Leeds Local Offer:

The specialist education offer (2-16)

What is the specialist education offer and where has it come from?

The Children and Families Act became law in March 2014. The Act aims to improve services for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities and their families.

The Act is supported by the SEN code of practice. The code of practice gives guidance to all the education, health and social care partners who deliver services for children and young people with SEN and disabilities.

The code says that local authorities (Councils) should set out details of the offer of support families can expect from all education providers in the area, including all schools.

It also says that all schools must also provide information about their individual support for children and young people with SEN and disabilities, on their own websites and/or printed information.

This guide sets out the offer of support that families can expect in Leeds from specialist education providers for those children and young people aged 2-16 with the most complex needs.

Information is also available about support for those over 16. Please see our guide ‘the post 16 offer’ for more details. You can find those on our website at www.leeds.gov.uk/localoffer. If you cannot access the internet you can visit any Leeds library or one stop shop for help to access this information or call the SEND Information and Advice Services (see last page for contact details).
Who decided what to include in the specialist school offer?

A workshop took place to agree what would be included here. Head teachers and SENCo's from all Leeds specialist schools were invited to attend, as were other colleagues working in education parents and carers groups in Leeds. Consultation with more schools was also done at meetings, conferences and ‘drop-ins’ and through the SEN strategy group, which includes head teachers from lots of different schools.

Consultation was also done with families by attending support groups and through a ‘virtual’ group of parents and carers who prefer to get involved by email. Children and young people with SEN and disabilities at schools and youth groups were also asked what was important to them about their school life. Comments made by all these partners were taken into account and influenced the final offer.

How can I find specialist schools in my area?

If you have access to the internet you can use the ‘search’ in the Leeds Local Offer website to find schools in a specific postcode area. The ‘search’ is accessible on every page of the Leeds Local Offer site (www.leeds.gov.uk/localoffer). All schools are required under the new code of practice (see above) to publish details of their individual offer of support for children with SEN and disabilities, on their own websites and/or printed information. This includes specialist schools.

You can also find a full list of specialist education provision on the Leeds SEND Information Advice Support Service (formerly Parent Partnership Service) website: www.leedsparentpartnership.co.uk. If you don’t have access to the internet you can call the service for advice and/or a printed list of specialist education provision in your area. Call them on 0113 3951200.
Specialist and mainstream education: what support is available?

The majority of children and young people with SEND can flourish in a mainstream school. All mainstream schools can provide support for children and young people with SEND, and have identified budgets to provide support.

Children and young people with more complex needs may have had a statutory assessment (known as an education, health and care needs assessment from September 2014) and have a Statement or an Education Health and Care plan which describes the support they need to achieve their best possible outcomes.

Many children and young people with a Statement or Education, Health and Care plan will access the extra support they need while continuing to go to a mainstream school. The school may access additional funding from the local authority to help them deliver support for high level needs. This is called ‘Funding for Inclusion’.

Some children and young people with more complex needs may not flourish in mainstream school environment and may need more specialist education provision. In Leeds there are different types of specialist provision to meet different needs.

All children and young people who access specialist provision will have complex needs and so will have had an assessment of their needs and will have a Statement or an Education, Health and Care plan.

How are decisions made about which specialist education provision a child or young person attends?

The decision about which of the specialist provisions they will access will be made during the assessment and planning process and the provision will be named in their Statement or Education Health and Care plan.

Families are very much involved in the process of decision making and producing the Education Health and Care plan, and can state which provision they would prefer to access.
What are the different types of specialist provision available?

In England and Wales there are different types of special schools.

**Maintained special schools/colleges** are state schools funded by public money. They provide education free of charge.

**Non-maintained special schools/colleges** are not dependent on government funding and may charge fees and/or fund-raise, however they do not make profit like most independent schools and the fees they charge are generally funded by the local authority. Non-maintained special schools have to be approved by the Secretary of State for Education if they are going to provide education for children and young people and be named in an EHC Plan. To become approved, they have to be non-profit making and demonstrate that they operate to a level at least equivalent to state maintained special schools (source: teachernet.gov.uk).

**Independent special schools** are not dependent upon national or local government for funding. Instead, they charge tuition charges, gifts, and endowments (teachernet.gov.uk). They are usually profit making. Local authorities do not usually fund places in these schools.

In Leeds, we mainly have maintained specialist education provision. There are 3 different kinds of provision, which cater for different needs in different ways, as follows:

**Resourced provisions within mainstream schools:**

Resourced provisions within mainstream schools support children and young people with SEND to access the majority of their learning and school life in an inclusive mainstream environment, alongside their peers, whilst also being able to access additional resources and expertise to support their specific needs. The amount of time they spend in the mainstream environment, and how they access it, will depend on their individual needs and their personalised plan.

Different types of resourced provision offer specific resources and expertise to meet different types of need as follows:
• **Speech and Language resourced provisions** meet the needs of children who experience the most severe difficulties with speech and language. Speech sound or language skills will be the primary difficulty for children.

• **Complex Communication resourced provisions** meet the needs of children with Autism Spectrum Condition

• **Hearing Impaired resourced provisions** meet the needs of children and young people who are severely or profoundly deaf and require specialist support and good acoustic environments throughout the day. They may use sign, spoken English or both to access the curriculum. They are likely to require specialist teaching on a daily basis to improve acquisition of language and literacy as well as subject specific teaching pre- and post- lessons.

• **Visually Impaired resourced provisions** meet the needs of children and young people who are severely or profoundly visually impaired and who require access to a high degree of specialist curriculum input. This may include the teaching of Braille, tactile skills, access technology and mobility and habilitation skills. CYP accessing these settings are likely to have little usable distance vision and difficulties moving confidently around school and travelling independently.

• **Physical and Medical resourced provisions** will meet the needs of children and young people who have little or no independent mobility and require assistance for all movement and all self-help skills. They will often have significant communication difficulties. They may require assistance for feeding or have a medical condition that requires medical intervention.

• **Complex Learning Needs resourced provisions** will meet the needs of children and young people children and young people who need access to a finely differentiated curriculum together with a high level of intervention for part of the day.

• **Specific Learning Needs resourced provisions** will meet the needs of children and young people who have been diagnosed as having specific learning needs, for example dyslexia, and need access to a finely differentiated curriculum together with a high level of intervention, for all aspects of learning throughout all of the day.
Children and young people with SEN and disabilities who go to a resourced provision will often spend time alongside their peers in the mainstream environment, but also access some more specialist support away from their peers if they need to. The amount of time they spend in the mainstream environment, and how they access it, will depend on their individual needs and their personalised plan.

When children and young people attend a resourced provision in mainstream school, they will be on the roll (or register) of that mainstream school. The school’s governing body will make any decisions about the how the provision operates and will be accountable for the children and young people. Ofsted inspections of the school and published attainment levels for the school will include the resourced provision.

While many mainstream schools offer expertise in specific needs, to be recognised specifically as a resourced provision they must go through a formal process supported by the Council.

**Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs):**

Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs) are schools that support children and young people with the most complex needs who may not flourish in a mainstream environment. SILCs offer a high level of expertise and facilities to support complex needs in a specialist and highly accessible environment.

There are 5 SILCs in Leeds that have the expertise to cater for a wide range of different complex needs; one for each area of the city (North East, North West, West, East, West and South). We aim for children and young people to be able to access the SILC in their local area, so that they do not have to travel a long way.

SILCs place a strong emphasis on community-based learning and preparation for adulthood.

There is an additional SILC, called the Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) SILC, which supports secondary age children who have complex social, emotional and mental health needs. Primary age children who have these needs may access a specialist provision which is part of the North East SILC.

All children and young people in SILCs will have a Statement or an Education, Care & Health Plan (EHC Plan).
Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre (SILC) Partnership schools:

Some children and young people have complex needs and require the support offered by a SILC, but can also benefit from attending a mainstream school for some or all of their education. Leeds SILCs work in partnership with identified mainstream schools so that children and young people on the roll (or register) of the SILC can access a local mainstream school environment for some or all of their learning while continuing to access high level support and resources and facilities from the SILC. The amount of time they spend in the mainstream environment, and how they access it, will depend on their individual needs and their personalised plan.

When children and young people attend a SILC partnership school, they will remain on the roll (or register) of the SILC and the SILC’s governing body continue to be responsible for their well-being and achievement.

All the children and young people who access SILCs will have complex needs and a Statement or Education Health and Care plan, which will name the SILC partnership school.

Other specialist education settings in Leeds:

Leeds also has a Specialist Free School, The Lighthouse School, which is a secondary school (11-19) catering for children and young people with Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC). The school offers autism specific teaching, small groups, personalised curriculum, specific focus on speech and language, life skills and social skills as well as functional skills and national curriculum. Inclusion is designed around each student both within the community and in the partner mainstream school. A Free School is set up and governed independently of the local authority and receives funding directly from national Government.

St. John’s Catholic School for the Deaf is a non-maintained specialist residential and day school that supports children and young people from Leeds and other local authorities.
**What about specialist education provision outside of Leeds?**

Some children and young people who live very close to other local authorities, or whose needs cannot be met locally, may need to access provision in other areas. This would be agreed when drawing up the Education, Health and Care plan (see above).

You can find maintained schools frequently used by Leeds children and young people in nearby local authorities by using the ‘search’ tool on the Leeds Local Offer website ([www.leeds.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/localoffer)). If you don’t sue the internet you can contact the Leeds SEND Information Advice and Support Service for help, see the last page for contact details.

There are also non-maintained specialist schools and colleges across the country. Generally, in Leeds we aim for children and young people to be able to access their education near to their home to support their participation in their local community. However in a small number of cases Leeds children and young people may access non-maintained specialist settings outside of Leeds if this is the best way to meet their individual needs. This would be agreed when drawing up the Education Health and Care plan (see above).

A full list of these settings in England and Wales approved by the Secretary of State to be named in an Education Health and Care plan is available online at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-and-non-maintained-special-schools](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-and-non-maintained-special-schools) or call the Leeds SEND Information Advice and Support Service for help to access this, see the last page for contact details.

There are also independent specialist schools and colleges across the country. Independent schools are not dependent on government funding and instead charge fees. They are usually profit-making. Leeds City Council cannot provide funding for places in these schools.
How is specialist education provision funded?

Leeds City Council buys places from all specialist education provisions in Leeds at a set amount. The same amount of funding is a paid for places in SILCs, SILC partnerships and resourced provisions.

If a child or young person in a SILC, SILC partnership or resourced provisions needs additional support that cannot be provided with that set amount of funding, the education provider can also apply for some extra ‘top up’ funding from the Council to meet those needs (‘Funding for Inclusion’).

Leeds City Council can also buy a place in some cases for an individual child or young person who needs to access a place in a specialist setting outside of Leeds (see above).

Funding can be complicated and different in individual cases. You can find more information and support at on the funding pages of the Leeds Local Offer website (www.leeds.gov.uk/local offer) or for more help contact the SEND Information and Advice Service (see below for contact details).

What about educating my child at home?

The Education Act 1996, Section 7, states that: ‘it is the duty of parents of every child of compulsory school age to ensure that they receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise’.

The word “otherwise” means parents can educate their child themselves if they wish to, provided their child is able to access full time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they have.

If your child has complex needs and an Education Health and Care Plan or Statement, the law says that you will need to agree arrangements to educate at home with the head of the complex needs service in Leeds City Council.

You can get more information and advice about elective home education from the Leeds SEND Information Advice and Support service. See the last page for contact details.
What support can my child or young person expect if they go to a specialist provision?

The SEN code of practice (see page 1) says that local authorities must publish the ‘offer’ of support what support children and young people with SEND can expect from education providers in the area. Every school must also publish information about how they provide that support.

In Leeds, we have worked with mainstream schools and parents/carers to agree what support ALL our Leeds schools should offer. We have also worked with specialist settings including SILCs, SILC partnerships and resourced provisions in mainstream schools, to agree what they offer in ADDITION to this.

We have set this out in a grid so you can see what the differences are between mainstream education and the 3 main types of specialist provision (Resourced provisions in mainstream schools, Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs), and SILC Partnership schools). As you can see, each has a slightly different approach, although they all have a lot in common too:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethos:</th>
<th>Mainstream schools</th>
<th>Resourced provisions</th>
<th>SILCs</th>
<th>SILC Partnerships</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There will be an inclusive ethos with high aspirations for all learners</td>
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<td>Learners with SEND will access their learning and wider school life alongside their peers who do not have SEND, in a mainstream environment</td>
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<td>Children and young people with high level needs will access some or all of their learning and school life alongside their peers in a mainstream school environment. However they will also have access to specialised support and resources to meet their specific needs that cannot usually be provided in other mainstream schools. The amount of time they spend learning in the mainstream environment and how they access it will depend on their individual needs and their personalised plan.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Children and young people with SEND will access a specialist environment with specialist resources and expertise and attended only by those with SEND.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children and young people with SEND will have access to the specialist resources and expertise of a SILC whilst also accessing some or all of their learning in a mainstream environment alongside their peers. The amount of time they spend in the mainstream environment and how they access it will depend on their individual needs and their personalised plan.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>There will be commitment to early intervention and the Early Support principles (<a href="http://www.gov.uk/help-for-disabled-child/early-support-programme">www.gov.uk/help-for-disabled-child/early-support-programme</a>).</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The voices of children and young people and their families will be valued and honoured and there will be opportunities for them to influence change.</td>
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**Leadership:**

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<th></th>
<th>There will be effective leadership at all levels, including the SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator).</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There will be effective monitoring, review, evaluation of SEND provision.</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
<td>There will be accountability and governance of SEND provision and regular reporting on how individual needs are met.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Children and young people will be on the roll (or register) of the mainstream school and the mainstream school's governing body will be responsible for their well-being and achievement.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children and young people will be on the roll (or register) of the SILC and the SILC’s governing body will be responsible for their well-being and achievement.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Budget:</strong></td>
<td>There will be an allocated budget for supporting SEND and effective use of funding from the local authority. Families will be able to access clear information about how funding is used to support learners.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>There will be effective communications with families about the implications of personal budgets to families.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Policies:</strong></td>
<td>There will be effective policies which are understood and consistently applied in the following: Inclusion; behaviour; teaching and learning; safeguarding/child protection; bullying; equalities; health and safety; access; information sharing.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
<td>There will be policies in addition to those above as follows: Sex and relationships education for those with SEND; manual handling; positive restraint; careers advice and education and getting ready for adult life</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum, teaching and learning:</strong></td>
<td>There will be an appropriate curriculum that meets specific needs and effective teaching and classroom management of support. There will be clear and regularly reviewed plans for students. A range of ‘interventions’ (support programmes) will be used, for example 1:1 support, nurture groups, mentoring and so on.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
<td>There will be an accessible environment for learning and access to ancillary aids and assistive technology where needed.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>There will be extra pastoral support arrangements to aid the social, emotional and behavioural development of children and young people with SEND, including measures to prevent bullying.</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
<td>There will be effective transition arrangements to help children and young people move between phases of education.</td>
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</table>
A highly differentiated curriculum can be offered if required. There will be expertise in specific ‘interventions’ (support programmes) to support high level need. There will usually be a higher ratio of staff to children than is usually offered in other mainstream provision. There will be additional support for transitions to the next stage of education or adult life.

There will be access to a highly skilled staff team with a variety of specialist knowledge to meet a variety of complex needs.

There will be support from staff with specialist knowledge in one defined main area of need (depending on the type of provision e.g. deafness and hearing impairment, or speech and language issues, or visual impairment and so on).

### Assessment and review:

- There will be a graduated approach to assessment and high quality practice in assessment. There will be an established method for recording agreed outcomes of assessment and communicating the outcomes to those involved.
- Progress and plans will be regularly reviewed and evaluated to inform next steps
- There will be expertise in very detailed assessment of progress.

### Workforce development and training

- All staff will have or be supported to gain basic awareness of inclusion issues
- Staff working directly with children and young people with SEND will have, or be supported to develop, enhanced skills to meet particular types of need.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working in partnership with other agencies</th>
<th>Staff wishing to gain specialist skills and knowledge will be supported to do so.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff wishing to gain specialist skills and knowledge will be supported to do so.</td>
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<td>There will be staff who are skilled and able to deliver Early Help support (Early Help is what we call our approach in Leeds of supporting families who need extra help, early on).</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff in the setting will have specialist knowledge in one specific area of need and will be supported to develop their specialist knowledge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff in or supporting the setting will have specialist knowledge in a variety of areas of need and will be supported to develop their specialist knowledge.</td>
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<td>There will be a rapid response to the need to access new training to meet a child’s needs (i.e. when a child is new to the setting, or if a child develops a new need that requires specialist support e.g. tracheotomy care).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working in partnership with other agencies</td>
<td>Schools will have regular engagement with teams in the local authority that can provide support, including the School Improvement team, the Educational Psychology team and SEN and Inclusion team, and attendance officers.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Schools will work in partnership with other agencies including speech and language therapy services, school nurses, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the Parent Partnership Service.</td>
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<td>Schools will also access support in their local area and cluster, for example family outreach workers, TSLs (targeted services leaders), and AIPs (Area Inclusion Partnerships).</td>
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<td>There will be strong relationships with specialist services and greater access to specialist services than is usual in mainstream schools.</td>
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<td><strong>Access to specialist facilities and resources</strong></td>
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<td>A highly accessible environment will be provided to meet a specific to a particular type of need (e.g. visual impairment, or hearing impairment, and so on).</td>
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<tr>
<td>There will be access to specialist resources and facilities specific to one type of need (e.g. specific audio-visual equipment for a deaf and hearing impaired resource school).</td>
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<td>A highly accessible environment will be provided where needed to meet a wide range of complex needs (e.g. smaller quieter spaces for those with complex communication difficulties; tracking for those who use wheelchairs and so on).</td>
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<tr>
<td>There will be access to a variety of specialist resources and facilities to meet a wide range of different needs (e.g. rebound, hydrotherapy, sensory room).</td>
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Please note: There are 2 schools in Leeds that do not fall into these categories. The Lighthouse is a free school that supports children and young people with autism spectrum conditions. They will a similar high level of support as that offered by SILCs, but they cater only for a specific type of need, autism spectrum conditions, rather than a wide range of different needs. The St. John’s Catholic School for the Deaf is a non- maintained special school that supports deaf and hearing impaired children and young people. You can expect them to deliver a very similar offer to that provided by SILCs, but they support deafness and hearing impairment specifically, although many of their students have a range of needs in addition to this.
What if I think there is something missing in this offer of support or something needs changing?

The SEN strategy group (see page 2) will continue to meet in future to keep reviewing the offer of specialist support. The group want to hear feedback from families to help develop the offer.

To give your feedback, please email bpteam@leeds.gov.uk or write to us at: Best Practice Development Team, Children’s Services, Leeds City Council, Adams Court, Kildare Terrace, Leeds, LS12 1DB.

What if I think my school is not providing this offer of support and is not meeting my child’s needs?

If you are unhappy about the support you are receiving from a school, we recommend you talk to them first and so they have chance to talk about any problems with you and resolve them together.

If this doesn’t help and you are still unhappy, you can make a complaint to Leeds City Council. Please be aware that the Council does not govern schools and cannot make them take any particular action. However we can encourage them and offer them support.

To make a complaint, you can complete a ‘Contact Us e-form’ on the Leeds City Council website at www.leeds.gov.uk/council/Pages/Let-Us-Know-Compliments-Complaints-and-Feedback. You can also speak to an advisor on 0113 222 4405.

You can raise a concern about a state school with Ofsted. Ofsted is the office for standards in education and is the national body responsible for schools. You can contact Ofsted by email via enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or you can telephone: 0300 1234 234. Ofsted ask people who want to raise non-issue issue about a school to raise the issue directly with the school first.

Ofsted do not manage complaints about academies or free schools. To make a complaint about an academy or free school, you must visit the Department for Education website at www.education.gov.uk/form/school-complaints-form. If you need help to access this, you can visit any Leeds library or one stop centre.
How can I get more advice and support?

If you would like advice and information about how to use the Leeds Local Offer please contact the Leeds SEND Information Advice Support Service (formerly Parent Partnership Service). The team can provide you with general information about services for SEN and disabilities and advise you on how best to access the site from a private or public computer or mobile device (phone or tablet). Leaflets and downloads can also be posted out to you. For expert advice on any of the services shown in the Leeds Local Offer please use the contact details that each specific website provides.

You can call the Helpline on 0113 3951200 or send an email to: sendiass@leeds.gov.uk