

## SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

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Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on  
Monday, 10th June, 2024 at 10.30 am  
*(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board at 10.00 a.m.)*

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### MEMBERSHIP

- J Bowden - Roundhay;  
D Cohen (Chair) - Alwoodley;  
R Downes - Otley and Yeadon;  
O Edwards - Guiseley and Rawdon;  
E Flint - Weetwood;  
T Goodall - Headingley and Hyde Park;  
J Heselwood - Weetwood;  
D Jenkins - Killingbeck and Seacroft;  
R Jones - Horsforth;  
N Manaka - Burmantofts and Richmond Hill;  
L Martin - Roundhay;  
K Renshaw - Ardsley and Robin Hood;  
J Senior - Morley South;  
R. Stephenson - Harewood;

### Co-opted Members (Voting)

- Mr E A Britten - Church Representative (Catholic)  
Mr A Graham - Church Representative (Church of England)  
Mr A Khitou - Parent Governor Representative (Primary)  
Vacancy - Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)  
Vacancy - Parent Governor Representative (SILC)

### Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)

- Mr N Tones - School Staff Representative  
Ms H Bellamy - School Staff Representative  
TBC - Young Lives Leeds  
Mrs K Blacker - Leeds Parent Carer Forum  
Ms M Adams

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**Principal Scrutiny Adviser:**  
**Rob Clayton**  
**Tel: (0113) 37 88790**

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Rob Clayton  
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# A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p><b>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</b></p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25* of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded).</p> <p>(* In accordance with Procedure Rule 25, notice of an appeal must be received in writing by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting).</p>	
2			<p><b>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</li> <li>2. To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</li> <li>3. If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</li> </ol> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:</p> <p><b>No exempt items have been identified.</b></p>	

3

### **LATE ITEMS**

To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.

(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)

4

### **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

To disclose or draw attention to any interests in accordance with Leeds City Council's 'Councillor Code of Conduct'.

5

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES**

To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.

6

### **MINUTES - 18 APRIL 2024**

7 - 14

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2024.

7

### **CO-OPTED MEMBERS**

15 -  
18

To receive a report from the Head of Democratic Services on the appointment of co-opted members to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families).

8

### **SCRUTINY BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE**

19 -  
36

To receive a report from the Head of Democratic Services presenting the Scrutiny Board's terms of reference.

9

### **SOURCES OF WORK FOR THE SCRUTINY BOARD AND DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25**

37 -  
62

To receive a report from the Head of Democratic Services on potential sources of work for the Scrutiny Board and presenting an initial draft work programme for the 2024/25 municipal year.

10

**YOUTH VAPING UPDATE**

63 -  
88

To consider an update report from the Head of Democratic Services on youth vaping setting out recent legislative developments at Government level and an update on local activity to tackle the issue in Leeds. This follows consideration of this item in the previous municipal year and a request that the Board receive an update early in the 2024/25 municipal year.

11

**PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

89 -  
112

To receive a report from the Director of Children and Families providing a summary of performance information relating to outcomes for Leeds children and young people.

12

**YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2024-2027**

113 -  
186

To consider and comment on the Youth Justice Plan 2024-2027 as required under the authority's Budget and Policy Framework.

13

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next public meeting of the Board will take place on 18 July 2024 at 2.00PM. There will be a pre-meeting for all board members at 1.45PM.

## **THIRD PARTY RECORDING**

Recording of this meeting is allowed to enable those not present to see or hear the proceedings either as they take place (or later) and to enable the reporting of those proceedings. A copy of the recording protocol is available from the contacts on the front of this agenda.

Use of Recordings by Third Parties – code of practice

- a) Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title.
- b) Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete.

# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 6

## SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

THURSDAY, 18TH APRIL, 2024

**PRESENT:** Councillor D Cohen in the Chair

Councillors D Blackburn, E Bromley,  
R Downes, O Edwards, B Flynn, Graham,  
C Gruen, J Heselwood, N Manaka,  
L Martin, K Renshaw, A Rontree and  
R. Stephenson

### **CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)**

Mr A Graham – Church Representative (Church of England)

Mr T Britten – Church Representative (Catholic Diocese of Leeds)

### **Co-Opted Members (Non-Voting)**

Ms H Bellamy – School Staff Representative

Ms K Blacker

### **CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER COMMENTS**

Before moving into the substantive items on the agenda, the Chair of the Board put on record his thanks and the thanks of the Board to Jackie Ward who has been a board member for 14 years as a co-opted member and who has contributed significantly to the work of the Board and Council during that time. This meeting was the last Jackie would be attending before stepping down as a non-voting co-opted member.

In addition, the Chair added his thanks and those of the Board to Cllr Caroline Gruen who was attending her last scrutiny board meeting before retirement. Cllr Cohen noted the contributions made by Cllr Gruen to the Council generally but specifically in two areas, in planning and in work with children and young people. Through contributions to plans panels Cllr Gruen's contribution to scene and place will be noted by residents for years to come. In respect of children and young people it was noted that this will not be as obvious, but that Cllr Gruen has made a major contribution and impacted the lives of children and young people over many years.

Cllr Venner also recorded her thanks for the commitment Cllr Gruen has shown in her role in terms of detailed analysis of issues and providing challenge. In addition, it was noted how much Cllr Gruen enjoyed working with children and young people and the contribution made to services for them in the city both through local work such as youth summits and through work on the Children and Families Scrutiny Board.

**94 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents**

There were no appeals.

**95 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**

There was no exempt information.

**96 Late Items**

There were no late items of business.

**97 Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

**98 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes**

The Board received the following apologies with substitutes listed where present:

Cllr Amanda Carter – Cllr Billy Flynn attending as substitute  
Cllr Jordan Bowden – Cllr Andy Rontree attending as substitute  
Anas Khitou  
Jackie Ward  
Laura Whitaker  
Cllr Jane Senior

**99 Minutes - 27 March 2024**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 March 2024, be approved as an accurate record.

**100 Inquiry Report - Provision of EHCP Support in Leeds**

The Board considered a report from the Head of Democratic Services that presented, for agreement, an inquiry report following the Board's scrutiny inquiry into the provision of EHCP support in Leeds. This also took account of comment and suggested amendments at the meeting held on 27 March 2024.

In attendance for this item were:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Economy, Culture, and Education

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Date Not Specified



- Julie Longworth, Director of Children & Families
- Dan Barton, Deputy Director – Learning
- Phil Evans, Chief Officer Transformation and Partnerships
- Rob Clayton, Principal Scrutiny Adviser

By way of introduction the Executive Member for Economy, Culture, and Education noted the ongoing work being done by the directorate to clear back logs and the wider work to improve processes in the future. The Executive Member also noted ongoing correspondence with Government around funding for children with SEND in Leeds and disparities with children living elsewhere in the country. It was highlighted that the correspondence from Government acknowledged that the funding formula being used was designed like that and that the funding disparities were a part of that and not an accident or an unintended consequence of the formula. It was agreed that the latest correspondence from Government would be shared with the Board following the meeting today.

The Board has identified funding issues as one of its recommendations in the inquiry report and it was agreed that as a follow up to that a letter from the Board would be sent to the Government setting out concerns in Leeds and the need for a review of the formula, this will be sent to Board members for comment before being issued to the Government.

The Chair noted attendance from the Leeds Parent Carer Forum (LPCF) observing the meeting from the audience, following the evidence put forward from them during the inquiry. The Chair also thanked the LPCF for their contributions and their ongoing work in this area.

Following questions and comment from Board members the following discussion took place:

- Members noted the recommendation around input and co-production from families and the need for this to be central to future work. The Chair noted ongoing plans to have a representative from the LPCF on the Board as a co-opted member.
- Board members also noted the recommendation on digital EHCPs and stressed the need for accessibility for all residents albeit that digital would be suitable for most people.
- Board members highlighted the role of the LPCF in the inquiry work and how the care they had for their children had shone through in the work carried out by the Board. It was therefore necessary for the inquiry recommendations to be focussed on and delivered sequentially to improve services for parents, carers and their children and young people.
- The Board heard of ongoing work by the directorate on communication between senior leaders and the LPCF and of the commitment to a 'you said, we did' approach to delivering change and improvement and a clear commitment to co-production of services. As part of this an event is being planned for the Summer to hear feedback from parents and carers which will inform self-evaluation processes.

- On digital approaches it was acknowledged that accessibility will be key and that digital approaches will be part of a suite of options to access services. It was also hoped that digitisation will assist the service in reducing bureaucracy and accessing real time information, but accessibility is a key consideration.
- The Board supported the parent and carer centred approach set out in the inquiry report but also noted the need for support for some parents and carers to be able to provide feedback due to, for example, language barriers. It was also noted that the recommendation around casework support could add value in terms of elected members being able to support residents.
- Board members welcomed the commitment to communication at strategic levels but also sought to ensure that communications were better at lower levels to ensure that parents and carers are aware of the process and what comes next. In response the Board heard about increased demand and the increased output from SENSAP services in terms of completions of EHCPs but even with that timescales have been a challenge. It was also noted that there is a culture issue and that parents need to be supported effectively rather than feel as though it is a battle to get an EHCP.
- The Board heard that whilst there are challenges in meeting the demand for services there is really good work and ongoing staff commitment to improve services in the SENSAP team. Whilst services will be improved it should not be forgotten that colleagues working in the team are striving to meet demand levels and are committed to their work and service improvement.
- The Board asked about availability of suitable places and support staff to support children and young people of SEND and the problems that schools have in meeting needs and resultant challenging behaviour when schools are unable to meet needs. In response the Board heard that the message from schools supports the view that there is a challenge in this area that is leading to issues with staff and teacher retention. It was noted that mainstream schools are struggling to meet needs and work is being developed to provide more specialists provision, working in partnership, to meet needs, this is being planned for availability in September which may assist in relieving some of the pressure. It was noted that a collaborative and child and carer focused approach will be important in the work moving forward. The Challenges being faced are difficult and working together in partnership, focussed on early intervention, will help in navigating the challenges being presented.
- The Board also heard that whilst it is a challenging period there is evidence of good practice as well such as work at the West SILC to prepare young people with SEND for employment and a child who had an EHCP in Leeds qualifying to go to University.
- Members also noted the difficulties being faced beyond SEND provision. In secondary schools there is a challenge around the suitability of the secondary curriculum which is leaving some children and young people feeling uncatered for and this is adding pressure to schools in terms of behaviour. It was thought that this could potentially be a piece of work in

the 2024/25 municipal year subject to limitations around what schools can do in terms of varying their curriculums.

**Resolved:**

The Board:

- a) Agreed the inquiry report on the Provision of EHCP Support in Leeds and;
- b) Agreed that in line with Recommendation 11 in the inquiry report ongoing check and challenge should be a work item for the successor Board in 2024/25.

**101 Co-Opted Members**

The Board received a report from the Head of Democratic Services on the appointment of co-opted members to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) following discussion of potential changes during the 2023/24 municipal year.

In attendance for this item were:

Rob Clayton, Principal Scrutiny Advisor

By way of introduction the Principal Scrutiny Adviser set out the background to this item which had arisen from board member comments on having a SEND co-opted member and a view that the Board could more formally and consistently seek the views of children and young people on the reports being put before them.

Following member comments and questions the following issues were discussed:

- It was suggested that in addition to the proposal to have a non-voting co-opted member with a SEND specialism or background that the Board should also seek to appoint a voting parent governor co-opted member from a Special School in the city. The Board also thought that the non-voting co-opted member should come from the Leeds Parent Carer Forum who had contributed significantly to the inquiry report on the Provision of EHCP Support. This was agreed to by the Board.
- In addition to this Cllr Stephenson suggested that a third non-voting co-opted member should be considered from a social work background to provide balance amongst the five non-voting co-opted members which currently has two school staff representatives, social work representing a significant element of the directorates work along with education and teaching. As part of the proposal, it was accepted that a Leeds City Council staff member could not sit on a scrutiny board.
- It was noted that, if necessary, this might involve the expansion of non-voting co-opted members from five to six through the appropriate processes which would be through the General Purposes Committee and if approved there, Full Council.

- Some Board members were not supportive of this approach setting out the difficulty in finding an individual who would be in a position to represent social work staff who was not a member of staff and due to the other forums available for staff representation such as Joint Consultative Committees (JCC) where liaison between the council, staff and Trade Unions takes place regularly.
- It was also noted that staff who regularly attend the Board as witnesses such as the Director of Children and Families and Deputy Director Social Care are social workers. Furthermore, the Board can call witnesses from the frontline to assist with work items should that be required by the Board and this would include social workers.
- Following further debate Cllr Stephenson moved a motion, seconded by Cllr Flynn to expand the number of non-voting co-opted members (Scrutiny Board procedure Rule 8.1) on the board from 5 to 6 through the appropriate channel which would be General Purposes Committee and Full Council and that if that were approved the non-voting co-opted member would have experience in or be from a social work background.
- Following a majority vote by show of hands by Board Members (excluding voting co-opted members who can only vote on matters related to education) the motion was lost.

**Resolved:**

The Board:

- a) Agreed to allocating a non-voting co-opted member position to a representative from the Leeds Parent Carer Forum and that the Principal Scrutiny Advisor would endeavour to find a suitable candidate.
- b) Agreed to an additional voting parent governor co-opted member to be sourced from a specialist school in Leeds and that the Principal Scrutiny Advisor would endeavour to find a suitable candidate.
- c) Agreed that the voices of children and young people should feature as part of the reporting process in the 2024/25 municipal year and that the Principal Scrutiny Adviser will build this into the Board's work programming approach in 2024/25 as well as considering attendance at Board meetings from appropriate witnesses to support this approach.

## **102 Children and Families Scrutiny Board End of Year Statement 2023/24**

The Board considered the appended 2023/24 end-of-year statement for the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) and agreed to its publication.

**Resolved** The Board approved the 2023/24 end of year statement for the Scrutiny Board (Children & Families) and agreed to its publication.

### **103 Work Programme**

The Board considered the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year.

In attendance for this item was:

Rob Clayton, Principal Scrutiny Adviser

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser provided the following updates:

- It was noted that the draft dates for the next municipal year and work items to recommend to the successor board in 2024/25 are included in the report.

#### **Resolved**

The Board:

- a) Considered the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year;
- b) Noted the draft meeting dates for 2024/25; and
- c) Agreed the items to be recommended to the successor board in the 2024/25 municipal year

### **104 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Subject to the Annual Council Meeting and any other adjustments the next public meeting of the Board is initially scheduled for 12 June 2024 at 10.30am with a pre-meeting for all board members at 10.00AM. The Chair noted that this date could be subject to change.

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## Co-Opted Members

Date: 10 June 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

- The Council's Constitution includes provision for the appointment of co-opted members to individual Scrutiny Boards.
- For those Scrutiny Boards where co-opted members have previously been appointed, such arrangements have usually been reviewed on an annual basis at the beginning of a new municipal year.
- Following discussion at the Children and Families Scrutiny Board in April 2024 at which consideration was given to co-opted members for the 2024/25 municipal year some changes have been agreed. These include a non-voting co-opted member from the Leeds Parent Carer Forum to provide more knowledge and experience in relation to SEND issues and a further Parent Governor representative to be sourced from SILC provision in the city.
- This report provides guidance to the Scrutiny Board about the appointment of co-opted members. In addition to general provisions applicable to all Boards, there are also several specific legislative arrangements for certain co-opted members. Such cases are set out in the Council's Constitution and are also summarised within this report.

### Recommendations

In line with the options available and information outlined in this report, Members are asked to:

- a) Consider and approve the appointment of non-voting co-opted members to the Children and Families Scrutiny Board.
- b) Note the nominations of the Roman Catholic Diocese and Church of England Diocese to the Children and Families Scrutiny Board in accordance with statutory requirements.
- c) Note the ongoing efforts to appoint parent governor representatives to the Children and Families Scrutiny Board both from secondary schools and SILC provision in the city.

## **What is this report about?**

- 1 In most cases the appointment of co-opted members is optional and is determined by the relevant Scrutiny Board.
- 2 The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution outline the options available to Scrutiny Boards in relation to appointing co-opted members.
- 3 In general terms, Scrutiny Boards can appoint:
  - a) Up to five non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that does not go beyond the next Annual Meeting of Council; and/or,
  - b) Up to two non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that relates to the duration of a particular and specific scrutiny inquiry.
- 4 To assist the Scrutiny Board, this report sets out issues to consider when seeking to appoint a co-opted member.
- 5 As well as general provisions for co-opted members, applicable to all Boards, Article 6 of the Council's Constitution reflects the specific legislative arrangements that relate to Education representatives co-opted onto the Children and Families Scrutiny Board. This report therefore sets out how this requirement is being met.
- 6 The report also seeks to respond to the Board's discussion at its meeting on 18 April 2024 in terms of the additional co-opted members that were discussed and which the principal scrutiny adviser has been working to provide.

## **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 7 It is widely recognised that in some circumstances, co-opted members can significantly add value to the work of Scrutiny Boards and, where appropriate, facilitate co-operation between Scrutiny Boards.
- 8 The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules make it clear that co-option would normally only be appropriate where the co-opted member has specialist skill or knowledge, which would be of assistance to the Scrutiny Board.
- 9 In considering the appointment of co-opted members, Scrutiny Boards should be satisfied that a co-opted member can use their specialist skill or knowledge to add value to the work of the Scrutiny Board. However, co-opted members should not be viewed as a replacement for professional advice from officers.
- 10 Co-opted members should be considered as representatives of a particular group of stakeholders. However, when seeking external input into the Scrutiny Board's work, consideration should always be given to other alternative approaches, such as the role of expert witnesses or use of external research studies, to help achieve a balanced evidence base.
- 11 When considering the appointment of a co-opted member for a term of office, Scrutiny Boards should be mindful of any potential conflicts of interest that may arise during the year in view of the Scrutiny Boards' wide-ranging terms of reference. To help overcome this, Scrutiny Boards may wish to focus on the provision available to appoint up to two non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that relates to the duration of a specific scrutiny inquiry.
- 12 The process for appointing co-opted members should be open, effective and carried out in a manner which seeks to strengthen the work of the Scrutiny Board. In doing so, due regard



should also be given to any potential equality issues in line with the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies.

### Education Representatives

13 In addition to elected Members appointed by Council, the Local Government Act 2000 states that the relevant Scrutiny Board dealing with education matters shall include in its membership the following voting representatives in accordance with statutory requirements:

- One Church of England diocese representative<sup>1</sup>
- One Roman Catholic diocese representative<sup>1</sup>
- Parent governor representatives<sup>2</sup>

14 The Parent Governor Regulations (Representatives) England 2001 states that a local education authority shall appoint at least two parent governor representatives to each of their education overview and scrutiny committees and sub-committees. There is scope for more than two parent governor representatives within the regulations and following discussion in April 2024 the Board agreed to seek a nomination from a parent governor from specialist or SILC provision in the city.

15 The number and term of office of education representatives is fixed by full Council and set out in Article 6 of the constitution. Representatives of the Church of England and Roman Catholic dioceses are nominated by their diocese and parent governor representatives are elected.

16 Where the Scrutiny Board deals with other non-educational matters, the co-opted members may participate in any discussion but shall not be entitled to vote on those matters.

17 In accordance with above statutory requirements, the following individuals have been nominated/appointed onto the Children and Families Scrutiny Board for the 2024/25 municipal year:

- One Church of England diocese representative - Andrew Graham has been nominated
- One Roman Catholic diocese representative - Tony Britten has been nominated

18 A number of efforts have been made to identify Parent governor representatives throughout the last municipal year and these efforts are ongoing. To date the following position can be reported:

- Vacancy (Secondary) – ongoing activity taking place to fill the vacancy
- Anas Khitou (Primary) – Appointed during the 2023/24 municipal year
- Vacancy (SILC Provision) – ongoing activity taking place to fill the vacancy

### Non-voting co-opted members on the Children and Families Scrutiny Board

19 The appointment of non-voting school staff representation has been a longstanding approach adopted by the Children and Families Scrutiny Board. This year, both Nick Tones and Helen Bellamy have again been nominated by the School Staff Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) to continue their role on the Scrutiny Board and to also be acknowledged in their role as representing school staff more broadly.

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<sup>1</sup> This appointment shall be for a term of office that does not go beyond the next Annual Meeting of Council.

<sup>2</sup> These appointments shall be for a four-year term of office

- 20 The Children and Families Scrutiny Board has also previously invited co-opted member representation from the Third Sector (i.e. Young Lives Leeds). This year Young Lives Leeds have indicated that there will be a change of nominee and at the time of publication this was still under consideration. If available this will be dealt with verbally at the meeting.
- 21 In addition, and to reflect the Board's April discussion, Kate Blacker (continuing her long standing involvement as non-voting co-opted member) and Maria Adams (Vice Chair Leeds Parent Carer Forum) have been nominated to fill the final remaining non-voting co-opted positions on the Board.

**How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

- Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

- 22 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the priorities set out in the Best City Ambition. A decision to co-opt members would be taken with the intention of adding value to the work of the Scrutiny Boards.

**What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

Wards affected:
Have ward members been consulted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

- 23 The guidance surrounding co-opted members has previously been discussed by Scrutiny Chairs and it was agreed that individual Scrutiny Boards would consider the appointment of co-optees onto their respective boards.
- 24 Consultation has taken place with the nominees and the organisations they represent in relation to the appointment of voting and non-voting co-optees.

**What are the resource implications?**

- 25 Where applicable, any incidental expenses paid to co-optees will be met within existing resources.

**What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

- 26 When considering the appointment of a standing co-opted member for a term of office, members should be mindful of any potential conflicts of interest that may arise during the course of the year in view of the Scrutiny Boards' wide-ranging terms of reference.

**What are the legal implications?**

- 27 Where additional members are co-opted onto a Scrutiny Board, such members must comply with the provisions set out in the Member's Code of Conduct as detailed within the Council's Constitution.

**Appendices**

- None

**Background papers**

- None

## Scrutiny Boards - Terms of Reference

Date: 10 June 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Children & Families)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

- This report presents the terms of reference for the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)
- While general Terms of Reference are applied to all Scrutiny Boards, the variations in the Scrutiny Boards' remits, together with their special responsibilities, are captured within Article 6 of the constitution.
- Further information is presented within this report to show how each of the five individual Scrutiny Boards align to 2024/25 Officer Delegated Functions and Executive Portfolios.
- In line with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules, the Scrutiny Boards will also continue to ensure through service review that equality and diversity/cohesion and integration issues are considered in decision making and policy formulation.

### Recommendations

- a) Members are requested to note the Terms of Reference as they relate to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families).

### **What is this report about?**

- 1 This report presents the Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families).
- 2 The general Terms of Reference applied to all Scrutiny Boards are set out in Appendix 1.
- 3 The variations in the Scrutiny Boards' remits, together with their special responsibilities, are captured within Article 6 of the constitution (see Appendix 2).
- 4 Further detail has been provided to illustrate how each of the five Scrutiny Boards align to 2024/25 Officer Delegated Functions and Executive Portfolios (Appendix 3).

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 5 This report seeks to clarify the Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families).

### **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

- 6 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards will continue to promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the Best City Ambition.

### **What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

- 7 The Terms of Reference were formally considered and approved by the Council at the Annual General Meeting on 23 May 2024.

### **What are the resource implications?**

- 8 This report has no specific resource implications.

### **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

- 9 This report has no risk management implications.

### **What are the legal implications?**

- 10 This report has no specific legal implications.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: General Terms of Reference applicable to all Scrutiny Boards
- Appendix 2: Article 6 of the constitution, outlining the variation in Scrutiny Board remits and any special responsibilities.
- Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board alignment with officer Delegated Functions and Executive portfolios 2024/25.

### **Background papers**

- None

## Scrutiny Board

The Scrutiny Board is authorised to discharge the following overview and scrutiny functions<sup>1</sup>:

1. to review or scrutinise decisions made or other action taken in connection with any council or executive function or any matter which affects the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area;<sup>2</sup>
2. to receive and consider requests for Scrutiny from any source;
3. to review or scrutinise the performance of such Trust / Partnership Boards as fall within its remit;
4. to act as the appropriate Scrutiny Board in relation to the Executive's initial proposals for a relevant plan or strategy within the Budget and Policy Framework which falls within its remit;<sup>3</sup>
5. to review or scrutinise executive decisions that have been Called In;
6. to exercise such special functions as are allocated in Annex 3 to Article 6 – Scrutiny Boards; and
7. to make such reports and recommendations as it considers appropriate and to receive and monitor formal responses to any reports or recommendations made.

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<sup>1</sup> In relation to functions set out in Annex 2 to Article 6 – Scrutiny Boards, whether or not those functions are concurrently delegated to any other committee or officer.

<sup>2</sup> Including matters pertaining to outside bodies and partnerships to which the authority has made appointments.

<sup>3</sup> In accordance with Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

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## ARTICLE 6 – SCRUTINY BOARDS

### 6.1 ROLE

The Council will appoint Scrutiny Boards as set out in Annex 2 to this Article to exercise functions conferred by section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 and in accordance with the National Health Service Act 2006, in accordance with their terms of reference<sup>1</sup>.

### 6.2 VISION FOR SCRUTINY

The Council has adopted a Vision for Scrutiny, which is attached at Annex 1.

### 6.3 ROLE OF SCRUTINY

#### **Policy development and review**

Within their Terms of Reference all Scrutiny Boards may:

- assist the Council and the Executive in the development of the Budget and Policy Framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues;
- conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options;
- consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options;
- question Members of the Executive and Directors about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area; and
- liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working.

#### **Scrutiny**

Within their terms of reference all Scrutiny Boards may:

- make recommendations to the Executive and/or appropriate committees and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process;
- review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the Scrutiny Board and local people about their activities and performance; and
- question and gather evidence.

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<sup>1</sup> As set out at Part 3 Section 2A of the Constitution

## Article 6 - Scrutiny Boards

### 6.4 SCRUTINY OFFICER

The Council has designated the post of Head of Democratic Services, as Scrutiny Officer<sup>2</sup>.

The functions of the Scrutiny Officer are:

- (a) to promote the role of the Scrutiny Boards;
- (b) to provide support to the Scrutiny Boards and their members<sup>3</sup>;
- (c) to provide support and guidance to Members (including Executive Members), and officers<sup>4</sup>, in relation to the Scrutiny Boards' functions;
- (d) to report to Council<sup>5</sup> annually about how the authority has carried out its overview and scrutiny functions.

### 6.5 PROCEEDINGS

Scrutiny Boards will conduct their proceedings in accordance with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

### 6.6 MEMBERSHIP

Members shall be appointed in accordance with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules.

Scrutiny Boards shall co-opt members in accordance with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules.

### 6.7 SCRUTINY BOARD CHAIRS

The Chair of each of the Scrutiny Boards shall be appointed in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules.

Group spokespersons shall not be appointed to Chair a Scrutiny Board which corresponds to the same portfolio.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Under Section 9FB Local Government Act 2000.

<sup>3</sup> The Scrutiny Officer shall exercise overall responsibility for the finances made available to Scrutiny Boards.

<sup>4</sup> The Scrutiny Officer shall exercise overall responsibility for the work programme of the officers employed to support the work of the Scrutiny Boards.

<sup>5</sup> After consultation with the relevant Scrutiny Chairs

<sup>6</sup> This does not apply to those groups who have less than 10% of the membership of the Council



### Vision for Scrutiny at Leeds

“To promote democratic engagement through the provision of an influential scrutiny function held in high regard by its many stakeholders and adds value by achieving measurable service improvements for the people of Leeds through a member led process of examination and review”

To achieve this Scrutiny will follow the nationally agreed ‘Four Principles of Good Scrutiny’;

1. Provide ‘critical friend’ challenge to decision makers, through holding them to account for decisions made, engaging in policy review and policy development;
2. Promote Scrutiny as a means by which the voice and concerns of the public can be heard;
3. Ensure Scrutiny is carried out by ‘independent minded’ Board members;
4. Improve public services by ensuring reviews of policy and service performance are focused.

To succeed Council recognises that the following conditions need to be present;

- Parity of esteem between the Executive and Scrutiny
- Co-operation with statutory partners
- Member leadership and engagement
- Genuine non-partisan working
- Evidence based conclusions and recommendations
- Effective dedicated officer support
- Supportive Directors and senior officer culture

***Council agrees that it is incumbent upon Scrutiny Boards to recognise that resources to support the Scrutiny function are, (like all other Council functions), under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met. Therefore Council agrees that constructive consultation should take place between the Executive and Scrutiny about the availability of resources prior to any work being undertaken.***

***Consequently, when establishing their work programmes Scrutiny Boards should***

- ***Seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources***
- ***Avoid duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue (e.g. Plans Panel, Housing Advisory Board, established member working groups, other Scrutiny Boards)***
- ***Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.***

Scrutiny Board	External oversight	Officer oversight (by reference to the Officer Delegation Scheme)	
		Council Functions	Executive Functions
<b>Strategy and Resources</b>		Chief Executive Director of Strategy & Resources Chief Officer (Financial Services) City Solicitor Director of Communities, Housing and Environment	Chief Executive (1-4) Director of Strategy & Resources (1-7) City Solicitor (1-3) Chief Officer (Financial Services)(1-5) Director of Communities, Housing and Environment (17-19)
<b>Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth</b>	Risk management authorities (defined by S6 Flood and Water Management Act 2010)	Director of City Development Chief Planning Officer	Director of City Development (1, 3, 4, 5(a-c), 6-11, 13, 14) Chief Planning Officer (1-4) Director of Children and Families (2(e)) Director of Strategy and Resources (8)
<b>Environment, Housing and Communities</b>	Responsible authorities (defined by S5 Crime and Disorder Act 1998)	None	Director of Communities, Housing and Environment (1-16, 20-22) Director of City Development (2)
<b>Children and Families</b>		Director of Children and Families	Director of Children and Families (1, 2(a-d & f), 3 & 4) Programme Director Strengthening Families, Protecting Children (1 – 3) Director of Children & Families 1 (Functions delegated as Lead Officer of One Adoption Agency for West Yorkshire)
<b>Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles</b>	Relevant NHS bodies or health service providers including:- NHS England NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board Local NHS Trusts and other NHS service providers Healthwatch Leeds	None	Director of Adults and Health (1 - 8) Director of Public Health (1-6) Director of City Development (12)

## SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCRUTINY BOARDS

### 1 – Flood risk Management

**The Scrutiny Board (Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth) is allocated special responsibility for flood risk management namely:-**

- To review and scrutinise the exercise by risk management authorities<sup>7</sup> of flood risk management functions<sup>8</sup> which may affect the Leeds City Council area<sup>9</sup>.

### 2 – Crime and Disorder

**The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) is allocated special responsibility for crime and disorder namely:-**

- To exercise the functions of a crime and disorder committee<sup>10</sup>, including the following:
  - a) To review or scrutinise the exercise of crime and disorder functions<sup>11</sup> by responsible authorities<sup>12</sup>; and
  - b) To review or scrutinise any local crime or disorder matter<sup>13</sup> raised by a Member.

### 3 – Health

**The Scrutiny Board (Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles) is allocated special responsibility for health<sup>14</sup> namely:-**

- to review and scrutinise any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service in its area and to make reports and recommendations on any such matter it has reviewed or scrutinised;
- to comment on, make recommendations about, or report about such proposals as are referred to the authority by a relevant NHS body or a relevant health service provider;

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<sup>7</sup> As defined by Section 6 Flood and Water Management Act 2010

<sup>8</sup> As defined by Section 4 Flood and Water Management Act 2010

<sup>9</sup> In accordance with Section 9FH Local Government Act 2000

<sup>10</sup> In accordance with Section 19 Police and Justice Act 2006

<sup>11</sup> As defined by Section 6 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (formulating and implementing crime and disorder strategies)

<sup>12</sup> These are the authorities responsible for crime and disorder strategies set out in Section 5 Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

<sup>13</sup> Any matter concerning –

- a) crime and disorder (including in particular forms of crime and disorder that involve anti-social behaviour or other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); or
- b) the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in that area

<sup>14</sup> In accordance with regulations issued under Section 244 National Health Service Act 2006 (the regulations).

## Article 6 - Scrutiny Boards

- to respond to consultation by any relevant NHS body or health service provider; and
- to nominate Members to any joint overview and scrutiny committee appointed by the authority<sup>15</sup>

Matters which fall within the terms of reference of this Scrutiny Board include:

- arrangements made by local NHS bodies to secure hospital and community health services to the inhabitants of the authority's area and the quality and safety of such services;
- the provision of family health services, personal medical services, personal dental services, pharmacy and NHS ophthalmic services;
- arrangements made by the authority for public health, health promotion, health improvement and for addressing health inequalities;
- the planning of health services by NHS bodies, including plans made in co-operation with local authority's Health and Wellbeing Board for improving both the health of the local population and the provision of health care to that population;
- any matter referred by Healthwatch Leeds; and
- the arrangements made by relevant NHS bodies and health service providers for consulting and involving patients and the public.

The Scrutiny Board may make recommendations to the authority, relevant NHS bodies, or relevant health service providers arising from the scrutiny process.

### 4– Residual Responsibility

**The Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources) is allocated residual responsibility for any function not otherwise allocated to a Scrutiny Board.**

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<sup>15</sup> such nominations to reflect the political balance of the Board.

## Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

<b>Scrutiny Board: Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles</b>	
<b>Functions by reference to the Officer Delegation Scheme</b>	<b>Executive Board Portfolio</b>
<p><b>Director of Adults &amp; Health</b> 8. Public Health</p> <p><b>Director of Public Health</b> 1. Health Improvement Functions 2. Health Protection Functions 3. Functions relating to the commissioning of Public Health services 4. Provision of statutory and mandated functions 5. Functions of Responsible Authority 6. Publication of the annual report on the health of the local population.</p>	<p><b>Equality, Health and Wellbeing</b> Cllr F Venner</p>
<p><b>Director of Adults &amp; Health</b> 1. Promotion of well-being 2. Information, advice and advocacy 3. Prevention and Recovery 4. Safeguarding 5. Assessment and eligibility 6. Diverse and high-quality services 7. Charging and financial assessment</p> <p><b>Director of City Development</b> 12. Sport and Active Leeds</p>	<p><b>Adult Social Care, Active Lifestyles and Culture</b> Cllr S Arif</p>

## Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

<b>Scrutiny Board: Children and Families</b>	
<b>Functions by reference to the Officer Delegation Scheme</b>	<b>Executive Board Portfolio</b>
<p><b>Director of Children and Families</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children’s Social Work</li> <li>2. Learning (excluding 2e)</li> <li>3. Child Friendly City</li> <li>4. Youth Services<sup>1</sup></li> </ol> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adoption services (Function delegated to the Director of Children and Families as Lead Officer of one Adoption Agency for West Yorkshire)</li> </ol> <p><b>Programme Director Strengthening Families, Protecting Children</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Act as an ambassador for Leeds City Council</li> <li>2. Strengthening Families, Protecting Children Programme (SFPC)</li> <li>3. Partners in Practice including Leeds Relational Practice Centre (LRPC)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Children and Families</b> Cllr H Hayden</p>

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<sup>1</sup> Save for Locality Youth Services

## Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

<b>Scrutiny Board: Environment, Housing and Communities</b>	
<b>Functions by reference to the Officer Delegation Scheme</b>	<b>Executive Board Portfolio</b>
<p><b>Director of Communities, Housing &amp; Environment</b></p> <p>1. Integrated locality working and its associated city-wide support and delivery functions including Locality Youth Services</p> <p>3 Customer services</p> <p>4. Central Library and Information Services</p> <p>5. Community Safety</p> <p>20. Welfare and Benefits services</p>	<p><b>Communities, Customer Services and Community Safety</b></p> <p>Cllr M Harland</p>
<p><b>Director of Communities, Housing &amp; Environment</b></p> <p>6. Public Health Protection and Control of Statutory Nuisance</p> <p>7. Environmental Health and Consumer Protection</p> <p>8. Environmental management</p> <p>9. Car parking</p> <p>10. Waste</p> <p>11. Cemeteries, crematoria, burial grounds and mortuaries</p> <p>12. Greenspaces</p> <p>13. Countryside management</p> <p>14. Ecological sustainability</p> <p>15. Climate Change</p> <p>16. Clean Air</p>	<p><b>Climate, Energy, Environment and Green Space</b></p> <p>Cllr M Rafique</p>
<p><b>Director of Communities, Housing &amp; Environment</b></p> <p>21. Council Housing Landlord Functions (funded by the Housing Revenue Account)</p> <p>22. Other Housing Functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Condition and Occupation of Housing</li> <li>b. Housing advice</li> <li>c. Homelessness</li> <li>d. Gypsies &amp; travellers</li> <li>e. Emergency &amp; temporary accommodation</li> </ul>	<p><b>Housing</b></p> <p>Cllr J Lennox</p>

## Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

f. Energy efficiency & fuel poverty g. Adaptations	
<b>Director of City Development:</b> 2. Functions relating to the Council's Register of Assets of Community Value	<b>Resources</b> Cllr D Coupar
<b>Director of Communities, Housing &amp; Environment</b> 2. Equalities	<b>Equality, Health and Wellbeing</b> Cllr F Venner



## Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

<b>Scrutiny Board: Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth</b>	
<b>Functions by reference to the Officer Delegation Scheme</b>	<b>Executive Board Portfolio</b>
<b>Director of City Development</b> 1. Asset Management <b>Director of Strategy and Resources</b> 8. Community Infrastructure Levy	<b>Resources</b> Cllr D Coupar
<b>Director of Children &amp; Families</b> 2e. 14 – 16 Skills Development	<b>Children and Families</b> Cllr H Hayden
<b>Director of City Development</b> 3. Inclusive Growth 4. Sustainable Development 6. Sustainable Economic Development 7. Employment and Skills 8. International and domestic inward economic investment 9. Highways and Transportation 10. Flood and water management 13 Active Travel 14. Planning Services <b>Chief Planning Officer</b> 1. Development Plan functions 2. Planning Policy and Guidance functions 3. Neighbourhood Planning functions 4a. Conservation Area functions	<b>Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Sustainable Development</b> Cllr J Pryor
<b>Director of City Development</b> 5. Sustainable Housing Growth:- a) Private housing development b) Affordable housing c) Council Housing Growth	<b>Housing</b> Cllr J Lennox
<b>Director of City Development</b> 11. Culture	<b>Adult Social Care, Active Lifestyles and Culture</b> Cllr S Arif

## Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

<b>Scrutiny Board: Strategy and Resources</b>	
<b>Functions by reference to the Officer Delegation Scheme</b>	<b>Executive Board Portfolio</b>
<p><b>Chief Executive</b> 1. Functions in relation to elections</p> <p><b>Director of Strategy and Resources</b> 1. Setting, supporting and monitoring the council’s policies and procedures for:-            a) human resources (including health and safety and equalities);            b) access to information            c) procurement, purchasing, contract management and commercial activity            d) projects and programmes            f) performance, organisational planning and service improvement            h) customer relations</p> <p>2. Digital and Information Services            3. Corporate communications and marketing services            5. The Council’s city-wide resilience and emergency planning functions            6. Shared Services            7. Civic Enterprise Leeds services</p> <p><b>Chief Officer Financial Services</b>            2. Ensuring effective financial management and controls            3. Setting, supporting and monitoring the Council’s policies and procedures for budgets            4. Administering effective financial management and controls            5. Corporate Governance</p> <p><b>City Solicitor</b>            1. Legal Services            2. Democratic Services including support to elected members in their responsibilities            3. Standards and Conduct</p>	<p><b>RESOURCES</b>            Cllr D Coupar</p>

## Appendix 3: Scrutiny Board Alignment to Executive Functions

<p><b>Director of Communities, Housing &amp; Environment</b></p> <p>17. Registrars functions 18. Licensing functions 19. Land and property search functions</p>	<p><b>RESOURCES</b></p> <p>Cllr D Coupar</p>
<p><b>Chief Executive</b></p> <p>2. Civic and Ceremonial functions of the Council 3. Devolution and local freedoms 4. City Region Functions</p> <p><b>Director of Strategy and Resources</b></p> <p>1. Setting, supporting and monitoring the council’s strategy, policies and procedures for:-              e) Joint Strategic Needs Analysis              g) risk and business continuity</p> <p>4. The Council’s corporate planning and policy development services, including co-ordination of the Best City Ambition.</p> <p><b>Chief Officer Financial Services</b></p> <p>1. Setting, supporting and monitoring the Council’s financial strategy.</p>	<p><b>LEADER’S PORTFOLIO</b></p> <p>Cllr J Lewis</p>

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## Sources of Work and Work Programme 2024/25

Date: 10 June 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

This report provides information and guidance about potential sources of work and areas of priority within the Scrutiny Board's terms of reference.

In consultation with the relevant Directors and Executive Board Members, the Scrutiny Board is requested to consider and discuss potential areas of work for the Board for the forthcoming municipal year.

The Council's scrutiny function seeks to add value to the work of the authority by carrying out a range of different categories of work including policy and service review, performance monitoring and pre-decision scrutiny.

In addition, and to remain agile to decision making requirements, the Board could also seek to make recommendations through enhanced use of scrutiny statements that would deal with forthcoming issues quicker whilst also enabling scrutiny boards to exert further influence on policy development and decision making within the authority.

### Recommendations

- a) Members are requested to reflect on the information and guidance provided within this report when considering potential areas for scrutiny for the forthcoming municipal year.

## **What is this report about?**

- 1 Scrutiny Boards are responsible for ensuring that their work programme prioritises issues where the Board can add strategic value, challenge service performance and/or respond to issues of significant public interest.
- 2 Scrutiny can also provide a valuable mechanism to consult members about new policy initiatives and as in previous years pre-decision scrutiny continues to be encouraged as an approach through which scrutiny can add insight and value to the achievement of the Council's ambitions.
- 3 To assist the Scrutiny Board in effectively managing its workload for the forthcoming municipal year, this report provides information and guidance on potential sources of work and areas of priority within the Board's terms of reference.

## **Key sources of information**

### Best City Ambition

- 4 The Best City Ambition was adopted in February 2022 and was last updated in 2023/2024. It sets out the long-term vision for the city with a strong emphasis on the importance of partnership working.
- 5 The Best City Ambition focuses on tackling poverty and inequality, through activity that prioritises the three 'pillars' of health and wellbeing, inclusive growth and zero carbon. It also identifies 'breakthrough priorities,' which will be the focus of cross-cutting, collaborative project teams.
- 6 The Council's approach to performance management is being reviewed following the adoption of the Best City Ambition and the implications of the Office for Local Government (OFLOG) which was established in 2023, revised performance monitoring will therefore be a matter for consideration by the five Scrutiny Boards over the course of 2024/25 and beyond.
- 7 The Best City Ambition, following the 2024 refresh, is attached as Appendix 1 for information.

### Performance Data

- 8 Performance monitoring remains a key element of the Scrutiny Boards' work and is also a valuable source of information to help identify issues that may warrant further scrutiny. The most recent performance data is included as a separate agenda item at today's meeting. This provides the Board with a summary of performance against the strategic priorities that are relevant to the Board's remit – although as noted above this is subject to ongoing review.

### Financial Information

- 9 All Scrutiny Boards are consulted annually on the Council's initial budget proposals in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework. This is undertaken in conjunction with a review of the in-year financial health of the authority.
- 10 Maintaining an overview of the Council's financial health is also a key element of the Scrutiny Board's work and the Board may wish to receive further financial health updates during the municipal year.

### Strategic Partnership Board

- 11 As set out within its terms of reference, this Scrutiny Board may review or scrutinise the performance of the Children and Families Trust Board acting as a 'critical friend.'
- 12 In considering items of scrutiny work this year, the Scrutiny Board is encouraged to explore how it can add value to the work of the Partnership in delivering on the city priorities, and the obsessions and outcomes detailed in the Children and Young Peoples Plan.

### School organisation proposals and objections procedure

- 13 Following the dissolution of the School Organisation Advisory Board (SOAB) in 2019, the Children and Families Scrutiny Board considered what role it could play as part of the school organisation proposals and objections procedure, which relates to maintained schools, in terms of still allowing an appropriate level of rigour and challenge to continue to exist where formal objections are received following the publication of a Statutory Notice to close a school; open a new school; or make prescribed alterations to a school. An approach was formally agreed by the Scrutiny Board in July 2019, and this is summarised in Appendix 2.

### Executive Board

- 14 Elements of the Executive Board's work programme which relate to policy development are often known in advance. As key issues and policies arise the Board could consider undertaking pre-decision scrutiny work to support and enhance policy development within its remit.
- 15 Additionally, as per the Constitution Scrutiny is also involved in pre-decision scrutiny work linked to the Council's Budget and Policy Framework - such as the forthcoming Youth Justice Plan Update (due for approval by Council in July 2024), featured elsewhere on today's agenda.

### Draft work programme for the 2024/25 municipal year

- 16 The draft work programme set out at Appendix 3 incorporates these matters if any are known, along with other annual update items so that members can consider and determine whether to proceed with these areas of work within the timescales available and to provide an initial overview of some possible work items in the 2024/25 municipal year.
- 17 In addition, reflected in the work programme are other known items of scrutiny activity, such as performance and budget monitoring and other identified areas of work recommended by the former Scrutiny Board to pursue in this new municipal year.

### Working with External Partners

- 18 In recent months, the scrutiny function has sought to develop stronger links with the University of Leeds to explore potential collaboration on policy development and making use of the significant expertise the University has in that area. Whilst this is not fully developed there is potential for the Board to make use of this expertise when developing its work programme and more generally to hear evidence from academics in areas that fall under the Board's remit.

### Voices of Children and Young People

- 19 In the 2023/24 municipal year the Board agreed to include the voice of children and young people in its work in future years. This will be led by the Principal Scrutiny Advisor working with the Voice, Influence and Change Team. Through this approach the Board's Work Programme could seek to reflect and where appropriate respond to the issues that children and young people believe to be the most important.

## Other sources of Scrutiny work

- 20 Other common sources of work include referrals to scrutiny, Call In requests and other corporate requests. The Scrutiny Board is required to be formally consulted during the development of key policies which form part of the council's Budget and Policy Framework.

## Methods of working

- 21 Each Scrutiny Board has planned to hold eight formal or 'consultative'<sup>1</sup> meetings throughout this municipal year.
- 22 Whilst the decision to hold any additional meetings is left to the discretion of each Board, historically Scrutiny Boards have also adopted other methods of evidence gathering outside of the public meeting setting, such as site visits and working group meetings.
- 23 Working groups comprise of Members of a particular Scrutiny Board who are appointed to carry out specific tasks on behalf of the Board. Suitable tasks for a working group may involve Members meeting on their own (for example for the purposes of developing reports and recommendations in connection with an ongoing inquiry or terms of reference for a future Inquiry). Alternatively, they may entail activities which cannot realistically be undertaken within the confines of a formally convened Scrutiny Board meeting.
- 24 In all cases, the primary purpose of a working group is to obtain and/or develop information and to report back to a formally convened meeting of the Scrutiny Board. A working group cannot discharge the primary purpose of a Scrutiny Board i.e. it cannot undertake inquiries independently from its parent Scrutiny Board, issue reports/recommendations (other than to its parent Scrutiny Board) or in any way present itself to a third party as representing the views of the parent Scrutiny Board.
- 25 As set out within the Vision for Scrutiny, the Board must also remain mindful of the resource implications associated with the use of site visits and working group meetings when determining its work programme.

## **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 26 The information and guidance presented within this report focuses on potential sources of work and areas of priority within the Scrutiny Board's terms of reference. This aims to assist Members when considering potential areas of scrutiny work for the forthcoming municipal year.

## **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

- 27 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the priorities of the Best City Ambition. The Boards are asked to consider proposed items of business within this context.
- 28 National guidance from both the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) and the Local Government Association (LGA) advocates pre-decision scrutiny as a means through which scrutiny can improve and influence decision making. In particular it can offer an impartial perspective, challenge assumptions and strengthen evidence to support decision making, provide enhanced engagement with the public and understanding of local views and widen

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<sup>1</sup> Consultative meetings are held remotely and webcasted live to enable public access. However, they are not a public meeting held in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.



ownership of decisions as more elected members are consulted on their expectations linked to decisions.

### What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes                       No

29 To enable Scrutiny to focus on strategic priorities, it is recognised that each Board needs to establish an early dialogue with those Directors and Executive Board Members whose remits are aligned to that of the Scrutiny Board. The Vision for Scrutiny also states that Scrutiny Boards should seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources prior to agreeing items of work.

### What are the resource implications?

30 The Vision for Scrutiny<sup>2</sup>, agreed by full Council, recognises that like all other Council services, resources to support the Scrutiny function are under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met. Consequently, when establishing their work programmes Scrutiny Boards should:

- a) Seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources;
- b) Avoid duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue;
- c) Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.

### What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

31 There are no risk management implications relevant to this report.

### What are the legal implications?

32 This report has no specific legal implications.

### Appendices

- Appendix 1: Best City Ambition
- Appendix 2: Agreed approach on the role of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board as part of the school organisation proposals and objections procedure
- Appendix 3: Draft Work Programme 2024/25

### Background papers

- None

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<sup>2</sup> This forms part of Article 6 within the Council Constitution

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# Leeds

# **Best City Ambition**

## **Tackling Poverty and Inequality**

Health and Wellbeing • Inclusive Growth • Zero Carbon

**2024 UPDATE - FINAL VERSION**  
TEXT VERSION – DESIGN WORK TO FOLLOW

## Foreword

Our ambition is for Leeds to be the Best City in the UK – where we work together in partnership to achieve our goals, proud of our strengths and track record of success, but focused fiercely on tackling poverty and reducing inequalities wherever we can.

Times are hard. Over a decade of austerity, paired with rampant inflation and a cost-of-living crisis have inevitably had an impact on the public services which people rely on, and created new challenges for businesses, organisations and families in every part of our great city. Leeds has proven itself time and again to be a resilient place and while the coming months and years will be challenging, I have no doubt we will remain an ambitious, vibrant and compassionate place to live, work, study or visit.

In spite of the challenges that we face across Leeds, we continue to deliver beyond expectations and contribute over and above to the wider UK economy, being one of only two cities outside of London that are net contributors to the Treasury. We continue to make our mark regionally, nationally, and globally, celebrating the broad range of talent and assets that we have across all areas of the city.

The Best City Ambition sets out a positive vision for the future of Leeds – one which recognises the amazing strengths and opportunities we still have. Our economy is growing and continues to attract investment making Leeds a better place to do business and a great place to live. The partnerships which drive our efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of our population are as good as you will find anywhere in the country. And Leeds is once again leading the way in demonstrating how we can meaningfully tackle climate change, recently being one of only 119 global cities to receive the highest 'A grade' by the Carbon Disclosure Project.

To be the best city Leeds must be a place where everyone can reach their potential, and I'm proud of our continued focus on supporting the most vulnerable in our society. As budgets get tighter – for the council and its partners – maximising the impact of investment into prevention and early intervention will take on even more importance.

We won't be able to do everything we would like to, that is clear, but by embracing the Team Leeds spirit that has been seen so often we have the best possible chance to continue to improve people's lives locally and promote everything Leeds has to offer nationally and internationally. When resources are stretched thin, it is more important than ever that we come together and support each other to pursue the shared goals we set out here.

We can all play a part in making Leeds the best city, one that is inclusive, compassionate, welcoming and ambitious in the face of challenge. To everyone who is part of Team Leeds and will be in the future – thank you.

**Councillor James Lewis**

## Introduction

The Best City Ambition is our overall vision for the future of Leeds.

At its heart is **our mission to tackle poverty and inequality** and improve quality of life for everyone who calls Leeds home.

Our 3 Pillars are at the centre of the Best City Ambition. They capture the things that will make the biggest difference to improving people's lives in Leeds up to 2030 and beyond – and many of the big challenges we face and the best opportunities we have relate to all three.

The Best City Ambition aims to help partner organisations and local communities in every part of Leeds to understand and support the valuable contribution everyone can offer – no matter how big or small – to making Leeds the Best City in the UK.

## Since we set out our Ambition...

There has been lots of feedback about the priorities which it sets out and the contributions people and organisations across Leeds are making, but we also know making progress is challenging and the cost-of-living crisis has made life a lot tougher for more people. Our drive to tackle poverty and inequality has therefore never been more important.

Over the last two years partners across the city have continued to demonstrate an extraordinary level of commitment to supporting our communities as we emerged from the pandemic and into the cost of living crisis. Together and alongside all of this work, we have refreshed our strategies to improve people's health and wellbeing and promote inclusive growth, while continuing to demonstrate national and global leadership in tackling climate change. Alongside this we have shown our commitment to reducing health inequalities through becoming a Marmot City.

As a city we have developed new tools like the Social Progress Index which can help us make better use of data and research to know if we are making a difference, as well as continuing to invest time and resources in engaging with communities directly to learn from their lived experiences.

Most importantly we have continued to strengthen our partnerships to pursue opportunities and support each other in tougher times. This update of the Best City Ambition has been informed by conversations based on honesty and openness; and continues to set out a vision that we will work together towards in the years ahead.

*“The evolution... to the Best City Ambition has been a powerful way of galvanizing partners across the city at a time of less resource.”*

Leeds City Council LGA Corporate Peer Challenge, November 2022

## Our Team Leeds Approach

Team Leeds is about supporting one another to **make Leeds the best it can be**.

It is about sharing ideas and learning, working in genuine partnership, being ambitious about our collective social, economic and environmental impact, and using our buildings, assets and other resources more collectively and creatively to deliver on shared goals.

We want to build **Team Leeds** – made up of the people who live or work here, and those who champion all of the distinct and diverse parts of the whole city nationally and internationally. Everyone in Leeds coming together to play their part is how we will achieve our ambitions, and be in a strong position to adapt to whatever the future may hold.

When coming together in this way we have proved it is possible to overcome some of the trickiest issues we face – and that **breakthrough spirit** is at the core of what makes Team Leeds so valuable. This is even more important when the economic environment is so challenging, with rising costs affecting us all and demand for many services increasing.

We will promote and adopt the following ways of working to drive a Team Leeds approach:

1. **GOOD NEIGHBOURS** Building mutual respect and understanding between one another by working together, leading with kindness, and valuing everyone's input and experiences.
2. **COMMUNITY POWER** Empowering people to generate the positive changes they want to see, enabling communities to thrive and tackle systemic inequalities.
3. **INNOVATION IMPACT** Being evidence-led, ambitious and optimistic for the future of Leeds, sparking innovation, creativity and an entrepreneurial spirit so we can succeed in a digital world.
4. **HEALTHY SOCIETY** Recognising the impact of society, environment and our economy on the health of people in Leeds, pursuing equity for people at every stage of their life.
5. **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY** Promoting the opportunity and responsibility for every business and organisation to create social value and engage with their local community.
6. **STRENGTH BASED** Developing community capacity and strengthening prevention, focusing on what people can do not what they can't.

## We are all Team Leeds

Leeds is made up of 812,000 people - from a diverse range of backgrounds, speaking over 175 different languages. Leeds has a unique geography with a vibrant urban centre surrounded by towns, villages and more rural areas, each with their own distinct history and character. We are proud to be a welcoming city, where our rich culture and diversity is celebrated and accessible for all. Every person in Leeds counts and should have the opportunity to contribute their strengths to Team Leeds.

Leeds doesn't have a 'top table' – we don't believe in that. The breadth and diversity of our city partnerships is a big strength – one that enables more people from a wider range of backgrounds to contribute. We are stronger and more successful as a city when we learn from the life experiences and voices of everyone.

Our Best City Ambition is by and for us all – and everyone will be involved to make it happen.

Leeds's networks of Anchors provide an important platform to come together as Team Leeds to agree and focus on collective goals, progressing our mission to tackle poverty and inequality and make Leeds the best it can be. The Anchors can provide a focal point for discussion and action while remaining more inclusive than traditional city partnership structures.

### **DIAGRAM** explaining the anchors groups.

#### **Leeds Inclusive Anchors**

Leeds Inclusive Anchors Network is a group of 13 of the city's largest (mainly) public sector employers. They come together and focus on areas where they can make a difference for people as an employer, through procurement, through service delivery or as a civic partner.

Leeds Inclusive Anchors Network

#### **Leeds Business Anchors**

The Leeds Business Anchors Network encourages businesses to work together, alongside other partners in the city, to maximise their positive contribution to benefit the people of Leeds.

Leeds Business Anchors

In the Third Sector, Community Anchors form part of a much wider and hugely vibrant ecosystem of local organisations and groups working closely with communities. These organisations are making a huge contribution to the priorities in the Best City Ambition, but can also act as a critical friend of statutory organisations as we strive together to achieve the best for Leeds communities.

#### **Third Sector Partnership**

Cross-cutting city partnership group

#### **Third Sector Leeds**

Leeds's not-for-profit policy & advocacy body

#### **Local community-based forums and city-wide thematic networks**

Supporting over 3,200 local organisations and groups which make up the Leeds Third Sector

#### **Leeds Community Anchor Network**

Leeds Community Anchor Network is a movement of independent local organisations promoting citizen-led activity and partnerships. In addition to their own activities, Community Anchors show generous leadership to help and support other groups and communities, as well as acting as advocates at a city level.

Leeds Community Anchor Network

## AMBITION ENABLER

### Child Friendly Leeds – 12 Wishes

We want to be the best city in the UK for children and young people to grow up in. Over 750 businesses, organisations and individuals have joined our campaign to make Leeds a Child Friendly City and have signed up to be a Child Friendly Leeds ambassador.

The voices and views of children and young people are at the heart of making Leeds a Child Friendly city and are crucial to achieving our Best City Ambition. Child Friendly Leeds has captured the views of over 80,000 children and young people in the city to identify top issues and priorities. Through a Team Leeds approach, the Child Friendly 12 Wishes have been created in partnership with children and young people from Leeds, as well as key stakeholders. Each year the council will publish an update on their progress, which will also be overseen by the Children and Young People Partnership, alongside the Children and Young People's Plan.

The 12 Wishes are focussed on making Leeds a better city for children and young people to play, live and grow up in, where their voices are heard.

## AMBITION ENABLER

### Age Friendly Leeds

Leeds has a longstanding ambition to be the best city to grow old in and a place where people age well. The Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan sets out this vision, focussing on the key factors that support healthy ageing, aligned to the World Health Organisations Age Friendly domains:

- Housing
- Public and Civic Spaces
- Travel and road safety
- Active, included and respected.
- Healthy and independent ageing
- Employment and learning

The strategy and plan represent the insights and experiences of older people in Leeds, forming a key driver of our Best City Ambition. This work is co-produced and co-delivered in a Team Leeds way by the Age Friendly Leeds Board in collaboration with statutory organisations, voluntary and community sector and private partners.

There are many other key partnerships across the city that contribute to delivering our ambitions. These are often rooted in places across Leeds or working with groups of people who share similar circumstances.

Whether it is Community Committees involving more people in local democracy, Local Care Partnerships supporting community health and wellbeing, schools and clusters ensuring every child has the best start in life, or partners like the Chamber of Commerce advocating for businesses and industry in the city – everyone is making a huge contribution which is recognised and appreciated.

Many of those working most closely with people affected by poverty and inequality are in our **vibrant Third Sector** – made up of over 3,200 organisations and groups which reach into every community across the city. Leeds needs a diverse and resilient Third Sector to be the Best City, and there are things we can all do to better understand, support and work in partnership with the sector so it can continue to make its vital contribution. The relationship between the sector and the Best City Ambition is highlighted in the [Leeds Third Sector Strategy](#).



Together, working towards the Best City Ambition, we will continue to act and speak up for Leeds and the people who live, work or study here.

## **AMBITION ENABLER**

### **Locality Working and Community Investment**

Working at a community and neighbourhood level is how partners across Leeds are able to listen to and work with local people to deliver the most meaningful change, especially in areas where people are facing the most disadvantage. Locality working in Leeds is organised through a range of governance arrangements – including community committees, local care partnerships, priority neighbourhoods and clusters. As part of our collective efforts to achieve the Best City Ambition these different forums will strive to work effectively together, multiplying the positive difference they can make alongside a wider group of partners, especially those in the Third Sector.

Through locality working and priority setting – including by using local area plans where they exist – we will pursue opportunities to achieve additional investment at a community level. Great progress is already being made with the £24m Morley Town Deal ongoing, £15.9m secured for community investments in Holbeck, and West Yorkshire being home to the country's third Investment Zone.

## The 3 Pillars of our Best City Ambition

The 3 Pillars bring together the key priorities set out in the main strategies we are working together towards. They provide a clear and coherent vision for the future of Leeds – a city where we work collectively to tackle poverty and inequality in everything we do.

The pillars are not independent of each other – in fact many of the biggest opportunities and challenges we see in Leeds sit at the centre of the three. They include a range of cross-cutting priorities which recognise that everyone has something to offer.

We take a long-term view here, an ambitious vision for the future. More detailed projects, programmes and delivery plans are outlined in supporting strategies, which have been developed in partnership and aligned to the Ambition.

## Health and Wellbeing

**Leeds will be a healthy and caring city for everyone: where those who are most likely to experience poverty improve their mental and physical health the fastest, with health and care inequalities reducing, and people being supported to thrive from early years to later life.**

To realise this ambition, Team Leeds will focus on:

- Ensuring children have the best start in life and enjoy a healthy, happy childhood, where their right to play and have fun is protected and they are free to express their views and feel heard.
- Promoting a mentally healthy city for all, where people are treated with compassion and are well-supported by their families, workplaces and communities.
- Creating a well-connected and welcoming city where every community has access to local green spaces, and people of all ages can enjoy activity that supports their mental and physical health.
- Working with housing providers, landlords, tenants and communities to provide more affordable and better quality housing, so everyone can have a home which supports good health, wellbeing and educational outcomes.
- Providing high quality care as part of an integrated system, with equitable access to essential services which support people to age well and are focused on prevention and early intervention.

## Inclusive Growth

**Leeds will be a place where we create growth in our economy that works for everyone, where people and businesses can thrive, and we work together to tackle poverty and inequality.**

To realise this ambition, Team Leeds will focus on:

- Ensuring people of all ages and backgrounds can enjoy access to education, skills development, and employment opportunities to meet their needs and the needs of a growing

economy, where businesses and educators are encouraged to invest in upskilling people and supporting them to reach their full potential.

- Supporting our businesses, organisations and social enterprises to be productive, innovative, creative, ambitious and connected to their local community, with access to the talent they need to boost productivity in a rapidly changing labour market.
- Maximising the potential of our city centre and local high streets to sustainably grow our economy, create jobs and deliver for people by investing in quality infrastructure, a transport system that will benefit our future and a vibrant public realm.
- Stimulating innovation which drives a healthier, greener and more inclusive future, growing cross-city research capacity and making Leeds a test bed for new ideas and technologies.
- Championing Leeds on the global stage by showcasing the talent and opportunity we have in the city, welcoming inward investors that want to create good jobs locally and attract top international talent.

## Zero Carbon

**Leeds aims to become the first net zero city in the UK, rapidly reducing carbon emissions and reversing the decline in biodiversity, while supporting people to make more sustainable choices which can improve their standard of living.**

To realise this ambition, Team Leeds will focus on:

- Improving transport to give people in Leeds a good alternative to car use, creating a safer and more walkable city to reduce unnecessary travel and support people to be physically active, while enabling drivers to switch to zero emission vehicles.
- Promoting a vibrant and resilient food economy for Leeds so everyone can access and enjoy a healthy diet, where more produce is grown locally, and less food is wasted.
- Making the homes we live in and the buildings we use healthier, more environmentally friendly and cheaper to run, helping to tackle fuel poverty and supporting the switch to renewable sources of energy across Leeds.
- Working together with local communities, landowners and partners to protect nature and reverse the loss of biodiversity, adopting innovative and sustainable practices which enable everyone to enjoy the benefits of abundant and thriving wildlife.
- Investing in our public spaces and infrastructure to prepare Leeds for future climate impacts, helping us adapt to climate change in a way which also improves quality of life for everyone.

## Achieving our Ambition

Tackling poverty and inequality is at the heart of our Best City Ambition. We know that across Leeds, many issues disproportionately impact some groups of people and communities, and this can make stubborn long-term challenges even more difficult to overcome.

Working with our partners we have developed a set of tools to help us regularly check in on the overall socio-economic health of our city. These overarching measures bring together longitudinal metrics which we can monitor on an ongoing basis to ensure we continue to make progress and adjust our strategies accordingly.

The data and learning from monitoring progress towards achieving the Best City Ambition will be made available publicly on the [Leeds Observatory](#) where everyone can use these tools for themselves. It will be reported annually as a point-in-time snapshot through a new Best City Ambition Scorecard and unpacked in more detail every three years through the Leeds Joint Strategic Assessment.

### **PROGRESS MONITORING FRAMEWORK:**

#### **Best City Ambition Scorecard**

We will develop a balanced scorecard of specific indicators (maximum of 20) which will enable us to effectively report headline progress on the Best City Ambition in a clear and understandable way.

The scorecard will draw from the two component parts of the progress monitoring framework – the Leeds Social Progress Index and the range of community engagement activity undertaken in the city – such as the Big Leeds Chat, Leeds Citizens Panel and community conversations led by anchor organisations. It will be incorporated into the council's Annual Performance Report.

Indicators will be linked to the priorities set out under the 3 Pillars – including for example issues like healthy life expectancy, educational attainment and housing sustainability.

#### **Social Progress Index**

Leeds is pioneering the use of the Social Progress Index, a tool which can help us monitor our progress towards the Best City Ambition. The SPI looks at the quality of life in different communities, showing whether it is improving each year in allowing for people's basic human needs, supporting their wellbeing, and providing opportunity.

The SPI will help us to understand how well Leeds is doing and where our strengths and weaknesses lie. It enables policymakers, businesses, organisations and citizens to understand wellbeing at a local level, helping us to make better decisions and maximise the use of our resources towards the priorities set out in the Best City Ambition. The SPI will also contribute to the new cross-cutting Marmot City Indicators currently being developed.

#### **Community Voice**

Using the data and analysis available to us through the Social Progress Index will be invaluable in measuring our progress – but alone this is not enough. Being the 'Best City' means different things to all of us, so having the commitment and space to reflect on people's individual experiences is crucial in monitoring our progress in the future. We need to understand people's perspectives, to hear real voices and reflections which can illuminate what life in Leeds is like more powerfully than is possible through using only data.

Partners across Leeds are already connecting with communities to do this work, and it will be strengthened further by reforming community committees to make them easier for the public to engage with, and by investing in innovative approaches like the Leeds Community Anchors Network listening exercise model.

## AMBITION ENABLER

### Fairer, healthier – Leeds becoming a Marmot City

Being a Marmot City means Leeds has made a commitment to building a fairer city and reducing inequalities in health and wellbeing. It is about ensuring everyone has access to the right 'building blocks' to good health, including high-quality and secure housing, better education, reliable and well-paid jobs, and a clean environment. A fairer, healthier city is essential if we are to meet our ambition to be the best city and is connected to all 3 pillars of the Best City Ambition.

We will work in partnership with the Institute of Health Equity, which is led by the world-renowned expert in this field Professor Sir Michael Marmot. Together, we will develop approaches which focus on supporting people at every stage of life and help meet the needs of different communities.

## Strategies and Plans

The Best City Ambition sets out our overall vision for the future of Leeds – it is something which people can come together and collaborate around, with a shared sense of direction.

The Ambition is not a delivery plan, but it is underpinned by a range of important strategies and plans for the city, and is increasingly embedded into the business plans of key organisations in Leeds too.

**DIAGRAM** *setting our key strategies and their associated governance/delivery partnership.*

Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Health and Wellbeing Board
Inclusive Growth Strategy	Inclusive Growth Delivery Partnership
Third Sector Strategy	Third Sector Partnership
Children and Young People's Plan	Leeds Children and Young People Partnership
Age Friendly Strategy	Age Friendly Leeds Board

Further key city strategies and plans can be found here: <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/plans-and-strategies>

## AMBITION ENABLER

### City Research

Socio-economic, cultural and environmental factors drive the success of our city and the health and wellbeing of our people. Building on the Team Leeds approach taken to the Leeds JSA, we will develop a shared research strategy for the council and city, embedding this within the Best City Ambition and providing a platform for partnership-based conversations about research and evaluation which can improve the positive impact we make.

Leeds has the knowledge across our partnerships to help shape and inform realistic priorities which can be delivered, the expertise to attract significant additional funding into the city, and the relationships to develop a strong strategy rooted in engagement with communities. Embracing research and enabling more people to participate and contribute to it has huge potential to help us maximise resources and ultimately achieve more of the goals set out in the Best City Ambition.

## Team Leeds in Action

In this section, we are keen to showcase unique spotlights that demonstrate Leeds leading by example, partnership working across sectors, and not all council-led initiatives.

These will be presented in a visually interesting way, with graphic design support required.

The section will include two parts:

1. An infographic sharing facts and figures about poverty and inequality in Leeds.
2. Examples of partnership working in response.

Being part of Team Leeds is something which can happen at all levels, whether it be local people checking in on their neighbours or key anchor institutions investing in the local economy so everyone can benefit.

The scale of inequality and poverty across the city is challenging, and we must work together to improve lives for people here. There are breakthrough examples of Team Leeds in action right across the city that are making a difference to communities, contributing to Leeds being the best city in the UK. These partnership approaches demonstrate Leeds leading by example, showcasing collaborative and unique initiatives. We can learn from these as we aim to tackle poverty and inequality and find solutions to the challenges that the city faces.

### **DESIGN WORK TO FOLLOW: Team Leeds Spotlights**

- **Healthy Holidays:** Leading community activities, events and providing healthy meals for young people.  
In 2023, 26% of Leeds children are eligible for free school meals compared to 22.3% nationally.  
In 2021 27,000 children received provisions through the healthy holiday scheme.
- **Child Friendly Leeds:** Empowering young people in Leeds to shape their own future.  
1 in 3 children in Leeds live in the UK's most deprived communities.  
Over 80,000 children helped to develop the child friendly wishes.
- **Leeds Food Aid Network:** Connecting people and communities to food providers and resources to overcome food insecurity.  
Reliance on food aid increased by 42% between 2021-23, to a total of 59,117 food bank accesses.  
In 2021, over 64,000 food parcels were distributed via food aid provides (Source: [Food security and economy \(leeds.gov.uk\)](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/food-security-and-economy))
- **Synergi-Leeds:** Trailblazing creative approaches to tackling ethnic inequalities in mental health provision.  
People from an ethnic minority background are up to 2.5 times more likely to be sectioned under the mental health act.  
Over 800 people directly benefitted, with a further 5,000 being engaged with projects.
- Leeds emits 4m tonnes of carbon each year.
- 200,000 trees are planted annually contributing to the White Rose Forest.

- **Leeds Pipes:** Delivering a low-carbon approach to affordable heat and hot water to homes and businesses.  
15.8% of Leeds households in fuel poverty in 2021.  
3,975 tonnes of carbon saved in 2022.
- **Leeds Green Activity Provider Network (LGAP):** Empowering communities to address climate action and improve health and wellbeing through nature-based activities.
- 1 in 4 adults in Leeds live in the UK's most deprived areas.
- **Asset Based Community Development:** Shifting power to local communities and enabling people to make meaningful change.  
Social value return on investment up to £14 for each £1 invested.
- **Walk Safe:** Driving a citywide and connected approach to community safety.  
84% of women experienced harassment or assault in Leeds  
There are over 600 'Ask for Angela' venues driving community safety.
- **Leeds Digital Festival:** Celebrating digital culture and collaboration underpinned by innovators in business, academia, and technology.  
A growing festival with over 240 events in 2023.
- **Tackling Homelessness:** Minimising homelessness and rough sleeping through strategic partnerships and investment in prevention and support.  
84% of people seeking support received a positive outcome compared to 56% nationally.
- Up to 12 year (men) and 14 year (women) life expectancy gap across the city.
- **Digital Inclusion Networks:** Joins people and services in Leeds to build digital inclusion.  
44 organisations across the city are empowering older people to get online through the digital inclusion network.
- **Leeds Carers Partnership:** Building representation for carers in Leeds to strengthen support and promote health and wellbeing.  
Of the 74,000 unpaid carers in Leeds, 73% experience negative mental health impacts.

Indicative design for “Team Leeds in Action” section – final design work to follow but included here for illustrative purposes.

#TEAMLEEDS

Being part of Team Leeds is about pulling together to address some of the biggest citywide challenges, whether it be local people checking in on their neighbours or key anchor institutions investing in the local economy. We are actively tackling poverty and inequality, creating a stronger, more resilient city through our Team Leeds approach.

This page showcases some of the best examples of Teams Leeds leading solutions to big city challenges.

Starting Well



Leading community activities, events and providing healthy meals for young people.



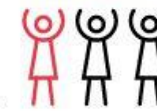
In 2021 **27,000** children received provisions through the healthy holiday scheme.

In 2023, **26%** of Leeds children are eligible for free school meals compared to **22.3%** nationally.



Empowering young people in Leeds to shape their own future.

**1 in 3** children in Leeds live in the UK's most deprived communities.



Over **80,000** children helped to develop the child friendly wishes.



Living Well Health & Wellbeing



**Leeds Food Aid Network**  
Connecting people and communities to food providers and resources to overcome food insecurity.

Reliance on food aid increased by **42%** between 2021-23, to a total of **59,117** food bank accesses.



Trailblazing creative approaches to tackling ethnic inequalities in mental health provision.



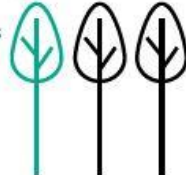
People from an ethnic minority background are up to **2.5 times** more likely to be sectioned under the mental health act.

Living Well: Climate Change

Leeds emits **4m** tonnes of carbon each year.



**200,000** trees are planted annually contributing to the White Rose Forest.



Delivering a low-carbon approach to affordable heat and hot water to homes and businesses.

**15.8%** of Leeds households in fuel poverty in 2021.

**3,975** tonnes of carbon saved in 2022.

LGAP

Empowering communities to address climate action and improve health and wellbeing through nature-based activities.



Living Well Thriving Communities



**1 in 4** adults in Leeds live in the UK's most deprived areas.

**Asset Based Community Development:** Shifting power to local communities and enabling people to make meaningful change.



Social value return on investment up to **£14** for each **£1** invested.

WALKSAFE

Driving a citywide and connected approach to community safety. **84%** of women experienced harassment or assault in Leeds. There are over **600** 'Ask for Angela' venues driving community safety.



Celebrating digital culture and collaboration underpinned by innovators in business, academia, and technology.

A growing festival with over **240** events in 2023.

Minimising homelessness and rough sleeping through strategic partnerships and investment in prevention and support.



**84%** of people seeking support received a positive outcome compared to **56%** nationally.

Ageing Well

Up to **12 year** (men) and **14 year** (women) life expectancy gap across the city.



**100%** Digital Leeds

Joins people and services in Leeds to build digital inclusion.



**44** organisations across the city are empowering older people to get online through the digital inclusion network.



Building representation for carers in Leeds to strengthen support and promote health and wellbeing.

Of the **74,000** unpaid carers in Leeds, **73%** experience negative mental health impacts.

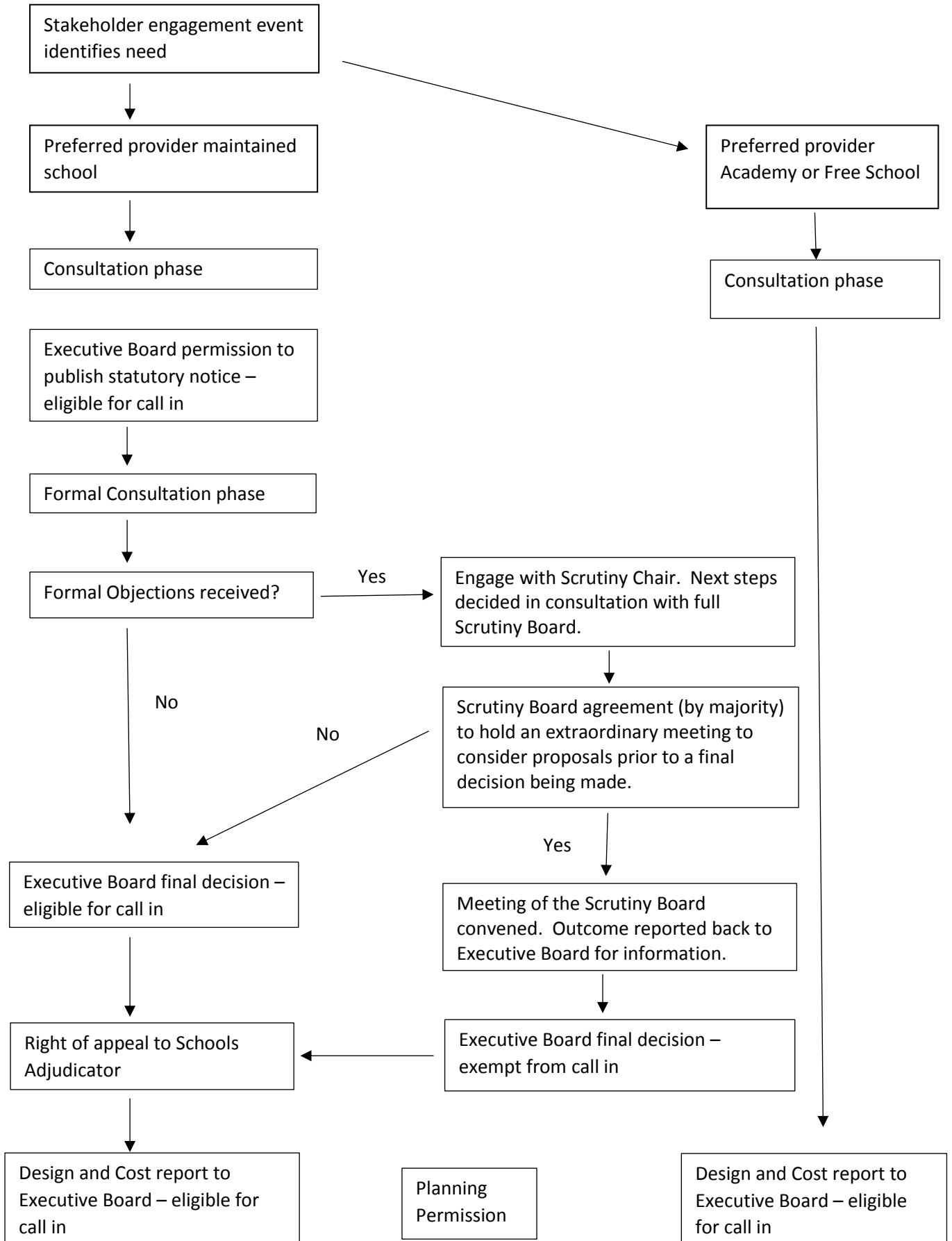


Provided over **13,000** contacts to support carers across group sessions, in-person appointments and telephone calls.





School organisation proposals and objections procedure.  
 Stages of decision making (where need is identified by the local authority)



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## Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

June	July	August
<b>Meeting Agenda for 10 June 2024 at 10.30 am</b>	<b>Meeting Agenda for 18 July 2024 at 2.00 pm</b>	<b>No Scrutiny Board meeting</b>
Co-opted Members (DB)	Annual Standards Report (PDS)	
Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference (DB)	SACRE Annual Report (PM)	
Potential Sources of Work (DB)		
Performance Update (PM)		
Youth Justice Plan (PDS)		
Youth Vaping Update (PSR)		
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

### Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring



## Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

September	October	November
<b>Meeting Agenda for 4 September 2024 at 10.30 am</b>	<b>Meeting Agenda for 9 October 2024 at 10.30 am</b>	<b>Meeting Agenda for 11 November 2024 at 1.30 pm</b>
Impact of Asylum Changes on Children and Young People in Leeds (PSR)  The independent review of children's social care (Macalister Review) – Implementation Update (PM)  EHCP and SEND Services Review – Update (PDS)	Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Update (PSR)  School Attendance Update (PM)	The Leeds 3As Strategy (PDS)
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
Provision of EHCP Support Inquiry Working Group – 22 September 10.00-11.30AM		23/11/23 - Provision of EHCP Support Inquiry Working Group – 23 November 10.00AM

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring



## Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

December	January	February
No Scrutiny Board meeting.	Meeting Agenda for 29 January 2025 at 10.30 am	No Scrutiny Board meeting.
	Performance report (PM) 2025/26 Initial Budget Proposals Financial Health Monitoring (PDS/PSR)	
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
2025/26 Initial Budget Proposals– TBC (remote working group)		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

### Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring



## Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2024/25 Municipal Year

March	April	May
<b>Meeting Agenda for 19 March 2025 at 10.30 am</b>	<b>Meeting Agenda for 28 April 2025 at 1.30 pm</b>	<b>No Scrutiny Board meeting</b>
The independent review of children's social care (Macalister Review) – Implementation Update (PM)	Children and Families Scrutiny Board End of Year Summary Statement (DB)	
<b>Working Group Meetings</b>		
<b>Site Visits</b>		

**Scrutiny Work Items Key:**

PSR	Policy/Service Review	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring

## Youth Vaping – Update Report

Date: 10 June 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Children and Families Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

The Children and Families Scrutiny Board agreed to look into the impacts of vaping on children and young people (youth vaping) in the 2023/24 municipal year and as a result considered two reports on the issue in Leeds. Following the last update report considered on 29 November 2023 the Board requested that the issue return for consideration early in the 2024/25 municipal year.

As part of its work the Board noted, and submitted a response to, the Smokefree Generation consultation process which has been used to inform legislation on smoking and vaping in England and will also be introduced in the devolved nations of the UK. The Board's consultation response is included at Appendix 2 for reference.

This report therefore provides an update on the legislative activity by Government and at Appendix 1 provides a further briefing note on youth vaping in Leeds including ongoing multi-agency activity to prevent it.

### Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- a) Note the update on legislative progress linked to the smokefree generation policy announcement and subsequent Tobacco and Vapes Bill.
- b) Note the activity taking place in Leeds on youth vaping
- c) Identify any future scrutiny activity that the Board could undertake in relation to youth vaping in Leeds.

## **What is this report about?**

- 1 This report provides a further update on youth vaping following previous reports brought to the July and November 2023 public meetings of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board. Following those meetings, it was agreed that a further update report would be brought back for consideration early in the 2024/25 municipal year.
- 2 Much of the concern around youth vaping both nationally and expressed at the Children and Families Board meetings in July and November 2023 centred around key issues such as advertising, marketing, packaging, targeting at young people, free gifting of vapes, environmental impacts and a strong desire for a much tighter regulatory framework to be established particularly with regard to disposable or single use vapes.
- 3 Since this issue was first considered by the Board the Government has set out proposals culminating in the Tobacco and Vapes Bill which has a headline measure of ensuring no one currently aged 14 or under can ever be legally sold cigarettes or other tobacco products but also has significant measures to tackle the growing problem of youth vaping. As part of this process the Board responded to the Smokefree Generation consultation which was used by Government to inform the Tobacco and Vapes Bill.
- 4 In terms of the views of the Board as set out in the consultation response the Tobacco and Vapes Bill closely reflected the concerns expressed when considered by the Board in 2023/24. Key measures included in the Bill were: proposals to ban the sale and supply of disposable vapes under environmental legislation; plans to restrict vape flavours, displays and packaging; quicker and simpler £100 on the spot fines (fixed penalty fines) for shops in England and Wales which sell tobacco and vapes underage; and a new excise duty on vaping products announced in the Spring Budget. All of these measures were supported in the Board's agreed consultation response.
- 5 Whilst the progress on the legislation has been positive there are no timescales for implementation of the measures on Vaping other than a commitment to introducing the new measures as soon as possible and in the case of banning disposable vapes a six month implementation period will be used (with no start date announced) to enable businesses to adapt to the new legislation. A further issue relating to timescales is that the Tobacco and Vapes Bill did not pass through Parliament in advance of the calling of the UK General Election on 4 July 2024, which could serve to delay its introduction.
- 6 It seems clear that legislation is forthcoming on youth vaping that will tackle the concerns of the Board and of Leeds residents however, it is unclear when this will come into force. This means that the issues identified in paragraph 2 (above) are likely to persist in the short-term. Appendix 1 therefore provides an update on actions taken in Leeds to tackle the problem.

## **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 7 The Board is asked to consider the information in this report and the wider context of the ongoing national legislative process. Previous reports considered by the board were mindful of the plans to legislate on both smoking and youth vaping and the Tobacco and Vapes Bill has made progress through Parliament since it was introduced on 20 March 2024, with the second reading also having taken place on 16 April.
- 8 There are clear timescales around the plans to prevent young people accessing tobacco, the new legislation would not have affected existing smokers born before 1 January 2009. Timescales for the wider measures on youth vaping are less clear which potentially leaves room for further local action to tackle some of the issues until such time as the national measures



such as banning disposable vapes and restricting flavours, advertising and marketing come into force.

- 9 The Vision for Scrutiny agreed by full Council sets out the nationally agreed four principles of good scrutiny. Within these is a commitment to 'Promote Scrutiny as a means by which the voice and concerns of the public can be heard.' Given the focus on vaping in the media, from Government and from health professionals this work item continues to seek to respond to both elected member concern and recent coverage that has raised the profile of this issue in Leeds and nationally.

### **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

- 10 The terms of reference of the Council's Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the priorities of the Best City Ambition.
- 11 This item has a stronger focus on the Health and Well-Being pillar, seeking to understand and challenge the health impact that vaping is having on children and young people in the city and contribute to wider action to prevent harm to children and young people through the use of vape products.

### **What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes       No

- 12 Children and Families Scrutiny Board discussed this issue in detail at its meetings in July and November 2023. Through this the Board has agreed to include this as an item in the 2024/25 Work Programme to keep a watching brief on national developments to ensure that action is taken to address youth vaping both nationally and in Leeds.
- 13 The Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles Board also discussed this in the 2023/24 municipal year, identifying the impact of vaping on children and young people as an area of concern. This led to the development of a joint approach to this issue from both Boards. The Chair of the Adults Health and Active Lifestyles Board has been invited to attend for this item along with other members who had identified this as an issue of concern in the city.

### **What are the resource implications?**

- 14 There are no specific resource implications associated with this item.

### **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

- 15 There are no specific risk management implications associated with this item.

### **What are the legal implications?**

- 16 There are no specific legal implications associated with this item.

## **Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **What other options were considered?**

17 This is an update report aimed at informing the Board of recent developments at Government level and the work being done in Leeds to tackle the problem of youth vaping. This report responds to a Board request and as such no other options were considered.

**How will success be measured?**

18 This is an update report to the Scrutiny Board at this stage there are no associated success measures.

**What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

19 This report provides an update on past consideration of youth vaping by the Board at this stage there is no associated timetable.

**Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Briefing Note – Activity on Youth Vaping in Leeds.
- Appendix 2 – Children and Families Scrutiny Board submission to the Smokefree Generation consultation

**Background papers**

- None

# Children and Families Scrutiny Board

## Briefing paper on vaping, children and young people

### 1.0 Background & Introduction

1.1 This report gives an update of the local work and action that has been taken regarding vapes in relation to children and young people. Previous attendance at Children and Families Scrutiny Board in July 2023 provided a report covering youth vaping, legislation and regulation and vapes as smoking cessation tool. The previous report can be accessed [here](#).

The Chief Medical Officer Professor Chris Whitty has maintained the key message: “If you smoke, vaping is much safer; if you don’t smoke, don’t vape; marketing vapes to children is utterly unacceptable.” Chief Medical Officer statement [Chief Medical Officer for England on vaping - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Vapes have a place in society to support those who currently smoke, to quit. Their success as a smoking cessation tool, when coupled with the appropriate behavioural support and treatment plan is evidenced by the Cochrane Collaboration Cochrane Collaboration (2024) [Electronic cigarettes for smoking cessation - Hartmann-Boyce, J - 2022 | Cochrane Library](#)

Evidence continues to emerge regarding vapes and there is robust evidence to suggest that vapes are substantially less harmful than smoking. However, this does not mean they are completely harmless. Further detail can be found in this helpful briefing which gives a well broken down guide to key questions on vapes and their risks: [House of Commons – Vaping and Health 2024](#)

For children and young people, vape use continues to be an area of concern. This has been reflected in proposed legislation as part of the “Stopping the Start; Creating a Smokefree Generation” Bill which is currently going through the stages of parliament.

The Bill would give new powers to tackle youth vaping by:

- restricting flavours,
- regulating the way that vapes are sold and packaged to make them less appealing to children,
- banning disposable vapes,
- looking to close the industry loophole which allows free samples to children.

There will also be new powers given to Trading Standards to give on the spot fines for underage sales. Further detail of the proposals can be found here: [Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Alongside this a proposed tax on vaping products, based on nicotine strength, has been announced in the 2024 Budget. This will help make vapes less affordable for children and young people and increase the duty on tobacco to ensure it remains expensive overall to deter uptake of smoking.

It is expected that even if the Bill is not passed ahead of a general election it will remain on the agenda due to the strong cross-party support it has had during its first and second readings in parliament, regardless of any changes to central government.

## 1.2 National Picture

Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) have recently highlighted the need for further action on youth vaping:

The key things to note from the most recent data findings are:

- Youth vaping has stabilised but is still higher than pre-pandemic levels
- Exposure to marketing is at an all time high
- Accurate public perceptions of harm are also at an all time low, particularly among young people.

In response to this ASH have developed some key messages:

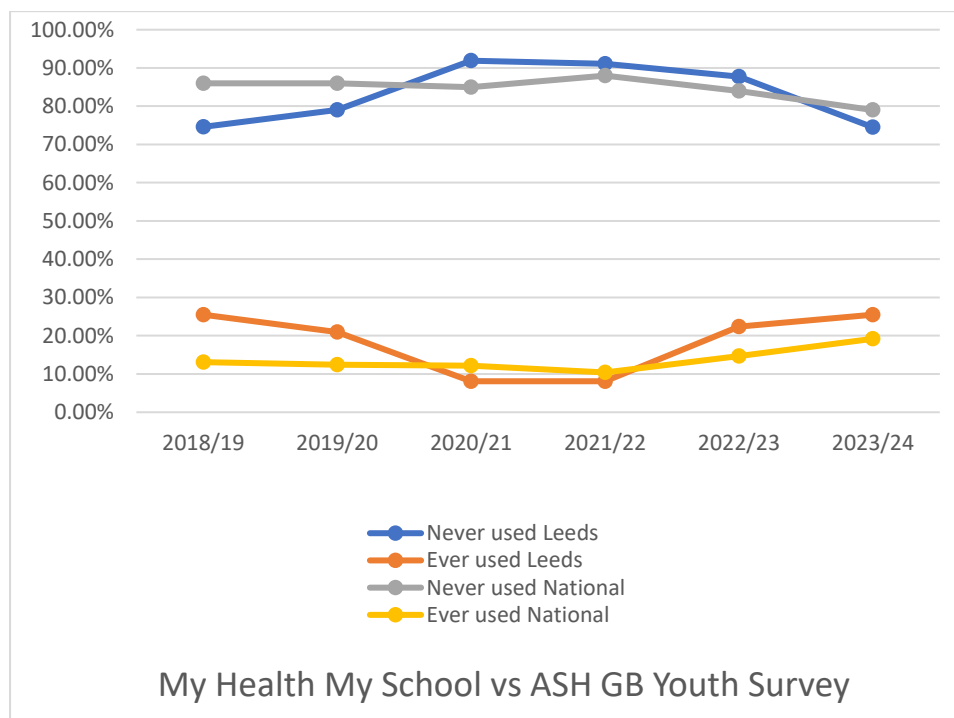
- Increased exposure to vape marketing demands immediate legislative action: with young people increasingly targeted by pervasive vape marketing and promotion, urgent enactment of the Tobacco and Vapes Bill is imperative.
- Addressing public misconceptions: despite the evidence indicating vaping as a less harmful alternative to smoking and an effective tool to help adult smokers quit, a concerning lack of awareness persists.

## 2.0 Vaping Prevalence in Young People

Data on vaping have been collected in Leeds since 2018 via the My Health My School (MHMS) survey. It should be noted that the MHMS data set for 23/24 is incomplete due to the survey being open until the end of the academic year. Therefore data for MHMS 23/24 represents responses from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023- 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024 and is therefore subject to change over the final weeks of term.

Generally, Leeds has followed a similar trend to the national dataset from ASH on youth vaping since 2020, however Leeds tends to identify higher rates of vape use overall as seen in figure 1.

**Figure 1: Comparison of 'ever vaped' and 'never vaped' amongst young people in Leeds Years 7,9,11 combined (My Health My School) with ASH GB Youth Survey**

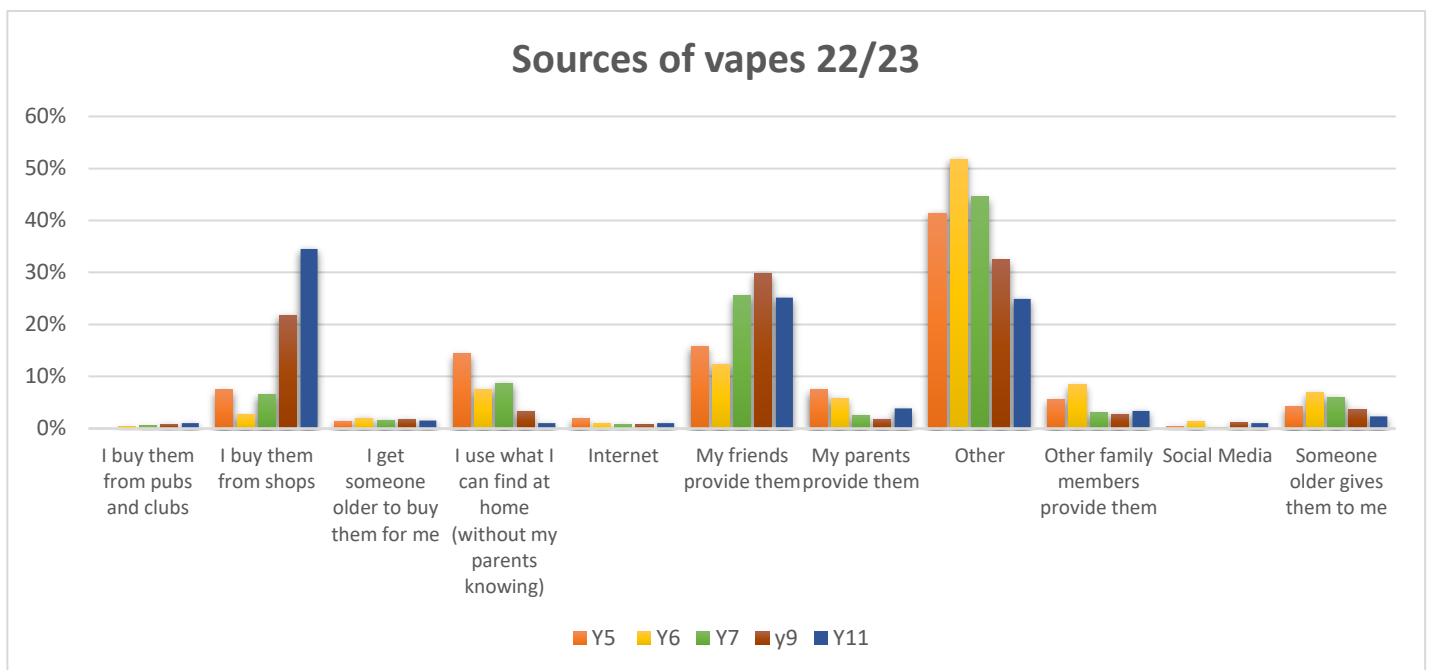


A further breakdown of Leeds vaping behaviour shows an increase in experimental vaping from 9.2% in 21/22 to 17% for 23/24 (year to date), and daily vaping at 2% in 21/22 to 6.5% for 23/24 (year to date).

Figure 2 shows responses to ‘Where do you get your vapes from?’ across each year group, with ‘Other’, ‘my friends provide them’ and ‘I buy them from shops’ being the most common answers overall. A larger proportion of responses from years 9 and 11 indicate that they are able to purchase them from shops illegally.

There was a higher number of responses stating ‘I use what I can find at home without my parents knowing’ coming from younger year groups (years 5-7). Work has been undertaken with trading standards and Leeds City Council communications team to begin to address these indicators detailed later in this report.

**Figure 2: Sources of Vapes by Year Group**



## 3.0 Summary of Local Action

### 3.1 West Yorkshire Trading Standards

Public Health undertook a piece of work with West Yorkshire Trading Standards (WYTS) focused on illicit vapes and underage sales. The tables below provide an overview of what was achieved:

	Oct-Dec 2023	Jan-March 2024
Number of warning letters sent - underage sales. (A warning letter is issued when a complaint is received that a business is selling to underage children)	14	17
Number of warning letters sent - oversized e-cigarette (A warning letter is issued when a complaint is received that a business is selling non-compliant e-cigarette)	23	45
Number of Infringement Reports issued. (An Infringement Report is issued to the business when officers find a non-compliance during an inspection visit)	26 (72% of premises visited were not compliant)	3 (100% of premises visited were not compliant)
Number of test purchases - underage sales to minors	0	5 out of 30 attempts resulted in an underage sale (17% sale rate)
Number of test purchases - oversize product	0	3
Number of non-compliant e-cigarettes seized and a proportionate overview of the common themes from seizures e.g. child appealing, above permitted tank size		18,519 (3 premises)  Child appealing = 391 (All seized e-cigs are greater than 2ml volume. Only seized if non-compliant. Greatest 6 19/04/24 final volume seized = 2x12ml (15,000 puffs))
Number of retailer education packs/materials distributed	35	

#### Complaints:

Source	Oct – Dec 23 (Q1)	Jan – Mar 24 (Q2)	Total no. complaints/referrals
Citizen’s Advice Consumer Helpline	6	13	19
West Yorkshire Police	3	2	5
Intelligence database	7	12	19
Total	16	27	43

West Yorkshire Trading Standards saw an increase in complaints and reporting in Q2 which is likely to be as a result of successful comms campaigns which ran alongside the regulation work (detail and stats detailed later in this report).

#### Seizure:

The above enforcement work was carried out in Leeds City Centre and the LS10/LS11 areas which had been identified as hotspot areas based on intelligence from WYTS reporting and MHMS data. A seizure was carried out in January across 2 city centre premises, which resulted in the confiscation of

approximately 15,700 illicit vapes, worth a retail value of around £150,000. Legal proceedings from this seizure are still currently ongoing and will be shared when complete.

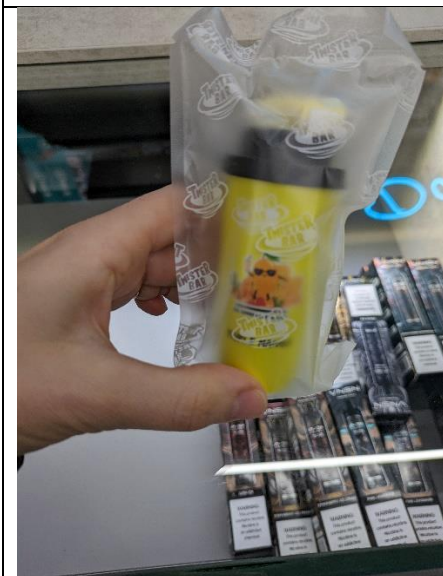
Images from seizure:



Illicit vapes clearly on display for customers in glass cabinet



Illicit vapes clearly on display for customers in glass cabinet



Child appealing illicit vape



Seizure of vapes from Leeds premises

In addition to this a further 21,988 illicit vapes have been picked up by the Cheap and Illicit Tobacco (CIT) team between Oct23-Mar24 when on outings regarding tobacco related work, note this is at a West Yorkshire level.

### 3.2 Communications work

Public Health and LCC Comms have worked together to develop social media campaigns to encourage reporting of illicit vape sales to compliment work from WYTS. Three paid campaigns were developed and run on social media platforms with excellent engagement as follows:



	Enforcement paid campaign 13/12/23 - 13/02/2024	Keep vapes out of reach campaign (07/03/24 - 07/04/2024)	Can you spot an illegal vape campaign (07/03/24 - 07/04/2024)	Total
Impressions	60,000	87,955	47,904	<b>195,859</b>
Reach	28,000	31,767	28,111	<b>87,878</b>
Link clicks (talk to frank)	542	402		<b>944</b>
link clicks (citizens advice reporting)	72			<b>72</b>
link clicks: <a href="#">E-cigarette regulations</a>			1,089	1089
Click through rate		0.5%	2.3%	
Cost per click		£0.32	£0.12	

The paid advert which performed particularly well was the ‘how to spot an illegal vape’ and it was the third best performing advert (equal with the flu vaccine) based on click through rate. It came ahead of Tropical World easter activities, women’s safety, air quality, Christmas 2023, voter ID applications and primary school admissions. In terms of cost per click, it was fifth best performing and came ahead of Morley Town Deal, women’s safety, voter ID, Tropical World February events, flu vaccine and air quality, amongst others.

Social media assets have also been developed by Leeds Rhinos Foundation and shared on social media platforms using same key messages as LCC campaigns to help compound collective messaging to wider audiences. Vaping posters and resources have also been shared with Leeds Rhinos Foundation to incorporate into education sessions and include in match day booklets. Some wider work with Leeds Rhinos Foundation is being carried out to work towards becoming a healthy stadium and messaging on tobacco and vaping is being incorporated into that work.

**Press coverage:**

Various press releases have been published and produced some excellent local coverage:

- Leeds City Magazine [Leeds Steps Up Campaign Against Underage Vaping - Leeds City Magazine](#)
- Bradford Zone: [Leeds launches campaign to curb underage vaping, retailers face fines | Bradford Zone](#)



In particular, a press release was published on the city centre seizure which had excellent interest and was picked up in various outlets listed below, including BBC Leeds:



- [Warning of the dangers of illegal vapes as thousands seized in city crackdown \(leeds.gov.uk\)](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/news/warning-of-the-dangers-of-illegal-vapes-as-thousands-seized-in-city-crackdown)
- [Leeds: Thousands of illegal vapes seized from two shops in city crackdown - BBC News](https://www.bbc.com/news/health-61888888)
- [Warning of the Dangers of Illegal Vapes as Thousands Seized in City Crackdown - Leeds City Magazine](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/news/warning-of-the-dangers-of-illegal-vapes-as-thousands-seized-in-city-crackdown)
- [Massive vape seizure: 16,000 illicit products worth £160,000 nabbed in Leeds crackdown | Bradford Zone](https://www.bradfordzone.co.uk/news/massive-vape-seizure-16000-illicit-products-worth-160000-nabbed-in-leeds-crackdown)
- [Ground News - Leeds: Thousands of illegal vapes seized from two shops in city crackdown](https://www.groundnews.co.uk/news/leeds-thousands-of-illegal-vapes-seized-from-two-shops-in-city-crackdown)
- [Warning of the dangers of illegal vapes as thousands seized in city crackdown \\* Leeds Star](https://www.leedsstar.co.uk/news/leeds-thousands-of-illegal-vapes-seized-from-two-shops-in-city-crackdown)

### 3.3 Public Health Work with Schools

- Want to Know More About (WTKMA) sessions are public health topic-based learning opportunities to develop professionals' awareness and practice around the subjects covered. A WTKMA Vaping awareness session was delivered on 23/01/2024. 85 individuals signed up

to the session with 47 attendees from across a range of organisations including schools, youth services, 0-19 Public Health Integrated Nursing Service and Forward Leeds. This WTKMA session had the highest number of bookings of all WTKMA sessions run between Apr 23-Mar 24 and had the highest number of feedback responses. 100% of those respondents rated the session as good or excellent. Comments included: *“It managed to be thoroughly informative without giving information overload and gave me lots of important factual & practical elements that I can use in practice and share with colleagues”*.. And *“Session was absolutely brilliant - was really informative and engaging”*

- Digital light bites session delivered with 6 schools in attendance with 100% saying session was good or excellent.
- Work with Healthy Schools team to share most up to date/new resources on vaping and ensure that content is accurate.
- Insight gathered with children and young people to understand attitudes towards vapes and vape use – this was used to inform social media campaigns. Findings varied across age groups and identified that a young person specific campaign would be challenging due to the maturity levels across a small age span i.e. what primary age children found scary/worrying secondary age (y7-9) saw it as ‘cool’. As a result social media campaigns were developed to be focused on parents and carers and looking at helping people (including young people) to spot illegal vapes.
- Development of a ‘How to spot an illegal vape’ poster which is available in the Public Health Resource Centre alongside youth vaping posters from ASH. These have been shared with schools and wider partners including WYTS, West Yorkshire Police and Hospitals to continue to raise awareness of illicit vapes and encourage reporting.

## 4.0 Future work and next steps

- The proposed legislative changes mean that the vaping landscape is likely to change, further training is planned for June to look at smoke and vape free homes training for some children’s centre staff to address MHMS data indicating that younger age children are finding vapes at home. An additional vapes training session for up to 20 PSHE leads is also planned for December 2024.
- The tobacco and nicotine team are reviewing approaches to workforce development to ensure that training includes vaping and other novel nicotine products to align with the changing dynamics of tobacco and nicotine.
- Discussions being held with commissioning managers for West Yorkshire Cheap Illicit Tobacco (CIT) contract to look at ways to source more sustainable funding from wider partners and organisations to allow CIT work to continue and broaden to cover illicit vapes and underage sales and other nicotine containing products.
- The Healthy Schools Team will continue to gather annual data on the purchase and use of vapes and cigarettes among young people via My Health My School survey.
- Working with Reading and Leeds Festival to prevent and reduce any sponsorship or promotion of vapes and other nicotine containing products to the festival audiences.
- Improving data collection on vaping at GP practice level to offer more in depth insight into vape use across the life course.

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## Consultation overview

The consultation asks questions in 3 areas for which new legislation would be needed:

1. Creating a smokefree generation: on smoking, the case for change is clear and the UK Government and devolved administrations are consulting on the smokefree generation policy and its scope to inform future legislation.
2. Tackling youth vaping: while there is also significant evidence for action to tackle youth vaping, within each proposal the UK Government and devolved administrations are consulting on several options to ensure we take the most appropriate and impactful steps, building on England's [analysis of the youth vaping call for evidence](#).
3. Enforcement: the consultation also asks questions on the proposal to introduce new powers for local authorities in England and Wales to issue fixed penalty notices to enforce age of sale legislation of tobacco products and vapes.

The UK Government and devolved administrations would like to understand the impacts on businesses and on people, and if there are any impacts on groups with protected characteristics (see [Discrimination: your rights](#)). We want to hear from:

- the public - from young people, parents, carers and teachers
- the retail sector and the independent vaping industry
- local authorities across the UK
- clinicians and medical professionals
- public health stakeholders and academic experts
- employers and trade unions

The UK Government and devolved administrations would like to receive as much detail as possible under each of the themes of the consultation. For each multiple choice question, you will be able to provide additional information and evidence to support your answer through free text boxes.

The UK Government and devolved administrations will only make any decisions on these proposed measures after fully considering:

- the consultation responses we receive
- the evidence provided in those responses
- a further review of the international evidence base

Following this, impact assessments will be published.

The UK Government, Scottish Government and Welsh Government intend to bring forward legislation as soon as possible. In Northern Ireland, the outcome of this

consultation will inform decisions of incoming ministers and the Northern Ireland Executive, or in the absence of ministers, those decisions that can be taken under the [Northern Ireland \(Executive Formation etc\) Act 2022](#). This applies to all proposals in the consultation document.

## **Consultation Questions**

All questions below are proceeded with: Please explain your answer and provide evidence or your opinion to support further development of our approach. (maximum 300 words)

1. Do you agree or disagree that the age of sale for tobacco products should be changed so that anyone born on or after 1 January 2009 will never be legally sold (and also in Scotland, never legally purchase) tobacco products?
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Don't know

***Proposed Board Response:*** No response, not covered by previous Board discussion.

2. Do you think proxy sales should also be prohibited?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Don't know

*(Proxy sales refer to a person at or over the legal age of sale purchasing a product on behalf of someone under the legal age of sale. Proxy sales are prohibited under existing tobacco age of sale legislation. In this context, prohibiting proxy sales would mean that anyone born before 1 January 2009 would be prohibited from purchasing tobacco products on behalf of anyone born on or after 1 January 2009.)*

***Proposed Board Response:*** No response, not covered by previous Board discussion.

3. Do you agree or disagree that all tobacco products, cigarette papers and herbal smoking products should be covered in the new legislation?

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response:** *No response, not covered by previous Board discussion.*

4. Do you agree or disagree that warning notices in retail premises will need to be changed to read 'it is illegal to sell tobacco products to anyone born on or after 1 January 2009' when the law comes into effect?

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response:** *No response, not covered by previous Board discussion.*

### **Vaping:**

5. Do you agree or disagree that the UK Government and devolved administrations should restrict vape flavours?

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response:** **Agree** – *Given the negative health impacts of vaping on young people the Children and Families Scrutiny Board believes that restricting vape flavours and preventing the sale of flavours that resemble sweets or sweet flavours will deter children and young people from vaping. Vape flavours are clearly aimed at attracting young people to vaping and the wide variety of flavours available also encourages users to try different flavours and encourage others to try new or 'different' flavours. We do not believe it is acceptable to market vapes at children and young people and this is one of the methods used to do that.*

*Vaping is an effective tool to reduce smoking rates and any measures taken should be mindful of any possible unintended consequences on the aim to reduce smoking rates.*

6. Which option or options do you think would be the most effective way for the UK Government and devolved administrations to implement restrictions on flavours? (You may select more than one answer)

- Option 1: limiting how the vape is described
- Option 2: limiting the ingredients in vapes
- Option 3: limiting the characterising flavours (the taste and smell) of vapes
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response: All three options** – *The use of exotic flavours and flavours that can be described in a similar way to sweets and sold in shops that in some cases also sell sweets clearly encourages young people to use vapes and can lead to more regular use rather than simply experimentation as users try the different flavours and can hear through word of mouth about new flavours. Names and descriptions such as custard creams, citrus explosion, red solero and berry blast either mimic or partially mimic existing sweet products or are designed to be marketable and potentially appealing to young people.*

*Ingredients in vapes need to be regulated more tightly and the Board is concerned about the availability of illicit vape products that can be widely available and contain dangerous ingredients such as lead and nickel and could have higher nicotine concentration levels, contain banned ingredients or have oversized tanks for nicotine liquid.*

*The characterising flavours are also a concern one of the main deterrents to smoking is the taste of cigarettes, on first try cigarettes do not taste or smell nice. With some vape flavours being appealing in smell and taste this deterrent is lost and could lead to greater levels of nicotine addiction both now and in the future. The Board also believes that some of the problems posed by vapes are similar to those issues that presented when alcopops were heavily promoted and popular in the 1990s and were used as a means to encourage young people to drink through marketing and advertising that was designed to attract them to alcohol. Taxation and regulation of marketing were used to reduce appeal and usage amongst young people.*

7. Which option do you think would be the most effective way for the UK Government and devolved administrations to restrict vape flavours to children and young people?

- Option A: flavours limited to tobacco only
- Option B: flavours limited to tobacco, mint and menthol only
- Option C: flavours limited to tobacco, mint, menthol and fruits only



**Proposed Board Response: Option C** – As noted in question 5 and 6 The Board is concerned about the description and marketing of vapes at children and young people and would like to see this tackled as a priority. However, it is clear that adults are using vapes as a means to quit smoking and any measures that are aimed at restricting flavouring should be mindful of that particularly given evidence that adults do access fruit based vape flavours. However, it is clear that brightly coloured fruit flavoured vapes are very popular with young people so measures to tackle that including curbs on marketing, advertising and packaging could be a first step before moving on to consideration of reducing the number of flavours that are available.

Any measures to reduce available flavours would need to be balanced with any impacts on the number of adults accessing vapes to quit smoking. As already noted the Board is concerned that vapes can taste and smell pleasant as opposed to cigarettes that on first try have an unpleasant smell and taste.

8. Do you think there are any alternative flavour options the UK Government and devolved administrations should consider?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response: No** – There is evidence that smoking related flavours such as tobacco and mint are not popular with young people and that fruit flavours are much more appealing, with approximately 60% of young people saying that they prefer fruit flavouring. On that basis the scrutiny board does not believe that further flavouring options should be explored by Government. Indeed, depending on the impact on adults seeking to quit smoking consideration of reducing flavouring availability would be the preferred direction of travel certainly in terms of reducing 'catchy,' marketable names but potentially also available flavours.

9. Do you think non-nicotine e-liquid, for example shortfills, should also be included in restrictions on vape flavours?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response: Yes** – During its consideration of these issues the scrutiny board heard that the health impacts of vaping are not yet fully understood, only that vapes are considered to be much less harmful than smoking tobacco. Nicotine addiction amongst young people is also a serious concern arising from the increase in vape usage and whilst non-nicotine versions of the product would negate that concern the uncertainty around health impacts suggest that measures to restrict nicotine based versions should also apply to their non-nicotine counterparts. In short vaping of any description is not risk free and is potentially harmful.

## **Regulating point of sale displays**

10. Which option do you think would be the most effective way to restrict vapes to children and young people?

- Option 1: vapes must be kept behind the counter and cannot be on display, like tobacco products
- Option 2: vapes must be kept behind the counter but can be on display

**Proposed Board Response: Option 1** – Whilst recognising the need to ensure adults can access vapes as a smoking cessation aid there is an equally compelling need to prevent children and young people being attracted to vaping products. Clear messaging to adults around the continued availability of vapes should assist if option 1 were pursued. The Board was of the view that strong action on advertising and marketing should be taken to prevent the continued growth in youth vaping and option 1 would be the best method to deliver that.

11. Do you think exemptions should be made for specialist vape shops?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response: Yes** – Exemptions could work for those businesses that specialise in selling vape products but would need to be coupled with measures to reduce on street advertising and in particular brightly coloured, hard to miss shop windows often used by specialist vaping shops. In addition, measures to prevent access to specialist shops by children and young people might be considered. The Board is clear that advertising and marketing is a real issue and strong measures should be taken to reduce this both in shops and how they impact on the street scene.

12. If you disagree with regulating point of sale displays, what alternative measures do you think the UK Government and devolved administrations should consider?

**Proposed Board Response: N/A** – *The Board supports additional regulation on point of sale displays.*

## **Regulating vape packaging and product presentation**

13. Which option do you think would be the most effective way for the UK Government and devolved administrations to restrict the way vapes can be packaged and presented to reduce youth vaping?

- Option 1: prohibiting the use of cartoons, characters, animals, inanimate objects, and other child friendly imagery, on both the vape packaging and vape device. This would still allow for colouring and tailored brand design
- Option 2: prohibiting the use of all imagery and colouring on both the vape packaging and vape device but still allow branding such as logos and names
- Option 3: prohibiting the use of all imagery and colouring and branding (standardised packaging) for both the vape packaging and vape device

**Proposed Board Response: Option 3** – *Given the alarming growth in use of vape products by children and young people and concerns raised by the Board in relation to the accuracy of data on youth vaping, the belief being that the figures are low in terms of usage, the strongest measures on packaging and product measures should be taken which are found in option 3. Again, the possible unintended consequence of impacting adult smoking cessation rates will need to be monitored closely.*

14. If you disagree with regulating vape packaging, what alternative measures do you think the UK Government and devolved administrations should consider?

**Proposed Board Response: N/A** – *The Board does support additional regulation on vape packaging.*

## **Restricting supply and sale of disposable vaping products**

15. Do you agree or disagree that there should be restrictions on the sale and supply of disposable vapes?

That is, those that are not rechargeable, not refillable or that are neither rechargeable nor refillable.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response: Agree** – Given the strong evidence from Ash on a national level and the My Health, My School surveys carried out in Leeds that indicate that disposable vapes are by far the most popular vaping product for children and young people restrictions on sale of disposable vapes should be introduced. The ongoing implications of youth vaping in terms of nicotine addiction amongst children and young people are significant and strong action is needed to prevent that as quickly as possible.

16. Do you agree or disagree that restrictions on disposable vapes should take the form of prohibiting their sale and supply?

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response: Agree** – During discussion on youth vaping the Board had clear concerns about availability and accessibility of disposable vapes and the environmental impact these have in and around school premises and in the wider community. To prevent harm to children and young people and to reduce environmental impacts disposable vape products should be made illegal.

17. Are there any other types of product or descriptions of products that you think should be included in these restrictions?

**Proposed Board Response:** Other products that could replace vapes in this market area should also be part of new restrictions, devices such as nicotine pouches and other similar products should be included. The Board has concerns about nicotine addiction amongst this generation of children and young people so other products similar in nature should be included.

18. Do you agree or disagree that an implementation period for restrictions on disposable vapes should be no less than 6 months after the law is introduced?

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response: Agree** – Urgent action is needed on disposable vapes and the whole issue of youth vaping so a swift approach to banning disposable vapes should be pursued. However, in addition to this the existing loophole on gifting vapes, which enables legal gifting of vapes to children and young people needs to be addressed with immediate effect.

19. Are there other measures that would be required, alongside restrictions on supply and sale of disposable vapes, to ensure the policy is effective in improving environmental outcomes?

**Proposed Board Response:** Litter picking groups that operate in communities in Leeds are reporting a huge increase in disposable vapes being found littered in communities and near to schools, urgently restricting sale and supply would bring clear and immediate environmental impacts, it is estimated that 5 million vapes per week are being discarded restricting availability would therefore bring clear environmental benefits.

## **Non-nicotine vapes and other consumer products**

20. Do you have any evidence that the UK Government and devolved administrations should consider related to the harms or use of non-nicotine vapes?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response: Yes** – The Board heard evidence that suggested that children and young people do not always use vapes that contain nicotine and given uncertainty around health impacts of vaping the Board believe that the Government should also act to prevent uptake of non-nicotine vapes by children and young people.

21. Do you think the UK Government and devolved administrations should regulate non-nicotine vapes under a similar regulatory framework as nicotine vapes?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response: Yes** – *As noted above vaping is not without risk and is potentially harmful so any measures taken on nicotine based products should be applied consistently on all vape products.*

22. Do you have any evidence that the UK Government and devolved administrations should consider on the harms or use of other consumer nicotine products such as nicotine pouches?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response: No** - *This was not specifically covered in the Board's consideration of this matter. However, products that deliver nicotine and can cause addiction were clearly an area of concern and therefore the Board believes that any measures taken on vapes should also be applied to other products containing nicotine.*

23. Do you think the UK Government and devolved administrations should regulate other consumer nicotine products such as nicotine pouches under a similar regulatory framework as nicotine vapes?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response: Yes** - *Products that deliver nicotine and can cause addiction were a clear area of concern and therefore the Board believes that any measures taken on vapes should also be applied to other products containing nicotine that could be marketed or targeted at children and young people.*

## **Increasing price on vapes**

24. Do you think that an increase in the price of vapes would reduce the number of young people who vape?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response: Yes** – During consideration of the impact of vaping on children and young people the Board had clear concerns around the low costs of disposable vapes with their pricing being within the budget that children and young people typically have. It was noted that the non-disposable versions of vapes require an up front costs in addition to ongoing costs which could contribute to those being considerably less popular amongst young people. Therefore, taxation or an increase in price were considered to have potential in reducing youth vaping.

## **Enforcement**

25. Do you think that fixed penalty notices should be issued for breaches of age of sale legislation for tobacco products and vapes?

Powers to issue fixed penalty notices would provide an alternative means for local authorities to enforce age of sale legislation for tobacco products and vapes in addition to existing penalties.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

**Proposed Board Response: Yes** – The role of trading standards and the need for stronger action on youth vaping through enforcement is a key element of preventing access and usage of these products. The Board were concerned about reports of vapes being more accessible in Leeds City Centre and supported stronger measures to tackle this through Trading Standards and the Police where appropriate. As noted above illicit products are a real concern given the content of them in terms of harmful ingredients, stronger enforcement powers would be an important deterrent in reducing that illicit market.

26. What level of fixed penalty notice should be given for an underage tobacco sale?

- £100
- £200
- Other

**Proposed Board Response:** *No response, not covered by previous Board discussion which was focussed on youth vaping as opposed to tobacco sales.*

27. What level of fixed penalty notice should be given for an underage vape sale?

- £100
- £200
- Other

**Proposed Board Response:** **Other** – *Enhanced co-ordinated working between agencies to tackle the harms caused by youth vaping should be introduced as a matter of urgency with Trading Standards playing a key role in that. The Board was clear that more enforcement is needed and should be prohibitive in terms of the penalties faced by offenders and be sufficiently high to be an effective deterrent to underage sales, which may be potentially higher than the £200 figure listed.*

## **How to respond**

This consultation seeks feedback on the proposed measures, to inform future legislation. On youth vaping, there are a number of options proposed, to ensure the UK Government and devolved administrations take the most appropriate and impactful steps, building on existing evidence.

The consultation closes on 6 December 2023 at 11:59pm and you can respond via our [online survey](#).



## Performance report for the financial year 2024/25

Date: Monday 10 June 2024

Report of: Director of Children and Families

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

This report provides an update on the Children and Young People's Plan and our ambitions for children and young people living and growing up in Leeds. Supporting this, the report contains assurances on key services for the Children and Families directorate, including the health of the social care system in Leeds. The report also includes the latest performance information showing progress against measures in the Children and Young People's Plan, at both city and cluster geographies. This is the first update of the 2024/25 financial year.

The Children and Young People's Plan update is presented by focusing on the three obsessions; additionally, this update includes the finalised key stage attainment data for 2023, the latest attendance data, and an EHCP update. Finally, a summary of changes in the Leeds under-18 population is provided, adding context to some of the other information included in this report.

### Recommendations

- a) That the Board consider and comment on the information contained in the report and appendices, noting the assurance provided and considering if any additional information or further scrutiny work would be of benefit.

## What is this report about?

- 1 This is the first performance update to Scrutiny of the 2024/25 financial year. The report provides an update on progress in delivering the council and city priorities in line with the council's performance management framework, including offering assurance around the health of the children's care system in Leeds.
- 2 Selected comparator information is mentioned in the appendices of this report. Further data are available in a range of online sources, including the DfE LAIT<sup>1</sup>, school performance tables<sup>2</sup>, the 2021/22 Annual Standards report<sup>3</sup>, and the Leeds Observatory<sup>4</sup>.
- 3 Information in this report relates to the refreshed Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP), with a specific focus on national data releases, which place Leeds' performance in the context of comparator groups. Future reports will be presented in a format that best highlights the progress being made against the CYPP. For this report, CYPP progress is reported against the three obsessions; also included is the finalised key stage 2022/23 attainment results, and the latest attendance information for Leeds.
- 4 Provided in appendix six is a summary of changes in the Leeds under-18 population over the last decade. This is included to provide context to some of the changing demands and pressures on the local child population, with a specific focus on the impact of the changing birth rate.

## What impact will this proposal have?

- 5 The CYPP is the strategic document that guides the work of Children and Families and its partners. Any progress referenced within this performance report relates to the obsessions, priorities, and outcomes within the CYPP.

## How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 6 The corporate intelligence and policy team, working with colleagues across the council, will continue to strengthen the council's approach to reporting against the Best City Ambition, with the latest updates being reflected in reports to scrutiny boards and Executive Board alongside the Best City Ambition refresh. The CYPP distils our city ambitions for children and families, including their expressed wishes.
- 7 The measures in the CYPP focus on improving the lives and outcomes for children and young people living in Leeds. The CYPP 2023-2028 includes a climate change priority; and two of the CYPP measures appear in the Best City Ambition: early years development (Health and Wellbeing), and engaged young people (NEET and Not Known; Inclusive Growth).
- 8 Children in care is a council performance measure for keeping children safe. This organisational measure supports our best city ambitions. Safely reducing the need for children to be in care ('looked after') remains a CYPP obsession for ensuring that children are safe, and for measuring the effectiveness of our collective support for parents and families.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-interactive-tool-lait>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/g12193/Public%20reports%20pack%2018th-Oct-2023%2013.00%20Executive%20Board.pdf?T=10> (pp1465-1504)

<sup>4</sup> <https://observatory.leeds.gov.uk/children-and-young-people/>

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: All wards

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 9 This is an information report and as such does not need to be consulted on with the public. However, all performance information included in this report is available to the public.
- 10 The CYPP 2023-2028 was adopted by Full Council in July 2023 after an extensive consultation exercise and retains the fundamentals of our long-term strategy whilst responding to today's needs and policy direction. The CYPP will be delivered in the context of pandemic recovery and cost of living challenges. Bringing #TeamLeeds together around shared ambitions is essential for understanding and responding to the evolving impacts on service demand, on participation and on child wellbeing and outcomes. Our vision and shared commitment will support successful engagement and responses to national policy changes.
- 11 Regular progress updates of the priorities and objectives of the CYPP are available through performance measures in quarterly-produced dashboards. Formal reporting of CYPP progress takes place every six months on behalf of the Director of Children and Families to the Leeds Children and Young People Partnership Meeting, which forms part of the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements, and to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families).

## What are the resource implications?

- 12 This report has no direct resource implications. However, the unprecedented challenges from the Covid-19 pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, and budget challenges have led the Children and Families directorate to target resources to areas of need with the highest priority to safeguard children and mitigate any impact on children's outcomes, both short- and longer-term.

## What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 13 The Children and Families directorate has eight risks: two corporate and six directorate. The key corporate risk, which is subject to an annual risk assurance report, is 'safeguarding children failure' (the risk of harm, accident, or death to a child linked to failure of the Council to act appropriately according to safeguarding arrangements). A new corporate risk, focusing on SEND and EHCP pressures has recently been introduced, with the previous corporate risk, 'school places' (failure to provide sufficient school places, including SEND school places, in good quality buildings that meet the needs of local communities), becoming a directorate-level risk.
- 14 The six directorate risks may also receive corporate attention, particularly the risk focused on 'Children and Families Services inspections', which recently changed from a corporate risk to a directorate risk due to the creation of an overarching corporate risk covering all inspections taking place across the authority. Any inspections that take place within Children and Families will therefore be included in the new corporate inspections risk discussed at Corporate Leadership Team and Executive Board.

## What are the legal implications?

15 This report is an information report providing Scrutiny with a summary of performance for the strategic priorities within its remit and as such is not subject to call in.

## Appendices

16 Appendix one (a) provides the latest citywide data for measures in the CYPP (from a dashboard that is produced quarterly and therefore contains data up to March 2024), with data from previous months as well as the most recent nationally published and statistical neighbour information where available. Some of the national data cover different time periods, as these are usually updated on an annual basis, with the period specific to each measure (academic year for attainment measures, financial year for social care measures, for example). Cohort numbers are provided wherever possible.

- The most recent NEET and Not Known figures in this dashboard are for March 2024. Different figures are presented in appendix four, which contains the three-month average figures that are used as part of the national annual NEET and Not Known dataset; this will be published later this year. Both figures are reported for completeness. Monitoring of involvement in education, employment and training follows the academic year. The focus now in the summer term is shifting to the start of the 2024/25 academic year and through the September Guarantee, which is a guarantee of an offer (made by the end of each September) of an appropriate place in post-16 education or training for every young person completing compulsory education.
- Statistical neighbours are specific to each local authority in the country and enable relative assessments of similar local authorities. A statistical model is used to identify ten 'near neighbours' for each local authority and has been used for many years by the DfE. The DfE's commitment to the statistical model is clear as it is currently being updated with some new socio-economic variables and weighting to produce new 'near neighbours'. Leeds' current statistical neighbours are Bolton, Bury, Calderdale, Darlington, Derby, Kirklees, North Tyneside, Sheffield, Stockton-On-Tees, and Wirral. The new model, and a new set of statistical neighbours, will be published later this year.

17 Appendix one (b) reports on a subset of the indicators contained in appendix one (a), but at cluster level. The information in this appendix provides the latest information, which may be a recent month, or the last academic year for attainment and attendance information. A map of clusters and wards is included for context.

18 Appendix two provides the final attainment data for the 2022/23 academic year. Much of this is unchanged from the data that were shared in the January 2024 performance update to Scrutiny; however, a revised set of information was released by the DfE the week after the last Scrutiny meeting (this is common practice; the DfE releases a provisional and a revised/final set of data each year) so the table in this appendix is included for completeness. The 2022/23 Annual Standards report will be shared with Scrutiny in the summer and will contain a detailed analysis of last year's attainment results.

19 Appendix three contains the latest attendance and exclusion data for the 2022/23 academic year. Published exclusions data is linked to publication of the School Census and therefore runs behind attendance data, so data are not yet available for the summer term of the 2022/23 academic year. Autumn and spring term data have been included for context.

- Primary school attendance in Leeds is in line with, or above, all comparator groups. Authorised absence is the twelfth lowest of all local authorities and reduced in Leeds by

0.4 points in the last year. Unauthorised attendance, however, rose in Leeds from 1.9 per cent in 2021/22 to 2.2 per cent in 2022/23 and is higher than most comparators.

- Secondary school attendance reduced by 0.5 points in the last academic year to 90.3 per cent. This is below the national figure of 91.0 per cent and places Leeds in band D when compared to other local authorities. Authorised absence is low, at 4.5 per cent, which is the 17th best performance of all local authorities; unauthorised absence, however, is high, at 5.2 per cent. This is nearly two points above the national figure of 3.4 per cent and places Leeds in the lowest 13 performing local authorities.
- Attendance levels across the country have not returned to pre-Covid levels and this is reflected in Leeds. Of note is the increase in persistent absence (PA) (pupils missing ten per cent of their possible sessions) and severe absence (SA) (pupils missing fifty per cent of their possible sessions). Primary PA and SA both doubled nationally and locally between 2019 and 2023. A similar pattern is present in the secondary phase, with PA doubling, and SA almost tripling in Leeds. Local unverified data for the first two half-terms of the 2023/24 academic year suggest that attendance has risen in both the primary and secondary phases, with slight improvements in both PA and SA driving this change. Further analysis of the current academic year, with national comparisons, will be available by the January 2025 performance update.

	Persistent absence		Severe absence	
	2018/19	2022/23	2018/19	2022/23
<b>Leeds primary</b>	8.8%	17.0%	0.3%	0.7%
<b>National primary</b>	8.2%	16.2%	0.4%	0.7%
<b>Leeds secondary</b>	14.6%	27.2%	1.7%	4.8%
<b>National secondary</b>	13.7%	26.5%	1.3%	3.4%

- The suspensions rate at both the primary and secondary phases in Leeds has risen in the most recent set of data, with an increase seen in both the autumn and spring terms. Leeds' primary suspensions rate of 0.34 (autumn) and 0.43 (spring) is below all comparators. The secondary rate is above the national figure in both the autumn and spring terms but is below all other comparators.

20 Appendix four provides an update on the three CYPP 2023-2028 obsessions. A summary is below.

#### *Children looked after*

- The number of children looked after in Leeds has risen by 101 (6.6 per cent) in the last 12 months, to the March 2024 figure of 1,548. This is a rate per 10,000 of 89.6, compared to 85.1 at the end of 2023. The most recent national data covers the 2022/23 financial year; this shows that Leeds' rate of 85.1 was above that of England (71) and Yorkshire and The Humber (81), but below statistical neighbours (94) and core cities (97). This should be viewed in the context of the key changes in Leeds' under-18 population, which is detailed in appendix six.
- National data covering the 2023/24 financial year will be published in October and November 2024. This will show whether Leeds' rise is line with the national change. An update will be provided to Scrutiny in January 2025.

- In 2023, children living in the most deprived one per cent areas of Leeds were 5.5 times more likely to enter care than children living in the 80 per cent least deprived areas of the city. 70 per cent of children looked after are from the 20 per cent most deprived areas in the city; with a 20 per cent increase in the number of children looked after in 2023 from the 20 per cent most deprived areas in Leeds.
- Thriving: The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds, has been refreshed and will be launched in July. The refreshed ambitions include being innovative, working together to break down the barriers that poverty creates; and being brave, together, to revolutionise the way that Leeds works with children, young people and families who live in poverty.

*Young people in Leeds attend school, achieve, and attain well, and continue their route of a sustained education, apprenticeship, or employment destination*

- Each year, local authorities provide three-month average NEET and Not Known figures as part of a national data submission. Leeds' figures for 2024 show that 800 young people (4.3 per cent) were NEET, 109 more than 2023, and 742 young people (4.0 per cent) had a Not Known status, 212 fewer than 2023.
- In addition to the annual combined figure, monthly data are also collected; this is the information displayed in appendix one. The March 2024 NEET figure of 924 young people is 205 higher than the March 2023 figure of 719, and the March 2024 Not Known figure of 573 is 462 fewer than the March 2023 figure.
- Ten workstream leads have now been identified under the 14 to 19 Strategic Partnership banner, with initial action plans developed. These will help to drive agreed actions and outputs linked to NEET reduction and raising participation.

*Leeds is a healthy place for all children; and improve the timely access to healthcare when needed*

- Appendix one(a) shows the latest data for the health-focused measures in the CYPP, which includes infant mortality rates, the prevalence of obesity at age five and age 11, under-18 alcohol-related hospital admissions, and under-18 conceptions. Also included is a link to *The Leeds Children and Families Health Needs Assessment 2022*, which focuses on key determinants of child health and key health factors.

21 Appendix five contains information related to education, health and care plans (EHCPs), with two sets of figures showing the number of requests, assessments, and plans issued in the 2023 calendar year: 8.4 per cent, and for the January to March 2024 period: 18.8 per cent. Also included is an update on changes that will be implemented in the coming months to support service delivery that will put the needs of children and their families at the forefront of the process.

22 Appendix six briefly summaries key changes in the Leeds under-18 population. This is included for context as it shows the complexity of the changing population in Leeds and what this might mean for both the education and social care systems in the city.

- Birth rates in Leeds peaked at approximately 10,000 per year and stayed at that level for eight years. Since 2017, the birth rate has fallen to the current position of 8,305 births in 2022/23, a 16.95 per cent reduction in six years.
- Year 7 pupil numbers have just begun to peak at the 10,000-birth plateau whilst the falling birth rate cohorts are affecting the reception and early primary-age cohorts.

- 44 per cent of Leeds pupils live within the most 20 per cent deprived localities of the city. These areas have seen the greatest 0-17 population growth in the last decade; they are also the most diverse localities in Leeds, accounting for nearly two-thirds of pupils from ethnically diverse communities, and 70 per cent of all pupils who speak English as an additional language.

### **Background papers**

- There are no additional papers for this report.

## Appendix one (a): CYPP key indicator dashboard - city level, March 2024

Measure	National	Stat neighbour	Result for same period last year	Result June 2023	Result September 2023	Result December 2023	Result March 2024	DOT	Data last updated	Timespan covered by month result
Number of children looked after	71/10,000 (2022/23 FY)	94/10,000 (2022/23 FY)	1,452 (85.1/10,000)	1,464 (85.8/10,000)	1,514 (88.8/10,000)	1,539 (90.2/10,000)	1,548 (89.6/10,000)	▲	Mar-24	Snapshot
Number of children subject to a child protection plan	43.2/10,000 (2022/23 FY)	51.3/10,000 (2022/23 FY)	611 (35.8/10,000)	662 (38.8/10,000)	679 (39.8/10,000)	694 (40.7/10,000)	690 (40.4/10,000)	▲	Mar-24	Snapshot
Number of children with a child in need (CIN) plan	Local indicator	Local indicator	2,865 (168.0/10,000)	3,026 (177.4/10,000)	2,816 (165.1/10,000)	2,820 (165.3/10,000)	2,867 (168.1/10,000)	▲	Mar-24	Snapshot
Percentage of parents that have had more than one child enter care at different times	Local indicator	Local indicator	25.9%	25.6%	25.2%	23.6%	26.3% (66/251 mothers)	▲	Mar-24	Rolling 12 months
Percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage	67.2% (2022/23 AY)	65.5% (2022/23 AY)	61.0% (2021/22 AY)	63.2% (6,083/9,629 pupils) (2022/23 AY)				▲	Nov 23 SFR	AY Confirmed
Infant mortality rates	4.0/1,000 (2021)	5.09/1,000 (U) (2021)	4.9/1,000 (2020)	4.9/1,000 (2021)				↔	Mar-23	Calendar year
Primary attendance	94.1% (HT1-6 2022/23)	94.2% (HT1-6 2022/23)	93.9% (HT1-6 2021/22)	94.1% (HT1-6 2022/23)				▲	March 2024 SFR	HT 1-6 AY
Secondary attendance	91.0% (HT1-6 2022/23)	91.0% (HT1-6 2022/23)	90.8% (HT1-6 2021/22)	90.3% (HT1-6 2022/23)				▼		HT 1-6 AY
Rate of Suspensions (formally fixed-term school exclusions): Primary	1.42 per 100 pupils (2021/22)	1.45 per 100 pupils (2021/22)	0.59 per 100 pupils (2020/21)	1.09 per 100 pupils (806 suspensions) (2021/22)				▲	Jul-23 SFR	AY
Rate of Suspensions (formally fixed-term school exclusions): Secondary	13.96 per 100 pupils (2021/22)	18.14 per 100 pupils (2021/22)	8.71 per 100 pupils (2020/21)	18.99 per 100 pupils (10,154 suspensions) (2021/22)				▲	Jul-23 SFR	AY

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### Key

**AY** - academic year **DOT** - direction of travel **FY** - financial year **HT** - half term **SFR** - statistical first release (Department for Education / Department of Health data publication)

Comparative national data for academic attainment indicators are the result for all state-maintained schools

DOT column compares the March 2024 result against data in the column titled 'results for same period last year' (not the December 2023 result)

<sup>1</sup> Includes all pupils with a statement/EHC plan or on SEN Support



Measure	National	Stat neighbour	Result for same period last year	Result June 2023	Result September 2023	Result December 2023	Result March 2024	DOT	Data last updated	Timespan covered by month result
Percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing, and maths at the end of Key Stage 2	60% (2022/23)	59% (2022/23)	58% (5,779 pupils) (2021/22)	58% (6,008/10,297 pupils) (2022/23)				↔	Dec 23 SFR Confirmed	AY
Progress 8 score for Leeds at the end of Key Stage 4	-0.03 (2022/23)	-0.10 (2022/23)	+0.12 (2021/22)	+0.12 (9,138 pupils) (2022/23)				↔	February 24 SFR	AY
Percentage of young people with special educational needs at KS4 remaining in education, employment or training <sup>1</sup>	88.9% (2021/22 AY)	-	85.8% (903 pupils) (2020/21 AY)	85.0% (994/1,170 pupils) (2021/22 AY)				▼	February 24 SFR	AY
Prevalence of children at age 5 who are obese	9.2% (2022/23)	9.9% (2022/23) Yorks & Humber	9.9% (2021/22)	9.4% (2022/23)				▼	Oct 23 SFR	AY
Prevalence of children at age 11 who are obese	22.7% (2022/23)	24.1% (2022/23) Yorks & Humber	25.1% (2021/22)	23.5% (2022/23)				▼	Oct 23 SFR	AY
Proportion of young offenders who re-offend	32.2% (England and Wales)	31.6% (Core Cities)	40.1% (FY 2020/21)	40.9% (FY 2021/22)				▲	Jan 24 SFR	FY
Under 18 conceptions (rate per 1000)	13.1 (2021)	17.1 (2021)	19.8 (2020)	19.3 (2021)				▼	Sep-23	Calendar Year
Alcohol-related hospital admissions for under-18s (rate per 100,000)	29.3 (2020/21)	-	27.8 (2019/20)	24.6 (2020/21)				▼	Jun-22	3 FY pooled (2018/19- 2020/21)
Level 3 qualifications at 19	60.7% (2021/22)	57.7% (2021/22)	53.5% (2020/21)	54.7% (4,129/7,548 pupils) (2021/22)				▲	May-23 SFR	AY
Young people who are NEET	2.8% (2023 SFR)	3.3% (2023 SFR) Yorks & Humber	719 (4.27%)	845 (5.02%)	441 (2.51%)	722 (3.98%)	924 (5.1%)	▲	Mar-23	Snapshot
Young people whose status is 'not known'	2.4% (2023 SFR)	3.2% (2023 SFR) Yorks & Humber	1035 (6.15%)	603 (3.58%)	7609 (43.31%)	816 (4.50%)	573 (3.16%)	▼	Mar-23	Snapshot

# Appendix one (b): CYPP key indicator dashboard - cluster level, March 2024



Time Period	Deprivation Rank	SAFE FROM HARM						PARTICIPATION & WELLBEING						ATTAINMENT					
		Number of open child in need cases <sup>2</sup>		Number of children subject to a child protection plan <sup>2</sup>		Number of children looked after <sup>2</sup>		Young People who are NEET <sup>1,2</sup>		Young People whose status is 'not known' <sup>1,2</sup>		Prevalence of children at age 5 who are Obese <sup>1</sup>	Prevalence of children at age 11 who are Obese <sup>1</sup>	Primary Attendance	Secondary Attendance	Early Years Foundation Stage: % GLD <sup>4</sup>	Reaching the expected standard in RWM at the end of KS2	Average Progress 8 Score	Level 3 Quals at age 19 <sup>5</sup>
IMD 2019	As at 31/03/2024	As at 31/03/2024		As at 31/03/2024		As at 31/03/2024		As at 31/03/2024		2021/22 AY	2021/22 AY	2022/23 HT1-6	2022/23 HT1-6	2022/23 AY	2022/23 AY	2022/23 AY	2021/22 AY		
Leeds		2,867 (168.1)		690 (40.4)		1,548 (90.7)		924 (5.1%)		573 (3.16%)		9.9%	25.1%	94.1%	90.3%	63.2%	58%	+0.12	54.7%
Cluster	<sup>1</sup> = most deprived; <sup>2</sup> = least deprived	No.	RPTT	No.	RPTT	No.	RPTT	No.	%	No.	%	%	%	%	%	Confirmed	Confirmed	Confirmed	Confirmed
Zgether	7	260	199.5	52	39.9	126	96.7	95	7.3%	61	4.7%	9.6%	28.8%	92.2%	89.4%	54.4%	50%	+0.23	61.8%
Aireborough	19	78	105.0	8	10.8	24	32.3	21	2.5%	7	0.8%	5.1%	15.3%	96.0%	91.9%	71.5%	69%	+0.18	68.3%
ARM	17	101	74.6	21	15.5	49	36.2	22	1.5%	22	1.5%	7.0%	22.6%	95.3%	93.0%	69.0%	70%	+0.41	60.9%
Beeston, Cottingley and Middleton	4	159	176.8	66	73.4	135	150.2	70	7.5%	29	3.1%	13.1%	27.9%	93.7%	90.3%	53.5%	50%	+0.44	40.2%
Bramley	3	198	266.3	25	33.6	69	92.8	72	8.7%	36	4.3%	10.7%	30.5%	93.6%	86.3%	58.7%	53%	-0.23	42.6%
Brigshaw	14	48	94.2	12	23.6	23	45.1	16	2.7%	12	2.0%	9.6%	29.9%	94.5%	90.8%	71.6%	68%	+0.10	57.1%
EPOS	22	51	69.7	12	16.4	12	16.4	5	0.6%	5	0.6%	7.4%	13.3%	96.0%	91.5%	80.7%	73%	+0.54	66.5%
ESNW	16	55	107.7	13	25.5	50	97.9	26	4.4%	15	2.6%	12.3%	23.6%	95.1%	90.7%	70.0%	67%	-0.07	46.8%
Garforth	18	15	43.7	5	14.6	15	43.7	8	1.8%	11	2.5%	6.7%	16.6%	95.5%	92.5%	62.5%	67%	+0.32	61.8%
Headingley - Kirkstall partnership	10	92	139.4	10	15.1	41	62.1	38	6.1%	15	2.4%	8.9%	24.6%	94.2%	89.5%	59.0%	61%	-0.08	67.4%
Horsforth	20	36	87.1	<5	-	5	12.1	7	1.6%	8	1.8%	6.8%	14.6%	96.2%	93.9%	74.1%	72%	+0.71	72.9%
Inner East	1	363	243.1	129	86.4	226	151.4	113	8.0%	56	4.0%	12.7%	32.1%	92.6%	88.9%	56.7%	45%	+0.06	42.5%
Inner West	6	225	249.8	79	87.7	97	107.7	83	8.6%	46	4.7%	12.8%	28.3%	92.8%	87.5%	57.8%	46%	+0.12	52.5%
J.E.S.S	2	249	211.0	67	56.8	156	132.2	92	7.8%	44	3.7%	12.5%	32.9%	93.0%	90.1%	50.2%	51%	+0.37	38.8%
Lantern Learning Trust	8	69	165.8	17	40.9	48	115.4	17	5.1%	8	2.4%	11.4%	29.0%	93.3%	91.7%	57.0%	59%	+0.14	31.5%
Leodis	15	34	105.2	<5	-	16	49.5	6	1.5%	4	1.0%	10.9%	26.6%	95.3%	91.2%	77.7%	63%	+0.20	57.7%
Morley	11	96	113.8	13	15.4	67	79.4	29	3.1%	26	2.8%	10.8%	20.9%	94.7%	92.3%	68.5%	63%	+0.63	59.0%
Olley/Pool/Bramhope	21	15	37.0	6	14.8	10	24.7	11	2.4%	7	1.5%	7.2%	17.5%	95.7%	91.4%	73.8%	70%	+0.30	80.5%
Pudsey	12	105	99.6	11	10.4	23	21.8	32	3.0%	29	2.7%	8.6%	22.6%	94.8%	91.0%	65.8%	68%	+0.00	48.8%
Rothwell	13	93	144.5	9	14.0	42	65.3	24	3.5%	12	1.8%	9.4%	19.1%	94.4%	91.8%	64.7%	58%	+0.40	51.7%
Seacroft Manston	5	261	251.4	82	79.0	162	156.1	94	8.3%	38	3.3%	11.1%	26.0%	93.3%	87.4%	64.6%	54%	-0.51	29.4%
Temple Newsam Halton	9	96	175.0	16	29.2	49	89.3	31	4.6%	15	2.2%	8.8%	22.7%	94.2%	89.0%	62.9%	51%	-0.17	53.2%

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- Key**
- AY - academic year P - provisional
  - CYPP indicators reported at a cluster level are not comparable with citywide results, as the data used are not always from the same period
  - 1 - Data for this indicator show children and young people living in the cluster area, not attending schools in the cluster
  - 2 - Data suppressed for instances of fewer than 5
  - 3 - Data for this indicator are by schools within the cluster, not by pupils living in the cluster area
  - 4 - GLD is Good Level of Development
  - 5 - Based on the location of the school the young person attended when they were in year 11, not where they gained the Level 3 qualification



Key: red - ward names and boundaries; blue - cluster names and boundaries; purple - shared boundaries

## Appendix two: attainment data for the 2022/23 academic year

Indicator	Academic Year					Trend	Change since previous assessment year	Rank	National Quartile Position	Comparator Data			
	2019	2020 <sup>2</sup>	2021 <sup>2</sup>	2022	2023					National	Statistical Neighbour	Core Cities	Yorkshire & Humber
<b>EYFS<sup>1</sup></b>													
Percentage achieving a Good Level of Development				61.0	63.2		2.2	140/153	Band D	67.2	65.5	63.3	66.1
Average number of early learning goals at the expected level per child				13.7	13.7		0.0	Equal 114/153	Band D	14.1	13.9	13.6	14.0
Percentage of children at expected level in Communication & Language, & Literacy areas of learning				62.7	64.6		1.9	Equal 135/153	Band D	68.8	67.0	64.6	67.5
Percentage of children at expected level across all early learning goals				58.9	61.8		2.9	132/153	Band D	65.6	63.6	61.6	64.0
<b>Key Stage 1</b>													
Phonics - Year 1	79			75	78		3	Equal 94/151	Band C	79	79	76	79
Phonics - Year 2	89			85	88		3	Equal 91/151	Band D	89	89	86	89
<b>Key Stage 2</b>													
Multiplication Timetable Check - Mean Average Score <sup>3</sup>				19.9	19.9		0	Equal 98/151	Band C	20.2	20.1	19.8	20.0
Multiplication Timetable Check - Percentage of pupils who scored 25 (full marks)				28	27		-1	Equal 106/151	Band D	29	30	28	29
Reading, Writing and Maths - percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard	62			58	58		0	Equal 95/153	Band C	60	59	57	58
Grammar, punctuation and spelling test - percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard	76			71	71		0	Equal 98/153	Band C	73	72	71	71
<b>Key Stage 4</b>													
Average Progress 8 Score <sup>4</sup>	0.03			0.12	0.12	N/A	N/A	Equal 37/152	Band A	-0.03	-0.10	-0.13	-0.06
Average Attainment 8 Score per pupil	45.1	47.6	49.2	47.8	45.8		-2.0	Equal 71/152	Band B	46.4	45.5	44.1	44.7
Percentage of pupils achieving a <b>strong pass</b> (grade 9-5) in English and mathematics	41.6	46.7	50.5	51.3	45.9		-5.4	Equal 59/152	Band B	45.5	44.1	41.3	42.6
Percentage of pupils achieving a <b>standard pass</b> (grade 9-4) in English and mathematics	62.1	67.7	69.9	68.3	64.6		-3.7	Equal 77/152	Band C	65.4	64.2	60.7	62.8
English Baccalaureate Average Point Score	3.91	4.12	4.29	4.22	4.03		-0.19	Equal 64/152	Band B	4.07	3.93	3.86	3.87

Indicator	Academic Year					Trend	Change since previous assessment year	Rank	National Quartile Position	Comparator Data			
	2019	2020 <sup>2</sup>	2021 <sup>2</sup>	2022	2023					National	Statistical Neighbour	Core Cities	Yorkshire & Humber
<b>Key Stage 5 covers all state-funded mainstream schools, academies, free schools &amp; maintained special schools</b>													
Average point score per A level entry	31.78	37.20	39.98	36.14	32.77		-3.37	102/152	Band C	34.63	32.82	33.29	34.10
Average points score for a student's best three A levels	32.22	36.89	41.22	37.05	33.62		-3.43	101/151	Band C	35.31	33.61	33.94	34.63
Percentage of students achieving grades AAB or higher (in at least two facilitating subjects)	11.8	20.3	27.9	17.5	14.2		-3.3	Equal 88/151	Band C	17.2	14.4	17.0	16.1
Average point score per entry for Tech level students	32.68	36.48	36.78	37.08	32.96		-4.12	69/137	Band C	33.17	32.93	32.78	33.67
Average point score per entry for Applied General students	27.13	30.4	33.85	32.47	30.54		-1.93	85/149	Band C	30.93	31.14	30.38	31.90
<b>Key Stage 5 covers all state-funded mainstream schools, academies, free schools, maintained special schools &amp; FE sector colleges</b>													
Average point score per A level entry	31.77	36.49	39.52	35.90	32.09		-3.81	108/152	Band C	34.16	33.31	32.99	33.59
Average points score for a student's best three A levels	31.11	35.78	40.69	36.75	32.71		-4.04	107/151	Band C	34.68	33.81	33.61	34.12
Percentage of students achieving grades AAB or higher (in at least two facilitating subjects) <sup>5</sup>	11.0	18.2	26.1	17.0	12.9		-4.10	91/151	Band C	15.8	13.9	15.3	14.8
<b>Attainment at 19</b>													
Level 2 qualification	75.7	75.9	77.0	77.0			N/A	Equal 126/150	Band D	81.7	79.7	75.9	78.2
Level 3 qualification	50.1	51.4	53.5	54.7			N/A	Equal 117/150	Band D	60.7	57.7	55.3	55.6
Level 2 qualification with English and maths	64.1	63.8	67.9	68.6			N/A	108/150	Band C	71.9	70.7	66.0	69.1

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**Footnotes:**

- 1 - Due to the changes to the EYFSP in 2021, particularly the removal of the 'exceeding' criteria, time series data is limited to 2022 onwards as it is not appropriate compare with previous years
- 2 - Gaps in data are due to no primary assessments taking place due to the pandemic
- 3 - The Multiplication Test was due to be rolled out in 2020 after a pilot in 2019 but was delayed until 2022 due to the pandemic. Comparisons to previous years for KS4 and KS5 must be made with caution due to the different methods of assessment used in 2020, 2021 (combination of centre and teacher assessed grades), and in 2022 (adaptations to the exams to allow for the disruption due to Covid-19). Another factor to consider across all attainment measures is the uneven impact of the pandemic in terms of teacher and pupil absence or even school closures
- 4 - A Progress 8 score of 1.0 means pupils in the group make on average a grade more progress than the national average; a score of 1.0 means they make on average a grade less progress than average. Progress 8 scores should be interpreted alongside the associated confidence intervals. If the lower bound of the confidence interval is greater than zero, it can be interpreted as meaning that the group achieves greater than average progress compared to pupils in mainstream schools nationally and that this is statistically significant. If the upper bound is negative, this means that the group achieves lower than average progress compared to pupils in mainstream schools nationally and that this is statistically significant
- 5 - Facilitating subjects are biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, further mathematics, geography, history, English literature, modern and classical languages. Data used are for GCE A level and Level 3 results of all state-funded students aged 16 to 19

## Appendix three: attendance data for the 2022/23 academic year

Indicator	Academic Year						Trend	Change	Rank	National Quartile Position	Comparators 2023			
	2018	2019	2020 <sup>1</sup>	2021 <sup>2</sup>	2022	2023					National	Statistical Neighbour	Core Cities	Yorkshire & Humber
<b>Attendance - Half Terms 1-6</b>														
<b>Primary</b>														
Percentage attendance in primary schools	95.9	96.0		96.4	93.9	94.1		0.2	79/151	Band C	94.1	94.2	93.6	94.0
Percentage authorised absence in primary schools	2.7	2.6		2.4	4.1	3.7		-0.4	12/151	Band A	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.0
Percentage unauthorised absence in primary schools	14	15		12	1.9	2.2		0.3	128/151	Band D	1.6	1.8	2.4	2.0
Percentage of enrolments classified as persistently absent in primary schools	8.9	8.8		8.8	17.1	17.0		-0.1	93/151	Band C	16.2	16.3	19.3	16.9
Percentage of enrolments classified as severely absent in primary schools	0.4	0.3		0.6	0.6	0.7		0.1	85/151	Band C	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.8
<b>Secondary</b>														
Percentage attendance in secondary schools	94.2	94.2		94.3	90.8	90.3		-0.5	113/151	Band D	91.0	91.0	90.0	90.3
Percentage authorised absence in secondary schools	3.3	3.1		3.2	5.2	4.5		-0.7	17/151	Band A	5.6	5.3	4.9	5.2
Percentage unauthorised absence in secondary schools	2.5	2.7		2.5	4.0	5.2		1.2	138/151	Band D	3.4	3.8	5.1	4.5
Percentage of enrolments classified as persistently absent in secondary schools	14.8	14.6		16.0	27.2	27.2		0.0	91/151	Band C	26.5	26.7	29.2	28.6
Percentage of enrolments classified as severely absent in secondary schools	1.5	1.7		1.9	3.6	4.8		1.2	140/151	Band D	3.4	3.4	4.5	4.3
<b>Special Schools</b>														
Percentage attendance in special schools	88.5	88.0		83.9	86.2	87.0		0.8	84/149	Band C	87.0	88.0	84.7	86.9
Percentage authorised absence in special schools	8.2	8.3		13.2	9.4	8.7		-0.7	34/149	Band A	9.9	8.9	10.2	9.8
Percentage unauthorised absence in special schools	3.3	3.8		2.8	4.4	4.3		-0.1	126/149	Band D	3.2	3.2	5.1	3.2
Percentage of enrolments classified as persistently absent in special schools	31.9	32.7		49.7	37.3	35.9		-1.4	44/149	Band B	38.3	35.2	42.6	37.6
Percentage of enrolments classified as severely absent in special schools	6.7	6.7		6.9	7.6	7.4		-0.2	111/149	Band C	6.2	6.1	8.8	7.1
<b>Exclusions HT1-6</b>														
<b>Primary</b>														
Permanent exclusions rate	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00	-	-	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02
Suspensions Rate (previously known as fixed period exclusions)	0.77	0.95	0.63	0.59	1.09			0.50	= 66/151	Band B	1.42	1.45	1.37	1.58
One or more suspension rate	0.39	0.45	0.36	0.36	0.52			0.16	50/151	Band B	0.68	0.68	0.71	0.69
<b>Secondary</b>														
Permanent exclusions rate	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.01			0.01	=4/151	Band A	0.16	0.25	0.19	0.17
Suspensions Rate (previously known as fixed period exclusions)	9.64	11.91	7.21	8.71	18.99			10.28	121/151	Band D	13.96	18.14	22.32	21.49
One or more suspension rate	4.68	5.11	3.33	4.29	7.41			3.12	123/151	Band D	6.02	7.05	8.42	7.64
<b>Special Schools</b>														
Permanent exclusions rate	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05			0.05	-	-	0.05	0.04	0.07	0.02
Suspensions Rate (previously known as fixed period exclusions)	9.40	4.36	1.33	0.06	0.87			0.81	14/150	Band A	9.60	7.97	10.90	5.68
One or more suspension rate	3.86	2.50	0.96	0.06	0.41			0.35	9/150	Band A	4.39	3.60	4.96	3.03

Indicator	Academic Year						Trend	Change	Rank	National Quartile Position	Comparators 2023				
	2018	2019	2020 <sup>1</sup>	2021 <sup>2</sup>	2022	2023					National	Statistical Neighbour	Core Cities	Yorkshire & Humber	
<b>Exclusions - Autumn Term</b>															
<b>Primary</b>															
Permanent exclusions rate	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	-	-	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	
Suspensions Rate (previously known as fixed period exclusions)	0.26	0.34	0.43	0.24	0.32	0.34		0.02	Equal 39/151	Band B	0.58	0.58	0.51	0.62	
One or more suspension rate	0.17	0.20	0.27	0.18	0.21	0.23		0.02	Equal 42/151	Band B	0.34	0.33	0.32	0.35	
<b>Secondary</b>															
Permanent exclusions rate	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01		0.01	Equal 6/151	Band A	0.07	0.11	0.09	0.08	
Suspensions Rate (previously known as fixed period exclusions)	3.89	4.21	4.02	3.93	6.02	6.80		0.78	99/151	Band C	5.90	7.78	9.31	9.14	
One or more suspension rate	2.41	2.46	2.17	2.24	3.36	3.64		0.28	107/151	Band C	3.16	3.87	4.60	4.18	
<b>Special Schools</b>															
Permanent exclusions rate	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	-	-	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.01	
Suspensions Rate (previously known as fixed period exclusions)	3.71	2.62	0.98	0.06	0.31	0.25		-0.06	8/150	Band A	4.31	3.18	4.04	2.38	
One or more suspension rate	2.30	1.51	0.74	0.06	0.21	0.20		-0.01	7/150	Band A	2.62	1.93	2.76	1.66	
<b>Exclusions - Spring Term</b>															
<b>Primary</b>															
Permanent exclusions rate	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00	-	-	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.01	
Suspensions Rate (previously known as fixed period exclusions)	0.23	0.30	0.20	0.08	0.33	0.43		0.10	63/151	Band B	0.56	0.55	0.53	0.60	
One or more suspension rate	0.16	0.20	0.15	0.07	0.22	0.30		0.08	66/151	Band B	0.35	0.35	0.36	0.38	
<b>Secondary</b>															
Permanent exclusions rate	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01		0.00	9/151	Band A	0.07	0.10	0.09	0.08	
Suspensions Rate (previously known as fixed period exclusions)	2.65	3.95	3.15	0.83	6.42	7.56		1.14	101/151	Band C	6.41	9.03	9.44	10.14	
One or more suspension rate	1.85	2.38	1.93	0.73	3.78	4.17		0.39	106/151	Band C	3.58	4.51	4.97	4.86	
<b>Special Schools</b>															
Permanent exclusions rate	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00		-0.05	-	-	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.01	
Suspensions Rate (previously known as fixed period exclusions)	2.33	1.35	0.36	0.00	0.21	0.40		0.19	11/150	Band A	3.50	2.52	2.89	2.17	
One or more suspension rate	1.75	1.03	0.30	0.00	0.15	0.35		0.20	11/150	Band A	2.23	1.76	2.16	1.63	

**Footnotes:**

1 - Data for the academic year 2019/20 is not available as the Summer Term Census, which would have provided the attendance data for the Spring Term, was not carried out due to schools being closed to most pupils from 24 March 2020, onwards. Data for the Summer Term is not available as schools only started opening from June with a phased return by year groups

2 - 2020/21 data is not comparable to other years as the DfE changed how attendance was calculated due to sessions recorded as 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus'. When calculating attendance rates, the DfE have included sessions missed due to Covid in the number of 'possible sessions' (denominator) but have not counted them as an absence. This resulted in a higher-than-average attendance figure

## Appendix four: the CYPP obsessions

### Obsession one: safely and appropriately reduce the number of children looked after

#### **Obsession update**

The number of children looked after in Leeds has risen by 96 (6.6 per cent) in the last 12 months, to the March 2024 figure of 1,548. This is a rate per 10,000 of 89.6, compared to 85.1 at the end of 2023. The most recent national data (the financial year finishing in March 2023) shows a rise in children looked after numbers for England of 2.14 per cent. Leeds' 2023 rate per ten thousand figure was the sixth lowest amongst its statistical neighbours, and fourth lowest amongst core cities. Leeds remains below both those comparator groups, but above both the England and Yorkshire and The Humber averages.

It is likely, given the trends in recent years, that the number of children looked after across England will continue to rise; what is not clear, however, is whether the rise in Leeds' numbers will be in line or not with the national change. Data for the 2023/24 financial year will be published by the DfE in October and November 2024.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) in care increased by 30.8 per cent in 2023, from 72 in April 2023 to 102 in December 2023. Since then, the figure has sustained at around a hundred children. These children represent a quarter of the growth in children in care over the last year, partly inflated due to the National Transfer Scheme, but also due to growing numbers of young people from hotels in Leeds that have been wrongly assessed by the Home Office as adults.

The National Transfer Scheme Protocol for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children enables the safe transfer of unaccompanied children in the UK from one local authority (the 'first' local authority) to another local authority (the 'receiving' local authority). It allows the Home Office to transfer UASC to local authorities up to 0.1 per cent of their under-18 population, which in Leeds is currently 172,651 (therefore a threshold of 172).

Research published *The Lancet*, in June 2022<sup>5</sup>, suggests that 10,356 more children living in English local authority areas became looked after than would have been the case had poverty levels remained at 2015 levels. The research team's modelling showed that within local authorities, between 2015 and 2020, a one per cent increase in child poverty was associated with an additional five children entering care per 100,000 population. In Leeds, this would be equivalent to approximately eight additional children becoming looked after for each one per cent increase in child poverty (based on current numbers; an increase in poverty is likely to further increase demand pressures and could see the figure of eight rising further).

Using Index of Multiple Deprivation data from 2023 shows a very pronounced pattern of diminishing chance of entering care from those less deprived areas, which is more exaggerated than in 2021 or 2022.

- In 2023, children living in the most deprived one per cent areas of Leeds were 5.5 times more likely to enter care than children living in the 80 per cent least deprived areas of the city.
- In 2023, children in the most deprived 10 per cent areas of Leeds were nine times more likely to enter care than those living the least deprived 10 per cent areas.

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<sup>5</sup>[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667\(22\)00065-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(22)00065-2/fulltext), *The Lancet*, June 2022



- 70 per cent of children looked after are from the 20 per cent most deprived areas in the city; with a 20 per cent increase in the number of children looked after in 2023 from the 20 per cent most deprived areas in Leeds.

*Thriving: The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds* was launched in 2019. The strategy was refreshed in late 2023 with consultation with over 20 groups of children and young people in Leeds, with new and emerging themes including addressing the stigma of poverty, improving access to food and other basic needs, and increasing our communication around available services. This strategy will be launched in June. The ambitions in the refreshed strategy are:

- 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.
- We will work together to tackle inequality across services and organisations, to find meaningful solutions for those experiencing poverty.

## **Obsession two: young people in Leeds attend school, achieve, and attain well, and continue their route of a sustained education, apprenticeship or employment destination**

For an update on attainment, please refer to appendix two. For an update on attendance, please refer to section 19 of the main report, and appendix three.

### ***The annual NEET and Not Known figure***

Each year, the average NEET and Not Known data for December, January, and February is uploaded to the National Client Caseload Information System. The national picture is published in late summer. Leeds figures for this year and the previous year are in the table below. There was, on average, 109 more young people recorded as NEET and 212 fewer young people with a Not Known status. Overall, 103 fewer young people (a 6.3 per cent reduction) were recorded as either NEET or Not Known. The key driver behind the reduction of the overall combined NEET/Not Known figure has been the reduction in the Not Known cohort; this has had the effect of increasing the NEET cohort due to NEET young people being identified through tracking the Not Knowns.

	2023/24	2022/23
NEET	4.3% 800 young people	3.9% 691 young people
Not Known	4.0% 742 young people	5.3% 954 young people
Combined	8.3% 1,542 young people	9.2% 1,645 young people

### ***The monthly NEET and Not Known figure***

In addition to the annual combined figure, monthly data are also collected; this is the information displayed in appendix one. The March 2024 NEET figure of 924 young people is 205 higher than the March 2023 figure of 719, and the March 2024 Not Known figure of 573 is 462 fewer than the March 2023 figure.

To develop an understanding of the gaps in post-16 provision, a secondment has been made to an Interim Strategic Lead - Raising Participation and NEET post. Phase one (September 2023 to February 2024) involved:

- Researching and understanding the reason for the NEET challenges in Leeds.
- Producing and submitting a gap analysis for the DfE, which shows post-16 provision deficit and identifies the level and locations of future growth.
- Reviewing and consulting with key stakeholders around post-16 strategies which progress sustainable change in relation to full participation.
- Progressing the 14-19(25) partnership to produce a strategic plan for raising participation.
- Working with schools, voluntary, independent training provider and further education sector partners and other stakeholders to raise awareness of the challenges and engage in intervention activity.

Phase two (February to September) involves:

- Reconstituting the post-16 forum to develop a systems-based approach to post 16 provision planning, collaboration, and partnership.
- Working with providers to understand the gaps and stimulating provider delivery in Leeds.
- Identifying potential space and sharing info about provision gaps to fill.

### **14 to 19 strategic partnership**

Ten workstream leads have now been identified and initial action plans developed; these will help to drive agreed actions and outputs linked to NEET reduction and raising participation. The ten workstreams are:

- Tracking, monitoring, and reporting
- Reduce the number of young people whose status is not known
- Sufficiency of post-16 learning places
- High quality impartial careers education, information, advice, and guidance
- Progression and transition support/ understanding our cohort
- Strategic partnership development
- Young people in vulnerable contexts
- Learner retention in post-16 settings
- SEND and SEMH and high needs
- Alignment with the inclusive growth strategy

A lead elected member is being identified to replace the outgoing chair of the partnership, Cllr Sharon Burke. This is crucial to improve the accountability of the partnership and maintain the political oversight. The ten workstream chairs report updates to the partnership, raising issues or concerns that need escalating or unblocking if they present a risk to the EET outcomes for young people.

### **Risk of NEET**

- Careers Enterprise Company (WYCA funding) Early Intervention: The 'Risk of NEET' funding has supported the development of a pilot working with four schools (Leeds West, Co-op Academy, Cockburn John Charles, and Leeds East). The recently developed Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) tool has been used by schools to identify a cohort of year 11 students. Four initial multi-agency panels have been held, with cases allocated across the support providers who are involved in the pilots. Two further review panels are due to be held with each school, this will provide an opportunity to monitor progress and measure impact of the interventions. A range of partners are supporting the pilot (internal and external to the local authority). The pilot is a proof of concept attempting to build capacity, at an earlier stage in schools, recognising that some schools and young people need an enhanced support approach if their EET post-16 transitions are to be secured.
- RONI Guidance (DfE): Whilst Leeds has developed its own RONI tool, having sought support from other core cities, the DfE is due to issue its RONI guidance linked to early intervention shortly. This validates the work of early intervention linked to NEET reduction, highlighting as it does the crucial targeted interventions required. The panels being held in the four Leeds schools aligns well with the guidance. The guidance and new NCCIS functionality, whilst welcome, will require further data exchanges with the school, presenting a capacity risk to colleagues who work in the local authority's reporting services.

### **Further context**

- In 2018, 15,818 young people were in the 16-17-year-old tracking cohort; this is projected to rise to 19,934 (1 26 per cent increase) by 2028.
- In 2022, 65 per cent of year 11 pupils achieved a grade 9-4 in English and maths, 35 per cent did not. Of the post-16 learning provision in the city, 75 per cent is Level 3, 26 per cent is entry, Level 1, and Level 2 provision, meaning that there is a disparity in the amount of provision available for the 35 per cent of young people who did not achieve the qualifications required to progress to Level 3 learning.
- There is a higher rate of pupils not achieving a grade 9-4 in English and maths in more deprived areas of the city (49 per cent in Gipton & Harehills, 45 per cent of pupils in Armley, 44 per cent in Burmantofts & Richmond Hill).
- Stimulating growth in appropriate post-16 learning provision, in the right areas of the city, is crucial to ensuring that more pupils have access to post-16 learning.

## **Obsession three: Leeds is a healthy place for all children; and improve the timely access to healthcare when needed**

**Mental health:** The local strategic direction for Leeds reflects national policy and emphasises early help, resilience building, better support for the most vulnerable children, and service transformation. The all-age Leeds Mental Health Strategy 2020-2025 outlines children and young people as a priority, with Future in Mind: Leeds 2021-2026 as the strategy driving forward these improvements. This covers children and young people from birth up to age 25. MindMate is the local website providing information and links to support for children, young people, and parents/carers in Leeds. MindMate was designed with young people, for young people, to provide a central place for information about common mental health issues and where you can find support.

**Focus on children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities:** The partnership is preparing for a SEND inspection and has highlighted key areas of risk, including EHCP timeliness, quality, and ongoing review, alongside capacity and waiting times in mental health and other health support services for children with SEND. Other non-health areas of focus have been identified for the local authority, such as sufficiency of school places, short breaks, and long-term care for children with very complex needs.

Appendix one(a) shows the latest data for the health-focused measures in the CYPP, including:

- Infant mortality rates in Leeds that, at 4.9 deaths per 1,000 live births remains the same as the previous reporting and below (better than) the statistical neighbour average of 5.09. The rate is, however, above the national figure of 4.0.
- The prevalence of children at age five (9.4 per cent) and at age 11 (23.5 per cent) who are obese. Both figures have reduced in the latest data release and are below the regional averages but above national figures.
- The under-18 conception rate in Leeds continues to reduce to 19.3 per 1,000 in the latest reporting period. There is a long-term trend in Leeds for reducing conceptions, but the figure is still above both statistical neighbours and the England average.
- Alcohol-related hospital admissions have reduced by 3.2 points in the latest reporting period, to 24.6 per 100,000. This is significantly lower than the England figure of 29.3.

More detailed information is available in *The Leeds Children and Families Health Needs Assessment 2022*<sup>6</sup>. This document provides a snapshot of information that describes life for children and families in Leeds in 2022. It has been developed in partnership with colleagues from across the city and brings together existing knowledge and data from a national, regional, and local level into a single document.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://observatory.leeds.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Final-Version-Leeds-Children-and-Families-Health-Needs-Assessment-2022.pdf>

## Appendix five: education, health and care plans

The Director of Children's Services commissioned PwC to undertake a root and branch review of the end-to-end EHCP process and target operating model. The Scrutiny inquiry followed this commission but both pieces of work have taken place in parallel.

In the 2023 calendar year:

- 1,497 requests for EHC assessments were received in the 2023 calendar year, 17 per cent more than the 2022 calendar year (1,284 requests).
- 980 EHC assessments were completed in 2023, compared to 374 during 2022.
- The percentage of EHC plans issued within 20 weeks is 8.4 per cent, compared to 12.3 per cent in 2022.

Between January and 31 March 2024 there were

- 481 requests for an EHC assessment (426 in the same period last year).
- 181 assessments completed (136 in the same period last year).
- 173 EHC Plans issued (131 in the same period last year).
- 18.8 per cent issued in 20 weeks (15.5 per cent in the same period last year).

There are a growing number of applications for EHCPs across England, which is putting a strain on SEND services within local authorities, with many looking for ways to compensate for this through increases in efficiency and changes to their EHCP processes.

The same challenges exist in Leeds, which is reflected in the data provided. In response, external resources were commissioned to undertake a rigorous review and to provide independent challenge, to better understand the opportunities and challenges around securing improvements in outcomes for children and young people, whilst considering the Council's position in relation to operating in accordance with the overriding legislation and relevant codes of practice. The transformation approach was reported to Scrutiny Board during 2023/24 as part of its inquiry, to Executive Board on 13 December 2023, and, into 2024/25, later this month (19 June 2024).

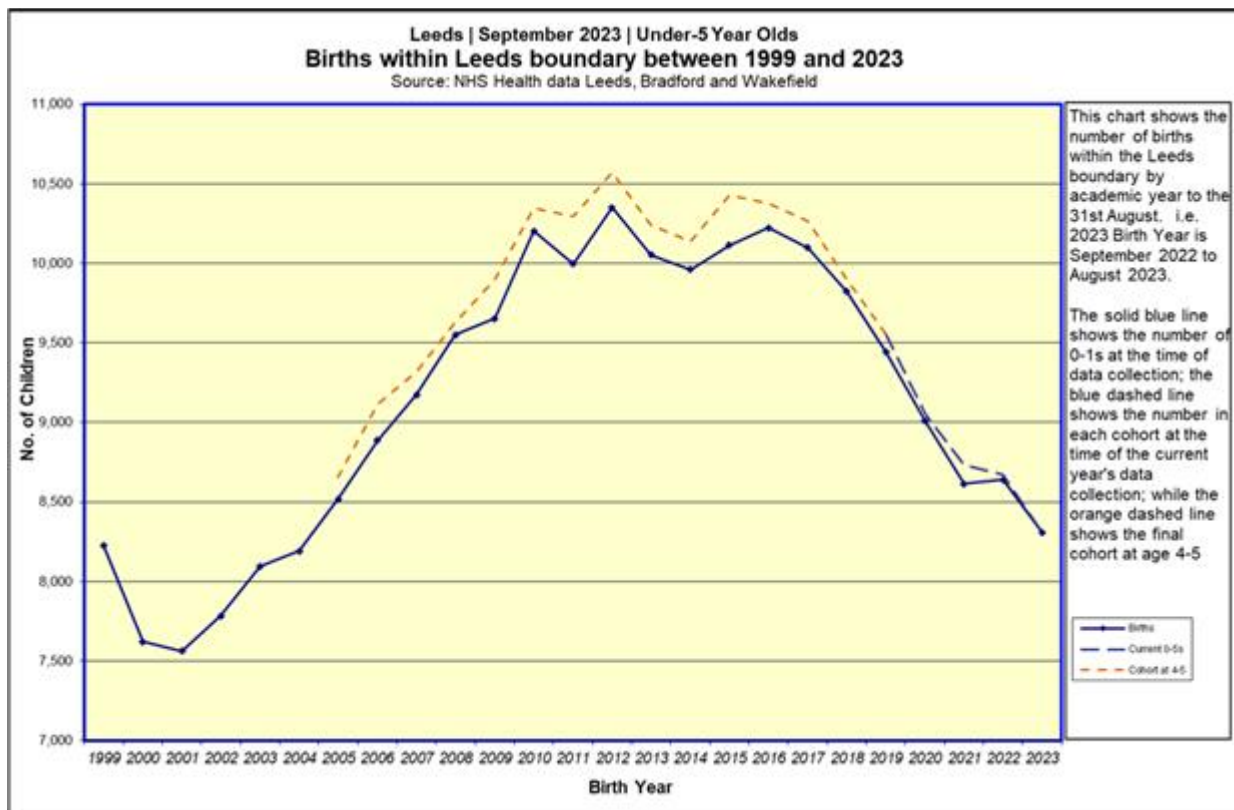
Several changes will be implemented over the next few months to support service delivery that puts the needs of children and their families at the forefront of the process, these being:

- A new operating model: The way in which the Council delivers its arrangements for administering the EHCP process will change, and a new operating model will be developed. This will support collaboration across functional teams for more effective case management; and improve tracking of cases, which will also support improved and timely communication with parents, carers, and settings.
- Simplification of process, decision making and funding arrangements: The amalgamation of multiple forms into one simplified application form; the introduction of multi-agency panels for decision making; and the consideration of assessment, setting, funding, and transport needs facilitated by the single application and panel process.
- Tackling backlog and future demand: Additional external educational psychologist resource will be secured to provide additional resource to reduce the backlog over the short-term whilst the new operating model is implemented to manage ongoing demand.
- Automation, training, and cultural change: Digital improvements are planned, which will aim to improve the availability and visibility of performance data so that the service can

increasingly seek to use data and insight to improve outcomes. Process automation solutions are also planned to reduce manual inputting to systems and facilitate automated updates to parents and carers regarding the status of the EHC application or assessment. There will also be a significant focus on organisational development to support these changes with a view to support cultural change which is child centred, solution focussed, embraces continuous improvement.

## Appendix six: population changes

Over the last two decades, Leeds has seen a pattern of rising births, a plateau of eight years at roughly 10,000 per annum, and then falling births since 2017. The number of births were static between 2020/21 (8,613) and 2021/22 (8,639) but have now fallen again to 8,305 for 2022/23. Leeds is currently at around peak population of 0-17-year-olds but as smaller birth cohorts feed through the population total will start to reduce. An overall decrease of circa 7.5 per cent by 2030 seems plausible.

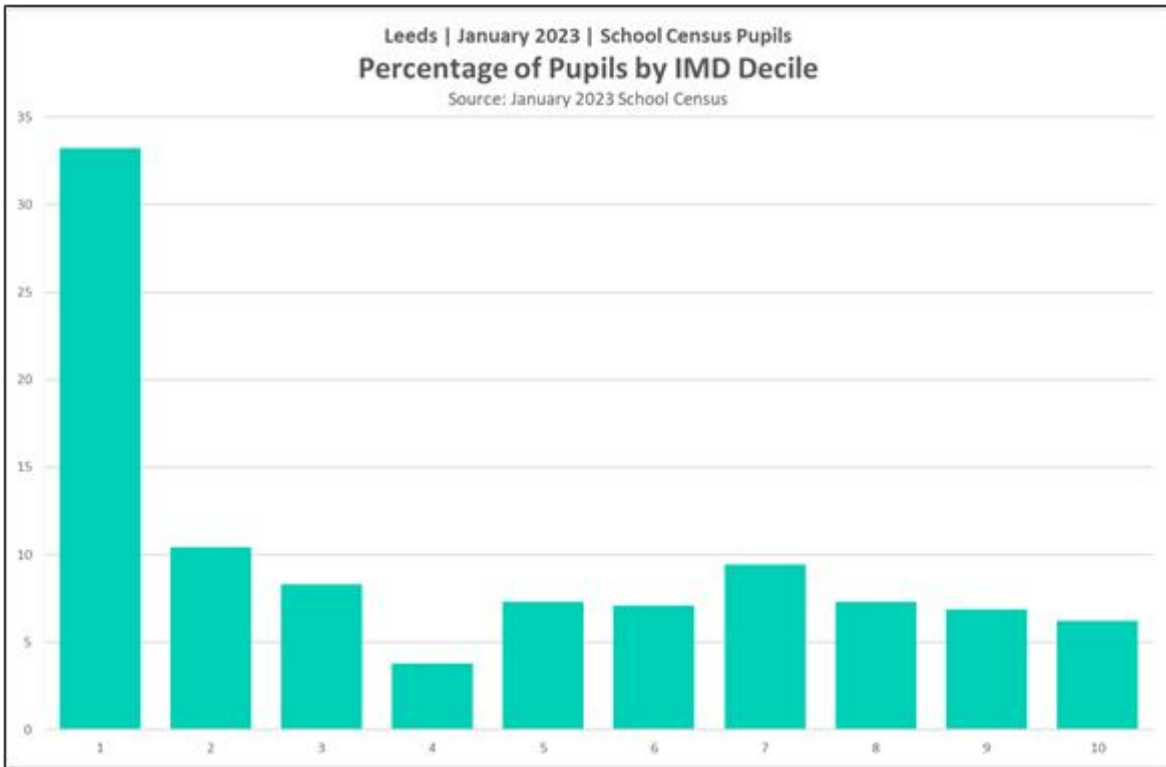


The falling birth rate has been progressively impacting on the number of under-5-year-olds. It is just beginning to impact on the numbers in reception and the primary-age cohort, and this will increasingly be the case in the near future. Year 7 pupil numbers have just begun to peak at the 10,000-birth plateau, and secondary phase numbers overall are still increasing. The larger birth cohorts are just beginning to arrive at post-16, and the peak plateau will begin in 2026/27.

The number of pupils in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) continues to rise and is now more than a quarter of all pupils (26.8 per cent). It should be noted that the number of FSM pupils have been impacted by Universal Credit transitional arrangements (which are due to end in 2025).

Not all pupils experiencing deprivation are necessarily eligible for FSM, and the Office for National Statistics produce an Index of Multiple Deprivation which ranks localities by their relative deprivation (decile one being most deprived, decile ten being least deprived). On this index, 24 per cent per cent of Leeds localities (LSOAs) fall within the 10 per cent most deprived nationally; however, 33.2 per cent of Leeds pupils (43,632) fall within these areas.

Adding deciles 1 and 2 together, 44 per cent of Leeds pupils (57,329) live within the most deprived 20 per cent localities. These areas have seen by far the greatest growth in the population of 0- to 17-year-olds over the last decade (two thirds of the growth). They are also our most diverse localities, accounting for nearly two-thirds of pupils from ethnically diverse communities, and 70 per cent of all pupils who speak English as an additional language.



In Leeds, 33,482 children under 16 were living in relative poverty before housing costs (BHC), equal to 22 per cent<sup>7</sup>. This compared to a national figure of 20 per cent (3.25m). Looking at the most recently available data, it can be said that even by the lowest estimate, one in five children under 16 in Leeds are living in poverty. 21 per cent of Leeds' population is living in relative poverty after housing costs are deducted from income, which equates to approximately 176,376 people.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2023/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-financial-year-ending-2023>



## Youth Justice Service Plan

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Report of: Director of Children & Families

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the 'Youth Justice Plan 2024-25,' which includes the refreshed multi-year strategy for the YJS covering 2024-27, and the work that sits underneath the strategy.

This report gives an update on each of the workstreams under the previous multi-year strategy 2021-24 in terms of recent activities, outcomes and next steps, and provides rationale for the refreshed strategy. It also considers the impacts that the national cost of living crisis is having on children and their families, and how that impacts on offending behaviours, paired with links with child exploitation and serious youth violence on offending behaviours.

This report provides information on the youth justice service, both at a preventative and statutory level, and supports and strengthens existing strategies within Leeds, including the Children and Young People's Plan, the Safer, Stronger Communities Plan and contributes to the Best City Ambition.

This report is developed to meet the core grant terms and conditions as set out by the Youth Justice Board.

### Recommendations

- a) That the Scrutiny Board acknowledges the strategic framework in place in order to prevent children from entering the youth justice system, and to support and divert those who have entered into the youth justice system in order to have a positive impact on the lives of children, their families and communities, and the work being undertaken by the council and other partners in key areas of activity.
- b) That the Scrutiny Board acknowledges the need to promote the work of the Youth Justice Service Plan across the city, across council directorates and wider city partnerships in order to reduce offending behaviours in children across the city.
- c) To note the impact of disproportionality on children from Black and Ethnic minorities within the youth justice cohort to highlight systemic inequalities. The Youth Justice Service seeks to address disproportionality within the youth justice system, however it is acknowledged

that this is a systemic issue. The service will work with partner agencies to actively challenge racial inequalities, through the service's understanding of the experiences and outcomes of children in the service and data.

- d) To note the Youth Justice Plan will be taken to Executive Board in July 2024 to recommend it is taken to Full Council in September 2024 for adoption.

### **What is this report about?**

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Youth Justice Plan, and the work that sits underneath the strategy. This report gives an update on workstreams under the previous strategy in terms of recent activities, outcomes and next steps, and demonstrates the evidence base for the refreshed strategy.
- 2 The Youth Justice Plan is part of the council's Budget and Policy Framework and therefore in accordance with the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, Full Council is responsible for its adoption. These arrangements are set out in Article 4 of the council's constitution.
- 3 As required by the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, it was agreed that the Youth Justice Plan would be referred to Children and Families Scrutiny Board for consideration.
- 4 The outcome of the Board's deliberations will be reported to Executive Board to inform its consideration of the final proposals. The Executive Board is also required to report to Council how it has taken into account any Scrutiny Board recommendations.
- 5 In addition to consideration of the Youth Justice Plan under the authority's Budget and Policy Framework, and given the clear links between the Youth Justice Plan and serious youth violence, Appendix 2 to this report provides the Board with the outcome of the recent Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to serious youth violence in Leeds for consideration and comment.

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 6 The aim of this strategy is to reduce offending behaviours in children across the city.

### **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 7 **Health & wellbeing:** In 2030 Leeds will be a healthy and caring city for everyone: where those who are most likely to experience poverty improve their mental and physical health the fastest, people are living healthy lives for longer, and are supported to thrive from early years to later life.
  - ensuring children in all areas of the city have the best start in life and enjoy a healthy, happy and friendly childhood
  - delivering a safe and welcoming city for people of all ages and from all communities in which residents feel more secure and have good friends

**Inclusive Growth:** In 2030 Leeds will have an economy that works for everyone, where we work to tackle poverty and ensure that the benefits of economic growth are distributed fairly across the city, creating opportunities for all.

- ensuring young people and those changing career in later life have the skills and job opportunities which enable them to realise their potential and thrive

- our businesses and social enterprises being innovative, creative, ambitious and connected to the local community they are in, with access to the skills they need to boost productivity and succeed
- understanding that place matters, and positive identity, culture, heritage and pride in our communities are vital assets in a sustainable future for the city and its local centres

### What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:		
Have ward members been consulted?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

8 The ongoing work highlighted within the Youth Justice Service Plan remains under the scrutiny of the Youth Justice Partnership Board which comprises of statutory services, including CSWS, the YJS, education, police, health and probation, third sector organisations, education sector representatives, elected members and the Youth Justice Board, and includes the voice of the children, their families and victims.

### What are the resource implications?

9 The YJ Partnership Board, representing the partners with support from the YJB, will work to ensure that the recommendations of the Youth Justice Plan are implemented within the financial framework available to the service.

### What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

10 There are no inherent risks within the Youth Justice Plan. Regular reporting is the key to ensuring that outcomes are improving and that challenges are swiftly identified, and remedial action is taken to mitigate the negative impact of those challenges. The Youth Justice Partnership Board has strategic oversight of the delivery of this plan.

### What are the legal implications?

11 None

## Options, timescales and measuring success

### What other options were considered?

12 This is an agreed strategic plan for the Youth Justice Service, endorsed by the Youth Justice Partnership Board.

### How will success be measured?

13 The Youth Justice Plan and refreshed strategy contains 15 performance measures for 2024-25 to measure success against the plan's outcomes and priorities. These measures will be reviewed regularly under the oversight of the strategic Youth Justice Partnership Board, and annually reviewed against within the Youth Justice Plan, as required by the Youth Justice Board as part of the core grant terms and conditions.

### What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

14 The Youth Justice Partnership Board and Director of Children & Families (Chair of the Board) will have strategic responsibility for the implementation of the Plan. This plan will be reviewed in 12 months' time.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 - Youth Justice Service Plan
- Appendix 2 - Joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to serious youth violence in Leeds.

## **Background papers**

- None

# Youth Justice Service Plan 2024 / 25

<b>Service</b>	Leeds Youth Justice Service
<b>Service Manager/ Lead</b>	Helen Burton
<b>Chair of YJS Partnership Board</b>	Julie Longworth

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## Chair's Foreword

It continues to be my great privilege to chair the Leeds Youth Justice Partnership Board and to provide the opening words for the 2024/2025 Youth Justice Plan.

This plan sets out our continued multi-agency commitment and shared priorities to meet the needs of children who are involved with or at risk of involvement with the youth justice system, preventing and reducing youth crime in Leeds and helping children to achieve better outcomes.

As always, the Youth Justice Service and the Leeds Youth Justice Partnership Board remain ambitious for the children of Leeds and committed to addressing barriers to children fulfilling their potential such as the impact of poverty, inequality, discrimination, trauma, mental health, substance misuse, domestic violence, special educational needs and disability, child exploitation, serious youth violence.

We maintain a relentless focus on Early Intervention and Prevention within this year's plan recognising the need for a multi-agency integrated approach that ensures the needs of children are identified, assessed and met in as timely and effective a way as possible. Within this we recognise the centrality of education as a protective factor and enabler for children, we welcome the Leeds Local Safeguarding Partnership's (LSCP) decision to recognise Education as a fourth LSCP statutory partner and we retain a sharp focus on Education within our 24/25 Youth Justice plan.

It is the Leeds Practice Model and our shared values and principles that underpin our work, cultivating and embedding culture and evidence-based practice founded on Child First principles, Restorative Practice, Strength Based Relational and Trauma Informed approaches.

A Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) focussing on how well the Local Authority and its partners help and protect children aged 10 and over who are at risk of, or affected by, serious youth violence or criminal exploitation was conducted in Leeds in March 2024.

The inspection was carried out by Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). The final inspection report was published on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024, the inspectors praised the "effective and well-coordinated response" of the city's agencies to serious youth violence and highlighted the "strong" multi-agency relationships among the city's strengths as well as organisations' use of data, research and information-sharing.

*They found that "Practitioners are astute and committed and many work relentlessly and passionately with children and families to reduce risks and inspire and divert children away from serious youth violence" and that "Children's diverse needs are considered, and services are designed to address the disproportionality of black and ethnic minority children involved in the criminal justice system, and additional vulnerability factors."*

This aligns with what I know and what I observe of the practice from dedicated colleagues within the Children and Families directorate and across the wider multi-agency partnership and I am delighted that their excellent work was recognised and acknowledged by the inspectors.

*Inspectors also reported that "The Youth Justice Board is a strong partnership. It contributes effectively to the understanding of serious youth violence in the city. It routinely and systematically reviews incidents of serious youth violence and identifies key issues.... There is evidence of challenge between partners facilitating actions at a strategic and operational level."*

The findings of the inspection provide reassurance of the many areas of good practice that exist in Leeds in one of the most challenging and dynamic areas of our work whilst identifying areas for further improvement and learning.

The Youth Justice Partnership Board will now work with our key partners involved in the inspection to develop and implement an action plan based on the findings in order to achieve the very best outcomes for children and their families. The plan will be overseen by the LSCP as part of the city's multi agency safeguarding arrangements.

We have recently appointed Jacinta Kane to the role of Head of Service with responsibility for the Youth Justice Service. I am delighted that Jacinta will join us on 15th July 2024 to take on her new role and to work tenaciously with colleagues and partners to implement this plan. Jacinta has over 20 years' experience of working in corporate parenting roles in local government. She comes to Leeds from a previous Assistant Director Role in the South of England and brings with her a wealth of knowledge, passion and commitment to the children and young people of our city, having managed a range of children's services including Youth Justice services in Harrow.

As in previous years this plan sets out clear expectations for how children should be helped and treated by all professionals within the partnership, Voice and Influence, enabling children and families with lived experience to have their voices heard, to shape and influence service delivery is central to our work our Youth Justice Plan and broader Children and Young People's Plan.

We are committed to working 'with' children and their families to translate our Child Friendly Leeds ambition into reality – with Leeds really being the best city for ALL children to live and grow up in.



*Julie Longworth*

Julie Longworth  
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## Introduction, Vision and Strategy

The strategic aim of the youth justice system is to prevent offending by children as set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Leeds Youth Justice Service Partnership Board is responsible for coordinating provision of youth justice services across the city, overseeing the Youth Justice Service (YJS) which is our multi-agency service with representation from a range of organisations including the Probation Service, West Yorkshire Police, Health Services, Education, the Voluntary Sector and the Local Authority Children's Services. We aim to achieve this through the delivery of safe, just and inclusive services, based on child-first principles, which ensure children are safeguarded, the public and victims of crime are protected and those who enter the criminal justice system are supported with robust safety planning and risk management arrangements.

Leeds YJS Partnership Board actively promotes Child Friendly Leeds, striving to make Leeds the best city for children to grow up in, to thrive from early years to adulthood. The Board shares the ambitions of the [Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2023-2028](#) (LCYPP) and the relentless focus on the question 'What is it like to be a child or young person growing up in Leeds and how do we make it better?' The YJS strategy is underpinned by the LCYPP five outcomes for all children:

- Are safe from harm
- Do well at all levels of learning and have skills for life
- Enjoy healthy lives
- Have fun growing up
- Are active citizens who feel they have a voice and influence

We are committed to playing our part in delivering on the priorities in the LCYPP, with a particular focus on:

- Helping children and parents to live in safe, supportive and loving families
- Ensuring the most vulnerable children are protected
- Increasing the number of children participating and engaging in learning
- Improving achievement and attainment for all pupils
- Improving at a faster rate educational progress for pupils vulnerable to poorer learning outcomes
- Improving social, emotional, and mental health and wellbeing of children
- Supporting children to make good choices and minimise risk taking behaviours

Our vision is to be safe, just and inclusive in our approach and the value set detailed in our plan shows what this means in terms of the way in which we work with children, their families and communities.

This plan is intended to support and strengthen the [Safer Stronger Communities Plan](#) while also contributing to the following ambitions set out in the [Best Council Plan 2020-2025](#) and the [Best City Ambition](#)

**Safe, Strong Communities:** Delivery of the priorities identified in the Youth Justice Plan 2024-27 will help keep people safe from harm and protect the most vulnerable. Reducing offending and reoffending and providing appropriate, targeted and positive support to children and their families will help us create safer, stronger, and more resilient communities.

**Promoting Community Resilience:** By working as a partnership to give 'the right support at the right time' to children and families and by listening to and acting upon solutions voiced by children and families themselves we aim to deliver more locally derived solutions to crime committed by children in Leeds.

**Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls:** This plan recognises the role played by the YJS Partnership in tackling gender-based violence and the importance of promoting and modelling positive masculinity.

**Child Friendly City:** The Child-First principles embedded within this plan and encapsulated in the YJS values statement directly contribute to several of the priority areas in the Children's and Young People's Plan – for example, helping children to make good choices and minimise risk-taking behaviours.

The YJS strategically aligns with the Children's Population Health Board, which is responsible for improving the outcomes, experience and value of NHS spend for all children who live in.

Our three-year Youth Justice Strategy 2024-27 has been developed through consultation with children and their families, with staff, with a wide range of partners and stakeholders, and with the YJ Partnership Board and sets out our four priority areas as follows:

- Prevention & Diversion: Reduce the number of children entering or re-entering the youth justice system
- Custody & Resettlement: Reduce the number of children in custody and positive resettlement from custody
- Risk Outside of the Home: Reduce and prevent exploitation and serious violence whilst developing families as protective partners
- Disproportionality: Identify and address inequality in the youth justice system

Underpinning the priority areas are the six Golden Threads of the service, which the YJS will have a relentless focus on:

- Child-First
- Education, Training and Employment
- Think Family, Work Family
- Trauma-Informed Practice
- Mental Health
- Victims

These priorities will be achieved during 2024/25 by:

Prevention & Diversion		
Outcome	What will we do?	How will we measure success?
Reduce the number of children entering the youth justice system	Develop a strategic and operational response to the end of Turnaround funding to ensure that there continues to be a preventative offer to children	There will be a preventative offer for children in place by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025 which will be underpinned by policy  FTE data will measure success
	Establish links and a clear pathway between the YJS and the new Family Help Hubs	Policy will be in place which outlines the pathway between the YJS and Family Help Hubs
Reduce the number of children re-entering the youth justice system	Undertake a multi-agency audit and review of decision-making for out of court disposals	Audits will be undertaken, learning will feed into service development at an operational and strategic level  Reoffending data will measure success
	Establish a Referral Order Scrutiny Panel	Referral Order Scrutiny Panel will have been established
	Embed the Prevention and Diversion Assessment Tool	The tool will be embedded in the case management system Training will be delivered to the whole service on the tool The use of the tool will be embedded in the service

Custody & Resettlement		
Outcome	What will we do?	How will we measure success?

Reduce the number of children in custody	A YJS & CSWS joint remand policy will be developed	There will be a remand policy embedded in the YJS and CSWS Data will demonstrate a reduction in short-term remands YDA and an increase in remand LA
Ensure positive resettlement from custody	Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be developed for children in custody	All children in custody will have an IEP Data will demonstrate that children leaving custody will have an education offer upon resettlement
	Children leaving custody will be supported to safely return to the care of their families upon resettlement	A parenting strategy will be developed which encompasses support for parents / carers of children in custody to be protective partners Data will demonstrate an increase in children leaving custody into the care of their families

Risk Outside of the Home		
Outcome	What will we do?	How will we measure success?
Reduce and prevent exploitation and serious violence	Embed the Concerns for the Safety and Wellbeing of the Child and Others Tiered Approach to Managing Risk	The tiered approach will be embedded in the service Training will be delivered to the service on the tiered approach Quality assurance will demonstrate the effectiveness of the tiered approach
	Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be developed for children in Tier 3	All children in Tier 3 will have IEPs Data will demonstrate a decrease in children in Tier 3 who are NEET
	Communication Access Accreditation will be achieved for speech and language inclusivity	Accreditation will be achieved
Develop families as protective partners	A Parenting Strategy will be developed focusing on harnessing the capacity of parents and carers as protective partners	Parents will be consulted on the YJS offer to parents and carers A parenting strategy will be developed QA will demonstrate greater input of parents and carers as protective partners

Disproportionality		
Outcome	What will we do?	How will we measure success?

Identify and address inequality in the youth justice system	Undertake multi-agency audits focusing on disproportionality at key decision-making points	Audits will be undertaken, learning will feed into service development at an operational and strategic level both within the YJS and across the partnership
	The YJS will take part in research with the University of Manchester: <i>Exploring race, disproportionality in diversion from the youth justice system</i>	The service will commit resource for the research project Feedback will be received from the researcher which will feed into service development at an operational and strategic level
	The Race & Identity Action Plan will be refreshed	The plan will be refreshed

## Local Context

### Local Delivery Environment

#### *Local Population Demographics*

Leeds is a growing city with an estimated population of 809,036 (ONS, Census 2021) and is home to an estimated 172,651 children aged 18 or under (ONS, Mid-Year Estimates 2021). As a core city, the size and scale of the city, both in terms of the children, families and communities within it, alongside a complex landscape of services, creates additional challenges for all working within this environment.

The 2023 School Census tells us that:

- 37.8% of pupils are from ethnically diverse backgrounds (38.9% of primary pupils and **36.2%** of secondary pupils)
- 21.6% have English as an additional language (EAL) (22.8% of primary pupils and **20.2%** of secondary pupils). This has nearly doubled over the past decade but there is no change from last year.
- 26.0% of pupils are entitled to free school meals (FSM) (25.4% of primary pupils and **26.0%** of secondary pupils). This has reduced slightly from last year, following the significant increase from the year before.

44.0% of the school population live in the most deprived areas of the city (IMD, 2019); which are also areas of higher crime and anti-social behaviour by children. The [Leeds Best City Ambition](#) (an overall vision for the future of Leeds) focusses on tackling poverty and inequality, improving the quality of life for everyone who calls Leeds home. Key workstreams for the Leeds Child Poverty Strategy include empowering families, safeguarding, financial health and inclusion and transitions and employment. Members of the YJS Partnership Board also sit on the Child Poverty Impact Board and ensure join up.

### Service Delivery Environment

Leeds YJS sits within the Directorate of Children and Families within Leeds City Council. The YJS comprises of three area-based teams in the north east, north west and south of the city, with a city-wide Interventions and ISS team, an early intervention Turnaround Team and Court Team. In addition, the management team is complimented by a Performance and Improvement Manager, and a Finance and Resource Manager. Geographically, the service works from three locality bases, one within each area-based wedge that the city is organised into, and the youth court. The YJS area-based team model works well in understanding local needs

and developing relationships with the rich and diverse network of community support organisations working in localities.

The Court Team provides daily cover for Leeds Youth, Magistrates and Crown Courts, with dedicated Youth Courts and Youth trials, and is staffed by Leeds, Wakefield and Kirklees Youth Justice Services. On Saturdays and Bank Holidays Leeds Magistrates Courts provide bail and remand Courts for children from across West Yorkshire, with a duty YJS Court service provided by West Yorkshire Youth Justice Teams. The work of the Court team received praise from HMIP Inspectors who visited Leeds YJS for the Joint thematic inspection of children remanded in youth detention accommodation in May 2023.

Leeds has seen an increase in out of area children appearing in Leeds Courts, as a direct result of children being charged with offences committed inside HMYOI Wetherby, which has posed challenges for the Court Team, due to the impact on resources. The Court Team work closely with HMYOI Wetherby to mitigate impact wherever possible.

The manager of the South and West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium is seconded from Sheffield but located and managed within Leeds YJS structures. Our youth justice practitioners comprise two grades, the Youth Justice Officer grade which requires a professional qualification in social work, probation, youth justice or youth work; and an unqualified Youth Justice Worker grade. We have a centralised team of Education Officers and a dedicated YJS activities worker. We have retained dedicated business support arrangements. Partnership arrangements in Leeds are strong, with seconded CAMHS nurses, police officers, probation staff and speech and language therapists. We have an in-house specialist family group conference officer, a volunteer coordinator and two victim liaison officers as well as an in-house information officer and good links to the directorate's policy and information team. The YJS seconds one member of staff to the Skill Mill. This year has seen increased links with the city's drug and alcohol service, Forward Leeds, whose staff base themselves at the area offices weekly, and who run groups within the service.

Leeds YJS management structures include a dedicated Service Delivery Manager with Operational Managers and Practice Managers.

The YJS structure chart can be found in appendix 2.

### [Leeds Children's Services](#)

In 2022 Ofsted judged Leeds Children's Services to be 'outstanding' in their overall effectiveness, stating that: *'The Leeds model of practice, based on a restorative approach with families, is coherent and palpable throughout the services offered to children'.*

*'Children and families benefit from well-established and extensive early help support, including through cluster arrangements with schools and children's centres, with early help teams provide targeted support formulated with families to identify children's needs and families' strengths – meaning children receive the right support and at the right time. Children who are missing from education are managed well, as are those who are electively home educated'.*

*'Leeds City Council prides itself on promoting a child-friendly city, where it is a good place to be a child. The Leeds practice model of restorative practice is wholly and authentically embedded within the strategic leadership group as much as it is within the operational layers of the service. This brings a strong and supportive value base and culture that ensures a keen focus on children and families' partnership and empowerment'.*

*'Children at risk of criminal and sexual exploitation are identified and well supported. Multi-agency approaches to identifying and disrupting exploitation are effective'.*

*'Despite the pressures, Leeds has maintained a relentless focus on prioritising services and support to children and families'.*

Leeds is developing a new Family and Community Hub Model of Delivery for Family Help, building on the strength of the partnership approach that was praised by Ofsted. The city will expand from three to nine Hubs, which will be embedded in local communities. Such an approach also builds on relationships with third sector organisations, who play a key role in the Youth Justice Partnership Board. The Family Hub model directly supports the aim of the YJS to reduce the rate of first-time entrants to the youth justice system. The YJS works closely with partners implementing this model to provide data which assists in ensuring that this provision targets those who may be disadvantaged and therefore more at risk of entering into the youth justice system.

CSWS has embedded a Risk Out of the Home Pathway in Child Protection processes, which utilises a Contextual Safeguarding approach where extra-familial significant risk of harm is identified. Over the past 12 months the YJS has reviewed internal processes for risk management to ensure better alignment with Contextual Safeguarding approaches. One of the key successes of this approach has been engaging non-traditional safeguarding partners in processes, and supporting parents and carers to be 'Protective Partners,' the learning from which has been utilised to inform YJS service delivery.

## Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements

Governance arrangements for Leeds YJS are provided through our Youth Justice Service Partnership Board which is chaired by the Director of Children's Services and includes executive leaders from across partner services, political leadership and relevant contributory third sector organisations. The YJS Partnership Board has an active role in informing strategic decision-making and is well placed to facilitate resource allocation where required. Quarterly meetings are themed around one of the Youth Justice Plan priorities, with the Board also retaining critical and strategic oversight of the performance of the service.

The Head of Service with responsibility for the YJS post is currently vacant however Jacinta Kane joins us as the new Head of Service in summer 2024. Cover has been provided in the interim, from a Head of Service with youth justice experience, to ensure continuity during this period. The YJS structurally sits alongside Children Looked After Services within the Children and Families Directorate of Leeds City Council. The dedicated YJS Service Delivery Manager is part of the extended Children's Services Leadership Team, resulting in excellent partnerships and joint working between services such as fostering, children's homes, children looked after social work teams, leaving care services and Adel Beck Secure Children's Home.

Strategically, Leeds YJS is fully integrated into local partnership planning arrangements for children and criminal justice services. The YJS has representation on a number of strategic groups including the Local Children's Safeguarding Partnership, the Prevent Silver Group, the Corporate Parenting Board, the Children and Families Equality and Diversity group, MACE Silver Group, the Liaison and Diversion Board, the Safer Leeds Executive, the Reducing Reoffending Board, the Serious Violence and Serious Organised Crime Board, and the ASB Silver Board; reports are provided to all Boards in relation to cross cutting safeguarding and youth crime related issues.

As highlighted elsewhere within this report, the YJS is strategically linked with partners with respect of the Serious Violence Duty, and operationally with respect of the partnership response to children identified as being at risk of serious violence through Project Shield.

West Yorkshire YJSs have worked together productively for a number of years, recognising the benefits of sharing good practice and problem solving. Whilst each has solid foundations in their local authority structures, the county-wide nature of other criminal justice agencies and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Mayor provide an incentive to co-operate across local authority boundaries. West Yorkshire YJS Service Managers meet monthly to identify areas of common interest and work together on joint projects. In addition the Leeds YJ Service Delivery Manager represents the five West Yorkshire YJSs at the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) for West Yorkshire, and has recently taken on responsibility for the strategic representation of West Yorkshire YJSs at the Serious Violence Reduction Strategic Executive Group under the serious violence duty.

Operationally, Leeds YJS benefits from a good range of partnership arrangements:

- Three police officers are seconded directly into the Service and take a lead on out of court disposal arrangements and information sharing between the two agencies. There are close links between the YJS police officers and the Safer Schools officers, Family Help Hub police officers and Youth Crime Prevention police officer who share management arrangements.
- 2.8 youth justice nurses are seconded from CAMHS.
- Two SLT practitioners are seconded from health
- Probation second x1 FTE Officer and x1 FTE Support Officer.

- Forward Leeds provide substance use workers and specialists to facilitate groupwork for each of the area teams.
- Skill Mill Ltd. Continues to work in partnership with Leeds YJS.
- Leeds YJS Court Team works in partnership with Bradford and Kirklees Youth Justice Services to provide daily cover for the Leeds Youth, Magistrates and Crown Courts.
- Partnership with LASBT has continued to strengthen the YJS response to contextual safeguarding, with ASB colleagues sitting on concerns for the safety of others panels.
- CSWS specialist risk outside of the home service, the Safe Project, is co-located with the YJS, .

### Speech & Language Therapy

This year we have had a re-organisation of the Speech and Language resource within the YJS to respond to the needs of the service to enable a holistic, whole-system approach. The service assesses all children at risk of custody, to ensure that courts are informed about speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and those aged 13 and below, to have maximum impact on education outcomes. All other children are screened during assessment and are referred for assessment based on need. Recognising the importance of parents/carers as protective partners, the service actively promotes their engagement with SLT. The SLT is also involved in training and conferences for health and education professionals. For example, short training/workshops about identifying SLCN in schools, making the link between unidentified needs and increased risk of exclusion, leading to increased vulnerability and risk of exploitation. The aim is to share the knowledge to increase school awareness of link between SLCN and SEMH. The YJS is committed to speech and language inclusivity and aims to achieve communication access accreditation for the service over the next year [Communication Access UK – Inclusive communication for all \(communication-access.co.uk\)](http://communication-access.co.uk).

#### Case Study

C (aged 14) was on a Referral Order when seen for SLCN assessment across two sessions, one in the Alternative Provision they were attending and the other in the Youth Justice Centre. A full communication profile (including strengths and areas of need and difference) was gained through formal and informal assessment, including self-evaluation of his communication skills.

Assessment scores and reported impact on daily life indicated difficulties in receptive language (understanding spoken information), and that needs may meet the criteria for Developmental Language Disorder. This term describes a cluster of persistent language difficulties; while each individual is affected differently, their needs impact on interactions and educational progress. SLT attended and contributed to a 5 P's formulation with other professionals; following this meeting, specific resources were sent to school to use with C (to support understanding of time concepts). A full SLT report with findings, advice and recommendations was provided.

Direct support with SLC skills from the SLT team was offered and it was agreed that further sessions would be of benefit. Due to the complexity of needs, the planning and timing of these sessions needed careful consideration in the context of other needs (e.g. support with substance misuse, emotional and mental wellbeing) and continued liaison with the case manager to provide the right level of support at the right time. C started sessions with the SLTA, which started with a review of what support they would want (using a health coaching approach, centring their views so they led their communication goals). Following intervention, they will be asked for their opinions about how useful the input was to evaluate any progress made with goals.

### Health Needs

It has been a priority this year to ensure health and education specialists work in a co-ordinated way due to the complexity of needs of many of the children working with the YJS, including SEND and the impact of their needs on education outcomes, safeguarding and re-offending. This is achieved through joint supervision and joint specialist meetings which are co-ordinated to include education and SLT specialists due to the high level of need relating to neurodiversity and SEND. This enables health professionals to sequence assessments

appropriately, which ensures full attendance at formulations, which support concerns for the welfare of others panels.

The YJ Nurses have excellent relationships with the community neurodevelopmental team in CAMHS, they undertake the preliminary information gathering and screening with parents and children and where a need for an assessment is identified, children open to the YJS are fast tracked for a neurodiversity assessment. However, the national shortage of ADHD medication has had some impact on children working with the YJS. The YJ Nurses continue to liaise with a range of health professionals to try to ensure everyone is kept safe. This includes co-ordinating services for FCAMHS, community consultant psychiatrists prescribing medication and the early intervention psychosis service, Aspire. Monthly meetings take place with FCAMHS to discuss potential referrals and seek advice. This has improved joint working and increased the access to service from FCAMHS for children working with the YJS.

The YJ Nurses continue to support trauma informed practice in the YJS through their oversight through formulation of all children where there is a high level of concern for their own or others safety. The formulations provide sequencing advice and a next steps plan, which helps to inform risk management and contingency planning.

However, despite the strength in the resource within the service, there have been distinct challenges in achieving services for some children, who have been impacted by the wider impact of resource constraints in mental health services for children nationally. Learning from these circumstances has been appropriately shared with the Youth Justice Partnership Board.

## Update on the Previous Year

### Progress on Priorities in Previous Plan

Leeds YJS Partnership Board set a number of priorities in the Youth Justice Plan 2021-24. Below highlights progress on those priority areas.

#### Priority 1

**Reduce the number of children and young people entering or re-entering the criminal justice system.**

Outcome Statement	Outcome Measure	Performance at February 2024	Rag
Reduce the number of young people re-entering the criminal justice system due to subsequent disposals	Reoffending Data PNC	Reoffences per re-offender (Jan to Dec '21) is on average 5.63, an increase from 3.9 the previous year. The rate increased both locally and nationally in the same period but at a slower rate than in Leeds. The binary rate for reoffending Jan '21 to Dec '21, (latest period) was up to 40.3% from 35.9% the previous year. This compares to an England and Wales rate of 31.4%.	
Reduce the number of young people entering the criminal justice system for the first time	First Time Entrant Data PNC	In the YJB's most recently published figures, the FTE rate per 100,000 of 10–17 population October 2022 to September 2023 was 251, a decrease of 6% from the previous year. This compares to an England and Wales average rate of 171.	



The numbers of children entering and re-entering the criminal justice system remains an area of development for the service. Turnaround and Outcome 22, Chance to Change, are starting to have positive impacts on FTEs, as highlighted in the decrease from the previous year, however this remains a key strategic priority area for the YJS Partnership Board.

### Priority 2

#### Identify and address racial inequality in the youth justice system and support cultural cohesion

Outcome Statement	Outcome Measure	Performance at February 2024	Rag
The Service delivers on its race and identity action plan	Rag rating of the plan	Race & Identity Action Plan has progressed, however there remain opportunities to strategically link YJS priority in this area across other strategic priorities across the partnership, and to share learning from YJS data in this regard.	Yellow
There is a proportionate representation to the demographic of Leeds in the youth justice service cohort	Childview YJB disproportionality toolkit	Whilst the proportion of white to BAME children remains in line with the city's demographic, there continues to be over-representation of mixed heritage and Gypsy Roma children in the justice system in Leeds	Red
The Service monitors and analyses racial disproportionality in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cohort as a whole</li> <li>• Assetplus needs analysis</li> <li>• Compliance and breach</li> <li>• Engagement in services</li> <li>• Disposal and sentence outcome</li> <li>• Custody</li> </ul>	Childview	Data highlighting racial disproportionality is a golden thread and a consideration in all data sets across the service. This includes consideration at every Youth Justice Partnership Board meeting and within management meetings. This data is shared both strategically and operationally to support a partnership response to tackling racial inequality and disproportionality.	Green

The YJS Race and Identity Action Plan is held to account by the YJS Partnership Board and sets out the detail as to how the service will identify and address racial inequalities within the youth justice system and actively promote cultural cohesion. This remains a priority for the Board, and as highlighted above there is still key progress to be made in this area; this Action Plan will be refreshed alongside the priorities.

### Priority 3

#### Doing the simple things better

Outcome Statement	Outcome Measure	Performance at February 2024	Rag
Delivery of Service Improvement Plan	Service Improvement Plan	The YJS Service Improvement Plan has	Green

The Service Improvement Plan has driven service delivery and developments at an operational level, supporting improvements in performance and ultimately outcomes for children within the YJS.

#### Priority 4

##### Reducing Serious Youth Violence

Outcome Statement	Outcome Measure	Performance at February 2024	Rag
A reduction in the number of young people convicted of serious violence offences	YJB SYV toolkit Any drug, robbery or violence against the person offence which has a gravity score of 5 or more	Convictions for SYV offences remains a concern.	
A reduction of the number of young people presenting to the emergency department of Leeds hospitals with injuries caused through violence	Data from the A & E navigator	The funding to the YJS for Safe Talk ceased in the previous year as the VRU wanted this work to be undertaken by a single provider, the hospitals, through the A&E Navigators, thereby mirroring how other such services across West Yorkshire are carried out. The YJS has an established link with the A&E Navigator service delivering on this work.	
A reduction in the number of young people convicted of knife crime offences	Childview	Convictions for knife offences have continued to fluctuate in the last few years. Knife crime offence charges remain over 50% more prevalent than our West Yorkshire counterparts. This continues to remain a priority for Leeds, with recent tragedies highlighting the devastating impact of knife crime.	

Please see the Section on Serious Violence, Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding for further information.

#### Priority 5

##### Attendance, achievement and attainment

Outcome Statement	Outcome Measure	Performance at February 2024	Rag
Young people are engaged in suitable education, training and employment through the course of their intervention with the YJS that is sustained after their Order	Childview: ETE hours offered ETE hours engaged in	A deep dive into ETE outcomes undertaken in November 2023 indicated that 65% of school aged children had the full offer, consistent with previous years but only 40% attended the full offer (down from 55%).  52% of children post 16 were NEET, a 9% increase from the previous year.	

With the launch of the new Leeds Children and Young People's Plan, the time was right to update the Refreshed 3As Plan. Education remains a key focus area in the Leeds Youth Justice Strategy 2024-27 as one of our 'Golden Threads', with our latest data showing low levels of education, training and employment for children aged 16 – 18 in the justice system, with 52% of children post-16 being NEET, an increase on the previous year. There is therefore clear evidence that there is more work to be done to tackle the number of

NEET children involved with the YJS. Education colleagues are key Board Members. The synergy between the overarching refreshed 3A's Strategy and this key focus area ensures opportunities for collaboration with the education sector both at a strategic level and in relation to the specific action plan and implementation. The Youth Justice Service Education Action Plan, which was reviewed in January 2024, sets out the detail as to how the YJS, alongside key partners, will improve educational outcomes for children within the justice system, ensuring a better quality experience for children, whilst promoting inclusion and belonging, alongside better support for children and families to make the changes that they need to.

### Priority 6

#### Reducing custody and positive resettlement of children from custody

Outcome Statement	Outcome Measure	Performance at February 2024	Rag
Resettlement promise delivered to young people	Audit on each young person on release and three months after release	The resettlement promise is delivered to children on their release from prison.	
Reduced numbers of young people sentenced to custody	Childview	There was a slight decrease in children serving custodial sentences, down to 14 in 2023 from 16 in 2022	
Reduced numbers of young people remanded to custody	Childview	There was a total of 21 children remanded to custody in 2023, an increase from 17 in 2022.	
Reduction in remand nights annually	Childview	There were 1884 remand nights for children from Leeds in 2023, an increase from 1307 the previous year.	
Improved ETE provision on release from custody	Childview	Our review of the resettlement arrangements of each young person released from custody in 2022/23 indicates that this remains an area of challenge for us.	

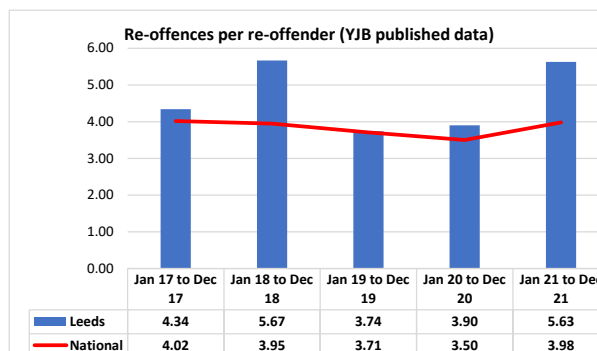
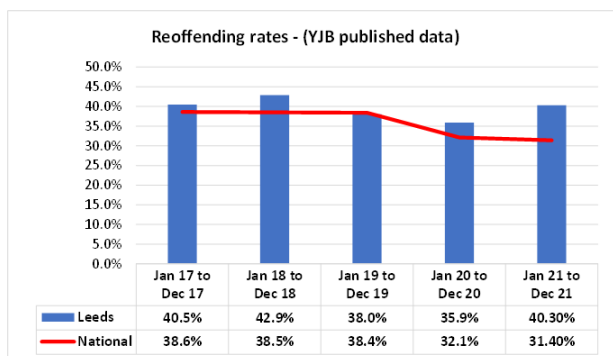
Leeds YJS is an active partner in the South and West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium at both strategic and operational levels, as highlighted within this document, which enables joint working and standard setting at a strategic level across South and West Yorkshire. This remains a key strategic priority area for the service.

## Performance Over the Previous Year

### National Key Performance Indicators

Existing key performance indicators

#### Reoffending

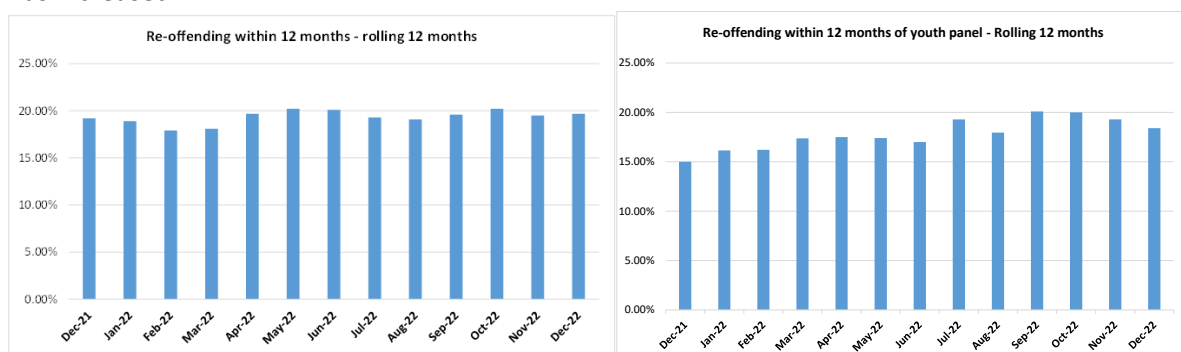


These graphs show the latest reoffending rates published by the YJB for 12 month period ending December 2021, which were published in December 2023. The YJB

published data tracks re-offences in the 12 month period following qualifying outcome but continues to track over a longer period; this means that figures are more lagged than those produced locally, but allows the time for cases to be processed.

In the five-year period the rate in Leeds has fluctuated, with an increase in the latest period to similar levels seen to the end of 2017 (40%). Nationally rates have steadily fallen over the same period to a low of 31.4%, widening the gap between local and national performance.

There was an increase in the average number of reoffences per reoffender in Leeds, up to 5.63. Although there has also been a rise national, this was at a slower rate so the gap between Leeds and national performance has increased.



Local reoffending measures are taken from ChildView and show the rolling twelve-month average of children who re-offend within 12 months of receiving a qualifying outcome/within 12 months of a youth panel outcome. These are provided to show the latest information, whilst acknowledging that there will be some children who have not yet received an outcome therefore actual rates will be higher; however, this is consistently the case and therefore the general trend in reoffending rates will be reflected.

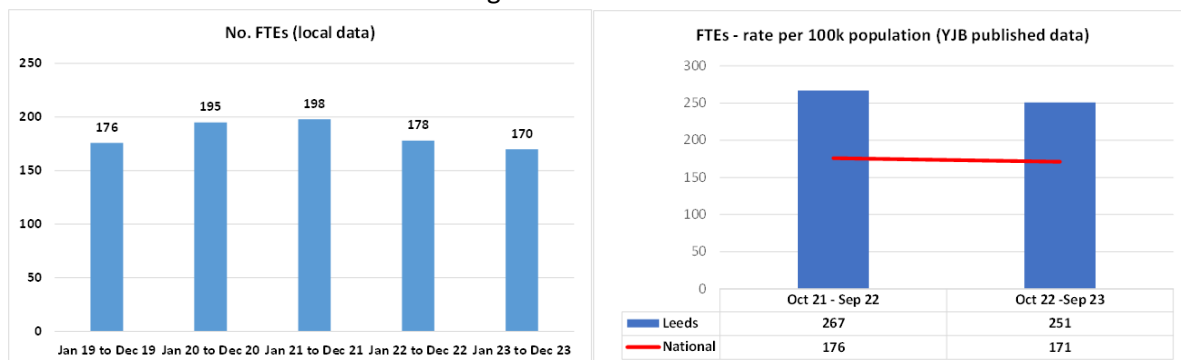
Overall reoffending rates have remained at around 20% in the reporting period.

For those who receive an outcome at Youth Panel, the reoffending rate has fluctuated and latest figure in December 2022 stood at 18%.

Education is a key factor in reducing the reoffending rate. The additional Education Officer capacity within the service provides the opportunity to further develop this area of work, with the focus for the forthcoming year on developing Individualised Education Plans for targeted cohorts of children. The number of NEET children, particularly post-16, highlights a significant gap for those at risk of reoffending.

First Time Entrants

The latest annual YJB figures were published in December 2023 and relate to the period to end of September 2023. The FTE rate (per 100k population) in Leeds has fallen by 6% in the 12-month period to September 2023, whereas nationally the numbers have fallen by 2.8%, so although the rate in Leeds remains higher, the gap has been narrowed. The YJB has changed the source data for the figures, from PNC to case level data, so we are not able to compare with historic FTE rates beyond the last year. This cohort includes children who receive an outcome at court and those who are given a Youth Caution or Youth Conditional Caution.



Reducing the number of FTEs remains a strategic priority for the service.

### Use of Custody

<b>Custody and Remands Q3 2023/24</b>	<b>Young People</b>
DTO/Custody Programme	3
Remand in Custody (YDA) SCH	5
Remand in Custody (YDA) STC	0
Remand in Custody (YDA) YOI	7
Remand to LAA Status/Programme	2
Section 250 Through Care Programme (prev Section 90/91)	8
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>25</b>

This table shows the number of children on remand or in custody in the quarter from data held in ChildView. The numbers of children in custody has increased, both for the remanded and sentenced cohort. As highlighted in this report, learning from the Remand Thematic Inspection (May 2023) has highlighted opportunities to improve work with CSWS to prevent unnecessary remands, and has directly fed into this refreshed strategy.

### Additional key performance indicators

From April 2023 the YJS was required to report on the following new Key Performance Indicators, with the first submission from August 2023. Data is scheduled for publication by the YJB in Spring 2025. It is not yet possible to obtain over 12 months data on these additional KPIs at a local level for trends and themes to be demonstrated.

### Suitable accommodation

Suitability of accommodation is recorded for all children on Childview. Guidance has been developed for case managers on the recording requirements for the date that accommodation is secured for custodial releases for case managers, to ensure consistency and accurate data is able to be reported on.

Suitability is impacted by families living in temporary accommodation due to homelessness, difficulties identifying suitable placements for children looked after, and children becoming homeless due to family breakdown after the age of 16. A housing consultant has worked with LCC to identify a strategy between CSWS and Leeds housing, which is under consideration. There is an invest to save strategy within the Corporate Parenting service; a placements team manager for 16 and 17 year olds has been appointed, a family reunification team has been set up, new inhouse children's homes are being developed and a placements support team is being recruited to. Managers within the service have provided training on youth justice to the Our Way Leeds supported housing team to increase their understanding and enhance the support they can provide to children they are working with in the youth justice system.

### Education, training and employment

An education screening tool has been developed for Education Officers to complete at the start and end of interventions on all children with regard to the suitability of their education offer. This takes into account hours offered and attended, and plans to support with special educational needs or reintegration into school if on a reduced timetable. The screening has been developed with an educational consultant within the Virtual School to provide objective standards for suitability, the consistency of this judgement is benchmarked by Education Officers.

Education hours offered for school age children and post-16 children is part of current performance data set; education suitability data is now being harnessed and will be included in future data sets.

### Special educational needs and disabilities/additional learning needs

In order to identify SEND needs, initial case checks take place on education systems and Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are uploaded onto Childview. The education screening tool (as outlined above) further identifies whether children have SEN, are on the SEN register and whether they have a SEN support plan other than an EHCP.

All new intervention checks include a history check on the speech and language (SLT) service database also, and all children are eligible for referral for assessment to the Speech and Language Therapist, where case managers identify a need, including those priority areas highlighted above. SLT assessments have increased the identification of children with undiagnosed SEN and communication passports are provided to education provisions where new needs are identified.

#### [Mental health care and emotional wellbeing](#)

The YJS is working with CAMHS to look at collecting and matching data for the KPIs including identifying children already receiving an intervention. However, given that the emotional wellbeing and mental health offer within Leeds is diverse, the work to understand this verifiable fuller picture of intervention engagement will take some considerable time to establish. YJ Nurses undertake case manager caseload review meetings to ensure all children requiring referral for intervention are being identified, and then identify the appropriate level of Thrive intervention.

#### [Substance misuse](#)

The YJS and Forward Leeds have reviewed service provision and recognised the positive impact of having dedicated workers attached to teams. Each YJS area team now has a substance use worker one day per week. Within the first quarter of implementation this has increased referrals and sustained interventions. Forward Leeds also have a groupwork education offer, which is currently being trialled with the plan to roll out across the service over the forthcoming year. Substance use is one of the KPIs which is recognised as an area for development as children can be reluctant to be referred to a specialist service however it identified that there is a high level of need regarding substance use within the current cohort of children. The YJS SDM chairs the Children's Drug and Alcohol Partnership meeting, which develops and oversees the children's priority for the citywide Drug and Alcohol Action Plan.

There are currently challenges in being able to record prior involvement with Forward Leeds as part of the KPI for children commencing with the YJS due to data sharing barriers, the YJS and Forward Leeds are working together to overcome these barriers.

#### [Out-of-court disposals](#)

The KPI requirements are already met by data already included in quarterly YJS performance report and highlighted within this report.

#### [Links to wider service](#)

Information on wider service involvement is gathered through initial new intervention checks against relevant databases.

#### [Management board attendance](#)

Management board attendance is monitored (see Appendix 1). The KPIs are discussed at the partnership meeting and performance data is being revised to include the new KPI requirements.

#### [Serious violence](#)

This is monitored through the Youth Justice Application Framework and internal performance data. In addition, as outlined within the section on Serious Violence and throughout this report, this is a significant priority and challenge for the city and YJS.

In February-March 2024 the YJS was part of the JTAI focusing on Serious Youth Violence, within which positive feedback was received regarding the response of the service and partnership to children identified as being at risk or involved in serious youth violence.

#### [Victims](#)

This data is already collected by Victim Liaison Officers, as highlighted within this report

## Local performance

Over the past twelve months the YJS has developed an internal monthly reporting-up mechanism which monitors the performance of all teams. This requires each team to analyse key data alongside the narrative relating to that data. This is providing the service with greater strategic oversight of the key strengths and challenges in performance, and highlights areas for development for the service.

An internal quarterly performance review meeting is currently being developed to compliment the reporting-up mechanism. This will commence in Q1.

## Risks and Issues

### Serious Youth Violence

Serious Youth Violence has been a significant challenge for the city over the past few years. Multi-agency focus on the local needs assessment, and strategic and operational response to serious violence and to the prevention of it, as detailed within this document, has resulted in tangible measures in place to reduce serious violence. The city's response was recently praised in the JTAI focusing on Serious Youth Violence, 2024. Data has demonstrated a reduction in incidents of violence, however despite these efforts the city has sadly seen tragedies that have impacted across all services, not least the YJS.

The level of risk and concern for the safety of others that the service is working with currently is unparalleled. An increase in the complexity of work paints a worrying picture for many of the children that we are working with. This in turn impacts on the resilience of staff, previously those covering the East of the city, where there is the highest prevalence of serious youth violence, have been most impacted, however the past year has seen incidents of violence spread further across the city, and as a result staff resilience across the service has been impacted. The links between serious youth violence, exploitation, urban street gangs and serious organised crime is evident, and as the new 'Working Together Model' has rolled out that as a city the focus has shifted to becoming more preventative in our responses, alongside having clearly established processes for a timely, partnership response when an incidence has occurred, with the aim to ultimately save lives.

In addition to the citywide response, internally the YJS undertake regular 'mapping' exercises to try to better understand children, concerns for them and the safety of others, in order to try and better understand rivalries and keep children and staff safe when attending appointments.

Staff safety is an absolute priority, and in response to the increase in serious youth violence the YJS has reviewed all risk assessments and made appropriate amendments to reflect the increase in risk to children and staff; individualised staff communication agreements have been put in place to ensure that should a significant incident occur that staff are supported in a way that is tailored to their needs. The YJS is part of a wider Leeds City Council working group looking at lone working and safe working practices; new guidance has been developed for staff across the whole directorate in that regard.

### Poverty and the cost of living crisis

The impact of poverty and the cost of living crisis continues to be evident in relation to the children we work with, their families, to staff, as a service and within the wider council itself. We have continue to see families having to choose between food and heating over the winter period. With deepening inequalities impacting on social exclusion, disaffection and crime, alongside a growth in children being exploited into serious organised crime, seemingly taking advantage of the poverty that many find themselves within. The YJS continues to advocate for children and their families, routinely signposting to specialist support services and distributing Fareshare food to those in need.

The impact of the cost of living crisis also has a knock-on effect to staff and their morale, many of whom may themselves have had to make difficult financial decisions. As a service, budgets have had to be balanced, with

decisions taken to reduce spend in some areas to ensure that the service can keep running without impacting on children, and without necessitating a reduction in staffing.

## Public sector finances

Organisationally, there continues to be significant financial pressure on the city council and other public services. One of the significant factors in the deficit are the rising costs of caring for vulnerable children in the city. Within the YJS we have seen an increasing number of children requiring placements, often outside of Leeds due to the perceived risk within the city. The benefit of the service strategically focusing on parents and carers as 'Protective Partners' aims to increase the number of children living safely within their families, thereby reducing any unnecessary spend on the cost of care.

In addition, many third sector partners are seeing a reduction in funding, impacting on their ability to support vulnerable children and families across the city. Leeds has a strong partnership, demonstrated through the citywide work in respect of serious youth violence, however it has to be acknowledged that reduced resources and financial pressures over the forthcoming years is a risk for the service.

At the time of writing, the YJS has yet to receive confirmation of grant for 2024/25 from the Youth Justice Board, making financial planning a challenge. In addition to this we have received notification that Turnaround funding will cease from March 2025 presenting a significant challenge to our preventative and diversionary offer. Additional specific grant funds remain subject to annual renewal, meaning funds may reduce or potentially cease altogether. Where short-term funding streams have been made available to the YJS, their time limited nature means it is often difficult to adapt our delivery model and staffing arrangements in the required timescales, Immediate Justice has been a prime example of this.

As part of our strategy to manage risks to future service delivery in an uncertain financial climate, the Youth Justice Service will consider the organisational structure over the forthcoming year. This will ensure that it is fully aligned to enable the delivery of statutory work, whilst aligning strategically with partners to deliver non-statutory work where the service is not able to fund delivery internally. The strong restorative value-base of the service will continue to transcend these challenges *'with'* children, families and multi-agency partnerships. We are committed to continuing to innovate and improve outcomes for children in the city, alongside our key partners.

## Plan for the Forthcoming Year

### Child First

Child Friendly Leeds was launched in 2012 and is the thread which brings together all the work we do to create better outcomes for all children in the city. This is a crucial element of the council's work to become the best city in the UK by 2030 and the Youth Justice Service work with partners across Leeds to ensure children in the justice system are fully included in this work. The concept of Child Friendly Leeds is well understood by agencies and means that a child-first approach to youth justice is an accepted ambition in the wider partnership beyond the Children and Families Directorate. The YJS values statement was developed in 2018 as a way of describing what child-friendly youth justice means both in principle and practice. The values statement is very visible in the buildings where we meet children, is widely shared with partners and forms part of the induction for Partnership Board members.

The key priority areas and objectives identified by the Youth Justice Partnership Board and Service in the Youth Justice Plan 2024-27 are founded on child-first, relational principles and demonstrate our ambition to address disadvantage and discrimination, prevent offending and divert children away from the formal criminal justice system and promote positive opportunities for those within the system. Examples of our child-first approach are woven throughout this document.

### Voice of the Child

The YJS remains committed to putting the child at the centre of all we do and recognise the importance of creating a collaborative and inclusive environment which supports them to take ownership and helps improve



their motivation. Understanding the journeys of the children we work with leaves us better placed to work with them in ways which are the most effective in achieving best outcomes.

The service recognises the importance of building a strong foundation when working with children and key to achieving this is through taking a relational approach. With this in mind the service is committed to appointing staff with the requisite skills and values to engage with children in the right way, at the right time. In order to get this right, the YJS involves children in the recruitment and selection of staff and places significant weighting on the views of children.

Recognising the benefits of the work we did last year with Leeds Involving People who represented the independent voice of the child, we are once again working with an independent project. The 'Child First' research project, commissioned by The Nuffield Foundation, aiming to develop a greater understanding of what children think about how they're involved in the Youth Justice decision-making processes.

Our model for Referral Orders includes the report for panel being written in the child's words and focus is placed on the child achieving their desired outcomes through help and support and ensuring victim needs are met through Making it Right.

The YJS ensures that children's views are gathered at the start of every intervention and at subsequent reviews. The YJS places importance on the child having a voice in all processes and on them taking ownership of their plan, which is done in collaboration with the child and their family, which also includes an emphasis on parents and carers as protective partners.

Children and parents/carers also complete self-assessment questionnaires at the start of an intervention, which are periodically reviewed. The information from the questionnaire is used not only to inform how we work most effectively with the child but also enables the YJS to identify service delivery strengths and areas for development, in order to ensure delivery of the best service possible to children.

The YJS undertakes an annual Child's Voice survey and uses the feedback to inform service development. It is the aim of the service to develop collaborative opportunities with children and to increase the child's voice within the strategic partnership.



Trauma Informed Practice

[Public Health England's Child Health Profile for Leeds](#), March 2023, estimates that:

- Children in relative low income families (under 16s) has increased to 24.6% compared to a national average of 18.5%

[Public Health England's report into health outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in Leeds](#) estimated in 2021 that:

- 19.8% of children in Leeds live in households with any of the so-called toxic trio (domestic violence, parental mental health, parental substance abuse)
- 1.2% of children live in households with all three

Leeds is on a journey to becoming a trauma-informed city, and as a result 'The Compassionate Leeds: Trauma awareness, prevention and response strategy' was launched in April 2023 and sets out the ambitious vision for partners in Leeds to work collectively as a trauma-informed city where we realise the widespread and unequal impact of adversity and recognise the part we can each play in overcoming this.

In response to this some significant developments have been undertaken recently including -

The Trauma Awareness Prevention and Response Community Grants Scheme has been set up and administered. The NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board in Leeds, Leeds City Council and Forum Central have partnered with Leeds Community Foundation to deliver a grants programme that seeks to boost protective factors in children who have experienced, or are at risk of experiencing, adversity.

The Leeds Trauma Informed Practice Integrated Resource Team has been further developed and will deliver on the following outcomes:

- The workforce working with children and families in Leeds will understand and adopt a trauma informed lens within their practice
- The organisations they work within will understand and actively support them to adopt this trauma-informed approach
- Key workforce groups will be able to access ongoing support to develop and embed a trauma informed approach in their work through reflective case discussion, supervision formulation and consultation
- There will be easy and streamlined access to joined-up, integrated trauma-focused expertise and recovery-focused intervention where needed.
- Stakeholder agencies and arenas will be working in partnership towards a Compassionate, Trauma-Informed Leeds across the life-course; families, schools/colleges and communities will have increased awareness of the impact of trauma and adversity in childhood.

This work will be a collective effort across the Leeds System to ensure children and their families are supported and with members represented from the Youth Justice Partnership Board on the Trauma Awareness, Prevention and Response Steering Group we can continue to ensure join up across the programmes of work. Trauma continues to be a key priority for children in Leeds, with a considerable number having adverse experiences which increase the risk of poor outcomes through into adulthood. In Leeds we are prioritising the early identification and support of these children and families, developing trauma informed practice across the city with clear access to expert advice and intervention when needed. The wider Leeds partnership works closely with colleagues in adult services to include the intergenerational aspect of trauma and the importance of ['Think Family, Work family'](#).

Within the YJS staff take a trauma-informed approach to their work with children and families in recognition of the impact of trauma in childhood, an understanding of the reasons that underpin the difficulties that some children have with their relationships, engagement in a learning environment and with their behaviour supports the journey to better outcomes. This approach also enables staff to advocate for the children that they are working with.

## Resources and Services

Funding for Leeds Youth Justice Service for 2022/23 is made up of contributions from statutory partners, Childrens Services, Probation, NHS, Police, Youth Justice Board, Ministry of Justice and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. The YJS also oversees the local authority budget provided to meet the cost of children remanded to the secure estate. Probation, Police and NHS resources are notionally allocated based on staff seconded to the service.

The full contributions that make up the overall Youth Justice Service budget can be seen in Appendix 4.

We use our grant, partner contributions and available resources to deliver the services detailed within this document and believe that they meet our statutory obligations, and the obligations of grant funding. As outlined above, part of our strategy to manage financial risks to service delivery, the YJS will consider the organisational structure over the forthcoming year with the aim of improving performance across our priority areas.

## Board Development

In September 2023 the Leeds YJ Partnership Board had a workshop, and requested that this was facilitated by the YJB, the Leeds YJ Partnership Board identified a number of actions to support its journey and commitment to continuous improvement. Subsequently the membership of the Board has been reviewed, with additional representatives from Education and Wetherby YOI joining the Board, a new Board induction has been developed and Terms of Reference updated. Board meetings continue to be themed to one of the identified priority areas, underpinned by data. A further Board workshop is planned for the summer.

The 2024 JTAI focusing on serious youth violence recognised the YJ Partnership Board to be a 'strong partnership.'

## Workforce Development

Leeds Youth Justice Service workforce development strategy is in line with the Youth Justice Service Professional Framework and aims to develop and maintain a high-quality workforce. In the last 12 months, there has been an 18% increase in the total caseload, this is compared to the previous 12 months when there was a 2% increase. Non-statutory interventions have increased by 65% and statutory interventions have decreased by just 2%. Alongside the volume of cases increasing, the level of complexity of the cohort of children known to the YJS has also increased. The workforce development strategy has been designed to support the workforce in response to increases in workloads.

This year, the YJS has recognised the Level 5 Youth Justice apprenticeship as the main progression route for staff to achieve qualified status. The YJS has chosen to partner with Intelligencia training. The apprenticeship is fully funded by the Apprenticeship Levy, thus being comparably more accessible for staff than the previous Youth Justice Foundation degree route, as they do not need to make a financial contribution. Due to this and the additional support built into the programme for those without passes in English and/or maths GCSEs the apprenticeship offers a more inclusive option for staff to develop, who may have experienced disadvantage. The YJS has 3 candidates on cohort 1 of the apprenticeship and 3 more staff about to start cohort 2. The cohorts are being delivered with candidates across Yorkshire, enabling our staff to learn from other YJS practice. We are expecting the first cohort to complete in 2025. It is an ambition of the service to develop existing staff and to create an evidence-based progression route for staff.

Practice Managers (PMs) provide new starters with thorough and tailored inductions with a mix of group and individual training opportunities. The Information Officer and PMs have worked with the Council IT trainers to develop video packages for Childview training, which can be used for induction but also an ongoing reference resource for the service. Our induction processes for practitioners detail their learning for the first six months of their employment in the Service; it includes the minimum training required, expectations around informal learning and competency expectations.

Staff continue to benefit from the wide-ranging offer from Leeds City Council Workforce Development Team for example restorative practice, child exploitation/contextual safeguarding and trauma informed practice. The LCC Prevent team, also provide an annual Prevent awareness week programme, with online speakers around a range of related subjects, which YJS have participated in.

AIM3 training for Harmful Sexual Behaviour was jointly recommissioned by West Yorkshire YJSs this year, co-ordinated by Leeds. Managers have also attended AIM3 supervision training, to strengthen quality assurance arrangements for AIM3 assessments within the service, the demand for which has increased over the last year.

Risk Management Panels have been refreshed in the service into a Concerns for the Safety of Others Tiered Approach. Training has been delivered to the whole service, alongside a programme of risk training delivered

by PMs. This programme of training will also include training for Chairs of those meetings to ensure consistency. The training plan for 2024 will continue to embed this new process.

The whole service attended Risk Out of the Home (ROTH) Pathway training to enable the YJS to be a proactive advocate for the newly embedded ROTH Child Protection pathway in CSWS.

We continue to work with PATH Yorkshire to give a local person from a Black and Minority Ethnic community the opportunity of a traineeship in the Service. There is currently one PATH trainee in the service, with the plan to recruit a further trainee. This has previously been recognised as a good practice example by HMIP.

The whole service has undertaken a number of Restorative Practice sessions with the aim of refreshing the restorative culture of the service, alongside which the management team have been accessing Restorative Practice Action Learning Sets, supported by the Workforce Development Team. This work will continue into 2024/25 and aims to support resiliency within the workforce.

The YJS has primarily focused on recruiting and supporting referral order panel volunteers and mentors this year. We currently have 27 volunteers, a third of whom are from black or minority ethnic backgrounds and around a third are male. Volunteers have had a monthly training offer from the YJS specialists including SLCN and trauma informed practice, to ensure they have a good knowledge of the issues faced by children in the criminal justice system. The Volunteer Co-ordinator post was vacant, however a new co-ordinator has now started with the service. Whilst the post was vacant there was some impact on volunteer retention, with the business support team providing extra support to panel members. The plan is for a volunteer recruitment drive to be undertaken late Spring 2024.

The training plan for the forthcoming year will include embedding the Prevention and Diversion Assessment Tool in the Service.

### [Evidence-based Practice and Innovation](#)

Leeds Youth Justice Service works within the context of the city's ambition to be child friendly. In practice this means working with children and their family in a positive, individualised and future focussed way. This child-first, relational approach is evidence based, grounded as it is in desistance theory. Some examples of our innovative projects are below:

#### [Seed to Feed and Beyond](#)

At the Youth Justice Centre, we have continued to make the most of the generous gardens and the specific skills of an Activities Worker who combines lived experience of the justice system with huge knowledge of the natural world and practical expertise. Children have the opportunity to engage in the 'Seed to Feed' project, growing food to give to local charities. In addition, opportunities to develop and accredit creative outdoor work have been individualised around children's own interests. Children love their one-to-one time with our worker, whose expertise and enthusiasm for his work is infectious, he describes his work as not being solely about the seed that is planted in the ground, but also the seed that is planted in the minds of children, about the different possibilities and perspectives in life, and the opportunities that children have *beyond* the YJS.

### Case Study

In Summer 2023, the Activities Worker was approached by a delivery driver who introduced themselves as the step-father of a child that the YJS had previously worked with, and who had undertaken work under the Seed to Feed and Beyond umbrella two years prior. Now aged 19, they were described as often talking about the Activities Worker, and the things that they had learned from him.

Whilst with the YJS during one Seed to Feed session, the child shared that their watch had broken. The Activities Worker encouraged the child not to throw the watch away, but to mend it, teaching him how to fix it, and what tools were needed. This particular session planted a seed in the mind of the child, who has since gone on to do an apprenticeship as a watch-maker, and who is now working at one of the top jewellers in Leeds, fixing high-end watches.

### Skill Mill

Leeds YOS over the past nine years established a Skill Mill. The Skill Mill provides young ex-offenders with a paid job working in natural environments, developing practical and employability skills and promoting desistance from crime.

The model works by employing a cohort of 4 children at any one time for a period of 6 months. During this time each cohort receives six months paid employment, invaluable practical real work experience, a nationally recognised qualification, and further opportunities for progression with local companies at the end of their time with The Skill Mill.

The programme has four main objectives; Reducing Re-Offending; Job Creation; Skill Development and Flood Risk Reduction/Natural Habitat Protection. In addition, it is designed to provide a step up arrangement into mainstream opportunities and to challenge discrimination by employers and the wider community of young ex-offenders.

We have established commercial partnerships with CEG, Myers and Leeds City Council among others to attract paid work. Over the past 12 months we have continued to work to establish better links with local communities and organisations to create added value for children and those communities.

For the last 2 years Skill Mill nationally has been awarded £2 Million in central Government funding through the Life Chances Fund. This enabled Leeds YJS to run two cohorts of Skill Mill, this funding has now finished and as a result the YJS has reverted to a single cohort.

### ROCLA / Preparing for Adulthood Forum

Recognising the longstanding over-representation of children looked after (CLA) in the justice system, The Reducing Offending by Children Looked After (ROCLA) multi-agency panel aims to find ways of appropriately diverting children in the care system away from offending and into positive support services. Currently Leeds YJS chair the ROCLA panel alongside: SAFE project, Liaison and Diversion, Therapeutic Childrens social work, CAMHS, Leeds Virtual school, Leeds Youth Service, Barca-Leeds, and WY Police attending as panel members. ROCLA was praised by Inspectors in the recent JTAI inspection focused on Serious Youth Violence.

Referrals into the ROCLA multi-agency panel provide CLA social workers the opportunity to refer children who have been identified as most at risk of being involved in offending before they have had any statutory contact with the justice system. ROCLA is held monthly and provides opportunity for an early intervention, trauma informed conversation about the appropriate services and responses to meet the child's needs. ROCLA uses a holistic approach and is solution and strengths focussed, aiming to understand the vulnerabilities and complexities of the child and where appropriate, different services are identified and recommended to the allocated Social Worker, aiming to avoid the stigma of criminalisation. ROCLA is underpinned by a relational approach, creating a strong partnership focused on reducing the numbers of care experienced children entering the criminal justice system.

The Preparing for Adulthood Forum is run jointly between Children's Social Work Service and Adult's Services, and provides a multi-agency forum to discuss vulnerable children on the cusp of adulthood in order to identify support available to them in that transitional period. This is an invaluable forum for many children within the YJS.

#### [Knife Angel & Project Shield](#)

As a response to the serious violence duty and concerns relating to serious violence within the city, February 2024 saw the arrival of the Knife Angel in the city for that month, alongside a Knife Crime Intensification Month and the launch of Project Shield as highlighted within this Plan. The YJS plays an active role in this partnership.

#### [Stay on Track](#)

Music is a powerful tool for engagement and one which all our children are familiar with. The YJS continues to run a music programme which is delivered both on a 1:1 basis and in groups which offers hands on experience of using music equipment and writing lyrics with positive messages. Key skills that are embedded through this programme include: communication, literacy, exploration of different cultures and confidence in public speaking.

#### [Resolve / ReConnect](#)

The YJS has had a dedicated family group conference and restorative conference practitioner for some years. All children open to the YJS are eligible for consideration for a family group conference or restorative meeting. These meetings are designed to improve family relationships and positive support networks for children and their parents/carers with the aim of reducing re-offending. This area of work embeds the restorative practice element of the Leeds Practice Principles within the YJS. The impact of this method of working can be significant, with families developing and owning their own plan, and addressing issues that had previously been 'stuck'. The evidence base for family group conferencing and restorative practices is well established and we are aligned with the city's family group conferencing service which undertakes the same work with the aim of supporting families to reduce care proceedings.

#### [Black History Month](#)

Throughout October the service celebrated Black History Month through a number of initiatives which included working with children to produce pieces of work that could be displayed at an event at the culmination of the month, undertaken in 1:1 and group sessions. This included artwork, poems, songs and raps/drill music. The inspirational event had a number of speakers from the global majority, including senior leaders, who shared their own personal experiences with children.

#### [Holocaust Memorial Day](#)

Leeds YJS has an educational Holocaust Memorial Day display. The display is designed to inspire YJS children and staff, to educate them about the events of the Holocaust and other genocides and devote their energies to 'building up' rather than 'tearing down' others. The display is available to view throughout the year. It is suitable for all ages and abilities, and all staff are encouraged to attend and bring their children to access it. In addition to the annual display, two Holocaust Awareness sessions have also been created which are designed to help children understand the context of the Holocaust, and to encourage them to consider how they can reach out to other individuals and groups who are in need of support and protection from hate and bigotry. These sessions help with identifying and addressing racial inequality in line with the Youth Justice Plan, developing empathy and victim awareness, issues relating to peer pressure and social pressure, consideration of belief systems and morality and decision making. Participation in the sessions and attendance at the HMD display also contribute to Making it Right hours. In addition, Antisemitism awareness training for all staff was provided by the Community Security Trust.

#### [Family Practitioner](#)

Leeds YJS have this year created a Family Practitioner role sat within the Turnaround prevention and diversion team. The focus of this role, in line with the Turnaround objectives, is to 'improve the socio-emotional, mental health and wellbeing of children' by supporting parents and carers with their own struggles that may then impact on their child's well-being and risk of (re)offending. Our worker also has a background in Speech and Language which has meant she has been able to tailor her work in a way that is meaningful for the child. This role takes a collaborative approach to identifying issues within the family, and can be delivered alongside our dedicated FGC worker. Examples of the work undertaken by the Family Practitioner: advocacy with bureaucracy, meeting practical needs in the home in relation to poverty, making referrals into more sustainable support such as counselling, supporting parents to develop their skills as protective partners, such as in setting boundaries and safety plans, educational work around specific risk concerns such as exploitation, enabling skills such as body language, comfort, and re-setting emotions when things get hard. We are also establishing a coffee morning for peer support for parents and carers.

### [Swimming](#)

Recognising the benefits of engaging children in positive activities the YJS delivered a 10-week swimming programme delivered by a qualified Swim England instructor. The objectives were:

- To improve children's confidence in and around water.
- To encourage children to engage in constructive activities.
- To improve physical and mental wellbeing.
- To gain a swimming certificate.
- To promote the other positive activities available at council run health centres.

The programme was very well received by the children who took advantage of this vital life skill.

### [Christmas Event](#)

In order to raise funds to provide additional support to children and their families over the festive period, a fundraising event was held for staff and partners, supported by children working with the YJS and local businesses. The event raised in the region of £700, and enabled the purchase of everyday and luxury items for 45 hampers for children and their families. We were also able to provide 65 gifts for children, either for themselves or to give to parents and carers.

### [PACT](#)

The PACT (Parents and Children Together) programme is a specialist group-work programme for families where a child has been violent or abusive towards their parent/s or carer/s. The group involves parallel programmes for parents and children and has been running for a number of years facilitated by the YJS. The programme is currently being evaluated.

### [Leeds Practice Model](#)

The Leeds Practice Model builds on all aspects of practice and what we know to be useful when assessing, implementing and evaluating what we do, and underpins the practice of the YJS, and aligns the partnership in Leeds. The Leeds Practice Model contains the five key elements of:

- Rethink Formulation - a way of unifying and developing practice across services in Leeds.
- Leeds Practice Principles – always working WITH, creating a context of high support and high challenge with children, families and each other; relationship-based practice; working early in the life of a problem; ensuring interventions are evidence based, formulation driven and systemic; strengths based
- Outcome Focused Supervision.
- Continuous Development; and
- Multi-agency Context.

The model places the family at the central point of convergence of these elements; each element is complementary and necessary to the other, and in turn they place emphasis on creating effective relationships, staying focused and using evidence-based approaches.

## Evaluation

### [Child-First Research](#)

The Nuffield Foundation commissioned a Child-First research project to develop a greater understanding of what children think about how they're involved in youth justice decision-making processes. The research explored how the system places children centre stage, prioritising their rights and engagement, and views, thereby promoting diversion away from the youth justice system and focusing on positive results for children. The researchers interviewed children involved with the service to share their experiences and views. The project aims to produce child-friendly guidance and materials on collaborative practice, with training made available to youth justice staff on embedding children's views into their practice. The research took place over a 6 month period, and a total of 20 children were interviewed. The researcher reported that "the children I interviewed were very positive about the support they received from Leeds YJS, saying that they were involved in decision-making about what their plan, felt supported by their Youth Justice Worker and they were listened to."

### [Exploring Racial Disparity in Youth Justice Decision Making](#)

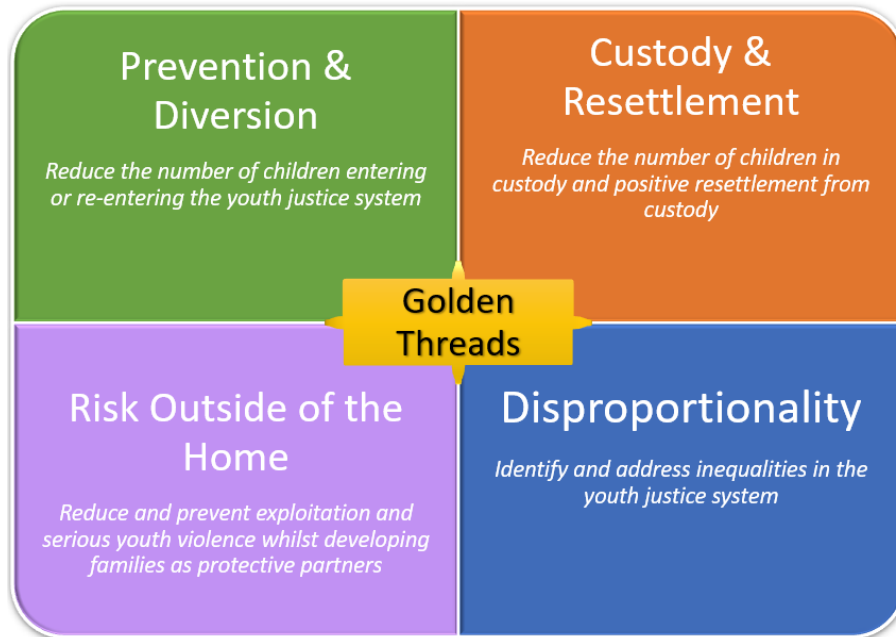
Leeds YJS are currently part of a research project, undertaken by the University of Bedfordshire and Manchester Metropolitan University, funded by the Nuffield Foundation, aims to explore the extent to which, and in what ways, decision-making at the gateway to the youth justice system influences racial disparities within that system. The research highlights that while the number of children entering the youth justice system has fallen substantially in recent years, that there has continued to be an increase in the over-representation of minoritised children. The research will aim to test the hypothesis that these trends can be explained, at least in part, by an increase in the use of diversion – including to non-formal outcomes – which appears to have benefited white children to a great extent than other groups.

### [Immediate Justice](#)

WYCA have commissioned an independent evaluation of the Immediate Justice Pilot across West Yorkshire, which will take place 2024/25. This will encompass an evaluation of how each YJS has implemented and delivered on this agenda, and upon its effectiveness.



## Priorities for the Coming Year



## Standards for Children

### Self-Assessment

The YJB self-assessment for “Standard 2: Work in Court” was undertaken in October 2023. The assessment explored three categories; Strategy, Reports and Process, with the latter two requiring an assessment of practice by considering a sample of cases going through court during the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

#### Strategy

The self-assessment identified that we have a number of strategies in place to minimise the unnecessary use of remands, including Bail and remand management policy, Remand Checklist and West Yorkshire PACE Joint Protocol. The positive impact these overarching strategies have on avoiding the unnecessary use of remand

into youth detention accommodation, was demonstrated when HMIP visited Leeds as part of their Thematic Inspection of Remands in May 2023.

Ensuring that we are taking all possible steps to divert children away from Court was identified as an area for improvement. Although we have a number of diversionary areas of practice in Leeds, including; Youth Panels (Out of Court Disposals/Outcome 22), early help through the Turnaround Team and the recent addition of a restorative diversionary intervention through the 'Immediate Justice' pilot, with written and up to date procedures in relation to diversionary areas of practice, there is not an over-arching procedure regarding the approach and how the service aims to divert children from court. A piece of work is currently underway to develop this, including ensuring defence solicitors are fully aware of Outcome 22 and putting in place procedures to divert children who have already been summonsed to Court back to Youth Panel where appropriate.

### *Reports*

The quality of reports produced for the Courts was identified as an outstanding area of practice. They were found to be child-focussed, analytical, desistance focused, using sufficient sources of information, considering diversity, balanced and impartial, succinct and written in plain, jargon-free language. Ensuring the views of the child and their parents/carers were evidenced within the reports was also identified as an area of good practice, as was ensuring that reports took account of the impact on victims. No areas for development were identified in this category.

### *Process*

Ensuring that children are able to engage in the Court process was an area of good practice, with strong evidence that staff are taking sufficient steps to ensure that children understand the outcome of court, including explaining the outcome immediately following court, and then subsequently reiterating court outcomes following the hearing. Although the assessment found that parents were informed of Court outcomes, there was less evidence of them being supported to fully understand proceedings and outcomes. It is felt that this is primarily a recording issue and has been identified as an area for development.

### *Risk Management*

As highlighted above, the YJS has continued to keep risk management processes under review. This year we have launched a new tiered system, incorporating the YJB's preferred terminology change in line with the Child First agenda and so practice previously known as 'risk management' is being re-framed around 'concerns for the safety of the child and others'. In line with this shift, but also in response to learning from quality assurance processes and critical learning reports, Leeds YJS have committed to reviewing the way that the child and the public's safety is managed across the board. The objectives around this piece of work have been to shift case-manager's understanding of the concept of 'keeping safe' as opposed to 'managing risk'; to improve skills around analysis and professional curiosity; to improve the effectiveness of the way our partners and staff work as a 'team around the child', including the parent and child; reduce duplication where possible; and to improve lines of escalation and senior oversight both within Children's Services but also alongside the Probation Service and MAPPA.

This piece of work has been a focus throughout 2023/24 and has included audits, reviewing best practice from other YJS around the country, and critical learning processes into cases that have resulted in death/serious injury and/or custody. An action plan has been developed alongside consultation with partners, and staff groups. A new tiering system has been introduced which will enable our existing assessment processes to target the right resources and level of seniority to those children who present the highest concerns. Work is ongoing with our Probation colleagues about how to manage children who present concern in the context of serious youth violence both whilst still a child, but also once the adult threshold has been reached. A modular training package sits alongside this area of development.

## Quality Assurance

The YJS undertakes routine auditing as part of QA work within the service. This has included auditing MAPPA cases, auditing case work against the current draft HMIP Inspection Framework and multi-agency auditing following identified actions at the YJ Partnership Board into themes such as FTEs. This work is planned to continue into the forthcoming year, aligning strategic priorities to the auditing cycle as part of our QA framework. It is the intention to explore how the voice of children and families can be brought into auditing, aligning with the Interactive Audit style that Leeds CSWS has adopted.

## Service Development

This plan outlines the key priorities of the service for the Leeds Youth Justice Plan 2024-27. This strategy has been devised in reference to existing and linked strategies as highlighted above, and also aligns with the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales Strategic Plan 2024-27.

### Serious incidents

There have been eight serious incidents concerning Leeds children between April 2023 and March 2024, as defined by the YJB's Community Safeguarding and Public Protection Incident reporting procedures. Two were tragically murdered whilst involved with the YJS, two children were charged with murder, one with attempted murder and three were under the criteria of GBH or wounding with or without intent – section 18/20. Multi-agency learning lessons reviews have been undertaken locally, with learning shared in the YJS itself, with partner agencies and at the YJS Partnership Board, with findings directly feeding into the service development plan.

### Learning from HMIP inspections

At the time of writing, Leeds Youth Justice Service was last inspected by HM Inspectorate of Probation in June 2019, with the final inspection report published in early January 2020. The inspectorate's final judgement in that report was that the Service required improvement. Since that time the YJS has been working towards a service improvement plan linked to those recommendations, however given the passage of time a new service development plan is being developed alongside the refreshed strategy.

In 2021 Leeds YJS was one of a number of YJSs to participate in the HMIP's thematic inspection on work with black and mixed heritage boys. Disproportionality continues to be an area for development for the service despite being a key focus of the previous multi-year Youth Justice Plan, and will continue to be a strategic priority for the service moving forward.

In May 2023 Leeds YJS was one of eleven YJSs to participate in the HMIP and Ofsted's joint thematic inspection on '[Work With Children Subject to Remand in Youth Detention](#).' The thematic report made a number of recommendations for Youth Justice Services and partners. In response we are working closely with colleagues in CSWS to develop a joint remand policy with the aim of improving joint working to reducing the number of children remanded YDA.

From the 19<sup>th</sup> February – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024 Leeds was visited under a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) with a focus on Serious Youth Violence, and in particular the partnership response to serious youth violence under the Serious Violence Duty. The report's headline findings stated there is a "clear and mutually agreed focus on locally-based early intervention and prevention" and this involved a "high level" of engagement with children and families. It recognised that "Practitioners are astute and committed and many work relentlessly and passionately with children and families to reduce risks and inspire and divert children away from serious youth violence." Inspectors also highlighted the "strong" multi-agency relationships among the city's strengths as well as organisations' use of data, research and information-sharing.

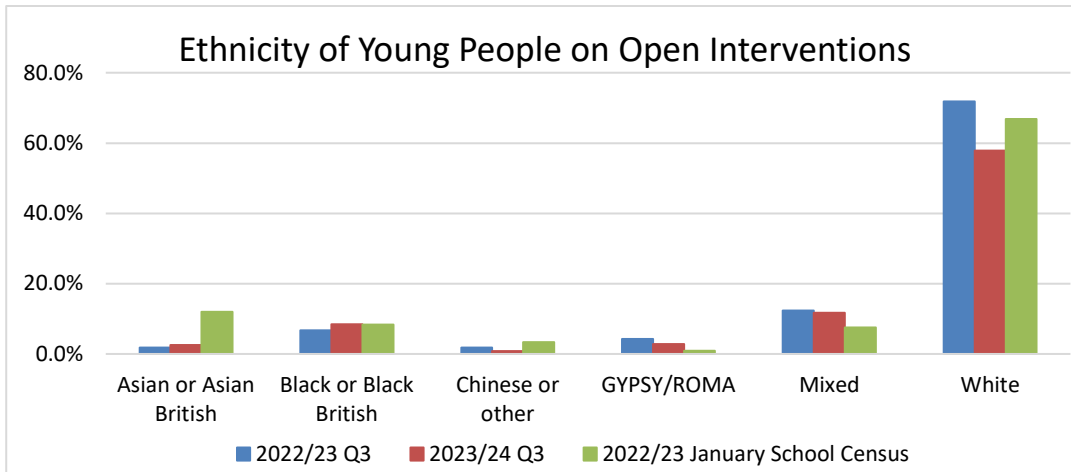
## National Priority Areas

### Children from groups which are over-represented

Our analysis of children working with the YJS in the year 2023–24 uses school census information as a comparator.

	2021 Census 10-17 population	2023 School census (Yrs 7 to 13)
<b>White</b>	79%	66.9%
<b>Mixed</b>	3.4%	7.1%
<b>Asian</b>	9.7%	12.3%
<b>Black</b>	5.6%	7.9%
<b>Other</b>	2.3%	5.9% <i>(includes unknown)</i>

As highlighted in the graph below, there is disproportionality in the numbers of Gypsy/Roma and Mixed ethnicity children who are over-represented in the youth justice cohort. The proportion of children of Mixed ethnicity is 11.7% in the youth justice cohort, compared to 7.1% in the school population. Gypsy/Roma children represent 2.8% of the youth justice cohort, compared to 0.8% in the school population.



Gender	F	M	% female
Asian or Asian British	1	9	10.0%
Black or Black British	0	33	0.0%
Chinese or other ethnic group	0	3	0.0%
GYPSY/ROMA	1	10	9.1%
Mixed	5	41	10.9%
Unknown	13	49	21.0%
White	25	202	11.0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>11.5%</b>

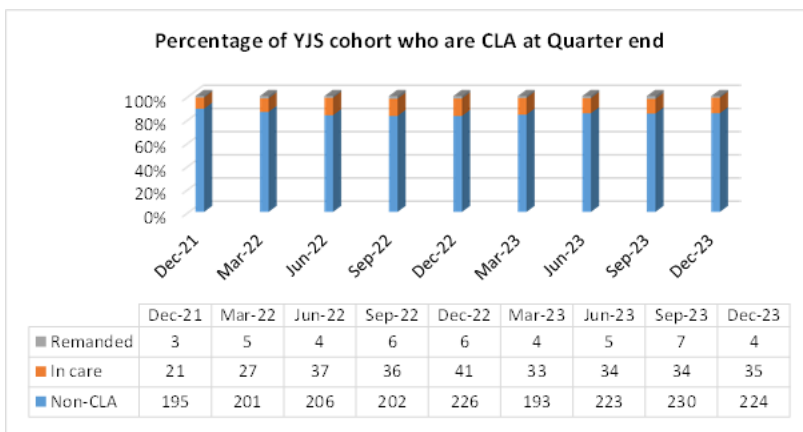
The above table highlights the open interventions in relation to gender and ethnicity. 11.5% of the overall cohort is female, which is a reduction of 0.8 percentage points from last year.

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	% 10-14
Asian or Asian British	0	0	1	1	1	1	3	3	0	30.0%
Black or Black British	0	0	2	0	3	13	7	8	0	15.2%
Chinese or other ethnic group	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	66.7%
GYPSY/ROMA	1	0	1	1	1	3	1	3	0	36.4%
Mixed	1	0	2	2	5	9	7	19	1	21.7%
Unknown	1	5	7	4	16	12	12	5	0	53.2%
White	0	1	14	23	41	41	57	48	2	34.8%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>34.7%</b>

As per last year, there was a higher proportion of White children in the younger end (10-14) of the cohort compared with Black and Mixed ethnicity children. Numbers in other ethnic groups are smaller so percentages fluctuate more easily.

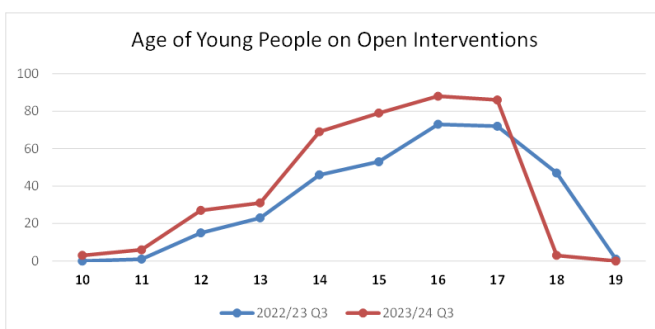
An analysis of Assetplus gives us a profile of needs amongst different ethnic groups in the cohort and has indicated differentials in mental and physical health concerns, school hours offered and risk profile. We track the ethnicity of children referred for support services, opportunities and programmes to ensure all children have appropriate access to these services. It is acknowledged that the learning from the YJS tracking of disproportionality needs to filter learning upstream in order for to unblock barriers to accessing services in order to preventatively address this agenda. We are actively working with Early Help colleagues to address this issue, and support the development of Family Hubs.

### Children Looked After



The numbers of Children Looked After known to the youth justice system continues to be of concern, with the latest percentage of the overall cohort at 13% in December 2023. The Reducing Offending in Children Looked After (ROCLA) meeting aims to prevent and divert children who are looked after from entering the justice system, as referenced within this document. The YJS works closely with the Staying Close pilot which seeks to develop a model of support for care leavers, and which prioritises those children who have been in custody in Leeds.

### Age and gender



This graph shows the age breakdown of children on open interventions compared with the same quarter last year.

16 years old remain the most common age of children on open interventions. Q3 saw a large increase in the numbers of 11/12yr olds. Almost one third of these children (30%) are open due to diversion work being delivered through the Turnaround project.

We continue to be mindful of this age group and are aware that younger children are now being identified as being at risk of exploitation and serious youth violence, as a result interventions have been adapted to meet the needs of all age groups. Outcome 22 and Turnaround have provided further opportunities for appropriate diversion for younger children whose offending is often an indicator of safeguarding concerns and for whom the risks of engendering a pro-criminal identity through association with the justice system are particularly apparent.

11.8% of the overall cohort were female, with the highest levels of interventions with females aged 14 and 15. There is a reduction in the overall cohort of females. Girls are more likely to be assessed at high risk to safety and wellbeing, but less likely to be assessed as posing a risk of serious harm to others. The link between girls and gangs has been identified through Contextual MACE; the YJS is part of a multi-agency working group looking at girls and gangs with the aim of improving the identification of girls, ensuring a consistent approach to safeguarding girls with interventions tailored to the specific needs of girls. The Safe Project are also now co-located with the YJS which supports this area of practice. This supports the city's priority focusing on violence against women and girls and the importance of positive masculinity.

## Policing

### [Early Help PCs](#)

Leeds benefits from a number of Early Help PC's who take a 'think child / think family' approach and are co-located with council colleagues and third sector Partners in 'Early Help Hubs' in the South, East and West of the City. Early Help PCs focus on identifying children at risk of becoming involved in criminality and entering the criminal justice system, identifying 'first time suspects' who have come to Police attention over the last 24 hours. These children are discussed in a multi-disciplinary meeting with a Council Hub Manager, in addition to Early Help Practitioners from the council and third sector partners. This allows for a holistic view of what support is needed for the child/family and if the child has a Social Worker, information is shared with them, as the lead practitioner for the child.

Information is shared appropriately with schools, to ensure joined-up support and pathways through school and cluster support can be accessed. PC's work collaboratively and share information to ensure the best outcomes for the child and family. They also assist those schools that do not benefit from having a dedicated 'Schools Officer' with education and diversionary activities and support and they also work to support Cluster Leads and Family Support Workers. Leeds also has a Youth Engagement PCSO who conducts 'transition visits' and delivers education to Year 6 students in preparation for their move to high school, including topics such as; road safety, bullying, trusted adults / who to turn to for support at high school, spotting the signs of grooming, etc. Where there are serious incidents, such as the murder of a child in Leeds outside a school in 2023, Early Help PC's helped to ensure an effective and impactful response to support staff and students at the school and surrounding schools.

PC's also have strong working relationships with Youth Services and diversionary activities are offered to children. In addition, officers regularly give advice to families / signpost them accordingly. The Early Help Hub PC's endeavour to work with children and to avoid unduly criminalising them and have delivered training to District Officers in relation to 'Intervention 22' educational inputs as a positive disposal for lower-level crime, offering education, support and signposting, with a view to preventing children entering the criminal justice system, where it is appropriate.

Early Help PC's work closely with council colleagues to deliver a number of projects to build positive relationships with children, with a view to breaking down barriers and delivering safeguarding and diversionary support in a manner that is truly impactful. Projects currently ongoing throughout the City, supported by the Early Help PC's and Leeds City Council's teams, include the '90 Minute Project', which offers children on the periphery of offending a 45minute sports activity as an 'ice breaker', followed by a 45 minute educational input. 'Herd Farm' - a cycling based intervention, where a number of school students who are on the edge of crime, at risk of becoming NEET, or who have been reported missing, are engaged around cycling

sessions with topics around their identified needs and risk factors, with a view to preventing escalations in their behaviour. Finally, 'Bumpy', is an intervention provided with the Bumpy charity, where vulnerable children work to obtain a qualification in motor vehicle studies, during which the cohort of individuals, many of whom are identified by partner agencies and in many cases are those at risk of becoming 'NEET', are engaged and supported, which has a positive impact on their attendance within education and assists in keeping them away from criminality. Whilst funding and partner support from charities and council partners, such as Youth Services, is vital to the above work, grants from avenues such as the 'Mayor's Community Safety Fund', in the case of Herd Farm, help to support the delivery of some projects.

Given the very nature of the role, it can be somewhat difficult to accurately measure the true long-term impact of some of the preventative work undertaken by officers within the team, although those who participate in some of the project work provide a basis for understanding some of the shorter-term impacts.

### Schools

A number of schools and education institutions benefit from dedicated officers working within specific settings, or across groups of schools. This role is vitally important in providing links between police and key education partners, with a view to protecting children and diverting those at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

Aside from the day-to-day safeguarding and information sharing which becomes engrained between these officers and colleagues within their settings, the relationships they look to build with students, some of whom are involved in serious offences or have familial links with serious criminality, can be crucial to understanding their behaviour and highlighting the need for additional support from Police / partner colleagues, with a view to reducing the risk of harm to / from them.

At a lower level, these officers work with schools to deal proportionately with matters within the school, looking to avoid criminalising children, whilst offering diversionary and education pathways with the intent of keeping children from engaging in criminal behaviour going forwards.

### Youth Justice

Youth Justice PC's work closely with colleagues in the Youth Justice Service to provide a strong and effective link between Policing and the local Youth Justice Service. The PC's have children at the heart of their work and are co-locating with Council, Youth Justice and health partners within the individual localities in Leeds, working to take an outcome orientated and restorative approach to supporting children who are entering, or at risk of entering, the criminal justice system.

Youth Justice PCs triage cases, in a number of instances advising officers to issue Police Issue Community Resolutions or Educational Inputs where there is no benefit for discussing the case at Youth Panel. They also ensure a referral for further support is made when this is needed, advising colleagues in relation to 'Turnaround' and Liaison & Diversion referrals.

They participate on the 'Youth Outcomes Panel', which looks to take a holistic view of a child's offending behaviour and life circumstances to identify appropriate crime outcomes that not only provides justice for victims but, crucially, looks to avoid unduly criminalising children. This also ensures that appropriate support is both identified and delivered with a view to changing a child's behaviour and improving their life prospects. Youth Justice PC's ensure that appropriate oversight from supervisors is considered to support appropriate outcomes, albeit with consideration to DPP guidelines / NPCC Child Gravity Matrix and work closely with children and partner colleagues to oversee the delivery of and engagement with those outcomes.

Where there is appropriate evidence of mitigation, such as with a young, vulnerable female Domestic Violence victim who had been coerced into keeping drugs for her boyfriend, or a vulnerable young child who had carried (but not used) a weapon due to bullying at school, the circumstances have supported deviations from more formal sanctions to take a child centred approach to prioritise looking to achieve best outcomes, over criminal sanctions.

Youth Justice PC's also work alongside Police and Leeds City Council colleagues, Youth Justice and Social Work teams as part of the MACE / Risk Management meetings, to ensure that services work closely together to understand risk factors around those children who are at risk of harm and at risk of being involved in criminality or exploited. This ensures a joined-up and cohesive strategy can be devised and delivered to best protect those most at risk.

Furthermore, our PC's support multi-agency initiatives, such as 'Project Shield', working with colleagues to identify and safeguard those at risk of engaging in and / or becoming a victim of Serious Youth Violence.

## Prevention

The Leeds partnership is committed to providing the support that children and their families need, as soon as they need it, when they need it and by the people who are best placed to help. All agencies see early help as part of the 'day job'. Leeds' early help approach focuses on shifting the balance of power so that work with families is led by their voice. This sits alongside our strategy to 'rebalance' the system safely and appropriately away from statutory and specialist services to working with children and families early in the life of a problem. This approach is crucial in improving outcomes for children as well as managing demand and cost pressures. [The Leeds Early Help Approach and Strategy](#) illustrates this approach.

The city's approach to youth crime prevention has many aspects. Restorative early support teams work with children and families as an alternative to statutory processes and the Youth Service provides youth work activities in the areas of highest need, including the city centre. Our YJS teams are co-located with Youth Service colleagues and there is frequent joint working on projects with vulnerable teenagers. The city's Pathways team, who work with NEET 16 – 18 year olds are based within the Youth Service and are therefore well linked to the YJS. The wider youth offer commissioned from the third sector includes work specifically targeting youth crime prevention activity, focussing on the 8 – 14 age group. In addition, the Youth Service offers a Life Coaching service which is focused on children who are experiencing mental health issues which are contributing to them being NEET or where they are on the edge of care.

Leeds is fortunate to have a robust family support offer which includes Multi-Systemic Therapy where the approach targets support for family with teenagers at risk of involvement in the justice system. The three Early Help Hubs, which will soon expand to nine, include 12 police officers who work as part of a wider multi-agency team and who proactively screen children who have come to police attention due to missing episodes, anti-social behaviour or low-level offending to refer to services as appropriate, a pathway into Turnaround has been developed through the Hubs. Liaison and Diversion work from the main Leeds police station, and also feed into this pathway.

Leeds YJS has built an excellent working relationship with the city's anti-social behaviour team (LASBT) and the Head of Service of LASBT sits on the YJ Partnership Board. Relationships between LASBT and the YJS have been strengthened through MACE and the serious youth violence work, and more recently LASBT have started to support the Concerns for the Safety of Others Tiered Approach to managing risk, which has enabled better information sharing and earlier identification of children in need of a preventative offer of support.

As highlighted elsewhere, the city's Child-Focused and Contextual MACE forums and Project Shield Daily Meeting all provide opportunities for the early identification of emerging concerns for children, all of which feed into the preventative offer across the partnership and within the preventative offer across the partnership and within the YJS.

## Diversion

Leeds YJS are embedding the successful West Yorkshire Child-First diversion pathfinder, which was approved and launched by West Yorkshire Police in May 2023. This new model uses Outcome 22 to provide a deferred pre-court option named 'Chance to Change'. The pilot in Bradford saw a reduction of numbers of Youth Cautions and Youth Conditional Cautions (YCC) which the Youth Justice Board (YJB) class as first-time entrants (FTEs). This is beginning to be replicated in Leeds since the launch, meaning that less children are formally brought into the criminal justice system, thereby meaning that they are prevented from the negative impact of being labelled as an offender and having the offence recorded on their criminal record which can impact on



their future aspirations. A driver for this model has been an understanding around different influences upon a child when faced with making choices around interaction with the police and formal justice system. The Child First approach understands that the context will be very different than for adults and so allows for work and support to be delivered to the child even if they do not formally indicate guilt. This allows for varying factors such as age, maturity, learning needs, extent of parental support, and trauma to be taken into account, alongside the added structural barriers for children from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and their perception of how they may be treated by those in authority.

Leeds YJS have seconded a team of staff to deliver upon the Ministry of Justice funded Turnaround programme (funded until March 2025), as outlined below, which seeks to achieve positive outcomes for children with the ultimate aim of preventing them going on to offend and actively promotes the diversion of children from the youth justice system. This programme enables the Turnaround team to work with children at an earlier point of entry than ever before, however only when there is evidence of formal contact with the police and/or the anti-social behaviour team. This hopefully fills a gap between net-widening and stigmatisation, whilst identifying children who are vulnerable to re-offending in order to receive support and diversion.

#### [First time entrants into the justice system](#)

Leeds Youth Panel provides the framework for decision making when children have committed a crime and are considered potentially suitable for an out of court disposal. The Youth Panel decision is based on a thorough assessment of the child's circumstances, history, strengths, and concerns completed by a YJS worker. The YJS victim liaison officer contacts the victim of the offence to give them the opportunity to let the panel know about the impact of the offence on them and to explore restorative outcomes. The panel is attended by a police officer, community volunteer, victim liaison officer and a manager from Early Help services and is chaired by a YJS manager. The panel is city-wide, meets weekly and considers the most appropriate requirements for the child as well as the outcome itself.

The child and their parent/ carer are required to attend at the police station following the panel's decision in order to receive their out of court disposal. An intervention following receipt of an out of court disposal usually lasts for three months and can be extended on a voluntary basis.

The West Yorkshire Child-First Pathfinder proposal has also been adopted this year which provides a further option at Leeds Youth Panel; to defer an outcome for a child. The West Yorkshire Police Force's position is that all children who are eligible and brought through our multi-agency panel should be now considered for this deferred outcome. The Pathfinder piloted and evidenced how a deferred outcome could be used with children to appropriately divert them out of the justice system and into alternative support arrangements. This uses Outcome 22 to deliver an offer known in West Yorkshire as 'Chance to Change.' This diversion offer was formally launched in the spring of 2023 and has become well-embedded, and already is having an impact on FTEs. Outcome 22 does not require an admission of guilt or acceptance of responsibility and so can be used to respond to scenarios where children's options may otherwise be impacted by a range of factors including influence of adults (or lack of support), structural barriers, ability and maturity levels, or a distrust in authority figures and the justice system.

This strengthens a broader range of options now available for children who are accused of offences with a gravity score lower than would attract immediate charge. The National Police Chiefs' Council Child Gravity Matrix has also been updated this year and provides a framework for making Child First decisions in terms of appropriate outcome. There is no expectation of an 'escalator' approach and individual children and their offending behaviour are assessed upon the individual circumstances. The YJS court team continue to identify children for diversion, who may have been charged to court due to a variety of factors, where an Out of Court of Disposal could have been considered.

Work also continues with other local partners to address the drivers behind the levels of FTEs in Leeds. The YJB guidance issued February 2024 states that the focus of prevention work with children should be on the underlying causes, not the offence itself, and therefore this work is key as many of the causes lie in a wider context than the child's own choice. The YJS is part of a multi-agency team in various hotspots in the city, working directly with children at risk of offending or involved in anti-social behaviour. Examples of partnership work to address FTEs, would also be the expansion of multi-agency forums across the city to identify children

who are at any way at risk of association with urban street gangs and serious youth violence, through Project Shield, complemented by the Contextual MACE meetings. We continue to work closely with LASBT and this is being strengthened through the Turnaround and Immediate Justice initiatives. Our PACT programme offers support to teenagers involved in adolescent to parent violence and their families, to help them improve relationships and avoid conflict in a domestic setting which often leads to criminalisation. And our ROCLA panel provides a forum to identify appropriate support and diversion for identified children looked after at risk of offending. There is also work being done across the Partnership to address structural barriers for children in the youth justice system to improve their life chances, for example with schools and colleges to ensure children are in receipt of a suitable educational offer.

## Turnaround

Turnaround, developed by the Ministry of Justice, has provided multi-year grant funding (from December 2022 to March 2025) to enable the Youth Justice Service to work with a different cohort of children who would not appear within our statutory responsibilities. The MoJ has confirmed that the funding for Turnaround will not continue past March 2025. The cohort of children sit even earlier in the system than those that come through the Youth Panel for consideration of an Out of Court Disposal, as detailed above. The overall aims of the Turnaround programme are to:

- achieve positive outcomes for children with the ultimate aim of preventing them going on to offend;
- build on work already done to ensure all children on the cusp of the youth justice system are consistently offered a needs assessment and the opportunity for support;
- improve the socio-emotional, mental health and wellbeing of children; and
- improve the integration and partnership working between YOTs and other statutory services to support children.

Leeds YJS have used this funding to establish a team who have a focus upon prevention and diversion. The team is comprised of case managers and a family support practitioner. Turnaround has tight eligibility criteria that ensures that there is timely intervention when children first come into contact with either the police, courts or the anti-social behaviour team. We have built a triage system and closer working with our colleagues in the Early Help Hubs and Liaison and Diversion to identify and target children at this early stage who may need support at points such as street-based Youth Community Resolutions, first arrest/interview, or release under investigation or police bail. This allows partners to view all children subject to first time Youth Community Resolution (that sit below the qualifying second outcome for Youth Panel) on a weekly basis, and also any other children across the points of contact at the police station or Hubs that may need to be viewed for more support.

The team take a whole family approach towards reducing the risk of re-offending for the child. To do this, we have employed experienced and creative staff who have particular specialisms in, for example, youth work, early intervention, domestic violence, art-based interventions, speech & language, family and parental support. Our ethos is in avoiding bringing any child into the formalised youth justice world and ensuring a non-stigmatising approach. We are careful to ensure the right language is used, right information shared with partners, and that the child is seen in an environment most appropriate to them. Our priorities are around ensuring the child's educational offer meets their needs, that their speech and language needs will be assessed, and that help and support is offered to parents and siblings too – with the overall aim of improving the strengths in a child's life and reducing factors against desistance. Part of the underpinning research for Turnaround is the findings of the HMIP 2021 Thematic Inspection into the experiences of Black and mixed heritage boys in the YJS. Therefore, we are also doubly aware of trying to bring support at an early stage for children and families from these backgrounds who may have previously been either overlooked in terms of their welfare needs, or faced other forms of structural barriers that have prevented services either being offered or taken up.

Examples of key pieces of work that Turnaround have completed this year are:

- Establishing a partnership with Think Like a Pony which is a charity that provides a nurturing learning environment using horses to aid children to learn calming strategies, and respect for self and others.

- Running an art group where, amongst other projects, artwork was produced with children and displayed in the Royal Armouries when the Knife Angel was in residence.



## Education

Leeds has 6 specialist schools, 2 alternative provision free schools and 260 mainstream schools. The Leeds [SEND and Inclusion Strategy](#) outlines how the city will improve outcomes for vulnerable children, enabling them to thrive in learning and in wider life.

Leeds YJS works closely with colleagues in the Inclusion team to improve outcomes for children in the justice system. The city is currently benefiting from the investment of the SAFE taskforce which is providing Education Inclusion Mentors (EIMs) and additional positive activities for children identified as being at risk of serious violence particularly in the east of the city.

The YJS employs five specialist Education Officers (one is a temporary contract funded by Turnaround) who work with YJS staff, schools, education support services and training providers to try to ensure children receive an individualised offer and are supported to access it. Given that one post is funded by Turnaround it enables children who are on the cusp of the youth justice system have full access to the Education Officer resource also, this resource has been designated in response to the significant barriers identified for this cohort of children with regards to them accessing education.

The Education Officers work to a detailed education plan (updated January 2024), linked into the priority areas for the service. Good links are maintained to inclusion and support services and appropriate escalation systems are in place should challenge be required. The Deputy Director for Education, Head of Service for Vulnerable Learners and the Director of Student Life at Leeds City College sit on the YJS Partnership Board. Education Officers are networked into the geographical areas they cover and attend Area Inclusion Partnership (AIP) meetings, secondary heads meetings, Fair Access Panel and sit on the Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH) panel. We continue to build relationships with the children missing education team, attendance team, SENSAP and SENIT. We regularly attend the area-based meetings for school Designated Safeguarding Leads and have presented an overview of the work of the YJS.

The Education Officers are supported by 2 lead YJS managers, an Educational Psychologist and a Consultant from the Virtual School for children with a Social Worker. The team meet fortnightly with the lead managers to track progress against the education action plan. They have regular peer supervision with the Educational Psychologist and have full access to the consultant. This has significantly improved the knowledge and skills of the team, which they have disseminated across the service. In addition, for children with a Social Worker or who have had a Social Worker in the last 6 years, the education consultant has offered individual advice, liaised with schools and chaired multi-agency meetings. The Education Officers and virtual school meet regularly to ensure alignment for children with a Social Worker. They also work closely with CAMHS nurses and Speech and Language Therapists in order to provide a holistic package which can support schools to meet the needs of the child in their setting, with the aim of reducing the number of NEET children.

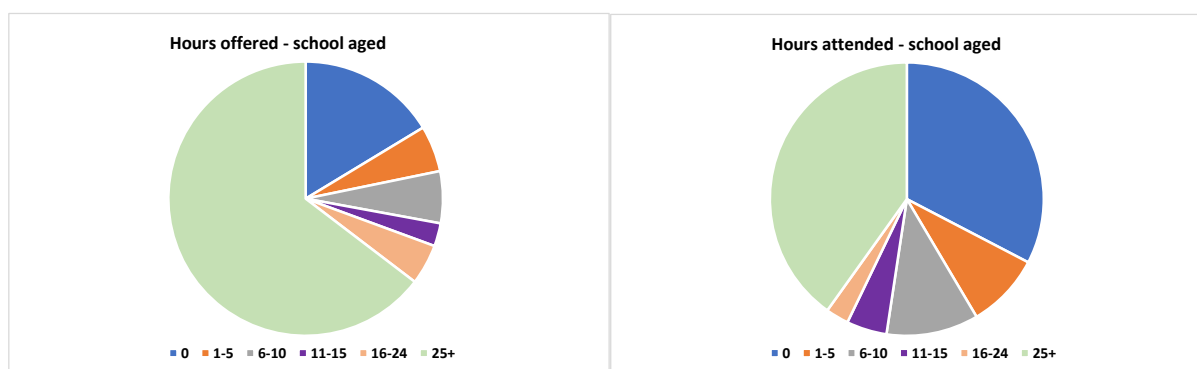
One of our key priorities is to ensure children can access a full education timetable. The whole service has received training on a number of topics to upskill all workers to have the right conversation with the right person in education to work towards this priority. We have had training on the graduated approach, education as a protective factor and the procedures around reduced timetables and exclusions and Extended School Non-Attendance (ESNA) to unpick the barriers for children who have not been at school and provide strategies to improve this. The Education Officers are also attending training on SEMH. Education Officers have half-termly consultations with all case holding staff to discuss the ETE needs of the children they support, providing advice and escalating where necessary. We also identify all children with SEN and monitor their individual learning plans or EHCPs.

The YJS has adopted the lines of enquiry questionnaire developed by a Virtual School consultant, and this has significantly improved the quality of information we receive from education providers to assist in determining what support we can offer. As referenced above, the education suitability KPI provided opportunity for the development of a structured questionnaire to inform an assessment of suitability, which has further enabled the service to start tracking themes and prioritise resources.

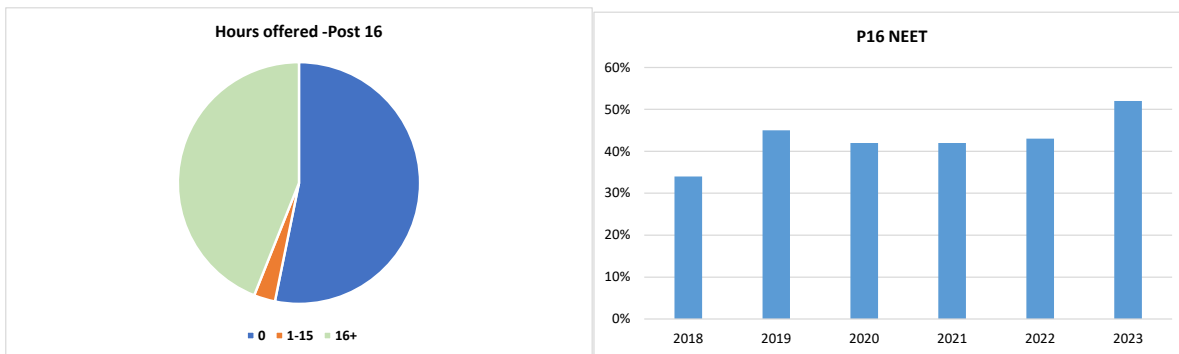
In relation to post-16 provision, we continue to attend the 14-19 strategic partnership and have links with the Positive Destinations Manager. We have visited Leeds City College, Leeds College of Building and NACRO to build relationships to improve access to post-16 opportunities for children within the YJS. We delivered training to the safeguarding leads at Leeds City College about the YJS, vulnerabilities of our children and how we can work together. From this, a pilot has been set up to jointly risk assess, taking a contextual safeguarding approach, with a view to planning for children to access and be safe in college. The Education Officers meet the Pathways workers regularly to identify NEET children and set up appointments for them. We have attended several careers fairs with children and are always searching for opportunities to inspire children.

As one of the priorities in the Youth Justice Plan 2021 – 24, Leeds YJ Partnership Board has examined the barriers to accessing appropriate education, training and employment for children known to the YJS and remains committed to improving access to education. Education, training and employment was a focus of the YJS Partnership Board meeting in January 2024, where key data was explored to look at how existing workstreams could be used to improve the offer to and ETE outcomes for children in the justice system. The YJS is part of the children missing education strategic and operational groups, aligning the city’s priorities for this cohort of children.

#### Hours Offered vs Hours Attended



These charts show the number of school aged children in Leeds known to the YJS by education hours offered and the hours that they are attending. The proportion of the children in receipt of the full offer has remained at a similar level to 2022 (65%). 16% had no hours offered by an establishment, double the rate reported at the same time last year.



This chart shows the percentage number of children post 16 on statutory and non-statutory orders by the number of hours offered and engaged in ETE. Sadly, the proportion of NEET children further increased by 9 percentage points, up to 52%.

### Hours Offered by Provision Type

The majority of school aged children open to the YJS are educated at school (61%), and of those in school, 80% are in receipt of the full offer of 25 hours per week. This drops to 48% for those attending alternative provision types.

Hours by Provision type	School		Alternative		None		Custody		Home school	
0	12	13%	3	7%	8	100%	0	0%	1	25%
1-5	2	2%	5	12%	0	0%	0	0%	1	25%
6-10	1	1%	8	19%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
11-15	1	1%	3	7%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
16-24	2	2%	5	12%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
25+	71	80%	18	43%	0	0%	4	100%	2	50%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>89</b>		<b>42</b>		<b>8</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>4</b>	

All those children who were in employment were working at least 16 hours per week. 90% of children attending college were in receipt of the full offer, with the remaining three children offered 10 to 15 hours.

Hours offered by type	Alternative		Apprentice		College		Custody		Employed		NEET		School	
0	1	25%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	74	100%	0	0%
1-15	0	0%	0	0%	3	10%	1	7%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
16+	3	75%	3	100%	27	90%	13	93%	11	100%	0	0%	5	100%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>30</b>		<b>14</b>		<b>11</b>		<b>74</b>		<b>5</b>	

### Hours Offered by Ethnicity

Similar to last year, just half of Black children were in receipt of the full offer and a third had zero hours. 17% of White children had zero hours offered.

\*(NB the high number of unknown ethnicities this year were where cases had been newly opened to the service and this information had not yet been obtained.)

Hours by Provision type	Gypsy /													
	Asian		Black		Roma		Mixed		Other		White		Unknown	
0	0	0%	4	33%	2	50%	1	8%	0	0%	14	17%	3	10%
1-5	0	0%	1	8%	0	0%	1	8%	0	0%	6	7%	0	0%
6-10	0	0%	1	8%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	7	9%	1	3%
11-15	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	8%	0	0%	2	2%	1	3%
16-24	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	15%	0	0%	4	5%	1	3%
25+	3	100%	6	50%	2	50%	8	62%	2	100%	49	60%	25	81%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>12</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>13</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>82</b>		<b>31</b>	

For children 16+ within each ethnic group numbers are small, however, 60% of Black children and 50% of Gypsy/Roma children had no hours offered compared with 44% of White children.

Hours offered by ethnicity	Asian		Black		Gypsy / Roma		Mixed		Other		Unknown		White	
0	1	25%	5	45%	2	67%	11	42%	1	100%	9	60%	46	57%
1-15		0%	1	9%		0%	2	8%		0%		0%	1	1%
16+	3	75%	5	45%	1	33%	13	50%		0%	6	40%	34	42%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>11</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>26</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>15</b>		<b>81</b>	

### Hours Offered by SEN Status

In the cohort there were 39 children flagged as having some SEN – 30 with an EHCP and a further 9 with some SEN support offered in the school. Just 43% of children with an EHCP were in receipt of the full offer, compared with 69% of those with no SEN. Almost a quarter of those with an EHCP were not offered any hours.

SEN type	EHCP		Other SEN		No SEN	
0	7	23%	1	11%	16	15%
1-5	3	10%	0	0%	5	5%
6-10	2	7%	0	0%	7	6%
11-15	1	3%	0	0%	3	3%
16-24	4	13%	1	11%	2	2%
25+	13	43%	7	78%	75	69%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>30</b>		<b>9</b>		<b>108</b>	

The following shows the children who are post 16 who have an EHCP, or who had some form of SEN support whilst they were of school age. The proportion who are NEET is highest for those with an EHCP (58%), with 47% of those who had received in school support and 53% of those without SEN now being offered no hours.

Hours offered by SEN status	EHCP		In school SEN Support		No SEN	
0	14	58%	7	47%	54	53%
1-15	1	4%	0	0%	3	3%
16+	9	38%	8	53%	45	44%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>15</b>		<b>102</b>	

### Hours Offered by CLA Status

There were 12 CLA in the cohort and a further two who were CLA due to remand status. Unlike in previous years, a higher proportion of CLA were in receipt of the full offer compared with their non-CLA counterparts; however, there were two who were not in receipt of any offer. One of these had been placed out of area and the placement was seeking suitable provision; the other child was new to the service and there was an immediate recommendation of a referral to the education officer. There was one CLA on a very reduced timetable, but this was deemed to be suitable.

CLA status	CLA		CLA due to Remand		Non CLA	
0	2	17%	0	0%	22	17%
1-5	1	8%	0	0%	7	5%
6-10	0	0%	0	0%	9	7%
11-15	0	0%	0	0%	4	3%
16-24	0	0%	0	0%	7	5%
25+	9	75%	2	100%	84	63%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>133</b>	

## Restorative Approaches and Victims

### Restorative Approaches

Within the Leeds YJS, restorative approaches underpin practice at all levels, as highlighted throughout this document. As outlined below victims are at the heart of our approach.

[Making it Right](#)

Children are encouraged to ‘Make it Right’ within all statutory orders, both directly and indirectly, with opportunities to do so tailored to the individual child. In addition, through Immediate Justice, restorative reparative activity is now offered to children identified who have committed ASB.

Over the past year new reparative opportunities have started to be identified in communities across Leeds, enabling children to be supported to undertake restorative interventions within local communities and in conjunction with third sector partners. In addition, when the Knife Angel visited Leeds in February 2024, the Project Shield Intensification Month created a number of creative and innovative ‘Making it Right’ opportunities for children, linked to knife crime.

[Immediate Justice](#)

In 2023/24 the Mayor of West Yorkshire received funding of £1million from the Government Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to deliver ‘Immediate Justice’ to tackle anti-social behaviour through reparative activities, for YJSs the aim was to divert children away from and preventing further ASB, or offending that impacts their communities. This funding was shared amongst West Yorkshire partners, with each YJS receiving a proportion to deliver on this agenda.

In Leeds the funding has been used to recruit additional staffing to deliver on this agenda, including sessional staff. Our Interventions Team have been working with community organisations to identify community projects for reparation. As a service we are dedicated to ensuring that this agenda remains child-focused and trauma-informed. Our VLOs are embedded within Immediate justice, ensuring that restorative justice runs throughout this piece of work.

[Victim work](#)

Leeds YJS have two specialist Victim Liaison Officers (VLOs) who work closely with their case manager colleagues to enable victims to have a meaningful say in work undertaken with children. VLOs are embedded in the child’s assessment and planning processes with a focus upon both how to protect, and potentially make reparation to an immediate victim, but also with a view to wider issues of public protection. The VLOs also continue to play a key role in the Leeds out of court disposal process, ensuring the panel hears victims’ views on potential outcomes and conditions, in addition the VLOs have started to embed their offer in Immediate Justice enabling the voice of victims to play a key role in shaping reparative opportunities for ASB.

Victims have been included as a ‘Golden Thread’ for the service, ensuring that there is strategic alignment with the Victims’ Code, this has included ensuring the voice of victims within the YJ Partnership Board. Operationally, the VLOs ensure compliance with the Victims’ Code, and are fully embedded within Youth Panels and Concerns for the Safety of Others Tiered Panels. The table below demonstrates the volume of victim support provided by the YJS between April 2023 and January 2024. With a 98% conversion rate from an offer of an intervention for victims.

Total Closed Cases	Victim Support	Indirect Mediation	Direct Mediation	Unable to contact	Not appropriate
252	136	94	16	4	2

### Case Study

A child was dealt with via an out of court disposal for an assault on an emergency worker offence. The child told their case worker that the offence was out of character for him and was a one off mistake, and asked if there was an opportunity to apologise to the Officer.

A restorative meeting was arranged between the child and the Officer where they were able to discuss the offence and the impact caused. They considered how the outcome might have changed if the child had made different choices throughout the incident. The child apologised to the Officer, which was accepted. They discussed the child's plans for the future when it transpired the Officer worked previously in the field that the child wanted to pursue a career so they had a conversation about things to consider to be successful in the future.

Both parties were really pleased with how the meeting went and the child said that a weight had been lifted and that they felt much better.

## Serious Violence, Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding

### Serious Violence

As a compassionate city, preventing victimisation and supporting people harmed by crime is central to our work, as is tailoring our response to individual needs. The [Leeds Safer, Stronger Communities Plan 2021 - 24](#) sets out the strategic direction of Safer Leeds Executive and is used to hold the partnership to account for keeping communities safe. The Serious Violence Duty, and governance arrangements to ensure the execution of that duty, of which the YJS is a Duty-Holder, strategically sit under the Safer Leeds Executive Board.

The Leeds Serious Violence Needs Assessment, undertaken by the Violence Reduction Partnership, in response to the Duty, directly feeds into the Leeds Local Delivery Plan. Leeds YJS is embedded and an active member of the Youth Violence Development Group, operationally responding to the identified needs within Leeds directly stemming out of that assessment. There is clear, strategic alignment and attendance across Boards all working towards this agenda, including the Leeds Youth Justice Partnership Board.

For the purposes of the Duty YJSs are a separate specified authority, and are therefore responsible for engaging in the partnership in their own right.

- The YJS has played a key role in supporting the development and implementation of the Response Strategy, ensuring that children and their interests are fairly represented in discussions. This includes:
- Identify and act to ensure children's best interests are kept at the forefront of any strategic planning
- Advice on appropriate response to increase levels of safety within the local partnership area and enable children to be able to move beyond their offending behaviour and status
- Assist in the delivery of prevention and early intervention initiatives where possible, and explain to partners how their input can help enhance this work
- Work across local authority areas and organisational boundaries where children are not located in the partnership area (e.g. when leaving custody, transitioning from youth to adult custody or in county lines drug dealing cases where children may be far from their home area)

The Service Delivery Manager for the YJS represents all five YJSs across West Yorkshire at the Serious Violence Reduction Strategic Executive Group for the combined authority.

At both a strategic and operational level within Leeds, the YJS has played a key role in the development of the 'Working Together Model' along with a range of multi-agency partners, and have contributed to the development of a model which aims to improve practice and local integration around children at risk of serious violence. This model was formally launched under 'Project Shield' in February 2024, and encompasses:



- Project Shield Daily Meeting – where live intelligence is shared in a multi-agency meeting, in relation to serious youth violence with a specific focus on sharing information, assessing risk and ensuring appropriate safeguarding responses are in place.
- Area-Based Serious Violence Meetings – locality based multi-agency meetings for children who have a Social Worker, and who have potential gang affiliation and/or there are concerns regarding weapon-carrying. The aim is to utilise current local knowledge and intelligence to support and supplement existing plans in place. This meeting is for children (under 18) and CLA (under 21).
- ‘Guiding a New Generation’ Meeting – city-wide multi-agency meeting with a strategic remit around serious violence, with an upper age limit of 24 years old, focusing on high-harm and high-risk individuals.

This Model links to existing MACE arrangements. Strategically this Model sits under the Serious Violence and Serious Organised Crime Board, for which members of the Youth Justice Partnership Board sit on and vice versa. This ensures consistency across the city with regards to the approach for tackling serious youth violence, whilst also providing the governance arrangements for information sharing across the partnership.

### Exploitation and Risk Outside of the Home

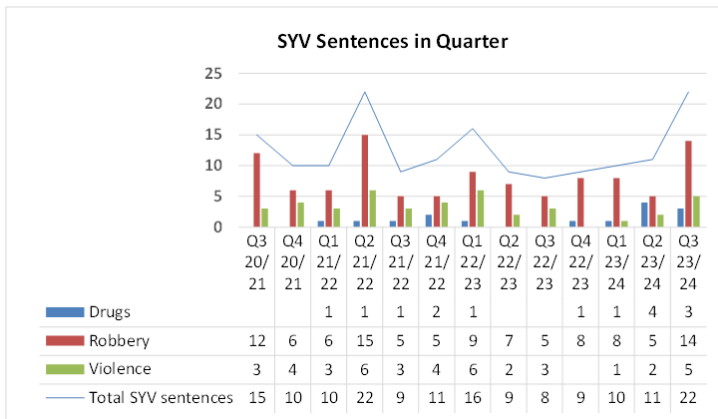
Leeds has developed a Contextual Safeguarding response to exploitation and risk outside of the home, following the Risk Out of the Home (ROTH) pilot that Children’s Services took part in alongside Professor Carlene Firman and the DfE in 2022/23. Subsequently a ROTH ICPC pathway has been developed for children where it is identified that there is a significant risk of harm, or likely to be a significant risk of harm, to a child outside of their family home, which may be for reasons such as exploitation, serious youth violence, gang affiliation etc... ROTH meetings focus on the context of a child’s life in which there is a significant risk of harm, which could be in their community, within their peer group or at school for example. These meetings have been the catalyst to shift focus to seeing parents as Protective Partners, which the YJS is adopting into our practice, as highlighted in our shift to a new process for managing Concerns for the Safety of Others through a tiered approach. Strategically the YJS is committed to developing protective partner capability of parents and carers, in order to reduce risks, and ultimately prevent children from entering the criminal justice system and from reoffending, and aims to develop a parenting strategy over the forthcoming year. The alignment of YJS processes with those of CSWS works towards bringing risk assessment and planning together with the ultimate aim of working towards children having ‘one plan.’

The SAFE project is part of Leeds Children and Family Services and is a multi-disciplinary team which offers support and information to children who are at risk of or have been sexually or criminally exploited. The service is delivered in a flexible, timely and when required, intensive way and also provides support and information to parents and siblings. The SAFE project is co-located with the YJS.

SAFE leads on the implementation of the MACE model, both Child-Focused and Contextual; Child-Focused MACE meetings are for children where there is a low, emerging risk of exploitation, and also at those where the risks are higher but current safety plans are not effective. Contextual MACE considers places, spaces, peer groups, perpetrators and themes and trends relating to risk outside of the home. Both meetings are very well attended by key partner agencies and use the formulation model. The YJS works closely with the SAFE team, is always represented at MACE, including Co-Chairing the Child-Focused MACE panel. The YJS Service Delivery Manager co-chairs the LSCP MACE Silver Group.

The YJS regularly undertakes CE risk assessments, makes referrals to CSWS where concerns are identified, and also refers into the NRM as appropriate.

## Serious youth violence & weapons related offending



As highlighted in this chart, the number of serious youth violence sentences increased in Q3 to 22, the joint highest in the period. As demonstrated below there has been a reduction in the total weapons offences compared to the last year.

	Q1 2022/23	Q2 2022/23	Q3 2022/23	Q4 2022/23	Q1 2023/24	Q2 2023/24	Q3 2023/24
Total weapons offences	10	10	13	20	12	8	2
- those in school	2	0	0	1	1	0	0

The local picture in Leeds remains of concern, with on-street and gang related violence ongoing with conflicts targeting individuals or their associates and / or families. Sadly during 2023/24 saw two tragic deaths as a result of serious violence. There is a significant impact on staff when there is a tragedy that touches the service, the emotional support and wellbeing of staff remains a priority for the service.

### Prevent

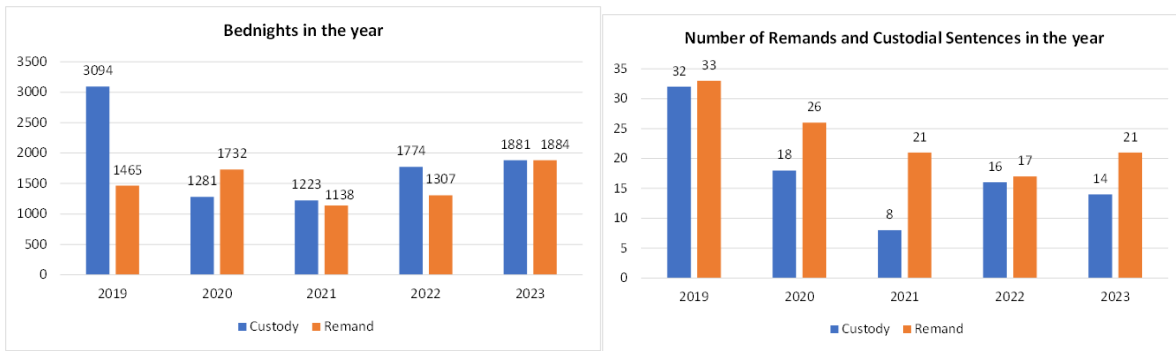
The YJS sits on Channel and the strategic Prevent Silver group. As referenced within the Workforce Development section the Prevent Team offers training which is open to the service. It is notable that over recent years there has been an increase in children identified as victims of radicalisation, with a high proportion of those children identified as having both diagnosed and undiagnosed ASD.

### Detention in Police Custody

West Yorkshire Police Custody Services, in conjunction with WYCA and the five local authorities, rewrote the Joint Protocol regarding PACE beds. There has been an extended project over the past two years to improve the number of beds available and compliance with PACE / Childrens Act and the Childrens Concordat. As such, placements are now massively improved and are incorporated into scrutiny panel meetings which involve unpicking the journey of every remanded child, with our partners, to ensure responsibilities are understood and any lessons learned. In line with this, a feedback system exists to notify Custody Sergeants about court decisions, thereby improving ongoing decision making about remands.

Police policy has recently changed to require a referral to Child Social Work Services for every child that comes into police custody. In the custody areas, The Appropriate Adult Service (TAAS) provides appropriate adult provision where required. The use of this commissioned service is currently being scrutinised within Leeds and across West Yorkshire, to ensure that it is being used appropriately, that children are being supported by the right person, which should be parents/carers wherever possible, and that the available resource meets the need.

## Remands



The first chart above shows the number of custodial bed-nights for both remands and sentenced children in the calendar year. The second shows the total number of instances this relates to. Total bednights for both remands and custodial sentences increased in the year compared with 2022, with remand nights at the highest level in the reporting period. Six of these remands were over 100 nights, with one child remanded for the whole year whilst awaiting sentencing.

Following feedback HMIP and Ofsted's joint thematic inspection of work with children subject to remand in youth detention it was recognised that as a city there is good practice with regards to avoiding unnecessary remands into custody, with remand into the care of the local authority being used successfully where appropriate to avoid the use of custody. However, the seriousness of some offences, particularly those linked to serious violence, has necessitated the use of remand into custody in some cases. All children who are remanded into custody have an internal custody review undertaken in order to identify if there are any learning opportunities, which directly feeds into service development.

A working group has been established, jointly with CSWS, with the aim of improving the timeliness and quality of the multi-agency response to children under arrest in the police station and likely to face serious charges which might lead to a remand into custody. The development of a child-first approach to police custody and strengthened communication processes with the Children's Social Work Service Placements Team has enabled there to be planning around potential placements as an alternative to a remand in custody at the earliest opportunity. There is a continued commitment to doing everything possible to ensure that children have suitable accommodation on release from custody. A joint policy will be developed over the forthcoming year.

Recognising the issues raised in the MoJs Review Custodial Remand for Children (January 2022) which includes a range of Next Steps and proposals around remand the South and West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium has recently expanded its remit to not only consider those children who are sentenced, but in 2022 and 2023 analysed data on children from the area who were remanded. Leeds contributed to this review and are also working with the Consortium to support the Local Criminal Justice Board's request for the 2024 analysis to be repeated. It is anticipated that this data and analysis will support work to develop and agree effective information-sharing procedures in relation to remand that enable youth justice services to present robust alternatives to custody to courts in a timely manner and also allow the Consortium, LCJBs and YJSs to monitor remand trends and provide oversight and regularly review practice. The Leeds YJ Partnership Management Board conducts regular practice reviews of children remanded to identify and properly understand trends and anomalies in performance, including a focus on disparity in outcomes, and taking appropriate action to tackle emerging issues and implement lessons learned.

### Use of Custody and Constructive Resettlement

As highlighted in the graphs in the above section, the number of bednights for those sentenced to custody was at the highest level since 2019, although the number of children this related to has not increased. This reflects the general reduction in the use of shorter custodial sentences, with alternatives to custody being more widely used, however the seriousness of some offences within this period has necessitated the use of custody for some.

Leeds YJS is an active partner in the South and West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium at both strategic and operational levels. The Consortium has been in place since 2014 when Leeds YJS supported its initial development including hosting the seconded Consortium Manager to co-ordinate the work around resettlement. Its remit is to improve resettlement outcomes for the children in the nine youth offending services in the area and to work with partners to support those children in custody and on release. This has included the introduction of resettlement clinics, improved multi-agency partnership work, increased advocacy for the children in custody and an Accommodation Standard for children.

The Accommodation Standard was enhanced in 2022 following consultation with Directors of Childrens Services which will hopefully see accommodation identified earlier for children in custody and also increase the use of Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) to ensure accommodation placements are successful and to reassure children about their provision on release. Work is ongoing by the MoJ to look at disseminating this practice across the country. The Consortium continues to work to overcome the challenges presented by the current issues in youth custody including Operation Safeguard and the admission of girls to Wetherby YOI.

Originally funded through the Youth Justice Board the Consortium is now supported by the nine Youth Justice Services in South and West Yorkshire, and the links developed, and partnerships made continue to enhance the resettlement work of the local youth justice services. The Consortium has a range of strengths, including; enabling joint working and standard setting at a strategic level, providing an operational managers forum to share effective practice and problem solve, offering a combined voice when responding to changes in national policy or consultations, enabling sharing of resources between areas for a relatively small cohort e.g. group work sessions and importantly providing an evidence base which allows data comparison through the resettlement tracker.

The Consortium objectives are:

- Understand the cohort and analyse need through work with key academic institutions/organisations
- Raise the standard of the 'resettlement offer' across South and West Yorkshire including improving take-up of ROTL
- Work with local, regional, and national government to deliver required change
- Ensure appropriate allocation of resources in accordance with identified need and ensure best value
- Communications – provide stakeholders with timely and relevant progress updates
- Undertake performance monitoring and evaluation as required by the Strategic Group
- Identify and share effective practice in the consortium and nationally
- Raise awareness of the work of the 'value added' through work undertaken in custody
- Continue to share learning from the Constructive Resettlement Pathfinder

The Consortium seeks to influence national considerations and agendas around key issues relating to Custody and Resettlement including discussions around the potential to increase the use of ROTL. Leeds YJS works to promote ROTL opportunities for it's children who are in custody.

The Consortium objectives are developed from an understanding of the issues which impact on resettlement as identified through the Consortiums Annual Cohort Analysis. Data from all nine Youth Offending Teams is collated and analysed to consider the trends and information around local resettlement issues and is shared with partners including the West Yorkshire Deputy Mayor (Policing and Crime). Leeds have also analysed data at a local level to utilise in the focus on resettlement in our area. In addition, custody reviews, where there is learning at a strategic level with respect of this agenda are shared with the YJ Partnership Board.

The collective work of the Consortium gives a focus on a small, but complex and vulnerable cohort who could cost the public sector a considerable amount if their offending continues and also provides a platform for obtaining funding on a regional basis e.g. the SEND Department of Education work, Nuffield Research, Pathfinder Grant.

Working with the Consortium as part of a YJB Constructive Resettlement Pathfinder Leeds YJS supported the Consortium to develop training programmes around Constructive Resettlement and Identify Shift. Staff from Leeds YJS were included in training and development opportunities which were organised by the Consortium. Phase 1 Training was an introduction to Constructive Resettlement and Identity Shift. The training introduced

practitioners to the concept of Constructive Resettlement and the role Identity Shift plays in transforming a child's future. The training drew upon research undertaken by Professor Neal Hazel (Criminology and Criminal Justice at Salford University & YJB Board member) and Beyond Youth Custody (NACRO) and offered a comprehensive overview of the key principles of Constructive Resettlement and how it supports a positive Identity Shift in children. Phase 2 Training considered how the Constructive Resettlement and Identity Shift principles can be put into practice. The training, resources and practice continue to be shared with newly recruited team members as well as reflecting on practice to ensure that future development.

Local analysis of children's experiences of resettlement has highlighted education and accommodation as significant factors in which children are disadvantaged. In response to this the service aims to develop and embed Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for all children in custody, akin to Personal Education Plans for CLA. It is hoped that IEPs will ensure a continued focus on ETE for children in custody, and support enhanced planning to ensure that there is an education offer for children upon release. Availability of placements for children upon release continues to be a challenge, the YJS is working closely with CSWS and the placements team to aid the identification of placements for children, through better analysis of concerns for the safety of the child and others, using a contextual safeguarding lens. However, it is recognised that the best place for children upon release, wherever possible, is with their own families, and therefore the service aims to develop a parenting strategy which will include supporting families whilst children are in custody, with the ultimate aim of develop parents and carers to be protective partners, and for children to be able to safely return to their families upon release.

In response to HMYOI Wetherby's recent inspection the YJS undertook a review of all children in custody to assure ourselves of the care they were receiving. Staff now request to see children's cells, and as a result one issue with a cell was escalated and appropriately responded to by HMYOI Wetherby.

There are representatives of both HMYOI Wetherby and Adel Beck SCH on the YJ Partnership Board.

### Working with Families

As highlighted throughout this report, the importance of services working with families as protective partners to keep children safe, and in preventing and diverting children from the criminal justice system is a key focus for the service, and one of our strategic 'Golden Threads.' Over the past 12 months the service has created a Family Practitioner role thereby enhancing the parenting offer, and worked to align our work with families with the contextual safeguarding model within CSWS. The service remains committed to working with families, and plans to develop a parenting strategy over the forthcoming year, further embedding our commitment to a 'Think Family, Work Family' approach.

### Sign-Off, Submission and Approval

Chair of YJS Board – Julie Longworth	JULIE LONGWORTH
Signature	
Date	

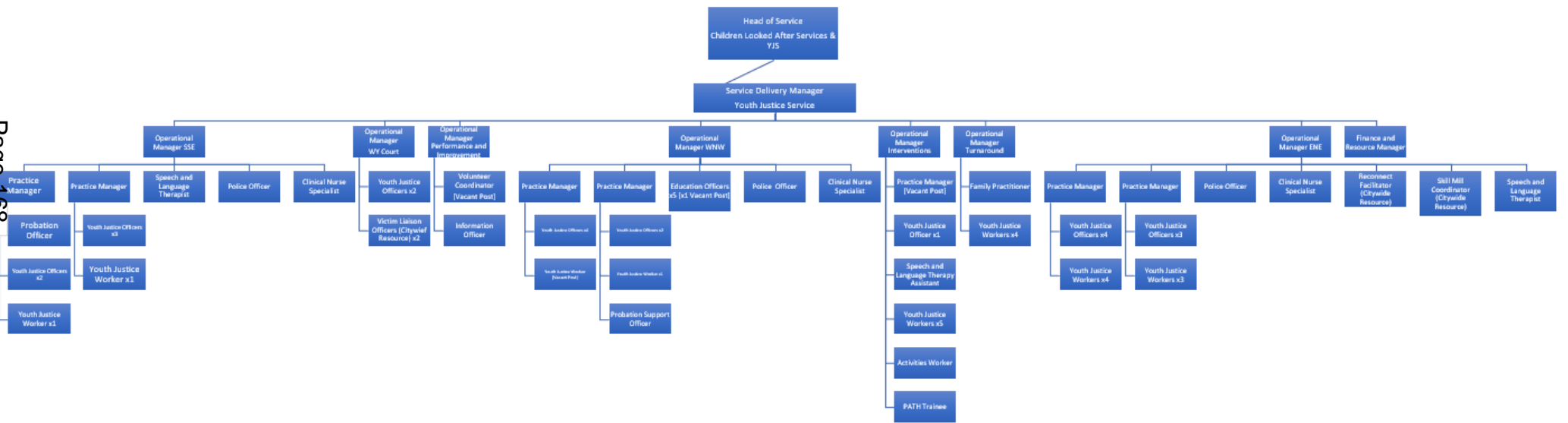
Appendix 1: Outline of full Board membership, including attendance, job title of the Board members and dates of Board meetings

Board Member	Title	09/05/2023	20/07/2023	26/09/2023	23/10/2023	07/11/2023	22/01/2024	16/04/2024
Andrea Cowans	Director of Student Life - Luminate Education Group	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Benjamin Finley	Head of Service, Corporate Parenting – Children & Families	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Claire Smith	Head of Service – Safer Neighbourhoods & ASB	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Cllr Jenkins	Councillor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cllr Venner	Councillor	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Dan Wood	Superintendent Neighbourhoods & Partnerships- West Yorkshire Police	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
David Hines	Deputy Head- National Probation Service	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Francis N'Jie	Service Delivery Manager – Secure Accommodation- Adel Beck	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Helen Burton	Service Delivery Manager – Youth Justice Service	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jayne Bathgate-Roache	Operational Lead – NHS Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group	No	Yes	No	No	No		
John Hazlegreaves	Finance & Resource Manager – Youth Justice Service	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Julie Longworth	Director of Children & Families & Chair of the YJS Partnership Board	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Dan Barton	Deputy Director Education, Children & Families						Yes	Yes
Karen Jessup	Principal Educational Psychologist – Children & Families	No	Yes	No	No	Yes		
Kelly Laycock	VRP Senior Programme Delivery Manager- Violence Reduction Partnership	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Laura Whitaker	BARCA Leeds	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Patsy Burrows	Head Of Service- Corporate Parenting- YJS/ CLA & Care Leavers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Toni Littlewood	Service Manager, Leeds CAMHS			Yes	No	No		
Sara Clarke	Head of Service- CAMHS						Yes	Yes
Victoria Fuggles	Head of Service – Early Help	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Sid Hussain	Head of Resettlement- Wetherby YOI						No	No
Warren Wilman	Head of Safeguarding- Wetherby YOI						Yes	Yes
Stewart Locker	VRP Programme Delivery Manager (Leeds)- Violence Reduction Partnership	Yes		No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Kelly Connolly	Liaison & Diversion Team		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Rebecca McCormack	Head of Service- Vulnerable Learners Lead						No	Yes
Emma Tollis	Deputy Head- National Probation Service							Yes

# Appendix 2: Service Structure Chart

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## Appendix 3: Staff equality and diversity

Ethnicity	Managers Strategic		Managers Operational		Practitioners		Administrative		Sessional		Student		Referral Order Panel Volunteer		Other Volunteer		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Asian	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	2	7
Black	0	0	2	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	8	5
Mixed	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	3
White	0	0	3	9	14	33	1	6	0	0	0	0	8	14	3	2	29	64
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
Not known	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>83</b>

Type of Contract	Strategic Manager (PT)	Strategic Manager (FT)	Operational Manager (PT)	Operational Manager (FT)	Practitioners (PT)	Practitioners (FT)	Administration (PT)	Administration (FT)	Sessional	Students/trainees	Referral Order Panel Volunteer	Other Volunteer	Total
Permanent	0	0	0.61	14	9.09	37	0.61	7	0	0	0	0	68.31
Fixed-term	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Outsourced	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Temporary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Vacant	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Seconded Children's Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seconded Probation	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Seconded Police	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Seconded Health (Substance misuse)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seconded Health (Mental health)	0	0	0	0	1.71	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.71
Seconded Health (Physical health)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seconded Health (Speech/language)	0	0	0	0	1.75	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.75
Other/Unspecified Seconded Health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seconded Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seconded Connexions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seconded Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.61</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12.55</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0.61</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>90.77</b>
Disabled (self-classified)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## Appendix 4: Budget costs and contributions

2024/25	YJB Plan			
Agency	Staffing costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Police ~	133,541			133,541
WYCA	198,092			198,092
Probation ~	90,256		5,000	95,256
Health~	208,932			208,932
Local Authority	1,790,408	626,931	187,560	2,604,899
YJB ~	1,490,615		102,688	1,593,303
Turnaround	358,010		42,530	400,540
Immediate Justice	81,160		9011	90,171
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,351,013</b>	<b>626,931</b>	<b>346,789</b>	<b>5,324,733</b>
~ Pending Confirmation of funding for 2024/25				

## Youth Justice Terms

<b>ACE</b>	Adverse childhood experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long lasting impact on the child's health, and life choices
<b>AIM 2 and 3</b>	Assessment, intervention and moving on, an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour
<b>ASB</b>	Anti social behaviour
<b>AssetPlus</b>	Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour
<b>CAMHS</b>	Child and adolescent mental health services
<b>CCE</b>	Child Criminal exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity
<b>Children</b>	We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.
<b>Child First</b>	A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenants to this approach, it should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion
<b>Child looked-after</b>	Child Looked After, where a child is looked after by the local authority
<b>CME</b>	Child Missing Education
<b>Constructive resettlement</b>	The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social
<b>Contextual safeguarding</b>	An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety
<b>Community resolution</b>	Community resolution, an informal disposal, administered by the police, for low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt
<b>EHCP</b>	Education and health care plan, a plan outlining the education, health and social care needs of a child with additional needs
<b>ETE</b>	Education, training or employment
<b>EHE</b>	Electively home educated, children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school

<b>EOTAS</b>	Education other than at school, children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting
<b>ESNA</b>	Extended School Non-Attendance
<b>FTE</b>	First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal)
<b>HMIP</b>	Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect Youth Justice services and probation services
<b>HSB</b>	Harmful sexual behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves
<b>JAC</b>	Junior Attendance Centre
<b>MAPPA</b>	Multi agency public protection arrangements
<b>MFH</b>	Missing from Home
<b>NRM</b>	National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery in order to gain help to support and protect them
<b>OOCD</b>	Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not sent to court
<b>Outcome 22/21</b>	An informal disposal, available where the child does not admit the offence, but they undertake intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending
<b>Over-represented children</b>	Appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average
<b>RHI</b>	Return home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing
<b>ROTH</b>	Risk Outside of the Home
<b>SLCN</b>	Speech, Language and communication needs
<b>STC</b>	Secure training centre
<b>SCH</b>	Secure children's home
<b>Young adult</b>	We define a young adult as someone who is 18 or over. For example, when a young adult is transferring to the adult probation service.
<b>YJS</b>	Youth Justice Service. This is now the preferred title for services working with children in the youth justice system. This reflects the move to a child first approach
<b>YOI</b>	Young offender institution



HM Inspectorate  
of Probation



Care Quality  
Commission



16 May 2024

Julie Longworth, Director of Children's Services, Leeds City Council  
Rob Webster, Executive Lead, Integrated Care Board  
Tracey Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire  
John Robins, Chief Constable, West Yorkshire Police  
Helen Burton, Youth Offending Service manager  
David Derbyshire, Independent Scrutineer

Dear Leeds Local Safeguarding Partnership

### **Joint targeted area inspection of Leeds**

This letter summarises the findings of the joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of the multi-agency response to serious youth violence in Leeds.

This inspection took place from 4 to 8 March 2024. It was carried out by inspectors from Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP).

### **Context**

The findings in the report evaluate the effectiveness of the multi-agency response to children aged 10 and over who are at risk of or affected by serious youth violence and/or criminal exploitation. Even where the report does not specifically refer to this group of children, all findings relate to this scope.

The inspectorates recognise the complexities for agencies in intervening to address serious youth violence when risk and harm occur outside of the family home. As a consequence, risk assessment and decision-making have a number of complexities and challenges. A multi-agency inspection of this area of practice is more likely to highlight some of the significant challenges to partnerships in improving practice. We anticipate that each of the JTAIs of this area of practice that are being carried out will identify learning for all agencies and will contribute to the debate about what good practice looks like in relation to the multi-agency response to serious youth violence. In a proportion of cases seen by inspectors, children had also experienced other forms of abuse, which reflects the complexity of the needs and risks for children.



## Headline findings

Most children in Leeds who are affected by serious youth violence and/or criminal exploitation benefit from an effective and well-coordinated multi-agency response. Strategic partnerships in Leeds are well embedded and mature. Strategic leaders across all agencies are invested in the partnership and in reducing the risks to children to make Leeds a safer city. Leaders have driven a clear, tiered response to address serious youth violence at strategic, tactical and operational levels.

A strong and coherent culture, based on a relational approach, trauma-informed work and the Leeds model of practice, underpins the partnership. Strategic and operational partners share the same principles, vision and values. There is a clear and mutually agreed focus on locally based early intervention and prevention. This includes a high level of engagement and consultation with children and families. This helps develop tailored and effective services and interventions informed by the communities and children throughout Leeds.

Numerous interventions and projects have been developed to support children at risk of serious youth violence and/or criminal exploitation and their families. Practitioners are astute and committed and many work relentlessly and passionately with children and families to reduce risks and inspire and divert children away from serious youth violence. Children's diverse needs are considered, and services are designed to address the disproportionality of black and ethnic minority children involved in the criminal justice system, and additional vulnerability factors.

Until recently, serious youth violence has not been one of the previously published priorities of the Leeds Safeguarding Children's Partnership (LSCP). The LSCP Executive has undertaken a review of its governance arrangements and the structure of its Business Unit and subgroups. Due to the review, several subgroups have not met for some time, including the risk and vulnerability subgroup. The LSCP review has now concluded and has led to the establishment of a revised Child Exploitation Silver MACE subgroup, which includes a focus on serious youth violence as well as a newly established Audit and Review subgroup. This group will monitor the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding practice through multi-agency audit activity and scrutiny of multi-agency progress on key performance indicators.

Many children at risk of serious youth violence and criminal exploitation who have emerging mental health needs and/or neurodiverse needs are waiting too long to be assessed by child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). The impact of this delay means not all children have their mental health needs fully addressed, nor are they easily able to access therapeutic treatment.



## What needs to improve?

- Consistent and timely sharing of police protection notifications (PPNs) when police officers identify risks to children. The quality of PPNs should include detailed information, including a child's ethnicity and culture, to assist with multi-agency decision-making.
- Waiting times for children to receive CAMHS assessments and therapeutic treatment in line with needs arising from their mental health conditions and neurodiversity.
- The frequency of multi-agency partnership auditing of children affected by serious youth violence, to inform a partnership learning and development strategy that builds on and enhances the existing training available to professionals working with children affected by serious youth violence.

## Strengths

- Strong multi-agency relationships with a shared vision and culture, both strategically and operationally, resulting in effective communication and effective partnership working.
- Collation and analysis of data across the partnership has informed a detailed strategic needs assessment and action plan.
- Targeted multi-agency interventions and projects across the city are helping to divert children away from youth violence and support children affected by criminal exploitation.
- Multi-agency formulation meetings provide a helpful insight into children's risks, vulnerabilities and needs through a trauma-informed lens.
- The partnership information portal (PIP) enables practitioners across all agencies to contribute vital information in an accessible way. This improves the partnership understanding of risk to children and their vulnerabilities.
- The research unit within the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) provides regular and detailed analysis of data, research, community feedback and children's views and experiences. This builds a rich picture and understanding of where, when and why children are at risk of serious youth violence.
- The partnership's 'Project Shield' includes daily multi-agency information-sharing to provide an immediate response when children have been affected by serious youth violence.
- Children at risk of significant harm from serious youth violence or exploitation are responded to through the risk outside the home (ROTH) pathway. The ROTH pathway enables partners to work under statutory child protection planning to effectively address risks and enable children and families to work in partnership with agencies using a non-blaming relational approach.



- Police analysts use information from their own systems and other organisations to profile crime and thematic topics across the whole force, local authority and locality areas. These profiles contain detailed information about risks to children, including places and times. They are used practically to drive interventions and disruption activity and to engage multi-agency practitioners in educational and prevention activities, such as engagement with cohorts of school children.

## Main findings

Leeds is the 86th most deprived local authority in England. 138 of its areas are among the most deprived 20% in England. 32% of pupils in the area are eligible for pupil premium, compared with 27% for England overall. 33.1% of children in Leeds are from ethnic minority groups.

The work of partner agencies in Leeds is supported by the West Yorkshire VRP. The VRP provides funding to the Safer Leeds executive board, which acts as the community safety partnership within Leeds City Council. Both these partnerships have a clear vision and objectives underpinned by a number of different approaches that support a public health approach to tackling serious violence, including child- and family-specific approaches for serious youth violence. This is supported by a thorough and detailed strategic needs assessment that includes a specific focus on under-18s. As a result, the partnerships have a good insight and understanding of local issues, places and spaces, and the needs of children at risk of criminal exploitation and serious youth violence.

The work of the VRP research unit is impressive. Data is gathered regularly from key sources, such as hospitals, schools and police, in line with a wide range of indicators, and collated into a dashboard. It is used to good effect to provide overarching data against the Home Office indicators. The research unit can also drill down into the dashboard to understand the local picture and the impact for the local community and children in Leeds. This helps to understand where and when serious youth violence is occurring and where resources and interventions need to take place. The partnerships continually look to improve their understanding of the reasons why violence occurs, by interweaving research, community engagement, children's views and partner intelligence, to achieve a rich analysis and understanding. This enables them to work in partnership with the Safer Leeds executive board to target training, interventions with children, and direct funding streams for community and third sector projects.

The LSCP has recognised the need for improvement and explicit scrutiny of all aspects of safeguarding in line with recent changes to Working Together guidance. An independent scrutineer has been appointed and has made a valuable contribution, informing and enhancing the review that had been initiated by the LSCP





Executive into its governance and structural arrangements. Positively, the LSCP has identified safeguarding adolescents with a focus on criminal exploitation and knife crime as one of three priority areas for action this year. It is slowly starting to align the LSCP's work in this topic with existing strategies. It has been recognised by the LSCP that access to the right level of training and development in relation to serious youth violence for practitioners across agencies could be enhanced through a more consistent multi-agency strategic approach. The LSCP acknowledge that there needs to be frequent and high-quality multi-agency auditing via the LSCP to identify and collate themes of good practice and areas for development. This will help to develop a training needs analysis and ensure that there is a coherent workforce learning and development plan across the whole of the partnership.

When children are referred for concerns of serious youth violence or exploitation, they receive a timely and mainly effective response through the 'front door' or from the emergency duty team. Children who require strategy discussions to ensure that professionals understand risks are immediately referred to the children's social work area teams for a multi-agency discussion. When an incident requires a rapid response, partners work effectively together to ensure that children are safeguarded at the earliest opportunity. However, there are some inconsistencies in how partners share information at the front door. For example, there is no consistent access to youth justice information, and health and education practitioners are co-located only one day a week. Police officers do not always record information about risks to children on PPNs. Some officers do not record enough information about the voice of the child or about a child's ethnicity or cultural heritage, or make it clear why they are making a referral for a child. These omissions can mean that a full picture of the child's circumstances is missing and not considered in next steps decision-making. Audits completed by the police have identified this issue and managers have initiated additional training to improve compliance with the police force policy.

Information about children who attend the hospital accident and emergency department (A&E) for reasons relating to violence is shared at weekly multidisciplinary meetings. This ensures that children are signposted to the right services. A&E youth work navigators accept referrals for 11 to 25-year-old victims of serious youth violence and aim to make prompt contact with the child, build a rapport and identify appropriate ongoing support. For serious incidents, the navigators will triage and offer support within 24 hours; however, for less serious incidents, there are waiting lists. This means not all children get immediate help, and this creates a missed opportunity to intervene at the point of crisis for a child.

When children are arrested for incidents relating to serious youth violence, police custody staff work closely with multi-agency partners to provide a child-centred approach within the criminal justice system. The vulnerability of detained children is well recognised. They are treated accordingly and seen by healthcare professionals,



liaison and diversion professionals, with timely referrals to social care. Alternative accommodation arrangements are in place and community-based help is quickly arranged for these children. This ensures that, in line with their risks and needs, children do not remain in custody longer than is necessary.

Multi-agency partners forge positive professional relationships with each other. This supports the work they do as individual agencies, and as a network around the child and family. The Leeds practice model and the trauma-informed approach is evident in workers' consideration and planning. All the professionals inspectors spoke with know their children and speak warmly about them. They understand their risks and needs, are aspirational and tenacious advocates for them. They understand the impact of serious youth violence on children's safety and well-being and the contextual risks for them. As a result, many children are having their risk of serious youth violence or exploitation managed and reduced.

Social workers are developing their knowledge and understanding of the links between exploitation and serious youth violence, although there is no bespoke specialised training for this scope. ROTH plans are incorporated with vulnerability risk management assessments and plans. Actions focus on reducing risks to the child as well as considering wider issues linked to exploitation, including peer mapping and mapping of significant information. Monthly multi-agency meetings are held to review the plan and are well attended by relevant professionals, with clear lines of accountability. Plans often identify who is the child's most trusted person, so they can maintain positive relationships. When appropriate, family networks are developed to add a further layer of safeguarding. ROTH plans consider the places and spaces in local communities where children may be at higher risk of youth violence and exploitation. Safeguarding is viewed as everyone's responsibility and includes non-statutory agencies such as licensing, highways and local businesses, who are all involved in plans when appropriate.

Risk assessment matrixes for children are updated monthly with new information being shared through the PIP, as well as emails to all professionals involved. This means that new concerns are quickly shared with partners and, when necessary, action is taken to safeguard the child. The multidisciplinary 'Safe' team works with children who are at risk of exploitation and serious youth violence. They visit children frequently and use a wide range of tools to work directly with children, helping them to understand the risks relating to exploitation. Workers also work closely with families and their networks to raise awareness and provide an additional layer of safeguarding. When risks are reduced for the child, workers continue to work with parents and other children in the family to ensure that safety plans are embedded and sustainable.



There are multiple regular professional forums and meetings taking place for children who are at risk of serious youth violence and/or criminal exploitation. While these meetings ensure timely information-sharing, there is inconsistency in the clarity of actions from some of these meetings. Many of these multi-agency children's meetings are time- and resource-inefficient, as they are attended by the same professionals who discuss predominantly the same issues. The sheer number of meetings and professionals can be confusing and overwhelming for many children and their parents. Some multi-agency meetings lack efficient coordination to serve multiple functions and reduce bureaucracy. Multi-agency partners recognise there is some duplication and are working towards better alignment of key meetings to make them more efficient.

The youth justice service has introduced a tiering model to help manage the risk of harm to the children they supervise. This is still in its infancy. These are well structured and organised in line with multi-agency public protection (MAPPA) practice. The relatively recent development of the 'tiered system' of risk management panels, to better align the response from the YJS and partners with identified risk, is to be fully embedded. It is hoped that this will lead to an enhanced and improved response to children both at and presenting a very high level of risk.

Youth justice practitioners have all been trained in trauma-informed practice and understand its relevance to their work. Formulation meetings are used effectively to help manage complex cases. They review children's experiences and behaviours through a trauma-informed lens and help the partners reflect and adapt their planning and focus. Inspectors saw numerous positive examples of formulation meetings helping to provide effective trauma-informed planning for children involved in serious youth violence.

Multi-agency child exploitation (MACE) arrangements review individual children's risks. Child-focused meetings are held to discuss children where there is an early emerging risk of exploitation. Professionals at the meeting consider push and pull factors to enable a clear analysis of risk. They agree further actions with an aim of intervening early and prevent children's risks escalating. Trends, themes, locations and suspected perpetrators are collated and inform an additional monthly contextual MACE meeting to ensure that action plans that address contextual harm can also be put into place.

In response to delivering a focused multi-agency response to serious youth violence and organised crime, the partnership has developed 'Project Shield'. This project was developed in collaboration with children and young people in Leeds, who have chosen the name for the project and designed its logo. Project Shield has clearly improved partnership information-sharing about violent crime affecting children. The daily meeting shares information about incidents of youth violence that have



happened the evening before. It is well attended by a range of multi-agency professionals, with the exception of health. The VRP has agreed to fund a multi-agency-crewed 'focused deterrence car'. This responds to taskings from Project Shield meetings and engages with children and their families affected by serious youth violence and exploitation. A parent-led group helps families who have been affected by serious youth violence to support each other. In addition to the daily meetings, locality meetings are held every six weeks to review children and incidents. This helps to build information and intelligence about serious youth violence and criminal exploitation between partners to ensure joined-up planning and responses.

Information and intelligence submitted by partners through the PIP helps with the understanding of risk to children from violence and exploitation. Positively, it is used to share information from return home interviews for children who go missing from home. This inclusion shows that the partnership understands the significant risk experienced by children who go missing. The use of this fast-time communication channel helps to reduce risk to these children.

Schools have increasingly built up their knowledge and expertise to recognise the triggers for children being groomed into exploitation and involved in serious youth violence. Tracking of children missing education is regular and comprehensive, to ensure that children are reintegrated into education at the earliest opportunity. The multi-agency partnership has recognised some gaps in post-16 education provision for vulnerable children and has taken significant and useful steps to begin to address this. This includes increased engagement and agreement with post-16 providers to accept children at risk of serious youth violence onto appropriate courses and to offer a menu of delivery. There is inbuilt contingency planning to avoid children being left without any educational provision.

A police youth engagement officer coordinates the activities of the safer schools' officers, anti-social behaviour officers and personnel from early help hubs. Neighbourhood police officers are trained in problem-solving techniques. This means they follow a considered approach that is proportionate to each situation and community. As a result, they develop multi-agency solutions to prevent violent crime and reduce risk to children.

'Operation Precision' is an effective part of the police's tactical and investigative response to serious youth violence. The force assigns investigations to specially trained officers, who work with multi-agency partners to pursue and bring to justice those responsible for serious crime, for example organised crime groups and urban street gang members. There are also flexible terms of reference to allow 'Precision'



to respond to other concerns and levels of crime. This is helping to reduce risks to children from organised crime.

Health staff demonstrate tenacity in safeguarding the wider family as victims of serious youth violence and exploitation. Most health staff are well supported to work with this cohort of children, receiving safeguarding supervision and reflective practice opportunities. Safeguarding supervision in the ambulance service is ad hoc and not all staff have had appropriate training. This means that some ambulance staff are less aware and knowledgeable about children's vulnerabilities for exploitation and violence.

Strategic leaders recognise that in the cohort of children affected by serious youth violence and exploitation there are many children with underlying unmet health needs, such as needs arising from emotional and mental health conditions and neurodiversity. There are unacceptably long waits for children to be assessed by CAMHS. Those children under the Youth Justice Service CAMHS receive an initial assessment and are offered trauma-specific support. Although these children are prioritised for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) medication, neurodevelopmental assessments and more specialised CAMHS support, there are still some delays in them receiving assessments and interventions. This means many children within the scope of this inspection do not have their health needs assessed, identified and responded to in a timely manner.

There are also short waiting lists for other specialist services, such as the 'Safe' team, and there are delays in children being considered by MAPPA panels. Some children at high risk of serious youth violence are being turned down as not meeting the criteria, where there would be value in bringing greater attention and resources to their needs.

The Youth Justice Board is a strong partnership. It contributes effectively to the understanding of serious youth violence in the city. It routinely and systematically reviews incidents of serious youth violence and identifies key issues, for example concerns in relation to children's access to education and the delay in the response to MAPPA referrals. There is evidence of challenge between partners facilitating actions at a strategic and operational level.



### **Practice study: highly effective practice**

For some children, there is a strong multi-agency team of practitioners advocating for them. The multi-agency teams around the child use a range of assessment, formulation and risk matrix tools effectively so that all practitioners have a shared understanding of a child's strengths, aspirations, circumstances and challenges.

This was particularly evident for one child who had been excluded from school. The team of practitioners working with the child used their risk matrix and assessment tools to understand the wider context of the child's experiences and their circumstances. The team ensured that there was clear analysis and information-sharing between all agencies. An important action from the practitioners' risk analysis was to enable the child to return to school safely. Practitioners recognised that the links between the risk of serious youth violence and exploitation are increased when children do not attend school.

A formulation meeting provided an in-depth understanding of the child in the absence of an assessment of ADHD. This supported the professionals who work with the child to understand the child's learning style and for the professionals to adapt their communication accordingly.

The virtual school worked directly with the education setting, offering support and challenge to remove the barriers that were preventing a safe return to school. The social worker and youth justice worker maintained consistent contact with the child and their carers. Their work supported the transition back to school and provided stability and focus on the other areas of the child's life, for example exploring their opportunities post-16. The multi-agency team around the child ensured a safe and positive return to school, reducing the risk that a school exclusion may have meant for this child and reducing the risk of further incidents of serious youth violence.



### **Practice study: areas for improvement**

Some children have had a less cohesive response across agency partners. For a child whose need was identified and referred promptly by the school, there was a significant delay in the completion of the social work assessment and many months before a risk matrix assessment was completed and a 'Safe' referral made. Multiple incidents involving the child were each responded to individually; however, these were not initially seen as part of a pattern of risk. There were also occasions when PPNs were not submitted following police incidents, which would have added to the multi-agency analysis of risk. As a result, concerns escalated before a holistic understanding of the child's needs was reached across all agencies.

A significant issue for this child has been the lack of assessment for needs arising from neurodiversity due to long waiting times, despite the potential additional vulnerabilities indicated. There are multiple referral routes for assessment that lead to inconsistency and delay. The child's mother was advised to access an assessment via the GP due to the long waiting list. This was a challenging and confusing process for the family.

More recently, professionals have worked together with greater focus on therapeutic support, including working with the family to help the child feel safe and valued. Those providing education continue to provide effective advocacy. However, the current level of support for this child has not had a positive impact on reducing risk.



### **Places and spaces: highly effective practice**

Children in the north-east of the city have access to an exceptional resource, 'CATCH', that promotes their education, employment and positive alternative actions that divert them away from exploitation and crime within the community. The centre is resourced by police, education and social care, as well as accessing specialist and third sector services. Over 1,400 children have or are accessing the service.

Staff are committed to all the children and are passionate about their care, with a culture of restorative action and 'not giving up', even when children present with challenging behaviour in the centre or out in the community. Children are encouraged to develop building and craft skills, which has led them to refurbishing a number of shipping containers into lounges, games rooms and a gym. Children are encouraged to care for the different animals at the centre, including goats and alpacas, which is helping them develop their emotional intelligence and build a sense of responsibility. 'Restore' is a part of the centre that supports children who are having difficulties in school. Children are referred from within the 'cluster' of schools and are supported through focused work to re-engage in education.

Children's views and feedback have helped shape the services. As they get older, they are encouraged to become volunteers for the centre and act as role models for other children.

As well as producing quantitative data for the violence reduction partnership about the numbers of children attending, staff also measure the impact of their interventions through pathways and destinations and case studies for children who have been volunteers. A significant number of children have gone on to gain employment or progressed into further education through the support they receive from staff.

The overall impact is that a high proportion of children in the local community are being diverted away from crime and are reducing their risks of being affected by serious youth violence and criminal exploitation through positive activities, strong role models and dedicated staff.





## Next steps

We have determined that Leeds City Council is the principal authority and should prepare a written statement of proposed action responding to the findings outlined in this letter. This should be a multi-agency response involving the individuals and agencies that this report is addressed to. The response should set out the actions for the partnership and, when appropriate, individual agencies. The local safeguarding partners should oversee implementation of the action plan through their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Leeds City Council should send the written statement of action to [ProtectionOfChildren@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:ProtectionOfChildren@ofsted.gov.uk) by 23 August 2024. This statement will inform the lines of enquiry at any future joint or single-agency activity by the inspectorates.



Yours sincerely

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