

Everyone's included:

The Leeds SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2022-2027

Making Leeds an inclusive child-friendly city for our children and young people aged 0-25 with SEND and additional needs.



Scan to view the SEND review: right support, right place, right time

In Leeds we are aiming high for our city, and for our children and young people. We want to become a child-friendly city, and the best city in the UK for children to grow up in.

Our *Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2018-23* sets out the outcomes we want for all our children and young people: to be safe from harm; to do well at all levels of learning and have skills for life; to enjoy healthy lifestyles; to have fun growing up; and to be active citizens who feel they have a voice and influence. NB a refreshed plan for 2023 to 2028 will be in place in summer from 2023, and will continue to focus on these outcomes.

Our *'3As' Plan: attend, attain, achieve* for learning in Leeds builds on this and aims to support all children and young people to regularly attend high-quality learning that is right for them, attain their best outcomes in learning, and achieve skills for life. Alongside this, our *Leeds Health and Wellbeing strategy* sets out our plans to improve health and well-being outcomes for all Leeds citizens, including children and young people.

Our new *Everyone's included: Leeds SEND and Inclusion strategy* builds on all these plans. Here, we set out our shared plans to improve support and outcomes for children and young people with SEND, and those with additional needs because of their circumstances: this includes children looked after by the Council, children in need (of support from a social worker), children living with financial disadvantage, and children who have experienced trauma. Our plans focus on improving outcomes for children and reducing the inequalities they may face in their learning, health, and wellbeing outcomes.

What is it like to be a child or young person with SEND in Leeds – and how do we make it better?

To produce this strategy, we brought together children and young people, their families, and partners in education, health, and care services, voluntary services, and community groups. We have talked together about experiences of using or working in local services, and what would make those experiences better.

We have heard many positive things about local services and found many examples of best practice to build on. We have also found that partners generally agree about changes that we need locally.

This has helped us to produce this joint strategy, based on a shared vision for the inclusive child-friendly city we want to be, and our shared priorities for change. It has also helped us to agree some shared actions to get us closer to our vision, and some shared values and behaviours that will underpin everything we do. This includes a focus on reducing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost of living crisis.



Scan to view the Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2018-23

'Right support, right place, right time': the national SEND review

Our local strategy also responds to a recent national government review of the system of support for children and young people with SEND. *The SEND review: right support, right place, right time* reported in summer 2022. Its findings echo the messages we have heard from partners in Leeds:

- We need a more consistent ethos of, and commitment to, inclusion across all our learning places and services. Most children and young people with SEND should be able to learn and participate alongside their peers, in their local mainstream schools, settings and services.
- To make this happen, we need all schools, settings, and services to work together in a more integrated (joined-up) way. We need consistent, quality approaches to identify and meet learning, health, and care needs, from the earliest time.
- While most children and young people should be able to learn and participate in mainstream schools, settings and services, there is a growing minority who have very complex needs across their learning, health, and care. The review proposes investment in more high-quality specialist and alternative learning places, to meet diverse individual needs. It also proposes investment in more 'wrap-around services' and 'respite care', outside of the school day and term-time.
- We also need clearer accountability across the SEND system: 'who is responsible for doing what, and how are they held to account?' The review proposes new 'SEND partnerships' in every local area, with a shared local strategy for improving SEND services (just as we are doing here in Leeds). It has also prompted changes to the *Ofsted and Care Quality Commission framework for inspecting SEND services*. The new Framework has more focus on accountability across learning, health, and care partners, and more of a role for families in evaluating local services.

Our local strategy very much aligns with these findings. However, the government's response to the review's recommendations will not be announced until late 2022. We need to leave some flexibility in our local plans to allow for this, so, we will have 2 different 'phases' for this strategy. As we work on the actions for phase 1 (set out over the page), we will also refine plans for phase 2, as we learn the final outcomes of the review.



Where do we want to be?

Our shared vision and ambitions:

The Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2018-23 sets out the outcomes we want for all our children and young people: to be safe from harm; to do well at all levels of learning and have skills for life; to enjoy healthy lifestyles; to have fun growing up; and to be active citizens who feel they have a voice and influence.



The **3As' Plan: attend, attain, achieve** sets out 3 outcomes we want for all our learners in Leeds: the best possible attendance, attainment, and achievement in learning for all children and young people, with the most rapid improvements for learners who are vulnerable to not fulfilling their potential

The **Leeds Health and Wellbeing strategy** sets out 5 outcomes we want for all people in Leeds: to live longer and have healthier lives; to live full, active and independent lives; to have their quality of life improved by access to quality services; to be actively involved in their health and their care; and to live in healthy, safe, and sustainable communities



The '3Is': 3 broad outcomes for an inclusive child-friendly Leeds:

Inclusion:

Children and young people are supported to live, learn, have fun, and be included in their local communities, with their peers, wherever possible. They can access high-quality support to reach their full potential and get ready for adult life.

All our learning places and services have a shared ethos of inclusion. They have high aspirations for all children and young people, and actively break down barriers to inclusion.

Our workforce has the skills, knowledge, support, and confidence to deliver consistent best inclusive practice across the city.

Integrated practices and pathways:

Partners across different services work together. They have shared values, a shared language, and shared practices (ways of working). They provide integrated (joined-up) pathways to identify, assess, and meet needs holistically, from the earliest time.

They use shared systems and approaches to minimise paperwork, plans, and meetings.

They also work in partnership with children and young people and their families, enabling them to have a voice and to influence change in their own lives, and in local services.

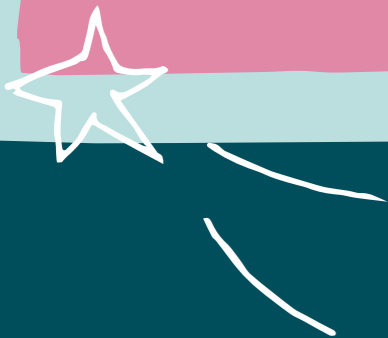
Individualisation:

Children and young people's individual needs, circumstances, goals, and identities are respected. Support plans reflect the individual and services are personalised as much as possible.

Leeds has a diverse offer of high-quality learning places and support services. This meets diverse needs, supports personalised services, and provides choices.

My teachers treat me with respect. They understand my individual needs and how to support me. I would like everyone who works with young people in Leeds to be like that.

Jacob, 12 years old



How will we get there?

6 shared priorities for action:



6 shared values and behaviours to underpin everything we do:

We respond to and reduce the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

We work with families as partners and enable their voice and influence

We support children from their earliest years. We support young people to prepare for adulthood from the earliest time

We personalise support and services as much as possible to recognise unique needs, circumstances, identities, and goals

We work together across agencies to identify the services we need, plan how to deliver them, and use money wisely (joint commissioning)

We use quality data to understand local needs and make sure we are improving outcomes



What are we doing first?

5 key actions in phase 1, to support our 6 shared priorities:

Priority 1, 2, and 3: we will co-produce the new SEND and Inclusion Practice Framework:

We will work together to share and build on expertise we already have in our Leeds learning workforce, using it to develop a shared framework for best inclusive practice for all our Leeds schools and learning places. The Framework will bring together learning, resources, and practical tools, underpinned by the national SEND Code of Practice 2015 and the local principles of a child-friendly city. This will support a consistent, shared approach to best practice in early identification of needs, holistic assessment of needs, and quality plans to meet needs and improve outcomes. We will also embed the Framework in wider Leeds early help services, to help practitioners have the right conversations, with the right people, at the right time if further, more specialised assessments or plans are needed.

Priority 3 and 6: we will embed high-quality plans across the whole local system of SEND support:

The SEND and Inclusion Practice Framework will reinforce consistent best practice in early assessments and planning to improve outcomes. Quality early assessments and plans will also provide a strong foundation for further, more specialised assessments and plans, if needed. This includes smooth, timely access to an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment and EHC Plan, if a learner is likely to need long-term, specialist support across education, health, and care. We will develop new systems to meet growing need for EHC assessments, making sure we have the most joined-up ways of working across education, health, and care partners. We will focus on meaningful outcomes in all plans, to make sure they reflect individual needs, circumstances, identities and goals. We will improve information for families about plans: who is responsible for them, and how families have a voice in them.

Priority 4, 3 and 6: we will develop a whole-city approach to inclusion for children and young people vulnerable to inequalities, because of their circumstances:

This includes children looked after, children in need, children living with financial disadvantage, and children who have trauma due to their early experiences. Many of these children have SEND, or unidentified SEND. These children are NOT 'destined to fail', but they are more vulnerable to exclusion from school, low attendance, and not achieving their full potential in learning. We will pilot new, shared approaches across the city to identify and meet these children's needs earlier, promote their resilience, and reduce inequalities in their outcomes. We will enable practitioners across the children's workforce to have quality conversations about attendance, attainment, and achievement with families. We will also develop a new city-wide approach to trauma-informed practice, building on the expertise we already have in the workforce to embed a shared, city-wide understanding of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences, and the factors that reduce the impact of trauma.

Priority 5: we will develop our local offer of learning places and support in the city:

We will embed inclusion in all plans for new learning places in the city. We will also create 400 new places in specialist education provision, including places combining aspects of mainstream and specialist learning. We will also respond to young people's voices and views by improving support to prepare for adult life. This will include our first large-scale inclusive careers fair 'Next Steps', and new supported internships. We will also work to embed inclusion in plans for 'places to go, things to do, and spaces to play' in Leeds. We will work with families to improve information about the local offer of services via our **Leeds Local Offer website** (www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk) and promote awareness of the site.

Priority 3 and 6: we will join up pathways and practices across services: in phase 1, we will focus on improving the multi-agency pathway to assessment and diagnosis of autism and ADHD

We will focus on working together effectively across the different services involved, and making sure children and families access support they need, from the earliest possible time. We will also work to re-structure our Leeds City Council teams supporting learners who are vulnerable to inequalities, so that teams can work together more effectively, and review our arrangements for planning services and working together effectively, across Leeds City Council and new integrated care partnerships in health services.

It's really important for people to see me first, not my additional needs, and focus on my skills and talents – not just the things I find difficult.

Ella, 17 years old



How will we know if we're making a difference?



A shared outcomes framework, developed across education, health and care services will help us to measure the difference we are making. It will set out 'indicators' of success for this strategy: improved learning, health, well-being, and participation outcomes for our children and young people.

This will need to be flexible and potentially change, as new national standards for monitoring and inspecting SEND services are proposed. However our preferred approach locally, mirrors the national proposals: we aim to focus on some key data, while also doing more to recognise the voices of children and families in evaluating our progress.

2 newly-established groups will support this: our new SEND Parents and Carers Forum, and our new Leeds SEND Youth Forum. These groups will make decisions about how they work, themselves: but they will also be supported by a dedicated SEND Voice, Influence and Change officer in Leeds City Council, who will enable them to have a voice and influence decisions in the city.

Who will hold us to account?

Our Leeds SEND Partnership Board will hold services to account for delivering the actions in this strategy.

The Board follows the approach proposed in the national SEND review: a group of key partners, with a single, shared strategy for SEND and Inclusion, and a single, shared approach to governance (holding services to account, and making any high-level decisions about the strategy and plans to support it). Partners who are members of the Board include senior leaders and decision makers in learning, health and care services; leaders and practitioners in Leeds schools and learning settings for 0-25 year olds; representatives of the voluntary and community sector; and representatives from the Leeds SEND Parent Carer Forum and Leeds SEND Youth Forum (facilitated by our dedicated SEND Voice, Influence and Change officer).



Find out more and get involved:

- Find out more about services in Leeds for children and young people aged 0-25 with SEND and/or additional needs:
🌐 leedslocaloffer.org.uk
- For impartial and confidential information, advice and guidance for parents and carers in Leeds: contact the Leeds SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SEND IASS):
🌐 sendiass.leeds.gov.uk/
☎ **0113 378 5020**
- Find out more about the Leeds SEND and Inclusion strategy or get involved in our work-groups: contact the Learning Inclusion Service, Leeds City Council via our Leeds Local Offer:
✉ LLO@Leeds.gov.uk (It would be helpful to include 'SEND and Inclusion strategy' in the title of your email.)
- Parents and carers, and local parent and carer community groups, who are interested in our Parent and Carer Forum are very welcome to contact us:
✉ LLO@Leeds.gov.uk
More information is also available on our Leeds Local Offer website as above.
- Young people who are interested in joining our SEND Youth Forum are very welcome to contact us at:
✉ LLO@Leeds.gov.uk
More information is also available on our Leeds Local Offer website as above.
- Find other opportunities to have a say about services in Leeds:
✉ leedslocaloffer.org.uk/#!/directory/33458

Many thanks to all the young people, parents and carers, and partners in services who have helped to shape this strategy.

Thank you for reading, and thank you for supporting an inclusive child-friendly Leeds!

