

## Adoption in Leeds

Last update received October 2007

	Recommendation	Where we are up to	Stage	Complete
2	<b>We recommend that the Director of Social Services reports back to us within three months on action that will be taken to reduce administrative delays in the adoption process</b>	<p><u>July 2007 position</u> Recommendations for administrative support to the Fostering &amp; Adoption Service will arise out of the full review of the service <b>Timescale: October 2007</b></p> <p><u>October 2007 update</u> <b>The timescale for the review to be completed is now January 2008. An additional temporary post has been agreed in the interim.</b></p>	4	
3	<b>We recommend that the Director of Social Services considers whether a similar organisational approach to that taken in Liverpool would benefit adoption in Leeds, and reports back to us with a view within three months</b>	<p><u>July 2007 position</u> This proposal will be considered as part of the full review of the service as it represents a significant change to current practice and has budgetary implications <b>Timescale: October 2007</b></p> <p><u>October 2007 update</u> <b>The timescale for the review to be completed is now January 2008.</b></p>	4	
5	<b>We recommend that the Director of Children's Services explores, with the inter-agency group, the case for change in adoption processes to make more effective use of combined resources, whilst protecting the integrity of decision-making in the child's best interests. We request a report back within three months</b>	<p><u>July 2007 position</u> This proposal will be taken to the next Family Justice Council to begin discussion on how the court process might be streamlined.</p> <p><u>October 2007 update</u> <b>Discussions are still continuing.</b></p>	4	

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6	<b>We recommend that the Director of Social Services reports back to us within three months on the potential for the regional consortium to develop a more strategic role to complement its successful 'marketplace' function</b>	<p><u>July 2007 position</u> The Adoption Consortium has invited the Coordinator of Adoption 22 to come to one of their meetings to discuss the suitability of a more strategic approach by the local Consortium.</p> <p><u>October 2007 update</u> <b>A regional approach to the recruitment of BME adopters and awareness raising is now taking place. Discussions on taking a more strategic approach are continuing.</b></p>	4	
9	<b>We recommend that the Director of Social Services commissions appropriate activity to raise general awareness of the range of people who can adopt children and reports back to us on initiatives proposed within three months</b>	<p><u>July 2007 position</u> Consideration will be given to increasing the recruitment budget. The current budget has not been increased for several years and is probably insufficient. The service review will report on this and make recommendations. <b>Timescale: April 2008</b></p> <p>Continue current involvement with the Adoption Consortium on raising awareness about adoption at a regional level particularly about BME children needing adoption</p> <p><u>October 2007 update</u> <b>Adoption Consortium involvement now in place (see 6 above.)</b></p>	6	
10	<b>We recommend that the Director of Social Services reports back to us regularly on the progress of the adoption recruitment strategy and the number of black and minority ethnic prospective adopters recruited</b>	<p><u>July 2007 position</u> The Local Authority is required by Adoption Regulations to provide a 6 monthly report on Adoption Agency activity. This will provide the Scrutiny Board with a regular update on progress on all these matters.</p> <p><u>October 2007 update</u> <b>Report on Adoption Agency activity attached.</b></p>	2	✓

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	Recommendation	Where we are up to	Stage	Complete
11	<b>We recommend that the Director of Social Services reviews the upper age limit policy and reports back to us on the outcome of that review within three months</b>	<p><u>July 2007 position</u> The current policy requires at least one of the adopters to be 60 or younger when the adopted child reaches 18. Consider increasing this age limit to 65. This age limit can be disregarded in special circumstances.</p> <p>Remove bar on adopting a child of 2 or younger if adopters already have children. Remove bar on adopted children needing to be younger than existing children in the family but maintain 2 year age difference.</p> <p><b>Timescale: September 2007</b></p> <p><u>October 2007 update</u> <b>Completed</b></p>	2	✓
12	<b>We recommend that the Director of Children's Services considers the appointment of an independent reviewing officer for adoption, and reports back to us with a view within three months</b>	<p><u>July 2007 position</u> The manager of the Independent Reviewing Officers will consider this proposal and make recommendations.</p> <p><b>Timescale: July 2007</b></p> <p><u>October 2007 update</u> <b>A review of the reviewing service is underway and the manager has been made aware of this proposal.</b></p>	4	
13	<b>We recommend that the Director of Social Services and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds produce an action plan within three months for improving the education support to adopted children, in order to ensure a more consistent quality of experience for adoptive families. This should cover awareness raising for schools; social services staff awareness of education resources; and parental awareness of education support particularly for special educational needs</b>	<p><u>July 2007 position</u> There is a piece of work currently being undertaken to develop practice in respect of the education of looked after children. The proposals regarding the education of adopted children will be similarly considered and added to the current piece of work.</p> <p><b>Timescale: April 2008</b></p> <p><u>October 2007 update</u> <b>A 'virtual headteacher' for looked after children has been appointed and will consider this as part of his brief.</b></p>	6	

**Review of 14-19 Education and Training**

**Last update received October 2007**

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Where we are up to</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>That Education Leeds, and in particular the LSC, ensure that young people are adequately consulted on the proposals for change before any final decisions are made.</b>	<p><u>July 2007 position</u> Commitment to consultation given.</p> <p><b><u>October 2007 update</u></b> <b>The proposals for change are elsewhere on this agenda.</b></p>	<b>2</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>That Education Leeds report back to us on how the Scrutiny Board's many concerns about the 14-19 review are being addressed.</b>	<p><u>July 2007 position</u> Initial response to concerns provided. Check against final proposals.</p> <p><b><u>October 2007 update</u></b> <b>A report on the 14-19 review is elsewhere on this agenda.</b></p>	<b>2</b>	

The Implications of Trust Schools for the Local Authority

Last update received October 2007

	Recommendation	Where we are up to	Stage	Complete
1	<p><b>That the Chief Executive of Education Leeds and the Director of Children’s Services take a proactive strategic approach to maximise the potential that Trust Schools might have for improving outcomes for children in deprived communities in Leeds by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exploring potential trust models for clusters of schools in deprived areas with a view to instigating trusts</li> <li>• issuing advice to strategic partners about how to target their partnership support to schools and areas most in need</li> <li>• informing our proactive approach to wider planning issues (BSF, 14-19 review, etc).</li> </ul>	<p><u>July 2007 position</u> Proposals for the development of a Central Leeds Learning Trust were agreed by Executive Board in June 2007. This is to be a formal partnership as opposed to ‘Trust Schools’ as defined in the Act.</p> <p><u>October 2007 update</u> A further report on the development of ‘The Leeds Learning Alliance’ is elsewhere on the agenda (see 14-19 review).</p>	4	

	Recommendation	Where we are up to	Stage	Complete
3	<p><b>That the Director of Children’s Services has regard to this report when responding to any school consulting on becoming a Trust School.</b></p> <p><b>In particular the points raised in this report regarding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>proposed partner organisations sharing the same vision for the school</b></li> <li>• <b>any proposed changes to the school’s admissions policy</b></li> <li>• <b>potential for the proposals to help or hinder “narrowing the gap”</b></li> <li>• <b>balance of trust appointed governors on the governing body</b></li> </ul> <p><b>and to consider how the individual proposals will contribute to community cohesion and delivering the Every Child Matters agenda.</b></p>	<p>Commitment given</p> <p>No further formal proposals received to date</p>	6	

	Recommendation	Where we are up to	Stage	Complete
1	In light of the evidence presented during our inquiry, we recommend that the youth offer for Leeds needs to address the following key findings:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need for a more equal distribution of universal youth services on offer across the city</li> </ul>	The youth offer's entitlement statements cover a very wide range of service provision and are designed to ensure universal access to opportunities and support.	4	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That the youth offer in Leeds should extend beyond the statutory 13-19 age group, at least to cover 11 and 12 year olds, but preferably to cover the 8-12 age group</li> </ul>	The youth offer will be governed by statutory requirements and will cover the 13-19 age group. Services will continue to be available to a younger age range. For example the youth service will continue to deploy approximately 20% of its resources on work with 11 and 12 year olds. The Scrutiny Inquiry on services for 8-13 year olds will explore services to the younger age range in greater depth.	2	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to include advice and signposting within universal provision</li> </ul>	The youth offer will reinforce universal access to information, advice and guidance services and will seek to ensure entitlement to a Connexions Personal Adviser.	4	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to recognise that some groups of young people (for example carers, looked after children and young people with disabilities) may need a different approach or extra assistance to enable them to access the types of opportunities included in the universal youth offer</li> </ul>	The Department of Children, Schools and Families has published a 'Targeted Youth Support Strategy'. The aim is very much to pursue this recommendation in the coming months and years.	4	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to recognise young people's expressed desires for venues and spaces to undertake their own (unstructured) activity</li> </ul>	The Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds have been used to channel funds into venues and spaces identified by groups of young people. The government's Ten Year Youth Strategy sets targets for the percentage of provision which should be run directly by young people so further development work will be taking place.	4	

Youth Services

Last update received September 2007

	Recommendation	Where we are up to	Stage	Complete
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The important role of inter-generational/all age activities as well as specific young people's activities</li> </ul>	<p>There are plenty of examples of this type of work but it has not previously been collated into a summary document. This could be done as a one-off exercise for Scrutiny Board if required.</p> <p><i>The Scrutiny Board requested this at its meeting in September.</i></p>	4	
	<p><b>We ask the Director of Children's Services to report to us within 3 months on how each of these issues will be addressed in the published youth offer.</b></p>	<p><i>The 'Breeze Youth Promise' is due to be published in November 2007</i></p>		
2	<p><b>We recommend that the Executive Board reviews the allocation of Youth Service funding to Area Committees, taking into consideration the issues raised by the Scrutiny Board.</b></p>	<p>A new minimum ward allocation is being introduced from October 2007.</p>	2	✓
3	<p><b>We recommend that the Director of Children's Services ensures that arrangements for funding and commissioning youth services through the voluntary, community and faith sector includes provision for the strategic capacity of the sector to be an effective partner in service delivery and development.</b></p>	<p>A number of arrangements have been made to commission organisations to provide this type of support to the voluntary, community and faith sector.</p> <p>It is intended to continue these types of arrangements as part of the Integrated Youth Support Service from April 2008 onwards.</p>	2	✓
4	<p><b>We also recommend that the Director of Children's Services promotes the development of local networks to help smaller organisations to play an effective part in the youth offer and qualify for funding.</b></p>	<p>Leeds Youth Work Partnership has recently established wedge based networks which are including a wider range of organisations at local level. This development is in addition to the operation of local networks run in conjunction with Area Management.</p>	2	✓



Youth Services

Last update received September 2007

	Recommendation	Where we are up to	Stage	Complete
5	<b>We recommend that the Director of Children's Services prioritises resources to support the work of the Youth Inclusion Projects (YIPs) and Junior YIPs in the way described to us during our inquiry.</b>	Youth Service resources are now being used in all five wedges of the city to address this recommendation.	2	✓
6	<b>That the Director of Children's Services finds ways of promoting positive relationships between the police and youth services more widely, building on the good examples that exist in some parts of the city.</b>	The position remains that there are good local examples but no strategic discussions have as yet taken place. This would be a useful starting point and will be followed up.	4	
7	<b>We recommend that the Director of Children's Services ensures that, in addition to existing consultation with service users, specific efforts are made to consult with non service users about their views on the Youth Service.</b>	The Youth Service will be conducting its second annual user survey in October 2007. This is specifically designed to assess customer feedback and satisfaction ratings. Extensive public consultation with young people about the youth offer has been taking place during the summer as part of Breeze on Tour	6	
8	<b>We also recommend that the Director of Children's Services considers how the examples of young people's involvement in the management of governance of services can be more widely applied across children's services.</b>	West Yorkshire Youth Association has operated the "Particip 8" initiative on behalf of Children's Services. It has delivered 42 programmes of work and worked with 30 agencies. 96% of schools had an active school council as at December 2006. A Participation Evaluation Toolkit (PET) has been piloted with youth agencies and is now being rolled out across Children Leeds Partnership. Work is under way to adopt and implement the "Hear By Right" national standards across all Children's Services. Both PET and Hear By Right are key elements of a participation strategy which is due out this autumn and which is involving children and young people in its development.	4	

Departmental Communications

Last update received July 2007

	Recommendation	Where we are up to	Stage	Complete
2	That costs for departmental publications 2006/2007 be supplied to a future meeting of Scrutiny Board (Children's Services), to establish a baseline figure for departmental publications produced by Education Leeds for comparison with future years.	Comprehensive costs for 2006/07 not available Costs for 2007/08 being monitored Scrutiny Board agreed to this as an alternative. <b>Review at end of 2007/08 financial year</b>	6	
3	That the Director of Children's Services obtain costs for publications relating to Children's Services 2006/2007 from Council Departments and external partners, where available, to supply to a future meeting of Scrutiny Board (Children's Services).	Response indicated amount of work required to achieve recommendation. Board agreed that information would be sought from council departments only in the first place, for 2007/08 <b>Review at end of 2007/08 financial year</b>	6	

**Catching the Bus**

**Last update received July 2007**

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Where we are up to</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>That First Bus review its fare structure so that the fare paid better matches the distance travelled. That First Bus review its fare structure in the light of the forum’s findings on the barrier cost represents to young people. And, that First Bus report its conclusions/intentions to Scrutiny Board (Children’s Services) in July 2007.</b>	First has agreed to re-examine this issue when fares are next reviewed, although the scope for change may be limited.	<b>6*</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>That Metro should investigate the possibility of developing a concessionary scheme whereby young people pay for the first few journeys in the usual way and then get one/two free (buy four, get one free for example but avoiding the need to pay up front) and report their findings/actions to Scrutiny Board (Children’s Services) in July 2007.</b>	Metro has agreed to consider this approach.	<b>6*</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>That Metro and the bus companies should co-operate to develop a day pass which can be used on all buses and that Metro report progress to Scrutiny Board (Children’s Services) in July 2007.</b>	Practical issues may present obstacles to progress.	<b>6*</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b>That Metro reviews the effectiveness of its marketing strategies with regard to young people’s concessionary schemes and report its progress to Scrutiny Board (Children’s Services) in July 2007.</b>	Metro has offered to work with the Director of Children’s Services on this issue.	<b>6*</b>	

**\* The Scrutiny Board agreed in July 2007 to set up a working group of Scrutiny Board members, young people and relevant officers to progress the recommendations from this inquiry. Following the Youth Council elections in October, this working group will meet shortly.**

## Catching the Bus

Last update received July 2007

	Recommendation	Where we are up to	Stage	Complete
5	<b>That Metro develop a text messaging comments and complaints system, promote this amongst young people and report progress to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.</b>	Metro will consider this further following the launch of their young people's website	6*	
6	<b>That Metro and First Bus investigate the possibility of developing CCTV systems on buses to record sound as well as pictures and report their findings to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.</b>	Metro and First are willing to consider this further, but warn that cost is an issue here.	6*	
7	<b>That the Director of Children's Services ensures that the barriers young people face with regard to transport are taken into account by ALL decision makers and that they are a key part of the Child Impact Statement process. We ask that she report back to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.</b>	The Director of Children's Services has given a commitment to this recommendation. The scrutiny working group is one way of promoting progress.	6*	
8	<b>That the Director of Children's Services investigates adding travel concessions to the other benefits of the Breeze card and reports back to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.</b>	There are some technical issues that need to be addressed. Metro and Leeds City Council have agreed to closer joint working on publicity, events and discounts.	6*	

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**Catching the Bus**

Last update received July 2007

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Where we are up to</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>That the Director of Children's Services orders a review of how school transport monies are being spent in Leeds to see if there is a better way in which it could be spent and reports back to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) in July 2007.</b>	A review is taking place.  Metro is developing a pathfinder bid for November 2007.	<b>6*</b>	
<b>10</b>	<b>That the Youth Council and ROAR lead a campaign with one aim - to achieve free bus travel for all young people - and that everyone who works with and for young people joins with and supports them in achieving it.</b>	The Youth Council and ROAR are carrying out a campaign.	<b>6*</b>	

\* The Scrutiny Board agreed in July 2007 to set up a working group of Scrutiny Board members, young people and relevant officers to progress the recommendations from this inquiry. Following the Youth Council elections in October, this working group will meet shortly.

## Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs)

Last update received July 2007

	Recommendation	Where we are up to	Stage	Complete
1	<b>That Education Leeds reviews the funding model for the SILCs, to reflect changing patterns of service delivery and the levels of funding required to support them.</b>	A fundamental review of funding to SILCs, partnership schools and resourced provision is due to report in October 2007. Any recommendations for change will be taken through Schools Forum.	6*	
2	<b>That Education Leeds carries out further analysis of the projected future numbers of pupils and their distribution between partnership and SILC sites, in order to inform further work on funding, accommodation and partnership development.</b>	Education Leeds are recruiting an officer to analyse patterns and predict future need, linking into the review of funding above.	4*	
3	<b>That Education Leeds considers the place of partnership models such as Holly Bush, where specialised SILC units are sited on mainstream school campuses, within the overall accommodation strategy for the SILCs.</b>	Accurate pupil level data is now available and will be used to demonstrate where pupils are making the best progress.	4*	
4	<b>That the Director of Children's Services and Education Leeds produce clear, co-ordinated and updated information, in a readily accessible manner, to guide parents and professionals through the maze of services for children with special educational needs.</b>	The Children and Families directory has been updated. A local information section has been drafted for the Early Support Programme. There is a proposal to develop a parent partnership website. The parenting strategy is out for consultation. Documentation for parents will be updated following the finalisation of the refreshed Inclusion Strategy.	4*	
5	<b>That the Director of Children's Services and Education Leeds devise a programme of training/visits to enable professionals to gain first-hand experience of current inclusion practice.</b>	A comprehensive training programme is being developed in partnership with the SILCs, Leeds University and the National College of School Leadership, as well as social services and health.	4*	

**\*Following consideration of the revised Inclusion Strategy in October, the Scrutiny Board has established a working group which will look at two of the four strategic objectives of the Inclusion Strategy. It is proposed that the Working Group also consider an update on progress against the recommendations of the SILCs Inquiry.**

**Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs)**

**Last update received July 2007**

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Where we are up to</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>That Education Leeds leads in developing a communications strategy for the SILCs strategy, to ensure that parents are engaged in the ongoing development of the SILCs and also kept informed of progress and choices in relation to their own child's educational provision.</b>	Individual SILCs have developed newsletters, and SILC Principals are working with the Communications Team to develop this model.  A review has taken place of systems and procedures for placements of pupils with SEN. The Choice Adviser and Parent Support Advisers are in place.	<b>4*</b>	
<b>7</b>	<b>That Education Leeds considers how the outreach role of the SILCs can be further supported and developed.</b>	A number of Service Level Agreements are in place, for example Hospital and Home Teaching Service, and physical needs. New arrangements are being developed covering further service areas.	<b>4*</b>	
<b>8</b>	<b>That Education Leeds facilitates a strategic review of the partnership provision associated with the SILCs and in particular the number of partnerships operated by the NW SILC, informed by future funding, accommodation plans and pupil number projections.</b>	An initial review took place in 2006, focusing on the NW SILC.  Further work was scheduled over the summer term 2007, linked to the fundamental review of funding and accommodation.	<b>4*</b>	

**\*Following consideration of the revised Inclusion Strategy in October, the Scrutiny Board has established a working group which will look at two of the four strategic objectives of the Inclusion Strategy. It is proposed that the Working Group also consider an update on progress against the recommendations of the SILCs Inquiry.**

Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs)

Last update received July 2007

	Recommendation	Where we are up to	Stage	Complete
11	<b>That the Director of Children’s Services and Education Leeds work with partners to ensure that the following issues which emerged during our inquiry are given further attention, and that they report back to us on the action being taken on each issue:</b>			
(1)	<b>Clear transition plans for pupils at all transfer stages, developed in conjunction with parents</b>	The annual review process and monitoring of individual progress are to be strengthened as part of a fundamental review of monitoring and assessment processes.	4*	
(2)	<b>The inclusion of information about the SILCs in admissions information and on the admissions preference form</b>	This will be part of the review of admissions arrangements for September 2008.	4*	
(4)	<b>Ensuring that information on services available to parents incorporates non-statutory services</b>	An Information Officer has been appointed to the Parent Partnership Service, and her role includes the provision of information on voluntary services. Close links have been established with the Children’s Information Service, with a view to producing a multi-agency community newsletter.	4*	
(6)	<b>The possibility of the direct payments scheme being applied to children’s care needs in education</b>	<i>Last reported March 2007</i> No progress to report - timescale for proposals was July 2007	4*	

**\*Following consideration of the revised Inclusion Strategy in October, the Scrutiny Board has established a working group which will look at two of the four strategic objectives of the Inclusion Strategy. It is proposed that the Working Group also consider an update on progress against the recommendations of the SILCs Inquiry.**



Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs)

Last update received July 2007

	Recommendation	Where we are up to	Stage	Complete
11	<b>That the Director of Children’s Services and Education Leeds work with partners to ensure that the following issues which emerged during our inquiry are given further attention, and that they report back to us on the action being taken on each issue:</b>			
(7)	<b>Reviewing funding to the Portage service</b>	<i>Last reported March 2007</i> Vacant post filled, however case load remains high. Further work required.	<b>4*</b>	
(8)	<b>Exploring opportunities for the SILCs and their pupils and parents to benefit from the extended schools agenda</b>	<i>Last reported March 2007</i> Action Plan due to be produced following planning day in March 2007.	<b>4*</b>	
(12)	<b>Developing an outreach role for staff in experienced partnership schools</b>	Further development of the role of partnership schools is a key element within the revised Inclusion strategy.	<b>4*</b>	
(15)	<b>The need for future consultation to inform realistic and challenging discussion of proposals</b>	<i>Last reported March 2007</i> Revised Inclusion Strategy to be the subject of consultation during summer and autumn 2007	<b>4*</b>	
(16)	<b>Consider appropriate governance structures to reflect the partnership nature of the SILCs</b>	<i>Last reported March 2007</i> Governance arrangements for SILC partnerships are now part of a larger project developing new governance arrangements for the growing number of collaborative arrangements between schools. Some of these are currently being piloted and if they prove successful should be transferable to SILC settings by September 2007.	<b>4*</b>	

**\*Following consideration of the revised Inclusion Strategy in October, the Scrutiny Board has established a working group which will look at two of the four strategic objectives of the Inclusion Strategy. It is proposed that the Working Group also consider an update on progress against the recommendations of the SILCs Inquiry.**