

	Recommendation	Stage	Complete
8	<p>Also, that the Director of Children’s Services and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds carry out a review of the funding for children with Special Educational Needs within Early Years, within the next three months, with a particular focus on ensuring that children are offered the same level of high quality support, regardless of the type of setting which they attend.</p>		
	<p><u>July 2011 update</u></p> <p>Update to follow</p> <p><i><u>Director’s Response (Approved by Executive Board August 2009)</u></i> <i>The Director of Children’s Services agrees with this recommendation.</i> <i>A review is being undertaken around funding for young children with disabilities across all sectors to ensure inclusion and access- this will report to the Sure Start partnership in September 2009. There is a planned programme for all Children’s Centres to undertake Early Support training by April next year- this is a national programme to facilitate parental engagement as central to all planning for their disabled child.</i></p> <p><i><u>December 2009 update</u></i> <i>Earlier this year the Private Child-care Providers network and the Early Years Reference Group which oversees the implementation of flexible free entitlement for nursery education and the implementation of an equitable funding system for free entitlement in school and Private Voluntary and Independent Sector (PVI) nurseries, requested that a small group should look into the cost of inclusion in PVI providers. The aim of this piece of work was to develop a formula for the cost of inclusion in PVI settings and to make recommendations around the affordability for such provision in the current economic climate. The ultimate aim was to reduce barriers to inclusion in the PVI sector and ensure that this provision was sustainable.</i></p> <p><i>The work was undertaken by a small group of volunteers from the PVI sector and supported by early years business support. The findings of this group have been compiled into a draft report 'the cost of inclusion in PVI settings'. This report will be ready for consultation in the new year and the results of the consultation will be incorporated into the report.</i></p>		

The outline recommendations are as follows

- a) Consultation on the following recommendations should take place*
 - i) A single equitable funding system should be implemented across PVI and Maintained sector settings*
 - ii) The amount of funding for each type of setting should be the same per unit*
 - iii) The funding delivery system should be equitable*
 - iv) Further investigations should be undertaken to ascertain if we are able to pay this funding to the PVI sector through the free entitlement system which would reduce the resources needed to administer the system and if this would be acceptable to PVI settings*
- b) After consultation and recommendations from this are incorporated into the report, implementation should be undertaken at the earliest possible opportunity*
- c) Further investigation needs to be undertaken on funding methods for those above the age of 5*

March 2010 update

Extensive work is now being undertaken on a single funding formula for inclusion. Extensive consultation with all providers will commence in April 2010 with the intention of implementation of April 2011 of a new funding formula equitable across all sectors including schools.

September 2010 Update

Work is being undertaken as part of the Children's services Transformation Programme around the formation of an Integrated service for Children with Disabilities. It has been agreed to postpone the implementation of a Single Funding Formula for Inclusion until further progress has been made on this. In this financial year all children regardless of the setting they attend have been funded in the same way (EYFFI) although not at the same level. All plans are in place to implement a single funding formula when the time is right.

Reduction of children at risk of language delay: Data from the Every Child a Talker programme in Leeds shows an average reduction of 21% (137) of children at risk of language delay since the programme began in September 2009. Approximately 653 children (aged 2-4, accessing early years provision in childminding, school, children centre or pre-school settings) have benefited from the targeted programme led by an Early Language Consultant in partnership between the Early Years Service and Speech and Language Therapy service. 85% (555) of children in the programme are now working at or above the expected level of development, building a firm foundation for language development when starting Reception class.

December 2010 Update

The funding solutions for disabled children remain under discussion. No further progress can be made on this until the plans for an integrated disabled children's service are further developed. Progress will be reviewed through the transformation programme in children's services.

	Recommendation	Stage	Complete
1	<p>That the Executive Board includes an increased resource for children's social care staffing in the budget proposals to be put forward to Council in February 2010.</p> <p>Also that the costings provided to us by the Chief Officer for Children and Young People's Social Care for a caseload of 20 cases are used as a minimum starting point for working towards a children's social work service with sufficient staff to ensure a reasonable caseload, and promoting quality outcomes for the children and families of Leeds.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>(not achieved)</p> <p>Progress made acceptable.</p> <p>Continue monitoring</p>	
	<p><u>July 2011 update</u></p> <p>The challenge around fully addressing this recommendation and specifically the 'target' caseload suggested of 20 cases continues to be the trend of a growing number of referrals to social care. As outlined in previous responses to this recommendation, good progress on social worker recruitment, training and service development has been made, which is reflected in greater confidence and better practice in the way that referrals are handled. However, to address caseload numbers over the longer term we need to work across services to reduce the number of referrals to social care. This makes the delivery of the ongoing structural work to create a more integrated children's service and provide more effective early intervention critical.</p> <p><i><u>Director's Response (Approved by Executive Board February 2010)</u></i></p> <p><i>Children's Services recognize and value the depth of the Scrutiny Inquiry into Safeguarding and appreciate the timeliness of this interim report and its recommendation. The Interim Director of Children's Services is happy to support the first part of the Board's recommendation. The need for additional resource has been highlighted through analysis carried out with Children and Young People's Social Care during 2009/10. Resource levels are also a key theme in the report on the announced inspection of safeguarding and looked after children's services, published on 7th January 2010. The Council is committed to responding effectively to the findings of that report. A separate report about the announced inspection is also on the February Executive Board agenda.</i></p> <p><i>Before the announced inspection, as Scrutiny Board's interim report recognises, work had already started to help reduce caseloads. In October 2009, for example, it was agreed that capacity should be increase through 25 new Advanced Practitioner posts. Eight of these have been recruited and will be starting work in these posts in February. The second wave of recruitment has now commenced.</i></p> <p><i>In view of the Scrutiny Board's recommendation, Executive Board is asked to note the report also on its February agenda, which sets out the Council's proposed revenue budget for 2010/11. In broad terms, the scrutiny recommendation is already taken account of within the proposed budget, which incorporates a £6.2 million increase for Children and Young People's Social Care.</i></p>		

What this proposed increase does not do is direct the full amount suggested in the Scrutiny Board's interim report for the immediate recruitment of the additional social worker numbers suggested (and the administrative and managerial staff needed to support these extra numbers). This would be an unrealistic ambition given the limitations of the support of qualified social workers currently available. Instead, the 2010/11 budget proposals include a two-year approach to increasing social work capacity. Year one builds-in additional funding for the 25 advanced practitioners, alongside a re-designation of other funding into additional frontline social work posts. Year two (2011/12) will allow for further new posts to be built into the social worker establishment. The two-year approach is pragmatic, with a strong focus in year one on remodeling the existing workforce to undertake more support functions and release social worker capacity. Importantly, this increased capacity is part of a wider approach to improving the quality of practice at the front line and the quality of service as a whole.

It is suggested therefore that Executive Board endorses the recommendation of the Scrutiny Board but rather than proposing the immediate recruitment of the number of additional social workers and support staff suggested in the scrutiny's report, agreed a more pragmatic approach, combining the remodeling of existing services along with phased recruitment of additional frontline staff. This is considered a better way to achieve the improved quality and reduced case loads being sought. Over the next two years this approach can significantly improve our support for vulnerable children and young people in Leeds.

If approved, Children's Services will welcome the opportunity to report progress on this approach to the Scrutiny Board. In addition, the progress and the impact of this work will be closely monitored by the newly established Improvement Board, ensuring it is continually and effectively reviewed. Executive Board will be kept up-to-date through the monitoring reports on the Children's Services Improvement Plan.

September 2010 update

In February 2010, both the Executive Board and Full Council approved a budget for 2010/11 that includes significant additional investment in Children and Young People's Social Care. A proportion of that investment has been used for the recruitment of additional social workers. Since February the number of Advanced Practitioners in post has risen to 12, another round of recruitment to these posts is underway. A number of temporary additional Team managers have also been appointed. Furthermore, over the summer 35 new social workers have also been recruited. A further round of recruitment for social workers is also about to be launched.

These new social workers, when combined with the agency staff who have been retained, have helped to increase capacity, which has in turn had a positive impact on caseloads. At present the average caseload is approximately 22 per social worker. However, it is important to recognise that given that many of the recently appointed social workers are newly qualified, workloads are being managed to reflect their experience.

We would anticipate a continuing positive impact on caseloads through:

- Ongoing recruitment drives – a budget is in place to enable continuing recruitment of social workers. Though this must be considered in the context of the national shortage of social workers and the competition this creates.*
- The service re-design work that is a key part of the transformation programme in children's services. The re-design work is informed by the intention to reduce case loads in child protection work to 20. More details about this can be provided on request.*

December 2010 update

Leeds now has 14 Advanced Practitioners in post and a further five people have been recommended for the post, subject to the necessary HR processes and checks.

At the start of December the latest round of interviews for social workers was due to commence. The latest round of recruitment saw a significant level of interest. We hope to be able to update the Board further at their December meeting.

Work to address case loads is continuing. The latest analysis (carried out in November) showed case loads for social workers in Child Protection Teams down to an average of 21.6 per social worker. Although case load levels continue to be managed to reflect the experience of different social workers. The service re-design work to reorganise teams locally is progressing. A draft structure has been developed and is currently subject to approval as part of the wider transformation programme in children's services. As stated previously, this model has been informed by the intention to reduce the average case load for social workers in child protection teams to 20.

March 2011 update

The unannounced inspection of contact and referral arrangements in January 2011 found that 'Social work staff have manageable caseloads, regular supervision and access to appropriate training'. This is a positive reflection on the recruitment and wider work that has been done to address case load issues.

However, this remains an area that requires careful management and monitoring, particularly given increases in the number of referrals to CYP Social Care. The service re-design work that will change the way teams are organised is moving forward as part of the wider transformation programme and it is anticipated that this will be fully implemented by September 2011. In order to be fully effective this will need to run alongside wider efforts to develop our early intervention work, which is a key feature of the transformation programme.

	Recommendation	Stage	Complete
2	<p>That the Chief Executive of Education Leeds ensures that parents, schools and governors continue to be reminded that term time holidays are discouraged.</p>	2 (Achieved)	✓
	<p><u>July 2011 update</u></p> <p>A copy of the revised Extended Leave guidance has been sent to a wide range of partners including chairs of governing bodies, headteachers, elected members and so on. From the limited responses it is clear that some schools wish to agree their own policy and wish to take an even more strict view of requests and do not wish to authorise any extended leave or holidays during term time. This remains the final decision of any school's governing body – the legislation makes provision for schools to permit periods of leave but this is ultimately at the discretion of the headteacher and his or her governing body.</p> <p>The responses show that other schools will find it helpful to make reference to this document when they receive requests for periods of extended leave.</p> <p>Minor grammatical errors will be completed and the guidance will now be published.</p> <p>The use of Penalty Notices for instances where it is appropriate continues as part of the city's on-going strategy to reduce the number of schools days lost due to parents requesting holidays during term time. This remains a challenge when "Butlins" holiday resorts recently advertised holidays where parents stayed for free if the holiday was taken mid-week for at least 3 nights. Leeds is planning to make a formal response to the chief exec of "Butlins", as are other regional neighbours.</p> <p><i>Director's Response (Approved by Executive Board June 2010)</i> <i>Following the lead taken by the North West area which reduced the overall number of days lost to holidays, more clusters and families of schools are adopting consistent holiday in term time policies across primary and high schools.</i> <i>The Attendance Strategy Team support schools by using penalty notices in instances of excessive, unauthorised holidays in term time.</i> <i>Analysis on the impact of holidays in term time is shared with schools and area partnerships.</i> <i>The policy on extended leave is being reviewed and updated. Once this has been completed, information will be sent out to all schools and key partners reminding them of the importance of regular school attendance and the impact holidays in school time has on learning.</i> <i>The Attendance Strategy Team utilises a variety of media to communicate with schools, parents and governing bodies e.g. press, radio, campaigns, newsletter, bulletin etc.</i></p>		

September 2010 update

A working group has been set up to review the current policy on Extended Leave which includes primary heads, Attendance Strategy, elected members and community representatives with plans for a consultative process which includes the voice of parents and families.

This revised policy also clarifies and reaffirms to schools the guidance from the DfE that holidays in term time are not a parental right and are authorised at the school's discretion, in line with policies that must be communicated regularly to parents. Those policies are increasingly being adhered to by clusters and families of schools to deliver consistent responses to schools in their localities for example the North West area policy as the first example of schools working collaboratively to agree a single approach to holiday requests.

December 2010 update

More and more clusters across the city are adopting consistent approaches to holidays in term time. The positive impact of this is being seen in the data – in 2009/10 primary school children attended an extra 9,000 days compared to 2008/09 because fewer parents removed their children from school during term time. In the secondary phase, the impact was an extra 6,500 days of school attendance.

When the socio-economic background of pupils who do take holidays in term-time was examined, there were not significant differences in the secondary phase. However, there is a small difference in the primary phase where parents who are defined as “comfortably off” take more holidays in term time than other categories i.e. wealthy achievers, hard-pressed etc. There is also a significant difference in parental attitudes to holidays across phases – almost twice as many parents take their primary age children on holiday than secondary.

An initial draft of the Extended Leave guidance has been circulated to the members of the working group and to key partners for comments and amendment. The guidance will be circulated to an appropriate consultative audience before the end of January to enable to contribution of key community representatives.

March 2011 update

Good practice from two primary schools in the city who have seen significant decreases in requests for Extended Leave has been incorporated into the guidance which is now under consultation/comment.

	Recommendation	Stage	Complete
2	<p>That the Director of Children's Services and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds explore children and young people's participation in activities and identify barriers to participation in more depth, either by including questions in the next Every Child Matters survey or by developing a separate survey using the Be Heard survey tool.</p>	<p>4 (not achieved) Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring</p>	
	<p><u>July 2011 update</u></p> <p>It has been decided that a non-user survey would be the most appropriate method. Cluster Managers are interested in undertaking the survey with schools in their local areas, as this information will be very useful to them. It is also hoped to capture the 16-19 age group through Breeze and the local colleges. However the progress of this work continues to be affected by limited capacity.</p> <p><u>Director's Response</u> <i>It is agreed that understanding barriers to participation is an important area of work. Officers will explore the most appropriate way to gather young people's views on this. This may involve using the Every Child Matters survey, or the Be Heard survey tool, but it may also be that another approach is considered more likely to gather a wider range of opinions from those young people who do not currently participate.</i></p> <p><i>The new Children's Trust Board are also investigating opportunities to widen participation and will be working with young people to explore suitable opportunities.</i></p> <p><u>January 2011 update</u></p> <p><i>We continue to recognise the importance of understanding barriers to participation. The Every Child Matters survey steering group have considered the scrutiny recommendation, however it is not felt that using the ECM survey would be the best way to build a more detailed understanding around this issue. Officers from different areas of participation work are currently working together to identify the best way to carry an effective piece of research with non-service users. The progress of this is however subject to other areas of work and limited capacity.</i></p>	<p>Suggest monitor again in 6 months</p>	

	Recommendation	Stage	Complete
3	<p>That the Director of Children’s Services ensures that the local analysis of findings from surveys such as the Every Child Matters survey and the Youth Service user survey is routinely made available at a local level to Area Committees and Clusters to inform their planning of future activity.</p>	<p>2 (Achieved)</p>	<p>✓</p>
	<p><u>July 2011 update</u></p> <p>We intend to carry out the youth service user survey/consultation in October 2011. With regards to the findings from the consultation, we intend to action as outline in recommendation 3 and ensure that the information is made available and accessible to Area Committees and Clusters as outlined.</p> <p><u>Director’s Response</u> <i>We will work towards providing future survey information to both clusters and Area Committees in a routine way. Cluster Managers will be able to access data from the 2010 Every Child Matters Survey later this year. For 2010 it will be possible to break this down to wedge level and in future we will aim to localise this further. A process is already in place for reporting key children’s services performance information to Area Committees on a half-yearly basis. In future we will work to incorporate key survey outcomes into this where appropriate.</i></p> <p><u>December 2010 update</u></p> <p><i>There have been no significant further developments relating to this recommendation at this stage. A new system is now in place that enables a breakdown of Every Child Matters survey data to cluster level, however as we are still in the early stages of collecting this data it will be some time before a full picture by cluster can be shared. The latest Youth Services User Survey is currently being developed with input from a group of young people.</i></p> <p><i>We will share the details of these surveys with Area Committees and clusters as appropriate at a timely point in the future.</i></p>		

	Recommendation	Stage	Complete
1	<p>That the Director of Children's Services considers extending the role of the Business Support Adviser (BSA) to include Herd Farm and possibly also Lineham Farm, and reports back to us in 3 months.</p>	2 (Achieved)	✓
	<p><u>July 2011 update</u></p> <p>David Ball, BSA has been meeting with Denise Ragan, Youth Work manager at Herd Farm and Victoria Fuggles, Senior Youth Officer on a regular basis. The main focus of their joint work has been to explore the potential options for future governance and establish a clear plan to move forward on this agenda (see update under recommendation 3). Other work led by the BSA has included identifying external funding opportunities and establishing contact with local colleges, specifically the Leeds College of Building. This new relationship has enabled Herd Farm to progress an exciting project that provides young people with the opportunity to gain new, accredited skills by building a "bungalow" on the Herd Farm site. David has also made contact with Leeds University and Leeds Met regarding possible student placements, Denise has picked up these links and further discussions are due to take place in the near future.</p> <p><i>Director's Response April 2011</i> A business support adviser has been allocated to Herd Farm. They will work with the centre manager and locality senior youth officer to increase efficiency and consider further marketing and income opportunities. We will report back to scrutiny on plans in 3 months.</p>		
2	<p>That the Director of Children's Services explores the scope for children's social care to make more effective use of Silverdale Holiday Camp, and reports back to us in 3 months.</p>	4 (not achieved) Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring	
	<p><u>July 2011 update</u></p> <p>A meeting has now been scheduled in the Head of Service's diary. We will report back after the meeting has taken place.</p> <p><i>Director's Response April 2011</i> The Chief Officer for CYPSC and the Head of Service for Looked after Children will meet with representatives from Silverdale and consider how best to use the holiday opportunities provided by the outdoor centre in Morecambe. We will report back on best use in 3 months.</p>		

	Recommendation	Stage	Complete
3	<p>That the Director of Children’s Services considers future governance options for Herd Farm’s long term sustainability, including the establishment of a ‘Friends’ organisation or exploring a Trust option and reports back to us in 3 months on any avenues to be pursued in more depth.</p>	2 (Achieved)	✓
	<p><u>July 2011 update</u></p> <p>A basic analysis has been carried out regarding the viability of establishing Trust Status for Herd Farm. Although there are potential gains from this, it is apparent that it is a lengthy process and would require a team in place to move the concept forward. The setting up of a “Friends of Herd Farm” would have been an excellent starting point for this; however, the initial response from potential partners/members was not promising. The BSA contacted a number of local organisations and businesses and invited them to join a “Friends of Herd Farm” The focus of this group was to be predominantly fund-raising activity and identifying external sources of funding. Unfortunately, there was a poor response and no one expressed an interest in participating.</p> <p>The key advantage of Herd Farm gaining Trust status would be the increased potential to attract external finance in terms of commercial sponsorship, legacies and donations. However, given the near vicinity and almost identical core business to Lineham Farm, by pursuing this option, we would be instigating direct competition for securing funding from both the private sector and charitable bodies between the two provisions, and therefore possibility put both Farms at significant financial risk.</p> <p>To establish an effective Trust relies on the ability to recruit suitable individuals that have both the necessary skills/expertise as well as commitment, to take on the role, responsibilities and liabilities of a trustee. The disappointing response we had regarding the “Friends of” group clearly suggests that this is likely to be a challenging task in itself.</p> <p>Taking these issues into account we feel that it is not the right time to pursue the suggested option of gaining Trust status for Herd Farm. Instead, we intend to establish a Herd Farm Steering Group. The membership of which will consist of key stakeholders. We are confident that this option will provide many of the benefits that Trust status would bring without the associated risks. Some of which are outlined below;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater influence of stakeholders regarding the governance and development of the centre • Increased levels of partnership working, which will inevitably support the Centre to run more efficiently 		

- Enable us to access a wider number of funding streams as membership will come from both the private and voluntary sector who could apply for funding on the Centre's behalf
- Wider skills, expertise and knowledge base coming from representatives of other organisations outside of the Local authority
- Increased accountability

We envisage that as the steering group matures, a "Friends of..." fund raising sub group could be established as well as a young people's steering group. This steering group could evolve over time into an independent trust.

The initial presentation evening for the Herd Farm Steering group has been planned for the evening of Tuesday 13th September. Invitees for the event include all current stakeholders e.g. Eversheds, HSBC, Business in the Community, a number of clusters and individual schools/academies, Vine project, Leeds Ahead and officers from other Children Services departments. Many of the potential members of the steering group have already expressed their commitment to participate.

Director's Response April 2011

Our initial reaction is that the establishment of "Friends of Herd Farm" is more feasible than the creation of a Trust. An options appraisal will be carried out. We would want to build in the role of young people into any new governance arrangements. The support of the Business Support Adviser links to this recommendation too.

	Recommendation	Stage	Complete
7	<p>That the DCS and the Trustees of Lineham Farm explore opportunities for greater co-cooperation between Herd Farm and Lineham Farm with the aim of securing the long term sustainability of both centres in the current economic climate.</p> <p>That the DCS and Lineham Farm Trustees be asked to confirm their commitment to this recommendation and that the DCS reports back to us regularly on progress</p>	2 (Achieved)	✓
	<p><u>July 2011 update</u></p> <p>Staff at Herd Farm have provided operational support and guidance to staff from Lineham Farm with regard to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leeds City Council procurement policies and processes. • Exchanging details of current suppliers of goods and services to ensure best value. • Support in establishing local procedures and recording systems for the raising of income. <p><i><u>Director's Response April 2011</u></i> <i>A working party supporting the aspirations of Lineham Farm is already in existence. Senior Officers from Children's Services are working with the trustees and closer links with Herd Farm remain on the agenda.</i></p>		