

2021-26

Future in Mind: Leeds

Our Future in Mind Strategy is a plan for Leeds that explains how people are working together to improve mental health and emotional health for young people.



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Foreword

The impact of a young person's voice being heard and used to influence the plans within Future in Mind is of great importance. I feel very privileged, as a young person, to have been involved in the development of this work and know that having young people's voices heard will make the improvements needed for Social, Emotional and Mental Health outcomes for children and young people in Leeds.

Rachael Campey, MindMate Ambassador



Rachael Campey

I think it's extremely important that young people's voices are heard when it comes to social-emotional wellbeing. Especially with the pandemic, it's important we address this issue head-on and the way this plan has been co-created with young people is one of many steps forward we are making to addressing the mental health of young people. Over the past year, one thing coronavirus has taught us is that mental health is very important and that we need to ensure that vulnerable children and young people have the right access to support in our city.

Lanre Adeleye, MindMate Ambassador



Lanre Adeleye

Introduction

Children and families, and professionals have come together in partnership to develop this strategy as a comprehensive approach to improving the social, emotional and mental health of children and young people in Leeds. We are committed to continuing to work together to make improvements, too. This includes making sure the support needs of parents and carers are met; they are the bedrock of all our work. We are dedicated to ensuring that children have the best start in life; we know just how important the first 1001 days of life are. Seamless and well-supported transitions to adult services are also vital and will continue to improve in this area. When we get this right for children, we improve the outcomes throughout the life course.

Our previous Future in Mind: Leeds plan was from 2016-2020 and together we achieved new things to help improve children and young people's social, emotional and mental health. These included growing the MindMate website so people know and understand what support is on offer, developing and delivering MindMate lessons in schools, and improving the offer of support for children and young people in crisis.

Whilst this was all important work, we know that we need to continue to make things better for children and young people in Leeds. This refresh of our strategy will continue the drive to improve children and young people's social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) outcomes with a particular focus on reducing health inequalities.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank those involved in bringing this work together and look forward to continued work in partnership to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Councillor Fiona Venner, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Adult Social Care in Leeds

Councillor Tim Ryley, Chief Executive Officer of NHS Leeds CCG



Future in Mind Overview

Future in Mind: Leeds is a strategy (plan) explaining how people will work together, across services in the NHS, Leeds City Council and in the community, to improve children and young people's emotional and mental health in the city. This covers children and young people from birth up to age 25.

The plan brings lots of people from communities and services in Leeds together to make sure everyone is working in an organised way to make improvements in a range of places. All of these improvements should have a positive impact on children and young people's emotional and mental health. The priorities and principles have been driven by the data and evidence, the voice of children and families, and best practice. You can see a summary of all of the data and engagement information we considered in the ['Future in Mind Data Pack Summary'](#) published alongside this strategy.

On the next page is an overview of the key priority outcomes that we want to achieve with Future in Mind, as well as the underpinning principles that will make sure this happens. Some of the priorities are also priorities in the [Leeds All Age Mental Health Strategy 2020-25](#). This is because we will make more progress in these areas if everyone is working together in children's and adults' services.



Future in Mind—the strategy

THE KEY PRIORITY OUTCOMES

1 PREVENTION

Children and young people, their families, communities and schools will be supported to promote and strengthen mental health and wellbeing.

2 SUPPORT

Children and young people will be supported as early as possible, by the right person as close to their home or school as possible.



3 TRANSITION

Transition between services and settings will be joined up and support children and young people's social, emotional and mental health needs.



5 IMPACT OF TRAUMA

We will recognise the impact adverse childhood experience can have on mental health across the life course and will focus on establishing a clear offer and response to childhood trauma.

4 INCLUSION

Our education, health and social care systems are inclusive and provide high quality support to the most vulnerable.



6 PARENT CARER AND FAMILY SUPPORT

Parents, carers and siblings will feel empowered and supported in their role and part of the team.

7 HEALTH INEQUALITIES

We will recognise and reduce the impact of health inequalities on children and young people's access, experience and outcomes.

THE KEY UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

Support and challenge, and try new things

Decisions based on evidence

Life course approach

A skilled and knowledgeable workforce

Children, young people and families voice is central

Systemic approach

Maximising the use of digital technology

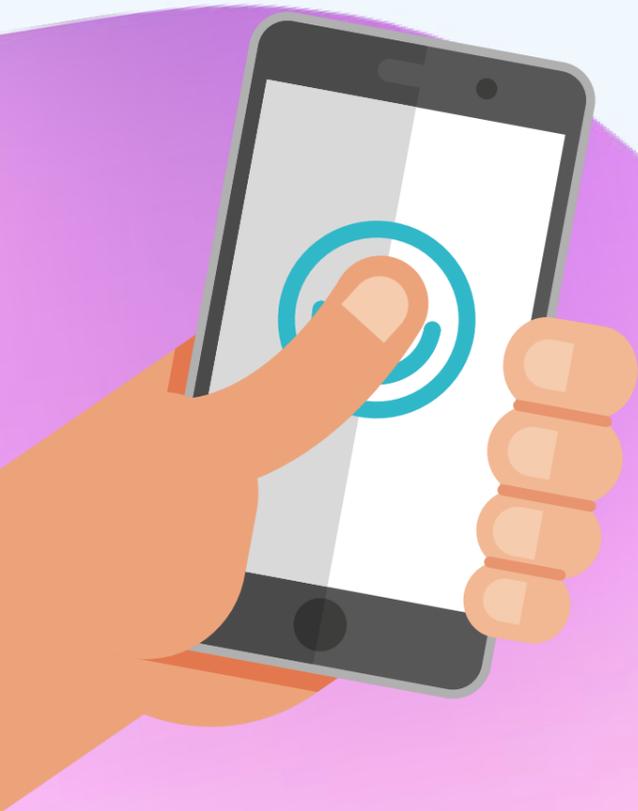
Why is Future in Mind important?

We all have mental health, just like we all have physical health. Sometimes we feel well, and sometimes we don't.

Sometimes, we might need a bit more support with our emotional and mental health, when life events create challenging times, and that is ok. We can all have days when we don't feel so emotionally healthy. It's important that we are all better at talking about how we feel and knowing it's ok to ask for help.

When we feel well, we are likely to feel like we can cope with everyday life. Being able to do this helps us reach our full potential. However, family life, friends, school, work and many other things can leave us feeling stressed, sad, lonely or worried. We all face emotionally challenging situations during our childhood and adolescence and our experiences can impact our life not only at that time but also as we grow older.

For some of us the environments we grow up in, the people we relate to, and the experiences we have are negative, and have a potentially traumatic and lifelong impact on our development, physical and mental health, and ultimately our way of life.



Why is Future in Mind important?

There are over

270,000

people in Leeds under the age of 25.

In 2020, one in six (16%) of children aged 5-16 are likely to have a mental health issue or need support with their emotional wellbeing. In Leeds, this equates to around:

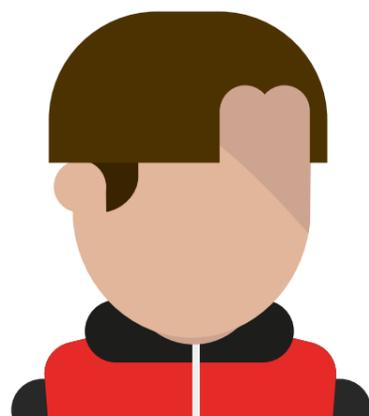
19,386 children

In 17-22 year olds, 27% of young women and 13% of young men are likely to have a mental health issue. In Leeds, this equates to around:



10,939

young women



4,551

young men

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on many children and young people's mental and emotional health, with many saying that lockdown has made their life worse.

Health Inequalities:

Health inequalities are differences in health outcomes between groups of people. These include things like life expectancy or the likelihood of developing a physical/mental health problem. These inequalities are often the result of the way in which the opportunity for a healthy life is distributed unfairly across a population.

Individual factors such as genetics play a small role in people's health (overall). The largest impact on people's health actually comes from where they live (things like housing) and how they are treated. The early part of someone's life, such as their experiences during the first 1001 days, and their access to services that may help them, can amplify these risks.

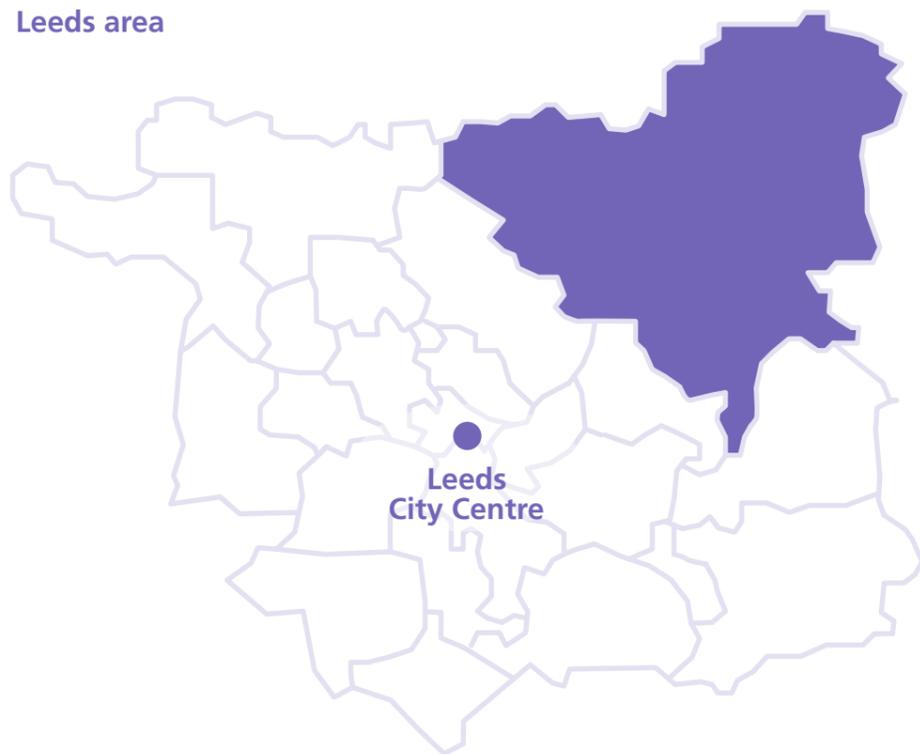
So, children and young people who experience more things that we know contribute to health inequalities may be more likely to develop mental health problems.

We know that the children and young people who are most likely to develop problems with their mental health are those who:

- Are excluded from school
- Are living in poverty
- Have experienced trauma
- Are in the justice system
- Are looked after children in the care system
- Are new to the country and asylum seekers
- Have special educational needs



We can show an example of health inequalities in Leeds using information from the School Census (January 2020).



If all children and young people in Boston Spa and the surrounding villages were a class of 30...

- 2 would be eligible for free school meals
- 0 would live in neighbourhoods from the 20% most deprived areas in England
- 3 would be from a Black and Minority Ethnic Group
- 1 would speak English as an additional language
- 4 would have a special education need or disability



If all children and young people in Richmond Hill, Burmantoffs, Lincoln Green and Gipton were a class of 30...

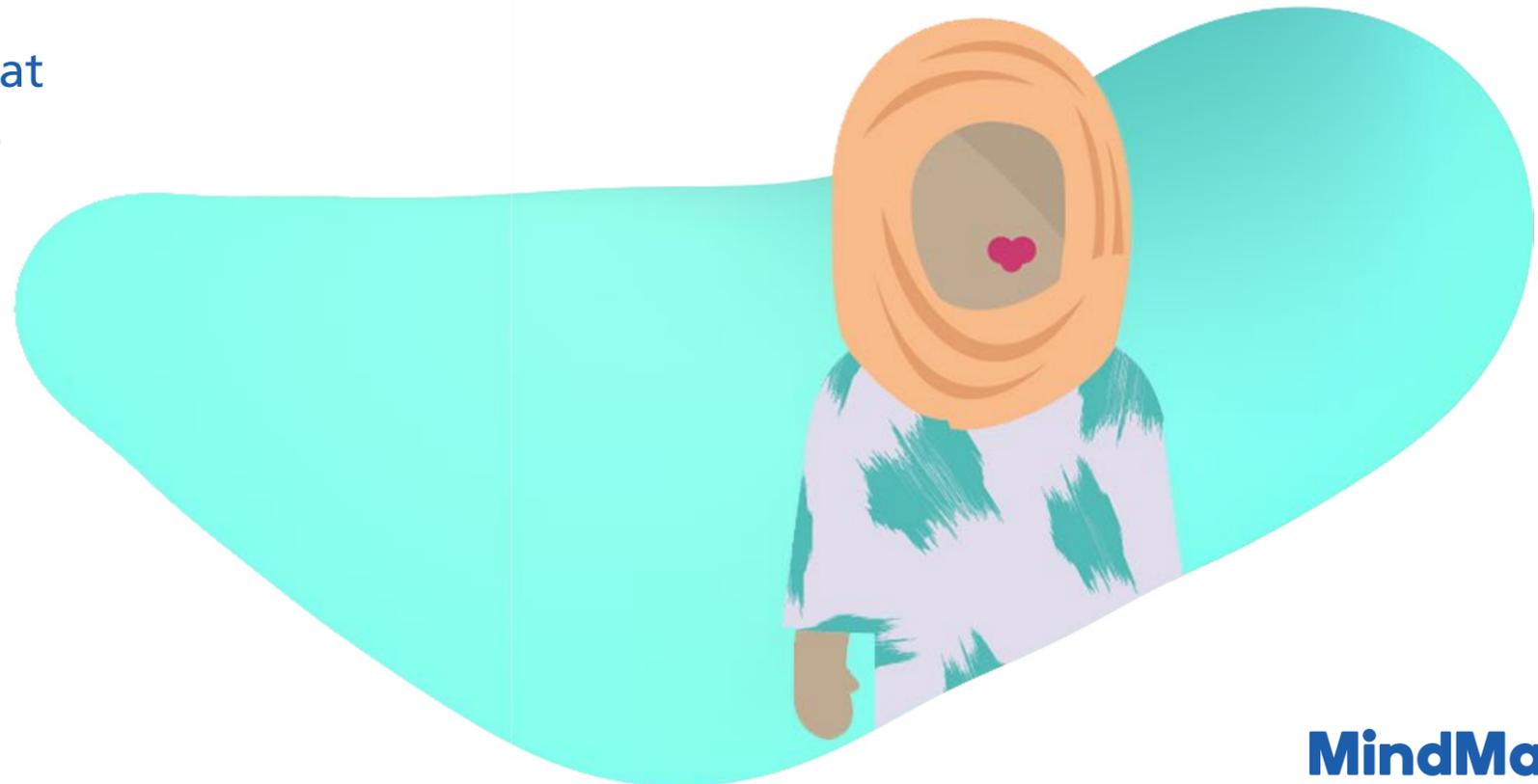
- 11 would be eligible for free school meals
- 29 would live in neighbourhoods from the 20% most deprived areas in England
- 21 would be from a Black and Minority Ethnic Group
- 14 would speak English as an additional language
- 5 would have a special education need or disability

Protective factors and resilience.

Just like there are factors that make someone more likely to experience mental health problems, there are also protective factors. Protective factors can be within the individual, in the family, or in the school or community – and they all link together. So for example a good attachment as a baby with your parent or carer develops your ability to self-regulate your emotions and make friends in childhood.

Resilience is a concept that refers to being able to cope with adversity or difficult life events.

Resilience can be increased by a positive interaction between the protective factors at the individual, family and community level.



The voice of children, young people and their families in Leeds

Through every step of the way, children and young people have been involved in shaping this plan. We are listening and learning about what is important to them when they access mental health support. What they've told us so far has helped us think about how we can improve this support:

"I have a story to tell. Share information effectively, with my permission, so I don't have to repeat myself."



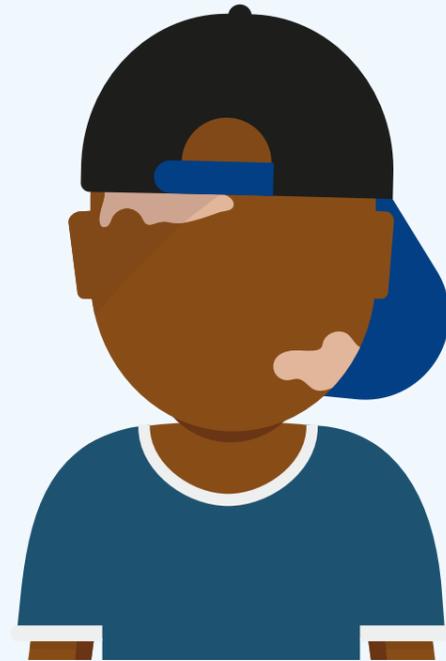
"If I'm vulnerable and have complex needs I should get extra help and support early enough to make a difference."



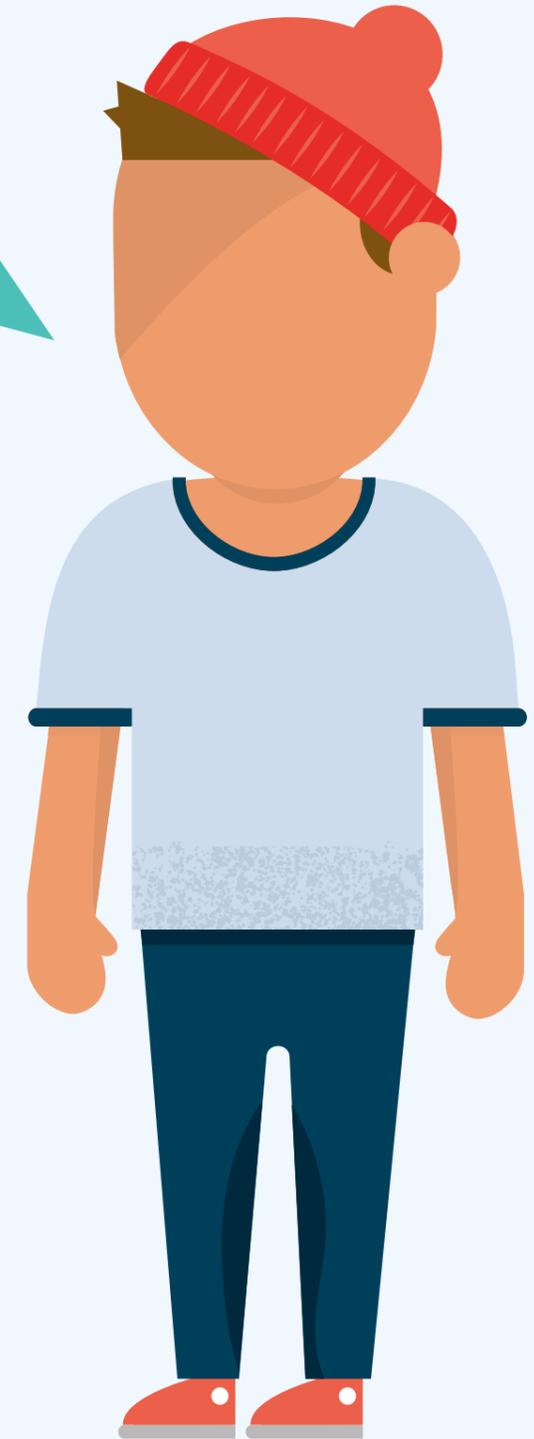
"I will know the name of the person responsible for my support. Show me that you are a human being too."



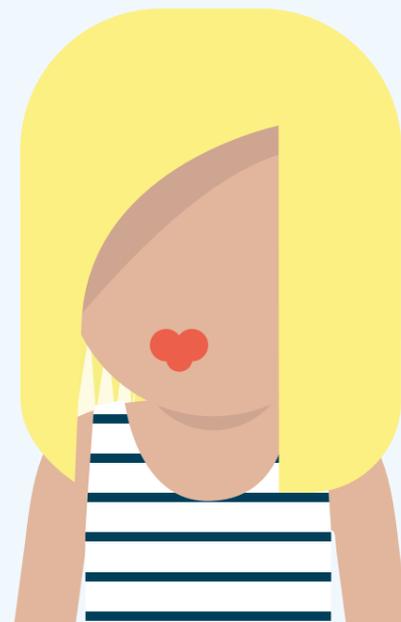
“I want to be able to get help quickly and easily when I ask for it, especially when I am in crisis.”



“I may be facing more than just a mental health challenge – I might have issues with drugs or alcohol or be having other difficulties. Please take this into account and don't judge me.”



“When I get older and if I need to move into adult support services, I want to feel supported and not abandoned.”



The seven priorities in detail

Priority 1: Prevention

Children and young people, and their families, communities and schools will be supported to promote and strengthen emotional and mental health. We will support nurturing resilient infants, children and young people, **promoting positive mental health and reducing stigma**, using the power of social media for positive messages, peer support and reducing self-harm. We will do all of this with a focus on context and impact of structural disadvantage e.g. poverty.

Children, young people and families raised to us **the importance of the mental health provision in schools**, the role of school staff in supporting children and young people and about the importance of awareness raising and reducing stigma.

“
Access to a safe, positive space where a young person, who may be struggling and feeling overwhelmed, can take timeout and speak to a member of staff, in addition to the support of a ‘buddy/ambassador’ within the school setting was considered central to the school offer.

Young Women’s Mental Health Outcome Based Accountability Report, 2020

Priority 2: Support

Children and young people need the right support at the right time, in the right place and by the right person. Within this priority we will continue to **drive down waiting times** to access services, and **ensure that services are respectful of the diverse communities and cultures that children and young people live in**. Children and young people in crisis will have **swift access to support 24/7** and we will focus on care out of a hospital setting, wherever it is safe to do so.

Children, young people and families told us that lengthy waiting lists were often debilitating, that people often felt in limbo and services should work better together. Communication from services – both while children and young people are waiting and when receiving support – should be better.



Services need to be better at following through on actions and treatment, and reducing waiting times where this is problematic.

[An exploration into the experiences of young people who have both physical health and mental health support needs, 2019](#)

Priority 3: Transition, from children and young people to adults services

Transitions will be flexible, well-supported and we will ensure that young people and their families receive personalised continuity of care. This priority is also recognised within the All Age Mental Health Strategy for Leeds. It focuses on **ensuring seamless and joined up transition for young people from child to adult services**. We will work with adult mental health services to make them young person friendly and recognise the role of parents and carers to ensure they are involved appropriately. Effective handover and communication will mean that young people don't feel they are 'filling gaps' or re-telling their stories.

Children, young people and families told us how much of an important priority this is and we have the whole mental health system across adults and children coming together to make things better.



“Consider how parents can support the process”

“Lack of provision and support during transition can have tragic consequences for young people and their families”

“Manage expectations through open and honest communication”

Young Women's Mental Health Outcome Based Accountability Report, 2020

Priority 4: Inclusion

Children, young people and families who are most vulnerable will receive high quality support when they need it. They have told us that **the current pathway for Autism and ADHD does not help them to get the support they need soon enough.** Increased need has led to longer waiting lists, and often services across health and social care are not integrated or responsive enough which can lead families to seek a diagnosis to get support. We are committed to working together, including with the third sector, so **support can be accessed earlier** and reflects what families tell us would help them.



Workforce development is required in all schools and services to work effectively and inclusively with children and young people with an Autistic Spectrum Condition.

Ballot with parents of children with SEND, July 2019



Priority 5: Impact of trauma

We recognise how Adverse Childhood Experiences and adverse community experiences can lead to trauma and significantly impact on children's outcomes, through into adulthood. We are prioritising the early identification and support of these children and families.

This will develop **trauma informed practice across the city with clear access to expert advice and intervention when needed.** We will work closely with colleagues in adult services to include the intergenerational aspect of trauma and the importance of 'Think Family, Work family'.

This helps move the conversation on from 'what is wrong with this child' to 'what has happened to this child'.

Children, young people and families told us about the importance of understanding what has happened to a child or young person, and working with the whole family.



Good quality training for all school staff in trauma and attachment. It would be wonderful for every school in Leeds to be able to adequately support children whose barriers to learning are caused by past or present trauma.

Ballot with parents of children with SEND, July 2019

Priority 6: Parent, carer and family support

We will embed a 'Think Family' approach across all services. This focusses on improving communication with parents and carers and ensuring that they feel 'part of the team'. **We will improve our promotion to parents and carers so they know where they can access support and will increase the availability of this support to families, including siblings.**

The feedback children, young people and families gave us was an overwhelming feeling that we need to do more to support parents and carers, to recognise the importance of this we have made it a standalone priority.



Parents told us that weekends were predictably more difficult and generally when everything kicked off. Families described weekends as terrifying at times, when they are at their most tired point, and their child behaving in ways which undid the help they'd had during the week. They remembered counting down the hours until the community team were back open. To be met with an answerphone or someone advising A&E as their only options, many parents felt abandoned and frightened.

[CAMHS New Care Model West Yorkshire: Key themes and messages from parents and siblings. April, 2020](#)

Priority 7: Health Inequalities

There are significant health inequalities for children and young people with mental health problems in terms of access, experience and outcomes. These inequalities strongly relate to poverty and specific communities, particularly those from diverse community groups. The Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs Assessment: Children and young people from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority Communities in Leeds (2019) gives us a good understanding of the particular needs of some of the diverse groups of children and young people and provides the starting point for this priority area in year 1 of the strategy.

“Black and minority ethnic parents/carers reported waiting times for support as key barrier, followed by not knowing how to access support

[SEMH Needs Assessment Children and Young People from BAME Communities in Leeds, 2019](#)



“I felt discussing mental state might bring shame on my family”.

Making sure it happens

How will we know the plan is working?

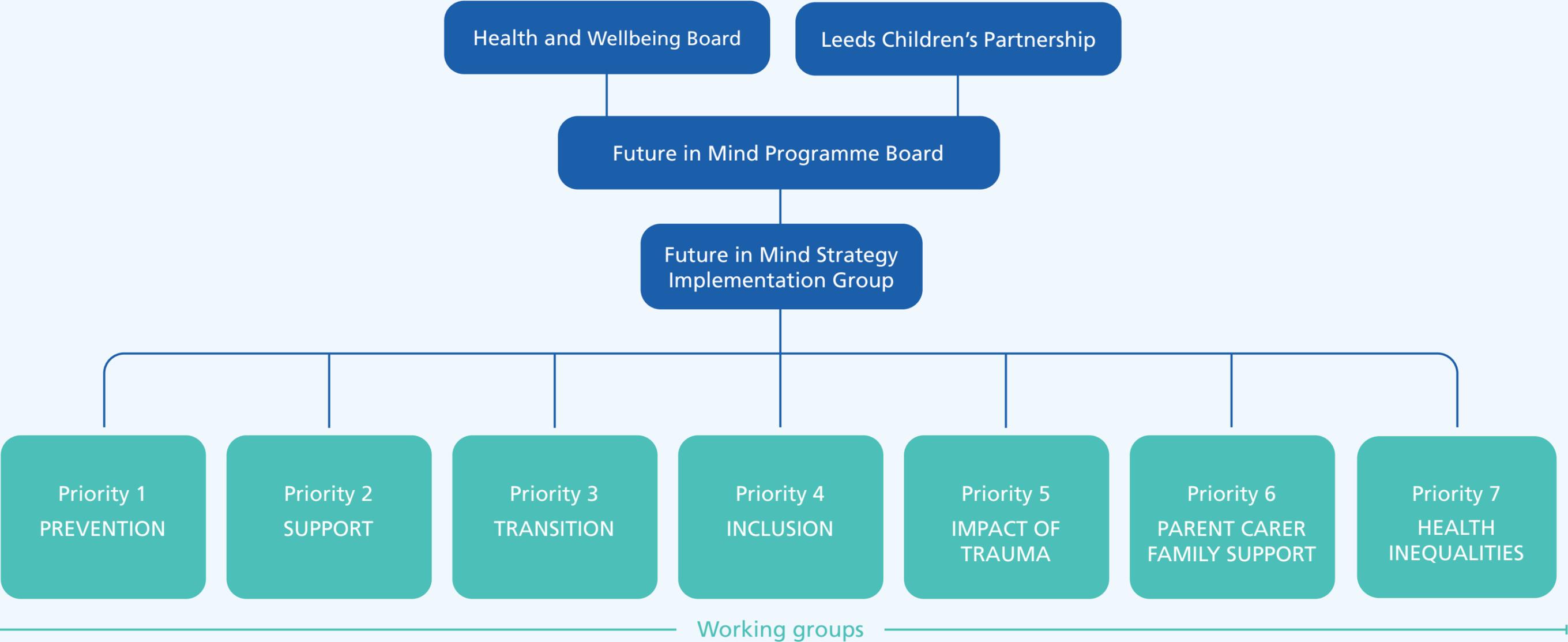
- We will keep on asking children, young people and families about Future in Mind, Leeds and things relating to the 7 priorities
- We will get detailed feedback from children, young people and families who are using services
- We will check the number of children and young people accessing services
- We will check the number of children and young people going to A&E in crisis
- We will check the number of children and young people admitted to hospital because of their mental health
- We will check that vulnerable groups have equitable access to services



Making sure it happens

We have a governance structure in place

This shows where we report to in Leeds. The boards will hold us to account for the work we do.



How can young people get involved?

Are you under 25?

Are you interested in how MindMate works behind the scenes?

We meet regularly with young people and offer volunteer opportunities. We'd love to hear from you if you'd like to be involved.

Find out more: mindmate.org.uk/are-you-interested-in-volunteering/



Thank you

We hope you found this document useful. If you have any questions or feedback, please get in touch. Visit the [MindMate website](https://mindmate.org.uk) and follow us on social media.

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