at the highest levels.
- **160** children's organisations joined 120 young people to strengthen our call to put children at the heart of Government spending priorities.



## IMPLEMENT

**From local projects to national programmes, we work with partners including local authorities, schools and health care providers to deliver the changes that make childhood better.**

During 2020–21:

- We brought **3,574** people together in networks and partnership meetings to collaborate on delivering a better childhood, addressing mental health, bullying, bereavement, early years provision, disability and other issues that put children's welfare at risk.
- We adapted fast to online delivery, holding **662** learning events, from introductory webinars to intensive accelerating working groups. These events engaged a total of **18,474** professionals.
- For example, more than **200** strategic leads and commissioners attended each of our webinars and national events focused on developing better outcomes for children with SEND.
- **82%** of participants who completed evaluation forms for our workforce development activities said the training had improved their confidence and skills, while **87%** rated the training as 'good' or 'excellent'.

We brought **3,574** people together in networks & partnerships to collaborate on delivering a better childhood.

## IMPROVE

**By constantly listening to children, young people and our partners, we will never stop building a compelling case about how to create better childhoods.**

During 2020–21 we relaunched *Listening to the voices of young children training* and are working with local authorities to roll this out more widely.

Next year we will be building on our *Children at the Heart* campaign, working harder than ever to amplify the voices of children and young people of all ages, bringing people together in support of our vision of a better childhood.



# 1. Making evidence count

Ensuring decisions affecting children and young people are based on sound research about what works.

## Making evidence count in the pandemic

Throughout the last year NCB has worked in partnership to generate and interrogate evidence to protect the interests of children and young people, especially those who are most vulnerable.

Since the Covid-19 crisis swept the country, we have been doing our utmost to ensure rapidly changing policies were fit for purpose, reflected the concerns of children, families and professionals, and were communicated swiftly to frontline staff.

This intensive combination of behind-the-scenes meetings with officials, network-gathering and information-sharing took place at great speed as the pandemic unfolded. The Council for Disabled Children, Childhood Bereavement Network and our early years networks were particularly vital hubs for intelligence-sharing throughout the pandemic.

From the outset of the pandemic we produced comprehensive briefings with other leading children's charities to guide support for children in the midst of the crisis and establish a vision for recovery.

Our own research helped to identify the impact of the pandemic on bullying and early childhood development, the extra struggle faced by grieving families, the challenges faced by young people leaving care with insecure immigration status, and more.

Informed by young people's experiences and refined by intelligence from our wider networks, our evidence reached the highest levels of decision-making through a variety of reports, roundtables and strategic meetings.

## Challenging the status quo where rights and welfare are at risk

### Improving mental health and wellbeing

During Infant Mental Health Week in June we launched our *Nurturing Healthy Minds Together* report, exploring how services and parents can work in partnership throughout the UK to support the social and emotional development of under fives.

We updated the research report in the light of the disruption of the pandemic, bringing conversations about infant mental health and authentic parental engagement into sharp focus for decision-makers, commissioners, researchers and practitioners.

In December 2020 we published a summary of the policy recommendations and Young NCB's thoughts on the findings of University College London's report on mental ill health at age 17, drawing on findings from the Millennium Cohort Study. The study showed important new evidence about the extent of psychological distress among teenagers, adding to a strong evidence base that urgent action is required to prioritise the mental health and wellbeing of our young people.

In Northern Ireland we undertook the research to inform the Department of Education's Children & Young People's Emotional Health & Wellbeing in Education Framework, which launched during the year. Working in partnership with organisations across the UK, we worked with young people to create the *Our Minds Our Future* charter and produce a video to raise awareness and make it count.

### Championing an education system that protects children from exclusion

For several years we have been building evidence and influence to support greater inclusion of disabled children and young people, ensuring our children can receive joined-up services in their local area, tailored to their needs and aspirations.

Photo: Children and young people in conversation with the Children's Minister and other partners at a virtual Roundtable.



The pandemic put their welfare at risk, with many children unable to access school or receive their usual support services.

With the SEND Review and Care Review around the corner, we gathered evidence and experience from our SEND networks, using the intelligence to guide pandemic decision-making without losing sight of the strategic picture and the changes our children need to see. Our Roundtable events in September and February brought children, young people and key partners together with the Children's Minister to discuss the evidence directly, combining Covid recovery planning with preparation for the SEND Review.

### **Tackling unacceptable levels of child poverty**

Growing up in poverty restricts a child's chances of doing well at school, of living a healthy and happy life, and of finding well-paid work as adults.

Last year, fresh evidence generated through the End Child Poverty Coalition drew attention to the inequality in the distribution of poverty, with rates rising fastest in the Midlands and northern cities. Insistent that child poverty must be at the heart of the effort to 'level up' the UK, and determined to protect planned cuts to Universal Credit, we led a campaign to call for decisive action. Preventing Government from hiding behind misleading statistics, through a successful complaint to the Statistics Authority's Office, was a small victory – we need many more to protect the UK's children from the grip of poverty.

### **Generating new evidence**

Last year we generated research evidence to guide responses to the pandemic as well as to inform our long term effort to drive continuous improvement in services and decision-making affecting children.

Through the Childhood Bereavement Network we examined how the pandemic affected bereavement support needs and gaps in provision, including an exploration of the funding needs of the voluntary sector in response, and clear recommendations for action. We also offered expert input into external research studies and policy work through involvement in advisory and reference groups including the national Covid-19 bereavement study, the planning group for the National Day of Reflection on 23 March, and Public Health England's umbrella review of effectiveness of support.

In Northern Ireland, our research illuminated the impact of Covid-19 on children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), their families and those who support them.

Research conducted by the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) showed the impact of the pandemic on young people's experience of bullying with more reporting being bullied online and a negative impact on children's friendships. Our research showed one in three children had been bullied between May and November 2020. During the year ABA also conducted a literature review about levels of racist and faith targeted bullying and developed resources with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils to help schools and other settings reduce bullying.

In November we published new evidence about the combined risks of mental ill health, domestic violence and drug or alcohol misuse, improving understanding and avoid assumptions that risk alienating families rather than supporting children. This research is part of *Living Assessments*, made possible by a five-year investment by Wellcome, and delivered in collaboration with the University of Cambridge, University of Kent, the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Children and the British Association of Social Workers.

# CHILDREN AT THE HEART

Together with children and young people, we're creating a positive vision of childhood and uniting all those who can help to bring it about.

## Building a movement

Over the last year we've taken the voices of children and young people to the heart of Government several times, using a campaign we've united more than 150 children's organisations behind.

*Children at the Heart* grew from our *Manifesto for a Better Childhood*, calling for a cross-Government strategy built on the principle that children and young people themselves must have a say in the political process.

We urged Government to establish a set of binding outcomes, backed by investment, that all departments are accountable for delivering in order to stop children and young people growing up in poverty, improve outcomes in early childhood, create an inclusive education system, and promote and protect our children's wellbeing and mental health.

Having focused initially on the 2019 General Election campaign, we turned our attention last year to guiding the immediate response to, and long-term recovery from, the pandemic, seeking to influence long-term spending priorities to deliver a better childhood for the UK.

## Bringing children's voices to the heart of Government

In June we galvanised our *Children at the Heart* movement to support a joint letter to the Prime Minister urging the Government to make this generation of children as central to the UK's coronavirus recovery plans as health and the economy.

We led the creation of overarching recovery principles, working in partnership with The Children's Society and other leading charities to provide high-level briefings on eight key areas of the services children count on.

NCB worked with the All Party Parliamentary Group chaired by Tim Loughton MP to hold a virtual meeting where children, young people and parents could share ideas and experiences of lockdown with MPs, Peers and representatives from across the children's sector.

In September we worked with children, young people and partners to direct our campaign towards the Chancellor ahead of the Comprehensive Spending Review, asking for urgent investment in mental health, improving education and turning around the crisis facing services for children. The submission was signed by over 120 children, young people and parents, as well as over 160 organisations working across the children's sector.

Our analysis of the Spending Review showed that the approach is still too piecemeal to deliver a better childhood for the UK's children, with major omissions in child poverty, early childhood, mental health and children's social care.

"Public services did not have enough funding before Covid-19, and are now expected to help the extra people impacted by the pandemic and lockdown. These services need long term funding and help to make sure they can continue to work with each other to help children and families." Aayushi, 13.

GIVE US A  
CHANCELLOR

children  
g people.



Spend to s  
our fut



"I think that the money should be spent on making sure that children and young people's wellbeing is OK after Covid. Yes, it is important that we all get back into education, but we also need all of the other things that have been taken away from us."

**Lucie, 11**

In December children, young people and parents joined an online meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Children to discuss these issues directly with 20 Parliamentarians including Treasury officials and advisers from the No.10 policy unit.

### Creating a new vision for childhood

In January we led a coalition of children's charities to publish an open letter in the Observer, calling for an independent commission to bring together representatives from across the sector, including charities, school leaders, teaching unions, education experts, doctors and mental health professionals, as well as the Children's Commissioner, to "steer children and young people clear from the lingering effects of Covid-19."

In February, the outgoing Children's Commissioner, Anne Longfield, could not have been clearer in her final speech that children and young people must be at the heart of a joined-up, cross-Government strategy that has their voices as well their welfare at its very centre.

It is heartening that the incoming Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, has taken on the baton, starting her term of office with *The Big Ask*, a monumental consultation with children on their priorities for improving childhood post-Covid. This is set to form the basis for the resulting Childhood Commission, an ambitious report setting out to tackle the problems holding our children back.

Our *Children at the Heart* campaign is now part of a bigger movement of people and organisations determined to work together throughout the UK to deliver the changes that make childhood better.

### What we'll do next year to make evidence count

We will build the evidence about the impact of COVID-19 and make the case for a cross-government recovery plan that puts the wellbeing of babies, children and young people at its heart.

We will campaign for a strategic response to the increasing levels of child poverty.

We will make the case for renewed investment in the services and workforce that children and families rely on at this year's spending review

We will continue to disseminate the learning from the lottery funded A better start programme – investment of ? in 5 sites

We will work with the Government and the disabled children's sector to make sure the SEND green paper delivers real solutions for disabled children, those with special educational needs, and their families.

We will provide evidence to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care so that its conclusions are based on the lived experience of children and young people and the evidence of what works

We will influence the Health and Care Bill so that children and young people are put at the heart of the new health and care system.

## 2. Involving children & young people

Amplifying the voices of children and families to make policy more relevant and to improve services.

### Involving children and young people in the pandemic

As well as moving all our engagement with children and young people online for the whole of the last year, we have ensured children and young people were involved in shaping our response to and recovery from the pandemic.

Alongside virtual meetings of our main participation groups, Young NCB and FLARE, young people rubbed online shoulders with Government Ministers at Roundtables, Select Committees and other Parliamentary events.

The pandemic also provided a focus for engagement, as young people contributed to several different internal and external evidence-gathering activities seeking to understand its impact.

Even though the pandemic limited our capacity to provide participation training, we were able to train 400 professionals to involve children and young people effectively, as well as continuing internal staff training to keep improving our own participation structures and approaches.

### Putting children and young people at the heart of our work, inside and out

In 2020–21 we engaged 1,304 children and young people through focus groups for research, campaigns and policy development, informing our responses to key Government consultations on topics such as the impact of the pandemic and the development of a mental health charter in Northern Ireland.

This is a 64% increase on our 2019–20 figure, as the shift to online engagement opened up new opportunities for children and young people to be involved and removed some barriers to participation.

### Media Ambassadors

Children and young people's voices have powered our policy and public affairs activity for many years. We decided to make it official this year by training our first group of media ambassadors to speak out directly on the issues that matter to them.

Young people from projects across NCB met virtually in January and again in March to participate in the training, which included reviewing written articles and practice interviews and reflecting together on the experience of speaking out.

Empowering young people to speak out directly can enable points of view to emerge that may not otherwise be heard if they are counter to the prevailing narrative. For example, two of the Media Ambassadors, Zoya and Disha, spoke to the BBC (left) about their positive experiences of school closures during the lockdown. Paying attention to these experiences is vital if we are to build back education and services to be better than they were before the pandemic.

During the year young people wrote contributions for Children and Young People Now, explored the nuances of being labelled as 'vulnerable', and even wrote a letter to



Photo:  
Young Media Ambassadors  
speaking directly to the BBC.

Children and young people's voices have powered our policy and public affairs activity for many years. This year we trained our first group of media ambassadors to speak out directly on the issues that matter to them.

The Times to object to being labelled as 'snowflakes'.

### Young Fundraisers

In March we were delighted to learn that 14-year-old Scarlett-Rose Farmer had chosen NCB as the charity to benefit from her running challenge. Running an average of 25km a week for a month, Scarlett-Rose not only smashed the physical aspect of her challenge, but nearly quadrupled her fundraising target, raising almost £2,000.

### Supporting professionals

Throughout the year our training courses on *Developing Participation Skills and Mechanisms of Effective Participation* enabled professionals across the UK to develop their participation skills and knowledge.

Our *Making Participation Work* project focused on children and young people with SEND, providing participation training for professionals covering topics such as local area SEND inspections, minimum standards and participation frameworks.

We held participation coffee mornings online throughout the year, providing an opportunity for professionals to come together in an informal setting, to discuss a relevant theme or topic. They have been well received by attendees who value the informal nature of the chance to share their successes, challenges and questions.

### Drawing on the experience of parents

The latest in a series of Expert Parent modules, *Complex Health Needs and Transition* (funded by Together for Short Lives) is a peer-designed and facilitated opportunity for parent carers of children with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions to increase their confidence in

navigating their child's transition to adulthood.

During the year the lead trainers for this module worked closely with CDC colleagues to expand the Programme with new e-learning modules on Supported decision making and the Mental Capacity Act (2005) and Planning for an uncertain future, two areas of vital importance for parent carers.

Alongside the e-learning, we continued to run our Expert Parent Programme workshops, a modular four-hour interactive session delivered by parent carers who can share this expertise and insight to parents who are seeking support to get the best out of the health system for their children.

### What we'll do next year to involve children & young people

We will make sure the impact of Covid-19 on the lives of children and young people is understood and their voices are heard and listened to when recovery plans are being developed and implemented.

We will increase the reach and size of our young researchers advisors group, using digital to break down barriers and embedding the lived experience of young people in our research.

We will champion the role of parents and carers in families and communities, providing support, training and opportunities, shifting power to put parents in the lead.

We will empower young people to speak truth to power, bringing them even closer to the heart of legislative and policy development.

# Young governance

Children and young people influence our operational and strategic development through our governance framework – the systems and practices we have put in place to ensure children's voices drive us at every level.

"Youth voice and mental health are really important to me and Young NCB has been a crucial part to help me act on them. I've had opportunities to speak to figures across Government, Parliament and Education and I feel that it has been extremely beneficial not only for me but for these key figures to hear young people's voices when they make decisions about us.

I only joined Young NCB back in February, in the early rumours of a pandemic, and I've already had so many opportunities. Even though my involvement has only been virtual, it's been a whirlwind – meeting new amazing and inspirational people, getting to work with my fellow Young NCB members and getting the opportunity to collaborate on such influential campaigns such as our #ChildrenAtTheHeart campaign.

Following on from the social media buzz of the campaign, I attended the live-streamed All Party Parliamentary Group for Children (APPGC) meeting in July. Being part of the virtual APPGC meeting was one of the most exciting opportunities that I have ever taken part in, it was so reassuring to feed directly to politicians about how we as young people think Covid-19 has impacted us and what we want within a recovery plan after COVID-19 comes to an end. There was so much support from NCB staff, they were always on an end of an email to be there to answer any questions or just to speak!

Young NCB has been a crucial support system for me to be able to do something and get on with it, especially during such tricky times. It was always really enjoyable to be logging onto a NCB Zoom meeting, just knowing that I'm going to have an absolute blast."

**Dmitrijs Meiksans, 15 (Photo, right)**

## NCB – at a glance



### Young NCB

From responding to surveys and consultations to taking part in focus groups, members of Young NCB keep our fingers on the pulse.

Young people on the Advisory Group meet regularly for a deep dive into the world of children's policy and practice, shaping our strategic direction and project development.

### FLARE

The Council for Disabled Children runs FLARE, a 16-strong group of 13–25 year-olds with SEND. As advisers to the Department for Education, the young people on this group are well used to meeting with the Minister and no strangers to speaking out on the issues that matter.

### Young Research Advisors

Children and young people's voices and experiences strengthen the quality, relevance and impact of NCB research. Established in 2011, the YRAs are a diverse group of children and young people aged 7–18.

### Young Representatives to the Board

Members of Young NCB who engage and collaborate with the Board with a view to becoming Trustees themselves in future.

### Board of Trustees

Our governing documents require us to have two Trustees aged between 18 and 25 at time of appointment.



Young NCB is kindly supported by the John Ellerman Foundation's Social Action strand – improving systems and institutions through policy, advocacy and campaigning by actively involving those with personal experience of the issues that need essential change.

# Raising funds to make a difference

Determined to make a difference for other children and young people, Scarlett-Rose set herself the challenge of running 100K in March 2020 to raise funds for NCB.

Doing lessons at home was fine for me. At the beginning I worked downstairs but my dad was too noisy on the phone so I had to do all my lessons in my bedroom. It wasn't too much of a struggle first time round, but it felt harder in January.

We were talking as a family about children during Covid – especially thinking about children who didn't have the same kind of opportunities as me, like children who didn't have a computer to use at home or a suitable space to work in.

I'd always wanted to run for charity at some point in my life. Some of my friends were doing a 5K or a 10K run for charity, that inspired me. It's easy to just notice the people who are bad influences. These friends were really good influences!

I did some research online for charities that I could support. I've always had love and support

from my family and I wanted to use that to help other people. I went through lots of options and chose the National Children's Bureau.

I wanted to do what I could to help, so I chose a big challenge: to run 100K in a month.

In the build up I was running two 5K runs a week with a longer run at weekends. Then during the challenge itself I had to run three 5K runs and a 10K run for four weeks. Getting up in the morning was the hardest part. Sometimes my legs were hurting before I'd even started.

My dad ran with me. He says that for the first 20 minutes of each run I would moan a lot and struggle, but then we'd get into the groove and get chatting and it wasn't so bad after that.

It was nice to spend so much time together actually. I'm 14, and so at home dad and I would sometimes have silly arguments like most people do. It was great to do something positive together. We had some good laughs along the way. He helped to motivate me and choose different routes to keep it interesting. My favourite run was to the West Ham training ground. We saw a smart car arrive, but I couldn't see who was inside!

I set myself a £500 fundraising target, and it made me really emotional to see the donations coming in. The positive messages made me feel proud! The donations and messages created a lot of pressure for me, because I didn't want to let people down, but ultimately that's what helped me keep going when I wanted to give up.

My last run was to the Hornchurch FC stadium, where the Chairman is a friend of the family. The club made a generous donation and allowed a few family members and my best friend to cheer me down the home straight on their stadium athletics track. That was a nice finish!

In the end I raised £2K for NCB, and it's nice to know that this money could help more children and young people to have their voices heard. I'm looking forward to finding out more about Young NCB and ways that I can stay involved myself.

**Scarlett-Rose Farmer, 14**



## Finding a voice, finding hope

Bethan used her own experiences of worry and uncertainty to speak directly to policy makers about the issues turning young people's worlds upside down

On the 24th of March 2021, my living room became the House of Commons. And that Zoom meeting room became the Committee Rooms.

That day still feels unreal; as young people, we spend hours trying to plead with adults that our opinions matter and that we deserve to be involved in shaping laws about us, and here I was. After over a year of fear, uncertainty, online learning and way too many hours on screens, here were MPs with a strong message: they care.

That day, I gave evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee on Education. I did it with two of my best friends, in front of MPs who hold power over our lives and our futures.

Our whole world was turned upside down last year, our homes became our colleges, our youth clubs, our places of worship, and we've all dealt with the circumstances differently. The Education Select Committee was running an enquiry about education during lockdown, and when I was asked to give evidence, I leapt at the chance.

As a Politics student, I recognise the importance of government scrutiny and shaping policy involving my life.

"The feeling after being able to speak to these MPs for an hour on how this year has been was indescribable."

We covered different subjects, such as exams, content, teachings, extracurricular activities and our fears and worries for the future. We echoed our fears on subjects such as the future of the job market, or how our exam grades will be seen by employers, as a year who's A Levels/GCSEs were "cancelled".

It was also an opportunity of a lifetime to be able to ask the MPs questions, including one on their role in scrutinising the Government, and also when they think the educational gap that has been widened as a result of covid, will finally even out.

The last year has been the most uncertain. In a year where I should have had the most certainty and power over my life, I've had to choose university courses based on unis I've never seen apart from via a screen, I've had to study and do tests online and battle internet issues or distractions from across my house.

But that zoom call gave me hope for the future.

I'm extremely grateful that the House of Commons made a conscious effort to listen to young people and value our opinions and our experiences, and I really hope they take our views into account when creating further legislation.

**Bethan Hoggan, 17**



"It's been really good for me to be part of the conversation, and have a seat at the table. Because of who I am, and because of my age, I wouldn't have imagined being part of these conversations at this stage of my life."



## Growing up with NCB

Having been involved with NCB for many years, Tutu's curiosity led her to become a Young Representative to the Board, to take a closer look at how the charity operates.

I've been working with NCB for a long time. In my teens in Lancashire I did a lot of local youthwork. I was growing out of that and looked on Google for children's charities to be involved with. I found NCB and filled in the online form to join.

I first got involved with the Young NCB advisory group and the Anti-Bullying Alliance. Over the years I did a few things like helping to develop the campaign for Anti-Bullying Week. I have also helped out at events, behind the scenes or representing young people. It's been overwhelmingly positive, and NCB is really nurturing.

I met one of my closest friends, Priyanka, through Young NCB. We're still best friends now, even though I'm in Norwich and she's in London. Her older sister Thivya is now a Board member.

It was curiosity that led me to become a Young Representative a few years ago. I'd done a lot of work with different parts of NCB over the years, but I hadn't spent a lot of time with the senior leadership team. I was interested in Anna (NCB's chief executive) in particular, who is an amazing woman from my experience. I wanted more insight on what went on behind the scenes.

I do enjoy seeing the back end of things. Many people see the end product, but seeing how decisions were made, what was taken into consideration, the vast amount of research that was done. That was interesting to see.

Since I've joined the Board as a Young Representative, I've enjoyed seeing the business side of running a charity, especially with the marketing and the re-branding, it's constantly updating and adapting.

Mental health has been such a big issue for quite a while. NCB devotes a lot of time and energy to addressing that issue.

If I could make one change that I think would make a huge difference, I'd love there to be a place online for young people to go to talk – like easy access to online therapy I suppose.

I remember discussions about diversity of the children and young people that NCB supports, but how this diversity isn't so well reflected in the people who actually work for NCB. When we discussed this at the Board, I was coming mostly from a position of listening. I knew that my voice would be heard, but I wasn't sure about how I could contribute, especially when it comes to knowledge and experience about HR processes, for example. It's been good that the Board is self-aware and looking at those issues and actively recruiting new Trustees to address this.

It's been really good for me to be part of the conversation, and have a seat at the table. Because of who I am, and because of my age, I wouldn't have imagined being part of these conversations at this stage of my life.

It's also been great to have access to all kinds of different people. I know that if in future I wanted to move into certain jobs I would have guidance from some of the people I've encountered through the Board.

It's like a double plus – I'm so heavily interested and invested in NCB's future, so I get all these benefits when actually I'm just happy to be there representing young people.

I'm in my final year at uni, so there's a lot up in the air at the moment. I'm open to anything that I care about – from working with NCB to continuing biochemistry and going into research sciences, banking, marketing – I still have a passion for business and am interested in that area. I don't have a single route in mind at the moment.

The last year has been challenging, I've had my ups and downs. Having a pause in a lot of things has given me a chance to think about what makes me happy, what I give meaning to within my life. It's made me realise how important certain things are to me, like my role in NCB, I really value that and have really valued being part of all the meetings.

**Tutu Mukelabai, 21**

# 3. Bringing organisations together

Using our convening power to unite all those who can help us put the best interests of children first.

## Bringing organisations together in the pandemic

Our experience of using online conferencing tools for collaboration between disparate teams enabled us to adapt quickly to the constraints imposed by the pandemic.

While there are aspects of face-to-face interaction that are hard to replicate online, we found that many of our events were able to connect wider audiences than ever before, bringing us closer together across geographical divides.

The pandemic provided a clear focus for much of our partnership activity last year. As well as working with 17 leading charities to provide the Recovery principles and policy briefings referred to in *Making Evidence Count*, every member of the NCB family brought organisations together to respond to the immediate challenges of the pandemic while staying focused on working in partnership towards our long terms goals to deliver a better childhood.

## Transforming early years provision

Our Early Childhood Unit continued to run the National Quality Improvement Network, twice bringing representatives from Regional Quality Improvement Networks together to share intelligence and inform the national picture.

As the Department for Education's Early Years stakeholder engagement partner, we delivered five events focused on supporting early years settings to implement the revised Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The events brought early years practitioners, local authorities, consultants and academics together with officials from the Department for Education and Ofsted to take an in-depth look at reducing unnecessary workload, tracking and assessment.

As well as convening these broad networks, NCB focuses on bringing partners together to drive change in particular aspects of early years provision. Our work shows how joined-up services can transform local systems and improve outcomes for children.

## Improving access and inclusion

Getting support right for young children with SEND requires joined-up multi-agency systems and a skilled, confident workforce equipped to provide good services with clear pathways to specialist expertise.

The Council for Disabled Children leads the Early Years SEND Partnership, working with Nasen, Contact, The Communication Trust and I CAN, to boost the skills and confidence of early years settings managers, and bring local partners, agencies and services together to improve local strategies throughout 73 local authorities in the five northern regions of England.

A formal evaluation conducted by NCB's research team demonstrated the "tangible and sometimes transformational impact" of our activity last year, as well as exploring barriers and enablers to success, to inform approaches to early years SEND support across the UK.



Photo:  
From our Making It REAL  
activity to create positive  
home learning environments.



Our careful balance of regional, local and specialist action learning groups strengthened relationships between partners, in some cases leading to the organic formation of new multi-agency working groups to continue improving early years access beyond the life of the Partnership. In other areas we saw significant expansion of the offer to young children, such as the creation of a new early years speech and language therapist post – the first example, in this local area, of the local authority and health commissioners jointly funding such a service.

### **Raising early achievement in literacy**

Engaging parents in their children's early literacy development has been shown to improve children's outcomes and help to narrow the gap between disadvantaged and other children.

Initially developed by the University of Sheffield, Making it REAL (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy) is our award-winning programme that brings practitioners and parents together to create a positive early home learning environment. While we hold Making It REAL training throughout the country, we target particular areas where REAL is part of a wider programme of strategic development or place-based system change.

Last year we expanded The REAL programme, to focus specifically on children with SEND. We delivered *A Special Approach to Making it REAL* across the north west of England, distributing 500 'Special Treasure Chests' and delivering workshops, vodcasts and activity sheets, all designed to improve parents' confidence and establish a positive home learning environment that will stand children and families in good stead for the future.

At the same time we are working in partnership with The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and NatCen to research the impact of the REAL programme through a randomised control trial, funded by EEF and the Department for Education. Teachers in 53 schools in the north of England attended four inspirational professional

development days with REAL's originators Professors Cathy Nutbrown and Peter Hannon, and then began delivering REAL projects to children in their intervention group.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic we have worked closely with teachers, utilising their fantastic creativity to adapt the programme to ensure it can continue whilst socially distanced.

### **Preparing for adulthood from the earliest years**

At every stage of their learning and development, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) must not only receive the right support for the stage they are in, they must also receive the right support to prepare them for the next stage of their development. Getting this right from a child's earliest years makes a lasting difference throughout their childhood and into adulthood.

To this end, the Council for Disabled Children has led the development, trialling and review of a tool to support schools in Preparing for Adulthood from the Earliest Years (PfAEY). This is part of a package of tools from the Whole School SEND Consortium to embed good SEND provision in schools.

Working intensively with a group of schools in Oxfordshire, CDC has demonstrated how schools have been able to bring about a wide range of improvements: strengthening pupil voice, a sharper focus on working with families, starting earlier and looking ahead, and prompting more fundamental review of curriculum design, relevance and impact.

A formal evaluation conducted by NCB's research team demonstrated the "tangible and sometimes transformational impact" of our activity last year.

## Joining up systems for children and young people with SEND

### Delivering better outcomes together

Through the Council for Disabled Children's extensive work with local authorities, health and social care agencies throughout the country, we know that effective services depend on joint, outcomes-based planning and commissioning, with systematic sharing of information and data across agencies.

This complex work is right at the heart of our mission. As part of the Delivering Better Outcomes Together programme, in partnership with Mott MacDonald and NDTi, we worked through extensive networks to bring people together in a series of what we call 'accelerated working groups' to understand and overcome the barriers to effective joint working. These national and regional groups identify and enable changes that make the whole system work better for disabled children and those with special educational needs.

Last year we made good progress towards tackling the problem of poor data. This has been highlighted time and again in SEND local area inspections by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission as a key factor undermining joint strategic planning and commissioning.

At the beginning of the year we updated our SEND Data Dashboard to help local areas develop indicators to use as part of an outcomes framework, both to track impact and to target services. By the end of the year we had created a new joint commissioning checklist – a simple, powerful tool providing local areas with a RAG rating framework to assess progress towards effective joint commissioning arrangements.

In 2020–21 we supported 12 local areas on their journey to outcomes-based commissioning, either through the development of a new strategic outcomes framework or through improved implementation and monitoring of an existing one. This builds on the six areas supported in 2019–20 and will continue into the new contract year. Combining detailed case studies and learning from these areas with insight from the accelerated working groups, we create an ongoing cycle of improvement to drive changes throughout the system and

deliver better outcomes for disabled children.

This has led to some significant cultural shifts and noticeably improved relationships between agencies:

*"The journey [developing the outcomes framework] is in itself impactful, it has brought us together as partners across education, health and care and with our families to gain this joint, shared understanding of what is really important to our families."*

Throughout the year we hosted a variety of webinars, each attended by more than 200 participants, a wider audience than before the pandemic. One series brought together Designated Medical Officers and Designated Clinical Officers to support joint working between health services and local authorities. Another focused on SEND Leads and Commissioners. Our national event brought all these audiences together along with strategic parental input, to update the sector, share knowledge and best practice and learn from each other.

### Prioritising social care for disabled children and young people

The national reform programme for children's social care aims to ensure social workers have a robust set of knowledge and skills to meet the needs of vulnerable children and families, as part of a system which understands and supports the unique needs, experiences and strengths of each child. As the Department for Education's Strategic Reform Partner for SEND, we meet this challenge by bringing people together through strong regional networks, delivering workshops, sharing examples of emerging practice, publishing case law briefings and answering policy and practice questions and providing bespoke support.

As well as bringing our regional networks together, we developed new communities of practice to focus on key areas of the system, sharing creative responses to the pandemic and drawing out learning to drive the system forward. These communities focused on the Local Offer (information about what SEND support services are available in each local area) and on Short Breaks (services to enable children with SEND to enjoy time away from their main carer).

Our communities of practice on the role of the Designated Social Care Officer brought 89 professionals together. Embedding this role in local areas will lead to improved relationships and more integrated approaches across education, health and care services.

The SEND Review and forthcoming Care Review create an opportunity for the Government to reprioritise social care for disabled children and young people. Through our networks and communities of practice as well as members meetings and national events, we are developing evidence to drive change in the social care and SEND systems.

### **Protecting the rights of children with SEND**

Convened by the Council for Disabled Children, the Special Educational Consortium (SEC), is an influential network of 34 organisations covering the voluntary sector, professional bodies and parent groups. As well as sharing information on SEN policy and practice, SEC held meetings with Government officials on finances, school exclusions, behaviour and Ofsted inspections. SEC gave evidence to the Education Select Committee on the impact of lockdown, met with the Children's Minister about the ongoing support of children with SEN, securing important changes to the language of school exclusions.

### **Bringing people together to prevent bullying**

The theme for Anti-Bullying Week 2020 was 'United Against Bullying'. During the year the Anti-Bullying Alliance embodied this theme by bringing members and partners together to focus on driving change to policy and practice.

Crucially, we reconvened ABA's Race and Faith Targeted Bullying Group which brings together an influential group of 30 individuals and organisations to work on a new strategy to tackle Race and Faith Targeted Bullying.

The year ended with an event bringing children, young people, partners and Parliamentarians together to mark the end of the All Together programme, celebrating the lasting difference we'd made to children's experience of feeling safe and confident at school.

## **United for better mental health**

As well as bringing people together through the Schools' Wellbeing Partnership, we shared learning from the six HeadStart Partnerships, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, to explore and test new ways to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people aged 10 to 16.

In October we brought 220 mental health professionals and commissioners together with representatives of the Department for Education, NHS England and Public Health England, to share national and local perspectives. Each Headstart Partnership presented workshops sharing key learning and insight into their local system responses and interventions to prioritise children's emotional wellbeing amidst the return of education settings in the context of Covid-19, highlighting key learning and good practice.

### **What we'll do next year to bring organisations together**

We will grow and develop the schools well being partnership, supporting our schools to recover and reconnect post Covid-19.

We will build further collaboration in the early years sector, continuing to advocate for high quality early education and services to promote emotional wellbeing and health for all children.

Through the Childhood Bereavement Network we will work with partners to establish a UK Commission on Bereavement to explore issues affecting grieving children, young people and adults, and make recommendations to improve support.

We will bring stakeholders together and build momentum for change in key policy areas such as child poverty, SEND reform, and investment in children's services.

Strengthen our anti-bullying work with Anti-Bullying Alliance in England, Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum in Northern Ireland and support for partners in Wales.

# Working together with schools to improve wellbeing

Through a variety of programmes, campaigns and partnerships, we're supporting schools to take strides in boosting staff and pupil wellbeing.

## Working together to tackle bullying

Research shows that 30% of children have been bullied in the last year alone, with 17% experiencing bullying online. Bullying does not only blight childhoods, its effects can last long into adulthood, harming health, employment, relationships and more.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance raises awareness of bullying and supports schools to tackle it effectively so children can learn and play without fear of bullying.

### Raising awareness – Anti-Bullying Week

The Anti-Bullying Alliance brought people together to run the 2020 Anti-Bullying Week campaign 'United Against Bullying. This year 80% of schools took part in the campaign, with 56% of schools joining in Odd Socks Day celebrations as part of Anti-Bullying Week to celebrate what makes us all unique.

In a year when the pandemic was in the media spotlight and schools were stretched to their limits, we still saw 50,000 downloads of our school resource packs and coverage in 46 national newspapers. It was, however, on social media that we saw the biggest growth this year, with an 84% increase in engagement compared to the previous year. We reached a quarter of a billion with the hashtags on Twitter and 44 million on TikTok.

From Ant and Dec and Craig David to the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, and Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson, social influencers, pop stars, athletes and parliamentarians combined to spread positive awareness and share a strong anti-bullying message.

Independent research showed that 93% of young people think Anti-Bullying Week helps raise awareness of bullying, and 86% think Anti-Bullying Week helps schools tackle bullying.

## Reducing bullying in schools – All Together

In March 2021 we celebrated the end of our All Together whole-school anti-bullying programme, in which schools worked towards All Together status by evidencing their activity to improve their school approach to bullying, and how they've worked to reduce it and improve wellbeing.

Aiming to reduce all bullying, particularly of disabled children or those with special educational needs (SEND), the programme was funded by the Department for Education and delivered by the Anti-Bullying Alliance with support from Achievement for All and Contact.

Since the programme launched four years previously, 4,000 schools have taken part, with 1,200 fully completing programme steps and 638 schools going on to achieve an All Together School award. Evaluation by Professor Peter Smith, Goldsmiths University of London showed::

- **71%** of schools taking part said bullying had reduced in their school as result of the programme. The biggest reduction in bullying was reported by children with SEND.
- **61%** of schools reported improved behaviour among pupils.

We saw drastic improvements in the way schools approach bullying after using our audit and action plan tool. We captured their good practice and inspiring case studies to share with other schools on the programme.

"It's been wonderful – the staff are more confident and the children are able to talk about bullying in a new way. They are more empowered."

Feedback from *All Together* evaluation



## Whole school approaches to mental health and wellbeing

Bullying is a vital strand of our wider work to address mental health and wellbeing in schools.

Three children in every classroom have a diagnosable mental health problem and this number was already on the rise before the pandemic struck. With long waiting lists and high thresholds, only 1 in 4 of these children is able to get the treatment they need.

Mental health problems can intensify as children grow up. By the age of 14, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 10 boys experience symptoms of depression. By the age of 17, 1 in 6 young people report high levels of psychological distress. This can't go on.

During the year we strengthened our Schools' Wellbeing Partnership to lead our efforts to bring schools together to tackle this most pressing issue. Under the direction of a steering group chaired by Matthew Purves, National Director of Education Services at Academies Enterprise Trust (AET), the Partnership became a fully-fledged NCB specialist membership group in May 2021.

### Providing resources

One issue schools face is navigating an overwhelming array of tools and programmes designed to address mental health and wellbeing, but without a reliable guide for their effectiveness. In October 2020 the Schools' Wellbeing Partnership produced an overview of children and young people's mental health and

wellbeing resources, reports and campaigns to further address this deficit.

When schools were grappling with the challenges of remote learning and lockdown, our *Recovery Toolkits* for primary and secondary schools set out actions and supporting resources to help schools focus on the mental health and wellbeing of staff and pupils.

### Prioritising wellbeing

When we developed a Wellbeing Award for Schools with Optimus Education, we designed it as a means for schools to take a systematic approach to improving the wellbeing and mental health of the whole school community.

The award is built on a robust framework of eight objectives which epitomise best practice. Each of these objectives contains a number of key performance indicators against which schools provide evidence of their achievements.

So far, more than 1,000 schools have completed the award and are able to demonstrate the value they place on approaches to wellbeing. We aim to reach many more. In the meantime, how can parents ascertain how schools who have not completed such an award value the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils?

To answer this question, the Schools' Wellbeing Partnership produced a simple resource for parents setting out five key emotional wellbeing points to consider when choosing a school for their child. From attitudes to behaviour to support for social skills, these five points provide a gateway into a school's wellbeing culture.

Together we are making an overwhelming case for schools to prioritise our children's wellbeing, for it is in everyone's interests. We aren't just making a case though – we are providing the tools for the job.

## 4. Developing the workforce

Training and equipping an up-to-date and skilled workforce to deliver a better childhood throughout the UK.

### Developing the workforce in the pandemic

The needs of the workforce were changing and developing throughout last year, as the delivery environment shifted due to the pandemic.

Across the NCB family, we draw intelligence from our networks about the challenges services are facing, and then provide targeted support and guidance, sharing good practice to overcome barriers and drive improvement.

As well as ensuring our training and support offer was available online, we have adapted the format and focus of webinars and e-learning content delivery to meet ongoing needs.

Given other pressures, we have worked with the sector to keep strategic priorities on people's radar and ensure the workforce has the confidence to continue to deliver, especially for children with SEND.

"Excellent training that brings issues to life. It is also good to know the experiences of other local authorities and share knowledge. Fantastic training. Thank you!"

Feedback from one of our SEND learning and development events.

### Strategic development for the whole workforce

As above, our strategic national and regional networks identify and enable changes that make the whole system work better for children. We then equip and strengthen the workforce to deliver those changes.

### Delivering better outcomes for children and young people with SEND

Early in the year we moved our extensive training offer online, to keep boosting the skills and confidence of the workforce, including courses designed to address priorities such as improving the quality of advice provided in the Education, Health and Care Plan process, and strengthening person-centred Annual Review processes and meetings.

We made the shift to larger scale online events, regularly reaching hundreds of professionals with a series of learning and development events for our health, social care and SEND networks. These covered topics such as the strategically-important designated social care officer role, along with early help services, SEN support and the Local Offer. Our second series of events included multi-agency priority-setting using our social care audit tool.

The impact of the ongoing pandemic restrictions is creating pressure on different aspects of the system, driving up need for early social care intervention via the Early Help framework. During the year we created webinars to help professionals grow in skills and confidence in this vital area.

Our shared support sessions continued to be well attended throughout the lockdown, providing a space for health and care practitioners to discuss the challenge of engaging with children and young people in challenging circumstances.



Alongside this, we delivered a variety of strategic and practical support to improve outcomes for children with SEND, including workshops on personalisation for NHS England, consultancy and development projects with services throughout the country and a national event to help designated clinical and medical officers excel in their vital role bringing services together.

### **Information, advice and support for children and young people with SEND**

Led by the Council for Disabled Children, the Information Advice and Support Programme is a national Government initiative which commenced in June 2018 and has now been extended to run until March 2022.

The programme is being delivered through a partnership arrangement with the Information, Advice and Support Services Network (IASSN) and Contact and seeks to ensure that in every local authority area, children and young people with SEND and their parents have access to impartial and free information, advice and support on education, health and social care through local statutory SEND Information, Advice and Support Services (SEND IASS) and the offer of a national helpline and online advice, which is provided by Contact.

Using financial incentives with SEND IASS the programme has played a vital role in ensuring families, children and young people know how to get the information they need amid the changing picture of the pandemic, striving to provide continuity and reassurance to vulnerable children in the most confusing of circumstances, where the services available to children have varied according to which school they attend and the local area in which they live.

Alongside this we have continued to support the joint commissioning of SEND IASS across the country, working with local authorities and CCGS to ensure sustainable holistic information

advice and support is available in the long term.

IASSN have delivered popular webinars to support services as they adapted to the pandemic and understand the Coronavirus Act 2020. We have published case studies where every single story is not only a learning example for other services, but a story of life-enhancing support that has been maintained and improved for children with SEND.

We have rapidly expanded our e-learning training offer to help services have a better understanding of mental health, social care and holistic outcomes in education, health and care plans, where the end of the year, 1573 people had completed our Holistic Outcomes course.

We have delivered 18 days of IPSEA legal training resulting in 85% of services across England having a member of staff trained to Level 1, 81% to Level 2 and 81% to Level 3. By the end of the year we facilitated 47 intervention sessions with SEND IASS which led to both support and constructive challenge to help managers overcome their barriers to delivery. The response from local services to this support was incredible.

## **Developing the early years workforce**

### **Early years training and resources**

Our Early Childhood Unit strengthens the early years workforce to improve the quality of life of young children. We have developed a variety of resources and approaches for settings and practitioners throughout the UK, and we have the biggest impact by focusing on working intensively across an area to join up systems and equip the workforce to deliver lasting change.

Over the past five years we have worked on an ambitious programme to transform early years systems in Jersey in partnership with Jersey Childcare Trust, engaging with 7,000 people directly, including over 3,000 children, and a

wider audience of over 3,000 practitioners and stakeholders trained and consulted across the island.

To ensure the programme is sustainable once the funding ends we have developed a legacy handover model for the main components, including embedding our Making it REAL approach in early years qualifications at a Jersey College, and handing over our successful Knowledge Makes Change communications.

During the year we combined our flagship early years products – Making It REAL and Knowledge Makes Change – across early years settings primarily in Jersey, Lambeth and the North West, to develop the skills and confidence of practitioners.

We also created a new training course to help practitioners listen to the voices of young children. This is at the heart of early years practice, ensuring that young children's individual needs, preferences, feelings, views and experiences are understood and considered as a matter of course.

## Stakeholder Engagement

Our role as Department for Education (DfE) stakeholder engagement partner for the early years involved keeping information flowing throughout the early years sector at a time of significant policy development, with changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

As well as maintaining the Foundation Years website to connect early years practitioners with the latest policy, practice and guidance, we delivered bulletins and newsflashes to bring the latest developments to the early years sector.

Alongside five virtual virtual Learn – Explore – Debate events to discuss key aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) reforms, we were commissioned to run further training events to support their implementation, reaching 150 of the 151 local authorities in England.

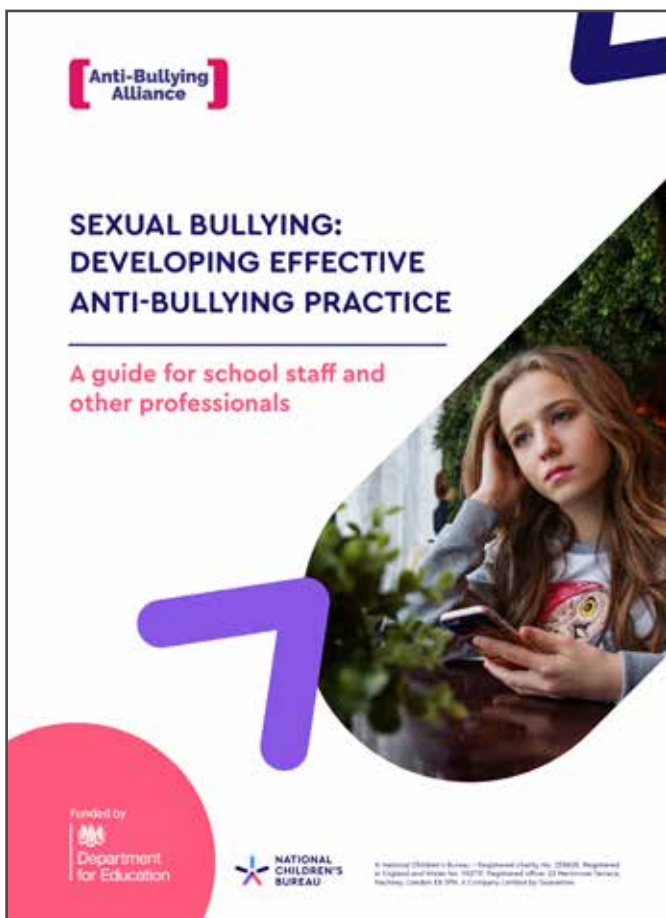
## Improving anti-bullying practice

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) provides online CPD training and live webinars to help professionals understand, prevent, reduce and respond to all forms of bullying.

We produced important new resources for schools, including a guide to preventing and responding to sexual bullying. At a time when *Everyone's Invited* has drawn attention to failures to keep children safe and address a culture of sexual harassment and violence in schools and online, our new guide and accompanying e-learning supports schools and other professionals as they safeguard, educate and support children in their care.

This guide draws on law and Government guidance, best practice from organisations that specialise in children's safety and/or sexual harms, research literature and consultation with children, including disabled children and those with special educational needs.

Alongside this, we created three new online courses anti-bullying courses, focusing on mental health, care-experienced young people and young carers.



The Anti-Bullying Alliance provides free CPD online training courses, including a course covering sexual bullying.

[www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/onlinetraining](http://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/onlinetraining)

## Strengthening bereavement services

The pandemic has had a profound impact on our experience of loss and grief. Many of us have experienced the loss of family and friends at a time when we have been unable to spend time with or say goodbye to loved ones, when funerals have been so different and it's been much harder for families to get together and support one another.

The Childhood Bereavement Network (CBN) spoke at external events organised by Public Health England, NHS England, Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care, the York St John University Counselling and Mental Health Centre and the Mental Health Leaders Group to raise awareness of the needs of bereaved children and young people grieving during the pandemic.

We also had a vital role to play in helping bereavement services adapt to unimaginably challenging circumstances to help children and young people move forwards in their grief.

## Sharing information and resources

Even before the first UK lockdown had been announced, we worked together with the National Bereavement Alliance to bring our networks of bereavement service managers and practitioners together through weekly webinars to strengthen our collective response to the growing pandemic.

We held 20 webinars during the year, with 10 in the first quarter when the turmoil was greatest. With an average attendance of 175, the webinars supported a total of 950 practitioners, providing a safe space for the sector during a particularly difficult, uncertain and complex time.

Through these webinars, network meetings, email bulletins and more, we maintained a comprehensive information service for our network members throughout the year, keeping services up to date with the latest Government guidance and helping them to adapt safely and effectively.

We produced new resources ourselves, including a guide on *Keeping in touch when you can't be with someone who is so ill that they might die*, as well as maintaining a collated

*Covid-19 Resources Pack* for professionals, drawn from resources shared during our weekly webinars.

## Raising awareness of bereavement support

Together with Grief Encounter, our partners in the Life Matters Taskforce and our members across the UK, we ran Children's Grief Awareness Week in November to raise awareness of the support available for bereaved children and young people. Our theme, #SayTheWords, encouraged families to reach out for support, inviting friends, schools, communities and services to acknowledge their grief and offer support.

We released new findings on bereaved families' struggles during the pandemic and worked with our members across social media to support children and young people to find their voice and talk about their grief, and to help those supporting them to #SayThe Words even if they don't know quite what to say.

## What we'll do next year to develop the workforce:

We will build on our significant success in delivering our digital training offer, developing an e-learning offer to ensure the widest range of practitioners can access quality training and support.

We will work specifically with commissioners and managers in health, education and care, in partnership with families, to build skills in commissioning for better outcomes for vulnerable children and families.

We will build on our programme of co-produced training, ensuring the expertise of children, young people and families as co-trainers is recognised and celebrated.

We will support Headstart mental health and wellbeing sites providing bespoke training support.



# Responding to Covid-19: Local services, national impact

Working together to understand the needs of families with young children, adapt local services and share learning to inform lasting change.

The earliest years of life are a vital time in which children's brains develop rapidly and foundations are laid for the future.

One of five *A Better Start* partnerships funded by The National Lottery Community Fund, the Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP) is just over halfway through a 10-year project to lay the best foundations for children aged 0–3 years in four deprived wards of South London.

Delivering this crucial support throughout the pandemic has required ingenuity and determination to understand emerging and changing needs and adapt to meet them.

## Understanding the impact

LEAP started in April 2020 by interrogating the evidence and producing a research brief to assess the known and likely impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic for children and families, especially those in the LEAP areas. This brief was an important component of NCB's collaborative work on the national Early Years Recovery Briefing.

The pandemic added to the existing stresses of pregnancy and parenting young children, creating conditions for domestic and child abuse to escalate. It cut many families off from the support networks, play facilities, outdoor spaces, groups, children's centres and other sources of support for health, wellbeing and development. Some families who were already experiencing adversities found those challenges intensified; others faced new issues entirely.

The virus and secondary impacts of the pandemic have disproportionately affected disadvantaged areas and Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic communities. This is of major concern to LEAP as a public health initiative operating in four deprived wards where 59% of 0–3 year olds are from a BAME background.

LEAP's Covid-19 activity has been intrinsically linked with our response to heightened awareness and widespread discussion of systemic racism since the killing of George Floyd in May 2020. As well as understanding the racial disparities in the impact of the pandemic, the team explored the impacts of systemic racism, identified areas of action, and celebrated Black families and figures. While this exploration and development around race equality was driven by more than Covid-19 and integrated into the wider programme, this has been an important part of LEAP's provision for families, workforce communications and team activity during the pandemic.

## Adapting local services

The challenge of helping parents through digital and online services when face-to-face meetings were not possible required the team to rapidly adapt its approach to improving diet and nutrition, communication and language, and social and emotional development.

LEAP continuously monitored local and national provision, public messaging and intelligence, including insights from parents, to determine how best to work with partners and networks to provide the best response for young families.

Some developments in services were to address specific needs arising from Covid-19. The *Winter With Us* campaign reached out to families with wide-ranging support, connecting parents with Parent Champions, running learn and play sessions, advising on employment, childcare and money worries and more, all supported through a range of short films from parents sharing their own ideas and experiences.

LEAP included activity packs in food parcels for children's centre clients and provided backing for the Healthy Living Platform in its leadership



Photo:  
Healthy Living Platform  
in action in Lambeth.

of the borough's emergency food response in providing healthy food deliveries to families at risk of going hungry and ensuring new mothers were welcomed home from hospital with a supply of ready cooked meals.

Some developments that were not primarily driven by Covid-19 took on new significance. In late 2020, for example, LEAP started remodelling its domestic violence service run by the Gaia Centre. LEAP strengthen the service's early intervention approach by expanding capacity for outreach and better tailoring it to the client group. This change seems particularly important at a time when the pandemic has escalated domestic abuse, restricted help-seeking opportunities and the visibility of survivors, and affected workforce connectedness.

Another example is the Maternity Vulnerability Assessment Tool (MatVAT), a holistic tool for midwives to measure social vulnerability in pregnant women more consistently. The pandemic changed, and in some cases reduced, face-to-face services for pregnant women. Identifying women with complex social needs became even more important to ensure those most in need receive support at a crucial time.

## Sharing learning

In NCB's role designing and delivering an ambitious programme of shared learning and development support across the entire *A Better Start* programme, we enabled knowledge and ideas to flow between the five local partnerships - in Blackpool, Bradford, Nottingham and

Southend as well as LEAP in Lambeth. Funded by The National Lottery Community Fund, we convened practitioners working in different areas to share their experiences and expertise through cross-organisation communities of practice. Through these insights, we were able to show how health visiting, family mentors, early literacy programmes, breastfeeding support, community engagement, healthy eating programmes, multi-professional health teams and other sources of vital support could be repurposed to help families during lockdown.

A steady stream of articles became the basis of two reports highlighting the *A Better Start* response to Covid-19, and featured in an in-depth article in *Nursery World*, sharing learning far and wide so that others working in early childhood development or place-based systems change could benefit.

This culminated in an online conference showing how *A Better Start* has made co-production with local parents a cornerstone of its approach, demonstrating the importance of putting families in the driving seat, even when grappling with the challenges of a year like no other.

As our summary report on the *A Better Start* response to Covid-19 concluded, it is clear that the virus will be with us for some time to come, and with it will emerge further evidence on its impact on young children, families and communities. We will continue to learn and adapt to make sure the needs of these families and communities continue to come first.

## 5. Growing respect & trust

Putting into practice our core governance principles of leadership, integrity, transparency and accountability.

### Embedding Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

The increased prominence of the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020 reinforced the importance of the principles and statement of intent developed last year, setting the cultural tone at NCB and making a contribution towards addressing the issue across the wider charitable sector.

We have finalised and implemented our staff Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity plan and are committed to embedding this plan in all aspects of our work, from staff and Trustee recruitment through our own staff policies to requiring suppliers to share their position and policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion with us.

We are working closely with our staff to ensure we continue to learn alongside and from each other as we strive to role model good practice in the sector. Our annual staff survey revealed that whilst staff recognise there is much to do to make NCB truly diverse, 73% of staff consider us to be an inclusive organisation. Whilst we are clear there is much more we can and will do, this a promising position to build upon.

### Embracing digital

The first anniversary of occupation of our new office in London Fields arrived as we moved into another national lockdown, but the legacy of changes made to how we work as part of this office move proved more valuable than ever.

With a fully cloud-based IT infrastructure and with all staff able to use video conferencing, webinar and other tools to bring people together internally and externally, we were able to move overnight to a full digital delivery model. In the staff survey, 90% of staff agreed or strongly agreed that they "have the tools and technology to work effectively away from the office".

The pandemic provided an accelerate to our digital development as we effectively translated

face-to-face delivery to the online world. In many cases this change was accompanied by increased accessibility and inclusivity, increasing levels of participation tenfold in some cases.

We have recently appointed a Head of Digital, a new role at NCB, to lead the dedicated digital team and drive forward our Digital Strategy as we work with funders and partners to determine the proportion of online delivery to retain in the long-term.

### Calm (and collaborative) in a crisis

NCB exists to bring organisations together to bring about the best for children and young people. Our trusted relationships with Government and partners enabled us to play a key role in supporting decision-making throughout the pandemic, based on sound evidence and intelligence from throughout our networks, including from children and young people themselves.

### Supporting a new charity

All relationships grow and change and we are proud of the responsible and professional way we have supported the Sex Education Forum (SEF) to establish as an independent entity, having been part of the NCB Family for 34 years. Both groups of Trustees maintained focus on delivering SEF's mission, ensuring clear communication with members with no adverse impact on their experience. There was an inevitable challenge to untangle systems and a range of legal and logistical issues to navigate. This was tackled systematically and with openness and transparency, keeping to tight deadlines and using our learning to improve our governance processes.

### Driving efficiency, compliance and accreditation

We continue to prioritise good governance, compliance with regulation and adoption of

best practice in all areas of operations. Key achievements in the year include compliance with Making Tax Digital and IR35 regulations as well as keeping abreast of data protection implications of leaving the EU.

We continued to improve efficiency this year through measures such as implementation of optical character recognition software to automate much of our purchase invoice processing and we have initiated a process to select software to automate more HR processes.

Having paid Living Wage as a minimum for many years we are proud to have received accreditation as a Living Wage employer.

## Looking after our people

Looking after our people's wellbeing and sense of belonging has been a priority through the past year and the additional challenges of enforced remote working. Focus has been on clear and frequent communications and finding opportunities to bring us together, even if virtually, in small and large groups.

Investment has also been made in developing our managers with training for all those with line management responsibility and we are nearing completion of an ambitious leadership development programme which was conceived pre-pandemic and moved to virtual delivery after the initial session.

Implementation of a new Performance Management Framework has simplified processes and increased consistency supporting both managers and staff to have constructive conversation, monitor progress against goals throughout the year and provide opportunity to regularly discuss workload and wellbeing.

## New ways of working

Our staff are NCB's greatest asset and we are proud of our value driven culture. NCB has long history supporting both informal and formal flexible working arrangements with policies expanded to reflect what we have learnt during recent experiences. We are working on a "Ways of Working" guide to be introduced during 2021/22 as we transition back to more face to face working. We expect the majority of staff to continue to work with a higher degree of flexibility than before the pandemic but also recognise the values of bringing people together and are looking forward to spending time with colleagues again.

73%

of staff consider us to be an inclusive organisation. That's not enough.

We're addressing this by setting the culture at Board level and bringing staff together to embed our shared Equality, Diversity & Inclusion plan at every level of the organisation.

## What we'll do next year to grow respect & trust

We will focus on delivering the ambitious second year of our five-year Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity plan, embedding this work in every area of the organisation.

With inclusion firmly in mind, we will recruit a further five Trustees with at least two under the age of 25. We will also recruit additional Young Representatives to keep amplifying the voices of young people at the heart of our governance.

We will build on our robust management of the short-term financial challenges presented by the pandemic to develop a five-year financial plan, accompanied by a wide ranging fundraising strategy, to maintain long-term financial sustainability.

We will drive our Digital Strategy forward, focusing especially on using digital to bring organisations together and provide a mix of free and paid-for learning opportunities to develop the workforce.

We will use the opportunity of returning to face to face delivery and our office spaces to further develop operational culture and enable all staff to work with even greater flexibility, promoting collaboration, efficiency and wellbeing.



# Trustees' Annual Report

## Incorporating the Directors' Strategic Report and Administrative Report for Companies Act Purposes

The Trustees of The National Children's Bureau present their Annual Report for the Year-Ended 31st March 2021 under the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006, including the Directors' Report and the Strategic Report under the 2006 Act, together with the audited financial statements for the year.

### Board of Trustees

Yvonne Campbell  
 Terrence Collis (to December 2020)  
 Ajit Dhaliwal (from October 2020)  
 Fergal McFerran  
 Thivya Jeyashanker  
 Clare Laxton  
 Page Nyame-Satterthwaite  
 Alison O'Sullivan, Chair  
 Elizabeth Railton CBE, Vice-Chair  
 Shubhi Rajnish (from October 2020)  
 Nainan Shah (from October 2020)  
 Kiki Syrad (to December 2020)  
 Robert Whelan, Treasurer  
 Brendan Whittle (to March 2021)

Members of the Board of Trustees under charity law are also Directors of the charitable company for the purpose of company law.

### Young Representatives to the Board

Bethan Hoggan  
 Sienna James  
 Mwitumwa Mukelabai

### Independent Members

Sheena Parker (Finance, Risk & Audit Committee)  
 Laura Sercombe (Selection Committee)  
 Judith Worthy (Finance, Risk & Audit Committee)

### Strategic Leadership Team

Anna Feuchtwang, Chief Executive  
 Annamarie Hassall MBE, Director of Practice and Programmes  
 Dame Christine Lenehan, Director of Practice and Programmes  
 Celine McStravick, Director of NCB Northern Ireland  
 Rachel Rand, Director of Finance and Corporate Services

### Auditors

Crowe U.K. LLP  
 55 Ludgate Hill, London EC4M 7JW

### Bankers

Barclays Bank PLC  
 1 Churchill Place, London E14 5HP

### Investment managers

CCLA Investment Management Ltd  
 80 Cheapside, London EC2V 6DZ

## Administrative Information

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) was registered as a charity in 1969 (charity number 258825), although it was founded in 1963 as the National Bureau for Cooperation in Child Care. NCB is also a company limited by guarantee (registration number 952717) and has a subsidiary trading company, National Children's Bureau Enterprises Ltd (registration number 2633796).

NCB's Registered Office is at 23 Mentmore Terrace, Hackney, London, E8 3PN.

NCB was established for the public benefit in order to advance the well-being of children and young people in particular by (but not limited to):

- relieving poverty, sickness and distress
- safeguarding and maintaining health and well-being
- encouraging positive and supportive family and other environments for children and young people
- advancing education and training
- reducing inequalities
- ensuring that children and young people have a strong voice in all matters that affect their lives.

For the purposes of carrying out these objects, NCB's Articles of Association expect it to promote and organise cooperation and partnerships and to influence and inform policy, practice and service development by bringing together voluntary organisations, statutory authorities, individual professionals and all those concerned with the well-being of children and young people.

The liability of members in respect of the guarantee, as set out in the Articles, is limited to £1 per corporate member of the company.

## Governance and Management

NCB is committed to upholding its organisational culture and values in line with the seven principles of the Charity Governance Code (updated 2020):

- Organisational Purpose
- Leadership
- Integrity
- Decision Making, Risk and Control

- Board Effectiveness
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Openness and Accountability

NCB's Board of Trustees and Strategic Leadership Team reflect these standards across practices, function and behaviours, conscious of the fact that the organisational culture is influenced and embedded from these levels. The Governance Code is also embedded across NCB particularly with regard to setting the foundations for the governance objectives and outcomes in the organisational strategy 2018-2023.

As set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, NCB's Board of Trustees comprises a maximum membership of fifteen, including the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer and at least two Trustees must be under the age of 25 years at the time of appointment to fulfill NCB's young governance requirements. Each Board member serves a maximum of two terms each of three-years, with the possibility of a one-year extension at the end of their second term in exceptional circumstances. At year-end 31 March 2021, the Board membership was 11 with the above requirements met.

Over the reporting period, one Trustee retired from the Board upon conclusion of full term of services and two resigned from the Board after serving one term owing to other professional commitments. Three new Trustees were successfully appointed through a wide reaching, transparent and robust recruitment process conducted with Inclusive Boards.

The induction of new Trustees has been refreshed with a new programme introducing the role of the charity Trustee, NCB leadership, governance, finance, development, core delivery programme and with a buddy system in place for further support in navigating the Board's business and the work for NCB.

In addition to the appointed Trustees aged under 25, the Board remains committed to ensuring the voice of young people is represented with three Young Representatives continuing to serve across the year, bringing highly valued insight and perspectives and providing direct link to the work of Young NCB.

The Board remains fully committed to promoting an inclusive approach, recognising that diversity strengthens leadership, effectiveness and decision making by harnessing a broader range

of perspectives. The Board recognises that lived experience is as valuable as professional expertise and will continue to develop and enhance its structures and ways of working to support this.

As part of the process, the Board periodically reviews its collective membership and individual expertise, lived experience and development requirements, annual one to ones with each Trustee and either the Chair or Vice-Chair and external effectiveness reviews will be undertaken periodically to obtain independent assessment and advice.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board swiftly and effectively moved its arrangements online and throughout the year has reviewed and modified its working arrangements to best deliver its duties and function remotely. The Honorary Officers have been extended from the Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasures to include the Chairs of standing committees and advisory groups and has met frequently across the year particularly to provide additional support to the Executive across this period of change and transition.

The Board of Trustees has revised its annual schedule maintaining the four Business Meetings to focus on statutory and strategic matters and has added four Reflective Sessions to explore and consider broader themes. The Board has revised its overarching governance framework, structures and terms of reference and memberships to committees and groups to ensure an appropriate balance of expertise and perspectives to inform dialogue and decision making, as well as providing development opportunities for Trustees.

The Finance, Risk and Audit Committee (FRAC) ensures that NCB is compliant in its financial obligations, auditing standards and legal requirements of regulatory bodies, including the Charity Commission, through an appropriate framework of policies, processes and controls. Previously, the Major Grants and Contracts Committee (MGCC) had specific remits focused on contracts of significant financial and reputational risks. With such contracts successfully being delivered, the MGCC has been disbanded and key contract reporting incorporated into the FRAC's quarterly business.

The scope of the Selection Committee has broadened beyond the remits of Board membership, succession planning and Trustee

recruitment, to include all matters pertaining to 'people' including equality, diversity and inclusion and that key strategic objectives set out in NCB's People Plan are progressed inline with NCB's vision, mission and values. To reflect the change, the committee has been renamed the People and Culture Committee.

The Board may establish advisory groups to support the development of strategic objectives, with the Fundraising Advisory Committee (FAC) a prime example of how these groups can be highly beneficial in this capacity having supported the development of NCBs income diversification plan. The FAC has been disbanded in that capacity with a new Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) established to provide such support in a broader context.

## Senior Pay

NCB aims to ensure that all staff are paid on a grade appropriate to the nature of the work and the experience, knowledge and skills needed to carry out the job within the organisation.

NCB also aims to ensure that all jobs are at a pay level which is reasonable when compared with the external market pay ranges for the charity and civil service sectors. The grades of all roles are assessed as part of NCB's job evaluation process, with the exception of the Chief Executive's and Directors' salaries which are determined by the Remuneration Committee of the Board of Trustees.

## Fundraising

NCB has not contracted the services of professional fundraisers or commercial participators. NCB benefits as one of four recipients from donations secured by Childlife, a consortium charity whose methods include door-to-door, street fundraising and payroll giving. All activity lines are rigorously observant of industry recognised, best practise in ethical fundraising.

We delegate our low level individual giving because our work does not lend itself to a large scale, fundraising opportunity with the general public. Accordingly, the advice we give to those wishing to fundraise on our behalf, is offered on a case-by-case basis, with Institute of Fundraising best practice in mind.

NCB and Childlife are registered with the Fundraising Regulator. No complaints have been received about our fundraising activities.

## Risk and Internal Control

The Trustees continue to review the risks facing NCB group, controls in place and mitigating actions being taken using the organisation's general statement of risk appetite with its corresponding set of principles around generally acceptable levels of risks.

The Trustees remain of the view that appropriate control procedures are in place to manage risks and that the systems of financial control comply in all material aspects with the guidelines issued by the Charity Commission.

The Trustees note the following specific areas that give rise to the potential major risks for the next financial year:

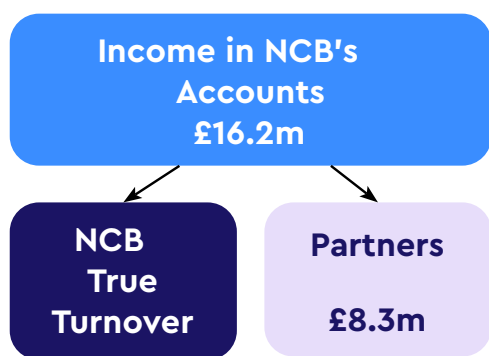
Risk	Mitigating action
<p><b>Financial</b> Longer-term implications of the global Covid-19 pandemic such as a UK/global recession and re-prioritisation of funding to short-term recovery initiatives resulting in an in-year deficit and reduction of unrestricted reserves (and longer term financial unsustainability).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial planning time horizons extended to up to five years and accompanied by longer-term fundraising strategy.</li> <li>• Spending controls over budgeted but uncommitted spend kept at the tighter levels introduced in the prior year.</li> <li>• Financial monitoring "Exception Reporting" introduced to supplement the established Quarterly current year reforecasting to provide earlier information to support both operational and strategic decision making.</li> <li>• Development of range of mitigating actions to reduce costs in the event of substantial multi-year reduction of income. Potential financial and non-financial impacts of each to be fully assessed to enable strategic deployment at short notice if required.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Delivery</b> Failure to adapt delivery models to meet the changing, and possibly as yet unknown, ways of working post pandemic. Misjudgments may lead to reduced impact for beneficiaries, impaired relationships with funders and partners, and financial penalties for missed KPIs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close liaison with funders and delivery partners to agree delivery expectations upfront, where possible building in flexibility to switch delivery models during the programme if required by changes in the external landscape.</li> <li>• Senior leadership and management teams focused on maintaining and building upon strong stakeholder relationships.</li> <li>• Project costing tools updated to accurately reflect the costs of high quality virtual delivery, incorporating learnings from the past year.</li> </ul>
<p><b>People</b> Whilst the extended period of enforced home working has been very challenging for some staff, others are fearful of a return to face to face working and uncertainty exists for all staff over the establishment of future work patterns. If not properly managed there is the potential for hybrid working styles to lead to a more fragmented workforce resulting in lower productivity on both personal and organisational levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed guidance for post pandemic ways of working developed in collaboration with staff and introduced over an extended transition period designed to enable all staff, including our younger workforce, to be fully vaccinated before being required to travel and/or work face to face.</li> <li>• Regular surveys of staff conducted to enable timely response to changes in levels of concern and regular evaluation of the ways of working guidance and application planned throughout the year.</li> <li>• Flexible working policies refreshed and extended to offer extensive guidance over, and support for, both informal and formal flexible working arrangements.</li> </ul>

# Financial Review

## Understanding NCB's finances

### Leading partnerships

Income shown in NCB's latest accounts is £16.2m. However, this is inflated by £8.3m of funding that is received by NCB, but is passed on to partner organisations, leaving a core income of £7.9m.



£4.6m of the funds managed on to partners is under the Information, Advice and Support Programme (IASP) we run on behalf of the Department for Education. A further £3.0m, the vast majority of the remaining amount, went to partners in the Lambeth Early Action Partnership (LEAP), a 10-year programme funded by the Big Lottery as part of their A Better Start initiative.

This situation is common for NCB, as one of our great strengths is convening the children's sector and therefore we are often asked, by Government and others, to lead partnerships. Part of our role, for the funder's convenience, is to receive, distribute and steward funding among partner organisations involved in a particular programme.

We still recognise this as income in our accounts, despite not funding NCB activity, for two reasons:

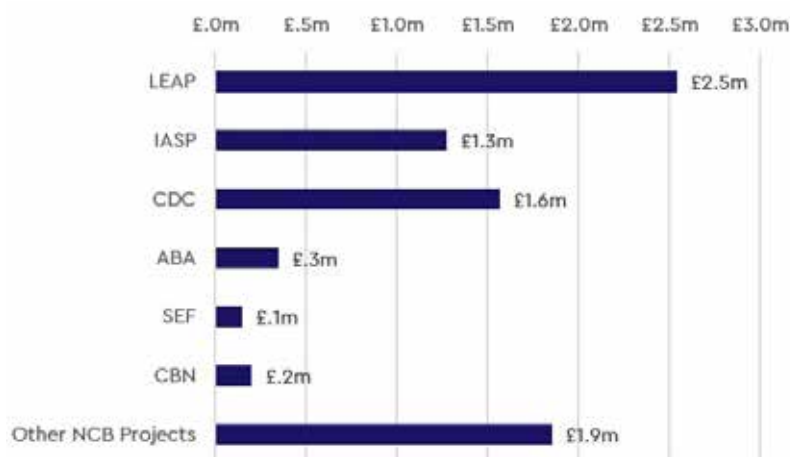
- We are required to by accounting standards.
- It helps ensure our budget holders have ease of visibility of all their financial transactions, helping ensure our excellent financial management.

### NCB's structure

NCB is a family, bringing together expert membership networks to provide a unifying

voice in the sector, including the Council for Disabled Children, the Anti-Bullying Alliance, the Childhood Bereavement Network, and the Sex Education Forum.

The £7.9m 2020/21 net income (i.e. excluding money to partners) can be broken down as follows:



### NCB's unrestricted income

NCB's accounts for 2020/21 show unrestricted income of £8.2m. It is important to understand that, according to charity accounting rules, this must include income earned by NCB through contracts and the sale of training and memberships, even though this income merely covers the unavoidable cost of delivering those contracted services. Only the £124k shown as unrestricted donations and legacies was genuinely given to NCB with free choice as to how to use it.

### NCB's reserves and reserves policy

In line with the Charity Commission's best practice, NCB's Trustees maintain a reserves policy. Whilst we would otherwise spend our funds on achieving charitable impact, we retain sufficient free reserves (ie unrestricted funds, excluding those tied up in our property or set aside to be spent soon), to protect against the impact of volatility in future funding, disruption to operations and other risks, and to invest in adapting and evolving our services, to ensure we sustain our impact for future beneficiaries.

NCB's trustees have adapted a standard, benchmarked framework to assess the reserves required to safeguard the charity against future

risks and provide for future opportunities. In their assessment, the trustees review the organisation's risk register and consider the possible financial impacts of those risks, of which the following are considered material:

- NCB may need to cover costs and ensure continuity of impact and, ultimately, solvency in the case of abrupt changes to funding over the coming years.
- Government funding, specifically, could be delayed or significantly changed, initially due to coronavirus disruption to spending plans, requiring NCB to cover staff and other costs in an interim period.
- The defined benefit pension scheme is valued on a triennial basis. We do not require input from reserves in the current period. Macro-economic conditions could increase the need for additional funding in future.
- We will need to continue to make cyclical investment in new products and services, to meet emerging policy aims and societal needs and generate the next income streams for NCB to sustain the charity.
- Other adverse events could require unbudgeted payment, such as failure of compliance with HMRC or GDPR.
- Costs would need to be met in the event of closing the charity down, eg administrator costs, redundancies. (While this is not remotely perceived to be needed, it is prudent to set this aside at all times.)

NCB typically only receives around £100k of donation-type income each year, with all other income tied closely to delivery expenditure. This means it is difficult to rebuild free reserves after they are spent, which encourages NCB to take a more conservative approach to retaining these funds for adverse events.

The current free reserves have been built primarily from the recent sale of freehold property (net of reinvestment in the new London office), meaning Trustees consider there to be less pressure to promptly spend these funds than if they had been donated with the expectation of achieving timely impact. NCB anticipates that the need for its system improvement, to continue delivering a better childhood, will continue to exist for the foreseeable future.

Trustees therefore assess that NCB should hold a minimum of £1m at any time. In considering the above risks, Trustees are also comfortable

that reserves significantly higher than this also represent an appropriate balance between using funds for impact and maintaining organisational integrity to ensure NCB continues to meet the future anticipated need to improve childhoods for years to come. This considers that the risks above are extremely unlikely to all be of imminent concern at any one time.

Current free reserves are £1.8m (with a further £0.8m designated against specific risks), in line with this policy and rightly at the higher end in light of the need to continue to manage through some disruption ahead due to coronavirus impacts. As is outlined elsewhere in this report this disruption will impact funding across multiple years, but this is not anticipated to be severe, still leaving appropriate reserves to cover the other needs and risks listed. NCB's operational budget is to break even, matching income and expenditure, while delivering across this strategic period and therefore maintain these reserves. In addition to this aim, our agreed budget for 2021/22 anticipates a small deficit, as we continue to deliver the full breadth of our core activities, underwriting these where funding is difficult to find, and invest in our future development to grow our scale and evolve to meet emerging needs, including strengthening our ability to deliver our impact digitally. We will therefore continue to look for external funding for all our programmes and investment funding to help us develop new solutions to meet these emerging needs.

In addition to our free reserves, we have now completed the work on our long leasehold property asset and, having capitalised or expensed our spend to date, we have designated less than £0.1m of funds at this year end to cover final finishing touches, and £0.4m for potential further VAT costs under the capital goods scheme. Funds from underspending against the original £5.7m budget, and from VAT recovery to date, have been released to free reserves above. Designated funds total £0.9m and £5.6m including the fixed asset fund.

NCB also has a long-term pension deficit, which is managed via an agreed, standard recovery plan (and against which we designate a small amount of reserves to help meet periodic changes in the recovery plan), and restricted project funds of £0.9m (2020 £0.7m) received in advance and strictly ring-fenced for delivery of the projects agreed with the funders. The total funds held by the charity therefore stand at £1.5m (2020 £0.8m).

# Summary for the year under review

2020/21 was the third year of the new five year strategy and accompanying income generation strategy, designed to grow and strengthen the diversity of income generating areas of the business. These two strategies have combined to address the deficits experienced in recent years and bring the organisation to run at a break even on unrestricted funds again this year (as in the previous two years), maintaining our strong reserves, and plan to do so in future years.

The result seen in the financial statements can be broken down as follows:

There was a small operating surplus on unrestricted funds (excluding the pension scheme) of £0.2m (2020 £0.2m), representing an important continuation of running at break-even whilst maintaining investment in income generation for future years.

Net income from operational restricted funds was £0.2m, reflecting merely the timing of spend on grant funded projects.

This resulted in the net of NCB's assets and current liabilities being strengthened to £8.6m (2020 £8.2m) and free reserves moving to £1.8m (2020 £2.0m), largely from releasing underspend from the funds set aside for purchasing and fitting out the new office, as well as designated further funds for key strategic priorities in 2021/22. NCB is therefore in a strong financial position, with free reserves above the policy minimum set out above, a significant property asset and a strong, strategic income generation approach to help ease the disruption in 2020/21 and continue the strong financial performance in the years ahead.

Alongside this positive result and position, NCB's overall net assets increased from £0.8m to £1.5m due to a slight decrease in the actuarial valuation of the liability in our defined benefit pension scheme from £7.4m to £7.1m. Whilst we must show the valuation according to FRS102 methodology in our accounts, this is a very long-term liability. NCB manages this in a long-term approach with the fund, meeting all funding requirements set out by the fund's actuaries every three years and the latest

valuation for contribution purposes showed the fund in surplus. Our continuing break-even result for this year is strong evidence that we will continue to sustainably meet any pension fund requirements.

## Financial performance

### Income

Overall income decreased during the year from £20.8m in 2019/20 to £16.2m. Unrestricted income reduced to £8.2m (£10.9m in 2019/20), reflecting mainly a reduction in subcontracts and funding passing through to partners on our main, continuing major contract, while restricted income lessened from £9.9m to £8.0m, reflecting the change in activity in our 'A Better Start' programme for National Lottery Community Fund. Outside of these the charity continues to hold a number of government contracts and has secured significant grants for its projects and research from a range of government, trust and other sources. The latter are listed in full at the back of this report.

### Fundraising

Our 2018–21 Fundraising Strategy set out to strengthen our funding through Trusts and Foundations, build our range of contracts with the National Lottery and maintain the important source of statutory funding for delivery of our work to build a better childhood. This remains an important foundation for NCB, which we are now building on with further development of community fundraising and traded income.

Our relationship with the National Lottery has continued to flourish, both directly as a trusted partner delivering multi-year programmes, and indirectly, such as being part of a successful bid led by NatCen to play a key role in the National Lottery Community Fund Strategic National Evaluation of the A Better Start Programme.

As our fundraising team has become more firmly established, we have started to strengthen relationships with Trusts and Foundations, especially those who could support our core functions. We have received a grant from the

Paul Hamlyn Foundation for a project testing an advocacy model for care leavers with insecure immigration status and the John Ellerman Foundation continue their support to ensure that the voices of children and young people are central to our policy and campaigning work.

This is not just about the fundraising team – we have been developing the fundraising culture of the organisation as a whole. This is reflected in teams across NCB all having income generation targets and an active role to play in our fundraising strategy. It is also reflected in young people who have not been involved with NCB before choosing to raise funds for us because they resonate with our cause.

NCB is proud to be part of the charity Childlife, which has adapted its individual giving and payroll giving fundraising activity to meet the challenges posed by the pandemic. As well as raising valuable income, Childlife has united the four member charities on integrated campaigns to connect donors with information and support about mental health.

During the year we have evolved our Fundraising Advisory Committee into a Strategic Advisory Group to energise and guide our strategic development activity.

Key successes include:

- We won a capacity-building grant to enhance our theory of change processes, strengthening the link between project activities and intended outcomes. This work is being done in association with our evaluation partner New Philanthropy Capital.
- We have secured funding for an ambitious 3-year project to deliver Making it REAL in all Early Years settings Lewisham. Supported by the Charity of Sir Richard Whittington, we aim to improve the communication, language and literacy of two to four year olds across Lewisham to increase their school readiness and close the attainment gap between disadvantaged children and their peers.
- Our Participation team was successful in their application to be part of the NHS England and NHS Improvement Framework for the Provision of Lived Experience Service(s), and our Health team was successful in tendering to be on the Personalised Care Framework run by Capita on behalf of NHSE/I.

## Expenditure

Expenditure decreased in line with the changes

in activity on our major contracts and grants, as expected and outlined above, from £21.0m last year to £16.1m this year.

## Financial position

NCB's total reserves increased from negative £0.8m at the start of the year to £1.5m at the end of the year. NCB has a strong general funds position (£1.8m) retained in line with the reserves policy by virtue of the break-even performance in the year, alongside further funds designated to meet specific needs or risks in the near future. In addition total assets, less current liabilities, includes the funds invested in and held aside for the our main London office (£8.6m 2021, £8.2m 2020).

Whilst the deficit in the pension fund (£7.1m, £7.5m 2020) is still significant, this is a long-term liability subject to fluctuations in economic conditions at the balance sheet date and is being managed and paid off under a standard recovery plan, with annual contributions managed comfortably within our annual budgeting.

## Other matters

### Disruption from Covid-19

NCB has continued to experience disruption to its operations due to Covid-19, as have most organisations. In addition to the explanation of this impact given in the report above, there was again very minor financial impact in the year under review and we anticipate some impact in the year ahead (2021/22) and beyond. This impact is being kept under review, and includes:

- Continuation of the vast majority of our delivery under government and other contracts, with much delivery switching to digital, and therefore maintenance of a good level of our major income streams.
- Some ongoing change in focus of our work and therefore resources, including in our LEAP programme in Lambeth (funded by National Lottery Community Fund), to focus on more direct reactive and recovery work for our beneficiaries.
- The costs associated with mothballing our office spaces and universal home working.
- The furloughing of a small number of staff, working outside of public funded programmes, and therefore limited use of the UK government's Coronavirus Job Retention

Scheme and some residual costs.

We expect the ongoing impacts to our finances to be similar, but tapering off in line with the phased return to normal face to face operations.

### **Leasehold Property**

NCB completed on the purchase of a property in March 2019 to act as a main office. Fit out of the space was completed, and the office brought into use, in September 2019, with final retention works completed in 2020/21. Trustees have retained a small amount of designated funds to allow for some final works to enhance the space, delayed due to Covid-19 restrictions. Further details are set out in the financial statements and notes 7 and 16 to the accounts.

### **Pension fund**

The valuation of NCB's defined benefit pension scheme as at 31 March 2021 (under FRS102 principles) has seen a decrease in the scheme deficit to £7.1m (from £7.4m in 2020), mainly due to change in inflation assumptions and the discount rate used to measure the future liabilities. Estimates used by the actuary in the calculation of this accounting deficit valuation have been benchmarked by the Trustees and are considered appropriate. Further details are shown in Note 18 to the accounts.

NCB closed its defined benefit scheme to new entrants in 2012/13 and now runs a defined contribution scheme for new starters. NCB continues to meet and monitor its annual obligations to the scheme, including the repayment of the deficit, as agreed with the scheme provider. The latest triennial valuation (as at 31st March 2019) calculated that no deficit recovery contributions were required for the next three years. NCB continues to hold funds to meet future increased obligations over the long term, and to allow proactive and responsive management of the scheme as it evolves, including in light of the impact of the Covid-19 virus on the investment of the fund's assets.

### **Going concern**

As is normal in the preparation of accounts, Trustees are required to determine whether the accounts are to be compiled on a going concern basis. All organisations will be placing increased scrutiny on this exercise in light of the ongoing disruption caused by the Covid-19 virus and the measures to control its spread, as well as future

economic influences, and NCB is no different.

The recent sale of the freehold property, and subsequent investment in a new property has put NCB in a strong reserves and cash position. This took place alongside restructuring, three subsequent years of break-even financial performance in running our charitable activities and the establishment of a medium-term financial strategy to strengthen the diversity of our income while continuing to break-even each year.

NCB currently holds £1.8m of free reserves, which meets the reserves policy set out above, including in light of the impacts from the Covid-19 disruption described above, and assures the Board of Trustees we can meet any risks that become issues, and puts NCB in a good position for the coming period.

Taking all these factors into consideration Trustees believe it is reasonable to expect that NCB will generate sufficient resources to finance its operations for the foreseeable future and believe there are no material uncertainties that call into doubt the charity's ability to continue. Accordingly the accounts have been prepared on the basis that the charity is a going concern.

### **Subsidiary**

National Children's Bureau Enterprises Ltd exists to manage, as and when appropriate, conference and lettings programmes, various funding activities and support services for other charities. Its results are consolidated in these financial statements. The majority of work has largely been stopped, and the residual, incidental trading activity handled within the charity itself, resulting in no turnover or profit in the company for the year, as was the case in the prior year. The company was dormant throughout the financial year. Any profit made by NCB Enterprises' is gift aided to the charity.

### **Investment Policy**

NCB's investment policy is to limit investment in more volatile assets and to keep key reserves in cash deposits. The Trustees continue to monitor this approach to investment, to ensure the best use of the significant funds from the sale of the freehold property. This is the role of the Investment Committee which is chaired by a Trustee, with the Chair and the Treasurer as members, and with the Chief Executive and the Finance Director in attendance.

The Investment Committee advises the Board on investment policy to ensure risk, return and liquidity are balanced in the best interests of the charity and, where necessary, will seek independent external advice. In addition, it recommends to the Board the proportion of its investments to be held in longer term funds against maintaining prudent cash, or cash equivalent, balances, or retaining for use directly on charitable activities, infrastructure and operations.

For any future investment in equities and other financial products, the charity will continue with an ethical investment policy, including avoiding companies with more than 50 percent of their turnover in gambling, tobacco or armaments. The Investment Committee will also advise the Board on maintaining a reasoned ethical approach, and will seek to take external advice to set this against the need for proper returns on new funds.

## Public benefit

The trustees continue to have regard to the public benefit provided by NCB in relation to its charitable purposes and have given due consideration to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on this subject.

We review aims, objectives and activities annually and, as part of that process, we consider the outputs of our activities, assess the benefit of those outputs on the lives of disadvantaged children and young people and develop future objectives to ensure that our work continues to deliver our charitable aims, which is reflected in our mission to improve children and young people's experiences and life chances by reducing the impact of inequalities. The trustees believe NCB can clearly demonstrate that it provides a public benefit.

# Statement of responsibilities

## Incorporating the Directors' Strategic Report and Administrative Report for Companies Act Purposes

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Strategic Report, the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards) and applicable law. 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 its net incoming resources for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue to operate.

The trustees are responsible for keeping 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Insofar as each of the trustees of the company at the date of approval of this report is aware there is no relevant audit information (information

needed by the company's auditor in connection with preparing the audit report) of which the company's auditor is unaware. Each trustee has taken all of the steps that he/ she should have taken as a trustee in order to make himself/ herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information.

### Compliance with statutory requirements

The financial statements have been prepared in compliance with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (SORP FRS 102) issued under the auspices of the Charity Commission.

### Funders, stakeholders and sponsors

We would like to express our grateful thanks to government departments, charitable bodies, companies and individuals for their considerable support in financing NCB's activities.

### Auditors

Crowe U.K. LLP has indicated its willingness to be reappointed statutory auditor.

This Annual Report of the Trustees, under the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006, was approved by the Board of Trustees on 30th June 2021, including approving in their capacity as company directors the Strategic Report contained therein, and is signed as authorised on its behalf by:



Alison O'Sullivan  
Chair

National Children's Bureau  
Company Number: 952717

# Independent Auditor's Report

## Independent Auditor's Report to the Members and Trustees of National Children's Bureau

### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of National Children's Bureau ('the charitable company') and its subsidiary ('the group') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Group Statement of Financial Activities, the Group and Company Balance Sheets, the Group Cash Flow and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 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 the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group 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 trustee's 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 charitable company's or the group'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 trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

### Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. 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.

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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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.

## Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- the information given in the trustees' report, which includes the directors' report and the strategic report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report included within the trustees' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and the charitable company and their environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

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

- adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept; 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.

## Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement (set out on page 47), 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 the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Details of the extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations are set out below.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

## Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We identified and assessed the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements from irregularities, whether due to fraud or error,

and discussed these between our audit team members. We then designed and performed audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks within which the charitable company and group operates, focusing on those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The laws and regulations we considered in this context were the UK Companies Act together with the Charities SORP (FRS102) 2019. We assessed the required compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which might be fundamental to the charitable company's and the group's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. We also considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the charitable company and the group for fraud

Auditing standards limit the required audit procedures to identify non-compliance with these laws and regulations to enquiry of the Trustees and other management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the financial statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be within the timing of recognition of grant and contract income and the override of controls by management. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management, and the Finance, Risk & Audit Committee about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, sample testing on the posting of journals, reviewing accounting estimates for biases, reviewing regulatory correspondence with the Charity Commission, and reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non-compliance

with laws and regulations (irregularities) is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the inherently limited procedures required by auditing standards would identify it. In addition, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

## 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 charitable 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 anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



**Tina Allison**

Senior Statutory Auditor

For and on behalf of

Crowe U.K. LLP

Statutory Auditor

London

Date: 22 July 2021

# Consolidated statement of financial activities

(Incorporating an income and expenditure account)  
Year ended 31 March 2021

		Restricted funds	Unrestricted pension reserve	Unrestricted other funds	2021	2020
	Notes	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	1 & 2					
<b>Income from:</b>						
Donations and legacies		39	-	124	163	175
Charitable activities		7,974	-	8,096	16,070	20,559
Other trading activities		-	-	4	4	4
Income from investments	3	-	-	2	2	35
<b>Total</b>		<b>8,013</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,226</b>	<b>16,239</b>	<b>20,773</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>	1, 4 & 7					
Raising funds						
Fundraising		-	-	31	31	32
Charitable activities		7,808	-	8,025	15,833	20,231
Exceptional costs	6	-	-	-	-	160
Operating pension scheme movements in year	18	-	305	-	305	609
<b>Total</b>		<b>7,808</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>8,056</b>	<b>16,169</b>	<b>21,032</b>
<b>Net income (expenditure)</b>		<b>205</b>	<b>(305)</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>(259)</b>
<b>Other recognised (losses) / gains:</b>						
Actuarial gains / (losses) on defined benefit pension scheme	18	-	626	-	626	2,048
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>205</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>1,789</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>						
Total funds brought forward		711	(7,446)	7,534	799	(990)
Total funds carried forward		<b>916</b>	<b>(7,125)</b>	<b>7,704</b>	<b>1,495</b>	<b>799</b>

Notes 1 to 19 form part of these financial statements.  
Full comparative figures are shown in note 19.

# Balance sheets

As at 31 March 2021

	Notes	Group		Charity	
		2021	2020	2021	2020
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Fixed assets:</b>					
Tangible assets	1 & 7	4,662	4,808	4,662	4,808
Shares in subsidiary undertaking	11	-	-	-	-
<b>Total fixed assets</b>		<b>4,662</b>	<b>4,808</b>	<b>4,662</b>	<b>4,808</b>
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Debtors	12	1,326	1,858	1,326	1,858
Notice deposits	10	3,040	1,038	3,040	1,038
Cash at bank		4,498	7,352	4,498	7,352
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>8,864</b>	<b>10,248</b>	<b>8,864</b>	<b>10,248</b>
<b>Liabilities:</b>					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	(4,906)	(6,811)	(4,911)	(6,816)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<b>3,958</b>	<b>3,437</b>	<b>3,953</b>	<b>3,432</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<b>8,620</b>	<b>8,245</b>	<b>8,615</b>	<b>8,240</b>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability		(7,125)	(7,446)	(7,125)	(7,446)
<b>Total net assets / (liabilities)</b>	17	<b>1,495</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>1,490</b>	<b>794</b>
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>					
Restricted funds	1 & 15	916	711	916	711
Unrestricted funds:					
- Other funds	1 & 16	7,636	7,434	7,631	7,429
- Designated new building fund	1 & 16	68	100	68	100
Unrestricted pension reserve	18	(7,125)	(7,446)	(7,125)	(7,446)
<b>Total charity funds</b>		<b>1,495</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>1,490</b>	<b>794</b>

Notes 1 to 19 form part of these financial statements. The net result of the charity for the year ending 31 March 2021 was a surplus of £0.7m (2020 surplus of £1.8m).

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 30th June 2021 and were signed on their behalf by:

*Alison O'Sullivan*

Alison O'Sullivan, Chair  
National Children's Bureau, Company number: 952717

# Consolidated cash flow statement

For the period ended 31 March 2021

Cash flows from operating activities	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
<b>Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities</b>	(808)	324
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Interest and dividends from investments	2	35
Purchase of leasehold property and equipment	(46)	(1,438)
<b>Net cash provided by investing activities</b>	(44)	(1,403)
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</b>	(852)	(1,079)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	8,390	9,469
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>	7,538	8,390

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Cash in hand	4,498	7,352
Notice deposits	3,040	1,038
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	7,538	8,390

Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities	2021	2020
	£'000	£'000
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	70	(259)
Adjustments for:		
- Depreciation charges	192	122
- (Decrease) / increase in creditors	(1,905)	133
- Decrease / (increase) in debtors	532	(246)
- Interest and dividends receivable	(2)	(35)
- Pension reserve net expense, excluding actuarial gains	305	609
<b>Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities</b>	(808)	324

# Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

## 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) – Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

NCB is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, incorporated in the UK and registered at 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

### Going Concern

After making enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue its activities for the foreseeable future. Accordingly they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements as outlined in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities.

### Group accounts

Group financial statements have been prepared on a line by line consolidation basis in respect of NCB and its wholly owned subsidiary National Children's Bureau Enterprises Limited (Note 11). No separate statement of Financial Activities has been presented for the charity alone as permitted by Section 408 of Companies Act 2006.

The charity has taken advantage of the exemptions in FRS 102 from the requirements to present a charity-only Cash Flow Statement and certain disclosures regarding the charity's financial instruments.

### Consortium charity

NCB is one of four charities in the field of childcare which receive grants from the consortium undertaking, Childlife. The grants are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities with Donations and appeals. The accounts of Childlife are considered not material for the purpose of consolidation.

### Income

Income includes donations on a received basis. Grant and contract income is recognised when the charity has entitlement, any performance conditions are met, it is probable that income will be received and the amount can be reliably measured. All other income is recognised on a receivable basis in respect of the year.

### Income in advance

Income is treated as received in advance only when the charity has to fulfil conditions before becoming entitled to it.

### Expenditure

All expenses are accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is classified under NCB's principal categories of activity rather than types of expenses in order to provide more useful information to users of the financial statements.

Expenditure comprises direct expenditure, including staff costs, attributable to the activity. Where costs cannot be directly attributed, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with budgeted use of the resources. Support services are allocated by income or by full-time equivalent staff.

Fundraising costs are those incurred in seeking legacies and donations.

Support services includes chief executive office, governance, facilities, finance, human resources and equipment depreciation.

Governance includes trustees, audit and general legal expenses.

## 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

### Value added tax

NCB is a partially-exempt body for VAT purposes. Expenditure subject to VAT, which is not fully recoverable by NCB, is shown inclusive of irrecoverable VAT in the financial statements.

### Pension costs

NCB is an admitted body of the South Yorkshire Pension Fund (SYPF), which is a defined benefit scheme. Employer's contribution to the pension scheme, which are made in accordance with consulting actuaries' periodic calculations to spread the cost of pensions over the employees' working lives, are charged in the year in which they become payable.

A cost of pension is calculated by the actuaries to comply with the accounting standard FRS 102 allocated to activities in proportion to employer contributions.

Employers' contributions are also made to a defined contribution scheme, managed by Standard Life, and employees' personal pensions. These are charged in the year in which they become payable.

### Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at their original cost (including any incidental expenses of acquisition such as surveyors' fees).

Leasehold property, shown at cost, is depreciated on a straight line basis over 100 years. Fitting out costs have been capitalised and are depreciated on a straight line basis over 20 years.

Furniture and IT equipment, shown at cost, is depreciated on a straight line basis at 20% to 33% per annum. Software is depreciated on a straight line basis over seven years. All fixed assets costing under £500 are written off in the year of purchase.

### Lease Commitments

Rental costs under operating leases are charged to the SOFA in equal amounts over the period of the leases.

### Investments

Investments are stated at market valuation at

the balance sheet date. The surplus or deficit of this revaluation is shown in the Statement of Financial Activities as unrealised gains or losses.

On disposal of investments the differences between their opening valuation for the year (or cost if acquired during the year) and the proceeds are shown as realised investment gains or losses in the Statement of Financial Activities.

### Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term liquid investments with a short maturity of one month or less from the date of acquisition or opening of deposit or similar account.

### Financial Instruments

The company only has financial assets and liabilities of a kind that qualifies as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value, and subsequently measured at the settlement value.

### Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due 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 group 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. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

### Fund accounting

Restricted funds are funds subject to specific conditions imposed by donors. The purpose and use of restricted funds are set out in note 15.

Designated funds comprise funds which have been designated at the discretion of the Board of Management for specific purposes. The purpose and use of designated funds are set out in note 16.

The Fixed Asset fund, in note 16, represent the investment in tangible assets.

General funds are available for use in furtherance of the general objectives of NCB.

### Key judgements and assumptions

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources.

The estimates and underlying 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 on-going basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects the current and future periods.

Details of the main accounting estimates can be found in the notes to the accounts. The valuation of the defined benefit pension scheme is in note 18.

## 2. INCOME

	Government grant income £'000	Other grant income £'000	Other income £'000	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
<b>Donations and legacies</b>	-	-	163	163	175
<b>Charitable activities</b>	1,658	6,314	8,098	16,070	20,559
<b>Other trading activities</b>	-	-	4	4	4
<b>Income from investments</b>	-	-	2	2	35
Totals for 2020	1,658	6,314	8,267	16,239	20,773
	1,698	8,100	10,975	20,773	

Government grants are for project delivery work secured by a bidding process.

## 3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
<b>Notice deposits:</b>		
Bank and other interest receivable	2	35

## 4. EXPENDITURE

	Staff £'000	Other expenses £'000	Support services £'000	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
<b>Raising funds</b>					
Fundraising	30	1	-	31	32
<b>Charitable activities</b>	4,440	10,276	1,117	15,833	20,231
Support services	459	658	(1,117)	-	-
Exceptional	-	-	-	-	160
Expenditure before pension scheme movements	4,929	10,935	-	15,864	20,423
Totals for 2020	5,171	15,252	-	20,423	

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
<b>Support services</b>		
Facilities	551	625
Human resources	162	122
Finance	225	248
Governance (see below)	35	28
Management	144	142
	1,117	1,165

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
<b>Governance costs</b>		
Trustees' expenses	-	5
Auditors' remuneration (excluding non-governance costs listed below)	23	19
Other expenses	12	4
	35	28

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
<b>Expenditure includes</b>		
Depreciation	192	122
Auditors' remuneration		
- Statutory audit current year provision	21	19
- Statutory audit under/(over)provision prior year	1	(1)
- Project audits prior and current years	3	7
- Other work	1	1

## 5. STAFF AND TRUSTEES

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
<b>Staff costs</b>		
Salaries and wages	4,113	4,134
Social security costs	431	420
Staff pension cost	385	617
	<u>4,929</u>	<u>5,171</u>
	2021 number	2020 number
<b>Average head count staff numbers</b>		
Full-time staff	87	91
Part-time staff	20	18
	<u>107</u>	<u>109</u>
<b>Staff earning over £60,000</b>		
Between £60,000 and £70,000	5	5
Between £70,000 and £80,000	2	2
Between £100,000 and £110,000	1	1

The key management personnel of the parent company, the Charity, comprise the Trustees, Chief Executive, Director of Finance & Corporate Services, Director of NCB Northern Ireland and two further Practice & Programmes Directors. The total employee remuneration and benefits received by the five key management personnel were £471k (2020 £458k).

In compliance with recent recommendations for disclosure from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), NCB has chosen to disclose the full-time equivalent, gross salaries of the strategic leadership team at 31 March 2021:

Role	Salary
Chief Executive	£103,703
Director of Finance and Corporate Services	£78,193
Co-Director of Practice & Programmes	£75,375
Co-Director of Practice & Programmes	£75,375
Director of NCB Northern Ireland	£63,880

No remuneration is payable to trustees. Travel and accommodation expenses totalling £106 (2020: £5,473) were reimbursed to one trustees (2020: six).

Trustee Indemnity Insurance £896 (2020: £650) was purchased in the year.

£22k redundancy costs were incurred in the year (2020: £160k) of which £6k is unpaid at the year end (2020 £7k).

## 6. EXCEPTIONAL COSTS

Costs in relation to restructuring include:	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Payments in respect of redundancy	-	57
Pension costs in respect of redundancy	-	103
	<u>-</u>	<u>160</u>

## 7. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Valuation	Leasehold property	Furniture and equipment	Total
<b>Group and charity</b>			
Valuation as at 1 April 2020	4,574	497	5,071
Additions	42	4	46
Valuation as at 31 March 2021	4,616	501	5,117
Depreciation as at 1 April 2020	49	214	263
Charge	99	93	192
Depreciation as at 31 March 2021	148	307	455
<b>Net book value as at 31 March 2021</b>	<b>4,468</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>4,662</b>
Net book value as at 31 March 2020	4,525	283	4,808

In March 2018 NCB exchanged contracts to purchase a 250 year lease on a property as a new London office, completed the purchase in March 2019 and completed office fit-out works and began using the office in September 2019. Amounts already paid are capitalised above and now include all retention payments. Trustees have set aside funds for some additional costs, as set out in note 16.

## 8. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

Amounts contracted for but not provided in the financial statements, all relating to the future property purchase, amounted to £nil (2020 £0.03m).

Further details of planned expenditure are also set out in note 16.

## 9. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

The Group has annual commitments under non-cancellable operating leases expiring as follows:

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
<b>Due within one year</b>		
Land and buildings	2	6
Equipment	4	3
<b>Due in 2 to 5 years</b>		
Equipment	2	5
	<u>8</u>	<u>14</u>

Lease payments recognised in the year amounted to £21k (2020: £135k).

## 10. NOTICE DEPOSITS

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
<b>Group and charity</b>		
<b>Notice deposits</b>		
Barclays	512	511
CCLA	2,528	527
	<u>3,040</u>	<u>1,038</u>

## 11. SHARES IN SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKING

This represents NCB's holding of 100 ordinary shares of £1 each, which is a 100% interest, in the share capital of National Children's Bureau Enterprises Limited, a company registered in England and Wales (no. 2633796) and a wholly owned subsidiary of the charity. The company gift aids its taxable profits to NCB. A summary of its trading results is shown below. Financial statements are filed with the Registrar of Companies. The results of the subsidiary undertaking have been consolidated on a line by line basis.

On departure from the previous property, letting activities and shared services have wound down. Activity may start up again from the new office, once social distancing restrictions allow more practical use of the space again, and from emerging fundraising approaches.

The company has been dormant for the whole financial year. The net assets brought and carried forward are £5k, with the debtor due from the charity, NCB. An audit was not performed.

## 12. DEBTORS

	GROUP		CHARITY	
	2021 £'000	2020 £'000	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Trade debtors	479	1,054	479	1,054
Other debtors and prepayments	248	108	248	108
Accrued income ( grants due for projects)	599	696	599	696
	<u>1,326</u>	<u>1,858</u>	<u>1,326</u>	<u>1,858</u>

## 13. CREDITORS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	GROUP		CHARITY	
	2021 £'000	2020 £'000	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Trade Creditors	1,726	3,332	1,726	3,332
Social Security and other taxes	1,084	687	1,084	687
Pension contributions	44	41	44	41
Amount due to subsidiary undertaking	-	-	5	5
Other creditors and accrued charges	1,806	2,576	1,806	2,576
Income received in advance	246	175	246	175
	<u>4,906</u>	<u>6,811</u>	<u>4,911</u>	<u>6,816</u>

	B/fwd	Received	Income	C/fwd
	1 Apr 2020 £'000	2021 £'000	2021 £'000	31 Mar 2021 £'000
Income received in advance in respect of 2020/21				
Services and other income	175	8,338	8,267	246
	<u>175</u>	<u>8,338</u>	<u>8,267</u>	<u>246</u>

## 14. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

NCB Enterprises Ltd (a wholly owned subsidiary of NCB, also registered at 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN) did not trade in 2020-21.

The amount owed from the parent company at 31st March 2021 was £5,374 (2020: £5,374). Further details are shown in note 11.

Annamarie Hassall was a director of Childlife; a consortium which donated £62,500 to NCB during 2020-21.

## 15. RESTRICTED FUNDS

Group and Charity	B/fwd	Income	Expenses	C/fwd
	1 Apr 2020 £'000	£'000	£'000	31 Mar 2021 £'000
Project and Unit funds				
Grants from Government Departments	43	1,658	(1,541)	160
Grants from Big Lottery	57	5,504	(5,506)	55
Other grants and income	588	851	(761)	678
Supplementary Notes Page 65	688	8,013	(7,808)	893
Other funds	23	-	-	23
	<u>711</u>	<u>8,013</u>	<u>(7,808)</u>	<u>916</u>

## 15. RESTRICTED FUNDS (Continued)

Comparative figures for prior year

Group and Charity	B/fwd			C/fwd
	1 Apr 2019 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	31 Mar 2020 £'000
<b>Project and unit funds</b>				
Grants from Government Departments	173	1,698	(1,828)	43
Grants from Big Lottery	28	7,401	(7,372)	57
Other grants and income	296	789	(497)	588
	497	9,888	(9,697)	688
Other funds	23	-	-	23
	520	9,888	(9,697)	711

## 16. UNRESTRICTED OTHER FUNDS

	B/fwd			Allocations and transfers £'000	C/fwd
	1 Apr 2020 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000		31 Mar 2021 £'000
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Fixed asset fund	4,808	-	(192)	45	4,661
Strategic priorities fund	-			400	400
Capital Goods Scheme fund	413	-	-	(38)	375
New building fund	100	-	-	(32)	68
Pension fund	192	4	(21)	241	416
	5,513	4	(213)	616	5,920
General Funds	2,021	8,222	(7,843)	(616)	1,784
<b>Group - unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>	7,534	8,226	(8,056)	-	7,704
<b>Group - unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>					
Charity - unrestricted funds	7,529				7,699
Subsidiary undertaking	5				5

## 16. UNRESTRICTED OTHER FUNDS (Continued)

Comparative figures for the prior year

	B/fwd 1 Apr 2019 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	Allocations and transfers £'000	C/fwd 31 Mar 2020 £'000
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Fixed asset fund – designated element	3,492	–	(122)	1,438	4,808
Capital Goods Scheme fund	–	–	–	413	413
New building fund	2,373	–	–	(2,273)	100
Pension fund	102	4	(198)	284	192
	5,967	4	(320)	(138)	5,513
General Funds	1,408	10,881	(10,406)	138	2,021
<b>Group – unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>	<b>7,375</b>	<b>10,885</b>	<b>(10,726)</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>7,534</b>
<b>Group – unrestricted funds before pension reserve</b>					
Charity – unrestricted funds	7,370				7,529
Subsidiary undertaking	5				5

The **Fixed asset fund** represents the net book value of tangible fixed assets.

The **Pension fund** is used to support funding the agreed annual deficit recovery contributions to the defined benefit pension scheme, as well as other small ad hoc pension costs.

The **New building fund** is set aside to fund the remaining costs for the purchase (and all associated fees), fit-out and move to the new London office property. For the costs already recognised see note 7 and for those committed to see note 8.

The **Capital Goods Scheme fund** is set aside for any additional expense of unrecovered VAT during the ten year period of the Capital Goods Scheme that NCB is required to run regarding expenditure on the new leasehold property. This represents NCB's full exposure through the period.

The **Strategic Priorities Fund** is set aside for our investment in 2021/22 in enhancing our digital capabilities, strengthening the diversity of our income, and supporting our core policy work, for which we do not anticipate finding external funding during the year ahead.

**General funds** represent the net of accumulated surplus and deficits of income and expenditure after transfers to designated funds.

## 17. ANALYSIS OF GROUP NET ASSETS / (LIABILITIES) BETWEEN FUNDS

	Tangible Fixed Assets £'000	Net Current Assets £'000	Pension Scheme Liability £'000	Total £'000
Restricted Funds	-	916	-	916
Unrestricted – other funds	4,661	3,043	-	7,704
Net Assets before Pension Reserve	4,661	3,959	-	8,620
Pension Reserve	-	-	(7,125)	(7,125)
Group Net Assets	4,661	3,959	(7,125)	1,495

### Comparative figures for the prior year

	Tangible Fixed Assets £'000	Net Current Assets £'000	Pension Scheme Liability £'000	Total £'000
Restricted Funds	-	711	-	711
Unrestricted – other funds	4,808	2,726	-	7,534
Net Assets before Pension Reserve	4,808	3,437	-	8,245
Pension Reserve	-	-	(7,446)	(7,446)
Group Net Assets	4,808	3,437	(7,446)	799

## 18. PENSION ARRANGEMENTS

The disclosures set out below relate to pension arrangements to which contributions are made by the charity – a defined benefit scheme, a defined contribution scheme and individual personal pension arrangements.

### Defined benefit scheme

The charity is an admitted body to the South Yorkshire Pension Fund (SYPF), which is a defined benefit scheme, managed by the South Yorkshire Pension Authority (SYPA). The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity by South Yorkshire Pensions Authority. Contributions to the scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities so as to spread the cost of pensions over the employees' working lives with the charity. The cost of NCB's contribution to SYPF for the year ended 31 March 2021 was £197,644 (2020 £434,627, including deficit recovery repayment £179,900).

There are two different valuations which are relevant to the scheme.

### Triennial valuation

A full triennial actuarial valuation is carried out every three years. This is used to determine the funding position of the scheme and calculate the cash contributions to the scheme to close the deficit position if one exists.

Following the March 2019 valuation, the contribution rate was increased to variable rates between 24% and 28% of pensionable salaries from 1 April 2020. This includes the contribution from the employee. There is no deficit recovery payment due across this triennial period.

The actuarial method in use at the most recent triennial valuation was the Projected Unit method.

### Accounting valuation

The charity is required to comply with the full requirements of FRS102 in valuing the scheme for the annual accounts. A further valuation of the scheme for accounting purposes as at 31 March 2021 was therefore undertaken by a qualified independent actuary. This valuation is undertaken using a series of assumptions and judgments which are agreed by Trustees. The valuation of the scheme is very sensitive to these assumptions and thus there is a significant risk that this valuation will change materially during the coming year, as it has in past years.

The deficit decreased from £7.4m to £7.1m during the year. The key assumptions and results of the valuation are shown below

Set out below are disclosures required for the purposes of FRS 102.

The fair value of assets in the scheme and the expected return were:

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000
Assets		
Equities	19,449	17,603
Government bonds	5,347	4,597
Other bonds	3,248	2,486
Property	3,605	3,064
Cash	555	1,021
Other	7,407	5,278
Total market value of assets	39,611	34,049
Present value of scheme liabilities	(46,736)	(41,495)
(Deficit) in the scheme	(7,125)	(7,446)

	2021 Assumptions	2020 Assumptions	2019 Assumptions	2018 Assumptions	2017 Assumptions
<b>The major assumptions used by the actuary were:</b>					
Increase in salaries	3.0%	3.4%	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%
Rate of increase in pensions	2.8%	2.2%	2.3%	2.2%	2.3%
Discount rate	2.1%	2.4%	2.4%	2.7%	2.8%
Inflation assumption	2.7%	2.1%	2.2%	2.1%	2.3%

	2021 £'000	2020 £'000	2019 £'000	2018 £'000	2017 £'000
<b>Analysis of the amount charged to operating result</b>					
Current service cost	321	370	347	408	343
Past service cost	-	306	-	-	-
Administration expenses	5	5	5	5	7
Curtailment loss	-	150	-	-	298
<b>Total operating charge</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>648</b>
<b>Analysis of other finance (expense) income</b>					
Expected return on pension scheme assets	805	862	933	943	1,010
Interest on pension scheme liabilities	(982)	(1,075)	(1,106)	(1,138)	(1,169)
<b>Net (expense) income</b>	<b>(177)</b>	<b>(213)</b>	<b>(173)</b>	<b>(195)</b>	<b>(159)</b>
<b>Analysis of remeasurements – liabilities and assets</b>					
Remeasurements – assets	5,738	(2,324)	1,100	461	5,021
Remeasurements – liabilities	996	2,282	0	377	144
Change in assumptions	(6,108)	2,090	(3,228)	0	(7,381)
<b>Net (loss) / gain</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>2,048</b>	<b>(2,128)</b>	<b>838</b>	<b>(2,216)</b>
<b>Movement in (deficit) during the year:</b>					
Deficit in scheme at beginning of year	(7,446)	(8,885)	(6,570)	(7,163)	(4,719)
Movements in year					
Operating charge	(326)	(831)	(352)	(413)	(648)
Employer contributions	198	435	338	363	579
Other finance expense	(177)	(213)	(173)	(195)	(159)
Remeasurements (loss) gain – liabilities and assets	626	2,048	(2,128)	838	(2,216)
<b>Deficit in scheme at end of year</b>	<b>(7,125)</b>	<b>(7,446)</b>	<b>(8,885)</b>	<b>(6,570)</b>	<b>(7,163)</b>

### Defined contribution scheme

The charity participates in a defined contribution scheme independently managed by Standard Life. Contributions to the scheme are charged to the statement of financial activities as they become payable. NCB makes twice the employees' percentage contribution, up to a maximum of 8% of pensionable salaries. The cost of NCB's contributions for the year ended 31 March 2021 was £181,479 (2020: £163,600).

### Personal pension plans

Payments are also made to employees' personal pensions which are charged in the year in which they become payable. NCB matches employees' contributions up to a maximum of 8% of pensionable salaries. The cost of NCB's contributions for the year ended 31 March 2021 was £6,030 (2020: £5,912).

## 19. CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES WITH COMPARATIVES

	Notes	Restricted Funds £'000	Un-restricted Pension Reserve £'000	Un-restricted Other Funds £'000	2021 £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Un-restricted Pension Reserve £'000	Un-restricted Other Funds £'000	2020 £'000
<b>Income from:</b>	1 & 2								
Donations and legacies		39	-	124	163	61	-	114	175
Charitable activities		7,974	-	8,096	16,070	9,827	-	10,732	20,559
Other trading activities		-	-	4	4	-	-	4	4
Income from investments	3	-	-	2	2	-	-	35	35
<b>Total</b>		<b>8,013</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,226</b>	<b>16,239</b>	<b>9,888</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,885</b>	<b>20,773</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>	1, 4 & 7								
Raising funds									
Fundraising		-	-	31	31	-	-	32	32
Other trading activities		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities		7,808	-	8,025	15,833	9,697	-	10,534	20,231
Restructure	6	-	-	-	0	-	-	160	160
Operating pension scheme movements in year	18	-	305	-	305	-	609	-	609
<b>Total</b>		<b>7,808</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>8,056</b>	<b>16,169</b>	<b>9,697</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>10,726</b>	<b>21,032</b>
<b>Net (expenditure)</b>		<b>205</b>	<b>(305)</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>(609)</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>(259)</b>
<b>Other recognised (losses) / gains:</b>									
Actuarial gains / (losses) on defined benefit pension scheme	18	-	626	-	626	-	2,048	-	2,048
Gain on sale of fixed assets		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>205</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>1,439</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>1,789</b>

# SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE (unaudited)

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Project	Funder	Funding balances 31 March 2020 £	Income £	Expend- iture £	Funding balances 31 March 2021 £
Lambeth Early Action Partnership	National Lottery Community Fund	55,857	5,504,200	5,504,762	55,295
	Lambeth CCG	21,447	-	-	21,447
	LB Lambeth	117,256	-	-	117,256
Childhood Bereavement Network	Baring Foundation	-	29,904	-	29,904
REAL in Lewisham	The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	-	112,517	-	112,517
Community Foundation – Maurice Healy	Community Foundation	-	9,926	8,077	1,849
EYSEND 20-21	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport	-	191,000	191,000	-
	Department for Education	-	850,413	850,413	-
	Department for Education	-	68,366	68,366	-
	Department for Education	-	251,451	251,451	-
All Together programme Variation 01					
Anti Bullying Forum (NI)	Department of Education (NI)	-	87,935	87,935	-
The REAL Programme (as part of the Home Learning Environment Round)	Education Endowment Foundation	230,643	159,767	169,353	221,057
Friends, Families and Travellers	Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	-	4,980	4,980	-
European Youth tackling Obesity	EU commission	10,231	-	-	10,231
Research Donations	Haskel Family Foundation	818	-	818	-
Childhood Bereavement Network	Other Funders	15,000	-	15,000	-
Children missing education	Lankelly Chase Foundation	806	-	806	-
Lottery Development Grant	National Lottery Community Fund	1,356	-	1,356	-
Autism Service Delivery Evaluation	NHS England	-	22,650	8,794	13,856
Community of Practice	NHS England	29,683	-	12,529	17,154
Health – SEND reforms CCG support	NHS England	5,075	11,375	10,657	5,793
Integrated Personal Commissioning Programme	NHS England	8,755	10,151	9,101	9,805
	Other Funder	-	1,000	1,000	-
NHS England Joint Training	NHS England	-	9,900	9,900	-
NHS Regional	NHS England	-	73,602	-	73,602
NW Learning & Autism	NHS England	-	29,983	-	29,983
Participation of Children and Young People in Transforming Care	NHS England	142	-	142	-
Making Space for RSE	Public Health England	-	24,863	24,863	-
Outside the Box in Haringey PHE	Public Health England	15,126	6,376	21,502	-
SEF HBT Bullying	Together for Short Lives	4,401	26,190	30,591	-
True Colours CDC Core	True Colours Trust	50,000	50,000	59,530	40,470
True Colours Timing	True Colours Trust	1,462	-	11	1,451
Use and Understanding of Data on Disabled Children	True Colours Trust	85	-	85	-
Jersey Early Childhood Development	UBS Optimus	16,394	85,000	101,394	-
Diverse Friendships	University of Bristol	5,715	5,775	11,490	-
ETHOS project	University of Roehampton	875	-	875	-
Anti-Bullying Week Donations	Various	46,450	39,235	51,250	34,435
Childhood Bereavement Network – Research	Waldron Trust	25,000	-	-	25,000
	True Colours Trust	1,059	-	-	1,059
	True Colours Trust	23,958	-	23,958	-
True Colours Covid	True Colours Trust	-	38,721	38,721	-
True Colours 1662	True Colours Trust	-	84,148	49,038	35,110
True Colours 1743	True Colours Trust	-	34,153	10,097	24,056
Living Assessment	Wellcome Trust	-	68,925	56,991	11,934
YEF Capacity Building Grant	Youth Endowment Fund	-	49,007	49,007	-
Young Minds	Young Minds	291	-	291	-
Youth Access	Youth Access	-	27,366	27,366	-
Job Retention Scheme	HMRC	-	44,740	44,740	-
		<u>687,885</u>	<u>8,013,619</u>	<u>7,808,240</u>	<u>893,264</u>



**NATIONAL  
CHILDREN'S  
BUREAU**

## United for a better childhood

The National Children's Bureau brings people and organisations together to drive change in society and deliver a better childhood for the UK. We interrogate policy, uncover evidence and develop better ways of supporting children and families.

Let's work together: 020 7843 6000 | [info@ncb.org.uk](mailto:info@ncb.org.uk)

London: 23 Mentmore Terrace, London, E8 3PN

Belfast: The NICVA Building, 61 Duncairn Gardens, BT15 2GB

Part of the family

**NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU**

National Children's Bureau is registered charity number 258825 and a company limited by guarantee number 00952717. Registered office: 23 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.