



One minute guide

Outcomes Based Accountability

No. 8 September 2013

What is it?

Leeds has adopted a city-wide approach across children's services to managing performance and shaping change – known as Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA)

OBA is based on the original work of Mark Friedman, who pioneered the introduction of results based accountability for services working with children, families and communities.

The approach is based on working backwards from the ends we wish to achieve – the conditions of well-being on which we are trying to make an impact – and then taking a step by step approach to understanding how we want those conditions to look and feel different; how to measure if that is happening and why; who needs to be involved in making the changes and what practical steps are going to be taken to actually achieve that change. This is often called '*turning the curve*'.

Why are we doing it?

In Leeds our Children and Young People's Plan has 12 priorities but we have decided to relentlessly focus on three areas in particular, which we call our '*obsessions*', on the basis that by making a real impact of these areas we will have a positive knock-on effect right across our work. In Leeds our three obsessions are:

- Safely and appropriately reducing the need for children to be looked after
- Reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- Improving school attendance

In the past Leeds has struggled to make a major impact on these areas and has seen negative social, financial and individual consequences as a result. We are using OBA to help us measure and demonstrate whether our efforts are making a difference against them.

OBA gives us:

- A single, clear and consistent methodology across the city
- A common language around performance and improvement
- An approach that can be applied to a wide variety of issues, but always focused on outcomes
- A way to visually demonstrate to staff, partners and the public the progress being made

Where is it happening?

Across the city! Leeds introduced a comprehensive OBA staff training programme to over 100 key practitioners from across the children's workforce, as well as a number of local councillors, to increase understanding of how to use this approach.

Those trained were asked to 'spread the word' about OBA within their services. Awareness and momentum is building across the city, paving the way for the use of OBA within local partnership arrangements. You might already have been part of an OBA or a 'turning the curve' workshop within your own service.

Our 25 local 'clusters' have completed an OBA workshop on each of the three obsessions, drawing together partners to focus on how to make a difference at a local level. OBA has become a key tool for clusters to review and refocus their work.

We have since introduced a number of different ways to visually demonstrate how our work is impacting on outcomes using OBA methodology. At a city wide level we have a *Weekly Obsessions Tracker* which shows very simply how we are performing against each of our three obsessions. We also have performance scorecards, which are used to regularly report performance to our Children's Trust Board and other partners. Crucially, the scorecard tracks our progress in 'turning the curve' on our performance.

Want to know more?

The Workforce Development Team can tell you more about how you can get training and support with OBA.

Workforce Development Team Tel: 0113 3950270

You can access the Results Based Accountability website and read a guide to OBA:

[Results Based Accountability](#)

[A guide to OBA](#)



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Leeds a child
friendly city**