

**Leeds children and  
young people's  
participation strategy  
2007**

**Children Leeds**

## Foreword

Making sure that every child can get involved in shaping the services that they use is vitally important. It forms a central theme of our Children and Young People's plan as it helps deliver effective and personalised services. It also ensures that each and every child makes the most of their talents, fulfils their potential and develops their confidence.

Leeds has an abundance of children's centres, schools, services, organisations, partnerships, projects and activities that do just that. The list is endless. But we have made a good start, as you will see in appendix 1!

This strategy shows the commitment to take our success in the participation of children and young people to the next level. For the first time it brings together in a single approach how we will work as a partnership to plan, deliver and improve the participation of children and young people in the services that matter to them.

We asked children and young people how they would know if we had succeeded in involving them. One young person told us that "it would look like heaven and every one would be more friendly."

We couldn't agree more.

Lead executive member for children's services  
Councillor Richard Brett

Director of children's services  
Rosemary Archer

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# **Leeds children and young people's participation strategy 2007**

## **Who is the strategy for?**

This strategy affects us all. We want to work together with our children and young people to help them to achieve the outcomes that they want for themselves. The strategy covers all children and young people aged 0-19 years, plus some young people with additional needs up to the age of 25.

## **What do we mean by participation?**

Participation means that children and young people have an ongoing influence over decisions and actions, not just that they are present.

## **Aims**

The aims of the strategy are:

- to provide a framework for all organisations across the Children Leeds Partnership to assist them in involving children and young people in the design, delivery and review of the services that affect them.
- to provide a mechanism for establishing and embedding good participatory practice in Leeds.
- to set out the range of activities underway in Leeds and the support available.

## **Principles**

The Leeds Charter for the Participation of Children and Young People was adopted in 2002. Its five key principles underpin this strategy. They are that we will ensure that:

1. we have positive attitudes towards all children and young people.
2. we are accessible to all children and young people.
3. across the Children Leeds Partnership we have the appropriate resources to support the participation of children and young people.
4. our information will inform and involve all children and young people.
5. we have the skills to enable all children and young people's participation and will support them to develop skills to participate.

## **Building a culture of participation: rationale and benefits**

### **The rationale**

The UK government has made its commitment to children and young people's participation clear:

"The Government wants children and young people to have more opportunities to get involved in the design, provision and evaluation of policies and services that affect them or which they use".

(Children and Young People's Unit 2001).

Locally, we want our children and young people to be happy, health, safe, achieving and free from the effects of poverty. We want them to feel lucky they grew up in Leeds. Across the children's trust arrangements our approach is based on working in partnership, developing participation, personalising services and preventing difficulties from occurring or worsening whenever possible. We will only achieve this with children and young people's help.

There are now many requirements for organisations to involve children and young people, including Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, National

Service Framework for Children's and Maternity Services 2004, Every Child Matters and the Children Act 2004 and Youth Matters 2006.

### **How do organisations benefit from children and young people's participation?**

Organisations that involve children and young people:

- meet legal requirements and inspection regimes.
- commission services more effectively.
- have confidence that they are meeting service standards and the needs of children and young people.
- develop a more responsive ethos that leads to services that are valued by the whole community.
- can use their research and analysis to enable services to develop efficiently, and to provide useful evidence for funding applications, etc.
- recognise and improve the status of children and young people as valued members of their community.
- enable children and young people's participation in wider society, both now and in the future.

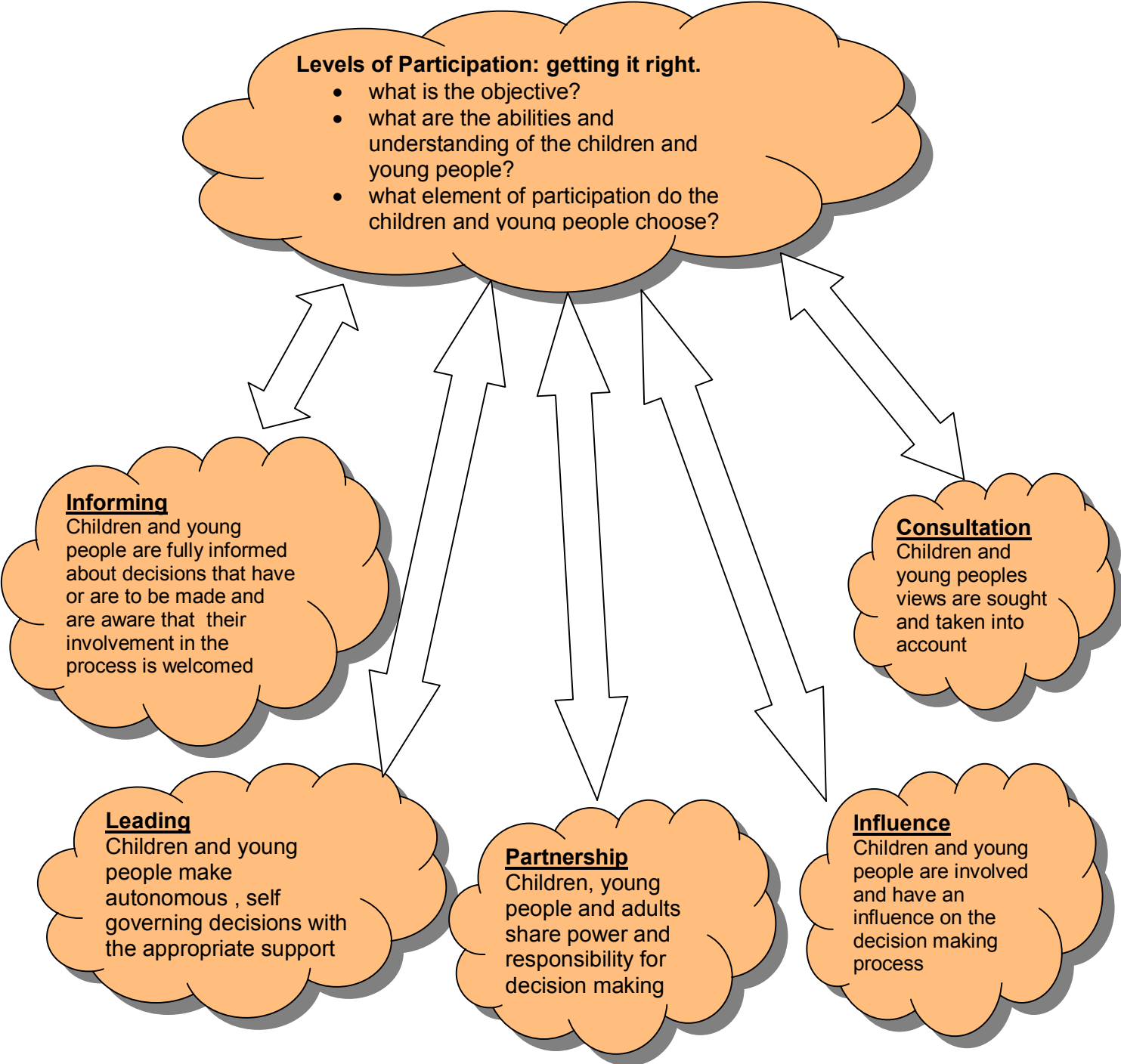
### **How do children and young people benefit from participation?**

Through participation, children and young people:

- have influence, and it is recognised and valued.
- know that they have a right to influence, under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- have services that meet their needs.
- are active partners in the planning, development, delivery and evaluation of services.
- are recognised as valuable within their communities.
- are equipped with knowledge, skills and understanding to have an active part in wider society, both now and in the future.

# Levels of participation

There are 5 different levels of participation, appropriate for different situations. These are informing, leading, partnership, influence and consultation.



Adapted from *Building a culture of participation*, National Children's Bureau.

## **Priorities for Leeds**

In implementing this strategy, the priorities for Leeds are:

- embedding the Hear by Right standards across Children Leeds.
- using the Participation Evaluation Tool across Children Leeds for service reviews and planning.
- ensuring that staff are trained appropriately in children and young people's participation.
- developing robust and rigorous processes for ensuring compliance with the Participation Strategy.
- building children and young people's participation into the developing commissioning processes for Children Leeds.

The resources available to support this work are set out in Appendix 1.

Outline Implementation Plan: Appendix 2.

## **How will we know if the strategy is working?: Children and young people's views**

### **If Leeds listens and works with children and young people now:**

- Life wouldn't be perfect, but it would be fairer.
- The future would be a better place for children and young people in Leeds.
- Not having money wouldn't be such a problem for families.
- Children and young people would be safer and welcome on the streets.
- Children and young people would make more of a contribution.
- It would look like heaven and every one would be more friendly.
- There'd be colour everywhere.
- Schools would be flexible and let you also learn things that you identify as important to you like driving skills, music, story telling, film making, how to work as a team, what's the best way to communicate and work with people to get what you want and help others. We would learn more.
- There would be more opportunities for children and young people and they would know about them.
- We would have a theme park in Leeds.
- We would have a water park with water slides and stuff.
- Health care would be better and we'd get free glasses.
- There would be no racists.
- More free leisure facilities and youth clubs; free sports for all races and that would help solve obesity.
- Everyone would have access to a career, not just job.
- Everyone would have shelter, food and money to meet their minimum needs.
- There would be more respect for authority' because they would respect us; children and young people would have more respect.
- Top class teachers. Children and young people would be able to have a say in who was employed to be a teacher and what was in their job description.

## Resources to support Participation

Leeds has a wide range of activities and providers to ensure that children and young people can access participation activities, have their say and influence their services and their communities. We acknowledge that not all the activity is described here but hope that it gives some idea of the scope and the framework it all operates within.

The National Youth Agency is currently setting up a pilot programme with Children Leeds to establish the Hear By Right Standards across the City; measuring effectiveness and impact through the Participation Evaluation Tool. Children, young people and service providers have agreed a set of priorities against the standards. The result will be a National Standards Framework for participation in Leeds against which we can measure the impact of the participation of children and young people whilst demonstrating the processes and methods used through the Participation Evaluation Tool.

### **Hear by Right (Self Assessment Participation Standards Framework)**

Hear by Right is a tried and tested national standards framework for organisations across the statutory and voluntary sectors to assess and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people.

The standards framework in Hear by Right is based on the Seven S model of organisational change: Shared values; Strategy; Structures; Systems; Staff; Skills and knowledge and Style of leadership. It relies on self-assessment, divided into three levels of 'emerging', 'established' and 'advanced', with each level building on the last. *This ensures that young people's involvement is built in and not just bolted on.*

Visit the website <http://www.nya.org.uk/hearbyright>: to find organisational profiles, case studies, mapping and planning tools, 'What's Changed' tools and downloads providing ideas, useful templates and evidence of young people's involvement and engagement.

### **PET (Self Assessment Participation Evaluation Tool)**

The Participation Evaluation Tool has been developed in Leeds to support services and schemes of work that encourage and enable children and young people not only to access services but have involvement in the policies, planning and decision making processes that shape them. The PET lays down clear principles and standards about what constitutes good practice in participation issues. PET is a self assessment tool which will help you to:

- Identify and record the types of participatory work your current service carries out.
- Identify your development priorities and put these into action plans.
- Evaluate the level of participation your service is working towards.

For more information please contact Charlee/Jo at the Project on 0113 3070905

At a strategic level, Leeds has two models currently operating to ensure that we can develop appropriate conduits for a "voice" for children and young people that can inform, influence and hold service providers to account. Whilst other participation initiatives in the City also operate at a city wide and even national level, the Youth Council and ROAR provide a framework for bringing children and young people from schools and across all of those initiatives together to look at specific issues.



## **Leeds Youth Council / Youth Parliament**

The Leeds Youth Council is an elected body representing young people of high school age from all over the city. Each high school, and currently one college, holds annual elections in October to elect two Leeds Youth Councillors who hold office for one year.

The Youth Council began in 2003. Currently 25 high schools in Leeds send representatives bringing the Youth Council membership to fifty.

The key aims of the Leeds Youth Council are to:

- be the elected voice of young people in Leeds.
- improve life for young people; and
- make sure that Leeds City Council and other decision making bodies take into account the views of young people when making decisions that affect us all.

Every year the Leeds Youth Council elects four of its members to serve as Members of the UK Youth Parliament.

Leeds Youth Councillors have produced a manifesto 2005-2008 which outlines the LYC's priorities. The Youth Council is key to the development of the democratic process for young people's voices in Leeds. It does this through developing a feedback mechanism through school councils, running scrutiny panels, engaging with consultation work, and leading on the youth opportunity and youth capital fund. The Youth Council often works in partnership with ROAR initiatives.

LYC has seven working groups: five reflect the Every Child Matters Outcomes and in addition there is a Transport Group and Fair Trade Group.

Please contact: Diane Whiteley-McLean or Lesley Reed, Voice and Influence Team, Leeds Youth Council, The Youth Service, East Leeds Family Learning Centre, Brooklands View, Seacroft, Leeds LS14 6SA Tel: 0113 224 3331

[www.leedsyouthcouncil.com](http://www.leedsyouthcouncil.com)

## **ROAR: Reach Out And Reconnect**

**ROAR** is a new city wide partnership group for children and young people to work at a strategic level in the planning and development of services for children and young people. In September 2005 Participants aged 8 to 19, from a host of different programmes including; YSHAG, Leeds Youth Council, The Crew, Young Peepz, Leeds Children's Rights and Youth on Health came together for the first time to develop 'Reach Out and Re-connect' or R.O.A.R. Over twenty children and young people designed, planned and delivered a citywide consultation event which reached 300 children and young people and a Young Delegate event to feedback their findings directly to members of Senior Management and Local Councillors.

ROAR is not a fixed group of children and young people, but a forum that invites participants from participation and involvement initiatives to work with other children and young people to inform and influence both the planning, development and delivery of services and increase the participation of children and young people. It also has a direct membership of over 600 children and young people who are informed of opportunities through a newsletter. Children and young people can participate to a level that meets their needs and interests; they can take part in as much or as little activity as they choose.

### **ROAR aims to:**

- Provide opportunities for children and young people to participate at a strategic level, specifically those who are often excluded.
- Enable children and young people to develop participation initiatives at both a city wide and wedge level as equal partners in the Children Leeds partnership.
- To promote children and young people as active participants engaged in dialogue and joint action with other Children Leeds partners.

In its first year ROAR planned and developed consultation and Young Delegates' events, formed part of the recruitment process for key posts in Children and Young People's Services, worked with services to develop strategies, took part in Scrutiny Panels with Councillors looking at specific issues and worked with the Leeds Youth Council on the Youth Opportunity/ Capital Fund.

For more information about ROAR please contact Jo Price The Project, 180, Chapeltown Road, Leeds, LS7 4HP [theproject1@btconnect.com](mailto:theproject1@btconnect.com), Tel: 0113 3070905.

In order to support the participation of children and young people, Leeds has two groups of adults who work with them at a strategic and operational level.

### **The Strategic Participation Group**

The Strategic Participation group works alongside others on the Children Leeds partnership to ensure that services ask children and young people, hear what they have to say and act with them to improve outcomes for children and young people in Leeds.

#### **What does the group want to achieve?**

- To influence strategy through active involvement of children and young people in obtaining their views and opinions.
- To ensure that services and organisations hear and respond to the voices of children and young people.
- To monitor and measure the performance of partners in terms of participation and consultation across the city.
- To embed the culture of participation through the Children Leeds partnership and associated key agencies.

#### **How is it going to do it?**

- To challenge the planning mechanisms of services that currently do not involve children and young people.
- To be the communication channel between the strategy/policy makers.
- Share knowledge and promote best practice at all times.
- To involve children and young people and ensure two-way communication.
- Promote the values and principles of participation, as outlined in the Leeds charter for the participation of children and young people and monitor how they are implemented.
- To provide and support the work of the Children and Young people Involvement Advocates (CIA's).

#### **Who are the members?**

Champions for participation representing a wide range of services, sectors and organisations.

We try to have effective and appropriate representation from key agencies, with an even balance of both the statutory and the voluntary sectors and a distinct contribution from partnership organisations. These key areas include Wedge representation, Health, Education, Environment, Community Safety, Youth Service, Early Years, Social Services and organisations from the voluntary sector that reflect the range of participation work in the city.

**Membership:** to be confirmed.

## **The role of the Children and Young People's Involvement Advocate. (City Wide)**

To champion children and young people's participation in the children's trust arrangements for Leeds, monitoring and advocating for the involvement and participation of children and young people at all levels of service design, delivery and review.

### **Key Activities**

1. To sit on Children Leeds partnership as CIA.
2. To be a critical friend to Children Leeds in relation to children and young people's participation in all aspects of the children's trust arrangements.
3. To work to ensure that Children Leeds acknowledges the reality of children and young people's involvement and to encourage and advocate for progress.
4. To hold Children Leeds accountable to the children's charter of participation.
5. To sit on the strategic participation group.
6. To encourage the best use of resources for children and young people's participation.

City Wide CIA: Deborah Howe

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## **The Role of the Children and Young People's Involvement Advocate. (Wedge Partnerships).**

The Children Leeds Partnerships in each wedge each have a CIA to champion the development of participation and involvement. The role would reflect that of the city wide CIA but with specific reference to their wedge.

### **Key Activities**

1. To sit on wedge Children Leeds partnership as CIA.
2. To be a critical friend to the wedge partnership in relation to children and young people's participation e.g. child centred planning etc.
3. To attend the participation sub group at wedge level and advise on the development, implementation and monitoring of the participation plan.
4. To work to ensure that the wedge partnership acknowledges the reality of children and young people's involvement and to encourage and advocate for progress.
5. To hold the wedge partnership accountable to the charter for the participation of children and young people and the wedge partnership plan for participation.
6. To attend the strategic participation group.
7. To encourage the best use of resources in the wedge for children and young people's participation.

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Children Leeds South CIA: Flavia Docherty

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## Leeds Participation Team

**The Leeds Participation Team** is an essential link in the participation and involvement chain. It is a forum where practitioners come together to both influence and support the work of the strategic participation group, looking at the practical application of strategic decisions, whilst influencing the direction of those decisions. It is a cross sector group of professionals who have clear operational responsibility for the development and delivery of participation within their organisations, departments or networks.

### **The Team aims to:**

- Identify and develop guidelines in relation to participation in the context of the city and Children Leeds.
- Develop and deliver a range of appropriate training that can be delivered by members of the partnership.
- Develop pathways for an open two way dialogue with Children Leeds including the wedge based partnerships.
- Provide support and information to other children and young people's services.
- Identify and share positive experience and practice.
- Develop the capacity for partnership working including projects, training and dissemination events.

Another essential link is with ROAR; as practitioners they are able not only to support members of their groups to be involved, but to work together to support the activities of ROAR.

Current members of the LPT describe what they do below, and indicate the wide range of activity currently in Leeds. As the membership is growing, this range of activities will inevitably develop;

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I work for BARCA, a community based organisation that delivers a range of services and opportunities for children, young people and adults. These range from youth work provision, Youth Bank, community development with learning opportunities for all, working with drug users and those affected by drug use to promoting and developing safe play for children.

The Youth Work Team upholds the right of young people to participate in decisions about the services on offer that affect them:

- By encouraging and supporting the involvement of young people in the planning, delivery and evaluation of all our services.
- Developing and supporting young people's involvement in projects, processes and partnerships that help them to contribute at all levels in community, civic and democratic life in the city.

**Who are the young people you work with?**

Any young people across West Leeds aged 5-19 years.

**What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

- Enabling young people in West Leeds to participate in the work of all providers who develop, plan and deliver services that affect their lives.
- Working for a common youth strategy for BARCA Leeds with youth participation at its core.
- Working with partner agencies and young people themselves to bring in resources, facilities, service improvements, and opportunities for young people in the area.

**How do you work with them?**

On a one-to-one basis and in small group work.

**Where do you work with them?**

Centre based Fairfield, Bramley & Sandford community Centres and 277 Upper Town Street (our info space)

Detached and mobile provision, Intake High & Valley View Primary Schools.

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The Cupboard is the young people's part of South Leeds Health for All. (SLHFA) is a community health development organisation working in partnership with communities in South Leeds to improve health and enhance people's lives. The organization was established in 1991 to work alongside communities, enabling them to identify health needs and take action to meet them. The organization has a strong track record working with a wide range of people from babies to the elderly. The Cupboard has gained national recognition for its participation work

### **Who are the young people you work with?**

We work with a wide range of young people (aged 13-19yrs) from South Leeds. These include traveller families, young people who have recently settled in the country, young people with learning difficulties, young people who are homeless, young people excluded from school or at risk of exclusion, young people who witness domestic violence, young parents and young women at risk of pregnancy, young people in care and care leavers and young people who are NEET (not in education, employment or training).

### **What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

Our overall aim is to improve the health and well-being of young people, within South Leeds. An integral part of this is ensuring that young people have the voice and tools to bring about real change in their services.

We identify and research young people's health needs within South Leeds in partnership with them through a range of different approaches. We are part of the national Young Researchers network. Whilst developing support work with vulnerable young people in response to their health needs, we support their participation in shaping health services. Our peer education programme underpins both the work of the Cupboard and contributes to the wider organization with young people trained in peer support/education to deliver on our programmes. We work with our young people to build links and research good practice locally, regionally and nationally.

### **How do you work with them?**

The Cupboard Project offers a wide of different approaches to meet the needs of young people and to give them different access points. A vital element of our work is young people's participation. Young people are involved on our steering group; we run a peer education project; and we consult young people on their views about issues and services that affect them. This work is done within the context of:

- **1-2-1 support** – practical and emotional support on a one to one basis. This ranges from a one off chat to ongoing support.
- **Group work** – a range of small targeted groups in response to young people's expressed needs.
- **Drop-in** – time and space where young people can come for information and support on a range of health issues. We also offer C Card Scheme, sexual health information and free pregnancy testing.

### **Where do you work with them?**

In a variety of venues in South Leeds

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I am the youth participation officer based within the Leeds Healthy Schools and Wellbeing Programme (LHSWP). I am part of a wider team that offers a wide range of resources to schools that promote 'Wellbeing'. At the centre of the programme is 'The Leeds Healthy School and Wellbeing Standard'. This provides schools with a self-evaluation tool for Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes and routes to achieving national and (Leeds) advanced healthy school status. The programme uses a whole school, participative approach. The standard helps schools to define their ethical stance, and make explicit the links between the curriculum, mental health, physical health and the environment in the context of a local and global community. The LHSWP works in partnership with a range of voluntary, statutory and private organisations to promote the health and wellbeing of children, young people and families in Leeds.

The LHSWP employs staff with dedicated time to promote participation: Annie Mitchell is the Senior Consultant for PSHE and Participation and Alison Yates is the Be healthy/Be safe challenge coordinator. In addition, at least 9 other members of the wider LHSWP team promote and evaluate the provision for participation in schools and beyond.

Our current work includes:

- External assessment of school provision of participation (standard 11 with sub criteria) as a requirement for the Leeds National and Advanced Healthy School Standard. The criteria reflect and promote the principles of the Leeds participation charter, participation evaluation tool and Hear By Right.
- Training and support for school senior management, relevant staff and young people to promote participation and effective school councils.
- Support with Youth Council and links with schools.
- Investors in Pupils (IIP); a quality award recognising the achievement of whole schools or class groups of pupils and involves children and young people taking a lead in understanding their role in schools in relation to learning, behaviour, attendance, classroom management and induction. All pupils and supporting adults are involved in the process, which creates a team ethos and leads to pupils feeling empowered, motivated and can contribute to raising achievement and attendance.
- Be Healthy-Stay Safe challenge (further details below).
- Sustainable Schools Summit and Young People's forum.
- Support the Project with Youth on Health meetings (all team members) and promote their work with schools.
- Mayor for the Day.

### **Who are the young people you work with?**

Specific groups I regularly support include are the Leeds Youth Council (LYC), Be Healthy! Young People's Planning Group and students involved with the yearly 'Mayor for the Day'.



I can potentially work with any child or young person attending school in Leeds (and West Yorkshire for IIP). I often attend school council meetings, run training for school councils, Investors in Pupils support sessions and assessment days and work with schools as part of LHSP.

### **What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

My role with the LYC and Be Healthy! Group involves facilitating opportunities for young people to come together, discuss issues that affect their lives and support them in working together to plan and take action to affect behaviour change in their own lives, the lives of others and the schools and communities they live in.

The aim of running training for children, young people and staff is to provide information, facilitate discussion and encourage schools to develop new ideas and strategies for increasing participation of children and young people in all aspects of school life. Through supporting schools to achieve 'Investors in Pupils' and providing training on effective school councils and participation, schools are encouraged to listen to their students more, value their opinions and ideas and give them some control over their learning and daily aspects of school life e.g. uniform, school policies etc.

Mayor for the Day promotes high school students' understanding of democracy and the election process. The aim is that young people will take greater interest in politics and the issues that affect their lives, school and community and develop strategies to address these issues. The initiative hopes to encourage more young people to vote when they turn 18.

The LHSP also engages with young people through school assessments (IIP and Healthy Schools) consultations, involving young people in the planning and delivery of events. This is to ensure young people's views and feedback to guide the work that we do as a service.

### **How do you work with them?**

- I work with LYC on a regular basis and support the 'Making a Positive Contribution' working group which meets every six weeks.
- The Be Healthy! Young People's Planning Group has met on a regular basis. The group was involved in problem solving, writing funding bids, writing articles and letters, running launch events for schools, working with health professionals and partner organisations e.g. Radio Aire to plan the campaign, organising the challenge in their schools and running the celebration event.
- Other direct work with children and young people e.g. Investors in Pupils sessions or school council training involves planning the session with the teacher and students in advance and running the session in school.

### **Where do you work with them?**

**LYC** - The Civic Hall, LYC Office, schools, Residentials, Visits and Trips in a variety of settings

**Be Healthy! Group** - The Project, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Schools, Host Media Centre, site visits e.g. Leeds Metropolitan University

**Mayor for the Day** - Schools, The Civic Hall

**Investors in Pupils** - Schools, training and conference venues across West Yorkshire

**School Council** – Schools

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I work for Education Leeds. It is responsible for providing all education support services that relate to children and young people of statutory school age.

**Who are the young people you work with?**

Children and young people in education up to 16 years old (19 years old with special educational needs).

**What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

To develop communication and engagement strategies that can contribute to improve learning and learning environments. This year we have objectives to engage more children and young people in recruitment and selection and to improve our performance in the "Every Child Matters" Viewpoint survey so that all children and young people say that they have very good or good opportunities to make changes in the way the school is run.

**How do you work with them?**

We work in partnership with teachers and staff to increase skills and knowledge in schools. We support them in organising activities in and out of school. We also have contact with parents and carers and we have involved some children and young people in recruitment.

**Where do you work with them?**

Mostly in schools.

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The 5.2.13 Crew is part of the participation programme of Leeds Children's Fund. Children have direct membership of the 5.2.13 Crew and receive the 5.2.13 Magazine four times a year as well as information about participation opportunities that they can engage with. 5.2.13 Crew currently has over 2,000 members.

### **Who are the young people you work with?**

We recruit through the 5.2.13 Crew membership for all Crew activities and work in schools to extend the access to the 5.2.13 Magazine. The age range is 5 -13yrs.

### **What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

We provide a range of different opportunities that enable children to explore different issues that affect them and other children, identify what they want to say and put their "voice" into action.

The different programmes include:

5.2.13 Magazine: an editorial group of between 20-30 children who meet on a regular basis to plan, design, edit and publish a magazine four times a year.

Crew on Move: an outreach programme that takes the magazine out to schools and specific groups to extend the contribution to the magazine.

Events Crew: at different times groups of children come together to plan and deliver young delegates events around different themes and organise events such as the Leeds Children's Fund Celebration.

Crew on the Loose: Groups of children visit different cultural events and places such as museums, art galleries and parks to find out what's available for them and record their experiences in the 5.2.13 magazine.

### **How do you work with them?**

Through a range of different activities that engage the children in planning what they are going to do, what they have to say and how they are going to do it.

### **Where do you work with them?**

At West Yorkshire Playhouse, in schools and at their service provision.

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Getaway girls offer various youth work programmes across the city of Leeds These currently include: a pregnancy, parenting and prevention programme, a sports and outdoor activity programme, a black and mixed heritage group work programme and a programme for young women 13-19 to encourage them to re-engage with education, work or training.

We are also able to offer other activities for young men, mixed groups and adults through our social enterprise programme.

### **Who are the young people you work with?**

Young women between the ages of 12 and 24 across Leeds. We have current priorities to work with following groups:

- Pregnant or at risk of early pregnancy (must be under 19).
- Black or of Mixed Heritage (12-24).
- Those currently not engaged in sport or outdoor activities (12-24).
- At risk of exclusion or excluded from school (13-19).
- In care or are carers themselves (13-19).

### **What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

Self development in many forms:

Increased confidence, increased ability to manage own behaviour, increased self awareness, increased self esteem, an opportunity to enjoy themselves, an opportunity to take controlled risks in a safe environment, opportunities to get involved in physical activity, opportunity to look at own and other cultures.

An integral part of the above is developing their skills and opportunities to influence decision making processes both at Getaway girls and with other services.

### **How do you work with them?**

Through group work, individual support and offering fun activities. We have a users' forum with members drawn from across the projects. This group contributes and influences the services Getaway girls offer and has recently been successful in raising funds to refurbish the building. They have recently won a national award and have made a DVD looking at young people and money choices. Other examples include regular sessions with young mums looking at the services provided for them and the "Cultivate" magazine written and designed by a group of young black and mixed heritage young people.

### **Where do you work with them?**

At our base in Harehills, in schools, in other youth work settings, in the outdoors, and on the sports field, anywhere young people choose to be.

**Name:** Liz Armitage  
**Job Title:** Development Adviser  
**Organisation:** igen  
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**Fax:** 0113 225 9090

### **What does your organisation/service do?**

The Leeds Careers division of igen provides information, advice and guidance, and transition support to young people aged 13-19 (up to 25 with learning difficulties or disabilities) as part of the Connexions service in Leeds. Services are provided in secondary schools and colleges, SILCs, the Connexions Centre and in community locations across the city. Connexions Personal Advisers (PAs) provide support to young people according to their level of need and specialist PAs work intensively with targeted groups of young people such as teenage parents, young offenders and those leaving care.

### **Who are the young people you work with?**

I co-ordinate the engagement and involvement of young people in the design, delivery, evaluation and governance of services. The young people I work with can be any age within the range above, from any part of Leeds. The numbers of young people involved and their ages, ethnicity, gender etc continually changes over the year as young people leave groups and different young people join. At any one time around 40 young people are actively involved.

### **What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

- The development of young people's skills in and knowledge and understanding of the services igen delivers.
- Their influence upon the development of existing and new services.

### **How do you work with them?**

Young people are involved in a variety of ways and in many different projects. They can be involved in formal sit-down meetings, selection interviews for new staff, and also in more fun and creative ways – getting involved in the redesign of our website or publications or in organising events for other young people. Young people are nearly always involved in group sessions with other young people but individual young people can be involved on their own with adults.

### **Where do you work with them?**

I usually work with young people at No 1 Eastgate – which is where Leeds Careers is based and also where the main city centre Connexions Centre is located.

**Name:** Kerry Roling  
**Job Title:** Participation and Communication Worker  
**Organisation:** Leeds Children and Young People's Social Care  
**Tel:** 0113 2474693  
**Email:** kerry.roling@leeds.gov.uk

I work within Children and Young People's Social Care. Within my organisation I work with professionals who work either on a regular basis (within respite and residential units) or on a less frequent basis (social workers, social work assistants and social work students) with disabled children and those with communication impairments. I support and offer advice to the professionals regarding communication and participation particularly in the assessment and review process as well as day to day living within respite and residential units. This can be in general terms or on a more individual basis for specific cases. I also develop and deliver training around communication and participation with this group of children and young people.

I am developing a group where disabled children and young people can meet to talk about issues that affect them. I am also hoping this group will enable disabled children and young people to participate in making decisions that affect them and develop skills that will enable them to participate. We intend to make links with more mainstream participation groups across the city and provide disabled children and young people with the confidence and skill to participate in these groups. I am currently developing this group with the support of Breeze International Youth and The Project and hope to support the group to access funding which would enable the group to continue to run. More information regarding this group is available on request.

**Who are the young people you work with?**

Disabled children and young people.

**What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

To develop their participation in decision making regarding their life.

**How do you work with them?**

Primarily I work with other staff working with the children and young people. Occasionally I will meet with certain children at respite or residential settings, school or home to undertake direct work with them. I also aim to meet with children and young people via an empowerment group which will meet once a month.

**Where do you work with them?**

Respite and residential settings, school or home. Also the empowerment group meets at Leeds Trinity and All Saints college.

**Name:** Fiona Blair  
**Job Title:** Project Worker (children's rights and advocacy)  
**Organisation:** Leeds Children's Rights Service  
**Tel:** (0113) 394 4748  
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Leeds Children's Rights Service is the children's rights and advocacy service for children and young people looked after by Leeds Social Care (plus care leavers up to the age of 25).

### **Who are the young people you work with?**

Looked after children and young people (including those in residential and foster care) and care leavers in Leeds (aged 25 and under), plus young people placed out of authority by Leeds Social Care.

### **What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

To provide a service to young people where there are concerns regarding their rights. This includes a variety of methods including individual and/or group advocacy and the promotion of children's rights.

To ensure that Leeds looked after children, young people and care leavers are informed of their rights, as embodied in the Children Act 1989 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other relevant legislation.

To promote and increase active participation of children and young people in respect of Social Care provision. A range of methods and forums is used to achieve this aim. To ensure children and young people are actively involved in decision making in a participatory way.

To influence the development of Social Care practice and procedures in respect of services provided to all looked after children and young people and care leavers.

To raise awareness in Leeds City Council and elsewhere about issues surrounding corporate parenting and children's rights and how they are affected by local government policies and procedures.

### **How do you work with them?**

Our work includes:

- Provision of individual and group advocacy for children and young people in care and care leavers (including advocacy in the complaints procedure and in child care reviews).
- Young People's Advisory Panel.
- The Flash magazine (produced in partnership with young people).
- In-care groups and events.
- Drama projects.
- Training young people as trainers for 'Total Respect' and delivering the training in Leeds.
- Visiting children's homes in Leeds.
- Provision of rights information.
- Attending national conferences alongside young people.
- Facilitating young people's participation in Leeds.

- Facilitating consultations with young people, locally and nationally (e.g. Care Matters consultation).
- Involving young people in the running of the Children's Rights Service.
- Campaigning on children's rights issues.

**Where do you work with them?**

Advocacy: venue chosen by young person (for example, Leeds Children's Rights Service young people's room, children's home, foster placement, school, Social Care office).

Groups and events: Leeds Children's Rights Service young people's room and occasionally in external venues.



**Name:** Lizzie Neill  
**Job Title:** Participation and Development Coordinator  
**Organisation:** The Market Place project for young people  
**Tel:** 0113 2461659  
**Email:** liz.themarketplace@virgin.net

The Market Place provides support, information and counselling for young people in Leeds 13-25. It is a city wide provision, based within the city centre taking a young-person-centred approach. I work within the Participation and Involvement project within The Market Place which commenced April 2007.

### **Who are the young people you work with?**

Any young person between 13 and 25 living in or around Leeds – who defines themselves as needing support.

The Participation and Involvement project works with any of these current (or past) service users within the age range who want to get involved in service development. A chunk of this work is running a participation group called HYPE (named by its members) standing for Helping Young People through Experience.

### **What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

There are two main objectives of the HYPE participation group.

The first is to provide service users with a space where they can grow and learn in an empowering, supportive environment, to experience being part of a group, grow in confidence, share their thoughts and opinions, debate and learn effective ways of communicating and reaching decisions.

The second objective is to seek a young person's perspective and take on board the experience of the service user when planning and developing services – a fantastic resource that helps the organisation (and sometimes outside parties) keep on track with what young people really want from their support services.

We have a whole range of systems in place at The Market Place for getting feedback from service users help to feed into the organisation in terms of service development and delivery so that anyone who uses services at The Market Place can have an impact regardless of whether they want to join a group. Young people have also participated in the recruitment of staff.

### **How do you work with them?**

The HYPE participation group meets regularly and the sessions are facilitated by myself and another member of staff. The members receive support to get involved, as well as high street vouchers to acknowledge their commitment. We try to provide creative tools to enable communication and to engage the young people in activities. As far as possible the content of the sessions is steered by its members. Relevant information from the HYPE group is fed back through the staff team and the board of directors (and sometimes other stakeholders) so that it can impact on service development.

### **Where do you work with them?**

Currently at 28, Kirkgate at The Market Place but the organisation is soon to be hiring a space in a second building on Lower Briggate (also city centre).

**Name:** Charlee Bewsher  
**Job Title:** Programme Coordinator  
**Organisation:** theProject, West Yorkshire Youth Association  
**Tel:** 0113 3070905  
**Email:** [theproject.cb@btconnect.com](mailto:theproject.cb@btconnect.com)  
**Fax:** 0113 3070906

The Project is a department of West Yorkshire Youth Association, a regional charity that provides a range of different services for young people across West Yorkshire. The project provides a range of different opportunities for children and young people to explore issues in their lives; inform and work with service provider to bring about changes that will result in positive outcomes for them and others. The majority of our work is in partnership with other service providers.

### **Who are the young people you work with?**

We work with children and young people from across the city, in locality based, service focused and city wide initiatives. Our programmes are inclusive; through targeted provision or recruitment to programmes that bring together children and young people from diverse backgrounds and circumstances.

The age range is 5-19yrs, with older young people involved as volunteers, who with training help run groups.

### **What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

We aim to work in partnership with children and young people. We provide a range of different opportunities that enable them to explore their lives and others, identify what they want to say and then to have a voice on matters that concern them. We also work with them and other service providers to put their "voice" into action and bring about change for them and others.

An integral part of the process for the young people is activities that raise their confidence, self esteem and communication skills. They also develop ways of working with others and specific skills related to the programmes; arts, drama, film, creative writing, editing etc.

### **How do you work with them?**

Our team of youth workers has a range of skills to engage with young people, from youth work, to film making, magazine, drama, dance, music, photography and graphics. Children and young people may just engage with these as part of the process to explore their lives and issues or that may produce a product such as a magazine, DVD, banners, performance and presentations. They use them as powerful platforms to present to service providers, elected members, parents and carers and other children and young people and engage them in further dialogue and action.

### **Where do you work with them?**

Across the city in a variety of different venues, within their service's provision, schools, in parks, fields, streets; wherever it is most appropriate for them.

**Name:** Diane Whiteley – McClean/Lesley Reed  
**Job Title:** Senior Youth worker  
**Organisation:** Voice and Influence Team  
**Tel:** 0113 224 3331/3130  
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lesley.reed@leeds.gov.uk  
**Fax:** 0113 2243173

The Youth Service provides a range of services across Leeds, ranging from local youth centres, detached youth workers, mobile provision, residential courses at Herd Farm, outdoor activities at the Lazer Centre, Duke of Edinburgh Awards to specialist provision in health, information, advice and guidance. The Voice and Influence team is part of that specialist provision.

### **Who are the young people you work with?**

We work with young people aged 13 to 18 years from across Leeds. These are elected to the Leeds Youth Council in a democratic process that is open to all high schools in Leeds during Local Democracy week. If the young person is not a member of their school council they are co-opted on to ensure there is a platform for two way communication and dialogue. We also support Youth Council members to work with other young people in school, through partnership with the ROAR programme and at events such as Breeze on Tour.

### **What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

We provide opportunities for young people to come together, discuss issues that affect their lives and support them in working together write their manifesto; to plan and take action to affect change in their own lives, the lives of others and the schools and communities they live in.

Through meeting with elected members and other decision makers, scrutiny panels and consultations, the Youth Council members aim to draw attention to young people's issues and seek to work with the council and others to bring about positive change. They also raise awareness of democratic processes and support others to engage a wider range of young people.

### **How do you work with them?**

We meet with the full council four times year, but facilitate the executive's meetings on a more regular basis. The Youth Council also has "ECM Outcome" groups which meet every six weeks. These groups recruit from across the membership of the Youth Council and explore specific issues for young people.

The Youth Council also takes part in consultations from a range of different service providers. Four members and 2 reserves are elected to sit on the UK Youth Parliament as members/deputy members for Leeds. We also support two young people who are paid as part time Youth Council workers.

### **Where do you work with them?**

LYC - The Civic Hall, LYC Office, schools, Residential, Visits and Trips in a variety of settings.

**Name:** Gaby Paradis  
**Job Title:** Project Worker  
**Organisation:** Youth on Health (YoH)  
**Tel:** 0113 3070905  
**Email:** theproject.gp@btconnect.com  
**Fax:** 0113 3070906

Youth on Health is a partnership programme supported by Leeds PCT, Leeds Healthy Schools and the Project, WYYA. YoH is about children and young people. YoH is made up of wedge based YoH groups for Primary Schools involved in the Healthy School initiative, plus the original Central YoH which recruits from the high schools. YoH is now working with approximately 100 children, from 50 schools and in contact with over 150 primary schools and all high schools. The children and young people have gained national recognition for their work and are featured on the National Youth Agency's Hear By Right website.

### **Who are the young people you work with?**

The young people are elected and nominated through their schools. We encourage schools to send a school council representative and a child or young person that they feel would benefit from the process who might not have engaged with participatory activities before. This year has seen an increased representative from SILCs and with Central YoH we recruit young people from specific interest groups who can contribute to the agenda. The age range is 8 -19yrs.

### **What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

We aim to work in partnership with children and young people in YoH. We provide a range of different opportunities that enable them to choose a "health" theme for each YoH group, identify what they want to say and put their "voice" into action.

The children and young people develop action plans to take back to their schools, looking at what they want to achieve, what they need to do and who back at school can support them. They then report back at their next session. This process has led to real changes that are child/young people led.

The children and young people also run a young delegates event each year in each wedge at Central YoH, where they meet with decision makers and services providers including representatives from their schools to discuss their "health" theme and activities.

An integral part of the process for the young people is activities that raise their confidence, self esteem and communication skills. They also develop ways of working with others and specific skills related to the programmes; arts, drama, film, creative writing, editing etc.

YoH also contribute to other consultation and participation programmes such as CAMHS, Sustainable Schools, School Dinners, Obesity Strategy etc.

### **How do you work with them?**

Each YoH meets every half term during the school day. We explore their themes through creative methods chosen by the young people.

### **Where do you work with them?**

At a variety of venues in the wedges and at West Yorkshire Playhouse for Central YOYH.

**Name:** Andrina Dawson  
**Job Title:** Youth Participation Worker  
**Organisation:** Youth Point  
**Tel:** 0113 274 9959  
**Email:** andrinayouthpoint@hotmail.com  
**Fax:** 0113 274 4795

I work for Youth Point, a locality based youth work provider that delivers a wide of services for young people in North West Leeds. These can range from information and support, detached youth work, youth arts projects, volunteering projects to alternate curriculum programmes in schools.

In particular the Make it Happen project supports young people to be involved in decision making and to have a voice. Any ideas of projects, volunteering or learning that a young person initiates can be supported by Make it Happen.

**Who are the young people you work with?**

Young people aged between 13 and 19 who live within the North West of Leeds.

**What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

The project's primary aim is to encourage young people to participate in decision making to a much higher level so that they are given more power and control of the services, opportunities and issues that affect them.

**How do you work with them?**

The young people at Youth Point are given information about the participation opportunities that are available to them, such as steering group meetings, youth forums, young advisors programmes etc and are supported to access those opportunities.

All of the projects that Make it Happen supports are initiated by young people and it is the service users themselves who manage and control every aspect of their project. Make it Happen provides support by giving information, highlighting the available options, supporting access to funding and occasionally giving individual support so that the young person can overcome any barriers they may experience that could prevent them from participating fully.

**Where do you work with them?**

We work within various venues in young people's communities or from Youth Point.

**Name:** Jo Holmes  
**Job Title:** Youth Work Manager/Sexual health  
**Organisation:** YSHAG in partnership with Health Ed Leeds  
**Tel:** 07891 271043  
**Email:** jo.holmes@leeds.gov.uk  
**Fax:** 0113 2775307

YSHAG (Young Sexual Health Action Group) works with young people interested in making a positive contribution to the development of city wide sexual health services, as well as sex and relationship issues.

The aim of YSHAG is to:

'Inform, improve, modernise and revolutionise sexual health services and make them more accessible to a wider range of young people across the city'.

### **Who are the young people you work with?**

Young people are recruited from across the city in a variety of settings. Many come from CASH (contraceptive and sexual health services), via youth work involvement in clinics, some come from mainstream youth provision and others come via youth work links in schools.

The age range is 13 to 19, with older young people involved as volunteers who help run the group.

### **What are you aiming to achieve with them?**

The above aims of YSHAG are achieved by members working towards becoming active peer educators, acting as consultants and/or working alongside professionals who deliver sex and relationship education, training and services. YSHAG aims to have young people's voices heard at as many levels as possible to begin to meet the sexual health needs of young people across Leeds. This includes representation at the Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Partnership Board.

### **How do you work with them?**

We meet fortnightly and have a set agenda led by the young people looking at issues such as project development, resource development, referrals, and opportunities for YSHAG members to attend citywide sexual health initiatives.

### **Where do you work with them?**

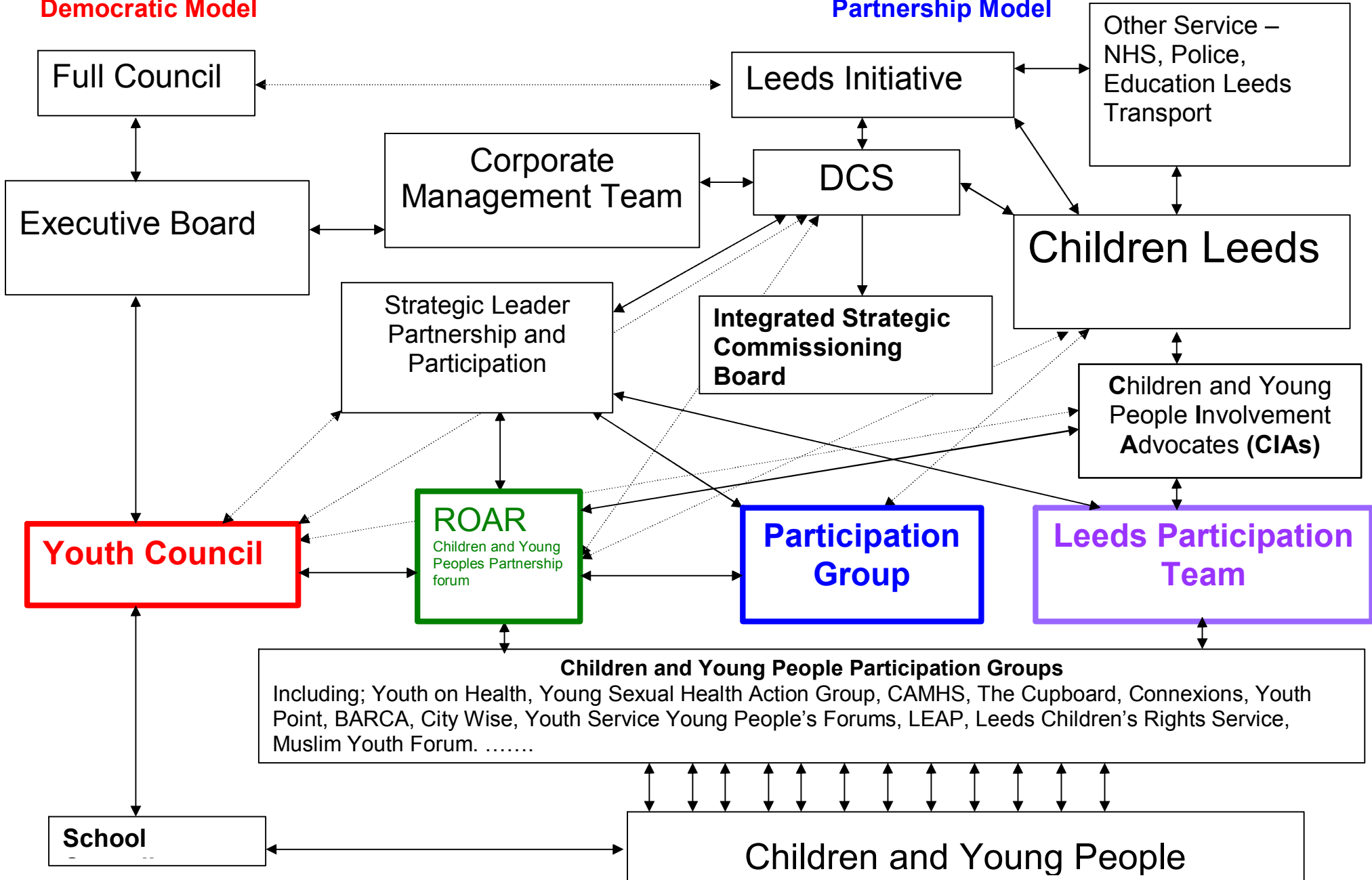
Citywise Clinic  
No1 Eastgate  
Fortnightly from 4-6.30

However, YSHAG offers sessional work in a number of venues, such as young people's dance nights where they provide a c-card and sexual health stall.

For more information and details of how to join the Leeds Participation Team please contact the Project on 0113 3070905 or email at [theproject1@btconnect.com](mailto:theproject1@btconnect.com).

Democratic Model

Partnership Model

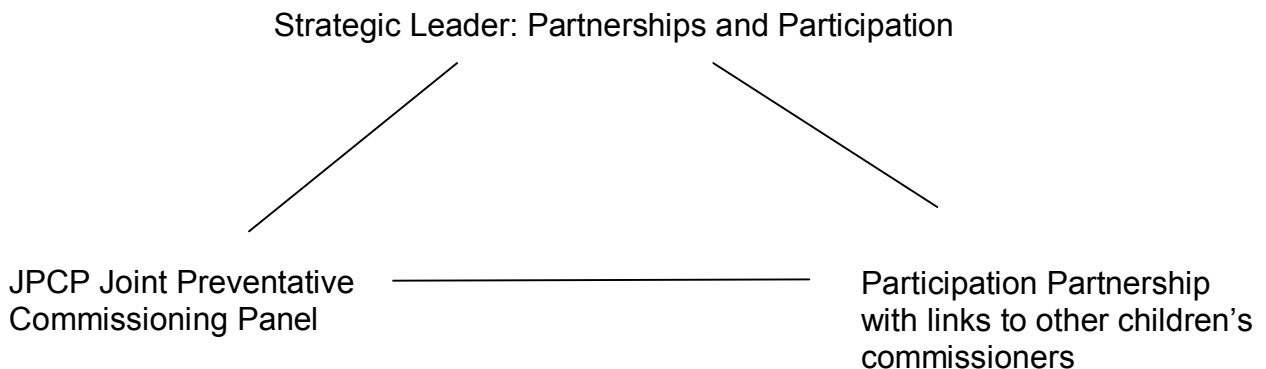


**Proposed model for commissioning children and young people’s participation**

Given the overarching nature of participation and the importance in ensuring service users’ voices are heard, the lead responsibility for co-ordinating commissioning should rest with the Children’s Services Unit.

The process should be the following:

- Participation strategy developed by November 2007.
- Implementation plan developed between November – December 2007. This will be undertaken by the strategic participation group.
- This will inform the drawing up of the specification for participation January – February 2008 to be completed by the strategic participation group.
- The membership of the current strategic participation group should be reviewed and the group established as the Participation Partnership to oversee strategic implementation and performance management of participation.



The Participation Partnership will have terms of reference and through the Joint Preventative Commissioning Partnership and the Joint Preventative Partnership will have a route to the Integrated Strategic Commissioning Board.

The commissioning plan for participation will need to cover the full range of young people’s involvement work.