



# One minute guide

## Child Friendly Leeds enrichment

No. 197, May 2021

### What is Child Friendly Leeds enrichment?

Child Friendly Leeds enrichment is a natural extension of the [Child Friendly Leeds](#) ambition and develops the Department for Education's (DfE)'s [New Belongings](#) work that began in Leeds in 2015. This initiative acknowledged the challenges that children and young people growing up in care can face around: socialisation; isolation; finances; stability; education, employment and training (EET); and their physical health and mental well-being.

The enrichment work aims to tackle these challenges and enables children and young people who are looked after in whatever type of their placement: foster family; kinship care; residential children's home; special guardianship order; or leaving care, to access a range of fun opportunities that support their ambitions, aspirations and personal development. Over time, the cohort of children and young people the enrichment team work with has expanded to include those involved with youth justice, unaccompanied asylum seeking children and the children of care leavers (corporate grand-parenting).

### Why does Child Friendly Leeds focus on supporting young people who are looked after?

[The Children's Act 1989](#) says: 'Looked after children deserve the best experiences in life, from excellent parenting, which promotes good health and educational attainment, to a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and skills in order to have an enjoyable childhood and successful adult life'.

Looked after children and young people may face particular disadvantages, such as financial hardship, as well as a poverty of opportunity and aspiration. It is the responsibility of the local authority and its partners, in their combined role as corporate parents, to ensure care experienced children and young people are able to access the same opportunities that their non-looked after peers also enjoy.

Child Friendly Leeds aims to create fun and meaningful experiences, outside of the school curriculum and to give the participants access to opportunities that they may not otherwise have, thereby providing an 'equality of opportunity' for **all** children and young people. The enrichment team work closely with [Foster4Leeds](#) (the local authority fostering team) and social care to support the development of safe and secure attachments in families, by enabling them to have fun together whilst creating positive memories.

The enrichment offer consists of projects and activities, tickets and gifts. Projects and activities offered are varied, taking place at weekends and in school holidays involving the outdoors, nature, arts and crafts, sport and drama. The emphasis is on encouraging young people to go out (take a break from IT devices), make friends, learn a new skill, step out of their comfort zone but most of all, to have fun. The team has: worked with Central Yorkshire Scouts to offer water-sport days; recruited young people to join the Outward Bound Trust seven and nineteen day summer programmes; and offered the '[Think Like a Pony](#)' therapeutic horsemanship programme.

The team receives complimentary tickets (valuing £30k in 2019) for: cultural events from City Varieties, Leeds Town Hall, first direct arena and local Literature Festivals; as well as for sporting events locally such as Leeds Rhinos games and international events e.g. Cricket World Cup and A J Bell World Triathlon. Some businesses sponsor and donate gifts at special times of the year: chocolate eggs for Easter; personalised presents at Christmas and gifts to celebrate Eid.

## What opportunities are there to work with Child Friendly Leeds enrichment?

There are many opportunities to work with Child Friendly Leeds enrichment including:

### **Becoming an ambassador**

Since its launch in 2012, Child Friendly Leeds has developed a network of partners and ambassadors who not only share our ambition, but are skilled at working in a child and family centred way. Many of the ambassadors wish to extend their reach to potentially marginalised groups and fulfil their corporate social responsibilities (CSR) by 'giving something back'. You can sign up to become a Child Friendly Leeds ambassador on the [Child Friendly Leeds Ambassador form](#).

### **Meeting us for a chat**

The opportunities that the enrichment team offer to children and young people would not be possible without the generosity, financial support and goodwill of Child Friendly Leeds partners and ambassadors. Child Friendly Leeds welcomes the opportunity to meet with existing ambassadors, as well as potential new partners, to discuss their ideas or the support they would like to offer to enable future projects.

### **Helping fundraise and make a donation—Child Friendly Leeds Fund**

The [Child Friendly Leeds Fund](#) was specifically established to support enrichment projects and activities and is open to applications from any organisation wishing to work with children and young people growing up in care or leaving care. Businesses support by fund-raising, making donations or choosing the fund as their 'Charity of the Year.'

### **Engaging with us online**

Child Friendly Leeds has a strong social media presence where it shares relevant news, useful information, resources and fun activities for young people. You can help to promote Child Friendly Leeds by sharing their content on your own social media channels. You can visit them on:

[Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Blog](#) and view their [Website](#).

Also, Child Friendly Leeds Enrichment runs a private [Facebook](#) group and [Twitter](#) feed that is specifically for young people leaving care.

## Key contacts and further information

Julie Longworth, Deputy Director Children and Families Services oversees the Child Friendly Leeds initiative on behalf of Sal Tariq, the Director of Children and Families and Councillor Fiona Venner, the Executive Member for Children and Families.

Councillor Salma Arif leads on Child Friendly Leeds work on behalf of elected members.

You can contact Child Friendly Leeds enrichment for more information by emailing them at: [cflenrichment@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:cflenrichment@leeds.gov.uk)

Further details about Child Friendly Leeds enrichment and its impact can be found in the annual report on the [Child Friendly Leeds website](#)