

UNITED FOR A BETTER CHILDHOOD

Annual report and
accounts 2023–24



NATIONAL
CHILDREN'S
BUREAU



UNITING
PEOPLE FOR
60 YEARS



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Foreword

From our Chair

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

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

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

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

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

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

and young people today.

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

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

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

I invite you to discover more about our new strategy at strategy.ncb.org.uk and learning about the fruits of our endeavours.



Alison O'Sullivan
Chair



From our CEO

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Anna Feuchtwang
Chief Executive



Introduction

A special year

60 years old, but forever young

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Building Brighter Futures

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

To guide our journey, we have identified six goals:

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

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

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

Welcoming Research in Practice into the NCB family

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

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

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

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

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



The NCB family

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

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



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

Highlights in 2023–24 included:

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

Find out more about our work at: anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk



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

Highlights in 2023–24 included:

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

Find out more about our work at: childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk



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

Highlights in 2023–24 included:

- As part of the [REACH consortium](#), working with the DfE and local areas to test the proposed changes to the SEND and Alternative Provision system, as set out in the Government's Improvement Plan.
 - Supporting 28 local areas and 1,940 practitioners attending our national workforce development sessions through the DfE-funded [RISE programme](#).
 - [FLARE](#) winning the Children's Achievement Award at the CYP Now Awards. The award provides recognition for those working to improve the lives of children and families.
 - Delivering the first national Designated Clinical Officer/Designated
- Medical Officer conference after the pandemic, and helping to establish and deliver a National Network of Keyworking Leads and Allied Health Professionals Community of Practice.
- Delivering 49 training sessions to [SENDIAS](#) services with a 97% satisfaction rate.
 - Launching the Special Educational Consortium [manifesto](#), highlighting key priorities that we would like the next government to focus on.
 - Supporting Plymouth to develop their early years ordinarily available provision document.
 - Launching the What Works in SEND Effective Practice Evidence Framework providing a way of capturing, validating and sharing examples of effective practice through the DfE-funded RISE programme.

Find out more about our work at:
councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk





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

Highlights in 2023–24 included:

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

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

research in practice

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

Highlights in 2023–24 included:

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



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

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

Find out more about our work at:
researchinpractice.org.uk



SCHOOLS WELLBEING PARTNERSHIP

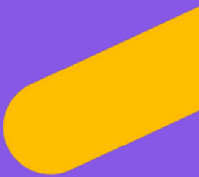
The Schools Wellbeing Partnership is a national network of more than 100 organisations working together to make mental health and wellbeing a strategic priority for both the government and educational settings.

Highlights in 2023–24 included:

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

Find out more about our work at:
schoolswellbeing.org.uk

Trustees' annual report





Our achievements in 2023–24

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

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

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

Influencing policy and making evidence count

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

Key highlights included:

Social care

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

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

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

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

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



Youth justice

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



Health and wellbeing

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

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

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

Early years

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

Bereavement benefits

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

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

Other research highlights this year included:

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





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

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

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

Key highlights included:

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



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

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

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

Welcoming Research in Practice to the NCB family

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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





Bringing organisations together

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

Key highlights included:

Children at the Table

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



Dame Christine Lenahan's valedictory lecture

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



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

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

Reaching Excellence and Ambition for all Children (REACH)

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

Early years SEND

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

professionals and parents across all nine English regions.

The LINKS Network of Support in Northern Ireland

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



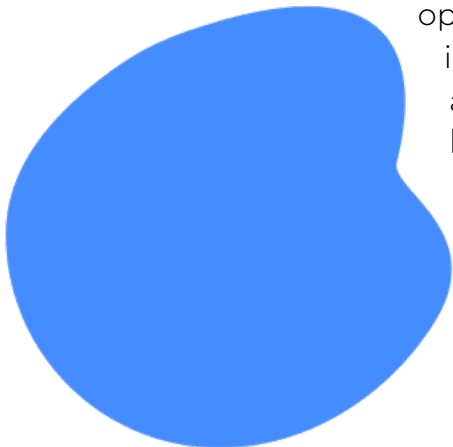
Developing the workforce

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

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

Key highlights included:

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





event in March. The event began with an address by the Children's Minister thanking the 7,000+ early years settings now signed up as part of their local hub's network membership.

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





Growing respect and trust as a pioneering and high performing charity

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

Key highlights included:

Building our reputation

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

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

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

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

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

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

A high performing charity

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

Dame Christine Lenehan's valedictory lecture

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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





Administrative information

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

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

Board of Trustees

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

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



Independent committee members

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

Strategic leadership team

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

Advisors

Auditors

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

Investment managers

CCLA Investment Management Ltd
80 Cheapside
London EC2V 6DZ

Bankers

Barclays Bank PLC
1 Churchill Place
London E14 5HP

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

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



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

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

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

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

Governance and management

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

The Board has continued to seek ongoing improvement

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

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

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

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

Senior pay

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

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



Board of Trustees for determination by the Board of Trustees.

Fundraising

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

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

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

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

Risk and internal control

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



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

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



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



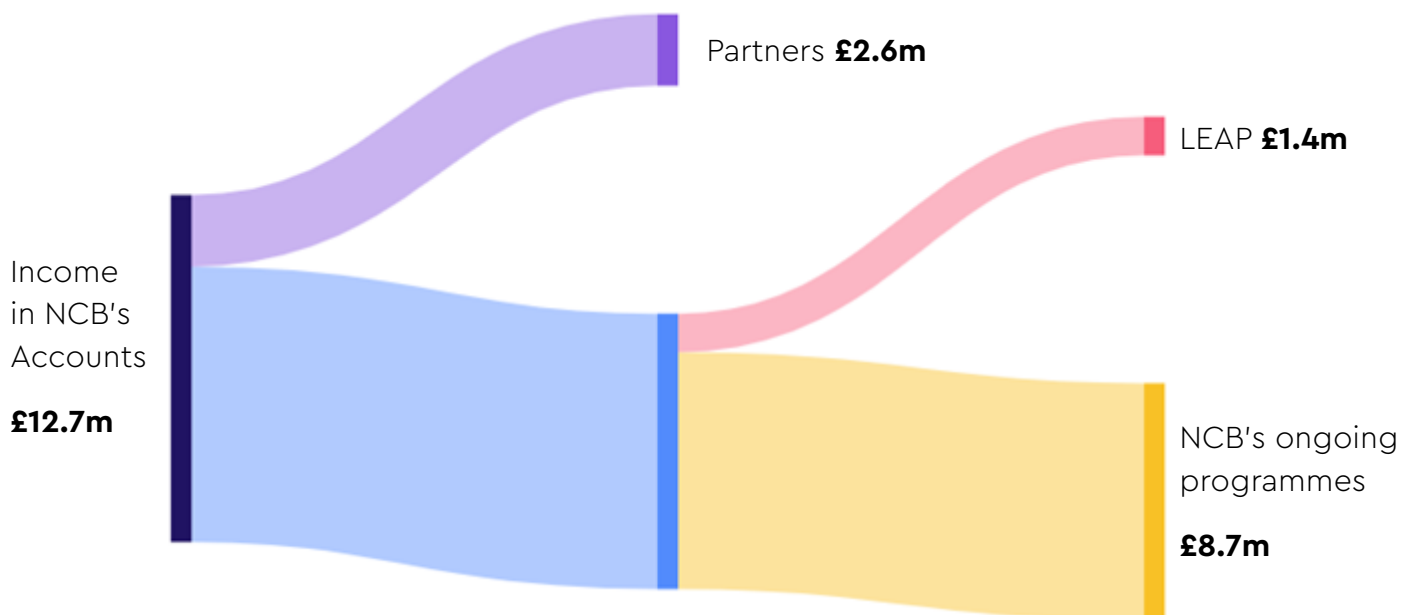
Financial review

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



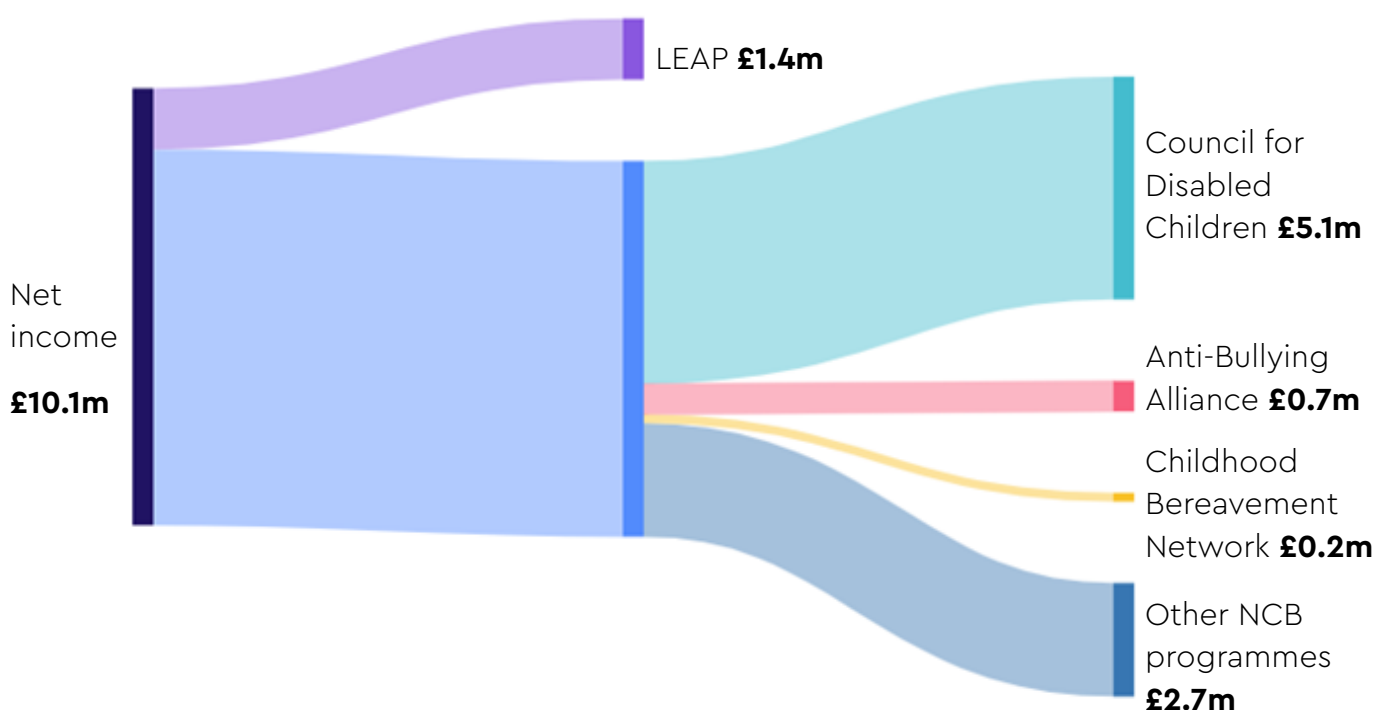
All income received that we manage must, for technical accounting reasons, be classed as NCB's own income – even though much of it is not ultimately spent by NCB. Our income figure may therefore give an overly inflated perspective of how much funding we can truly spend at our discretion.



NCB's structure

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

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



NCB's unrestricted income

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

'restrictions' for accounting purposes.

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



NCB's reserves and reserves policy

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

Risks and requirements

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

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

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

NCB's current reserves

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

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





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

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

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

Summary for the year under review

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

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

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

income generation for future years.

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

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

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



Financial performance

Income

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

Expenditure

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

Financial position

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

Other matters

Going concern

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

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

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

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

Subsidiaries

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



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

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

Joint Venture

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

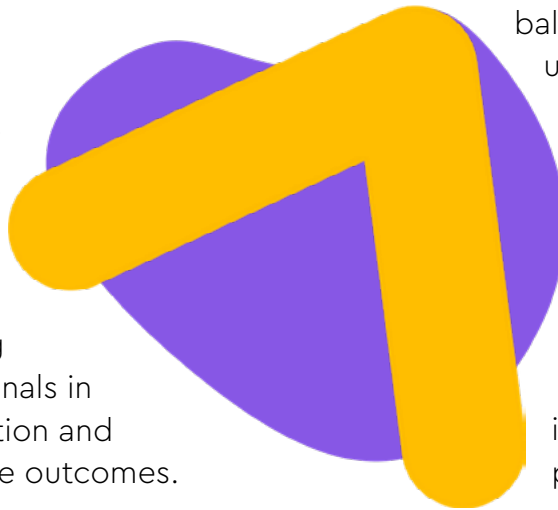
Investment policy

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

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

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

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





Statement of responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Strategic Report, the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards) and applicable law. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of its net incoming resources for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue to operate.

The trustees are responsible for keeping

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

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

Compliance with statutory requirements

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



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

Funders, stakeholders and sponsors

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

Auditors

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

Alison O'Sullivan
Chair

National Children's Bureau
Company Number: 952717



Independent auditor's report

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of National Children's Bureau (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiary (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the consolidated statement of financial activities, the group and parent charitable company balance sheets, the consolidated statement of cash flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with

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

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material



uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on National Children's Bureau's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, other than the group financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the group financial statements does not cover the other information, and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the group financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the group financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we

are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

- The information given in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements
- The trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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



accounting records and returns; or

- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit

Responsibilities of trustees

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

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

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

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we



do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Joanna Pittman (Senior statutory auditor)

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP,
Statutory Auditor

110 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TG

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



Financial statements

Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities

(incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

Year ended 31 March 2024

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

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



Balance sheets

As at 31 March 2024

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

Notes 1 to 19 form part of these financial statements

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

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

Alison O'Sullivan

Alison O'Sullivan
Chair

National Children's Bureau
Company Number: 952717



Consolidated cash flow statement

for the year ended 31 March 2024

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



Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 March 2024

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Statutory information

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

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by

Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

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

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

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

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

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

Public benefit entity

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

Going Concern

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



Group accounts

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

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

Consortium charity

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

Income

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

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

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

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

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

Fund accounting

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

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

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



Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

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

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

Delivery Partners

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

Allocation of support costs

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

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

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

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

Operating leases

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

Tangible fixed assets

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

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:



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

Investments

Investments in subsidiaries are at cost.

Cash at Bank and In Hand

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

Notice Deposits

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

Debtors

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

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the group has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation

Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

Pension costs

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

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



2 INCOME

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

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



3 EXPENDITURE

	Staff £'000	Delivery partners £'000	Other expenses £'000	Support services £'000	2024 £'000
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

Comparative figures for the prior year

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

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

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

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



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

4 DELIVERY PARTNERS

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

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



5 STAFF AND TRUSTEES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



6 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

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

7 OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

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

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

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

8 NOTICE DEPOSITS

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Group and NCB		
Notice deposits		
Barclays	2,000	522



9 SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKING

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

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

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

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

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

The aggregate of the assets, liabilities and reserves was:

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

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

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

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

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



10 JOINT VENTURE

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

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

The aggregate of assets, liabilities and funds was:

	2024	2023
	£'000	£'000
Assets	844	505
Liabilities	(231)	(115)
Net assets	613	390
Total funds	613	390

11 DEBTORS

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



12 CREDITORS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

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

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

13 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

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

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

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

Exceptional costs were incurred in the transfer:

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

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



14 RESTRICTED FUNDS

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

Comparative figures for prior year

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

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



15 UNRESTRICTED OTHER FUNDS

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

Comparative figures for the prior year

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

16 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

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

Comparative figures for the prior year

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



17 PENSION ARRANGEMENTS

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

Defined contribution scheme

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

Personal pension plans

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

Defined benefit scheme

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

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



18 CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES WITH COMPARATIVES

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

19 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

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



**NATIONAL
CHILDREN'S
BUREAU**



**ANTI-BULLYING
ALLIANCE**



**CHILDHOOD
BEREAVEMENT
NETWORK**



**COUNCIL
FOR DISABLED
CHILDREN**



**SCHOOLS'
WELLBEING
PARTNERSHIP**

LEAP

**research
in practice**

United for a better childhood

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

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

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