

Appendix One

Update on Thriving: The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds

1. Main issues

This report provides an update on Thriving, the Leeds Child Poverty Strategy¹ and progress of the workstreams that sit underneath the strategy. It also details our responses to the post pandemic and cost of living crisis, in terms of ongoing work, impact and next steps.

1.1 National picture ²

Updated statistics are due for publication end of March 2023

In FYE 2021, there were 2.92 million children (aged 0 to 19) living in families in Relative low income and 2.37 million children (aged 0 to 19) in Absolute low income across the United Kingdom; 81% of children were aged under 16 for both measures.

In the United Kingdom, the proportion of children aged under 16 in low income families was 19% for Relative low income and 15% for Absolute low income.

At a local level, the proportion of children aged under 16 living in low-income families varies greatly, ranging from 3% to 42% across local authorities for Relative low income and from 3% to 39% for Absolute low income.

Some groups, such as children, lone parents, those with disabilities and people from ethnic minorities are more likely to experience poverty, to remain in poverty for longer and to experience deeper poverty than others. The proportion of families in poverty where at least one adult is in work reached a record high in 2019-20 with two thirds of families in poverty having someone in work³

Joseph Rowntree Foundation UK Poverty report⁴ published in 2023 detailed the following -

- 13.4 million people were in poverty during 2020/21, including 3.9 million children. Of these, 1.3m were primary school children and 1m children under the age of four, who are now 'experiencing the sharp end of the hardship caused by the cost-of-living crisis'.
- One in six (18 per cent) children were living in persistent poverty (spending at least three out of the last four years in poverty). The JRF says that 'for young children, that is nearly their whole life.' Almost 40 per cent of children in a lone parent family are in poverty.
- The Government showed it could make a meaningful difference to the numbers experiencing poverty during the pandemic when it introduced the temporary £20 a week increase to universal credit and working tax credit. However, the period of respite was brief, with the Government taking away this help just as the cost-of-living crisis began, with benefits instead rising by only 3.1 per cent - a fraction of the inflation many families are experiencing.

1.2 Local picture in Leeds

Please note updated statistics are due for publication end of March 2023 Latest figures available: FYE 2020

- 22% of Leeds' population is living in relative poverty after housing costs are deducted from income. This equates to approximately 174,000 people⁵.

¹ [Child Poverty Strategy Report Appendix 1 121119.pdf \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#)

² [Children in low income families - Local area statistics](#)

³ [Only good, well-paid work is a route out of poverty | TUC](#)

⁴ [UK Poverty 2023: The essential guide to understanding poverty in the UK | JRF](#)

⁵ DWP, [Households below average income \(HBAI\)](#)

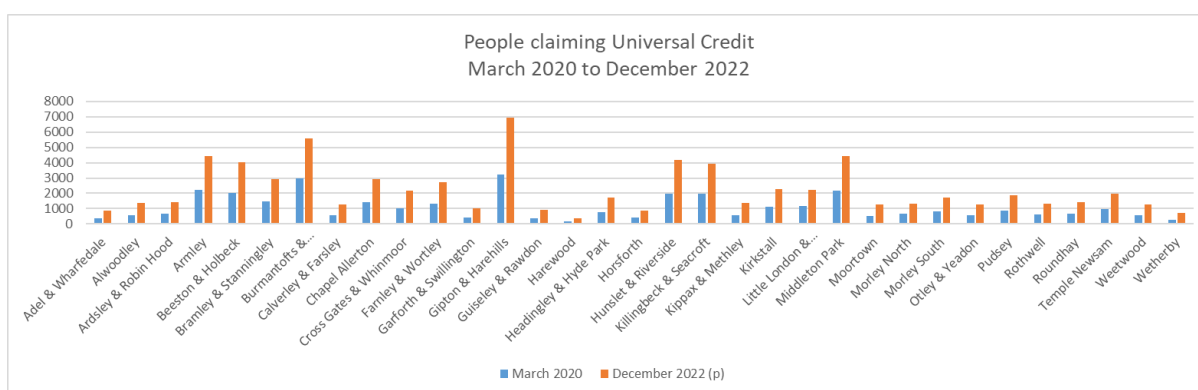
Please note: data collection for HBAI FYE 2021 (released in 2022) was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the figures produced are subject to additional uncertainty and may not be strictly comparable with previous years. Therefore, figures for FYE 2020 (released in 2021) have been referred to as most the most reliable and up to date source.

- 24% of children, (36, 496) were living in relative low income families BHC in 2019/20. This is an increase of 1% (1634) children since 2018/19.

In March 2020, 35,450 were claiming Universal Credit in Leeds, this increased to a high of 74,515 people in March 2021. The latest provisional data shows that in December 2022, that figure has slightly reduced to 74,183 claimants, however, still remains more than double the pre-pandemic level.

All wards in Leeds have seen an increase in people claiming UC (Not in Employment), with the highest impact on our poorest wards. The most affected wards are Gipton and Harehills, where claimants have increased from 10.6% of WAP, 2,210 claimants in March 2020 to 21.1% of WAP, 4,384 in October 2022, and Burmantofts and Richmond Hill ward where claimants have increased from 11.0% of the working age population, 2,068 claimants in March 2020 to 18.2% of the working age population, 3,421 claimants in October 2022.

Below details the information by ward across for UC all claimants.



The University of Leeds report, Deep Poverty: Everyday Financial Crisis in Leeds⁶ published late 2022 states that indicators suggest an increasing prevalence and severity of poverty in Leeds. Between 2014 and 2020, the number of children living in ‘relative low-income’ and ‘absolute low-income’ increased by 49% and 19% respectively in Leeds. As a result, the economic gap between Leeds and the rest of the UK has widened in recent years. Alongside this, cuts to local authority funding are presenting a challenge to the operations of statutory agencies and third sector support organisations at a time of rising demand for their help from low-income communities.

Similarly, the Child of the North report⁷, published in December 2021, found that children in the north are more likely to live in poverty than the rest of England and increasingly so as living costs rise. Child poverty, including fuel poverty and food insecurity, are higher in the North than the rest of England and minority ethnicity families, families with younger children, families in which someone is living with a disability, renters, larger families and lone parents, are all more likely to be going without, falling behind with essential bills, or taking on debt as living costs rise, reflecting real harm and suffering. Poverty is the lead driver of inequalities between children in the North and their counterparts in the rest of the country, leading to worse physical and mental health outcomes, educational attainment, and lower lifelong economic productivity.

It also found that 34% of children in the North are living in poverty compared to the overall English figure of 28%. In Yorkshire and the Humber and the North East, child poverty is now the highest it has been since 2000/2001. Findings include that Leeds has 2 of 11 parliamentary constituencies in the North (Leeds East and Leeds Central) where relative child poverty after housing costs has reached 45% or higher. Findings also show that that over 20% of households in these constituencies were already fuel poor before the current crisis.

⁶ [Deep Poverty Report FINAL \(deep-poverty.co.uk\)](https://deep-poverty.co.uk/)

⁷ [COTN-APPG.pdf \(thenhsa.co.uk\)](https://thenhsa.co.uk/)

1.3 Poverty, the cost-of-living crisis and the impact on children and families

Poverty has a profound effect on families and children living in them.

The cost-of-living crisis is having a severe impact on families with children. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the war in Ukraine, Brexit and austerity and inflation has all increased pressures on low-income households and the most vulnerable in society, as well as pushing many additional households to experience financial uncertainty and hardship for the first time.

A full and comprehensive “Cost of Living Update report”⁸ on the cost-of-living crisis and actions being undertaken by the Council and partners from a welfare and financial inclusion perspective is being presented by the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment to Executive Board in March 2023.

With the increase in prices, families are finding it increasingly harder to provide for their children and are struggling to keep their children warm and fed which in turn is having an impact on mental wellbeing of parents. A report by Barnardo’s⁹ in October 2022 evidenced that

- More than half of parents (54%) have been forced to cut back on food spending for their family over the past 12 months.
- One in five parents said they have struggled to provide sufficient food due to the current cost-of-living crisis, and over a quarter (26%) said their child’s mental health has worsened due to the situation.
- Parents have admitted resorting to desperate measures, with a quarter (26%) having sold possessions, one in five (20%) having taken on new credit cards, extra debt or a payday loan, and sixteen respondents have even left pets at rescue centres due to the rising cost-of-living.

The cost-of-living crisis is also having an impact on children’s learning. Education charity Sutton Trust¹⁰ surveyed 6200 schoolteachers in Autumn 2022 and found staff were seeing serious issues linked to the cost-of-living crisis

- 38% said more children were coming to school hungry (rising to 56% in the most deprived schools)
- 54% saw an increase in kids without adequate winter clothing (but 65% in the poorest areas)
- 17% had more families asking to be referred to a foodbank (increasing to 27% in the least well-off places)
- 74% have seen an increase in pupils unable to concentrate or tired in class
- 67% have more students with behaviour issues
- 54% have seen an increase in those coming into school without adequate winter clothing like a coat.

The End Child Poverty¹¹ Youth Ambassadors¹² have researched, written and launched a report in November 2022 detailing the experience of 16- to 25-year-olds in relation to the Cost of Living Crisis. 476 young people were asked about their thoughts and feelings in relation to the cost-of-living crisis. 97% said they thought the rising cost of living was a problem for young people aged 16- 25 today. Responses included young people struggling to pay bills, the cost-of-living crisis having a negative impact on the mental and physical health and a loss of independence and a feeling on uncertainty due to the crisis.

A report published in December 2022 “Survival is not easy”¹³ captures the views of 461 care experienced young people on the impact of the cost-of-living crisis; with 65% stating that this crisis has had a significant effect of them including paying for food, bills, and effect on mental health.

⁸ [Corporate report template for committee and officer decisions \(new\) \(leeds.gov.uk\)](https://leeds.gov.uk/corporate-report-template-for-committee-and-officer-decisions-new)

⁹ [At What Cost - the impact of the cost of living crisis on children and young people.pdf \(barnardos.org.uk\)](https://www.barnardos.org.uk/what-cost-the-impact-of-the-cost-of-living-crisis-on-children-and-young-people.pdf)

¹⁰ [Cost of Living and Education 2022 - Sutton Trust](https://www.suttontrust.com/research/cost-of-living-and-education-2022)

¹¹ [We're Skint - End Child Poverty](https://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/wheres-skint)

¹² [Youth Ambassador Scheme - End Child Poverty](https://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/youth-ambassador-scheme)

¹³ [Survival-Is-Not-Easy-Full-Report-with-Word-Cloud-NLCBF-December-2022.pdf \(catch-22.org.uk\)](https://www.catch-22.org.uk/survival-is-not-easy-full-report-with-word-cloud-nlcbf-december-2022.pdf)

Research indicates that poverty is also having a significant impact on the health of children and families in the UK. In January 2023, the British Medical Journal published a report¹⁴ as to how the cost-of-living crisis is damaging children's health.

In January 2023 Bristol University published a study¹⁵ which found a "strong social gradient" linking poverty with increase in mortality. Of the children who died in the Sudden unexpected death in infancy or childhood (Sudic) category, four times as many came from the most deprived fifth of the population, compared with the least deprived fifth. These findings follow a report that revealed homelessness may have been a contributing factor in the deaths of at least 34 children in England between April 2019 and March 2022.

Health visitors have warned of a developmental delay¹⁶ and rise in babies born into poverty. The survey found that over one in ten health visitors reported an increase in poverty affecting families over the past few months.

"I am seeing children at 17 months old not walking due to gross motor delay as a consequence of lack of space and inadequate housing; speech and social development impacted by lack of play and stimulation secondary to the harmful impact of poverty, deprivation and poor housing"

Research published¹⁷ in January 2023 stated that homelessness may have been a contributing factor to at least 34 unexpected children's deaths 2019 – 2022 temporary accommodation.

1.4 The Leeds Approach

Thriving: The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds was launched in 2019. We know that the feeling of being in poverty, the feeling of being excluded and the feeling of being ashamed can impact a child for the rest of their life. We don't want this in Leeds. So, we are working together, as a city, to reduce the impact of poverty on young people. This is our moral imperative.

The child poverty strategy was co-created with children, young people, families with direct experience of poverty, third, private and public sector, schools, academics and other organisations.

There are seven workstreams which sit under the Child Poverty Impact Board:

1. Readiness for learning and school-aged education
2. Housing and provision
3. Empowering families and safeguarding
4. Financial health and inclusion
5. Transitions and employment
6. Best start for health and wellbeing
7. Green spaces

Our Ambitions

- We will be innovative, together, to break down the barriers that poverty creates.
- We will be brave, together, to revolutionise the way that Leeds works with children, young people and families who live in poverty.
- We will fight, together, to ensure that every child and young person who experiences poverty can thrive.

Thriving has **five fundamental principles**:

- 1) All work needs to be informed by the knowledge of children, young people and parents/carers
- 2) All projects need to work with a wide variety of partners

¹⁴ [How the cost of living crisis is damaging children's health | The BMJ](#)

¹⁵ [Child Mortality in England During the First 2 Years of the COVID-19 Pandemic | Pediatrics | JAMA Network Open | JAMA Network](#)

¹⁶ [State of Health Visiting Report 2022 FINAL VERSION 13.01.23.pdf \(mcusercontent.com\)](#)

¹⁷ [APPG report final version 13th Jan \(householdstemporaryaccommodation.co.uk\)](#)

- 3) The focus is on changing structures, not individuals
- 4) We need to reframe the language and understandings that are used
- 5) Research is incorporated into every project

2.0 Main issues

This section provides an update on each impact workstream, the projects that sit within the impact workstreams and details responses to COVID-19, impact and Next steps.

3.0 Financial Health & Inclusion

The aim of this workstream is: ***We want every family to be equipped with the support, guidance and opportunities needed to live financially secure and stable lives.***

This workstream is led by Lee Hemsworth, Chief Officer Customer Access and Welfare Communities and Environments.

The main projects are: Financial health and inclusion support directly to families; Increasing engagement in wider support and guidance to families to support financial health and inclusion; and Ensuring knowledge and understanding of financial health and inclusion issues and support.

3.1 Priority 1: Increasing engagement in financial health and inclusion support directly to families

Update on recent activities

The key areas of activity for priority 1 are the Healthy Holidays programme, Household Support Fund, and Free School Meal uptake.

Healthy Holidays

Leeds City Council leads the Healthy Holidays programme, which has been running since 2018, in partnership with Leeds Community Foundation. The programme provides enriching activities and healthy food to school aged children who are eligible for Free School Meals across the city. Funded by Department for Education, for 2022 Leeds City Council received just under £3.5 million. As a result, Healthy Holidays programmes in 2022 took place within 120 schools, 52 third sector organisations and 19 Council provisions within Community Hubs, Breeze and through the Youth Service. The multiplicity and varied nature of the programme within Leeds is a key strength.

Additional support for the programme is provided by a range of Council and external providers enhancing the local offer and including: Food support from Catering Leeds, FareShare, Rethink food, Hamara and Give a Gift; Active Leeds swimming catch up programme; Parks & Countryside's trips and visits to our Activity Centres as well as nutritional education support through Zest-Foodwise.

Household Support Fund

The Department for Work and Pension's Household Support Fund is a short-term national funding stream, delivered by local authorities in England to support those most in need with the costs of food fuel and essential items. Leeds City Council received £7.1m to allocate between 1st October 2022 to the end of March 2023.

Free School Meals

See data below

Outcomes and outputs:

Healthy Holidays

Over the course of Easter and summer and Christmas 2022, Healthy Holiday provision in Leeds reached over 24,250 individual children and young people. During summer provision this number included 1786 children and young people with a special educational need or disability.

Across Easter, summer and Christmas 2022, 169,000 portions of food were served. Over Christmas, there was a target to reach 4,500 children but over 5800 children and young people actually took part in Healthy Holiday activities and over 29,000 portions of nutritious, predominantly hot meals were served across the programme.

The Healthy Holidays Programme in Leeds has a significant, beneficial impact upon the children and young people participating. Providers, especially schools, report ongoing and improved engagement from children and young people who have accessed the Healthy Holidays Programme; better transitions between primary and secondary education settings and reassurance in seeing children throughout Easter, summer and Christmas holidays from a safeguarding perspective.

A video was also produced for the 2021 provisions¹⁸ - [Healthy Holidays Leeds - YouTube](#)

- **Feedback received from a third sector provider over summer 22:** *One family has a child with special needs who are also struggling financially. We were not only able to give the children the opportunity to take part in fun activities we were also able to refer mum to our food pantry for support. Her children, one with SEND, responded well to the cooking activities and a normally 'faddy' eater was happily found tucking into Lentil Ragu with a tomato and vegetable sauce. Mum is convinced that he would not have tried that at home.*
- **Feedback from a parent over summer 22:** *"Please keep putting on these events - they're excellent and invaluable for families who struggle (for all sorts of reasons) with access to other activities."*
- **Feedback received from a parent whose child attended a school provision over Christmas 22:** *"Winter wonderland has removed my guilt from this year not been able to treat the kids to a Christmas experience that would be ridiculously overpriced and underwhelming, this club has had everything & more. I felt my children were in safe environment to go off with friends and explore safely, whilst having fun It was an event for all ages to enjoy together."*
- **Feedback from a school provider over Christmas 22:** *We had one individual who we had tried to get involved in our Easter and Summer programmes but who had not been able to come to any of the sessions. We discovered that this was largely a financial/transport issue which we were able to help the family out with and the pupil was able to attend for the whole 7 days. This pupil comes from a background of high poverty and there have been issues with school attendance and fitness/lifestyle. He hugely benefitted from the activities themselves, the contact with the strong adult role models, the fruit provided and the hot, healthy lunch which they greatly enjoyed. The pupil also benefitted from the contact with their peers as quite often they didn't leave their flat for the whole of the holidays and was very lonely. They had also clearly made some friendships with some of the other young people and when I asked them about the course they told me 'I've had the best time made some great friends and cannot wait until the Easter activities.'*

Data-sharing and collaboration between Performance and Intelligence team in Children and Families and the Financial Inclusion team enabled a map to be created with Child Poverty indicators, Healthy Holidays provision and new applications to assist in decision making for the next round of funding and help assess any gaps in provision.

¹⁸ [Healthy Holidays Leeds - YouTube](#)

Household Support Fund

Government funding of £7.1m to support vulnerable people with the costs of energy, food and essential items between October and the end of March 2023. Funding is being used as follows;

- Support to Housing Benefit recipients not eligible for the £650 DWP Cost of Living payment- January/ February (approximately 600 households)
- £70 payments to working age people in receipt of Council Tax Support- Letters sent out w/c 5TH December (42,484 households)
- Additional funding to the Local Welfare Support Scheme and additional payments for people claiming Discretionary Housing Payments.
- Funding to Childrens services and Housing Leeds to support foster carers.
- Third sector support through Voluntary Action Leeds, Forum Central, Leeds Food Aid Network and advice organisations.

Free School Meals

The number of children who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals (FSM) has increased substantially over recent years. In January 2020 (pre-pandemic) 25,473 children were eligible. By January 2022 this had increased by 7,413 to 32,886.

Data from the January 2022 census showed out of the 32,886 FSM eligible pupils, 7,625 were reported to not take up the offer of the FSM (76.8% take-up). To support schools to increase take up the Health and Wellbeing Service alongside Catering Leeds delivered a free school meals campaign in January 2023. The campaign shared images and key messages to raise the profile of school meals and encourage families to take up their entitlement. Early indications show 27 schools took part and the campaign had a positive impact. 58 schools are now accessing the Free School Meals Toolkit and 12 schools attending FSM training in Nov 2022 delivered in partnership with the Council Tax and Benefits Service. Data on take-up from the January 2023 census will be available for the next report.

Next steps:

In terms of Healthy Holidays, work is now ongoing planning the programme for 2023 with bids assessed for the third sector; schools' assessment panels currently convened and the development of the Leeds City Council programme underway, including a focus upon targeting under-represented cohorts of children and younger people including older young people and children living in families with experience of domestic abuse.

3.2 Priority 2: Increasing engagement in wider support and guidance to families to support financial health and inclusion

Update on recent activities

In terms of engagement in wider support and guidance, current focus is on the Uniform Re-use scheme and gambling-related harm work.

Leeds School Uniform Exchange (LSUE)

Leeds City Council and Leeds Community Foundation have funded Zero Waste Leeds (ZWL) to bring a co-ordinated uniform reuse scheme to the city. The aim of the scheme is to reduce the amount of uniforms sent to waste, reduce the stigma of wearing second hand clothing and tackling poverty through encouraging more families to reuse and donate rather than to feel pressured to buy new uniform every term.

Uniform exchange promotional events supported by ZWL now take place across the city, during half term and seasonal periods. Various regular weekly exchanges have now also been established, alongside other support services such as food pantries.

In addition to the uniform activities, ZWL has also coordinated a Winter Coat Campaign and established the 'Together for Sport' project, for the donation and distribution of sport kit and equipment.

Gambling Related Harm

The annual "My Health, My School Survey" includes questions on gambling for the fourth year running. The 2020-21 survey showed that figures remained consistent with those of previous years: 24% secondary school pupils reported to have taken part in gambling activities during the past year.

A survey carried out with staff in Secondary and Further Education settings (PSHE, Pastoral and Safeguarding Leads) earlier this year found that there is a need for further training and support with gambling harm resources. In response to this, a training and resource package is being developed in partnership with the charity Gambling with Lives and will be piloted in Leeds in February/March 2023.

A 'One Minute Guide' on Gambling and young people has now been approved for distribution to the Children's Directorate workforce¹⁹. Online information on gambling harm has also been added to the MindMate website.

Leeds City Council continues to roll out Harmful Gambling Guidance for all staff. This guidance aims to support staff experiencing gambling related harms, whether it is caused by their own gambling or that of a loved one. Plans are being developed to roll this out across Anchor Employers in the city.

A communications campaign ran during the Football World Cup with the aim of making the people of Leeds think when gambling crosses the line, increasing much-needed awareness of gambling harms and where people can find support, if they feel that they are negatively affected by gambling. There is a particular emphasis on considering 'affected others' (those impacted by the gambling of someone close to them), including social media posts aimed at families to encourage people to think about the impact their gambling could have on parents, children and/or siblings.

In October 2022, Public Health delivered an online workshop in partnership with the National Centre for Gaming Disorders for the Children's Social Care workforce. This session included content on the 'gamblification' of gaming, such as skin betting; raising awareness amongst frontline workers working with vulnerable young people in a range of settings.

The Leeds Gambling Harms Group is a citywide partnership bringing together services to collectively address gambling-related harm in the city. The group met on 17 January 2023 and identified 'protecting children and young people from gambling-related harm' as a key priority for the group. This will be built into the forward work programme and a specific working group set up to identify projects to address this priority, building on work already undertaken.

The Communities, Housing and Environment Scrutiny Board hosted a consultative meeting with a focus on Reducing Gambling Harm on 20 January 2023. The Board endorsed the work already undertaken in the city around early intervention and communications as part of a preventative approach to tackling gambling harm within children and young people.

Outcomes and outputs:

LSUE

There are now 273 exchanges operating in the city, covering 92% of schools in Leeds.

The Winter Coat Campaign exceeded its target of distributing 2,000 coats, with over 3,600 coats collected and distributed across community settings in Leeds.

¹⁹ [One Minute Guide - Gambling and Young People.pdf \(leeds.gov.uk\)](#)

Gambling Related Harm

The My Health, My School Survey analysis showed that 1988 secondary school pupils completed the gambling questions within the survey. Of those, 24% reported they had gambled, 0.6% reported gambling as a cause of concern or worry (an increase of 0.2%) and 49% reported they need better information on learning material in school on gambling.

Next steps

Winter Coats Campaign

Due to the success of the campaign, the scheme has been extended, utilising a self-supporting model (sites both collect and redistribute coats). The scheme is expected to continue throughout the winter period (estimated close in March 2023).

Gambling Related harm

The findings of the gambling survey will be analysed and will inform the children and young people's gambling work stream, alongside the results from the My Health, My School Survey.

Once fully implemented in Leeds City Council, the Financial Inclusion Team and Public Health will be working with other anchor organisations in the city to implement their own Harmful Gambling Guidance to support employees.

3.3 Priority 3: Ensuring knowledge and understanding of financial health and inclusion issues and support

Update on recent activities

Google drive

A Google drive has been established to share key resources, and messages across services and organisations. Physical resources are available to download or request for printing, including flyers (including translations), concertinas and business cards.

Training Awareness Sessions

A suite of themed awareness videos are being developed to be shared with frontline staff and volunteers on key subjects including advice and support, energy, mental health.

A range of awareness raising sessions have been undertaken over the past 3 months focussed on financial health and inclusion. These have included sessions on tackling poverty and financial inclusion, cost of living, fuel poverty support and training, signposting to warm spaces.

Each session has been facilitated by the financial inclusion team in collaboration with the relevant partners organisations and experts. Sessions have been promoted across the council and attended by a range of services including services working directly with families with children.

Gypsy and Traveller Energy Support Pilot Project

Green Doctor and other advice services worked on a pilot project explore how targeted support around energy and utilities can be made available and accessible to Gypsy and Traveller families in Leeds, particularly those living on LCC Settled Sites (Cottingley Springs & Kidacre Park) and families engaging with GATE (Gypsy and Traveller Exchange).

Outcomes and outputs:

Google Drive

Over 70,000 resources have been distributed to organisations including council services, NHS and health settings, DWP, third sector and universities over the past two months.

Training Awareness Sessions

Financial Inclusion Team have delivered training and awareness sessions to a wide range of council (including elected members) and health services since October 2022 including;

- Inner North East Community Committee Workshop - Cost of Living (approx 60 attendees)
- Training Session on Money Information Centre & signposting to advice services for DWP staff – 80 attendees
- Public Health Want to know more about 'Tackling Poverty & Financial Inclusion' Session – 40 attendees
- Fuel Poverty & Support Training for PCN – 25 attendees
- Tackling Poverty & Financial Inclusion Session for Childrens Services – 80 attendees
- Childrens Services Directors Development session- 40 attendees

Gypsy and Traveller Energy Support Pilot Project

Green Doctor attended sites alongside support agencies, for site 'walkabouts' and visits. All residential plots across the three sites have been visited and offered support. Immediate uptake on Green Doctor appointments has remained low, however Green Doctor have reported this approach has enabled staff to strengthen understanding and working relationships with frontline services supporting the community and it is felt that as overall awareness of the service is embedded, over time, uptake in the community is likely to increase.

Next steps

Google Drive

To continue updating resources

Training and Awareness sessions

Continue establishing a clear and concise narrative using poverty statistics, data and local evidence, maintaining resources such as the Leeds Poverty Fact Book and Leeds MIC Website and Printed Resources.

Gypsy and Traveller Energy Support Pilot Project

Green Doctor have now offered to provide tailored training sessions to frontline services, both in order to further enhance the existing working relationships between services, and to enable staff/volunteers from a range of services to offer additional one to one support and advice with respect to energy and utilities, directly to residents.

4.0 Best Start for Health & Wellbeing

The aim of this workstream is: ***We want every Leeds baby from conception to age two to have the best start in life, especially those who are the most vulnerable.***

This workstream is led by Kathryn Ingold, the Chief Officer - Public Health.

4.1 Priority 1: Baby Buddy App

Update on recent activities

Baby Buddy is a parenting app that is free to use. It provides evidence-based support and information throughout pregnancy and the first year, which is accessible at any time. The most recent data show that 47% of expectant and new parents in Leeds are using the app. Leeds is the top local authority for the

numbers of fathers downloading and using the App, with over 5 times more downloads by fathers than any other local authority.

Baby Buddy 2.0 launched on November 22nd 2021. The new App has been completely updated with additional functions including content up to the first birthday, information for fathers/partners, choice of place of birth and in App support plans/spaces.

New content to support healthy lifestyles has been developed and Best Beginnings have agreed to come and share this at the Perinatal Parenting Programmes Network in April to ensure practitioners have all the available information to share the messages and signpost to the content.

Outcomes and outputs:

We are due a report from Baby Buddy for the last quarter in the coming weeks meaning there is no available new data to report until next time. There will be an annual report available in May 2023.

The App continues to be promoted widely, however due to there being no funding for ongoing work with Best Beginnings there is limited opportunity to report on outcomes and outputs directly from Baby Buddy. Additional feedback regarding usage and user satisfaction will continue to be requested from practitioners.

Next steps

To continue to work with Best Beginnings and services/organisations on the interconnected workstreams and activities to increase the uptake of Baby Buddy 2.0 in Leeds. This includes:

- Ensuring the Leeds bespoke promotional resources are shared and displayed in places families visit, including libraries, children's centres and health centres
- Sharing the bespoke training and promotional videos across services in Leeds
[Leeds Trailblazer Square Local 60s](#)
[Leeds Trailblazer Promo 2m20s](#)
- Collating feedback via the App and via the Champions from new and expectant parents, this will be provided as part of the annual report in May 2023.
- Exploring opportunities for additional funding/partnership working with Best Beginnings and Baby Buddy app.

4.2 Priority 2: Preparation for Birth and Beyond

Update on recent activities

The virtual PBB courses continue to run with good attendance from pregnant people and their support partner. The sessions are delivered in partnership by 0-19 service and children's centres with 4 courses being delivered per month on a rolling programme. Face to face courses are running alongside the virtual courses and are now running 4 per month. In the 6-month period from June-Dec 2022 over 40 courses were delivered (virtual and face to face combined), with more than 300 participants in total. Face to face groups are now much more popular and are now organised with Children's Centres for at least 3 months in advance.

The practitioner PBB forum continues to run quarterly to ensure that practitioners are skilled and confident in facilitating the sessions. The most recent forum was in Dec 2022 and had a focus on 'crisis support' for families with an excellent presentation and sharing of resources from Public Health.

Outcomes and outputs:

Verbal feedback from virtual sessions continues to be positive, with many commenting on how much they have learned about caring for baby and about baby brain development. The electronic survey has been reintroduced with a reminder to complete at the end of each session.

Many of the recently run virtual courses have seen large numbers of fathers/partners attending the sessions, fathers/partners have commented that they feel much more part of the pregnancy journey and that they feel more informed and involved.

Parent feedback from a recent course (Jan 23)

One thing you enjoyed about the session?

- Videos
- Game
- Interactivity
- Learning to self-pump
- Enjoyed baby benefits game
- Had zero knowledge but you guys nailed it
- All of the session
- Useful info about breastfeeding
- Technique of latching on the breast for feeding

One thing you have learnt that you didn't know before?

- The importance of bonding and brain development in the first 2 years of baby's life
- That baby's lungs aren't fully developed until born
- What babies' brains are like when they're born
- Didn't know about process of development of brain
- Baby's move away when they have had enough of things
- The growth and development from a baby's brain from birth
- You get eyebrows & lashes very early
- There's an app to help me
- Brain development
- Development Stages
- Weekly progress of baby
- Red/amber/green traffic light system

From today's session, is there anything new you would you plan to do with baby?

- Communicate with baby bump
- Use the traffic light system
- Invest in a sling
- Look out for green, amber, red signs
- Traffic light system
- Music before birth
- Red/amber/green
- Playing music & singing around him
- Already planned to connect with my baby

- More interactions with baby
- I will interact more

Next steps

We will continue the rolling programme of courses including 4 virtual courses 4 face to face courses per month.

Further promotion and usage of the Baby Buddy app will continue in PBB sessions with expectant parents. The team will continue to develop the resource pack for parents using the PBB forum as a training platform to inform staff.

The infant mental health service will continue to provide on-going training to enable more practitioners to be able to facilitate the courses.

4.3 Priority 3: Economic wellbeing 0-19 service

Update on recent activities

The 0-19 Public Health Integrated Nursing Service has an economic wellbeing pathway linked to their internal intranet, making it accessible to all practitioners. The pathway describes how the 0-19 PHINS and Early Start practitioners will support families to achieve economic wellbeing. This includes support to families to:

1. Maximise income
2. Manage debt
3. Access support services
4. Reduce fuel bills
5. Develop financial literacy
6. Access education and work

The pathway includes links to a vast range of support that practitioners can signpost to including food banks and Healthy Holiday clubs.

Outcomes and outputs:

The 0-19 PHINS practitioners continue to support families with social and economic needs through their mandated contacts with children and families. Needs are identified and reviewed with practitioners enquiring about food availability, debt, benefit entitlement and employment. They signpost/refer families to benefit support, healthy start vouchers, child benefit and local support networks including food banks, Healthy Holiday clubs, One Stop centres, Children's Centres, or libraries. Between July 2022 to Sept 22 the service made over 2400 contacts to offer signposting, support and advice around issues related to economic wellbeing. In total there have been over 4100 contacts since the start of April 2022. Data on economic wellbeing interventions for Q3 will be available in early February 2023.

Next steps

Commissioners will ensure the service is kept up to date on local support services and encourage promotion of the Together Leeds web page.

Commissioners will also continue to monitor the number of economic wellbeing interventions and will report back through all relevant channels.

5.0 Housing & Provision

The aim of this workstream is: ***We want to support every family and young person living in social housing in Leeds to achieve a sustainable tenancy***

This workstream is led by Gerard Tinsdale, Chief Officer Housing, Resources and Housing.

Priority 1 - Joint Working Between Housing and Children's Social Work Teams to Support Families in Council Tenancies

Update on recent activities

Representatives from local Housing team and Children's Social Work area teams are attending each other's team meetings regularly to discuss common issues, problem solve and ensure families' needs are being met.

Housing Management have been attending the Children's Health and Disability (CHAD) Operations Group meeting to foster closer working. They also work to improve the referral process and outcomes for families with disabled children. Additionally, they have been exploring options for minor works to existing assets, without impacting on assessment waiting times. Learning outcomes have been shared with staff and further guidance / training to be developed for staff.

Housing and Early Help Hubs managers have been meeting to strengthen referral pathways for early intervention - with a view to housing teams becoming part of the multi-disciplinary pathways meetings in the hubs. This will ensure a well-considered, inclusive offer of intervention for families and prevent tenancies failing. These are currently taking place as and when required, due to the ongoing review of the Early Help Hubs and consideration to expanding the hubs across new locations.

Housing staff attendance at Domestic Violence and Abuse Briefings has been important in helping staff identify the signs and indicators and the impact of domestic violence and abuse on victim-survivors. It also has the effect of increasing understanding of how domestic violence and abuse affects adults, children and families, and how they can be supported.

Current themes:

There's been a significant increase in the level of debt owed by tenants in arrears compared to the same period last year – difficulties continue with engaging some families in the support process and a collaborative, multi-agency approach is often the most successful at overcoming barriers.

There has also been a significant increase in the number of families reporting issues with damp and mould in their properties following the coroner's report on the death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale. This coupled with the cost of living / fuel crisis, has meant some people are not heating their homes as much. Housing have set up a dedicated team to log, triage and take appropriate action on these enquiries, prioritising the most urgent cases and using remote technology to identify / diagnose cases more efficiently.

Outcomes and outputs:

Case study Mr and Mrs B – couple with 6 children

Mr and Mrs B have a large amount of disrepair in their home and large arrears on their rent account. The couple were not engaging with the service, refusing access for inspections and repairs, and falling to take up offers of support. Safeguarding referral submitted due to concerns the children's needs were not being met and poor property condition. Multi agency meeting convened with Housing, Children's Services, School and repairs contractor.

Agreement reached that decanting the family into another property on a temporary basis to enable unrestricted access for contractors to carry out necessary repairs in their home. A combination of

encouragement and enforcement with regards best interest for children and risks to tenancy on not engaging helped to secure agreement from Mr & Mrs B to accept the plan and also attend a meeting with benefits advisor to discuss their debt and maximising their benefit income.

Family have moved into temporary decant property, repair works on schedule and due to complete mid February. Benefits Advisor has secured extra income entitlement and arrangement made and to date adhered to pay rent plus and amount of their arrears. Also awaiting the outcome of a referral to the emergency housing support fund to further reduce the debt.

It's still early days with much work still to be done on improving trust and relationship between Mr & Mrs B and services, but initial signs are positive and teams have made more progress together in the last six weeks, than they did individually in the previous six months.

Next steps

There will be training / guidance developed for housing teams to ensure requests for adaptations / assessment are directed to the correct people, and that waiting lists for Children's Health and Disability are not impacted.

There will also be further targeted work with families with rent arrears to access funds through the Household Support Fund to prevent enforcement action due to debt / potential homelessness.

Priority 2 -Refreshing the Rehousing Pathway for Care Leavers

Update on recent activities

Project Steering Group on Preventing Homelessness for 16/17-year olds

A Report was completed covering:

- The national and local context relating to young people in housing need.
- Upstream universal work with young people and families on housing and future options.
- Targeted early intervention work to avert a crisis of homelessness.
- What happens at the point a 16/17-year-old is or may be homeless.
- Supported housing options in Leeds.
- Settled accommodation with support options.

Lead officers identified for the five different areas of recommendations within the report:

- Upstream universal work with young people and families on housing and future options.
- Targeted early intervention work to avert a crisis of homelessness.
- What happens at the point a 16/17 year old is or may be homeless.
- Supported housing options in Leeds.
- Settled accommodation with support options.

Recommendations have been made within the report, which cover several dimensions of work with this age group, from upstream prevention work through to assisting those who are unable to remain in their family home or network.

Outcomes and outputs:

Focusing on the *Settled accommodation with support options* theme, the report showed that young people make up 3% of our tenants, but account for 13.8% of all tenancy failure (defined as abandonment of a tenancy or eviction). The working group will look in more detail at the data to break down the tenancy failure reasons and try to identify any trends and areas that may be more affected than others. Further

work is ongoing to consider what existing provision can do, the integration of leaving care, local housing and supported housing teams and enhancement of the offer for young people taking up a new tenancy both in terms of practical support around the basics of managing their home and the standard of accommodation offered to give them the best chance of success. Consideration will also be given to the role of the Evict Alert service and improving access to the private rented sector for young people.

Next steps

The Task and Finish groups are to continue working through recommendations and progressing the action plan. The aim is to be in a place to say what priorities of actions are, and to know what they can and will do as well as how to measure it.

Priority 3 - Supporting Families in Council Tenancies to Maximise their Income

Update on recent activities

Context

Between October 2022 and December 2022, the Housing Officers Income (HOI) have worked with 1117 Households in total and have been able to secure around £324k in additional income for them. Between these date our HOI have secured additional income for:

Oct £23,556.22 Families with Children
Oct £134,877.70 Families Without Children
Total £158,434.01

Nov £17,112.66 Families with Children
Nov £97,490.73 Families Without Children
Total £114,603.39

Dec £4,563.78 Families with Children
Dec £46,264.70 Families Without Children
Total £50,828.48

Households with Children:

Between Oct 2022 and Dec 2022, we worked with 309 household with Children, this work generated around of £45k of additional income. This works out as an average of around £290 of additional income per family supported. The teams have been able to secure income for households with children from 16 sources. The top five of these income streams (which have generated the most for households with children) are:

- Universal Credit
- Housing Benefit
- DHP
- Council Tax Support
- Disability Benefits

Overview

We have seen an increase in the total number of individual households supported compared to the same period last year. We have also seen an increase in the number of households with children supported when compared to the same period.

Current themes

Due to cost-of-living increases tenants are reporting they are finding it harder to make ends meet, as neither benefit levels nor wages have increased accordingly. HOI's have noticed an increase in referrals/enquiries relating to pensioner benefits, with some pensioners advising of a need to return to the job market following retirement. Added to this, many tenants have advised that their utility providers are less willing to help with emergency top up credit, which saw many referred to the recent LCC/British Gas Energy Trust (BGET) Fuel Voucher Scheme, where were able to provide £120k of BGET fuel vouchers to tenants. Advisors are also reporting an increased number of requests for food parcels in recent months.

Outcomes and outputs:

Case Studies 1

Mr A, alongside his 2 younger brothers, found themselves alone in their property following the death of their Mother. Mr A was under 18 at the time and his Auntie moved into the property to care for the boys. The Auntie allowed high rent arrears to accrue alongside other priority debts including C Tax.

Once turning 18 it was arranged for Mr A to succeed the tenancy from his late Mother, but he also inherited the historical rent arrears. Upon succeeding the tenancy, he asked his Auntie to vacate the property. She did, but also took his 2 younger brothers with her, leaving him under occupying a 4-bed property. Mr A admitted to feeling out of his depth and felt like he had nowhere to turn for help.

Mr A also had an ongoing sanction to his UC award which had meant he had received no benefit for over 12 months.

Our HOI was asked to intervene following referral from Housing Officer with the following results:

- DHP approved – Credit to rent account of around £1700.
- Council Tax arrears backdate of £347 and Single Person Discount applied. A hold was placed on the account and Bailiffs asked to return debt to the council reducing debt to Mr A by £135.
- UC backdated payment to January 2022 when sanction began - award received by claimant £2328.
- A Support worker was assigned and Mr A engaging well.
- Housing Application made to deal with under occupation. Mr A awarded Band A and Direct Let status.

Case Studies 2

Mr & Mrs B live in a 4-bed property with their 2 children. English is not the families first language and communication had been difficult with both support and benefit agencies. Both adults are in receipt of PIP and one child receives DLA.

Mr B's PIP claim had ceased and he needed assistance completing review.

Referred to HOI following suspension of HB claim as couple could not complete the form due to the language barrier. Our HOI attempted contact several times until finally managing to speak with Mrs B whilst she was in hospital. Mrs B was able to translate between HOI and Mr B and HOI arranged a call with PIP who employed an interpreter. PIP claim now back in payment.

Reconsideration of HB claim resulted in a backdated HB payment of £900 which cleared the arrears.

HOI was able to award £147 in Fuel Vouchers through the LCC/BGET Fuel Voucher scheme.

Case Studies 3

Mrs T is a single Mum with 5 children. Referred to HOI due to escalating rent arrears. HOI discovered that Mrs T had not declared any housing costs when making her UC claim so no housing element in payment.

Mrs T advised that she had long standing mental health issues which, although she had support in place, she felt lost when trying to understand the benefit system. Our HOI assisted with confirming housing costs correctly and then liaised with DWP, who agreed to backdate the housing element due to Mrs T's mental health. Our HOI arranged for a work capability assessment for Mrs T which could see an additional element awarded to her UC claim. Our HOI also assisted Mrs T with making a PIP claim which is currently being processed. Referral made to Green Doctor for home to be assessed for energy efficiency. Referred to LCC/BGET fuel voucher scheme and Mrs T was issued £147 in fuel vouchers.

Next steps

We are continuing to strengthen our partnership working and training offer to staff to enable ongoing support to tenants with their energy costs through referrals, help with emergency fuel vouchers and support contacting suppliers.

6.0 Employment & Transitions

The aim of this workstream is: ***We want every young person and family to have the relevant skills and experience to access and secure well paid employment.***

This workstream is led by Martyn Long, Head of Service Employment and Skills

6.1 Priority 1 - Raise awareness for access to employability and skills provision to support people into work and/ or improve their skills.

Update on recent activities

- Leeds Creative Skills Festival (LCSF), a weeklong festival of activities took place 14th – 18th November 2022 with a Creative Skills Showcase event held at the Leeds First Direct Arena on Thursday 17th November 2022. The event, sponsored by Channel 4, 4Skills and Leeds City College, aimed to inspire young people to consider a career in creative skills and provided a platform for industry experts to deliver presentations and take part in topical panel discussions. A total of 63 employers, training providers and SEND support exhibited at the event and 2,200 people attended. Artforms Leeds, Leeds 2023, Grand Futures Leeds and Leeds Cultural Education Partnership attended the event as Friends of the Festival.
- Connecting Communities to Health and Care Careers: 12 information and assessment sessions were delivered during this quarter, 6 within the localities, (CATCH in Harehills, Chapel FM in Seacroft, Stocks Hill Centre in Armley and Reginald, Hunslet and Dewsbury Road Community Hubs). 109 people attended, 70 progressed onto courses, Careers in Care or Customer Service and You and 29 people were referred for further Numeracy and Literacy support. This quarter 32 people were successful in securing a job including 5 Apprenticeships and 41 people completed courses.
- The Inclusive Recruitment event was held with McDonalds at Armley Community Hub on 16th November 2022, 6 people attended.

Outcomes and outputs

From April to December 2022 Employment and Skills Service:

- Supported 2,239 people into work of whom 58% are from the top 20% most deprived SOA's of the city. Jobs were secured across all sectors with the largest numbers in health and care, food retail, logistics, distribution, and transport, digital and technology.
- Supported 2,948 people to improve their skills, 59% of these learners lived in neighbourhoods that fall within the 20% most deprived SOA's on the Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Academic Year 2022/23 - 571 courses, including 36 courses on-line, city wide, have been planned at 64 venues city wide including ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages), Employability, Family Learning and Arts and Crafts. For further information on courses available both online and face to face at community venues, please visit: <https://leedsadultlearning.co.uk>
- Parents can access a range of employment support services. The data shows that between April to December 2022 a total of 10,623 customers accessed Employment and Skills, of whom 64% (6,797) are from the 20% most deprived SOA's in the city. 25% (2,647) had a child under 16 years of age and 10% (1,075) were lone parents. While this information is requested of service users, a number prefer not to provide this information.

April – December 2022	No. of residents supported	Residents supported with a child under 16 yrs		Lone Parents supported	
		Number	% of total	Number	% of total
Jobshops	2,896	977	34%	432	15%
Employment Hub	4,147	1,153	28%	520	13%
Adult Learning	2,946	459	16%	84	3%
Total	9,989	2,589	22%	1,036	10%

Next steps

- Connecting Communities to Health and Care Careers - 3 information and assessment sessions took place in January 2023 at City Centre, Compton and Dewsbury Road Hubs to support recruitment to Health and Care support roles including We Care Academy, Apprenticeships in Business Admin and Clinical Support Worker roles as part of the NHS Winter Workforce Programme.
- Reducing Re-Offending Programme.
- In partnership with West Yorkshire Combined Authority an event is scheduled for early 2023 to support the children of current serving prisoners at HMP Wealstun and aims to raise employment and education aspiration levels of the children attending.
- A Construction event (23 January - 3 February 2023) was held at HMP Leeds aims to encourage employers to engage in recruiting prison leavers and to increase the number of prison leavers offered employment in the construction industry.

Jobsfairs, recruiting for range of posts within Leeds City Council, 4 events took place at the following Community Hubs:

- City Centre, Wednesday 25th January 2023
- Armley, Friday 3rd February 2023
- Dewsbury Road, Thursday 9th February 2023
- Compton Centre, Thursday 16th February 2023

6.2 Priority 2 - Connecting parents / carers to Family Learning provision to enhance children's learning through activities, techniques and games delivered in schools

Update on recent activities

- Lifelong Learning Week took place 8th – 16th November 2022. Adult Learning, Leeds Apprenticeship Hub and Employment Hub delivered 4 skills marketplace sessions at Armley, Dewsbury Road, Compton and Seacroft Community Hubs which focused on digital skills for life and work. 13 people attended.
- This quarter Family Learning Provision was delivered in 5 Children's Centre's and 9 schools across the city.

Outcomes and outputs

From April to December 2022

- In this period, 57 courses were delivered across 37 venues.
- There have been 281 learners and 338 enrolments on courses so far.

Next steps

The first ever Leeds Family Learning Festival took place on the 16th February at The Carriageworks. Exhibitors included staff from housing, libraries, health, sports and leisure, local skills providers, colleges, universities, and employment advisors.

6.3 Priority 3 - Ensuring career information, advice and guidance supports young people to move into Education, Employment or Training (EET) from school

Update on recent activities

- Staff supported and attended a careers event in October 2022 held at Leeds University and Elland Road Conference Centre. Engagement reached 360 young people, 40 parents and 12 teachers.
- Department for Transport Outreach Day held on 25th November 2022 showcased jobs and roles within DWP, inspiring students to consider pursuing a career in the sectors. 30 students from Leeds City College 14+ Academy attended.
- Delivered training to 9 Apprentices to enable them to become Apprenticeship Ambassadors to speak to young people in schools and colleges across Leeds about the benefits of doing an Apprenticeship so students can make informed choices. A further training session is booked for February 2023 for Council and external Apprentices to attend. Further sessions will be offered during the remainder of the academic year

Outcomes and outputs

- The following school and college engagement activities took place during quarter 3, engaging with 2,101 students, 168 parents and 79 teachers.
- Supported and attended careers events and parents' evenings at Leeds University, Temple Moor High, Lawnswood, Ruth Gorse, Bishop Young, Prince Henrys, Mount St Marys, Ralph Thoresby, Leeds City, Morley, Co-Op, Woodkirk, Oulton, Prince Henrys and Cockburn John Charles Academies.
- Delivered Apprenticeship presentations at Lawnswood School, Carr Manor, Co-op Priesthorpe, Farnley, Priesthorpe Academies. Feedback from the presentations showed:
 - 97% of students found the sessions useful
 - 97% of students had a clearer understanding of apprenticeships
 - 80% of students said they would now consider an apprenticeship

Next steps

- Leeds Apprenticeship Recruitment Fair (LARF) took place on Monday 6th February 2023 to mark the start of National Apprenticeship Week (6th – 12th February 2023), Over 100 employers and training providers participated, with over 8,000 visitors attending throughout the event. A series of sessions were delivered to secondary schools and colleges to help prepare students to get the most from the event.
- Apprenticeships For Graduate's Webinar took place on 26th January 2023 to inform university students about Apprenticeships as an option when they graduate and help them prepare for attending LARF23. 18 students attended.
- Apprenticeship Awareness sessions are planned for delivery during January – March 2023 at Allerton High, Notre Dame 6th Form College, Boston Spa Academy, Brigshaw Academy, Elliot Hudson Academy, Leeds City Academy, Prince Henry Grammar, Pudsey Grammar, and Stephen Longfellow Academy.
- Apprenticeship Awareness Videos have been produced which highlight the opportunities available with a range of employers across the city. Discussions are ongoing as to where and when they will be published.
- Leeds City Council will be a sponsor of the Ahead Partnership's headline event on 16th March 2023. Girl Tech. An Apprenticeship focused workshop will be delivered to approximately 60 female students from year 8. A marketplace event will also take place on the day to discuss Apprenticeships.

7.0 Empowering Families & Safeguarding

The aim of this workstream is: ***We want to change the structure around social care to better support children, young people and families living in poverty.***

This workstream is led by Farrah Khan, Chief Officer, Children and Families Service.

7.1 Priority 1 – Connecting services to better support families

Update on recent activities

Cost of living crisis: we have worked in partnership with the Communities directorate and 3rd sector organisations to provide additional support to families. This includes emergency food support through vouchers which diverts the need for EDT (Emergency Duty Team) resources.

We also partnered with ZeroWaste Leeds to support a winter coat campaign. So far, the scheme has given out over 4000 free second hand coats to local communities across Leeds.

We have recently recruited new volunteers for EPEC (Empowering Parent Empowering Communities), and they are currently going through their training programme. By supporting more volunteers this will mean we're able to increase the reach of this evidence-based parenting programme.

GRT collaborated with a charitable Organisation and a local community centre to set up a soup kitchen for families to access. There are regularly over 80 children and families who attend. We also use the space to provide positive messages for families such as; safe sleeping, supervision of children, healthy eating and community cohesion.

We have connected a charitable organisation with CHAD (Child Health and Disability) teams to support children and families on managing periods with a disability.

We are currently exploring with faith organisations and the migration team to raise awareness of our early help offer to marginalized groups

We will be incorporating the recommendations of the National Social Care Review around Family Help and engaging the third sector. We are engaging Young Lives Leeds as a forum to work with our voluntary sector organisations. We are developing a plan for implementing our Early Help Review recommendations around Family Hub Models in localities. This will strengthen locality working with community groups and third sector groups to support children and families

Next steps

There will be work to identify key strengths in the Community and 3rd sector and Community leaders who may be able to offer Early Help to a family.

We will work to identify community strengths- cultural awareness/ additional languages so that the family can be offered a 'menu of support options'

We will be led by the voice of Families- begin to gather feedback from families who we have made contact with- what did we do well during the conversation, and what are our areas for improvement?

EPEC courses are to be planned for the year which will include a range of course options.

7.2 Priority 2 – tackling inequality in accessing services and support

Update on recent activities

We will look to tackle inequality through our work with the 3rd sector, faith groups and community leaders, this will begin with listening exercises to ensure that families voices and experiences are heard.

Furthermore, we will work ensuring that organisations who are supporting families, such as faith organisations, are aware of the Leeds offer of Early Help.

Next steps

We will Arrange to meet with the 3rd sector through Young Lives Leeds to begin discussions and fact finding.

Further to this we are proactively engaging with faith organisations and community leaders.

7.3 Priority 3 – Workforce Development

Update on recent activities

Reducing parental conflict coordinator (now known as ‘relationships matter’) now in post. Deep diving of the programme up to date is now complete and a relaunch is planned for March 2023. We are also working on a bid for the challenge fund 2 from DWP with partners.

Support for the workforce will include training sessions to ensure clarity on the differences between parental conflict and Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and different options of support.

Training offer being devised for the parental advocacy service in collaboration with Advonet.

Early Intervention apprenticeship for LCC employees will launch in March 2023- expressions of interest are currently open.

Next steps

There will be a relaunch of the parental conflict training offer.

There will be further delivery of training to a wider workforce.

8.0 – Readiness for Learning

The aim of this workstream is: ***We want to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of children and young people who live in poverty.***

8.1 Priority 1 Early Years - Take up of free nursery places for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds

Update on recent activities

Leeds has entered into a long term partnership with Nesta alongside York and Stockport. The partnership is called Fairer Start Leeds and is a three-to-five-year innovation partnership with an aim to work together so that all children have a brighter start for a stronger future. The partnership centres on a shared commitment to reimagining early years support to deliver tangible improvement to the lives of disadvantaged children. There is a greater focus on collaborative working with York and Stockport, sharing the learning across the partnership. The new partnership started on 24th November 2022 and will build on the learning from the discovery phase.

Priorities for the first year: The partnership is structured so that each year there are two local priorities agreed and one shared priority across the three authorities. In the first year we will continue to focus on engagement with the two-year-old offer, evaluation of PEEP and improving speech, language, and communication.

- One element of the ‘Engagement’ strand was explored through a Randomised Control Trial (RCT) looking at the offer letter, which was sent to parents when we advise them, they may be eligible for the 2-year-old funded offer. Two new types of letters were issued in March and April to families, and the RCT assessed the impact of the language used in the letters on the take up of places. The findings from the RCT trial suggests that the type of letter has no impact on the take up of the offer.

- The attendance project which was a shared priority with York and Stockport focused on looking at opportunities to increase attendance with the offer. Children Centres have very much supported and been a key part of this work which has now concluded. The final report was published in January. In Leeds twenty-one settings took part, so this is a very small proportion of our settings, so any findings need to be seen within this context.
- The local priority will build on the current work with regards to speech, language and communication and builds on the work undertaken in the discovery phase and current work with the Speech & language team. Data information agreements are being worked up and Nesta have been making plans to scope out referral data and information for those children on the waiting list for speech therapy. We will build on this work going forward and report progress.
- We have now 45 trained in Leeds on the Peep programme ²⁰ which has been delivered across Leeds. This is a programme for practitioners who work with partners / carers and babies / young children. The aims of the programme are to
 - engage and support parents to build on what they already do to enhance their baby's or child's early learning and communication (contributing to school-readiness), through talking and playing as part of everyday life,
 - explore practical ideas, strategies and resources, using the comprehensive and flexible Peep Learning Together Programme,
 - deliver universal or targeted sessions with parents and children together – in person or online: 1-to-1, groups or drop-ins.

Outcomes and Outputs

Two-year-olds take-up

Leeds has an average take-up city wide of 75%, based on three terms worth of data (spring 2022, summer 2022 and autumn 2022). The inner city areas of Holbeck, Harehills, Burmantofts and Woodhouse are still below the city average at 69%, 50%, 65% and 58% respectively. Further work to increase take-up in these areas is a priority and action.

Three and four-year-olds take-up

Take up for 3 and 4 year olds was 93% as of Summer 2022, which is an increase on the previous year of 89%. The average over the past 3 years (which includes the lockdown period of 2020) is 92% city wide. The areas of Burmantofts, Harehills and Holbeck are significantly below this figure and are deemed priority areas in the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, to increase take-up

Next steps

There will be some changes to the partnership going forward with a focus on one priority for the whole year and a clear timeline and project plan to support this work. We will continue to work with York and Stockport, but this will be around sharing practice as opposed to a shared priority. The proposal is that authorities will meet two or three times a year around a common theme and share ideas/practice. The first of these took place in January in London.

8.2 Priority 2 – Emotional Health and wellbeing/ Mental Health

Update on recent activities

Wellbeing for Return to Education

Three phases of the DfE Wellbeing for Return to Education were delivered, since implementation in 2020. Phase 3, delivered in the 2021-2022 academic year, is a free core offer for one day to every school in Leeds focusing on making meaning of social, emotional, mental health needs and extended school non-

²⁰ [Peep Learning Together Programme](#).

attendance - two key themes from school feedback. This has now become an embedded core offer to schools and includes the development of an early years offer. Webinars and progression courses are available for free CPD available on Leeds for learning.

The Educational Psychology team has developed guidance on Extended School Non Attendance to support settings with evidence based approaches. This area is an emerging theme within local data and national literature as of increased concern following the pandemic.

Headteacher Support Offer

The headteacher support offer is being developed to support wider leadership teams. The local authority is exploring and implementing initiatives that enable school leaders and governors to support whole staff wellbeing.

The new service is currently focused on preparation, planning and setting a solid base from which to build. Ensuring effective discussion on future strategies is key to ensuring that the service has impact from September 2022.

My Health, My School Survey

Following partner consultation on the My Health, My School (MHMS) survey a reviewed and refreshed question set was produced for the 2021-22 academic year. All participating schools were able to access their own data to plan interventions. The Health & Wellbeing Service collated survey data at a city-wide level. A new 'School Resource Pack and Pupil Campaign Tool' was made available to schools In September 2022 to support with pupil analysis and reporting - a dedicated PowerPoint presentation facilitates 'peer-to-peer' sharing of results enhancing opportunities for pupil voice, underlining ownership and supporting change on key issues in school. The MHMS survey is included in the actions within priority 4 of The Refreshed 3As Plan.

Outcomes and outputs

Wellbeing Support – evaluations continue to be positive. Data on impact of intervention will be collated and reported on annually as part of evaluation of service delivery. Annual evaluations of support will be part of the whole EP team evaluation process and guide future service delivery.

My Health, My School Survey

A total of 22,389 pupil responses were received from across 181 Leeds schools and settings that participated in the 2021-22 survey. The raw data results were made publicly available on Data Mill North. A number of resultant Annual Reports reflecting the eight themes of the survey were published. As of February 2023, there have been an encouraging 8,741 survey responses from 79 Leeds schools and settings indicating a degree of confidence that the total number of survey returns for the 2022-23 academic year will be at least in line with last year's results.

Next steps

- Continued offer via Leeds for Learning to all schools to support targeted mental health needs within the schools' context. Embedding of universal and systems support in the education context.
- Future in Mind Strategy to continue to have oversight of prevention and early support for mental health needs.
- Development of the priorities in line with the Future in Mind priorities for prevention and reduction of health inequalities and in line with the SEND and Inclusion Strategy priority of integrating practices.

The consultation on the question set for the My Health, My School survey 2023-24 opened at the beginning of February with a deadline of the end of March. Leeds City Council Service representatives have been invited to review and suggest amendments to the survey questions to be used with schools for the next survey period as well as being tabled as an agenda item on various strategic Programme/Project Boards

facilitating broader discussion. Following the review, the survey will be revised and amendments drafted in time for the next MHMS Steering Group meeting in summer 2023.

8.3 Priority 3 – The 3 As strategy - working with schools to improve attendance, achievement and attainment.

The two-page plan can be found here [- The 3As gateway | Leeds for Learning](#)

3As Strategy

- The original 3As Strategy has been **renamed The Refreshed 3As Plan** and is now being utilised by teams across Children and Families Services to deliver the priorities and actions detailed in the plan. The 5 key priorities of the refreshed plan are:
- **Priority 1** - All children in Leeds are supported to improve their fluency in reading taking into account their individual needs
- **Priority 2** – All children, young people and families are supported to access and regularly attend early years' education settings, schools, and post-16 education settings to benefit from learning opportunities, protective factors, and enrichment activities
- **Priority 3** - Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families receive timely and appropriate support to achieve their best possible outcomes and prepare for adult life
- **Priority 4** – All children and staff working in learning settings are supported with their wellbeing
- **Priority 5** - All children make the best start to each stage of their learning

Outcomes and outputs

A report on the Refreshed 3As Plan is due to be presented to the Children and Families scrutiny board on 29th March. Some of the headlines so far are listed below.

Priority 1 Reading:

- 132 deep dives in reading have taken place since September 2021.
- 104 delegates from 74 schools have completed the Level 1 training we offered on 'Meeting the needs of children with specific learning differences (SpLD) and literacy difficulties'.
- A cross phase conference focussed on reading after phonics is scheduled for 24th February 2023.
- A Reception Reading Stars Project took place in the summer to encourage children about to start reception to meet their new classmates at the library and enjoy books together.
- Refreshed Leeds Book Award (Launch Feb 23). The Book Award aims to encourage reading for pleasure for all children from Early Years through to Key Stage 4 and it will culminate in an Oscar style celebratory event at Elland Road in the autumn with all shortlisted authors, illustrators and publishers.
- A leaflet for parents with advice about how to read to your child has been produced in English and 8 other languages common to Leeds. This will be widely distributed in the city and shared with social workers to inform their conversations with parents and carers.
- A guide for supporting older readers who need to catch up has been produced for secondary leaders and has been accompanied with a training offer and briefings to senior leaders.
- Working in partnership with University of Leeds on the ICKLE+ project looking at how to support primary aged pupils with their reading who have been impacted by the pandemic.
- A secondary training offer to support struggling readers has been developed.

Priority 2 Attendance:

Register checks with primary and secondary ongoing and to date 64 have been completed. These register checks were prioritised based on attendance and persistent attendance absence data 2020/21.

The register checks have meant that there has been a co-ordinated approach between services (School Attendance Service and School Improvement) which has reinforced the advice, guidance, and challenge to schools on their attendance practices to support vulnerable children.

Schools have found the register checks useful with significant positive feedback being received by the team. Schools have also been able to implement advice on attendance codings to improve consistency across Leeds schools.

Primary attendance half-terms 1-4 2021-22.

	%	
Leeds	94.3	Leeds ranks 26/151 LAs Band A
National	93.8	
Statistical Neighbours	93.9	
Core Cities	93.9	
Yorkshire and Humber	93.8	

Secondary attendance half-terms 1-4 2021-22

	%	
Leeds	91.3	Leeds ranks 74/151 LAs Band C
National	91.4	
Statistical Neighbours	91.5	
Core Cities	91.1	
Yorkshire and Humber	90.8	

Primary persistent absence half-terms 1-4 2021-22

	%	
Leeds	16.4	Leeds ranks 32/151 LAs Band A
National	18.2	
Statistical Neighbours	17.6	
Core Cities	18.4	
Yorkshire and Humber	18.3	

Secondary persistent absence half-terms 1-4 2021-22

	%	
Leeds	25.5	Leeds ranks 59/151 LAs Band B
National	26.7	
Statistical Neighbours	26.3	
Core Cities	27	
Yorkshire and Humber	28.2	

Priority 3 SEND:

To improve outcomes SEND will be the main focus of the secondary traded package to schools for 2023-24 which is a series of 3 termly networks in 13 subjects for curriculum leaders. The aims of the package are to ensure that all subject leaders can articulate an ambitious vision for what pupils with SEND can achieve in their subject; be clear what the core knowledge is pupils including those with SEND, should learn for each part of their curriculum that will enable them to access future learning; can give examples of how learning is scaffolded for pupils with SEND within their subject, so that they access the curriculum and support future learning; explore the best strategies that will support pupils with SEND in a specific subject context; ensure each team member of their team has the required knowledge to be able to identify, assess and scaffold their teaching to meet the specific needs of pupils with SEND within their classroom and work with colleagues to develop and challenge their understanding of SEND provision in the classroom.

Priority 4 Well-being

- The Headteacher Support Service has been further developed with 2 new colleagues, Cath Lennon and Deborah Park (both experienced senior leaders in schools) now in post.

Priority 5 Transition

- To support the implementation of the new Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, 90 delegates (practitioners from school, childminder and PVI settings) attended 12 free-of-charge training sessions covering various elements of transition. Further sessions are on offer for up to 200 delegates throughout the coming year, including a number of bespoke in-house sessions. An estimated 80 delegates will receive the training in January and February 2023.
- The secondary traded offer, the Leading Learning Partnership (LLP), which is subscribed to by 30 settings in Leeds, has focussed this year on the transition between KS2 and KS3.

Next steps

- To report to Scrutiny on the progress made against the actions outlined in the Refreshed 3As Plan on 29th March;
- To continue to implement the actions detailed on the Plan;
- In summer 2023, consider the effectiveness of the Plan and consider consulting with education settings across the city about future priorities.

9.0 Green Spaces

The aim of this workstream is: **We want to improve access to green spaces by improving the quality of existing green spaces, influencing the location and quality of new local green spaces through the Planning System, creating an online map of all Leeds green spaces, and making travel to green spaces easier, safer and more affordable**

This workstream is led by Sarah Wilson, Senior Design Officer.

Priority 1 / Project 1 Lincoln Green

Update on recent activities

Complete:

The Mini-Holland Highways project to make key roads through Lincoln Green safer for pedestrians and cyclists. The project budget also part-funded new play equipment for the adjacent Lindsey Gardens play area, primarily for children aged 8-12.

In progress:

Roxby Community Garden, which is a former disused play area designed as a new community garden in partnership with Mafwa Theatre – a community theatre company working mainly with women from migrant backgrounds. The Council have awarded the construction contract and work will begin in Spring 2023 to make the garden a multi-functional performance, play and gathering space. Mafwa Theatre have also set up Lincoln Greeners residents' gardening group and they have revitalised the planting beds in the garden and at Lindsey Mount with fruit, vegetables and flowers.

The Public Realm Masterplan for the area is under development to continue to improve the green spaces and streets for residents, especially children. Consultation has been carried out with residents at Granville Road maisonettes and the Council's new Play Strategy Officer will also be advising on the Masterplan. Additionally, Urban Trails are being designed across Burmantofts, Richmond Hill, Harehills as part of a Department for Transport funded walking, cycling, wheeling project and Lincoln Green has been identified as a pilot area for a play-focused trail.

Outcomes and outputs

The success of completed and developing green space and play improvement projects will be measured through ongoing engagement with Shakespeare Primary School, Mafwa Theatre and the Lincoln Greeners.

Next steps

The team will continue development of the Public Realm Masterplan and Urban Trails.

Priority 2 / Project 2 Green Spaces Mapping

Update on recent activities

There is a project in partnership with Strategic Planning Data & Intelligence colleagues to develop an up-to-date interactive digital map of all green spaces in Leeds including: spaces managed by Parks & Countryside, privately managed/maintained public open spaces, accessible natural green space, amenity space on Housing land. It is intended for the map to be used by officers to investigate options for quality and accessibility improvements, will also investigate how best to make the map useable for the public. The team have acquired data sets for Gipton & Harehills and are currently undertaking detailed work to map the green spaces, aiming to have a draft map ready to share in Spring 2023.

Natural England launched the new national Green Infrastructure Framework on 31.1.2023 which includes a map with green spaces, which is proving useful to see what spaces are currently mapped and compare with other places in England. However, it is not 100% accurate and does not show all types of green space.

Outcomes and outputs

It is expected that it will take 6-12 months to map all green spaces in Leeds. As each Ward is completed in this period, staff will be able to start using the data to inform assessments of quality and propose improvements, and potentially start making the map publicly available.

Next steps

The team are aiming to have a draft map ready to share in Spring.

Priority 3 / Project 3 Green Spaces Design Guidance

Update on recent activities

Guidance for how green spaces should be designed in planning applications for proposed developments was presented to Leeds Planning Services Senior Officers at Planning Board in September 2022 and a range of revisions, improvements and further internal consultation was requested. The final version of the guidance is now awaiting approval from Senior Management in the Leeds Planning Service to publish the guidance on the Council Landscape Planning and Development website.

The published guidance is likely to be developed into a new green infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) once new green space policies in the Local Plan Update are adopted. The new national Green Infrastructure Framework will also influence these local Planning policies and document.

Outcomes and outputs

Once guidance has been published there will be ongoing monitoring of use by officers, and a resulting green space quality assessment will be carried out.

Next steps

The team are aiming for publication on the Council website in March 2023, subject to approval from Senior Management in the Planning Service.