

Services in Leeds to support children  
and young people's social, emotional  
and mental health and wellbeing

# Guide for families at September 2016





We want Leeds to be the best place for all our children and young people to grow up – a child friendly city.

To make this ambition a reality, some important things need to happen: different services must work together effectively; families must receive timely, consistent information; and we must target our support to the children and young people who need it the most.

When we do this well we can be confident that we'll provide the right services, in the right place and at the right time.

The Leeds local offer helps us to make this happen. It brings together and describes our full 'offer' for the families of children and young people with social, emotional and mental health

needs and makes this available in one place online, so that it's easier for families to find the help they are looking for.

We've worked with both service providers and service users to develop the offer in a way that makes sense. People can find what's available both locally and across the city and can search for help that relates to the different ages and stages of a child's journey.

In Leeds we also have a strong commitment to three clear behaviours: listening to the voices of children, young people and families; working restoratively with people to help improve their lives; and demonstrating clearly how services we provide help to improve outcomes.

As we further develop our local offer these behaviours will

underpin everything we do. We will continue to learn from the feedback that families give us, to shape the offer based on a deep understanding of needs across the city and to demonstrate at every stage how we're making a difference.

We know that it can feel challenging and complicated for parents and carers to support children and young people with social, emotional and mental health needs. Our services are here to help and our aspiration is that the local offer will be the first point of reference for valuable information and advice. So whether its specialist services, general support or a specific need that must be met, please do use the local offer to find what you need, it's a key part of our commitment to a more child friendly Leeds.



**Councillor Lucinda Yeadon**  
Chair of the complex needs partnership board

**Nigel Richardson**  
Director of children's services

## Share your feedback on this guide

This guide was produced in March 2016 and refreshed in September 2016. It was written with a working group that includes education, health and social care workers and parents and carers. We would like to know what you think of it.

We will use your feedback to make amends when we review this guide. To give feedback, please email: [bpteam@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:bpteam@leeds.gov.uk) with the subject 'SEMH offer feedback'.

If you need advice in a hurry, go straight to page 6 for details of who to contact. If you prefer to see information online, you may like to look at the Mind Mate website: [www.mindmate.org.uk](http://www.mindmate.org.uk)



## What is this guide about?

This guide aims to tell you about services in Leeds that promote social, emotional and mental health for all children and young people in our city. It also describes local services for children and young people who need extra support with social, emotional and mental health issues.

It includes details of support provided by education, health and social care services. It also tells you what support you can expect from all local schools and education providers in terms of social, emotional and mental health.

This guide was written for families. We have also written a more detailed guide which may be more useful to people working with children and young people.

It is published in the same place as this one on the Leeds Local Offer website ([www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk)).

This guide is part of the Leeds Local Offer: ([www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk)) which sets out all the support and services in Leeds for children and young people aged 0-25 who have any kind of special educational need and/or disability (SEND).

**Please bear in mind as you read this guide:** every child or young person is an individual with their own needs and situation. This guide aims to give you general information about support in Leeds. If you want to talk about your individual situation, we recommend that you talk to some of the contacts we have listed on the last page for specific advice.

### Terms used in this guide:

**In this guide we sometimes shorten the words 'social, emotional and mental health' to 'SEMH' to make diagrams and lists easier to read.**

**We also sometimes shorten the words 'special educational needs and/or disabilities' to 'SEND'.**

# What do we mean by ‘social, emotional and mental health needs’?

The World Health Organisation describes emotional and mental health as ‘a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively... and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.’

Some people do not completely agree with this definition, but generally people agree that mental health is about feeling able to: cope with every day life, enjoy things, and achieve our potential.

When we talk about children and young people having ‘emotional and mental health needs’, we usually mean children and young people who do not feel they can cope with life and/or enjoy things, and who may not be able to achieve their potential in learning and developing.

The SEN Code of Practice 2015 also adds the word ‘social’ to this definition, to point out that sometimes feelings and behaviours in children and young people are linked to their ‘social’ life: what’s going on in their family, with their friends, and in the community they live in.

**Social, emotional and mental health needs can be very different in different children and young people. Some of the issues that might be involved are:**

- Having a mental health condition, like clinical depression, an eating disorder, or an anxiety disorder, that may or may not have been diagnosed and may not have any obvious ‘reason’
- Having problems with peers (children and young people the same sort of age), for example bullying or sexual exploitation
- Difficult times at home: relationships between parents breaking down, being a young carer for a relative, having family members who are struggling with issues like illness,

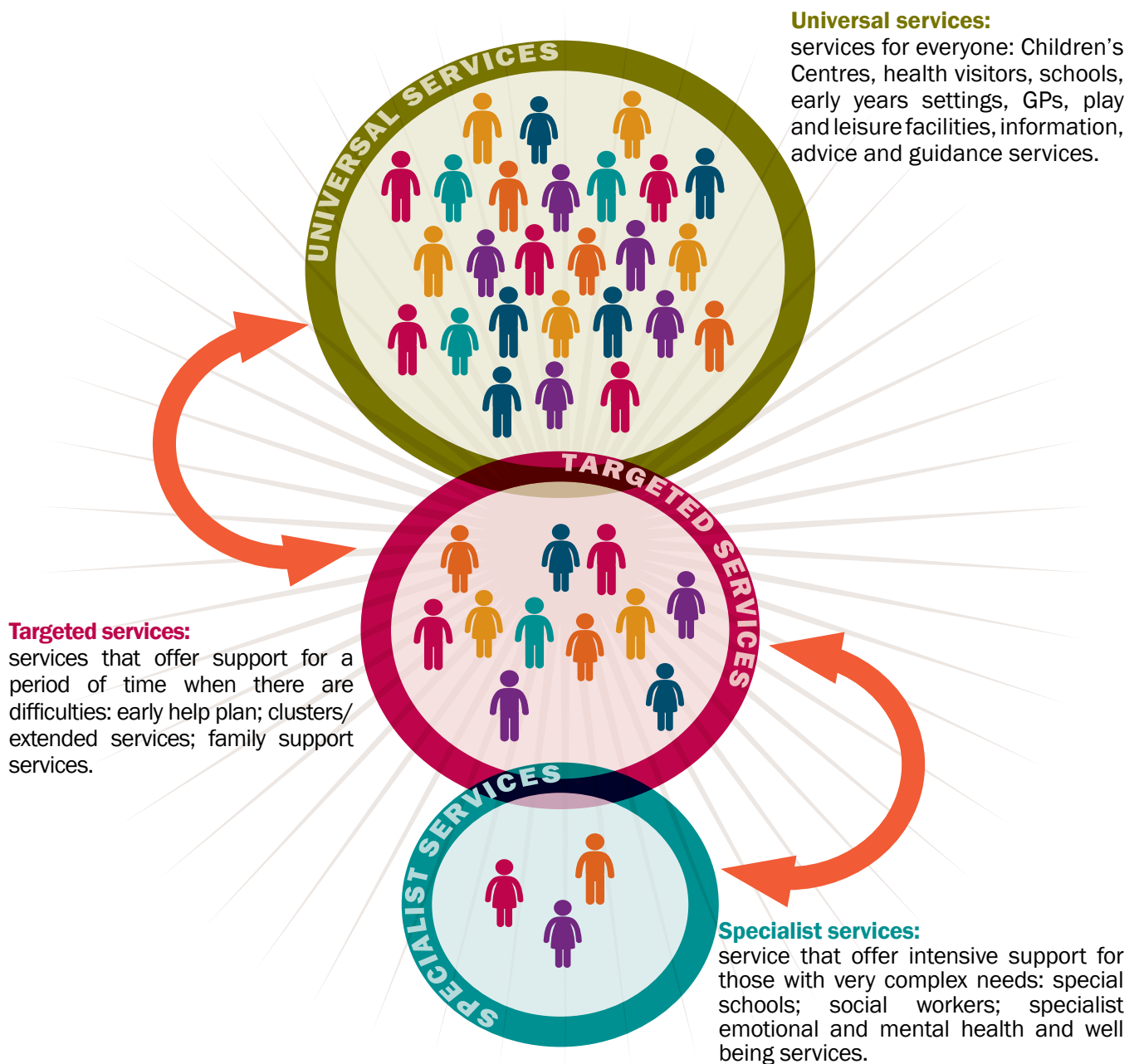
unemployment, drug and alcohol misuse, or other stressful situations

- Experience of a traumatic situation, like violence, abuse, a significant accident or injury, or becoming a refugee. We know from research into children and young people in Leeds with very complex and challenging SEMH needs that many have experienced trauma
- Drug or alcohol misuse, especially in older children and young people
- Special educational needs and or disabilities such as autism conditions, learning disabilities or physical disabilities. These conditions may be linked to depression, anxiety, and/or unhelpful behaviours. This is especially the case if the child or young person has an issue which has not been noticed yet, for example dyslexia or autism, and they are not getting help.
- A combination of any of the above
- Any other issue which is affecting how a child or young person feels and behaves, to the point where every day life becomes a problem.

It is important to remember that all children and young people experience difficult feelings and situations in their lives. Families often play the biggest role in helping children learn how to cope with difficult feelings and experiences. Schools, and other services in children’s daily lives, also play a big part in this. For most children and young people, this will be enough to help them cope with difficult times.

For other children, if their feelings, thoughts and behaviours affect their everyday life and stop them from making progress, or risk harm to themselves or others, they may be considered to have social, emotional and mental health needs. They may well need extra help. This guide explains what help is available in Leeds, across education, health and social care services and community and voluntary services.

## Overview of services in Leeds for children and young people with additional needs of all kinds:



Most children and young people will get all the support they need through universal and targeted services.

A small number of children and young people will have very complex needs and need specialist support. Where possible we bring specialist services to the child or young person in their mainstream environment (e.g. their school or home). Sometimes a specialist environment like a hospital or special school will be the best way to meet very complex needs, either for a short time or long term.

Children and young people may access a combination of these services, e.g. they may go to a mainstream school (universal service) but have support from a social worker (specialist service).

Every child and young person is unique. We aim to provide personalised support to meet their individual needs. We respect children's right to a mainstream education and a 'normal' life and try to bring services to them in their usual environment wherever possible.

# Steps to support: quick guide on to how to access advice and support:

## If you are a parent or carer reading this guide:

If you think any child or young person is at risk of harm, please contact Children's Social Work Services on:

**0113 222 4403** ( 9am to 5pm ) or

**0113 240 9536** (out of office hours).

**If you think a child is at immediate risk, please contact the emergency services on 999.**

If you have concerns about your child's emotional and mental health and/or their behaviour, you can see your GP for advice and to access support. If your child is under 5, you could also talk to your health visitor. If you or your child is in an education setting (such a nursery, school, or a college) you can also talk to any member of staff you feel comfortable talking to, or the SEN coordinator (SENCo). Every school or setting has an SENCo who will help you make a plan to get support if you need it. You could take a copy of this guide with you, or show it to them online, to help you start the conversation.

The people above should always be willing and able to help you, but if for any reason you feel you cannot talk to them, or you want independent advice, you can also contact the Leeds SEND Information Advice Support service. They provide independent, impartial advice for families of children and young people with any kind of additional need. Call their helpline on **0113 39 51200**. You can also find information and self-help tools for emotional and mental health and wellbeing on the Mindmate website: [www.mindmate.org.uk](http://www.mindmate.org.uk).

A range of other groups can offer support with specific issues, like eating disorders or drug misuse. Find details on the last page.

## If you are a young person reading this guide and you need help:

**If you have been hurt by anybody, or an adult or another young person has done something that makes you feel upset or scared, it is important that you tell somebody so that you can get the support and protection you need.**

- Tell an adult you trust (like someone at your school, college, youth club, doctor's surgery or any other place you attend).

- Tell them about what is happening and how you feel, and they should know how to get you the support and protection you need. If you don't want to tell any of the adults you know, you can speak to someone at Childline on **0800 1111** (calls are free and confidential), or through their website at [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**The people at Childline are trained to listen to you, will not judge you, and can help you with all kinds of problems.**

If you are not hurt, upset or scared, but you still feel like you need help with an issue like feeling a lot of anxiety or anger, it is still important to talk to people who can help. **You have the right to get help and asking for help is a strong, brave thing to do.**

Tell an adult you trust (like someone at your school, college youth club, or other place you attend) and they should know how to get you the support you need. You could show them this guide to help start the conversation. You should know that they may need to tell other people in your life about the problem to get you help. If you don't want to tell any of the adults you know, you can speak to someone at Childline (details above).

You can also visit the Market Place. The Market Place is in Leeds city centre and open Tuesday to Saturday. The centre is free, confidential and open to anyone aged 13-25. They offer a drop-in centre where you can get information, and also services like counselling.

Contact the Market Place on:  
phone **0113 246 1659**,  
email [admin@themarketplaceleeds.org.uk](mailto:admin@themarketplaceleeds.org.uk) or  
visit [www.themarketplaceleeds.org.uk](http://www.themarketplaceleeds.org.uk)

There is lots more information for young people on the Mindmate site: [www.mindmate.org.uk](http://www.mindmate.org.uk). It gives information through simple text and animations that you may like better than this guide. It also has things like self-help tools.

You can also find details of different local and national groups who support young people, on the last page.

## Support and services in detail: services for all children and young people

### Early Start Children's Centres (under 5's):

Children's Centres in Leeds offer activities and services for families with children under five years old. They work with families to help them give their child a strong start in life, be healthy and safe, and get ready for learning. They try to work most with families who need extra support because of additional needs. **Each Children's Centre offers slightly different activities, but they all offer things like:**

- **Individual family support:** the Children's Centre team can give support in range of areas including healthy eating, sleeping and routines, understanding child development, managing behaviour, domestic violence, mental health issues and more. Members of the team can visit you at home, or meet you at a community venue or a group.
- **Parent and child groups and early learning:** Children's Centre groups are for you and your child to enjoy together. A range of fun learning activities are provided and experienced staff are available to offer friendly support and advice about any issue you have concerning your child's development. You can also meet other local families with young children to share tips and achievements. Some sessions may focus on one issue, for example weaning or sleeping.
- **Courses for parents and carers:** Topics covered include: parenting skills, healthy eating, children's learning and development and adult learning opportunities.
- **Information and advice for parents and carers:** Children's Centres work closely with other agencies to offer information and advice sessions which may include information and advice about: jobs and training, benefits, finances, health, relationships. They also offer counselling for parents and carers who need it.
- **Early education and childcare:** some Children's Centres provide early education and childcare. This includes free early education places for some 2 year olds, and for all 3 and 4 year olds. Children's Centres with childcare have teams of qualified, experienced staff including several who have degrees and post graduate qualifications in early learning and development.

If you have a child under 5 and are worried about their emotional and mental development and/or their behaviour, your local Children's Centre can be a great place to get advice or support from skilled, non-judgemental professionals and other parents and carers in your community.

You are very welcome to drop in to your local centre or call them to find out more. To find details of your local Children's Centre, see the Leeds Family Information Service website ([www.familyinformationleeds.co.uk](http://www.familyinformationleeds.co.uk)) or call the service on **0800 731 0640** or **0113 247 4386**.

### GPs and health visitors:

Your GP (doctor) can help with any health worries, including worries about emotional and mental health and child development. You can visit your GP alone for a confidential appointment, or bring a friend along for support. You might find the 'Doc Ready' site useful to help you prepare for your appointment: [www.docready.org](http://www.docready.org)

Your GP can also help you decide if a referral for more specialist support will be helpful, and make that referral. Find out more about specialist services in the section later in this guide. This could include referral for a more detailed assessment of your child's needs.

Your health visitor can also help you if you have a child under 5 years of age. Health visitors work closely with Early Start Children's Centres (see previous section).

*'I feel lucky that we have such a good GP...he really listens to us. It's not always easy for teenagers to confide in people but (my son) is able to talk to him, which is great'*

*Parent of a young person in Leeds who has experienced depression and anxiety, June 2015*



## Schools and other education providers:

The Department for Education says that all schools should support all children and young people's social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing.

The Children and Families Act 2014 also says that schools, colleges, and early years settings like nurseries, must provide extra support for children and young people who have SEND needs, including social, emotional and mental health needs.

In Leeds we have worked with schools and education settings to agree some things that they will all do to support children and young people who have any kind of SEND needs. Families and children and young people helped put this together. You can find details on the Local Offer website: ([www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk)) but here are the main things everyone agreed:



*'The school has been brilliant! Everyone is understanding and they have helped our whole family learn what to do to help when my son is having a 'melt-down'. They have talked to our GP as well. It has made a huge difference to have non-judgmental support, I feel less alone'*

*Parent of a child with ADHD in a Leeds primary school, June 2015*

- **Every child or young person is a unique individual:** every child or young person and family is different and has different needs. If they need extra support, it should be provided in a personalised way based on their situation and needs
- **Early identification and early help:** staff should have the skills and knowledge to identify any additional needs early on and get the right help in place for a child or young person and their family as early as possible
- **Working with families:** staff should make sure that children and young people and their families are involved in making decisions about what help they need and how they get support (unless this would risk the child or young person's safety and wellbeing)
- **Working together:** staff in schools and settings should talk to and work closely with any other people supporting a child or young person and their family (for example health workers). This helps to make sure everybody knows what's happening.

We have also worked with local schools to agree some extra things that they will do to support social, emotional and mental health.

## Support schools in Leeds will offer:

- The leaders of the school or setting and all staff aim to keep children and young people included in mainstream education wherever possible and support a goal of no child being permanently excluded from education
- The leaders of the school or setting and all staff aim to create an environment where the SEMH of all pupils is promoted and nurtured
- Staff have the skills to identify additional needs and understand that there can be complex reasons for challenging, disturbing and disruptive behaviours and distress. They are able to get training and development to help with this.
- Staff and leaders manage risks in a way that fits with the circumstances of different situations.
- The school or setting's policies, including those on behaviour and bullying, recognise that SEMH needs may be linked with other SEND needs (for example autism) and allow for reasonable adjustment for this. Policies are shared with parents and carers
- The school or setting offers a range of support for those with additional SEMH needs, which may include all or some of these things:
  - Teaching problem solving skills as part of the curriculum.
  - Access to personal, social and health education and/or emotional literacy development as part of the curriculum.
  - Access to pastoral support in the school (help with personal needs and problems) and access to a school nurse.
  - Access to a learning mentor (learning mentors work with pupils who need help with difficulties that are getting in the way of their learning).
  - Support for parents and carers who want help with parenting their child with SEMH needs. This may involve providing information, or offering small, group sessions run by trained health or education workers.
  - Making sure the pupil has the opportunity to contribute to lessons and their input is valued.
  - Consideration of seating arrangements, structure and routine in class, activities and outcomes, tailored for each pupil.



- Tasks which are tailored to the learner's needs and abilities and give them opportunities to experience success and take on new challenges
- Structured opportunities for the learner to interact with others.
- An individual behaviour plan which recognises and is adjusted to the learner's individual needs.

Schools are also encouraged to have at least one staff member of staff who takes a lead on SEMH needs. They are referred to as 'MindMate Links'.

Best practice would include a senior member of staff such as a SENCO, a member of staff who directly supports pupils such as a learning mentor, a governor and a learner all becoming MindMate links in the school.

They would have increased awareness of SEMH needs and how to support them effectively in school and through other agencies. You can ask your child's school if they have MindMate links and how you can contact them.

Schools should also be aware of the support, advice and training provided by the Council's complex needs service, including the educational psychology team, and the special educational needs and inclusion team, who both support these kind of needs.

*I was told by his teacher, 'Michael can't sit still, Michael can't be quiet, Michael can't focus.' I said, maybe he's bored..."He's not gifted," came back the reply. "Your son will never be able to focus on anything." (Michael Phelps' mother talks about her Olympic Gold Medallist swimmer son, who has ADHD ([www.healthcentral.com/adhd](http://www.healthcentral.com/adhd)))*

### Youth services:

Leeds City Council has made a 'youth promise' to make sure that all our young people have:

- Something to do
- Someone to talk to
- Somewhere to go to
- Something to say

The Leeds City Council youth service helps to make this happen by providing activities including sports, arts and IT clubs. They have local centres and 5 youth hubs. They work on the streets, in schools and from mobile provision, and have drop-ins where young people can talk about any emotional and

mental health issues or any problems in their lives with specially trained youth workers.

Young people can also get involved in the Duke of Edinburgh award through the youth service, or get involved in other programmes with accredited outcomes through the Leeds Youth Award. They can also get involved in decision-making and campaigning through Leeds Youth Council.

### Find out more about the youth service and activities in your area at:

**[www.leeds.gov.uk](http://www.leeds.gov.uk) (search for 'youth service'), or call 0113 224 3796.**

### Information and advice services:

The law says that all Councils must make sure that an impartial information service is available for families who want information and advice about issues related to services and support for children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

In Leeds this service is provided by the Leeds SEND information advice support service (SEND IASS).

You can contact them on:

**0113 3951 200** (Mon-Fri 10 am to 3pm) or email **[send.iass@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:send.iass@leeds.gov.uk)**

The MindMate website provides young people with useful information about local support with

mental health and wellbeing. It can help them to understand the way they are feeling and find the right advice and support for them. It has a section for parents and carers too. See the site at **[www.mindmate.org.uk](http://www.mindmate.org.uk)**

The Leeds Local Offer website has lots of useful information for families about services and support in Leeds for children and young people with all kinds of SEND, including social, emotional and mental health needs, and other needs that may be related, like autism, learning disability or other needs. It describes local services across education, health and social care, and voluntary and community support groups. Search the Leeds Local Offer site at **[www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk)**

You can also find a list of other useful contacts on the last pages of this guide.

## Services for children and young people who need some extra help: 'targeted services'

Most children and young people will be able to get any help they need with their social, emotional and mental health from their family, their education setting (school, college, nursery) and any other services that are part of their every day life (for example childcare providers, youth clubs).

Some children and young people may need more support for a time if they have additional social, emotional and mental health needs. Targeted services in Leeds provide extra support.

Targeted services usually work with a child or young person and their family for a set period of time, helping them develop their strengths so they can work towards their goals. Targeted services are often provided in the school or education setting, so the child or young person can stay in a place they know.

### Clusters and early help plans:

In Leeds targeted services is arranged in clusters (small areas of the city). Leeds is split into 25 clusters, all offering extra services in that area to help families stay strong. They work closely with schools and other education settings.

Your child's school or setting, or anyone else working with them regularly, may ask for support and guidance from their cluster if they need extra help to support your child.

Clusters will often suggest an **early help plan** as a good way to get some extra support for a time. Anyone who works closely with a child or young person can suggest an early help plan, and get one started if the family agrees it is a good idea.

To make an early help plan, the child or young person, their family and the people working with them across education, health and social care services, all come together as a team to assess (look at and think about) what strengths and difficulties they have and what goals they want to achieve.

They all plan a way to work towards these goals, including accessing extra services (see below) and use the early help plan to record this. The plan is reviewed regularly. This is a good way to make sure everyone knows what is going on and nothing gets missed.

If you think an early help plan would help your child and/or family, you can ask anyone else working closely with your child (for example a teacher, or a health worker) about getting an early help plan.

If you can't talk to any of these people, you can also contact the team who look after early help plans directly.

**You can contact them on: 0113 247 6830.**



The sorts of services that might be available through an early help plan will depend on what your child and family's individual needs are. **They might include:**

**Family support services:** services that can help the whole family work on difficult issues that are affecting the child or young person's emotional and mental health and wellbeing. Trained family support workers can provide information, support and help with strategies and tools to cope with problems and work towards a better life. They are non-judgmental and they work with families to help them make changes in their lives themselves.

**Support in school from a social, emotional and mental health support worker:** Every cluster provides social, emotional and mental health support which schools in the cluster can access to support their learners. This is sometimes known as Mind Mate wellbeing support. This might include training for

staff in the school, or one-to-one support such as counselling for individual learners. You can ask your child's school for more information about this.

**Other services:** each cluster offers something slightly different depending on what is needed in the local area. This could include services like counselling, parenting courses, family learning or other things.

**Support for children and young people who need something different to mainstream school or are excluded from mainstream school:**

Clusters also work closely with **Area Inclusion Partnerships**. These are partnerships of schools in different areas of the city, who work together to support children and young people in their schools who need extra help with their social, emotional and mental health and their behaviour. Every school in Leeds belongs to an Area Inclusion Partnership.

Some Area Inclusion Partnerships provide workers who can go into a mainstream school to support a child or young person who is struggling with social, emotional and mental health issues and related behaviours. They will work with the child or young person, their family and the staff working closely with them.

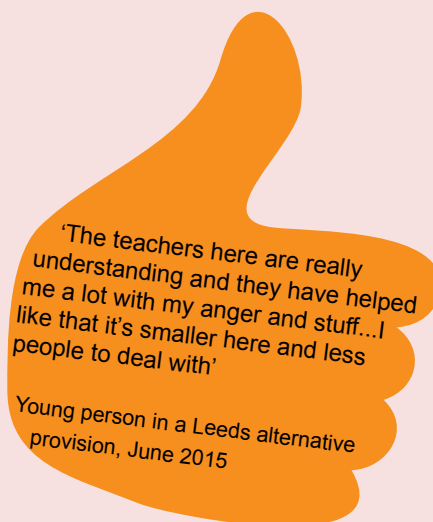
Area Inclusion Partnerships also organise places in **alternative provision** on behalf of Leeds City Council, using funding provided for this. Schools can also organise alternative provision for learners themselves.

Alternative provision offers a different environment or place for learning. It is for children and young people who are finding it hard to learn, enjoy school life and achieve their full potential in a mainstream environment. These children and young people may not attend school regularly because school is difficult for them. This can really affect their long term future if it carries on.

**There are different types of alternative provision to meet different needs:**

- For children and young people who have social, emotional and mental health needs that cause challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviours, alternative provision offers specially trained teachers and support staff to help them learn new ways to manage their feelings and behaviour, and to help them catch up if they have missed out on learning. These placements are usually limited in time, and aim for a successful return to mainstream school.

- For children and young people whose emotional and mental health needs make going to school challenging, alternative provision can offer a smaller building that feels safer, and specially trained teachers and support staff to help them work on and overcome their fears.
- Alternative provision can also offer different types of courses, for example mechanics or construction skills, for young people who need different courses to keep them focused on learning and attending school.



If your child's school thinks it would be a good idea for them to access alternative provision, they will always talk about this with you first. If this hasn't been suggested, but you think it might be a good idea, you can talk about it with any of the staff in their school who you feel comfortable talking to. You could show them this guide to help start the conversation. If your child has been excluded from school for more than 5 days, there is legal duty for the school's governing body or the council to provide them with alternative provision so they do not miss out on education.

If your child has been excluded from school, or you want to know more about exclusions, you can find more helpful information in a guide produced by the Coram Children's Legal Centre. The website is [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com) click on 'child legal advice' to find the guide, which is recommended by the Department for Education.

You can also find it on the Leeds Family Information Service website: [www.familyinformationleeds.co.uk](http://www.familyinformationleeds.co.uk) (find it in the 'education' section). If your child is permanently excluded, the guide will be sent to you by Children's Services and usually by the school too.

If you can't access this guide, or you want to talk to someone about exclusions, you can also contact

the Leeds SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS) for impartial advice and support. Contact them on **0113 3951 200** (Mon-Fri 10am to 3pm) or email [sendiass@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:sendiass@leeds.gov.uk).

### **Educating your child or young person at home: elective home education:**

Elective home education is when a parent chooses to withdraw their child from formal education and educate them at home. The Education Act 1996, Section 7 states: "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable (a) to his age, ability and aptitude and (b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

The use of the word 'otherwise' means that parents have the right to educate their children at home if they choose. They need to provide a suitable education as above. If their child has very complex needs and has an Education, Health and Care Plan or statement (we describe these more later in this guide), they must also get permission from the complex needs service in Leeds Children's Services. This is because Councils have a duty to make sure children's educational needs are met as described in the Education Health and Care Plan or statement.

If you are considering elective home education, there are lots of issues to think about. For example, you need to know that you will take on all costs of educating your child, such as text books and exams.

You can find you more details on this and other issues, on the Leeds Family Information Service website ([www.familyinformationleeds.co.uk](http://www.familyinformationleeds.co.uk)); click on 'education', or call the Elective Home Education Team for advice on **0113 395 1183**.

### **What if a child or young person has been accessing the services described so far, but is still finding it hard to cope and achieve their potential?**

Targeted services like the ones described above are usually delivered for a set period of time. The goal is to give the child or young person and their family the tools they need to be able to achieve their goals themselves, without having to rely on services for support in the long term.

Teams who are working with a child or young person to access targeted services will keep assessing their needs and reviewing how things are going, discussing this with the child or young person and their family. They will all decide together when the child or young person is ready to stop accessing targeted services and continue with their education with the on-going support that their school, college or early years setting provides.

For a small number of children and young people whose needs are very complex, it may be agreed during a review that more specialist help is needed for them to be able to make progress with their learning and get ready for adult life.



**"Anxiety is a mental illness... illness is not something that people choose. I did not choose it...but I did get better"**  
**Zoe Sugg, who has more than 7 million subscribers on YouTube and had anxiety and panic attacks for 14 years**  
([www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/03/20](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/03/20))

## Services for children and young people with very complex SEMH needs: 'specialist services'

As described in the previous pages, most children and young people with additional social, emotional and mental health needs will be able to get all the support they need through mainstream services, for example their school, and from targeted services who can offer some extra support for a period of time.

A small number of children and young people will have more complex needs and may need more intensive, specialist support beyond the support that mainstream and targeted services can provide.

Identifying complex needs early on is very important to make sure that children and young people get any support that they need quickly. All schools, colleges, and early years education settings, are required by law to have a special educational needs coordinator, or SENCo, who will be able to identify possible complex needs. GPs and health visitors can also identify complex needs. If you think your child may have complex needs, you can always talk to one of these people.

If a practitioner like a SENCo working with your child is concerned that their needs are not being met, despite support from mainstream and targeted services, they may suggest an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment. This is a detailed process of identifying what a child or young person's specific needs might be, and involves input from the child or young person and their family, the people working closely with them (for example their SENCo, their doctor) and experts like Educational Psychologists.

If the EHC needs assessment concludes that the child or young person must have support from specialist services to be able to access education and make progress in their learning, then an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan) will be produced.

The EHC plan, which is put together with the child or young person and their family, the people working closely with them, and with advice from experts, will set out the support and services the child or young person needs to access education, achieve their full potential in learning, and get ready for adult life. It will also include details of other support they need from health and social care services.

EHC plans replace old Statements of SEN and are legally binding documents that make sure vulnerable children and young people with very complex needs get the support that they need and not miss out on education.

### **Not all children and young people who need specialist support will need to have an EHC plan.**

EHC plans are for those children and young people in education with very complex needs that compromise their ability to access mainstream education.

Some children and young people will have complex social, emotional and mental health needs, but not to the point where they cannot access education. In those cases, they can still access specialist social, emotional and mental health services, but will do so without having to go through the long and detailed EHC needs assessment and planning process.

If you want to find out more about EHC needs assessment and plans, the SENCo in your child's school or setting, is an ideal person to talk to. They can also make a request for EHC needs assessment

Parents and carers, and young people over 16, can also make a request for an EHC needs assessment themselves. The process will take the same amount of time if the parent makes the request. The team in Leeds City Council who looks after EHC plans is called the **SENSAP** (SEN statutory assessment and provision) team. Contact them on **0113 395 1030** or email **SENSAP@leeds.gov.uk**.

There is much more information about EHC plans on the Leeds Local Offer website ([www.leeds.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/localoffer); click on 'SEN and disabilities').

You can also get impartial advice from the Leeds SEND information, advice and support service. Contact them on **0113 395 1200** (Mon -Fri 10am to 3pm) or email **sendiass@leeds.gov.uk**.

## **Specialist education provision in Leeds for those with very complex needs and an EHC plan:**

In Leeds, we follow the national policy of trying to be as inclusive as possible in mainstream schools and protecting the right of children and young people to a mainstream education. Wherever possible, where a child or young person needs specialist support, we will try to provide this in a mainstream school or setting.

Schools and early years settings in Leeds can apply to Leeds City Council for extra funding ('funding for inclusion') to provide specialist support to children and young people with complex needs in their mainstream setting. Other specialist services across education, health and social care may also provide support while a child or young person with an Education Health and Care plan continues to access mainstream education. The exact support offered will be detailed in the plan.

However, where a child or young person has very complex and challenging social, emotional and mental health needs, their Education, Health and Care plan may identify that their needs are too complex for a mainstream setting to support them, even with extra specialist services. For this small number of children and young people, a specialist education provision with highly experienced, skilled staff, specialist facilities and a smaller environment may be needed.

### **Specialist education provision for complex social, emotional and mental health needs:**

At the time of writing this guide in September 2016, we are working to improve our education provision for children and young people who have an Education, Health and Care plan and need a specialist school because they have complex social, emotional and mental health needs.

We are working with the Wellspring Academy Trust to develop a new academy in Leeds for 4-19 year olds with these needs. This will be based in four different sites across the city, in new buildings with high quality facilities.

We are making these changes because to date, Leeds has only had one secondary school site and one primary school site for these learners. This has meant travelling right across the city for some learners. The secondary school site (the BESD SILC at Elmete Wood) has also not been as good quality as we would like, with old buildings and facilities, and it has only catered for learners aged up to 16.

We have also had 3 Pupil Referral Units, or PRUs, managed by the Council. These have provided short-term placements for learners with social, emotional and mental health needs while they have an assessment to see if they need a place at a specialist school. However, PRUs managed by Councils are no longer considered appropriate by national government. We have also had just one PRU for each age group, meaning some learners have had to travel a long way to get to the PRU.

Leeds City Council and the Wellspring Academy Trust are working together to replace these old education provisions with a new academy. The Wellspring Academy Trust is renowned for providing high quality support for children and young people with these needs in other areas.

The new academy, which will be called the Springwell Leeds Academy, will be based in six different sites across the city. It will offer permanent places for learners aged 4-19 with complex social, emotional and mental health needs and an EHC plan. It will also offer short-term assessment places for learners aged 4-19 with these needs who are undergoing an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

Providing the new sites in six different locations will provide better access across the city. Leeds City Council is also making a major investment to provide new, purpose built, world-class buildings and state-of-the-art facilities at the new sites.

At September 2016, these plans are well underway, with the official conversion from the old sites to the new Springwell Leeds Academy now achieved and building works underway. We have also provided temporary 'interim' sites for learners with complex needs who need to access education now. These sites have been specially chosen to offer a good quality experience while the new, improved buildings are being built.

If you would like to know more about this, or get more up-to-date information since this was written in September 2016, please contact the project officer for this work, Chris Sutton, at [chris.sutton@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:chris.sutton@leeds.gov.uk). You can also find out more about the Wellspring Academy Trust at [www.wellspringacademytrust.org.uk](http://www.wellspringacademytrust.org.uk)

**The Medical Needs Teaching Service:** this service provides education for children and young people of compulsory school age who cannot access mainstream education because of medical needs (this includes mental health needs, e.g. eating disorders, extreme depression, psychosis).

The service provides the core curriculum of English, Maths and Science for all pupils aged 5 - 16 years who have been out of school for 15 days or more due to a medical need. The service is commissioned by Leeds City Council and delivered by the East Special Inclusive Learning Centre.

The service may provide tuition in a hospital, at home, or in a place at a small regional school service at Little Woodhouse Hall or the Grafton Learning Centre. The service takes referrals for children and young people who have a mental health medical need, supported by evidence from CAMHS (see more information about CAMHS in the 'specialist services' section). Referrals are considered by a panel. The service also works to try to re-integrate students back into mainstream education as conditions improve. For more information about the service, call the Medical Needs Team on **0113 336 8060**.

**The Pupil Tuition Service:** this small teaching service offers sessional education to pupils who for reasons other than illness or injury are unable to attend full time school. This may be because they are disengaged from education, or because they are pregnant or on maternity leave. The team provides one-to-one literacy, numeracy and other subject area support (where requested) for a minimum of 5 hours of tuition per week, and also works to re-engage students in mainstream provision wherever possible, for example once maternity leave is over.

For more information, email [ptt@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:ptt@leeds.gov.uk). More details about all specialist education in Leeds can be found on the Leeds Local Offer website ([www.leeds.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/localoffer); click on 'services', then 'education').

**The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service** (or CAMHS) offers assessment and help to children and young people aged 18 and under with significant emotional and behavioural difficulties (e.g. anxiety, depression, eating disorders) and their families.

They work across the Leeds area in community based teams and try to meet with families in a place near to where they live. A referral to CAMHS might be needed if, despite advice and input from services you access in everyday life (as described in the 'universal' and 'targeted' services sections of this guide), problems continue and have a big effect on your child's daily life.

CAMHS accept referrals for children and young people under the age of 18 years. If you think your child may need a referral to CAMHS, you can talk to your GP, or your health visitor if your child is under 5. You could also ask the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) in your child's school or early years provider (if applicable) for advice about referral to CAMHS.

Once a referral has been received and accepted, children, young people and usually their families are seen in a consultation clinic. In this clinic your child and you will work together with a CAMHS clinician to think about the difficulty and what or who might help. For many, these two or three sessions are all that's needed. If your child needs more help following these sessions, CAMHS can offer 'follow on work'. This will be a unique package of care based on what is most likely to meet your needs. This might be:

- Specialist assessment e.g. for ADHD, eating disorders, Autistic Spectrum Conditions
- Other support e.g. parenting groups, individual therapy

The service includes a specialist team for children with learning disabilities and their families. Services are tailored to take into account their specific needs. Once in the service, if children or families do not find that the standard service has helped to resolve their problems, they may be offered an a different service such as family therapy, psychotherapy, creative therapies.

For a very small number of young people, highly intensive assessment and treatment packages are needed. Leeds CAMHS has both intensive outreach and inpatient services. Children and young people offered this will usually already have had lots of other support from the service.

CAMHS nurses are also based in the Leeds Youth Offending Teams; see section later in this guide. You can find out more about CAMHS on their website at [www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk](http://www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk) (use the 'A to Z' search to find 'CAMHS').

#### **Support from Leeds social work services:**

Children's Social Work Services assess and support children, young people and their families who are:

- Children in need
- Children subject to child protection plans
- Children subject to care proceedings
- Children looked after by Leeds City Council (in the care of the local authority either with a foster carer or in a children's home)

Social work teams in Leeds are located across the city and work closely with other community based professionals to enable children and young people to remain in the care of their families at home. Services such as Family Group Conferencing (FGC) and Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) are used to help families find their own solutions and develop coping methods.

Child health and disability (CHAD) teams work within the complex needs service area based teams and offer services as above to those children and young people who have additional needs and disabilities.

The regional specialist paediatric social work team is based at Leeds General Infirmary. They work with children and young people with a range of specified health conditions and their families. Children who are looked after by the Council will also have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) that will plan any support they need to enjoy and achieve in education.

In some cases this may include access to targeted or specialist services, although in other cases the child will be able to access all the support they need through mainstream education settings and universal services.

More information about social work services in Leeds can be found at:

**[www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/Children-Social-Work-Services.aspx](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/Children-Social-Work-Services.aspx)**

For advice about supporting a child or young person, or if you have concerns for their safety and wellbeing, contact the Duty & Advice team on **0113 376 0336** between 9am and 5pm. If your enquiry needs a response outside normal office hours, please phone the Emergency Duty team on **0113 240 9536**.

**If you feel that a child is at immediate risk of harm, please contact the emergency services on 999.**

## Useful contacts:

If you can't find the contact you need, you can contact the Leeds SEND information advice support service (IASS) for help to find the right contact details. See their details below. If any of the details in this guide are out of date or incorrect, you can tell the best practice team in the complex needs service and we will make sure they get updated: **[bpsteam@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:bpsteam@leeds.gov.uk)**.

### Local services and support:

**If you think any child or young person is at risk of harm**, please contact Children's Social Work Services on **0113 222 4403** ( 9am to 5pm ) or **0113 240 9536** (out of office hours). **If you think a child is at immediate risk, please contact the emergency services on 999.**

For independent advice about anything in this guide, or any issue related to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, contact the **Leeds SEND information advice support service** (SEND IASS):

call **0113 395 1200** (Mon -Fri 10am to 3pm) or email **[sendiass@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:sendiass@leeds.gov.uk)**

Find information about all services for children and young people with any kind of special educational needs and/or disabilities on the Leeds Local Offer website. Browse the site at **[www.leeds.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/localoffer)** or search for a service or topic at **[www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk)**

The MindMate website provides young people with useful information about local support with mental health and wellbeing. It can help them to understand the way they are feeling and find the right advice and support for them. It has a section for parents and carers too. See the site at **[www.mindmate.org.uk](http://www.mindmate.org.uk)**

If your child attends an early years setting (like a nursery or preschool), a school, or a post 16 education provider (like a college), they are required to have a **special educational needs coordinator** (SENCo) who has expertise in all kinds of additional needs, including social, emotional and mental health needs.

You can always ask them for any advice or talk to them about any concerns you have about your child. Contact details should be easy to find on their website, or ask any member of staff for their details. You can also talk to any member of staff who you feel comfortable with and they will help you, or find someone who can.

If you would like to talk about **early help plans** (see the 'targeted services' section), we suggest you talk to the special educational needs coordinator as above, or any education or health worker you know well (this might be a children's centre worker, a health visitor or your GP). If you can't talk to any of these people and you want to ask about early help plans, you can also contact the early help team direct on **0113 247 6830**.



If you would like to find out more about education, health and care plans (EHC plans: see the section on 'specialist services') you can find lots of information, including a short film, on the Leeds Local Offer site as above.

You can also talk to the special educational needs coordinator in your child's early years setting, school or post 16 education provider, or contact the SEN statutory assessment and provision (SENSAP) team (this is the team who look after EHC plans) on **0113 395 1030** or **SENSAP@leeds.gov.uk**

**The Market Place:** A drop in service for young people aged 13-25 years old. They offer counselling and other one-to-one support services.  
**www.themarketplaceleeds.org.uk**

**Willow Young Carers:** A support service for children and young people aged 5-17 living in Leeds who are caring for or affected by a family member with a serious physical illness, disability or mental health issue. **www.barnardos.org.uk/willow**

## **National support and helplines:**

**Childline:** This website and helpline provides information to children and young people and adults on all issues concerning children and young people and their families. The helpline is free and the number will not show up on telephone bills. Freephone **0800 1111**  
**www.childline.org.uk**

**Contact-a-Family:** supports families with disabled children across the UK. The website offers advice on medical information, knowing your rights, advice and support for carers and information for professionals.  
**www.cafamily.org.uk**



### **Thank you for reading this guide.**

We hope you have found it useful. We would really like to hear your feedback on this guide. We would like to know what you like about it and any changes you would like to see to make it better.

To share your feedback, please email: **bpteam@leeds.gov.uk** with the subject 'SEMH offer feedback'.

We will review this guide at least once a year and use your feedback to make changes.

