



Working with children,
for children

National Children's Bureau Celebrating 50 years Annual Review 2013/2014

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Introduction

Welcome to our Annual Review of 2013/14, presenting highlights from across NCB's broad spectrum of work to improve the lives of children and young people.

The past year has been eventful, by turns a time of celebration, a time for prudence and a time to look forward to new beginnings.

Celebration came as we enjoyed a year packed full of special events to mark our 50th anniversary. Starting with a thought-provoking debate about the characteristics of modern childhood at the V&A Museum of Childhood, we went on to publish an in-depth report on the impacts of poverty and inequality on children, *Greater Expectations*. This report confirmed that urgent action is needed to address the disadvantage that still wreaks havoc on children's lives, causing them to lag far behind their more affluent peers in almost all areas, from health to education, early development to housing.

This underlines why our work is important and makes the impact of NCB in 2013/14 a great source of pride. Our work as strategic partner for both the Department for Education and the Department of Health, our work to secure important amendments to the Children and Families Act 2014, together with the release of reports such as *Putting Corporate Parenting into Practice*, demonstrate NCB's breadth of achievement throughout the year.

2013/14 was also a time for us to continue a process of reorganisation that consolidated our activities and built a strong financial basis for us to continue our vital work. During this period we were lucky enough to have Dr Hilary Emery, our tireless chief executive, leading the organisation. Hilary stepped down in 2014, and we would like to thank her for her invaluable contribution to NCB. We are delighted to have appointed Anna Feuchtwang as our new chief executive. She takes up her role in the latter part of 2014.

Anna joins NCB just after we have secured 10-year investment from the Big Lottery Fund for a project to improve the lives of young children in Lambeth. This project, coupled with the firm structural foundation we have established, means the future is looking bright for NCB.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow honorary officers and trustees, all the young people we work with and, most importantly, all the staff of NCB for their contribution to these achievements. I hope you enjoy reading about them.

Elaine Simpson
Chair



The National Children's Bureau at 50

NCB is a leading children's charity that has for five decades been at the forefront of work to improve the lives of children and young people, especially the most vulnerable.

Our mission is to be a strong voice for children and young people, championing their rights and reducing the impact of inequalities, so that every child, especially the most vulnerable, can grow up safe, happy and healthy.

Working with and for children our vision is that:

- Children and young people's voices and actions improve their lives and the lives of those around them.
- Vulnerable children and young people have improved experiences and life chances.
- Children, young people and families successfully deal with life changes and challenges.

1963

We were born. Originally called the National Bureau for Co-operation in Childcare, we changed our name to the National Children's Bureau (NCB) in 1970.



1973

We published *Born to Fail*, a groundbreaking study that questioned the priorities and perspectives of British society after exploring the impact of inequality on 'disadvantaged' children.



1989

We played a key role in shaping the Children's Act. Intensive lobbying from NCB and the Council for Disabled Children transferred responsibility for disabled children from the NHS to their local authority and led to the closure of long-stay hospital wards for children with learning disabilities.



1993

We consulted on the 1993 Education Act, particularly around children with special needs, and many of our recommendations on school exclusions were incorporated in government guidelines.

Highlights from NCB's 50th anniversary year

In 2013/14 NCB celebrated the 50th anniversary of its founding in 1963. To mark the occasion, the year saw a range of special activities to celebrate our achievements.

'Debating Modern Childhood'

This thought-provoking event at the V&A Museum of Childhood brought together influential speakers and young people to consider how modern childhood has been transformed in Britain. The debate asked the question: 'Do today's children enjoy better rights and opportunities than ever before, or is inequality as entrenched as it was 50 years ago when NCB was founded?'

Greater Expectations (for more information see page 4)

Compelling research published in our *Greater Expectations* report compared data on different aspects of children's lives today with a groundbreaking study published in 1973. The report found that significantly more children grow up in poverty today and these children suffer devastating consequences throughout their lives.

Young Person's Question Time

The Young Person's Question Time, organised with the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Children, gave young people an opportunity to visit Parliament and debate issues relating to education with leading figures in children's policy, including the Children's Commissioner for England, Dr Maggie Atkinson, Shadow Minister for Young People, Rushanara Ali MP, and Liberal Democrat education spokesperson Lord Storey.

Generation Next

Work commenced with Ipsos MORI on an in-depth survey of the attitudes and anxieties of 'Generation Next', young people born around the millennium who are soon to be the next generation of young adults of voting age.

Twitter campaigns

We used our influence on Twitter to run two separate social media campaigns to mark our anniversary. Each campaign featured 50 days of tweets to mark our 50 years. The first campaign presented daily facts and statistics relating to children, and the second campaign highlighted what NCB believes would improve children's lives.



2012

Our 'Making it REAL' literacy project won an award for radically improving the life chances of babies and young children.



2004

We played a pivotal role in establishing the first ever Children's Commissioner for England.



1998

We began work to promote the active participation of children and young people with the publication of *Young Opinions, Great Ideas* and later established our youth membership group, Young NCB, in 1999.

Our policy work

NCB has a long history of working with children and young people, politicians and practitioners to improve policy and legislation in the education, early years, youth, health and social care sectors.

Our goal is to ensure that the legal and statutory frameworks that govern the delivery of support and care to children and families result in better outcomes for children and young people, reflect their views, and tackle disadvantage and inequality.

Greater Expectations: 50 years of influencing policy

To mark our 50th anniversary we revisited a major study carried out by NCB in 1973. *Born to Fail?* revealed how growing up in poverty damaged children's lives, resulting in poor health, underachievement at school and a lack of opportunities to fulfil their potential. Our new report, *Greater Expectations*, found that these patterns of inequality and disadvantage persist today: more children are living in poverty and, compared to their better-off peers, they are still far more likely to struggle in their early learning and at school, suffer from poor health and be at risk of injury.

In *Greater Expectations* we demonstrated how much better England could be doing to make a difference to the lives of children. If we were performing as well as the best industrialised nations, almost 1 million children in the UK would not be living in poverty.

So, we continue to advocate for a more focused effort across all government departments to improve the lives of children and to monitor the impact of policy and budgetary decisions on them and their families.



Born to Fail, published in 1973, showed how poverty blights the lives of children and young people.

Our achievements in policy

NCB and partners across the early childhood sector persuaded the government to reverse plans to increase child-to-staff ratios for early years and childcare providers, key to ensuring safe and high quality care.

NCB published a set of essays by leading thinkers from across the children's sector, calling for a wide-ranging debate on the future of children's centres.

The Special Educational Consortium and the Every Disabled Child Matters campaign, hosted by the Council for Disabled Children, played the key role in coordinating the special educational needs and disability sector's work on the Children and Families Act 2014, securing a number of important changes.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance succeeded in overturning a legislative measure in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill which would have allowed head teachers to place injunctions on pupils accused of bullying, unnecessarily criminalising often vulnerable children in the process. The Standing Committee for Youth Justice, of which NCB is an active member, successfully lobbied against a new definition of Anti-Social Behaviour being introduced, which would have put children at risk of injunctions for any conduct deemed 'capable of causing nuisance and annoyance', therefore reducing opportunities for children and young people to freely play or socialise outdoors.

In response to contributions by experts in NCB and our specialist membership groups, statutory guidance for schools on supporting pupils with medical conditions and keeping children safe were improved.

NCB continued to advocate for children to be a priority across the new health system. As a result, government went further in

promoting the principles in its pledge, 'Better Health Outcomes for Children and Young People', by including its commitments in the mandate to NHS England.

We published a report outlining the need for GP services to be more child-friendly. Since then, NHS England has committed to working with local health commissioners to improve primary care services for children.

With the NHS Confederation we published results from a poll of child health professionals which suggested that barriers to joined-up working and an insufficient focus on prevention appear to persist in child health services.

NCB has called for greater involvement of children and young people in decisions about health services and their own care. In response, national health organisations have taken positive action: NHS England established a Youth Forum to provide strategic advice and HealthWatch England published guidance on making local HealthWatch child-friendly.

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Children, which NCB clerks, launched their inquiry report, *Are Children and Young People Getting the Opportunities They Want?* It recommended that a cross-government youth strategy be established. The Cabinet Office has since taken over responsibility for youth policy to facilitate a cross-government approach.

For vulnerable and looked after children, NCB secured improvements to several pieces of statutory guidance on keeping children safe in education, care for unaccompanied and trafficked children and planning transitions to adulthood for care leavers, making agencies' responsibilities to those most in need clearer.



Our research

The work of NCB's Research Centre provides the essential evidence base necessary to improve practice across the children's sector.

Over the past year the NCB Research Centre has successfully delivered a wide range of research and evaluation projects. These have included studies for external bodies such as the Department of Health, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH), the Nuffield Foundation, the Prince's Trust and the Big Lottery.

Research projects undertaken for the Department for Education, where the Research Centre was successful in winning a number of competitive tenders, include:

- A project to explore how to improve the quality of children's homes (in partnership with TNS-BMRB).
- The 'Evaluation of the two-year-olds in schools demonstration project', which has involved working with 49 schools across the country, undertaken in partnership with Frontier Economics and NCB colleagues in the Early Childhood Unit.
- A project with Loughborough University to help local authorities use the research evidence for supporting children who return home from care.

A workshop involving NCB's Young Research Advisors.





Our achievements

The role of independent reviewing officers

We completed large-scale research on independent reviewing officers (IROs) in England that culminated in a parliamentary launch in spring 2014.

All children in care have an IRO: an adult who has oversight of their care plan and is empowered to act on their behalf in challenging the local authority. The research confirmed that IROs can have a real impact on ensuring care plans are properly reviewed, and they can contribute to improved support and services for looked after children.

However, the research study found that while there was consensus about the characteristics of an IRO service that was working well, there were challenges facing IROs when it came to translating theory into practice.

High case loads, an inability to assert independence and confront poor practice, time constraints and an expectation to conduct other duties outside the IRO remit, all contributed to an inconsistent application of the core IRO duties.

'We are a diverse group of young people who undertake or provide advice on research into different topics. We joined the group for a variety of different reasons but each of us loves being part of it!'

Young Research Advisors

Trajectories and transitions of disabled children and young people

This research (undertaken in partnership with the Centre for Longitudinal Studies at the Institute of Education, the London School of Economics and the Council for Disabled Children) will be published later in 2014.

This project, which has involved analysis of two large-scale, nationally representative, multi-topic surveys, has explored a number of important issues that impact on the experiences of disabled children and young people, including bullying, the development of behaviour problems and their educational aspirations. The project has produced a series of research summaries that have been widely distributed to academics and practitioners.

Young Research Advisors

Involving children and young people, and their parents and carers, in the research that NCB undertakes continues to be a fundamental part of the Research Centre's work.

Our team of Young Research Advisors has contributed towards several of our projects, including 'Children's Involvement in Health Decisions', 'Exploring Children's Understanding of the Law and their Rights' and 'From Care to Independence'.

The Research Centre also provides the patient and public involvement input into a large five-year research programme that is coordinated by the Children's Policy Research Unit (CPRU), based at the Institute of Child Health and University College London. As part of this work we continue to offer different research opportunities to our Young Research Advisors and to our research group of families and carers.

Our practice improvement work

NCB provides a variety of assistance to professionals working with children and young people. Our aim is to improve the quality of their work, in order that children themselves benefit.

The Children's Partnership

The Children's Partnership is the voluntary and community sector strategic partner to the Department for Education (DfE) for the period 2013–15. It is part of DfE's programme to develop its strategic relationship with the children, young people and families' voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. Using this strategic partner approach, DfE anticipates being able to strengthen capability and capacity across the sector and bring the sector's voice and expertise into the creation of policy.

The Children's Partnership is jointly led by NCB and 4Children. It also draws on the expertise of other key sector organisations in order to expand overall reach and to support services. These organisations are Barnardo's, the Family and Childcare Trust, NAVCA, NCVO, NCVYS and NSPCC, which together with NCB and 4Children form the partnership board that oversees the work of the Children's Partnership.

In 2013/14 The Children's Partnership has developed into an effective VCSE strategic support partner for the DfE, well regarded among policy officials as a key means for helping the Department understand, relate to and reflect VCSE needs in policy making.

Strong working relationships and delivery processes have been established between the partnership and DfE, with delivery gaining momentum as a result.

The Partnership is recognised by DfE officials for operating a collaborative working style in its engagement with stakeholders.

The Partnership's e-bulletins and communications are reaching nearly 30,000 individuals and 91 per cent of grant holders have attended events.

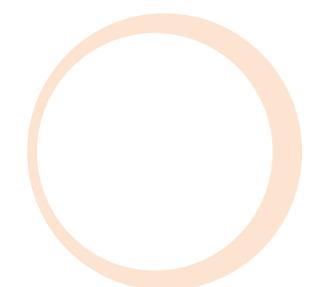
The Partnership's Knowledge Bank provides online access to policy, practice and up to date information relating to the key themes of early years, childcare, adoption and children in care, along with relevant information on other policy areas – families, safeguarding and young people.

Corporate parenting and Children in Care Councils

In 2013/14 we published *Putting Corporate Parenting into Practice*, which shows how elected members and senior officers in local authorities can fulfil their duties to vulnerable children growing up in care.

Building on this work, we brought together 286 corporate parents with young people from Children in Care Councils based across 69 local authorities. They participated in a series of creative and dynamic events that explored how they could most effectively work together.

Following these events we produced a short, animated film highlighting how looked after children can have a more effective voice through their Children in Care Councils (see *Taking it to the Next Level*, available at www.youtube.com/watchncb).



C4EO

The Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services (C4EO) provides a range of products and services to support the children's services sector. It offers hands-on support and challenge to build local capacity at the front line of local service provision delivered by trained and accredited sector specialists recruited from children's services. It also gathers examples of excellent local practice that have led to significantly improved outcomes for children, young people and their families, and then shares these examples with the sector.

C4EO is now a self-sustaining programme that maintained a presence in local areas in 2013/14, winning tenders and responding to local needs. Tailored peer-to-peer support was provided in the fields of adoption, early years, early intervention, safeguarding and data, always ensuring a co-production approach, building solutions with the workforce. C4EO also provided a regional mentoring programme for social care aspirant leaders, as well as regional support around the use of data and performance management systems. In addition, C4EO has also been selected as the lead improvement partner for a local authority, providing ongoing coaching and mentoring for its social care managers.

Making it REAL

In the first year of DFE funding, the Making it REAL programme provided training for early years practitioners, enabling them to build the skills and confidence of parents as they support their child's early literacy development. The programme builds on the learning from the University of Sheffield's REAL (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy) project and shares the approach through free training offered nationally.

At the project's core is the belief that parents can be supported to develop their child's literacy skills. This is achieved by using a range of activities such as home visits, group activities and trips, and through sharing an effective and tested framework to think about all the ways parents can help their children's early literacy development. NCB's Early Childhood Unit with delivery partners PACEY (Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years), Pre-school Learning Alliance and NDNA (National Day Nurseries Association) delivered training to 1,600 early years practitioners, receiving consistently positive feedback.

Through eight local authority partnerships in Oldham, Haringey, Peterborough, Luton, Blackpool, Sandwell, South Tyneside and Sheffield, 64 settings and schools have been engaged, reaching 512 targeted children (including 100 two-year-olds) along with more than 130 siblings. Over 780 home visits and 160 literacy events have taken place.

Innovations include adapting Making it REAL for two-year-olds, engagement of volunteers and development of support for early mathematics.

Feedback indicates that participation in Making it REAL has helped to increase practitioners' confidence in handing over early literacy knowledge to parents, resulting in greater parental involvement in their children's learning.



Our participation work

NCB champions the right of young people to have a say in decisions that affect their lives.

We engage young people in all areas of our work, including staff recruitment, our board of trustees and across our project work. Our youth engagement initiative, Young NCB, gives young people the chance to take action on issues that are important and relevant to them.

In August 2013 NCB launched its new three-year participation strategy. The new strategy builds on good practice from across the organisation to ensure that the voices of children and young people inform and influence all of our work and looks to build an evidence base of how participation results in tangible improvements to the lives of young people.

Working with young people

Alongside Young NCB there are a range of other NCB projects harnessing the enthusiasm and experience of children and young people:

- VIPER (voice, inclusion, participation, empowerment and research)
- EPIC (equality, participation, influence, change)
- Young Research Advisors
- JP Morgan Life Skills.

Case study:

Saaria Ahmed (18) – Young NCB member

'I joined NCB in 2010 and had many opportunities to be part of health consultations, seminars and advisory group meetings. Every event I participated in made me feel valued as a young person and I could express my views and opinions coherently. The staff were always helpful so I felt safe and my confidence grew.

During 2013/14 I was involved in the early stages of planning and developing "The Big Discussion" with Birmingham Children's Hospital and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. We wanted to create a platform that would help us to raise concerns about the National Health Service.

I have been fortunate to be part of Young NCB and it has given me the chance to meet many other young people and discuss areas that affect every young person. I hope I made a difference to the lives of young people. I would thoroughly recommend Young NCB to anyone.'



Young NCB: Our achievements

This year Young NCB members had over 100 opportunities to participate in our work. These ranged from giving their views on government consultations and speaking to the media, to being involved in governance, sitting on staff selection panels and participating in work experience opportunities:

- Young people met regularly to plan a health summit with Birmingham Children's Hospital and RCPCH.
- Young NCB members took part in a series of consultations with Public Health England.
- Four young people took part in a project to make a short film on young people's voices in health, which was then shown at the Children and Young People's Health Outcomes Forum summit.
- A Young NCB member also worked with Transport for London to design and develop their new website.
- During NCB's 50th year, Young NCB members were involved in a host of events including 'Debating Modern Childhood' at the V&A Museum of Childhood, the Parliamentary Reception in July, the Young Person's Question Time event (see page 3) and NCB's AGM and Annual Debate.
- Young NCB members featured in a variety of media throughout the year, including discussing the voting age on BBC Two's *Newsnight* and being interviewed on Radio 4's *You and Yours*.

Young NCB member Jhon Bateman meets his MP Andrew Bridgen at NCB's Parliamentary Reception. They stand in front of a banner designed by Young NCB members to highlight their work.

NCB Northern Ireland

Our highly skilled team in Northern Ireland have made significant progress during 2013/14, influencing policy, being a strong voice for young people and front-line professionals, and providing research and practical solutions on a range of issues.

We led a campaign to improve impact measurement in children's services, working with 120 senior civil servants and 200 voluntary and community sector staff to introduce Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) across Northern Ireland. This included developing a Child Poverty Outcomes Framework for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister and delivering ongoing performance management support for the Colin Early Intervention Community.

Our research continued with 32 post-primary schools and 2,450 pupils to identify current practice for young people at risk of becoming disengaged from education, employment or training and to explore young people's online activity and subsequent attainment levels. Emerging results are influencing how services and policies can be developed to improve outcomes.

Working with the Northern Ireland Childminding Association we produced the first ever study of childminding practice in Northern Ireland. The findings are currently informing the development of the new childcare strategy.

We welcomed several international speakers to Northern Ireland including Dr Bruce Perry, Dr Ian Manion and Mark Friedman, hosting conferences with over a thousand policy makers and practitioners, highlighting the need for early intervention. We influenced the development of the new £35m Early Intervention Transformation

Programme which we are now supporting through the provision of 'what works' evidence, performance management and implementation expertise.

Our Participation Support Programme continues to embed a culture of participation in schools and we were delighted to be named as a support organisation in the Department of Education's guidance for schools.

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF), hosted by NCB Northern Ireland, worked with 10,000 children and young people, and 200 school leaders over the past year and provided a review of legislation, guidance and policy for the Education Minister.

We worked with practitioners across Northern Ireland who deliver evidence-based programmes supporting fidelity to deliver outcomes and we coordinated a programme for 'Incredible Years' commissioned by the Public Health Agency.





Our funders and supporters 2013/14

We would like to thank all those who have funded and supported our work on behalf of children and young people.

Atlantic Philanthropies
Big Lottery Fund
Big Lottery Fund (NI)
Brook
Camden and Islington Public Health
Children's Trust, Tadworth
Colin Early Intervention Community
Comic Relief
Contact a Family
Dawes Trust
Department for Education
Department for Education (NI)
Department of Health
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

European Commission
Federation of Sports and Play Associations
Film Creatives
Ian MacTaggart Trust
Institute of Education
Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute
JP Morgan
Medici Choir
Mencap
Nuffield Foundation
Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM)
Pears Foundation
Prince's Trust

Public Health Agency (NI)
RNIB
Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland
Sieff Foundation
Souter Trust
Terrence Higgins Trust
Thomas Knights Film & Photography
Trinity College London
True Colours Trust
V&A Museum of Childhood
Vodafone
Youth Council for Northern Ireland

Also our grateful thanks for the support and donations received from NCB members, corporate partnerships, voluntary organisations, schools, community organisations, individual donors and participants in sponsored events like the London 10k run. Our heartfelt gratitude to you all.

Our partnerships

Partnership is one of the founding principles of NCB's work and remains a priority 50 years later. Through our vibrant and influential partnerships and networks, we engage with statutory, private and voluntary organisations to establish shared priorities for improving the lives of children.



Play England successfully co-ordinated national Playday 2013 with 647 events and over 900,000 participants. It has worked closely with partners in the voluntary sector creating nearly 50,000 new volunteers supporting children's play through the Social Action Fund and street play project. Play England has now become a fully independent charity.



To help the Childhood Bereavement Network's members demonstrate the difference they make, NCB piloted a new tool for measuring outcomes. We've also developed a 'cost-avoidance calculator' so they can demonstrate the savings they bring through their preventative work.

We published *What Do We Know About Childhood Bereavement in 2014?* to bring together the latest findings on children's grief, and we've been advising on a national project to establish the research priorities for palliative care. We held a fascinating conference exploring grief across cultures.

We've also worked closely with MPs, peers, officials and other bodies to get a better deal for widowed parents in and out of work.

Sharing our model of collaboration, we helped to establish a new Family Bereavement Network in Europe.

www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk

Highlights from our specialist membership groups



The Anti-Bullying Alliance embarked on a two-year Department for Education funded programme of training and resources to reduce the bullying of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities in schools. We set up an information hub and developed training that is being rolled out nationally. We coordinated an extremely successful Anti-Bullying Week 2013, which achieved record-breaking media coverage. It was targeted at empowering young people, parents and teachers to bring an end to cyberbullying, with the theme 'The Future's Ours: Safe, Fun and Connected'.

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk



The Sex Education Forum launched a termly e-magazine for teachers of sex and relationships education (SRE). Issue 2 looked at teaching about consent and was informed by a survey of 890 young people, which found that almost one in three had not learnt about sexual consent in school.

The members of the Sex Education Forum also campaigned together for sex education in the new National Curriculum Science and were successful in securing a clear place for puberty in the new programme of study for primary schools.

The Forum also collaborated with Brook and the Personal Social Health and Economic Education (PSHE) Association to produce supplementary advice for schools on SRE.

www.sexeducationforum.org.uk



The Council for Disabled Children

As the leading umbrella body for the disabled children's sector in England the Council for Disabled Children (CDC), based at NCB, brings together a cross-section of voluntary and community sector organisations to maximise the sector's influence on national policy and legislation relating to disabled children.

This year a significant part of our work has been our role as strategic partner to the Department for Education on the reforms to the provision of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) of children and young people. Working with our members and the wider sector we have provided expert advice to the Department and developed a series of resources, toolkits and factsheets to inform and support stakeholders through the reforms.

The following are just some of the projects undertaken by CDC in 2013/14:

Every Disabled Child Matters

Every Disabled Child Matters (EDCM) is a national campaign fighting for rights and justice for disabled children. The campaign is led by four national organisations: CDC (which also hosts the campaign), Contact a Family, Mencap and the Special Education Consortium.

Following the introduction of new health reforms in April 2013, EDCM, in partnership with The Children's Trust, developed the Disabled Children's Charter aimed at supporting the newly formed Health and Wellbeing Boards in meeting their responsibilities to disabled children.

Expert Parent Programme

With funding from the Department of Health CDC developed the Expert Parent Programme, an innovative new training programme aimed at empowering parents of disabled children to become more confident and resilient when engaging with health services.

VIPER

VIPER is a three-year project funded by the Big Lottery Fund to explore the most effective ways of supporting young disabled people's participation in the development of services. The project was delivered in partnership with CDC, the NCB Research Centre, the Alliance for Inclusive Education and the Children's Society.

At the heart of the project was a group of 16 young disabled people. They participated directly in the research, conducting fieldwork interviews and focus groups, developing surveys and analysing data.

'By getting involved
it's showing people that we
are able to do what other
people can do. Also, by helping
to plan the services it's getting
[young disabled people]
involved in what essentially
will affect us!'

VIPER participant



Financial review of the year

Summary

2013/14 saw an improvement in financial performance:

- The operating deficit (loss) on unrestricted funds of £(0.3) million was significantly lower than the previous year (£(1.0) million). Trustees consider this to be the key indicator of financial performance, and its improvement this year demonstrates the progress being made towards reaching a more sustainable financial position.
- £(0.9) million of restricted funds carried forward from the previous year were disbursed during 2013/14, resulting in an overall net expenditure for the year of £(1.1) million.
- NCB's overall net assets increased from £3.0 million to £4.0 million in the year.

Income

While overall income fell slightly (£10.5 million in 2013/14 from £11.5 million in 2012/13), unrestricted income increased (to £6.6 million from £5.7 million). This is in line with the trustees' objective of continuing to increase the proportion of unrestricted income within the total.

In 2013/14 NCB worked as a Strategic Partner to both the Department of Health and, as part of the Children's Partnership, the Department for Education. NCB continued to deliver a number of significant contracts

with the Department for Education, was successful in winning three further two-year grants under the Department's VCSE National Prospectus Grants Programme and, late in the year, was awarded the coordination of the Independent Support programme.

Significant, continued support for our work came from a variety of funders listed on page 15, and NCB also gained financial support from new sources.

As we move into the new financial year, we continue to deliver almost all the programmes listed above and welcome the opportunity to commence the 'A Better Start' programme, funded by the Big Lottery Fund, as part of the Lambeth Early Action Partnership. This is significant for NCB as it represents a 10-year programme, securing long-term funding and impact.

Financial position

NCB's total reserves grew from £3.0 million at the start of the year to £4.0 million at the end of the year.

The deficit on NCB's defined benefit pension scheme reduced significantly (£4.1 million to £2.9 million), whilst we continued to recognise the (now increased) current market value of our property as we progress toward its planned sale. This led to a significant strengthening of unrestricted funds (net of the pension deficit) from £1.3 million to £3.2 million over the year.

Freehold property

As NCB repositions itself for the future it has become increasingly clear that it no longer requires an office as large as the one it presently has and needs to operate at levels of efficiency and collaboration that its present building make impossible. The trustees have therefore approved plans for the sale and redevelopment of NCB's London office and the moving of all its London-based staff into a smaller property on the same site.

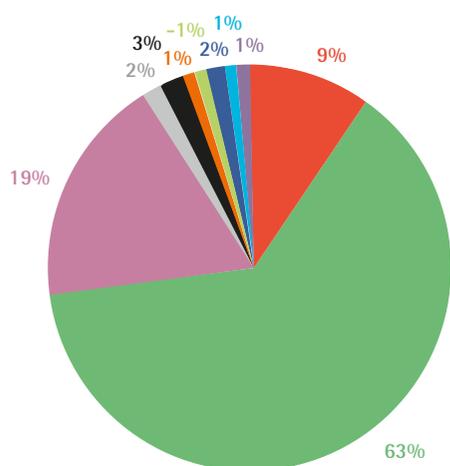
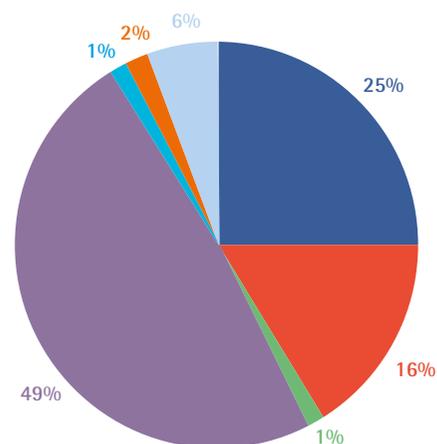
Following a robust appraisal by the trustees and independent expert advisors of a number of offers and in-depth review by a specially formed sub-group of trustees, NCB exchanged contracts during the year with a developer for the site. Completion is subject to planning permission. NCB received a non-refundable deposit of £355,000 on exchange of contracts.

Pension fund

The valuation of NCB's defined benefit pension scheme as at 31 March 2014 (under FRS17 principles) has seen a significant reduction in the scheme deficit to £2.9 million (from £4.1 million in 2012/13).

NCB closed the scheme to new entrants in the previous financial year and now runs a defined contribution scheme for new starters. NCB continues to meet and monitor its annual obligations to the scheme, including the reduction of the deficit, as agreed with the scheme provider. The value of the agreed contribution towards reducing the deficit for the coming year is just £160,000.

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2014



Income

	2014 £'000	2013 £'000
Restricted income		
Government project grants 25%	2,668	4,572
Other project grants 16%	1,666	1,310
Unrestricted income		
Voluntary income 1%	139	115
Contracts, unrestricted grants and fees 49%	5,104	4,745
Membership subscriptions 1%	125	112
Publications and conferences 2%	195	264
Shared services and other income 6%	592	402
Total income	10,489	11,520

Expenditure

	2014 £'000	2013 £'000
Fundraising 1%	24	129
Evidence and Impact 9%	1,083	955
NCB Partnerships 63%	7,317	7,104
NCB Programmes 19%	2,203	2,750
Sector Support 2%	278	560
Children's Partnership 3%	300	0
Shared services 1%	138	163
Pension scheme movements -1%	(110)	(69)
Other costs (including restructuring) 2%	260	206
Governance 1%	58	82
Total expenditure	11,551	11,880
Other recognised gains/(losses)	2,158	1,809
Net movement in funds	1,096	1,449

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2014

	2014 £'000	2013 £'000
Fixed Assets		
Tangible assets	5,194	4,166
Investments	10	10
	5,204	4,176
Current Assets		
Stocks	13	13
Debtors	2,414	2,416
Cash on deposit	20	2,215
Cash at bank and in hand	2,299	832
	4,746	5,476
Less		
Creditors falling due within one year	(3,036)	(2,644)
Net Current Assets	1,710	2,832
Net Assets excluding pension liability	6,914	7,008
Pension scheme liability	(2,867)	(4,057)
Net Assets including pension liability	4,047	2,951
Funds		
Restricted funds	821	1,687
Unrestricted other funds	6,093	5,321
Unrestricted pension reserve	(2,867)	(4,057)
Total funds	4,047	2,951

The information contained in this summary has been extracted from the Annual Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2014 on which our auditor, Crowe Clark Whitehill LLP, has given us an unqualified opinion. A full copy of the financial statements is available at www.ncb.org.uk or on request from the company secretary.

Stay in touch

Who we are

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) is a leading children's charity that has for five decades been at the forefront of work to improve the lives of children and young people, especially the most vulnerable.

Our mission is to be a strong voice for children and young people, championing their rights and reducing the impact of inequalities, so that every child, especially the most vulnerable, can grow up safe, happy and healthy.

🖱 www.ncb.org.uk

Join NCB

NCB is the largest multi-agency membership network for the children's sector in the country, offering practical and valuable resources for everyone working with children and young people. Become a member and get to the facts on the changes in policy and practice in the children and young people's sector – and receive exclusive NCB Member discounts.

✉ membership@ncb.org.uk

🖱 www.ncb.org.uk/membership

Keep in touch

NCB works closely with the media to promote positive stories about children and young people, disseminate best practice to professionals and engage the wider public on children's issues. Find out more:

✉ media@ncb.org.uk

🐦 [@ncbtweets](https://twitter.com/ncbtweets)

📘 www.facebook.com/ncbfb

Support NCB

Our vital work – championing the rights of children, especially the disadvantaged, and giving them a voice in the decisions that affect them – would not be possible without your support. For more information on how you can be part of our work visit:
www.ncb.org.uk/get-involved



Working with children,
for children

National Children's Bureau

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Registered charity number: 258825