



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
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- The Matthew Elvidge Trust
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- The Prudence Trust
- The Segelman Trust
- The True Colours Trust
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Forewords

From our Chair

Despite 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

As 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

Welcome 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



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



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



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



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



research in practice

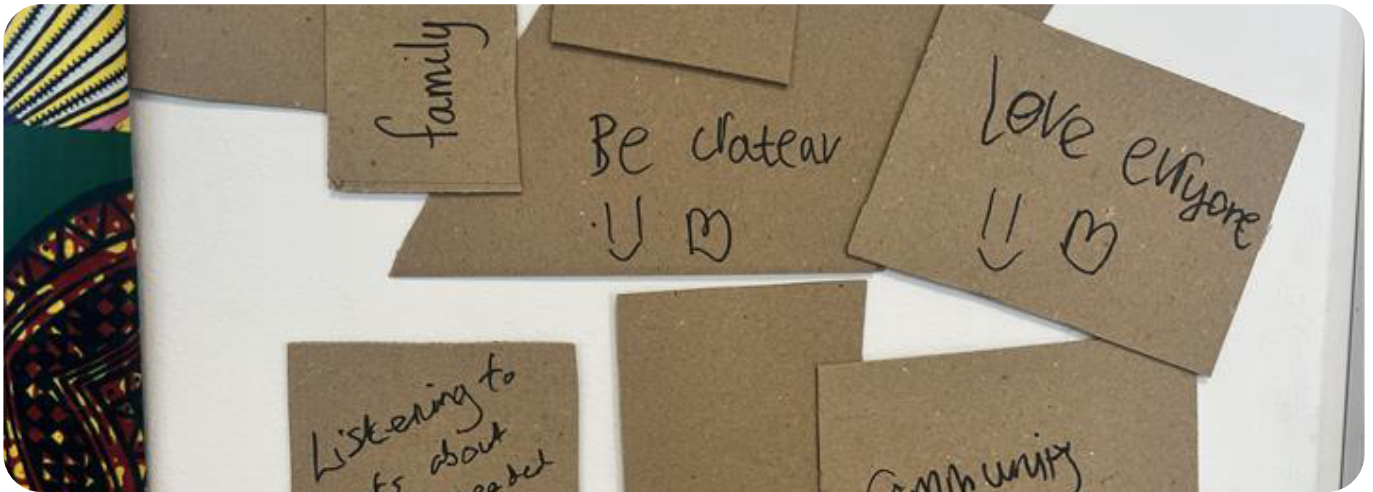
[Research in Practice](#) works with and for professionals in the social care, health, criminal justice, and higher education sectors offering resources, learning opportunities and specialist expertise. We aim to support their learning to enable people – children, young people, families, adults, carers,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



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



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>People – Organisational Change Capacity</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">• Extensive project prioritisation, detailed monitoring of project progress and regular review of priorities• Annual staff survey amended to six-monthly pulse surveys for two years to enable more detailed monitoring of engagement rates• Improved monitoring of staff utilisation rates to ensure early identification of inappropriate workloads in particular areas of the organisation.
<p>Financial – Working Capital</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">• Timely invoicing and credit control• Detailed, routine budget monitoring• Detailed, regular cashflow forecasting updates• Active cash management• Overdraft facility established



Risk	Key mitigating actions
<p>Delivery – Economic and Government Environment:</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">• Executive and trustees building and maintaining strong relationships with key stakeholders, including those in all political parties• Contract managers prioritising relationship building/ maintenance and highly detailed contract management• Plurality of income sources, enhanced with the addition of Research in Practice, provides a level of resilience to inherent levels of volatility• Robust level of reserves held, above policy minimum, to allow for tiding over, maintaining continuity of programmes.



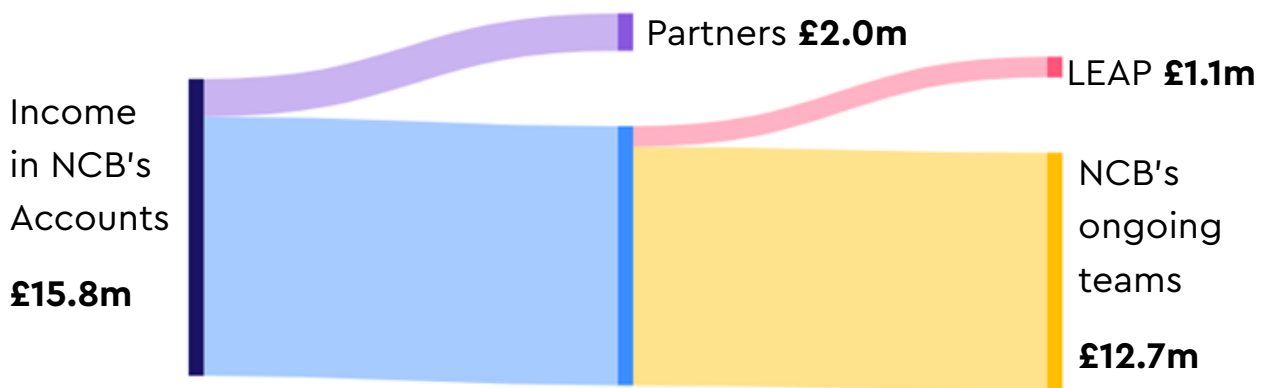
Financial review

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.



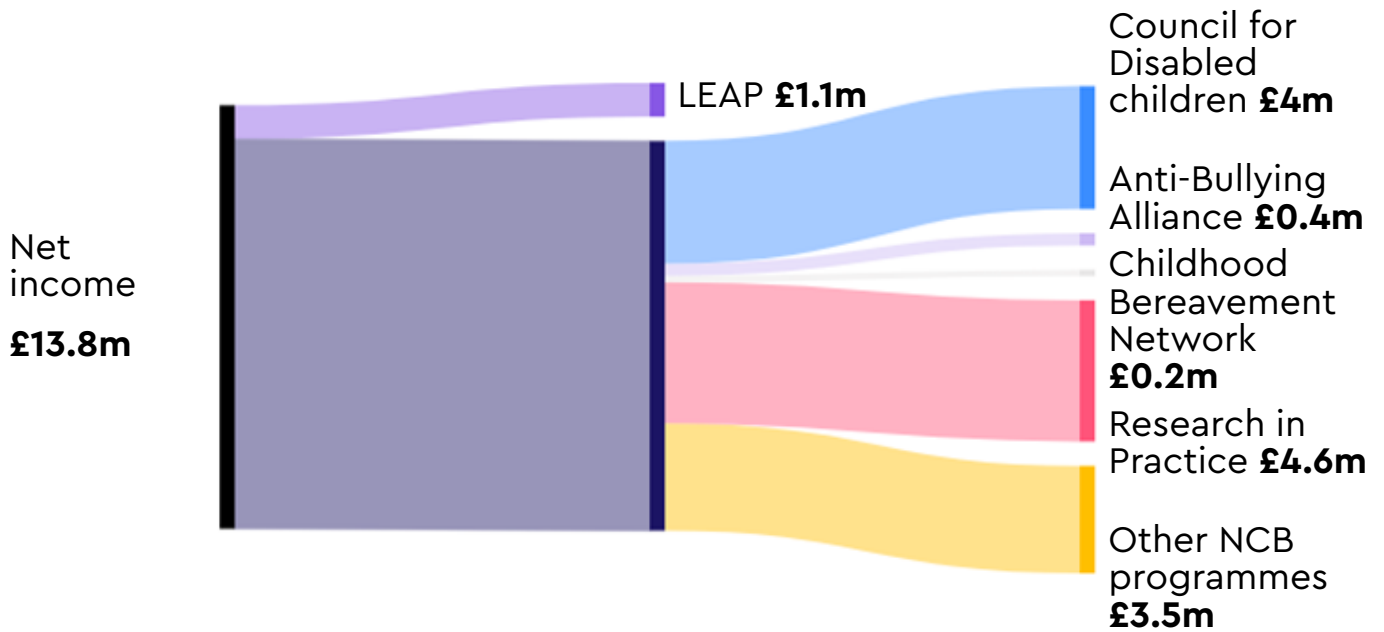
All income received that we manage must, for technical accounting reasons, be classed as NCB's own income – even though much of it is not ultimately spent by NCB. Our income figure may therefore give an overly inflated perspective of how much funding we can truly spend at our discretion.



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

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 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. 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)

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
Income from:	1 & 2				
Donations and legacies		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
Total		4,857	10,920	15,777	12,751
Expenditure on:	1, 3 & 6				
Raising funds					
Fundraising		-	48	48	34
Charitable activities		5,084	10,862	15,946	13,096
Exceptional expenditure	13	-	8	8	166
Total		5,084	10,918	16,002	13,296
Net movement in funds		(227)	2	(225)	(545)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		615	7,787	8,402	8,947
Total funds carried forward		388	7,789	8,177	8,402

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
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	1 & 6	4,317	4,466	4,317	4,466
Shares in subsidiary undertaking	9	0	-	0	-
Total fixed assets		4,317	4,466	4,317	4,466
Current assets:					
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
Total current assets		8,285	9,004	6,072	7,586
Liabilities:					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	12	(4,425)	(5,068)	(1,887)	(3,324)
Net current assets		3,860	3,936	4,185	4,262
Total net assets	16	8,177	8,402	8,502	8,728
The funds of the charity:					
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
Total charity funds	18	8,177	8,402	8,502	8,728

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
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net cash used in operating activities	<u>(457)</u>	<u>(717)</u>
Cash flows from investing activities		
Interest from investments	150	198
Purchase of leasehold property and equipment	(58)	(252)
Net cash provided by investing activities	<u>92</u>	<u>(54)</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period	(365)	(771)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	4,740	5,511
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	<u>4,375</u>	<u>4,740</u>
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Cash in hand	4,375	2,740
Notice deposits	-	2,000
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>4,375</u>	<u>4,740</u>
Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities	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)
Net cash used in operating activities	<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
Donations and legacies	157	133	290	172	104	276
Charitable activities						
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
Other activities	-	5	5	-	5	5
Income from investments						
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
Raising funds					
Fundraising	48	-	-	-	48
Charitable activities	8,864	1,969	3,137	1,976	15,946
Support Services	702	-	1,187	(1,889)	-
Governance costs	-	-	87	(87)	-
Exceptional expenditure	-	-	8	-	8
Total Expenditure	9,614	1,969	4,419	-	16,002

Comparative figures for the prior year

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

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

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Governance costs		
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
	87	96

	2025 £'000	2024 £'000
Expenditure includes		
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
Group & NCB Staff costs		
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
Group & NCB Average head count staff numbers		
Full-time staff	154	119
Part-time staff	52	28
	<u>206</u>	<u>147</u>

Staff earning over £60,000		
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:

Role		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
Group and NCB			
Cost			
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>
Net book value as at 31 March 2025	4,140	177	4,317
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
Due within one year		
Land and buildings	13	7
Equipment	5	-
2 to 5 years		
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
Group and NCB Notice deposits		
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
Income from:				
Charitable activities	110	4,826	4,936	423
Total	110	4,826	4,936	423
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	110	4,825	4,935	754
Total	110	4,825	4,935	754
Net income (expenditure)	-	1	1	(331)



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	2024	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'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

Project and Unit funds		B/fwd 1 April 2024 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	C/fwd 31 March 2025 £'000
Project	Funder				
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
NCB - restricted funds		589	4,747	(4,974)	362
Other grants and income		26	110	(110)	26
Subsidiaries - restricted funds		26	110	(110)	26
Group - restricted funds		615	4,857	(5,084)	388

Comparative figures for prior year

Project and Unit funds		B/fwd 1 April 2023 £'000	Income £'000	Expenses £'000	C/fwd 31 Mar 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
Other grants and income		142	1,155	(1,080)	217
		1,082	5,484	(5,977)	589

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
Designated funds					
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
NCB - unrestricted funds	<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)
Subsidiaries - unrestricted funds	<u>(352)</u>	<u>4,826</u>	<u>(4,825)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(351)</u>
Group - unrestricted funds	<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
Designated funds					
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
NCB - unrestricted funds before pension reserve	<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)
Subsidiaries - unrestricted funds before pension reserve	<u>5</u>	<u>392</u>	<u>(749)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(352)</u>
Group - unrestricted funds before pension reserve	<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
Income from:	1 & 2								
Donations and legacies		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
Total		4,857	-	10,920	15,777	5,515	-	7,236	12,751
Expenditure on:	1, 3 & 6								
Raising funds									
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
Total		5,084	-	10,918	16,002	5,982	-	7,314	13,296
Net movement in funds		(227)	-	2	(225)	(467)	-	(78)	(545)

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