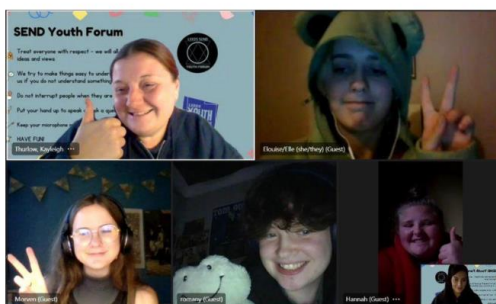


Voice, Influence and Change Team





Summary Report 2022-23

Voice, Influence & Change Team

Established in 2012 and based in the Children & Families directorate of Leeds City Council, we are responsible for ensuring that children, young people, parents, carers and families are able to have a voice and influence over services that are provided in our city.

“Listening to and responding to the voice of the child” is one of the 4 key behaviours that underpin our citywide approach to supporting children and young people, and encouraging children and young people “to be active citizens who feel they have a voice and influence” is one of the 5 outcomes as detailed in the 2018-2023 Children and Young People’s Plan. We are proud to work towards the citywide ambition to become a ‘child friendly Leeds’ – the best city to grow up in.

The team deliver and support a range of projects and programmes for children and young people including:

<p>‘Have a Voice’ Children in Care Council</p> 	<p>Care Leavers Council</p> 	<p>Leeds SEND Youth Forum</p> 
<p>Leeds Youth Council</p> 	<p>Leeds Children’s Mayor</p> 	<p>UK Youth Parliament</p> 
<p>Takeover of strategic boards</p> 	<p>Voice and Influence of young people with SEND in schools</p> 	<p>Commissioning and recruitment</p> 

We work in partnership with teams and organisations to develop networks, deliver training, share good practice and to ensure that the views of children & young people and parents & carers and families are taken into account at different levels of local decision making.

We have produced this annual report to share some of our team highlights from 1st April 2022 – 31st August 2023. We hope you enjoy reading and encourage you to get in touch if you would like further information on any aspect of our service or to be added to our mailing list.

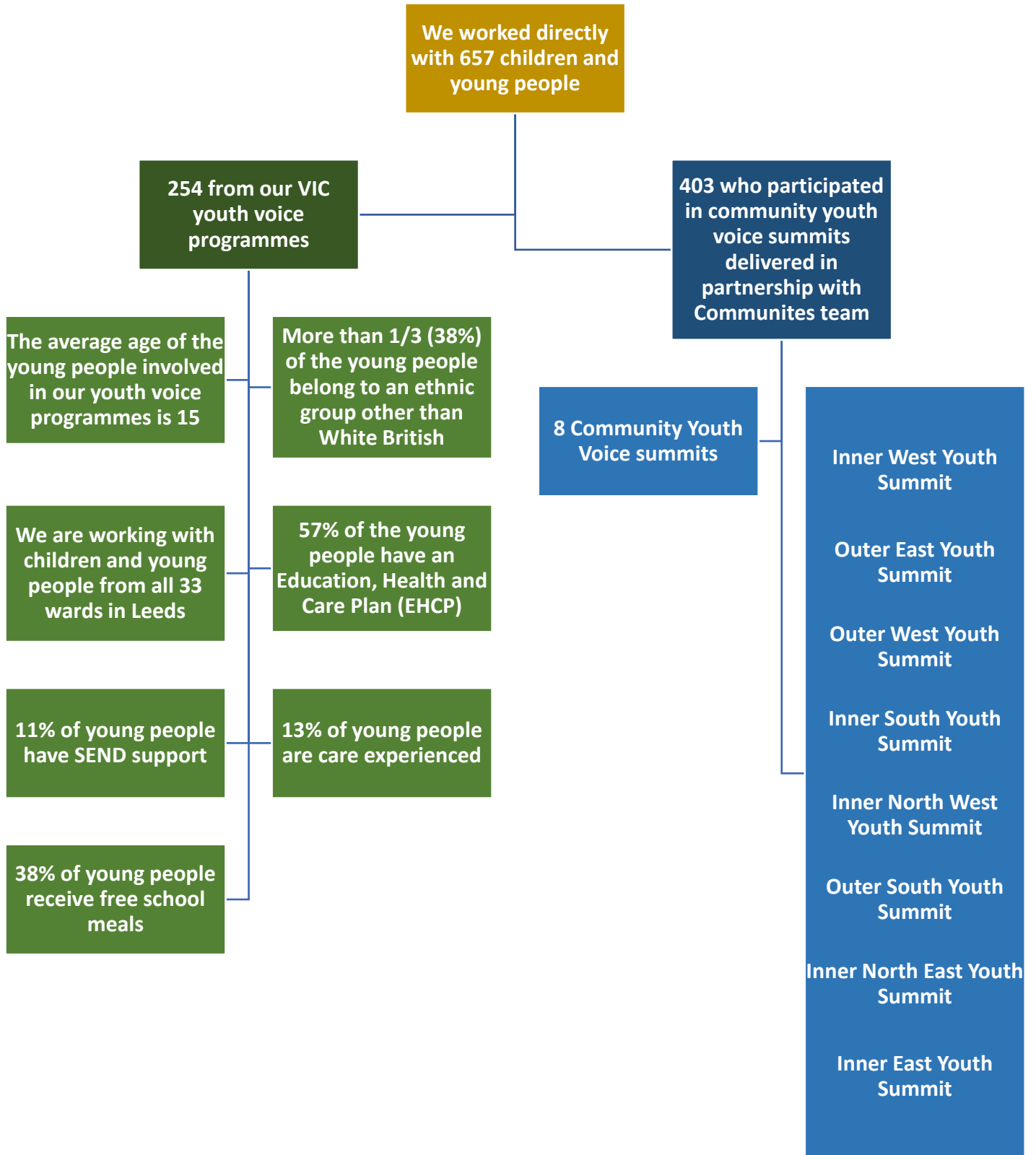
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Direct work with Children and Young people - April 2022 to September 2023



Communications and Engagement (April 2022- September 2023)

VIC Network

- Our Voice Influence and Change Network includes 1560 colleagues across the city. Including staff who lead on pupil/ student voice in learning settings, voice and influence leads in third sector organisations, health and public sector partner organisations, Leeds City Council teams /services, youth groups and youth voice groups.
- Colleagues on the VIC network were invited to contribute to **6 quarterly e-newsletters** – sharing their news, resources, promoting voice and influence opportunities for children, young people and families.
- 6 newsletters were sent to 99 elected members via Lead member for Children and Families – Cllr Fiona Venner.
- Members of the network are invited to contribute to three voice and influence reports that are produced every six months: Citywide Children and Young People Voice and Influence Report, Citywide Parent Carer and Family Voice and Influence Report and Voice of the Child in Social Care report. Six monthly reports provide updates on issues raised by children, young people and families, voice and influence activity and future plans. **9 voice and influence reports** were shared with the network, elected members and presented at strategic partnership boards and meetings

SEND Local Offer Network

- Our SEND local Offer network includes 323 colleagues and partners working with children and young people with SEND or their families. It includes colleagues from education, health, social care, children's services, third sector, parent carer support groups, short break providers, primary and secondary SENCO's, SILCS, colleges, targeted service leaders and youth groups for children and young people with SEND
- Network members were invited to contribute to **9 bi-monthly e-newsletters** over the last 18 months.

Leeds Youth Council Network

- Approximately 500 young people aged 10-18 (or up to 25 with additional needs) who live or go to school / college in Leeds received **18 voice and influence monthly opportunity updates** via email and text message.

Websites

- An [internal web page](#) promoting the work and offer of the VIC team to colleagues in Leeds City Council
- Web Pages on Leeds for Learning promoting the work and offer of VIC team to learning settings in Leeds. This includes [voice influence and change team](#), [parent carer family voice and influence](#) and [SEND Local Offer and Voice and Influence](#).
- Over the last 12 months the team have redesigned and updated all content on the [Leeds Youth Voice](#) web page which promotes the team offer to children and young people in Leeds. Updates include videos from all lead staff – following feedback from young people
- The team are also responsible for the coordination and updates of the [SEND Leeds Local Offer Website](#)
- The team share spotlights on good practice from across the city on the [Child Friendly Leeds Blog](#). Over the last 18 months the team have visited schools and youth voice groups and developed spotlights on [Carr Manor School Student Voice](#) , [LEAP Young Carers group](#) and [Youth Association Community Ambassadors](#).

Social Media

- Leeds Youth Voice on [X \(formally Twitter\)](#) has 3247 followers
- Leeds Youth Voice on [Instagram](#) has 1468 followers
- [Leeds Local Offer Facebook](#) group has 926 members.

One Minute Guides -[Voice and Influence](#) and [Voice and Influence Opportunities](#) were updated in 2022

Press Highlights:

[Leeds announces new Children's Mayor | Public Sector News \(publicsectorexecutive.com\)](#)

[Voting opens for next Leeds children's mayor - BBC News](#)

[King Charles given birthday card by 10-year-old mayor | UK News | Sky News](#)

The 5 O's Model

In July 2023, the VIC Team had a development session exploring a wide range of different participation/ youth voice models and how we are using them both in our everyday practice and in advising different teams and services.

The team regularly use the [ladder of participation \(Hart 1992\)](#) to explain different levels of participation and youth voice, how participation can progress through stages and what is tokenistic/ non- participation. The team also use the [Lundy Model \(2007\)](#) which helps explain the importance of the; space of collaboration, the support adults provide, the influence young people can have and the audience.

The team reviewed the spectrum model -[pathways to participation \(Shier 2001\)](#) which identifies 5 different levels of involvement but recognises that organisations will work at different levels depending on their goals.

The 5 different levels of involvement in Shier's model are:

1. Children are listened to
2. Children are supported in expressing their views
3. Childrens views are taken into account
4. Children are involved in decision-making
5. Children share power and responsibility for decision making

The team agreed there would be value in developing a new framework to support how we plan and evaluate our voice and influence programmes and how we advise other teams and services. We decided to adapt the Shier's model, which identified three stages of adult-commitment (openings, opportunities, and obligations).

We developed two additional stages of adult commitment (outcome and ownership) to ensure we are continually prioritising demonstrating the outcomes and clear on who is the owner (team/ organisation) and responsible for acting on views of children and young or families.

Over the last few months, we have started to use the 5'O's framework to:

- Plan campaigns with young people on our youth voice groups
- Produce a 5 O's template which we support teams and services to complete when they are consulting with children, young people or families
- Developed a recording spreadsheet to plan and evaluate our work
- Review which consultations we have supported children young people or families to be involved in and are we are still awaiting an outcome about how their views have had an influence.

This Voice Influence and Change Team Summary report for the last 18 months is in a new format to previous years, we have used the 5'O's to demonstrate impact and outcomes of our different programmes.

THE 5 O'S

framework for partnership programmes



Citywide Consultations: coordinated by VIC Team and supported by partner organisations and schools

Consultation	Opening <i>Who</i>	Opportunity <i>What</i>	Obligation <i>CYPP/ Wish / Promise</i>	Outcome	Ownership <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
Child Friendly Leeds Wishes Refresh	Views of 80,000 CYP – themes. 70 CYP consulted wording and 300 images during April -July 2022	For CYP to review and finalise wording of the wishes and create images linked to wishes	CFL wishes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views of 80,000 CYP -ballots, surveys consultations to identify key themes Consultation sessions with CYP from Leeds Youth Council, BARCA, SEND Youth Forum, Youth Service Groups, 2 primary schools led to review and finalise wording for refreshed wishes.300+ children and young people drew the wish they felt was most important and these were used to develop the final images Wishes launched at exhibition at City Museum in July 2022 	Child Friendly Leeds Children and Young People’s Partnership
Leeds Children and Young People’s Plan Refresh Consultation	67 CYP contributed their views through sessions facilitated in youth voice groups, 3 rd sector youth groups and schools during November – December 2022	For CYP to feedback on proposed updates to the Leeds Children and Young People’s Plan. The team devised guidance and consultation activity session plan and shared with VIC network	CYPP	<p>There was broad support for the proposed changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback that health ‘obsession’ addresses a range of views raised A climate change/emergency priority will be introduced, echoing the wording in the 12 Wishes. Align future updates of the Wishes and the CYPP so that young people’s voices remain central to the CYPP. Refreshed plan launched by end of 2023. An update and new CYPP will be shared with youth groups and schools participating when it launched. 	Children and Young People’s Partnership
Child Poverty Strategy Refresh Consultation	214 CYP contributed their views through sessions facilitated in youth voice groups and youth groups across the city during July – September 2023	For CYP to share what they feel poverty feels like, what is the biggest impact of poverty for CYP in school, home and their community and from their experience what approaches work and what could work better where they live.	CFL wish 6	<p>Priorities identified through consultation with children and young people are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the shame and stigma around poverty Improve offer and accessibility of offer of activities for CYP living in poverty Ensure children living in poverty have their basic needs met <p>These priorities will be incorporated into poverty board priority lead work plans. Consultation report shared with Board on October 2023 Summary will be produced to share with youth groups and schools participating by December 2023.</p>	Leeds Children’s Poverty Board
Child Friendly Leeds City Centre Consultation	297 CYP completed a survey shared at community youth voice summits, youth groups and with SILCS and via an online survey during October 22-April 23	For CYP to share how often they visit the city centre, why they visit, where they most and least enjoy going and why, what would they improve and how would they want to find out what is on offer.	CFL Wish 2 and 7	<p>Across the age phases, the joint top issues CYP would like to improve are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcoming safe spaces dedicated to CYP to support them and keep them safe Free / low-cost events, activities and clubs for children and young people More green spaces, less litter, less smoking, pollution and noise from traffic Consultation report presented Child Friendly Leeds City Centre Partnership in September 2023 and will be presented Safer Leeds Partnership Board in 2024 Event planned for February 2024 – to discuss calls for action and explore how CFL Ambassadors and partners can support. 	Child Friendly Leeds City Centre Partnership Safer Leeds Partnership

Training delivered by Voice Influence and Change Team

Training	Opening <i>Who</i>	Opportunity <i>What</i>	Obligation <i>CYPP/ Wish / Promise</i>	Outcome	Ownership <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
Voice of the Child in Social Care	Social Care staff and students on placement with Leeds Social Care	Online 90-minute training sessions x 5	Wish 3 The promise	<p>Training delivered to 128 staff and students. Learning Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand why it is important to involve children and young people in decisions that affect their lives • Learn from children and young people about what they want and need from social workers • Explore different approaches to enabling children and young people to meaningfully participate and have their voices heard in decision making forums. • Find out about guidance and resources to support you in your practice • Learn about examples of strategic voice and influence opportunities and youth voice groups to promote to children and young people you work with 	Workforce Development Team
Listening to the voice of the child	Scope activity providers.	Online training for activity providers undertaking the Scope Inclusive Activity Award.	Wish 3	<p>Training objectives met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify mechanisms in the city for ensuring children and young people with SEND and their families have a voice and influence in service review and development. • Practical ways to gather the views of children, young people and their families. • How can children, young people and their families influence your service 	SCOPE
Training offer for Leeds Youth Voice groups	Leeds Youth Voice Groups (SEND Youth Forum, Leeds Youth Council and Social Care groups)	Training programme to increase skills of young people participating in LYV groups.	Wish 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to youth voice delivered to 9 young people • Children's rights training delivered to 10 young people • Recruitment and selection training delivered to 3 young people • Public speaking and debating training delivered to 7 young people. 	Voice Influence & Change Team

Universal Youth Voice Programmes Highlights

Leeds Youth Council Network is a network of children and young people aged 10-18 (up to 25 with additional needs). The programme aims for children and young people to have influenced decisions surrounding service improvement in Leeds. Children and young people receive monthly opportunities detailing voice and influence activities that are available to participate in. 197 children and young people have taken part in monthly consultations run by the VIC team.



Reflections from CYP include:

"I first joined after being a finalist for Leeds Children's Mayor in 2018. I have continued with it for the past 5 years because I have enjoyed being involved in meetings, workshops and projects provided by Leeds Youth Council"

"I enjoy the wide range of opportunities that they provide for young people of Leeds, it's an amazing programme to help unite the young people of Leeds considering we've been through a lot since 2019"

Leeds Youth Council Campaign Group is a group of 15 CYP aged 10-18.

The programme aims for CYP to have influenced decisions surrounding the local issue from the Make Your Mark ballot. **Reflections from CYP include:**

"I get the opportunity to help Leeds and improve it"

"Knowledge about how to make a change"

"Feels good to be able to make a difference"

"Skills for my CV and new friends with similar interests"



Project / Campaign	Opening <i>Who / when</i>	Opportunity <i>What</i>	Obligation <i>CYPP/ Wish / Promise</i>	Outcome	Ownership <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
Leeds Youth Council Network Branding	October 22 - July 23 17 members LYC attended 3 sessions	To develop the new Leeds youth council logo and promotional film.	Wish 3	6 candidates submitted their design for the logo and CYP voted for their favourite. The winning logo is now used on all branded documents. Young people helped produce a film to raise awareness of youth voice opportunities in Leeds. The film (including the logo) can be viewed here .	Voice, Influence and Change Team
Leeds food strategy	November 2022, 5 members LYC online session	To share views on the future of how food is produced, consumed, and disposed of across Leeds.	Wish 9	The strategy document has been amended and additional recommendations have been taken forward to shape the Food Action Plan which is currently being coproduced.	Communities, Housing and Environment Team

Leeds innovation arc	November 2022 7 members LYC online session	To share information about the draft proposals for the innovation arc and determine the aspects most important for young people.	Wish 2 Wish 7	The consultation supported the proposed changes and reinforced the need for change, including new and enhanced green space, enhanced connectivity, re-use of heritage buildings, and sustainability.	Inclusive Growth Partnership
Make your move campaign	February 2023 9 members LYC online session	To develop a social media campaign to encourage young people to participate in physical activities in support of their mental health.	Wish 9	The social media campaign reached 70, 329 accounts within the target group. There were 1,595 click-throughs to the MindMate webpage. There were 550 interactions with the hashtag #MakeYourMove. The engagement and interaction was 3x greater than the average for a MindMate campaign. One of the videos from a Leeds Youth Councillors received the most clicks and highest click through rate. The videos can be viewed here .	Public Health
A660 development	March 2023 4 members LYC online session	To consult with young people on safety and design of streets.	Wish 6	Changes have been made to the scheme because of the consultations. Findings can be found here .	Connecting Leeds
Community cohesion survey	July 2023 3 members of LYC online session	To share views on how Leeds can become the best inclusive city by shaping initiatives that promote community cohesion.	Wish 4	The findings of the consultation are yet to be published.	Safer, Stronger Communities Team
Oral health	July 2023 4 members of LYC in person session	To share experiences of dental care to help improve dental services for children and young people in Leeds.	Wish 9	Funding has been obtained towards providing oral health promotion within the East Leeds locality. A full report is being co-produced and will be finalised by end of 2023.	Healthwatch West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
Leeds Youth Council Campaign Group	September 2022 - August 2023 3x MYP and 12x members LYC met in person on a monthly basis.	To influence decisions surrounding the top local issue from the Make Your Mark ballot, 'health and wellbeing'.	Wish 1 Wish 3	The group developed 'Your Health Matters: You're the Best at Knowing You' consultation which was completed by 853 young people. Services across Leeds received the consultation report and offer to request the raw consultation data. The report has been widely shared and 75 users have accessed it via the Leeds Local Offer website. Read the full report here . 'Your Health Matters: You're the Best at Knowing You' consultation led to the development of a partnership with MindMate and resulted in a social media campaign about exam stress, reaching a total of 36,887 accounts and receiving a total of 26,021 views. It also led to a review of the MindMate webpages , thereby increasing access to information for children and young people about the top issue of 'exam stress'. The group developed an 'exam stress' survey leading to good practice examples from members' schools about their approach to supporting students. This will be shared at a presentation at the secondary head teacher's forum in November 2023. The working group plan to audit all secondary school websites to determine how many have a mental health and wellbeing page and to develop best practice tips and / or a template.	Future in Mind Board Voice, Influence and Change Team

Leeds Members of Youth Parliament (MYP)

A social change programme in which young people aged 11-18 apply to become a member and young people aged 11-18 across the city vote and elect their 3 members of youth parliament, elections take place every two years.

The programme aims for the 3 elected Leeds MYPs to have influenced decisions surrounding the national issue from the Make Your Mark ballot and represent the views of young people at local, regional and national events and workshops.

3 MYP attended 17 internal meetings, 3 regional youth conferences, 1 regional residential and 1 national annual sitting

Reflections from MYPs include:

“Being someone who always found it difficult to find ways to make a difference and bring about change. This role has equipped me with the tools needed to bring about change. The role has allowed me to meet with like-minded people and have discussions about not only the problem but solutions. The role has provided many opportunities such as going to the House of Commons, meeting the King, join campaign groups that are fighting for a cause that I agree with. This role has given me a bit of insight in the role of an actual MP. It has allowed me to see things differently and from different perspectives. I’ve become very perseverant as decisions makers don’t always make it easy. Overall, this role has opened so many doors that I would have never been able to open by myself. This role has boosted my confidence a lot and allowed me to move to the next level of my journey.”

“As someone who wasn’t interested in politics beforehand, it has been an eye-opening experience. These experiences have not only provided me a deeper understanding of the socio-political climate but also enabled me to develop leadership skills and shape my ability to campaign and advocate effectively. I didn’t realise how significant this role is as well when I mention it in my personal statement. I used to want to enter finance but now I want to do something that makes a wider impact on the community.”



Project / Campaign	Opening <i>Who / when</i>	Opportunity <i>What</i>	Obligation <i>CYPP/ Wish / Promise</i>	Outcome	Ownership <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
Food for Learning Bill	3 MYPs took part in a range of workshops throughout 2023 at Regional Youth Conventions and an Annual sitting.	To influence the Food for Learning Bill and help develop the Food for Learning campaign	Wish 8	The UK Youth Parliament’s priority campaign for 2023 is the cost-of-living crisis. It was voted for at the House of Commons sitting as having the biggest impact on CYP’s health and wellbeing. As part of the National campaign , Members of Youth Parliament have helped to develop content in the Food for Learning Bill , promoting universal/wider access to free school meals. MYP’s participated in working groups regionally and nationally around the Food for Learning Bill where their ideas contributed to the issues around standardisation and food quality that were included the debate held at the Houses of Commons. MYP’s spoke with Hilary Ben MP to raise awareness of the bill. Though he was unable to fully back the bill, he sent a written response showing his support for free school meals in primary schools. They also made a film to be shared to raise awareness with young people across Leeds.	British Youth Council
Climate Action Leeds Event	3 MYPs participated in the event in October 2022.	To share views on how Leeds can work towards being zero carbon, nature	Wish 5	MYP’s attended the Leeds Climate Action event called ‘From Vision to Action’ where they gave a speech on their vision for a zero carbon, nature friendly and a socially just Leeds. The event was attended by social activist groups, students, local businesses, charities and	Climate Action Leeds

		friendly, more socially just Leeds by 2030.		community groups. The aim was to help influence the decision makers in the room to include the voice of young people in creating inclusive climate action plans.	
Information Commissioners Office	12 young people including 1 MYP attended focus group in January 2023	To take part in a focus group to provide guidance for organisations on biometric use	Wish 3	MYP Took part in a focus group with the Information Commissioners Group to understand how biometrics is used in leisure, education, and technology; shared opinions on case studies regarding the use of AI to improve focus on students and consent when AI is used on marketing analysis. MYP was able to help to create a gold standard for how biometrics are used to protect young people and educate organisations. A summary of the consultation can be found here .	Information Commissioners Office / British Youth Council
Leeds 2023 Youth Fund	1 MYP took part in planning sessions	To co-design 2023 Youth Fund	Wish 3	MYP was part of a group of young people who co-produced Leeds 2023 Youth Fund for young people aged 14 – 30 to apply for funding to develop ideas, gain skills and bring creative projects to life. The MYP was able to share their ideas on how the youth fund can be more accessible and appealing to young people. The youth fund was then promoted across Leeds for young people to apply for.	Leeds 2023
Votes at 16 Youth Action Group	1 MYP attended group meetings February- July 2023	To join Votes at 16 action group and campaign	Wish 3	MYP worked with young people across England to put pressure on the government to change the voting age to 16. MYP also wrote a blog to update her following on the progress of the Votes @ 16 campaign .	British Youth Council
Make Your Move Campaign	1 MYP attended meetings and made a film	To make a film to support the Make Your Move Campaign	Wish 9	MYP took part in the Make Your Move Campaign that promoted positive mental health and wellbeing and made a film . MYP co-created and delivered dance workshops alongside professional dancers to young people as part of the campaign. MYP was supported to find other opportunities to allow her group to perform and was able to showcase their dance at the Yorkshire Dance festival.	Public Health

[Leeds Children's Mayor](#)

The Leeds Children's mayor programme is delivered in partnership with democratic services team.

It is an annual citizenship programme where Year 5 children are nominated/ elected to represent their school and write a manifesto. Shortlisted finalists' campaign across the city and children aged up to 18 who live or go to school in Leeds vote for their preferred candidates.

The Leeds Childrens Mayor works alongside the Lord Mayor attending events throughout the year and representing children and works with the VIC team and their school on a project to address their manifesto aims.

Reflections from CYP include:

"I was scared before, now I can speak to loads of people" – Leeds Children's Mayor

"I feel a lot more confident now that I've had practice" – attendee from Leeds Children's Mayor summit



Project / Campaign	Opening <i>Who / when</i>	Opportunity <i>What</i>	Obligation <i>CYPP/ Wish / Promise</i>	Outcome	Ownership <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
Leeds Childrens Mayor 21/22	From April to September 2022	To plan and deliver an event that meets the LCM manifesto aims - creating opportunities for CYP to remember friends and family who were affected by / lost their lives to Covid 19	Wish 1 Wish 3	Zulaykha and her school Bardsey Primary worked with the VIC team to deliver a 'Togetherness' event over two afternoons in July. Children at Bardsey Primary School celebrated their resilience during the pandemic, remembered family and friends who they have lost and participated in activities to enable the children to explore maintaining good mental health practices through the support of MindMate. A total of £750 was also raised for charity and the school are working to get a memorial bench. Zulaykha helped develop a guide for children across Leeds to explain how they could deliver similar events. The team wrote a press release which included an update about the togetherness event.	Voice, Influence and Change Team in partnership with Democratic Services
Leeds Children's Mayor 22/23	30x primary schools submitted entries during summer 2022. 12x finalists attended the finals event in October 2022 when the winner was announced.	For children and young people to experience active citizenship by writing a manifesto, casting a vote and influencing change.	Wish 1 Wish 3 Wish 4 Wish 9 Wish 12	<p>7870 children voted in the 2022 Leeds Children Mayor elections. The winner, Mason Hicks, read his manifesto at a full council meeting to all 99 councillors in November 2022 and received a standing ovation. In response to his deputation, lead member for Children and Families Cllr Venner developed and chaired a working group to encourage partnerships with organisations and LCC teams / services, to work with the Leeds Children's Mayor on his manifesto aims. This resulted in Mason fulfilling his ceremonial role at a number of events such as the Yorkshire Ability Triathlon. It also led to his school's involvement in 'My Leeds 2023'. In addition, Breeze supported Mason's school with their accessible Olympics event by providing a football speedshot.</p> <p>Mason worked with his school to plan and run an accessible Olympics on Monday 17th July, fulfilling the main manifesto pledge. Local ward Councillors donated some of their MICE money, contributing to their role as active community leaders.</p> <p>Mason attended a summit, held by the VIC team in May 2023, to promote his winning manifesto and share his school's Olympics guide to encourage other schools to support his pledge and hold a similar event. 56 children from 14x primary schools attended the event, enabling them to implement ideas from the winning manifesto, as well as supporting children and young people to write effective manifestos for next year's elections. The schools were invited based on their location in the city and previous participation with the programme.</p> <p>Mason developed a video providing a personal insight into the impact the programme had, as well as promoted the winning manifesto, the events they attended and the LCM programme, thereby promoting youth voice opportunities. The video has had over 150 views and was shared via the VIC network and at the Leeds Children's Mayor summit. The Leeds Children's Mayor programme received lots of positive press throughout Mason's term, for example, meeting King Charles and the Princess of Wales.</p>	Voice, Influence and Change Team in partnership with Democratic Services

Social Care Youth Voice Programme Highlights

Care Leavers Council

The Care Leaver council is a group of 17- 25-year-olds who have previously spent time in the care of Leeds City council. The aim of the group is to improve the services care leavers receive from Leeds City Council, and to help make the difficult transition from care to adulthood a better experience for all young people. The group also wish to make a difference to the lives of all young people experiencing care.



Have a Voice (Children in Care Council)

The Have a Voice Council is a group of 10- 17 years olds who are currently in the care of Leeds City Council. Group members work with decision makers to improve children's services and to ensure all those who play a part in the lives of children in care – including schools – uphold the requirement to enable young people to have a genuine voice and influence.

"I joined the Children in Care council because I wanted to get my voice heard and to make a difference. I want to make a positive impact and being a member has helped me to do this in so many different ways"

"I had a blast; it was so good and a pleasure. It feels good to be appreciated."

"I've gained a lot of experience and I feel like I am helping make a difference."

"I enjoyed myself and actually learnt a lot from being involved."



Project / Campaign	Opening <i>Who / when</i>	Opportunity <i>What</i>	Obligation <i>Wish / Promise</i>	Outcome	Ownership <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
Designated Looked After Nurse Consultation	Designated Nurse met with 6 group members April 2022	To share views about how Looked after nurses should communicate with them if they miss appointments, their views on health assessments and how GPs can support them in their final review health assessment	Wish 3 Wish 9 The Promise	The Designated Nurse for Looked After Children and Care Leavers fed back in May 2022, that they have listened to the ideas they gave when asked about requesting feedback for when they don't attend appointments and will be using WhatsApp, making the message personal and keeping it short and snappy with requests for yes/no answers to 2 questions. The young people's ideas and feedback about health assessments will be included in a training film (animation) for social workers and carers about health and the importance of health assessments- still in development.	Specialist Nursing team – Looked after children and young people

Archway – new care leavers hub	April 2022 -3 group members joined other young people for consultation session at Archway and 2 young people joined ongoing co-design group	To take part in a consultation event with other care leavers and young people about how to make Archway even better for young people and what it should offer and be part of ongoing co-design group.	Wish 3 The Promise	Young people shared their ideas and feedback about improvements to the facilities and décor to make it a more young person friendly space. 2 group members have regularly attended the ongoing co-design group. All their ideas have influenced the changes and improvements made including furniture, equipment, soft furnishings and programme of activities offered on weekly basis.	Care Leavers Service
Care Leavers Pledge and Agreement	All group members have taken part in meetings with the Care Leavers Team manager over last 18 months April 2022 – September 2023	Following suggestion from Care Leavers Council, the young people, VIC Team and Care Leavers service have been working together to produce a new Care Leavers Agreement and Pledge.	Wish 3 The Promise	Over the last 18 months, regular meetings and updates have taken place on the content, wording, design and format and the final version was agreed in June 2023 and Care Leavers Service is currently working with the Communications team to finalise the pledge and agreement	Care Leavers Service
Independent Fostering Agencies Commissioning Panel	5 group members September 2022	To help decide which fostering agencies should be included as approved suppliers.	Wish 3 The Promise	5 young people were involved in a commissioning panel for independent fostering agencies. They assessed applications and rated the most appropriate ones to be included as approved ‘suppliers’ for the framework and influenced decision for who should be approved suppliers	Commissioning Team
My Things Matter Campaign	All group members September 2022 and May 2023	To decide if Leeds City Council should sign up to the My Things Matter Campaign and then share their views on draft guidance developed for staff in meetings/individual phone calls	Wish 3 The Promise	Leeds City Council signed up to the pledges in October 2022 following discussions with Have a Voice Council, Care Leavers Council, Corporate Parenting Operational Group and Corporate Parenting Board. Young people were consulted on their views and experiences in relation to the pledges and their views were included in the draft guidance that is being develop for staff.	Corporate Parenting Board
SAFE taskforce Commissioning panel	5 group members October 2022	To review applications for a SAFE taskforce contract	Wish 3 The Promise	5 Young people were involved in a commissioning panel for a SAFE taskforce contract. They shared their views, opinions and feedback and influenced the decision on who was awarded the contract.	Commissioning Team
Recruitment Voice and Influence Officer	9 group members January 2023	To plan young people’s involvement and take part in the recruitment of Voice and influence Officer	Wish 3 The Promise	9 young people developed an activity and asked the interviewees questions and scored them. The young people shared their scores and feedback with the VIC Team which contributed 30% to final decision.	Voice, Influence and Change Team.
Total Respect Training	3 group members planned and delivered Total Respect Training to members of the Corporate Parenting Board March and April 2023	To increase board members understanding of being in care and priorities of care experienced young people	Wish 3 The Promise	All members of the Corporate Parenting Board have an increased awareness of the care experienced young people’s lived experience and their top priorities.	Voice, Influence & Change Team in partnership with Workforce Development.

Stable Homes Built on Love -National Consultation	10 group members Discussed in group sessions and feedback gathered from one-to-one sessions April -May 2023	Opportunity for young people to share what they most want from a social worker to be included in a regional resource developed by Principle Social Worker Network -feeding into the Children and Family Social Worker Workforce government consultation -Stable Homes Built on Love	Wish 3 The Promise Influenced Statutory Guidance	Young people shared a resource they were already developing about what they think makes a good social worker and top tips following the request from Principle Social Worker– this was included with other young peoples views and developed this regional resource The young people’s feedback was shared with Leeds Childrens Social care staff who lead on recruitment, and they are using the young people’s feedback to design questions and activities for social worker recruitment. The feedback is also shared at the Voice of the Child in Social Care training sessions that take place through out the year in Leeds- 128 staff and social care students on placement in leeds have heard this feedback from YP	Principle Social Worker – Leeds
Fostering Panels	4 group members May 2023	To meet with Fostering team manager and share views/ experiences about foster carers and help develop questions to ask at fostering panels	Wish 3 The Promise	The young people were able to share their views on what would make a good foster carer. The young people created questions that will now be asked to aspiring foster carers attending panels	Fostering Team
Recruitment Social Care Managers	2 group members and 2 other care experienced YP May 2023	To plan young people’s involvement and take part in the recruitment of Service Delivery Managers- Children’s Residential	Wish 3 The Promise	2 group members and 2 YP from a residential home developed and asked interviewees several questions and assessed them based on their answers. The young people shared their feedback and scores which contributed 25% to final decision.	Children’s Social Care
Have a Voice Council Promotion film and flyers	10 group members June 2023	Opportunity to plan, develop and create a promotional film- which is going to be used to encourage young people to join the groups and update flyers	Wish 3 The Promise	The group produced this film which is going to be shared across the city and developed new flyers to promote the groups	Voice, Influence and Change Team
Step up social work Recruitment Panel	3 group members attended the Step up to Social Work recruitment panel. June-July 2023	Members of the Care Leavers Council were given the opportunity to help assess and recruit student social workers to the Step Up to Social Work Programme.	Wish 3 The Promise	Young people helped develop a group exercise which included asking potential social work students questions. Young people were involved in the recruitment and selection for the Step Up to Social Work degree programme. The young people influenced the decision on which social workers were recruited.	Childrens Services Workforce Development Team
Health Watch-Oral Health	5 group members June 2023	Opportunity to share experiences of accessing dental care in Leeds and help improve dental services in Leeds	Wish 3 Wish 9 The Promise	Health Watch spoke with the young people to identify gaps in knowledge on oral health, areas in need of improvement within dental practices. Health Watch will share the information and views of the YP with dental services in Leeds to help improve dental services that young people access.	Health Watch

Corporate Parenting Board Meeting	3 group members July 2023	To participate in the Corporate Parenting Board Meeting to share young people's views and experiences about education.	Wish 3 Wish 10 The Promise	The young people shared feedback gathered from last few years and their own experience of being in education and highlighted areas of concern that needed improving.	Voice, Influence and Change Team Corporate Parenting Board
Supported Accommodation for Young people Commissioning Panel	5 group members July 2023	Group members were asked to evaluate applications from services for the Leeds Electronic Market Place (EMP) for Supported Accommodation for Young People	Wish 3 The Promise	The young people evaluated and scored the services and shared their feedback which influenced final decisions on who was awarded contracts	Commissioning Team

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Programme Highlights

The Leeds SEND Youth Forum was established in December 2020. The forum is a group of 11 to 25 year olds with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who are passionate about making Leeds a more child friendly city. The 61 forum members receive monthly email updates giving them the opportunity to attend and to have their say on local, regional and national consultations.

SEND Youth Forum

"I joined the SEND Youth Forum to help young people similar to me get the support and help they deserve"

"I joined the SEND Youth Forum as I wanted to share my voice and experiences of growing up with various neurodiverse conditions that were undiagnosed for a long time. I want to make a difference to services, activities and education in Leeds, in the knowledge that other young people can get the best support possible."

"I joined the SEND Youth Forum to make friends and to make the world a better place for everyone, so they don't have a tough time like I do."

"I enjoy being able to share my voice and be heard, and bring to light SEND young people too help make Leeds a more inclusive and child-friendly city"

"I enjoy taking part in projects and creating resources to help improve SEND services"

"I have a greater understanding of my own and other young people's needs and wants"

The team deliver a number of youth voice programmes for young people with SEND in mainstream and specialist provisions, these include the SEND Summit, Takeover of the Leeds Area SEND Partnership Board, Compass House Project and consultation sessions.

SEND Summit

"The activities were fun and enjoyable."

"I really enjoyed being able to share my ideas."

Give it a Go Event

"It was my first time riding a bike!"

"It was such a fun event; I don't usually get chance to take part in these kinds of activities."



Project / Campaign	Opening <i>Who / when</i>	Opportunity <i>What</i>	Obligation <i>Statutory / Wish / Promise</i>	Outcome	Ownership <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
Leeds Local Offer website	Students from the Powerhouse, West SILC. 1 hour a week for 3 months.	Reviewing and rewriting the young people's section on the Leeds Local Offer website.	SEND Code of Practice	Full review of the young people's section of the LLO website. All suggested changes implemented.	Voice Influence and Change Team
Accessible Breeze in the Park session	Consultation with 72 students from specialist provisions across Leeds.	Focus groups were delivered in specialist provisions across Leeds with the aim to raise awareness of Breeze in the Park and find out from young people how the sessions could be more accessible.	Wish 2 Wish 7 Wish 12	More relaxed sessions were offered during the summer programme. Suggestions made by students were implemented.	Breeze Leeds
SEND Review Green Paper	July 2022 Two national consultations.	Opportunity to influence the way local services for children and young people with SEND are inspected. Shared the online consultation surveys with the SEND Youth Forum. Held a focussed SEND Youth Forum session to gather their feedback.	SEND Code of Practice	All feedback was submitted, and the new papers were written taking into account feedback from children, young people, parents and carers.	National Government
Compass House Project	September to December 2022 77 students from across six specialist learning settings	The Compass House is a work experience project- which was developed following young people sharing they had limited work experience opportunities. Students worked together to plan their Christmas pop up shop, the students made all the decisions about the shop, created all the products to be sold and then worked in the pop-up shop,	Wish 3 Wish 11	The 2022 pop up shop opened for five days week commencing 5 th December 2022 in Kirkgate Market. The full report can be found here .	Voice Influence and Change Team in partnership with specialist learning provisions.
SEND Summit	56 students from Bromfield South SILC, Rodillian Partnership, West SILC, John Jamieson, Oulton Academy, Green Meadows Academy and the Lighthouse School came together on Wednesday 2 nd November 2022 at Leeds Civic Hall for the first SEND Summit.	The SEND Summit provided an opportunity for secondary aged students with SEND to come together to share views and opinions on service delivery and development as well as finding out about services that are available to them. The SEND Summit enables students to meet other young people from across the city, learn about services, visit Leeds Civic Hall and make a difference.	Wish 3	Youth Activity Fund consultation – all feedback was shared with the community committees and fed into decisions about activities to fund locally. Your Health Matters consultation – all feedback received was incorporated in the final report and shared with services to use as a reference when developing services. The full report can be found here .	Community Committees/ Communities team

Takeover of the Leeds Area SEND Partnership Board	In November 2022; 12 students from West SILC, East SILC and Broomfield South SILC took over the SEND Partnership Board on Tuesday 29th November 2022 as part of National Takeover Challenge.	Every November students from specialist provisions in Leeds takeover the Leeds Area SEND Partnership board. Students plan the meeting, agree what they want to share with the board and chair the meeting.	Wish 3 Wish 12	Students from our specialist schools and the SEND Youth Forum have developed a resource for the teams and services to share information about the qualities they would like to see in the workers who support them in their everyday lives. The resource can be found here. The resource has been shared widely, and service are being asked to feedback how they have used the resource. The feedback will be shared with students. The full reports can be found here.	Voice Influence and Change Team in partnership with specialist learning provisions. SEND Partnership Board
Give it a Go event	On Thursday 6th July 2023; 69 students with SEND in Leeds attended the Give it a Go event at John Charles Centre for Sport.	During the 2021 takeover of the Leeds Area SEND Partnership Board students asked for the opportunity to try out different sports and activities (short breaks) to see what they enjoy and don't enjoy.	Wish 2 Wish 7 Wish 9 Wish 12	The event gave young people with SEND the opportunity to try out different activities and sports that are on offer to them across Leeds (short breaks and fun activities). Each student received an activity booklet that provided information about the activities and how to book onto them after the event and an accessible play spaces booklet developed for the event. Information about activities available in Leeds and accessible places spaces can be found on the Leeds Local Offer website. The full report here.	Funded by the Community Committees Event planned and delivered by the Voice Influence and Change Team, Breeze Leeds, Child Friendly Leeds and Active Leeds.
Raising awareness of disabilities – resource developed by the SEND Youth Forum	2023 Campaign developed by Leeds SEND Youth Forum	The Leeds SEND Youth Forum raised that they want professionals they come into contact with to have a greater understanding of disabilities and how to support young people in different situations. Members developed their campaign over a number of online sessions.	Wish 3 Wish 12	The SEND Youth Forum have worked together to create a booklet of various journeys and challenges of young people with SEND to help you help us! The resource is not just about knowing how you can support young people, but to understand how we might perceive and feel during these experiences. The resource can be downloaded here.	Voice Influence and Change Team
Scope – information for activity providers	June 2023 SEND Youth Forum Members	Members heard from Scope Activities for All and how Scope have shared the SEND Youth Forum resource with activity providers in Leeds.	Wish 3 Wish 12	The SEND Youth Forum have developed an information document for activity providers that shares how young people feel when accessing an activity or group for the first time and provided some 'top tips' to help make a young person's experience of accessing group / activities positive.	Scope

MindMate – website alternations	May 2023 SEND Youth Forum Members	Members heard from MindMate about their website, and the new Neurodiversity Information Hub. Members shared their experiences of using the website and were tasked with having a further look at the website and then provide feedback to MindMate.	Wish 1 Wish 3	Members fed back to MindMate that they really liked the website; however, they shared how the urgent help information is all for under 18's, and only option for 19 to 25 year olds is to call 999 or visit A&E. Based on their feedback MindMate have updated the service information on their website for 19 to 25 year olds.	MindMate
Reviewing the Leeds Local Offer Website	February 2023	The Leeds SEND Youth Forum attended an online session on to review the young people's section on the Leeds Local Offer website.	Wish 3 Wish 9 Wish 12	All feedback and recommendations for improvement to the website have been actioned and responded to. The full report can be found here .	Voice Influence and Change Team
Youth Activity Fund Consultation	November 2022 to March 2023	The Communities Team at Leeds City Council asked young people with SEND via an online survey and consultation activity at the SEND Summit in November 2023 what activities they would like to be available in their local area.	Wish 2 Wish 3 Wish 7 Wish 12	All feedback has been shared with the Communities Team to share with the Community Committees when making decisions about activities to fund in local areas.	Communities Team

Leeds Local Offer (SEND)

The Leeds Local Offer website is for those 0-25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and has been operational since 1 September 2014: www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk The Leeds Local Offer is not just a directory of services, it is the unique place where young people with SEND and their families can provide suggestions for improving services and for new services they need. Comments that come in through the website and to llo@leeds.gov.uk drive and influence service improvement.

Feedback from families

"The Leeds Local Offer is pretty good, and there is lots of useful information for families."

"The videos are especially helpful and explain things simply and clearly for families as well as staff."

"Useful to find and share consultations."

"Leeds Local Offer Live is a great event, not only for families but for professionals to network and find out more about SEND services."

"The Leeds Local Offer ebulletin is really useful to hear about SEND events and service updates."

Leeds Local Offer Website

In the report period from the 1st of July 2022 to the 30th of June 2023 the Leeds Local Offer website had 41,766 unique visitors; unique visitors are the number of visitors to a website in a single reporting period. The number of people viewing the Leeds Local Offer website has increased by 13,119 from the previous year, when there were 28,647 unique visitors. This is a 45% increase.

Raising awareness of the Leeds Local Offer and SEND services in Leeds City Council

- The [Leeds Local Offer Facebook group](#) was set up for families in December 2020 as an alternative mechanism for families to receive updates about SEND services and activities taking place in the city. There are 771 members in the group; 417 have joined in the last 12 months. Over the last 12 months there have been 280 posts.
- [Leeds Local Offer Live](#) is an annual marketplace event that provides families an opportunity to speak and find out about a wide range of SEND services in Leeds. The 2023 event took place on Thursday 28th March 2023, 10am till 2pm at Pudsey Civic Hall. There were 50 SEND service stalls at the event, with 236 families in attendance.
- Following feedback from families, the [Leeds Local Offer information booklet](#) was produced to help families of a child with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) find out about information, help and support available to them in Leeds. The information booklet can be downloaded [here](#).
- The Leeds Local Offer officer [visits support groups](#) across Leeds to promote and share information about the Leeds Local Offer website and SEND services in Leeds.
- The bi-monthly **Leeds Local Offer ebulletin** is shared with over 700+ professionals working with families. The ebulletin provides information on service updates, Leeds Local Offer developments, voice and influence opportunities and much more.

You said our response

Leeds City Council must respond to all feedback and comments received about the Local Offer on an annual basis, and outline what actions have been taken in response to the comments received. A summary of all the feedback received and actions taken in response to this feedback is published [here](#). Examples include information being updated on the website, sections reviewed, new sections added, new document created to explain how to use the website and a new summary booklet for families.

Parents and Carers

Leeds Parent Carer Forum is led by local parents working to represent the views of parents and carers of children and young people with SEND while working in partnership with the Local Authority Education, Health & Care services to make a positive difference for children and families in Leeds. 30 Parent / Carer Support Groups from across Leeds meet quarterly with the Leeds Parent Carer Forum and the SEND Voice and Influence Coordinator at Leeds City Council to feedback the issues parents / carers of children with SEND are experiencing. These issues are shared with the relevant service and responses given.



Project / Campaign	Opening <i>Who / when</i>	Opportunity <i>What</i>	Obligation <i>Statutory / Wish / Promise</i>	Outcome	Ownership <i>Delivery Service / Partnership</i>
SEND Review Green Paper	Parents and carers of children with SEND July 2022	Opportunity to influence the way local services for CYP with SEND are inspected by participating in online consultation surveys with parent carer support groups and via the Leeds Local Offer website.	SEND Code of Practice	All feedback was submitted, and the new papers were written, taking into account feedback from children, young people, parents and carers.	National Government
Developing a new Leeds Parent Carer Forum (SEND)	September 2022 to April 2023	Support the development and promote the new DfE funded parent carer participation forum	Statutory – SEND Code of Practice	The VIC Team worked with Contact and parent/ carer support groups to help develop a new Leeds Parent Carer Forum -launched in March 2023.	Leeds Parent Carer Forum (SEND)
Leeds SEND Parent Carer Support Group Network	Quarterly online meetings with representatives from SEND parent carer support groups	Representatives from SEND parent carer support groups feedback the issues parents / carers of children with SEND are experiencing. These issues are shared with the relevant service and responses given.	Statutory – SEND Code of Practice	The issues tracker, responses and actions can be found here .	Voice Influence and Change Team and Leeds Parent Carer Forum
STARS/Communication & Interaction Team Leader Interview Panel	A parent / carer sat on the interview panel September 2022	To be part of an interview panel and decide who should be appointed to the role		A parent / carer sat on the interview panel with an equal weighting.	Learning Inclusion Service
Leeds Schools Admissions Policy	Parents and carers of children with SEND November 2022	An online survey was shared via the Leeds Local Offer website and Facebook group and with parent carer support groups.	Wish 10	The new admissions policy was signed off in February 2023.	Admissions Service, Leeds Cit Council
Thackray Museum of Medicine – sensory room	6 Parents and carers of children with SEND November 2022	Mystery shopping visit to the Thackray Museum to review how accessible the museum is for families with SEND.	Wish 2 Wish 12	The Museum have made changes to the museum based on feedback from families.	Thackray Museum of Medicine
Accessible Playgrounds in Leeds	38 parents' carers of children with SEND completed the online survey January 2023	An online survey was shared via the Leeds Local Offer website and Facebook group and with parent carer support groups.	Wish 2 Wish 12	The information gathered was used to inform the design of new play facilities to help ensure we fulfil our aim to provide 'something for everyone'.	Parks and Countryside Service, Leeds City Council

Key priorities for the next 12 months

- a) Work in partnership to ensure the voice and influence of children, young people and parents carers and Child Friendly Leeds Wishes become embedded within Leeds City Council key strategies, policies and plans.
- b) Five O's model – implement and embed the new Five O's model in Voice Influence and Change team practice and use model when advising teams and services on effective voice and influence practice.
- c) Continue to build stronger relationships with third sector partners who facilitate youth voice groups by working together on the Youth Voice Groups Children and Young people's Partnership Takeover and visiting groups and creating spotlights on good practice blogs.
- d) Increase the number of third sector organisations contributing to the 6 monthly voice and influence reports and quarterly newsletters.
- e) Help raise children and young people's understanding of how to share their ideas and raise any issues in their local community by developing guides with elected members and community committees
- f) Increase young people's awareness of the work of the team and voice and influence opportunities through implementing our social media plan for Instagram. Impact will be demonstrated by increase in followers and engagement with posts
- g) Update and refresh parent, carer and family voice and influence on Leeds for Learning
- h) Targeted campaign to recruit younger members aged 10-15 to the children in care council
- i) Review the Leeds Youth Council network model and approach
- j) Respond to feedback from families and explore options for Leeds Local Offer Website to move away from being a directory-based website
- k) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) -continue the review of all team programmes and use the EDI checklists developed by the team when planning and delivering sessions and events.