



# One minute guide

## Workforce Development

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### What is it?

Our ambition is for Leeds to be a [child friendly city](#) with children at the heart of all decisions and issues that affect them. The children's workforce across the city are critical to making this happen. The values, behaviour, insight and approach that leaders, managers and practitioners bring to their work determines the quality of the service that children, young people and families receive.

In recognising this, Leeds has invested in a variety of programmes, partnerships and initiatives that aim to create an environment in which our workforce can flourish; through learning, supporting and challenging one another and developing the flexibility and skills required to succeed in the modern workplace and, most importantly, to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Learning and development is a key way to create a more integrated, skilled and confident children's workforce and find common language and common purpose—key objectives of the [Children Act 2004](#).

### What do we have in Leeds?

Leeds has put in place a dedicated Children's Workforce Development Team responsible for ensuring that the key behaviours that guide the approach in Leeds: listening to the voices of children and young people, working restoratively *with* families, and using outcomes based accountability to measure what difference has been made - underpin practice and professional development across the children's workforce. The team provides a mixture of statutory and tailored training, combining a free core package with a traded offer.

A wider training offer for all council staff complements the offer from the Children's Workforce Development Team and should link to appraisal objectives and team priorities.

### What does the Children's Workforce Development Team offer?

The Workforce Development Team provide a core learning offer which is free to the wider children's workforce which includes training on: restorative practice, supervision, assessment, safeguarding, equality and diversity, attachment, Child Sexual Exploitation, and child development.

The team also offers individual support through mentoring and coaching. It also commissions specialist training to meet service specific needs such as Infant Mental Health and Foetal Alcohol Syndrome. Approximately 50% of the team's work is directed by statutory requirements for training. This is primarily delivered to social workers, foster carers and residential staff. The team can also offer tailored learning and development to the particular operational context and to target practice improvement through effective planning. Examples of bespoke training are 'building stronger teams' and leadership development programmes. In addition, the team leads the restorative practice training as part of the Strengthening Families Supporting Children Programme.

The learning and development offered is based on research and is regularly reviewed in response to feedback; and the team works with external experts where appropriate to develop training based on best practice and objective analysis of the need and context in Leeds.

## Is there a specific development offer for social work in Leeds?

Yes. In 2015 Ofsted described Leeds as a place where *'good social work can flourish'* and in 2018 a place where *'good social work is flourishing'*. This reflects the investment that has been made into social work training and development over several years of focused improvement. The Workforce Development Team and Advanced Practitioners together with the Principal Social Worker have come together to put in place a package that recognises the status of social workers as one of the key support services for vulnerable families in Leeds. This includes:

- A comprehensive **programme of induction** and support in a social worker's first year, which includes Action Learning Sets, academic learning, training and development pathway, mentoring and Learning Conferences to support practice and development;
- Regular training linked to the **progression pathway** and to the Professional Capability Framework and Knowledge and Skills Statements. Updates to guidance and legislation are regularly reviewed to ensure that Leeds social workers have the latest knowledge, advice and support. This is informed by links with leading academics across the country who advise on practice improvement in Leeds;
- The service provides an **aspiring manager** programme; an **aspiring leader** programme, and a team manager induction and training programme, which offers a calendar of individual, team and bespoke activities designed to support and develop management and leadership skills;
- A rolling programme of **academic lectures** and **master-classes**;
- An annual **social work conference**, with leading national and international speakers;
- Leeds subscribes to and makes available events from **Research in Practice**, **Making Research Count** and **Community Care Inform**

All of this work is underpinned by a commitment to restorative practice across children's social work, doing things with children, young people and families, instead of for them, to them or doing nothing.

The commitment from Leeds is that all Social workers undertake at least 5 days learning and development per year in order to develop and enhance their skills and keep up registration with [Social Work England](#).

## For more information

Information on the workforce offer is available from the Workforce Development Team at: [workforcedevelopment@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:workforcedevelopment@leeds.gov.uk)

For more information about the social work training and development offer, contact Julie Devonald or Sultan Khatun on: [ChildrensSocialWorkServiceTraining@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:ChildrensSocialWorkServiceTraining@leeds.gov.uk).

For information about the restorative practice training that forms part of the Strengthening Families Protecting Children programme please contact Katie Lamb at [Katie.lamb@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:Katie.lamb@leeds.gov.uk)

Our traded offer can be found on the [Leeds for Learning](#) website and for enquiries about traded provision contact: [lisa.banton@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.banton@leeds.gov.uk)

The Head of Workforce Development in children's services is Andy Lloyd, [andy.lloyd@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:andy.lloyd@leeds.gov.uk)

Information on the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership training is available from [here](#).