

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Thursday, 18th July, 2024 at 2.00 pm
(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board at 1.45 p.m.)

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

- 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;
- 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)

Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)

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

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

Produced on Recycled Paper

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A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</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>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 2. To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information. 3. If so, to formally pass the following resolution:- <p>RESOLVED – 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>No exempt items have been identified.</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 - 10 JUNE 2024

7 - 18

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2024.

7

CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER (CLA) SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY

19 - 48

To consider a report from the Head of Democratic Services setting out the Council's Children Looked After (CLA) Sufficiency Strategy that was approved at Executive Board on 19 June 2024.

8

CHANGES TO FUNDING FOR INCLUSION (FFI) - BRIEFING

49 - 56

To consider a report from the Director of Children and Families that provides a briefing on the planned changes to Funding For Inclusion (FFI) in Leeds.

9		<p>THE ANNUAL STANDARDS REPORT</p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Children and Families that presents Scrutiny with performance data for pupils in Leeds in 2023 that has been externally validated following the statutory assessments and examinations which took place in 2023.</p>	57 - 88
10		<p>SACRE REPORT SCRUTINY - JULY 2024 FINAL</p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Children and Families that sets out the priorities for SACRE over the last year and the progress made on them.</p>	89 - 114
11		<p>WORK PROGRAMME</p> <p>To consider the Scrutiny Board’s work programme for the 2024/25 municipal year.</p>	115 - 136
12		<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The next public meeting of the Board will take place on 4 September 2024 at 10.00AM. There will be a pre-meeting for all board members at 9.45AM.</p> <p>THIRD PARTY RECORDING</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Use of Recordings by Third Parties – code of practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 6

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

MONDAY, 10TH JUNE, 2024

PRESENT: Councillor D Cohen in the Chair

Councillors J Bowden, Mr E A Britten,
K Brooks, R Downes, O Edwards, E Flint,
B Flynn, T Goodall, J Heselwood,
D Jenkins, N Manaka, K Renshaw and
A Scopes

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)

Mr T Britten – Church Representative (Catholic Diocese of Leeds)
Mr A Khitou – Primary Parent Governor representative

Co-Opted Members (Non-Voting)

Ms M Adams – Leeds Parent Carer Forum

1 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals.

2 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

3 Late Items

There were no late items of business.

4 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

5 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies were received from the following:

Cllr Stephenson with Cllr Flynn attending as substitute
Cllr Martin with Cllr Brooks attending as substitute
Cllr Jones with Cllr Scopes attending as substitute
Helen Bellamy
Andrew Graham

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 18th July, 2024

6 Minutes - 18 April 2024

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 April 2024, be approved as an accurate record.

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

Before moving on to the meeting agenda the Chair of the Board, Cllr Cohen, noted his thanks to members who sat on the Board in 2023/24 and also welcomed new members who are joining the scrutiny board for the 2024/25 municipal year.

The Chair also welcomed the new Executive Board Member responsible for Children and Families, Cllr Helen Hayden.

7 Co-Opted Members

The Board considered a report from the Head of Democratic Services on the appointment of co-opted members to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) in the 2024/25 municipal year.

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser provided an update based on a report that was brought to the April 2024 meeting of the Board. This included the five non-voting co-opted members, 2 voting church representatives and an update position on voting parent governor co-opted members.

Resolved

The Board:

- a) Approved the appointment of five non-voting co-opted members to the Children and Families Scrutiny Board and noted the position in respect of a new nominee from Young Lives Leeds.
- b) Noted 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) Noted the ongoing efforts to appoint parent governor representatives to the Children and Families Scrutiny Board, in addition to the Primary parent governor representative appointed in 2023/24, both from secondary schools and SILC provision in the city.

8 Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference

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

Resolved - Members noted the Terms of Reference as they relate to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families).

9 **Sources of Work for the Scrutiny Board and Draft Work Programme 2024/25**

The Board received 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.

In attendance for this item were:

- Cllr Helen Hayden, Executive Board Member for Children and Families
- Julie Longworth, Director of Children and Families
- Rob Clayton, Principal Scrutiny Adviser

Cllr Hayden welcomed the work of the Board in recent years and looked forward to continuing that in the coming municipal year. The Director of Children and Families echoed those views and stressed the positive impacts that the Board has had and that it had been noted in the last inspection of Children's Services.

The Scrutiny Adviser provided a brief introduction to the report covering some of the discussion from the pre-meet. Key issues identified as areas of focus in 2024/25 were:

- Early Years and Best Start Programme
- Transition from Children's to Adult services
- Children Looked After Sufficiency and Service Transformation
- Family Help Services and preventative measures that could support challenges experienced in schools linked to attendance, curriculum suitability, behavioural challenges and availability of mental health services (CAMHS). The Board thought that this could be taken forward under an Early Help/Family Help themed approach and also include areas such as life coaches and also focussing on multi-agency approaches to delivering early intervention services.
- Accessibility of Work Experience for all children and young people, including learning from best practice such as the Spear Programme
- Performance monitoring linked to transition between different services and different ages from pre-conception to adulthood.

The Board thought this would form a positive basis for the year's work and it was agreed that this would be taken away and brought back to the board to get thoughts on timing and overall content.

Resolved – The Board agreed that Appendix 3 to the report (draft initial work programme) along with the suggestions noted above would form the basis of the work programme for Children and Families Scrutiny Board in 2024/25.

10 **Youth Vaping Update**

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 18th July, 2024

Board members considered 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 followed consideration of the issue in the previous municipal year and a request that the Board receive an update early in the 2024/25 municipal year.

In attendance for this item were:

- Cllr Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Equality, Health and Wellbeing
- Cllr Helen Hayden, Executive Member for Children and Families
- Cllr Andrew Scopes, Chair Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles Board
- Helen Goddard, Advanced Health Improvement Specialist
- Heather Thomson, Head of Service Healthy Living Team
- Anna Ross, Head of Service C&F Public Health Team
- Rob Clayton, Principal Scrutiny Adviser

The Chair highlighted the legislative background to this issue and the importance that is likely to have on the approaches taken in Leeds following the forthcoming general election. It was thought that the Board should adopt a watching brief pending the expected legislative developments through the Tobacco and Vapes Bill.

The Executive Member for Equality, Health and Wellbeing noted her past role as an Executive Board Member covering children and families and welcomed the role played by scrutiny and the challenge provided. The Executive Member wished the Board well in 2024/25 and noted the importance of the work carried out by the directorate and the board.

On the subject of youth vaping the Executive Member noted the legislative background and the importance of the growing issue of youth vaping in the city and the health consequences associated with it. The public health message on vaping was emphasised that for adults vaping is effective as a smoking cessation aid but a consequence of vapes being available is that children and young people have been able to access them and are becoming addicted to nicotine having had no intention of taking up smoking.

The Board were informed that ASH has surveyed public support for the tobacco and vapes bill and discovered that support for the bill was significant amongst the public suggesting that nationally 69% support the measures, in Leeds the figure is between 68% and 70% with between 11% and 12% opposing the policy. In respect of children and young people aged between 11-15 who will be the first generation impacted by the bill, nationally two thirds support the bill with fewer than 1 in 10 opposing.

In Leeds public health work is ongoing with partners to deliver training in schools and to sustain or increase the capacity of the cheap and illicit tobacco team across West Yorkshire. It was noted that vaping is an obvious and key focus but there are other 'novel nicotine' products that could be of concern.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 18th July, 2024

The Board agreed to keep this on the Board's agenda in 2024/25 and to await legislation. It was also agreed that the correspondence and the Board's consultation response be sent to ministers once the outcome of the general election is known.

Board members also noted the need for early education approaches to tackle vaping, the issue of vaping on public transport and the prevalence of vape shops and advertising as ongoing issues.

The Chair also thanked Cllr Sandy Lay for his involvement in the work having initially brought this issue to the Board in 2023/24.

Resolved

The Board:

- a) Noted the update on legislative progress linked to the smokefree generation policy announcement and subsequent Tobacco and Vapes Bill.
- b) Noted the activity taking place in Leeds on youth vaping
- c) Agreed to maintain a watching brief on the issue in light of the expected legislative changes following the general election and bring an update report back summarising the expected changes.

11 Performance Update

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

In attendance for this item were:

- Julie Longworth, Director of Children and Families
- Councillor Helen Hayden, Executive Board Member for Children and Families
- Farrah Khan, Chief Officer Family Help
- Dan Barton, Deputy Director – Learning
- Chris Hudson, Policy, Planning and Procedures Leader

The Director of Children and Families introduce the item and highlighted the changes in the Leeds under 18 population as providing context to the performance data provided to the Board.

In addition, the Director highlighted areas of concern and challenge being faced by the directorate, highlighting the impact of the pandemic in terms of impact on mental health services and CAMHS and poverty with 44% of pupils in Leeds living in the most 20% deprived localities in the city. It was also noted that poverty significantly increases the likelihood of experiencing neglect and

abuse and of ultimately becoming a Child Looked After. The increase in CLA numbers was noted along with the 'broken system' as highlighted by the MacAlister Review and the demand pressures for CLA services and growing costs of those services. SEND demand pressures were also noted with the report setting out the increase in demand and the need to meet needs in a timely way in line with statutory duties.

In response to comments and question the following issues were covered:

- In response to a question regarding the number of CLA looked after in Leeds provision, 64% are cared for through internal provision which compares to a core city average of 49.6% and 49.3% average for statistical neighbours. Of those that are new to the care system between 60% and 70% are cared for in Leeds with the remaining often due to specific or specialist needs, cared for externally.
- The Board also heard about the wider sufficiency strategy which discharges the duty to provide sufficient quantity and mix of care placements in Leeds. A central theme of this is to increase and develop the Council's own provision through foster care and small group residential homes which is focused on keeping Leeds children in Leeds.
- The Board discussed EHCPs with reference to the statutory timescales and how the Council might reach 100% of EHCPs being in place within the 20 week statutory timescale. There are plans in place linked to the PwC work to improve timescales and to tackle backlogs within the next five months that should improve timeliness figures. There are some dependencies on this such as having a full staff cohort. The Board requested additional data on the specifics of EHCP timescales so how many are completed within 25 weeks, 30 weeks or more.
- The Board noted pressure points in the EHCP system linked to availability of education psychologists and the writing up of plans as the number of plans increase, additional resource will ease the pressure in these areas. It was also noted that the service dealing with EHCPs is currently dealing and finalising more cases than they ever have, and the key issue is demand pressure with the volume of cases having increased significantly in recent years.
- Members asked about FFI (Funding for Inclusion) and plans to review that system and also about how much of the EHCP forms part of the provision offered on the ground. In response the Board heard that the directorate will gradually migrate away from FFI, this will be done carefully with prioritisation of FFI transition and clear planning with schools to make sure there are no gaps in provision. This work is ongoing the directorate has and continues to work closely with education leaders in the city to secure their views and support for change. A carefully prioritised list of children is being developed with key stakeholders, mindful of managing demand and with a commitment to funding existing FFI packages until migration can take place. The principle of early intervention and the provision of early help for children with additional needs underpinned the establishment of FFI in the city. FFI has been recognised historically by the DfE and external bodies as an example of best practice, however the Local Authority and its key partners agreed that a review was necessary.

The review has been undertaken with schools and other key partners with a focus on fulfilment of the Local Authority statutory duty to assess where appropriate whilst ensuring that children and families have access to timely and effective early help in education settings.

- In response to the question on provision work is ongoing to develop a strategic plan to create additional places where they will be needed working with schools to work out what the offer will be and where provision will be provided.
- The Board heard that this is a clear priority for the directorate and senior leaders have recently met with the Leeds Parent Carer Forum listening to concerns and working with them to deliver improved performance in this area. It was also recognised that early help, family help and prevention are key elements of the ongoing approach, to identify needs and meet them at the earliest opportunity.
- The Board highlighted that the system can appear to be fragmented from a parent and carer perspective, noting that one size does not fit all and the importance of setting out clearly what the offer is in Leeds. In response the Board heard about the importance of listening to parents, carers and children and collaboration and co-production as key principles of the service. Clarity on the services available and providing support to access them were noted as key points.
- The board also heard about timeliness being important but also quality being as important. The speed of EHCP reviews were also noted.
- The Board discussed support groups and the need to make everyone aware of them and the support that can be offered by sharing experiences and discussing what is available and providing mutual support. It was acknowledged how lonely it can be when support is not available or communicated for parents and carers.
- Whilst there are issues with the system the Board also noted the efforts of staff working in the service to deal with increased demand.
- Board members asked about the number of children being re-united from care to their families. In response the Board heard of the kinship care service in Leeds, which is one of the largest in the country, this along with special guardianships keeps care arrangements within wider families. There is also an expanded team aimed at re-unifying families, this focusses on the support required for children to be re-united with their birth families and addresses the decreasing numbers of children who have been successfully reunited with family which can often be linked to the ages of CLAs with more adolescents coming into the CLA system. The Board noted the impact of more children and young people, particularly adolescents, living in areas of high deprivation and the impact that is having in terms of adolescents entering care, the highest cohort entering care in 2023 was adolescents and children aged under one. The Futures Service was referenced which is focussed on parents and carers who have had a child taken into care, unfortunately those who had a child taken into care are at higher risk of further children being taken into care.
- The Board asked about children and young people with not known status, these figures have been reduced but NEET figures have increased. In response on Not Knowns the improved relationships with settings at key time such as Year 11, was cited as a measure taken to understand more

about what children and young people are doing and to target resource at NEETs to get them to re-engage with employment, education and training settings.

- The Board discussed budget gaps and business transformation. A Delivery Board, chaired by the Director, is in place to oversee service transformation and dealing with issues such as transport, CLA sufficiency strategy and demand and demography issues. All of these have strategic plans in place providing a clear framework to deliver transformation and improved services and outcomes.
- Members highlighted residents who do not speak English as a first language and how they access services as being an added complication when parents and carers are planning to access services. This was noted as an area for constant prioritisation.
- In response to questions the board were informed of a 30% increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum seekers in the city and the knock on impacts on CLA. In addition, the number of incorrectly age assessed asylum seekers is an ongoing challenge.
- Board members highlighted re-offending rates as an area of potential concern and what might be done to tackle the cycle of re-offending. It was noted that the re-offending rate is influenced by a small cohort of frequent re-offending children and young people. Re-offending rates are a challenge, but the number of offences and seriousness of offences are reducing linked to programmes such as Turnaround.
- On school absences the Board expressed concern about the data remaining stubbornly high and that it may be an issue that is returned to in the municipal year, noting the links between persistent and severe absence and NEETs.
- In closing remarks on this item, the Executive Member for Children and Families noted the importance of the not known and NEET data and acknowledged the efforts of staff working across the directorate in a number of challenging areas and doing an excellent job.

Resolved - The Board considered and commented on the information contained in the report and appendices and noted the assurance provided on the performance data.

12 Youth Justice Plan 2024-2027

The Board received a report on the Youth Justice Plan 2024-2027 as required by the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules. It was therefore agreed that the Youth Justice Plan would be referred to Children and Families Scrutiny Board for consideration and comment.

In attendance for this item were:

- Julie Longworth, Director of Children and Families
- Councillor Helen Hayden, Executive Board Member for Children and Families
- Farrah Khan, Chief Officer Family Help

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 18th July, 2024

- Benjamin Finley, Head of Service Corporate Parenting
- Helen Burton, Youth Justice Service Delivery Manager

The Director and Executive Board Member introduced the item noting the comments made in the recent Joint Targeted Inspection in terms of the partnership working that goes on in Leeds working jointly towards delivering the best outcomes for children and young people in the Youth Justice System.

In response to comments and question from the Board the following areas were covered:

- On re-offending linked to questions under the previous performance item, the Board were informed of the first time entrant rate reducing which means that there is a small cohort of quite prolific offenders. It was also noted that the re-offending data does have a time lag. The Board heard in more detail about the Turnaround team who work with offenders to reduce re-offending and who currently have a less than 1% re-offending rate amongst the children they work with, so it is having an impact. The Turnaround Team is funded by the Ministry of Justice with the funding due to end in March 2025.
- Other approaches such as Outcome 22 were referenced which is an initiative that has been used in Bradford and works with young people on re-offending and is expected to create a downward trajectory in re-offending rates. This is targeted at children and young people who are seen as unlikely to re-offend and aims to keep them from entering the criminal justice system again.
- Members requested a breakdown of data in terms of age and gender, this will be provided to the Board outside of the meeting, but the Board was assured that the data is interrogated and is part of the work of the service.
- Serious Youth Violence was raised as an issue and it was acknowledged that in a lot of cases these are first time offences. The Board heard that frequent offenders often have a different profile to those committing more serious offences.
- The Board asked for more information on caseloads and how many in a caseload are new offenders and re-offenders. It was explained that the Turnaround offer, which works with children who would previously not have been in caseloads, has led to some of the increase.
- In response to questions on staff training and apprenticeships the Board were informed that the service is trying to grow and skill up unqualified staff into qualified staff over time.
- In respect of Priority 5 in the plan on attendance, achievement and attainment members were keen to ensure that the offer and examples set out in the report are being offered to all children and young people who the service works with. In response the board were assured that all children in the service have access to an education officer who works with the case holder to work with the child and family to ensure education outcomes. There are also plans to develop individual Education Plans targeted at those with increased risk and children in custody.

- Responding to questions linked to the experience of children and young people in custody it was noted that this is the first version of the plan that looks specifically at the experience of young people in custody, and it was recognised that it was a possible area of work on how best to support young people through what is a difficult experience for them.
- The Board heard about the impact of Early Help Hubs in terms of de-escalating, on a multi-agency basis, anti-social behaviour and targeting resources at individuals causing the most concern in specific areas.
- The Board noted the positive outcome of the recent JTAI (at Appendix 2) despite this being one of the most complex and dynamic areas of our work undertaken by the Council.
- The Board discussed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion with children and young people from ethnically diverse backgrounds being over-represented in the youth justice system and the work ongoing to ensure that services and agencies involved in youth justice work are aware of this issue and are working towards reducing this disproportionality.
- In relation to serious youth violence the Board asked about whether services have learned from experiences in other areas and how services are targeted at particular areas of the city. In response the Board were informed of both city wide approaches and resources being targeted at specific areas for example work in Harehills which is a multi-agency local approach, there are also city wide measures such as Operation Shield and approaches on child sexual exploitation which are taken forward on a trends and themes basis, city wide.
- The importance of multi-agency work was set out as a key learning point, working together on a local and regional basis through partners such as Police, Health anti-social behaviour teams, early help colleagues and the Youth Justice Service. It was also noted that the Youth Service are fully embedded in the multi-agency approach.
- In response to questions around self-harm at the Wetherby Youth Offenders Institute the Board were informed that the issues identified are being dealt with through the Leeds Safeguarding Children's Partnership Executive and involving leaders from the Youth Offenders Institute.

Resolved

The Board:

- a) Acknowledged 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) Acknowledged 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) Noted the impact of disproportionality on children from Black and Ethnic minorities within the youth justice cohort and that the Youth

Justice Service seeks to address disproportionality within the youth justice system.

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

13 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next public meeting of the Board is scheduled for 18 July 2024 at 2.00pm with a pre-meeting for all board members at 1.45pm.

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Children Looked After, Sufficiency Strategy

Date: 18 July 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

During the 2023/24 municipal year the Board received a number of reports focussed on the Council's approach to Children Looked After (CLA) in terms of the numbers of CLA, associated costs and significantly increased demand, how CLA are cared for, safeguarding practice and overall guiding strategies such as the implementation of the MacAlister Review and the Stable Homes, Built on Love Implementation Strategy. These items were considered within the context of the directorate's service transformation approach which given the ongoing financial challenge and increased demand and demography pressures is driven by a need to deliver 'more for less'.

The national context impacting children's social care services has seen significant pressure on local government finances, increasing demand, demography pressures and escalating cost of social care and education external placements. This has led to significant pressure on the Council's financial sustainability not just within children and families' services, but as a whole.

The CLA Sufficiency Strategy is therefore linked to the Board's past consideration of these issues and aims to provide a framework to deliver the significant change and development required to respond to the challenging national context and to have a material impact upon the Council's overall financial sustainability by delivering reduced costs of external placement provision within the Children and Families Directorate.

The Board is therefore asked to note and comment on Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy Executive Board report which is presented as Appendix 1 to this report and the Sufficiency Strategy itself at Appendix 2. Appendix 3 provides key messaging on the approach being taken to deliver the strategy.

Recommendations

- a) The Board is asked to note and comment on the Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy and identify any future areas where scrutiny activity might take place and add value to the work being undertaken by the Children and Families Directorate.

What is this report about?

- 1 This report provides the Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy considered at Executive Board on 19 June 2024 for scrutiny board consideration and comment. Also included at Appendix 3 is a CLA Sufficiency Strategy infographic which provides key messaging on the approach being taken by the Council.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 Scrutiny plays an important role within the Council's Governance framework providing the opportunity for wider check and challenge and to add value to policy development and decision making processes.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 3 Developing a CLA sufficiency strategy that has quality of placement, family first and stable homes as key principles offers a positive environment for CLA to develop and thrive and to have fulfilling lives upon leaving care. As such the report and strategy contained in the appendices contribute significantly to the health and well being and inclusive growth opportunities for Children Looked After in Leeds.
- 4 The Best City Ambition seeks to use available resource to deliver the Council and City's ambitions, addressing the financial pressures being experienced in particular with regard to external CLA placement costs will contribute to the overall financial sustainability and robustness of the authority.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 5 This is an update report to scrutiny as such no specific consultation has taken place.
- 6 Each year the Scrutiny Board is presented with a draft work programme at its June meeting for initial discussion and agreement. The possibility of an update item on the CLA sufficiency strategy was mentioned in discussion of that item.
- 7 The report and strategy contained in the appendices to this report were considered at Executive Board on 19 June 2024.
- 8 Consultation and engagement details related to the Executive Board report are contained in Appendix 1.

What are the resource implications?

- 9 There are no specific resource implications associated with this update report. However, Appendix 1 contains details on resource implications linked to the CLA Sufficiency Strategy.

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

- 10 Any risk implications associated with this strategy are addressed in Appendix 1.

What are the legal implications?

11 Any legal implications associated with this strategy are addressed in Appendix 1.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

12 This is a scrutiny update report and as such no other options were considered. Appendix 1 contains relevant comments in relation to the sufficiency strategy itself.

How will success be measured?

13 This is a scrutiny update report and as such success measures are not relevant. Appendix 1 containing the 19 June Executive Board report provides details in relation to the sufficiency strategy.

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

14 This is a scrutiny update report and as such this is not relevant. Appendix 1 containing the 19 June Executive Board report provides details in relation to the sufficiency strategy.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – CLA Sufficiency Strategy Executive Board report considered on 19 June 2024.
- Appendix 2 – Leeds Sufficiency Strategy 2024-2027
- Appendix 3 – CLA Sufficiency Strategy Key Messaging Infographic

Background papers

- None

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Children Looked After, Sufficiency Strategy

Date: 19th June 2024

Report of: Director of Children and Families

Report to: Executive Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

Leeds City Council has a legal duty under the Children Act 1989 to make sure we have enough placements, and a mix of placements, within the Council's area, to meet the needs of Children Looked After.

This report provides a draft Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy which aims to set out, in some detail, the Council's approach to meeting its Sufficiency Duty and the needs of children in its care.

The Leeds sufficiency strategy 2024 -2027 is focused on families first, family valued and creating loving and stable homes. The Strategy highlights Leeds commitment to keeping children and young people in the city, close to their families, friends, local communities and school and their support networks. Working in partnership and cooperating with partners is key to ensuring the provision of a range of high-quality placements that meet the needs of Children Looked After.

Detailed three-year profiles and implementation plans will sit underneath this strategy and will be monitored monthly and updated annually to ensure that the ambitions and targets set out are achieved.

The strategy has been informed by the views, voices and lived experience of children and young people and a measure of its success is that we deliver on the promises made to them as their corporate parents.

The strategy is set within the wider national context where there is significant pressure on local government finances, caused in part due to increasing demand, demography pressures and escalating cost of social care and education external placements. This is a very significant issue for the City Council's financial sustainability and the activity emanating from the delivery of this strategy is a key deliverable for the Council as a whole.

The strategy seeks to provide a framework to deliver the significant change and development required to respond to the challenging national context but also to seek to make a material impact upon the Council's overall financial sustainability by delivering reduced costs of external placement provision within the Children and Families Directorate.

Recommendations

Executive Board is recommended to:

- a) Comment upon and agree the proposed Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy.
- b) Note that the document will be subject to regular review and any significant changes may mean that the Sufficiency Strategy is represented to Executive Board for endorsement.

What is this report about?

- 1.0 All Local Authorities have a legal duty under the Children Act 1989 to make sure they have enough placements, including the correct balance of placement type, to meet the needs of the children they look after. Whilst the Council has the lead role, there is also a duty on local partners such as Health to cooperate in this work, to make sure that children's needs are met. Led by the local authority, all local areas are expected to produce a plan, the 'Sufficiency Strategy' that sets out how children's need will be best met.
- 2.0 **Draft Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy**
- 2.1 The draft Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy is attached as appendix one.
- 2.2 The drafting and development of the Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy has been overseen by a Sufficiency Board comprising a range of Officers from within Children and Families Directorate and from the wider Council and health and education partners.
- 2.3 The strategy is set within the wider national context where there is significant pressure on local government finances, caused in part due to increasing demand and escalating cost of social care and education external placements.
- 2.4 The strategy seeks to provide a framework to deliver the significant change and development required to respond to the challenging context but crucially by changing the mix and model of provision deployed within the Children and Families Directorate with a particular focus on diversifying our model of provision and delivery and seeking to reduce the cost of external placements.
- 2.5 The strategy is focused on family first and creating stable homes in the city, where children can be close to their local school, communities and support networks
- 2.6 Ensuring the right approach and providing the right support and provision at the right time, in the right place provides the Council the best opportunity to deliver affordability, best value and existing within agreed budgets.
- 2.7 The Strategy sets out a key number of principles which will drive the implementation of the Strategy:
 - Ongoing commitment to working 'with' family, to identify family-based settings, family-based solutions (eg through Family Group Conferencing and Family Plans) maintaining Family Links for children and reunification back to family where possible.
 - Reduce the need for children and young people to be in care. This will be implemented through evidence-based developments in early help and prevention and a continued focus on support and planning to help children move on from care.

- To achieve wherever possible family-based placements for children who need to be looked after.
- Effective permanency planning through the childcare review process, supporting applications for a Special Guardianship Order, reunification to family or ensuring that children are matched with identified long term carers
- Supporting the transition to adulthood and independence by providing a range of options for Care Leavers. The implementation of Staying Put and Staying Close, ensuring support is close in proximity and provided through trusted relationships.
- Stronger relationship-based commissioning and market management and shaping with a focus on 'home grown' Leeds based providers. Working alongside care, education and health to collaboratively commission external placement provision that meets needs, delivers child outcomes at the right cost.
- Implement learning from the National Review of Complex Health Needs in Residential Settings by ensuring a robust, multi-disciplinary and tenacious approach to quality assurance across all care health and education residential settings.
- Address the 'broken market' and escalating external costs by developing more high-quality evidence based internal in-house provision (residential and foster care) that enables Council and partners to gain more control over cost, quality and outcomes for children and families.

2.8 Over and above the key principles set out in 2.3 the Strategy seeks to set out:

- The context within which the Council is, with partners, seeking to address significant challenges in increasing numbers of Children Looked After; increasing challenges on ensuring the correct and appropriate mix of placement types (internal fostering, Independent Fostering Agencies, internal residential accommodation, external residential accommodation etc.); increasing cost of and scarcity of external residential accommodation and increasing poorer outcomes for children.
- The need to consider location of provision and the ability to ensure that children and young people are where appropriate accommodated in provision as close to Leeds, family, school and wider support networks as possible.
- The need to keep the strategy child centered and to ensure the needs of the child, young person and family remain central to all activity and decision making.
- The need to ensure that there is a 'mixed economy' and continuum of provision which can best meet the needs of children and young people.
- The financial implications and cost pressures related to providing and securing options for accommodation which are best matched to need.
- The key issues which the Strategy needs to be cognisant of and the changing context within which complexity of need and demand are rising both locally and nationally.
- The need for the Strategy to be aligned with the Council's values and behaviours and its wider corporate planning arrangements i.e. aligned to the Best City Ambition.
- That taking a Team Leeds approach to working in partnership with other agencies within the city is the correct approach.

- The criticality of early help, prevention and a family first approach and its vital role in securing better outcomes for children and young people, avoiding escalation and achieving de-escalation where possible.
- The need to reflect the overarching perspective of Government through its Stable Homes Built Upon Love Plan and the perspective of Ofsted as the principal regulator of Children’s Social Care.
- A strategy which is evidence based, grounded in data and committed to using insight to develop responses to identified issues and need.

2.9 The implementation of the strategy will be accountable to Children and Families Leadership and Corporate Parenting Board. The implementation plans will involve.

- Three-year profiles and action plans across fostering, residential and supported accommodation.
- The profiles will set out direction of travel for the next 3 years and targets required for each area of provision.
- The implementation plans will outline what is needed, by when and who is responsible. These plans will be monitored monthly and updated annually based on progress, changing need and financial and budget implications.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 3.0 The Strategy and its implementation will have a key impact in ensuring that the needs of Children Looked After, by definition some of the City’s most vulnerable children and young people, continue to be prioritised and met. The Strategy will ensure that the Council’s arrangements for supporting Children Looked After are based on a robust strategic assessment of need.
- 3.1 An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening (EDCI) form is attached as appendix two.
- 3.2 The Strategy will align and contribute to the developing Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds 2024.

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

- Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

4.0 The Strategy and its implementation will have a direct impact on the ability to deliver improvements to the health and well-being of children and young people across the City. The Strategy will enable more children to live locally in Leeds, supporting them to become active citizens. It will reduce the need for children to be placed outside of Leeds and the associated travel for Social Workers as they fulfil their statutory duties.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

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

- 4.1 The strategy has been the subject of considerable internal officer consultation and engagement and has also been discussed with Children Looked After through our Voice and Influence team, looking at previous views and information shared by children and young people and specific focus group discussions. In addition, three public facing sessions were held in Spring 2024 whereby a range of professionals including the Council’s Placement team and Social Worker, Partners, including Health and Third Sector could engage with the Council on the draft strategy.
- 4.2 The consultation and engagement undertaken to date has generated the feedback set out below which has been accommodated into the draft Strategy now presented to Executive Board for approval.

Consultation and Engagement Feedback

Issue raised	Incorporated into draft Strategy	Additional Comments
Strategy needs to align with and be set in the context of other Council strategies, priorities and initiatives	Best City ambition and children and young people’s plan highlighted	
Needs to benchmark data against core cities	Core city data added into data section	
Focus on family needs a higher priority	Commitment to family-based settings first priority in priority section	
Simple summary on a page for children and young people	Plan on page developed for children and young people	This will be developed into an infographic
Need to reference corporate parenting promises	Promises and pledges added	

What are the resource implications?

- 5.0 The consideration of the Strategy itself and the work done so far raises minimal resource considerations and all activities associated with bringing forward the Strategy for approval have been delivered within existing resources.
- 5.1 Implementation of the Strategy does have the potential for a change in resource deployment between individual placement types but more crucially it should deliver positive financial benefits to help address the significant financial pressure the Council faces on the costs of Children Looked After by ensuring that a) a mixed economy of provision, suitable for need exists and b) individual children and young people’s needs are matched to accommodation and support. In addition, the continued focus on ‘family first’ and supporting children to remain within stable family arrangements will bring beneficial outcomes for children and young people.
- 5.2 Given the general financial pressures being experienced within the Directorate, as referenced in the 2023/24 Financial Outturn reported elsewhere on today’s Executive Board’s agenda, and in particular the very high costs of external residential placements for Children Looked After, the Strategy will play a key element in the Directorate’s plans for reducing expenditure on Children Looked After, by:
- Ensuring that a holistic systems wide approach to forecasting likely demand

- Seeking to provide effective child centred provision based upon principles of ‘family first’
- Ensuring that effective care planning processes are in place and that the correct provision is available for each child or young person, with provision meeting need and reflecting a balance of cost and positive outcomes for the child young person
- Having the correct balance of provision including LCC supported foster carers, Independent Foster Agencies, internal provision, commissioned provision and external provision
- Maximizing LCC foster carer provision and supporting more kinship care and SGOs
- Brining forward new levels of LCC supported foster care aimed at children and young people with more complex needs
- Supporting an agile approach to matching the needs of children and young people to available provision
- Ensuring that a mixed economy of provision exists so that the council can respond to changing external market conditions including the potential of joint arrangements with commissioned providers
- Reviewing entrants to care and the processes undertaken by LCC in that decision making
- Strengthening compliance and commissioning arrangements
- Consideration of ‘block booking’ and ‘retainer’ arrangements with external providers with a focus on Leeds based provision.
- Consolidating activity to consider reunification of children and young people with parents and carers
- Reviewing care plans for children with a view to supporting and enabling a more timely return to Leeds where this is in the child’s best interests.
- Strengthening the work with health, education and third sector partners to bring forward positive outcomes for children and young people whilst delivering financial savings to partners

5.3 The work on delivering the Sufficiency Strategy will be taken forward alongside a range of other activity across the Directorate to reduce its cost base and to maximise efficiencies.

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

- 6.0 Sufficiency numbers and timescales in implementation plans may not be achievable, realistic or in line with budgetary expectations, this will be mitigated by regular review of the Strategy and by ongoing performance management arrangements.
- 6.1 Assumptions made around data and in particular forecast positions are incorrect, this will be mitigated by a regular review process and performance management arrangements which should allow for remedial action to be undertaken.

What are the legal implications?

- 7.0 There is a general duty arising under section 22G of the Children Act 1989 which requires local authorities to secure sufficient accommodation for children looked after. The Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy sets out how Leeds City Council aims to meet this duty. Executive Board's approval of the Strategy will provide executive oversight, monitoring and endorsement.
- 7.1 Executive Board's approval of the Strategy will assist in ensuring the Council is meeting its legal responsibilities. The Strategy will however not form part of the Council's policy and budget framework.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 8.0 Given the risks associated with not having appropriate arrangements, and the legal duties to secure sufficient accommodation for Children Looked After, the 'do nothing' option was not considered a viable alternative.

How will success be measured?

- 9.0 A range of formal success measures have been constructed and will form the basis of ongoing monitoring and management oversight. Moreover, the Council, partners and stakeholders will know if the Strategy is successful if:
- Less children are looked after and more children live in loving, stable, family-based settings and local children's homes that are high quality and good value.
 - If children and young people tell us that we are delivering on the promises we made to them as corporate parents.
 - More children will be in stable, long-term care. Fewer children will see an unplanned end to their care.
 - Our children looked after and care leavers will have some of the best outcomes of any children, anywhere.

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

- 10.0 The Director of Children and Families is responsible for implementation and is supported by officers across the Directorate. Implementation of the Strategy will be immediate.

Appendices

- | | | |
|------|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| 11.0 | Appendix one | Draft Strategy |
| | Appendix two | EDCI screening |
| | Appendix three | Children and Young People Infographic |

Background papers

- 12.0 None.

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Leeds Sufficiency Strategy 2024-2027

Family Valued, Stable Homes

June 2024



Executive summary

Our vision is to make Leeds a Child Friendly City, the best city for children, young people and families in the UK.

We are ambitious for our children and young people and want them to fulfil their potential and achieve improved care, education and health outcomes.

We want children to be brought up by family and where this is not safe or possible, we want to improve the lives of children and young people in care. These children face some of the biggest challenges, so they need the best help to give them an equal chance to grow up with the support, care and love that every child deserves.

The Leeds sufficiency strategy 2024 -2027 is focused on families first, family valued and creating loving and stable homes.

The Strategy highlights Leeds commitment to keeping children and young people in the city, close to their families, friends, local communities and school and their support networks.

It also highlights Leeds commitment to recognise and embrace different needs, situations, and ambitions for our children looked after. The Strategy will seek to promote the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) agenda by removing the barriers that limit what children looked after can do and can be, enabling them to be their best.

We have set our ambitions for children and young people, and we will implement these using the Leeds Practice Model underpinned by a consistent therapeutic approach informed by Dyadic Development Psychotherapy.

We know that we can only promote and utilise family and create stable homes if we work together with families and our partners across the city.

We need to develop a flexible range of high-quality responsive provision for our children and young people that provides the right support at the right time. This starts with effective evidence based early help, prevention, family support and reunification through to short breaks, crisis intervention, family-based care and small group living. Residential care is seen as an intervention and not a destination and crisis provision as a safe space to work towards the next step in achieving family resolution. Staying put and staying close will be promoted to ensure trusted relationships can be maintained to support independence.

Detailed three-year profiles and implementation plans will sit underneath this strategy and will be monitored monthly and updated annually to ensure we are working towards the ambitions, meeting the targets and delivering affordability.

The strategy has been informed by the views, voices and experience of our children and young people and the measure of its success is that we deliver on the promises we have made as their corporate parents.

Foreword

Cllr Helen Hayden, Executive Member for Children and Families

I am delighted to introduce Leeds City Council's Sufficiency Strategy for children looked after. It is our vision is to make Leeds a Child Friendly City, the best city for children and young people to grow up and live in.

We are ambitious for our children and young people and want them to fulfil their potential and achieve improved outcomes. We want children to be brought up by family and where this is not safe or possible, we want to improve the lives of children and young people in care. These children face some of the biggest challenges so need the best help to give them an equal chance to grow up with the support, care and love that every child deserves.

To give every child and young person the best home and best support, the Council is committed to work in new and better ways with its partners in the public, private and third sector and, importantly, to work in different ways with families and communities.

In line with our aim to be a Child Friendly City, our strategy is shaped by the voices of children and young people and supported by research on what is most beneficial for their well-being. Above all, children and young people wish to stay with their family and friends wherever possible. When they need to be in care, they generally prefer to remain in Leeds, in a setting like a family home, surrounded by trusted, caring adults and children. These are things that we would hope for any child, yet we recognise that there is still work to be done, both in Leeds and nationally, to ensure every child has these opportunities and rights.

Introduction

In Leeds around 1,500 children and young people are looked after by the Council at any one time. For most of these children and young people, the Courts have decided that this is in their best interests, or their parents have asked that the local authority bring them into care. So, for each of these children and young people, a new home is needed that will meet their needs and help them thrive again. This Strategy sets out how the Council and its partners aim to meet this challenge.

As set out in the Leeds Children and Young People Plan, one of our three 'obsessions' is to reduce the need for children to be in care. We will achieve this by providing more effective and timely early help for families, taking a strength based relational and evidence-based approach to working 'with' children and families and their wider support networks and improving the quality of care planning to help children move onto a permanent home sooner.

Leeds other two obsessions focus on all children and young people attending, achieving, and attaining well at school, and continuing their route of a sustained education, apprenticeship or employment and Leeds being a healthy place for all children and young people; improving the timely access to healthcare they need.

For those children and young people who need to be in care we aim to improve the choices and opportunities available to each child. We will create more family-based homes for children to live in Leeds by continuing our successful work to recruit more foster carers from across Leeds, and by reshaping our children's homes to become smaller, located in the heart of our local communities and supported by an agile multi-disciplinary team wrapped around the child and family with a focus on maintaining family links and reunification wherever possible.

We will keep children and young people at the centre of all of what we do and ensure they are always involved in the decision making that affects their lives. Practice, behaviour and decision making to safeguard and promote children's welfare will always be seen through a lens of 'Think family'. In order to do this effectively we need a trained, supported and diverse workforce that reflects the culture, identity and diversity of our children looked after.

Background

Sufficiency Strategy

All local authorities have a legal duty under the Children Act 1989 to make sure they have enough placements to meet the needs of the children they look after. Whilst the Council has the lead role, there is also a duty on local partners such as Health to cooperate in this work, to make sure that children's needs are met. Led by the local authority, all local areas are expected to produce a plan, known as the 'Sufficiency Strategy' that sets out how children's needs will be best met.

Best City Ambition

The [Leeds 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 the quality of life for everyone who calls Leeds home. The Team Leeds approach will focus on improving outcomes across three pillars; Health and Wellbeing, Inclusive Growth and Zero Carbon. Our commitment to [equality, diversity and inclusion](#) is also a key part of the best city ambition. We want Leeds to be a trauma informed compassionate city that is fair and just, that recognises and embraces people's different needs, situations, and ambitions. The barriers that limit what people can do and can be, will be removed, and everyone will be enabled to be their best.

Child Friendly Leeds

Leeds also aims to be a Child Friendly City, the best city in the UK for children, young people to live and grow up in and the best city for families. To achieve this, organisations who seek to support children and families in Leeds have committed to shared priorities, specific behaviours and ways of working. The Child Friendly Leeds [12 wishes](#) were refreshed in 2022 and developed based on consultation with over 80,000 children and young people in Leeds. These wishes, our shared priorities, values and behaviours shape this Sufficiency Strategy.

Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2023 – 2028

The detail of all our plans and ambitions for children and young people are part of the [Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2023-2028](#). The Leeds CYP plan has 5 outcomes, 14 priorities and 3 obsessions that underpin this sufficiency strategy. The 3 obsessions are:

- Safely and appropriately reduce the number of children looked after
- Young people in Leeds attend school, achieve, and attain well, and continue their route of a sustained education, apprenticeship or employment destination
- Leeds is a healthy place for all children; and improve the timely access to healthcare when needed

Leeds promises and pledge

Leeds City Council and its partners through its Corporate Parenting Board has made a series of [promises to children and young people in care](#) to;

- help and support you to stay safe and have a healthy lifestyle
- have high aspirations and reach your full potential
- make sure you have lots of different people to support you
- help you have new experiences and develop your own interests
- support throughout your education and to plan for the future
- involve you in all decisions about your life
- celebrate your achievements
- listen and make sure you know what will happen next
- work towards the [My Things Matter Campaign](#)

Leeds City Council have also agreed to establish Care Experience as a locally protected characteristic by the Council. This means that decisions on services and policies made and adopted by the council will be assessed and consider the impact on people with care experience. We want to keep improving how we meet the needs of those who have care experience and reduce the disadvantages they face. Working with care experienced individuals, we will enhance our cross-council approach to creating opportunities for those with care experience to thrive and succeed.

Voice of children and young people



Listening to and acting on the views of children and young people is essential to making sure that the right home, care and support are provided at the right time for our children and young people.

The views of children and young people have been gained through direct feedback and ongoing consultation work with Voice and Influence groups and Youth Councils, and our Advocacy and Children Rights service. Children and young people have clearly shared that they want

- an 'ordinary' family life, and not to feel 'different'
- to maintain relations with their birth families
- to understand why they're in care
- to be listened to about where they want to be, and to have an element of control
- to be valued, respected, encouraged (for example, at school) and to be appreciated for themselves.

The Leeds Corporate Parenting Board completed a survey with children and young people. The key messages, themes and findings from children and young people include:

- Children and young people want to be happy, healthy and settled. They want a say in decisions about where they live and the opportunity to build positive relationships with the people that care for them.
- They want to achieve at school and receive opportunities to develop further education, training and employment options that are right for them.
- They want effective support with their physical and mental health, at the right time and a say in what this looks like.
- Children and young people want choice about where they live and for this to be matched to their needs personally.
- Relationships with their families is really important to them and the time that is spent with them.
- Young people want information and support as they develop into adulthood and stability and consistency of support from the people caring and looking after them.

Listening to those with lived experience including parents and carers and those who have had previous children removed or adopted is also a key part of our consultation and engagement. Child and Parent advocates are used to ensure voice and lived experience is heard and effectively responded to.

Leeds children

This section presents our Leeds children in care population in the context of our overall child population as part of a large, diverse, complex and growing city. Locally and nationally Children looked after populations are growing and are weighted to older ages and to children from deprived communities.

The Leeds child population (under 18) has grown 10.9% in the last decade. This growth has seen an increasingly diverse child population and a child population weighted towards more deprived communities and families with low income.

- The Office for National Statistics estimates that the Leeds population of 10–15-year-olds grew 9% 2019-2022 and the population of young people ages 16 and 17 grew 12%. Leeds has had a falling birth rate in recent years alongside a now growing teenage population.
- A disproportionate third of Leeds children live in areas in the 10% most deprived in England. 57% of care starters (2023/24) come from communities in the 10% most deprived in England.
- The number of children in Leeds experiencing low income is the 7th largest number in England.
- Our youngest populations are our most diverse and diversity is increasing.
- As at March 2024, 1548, children are in care a rate of 89.7 per 10,000 children. Children in care rose by 7% in 2023/24, care starters exceeded leavers in 9 out of the preceding 13 months.
- The March 2023 average children in care rates for DFE statistical neighbour local authorities was 93.7 per 10,000 (range 57 to 144) and for Core Cities 96.5 (range 57 to 156). 2024 rates will be available late autumn 2024.
- Children aged 10-17 make up 62% of our looked after population and 44% of our child population, this is reflected nationally.
- Children from mixed ethnic background are over-represented in our care population.

Child Population

After a sustained period of high birth years in Leeds there has been a decline in the birth rate since 2017. With this decline in birth rate the Leeds child population (under 18) is at its current peak. We recognise that the high birth years have just begun to enter secondary school and will start to reach post-16 learning in 2026/27. This growth in our Leeds teenage population will see a more diverse teenage population and one weighted more to our deprived neighbourhoods.

Nationally and in Leeds the child in care population is disproportionately weighted to older age groups and to children from more deprived backgrounds. These demographic factors will impact on demand. This is in the context of broader challenges impacting families, children and young people including cost of living, growing inequality, increased mental health needs in young people and lower levels of school attendance post pandemic. Mitigation comes from strong partnerships at all levels that listen to children and families and supporting timely identification and help. The table below shows the under 18 child population 2019-2022 by age groups. The overall child population has grown by 2% ages but within these ages 10-15 have grown 15% and ages 16-17 by 12%.

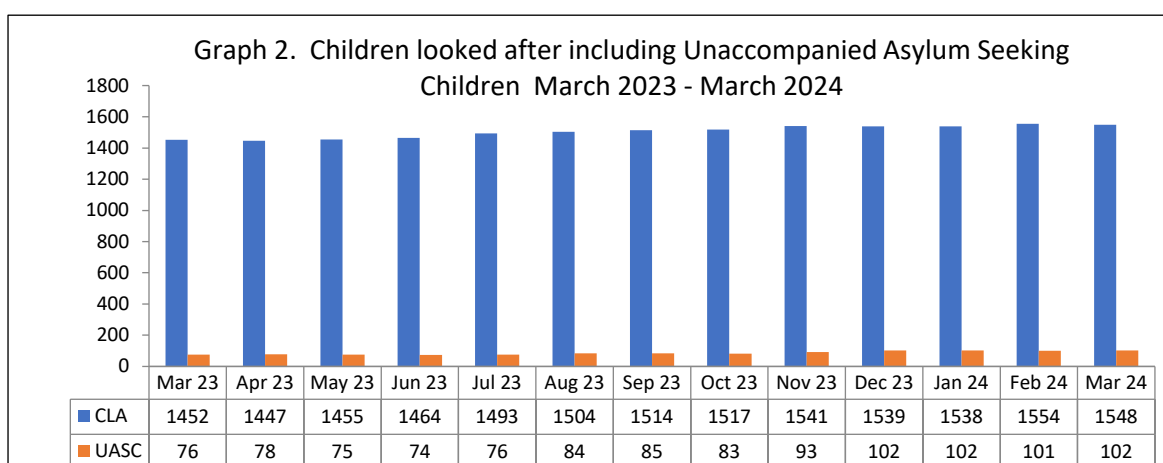
	2019	2020	2021	2022	Change	
0-4	49,212	48,022	46,395	45,846	-3,366	-7%
5-9	50,115	49,727	49,557	49,782	-333	-1%
10-15	54,185	55,851	57,325	59,142	4,957	9%
16-17	15,953	16,692	17,362	17,881	1,928	12%
TOTAL	169,465	170,292	170,639	172,651	3,186	2%

Source Office for National Statistics.

Children looked after population

Our Looked After Children population grew by 7% from March 2023 to March 2024 with 1548 children in care on 31 March. This represents 89.7 children in care for every 10,000 children under 18 in Leeds. Graph 2 shows the looked after children population over the 13 months to March 2024, in this period care starters exceeded care leavers in 9 of the 13 months.

The number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children in care increased in 2023 and has sustained at around a hundred children. These children represent a quarter of the growth in children in care over the last year. Numbers may rise further reflecting Leeds commitment as a compassionate city and government guidance.



The table below compares Leeds rate of children in care per 10,000 children with 4 comparator averages from 2014 to 2023 (latest national data). For March 2023 Leeds has a rate above England, close to the Yorkshire and The Humber and below Department for Education Statistical Neighbours and Core Cities.

Consistent with authorities across England, Leeds is seeing growth in the child in care population. The provisional Leeds rate per ten thousand for March 2024 is 89.7 per 10,000. The official release of national data will be late 2024. Comparing 2019-23 Leeds has a marginally higher rate of increase than comparators (7 children per 10,000 compared to 5 or 6) but 2014-23 Leeds' rate of children in care declined against increases in comparator rates of 10 children in care per 10,000 or greater. For 2023-24 regional sharing of unofficial data suggests a mixed picture with authorities care populations, including a rise in Leeds and a small reduction in the regional rate.

Within these averages there is substantial local authority variation, Leeds 2023 rate of children in care at 84 per 10,000 ranks 6th of 11 with statistical neighbours, rates range from 57 to 144. Leeds rate is 4th of 8 core cities with a range from 57 to 156 children in care per 10,000. Local authority rates of children in care are affected by socio-economic factors, demography and local organisational and practice arrangements.

Table 2 Rates of Children in Care 2014-2023 (children in care per 10,000 child population)

CLA rates at end of March	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change 14 to 23	Change 14 to 23
Leeds	86	78	76	76	76	77	79	75	80	84	7	-2
Yorkshire & The Humber	65	64	63	67	71	75	78	80	81	81	6	16
Statistical Neighbours	76	77	76	82	83	89	91	93	92	94	6	18
Core Cities	87	84	82	84	86	91	93	94	99	97	6	10
England	60	60	60	62	64	66	68	69	70	71	5	11

Source DFE Local Authority Interactive Tool/SFR. Dates are for the end of March. Leeds/England/Yorkshire are CLA rates per 10,000 statistical neighbour/core cities are the average rate across local authorities.

Children looked after population by age.

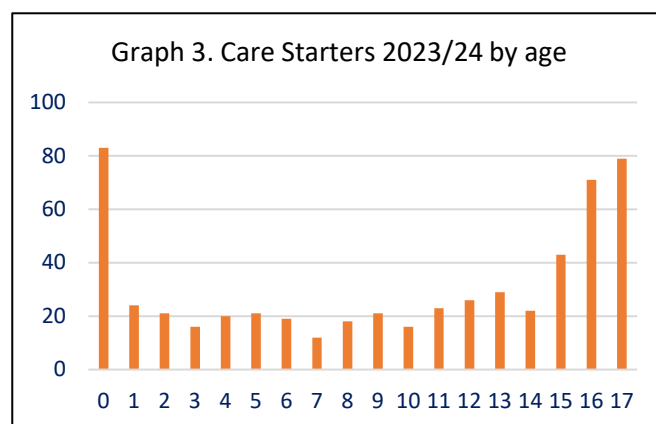
The Office of National Statistics estimates that the Leeds child population (U18) grew by 2% 2019-22 to 172,651. The age profile of the Leeds children in care is similar to England this includes younger ages being under-represented compared to the local child population and ages 10 plus overrepresented, especially ages 16 and 17. For this later group they make 22% of Leeds care population (03/23) and 10% of Leeds population (ONS 22) for England this is 26% (03/23) and 11% (ONS 22).

The Leeds care population has seen a 20% increase from March 2019 to December 2023, within this:

- Ages 0-4 saw a 3% increase in the context of a declining child population (273 children Dec 23).
- Ages 5-9 a 26% increase in the context of a stable child population (308 children Dec 23).
- Ages 10-15 a 16% increase in the context of an increasing child population (591 children Dec 23).
- Ages 16-17 a 39% increase in the context of a stable child population (361 children Dec 23).

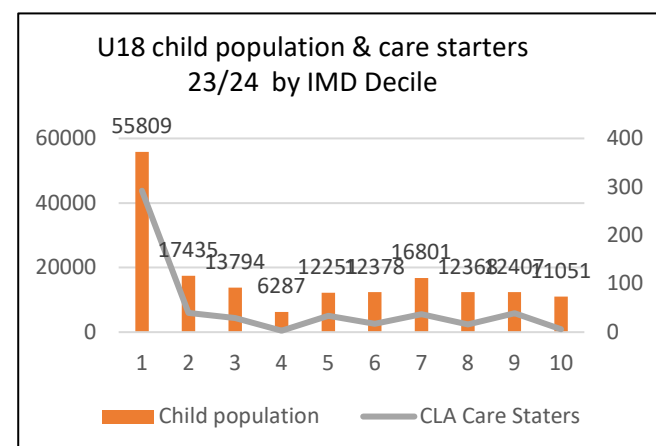
Children looked after starters and leavers

- Graph 3 shows care starters in 2023/24 highlighting that starters are weighted to children under one (15%) and teenagers aged 15 and over (35%), the later will include the majority of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.
- 2023/24 saw a continuation in the rising numbers of children entering local authority care in Leeds with 558 children starting care. This is a 6% increase on 2022/23 and a 35% rise from 2018/19. Abuse or Neglect is the main reason for children entering care, consistently 60-64% of care starters each year. Absent parents (18%) and families in acute distress (10%) have increased as reasons for care entry in recent years. (2023/24 data is provisional).
- In 2023/24 (provisionally) 482 children left care, 153 of whom when they turned 18. 22% of care leavers were aged under 5, 13% aged 5 to 10, 14% 11 to 15, 19% aged 16 and 17 and 32% aged 18.



Children looked after population and poverty, income and deprivation.

Leeds is the second largest metropolitan authority in England. For the financial year ending 2023 33,432 of the under 16 child population in Leeds were living in households of relative low income, 21.6% of the child population. While the Leeds percentage of children in low income households doesn't stand out the absolute number does, Leeds has the fourth largest child population being impacted when compared to metropolitan and unitary authorities and the seventh if large county councils are included.



The growth in the Leeds child population is weighted to our most deprived communities. 33% of the Leeds children under 18 population live in neighbourhoods in the 10% most deprived nationally. In 2023/24 57% of care starters came from these communities.

Data sources: Children in care local statistics. Population Office of National Statistics. IMD – Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 1-most deprived decile 10 – least

While overall Leeds has a rate of children in care of 89.7 per 10,000 (03/2024) at a community level this varies. 3 of our 22 children’s clusters (local partnership areas) have rates of children in care over 150 per 10,000 and 11 have rates lower than 20 per 10,000. We recognise that all Leeds communities have families experiencing low income and children eligible for free school meals and that these are heavily concentrated in some communities. This includes both highly mobile, diverse, dynamic communities and more settled communities facing intergenerational challenges.

Children looked after population and diversity.

Our youngest children and our youngest communities are our most diverse and diversity is increasing. The table from the 2021 census emphasises this.

Table 3 Leeds 2021 Census Ethnic diversity by age.

	24 & under	25 to 64 years	65 years & over
Ethnically Diverse Communities	29%	20%	6%
White	71%	80%	94%

Source ONS Census 2021

Children with English as an additional language make up 23% of primary pupils in Leeds school and 20% of secondary pupils, this is above national and regional rates with the Leeds rate, especially at secondary school, increasing faster than comparators. (Source DFE School Census)

For children in care those from mixed ethnic backgrounds are over-represented and those from Asian backgrounds under-represented relative to the Leeds population. It is a recognised that these broad headings do not adequately represent the diversity or change in our communities.

Table 4 Children in Care by Ethnicity.

Open Children Looked After	School Census		
	Apr-24	Mar-23	Jan-22
White	70	71	69
Mixed	14	14	7
Asian	4	4	13
Black	8	8	8
Other	4	3	2

Source Leeds CHAT April 2024 local data

Nationally published (March 24 for 2022/23) data identifies children in care with special education needs, both children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and children identified in school as in need of SEN support. 60% of Leeds children looked after of statutory school age have an identified SEN compared to 58.1 percent in England. 436 looked after children are identified as having special education needs, 149 with an EHCP and 287 receiving SEN support. Social Emotional and Mental Health is the primary SEN need for 57.1% of these children. Local analysis from the 2024 January school census 219 children in care attending a Leeds schools are in receipt of SEN support.

Leeds current provision

Local Authority Fostering

Leeds has recruited and supports over 400 foster carers who work with a range of children and young people, including those with complex needs and disabilities. Mockingbird Hubs are a central part of the support and infrastructure of the Leeds fostering community. A resourced recruitment strategy is in place that aims to significantly increase the number of carers. Over 60% of our children looked after are placed with Leeds Foster carers.

External Fostering – Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA)

Where fostering demand cannot be met through the in-house fostering service, Leeds commission provision direct from IFAs through the White Rose IFA Electronic Market Place (IFA EMP). The White Rose Partnership (WRP) is a regional partnership of Yorkshire & Humber local authorities who work together to ensure there are contracted quality placement options available. Where contracted providers cannot be sourced, off contract spot purchases are made with additional quality assurance and due diligence checks.

Local Authority Residential

Leeds provides a number of children's homes for children and young people focusing on long term support, complex need, SEND and reunification. There are plans to double this internal provision providing additional small group living homes which will offer multi-disciplinary evidence-based models of intervention and wrap around care. Leeds is also working in partnership with Health to develop multi-disciplinary homes for children and young people at risk of or stepped down from admission to tier 4 mental health provision.

External Residential

Where residential demand cannot be met through the in-house residential service, Leeds jointly commission alongside health and education, provision direct from the independent external children's homes providers through the White Rose Residential Electronic Market Place (Residential EMP). Due to the demand on this provision, spot purchased placements are also made with additional quality assurance and due diligence checks.

SEND Care and Education

Leeds commission care and education provision from the White Rose SEND Schools and College Placements Electronic Market Place (SEND EMP). These provisions can be day placements or can be residential schools. Spot purchased placements are also made with additional quality assurance and due diligence checks.

Short breaks

Leeds has a graduated short break offer which is communicated through the Local Offer and short break statement which includes residential short breaks.

Parent and child

Leeds commission parent and child assessment, support and residential provision through external locally based providers.

Supported Accommodation

Our Way Leeds (OWL) is a partnership of external providers who provide accommodation with support to Leeds young people aged 16+. This arrangement is Leeds-only and has been commissioned jointly with the Adults & Health Directorate. Leeds has also commissioned a Leeds Electronic Market Place for Supported Accommodation for Young People aged 16 to 25 (16+ EMP). The 16+ EMP has a range of registered support accommodation providers including floating support.

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)

Leeds is seeing an increase in Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking children (UASC) and is developing a specific support and accommodation offer to meet this need and demand. This builds on the existing service and support given that this was highlighted as best practice in Leeds last Inspection of Local Authority Children Services (ILAC).

Staying put and close

Leeds is committed to and has invested in Staying Put and Staying Close, to ensure that young people can sustain their trusted relationships and networks of support through foster care and residential workers up to the age of 21. Staying Put and Close are recognised models of good practice that are embedded in policy and practice and deliver positive outcomes around accommodation stability, wellbeing, education, employment and training, independent living skills and support networks.

Emergency

At points of crisis, placement breakdown and in emergencies, activity-based provision is commissioned for short periods of time. Due to the unregulated nature of this provision additional quality assurance, due diligence, and social work and senior management decision making, and oversight is put in place. There is commitment to keeping our numbers of children and young people in unregulated settings to an absolute minimum and ensuring there is high support and high challenge given at all levels throughout the course of these placements.

Secure Children's Home

Leeds provides a local authority secure children's home. The home comprises of three 8-bedded house units. Of the 24 available places, 14 are contracted to the Youth Custody Service (YCS), allowing 10 placements for local authority purchase under s25 Children Act 1989 or further spot purchase YCS requirements. If available, beds can also be accessed under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984 for the 5 local authorities in West Yorkshire only.

Wetherby Young Offenders Institution

Leeds hosts HM Wetherby Youth Offender Institution (HMYOI) which is a closed youth custody centre housing up to 250 male juvenile offenders between the ages of 15 to 18. All accommodation is single cell occupancy consisting of four wings and a specialist unit called Keppel. Keppel unit is an enhanced needs unit holding up to 48 young people. This is a national resource and looks after young people who find it difficult to manage in normal accommodation due to issues including learning, physical and mental health issues. Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust provides a community style, general health service to the prison.

PACE beds and Remand care

Leeds provides PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence) and remand care beds in line with the guidance set out in PACE Act 1984 and Children Act 1984 and process outlined in the Leeds Bail and Remand Protocol for young people.

Red Kite View

Leeds hosts Red Kite View which is a Children and Young People's Mental Health Unit. The 22 bed unit, is based at St Mary's Hospital site and delivered by Leeds and York Partnership Trust. The provision was designed in partnership with clinicians and young people and is part of the drive to eliminate out-of-area placements for young people who need to be inpatients but can't access a bed locally.

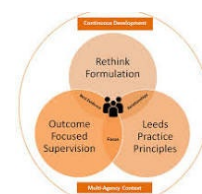
Leeds Vision

- Commitment to *'think families and families first'*, including Family Valued model, family-based settings, family-based solutions (eg Family Group Conferencing) and reunification with family where possible.
- Safely reduce the number of looked after children because we know the best place for a child to be brought up is with family. This will be implemented through developments to early help and preventative services, so reducing the need for children to become looked after and through better support and planning to help children move on from care and return home.
- A focus on family-based solutions for those in care. This will be implemented through work to promote adoption, new policies and support for kinship carers, enhanced Special Guardianship Order (SGO) offer and continued recruitment and development of foster care.
- Effective permanency planning through the childcare review process, supporting applications for a Special Guardianship Order (SGO), reunification with family or ensuring that children are matched with identified long term carers
- Where foster or residential care is needed, these high-quality stable homes will be centred on the needs of the individual, be family focused and as close to home as is possible and safe, to allow children to maintain family, friendships and community networks.
- Residential care will be seen as an intervention not a destination. Residential homes will be developed by the local authority and in partnership with local providers to ensure there is high quality provision to meet a range of different needs.
- Stronger relationship-based commissioning and market management and shaping to address escalating cost and the 'broken market and delivering value for money.
- Multi-disciplinary approach from care, education and health to assess, commission, support and intervene ensuring an agile, flexible joined-up wrap around offer for children, young people and families. This approach is in partnership with parents, involves the voluntary and community sector and recognises education as key.
- Implement learning from National Review of Complex Health Needs in Residential Settings by ensuring a robust, multi-disciplinary and tenacious approach to quality assurance across all care health and education residential settings.
- Supporting the transition to adulthood and independence by providing a range of options for Care Leavers, USAC and children leaving Youth Custody. The implementation of Staying Put and Staying Close ensuring support is close in proximity through trusted relationships.
- Working together across the Yorkshire and Humber region, alongside health partners, to understand need, gaps and opportunities, developing regional sufficiency solutions to local challenges.
- Recognising, supporting and developing an agile, highly skilled, knowledgeable and experienced workforce that understands, promotes and reflects the culture, identity and diversity of our children looked after.

Leeds 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. It is based on findings from a wide range of practices and does not necessarily represent anything new or unknown. Rather it is a bringing together of evidence based best practice which in itself naturally aligns to working restoratively with both children and families. The Leeds Practice Model contains the five key elements of:

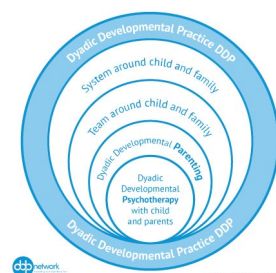
- Rethink Formulation
- Leeds Practice Principles
- Outcome Focused Supervision
- Continuous Development
- Multi-agency Context



A central part of the Leeds Practice principles is [restorative practice](#). Restorative practice is a term used to describe the behaviours, interactions and approaches which help to build and maintain positive, healthy relationships, resolve difficulties and repair harm where there has been conflict.

When we work restoratively with and alongside people, there is strong evidence to say that outcomes for children and their families are improved.

All our fostering, family-based settings, reunification and residential homes are underpinned by the same evidence based therapeutic model and approach. Dyadic Development Psychotherapy (DDP) is based on and brings together attachment theory, what we understand about developmental trauma, the neurobiology of trauma, attachment and caregiving, intersubjectivity theory and child development.



DDP helps children learn to trust. It is family based and relationship focused, using PACE to develop connections, relationships and attachment. PACE is **Playfulness** which brings enjoyment to the relationship. **Acceptance** which creates psychological safety. When we **Curiously** explore within a relationship, we express a desire to know the other more deeply. Finally, **Empathy** communicates our curiosity and acceptance, as we recognise and respond to the other's emotional experience.

The Leeds Model acknowledges that we can only promote family first and create stable homes when we work together effectively with children, their families and our voluntary and statutory partners. This also includes contextual safeguarding and an understanding and response to the extra familial risks that children and young people face across a range of social contexts.

The Leeds Practice model also recognises that there needs to be flexible range of responsive provision for our children and young people that provides the right support at the right time. This starts with effective evidence based early help, prevention, family support and reunification through to short breaks, crisis intervention, family-based care and small group living. Residential care is seen as an intervention and not a destination and crisis provision as a safe space to work towards the next step in achieving family resolution. Staying Put and Staying Close are promoted to ensure that trusted relationships can be maintained to support independence.

Leeds Ambitions

Our Families First ambition...

That all children and young people, where safe and possible are brought up in families or family-based settings

We will achieve this by...

- Investing in restorative early support, prevention and family help including Family HUBs
- Development of a reunification service offer, including Multi Systemic Therapy (MST) CAN (Child Abuse and Neglect) MST Family Integrated Transition (FIT) and Integrated Treatment Model (ITM)
- Implementation of enhanced Special Guardianship Order (SGO) support offer

We will know we are achieving this if...

- We stabilise or reduce the numbers of children looked after
- Increase the number of children and young people reunified to families or family-based settings

Our fostering ambition...

That all children and young people who need and can live in a fostering family, have access to foster carers in Leeds

We will achieve this by...

- Wrap around support to our foster carers through Mockingbird and therapeutic service
- A resourced and effective foster carer recruitment strategy that provides a diverse range of carers that offer family-based provision for children and young people that is part of their care plan
- Training and developing foster carers that can support a range of children and young people including teenagers, children with complex and mental health needs and stepping down from residential placements
- Developing effective partnerships with external fostering providers to maximise the use of local carers to provide homes for Leeds children and young people with a range of needs include complex

We will know we are achieving this if...

- We increase the number of in house foster carers in line with agreed targets
- Increase retention of foster carers
- We increase the stability of children and young people in foster care
- We have positive feedback from children and young people and foster carers

Our residential ambition...

That all Leeds children and young people that need residential care can have access to local, loving, nurturing stable homes that are rated good and outstanding and effectively meet their range of needs.

We will achieve this by...

- Implementing the Leeds Practice Model for residential including therapeutically informed and psychologically lead wrap around support
- Providing a range of local authority registered residential homes to meet the needs of children and young people
- Developing a joint Health funded home for children and young people stepping down or at risk of tier 4 mental health admission
- Implementing a wrap-around multi-disciplinary flexible support offer to all children and young people in residential care
- Developing a mixed economy of residential provision including exploring partnerships with the third sector
- Ensuring Leeds based external residential children's homes are prioritised for Leeds children and are used to compliment local authority homes and manage fluctuation in demand
- Implementing a 'no notice' approach to placement stability so that children and young people only move home if it is part of planned move as part of their care plan

- Leeds children being in high quality local children's homes

We will know we are achieving this if...

- We increase the number of local authority homes in line within agreed targets
- We develop homes in partnership with third sector in line within agreed targets around cost, quality and mobilisation timescales
- We increase the use of good or outstanding local children's homes
- We increase the stability of children and young people in children's homes
- We decrease the number of children and young people placed at distance

Our Supported Accommodation ambition...

That young people progress into and through independence and having access to the right high quality accommodation and loving and nurturing support

We will achieve this by...

- Supporting young people to access education, training and employment and being ambitious about plans for the future
- Ensuring there are a range of registered supported accommodation providers that meet different levels of need and support for young people into independence
- Maintaining an effective contractual partnership with the third sector to provide accommodation and support
- Providing a specific offer and pathway for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children
- Implementing the Staying Close initiative which ensures practical and emotional move on support from trusted workers

We will know we are achieving this if...

- We increase the number of registered providers and provision for different levels of need
- We increase the quality of provision and amount of young people in good or outstanding registered provision
- We meet our agreed Staying Close and Staying Put targets
- We have positive feedback from our care leavers

Implementation

Three-year profiles and implementation plans will be developed for the fostering, residential and semi-independent ambitions.

The profiles will set out direction of travel for the next 3 years and detail target numbers required for each type of provision.

The implementation plans will outline what is needed, by when and who is responsible. These plans will be monitored monthly and updated annually based on progress, changing need and financial and budget implications.

The Sufficiency Strategy will be agreed by the Council's Executive Board having progressed through a range of Leeds City Council's internal teams and Board's including the Children and Families Senior Leadership Team, Corporate Parenting Board and Corporate Leadership Team.

A summarised infographic of the strategy, including an accessible version has been shared with children and young people for their input and agreement.

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Leeds Sufficiency Strategy



2024-2027

1 What we know

The number of children looked after is increasing in a time of austerity and pressure on public sector finances.

Children and young people's needs are complex and we don't always have enough of the right homes and support at the right time for them.

Our children looked after need good quality care, close to their communities, but we don't currently have the right mix of care available for our children.

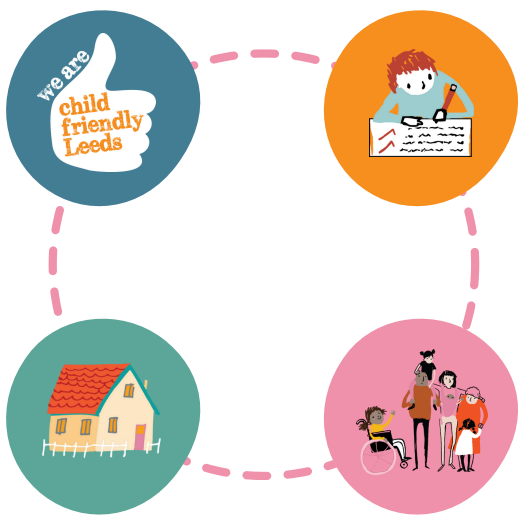


2 What we want to achieve

We want Leeds to be a Child Friendly City, the best city for children, young people and families and we are obsessed with reducing the number of children looked after because we know the best place for a child to be brought up is with family. We are also obsessed with increasing children and young people's educational attainment, health and wellbeing.

We want children and young people to be in family based, stable homes, built on love, close to their local communities and networks of support.

We want to provide care for our children looked after in Leeds, through our own homes and carers or in partnership with local providers.



3 How will we work

We will put children, young people and families at the centre of all we do and ensure their voice influences what we do and how we do it.

Social care, education, health and third sector will work in partnership to ensure there is a focus on family led decision making, evidence-based family support, early intervention and the behaviours set out in CYP Plan.



4 What we will do

We will invest in early help, family-based solutions, permanency planning, fostering and local children's homes.

We will help young people to transition into adulthood and independence by providing a range of options and close proximity of support from trusted relationships.

We will use learning, best practice and local authority investment to ensure there is greater control of the cost, quality and outcomes for children and families.

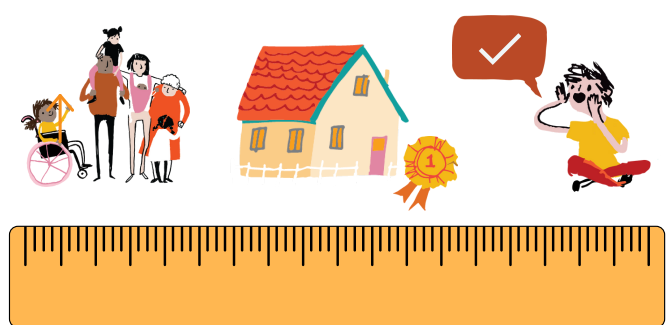


5 How we will know we have succeeded

We will know we have succeeded if less children are looked after, more children live in stable, long-term family-based settings and less children see an unplanned end to their care.

We will know if more of our children and young people live in local homes that are high quality, meet their needs and are good value.

We will also know if children and young people tell us that we are delivering on the promises we made to them as corporate parents.



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Changes to Funding for Inclusion (FFI) – briefing

Date: 18th July 2024

Report of: Director of Children and Families

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

This briefing follows the Children and Families SEND transformation update paper to Executive Board on 19th June 2024. A number of questions were raised in the Executive Board meeting by the Leader of the opposition who requested further information and clarification in relation to proposed changes to Leeds Funding For Inclusion (FFI).

FFI, is an approach developed by Leeds City Council some years ago to identify and fund provision to meet needs of children and young people with SEND. FFI and its underlying principles of early intervention and prevention has been acknowledged historically as best practice however the Local Authority and Leeds education leaders agreed that it is no longer fit for purpose and must be reviewed, not least to ensure that the council is fulfilling its statutory duty to children with SEND.

The review has been conducted in partnership with school leaders and Officers from Children and Families have agreed to develop a focused briefing for the Children and Families Scrutiny Board. This briefing provides in-depth information in relation to the review and the proposed changes, which are set out in this paper.

Recommendations

- a) Note the specific and detailed responses to questions raised at Executive Board on the 19th June.
- b) Note the clarity and assurance provided in relation to the interface and for some children the necessary transition from FFI to Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) provision.

What is this report about?

In Leeds, Funding for Inclusion (FFI) has been a mechanism for supporting the education of children with Special Educational Needs by funding provision in education settings since 2002. Since the changes to legislation in 2015, it has become clear that the system needs to change for a number of reasons which are set out in this report. The aim is to remove the system for FFI in order to ensure adherence to statutory obligations providing children with regular review of provision and right to appeal. At the same time, the proposals will continue to focus on early intervention through alternative means and by linking with other areas of improvement across the directorate and wider children's system.

- 1 This briefing responds to questions focusing on:
 - i. Communication, consultation and co-production with schools and other education settings as part of the review process.
 - ii. The scale of the transformation in terms of numbers of young people affected
 - iii. How needs will be met for children moving from FFI to EHCP provision
 - iv. Plans for how to conversion from some FFI plans to EHCPs will be managed
 - v. Clarity around the legal basis for making these changes

What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 This briefing paper is designed to provide updates and assurance. The specific proposal to move away from FFI as a mechanism for funding provision to meet need is a necessary step to take to ensure that the council meets its statutory duties. Children and young people with SEND will benefit from more regular review of needs and provision as well as the right to appeal and challenge provision and placement, which are integral to the 2015 act and related Code of Practice.

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 3 Provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) is a crucial protective factor for all health and wellbeing outcomes and future life chances. This proposal is central to the delivery of the city's Children and Young People's Plan and, in particular, the education 'obsession' and 3As delivery plan (attendance, attainment, achievement).

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: All wards

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 4 This main body of this paper sets out for the rationale for transformation activity and provides a detailed summary of consultation and engagement with school leaders undertaken to date. It is clear that Head Teachers and SENCOs recognise the need to review and change FFI due to concerns around duplication, unwieldy application processes and specific 'windows' for application which do not allow for timely or agile identification of need.

What are the resource implications?

- 5 Leeds City Council spends specific grant funding in the form of the High Needs Block (HNB) on provision to meet the needs of children with SEND. The HNB is part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) which is provided to the council and to all schools in the Leeds City footprint from central government.
- 6 In the last financial year, the City Council spend £121.4m, funded by the HNB, on meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND. Broadly speaking, this funding is split between place funding for special schools, alternative and independent provision, and top-up funding passported directly to schools in the form of EHCP top-ups or FFI.
- 7 Nationally, demand for SEND provision, in the form of EHCPs has increased by more than 60% since 2015. Whilst funding for this provision, in the form of the HNB, has increased, it has not grown at the same rate. As such, there is significant pressure on high needs funding nationally, and this is mirrored in Leeds.
- 8 Nevertheless, transition from FFI to EHCP funding for some existing pupils in the city is intended to be met from within the same resource envelope, excluding new demand. Our working assumption is that the upper threshold of current spend will not be exceeded. The current budget for the 2024/25 financial year for mainstream FFI is c.£32.500m.
- 9 Following transition from FFI to EHCP funded provision for the majority, but not all, of the current FFI cohort, it is envisaged that the proposals for an 'environment fund' would be funded from the remainder of the existing financial envelope. Detailed financial modelling will be undertaken to fully assess the financial impact of the proposal.
- 10 In some cases, the provision and cost will likely remain the same or potentially reduce whereas in others, due to escalating need or needs which become apparent through the rigorous assessment process, costs may be greater. It is certainly the case that the efficiencies developed within the new operating model will realise benefits to processing speed and increased availability of staff time to carry out statutory work. This will mitigate to some extent the potential future liabilities associated with consistent increases in demand.

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

- 11 There is a risk that transitioning the plans for all children in receipt of FFI packages to EHCPs at the same could overwhelm an already challenged system and process. As such, a carefully managed prioritisation process is being developed which will see groups of children transition to EHCP funded packages in a phased way over the course of a maximum of 4 years – the transition timetable is included in the last section of this report. It is possible that some families will not want their child to have an EHCP, so it will be important to capture this at the point of assessment. This will allow the SENSAP team to process new applications for EHCPs alongside children transitioning from FFI without undue pressure on the system.
- 12 There is a risk that children whose educational needs are being met through FFI funded packages of support will lose out when moving from FFI to EHCP provision. This risk is managed by the guarantee that no FFI package will be ceased for a child who eventually is provided with an EHCP until such time as the EHC needs assessment is concluded and EHCP issued to the school.
- 13 In a small proportion of cases, it is likely that children receiving provision funded through FFI will not meet the threshold required to necessitate an EHCP. In these circumstances, the school, in line with the High Needs Block operational guide and SEND Code of Practice (2015), must provide funding to support educational provision from within its Notional SEND budget.

- 14 As part of the Department for Education's (DfE) Change Programme Partnership (CPP), Leeds is working with other local authorities in the Yorkshire and Humber Region on several pilot projects flowing from the 'Right Support, Right Place, Right Time' improvement plan, which was developed following the SEND review of 2022. The improvement plan has a significant focus on Early Help, which supports the early identification and meeting of need.
- 15 A number of elements in the change programme are, therefore, looking at how to better support pupils in mainstream settings and looking towards the creation of a National Funding Model. Through discussions with DfE colleagues we have developed the concept of an 'environmental fund' which is designed to support schools where the proportion of children with SEND, but below the threshold for an EHCP, is higher than average. The proposal is that these schools would be eligible to apply for additional funding in recognition of the scale of demand in their setting without EHCP funding to support meeting needs. This mechanism will provide further management of the risk that children moving away from FFI packages without an EHCP might risk reduced levels of provision. At this time, further work is required to fully develop these proposals.
- 16 Locally, as part of the Early Help (EH) review, SEND co-ordinators will be employed to work directly from Early Help Hubs to support early identification of need and signposting, both to existing services within the EH offer and to new services which come online as part of the wider service and system redesign. There is also a focus on workforce development which will support the Children and Young People's workforce, cross sector and across the city to achieve early identification of need and get the right support for children at the right time. These improvements will further mitigate risks associated with any potential reduction in funding

What are the legal implications?

- 17 When FFI was created, the Council benefitted from a local pilot scheme which enabled the allocation of top-up funding to schools based on the needs of individual children, but not linked to an EHCP. The legislative position has since shifted. As a result, despite the advantages it may bring, the FFI scheme poses two legal issues.
- 18 Firstly when the authority becomes aware of individual children with potential SEND it triggers the first stage of the statutory EHC needs assessment process. By assessing them under the FFI process, instead of applying the statutory EHC needs assessment process, it creates a risk of challenge.
- 19 Secondly, the application of FFI could be seen as being used to divert or deter schools and parents from pursuing their statutory rights and protections which they benefit from under the EHC legislation. This adds a further risk of challenge.
- 20 The transition away from FFI will ensure that the statutory EHC framework will receive the necessary level of focus and resource that removes the risk of challenge, while preserving the ability of the Council to offer the discretionary programmes described in paragraph 15 above to support the children who do not qualify for EHCPs.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 21 This report does not contain an options appraisal. The plan which drives the transition from FFI was developed as part of the overarching transformation plan resulting from the directorate's work with Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC). Development of these proposals continues to be done with and alongside the education sector in the city. Legal services have been part of the development, and now implementation, of the plan and have set out

clearly (above) why the council’s approach to identifying and meeting need for children and young people with SEND must progress as described.

How will success be measured?

- 22 A comprehensive and detailed transformation plan has been developed to support and manage changes to systems, practice and processes which underpin our SEND system locally. The plan clearly sets out a range of milestones and performance metrics to help us stick to plan, identify successes, and manage underperformance in real time over the course of the implementation.
- 23 A clear plan with milestones for specific cohorts of children and young people has also been developed to support the FFI transition process.
- 24 Ultimately, successful transition will be measured through our understanding of the lived experience of our children and young people with SEND. This will be evidenced through the right to appeal and challenge as set out in the 2015 Children and Families Act, which materially impacts on families’ rights under statute. It will also be measured through our regular seeking of qualitative, authentic voice feedback from children and families as well as from schools and settings. Furthermore, children accessing provision in a timely and effective way, as well as provision being reviewed regularly will support them to achieve to the best of their potential.

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

- 25 The timetable for transition will begin in September 2024 and will proceed in four phases, culminating in a final phases in September 2027. We will, of course, keep this plan under review so that we take advantage of any improvements in latent capacity generated by the progress of other transformation activity. Over time, it may be possible to reduce the number of year groups planned to transition in the later phases of the plan. There is a possibility that any national review or change to SEND strategy on a countrywide footprint are likely to have a bearing on the pace and nature of these proposed changes. The current phased plan represents the maximum amount of time that this transition will take.

The year groups below are based on the chronological year group of pupils as of Sep 24			
Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Sep 24/25	Sep 25/26	Sep 26/27	Sep 27/28
NC Year	NC Year	NC Year	NC Year
N2	N1	EY2	
6	5	4	3
11	10	9	8
13	12	11	10
	1	R	2
	14	7	
	15		

Appendices

There are no papers appended to this briefing

Background papers

No background papers are provided

Changes to Funding for Inclusion (FFI) – Briefing Questions for consideration

What consultation has taken place with schools and educational settings?

Schools and education settings have been an integral part of the root and branch review of SEND process, provision and funding in Leeds, carried out alongside PwC as part of the discovery and planning phases of work.

A series of working groups and consultative groups have been created to support the development of the implementation plan and to test out working assumptions with education professionals. Most notably, the FFI working group, which has seen the FFI team working alongside Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) to think through and plan the specific work to transition from FFI. In addition to this, the Deputy Director, Dan Barton, has convened the SEND Transformation Oversight Group, which brings together Head Teachers, SENCOs, LCC Service Leads and frontline workers, as well as parent/carer representatives, supported by finance, legal and transformation teams, to provide an opportunity for transparency, check and challenge in relation to both the broader SEND Transformation Programme and the specific plans to transition from FFI as described.

Furthermore, the Deputy Director has attended Family of Schools (FoS) meetings since January, meeting with more than 230 Head Teachers in person in these meetings, allowing dedicated time to inform, consult and take feedback in relation to the FFI transition. Further meetings have taken place at the Primary Head Teachers Forum (c.150 attendees in person, separate online and in-person meetings since January). Early opportunity to indicate the likely changes in FFI arrangements was taken at the SENCO conference at Elland Road in early Spring.

In tandem with these mechanisms, a regular communication product has been written by the Deputy Director via email to all Head Teachers in the city which details, amongst other key information, iterative and increasingly detailed plans for driving forward the FFI transition. These emails are available as articles in the archive on the Leeds for Learning website.

Most importantly, the FFI team has committed to meeting all schools before the summer break in order to work through a caseload list of children and young people with SEND to ensure that the FFI transition process is understood, and to co-produce a list of children who should be prioritised for assessment request from the Autumn term 2024. At the time of writing the team has met with over 140 schools, with positive feedback.

The service plans to continue to work closely with the wider education system in the city to ensure that the implementation of the transformation plan, as well as the FFI transition, is timely, smooth and effective. An FAQ section has been developed on the Leeds for Learning website. Regular discussion with parents and carers is underway through the Leeds Parent Carer Forum, with a parent carer engagement event planned for the 9th of July.

**How many young people are in receipt of FFI funding who do not have an EHCP?
What is the scale of the change being proposed.**

Over 5000 children and young people in the city are accessing support in mainstream schools via packages of FFI funded provision. The current cost of FFI packages in mainstream settings is £32.5m. It is clear, therefore, that the scale of the transition is very significant. Once the planned transition has been completed, Leeds will be in line with the rest of the country and core city comparators in terms of the percentage of school age and 0-25 population with EHCPs.

For this reason, a detailed programme of prioritisation is underway in meetings directly with schools and settings, led by the FFI team. Children in priority groups will be first to have their FFI provision reviewed through the statutory assessment process. A copy of the phasing plan is embedded in the main body of the report.

We know that approximately 50% of the more complex FFI packages (do we need to explain a bit about the more complex packages? are likely to be progressed automatically through to assessment, with the remaining cases being initially assessed at the 'request to assess' panel. Looked After Children will be the first priority group, followed by children entering key school phase transition points and where settings have identified significant escalation in need.

What account has been taken of the fact that EHCPs have a higher threshold than FFI have had to date, or is this part of the plan? Will vulnerable learners who might not qualify for EHCP's no longer get the additional funding they need or has this been factored into the plans?

We anticipate that somewhere in the region of 70% of children on existing FFI packages would meet the threshold for an EHCP following the assessment process. Since the EHCP is designed to provide education support for children for whom the school's notional funding budget is not sufficient, it therefore follows that 'vulnerable' children will meet the threshold and have education delivered in line with an eventual EHCP.

For children currently accessing FFI funded support, some will not meet the EHCP threshold and will have to have their education provision funded through the school's notional budget in line with the national guidance.

Due to the non-statutory nature of FFI, it will always be difficult to be very specific about the extent to which children with existing FFI packages will be assessed to be above the EHCP threshold. However, we can be certain that, for a significant proportion of children accessing FFI, an EHCP assessment will lead to a funded plan

This is complicated by the fact that FFI packages are reviewed (reapplied for) every 3 years, rather than annually. As such, it is possible that needs may have escalated or that the detailed and thorough EHCP assessment process might pick up previously unidentified need.

Is this not going to cause a significant increase in the number of EHCP applications which will add to the already significant problems dealing with outstanding EHCP applications?

Certainly, the number of FFI packages which will, in time, need to be processed as part of this transition is very significant and, if all were processed at the same time, it would inevitably cause unmanageable pressure to an already very challenged system.

This is why we have adopted a multi-year phasing arrangement which will support the SENSAP and wider advisory team to manage FFI transitions alongside existing demand. It should be noted that EHCP assessment and production processing speeds will be positively impacted by a number of important productivity improvements taking place in parallel as part of the wider transformation programme.

Would it be better to resolve issues with outstanding ECHPs and ensure that system is fully working before making a major change such as this, which could create further demand pressure?

No. Whilst this proposition is not without merit for obvious reasons, the risk of challenge (highlighted in the 'risk' section of the main body of the report) sets out the reasons why we cannot continue to meet needs through FFI without a clear and ambitious plan to move away from this funding mechanism.

In Leeds, around 2.7% of the school-age population has an EHCP. This is very significantly below the national and core city averages (approximately 4.7% and over 5% respectively). This is because FFI packages account for a sizable portion of the actual EHCP demand in the city currently. Whilst the processing of FFI transitions through to EHCP will be a pressure on the service, it should not be thought of as 'new' demand, since the children are already known to the system and have provision in place to meet need.

Children who subsequently become known to the SENSAP team can be considered 'new' demand and requests for assessment are being received currently at a rate of approximately 30 per week in term time. Overall, the team progresses with assessment in roughly 75% of these cases.



Report author: Dan Barton

Tel:

The Annual Report on Academic Outcomes

Date: 18th July 2024

Report of: Director of Children and Families

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 Annual Standards Report presents externally validated outcomes data following the statutory assessments and examinations which took place in primary and secondary schools in 2023.

The Annual Standards Report relates to the fifth priority of The Children and Young People's Plan, which is to improve the achievement and attainment for all children in Leeds.

Recommendations

- a) Note the performance against headline measures for pupils in Leeds in 2023 in comparison to national data.
- b) Note the actions taken by local authority services to support maintained schools and academies in their work to improve outcomes in Leeds.

What is this report about?

- 1 The Annual Standards Report is written to provide elected members with an overview of educational outcomes for Leeds following assessments which took place in 2023.
- 2 The data reviews outcomes from early years to post-16. Outcomes in Leeds are compared with national figures. The report also considers the performance of pupils in Leeds settings by cohort.
- 3 The report details the actions taken by learning improvement services to improve outcomes.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 4 This report is to provide an update and does not contain a proposal.

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 5 This report describes educational outcomes for children and young people in state-funded schools in Leeds. Raising educational attainment gives young people a greater range of options for positive education, employment and training destinations after the end of statutory schooling. These can include further learning, as well as employment with training.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

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

- 6 This report presents information only and does not require any consultation.

What are the resource implications?

- 7 Resource implications for Leeds City Council are the staffing costs of retaining the 0-19 learning improvement service in addition to other statutory and non-statutory learning services that have an impact on educational outcomes. The learning improvement service specifically includes a group of colleagues who deliver professional development to school-based staff, and who generate traded income for Leeds City Council.
- 8 Undertaking activity that raises educational attainment is also dependent on resources held within schools themselves. This includes schools being able to recruit and retain teaching and support staff, and having the resources to fund professional development for their workforce. Leeds City Council's Financial Services to Schools Team provides budget management support for many of the city's maintained schools, to support school leaders with managing their limited resources. However, in common with other parts of the public sector, many schools report facing very challenging budget positions and increasingly face difficult decisions about how they structure their workforce. The

implications of reduced resources in schools have the potential to impact negatively on learning outcomes.

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

- 9 The local authority previously received from the Department for Education (DfE) a School Improvement and Brokerage Grant, to enable it to undertake its statutory and core support, monitoring and intervention duties to maintained schools, as well as to broker additional support to schools requiring additional intervention. The grant supported the work of the learning improvement advisory service to undertake these roles. In the 2022/23 financial year the DfE reduced the amount of grant available to the local authority and Schools Forum agreed to fund the gap through de-delegation of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding in order to maintain the service for schools. The DfE removed the grant fully in the 2023/24 financial year. Since this point Leeds Schools Forum agreed to de-delegate DSG funding in order to continue to fund learning improvement services that are available to all **maintained** schools.
- 10 A risk is that if in future years Schools Forum did not support de-delegation to be able to fund learning improvement services, there will be a very significant reduction, and potential removal, of learning improvement services to schools. Maintained schools and their governing bodies would need to take the action necessary to source and fund external support required for school improvement activity, including headteacher recruitment, headteacher support and managing complex improvement situations in school.
- 11 This risk is being managed by evidencing the impact of de-delegated funding to support schools. Some of this funding is earmarked to award directly to schools to pay for centrally-brokered support from other school leaders, or to pay for improvement services provided by Leeds City Council teams.

What are the legal implications?

- 12 This report does not contain any legal implications.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 13 This report does not include an options appraisal.

How will success be measured?

- 14 Educational attainment is measured annually, on the publication of outcomes of statutory assessment in the primary and secondary phases. The next report will look at outcomes from teacher assessment, checks, tests and examinations that will take place in summer 2024.

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

15 Learning improvement services to schools are delivered throughout the academic year. Statutory assessment takes place in the summer term 2024. The head of service for learning improvement is responsible for the implementation of the learning improvement service.

Appendices

-

Background papers

- None.

Annual standards report 2022-23

The annual standards report is written to provide elected members with an overview of educational outcomes for Leeds following assessments which took place in 2023. Due to the pandemic, external assessments were cancelled in 2020 and 2021 and no school headline measures were published.

The Annual Standards report covers outcomes for both the maintained and academy sectors.

1. Summary of outcomes in Leeds

- 1.1. This report presents data for assessment from the early years foundation stage through to key stage 5. Outcomes for Leeds pupils are mixed across these indicators. The strongest performance tends to be observed in the secondary phase, where outcomes are broadly in line with national averages, and above on the Progress 8 measure. In the primary phase, average outcomes in Leeds tend to be in the bottom half of local authorities nationally, although rates are closer to national averages for indicators measuring outcomes at the higher standard at KS1 and at KS2 than at the expected standard. Outcomes are lowest at the early years foundation stage.
- 1.2. The biggest attainment gaps in Leeds tend to be for pupils who are disadvantaged, or who have SEND. Pupils who speak English as an additional language often have lower attainment in the primary phase, but typically by the end of key stage 4 these gaps have narrowed and these groups of pupils make very strong progress.
- 1.3. Inspection outcomes in Leeds remain strong. As at the end of March 2024, 92% of primary schools in Leeds are good or outstanding and 86% of secondary schools are good or outstanding. This figure for primary is higher than in last years report, and the figure for secondary is stable. ¹
- 1.4. 96% of early years setting providers received good or outstanding outcomes at their last inspection, and this figure has remained stable over the last few years. ²
- 1.5. Outcomes have been achieved in the most testing of circumstances over recent years. As well as the impact of the pandemic on learning disruption, schools and early years settings in Leeds have experienced:
 - An increased prevalence of pupils with special educational needs, which has led to a steep rise in requests for education, health and care assessments and support from other learning inclusion services.
 - Budget pressures arising from reductions in central Government funding for schools, which in some cases are exacerbated by demographic changes in Leeds meaning some schools have falling rolls. The Reception cohort who started school in the 2023/24 academic year has around 1,100 fewer pupils than the number who left Leeds primary schools at the end of Year 6 in summer 2023.
 - Recruitment and retention concerns at all staffing levels, from headteachers and senior leaders, through to teaching assistants, including early years staff.

2. Who impacts on learning outcomes in Leeds?

- 2.1 There are around 125,000 children and young people enrolled in state-funded schools in Leeds between Reception and Year 13, in more than 270 schools across both the maintained and special sector. For most of these pupils, the group within the children's workforce who

¹ Data source: Watchsted: <https://www.watchsted.com/tables>

² Data source: Ofsted official statistics - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childcare-providers-and-inspections-as-at-31-august-2023>

make the biggest difference to their learning outcomes are their teachers, and the leaders and support staff in the schools that they attend.

- 2.2 Where children attend early years settings (nurseries, pre-schools and childminders), the quality of education that children experience before starting school also makes a critical difference to their learning outcomes. There are around 900 early years settings operating in Leeds, and the sector covers a wide range of private, voluntary and independent settings, as well as school nurseries.
- 2.3 “School improvement” is the umbrella term for a broad range of activity delivered by stakeholders from multiple different agencies with the aim of improving attainment and progress outcomes for pupils. Sometimes the provider of school improvement activity depends on the governance status of a school.
- 2.4 Schools in multi-academy trusts (MATs) tend to have centralised school improvement functions located with their MATs. Maintained schools can access a school improvement adviser offer through the local authority, that is funded by de-delegated Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Details of the school improvement adviser service are included in the next section of this report.
- 2.5 Leeds City Council also offers a traded school improvement service delivered by a small team of consultants, who offer professional development and bespoke support, usually working with middle leaders. Schools pay for this support, as this service is required to operate on a full-cost recovery model. Catholic and Church of England schools can also access improvement services from their Dioceses, although these tend to focus on the distinct faith ethos of a school, collective worship and the provision of RE, rather than other curriculum areas.
- 2.6 There are also other providers operating in the school improvement market. Some of these include other commercial providers of professional development services to teachers and school leaders.
- 2.7 Schools can also access support that is free at the point of use because it is funded by central Government. This includes training for subject teachers available from [subject hubs](#) such as English and maths hubs; system leadership through the DfE’s [trust and school improvement offer](#); and from [teaching school hubs](#), who deliver professional development for early career teachers, and national professional qualifications for school leaders.
- 2.8 In Leeds there is a range of early years settings. These cover private and voluntary group settings, alongside some local authority children’s centres.
- 2.9 The next section describes information about what the local authority has done to make a difference to learning outcomes. **This work by LA officers needs to be understood in the context of being a subset of the total school improvement activity being undertaken in the city by the wide range of providers referenced above.**

3 What actions has the LA taken to support schools in their work in raising outcomes?

3.1 *Early years*

The early years team provides advisory and consultancy support to a range of early years settings (childminders, private day nurseries and early years in schools). Through collaborative efforts with educators, it provides a range of statutory, core and traded support and training. This work includes Ofsted registration support and pre-Ofsted support across all early years settings. The offer also provides targeted and bespoke support to early years

settings judged by Ofsted to require improvement or judged inadequate, and the team facilitates links with regional HMI inspectors.

- 3.2 The early years team adeptly balances their statutory obligations with their traded offers, ensuring a comprehensive approach to supporting all its stakeholders. While fulfilling regulatory requirements and statutory responsibilities, such as safeguarding and adherence to early years statutory framework, they also provide additional services through the traded offer. The traded offer includes specialised training for early years practitioners, bespoke consultancy services for nurseries, schools and child-minders, or access to tailored resources and curriculum support. By integrating statutory duties with traded offers, the early years team maximises their impact, offering a holistic support system that addresses both mandatory requirements and the unique needs of individual settings. This balanced approach not only ensures compliance with regulations but also enhances the quality and effectiveness of early years provision, ultimately aiming to improve outcomes for all children.
- 3.3 Effective transition from early years settings to school is vital to children making a good start in learning. The early years improvement team developed a training package for practitioners across the sector covering how to put in place strategies to support effective transition; for staff in private day nurseries, children's centres, schools and childminders. Following this training, a designated information area has been developed on Leeds for Learning supporting transition, and on-demand training can continue to be provided to settings.
- 3.4 Early years provider meetings have identified that early years settings across the city are noting increasing numbers of children with potential SEND. Long waiting times for services and external support mean that the help that childminders and nurseries can give to children becomes even more important. In response to this the service has developed a set of online meetings that are free for SENCOs working within private nursery settings. This is to help these staff understand referral pathways information in Leeds, support new SENCOs, and enable them to have access to expertise from SEND professionals.
- 3.5 Early years provider meetings have identified that early years settings across the city are noting increasing numbers of children with potential SEND. Long waiting times for services and external support mean that the help that childminders and nurseries can give to children becomes even more important. In response to this the service has developed a set of online meetings that are free for SENCOs working within private nursery settings. This is to help these staff understand referral pathways information in Leeds, support new SENCOs, and enable them to have access to expertise from SEND professionals.
- 3.6 The service has also improved access to information and training for the sector through the creation of an early years gateway on the Leeds for Learning website, and launched an improved newsletter. This has increased the volume of traffic to this site, up to more than 3000 views in May 2023, meaning that providers in Leeds are accessing reliable and up-to-date information and resources.
- 3.7 **Primary**
The school improvement adviser service to maintained primary schools provides a tiered level of support. The universal offer for all maintained schools is two days of school improvement adviser time, with schools experiencing vulnerability receiving an allocation of enhanced support. This includes schools with an Ofsted judgement of "requires improvement," or schools entering an Ofsted inspection window. Adviser support in the 2022/23 academic year included pre-and post-inspection support for schools; carrying out deep dives in reading, maths, other curriculum subjects and in early years; support for new headteachers; advising governing boards during headteacher performance management; supporting governing boards through headteacher recruitment; and brokering school-to-school support from other

school leaders in Leeds. Advisers also sometimes lead a “team around the school” approach when a school needs additional support from services across the local authority.

- 3.8 In view of the fact that some of the biggest challenges around outcomes in Leeds are at the early years foundation stage, the primary school improvement adviser team appointed an additional school improvement adviser in autumn 2023 to focus on early years support. This adviser does not hold a standard caseload of schools, but instead works exclusively on supporting maintained schools with their early years provision, in schools where this need is greatest.
- 3.9 Alongside the adviser service, which is free for maintained schools as this is funded through de-delegated dedicated schools grant, the primary learning improvement service offers a traded service of training and bespoke consultancy support. This kind of support is where consultants work, often on a one-to-one basis, in a school supporting individual teachers and leaders to develop their practice, for example in subject leadership, curriculum design, meeting the needs of specific pupil groups, developing their early years provision, etc. This type of support is tailored to a school’s needs, and has the potential to be impactful in helping a school to bring about improvement. There are examples in 2022/23 where schools received consultancy support around their early years provision and saw sizeable increases in the proportion of pupils reaching the good level of development at the end of the early years foundation stage.
- 3.10 Bespoke consultancy support in primary schools can sometimes lead to improvements that are visible at school-level in the assessment outcomes included in this report. However the impact of learning improvement consultancy work cannot always be evidenced through outcomes data, because what is assessed and reported on is only ever a subset of the entire primary curriculum. During the 2022/23 academic year there was an increase in demand for support for subject leaders across foundation subjects, with support being provided in art, computing, design and technology, geography, history, modern foreign languages, RE and science. This type of support results in subject leaders who have improved subject knowledge, who are better able to design and sequence the curriculum in their subjects, ensure clear end points, design appropriate assessment, and support other teachers to be able to teach this subject well. This support is crucial, as primary school teachers are required to teach 11 national curriculum subjects, so are rarely subject specialists in the subject that they lead. Yet the impact of this support is not quantifiable in the published assessment data in this report, as only core subjects are assessed at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2. An example is given below of how impactful subject-based training can be:

Working with a multi-academy trust to develop the art curriculum

The Wellspring Academy Trust commissioned support from Leeds City Council’s ArtFoms arts development staff (part of the learning improvement service) to work on their art and design curriculum in two of their academies. This work took place over a 12 month period and began with subject leader training in art and design, covering the national curriculum programme of study, Ofsted framework, and the purpose and value of the subject. This work was designed to ‘level the playing field’ as some of the subject leaders were new to the role and were not subject specialists. Subject leaders then received training in the key processes included in the primary art and design curriculum (drawing, painting and sculpture), followed by development of that area of the curriculum. This enabled subject leaders to ensure specific progression in a process within their long-term curriculum planning. This also provided an opportunity for peer support, with subject leaders working together to create key resources for the class teachers, thereby reducing teacher workload. Arts development consultants also delivered whole staff training in art in three other academies in this trust.

- 3.11 Where maintained schools might struggle to be able to afford learning improvement consultancy services, but where school improvement advisers recognise a need for curriculum

improvements, the local authority retains £100,000 of the DSG de-delegated funding to be able to award to schools to pay for this work. This funding has been used to enable schools to pay for support around curriculum development and early years support.

- 3.12 Consultancy work delivered over a medium-term timescale by learning improvement officers who have expertise in their subject or phase specialism tends to be impactful. This type of intervention is also supported by research-backed evidence from organisations such as the Education Endowment Foundation, as being likely to yield the strongest impact, compared to teachers attending training courses or doing online learning. However because this model is high-cost in terms of staff deployment (a consultant working one-on-one with a teacher over 5 to 10 days during an academic year), this model necessarily means that only a subset of the schools who might benefit from this kind of support can receive it at any one time. This situation is compounded by the diminishing capacity available within the learning improvement service, as staff have been released through the voluntary leavers scheme to contribute to Leeds City Council's financial challenge.
- 3.13 Traded consultancy work is highly regarded by schools that have used this, and the service is always fully booked. The learning improvement service fulfils the trading requirements of charging on a full-cost recovery basis for this type of work. However this does mean that access to this very valuable form of support is determined by a school being able to afford this. The awarding of grant funding described in 3.11 does go some way towards mitigating affordability issues for schools that are in deficit budget positions but still require support, but this is a limited source of funding.
- 3.14 **Secondary and Post-16**
The school improvement adviser (SIA) offer to secondary schools was reviewed for the academic year 2022-23 to ensure it was fit for purpose and all maintained schools were offered either four, three or two days of support, depending on need. The adviser team support 17 settings: all maintained secondary schools, SILCs and the secure children's home. The learning improvement service also offers the traded Leading Learning Partnership (LLP) offer, which most secondary schools and academies and Leeds subscribe to, as well as the post-16 traded programme of training and support.
- 3.15 Schools and SIAs agree together how to make use of adviser time, and this included the following range of activity in the 2022-23 academic year:
- Curriculum reviews, across various curriculum areas;
 - SEN curriculum reviews;
 - Behaviour and attitudes reviews (this is one of the four key judgement areas during Ofsted inspection);
 - Personal development reviews (this is one of the four key judgement areas during Ofsted inspection);
 - Whole school reading reviews;
 - Careers provision;
 - Post-16 provision;
 - Whole school self-evaluation with leaders;
 - Development of whole school development planning with leaders;
 - Coaching of middle and senior leaders; and
 - CPD planning and delivery.
- 3.16 Both secondary school improvement advisers are also practising Ofsted inspectors, which means they are able to offer guidance beyond the curriculum, on behaviours and attitudes, and personal development.
- 3.17 Through the LLP, the service provided support and tools for middle leaders to evaluate the quality of provision for learners with SEND in their subject areas. This was shared with 29

secondary-phase schools and settings across the city, across 13 subject areas. Following on from this work SIAs have identified evidence of SEND priorities and practice in place in a number of Leeds schools, and one school has completed a whole school review, with positive impact. The 2024/25 LLP programme will continue to develop the focus on SEND. The LLP end points will remain the same, so that the SEND focus can become embedded across more schools, as well as introducing equality, diversity and inclusion as a leadership strand.

4. Making sense of the data in this report

- 4.1 Producing a concise evaluation of learning outcomes from statutory assessment that takes place across seven separate points of assessment, each of which results in multiple performance indicators, is a challenge in itself. The established format for collating and presenting this data is calculating averages for whole cohorts or for pupils groups, and comparing these to an average for the equivalent pupil cohort nationally, regionally, or in comparator groups of local authorities. This approach can be helpful in that it consolidates large datasets down, but a significant trade-off of aggregation is that it masks variation.
- 4.2 There is frequently significantly more range in pupil outcomes **between schools in Leeds** than there is between aggregated datasets presented at local authority level. Local authority (LA) level data alone does not allow us to make inferences about the pupil outcomes that represent the entirety of the learning experience for a particular cohort.
- 4.3 For example, at key stage 2, on the headline measure of the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, the Leeds average in 2023 was 58%. The highest performing LA on this measure (that has more than just one school) has a result of 74% on this indicator, and the lowest performing LA's result is 49%. This equates to a span of just 25 percentage points separating average outcomes on a measure that includes around 667,000 pupils nationally. In contrast, the highest performing school in Leeds on this measure saw 95% of pupils achieving this standard, and in the lowest performing (mainstream) school in Leeds in 2023, 18% of pupils achieved this threshold. A span of 77 percentage points separates the highest and lowest performing schools in Leeds on this measure – more than three times the variation when data is interrogated at an LA level. On this measure 116 Leeds schools had KS2 outcomes above the national average, seven schools were exactly in line with the national result, and 97 schools had outcomes on this measure below the national average.
- 4.4 It is helpful to bear in mind this extensive range of outcomes typically observed across Leeds schools for almost all performance indicators included in this report.
- 4.5 ***The differences between attainment and progress:*** Outcomes data can broadly be split into two main categories: attainment and progress. Attainment data is based on teacher assessment, tests or exam results.
- 4.6 Progress data is based on the progress children make from a previous assessment point, and their outcomes are compared to the progress made by children with the same starting point nationally. In primary schools, progress is currently measured between outcomes at the end of KS1 and the end of KS2. In secondary schools, progress is measured from the end of KS2 to the end of KS4, and this indicator is called Progress 8 and forms a headline accountability measure for secondary schools.
- 4.7 ***Ranks and quartiles:*** For each measure, outcomes are ranked and used to place the local authority in a quartile A-D indicating whether they are amongst the top 25% best performing authorities (A) or the bottom 25% worst performing authorities (D).

- 4.8 Ranks and quartiles are used as they are deemed to be a straightforward way of interpreting a set of outcomes based on where Leeds falls within a national distribution of local authorities.
- 4.9 Most ranks are based on 153 local authorities (LAs). This is the total number of unitary LAs in England, but some indicators include fewer LAs. This is the case where data is suppressed for some LAs because of the number of pupils included in a certain measure being below DfE suppression rules. This is more commonly the case when disaggregating whole cohort data by pupil characteristics. There are two LAs in England that only have one school in the primary phase (City of London, and Isles of Scilly), so when data is broken down by characteristic data it can result in very few pupils being in scope for a measure. The Isles of Scilly also only have one secondary school and the City of London has no secondary schools, so the maximum number of LAs included for secondary ranks is 152.
- 4.10 Where more than one local authority has the same value for a particular performance measure, the rank is expressed using = before the rank value, and all LAs with the same value have the same rank measure. This is frequently the case for measures where the outcome is expressed to no decimal places, which is increasingly the most common DfE format for reporting threshold measures. For example, if the first 10 local authorities all have the same result, all ten would be described as =1/153. If the following 15 local authorities all had the same result, all 15 would be described as =11/153.
- 4.11 Ranks are a relative measure. This means that an LA's rank depends on the outcomes of all other LAs in the country. It can be the case that the rank for an LA can change, even if outcomes are unchanged. For example, this was the case in 2023 with the multiplication tables check. In 2022, an average score of 19.9 placed Leeds in quartile B for this indicator. A year later in 2023, the average score for Leeds pupils on this indicator remained at exactly the same value. But because average outcomes had increased, Leeds' rank in 2023 placed the city in quartile C.
- 4.12 Quartiles are determined using the median value of the entire dataset when sorted high to low, and then dividing the dataset in half at the median point. The median for the first group is the boundary between quartiles A and B, and the median for the lower group is the quartile boundary between C and D. Because of the nature of educational performance data – where several LAs can have the same value where outcomes are reported to no decimal places – there are not necessarily an equal number of LAs falling into each quartile. This is particularly the case where only a narrow span of values separate the highest and lowest quartile. For example, there is only a 15 percentage point span separating the band A and band D thresholds on the KS2 greater depth writing indicator.
- 4.13 **Comparator groups:** Each set of data includes comparisons to the national average, as well as comparison to statistical neighbours and core cities. Statistical neighbours provide a method for benchmarking that is produced by central Government, having been adapted from an original model produced by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER). For each LA, this model designates a number of other LAs deemed to have similar characteristics. The following LAs are classed as statistical neighbours of Leeds.
- Derby
 - Wirral
 - Darlington
 - North Tyneside
 - Kirklees
 - Bolton
 - Calderdale
 - Sheffield
 - Stockton-on-Tees

- Bury

4.14 The model is not solely based on similarities in the educational context of these LAs. The background variables included for determining similarity include a range of demographic data related to housing, average earnings, vehicle ownership, ethnicity, prevalence of higher qualifications among working age adults, health outcomes, etc.

4.15 Comparison is also made between outcomes in Leeds to those from other “core cities.” The cities included are:

- Newcastle upon Tyne
- Liverpool
- Manchester
- Sheffield
- Nottingham
- Birmingham
- Bristol

4.16 The core cities are not selected for data comparison purposes in the same way as statistical neighbours. They are not used because they share demographic similarities with Leeds, rather the core cities are a research and policy development group who exist to work with central government and other public policy stakeholders to lobby on behalf of large cities on matters relating to the economy, infrastructure, urban health and wellbeing, climate change, and the global reach of cities.

4.17 ***Pupil characteristics:*** Disadvantaged pupils include pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (FSM) in the previous six years, or are looked after or previously looked after children.

4.18 Educational outcomes for looked after children are not covered as a separate group in this report, as this data is reported in the Virtual School’s annual report, which was received at Corporate Parenting Board in May 2024. In 2023 children who were in the care of Leeds achieved better outcomes in comparison to looked after children nationally across a number of measures including Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), progress measures for reading and writing in key stage 2 and GCSE attainment.

'At a glance' headline data

Phase	Measure	Rank	Band A-D	Summary
ATTAINMENT MEASURES				
Early Years	% pupils meeting good level of development (GLD)	140/153	D	<i>Leeds is below national in all Early Years Foundation Stage headline measures.</i>
	Average number of met early learning goals	=114/153	D	
	Pupils eligible for FSM achieving GLD	=132/152	D	
Primary	% of pupils meeting the expected standard in the phonics screening check in year 1	=94/151	C	<i>The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in phonics at the end of year 1 has increased, but remains below the national average.</i> <i>Attainment at Key Stage 1 has increased across all subjects when compared to 2022, with higher rates of increase than seen nationally at the expected standard. Outcomes at the greater depth standard are more closely in line with national averages.</i> <i>Pupils in Leeds did not perform as well in this check as the national average</i> <i>Attainment fell in reading, but slightly increased in writing and maths. On the combined reading, writing and maths attainment measure, outcomes were the same as in 2022. Gaps to national remain at the expected standard measures, but at the higher standard outcomes in Leeds are closer to national averages, or in some subjects above the national average.</i>
	% of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading at KS1	=125/151	D	
	% of pupils meeting the expected standard in writing at KS1	=114/151	D	
	% of pupils meeting the expected standard in maths at KS1	=115/151	D	
	% of pupils achieving the higher standard in reading at KS1	=94/151	C	
	% of pupils achieving the higher standard in writing at KS1	=67/151	C	
	% of pupils achieving the higher standard in maths at KS1	=62/151	C	
	Year 4 multiplication tables check mean score	=98/151	D	
	Year 4 multiplication tables % Pupils achieving full marks	=106/151	D	
	Year 4 multiplication tables Mean score pupils eligible for FSM	=98/151	D	
	% of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at KS2	=95/153	C	
	% of pupils achieving the higher standard in reading, writing and maths at KS2	=46/153	B	
	% of pupils eligible for FSM meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at KS2	=99/153	C	
	% of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading at KS2	=123/153	D	
	% of pupils achieving the higher standard in reading at KS2	=97/153	C	
	% of pupils meeting the expected standard in writing at KS2	=118/153	D	
	% of pupils achieving the higher standard in writing at KS2	=58/153	B	
	% of pupils meeting the expected standard in maths at KS2	=95/153	C	
	% of pupils achieving the higher standard in maths at KS2	=60/153	B	
	% of pupils meeting the expected standard in grammar, spelling and punctuation at KS2	=98/153	C	

	% of pupils achieving the higher standard in grammar, spelling and punctuation at KS2	=75/153	C	
Secondary	Attainment 8	=71/152	B	<i>Pupils in Leeds make accelerated progress in the secondary phase and leave with results broadly in line with national.</i>
	Attainment 8 for disadvantaged pupils	=67/152	B	
	% of pupils achieving English and maths at grade 5+	=59/152	B	
	% of pupils achieving English and maths at grade 4+	=77/152	C	
	% disadvantaged pupils achieving English and maths at grade 4+	=55/152	B	
Post 16	A level average point score: schools only	102/152	C	<i>Outcomes in Leeds are below national for A levels, but above for Applied General and Tech level qualifications.</i>
	Tech level average point score: schools and colleges	=67/152	B	
	Applied General average point score: schools and colleges	=67/152	B	
PROGRESS MEASURES				
Prim	Reading KS1 to KS2	=51/153	B	<i>Young people in Leeds tend to make greater progress between key stages than young people with the same starting points nationally.</i>
	Writing KS1 to KS2	=38/153	B	
	Maths KS1 to KS2	=38/153	B	
Sec	Progress 8 KS2 to KS4	=37/152	A	
	Progress 8 KS2 to KS4 Disadvantaged pupils	=35/152	A	

5. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Key message: Leeds is below national for all Early Years Foundation Stage headline measures.

- 5.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) is a teacher assessment compiled at the end of the Reception year, and contains 17 goals covering seven areas of learning. The areas of learning are divided into prime areas and specific areas. The prime areas are: *communication and language; physical development and personal, social and emotional development*. The prime areas are considered to be particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving and are strengthened and applied through the following four specific areas: *literacy; mathematics; understanding the world and expressive arts and design*.
- 5.2 The EYFSP requires practitioners to indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are not yet reaching expected levels (‘emerging’). Time series data is only valid from 2022, as the framework changed in this year to remove the ‘exceeding’ standard.
- 5.3 In Leeds in 2023 63.2% of children achieved the good level of development standard, compared to 67.2% nationally, representing a gap of four percentage points. A child is defined as having a good level of development if they are at the expected level for the 12 early learning goals within the 5 areas of learning relating to: communication and language; personal, social and emotional development; physical development; literacy; and mathematics. Outcomes in Leeds are below all comparator groups and in quartile band D.

Table 1: Percentage of pupils reaching the good level of development standard at EYFS

	2022	2023	2023 rank
Leeds	61.0	63.2	140/153 BAND D
National	65.2	67.2	
Stat. neighbours	64.0	65.5	
Core cities	60.8	63.3	
Yorkshire and Humber	64.4	66.1	

- 5.4 In Leeds in 2023 pupils achieved slightly fewer early learning goals at the expected level than was the case nationally, which places Leeds in the bottom quartile on this measure.

Table 2: Average number of early learning goals at the expected level per child

	2022	2023	2023 rank
Leeds	13.7	13.7	Equal 114/153 BAND D
National	14.1	14.1	
Stat. neighbours	13.9	13.9	
Core cities	13.5	13.6	
Yorkshire and Humber	13.9	14.0	

5.5 EYFS outcomes for pupil groups

While some Leeds groups achieved above the national average on the good level of development measure (non-FSM eligible pupils, non-EAL pupils, girls, and pupils without SEN), others have rates of attainment on this measure below the national average, but also below groups with the same characteristics nationally.

- 5.6 **Free school meal (FSM) eligibility:** The percentage of FSM-eligible pupils reaching the good level of development increased in 2023 compared to the year before by more than four percentage points, whereas the national rate of increase was 2.5 percentage points.

However the gap in attainment between Leeds FSM-eligible pupils and outcomes for this group nationally is larger than the gap for the non-FSM cohort.

Table 3: Percentage of pupils reaching the good level of development standard at EYFS by FSM eligibility

	2022	2023	2023 rank
Leeds FSM	42.1	46.2	Equal 132/153 BAND D
National FSM	49.1	51.6	
Leeds non-FSM	66.9	68.0	
National non-FSM	69.5	71.5	

- 5.7 ***Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL):*** Most early learning goals can be assessed in the context of any language, including a child’s home language, but the communication and language and the literacy early learning goals must be assessed in relation to a child’s competency in English. Good level of development outcomes have increased for both Leeds EAL pupils and the national average for this group compared with 2022, but there are still proportionally fewer EAL pupils in Leeds reaching this level at the end of the Reception year.

Table 4: Percentage of pupils reaching the good level of development standard at EYFS by EAL status

	2022	2023	2023 rank
Leeds EAL	51.7	53.5	Equal 135/153 BAND D
National EAL	60.1	62.4	
Leeds non-EAL	63.8	66.6	
National non-EAL	67.1	69.3	

- 5.8 ***Pupils with a special education need or disability (SEND):*** The proportion of Leeds pupils with SEND who reach the good level of development increased in 2023 compared to the year before. Although the proportion of pupils with an EHCP who reach this level is very small, the overall cohort of Reception age pupils with an EHCP is small, and equates to a little over two classes across the entire city.

Table 5: Percentage of pupils reaching the good level of development standard at EYFS by SEND status

	2022	2023
Leeds non-SEND	67.7	71.3
National non-SEND	70.9	74.0
Leeds SEN support	17.5	22.0
National SEN support	22.9	24.3
Leeds EHCP	0.0	2.9
National EHCP	3.6	3.8

6. Phonics screening check

Key message: The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in phonics at the end of year 1 has increased, but remains below the national average.

- 6.1 Pupils take the phonics screening check at the end of year 1 and those who do not meet the standard take the check again at the end of year 2.
- 6.2 78% of pupils met the expected standard in the phonics screening check in year 1, up from 75% in 2019. Performance is one percentage point lower than the average for England. Out of 151 LAs, Leeds ranks in equal 94th position and is in Band C for performance.

Table 6: Percentage of pupils reaching the Y2 phonics screening standard

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	2023 rank
Leeds	77	79	79	75	78	Equal 94/151 BAND C
National	81	82	82	75	79	
Stat. neighbours	80	82	82	76	79	
Core cities	79	80	79	73	76	
Yorkshire and Humber	79	80	80	75	79	

- 6.3 88% of pupils met the expected standard in the phonics screening check by year 2, this is an increase of three percentage points from 2022. As national performance has increased by two percentage points, the gap between Leeds and national has narrowed slightly, but average outcomes in Leeds are below the national average. Out of 151 LAs, Leeds ranks in equal 91st position and is in Band D for performance.

Table 7: Percentage of pupils reaching the Y2 phonics screening standard

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	2023 rank
Leeds	90	90	89	85	88	Equal 91/151 BAND D
National	92	92	91	87	89	
Stat. neighbours	91	91	91	88	89	
Core cities	89	90	89	84	86	
Yorkshire and Humber	91	91	90	87	89	

6.4 Phonics outcomes for pupil groups

EAL: There is a six percentage point gap between the proportion of children meeting the expected standard in phonics at year 1 who have English as a second language, and those who do not. The percentage of pupils in Leeds with EAL meeting the standard increased by six percentage points compared to 2022, which is double the rate of improvement for EAL pupils nationally, although phonics outcomes for this group in Leeds remain below the national average for EAL pupils. EAL pupils may face greater challenges in learning the English phonetic depending on their first language, limited schooling or literacy, and the teaching and learning strategies employed.

Table 8: Percentage of pupils reaching the Y1 phonics screening standard by EAL status

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023
Leeds EAL	72	75	73	68	74
National EAL	81	82	82	75	78
Leeds non-EAL	79	81	81	78	80
National non-EAL	82	83	82	76	80

- 6.5 **FSM:** Only 64% of children eligible for FSM met the expected standard in the phonics check in 2023, compared to 82% of non-FSM children in Leeds schools. The size of this gap has

narrowed slightly since 2022, when 20 percentage points separated outcomes for these groups in Leeds. FSM-eligible pupils comprised about a quarter of the year 1 cohort in Leeds schools in 2023.

Table 9: Percentage of pupils reaching the Y1 phonics screening standard by FSM eligibility

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023
Leeds FSM	64	66	67	60	64
National FSM	68	70	70	62	66
Leeds non-FSM	80	82	82	80	82
National non-FSM	83	84	84	79	82

- 6.6 **SEND:** The trend of gaps in outcomes between SEND pupils and non-SEND pupils in Leeds largely mirrors that national gap, except for pupils with an EHCP. For this group in Leeds, proportionally far fewer of these pupils reach the expected standard in phonics than is the case for the equivalent pupil group nationally, however there are some differences between these groups. The EHCP group in Leeds is smaller than nationally, comprising 1.2% of the year 1 2023 cohort in Leeds, compared to 3.2% of the year 1 cohort in England in 2023. Among the Leeds EHCP group, there was a far greater prevalence of these pupils being disapplied from the phonics screening check (meaning that headteachers have decided that a pupil has no understanding of grapheme-phoneme correspondences and would not be able to access the check) than was the case with the national EHCP year 1 cohort. Nationally, more than half of Y1 pupils with an EHCP participated in the phonics screening check, whereas in Leeds almost 80% of pupils with an EHCP were disapplied from the check. This means that the result of 7% in the table below for EHCP pupils in 2023 only actually reflects outcomes for a group of fewer than 30 pupils with EHCPs who participated in the check, which is equivalent to less than one class. It is not possible therefore to use such a small dataset to make inferences about phonics teaching for this group of pupils.

Table 10: Percentage of pupils reaching the Y1 phonics screening standard by SEND status

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023
Leeds non SEND	83	86	86	82	85
National non SEND	87	88	88	82	86
Leeds SEN support	45	44	47	45	47
National SEN support	47	48	48	44	48
Leeds EHCP	9	8	11	11	7
National EHCP	18	19	19	19	20

7. Key stage 1

Key message: Attainment at key stage 1 has increased in all subjects compared to 2022, although gaps to national attainment remain broadly the same. Outcomes tend to be much lower for pupils who are eligible for free school meals, speak English as an additional language, or who have SEND.

- 7.1 Pupils undertake teacher assessment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 (KS1). Pupils also take tests, which are used as evidence to inform teacher assessment judgements, but test marks are not reported to the local authority or to the DfE. 2023 was the last year in which KS1 outcomes are reported, as teacher assessment and tests at this key stage are now non-statutory.
- 7.2 In Leeds 65% of pupils met the expected standard in reading; which remains below pre-pandemic attainment levels in this subject. The gap to the national reading attainment has narrowed by one percentage point compared to 2022, although outcomes in Leeds remain in the bottom quartile of local authorities.

Table 11: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in KS1 reading

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	2023 rank
Leeds	68	69	70	63	65	Equal 125/151 BAND D
National	75	75	75	67	68	
Stat. neighbours	74	74	74	67	68	
Core cities	71	72	72	63	64	
Yorkshire and Humber	72	72	73	65	66	

- 7.3 57% of Leeds pupils met the expected standard in writing at the end of KS2, compared to 54% in 2022. This three percentage point rate of improvement from last year is higher than the increase seen nationally and among comparator groups, but outcomes in Leeds remain lower than the national average.

Table 12: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in KS1 writing

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	59	63	63	54	57	Equal 114/151 BAND D
National	68	70	69	58	60	
Stat. neighbours	67	69	68	56	58	
Core cities	64	67	66	54	56	
Yorkshire and Humber	66	67	67	56	58	

- 7.4 68% of Leeds pupils met the expected standard in maths compared to 70% nationally. This is the subject with highest attainment levels in both Leeds and nationally, and the pattern of a higher rate of increase observed in Leeds than nationally is replicated in this subject.

Table 13: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in KS1 maths

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	68	71	71	65	68	Equal 115/151 BAND D
National	75	76	76	68	70	
Stat. neighbours	74	75	75	67	70	
Core cities	72	73	73	64	67	
Yorkshire and Humber	73	74	74	66	69	

- 7.5 17% of pupils in Leeds achieved the greater depth standard reading compared to 19% nationally. This places Leeds in Band C for this measure. Outcomes on this measure are in line with or above comparator groups.

Table 14: Percentage of pupils achieving the greater depth standard in KS1 reading

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	19	21	21	16	17	Equal 94/151 BAND C
National	25	26	25	18	19	
Stat. neighbours	24	24	24	16	17	
Core cities	20	22	22	15	16	
Yorkshire and Humber	22	23	23	16	17	

- 7.6 Seven per cent of pupils achieved the greater depth standard in writing, which is in line with national performance on this measure, and above the average rate in comparator groups.

Table 15: Percentage of pupils achieving the greater depth standard in KS1 writing

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	11	11	12	7	8	Equal 67/151 BAND C
National	16	16	15	8	8	
Stat. neighbours	15	15	14	7	7	
Core cities	12	14	13	6	7	
Yorkshire and Humber	14	14	13	7	7	

- 7.7 16% of pupils achieved the greater depth standard in maths, which is in line with the national average and above comparator groups.

Table 16: Percentage of pupils achieving the greater depth standard in KS1 maths

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	16	17	18	14	16	Equal 62/151 BAND C
National	21	22	22	15	16	
Stat. neighbours	20	21	21	13	14	
Core cities	17	20	20	13	14	
Yorkshire and Humber	19	20	21	14	15	

- 7.8 **Key stage 1 outcomes for pupil groups:** Attainment at KS1 in reading has improved since 2022 for most pupil groups, but fallen for pupils who have English as an additional language and the EHCP cohort. In writing, performance has either improved or remained static (SEN Support and EHCP cohorts) and in maths it has improved for almost all groups and fallen for the EHCP cohort.
- 7.9 Across the three subjects, pupils eligible for FSM did not perform as well as the same pupils nationally with the largest gap in reading. The gap in performance between Leeds FSM eligible pupils and non-FSM eligible pupils is greater than that seen nationally.
- 7.10 **FSM:** In Leeds in 2023, both pupils eligible for FSM and the non-eligible cohort have attainment at KS1 that is below the national average for the equivalent groups. However the gaps to similar pupils nationally are greater for the FSM-eligible cohort. In all three subjects, the non-FSM cohort in Leeds attain on average one percentage point below the average outcome for non-FSM pupils nationally, whereas the gap between FSM eligible pupils in Leeds and FSM pupils nationally is between six and eight percentage points, which places Leeds in the bottom quartile of local authorities for all three subjects.

- 7.11 **EAL:** In Leeds in 2023, 54% of children with EAL reached the expected standard in reading, 49% in writing and 61% in maths. Gaps are larger in Leeds than they are nationally between pupils with EAL and those without. Attainment in 2023 for EAL pupils nationally was 11 percentage points higher in reading, nine percentage points higher in writing and eight percentage points higher in maths, although there is a trend over time of these gaps reducing.
- 7.12 **SEND:** Across the three subjects in 2023, SEND pupils in Leeds did not perform as well SEND pupils nationally, particularly the EHCP cohort. 30% of Leeds pupils with SEN Support met the expected standard for reading, up from 29% in 2022. Performance is the highest it has been in the previous five years where assessments have taken place. Nationally, 32% of pupils met the benchmark. Four per cent of pupils with an EHCP met the expected standard in reading, compared to 12% nationally. The figures for this cohort tend to fluctuate year by year due to the small number of pupils with an EHCP in this year group. In writing and in maths outcomes for the Leeds SEN Support cohort are one percentage point below the equivalent groups nationally, but gaps are greater for pupils with an EHCP: two per cent of Leeds EHCP pupils reached the expected standard in writing, eight per cent did so nationally; and 4 per cent of Leeds EHCP pupils met the expected standard in maths whereas 15% did so nationally.

8. Multiplication tables check

Key message: Outcomes for Leeds pupils in this check were below the national average.

- 8.1 The multiplication tables check became statutory in the 2021/22 academic year. It is an online, on-screen assessment given to pupils in year 4 and checks their ability to fluently recall times tables. There is no expected standard set as part of this check, so the performance indicators associated with this assessment are the average score and the percentage of pupils who scored full marks (25 marks).
- 8.2 Of pupils who took the check in Leeds, the mean average score was 19.9 out of 25. This is below the national and statistical neighbour results. Out of 151 local authorities, Leeds is ranked at equal 106 and is in quartile band D for performance.
- 8.3 27% of pupils in Leeds achieved full marks in the check; this is below all comparators, and represents a decrease of one percentage point from 2022. Out of 151 local authorities, Leeds has a ranking position of equal 106 and is in quartile band D.

Table 17: Mean average score in the multiplication tables check

	2022	2023	2023 rank
Leeds	19.9	19.9	Equal 98/151 BAND C
National	19.8	20.2	
Stat. neighbours	19.8	20.1	
Core cities	19.5	19.8	
Yorkshire and Humber	19.6	20.0	

- 8.4 Pupils with an EHCP and those recorded as SEN Support had the lowest scores: 13.7 and 15.8 respectively. For pupils with SEN Support, this is in line with the national average for this group, the score for Leeds EHCP pupils was one point below the average for this group nationally.

9. Key stage 2

Key message: Attainment fell in reading, but slightly increased in writing and maths. On the combined reading, writing and maths attainment measure, outcomes were the same as in 2022. Gaps to national remain at the expected standard measures, but at the higher standard outcomes in Leeds are closer to national averages, or in some subjects above the national average.

9.1 Results at the end of Key Stage 2 focus on a child's attainment and progress in maths, reading and writing. Writing is based on teacher assessment, whereas reading and maths are assessed based on end of key stage tests, unless pupils are working below the standard of key stage 2, in which case a pre-key stage teacher assessment framework is used. A grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) test is also taken.

9.2 Combined reading, writing and maths (RWM)

In Leeds in 2023, 58% of pupils met the expected standard in RWM. This result is the same as in 2022, whereas national outcomes have increased slightly.

Table 18: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in KS2 RWM

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	56	61	62	58	58	Equal 95/153 BAND C
National	62	65	65	59	60	
Stat. neighbours	60	64	65	58	59	
Core cities	59	63	63	57	57	
Yorkshire and Humber	58	62	64	57	58	

9.3 9% of Leeds pupils met the higher standard in RWM compared to 8% nationally. Performance in Leeds is above all comparators. Out of 150 local authorities, Leeds ranks in equal 46th position and is in quartile Band B for performance. Obtaining the higher standard across all three subjects is very challenging; even in the highest performing local authorities only 18 per cent of pupils achieved this standard across all three subjects.

Table 19: Percentage of pupils achieving the higher standard in KS2 RWM

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	7	9	10	8	9	Equal 46/153 BAND B
National	9	10	11	7	8	
Stat. neighbours	8	9	10	6	7	
Core cities	7	9	10	7	7	
Yorkshire and Humber	7	9	9	6	7	

9.4 Outcomes by subject

Reading: 70% of pupils met the expected standard in reading (a decrease of three percentage points since 2022). However, this decrease was also reflected in a decline nationally at the expected standard reading attainment and among all comparator groups.

Table 20: Percentage of pupils achieving expected standard at KS2 reading

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	68	72	70	73	70	Equal 123/151 BAND D
National	72	76	74	75	73	
Stat. neighbours	70	75	72	74	72	
Core cities	69	73	71	72	70	
Yorkshire and Humber	68	73	71	73	71	

- 9.5 27% 27% of pupils met the higher standard in reading, with performance remaining below national, and the gap widening slightly by one percentage point. Leeds ranks in equal 97th position and is in quartile band C for performance.

Table 21: Percentage of pupils achieving the higher standard at KS2 reading

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	23	27	25	27	27	Equal 97/153 BAND C
National	25	28	27	28	29	
Stat. neighbours	23	26	26	27	27	
Core cities	22	26	25	27	27	
Yorkshire and Humber	22	26	25	26	26	

- 9.6 **Writing:** 69% of pupils met the expected standard in writing; the gap to the national average in this subject has remained at three percentage points. Writing outcomes at the expected standard remain well below pre-pandemic levels for all comparator groups.

Table 22: Percentage of pupils achieving expected standard at KS2 writing

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	70	74	75	67	69	Equal 118/151 BAND D
National	77	79	79	70	72	
Stat. neighbours	76	78	78	68	71	
Core cities	74	76	77	67	68	
Yorkshire and Humber	75	77	78	69	71	

- 9.7 14% of Leeds pupils were assessed as working at greater depth in writing compared to 13% nationally. Performance is above national and above all other comparators. Leeds ranks in equal 58th position and is in quartile band C for performance.

Table 23: Percentage of pupils achieving the greater depth standard at KS2 writing

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	13	17	18	13	14	Equal 58/153 BAND C
National	18	20	20	13	13	
Stat. neighbours	17	18	19	11	12	
Core cities	16	18	19	12	12	
Yorkshire and Humber	17	19	19	11	12	

- 9.8 **Maths:** 72% of pupils met the expected standard in maths. Although attainment has increased since 2022, outcomes at maths are below pre-pandemic levels, both in Leeds and nationally.

Table 24: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard at KS2 maths

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	71	73	77	71	72	Equal 95/153 BAND C
National	75	76	79	72	73	
Stat. neighbours	75	75	79	71	73	
Core cities	74	75	78	69	71	
Yorkshire and Humber	73	74	78	70	72	

- 9.9 24% of Leeds pupils met the higher standard in maths, which is in line with the national figure of 23%, and places Leeds in quartile band B.

Table 25: Percentage of pupils achieving the greater depth standard at KS2 maths

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	21	22	26	22	24	Equal 60/153 BAND B
National	23	24	27	23	24	
Stat. neighbours	22	23	26	21	22	
Core cities	22	23	26	21	23	
Yorkshire and Humber	20	21	25	21	22	

- 9.10 **Grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS):** 71% of pupils met the expected standard in GPS. Average attainment in this assessment has not changed since 2022 in Leeds, or nationally.

Table 26: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard at KS2 GPS

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	75	75	76	71	71	Equal 98/153 BAND C
National	77	78	79	73	73	
Stat. neighbours	77	77	78	72	72	
Core cities	76	76	77	70	71	
Yorkshire and Humber	75	76	77	70	71	

- 9.11 This is the subject in which the greatest proportions of pupils attain the higher standard, both in Leeds and nationally. 29% of Leeds pupils met the higher standard, an increase of two percentage points compared to 2022. Performance is broadly in line with the national outcome and comparator groups.

Table 27: Percentage of pupils achieving the higher standard at KS2 GPS

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	28	33	35	27	29	Equal 75/153 BAND C
National	31	35	36	28	30	
Stat. neighbours	30	34	35	27	29	
Core cities	31	35	36	28	30	
Yorkshire and Humber	27	32	33	25	27	

9.12 **Progress from key stage 1**

The progress measures capture the progress that pupils make from the end of KS1 to the end of KS2. They are a value-added measure, which means that pupils' results are compared to the actual achievements of other pupils nationally with the same prior attainment at KS1. Progress scores are presented as positive or negative numbers either side of zero. A score of zero means that pupils in a school or local authority made the same progress as those with similar prior attainment nationally. A positive score means that they made more progress than those with similar prior attainment; a negative score means they made less progress than pupils with similar starting points nationally.

- 9.13 Progress measures will not be reported at the end of the 2023/24 and 2024/25 academic years. This is because pupils who reach the end of key stage 2 during these years do not have key stage 1 assessment data, as these cohorts were in year 2 in 2020 and 2021 when statutory assessment was cancelled due to the pandemic.
- 9.14 The positive progress scores show pupils in Leeds made on average more progress in reading, writing and maths than similar pupils nationally.

Table 28: Average progress scores between KS1 and KS2

	Reading	Writing	Maths
Leeds	0.31	0.62	0.73
National	0.04	0.04	0.04
Stat. neighbours	-0.08	-0.02	-0.03
Core cities	0.02	0.03	0.12
Yorkshire and Humber	-0.26	0.08	-0.01
Ranking	Equal 51/153	Equal 38/153	Equal 38/153
Band	BAND B	BAND B	BAND B

9.15 **Attainment at key stage 2 for pupil groups**

Disadvantaged pupils: Disadvantaged pupils are those who have had a period of free school meal eligibility during the previous six years, plus pupils who are looked after, or who left care to be adopted, or enter a kinship care or special guardianship arrangement.

- 9.16 Nationally, disadvantaged pupils performed better than disadvantaged pupils in Leeds, with 44% meeting the expected standard; the gap between disadvantaged and non disadvantaged is 22 percentage points and is smaller than the one in Leeds. The disadvantage gap index reduced between 2011 and 2018 indicating that the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils was becoming smaller before remaining at a similar level between 2018 and 2019. The index had increased in 2022 to the highest level since 2012, suggesting that disruption to learning during the COVID 19 pandemic had a greater impact on disadvantaged pupils. In 2023, the gap has reduced slightly, but remains high.

Table 29: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in KS2 RWM by disadvantage status

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds disadvantaged	39	45	45	39	41	Equal 95/153 BAND C
National disadvantaged	48	51	51	43	44	
Leeds non-disadvantaged	66	70	71	67	67	
National non-disadvantaged	68	71	72	66	67	

- 9.17 **EAL:** In Leeds, the percentage of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) meeting the expected standard at KS2 in all three subjects increased slightly, while the national average for this pupil group remained the same compared to 2022. However there is still a nine percentage point gap between outcomes for Leeds EAL pupils and national EAL pupils. Non-EAL pupils in Leeds achieve slightly higher in the combined RWM expected standard measure than non-EAL pupils nationally.

Table 30: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in KS2 RWM by EAL status

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023
Leeds EAL	48	53	54	52	53
National EAL	61	65	66	62	62
Leeds non EAL	58	63	64	59	60
National non EAL	62	65	65	58	59

- 9.18 **SEND:** Five per cent of Leeds pupils with an EHCP achieved the expected standard in all three subjects, whereas nationally eight per cent of pupils with an EHCP did so. The number

of pupils in the EHCP cohort is relatively small, so the gap between the Leeds EHCP outcome and the national one only equates to nine pupils.

- 9.19 22% of pupils receiving SEN support achieved the expected standard in RWM, which is a slight increase from 2022. However, the national rate increased by a greater proportion.

Table 31: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in KS2 RWM by SEND status

	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023
Leeds non-SEND	64	70	71	67	69
National non-SEND	71	74	75	69	70
Leeds SEN support	16	21	23	21	22
National SEN support	21	24	25	21	24
Leeds EHCP	7	3	4	5	5
National EHCP	8	9	9	7	8

10. Key stage 4

Key message: As expected (see explanation below), national performance in 2023 across key measures for all pupils is below the previous year's. When compared with 2019, performance has improved for both the strong and standard pass for English and maths and fallen for Attainment 8, but is broadly in line for the EBACC Average Point Score.

- 10.1 In September 2021, Ofqual set out a two year plan to return to pre pandemic grading following two years of disruption when examinations did not take place as a result of COVID 19. During this time a combination of centre assessed and teacher assessed grades replaced external examinations. On average, these grades were higher. This is not necessarily because there was 'grade inflation' or because teachers were not vigilant in how they assessed pupils; it is simply because a different assessment approach was used.
- 10.2 The DfE and Ofqual stated that a return to an exam system would disadvantage the 2022 and 2023 cohorts, who were affected by the pandemic. As a result, 2022 grade boundaries were set at a midway point between 2021 and 2019. In 2023 there was a return to results that are more in line with those seen in the pre pandemic years, with some protections in place in recognition that students have experienced disruption to their education. By adjusting the grade boundaries this protection means that, for example, a student who achieved a grade B in English before the pandemic is just as likely to receive the same grade during 2023, even if their performance in the examination is a little weaker than it was pre pandemic. The most appropriate comparison point therefore for 2023 outcomes is to refer to 2019 data.
- 10.3 **Attainment 8**
Attainment 8 measures the average achievement of pupils in up to 8 qualifications including English (double weighted if the combined English qualification, or both language and literature are taken), maths (double weighted), three further qualifications that count in the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) and three further qualifications that can be GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or any other non-GCSE qualifications on the DfE approved list. Given a 'standard' pass is a grade 4 and a 'strong' pass is a grade 5, a school with an average attainment 8 score of 50 would be one where on average every result was a grade 5.

- 10.4 The average Attainment 8 score per pupil in Leeds was 45.8 which is above the 2019 outcome on this measure, with the gap to national having narrowed slightly. Leeds is in quartile band B on this measure and above comparator groups.

Table 32: Average Attainment 8 score

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	45.1	47.6	49.2	47.8	45.8	Equal 71/152 BAND B
National	46.8	50.2	50.9	48.9	46.4	
Stat. neighbours	45.8	49.1	49.8	47.4	45.5	
Core cities	44.2	47.7	48.2	46.7	44.1	
Yorkshire and Humber	45.4	48.3	49.1	46.9	44.7	

10.5 **Progress 8**

Progress 8 aims to capture the progress a pupil makes from the end of key stage 2 to the end of key stage 4. It compares pupils' achievement – their Attainment 8 score – with the average Attainment 8 score of all pupils nationally who had a similar KS2 prior attainment. Progress 8 is a relative measure, therefore the national average Progress 8 score for mainstream schools is very close to zero. An average Progress 8 score of 1.0 means that pupils in the group make on average a grade more progress than the national average; a score of -0.5 means they make on average half a grade less progress than average. During 2020 and 2021 the DfE only published attainment data, not Progress 8 data.

- 10.6 Progress 8 outcomes in Leeds have consistently been above national and comparator groups, and this was the case again in 2023. On average Leeds pupils achieve just over a grade higher per Attainment 8 GCSE compared to pupils nationally with the same KS2 prior attainment. At the July 2023 children and families scrutiny board, members requested a table of Progress 8 outcomes by school, this is included at Appendix 1.

Table 33: Average Progress 8 score

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	0.03	The DfE did not publish Progress 8 data in these years		0.12	0.12	Equal 37/152 BAND A
National	-0.03			-0.03	-0.03	
Stat. neighbours	-0.13			-0.13	-0.10	
Core cities	-0.10			-0.10	-0.13	
Yorkshire and Humber	-0.02			-0.07	-0.06	

10.7 **Strong pass in English and maths**

Proportionally more pupils in Leeds achieved a strong pass in English and maths than did so nationally or in comparator groups. Outcomes on this measure have increased since 2019.

Table 34: Percentage of pupils achieving a strong pass (grades 9-5) in English and mathematics

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	41.6	46.7	50.5	51.3	45.9	Equal 59/152 BAND B
National	43.4	49.9	51.9	50.0	45.5	
Stat. neighbours	41.9	48.3	50.3	47.7	44.1	
Core cities	38.1	44.9	46.8	46.9	41.3	
Yorkshire and Humber	41.1	47.5	49.4	47.7	42.6	

10.8 **Standard pass in English and maths**

Slightly fewer pupils in Leeds achieved a standard pass in English and maths GCSEs in 2023 than did so nationally, although the pass rate has increased since 2019. Outcomes were higher on this measure in Leeds than in statistical neighbour, core city and other Yorkshire and Humber LAs.

Table 35: Percentage of pupils achieving a standard pass (grades 9-4) in English and mathematics

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	62.1	67.7	69.9	68.3	64.6	Equal 77/152 BAND C
National	64.9	71.2	72.2	69.0	65.4	
Stat. neighbours	63.8	69.9	70.8	66.9	64.2	
Core cities	58.5	65.9	66.9	64.9	60.7	
Yorkshire and Humber	62.6	68.8	70.0	66.6	62.8	

10.9 **Attainment at key stage 4 for pupil groups**

Disadvantaged pupils: Disadvantaged pupils made less progress on average than non-disadvantaged pupils with similar prior attainment at KS2. A Progress 8 score of -0.33 means on average a third of a grade less than pupils with similar prior attainment. However, disadvantaged pupils in Leeds have made more progress than disadvantaged pupils nationally and out of 152 local authorities, Leeds ranks 35th and is in quartile band A for performance.

10.10 English and maths outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in Leeds are similar to disadvantaged pupils nationally, but both groups attain well below non-disadvantaged pupils.

10.11 Non-disadvantaged pupils achieved average Attainment 8 scores roughly in line with 2019 levels, but for the disadvantaged group, Attainment 8 scores remain slightly lower than pre-pandemic, which means the gap has widened on this indicator, for both Leeds disadvantaged pupils and the same group nationally.

Table 36: Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in 2023

	Attainment 8	Progress 8	% 9-5 Eng/Maths	% 9-4 Eng/Maths
Leeds disadvantaged	34.4	-0.39	25.7	43.9
National disadvantaged	35.1	-0.57	25.4	43.7
Leeds non-disadvantaged	50.7	0.33	54.7	73.6
National non-disadvantaged	50.4	0.17	52.6	73.1

10.12 **EAL:** Pupils who speak English as an additional language are one of the groups with the highest Progress 8 scores. Although in earlier key stages there are often attainment gaps for EAL pupils, on average by the end of KS4 these pupils have attainment in line with English native speaker pupils in Leeds. Although attainment rates are slightly below the national EAL group, there have been significant increases in attainment since 2019 for the Leeds EAL group, with an increase of 11 percentage points on the 9-5 pass measure and just over seven percentage points on the 9-4 pass measure.

Table 37: Outcomes for EAL pupils in 2023

	Attainment 8	Progress 8	% 9-5 Eng/Maths	% 9-4 Eng/Maths
Leeds EAL	47.1	0.71	46.2	64.2
National EAL	49.4	0.51	50.2	68.3
Leeds non-EAL	46.0	0.03	46.6	65.5
National non-EAL	45.9	-0.12	44.6	64.9

10.13 **SEND:** Pupils in Leeds without SEND achieve in line with non-SEND pupils nationally. Pupils with SEND support have lower attainment and progress than non-SEND pupils both in Leeds

and nationally, but attainment rates are slightly lower for the Leeds SEN support cohort, except on the 9-5 pass measure. Attainment rates in 2023 were in line with pre-pandemic trends on all measures for pupils with SEND.

Table 38: Outcomes for SEND pupils in 2023

	Attainment 8	Progress 8	% 9-5 Eng/Maths	% 9-4 Eng/Maths
Leeds non-SEND	50.0	0.29	52.2	72.2
National non-SEND	50.2	0.10	51.3	72.4
Leeds SEN Support	31.0	-0.45	21.0	34.9
National SEN Support	33.3	-0.45	20.7	36.9
Leeds EHCP	11.4	-1.20	7.0	12.1
National EHCP	14.0	-1.12	6.9	13.0

11. Outcomes at key stage 5

Key message: Outcomes in Leeds are below national for A levels but above for Applied General qualifications and Tech level qualifications.

- 11.1 As with GCSE, comparisons cannot be made with data from 2020, 2021 or 2022. This is because outcomes for 2020 and 2021 were based on centre and teacher assessed grades and were on average higher than those awarded in 2019. Grades in 2022 were set at a midpoint between 2019 and 2021.
- 11.2 In addition, there is no progress, or value added, data for 2022 and 2023. This data is normally generated from what students achieved at the end of key stage 4 (GCSE or equivalent) and the outcomes of their A levels or equivalent, and comparisons are made with young people across the country with the same starting points. As students did not take formal exams in 2020 or 2021, this measure cannot be calculated for the years when these cohorts of students completed key stage 5.
- 11.3 **Average point score (APS) per A level in schools**
A score of 30 equates to a C grade and 40 to a B grade. A large proportion of students taking A levels attend schools and sixth form colleges, so this is the data represented below. The average point score in Leeds was 32.77 which is below the national average and lower than all comparators. This drops very slightly if FE college data is included; the APS becomes 32.09.

Table 39: Average point score per A level entry: Schools

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Leeds rank
Leeds	31.78	37.20	39.98	36.14	32.77	102/152 BAND C
National	33.09	39.07	40.97	38.28	34.63	
Stat. neighbours	32.63	38.71	41.07	37.28	32.82	
Core cities	32.41	38.34	40.23	36.75	33.29	
Yorkshire and Humber	32.57	38.21	40.33	37.65	34.10	

11.4 Average point score per Tech Level in schools and colleges

Tech Levels are advanced qualifications for students wishing to specialise in a technical occupation or occupational group for example engineering, IT, accounting or professional cookery. They are recognised by a relevant trade or professional body or at least five employers that are representative of the industry sector or occupation to which the qualification relates. Very few students take Tech levels at school, so the data below is for

schools and colleges. The average point score in Leeds is in line with the national outcome on this measure.

Table 40: Average point score per Tech level entry: Schools and colleges

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Leeds rank Equal 67/152 BAND B
Leeds	31.32	30.95	31.98	30.04	28.80	
National	28.64	29.92	31.65	30.54	28.50	
Stat. neighbours	29.73	32.26	32.71	32.25	29.61	
Core cities	29.03	30.39	31.19	30.47	28.96	
Yorkshire and Humber	29.37	29.35	31.41	30.65	29.11	

11.5 Average point score per entry for Applied General qualifications in schools and colleges

Applied General qualifications are vocational qualifications which are the equivalent to A levels and allow students to continue their education through applied learning. A large proportion of the students taking applied qualifications are in colleges so the figures below are the combined schools and college data. Outcomes on this measure are above the national average and in quartile band B.

Table 41: Average point score per Applied General entry: Schools and colleges

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Leeds rank Equal 67/152 BAND B
Leeds	26.56	28.54	32.30	32.22	29.82	
National	28.89	31.22	32.63	31.91	29.52	
Stat. neighbours	29.38	32.92	34.60	33.53	30.60	
Core cities	28.67	30.83	32.10	31.47	29.44	
Yorkshire and Humber	29.03	31.55	33.73	33.14	30.95	

Appendix 1: Key stage 4 outcomes by school in 2023

School name	% disadvantaged at end of KS4	A8 Score	P8	E&M 9-4	E&M 9-5
Abbey Grange CofE Academy	16%	55.6	0.49	81%	66%
Allerton Grange School	28%	43.9	-0.03	63%	43%
Allerton High School	24%	57.1	0.64	86%	75%
Benton Park School	19%	45.4	-0.25	66%	46%
Bishop Young CofE Academy	54%	35	-0.35	41%	21%
Boston Spa Academy	22%	54.8	0.5	82%	67%
Brigshaw High School	19%	45.6	0.14	66%	43%
Bruntcliffe Academy	32%	50	0.66	72%	48%
Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School	19%	55.2	0.55	87%	65%
Carr Manor Community School	35%	47.6	0.47	69%	50%
Cockburn John Charles Academy	59%	44.8	0.72	53%	38%
Cockburn School	37%	48.1	0.61	68%	49%
Co-op Academy Leeds	62%	27.9	-0.33	30%	10%
Co-op Academy Priesthorpe	29%	46.3	0	67%	48%
Corpus Christi Catholic College	29%	38.5	-0.99	47%	28%
Crawshaw Academy	22%	43.5	-0.48	64%	43%
Dixons Trinity Chapeltown	42%	48.6	0.73	66%	50%
Dixons Unity Academy	56%	30.9	-0.82	35%	20%
Garforth Academy	14%	50.7	0.26	77%	59%
Guseley School	8%	52	0.2	76%	60%
Horsforth School	14%	57.6	0.74	82%	64%
John Smeaton Academy	44%	34.9	-0.85	46%	23%
Lawnswood School	43%	42.7	-0.26	58%	36%
Leeds City Academy	56%	35.7	0.32	41%	20%
Leeds East Academy	67%	37.3	-0.59	49%	29%
Leeds Jewish Free School	24%	42.1	-0.3	64%	44%
Leeds West Academy	44%	39	-0.25	53%	35%
Mount St Mary's Catholic High School	39%	49	0.81	64%	42%
Otley Prince Henry's Grammar School	9%	54.4	0.36	78%	62%
Oulton Academy	38%	51	0.52	72%	56%
Pudsey Grammar School	20%	46.7	0.02	62%	41%
Ralph Thoresby School	24%	43	-0.48	57%	41%
Rodillian Academy	28%	45.8	0	66%	40%
Roundhay School	20%	51.8	0.33	79%	63%
St. Mary's Menston	7%	57.2	0.56	85%	67%
Temple Learning Academy	61%	27.7	-0.63	27%	16%
Temple Moor High School	23%	47.3	0.24	68%	45%
The Farnley Academy	31%	50.5	0.72	77%	56%
The Morley Academy	19%	58.2	0.83	83%	65%
The Ruth Gorse Academy	51%	48.8	0.92	69%	47%
University Technical College Leeds	33%	42.6	-0.72	64%	32%
Wetherby High School	26%	48.7	0.19	72%	52%
Woodkirk Academy	21%	48.7	0.19	69%	51%
	30%	45.8	0.12	65%	46%

Data Source: DfE school performance tables

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SACRE Annual report 2022-2023

Date: 18th July 2023

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

- Every school in England must include religious education as part of its curriculum. Every local authority must appoint a Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE) to support this provision.
- SACREs have a duty to publish an annual report, ideally by the 31st December each calendar year. This report has to be sent to the Secretary of State for Education as well as to key partners, including schools, teacher training institutions, libraries and councillors.
- This report considers the priorities for SACRE over the last year and the progress made on them; the main areas of discussions at SACRE meetings; work to review RE provision in secondary schools in Leeds; the Welcoming Schools initiative; results in RE in external exams; production of a Sensitivity to Faiths document and details of the professional support and training offered by SACRE consultants.

Recommendations

- a) Members are asked to note the content and recommendations set out within the appended report.

What is this report about?

1 The work of SACRE in 2022-2023.

What impact will this proposal have?

2 Councillors will have greater awareness of the work of SACRE and the opportunity to ask questions about it.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

3

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

4 The report has been considered by Leeds SACRE.

What are the resource implications?

5 SACRE recommends a review of the funding of SACRE to ensure it is in line with national recommendations and good practice. The DfE recommends that local authorities allocate 2% of Central School Services Block (CSSB) grant to SACRE.

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

6 There are no immediate risks to consider.

What are the legal implications?

7 Current funding limits the work of SACRE in fulfilling its statutory duties.

Options, timescales and measuring success

This is an annual report which is reporting retrospectively so that options, success and timescales are not applicable in this instance.

What other options were considered?

8 N/A

How will success be measured?

9 N/A

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

10 N/A

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – SACRE Annual report

Background papers

- None

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Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Annual Report 2022-23

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Section One: Introduction and the Work of SACRE

Words from the Chair

We are LEEDS! This year has been a significant one for Leeds SACRE, and like our local football chant, we are proud to say we are SACRE!

We Question: As a SACRE team, we question by monitoring RE provision in schools, encouraging critical thinking on the subject. We question the effectiveness of RE taught in both Primary and Secondary schools. We do this not only by asking how we can support those schools who ask for help but also by reviewing compliance through online digital surveys.

We are out and about: We hold our four meetings around the city at different venues, including this last year, the Hindu Mandir in Headingley, Etz Chaim Synagogue in Moortown, Carr Manor High School and Moor Allerton Hall Primary School at Roundhay. We have not only been made to feel welcome by both the faith groups and the schools but also helped forge an understanding of what we do.

We are connected: Through being connected to other SACREs in the West Yorkshire region, we have been able to continue to share our learning and best practices with each other. This, in turn, has added to our SACRE's collective knowledge to assist in teaching RE.

In the coming year, our SACRE members will be focusing on Collective Worship. We will be doing this by visiting schools both Primary and Secondary around the city to see what is being achieved and how it is delivered to pupils.

And finally, this coming year will see the launch of our new RE syllabus which builds on much of what has gone before but with an emphasis on 'big ideas' to be included in RE lessons.

Russell Trudgen

Chair of Leeds SACRE 2022 - 23 and Pentecostal representative

Overview

This annual report is prepared by Leeds SACRE. SACRE as a body is required to advise the Local Authority on matters relating to Religious Education and Collective Worship. This report provides a picture of the support given for Religious Education and Collective Worship during 2022-23. The report is a public document which is also sent to the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) and the Department for Education.

For further information on the report or on RE and Collective Worship in Leeds, contact Helen Rivers at helen.rivers@leeds.gov.uk

For information on SACRE please contact the clerk, Michael Oates michael.oates@leeds.gov.uk

Dates and content of meetings

There were four meetings of Leeds SACRE during the year 2022-23, all held in person at the following times and places:

September 22 2022 (AGM) - Hindu Mandir, Headingley

December 7 2022 - Moor Allerton Hall Primary School, Roundhay

March 13 2023 - Etz Chaim Synagogue, Harrogate Rd.

June 6 2023 - Carr Manor Community School

Meetings are open to the public and minutes are also available on-line via Leeds for Learning RE and SACRE resource page.

At the September 2022 AGM, Russell Trudgen (Pentecostal representative) was re-elected as the chair. Afsha Hussain (Muslim representative) was re-elected as vice-chair.

As well as considering the general position of RE and collective worship in the city, SACRE discussed the following issues at its meetings during the academic year 2022 - 23:

- The Local Agreed syllabus review (September 2024); joint WYSACRE meetings have agreed to follow 'Big Ideas'
- Future joint meetings of chairs and vice chairs across West Yorkshire (WYSACRE);
- Guidance on sensitivity to faith in schools approved Sept 22; 'Sharing the Journey'
- Continued clarification of funding for Leeds SACRE responsibilities and activities;

- Review of primary provision for RE, including time allocation, RE visits and CPD.
- Completion and launch of the two films funded by Westhill endowment trust;
- Improving representation on SACRE from those groups currently under-represented – focus on recruiting teacher reps and CE reps.
- Roles of SACRE members; working party for completion of SACRE self-evaluation
- National Association of SACREs (NASACRE) – items of interest or action, including information from NASACRE conference on the role and impact of SACREs
- Ofsted reports, including feedback from Deep Dives in RE and issues around SMSC
- Training and induction for SACRE members training
- Collective worship – guidance reviewed and updated.

SACRE Priorities for 2022-23

In the development plan for 2022-23, the priorities for SACRE were:

1. Communication, information and guidance.
 - Produce regular information for schools, including regular updating of intranet for schools and half termly newsletter;
 - Provide updated guidance on key areas: RE, Collective Worship, Celebrating diversity, and nurturing tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.
2. Professional development and support
 - Provision of CPD, regional networks and consultancy for primary and secondary schools;
 - Begin the process of reviewing and updating local agreed syllabus for RE;
 - Monitor compliance and provision of RE in secondary schools.
3. Strategy and priorities
 - Widening participation and involvement in SACRE;
 - Further develop the West Yorkshire SACREs joint working;
 - Implement new format for annual report; report to be presented to scrutiny panel.
4. Promoting understanding and tolerance
 - Continuing to develop ‘Schools Welcome!’ project to encourage visits and visitors to and from faith communities; update and maintain visits directory;
 - Offering free training to faith communities;
 - Complete Westhill funded film project;
 - Produce guidance on faith sensitivities.

Self-evaluation and priorities for 2023-24

During the year, Leeds SACRE completed a process of self-evaluation based on the NASACRE template. Arising from this, the following areas future development were identified and will be built into the development plan for the next year.

SACRE

1. Membership and attendance: SACRE needs to ensure there continues to be consistent attendance from all faith groups and teachers. Regular attendance by local councillors needs to be prioritised. Vacancies for faith groups to be filled.
2. Contacts with partners, such as HE providers, should be developed. It is worth exploring whether a more structured link with MATs is feasible and beneficial
3. Communication: An annual discussion of the report will continue to take place at CYP Scrutiny or similar. Procedures should be put in place so that meaningful contact can be made with and between members outside of SACRE meetings. More opportunities should be found to hear from pupils as well as teachers.
4. Planning and Strategy: The development plan should be reviewed regularly and be the focus of every SACRE meeting. An annual questionnaire will be sent to all schools to elicit relevant information and to enquire about what support might be needed.

Religious Education

1. Information: An annual questionnaire will be used to enquire about RE and other matters, alongside other ways of collecting information such as via primary and secondary RE networks. SACRE will continue to receive and analyse data from public examinations. Together with reviewing Ofsted reports this information should be used to focus on appropriate support and intervention.
2. Issues with communication need to be resolved and alternative routes such as direct mailing, RE networks and more focused advertising need to be explored.

Local Agreed Syllabus

1. Planning for the review and revision of the agreed syllabus, due by 2024, started in September 2022. This fully involves teachers, the maintained and academy sector,

and faith representatives. The new syllabus recognises and include latest guidance, research and developments; it will be based around 'Big Ideas'. The review is taking place in partnership with other authorities in West Yorkshire (Calderdale, Kirklees and Bradford.)

2. Agreed syllabus conference to take place in March 2024; Syllabus to be used by schools from September 2024.

Collective Worship

1. SACRE members should continue to visit local schools to discover how Collective worship is planned and delivered. This will raise its profile and enable SACRE to offer review or professional development to schools.
2. Although there are no current determinations in Leeds schools, there needs to be a process for considering these should one arise. SACRE members need some training and briefing about determinations

Community Cohesion

1. Continue to reflect on census information on faith, (published in November 2022) and use this to inform SACRE's work in the wider community.
2. Develop further links with the Communities team and others to ensure SACRE is fully engaged with wider city issues.
3. Promote and develop the synagogue and gurdwara films (Westhill-funded) and explore future similar projects.

Further details of the self-evaluation or the development plan can be obtained via the clerk to SACRE.

Meetings for 2023-24

SACRE meetings for 2023-2024 have been provisionally arranged for these dates: 19th September 2023 (AGM), 7th December 2023, 12th March 2024 (Joint Local Agreed Syllabus Conference) and 24^h June 2024. For more information contact the clerk, Michael Oates michael.oates@leeds.gov.uk

Section Two: Statutory Responsibilities: Religious Education

The Local Agreed Syllabus

The Local Agreed syllabus, 'Believing and Belonging', is the statutory curriculum for all maintained schools in the city. This syllabus is shared with Bradford, Kirklees and Calderdale. Other academies and free schools must teach RE according to the requirements of their trust deed or funding agreement; although SACREs and local authorities do not have any responsibility or authority for their curriculum, it welcomes use of these resources by all local schools. Results from SACRE surveys of RE provision in Leeds demonstrate that the majority of secondary academies and many primary academies have adopted the local agreed syllabus.

The agreed syllabus is due to be reviewed and updated by 2024. The process for this review was introduced at the SACRE meeting in September 2022 and there is a timeline for completion. The framework for the syllabus review is based on 'Section 3 of the SACRE self-evaluation (SEF): 'The effectiveness of the locally agreed syllabus'.

Standards and Monitoring

SACRE enquiry

Primary Survey results

In November 2022, Leeds SACRE asked primary schools to complete a brief survey about the provision of RE. The Questionnaire was circulated via Leeds for learning, with follow-up reminders via networks, newsletters and headteacher briefings. Just over 40 schools replied (out of 222).

The main general findings and issues from the survey were:

- Most schools use the local agreed syllabus
- Most schools make adequate time and curriculum provision (34/42)
- Most schools teach RE as a discrete subject; some make topic links where appropriate.
- Many schools use HLTAs to teach some or all RE (13/42)

The survey has informed SACRE of the needs of primary schools and enabled targeted support and action. All those who responded have been followed up with offers of support and a reminder of the CPD and curriculum resources available for teaching RE. Eight schools were followed up with an individual letter reminding them of their responsibilities regarding the teaching of RE and with the offer of tailored support. One of these schools has now joined the primary RE network.

A SACRE working party has now been formed in order to undertake regular surveys of primary and secondary provision for RE. It is anticipated that annual surveys of both phases will be used to inform SACRE of school priorities and needs.

Examination results

In 2023, there was a return to post pandemic grading (with some protections) and it is worth noting that GCSE outcomes may have still been affected by the ongoing uneven impacts of the pandemic on schools, colleges and pupils. The DfE have therefore advised that the most meaningful comparison for the year's measures is with the 2019 results, as it is expected that performance in 2023 will generally be lower than in 2022.

Having said that, outcomes for Leeds were very positive. The progress 8 measure, which looks at the progress pupils make from the end of their primary education to the end of their compulsory school education aged 16, is 0.12 in Leeds; this means pupils in Leeds have made greater than average progress compared to pupils nationally. This placed Leeds as equal 37th out of 152 local authorities (a slight fall of four places from 2022) and in quartile Band B for performance.

This positive picture was replicated in results for GCSE Religious Studies. The number of pupils taking GCSE RE increased with over 400 more entries compared with last year. The average point score for the 2176 pupils who took this qualification was 5.3, compared to the national figure of 5.1. 75% of pupils gained a grade 4 or above, 4% higher than the national figure and 65% gained a grade 5. 32% gained a grade 7 or above, which is the equivalent of an old A grade.

In the past girls have outperformed boys by some measure. The gender gap has widened since last year with 69% of boys in Leeds taking GCSE RE gaining a grade 4 or above in 2023, compared to 80% of girls. 65% of pupils who receive free school meals, or have received them in the past 6 years, gained a grade 4 or above. There is little overall difference in the

average point score for pupils with English as a second language and pupils with English as a first language.

The progress 8 figure for RE is very high at +0.33. This is equivalent to one in three pupils in Leeds being awarded one grade higher than their peers nationally with the same starting point.

Professional development and support for schools

General support

During the year this professional support continued through two consultants, Alastair Ross (SACRE and secondary schools) and Helen Rivers (SACRE, primary schools, training and general RE enquiries), who are contracted through Pennine Learning, a small local company specialising in RE and community cohesion. Pennine Learning also supports SACREs and RE in Calderdale and Kirklees, enabling appropriate collaboration and partnership.

Together the two consultants provide forty days support per year in total, though this is arranged as flexibly as possible to facilitate effective working with schools and others. In addition, Jake Womack has helped Caroline Dodgeon to facilitate the secondary RE network for Leeds, Kirklees and Calderdale.

Alastair Ross is stepping back from his day-to-day work. Helen will take responsibility for Leeds SACRE, primary RE support and general RE enquiries. Alastair will continue to support the secondary network and will be available for consultancy and support where needed.

Through the Learning Service and the RE consultants, support has been available to schools, and used by teachers, in a number of ways, including:

- Maintenance of the syllabus and its schemes of work, including prompt response to queries or difficulties;
- Consultancy over specific or general RE issues, including advice about withdrawal from RE;
- Availability by phone, email or virtual meetings;
- Support for schools wishing to develop and improve RE following Ofsted inspections.
- Support for schools wishing to prepare for an Ofsted 'deep dive' in RE.

Training

This year courses have included a termly primary RE network meeting, a day course for new RE coordinators and a day course for RE subject leaders to explore the teaching of Islam. The Islam course was facilitated by Equilibria Experience and funded by Pennine Learning so that it could be offered free to teachers; 35 teachers attended.

A secondary Subject Leaders Development Meeting (SLDM) is organised by the Learning Partnership and organised by leading teachers Caroline Dodgeon from Abbey Grange CE Academy and Jake Womack from Pennine Learning. SLDMs took place each term at different locations around West Yorkshire, including a full day of training and networking for Secondary RE teachers at Abbey Grange Academy Leeds. The secondary RE network is organised in partnership with Kirklees and Calderdale RE networks and is open to teachers from all three local authorities. This joint secondary network has increased in numbers over the year and provides excellent support and networking opportunities for secondary RE teachers. It is planned to increase the offering from 2 half-days and one full day to 2 full days and one half-day in 2023 -24.

A series of seven twilight webinars on subject knowledge of world faiths began in June 2023 and will continue into the 2023/24 academic year. The webinars include guests from local faith communities, following and building on the successful pattern of last year's series. They are promoted and organised in cooperation with partner local authorities and are open to all.

In the coming year a full range of CPD and consultancy will be available through Leeds for Learning. All details are on the RE resource page of Leeds for Learning.

RE Reviews

The RE review continues to be available to schools as a way of evaluating provision in RE and planning for future improvement. A small number of schools have worked with a consultant to review their RE provision using the framework (available on Leeds for Learning). The review will be promoted through RE networks again this year, and it is hoped that some will feel ready to achieve the SACRE RE Merit award for good quality RE.



A 'Deep Dive' in Religious Education is also offered to schools. This half-day session focuses on a review of curriculum provision, looking at its scope, rigour and sequencing. These opportunities are promoted via RE networks and on Leeds for Learning.

Other information

A range of guidance continues to be available to Leeds schools on a wide range of related areas, including:

- RE Policy
- Withdrawal from RE
- Collective Worship
- Celebrating Diversity
- Engaging with faith communities
- Sensitivity to issues relating to faith in schools
- Question for RE subject leaders (preparation for Deep Dive in RE)

In addition, a half termly newsletter and index of resources is available to all schools, together with a directory of possible visits and visitors. All are available via Leeds for Learning RE resource page.

Section Three: Statutory Responsibilities: Collective Worship

Standards and Monitoring of Collective Worship

Guidance is offered to schools and Ofsted reports are scrutinised in order to keep up to date with current issues and concerns. One of SACRE's key priorities in the coming year will be to remind, facilitate and support schools in developing collective worship. This will include offering light-touch review conversations with practical suggestions. SACRE members have visited schools to support and to gain insights into collective worship.

Complaints and determinations

There were no complaints made during the year to SACRE about Collective Worship. There are no determinations to vary statutory requirements in any maintained school in Leeds. Responsibility for determinations in English academies and free schools rest with the Schools Funding Agency. The Determination Process is to be reviewed by Leeds SACRE in the coming year.

Professional development and support for schools

Through the consultant, SACRE is always ready to advise or support schools on request. It has been noted that some SACRE members are well-placed to support collective worship in schools and opportunities for discussion about this have been included on the agenda in 2022-23.

A half-day course on planning for collective worship/ inclusive assemblies was offered in summer 2023 to aid schools in developing an effective and inspiring programme. A number of SACRE members attended this training in order to help them become more confident in practical support and monitoring.

Other information

Parents have a statutory right to withdraw their children from collective worship. Guidance on good practice and protocols for withdrawal is available to schools; consultants are available if further support is needed. SACRE recognises parents' legal rights but hopes all

children will be enabled to receive stimulating and balanced RE as part of their entitlement to a broad curriculum. Guidance is also provided to schools in fulfilling statutory obligations over collective worship and promoting good SMSC development.

Section Four: Links with other organisations

SACRE has active links with the following organisations:

- National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)
- West Yorkshire SACREs (WYSACRE)
- The Association of RE Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants (AREIAC)
- Local faith organisations and interfaith groups
- Leeds for Learning
- The School Improvement Service
- RE Today Services
- And other local organisations and charities such as Equilibria

Section Five: Other areas of involvement

Welcoming Schools

Visits to local places of worship and links with faith communities continue to be promoted to fulfil our obligation to promote fundamental values of respect and tolerance. We want to broaden pupils' experience and perspectives of the faith communities in Leeds; to this end, a directory of faith visits and visitors is regularly updated. It includes individuals from faith communities who are willing to come into school and bring direct engagement and an opportunity for dialogue. It also includes general information about places and organisations.

Online events: Faith@Home

In the Summer term 2023, Leeds primary schools were invited to participate in an online diversity conference focusing on the practice of faith in the home. Following some subject content and creative activities, pupils were given the opportunity to meet representatives from the Christian, Hindu and Jewish faith communities and to ask questions in an online session. These 'virtual' sessions will continue to be offered and promoted alongside in-person visits and events in the coming year.



Free training is offered to faith communities in order to inform them of the requirements of the Leeds RE Syllabus, and to support them in hosting visits from schools. Training has been offered at venues in Leeds and Kirklees. This project continues to build up worthwhile links between schools and faith communities. Local organisations such as Concord Interfaith Fellowship and Leeds Interfaith are supportive in publicising and supporting training events.

An audit tool is available, along with consultancy support for promoting tolerance and understanding of different faiths in schools. This is available on Leeds for Learning and is promoted via RE networks.

Westhill Project

Leeds SACRE has been awarded a Westhill grant to fund the production of two professionally produced films to introduce young people to a synagogue and a gurdwara in

Leeds. Interviews with representatives from the two faith communities are included, along with footage of worship and activity in the places of worship themselves. These films were completed in summer 2023 and are freely available to schools locally and nationally.

Leeds SACRE is grateful to Westhill, and to Kirklees and Calderdale SACREs for funding the production of these films. The completion of the films was celebrated with a launch event in Leeds in June 2023, attended by members of local faith communities, SACRE members and representatives from Kirklees and Calderdale councils. Unfortunately, no Leeds councillors were available to attend this event.

Faith sensitivities

Leeds SACRE has worked with partners in Calderdale, Kirklees, Oldham and Tameside to produce advice on sensitivity to issues relating to faith in schools. 'Sharing the Journey' was signed off in autumn 2022 and is available to schools via Leeds for Learning as practical information and support to school leaders. It is circulated to all Leeds schools twice a year as a reminder of the support available for sensitive issues.

Section Six: Leeds SACRE arrangements

Leeds City Council funds the operation of SACRE by contracting its consultants, providing a clerk and supporting its work through links with senior education officers.

SACRE membership includes representatives from all four constituent committees.

Committee A	Faith communities except for the Church of England
Committee B	Anglican representatives
Committee C	Teachers and schools
Committee D	Leeds City Council

Membership for 2022-3 was as follows:

Buddhist	A	Chris Smart
Hindu	A	Saroj Chauhan
Jewish	A	Gail Taylor
Muslim	A	Afsha Hussain
<i>Muslim</i>	A	Shazia Mahmood
Sikh	A	Vacant
Humanist	A	Ian Harris
<i>Bah'ai</i>	A	<i>Vacancy</i>
Christian denominations (Methodist)	A	Ruth Barlow
Christian denominations (Orthodox)	A	Vacancy
Christian denominations (RC)	A	Diane Brodowska
Christian denominations (Pentecostal)	A	Russell Trudgen
Christian denominations (Quaker)	A	Pauline Leonard
Christian denominations	A	Vacancy
Christian denominations	A	Vacancy
Christian denominations	A	Vacancy
Church of England	B	Denise Brogden
Church of England	B	Ann Nicholl
Church of England	B	Ben Cordy
Church of England	B	Vacancy
Church of England	B	Vacancy
Teachers associations	C	Mel Robinson
Teachers associations	C	Sameena Abbas

Teachers associations	C	Elizabeth Halfpenny
Teachers associations	C	Salma Begum
Teachers associations	C	Vacancy
Local authority	D	Cllr Ryk Downes
Local authority	D	Cllr Zara Hussain
Local authority	D	Cllr Andrew Scopes
Local authority	D	Cllr Sam Firth
Local authority	D	Vacancy
Coopted	Z	Available
Coopted	Z	Available
Coopted	Z	available

SACRE needs to ensure that attendance continues to be consistent by local councillors and faith groups. Representation from the Church of England and teacher associations has increased through the year. There are a number of vacancies in group A. Local authority representatives need to attend more regularly.

Contacts with partners, such as HE providers, should be developed. Leeds SACRE is exploring a more structured link with MATs; this is on the list of priorities for 2023/24.

Training is provided by NASACRE and offered to SACRE members, though better induction is needed locally. Induction procedures for SACRE are included in the priorities list for 2023/24.

Section Seven: Advice to the Local authority

The following advice is given by SACRE to the local authority:

1. To review the funding of SACRE to ensure it is in line with national recommendations and good practice. The DfE recommends that local authorities allocate 2% of Central School Services Block (CSSB) grant to SACRE. At present less than 0.5% is allocated and this limits the work of SACRE in fulfilling its statutory duties. We urge the council to explore how they fulfil their obligations;
2. To ensure that subject leader networks for teachers of RE are provided at no or very low cost in view of the issues of sensitivity and confidence. Training and support will be especially important once the new syllabus is in place;
3. To review the membership of SACRE annually to ensure it reflects the breadth and diversity of the city in terms of faiths and beliefs; To ensure the designated local councillors attend SACRE meetings regularly;
4. To ensure SACRE's annual report is considered carefully by the Scrutiny Panel of the Council and its content noted.
5. To produce a new local agreed syllabus for September 2024 in collaboration with neighbouring West Yorkshire SACREs. To provide training and support in order to implement this local agreed RE syllabus in schools across Leeds.
6. To note the analysis of GCSE results in Religious Education and to review arrangements for the teaching of RE at Key Stage 4 to non-exam classes.

No appendices are attached to this report; all the relevant information is contained within the main body. However, any further information can be requested via the clerk, Michael Oates michael.oates@leeds.gov.uk



This annual report is prepared for Leeds Standing Advisory Council on RE (SACRE) as part of its statutory responsibility. For further information on the report or on RE and Collective Worship in Leeds, please contact Helen Rivers at helen.rivers@leeds.gov.uk

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Work Programme

Date: 18 July 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

- All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work programme for the municipal year. In doing so, the work programme should not be considered as fixed and rigid, it should be recognised as a document that can be adapted and changed to reflect any new and emerging issues throughout the year; and also reflect any timetable issues that might occur from time to time.
- The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules also state that, where appropriate, all terms of reference for work undertaken by Scrutiny Boards will include ‘to review how and to what effect consideration has been given to the impact of a service or policy on all equality areas, as set out in the Council’s Equality and Diversity Scheme.’
- Reflecting on the information in this report, members are requested to consider and discuss the Board’s work programme for this municipal year.

Recommendations

Members are requested to consider the Board’s work programme for the 2024/25 municipal year.

What is this report about?

1. A draft work programme for the Children and Families Scrutiny Board is presented at Appendix 1 for consideration and discussion. Reflected in the document are known items of scrutiny activity, such as performance and budget monitoring, as well as other areas of work identified by the Board at its meeting held on 10 June 2024.
2. The latest Executive Board minutes from the meeting held on 19 June 2024 are also attached as Appendix 2. The Scrutiny Board is asked to consider and note the Executive Board minutes, insofar as they relate to the remit of the Scrutiny Board; and consider any matter where specific scrutiny activity may also be warranted.
3. Members will note that a number of areas discussed at the June meeting have now been incorporated into Appendix 1. These include: Early Years and Best Start Programme, Transition from Children's to Adult services (with possible links to wider transition between services), Children Looked After Sufficiency and Service Transformation, Family Help Services and preventative measures that could support challenges experienced in schools linked to attendance, curriculum suitability, behavioural challenges and availability of mental health services (CAMHS) and Accessibility of Work Experience for all children and young people.

What impact will this proposal have?

4. All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work programme for the municipal year.

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

5. The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the Best City Ambition.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

6. To enable Scrutiny to focus on strategic areas of priority, it is recognised that each Scrutiny Board needs to maintain dialogue with the Directors and Executive Board Members holding the relevant portfolios. 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?

7. Experience has shown that the Scrutiny process is more effective and adds greater value if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time and focus its resources on one key issue at a time.
8. The Vision for Scrutiny, agreed by full Council also recognises that like all other Council functions, resources to support the Scrutiny function are under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met.

9. 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;
 - 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?

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

What are the legal implications?

11. This report has no specific legal implications.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Draft work programme of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board for the 2024/25 municipal year.
- Appendix 2 – Minutes of the Executive Board meeting on 19 June 2024.

Background papers

- None

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

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

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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
Meeting Agenda for 4 September 2024 at 10.30 am	Meeting Agenda for 9 October 2024 at 10.30 am	Meeting Agenda for 11 November 2024 at 1.30 pm
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) Work Experience Accessibility (PM) Family Help Themed Approach – School Attendance (PDS)	The Leeds 3As Strategy (PDS) Family Help Themed Approach – CAMHS and Mental Health (to include life coaches suggestion) (PDS) Transition from Children's to Adult services (PM)
Working Group Meetings		

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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) Youth Vaping Update (PSR)	
Working Group Meetings		
2025/26 Initial Budget Proposals– TBC (remote working group)		
Site Visits		

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

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 19TH JUNE, 2024

PRESENT: Councillor J Lewis in the Chair

Councillors S Arif, D Coupar, H Hayden,
A Lamb, J Lennox, J Pryor, M Rafique and
F Venner

APOLOGIES: Councillor M Harland

1 Pre-Election Period of Heightened Sensitivity

The Chair reminded the Board that as a result of the General Election being called for the 4 July, the meeting was being held during the pre-election period of heightened sensitivity.

It was noted that whilst the purpose of the pre-election period was not to prevent the Council from carrying out its normal business, it was to prevent the business conducted by the Council being used, or being perceived as being used, to secure any electoral advantage.

Therefore, Members were asked to treat the meeting as a normal Board meeting, but being mindful not to enter into debate that amounts to, or could reasonably be perceived to amount to electioneering.

2 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no information contained within the agenda which was designated as being exempt from publication.

3 Late Items

There were no late items of business submitted to the Board for consideration.

4 Declaration of Interests

There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests declared at the meeting.

5 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th April 2024 be approved as a correct record.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

6 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) – Review Process – Update Report

Further to Minute No. 83, 13th December 2023, the Director of Children and Families submitted a report setting out proposals regarding the ‘delivery stage’ of the new arrangements regarding Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessment and provision in Leeds. The report also presented the

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 24th July, 2024

Inquiry Report of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board into the provision of EHCP support for the Board's consideration.

The Executive Member introduced the report and in doing so, acknowledged that the Council currently was not delivering the level of service in this area that it wanted to. However, in response to this, it was highlighted that the steps outlined in the report, informed by the outcomes from the review, were being proposed to improve the timeliness by which EHCPs were delivered and improve the experience for children and their families. The significant increase in demand in this area was highlighted, which it was noted was a common experience for many other Authorities. The impact of such demand was emphasised, with staff being thanked for their continued efforts. It was noted that the proposed changes would help the Council achieve and maintain the improvements that were needed and that they would continue to be informed via the views of all relevant parties. As part of the proposals, external resource would be used to tackle the EHCP backlog. Thanks was also extended to the valued work of the Scrutiny Board in this area.

The Board welcomed Councillor Dan Cohen to the meeting, as Chair of the Scrutiny Board Children and Families, who was in attendance to introduce the related Scrutiny Board inquiry report and its recommendations, as included at Appendix 2 to the submitted report. In doing so, Councillor Cohen thanked all parties who had contributed to the Scrutiny Board inquiry and resultant report. Detail was provided on the aims of the inquiry, the areas which the inquiry had focussed upon and the range of stakeholders who had engaged in the process. The Board's attention was also drawn to several of the Scrutiny Board's recommendations. Councillor Cohen acknowledged that whilst some performance had improved, there was still huge room for improvement. It was noted that the Scrutiny Board intended to robustly monitor performance and looked forward to significant improvements being made.

Responding to a specific enquiry regarding the commissioning of the review work undertaken by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), the Board was advised of the cost of the work undertaken. In addition, it was noted that PwC had been commissioned on the basis that a full review was required, which needed an objective view by an organisation with specialist experience. Given the detail and scope of the review, it was noted that the Council could not have conducted the same level of review internally. It was emphasised that the review had put the Council in a very good position to have a clear plan of implementation to realise its absolute commitment to achieve full compliance with statutory duties in this area and to ensure that the needs of children and families were met.

A Member sought assurance around the approach that would be taken to ensure that the current backlog was cleared whilst also delivering improvements at pace in order to enable statutory requirements to be met. In response, further detail was provided, which included the provision of additional resource, together with the cross-Council and multi-agency approach being taken to deliver improvements in key areas such as digitalisation and the reduction of bureaucracy.

A concern was raised on the specific proposal to change the operating model regarding the provision of 'Funding for Inclusion' (FFI). In response, further detail and context was provided on the reasons for the proposed change, its aims and how it was part of the Council's approach to ensuring that statutory requirements were met. In this case it was noted that this proposal was to ensure that children and young people had access to a statutory assessment in relation to SEND. It was highlighted that significant changes had been experienced in the sector since the introduction of FFI, which was another factor for the proposals. Detail was also provided on the continued consultation and engagement with relevant partners; on the number of children and young people currently in mainstream schools on FFI packages; and the innovative approaches being considered to ensure early intervention in relation to children's needs.

Whilst supportive of the other recommendations, a Member raised further concerns on the proposals regarding FFI and suggested that further detail was needed prior to a decision being made on this specific element. It was also requested that such matters be considered further with the involvement of Scrutiny. In response, it was undertaken that officers would provide a further briefing to the Member in question in relation to FFI, and it was also undertaken that the Executive Member together with officers were happy to work with Scrutiny going forward on this matter, and on the wider issue of EHCP provision.

In conclusion, it was highlighted that through these proposals, there was no suggestion that the Council would be putting less resource into supporting those with SEND, but that it would enable the Council to adapt its approach so that the significant increase in demand was met. It was also noted that where appropriate, representations would continue to be made seeking further resource.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the proposed changes to be made to the way in which EHCP processes are delivered in Leeds, as detailed within the submitted report, be agreed;
- (b) That the need to ensure that the views and experiences of children, young people, parents and carers are captured during the delivery of changes and improvements, be endorsed;
- (c) That the need to work in partnership with a range of stakeholders, especially schools and other specialist settings, to deliver improvements to EHCP arrangements across Leeds, be endorsed;
- (d) That in accordance with the established arrangements for reporting and commenting upon Scrutiny Board Inquiry reports, the concurrent Children and Families Scrutiny Board Inquiry report, as presented at Appendix 2 to the submitted report, be noted, together with the comments made during the Board's consideration of this Inquiry report.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor A Lamb required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

7 Little Owls Nurseries Review

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which presented the findings from the review work undertaken into Little Owls nurseries provision to date, together with the associated consultation and engagement responses received. The report, in taking such findings into consideration, made a number of recommendations to the Board in relation to next steps.

In introducing the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the proposals which were to close 3 of the Little Owls settings, undertake an exploration of other options for the future delivery of childcare in a further 12 settings, and for at least 9 Little Owls settings to remain in operation by the Council where most needed. The impact faced by those affected was acknowledged, however, the reasons for the proposals were highlighted, with reference being made to the significant financial challenges which continued to be faced. Details were also provided on the range of factors taken into consideration as part of the review.

As part of the proposals, it was highlighted that guaranteed places were available for those children currently attending the 3 settings proposed for closure at other local Little Owls nurseries. It was also noted that there were sufficient vacancies in settings within the service to accommodate affected staff.

Responding to a number of enquiries and concerns raised by a Member regarding the proposals, further information was provided on the following:

- The range of consultation and engagement which had been undertaken with parents and carers as part of the review;
- The information which was used to determine the cost per day for a place in a Little Owls setting;
- The actions which had been taken to reduce the overspend position during 2023/24;
- Further information was provided on the context within which the proposals were being made and the actions taken to date to reduce costs and to maximise efficiency;
- Responding to an enquiry regarding the alternative options which had been considered, the Board received further detail on the methodology used during the review that had led to the proposals as presented in the report;
- In responding to a question about the increase in fees that was needed to close the current overspend, it was highlighted that the Council looked to strike the correct balance to ensure that a sustainable service providing value was delivered, and which fulfilled the Council's statutory duties around sufficiency of places, whilst also operating within the agreed budgeted position;

- It was reiterated that guaranteed places were available for those children currently attending the 3 settings proposed for closure at other local Little Owls nurseries, with Members receiving an overview of the responses received to that offer.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That in general terms, the contents of the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that the Council will continue to directly deliver day care at the following Little Owls settings:
- Chapeltown
 - Harehills
 - Middleton Laurel Bank
 - New Bewerley
 - Swarcliffe
 - Two Willows
 - Little London
 - Seacroft
 - Armley Moor
- (c) That the consultation and engagement responses in relation to the proposal, as detailed within the submitted report and appendices, be noted; and having had regard to those, the withdrawal from and/or closure of Little Owls Gipton North, Little Owls Chapel Allerton and Little Owls Kentmere, be approved;
- (d) That following resolution (c) above, where possible and noting ancillary use, those buildings be declared surplus to operational requirements following the closedown of Little Owls functions;
- (e) That the initial consultation and engagement responses in relation to the proposal to explore the potential amalgamation of some Little Owls settings and to explore potential and viable interest from other providers, as detailed within the submitted report and appendices, be noted; and that agreement be given to the undertaking of a ‘market sounding exercise’ to deliver additional nursery places to replace specific Council run settings at the following locations:
- Shepherds Lane
 - City & Holbeck
 - Hunslet Rylestone
 - Meanwood
 - Parklands
 - Osmondthorpe
 - St Mary’s Hunslet
 - Quarry Mount
 - Rothwell
 - Hawksworth Wood
 - Bramley
 - Burley Park
- (f) That the subsequent ‘market sounding exercise’ in relation to the settings set out in resolution (e) above, be agreed, and that it be noted that those ‘market sounding exercises’ will commence immediately;
- (g) That it be noted that the Director of Children and Families may take further decisions in respect of the settings listed at resolution (e) above following the market sounding exercise for the twelve settings indicated, which would be as a direct consequence of this decision.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor A Lamb required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

8 Children Looked After, Sufficiency Strategy

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report presenting a draft Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy which aimed to set out the Council's approach towards meeting its Sufficiency Duty and the needs of children in its care. Further to this, the report noted that detailed three-year profiles and implementation plans would sit underneath the strategy and would be monitored monthly and updated annually.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member highlighted the importance of this service area and the key benefits arising from the delivery of an effective sufficiency strategy. It was noted that the voices of children and young people with lived experience were highlighted within the strategy. The Council's corporate parent role was also emphasised as a key consideration.

The need for the strategy to deliver the best outcomes for children and young people was highlighted, whilst emphasis was also placed upon the key role that this service area played in terms of the Council's management of its ongoing financial challenge.

A Member raised an enquiry which sought reassurance that through the strategy the Council would deliver the changes which were needed at the pace required. In response, the Board received an overview of the aims and ambitions of the strategy, and the actions being taken to deliver it. Key aspects included the cross-Council approach being undertaken and the additional resource from within the directorate being utilised.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the proposed Children Looked After Sufficiency Strategy, as presented at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be agreed, and that the comments raised by the Board during the consideration of this item, be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that this strategy document will be subject to regular review, and that any significant changes may mean that the Sufficiency Strategy is re-presented to Executive Board for endorsement.

9 Update report – Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) on serious youth violence in Leeds

The Director of Children and Families and the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a joint report providing an overview of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) undertaken into the response of Leeds' multi-agency partnership of the Local Authority, Police, violence reduction partnership and health services to children affected by serious youth violence. The report noted that the inspection was undertaken in March 2024, with the resulting inspection report published on 16th May 2024. The report presented the findings in the published inspection report and the proposals in terms of next steps and actions.

In presenting the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key elements of the inspection. The strengths of the service identified within

the inspection report were noted, with the improvements which had been made regarding multi-agency relationships being highlighted. However, it was emphasised that the Council was not complacent in this area and that an action plan was underway to look to further develop and improve the service.

Responding to enquiries, the Board received further detail on the actions being taken to address the 3 areas for improvement which had been identified.

Regarding the requirement for a plan to be compiled and submitted in response to the report's findings, the Board noted that this was being produced in collaboration with key partners. In response to a Member's enquiry regarding the democratic oversight of the plan, it was undertaken that the plan could be shared with the Scrutiny Chair when completed, and that the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership Executive would oversee the implementation of the plan, in line with expectations.

Thanks was extended to all those involved in the delivery of support for young people in this complex area, including services across the Council and also in terms of the key role played by partner organisations.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the submitted update report, be noted;
- (b) That the findings in the published inspection report, as appended to the submitted cover report, be noted;
- (c) That it be noted that the Children and Families directorate accept the findings of the inspection and will address any areas for improvement for the Local Authority in partnership with Safer Leeds, as identified by the inspection team;
- (d) That it be noted that Leeds City Council is the principal authority and should prepare a written statement of proposed action responding to the findings outlined in the report, which should be a multi-agency response involving the individuals and agencies that the inspection report is addressed to. That it also be noted that the response should set out the actions for the partnership and, when appropriate, individual agencies, and that the local safeguarding partners should oversee the implementation of the action plan through their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

10 Children's Transport Policy: Permission to Consult on Proposed Changes to Transport Assistance for Post-16 Learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which sought approval for the Council to undertake a period of consultation on a range of proposals regarding the future provision of transport assistance for post-16 learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

In presenting the report, the Executive Member highlighted that should the proposal for consultation be agreed, the intention was to submit a further report to the Board in October 2024 presenting the consultation findings and any associated proposals. The context and factors which had led to the proposal to undertake consultation in relation to this service area were noted, and it was highlighted that any changes which were delivered would be phased in from September 2025 for new applications.

Concern was raised by a Member regarding the recommendation within the report that the decisions from it be exempted from Call In. In response, it was highlighted that the proposed consultation was required to be undertaken during school term time and that the subsequent report due to be submitted in October outlining any proposals to change the service would be eligible for Call In. It was also highlighted that due to the level of transformation across the directorate, the work which had been undertaken to date on this matter and due to the capacity available, it had meant that this was the earliest opportunity to submit this report to the Board.

A further concern was raised about the principles of the proposals, and the need to ensure that the requirements of young people needed to be prioritised ahead of the need to save money.

Members discussed the benefits of independent travel training and the scale at which it was being delivered.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That in general terms, the contents of the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That the plan for consultation to take place over a four-week period starting 24th June 2024 and closing on 21st July 2024 on a range of proposals for post-16 SEND transport assistance, be approved;
- (c) That it be agreed that the findings from the consultation be used in the preparation of a new post-16 SEND transport offer, with it being noted that it is currently planned for this to be presented to Executive Board for approval in October 2024;
- (d) That the resolutions from this report ((a) – (e)) be exempted from the Call In process for the reasons as set out in paragraphs 32 – 34 of the submitted report;
- (e) That it be noted that the officer responsible for the implementation of such matters is the Director of Children and Families.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor A Lamb required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

(The Council's Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules state that a decision may be declared as being exempt from the Call In process by the

decision taker if it is considered that the matter is urgent and any delay would seriously prejudice the Council's, or the public's interests. In line with this, the resolutions contained within this minute were exempted from the Call In process, as per resolution (d) above, and for the reasons as set out within sections 32 - 34 of the submitted report and as discussed during the meeting)

LEADER'S PORTFOLIO

11 Celebrating and Commemorating the life of Rob Burrow CBE

The Chief Executive submitted a report which celebrated and commemorated the life of Rob Burrow CBE, who sadly died on 2nd June 2024 after suffering from Motor Neurone Disease (MND) since his diagnosis in late 2019. The report highlighted how much adoration and recognition had been shown for Rob and provided Executive Board with an opportunity to reflect upon his life and his achievements.

In presenting the report, the Leader highlighted how the report set out the Council's proposed approach to commemorating the life of Rob Burrow. It was noted that in January 2023 both Rob and Kevin Sinfield CBE had been made Honorary Freemen of the City of Leeds. This was in recognition of their contribution to Leeds in terms of their sporting achievements and also their charitable work with the MND Association and their support to the wider MND community.

It was undertaken that the Council will work with Rob's family, Leeds Rhinos and MND charities to ensure that a fitting memorial is established for Rob.

Members echoed the comments made, highlighting how Rob transcended the world of sport and had a huge impact upon the city of Leeds and beyond. Members supported the wish to continue his legacy and commemorate and honour Rob, taking into account the wishes of his family.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That continued support be given to the celebration and commemoration of the life of Rob Burrow CBE and to his contribution to rugby league, the ongoing fight against MND and to showing the world how to live courageously and illustrating the meaning of true friendship;
- (b) That the work being undertaken to mark Rob's life and legacy, be supported, via engagement with Leeds Rhinos and Rob Burrow CBE's family in the most appropriate way in order to support Rob's ambitions, which included work to build the Leeds MND Centre and finding a cure for MND.

RESOURCES

12 Financial Health Monitoring 2023/24 - Outturn Financial Year Ended 31st March 2024

The Chief Officer, Financial Services submitted a report which presented an update on the financial performance of the Authority against the 2023/24 Revenue and Capital budgets at the Outturn of the financial year. The report also recommended actions in relation to several areas including the flexible use of Capital Receipts, the creation of earmarked reserves and injections into the Capital Programme.

In presenting the report the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points in which a balanced position for 2023/24 was being reported through the use of the £17.7m refund from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and also through use of part of the Merrion House reserve. It was also highlighted that directorates had delivered 77% of savings required, with all directorates being thanked for their contribution towards this.

A Member raised enquiries regarding the reasons for the use of £10.25m Adults and Health reserves in order for the directorate to achieve a balanced budget in 2023/24 and the impact of that upon reserve levels. In response, the Board received further information with it being noted that this was due to significant increase in demand for specific services, which had now stabilised in some areas. Whilst it was acknowledged that this was a challenging position, further detail was provided on the actions that continued to be taken by the directorate in this area.

In terms of the lessons which had been learned from the experience in Adults and Health directorate and whether this could be shared with Children and Families directorate, the Board received information regarding the cross-directorate work which was being undertaken. Further detail was provided on the approach being taken in this area across the Council generally and within Children and Families directorate specifically.

Responding to an enquiry, the Board received an update on the impact regarding the removal of the Maximum Assessed Charge (MAC) cap in relation to non-residential Adult Social Care, with Members noting the actions which were taken in the preparation and delivery of the policy in order to achieve a smooth transition.

In response to an enquiry about the delivery of the strategy in place to manage and deliver the Children and Families directorate budget moving forward, assurance was provided that robust and appropriate plans were in place, together with the cross-Council approach to address the ongoing challenges. It was noted that this was however within the context of the significant issues being experienced nationally including major challenges regarding demand and demography.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That it be noted that at Outturn, the Authority's General Fund revenue budget is reporting a balanced position after the application of reserves and one off measures;
- (b) That it be noted that during the year where an overspend was projected, directorates, including the Housing Revenue Account, were required to present action plans to mitigate their reported pressures, in line with the amended Revenue Principles agreed by Executive Board in February 2024, with it also being noted that savings actions identified are included within the submitted report;
- (c) That it be noted that known inflationary increases, including demand and demographic pressures in Social Care, known impacts of the rising cost of living, and the agreed 2023/24 pay award, have been incorporated into this reported financial position;
- (d) That it be noted that that at Outturn the Authority's Housing Revenue Account is reporting a balanced position after a contribution of £0.9m to reserves;
- (e) That the updated planned use of flexible use of Capital Receipts, be approved as follows, following Full Council's approval of the Strategy for the flexible use of Capital Receipts at the February 2023 Budget, as set out at paragraph 3.1 in Appendix 1 of the submitted report:
- £1.52m Voluntary Leaver Scheme costs and flexible retirements;
 - £0.35m Strategy & Resources' staff supporting transformational projects/ work;
 - £0.35m Communities' staff supporting transformational projects/ work in climate change and Community Hubs;
- (f) That in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework, the creation of earmarked reserves, as detailed at Appendix 5 to the submitted report, be approved, and that their release be delegated to the Chief Officer, Financial Services;
- (g) That in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework, approval be given for the following injections into the Capital Programme, as detailed at Appendix 6A(iii) to the submitted report:
- £8,029.4k of 24/25 High Needs Provision Capital Allocation (HNPCA) Grant;
 - £7,758.6k of additional funding injections to HRA Schemes;
 - £1,313.5k of external contributions for works on Highways schemes;
 - £1,000.0k of additional Highways Grant for the TCF City Centre Cycle Network scheme;
 - £110.5k of additional departmental borrowing for the Waste Depot scheme; and
 - £2,416.1k of other external contributions;

- (h) That the additional Capital Receipts Incentive Scheme (CRIS) allocations to Wards and Community Committees for the period October 2023 to March 2024 of £0.2m, be noted;
- (i) That it be noted that the Chief Officer, Financial Services is responsible for the implementation of such matters following the conclusion of the Call In period.

13 Treasury Management Outturn 2023/24

The Chief Officer, Financial Services submitted a report which presented the Council's Treasury Management position as at the Outturn for the 2023/24 financial year.

The Executive Member introduced the report, and paid tribute to the officers involved in the area of Treasury Management for the outcomes which had been achieved. The lower than forecasted borrowing levels were highlighted.

An enquiry was raised which sought further information and context regarding the less than forecasted borrowing levels, which were a result of the Council being underspent on the Capital Programme. In response, the Board was provided with further information in relation to the underspend and noted that it was not an intentional strategy but that schemes had slipped into the next year, which would be for a range of reasons.

RESOLVED – That the Treasury Management outturn position for 2023/24, as presented within the submitted report, be noted; with it also being noted that treasury activity has remained within the Treasury Management Strategy and Policy framework.

ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

14 Leeds Business Improvement District Ballot (2025 - 2030)

The Director of City Development submitted a report which presented proposals regarding the Council's role in operating the Leeds Business Improvement District (LeedsBID) ballot for a third term for the period 2025-2030.

The Executive Member introduced the report providing an overview of the key points and highlighting LeedsBID's intention to increase the geographical area of the BID by extending it south of the river into the South Bank. It was noted that this would increase the number of businesses in the BID by 100. Also, an update on footfall figures for the city centre was provided.

Clarification was provided that a further report would be submitted to the Board in September 2024 regarding LeedsBID's Business Plan for 2025-2030 and also in relation to the Council's vote in the upcoming ballot.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board was provided with further detail on LeedsBID's consultation with stakeholders regarding the proposed geographical expansion of the BID area.

Also, further detail was provided on the work which had been undertaken in the city centre by the BID to date, and the positive impact that had been noted both in terms of footfall in the city centre and also from an economic perspective.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the arrangements for the Council to operate a ballot, as presented in the submitted report, and in accordance with the statutory role of the Local Authority as set out in the BID regulations 2004, be approved;
- (b) That the draft Statement of Services, as presented in Appendix 2 to the submitted report, be approved, and in doing so, the Board provides a commitment to continue to maintain provision of services within the LeedsBID area;
- (c) That the proposed Operating Agreement, as presented at Appendix 3 to the submitted report, be approved;
- (d) That the stages and timescales, as outlined within the submitted report, which are required to implement the Board's resolutions, be noted, with it also being noted that the Head of City Centre Management is responsible for the implementation of such matters;
- (e) That it be noted that a further report will be submitted to Executive Board in September 2024 containing LeedsBID's Business Plan for 2025-2030 and that will provide a recommendation for the Council's vote in the upcoming ballot. That it also be noted that additional financial information will be provided at this time;
- (f) That LeedsBID's intention to extend their geographical area into the South Bank of the city centre, be noted, with it also being noted that in line with BID regulations, this change requires a new ballot to be held rather than a renewal ballot.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: FRIDAY, 21ST JUNE 2024

**LAST DATE FOR CALL IN
OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS:** 5.00PM, FRIDAY, 28TH JUNE 2024

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