



**The Leeds  
3As Strategy:  
Attend, Attain, Achieve**



## Introduction

We want Leeds to be the Best City for Children and Young People – a child friendly city where children and young people are at the heart of a compassionate city with a strong and inclusive economy.

Over the past decade Leeds has made great progress. Through the whole city working together – families, communities, services and businesses – we have made a big difference. Social work and early help support for children and families facing the biggest challenges have improved from being ‘inadequate’ to being ‘outstanding’; Leeds has become the first UK city to begin to reduce childhood obesity; and more schools are judged good or better.

The next challenge to make Leeds a truly child friendly city is to ensure every child and young person in Leeds has the opportunity and support to achieve their potential, and to make sure that the city’s young people have the skills and knowledge to help the city’s economy thrive in the future. We will do this as part of an holistic approach, ensuring that every child and young person has access to the broadest range of positive experiences. Whilst academic outcomes are a measure of success, as a city, we would aim for all children and young people to have the best educational experiences as well as the best possible outcomes.

Leeds is well placed to succeed, and has many strengths and opportunities as a foundation to build on in the future. The city has protected its network of children’s centres, and has worked well with school leaders to build a diverse community of high quality schools. As a major city Leeds has a wide range of great further education colleges and three universities with internationally recognised research and teaching. The wider city has great strengths too – diverse communities bringing learning and skills from around the world; a vibrant third sector and a socially committed business community that has shown its investment in children through Child Friendly Leeds.

The implementation of the Leeds Learning for Life Strategy resulted in an improvement in the results at the end of primary school and GCSE results are also much improved, and we are determined to build on this progress. However, outcomes for children in the early years foundation stage are lower than we would like and the proportion of young people remaining in learning and achieving good qualifications by age 19 is too low. We want to significantly improve outcomes in all of these areas, so that all children and young people in Leeds, at every stage of their education, are supported to reach their potential. Leeds has the third lowest funding per pupil of the 15 authorities in the Yorkshire and Humber region currently.

Some children and young people face particular challenges in getting the most out of education. Research and national data highlights that children from deprived families and communities, children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Children In Need and those with Asian, Black and Mixed heritage are all more likely to do less well than their peers. In Leeds whilst we have improved outcomes for our most vulnerable learners our performance is still below that of other areas of the country. In improving educational outcomes for all we want to narrow the gap between vulnerable learners and other children and young people in the city.

These challenges must be overcome if Leeds is to achieve its aim of being the Best City for Children in the UK. It is vital that every children has the opportunity to reach their potential or the city will miss out on the skills and potential of its young people. While the Council has a different role in education than in the past, it retains a duty to champion the needs of all children, to promote equality and cohesion and to build an inclusive and successful economy for all. As such, it is clear that change is needed.

Our 3As strategy sets out our direction and approach to change. The 3As are: ‘Attendance’ because we know being in schools means children are not just more likely to learn but be safe and build friendships; ‘Attainment’ to focus on exam results and academic progress; and ‘Achievement’, here defined in its widest sense to include not just exams but personal and social development and wider growth and success.






The 3As strategy is informed by consultation across the city, by research and by learning from what has worked in Leeds over the past decade. Importantly, it is also shaped by the child-centred, restorative values and ethos that Leeds has built over the past decade. As such, it takes a distinctive direction to improving learning - promoting a whole child focus on both learning and wellbeing; a recognition of the importance of families and communities alongside schools in achieving success for children; emphasising the importance of early identification of problems and a ‘think family’ approach to joined up work with both children and their families. Finally the 3As strategy seeks a whole city approach – building on the success of the Child Friendly Leeds initiative.

For sustainable improvement in outcomes to take place over time, we need to work with children and their families from the earliest possible opportunity. From birth to age 5, a child’s brain develops more than at any other time in life. Early brain development has a lasting impact on a child’s ability to learn and succeed in school and life. The quality of a child’s experiences in the first few years of life – positive or negative – helps shape how their brain develops. Our strategy, therefore, focuses as much on work with parents and communities as it does with schools and services.

The 3As Strategy tries to learn from what works is to keep things simple. Strategies for children’s services can often be long and complicated but in Leeds our Children and Young People’s Plan is a plan on a page. What has made a difference is using our plans to build shared understanding, shared priorities and collective action. What has worked particularly well are the ‘three obsessions’ in the plan – a shared focus on the biggest issues that could make the most difference. Therefore, the 3As has adopted this and has three obsessions of its own:








- *All children make the best start to school:*
- *All Children In Need are safe, supported and successful in school:*
- *All children in Leeds read for learning and fun*

This strategy is a great opportunity for Leeds, but making this strategy work will need the efforts of the entire city. We look forward to working with you in the years ahead and together we can make sure all children and young attend, attain and achieve.

				
Councillor Jonathan Pryor Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment	Steve Walker Director of Children and Families	Councillor Fiona Venner Executive Member for Children and Families	Phil Mellen Deputy Director for Learning	Saleem Tariq Deputy Director Children’s Social Care

## Background, key facts and figures

190,816	<p>190,816 is the latest estimate for the number of children and young people aged 0-17 years old in Leeds. This makes Leeds the local authority with the 12<sup>th</sup> highest number of children and young people in England.</p> <p>The child population has grown about 10% over the past ten years, and is forecast to grow a similar amount over the next decade. The child population is more diverse than the adult population, and is becoming more diverse over time.</p>
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	<b>If all the children in Leeds were a class of 30...</b>
	<b>12 would live in neighbourhoods classed as amongst the 20% most deprived in England</b>
	<b>10 would be from a Black Asian or Minority Ethnic family</b>
	<b>6 would have English as an Additional Language</b>
	<b>5 would be eligible for Free School Meals</b>
	<b>4 would have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities</b>
	<b>1 would be a Child in Need (with such significant needs they need assessment or support from a social worker)</b>



30% of secondary age pupils are from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic communities (BAME). 35% of primary pupils are BAME heritage. This is broadly in line with national averages. The proportion of BAME children in Leeds has risen in recent years, from 17% in 2005. Some groups have grown even faster – the proportion of pupils from ‘White Other’ backgrounds has tripled in this time, and the proportion of ‘Mixed Heritage’ and ‘Black heritage’ pupils has doubled. 22.3% of primary school pupils and 16.1% of Leeds pupils have English as an Additional Language (EAL). This is close to the national rates, although Leeds primary schools are slightly above the national average. The diversity of the child population is expected to grow in the next decade.

Leeds is the 57<sup>th</sup> most deprived Local Authority area in England. Around 15% of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals, which is above the national average. Roughly 40% of children and young people in Leeds live in neighbourhoods classified as amongst the 20% most deprived in England, and two-thirds of the growth in the child population in Leeds over the past decade has been in these areas.

In Leeds 1.9% of pupils have such significant Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) that they are supported through a statutory, multi-agency 'Education Health and Care Plan' (EHCP). This proportion is well below the national average (2.9%) and that seen in similar areas (2.98%). 11.8% of pupils are judged to have SEND but are supported through school. This proportion is broadly in line with the rate seen in similar areas and nationally.

In May 2019 there were 3150 Children In Need in Leeds (National average 2662 per Local Authority). Children In Need are defined as those children whose needs are such that they require the statutory assessment and support of a social worker but have not been taken into care. This group includes 436 children and young people subject to a Child Protection Plan and 2,714 children with an ongoing assessment or Child In Need plan.

### Outcomes – the Leeds report card

	 <b>Doing well</b>	 <b>Need to improve</b>
Early Years Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>96% of 3 and 4 year olds benefit from some free early education</li> <li>The proportion of five year olds achieving a 'Good Level of Development' in the Foundation Stage Profile has risen more quickly in Leeds over the past three years than the national trend.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Leeds the proportion of five year olds assessed as achieving a 'Good Level of Development' – 65.7% compared to 71.5% nationally</li> <li>Less than half of the five year olds eligible for Free School Meals achieve a 'Good Level of Development'</li> <li>Five year olds with Asian and Black heritage do less well than the city average and also less well than five year olds with the same circumstances nationally</li> </ul>
Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leeds is in the top 10% of Local Authority areas for improvements in Key Stage 1 Test results in reading, writing and maths over the past three years</li> <li>The percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in Key Stage 2 assessments in Reading, Writing and Maths has improved significantly in the past three years, faster than the national rate and the average seen in similar areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Results in Leeds in Key Stage 1 Tests at aged seven and results in Leeds in Key Stage 2 assessments at aged 11 are lower than those in similar areas and the national average. Leeds is in the bottom 25% of Local Authority areas for the proportion meeting expected standards.</li> <li>11 year olds with Asian, Black and Mixed heritage do less well than the city average and also less well than five year olds with the same circumstances in similar areas of the country.</li> </ul>
Secondary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The progress made by Leeds pupils between Key Stage 2 and GCSE is higher than in similar areas of the country</li> <li>The 'Attainment 8' score for GCSE pupils in Leeds is in line with national average</li> <li>The proportion of pupils in Leeds achieving a 9-5 pass in English and Maths is above the national average</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attainment 8 scores for pupils of Asian and Mixed heritage in Leeds are in the bottom 25% of Local Authority areas nationally</li> </ul>

Post 16 Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The percentage of Key Stage 5 learners going on to further learning or employment is in line with the national average and the average of similar areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proportion of 19 year olds achieving a Level 2 qualification (equivalent to 5 good GCSEs), and the proportion achieving a Level 3 qualification (equivalent to two A Levels) in Leeds is lower than the national average and the average for similar areas of the country.</li> </ul>
Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall school attendance is in line with the national average and higher than in similar areas of the country</li> <li>Overall attendance by Children Looked After in Leeds is higher than the national average and higher than in similar areas of the country</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The attendance of Children In Need in Leeds is lower than the national average and their peers in similar areas of the country.</li> </ul>
Exclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leeds has the third lowest rate of permanent exclusions in the country, much better than the national average and similar areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rate of fixed term exclusions in Leeds is higher than the average in similar areas and nationally. The rate of fixed term exclusions is in the top 25% nationally. This is negatively affected by a relatively small number of schools.</li> </ul>

More information on outcomes in Leeds can be found in the Annual Standards Report:

<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s185864/Annual%20Standards%20Cover%20Report%20Appendices%201-4%20V2%20080319.pdf>

## Principles and strategy

The 3As strategy is informed by a belief that to make a difference we need to activate the whole city in changing the lives of children and young people in Leeds. This can be illustrated by some simple facts:

<h1>10%</h1>	<p>10% is an important figure because educational research suggests that only 10% of the difference in a child's outcomes can be explained by their school. Whilst the impact of schools does vary, there is often bigger differences <i>within</i> schools than <i>between</i> schools. A wide range of influences can make a difference to a child's chances of success – from parents' qualifications to gender to maternal mental health to the month of a child's birth.</p> <p>This does not mean that schools do not matter, but it does mean that our strategy needs to consider and respond to the wider determinants of learning and that schools need the support of parents, families, services and communities if we are to make a real difference.</p>
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<h1>14%</h1>	<p>14% is an important figure because that is the amount of time children spend in school. As can be seen in the graphic above, children spend three times more time out of school than in school.</p> <p>This means that our strategy needs to include work with parents, family and friendship networks and communities to help them help their children succeed.</p>
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**Schools do matter but alone they cannot meet all the needs of every child. Schools should be free to concentrate on the teaching and learning they are best at – we cannot expect schools to solve**

every problem, to be social workers, nurses, psychologists and food banks as well as being teachers, although we know that this is the reality for many schools. The challenge is to make sure that the city works together to build better support for every child and family across the city – to get the right help for parents and communities so that they can in turn help their children to thrive and learn and succeed. For this to be sustainable we need to provide training and resources to parents and communities. Therefore our approach is as follows:

- *A whole child approach:* the 3As strategy is shaped by a recognition that children’s academic success relies on wider wellbeing – on physical and mental health and resilience
- *Think family:* we know that parents, carers and the wider family and friends network are vital in helping children and young people succeed. Conversely, family problems can have a big impact on children and their learning. Therefore our approach has to be to find new joined up ways of working with families and helping them help their children to learn.
- *A contextual approach:* building on the whole child approach, the strategy is focused on the wider context for children’s learning and wellbeing. We know that children spend only 14% of their time in school, so a key challenge is how to work with parents, carers, families and communities to promote learning and better lives for children.
- *Joined up local working:* Leeds benefits from the ‘clusters’ of schools and services in local neighbourhoods, helping join up work with the children and families facing the biggest challenges. This strategy seeks to continue to build on this approach, strengthening the focus on learning.
- *A whole city approach:* the Child Friendly Leeds initiative has shown the value of involving the whole city – individuals, organisations and businesses have worked together to make a huge difference for children and families in the city.



‘People say ‘it takes a village to raise a child’. If that is true imagine what we can do together in a great city like Leeds to give all our children the best chance of success.’

Cllr Fiona Venner  
Executive Member for Children and Families

- *Restorative working:* restorative practices seek to focus on and build strong relationships. Successes in services and schools across Leeds have demonstrated the power of this approach – how better relationships between learners, teachers, schools, families, communities and services can build trust and resilience, and work to promote change.
- *Early help:* resolving problems early in the life of a child, or early in the life of the problem is the best way. It is normally easier, cheaper and more effective to act earlier than to wait until problems escalate and become entrenched.
- *Evidence Based:* Leeds’ recent successes have been strongly informed by evidence and research, for example in transforming children’s social care or in reducing childhood obesity. Therefore this 3As Strategy uses research on what works in improving learning.



## Priorities and the 3As Obsessions

### Our obsessions

These three outcomes have been chosen because they are vital issues in themselves but also because change in these areas should lead to change in the wider city and system.

#### 1. All children make the best start to school [Attend, Attain and Achieve]

This is our first obsession because it is vital to changing outcomes for all learners over time. Research and evidence suggests that improving learning in the early years improves outcomes throughout childhood and into adult life. Improving early learning is the most effective and cost effective way of improving outcomes for all children and narrowing the gaps between groups of learners.

At present Leeds does not do well as a city for the youngest learners in some measures. In the assessment undertaken for all five year olds, the Foundation Stage Profile, only 65.7% currently achieve a 'Good Level of Development' compared to 71.8% nationally, although this is improving.

The principles that inform the Three As strategy shape our approach. As a whole child strategy we want to focus on learning and wider wellbeing – recognising the importance of early years attachment and the power of play for early learning. As a Think Family strategy we want to continue to build better ways of joined up help for the whole family because we know this is important to help infants thrive. As a restorative strategy we want to work *with* families and communities to help them to build relationships and the social capital to support families and children thrive and learn.

Key measure: the % of five year olds achieving a 'Good Level of Development' in the Foundation Stage Profile.



'Investing in the early years is vital – it is the best and most cost effective way to help children throughout their childhood and into adult life.'

Cllr Jonathan Pryor  
Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment

#### 2. All Children In Need are safe, supported and successful in school [Attend, Attain, Achieve]

Children In Need are those children and young people facing the biggest challenges – they are defined as 'Children in Need' because their needs are so serious that they need help from a social worker. Most of these children and young people need help due to family problems – often made worse by poverty. Parental mental illness, drug and alcohol abuse and domestic violence are the most common reasons why these children and families need extra help.

Data and research shows that Children In Need are at much greater risk of poor learning outcomes than their peers. Levels of attendance and attainment are generally much lower than for the population as whole. In Leeds the main concerns are attendance – unauthorised and persistent absence and Key Stage 2, where outcomes are amongst the lowest in the country.

In line with Leeds' whole child approach the 3As strategy our aim is to improve attendance and attainment but also to ensure these children and young people have the chance to achieve and enjoy positive opportunities for development such as in sports and the arts. In line with our restorative working we want to work to improve the range and quality of relationships for these vulnerable children – to have the friends and a trusted adults that school can provide. This is important because we know that friends and trusted adults are key to promoting resilience and better outcomes for vulnerable children. Lastly, in line with our commitment to joined up local working we want to improve the way we wrap support from services around each child and their school.

Key measure: the attendance of Children In Need.

### **3. All children in Leeds read for learning and fun [Attain and Achieve]**

Reading is a vital skill that is a cornerstone of successful learning. Research shows that reading helps nurture the linguistic and creative skills needed at every stage of learning from the early years to adulthood. Reading in the early years can be an important part of family activities and build bonds between adult and infant. Reading in later years is vital to unlock the wider curriculum and to develop the critical and academic skills needed for work and later life.

Improving reading is a big challenge for Leeds. Leeds is ranked 144<sup>th</sup> out of all 152 local areas for reading outcomes at age five, 146<sup>th</sup> for reading in Key Stage 1 tests and 126<sup>th</sup> at Key Stage 2. All of these measures are improving but Leeds is still well behind similar areas and the national average.

Following the whole child approach, our aim with the 3As Strategy is to promote reading not simply for learning but for enjoyment, not merely for tests but to provoke imagination and creativity. In line with the principles of 'Think Family' a key aim is to work to promote family reading and the strong bonds made possible by parents reading to their child. We will seek to activate the city around reading in support of families, children and schools.

Key measure: the % of children achieving the expected standard in reading at age seven in Key Stage 1 tests.

## **Our wider priorities**

### **1. Improve opportunities for children in Leeds in sports, arts and positive activities [Achieve]**

This is a priority chosen to focus effort on promoting the 'Third A' – achieve. These can help academic learning by building resilience, creating new friendship groups, offering new experiences and teaching valuable qualities such as hard work and team work.

Leeds is a large city which offers children and young people great opportunities to be involved in a wide range of positive activities such as sports, the arts and volunteering. However, not all children and young people have the same opportunities and some have difficulties accessing these activities for a range of reasons such as cost, location and accessibility. We will work with families, communities and across the Council to ensure every child has the opportunity to take part in positive activities in their local community.

Key measure: the % of children who report they take part in an out of school arts, sports or positive activity.

### **2. Increase the number of children and young people who attend schools and settings judged by OFSTED to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding' [Attend and Attain]**

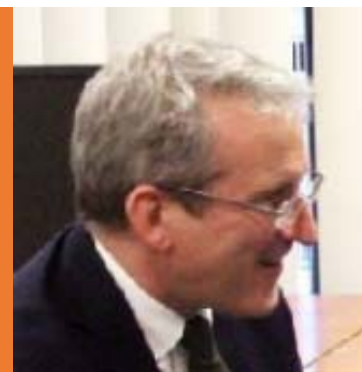
Leeds schools have improved in recent years. The proportion judged as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by OFSTED inspectors has increased over the last decade. However, there is still work to do, particularly in some communities where fewer children are likely to attend a school with a positive inspection rating.

Key measure: the % of children in the seven high needs clusters who attend a school judged to be 'Good' or better by OFSTED

### **3. Increase parental and community involvement and empowerment in schools and settings [Attend, Attain and Achieve]**

This is a priority because strong governance is important in improving the quality and outcomes of schools and settings, because research has shown parental involvement in learning is important for success and because recent national policy has reduced the role of parents and the community in the running of schools.

Key measure: the % of parents who report they are regularly involved in their child's school or setting



‘We can learn a lot from schools like Carr Manor Community School, by all working together – government, councils, schools, police and the health service – to give young people the knowledge, skills and resilience they need to fulfil their potential.’

Damian Hinds  
Secretary of State for Education

#### **4. Reduce the number of children excluded from school [Attend, Attain]**

Through our innovative Area Inclusion Partnerships the schools community in Leeds has worked hard and been successful in limiting and managing permanent exclusions in Leeds, As a result, Leeds has the third lowest rate of permanent exclusions in the country. However, the use of fixed term exclusions is too high. We are working with the Area Inclusion Partnerships to focus on fixed term exclusions and linking with School Improvement Service to work directly with the small number of schools that account for a large and disproportionate number of these exclusions. This work is linked to the recent Timpson review (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/edward-timpson-publishes-landmark-exclusions-review>) to ensure that we address and challenge ‘off-rolling’ – an informal route to excluding children that is rising in prevalence across England.

Key measure: the number of all fixed terms exclusions in all schools, expressed as a proportion of the whole school population.

#### **5. Improve support and outcomes for children educated outside mainstream schools and settings [Attend, Attain and Achieve]**

Whilst Leeds schools generally have a strong shared inclusive ethos, with relatively high numbers of pupils with additional needs educated in mainstream schools and low levels of permanent exclusions, a significant number of children and young people are educated outside school. This includes those families who have chosen ‘Elective Home Education’, those with medical needs and children missing education. Research and local learning both confirm that these pupils can be more likely to have poor outcomes and therefore work is needed to improve support and outcomes.

Key measure: the number of ‘pupil days’ (No. of pupils x days out of school) of children missing education

#### **6. Improve learning outcomes for learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities [Attend, Attain and Achieve]**

In 2016 OfSTED and the Care Quality Commission inspected Leeds’ support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Whilst the inspection report was very positive in general, inspectors shared the Council’s desire to improve educational outcomes of local pupils with SEND. Whilst there has been some improvement since 2016 there is still much more to do to ensure Leeds’ children with SEND achieve as well as or better than their peers in other areas. The main areas where outcomes are poor include Key Stage 2 results and attainment at GCSE.

Key measure: the average Attainment 8 score for pupils with SEND but no statement

#### **7. Increase the proportion of learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities who make a successful transition to further learning, qualifications and work after school [Attend, Attain and Achieve]**

Transition from school to further learning and work is a big and important challenge for all young people, and for young people with SEND it is perhaps even more important and more of a challenge. Often schools provide a much more supportive and nurturing environment than larger colleges or new employers and additional needs can be a major barrier to employment and progression. Currently, the proportion of young people with SEND in Leeds with a Level 2 qualification (equivalent to five good GCSEs) including English and maths by aged 19 and pupils with SEND but no formal statement or plan who continue in learning is not good enough.

Key measure: % of KS4 pupils with SEN Support going to, or remaining in education and employment/training overall (including special schools)

#### **8. Improve learning outcomes for children with English as an Additional Language [Attend, Attain and Achieve]**

As a compassionate, Child Friendly City Leeds is proud to have welcomed many children and families to the city. Research shows that these children, families and communities bring a wide range of benefits to our city – new skills, energy and culture for our neighbourhoods. These new communities bring new businesses and employment, generating more in new tax for public services.

Some longer established communities in Leeds thrive educationally and economically, for example Chinese and Indian heritage pupils consistently outperform the city average. Newer communities can face bigger challenges, particularly where English is a new language for children and families. As the population of the city changes, a growing proportion do not have English as their first language. In 2017-18 just over 20% of learners had English as an Additional Language, with higher proportions in younger age groups.

Nationally, learners who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) do less well than other pupils. In Leeds, this is even more marked. For example at age five 66% of pupils with EAL achieve a 'Good Level of Development' nationally, 7% points below pupils without EAL. In Leeds 56% of pupils with EAL achieve a 'Good Level of Development', 10% below pupils without EAL. Nationally, EAL pupils actually outperform their non-EAL peers at GCSE by 1% point. In Leeds the gap persists – only 33.4% achieve a strong pass (grades 9-6) in English and mathematics.

Key measure: % of pupils with EAL achieving a Good Level of Development at aged five.

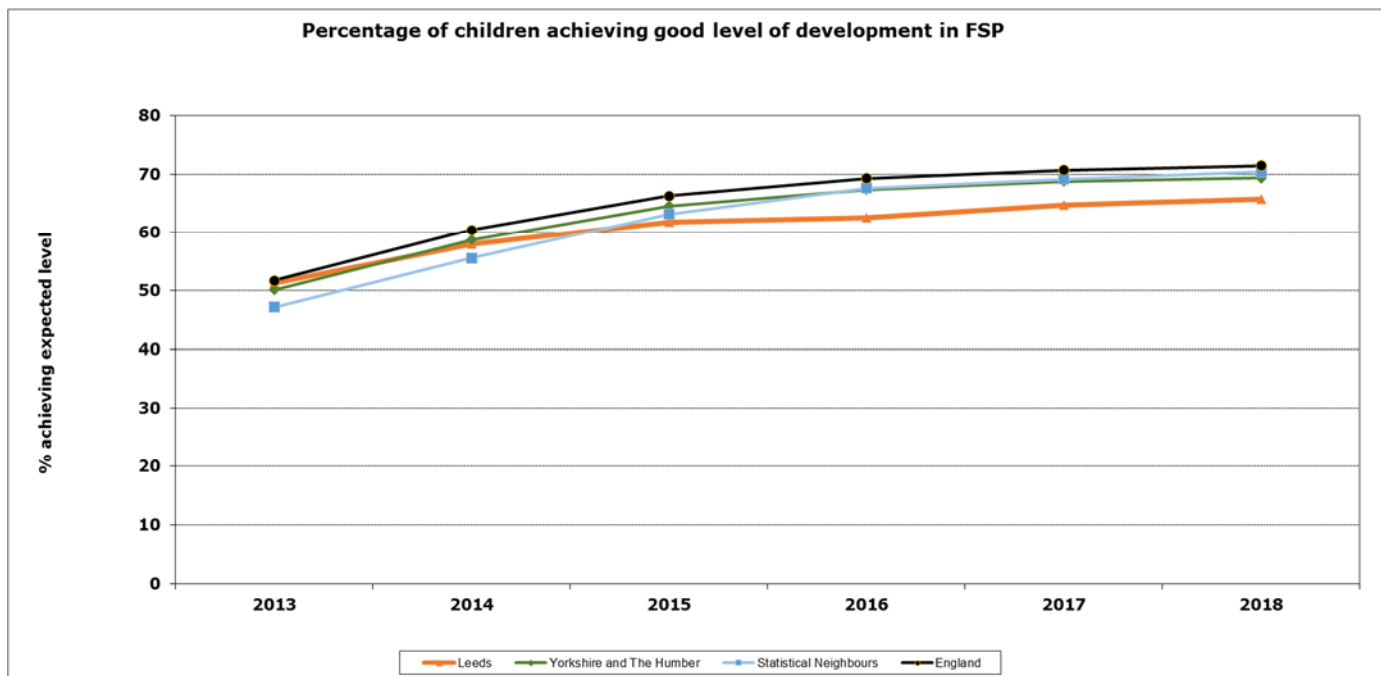
## Action Plan Summary for 3 Obsessions

### Obsession 1:

#### All children and young people have the best start to school

##### Key measure:

The percentage of children achieving a good level of development in Foundation Stage Profile



##### The story behind the curve

Good Level of Development (GLD) appears to be a problematic measure for all core cities with only Newcastle ranked inside the top 100 Local Authorities (87th). Literacy is the worst element in all but two of the core cities. Seven out of the eight core cities are in the bottom 25% and 4 are in the bottom 10%. Newcastle cite the 100% take up of their 2 year old offer as a key element of their relative success around literacy outcomes. Consequently, as part of this strategy we will be targeting the 2 year old offer as a key action. 7 out of the 8 core cities have similar GLD outcomes to Leeds and appear in the bottom 25% of all local authorities for this measure for 2018. This would suggest that deprivation, mobility and international new arrivals are all factors in the outcomes in this measure more than others. Using the Average Points Score (APS), places Leeds much higher in the national tables. APS is an average of all pupil's scores across the early learning goals which captures those children who have made good progress but not hit all measures in GLD. In 2018, Leeds APS of 34.40 saw us ranked 77<sup>th</sup> out of 152 local authorities and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the core cities. Low take up of the free childcare offer by eligible two year olds in the city appears to be a factor in some children not hitting the overall GLD measure along with intergenerational deprivation in some Leeds communities and poor outcomes for some Black and Minority Ethnic groups. The latter two can certainly be seen in the data – only 48% of Leeds pupils eligible for Free School Meals achieve GLD compared to 57% nationally, 62% of Black Heritage pupils in Leeds achieve GLD compared to 70% nationally, and 62% of Asian Heritage pupils in Leeds achieve GLD compared to 71% nationally

##### Where do we need to know more?

There is a need to develop a more complete picture of why Leeds has low outcomes for this age group. More is needed to understand the interactions between deprivation and ethnicity and more needs to be understood about the impact of attendance at differing local early years provision. We need to understand why the 2 year offer (and to a lesser extent, the 3 and 4 year old offer) is not taken up by some families so that we can address their concerns. Finally Leeds needs to learn from best practice in similar areas such as Newcastle and Rotherham where there is similar deprivation and diversity but better outcomes in the early years.

## What works?

The Education Endowment Fund have reviewed research on Early Years outcomes and recommend the following interventions in order of impact: an earlier starting age; communication and language approaches; Early numeracy approaches; play based learning; self-regulation strategies; parental engagement and early literacy approaches. (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/early-years-toolkit/>)

## Who needs to be involved?

To make a difference, it is important that a wide range of stakeholders are involved and empowered to support change. This includes: parents and carers; wider family and friends networks; early years providers; local voluntary, community and faith organisations; NHS staff particularly maternity services, GPs and health visitors as well as the city council as a whole.

## What are we going to do?

We will:

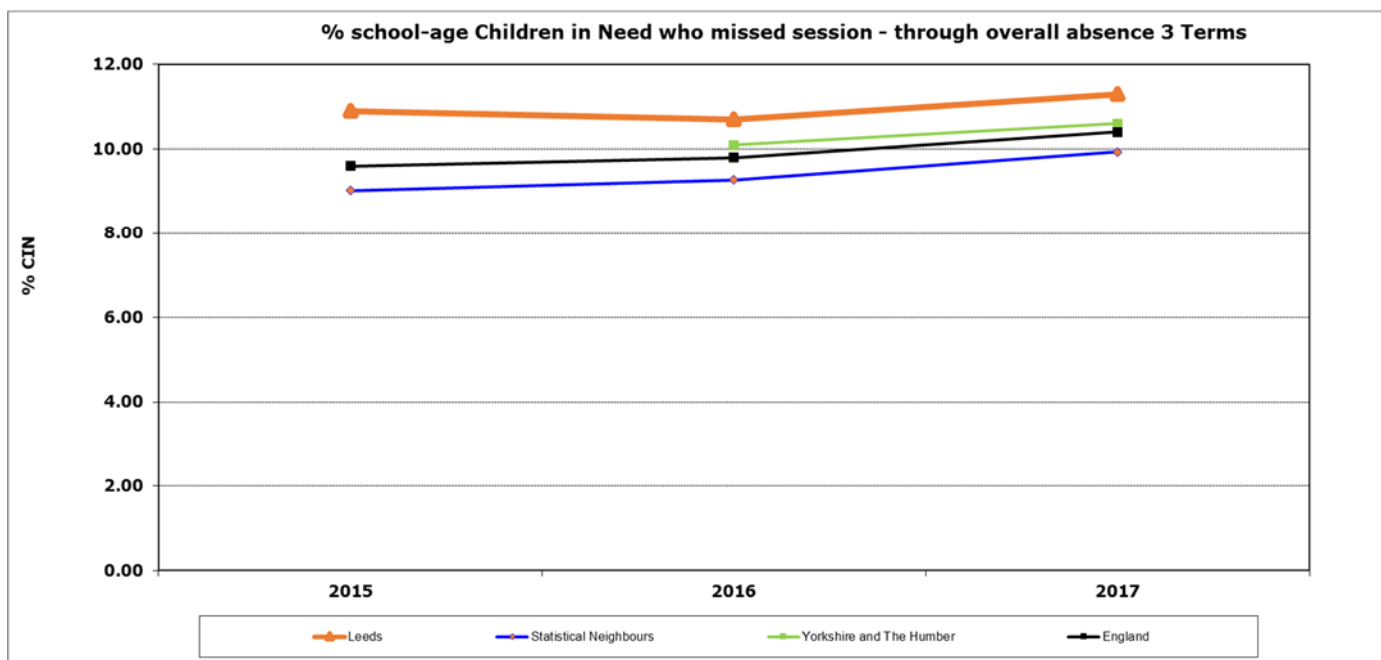
- Complete the Local Government Association Peer Review by July 2019 and implement the recommendations and learning from September 2019
- Partner with local universities to undertake more detailed research and analysis into the underlying reasons behind Leeds' poor outcomes. Interim findings to be complete by November 2019 and promoted at Baby Week, final report complete by March 2020.
- Improve the analysis and use of the 'Two Year Check' Ages and Stages Questionnaire, to improve the early identification of potential problems and agree new multi-agency arrangements to respond to children's needs. New system in place by January 2020.
- Create a small central team, co-located with the Stronger Families, Families First and Front Door teams to improve the coordination of data to identify families that are not taking up the offer of free early years childcare. Team to be set up by September 2019.
- Agree new arrangements for early years take up with clusters, children's centres and Early Help Hubs where families are identified as not taking up the offer of free early years childcare. New system to ensure that the most suitable early help, early years or schools practitioner with the best links to the local community and family will meet with the family to help them engage with early learning. Arrangements in place by September 2019.
- Trial the use of an 'Asset Based Community Development' (ABCD) project in an area of the city where outcomes are poor and uptake of Early Years learning and childcare is low. ABCD project will map community resources and support the development of new community led work and peer support networks. ABCD project to start by September 2019. Interim evaluation report December 2020.
- Improve access to training and development for early years staff by reducing the use of charging and increasing the use of 'twilight' sessions. New training arrangements in place for September 2019.
- Develop improved guidance and training for early help and social work staff to enable them to better support early learning and family learning. Guidance and training in place by September 2019.
- Undertake a wide range of programmes to promote child and family reading.
- Expand promotion of the '50 things to do before you are five' in high need areas through social work and early help teams to the most vulnerable families in Leeds from September 2019
- Complete new digital learning resources with Dubit for early learning by December 2019
- Review and target communication speech and language support to areas of highest need.
- Work with Newcastle and Rotherham to understand what is effective about their practice at Early Years. Phone conversations and visits to take place and Leeds plans to be amended to reflect learning.

## Obsession 2:

### Children In Need are safe, supported and successful in school

#### Key measure:

#### Overall absence of Children in Need



#### The story behind the curve

Children In Need (CIN) have lower attendance across England – in general absence is more than twice as high for this group compared to the average for all pupils (10.4 compared to 4.7%). Research suggests that this group face significant extra challenges to attendance – compromised parenting due to parental mental ill health, substance misuse or domestic violence; caring responsibilities for children; health problems for children and/or parents; poverty.

#### Where do we need to know more?

Whilst attendance generally in Leeds is in line with the national average Children In Need attend less regularly than similar children in similar areas – it is not entirely clear why this is the case.

#### What works?

The Newcastle University study into 'Poverty Proofing the school day' found 'in one school, [there was] a 5% rise in attendance overall and a 7% rise for pupils on Free School Meals (almost 50% of the school cohort). In the 6 North Lincolnshire schools absence of pupils on FSM fell in every school but one after the initiative.' It also found 'Evidence from 7 North Lincolnshire schools of greater increases in the attainment levels of pupils on FSM at KS1, KS2 and KS4 than all other pupils overall.' We will implement a similar approach to ensure that CIN pupils do not have additional barriers placed in the way of their education.

#### Who needs to be involved?

Key people to be involved include: children and young people in need; parents and families; designated lead teachers in schools and settings; social workers; Third Sector colleagues; attendance and exclusions team at Children and Families.

## What are we going to do?

- We will fund and recruit a new 'Virtual Head for Children in Need'. This new leader will build on the success of the Leeds Virtual School for Children Looked After, and lead work across the city to monitor outcomes, advocate for children, provide training and advice for schools and social workers and provide support and challenge to schools. The Virtual Head will be in post by Spring Term 2020.
- We will develop, agree and implement new multi-agency planning and support for Children in Need where there are challenges with attendance and/or academic progress. Child In Need reviews will consider school attendance and progress at every meeting, and where absence is high or progress is below expectations an updated shared assessment and plan will be agreed. New arrangements in place by September 2019.
- We will update and extend training and guidance for all social workers to enable them to better support the learning and attendance of the children and families they work with every day. Training programme and updated guidance to be in place by September 2019.
- We will ensure a renewed emphasis on the attendance and attainment of Children in Need through all teams who have regular contact with schools. Guidance issued to all relevant teams by October 2019.
- We will work with Children North East to look at using the 'Poverty Proofing the School Day' in relevant schools to ensure that all disadvantaged children (but CIN in particular) have the best chance of attending regularly and succeeding academically. Trialled in targeted schools in Spring 2020. Roll out to all relevant schools (if effective) by September 2020.

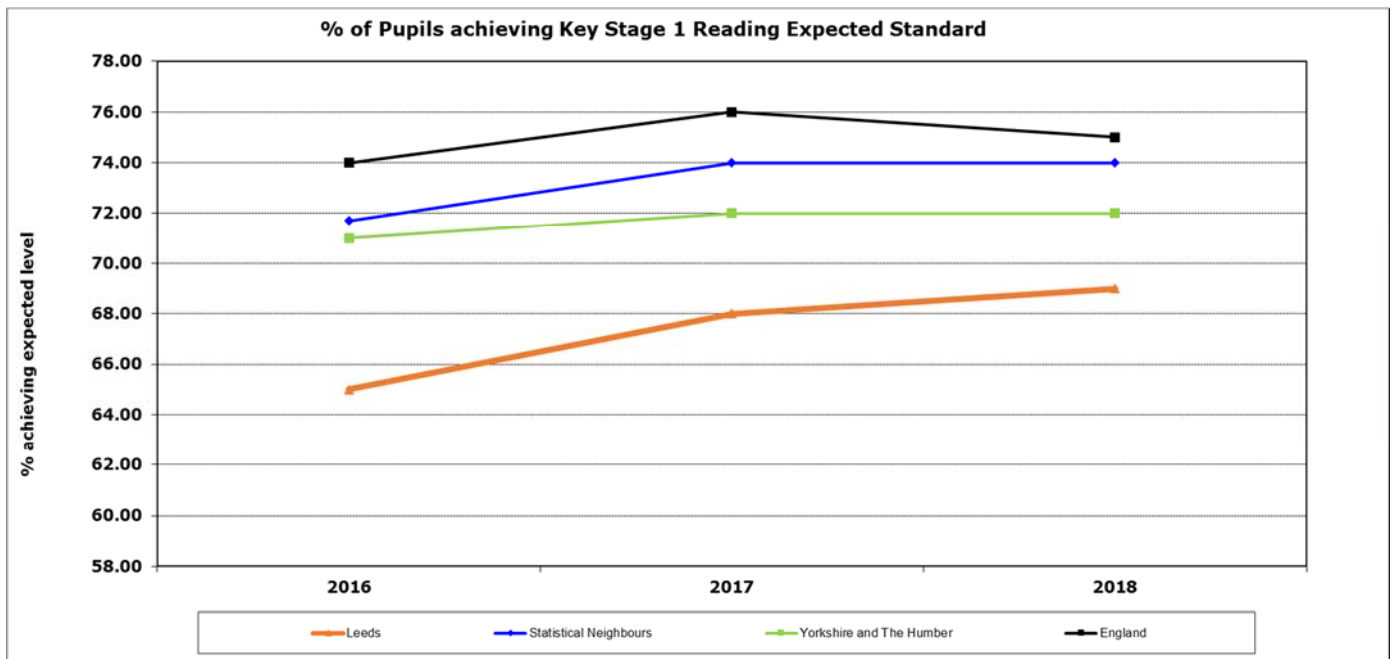


## Obsession 3:

### All children in Leeds read for learning and fun

#### Key measure:

#### % of children achieving the expected standard in reading in Key Stage 1



#### The story behind the curve

Although the percentage of children achieving the expected standard in reading at KS1 has improved by 4% since 2016, that progress has slowed and there is still a 6% gap to the national average. Writing has a similar gap to national over the last 3 years and we know that improving reading skills also improves writing skills. The percentage of pupils achieving the 'greater depth' higher standard in reading at KS1 is improving faster than national. The Good Level of Development measure at end of Reception shows that Literacy (Reading and Writing) was the worst of the 7 areas which are assessed. Literacy had 67.4% of pupils in line with or above the national as opposed to 80.1% for Communication and Language and 81.2% for Knowledge and Understanding of the World.

#### Where do we need to know more?

We need to continue to gain a better understanding of the outcomes by area in these measures so that we can clearly see where the worst outcomes are and the relationship they have to poverty, resources, quality of provision and community engagement.

#### What works?

BookTrust have a comprehensive range of research and impact measures demonstrating the impact their programmes have on reading engagement and outcomes, for example, '94% of Bookstart Baby practitioners said the programme encouraged parents or carers to share books with children at an earlier age, and 90% said it promoted shared reading with babies (aged 0-12 months) as part of a daily routine. 83% of Bookstart Treasure practitioners said the programme increased the frequency that the parent or carer read with their child aged 3-4.' Booktrust will be working in partnership with Leeds to assess the impact of training a variety of staff and volunteers to deliver their 'Corner' programme to families. Previous research on this programme shows: 93% of practitioners said Bookstart Corner parents or carers were more confident about reading with their child aged 12-24 months after taking part in the programme. Parents or carers increased the use of book sharing skills to bring stories alive and encourage interaction and engagement with stories after taking part in Bookstart Corner. Parents or carers were twice as likely to say they used puppets and toys to act out stories with their child (from 33% before to 65% after), and more likely to ask

questions when reading together (from 68% before to 89% after). For more research see: <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/what-we-do/impact-and-research/>

### Who needs to be involved?

Early Years settings and schools, Leeds Library Service, The BookTrust, Dubit (digital partners with expertise in online content for children and young people), Councillors and officers of Leeds CC, Third Sector Colleagues, Health Visitors, Children's Centres, Social Workers, Early Help Workers, Universities, Child Friendly Ambassadors, parents and pupils.

### What are we going to do?

- We will use donated BookTrust books (and others funded by Child Friendly Leeds Ambassadors) to support reading in schools and settings where most needed. We will work with charity partners to target areas and groups most in need. 15,000 books to be circulated by April 2020.
- Plan, publicise and deliver a 'Year of Reading' across Leeds in partnership with BookTrust and CFL Ambassadors. Involve officers, councillors and others in reading sessions across the city, particularly in areas of high deprivation or low reading outcomes. Incorporate new / revised BookTrust programmes. Organise author visits, poetry events etc in locations of most need. Tie in with Baby Week, 50 things to do before you're 5 etc. Year of Reading to run September 2019 to August 2020.
- Review and refresh the learning offer to parents across the city in terms of adult learning, particularly adult literacy. Target areas where reading outcomes are lowest for children and signpost parents to appropriate events and support. Review completed by December 2019', new programme in place by Easter 2020.
- We will use the ABCD approach to trial having a 'Reading Champion' in a focused area of the city to see the impact this has on reading activity and outcomes in that targeted neighbourhood. Pathfinder Programme to start Autumn 2019. Review July 2020 and decide whether to roll out to other communities.
- We will work in partnership with The BookTrust to trial and deliver new and refreshed programmes, particularly those aimed at 0-7 years olds. We will also work together on researching the impact of this with the Booktrust's own research partners and with Leeds Beckett University. Revision of current uptake of BookTrust Programmes June 2019. Findings to be implemented Autumn 2019. BookTrust Represents Pathfinder in 9 schools in June 2019. Wider roll out September 2019 to July 2020. Work with BookTrust on innovation and adaptation of programmes from July 2019 to July 2022.
- We will work with digital partners to create and share online content and apps to support reading across the city. First content will be available from September 2019 and added to across the next 3 years.