



Candidate Briefing Pack Director of Services May 2026

EVERY CHILDHOOD IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR

Registered charity numbers:
216401 & SC037717

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Welcome from our Chief Executive

Thank you for your interest in joining us at the NSPCC as our next **Executive Director of Services**.

The NSPCC is the UK's largest children's charity, driven by one unwavering belief: **every child deserves to be safe, loved, and free from abuse**. Today, that mission has never been more urgent. From tackling online safety challenges to providing vital frontline support, we respond every day to the changing world children are growing up in.

Last year alone, we helped make more than **1.5 million children safer** from abuse. Our Helpline answered almost **70,000 calls**, many leading to direct interventions, and through **Childline**, our 24/7 service, we delivered over **160,000 counselling sessions** to children and young people who needed someone to listen.

For me, this work is deeply personal. As a child, I was one of many who turned to Childline when I felt I had nowhere else to go. To now lead the NSPCC as CEO is both a privilege and a responsibility I carry wholeheartedly. Since stepping into the role in January 2025, I have focused on strengthening and evolving our organisation to meet the growing needs of children and families.

Our Services Directorate sits at the heart of this work, delivering practical support that helps children and young people stay safe and thrive. Working with children, families, and professionals across the UK, we turn our mission into action through high-quality, child-centered services. Our teams deliver preventative programmes, provide therapeutic support, and work alongside professionals to strengthen safeguarding practice, grounded in compassion, expertise, and a deep understanding of children's experiences.

This is an opportunity to shape the NSPCC's future, drive bold strategies, and help protect children for generations to come.

We are looking for a collaborative, visionary leader who can deliver real change - someone who thrives on challenge, brings people with them, and sees possibility where others see barriers.

If you are ready for a role that will stretch your leadership and make a lasting difference to millions of children, I would love to hear from you.

Best wishes,
Chris



Chris Sherwood
Chief Executive
NSPCC

About NSPCC

Context and Background

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) is the UK's leading children's charity. Established in 1884, our charitable purpose, enshrined in our Royal Charter, is the prevention of cruelty to children. For more than 140 years we have been committed to making lasting change in the lives of vulnerable children and ensuring they grow up free from abuse and neglect.

We are a large and multifaceted organisation, active across all four nations of the UK and the Channel Islands, employing around 1,500 people and supported by approximately 5,000 volunteers. While often seen as a large charity, we are small in comparison to the scale of the problem we seek to address. We raise around c.£120m each year, primarily through voluntary donations from hundreds of thousands of individuals, and use this to drive impact far beyond our direct reach, influencing attitudes, behaviours and laws to better protect children.

That includes our work with schools where, in the average primary school class, at least two children have suffered abuse or neglect. Our schools programme helps children and young people learn about their rights, what is OK and not OK, and what to do if they are ever worried or scared.

We work directly with children and families through our national and regional hubs and place based partnerships, and we support thousands of children and young people through Childline, our 24/7 service for those with nowhere else to turn, as well as through our advice for families on issues such as children's mental health and staying safe online. Our Helpline is there for any adult concerned about a child. As the only UK children's charity with statutory powers, we are uniquely placed to take action to safeguard children at risk of abuse.

We also provide training and resources in safeguarding and child protection, and campaign for change to strengthen protections for children, including our current work to end physical punishment. Central to all we do is a commitment to evidence led practice, ensuring value for money from every donation, and placing the voices and experiences of children and young people at the heart of our work.

[Read more.](#)



Strategy

We are about to embark on a new strategy development cycle, with a bold new strategy to be implemented from April 2027. With a new, clearly defined purpose statement that guides our strategic priorities, we will look to retain and build upon our legacy brand, trust and passion and power of our people; while renewing and deepening our relationships and our relevance with those we serve and support, those we partner with and those we need to give us their time, voice and money so that we can deliver on our purpose. The new Services Director will play a key role in helping us shape our strategy and the services strategy that will both underpin and propel that new strategy. [Read more.](#)

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Child abuse can affect any child, whatever their background, and addressing it requires collective responsibility. To reach every child, we must be a diverse and inclusive organisation that reflects the communities we serve. We are committed to breaking down barriers and prejudice, creating a fairer society where everyone feels a sense of belonging and can see that the NSPCC is for them. While we are making progress, we know there is more to do, and we remain focused on removing real and perceived barriers while valuing everyone who volunteers with, works for, supports or benefits from our work. [Read more.](#)

Our values, principles and standards

As the only charity focused on ending child cruelty across the UK, everything we do protects children and prevents abuse. The values that embody our charity and reflect what we stand for are:

Putting children first

We believe in children, we want what's best for them, and we make sure we fight for every childhood

Striving for excellence

We're constantly learning, developing our work, measuring what's effective and sharing knowledge with others.

Taking a stand

We are courageous in standing up for what is right. We speak out when something is wrong and celebrate success with those who help things improve.

Making an impact

We base our actions on evidence and the difference we will make to children.

Working together

Our passion inspires others, and working with inspirational people, organisations and children helps us achieve more.

Youth Participation

We work to ensure all children and young people can access our services and help shape what we do. Their views and experiences improve our decisions and help us use resources more effectively by understanding what they need, rather than what we assume is important. Participation means taking part, and at the NSPCC this means listening to and working with children and young people so they are involved in decisions that affect them. We are committed to providing meaningful and accessible ways for children and young people to get involved, ensuring they feel safe, supported, and able to make a difference, and demonstrating the impact of their involvement, including through initiatives such as the [Young People's Board for Change](#), which helps place young people at the heart of our decision making.

Our goals are to:

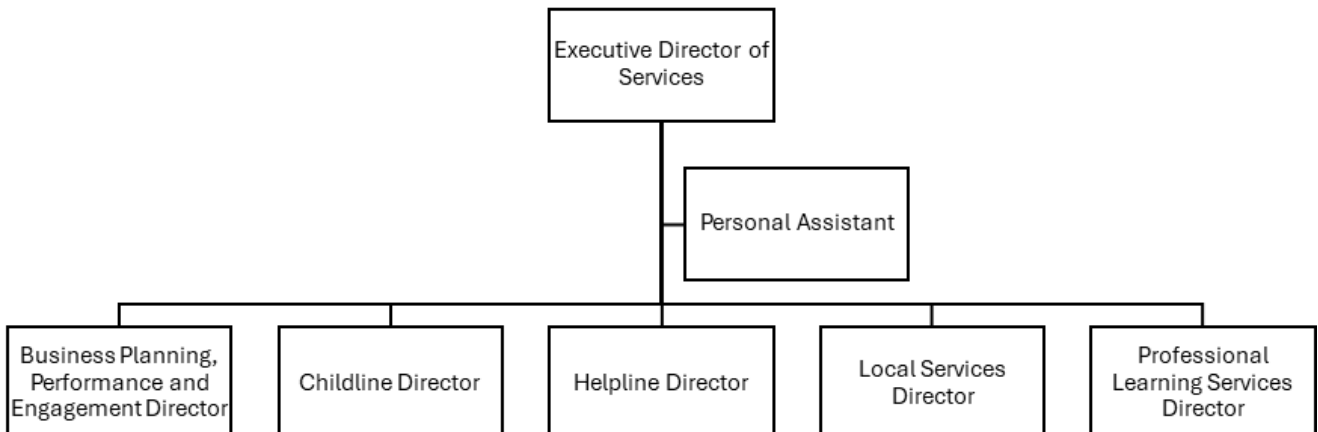
- ensure all NSPCC staff and volunteers understand what participation is and why it matters
- provide a range of meaningful and engaging ways for children and young people to get involved
- ensure all children and young people can participate safely and feel supported to do so
- demonstrate clearly how children and young people's involvement makes a difference



About our Services

- **The Operations & Engagement team** helps Services achieve the greatest impact for children. The team leads change across systems, processes and technology, while driving continuous improvement and operational effectiveness to ensure frontline teams can focus on what matters most. Working flexibly across the UK, they shape how services grow and adapt, lead service planning, marketing and communications, and provide the insight and performance data that drive quality, improvement and effective decision making across the directorate.
- **Childline** provides a vital, confidential lifeline for children and young people, offering support by phone and online whenever it's needed. Delivered by over 1,300 trained volunteers alongside professional staff and bases across the UK, Childline ensures every child has someone to turn to, no matter where they are or what they're facing.
- **Local Services** bring the NSPCC's work into communities across the UK, combining direct work with children and families and delivery in schools. By being both nationally significant and locally relevant, these teams help ensure children feel safe, listened to and supported where it matters most.
- **The NSPCC Helpline** supports adults who are concerned about a child, offering safeguarding advice, guidance and reassurance. Our practitioners help people take action to protect children from harm and work closely with statutory agencies to ensure safeguarding concerns are responded to appropriately.
- **Professional Learning Services** supports professionals and organisations to build the skills and confidence needed to safeguard children. Through training, consultancy and innovative learning solutions, the team helps create safer cultures across the UK while continually evolving its offer to meet changing needs
- **Blackpool Better Start** is a project, started in 2015, that helps parents give their children the best possible start in life. The partnership is made up of Blackpool Council, NHS, Lancashire Constabulary, community members and the NSPCC acting as lead agency. Blackpool Better Start's work is driven by the Centre of Early Child Development (CECD).

Team Structure



The Role

Title:	Director of Services
Salary:	c.£130,000
Location:	National with regular travel to London

Job purpose

A member of our Executive Leadership Team, the post holder is responsible for leading the development and delivery of national and local services that directly and indirectly positively influence the safety of babies, children and young people from abuse and neglect across the UK and the Channel Islands.

The director leads and manages a range of complex operational and specialist service teams and leads the integration and strengthening of what the NSPCC and Childline offer, both nationally and, where appropriate, distinctively to the nations and regions of the UK.

Success will be represented the effective and safe delivery of services and the impact they achieve, relative to our strategy.

Key relationships - Internal

- Reports to the Chief Executive
- Works closely with the Chief Social Worker and Director of Organisational Safeguarding
- Works closely with the other Directors on the Executive Leadership Team and members of the Senior Leadership Team
- Responsible for the engagement, performance and stewardship of the Services Senior Management Team
- NSPCC Board of Trustees, Trustee Sub-Committees, the services development and services quality committee, the trustee safeguarding lead and other volunteers including the President and Deputy President of Childline and the Young People's Board for Change
- NSPCC Change Board
- Draws particularly on practice-based expertise and the perspectives of service users

Key relationships - External

Key experts in operating services within the children's sector including national and local government, other charities, local and national NSPCC partners, professional bodies and academics.

Main duties and responsibilities

- Provide exceptional leadership to the directorate, ensuring coherence, consistency, accountability, integration and impact across all services, and with the wider organisation.
- Lead the Directorate in ensuring it has the correct balance and mix of skills, experience and behaviours now and into the future to deliver on our ambitions.

Main duties and responsibilities continued...

- Ensure we have robust governance in place to develop and deliver the highest quality, impactful services that babies, children and young people deserve.
- Advance the Childline Vision, ensuring our operating model for this service delivers a safe and effective service that meets our volunteers' needs and, crucially, the needs of children and young people into the future.
- Ensure the integration of our services offer to the wider NSPCC, including but not limited to safeguarding, brand and marketing, income generation opportunities, technology architecture and our volunteering aspirations.
- Lead the transition from functions organised around specific services to a future operating model where a single NSPCC best draws on the distinct strengths within each of the 3 nations, six English regions (and the Channel Islands).
- Establishes quantitative and qualitative metrics, guidelines, and standards by which our efficiency and effectiveness can be evaluated; identifying and mitigating against potential risks and threats to our work; and identifies opportunities for continual improvement.
- Reviews, analyses and evaluates our business procedures and practices.
- Progresses our work to focus direct services more onto prevention work, including through a widening range of partnerships.
- Focuses test and learn services ensuring that cutting edge work to support those who have already experienced abuse (e.g. the Lighthouse) has impact beyond our own efforts.
- Works closely with the Chief Social Worker in their capacity as Director of Organisational Safeguarding to ensure a consistent and high standard of safeguarding and quality assurance across our services.
- Works with the Director of Strategy and Transformation to ensure good governance across our services as well as to support service development and a consistent approach to programme and project management.
- Work with the Director of Policy and Social Change, to ensure we develop lived experience insight from the delivery of our services that influences well beyond the NSPCC itself and what we learn. Also works with the Director to embed participation of children and young people across all that we do.
- Work with the Director of Engagement and Fundraising to identify opportunities for NSPCC to secure funding for projects and services which help advance the strategy.
- Work with the Director of Finance and Technology to harness digital and mobile based enhancements to the effectiveness and relevance to children and young people of the services we are delivering.
- Work with the Director of Communications and Marketing to raise awareness and build wider public association with our services, especially where the community are playing an increasing role in supplementing the efforts of professional practice.
- Develop further our e-learning, training and consultancy offer including its balance between achieving safeguarding and income generating objectives.
- Contribute to the corporate leadership of the NSPCC as a member of the Executive Board.
- Any other duties as reasonably requested by the Chief Executive Officer.

Responsibilities for all staff within Services

- A commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk.
- To update all information systems on a regular basis in line with Data Protection legislation and NSPCC policy and procedures.
- To actively lead and participate in regular department and team meetings, contributing to strategy, discussions and decisions which will be beneficial to the Directorate and wider NSPCC activities.
- To adhere to all the NSPCC's service standards, policies and procedures.
- To evidence an understanding of and commitment to the demonstration of the NSPCC's values. To maintain an awareness of and comply with NSPCC data protection regulations and to ensure currency of changing GDPR regulations.
- To be responsible for personal learning and development, to support the learning and development of others and the whole organisation.
- To work in a manner that facilitates and encourages inclusion.
- To be pro-active in identifying ways to improve personal and team performance.
- To maintain an awareness of own and others' Health and Safety and comply with the NSPCC's Health and Safety policy and procedures.
- To take personal responsibility for keeping up to date with NSPCC work to end cruelty to children, including securing updates on project and service developments and general NSPCC news.
- A commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of babies, children, young people and adults at risk.



Person Specification

- Extensive experience and proven track record at Director level of successfully developing and delivering services, including co-production and collaboration with partners, in a complex stakeholder environment that have a measurably positive impact for beneficiaries.
- Highly experienced in child protection with demonstrable knowledge and experience of child safeguarding. A social work qualification will be highly advantageous.
- Proven experience leading and managing teams of functional experts, overseeing significant income and expenditure budgets, and driving operational performance through the setting and monitoring of clear, aligned objectives.
- Experience of designing and delivering transformational change and driving performance management using appropriate quality and management methods and models, to deliver efficient and effective services.
- Demonstrable understanding of the operational context for services including the commissioning and market environment.
- Experience of managing senior stakeholders, both internally and externally, and confidence in dealing with, and influencing, senior employees and volunteer colleagues, and producing and imparting clear and non-technical advice and information.
- Values the different skills and attributes of others, utilising the insight, experience and expertise of colleagues.
- Experience of representing an organisation at the highest level. Clearly articulates a compelling vision, focussing on both what the future might hold and the more immediate stepping stones to realise those outcomes.
- Challenges constructively and evidences a willingness to receive constructive challenge in order to drive our individual and collective efforts forward.

Safer Recruitment

As an organisation, we are committed to creating and fostering a culture that promotes safeguarding and the welfare of all children and adults at risk.

Our safer recruitment practices support this by ensuring that there is a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about candidates to ensure that all persons appointed are suitable to work with our children and adults.

The recruitment and selection of our people will be conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and in compliance with current employment legislation, and relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

Our safer recruitment principles

- Always seek to recruit the best candidate for the role based on merit including their skills, experience, motivation and competencies. Our robust recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the role and the organisation.
- Committed to diversity and equality of opportunity and will interview all applicants (internal and external) who self-declare at application as having a disability and who meet the minimum requirements in the person specification of the vacancy they are applying for.
- We will make reasonable adjustments at all stages of the recruitment process in order to enable successful candidates who declare disabilities to start working or volunteering their time with us.
- Any current member of staff or volunteer who wishes to apply for vacancies and is suitably qualified will be considered and addressed fairly and objectively based on their merit.
- As an organisation committed to safeguarding, we will ensure all under 18's joining the organisation will have ongoing risk assessments to ensure their role and activities are safe and appropriate.
- All documentation relating to candidates will be treated confidentially in accordance with the GDPR legislation

How to apply

If you are interested in this key role within the NSPCC and feel you have the skills and experience we are looking for, please include the following with your application:

- An up to date CV with the details of two referees (we will not contact them without your prior permission).
- A supporting statement which addresses how you meet the criteria for the role as detailed in the Person Specification. Please also discuss your motivations for applying.

All applications will be handled by our recruitment partner, Russam.

Please send your application to Russam via this [application link](#).

Closing date for applications:	Monday 1st June 2026
Preliminary interviews with Russam:	12th-16th June 2026
First stage interviews with NSPCC:	Week commencing 29th June 2026
Second stage interviews with NSPCC:	Week commencing 6th July 2026

For a confidential discussion about the role, please contact Melissa Baxter on 07789 985229 / melissa.baxter@russam.co.uk or via Anna Henderson on 07557 749746 / anna.henderson@russam.co.uk.

We look forward to receiving your application.