



Education Leeds and Leeds City Council are committed to providing the services people want and need in their local community.

When it comes to making big decisions about the city's schools, this means talking to everyone involved in the school community, including parents and carers, children and young people, school-based staff, governors, local residents, councillors and other council departments and organisations providing services across the city.

This leaflet explains how and when we involve these people and others in the decision-making process, and how you can have your say.

## Why do we change things?

The main reasons we change anything are to improve the start we give to local children and young people, and to improve services for families. To help us do this we look at all the information we have covering everything from which schools parents and carers want their children to go to, through to the results across subject areas and age groups. We work together with schools and other partners to improve every area of school life.

Sometimes we believe that major changes need to be made. This could mean closing a school, opening a new one, making one bigger, changing its location, increasing or reducing the number of pupils or changing a school's age limits to make sure that school places are available where they are needed.

Sometimes we make changes to improve standards or the places where children and young people learn. This could mean refurbishing or rebuilding a school or changing the way it is run, like creating trusts or academies.

When we propose major changes like these, we need to talk to everyone involved to make sure that it is the right change to make. We do this during three stages before Leeds City Council's highest decision-making body, the Executive Board reaches a final decision.

## Stage 1: Developing proposals: Informing and engaging

When we believe that a major change is required we will first discuss the issue with the headteachers and governing bodies of the schools involved. We will also tell local ward councillors and other council departments about our conversations with the schools.

At this stage we do not know if a change is definitely required, so we treat all information as confidential. Doing this means we do not cause concern for parents and carers, pupils or staff before we know that a change is definitely required.

Because the information is confidential, Education Leeds aims to complete this stage as quickly as possible, usually within three months.

At the end of this stage we could decide that we don't need to make changes, or that we need to find out more about the issues before making a decision. If we believe a major change is needed we will ask the Leeds City Council Executive Board for permission to go to a public consultation over the proposals.

## Stage 2: Public consultation

The public consultation is designed to make sure that everyone involved can see, understand and have the opportunity to comment on the proposals. The Executive Board needs to know what people think of the proposals before it makes a final decision on whether to go ahead.

The consultation will last six to eight weeks. Education Leeds produces and distributes a booklet explaining the proposals, why we are making them and how to respond. The booklet is sent directly to key people like councillors and headteachers, and is available for children, young people and families in the affected schools, in local libraries, and sometimes in other appropriate places like community centres or children's centres.

The consultation is promoted through the local media, the affected schools, and on the Education Leeds and Leeds City Council website.

The booklet and all other publicity will also advertise the public meeting held as part of every consultation. Anyone can attend these public meetings. Education Leeds also meets with key groups like local ward councillors, children

and young people in the school, staff and governors. All the views expressed in the meetings are recorded and placed on the Education Leeds website.

When responding to the proposal it is important that if you can, you give reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the proposals so that as much information as possible is available to the Executive Board when making their decision.

### What happens to your responses?

Education Leeds summarises all the responses to the consultation in a report with an analysis of the outcomes of the consultation and recommendations on the next steps.

The Executive Board can decide not to take the proposals any further, change them in some way or to proceed with the original proposal. If the Executive Board wants to make a major change to the proposal, then we would have to carry out a fresh public consultation.

If the Executive Board accepts or makes only a minor change to the proposal, then the proposal moves to stage 3.