

**Leeds SEND Youth Council involvement and achievements**

**1st September 2023 to 31st August 2024**

The Leeds SEND Youth Council is group of young people aged 11 to 25 years old with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who live in Leeds or attend school in Leeds.

The Leeds SEND Youth Council take part in a range of youth voice activities that enable them to share their experiences and feedback about SEND services in Leeds.

Feedback from consultations with children and young people with SEND can be found here: <https://www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk/have-your-say/children-and-young-people/consultation-feedback>

Contact [VIC@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:VIC@leeds.gov.uk) for more information about the Leeds SEND Youth Council.

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| **Regional representation**  Representing the voices of young people in Leeds on a regional level. |
| Three members of the SEND Youth Council joined the Yorkshire and Humber regional SEND Youth Alliance group to represent the voices of young people in Leeds.  The members attended their first SEND Youth Alliance meeting on the 28th August 2024. |
| **Campaigns** |
| **2024 campaign**  The Leeds SEND Youth Council have used existing data and consultation feedback to explore ideas for their next campaign / project.  Members have voted, and their next campaign will focus on mental health support for young people with special educational needs and / or disabilities.  **Communicating with young people with SEND**  The Leeds SEND Youth Council have developed an eLearning programme that focusses on communicating with young people with SEND. The eLearning will be shared across education, health and social care. The eLearning was launched August 2024.  **Raising awareness of disabilities**  A partnership project between Child Friendly Leeds, Leeds Youth Voice and Town Centre Securities to raise awareness of disabilities working towards improving Child Friendly Leeds wish 12, making Leeds a more inclusive city.  The team spoke to young people about what this means to them and a clear message was around raising awareness of disabilities, particularly hidden disabilities - where the disability may not be obvious just by looking at the person.  This kickstarted an art project, asking young people "How can Leeds be more inclusive to those with hidden disabilities?", so that children and young people are not feeling judged. The SEND Youth Council, as well as 4 other education settings in Leeds took part in a session to design artwork.  The artwork created by young people has been developed into 3 posters, which will be displayed around Leeds in community hubs, libraries and doctors' surgeries. This will help to spread awareness of the perspective of young people in Leeds with hidden disabilities. The artwork was exhibited at a unit in the Merrion Centre Saturday 18 May to Tuesday 4th June 2024.  Information about the project can be [found here](https://wearechildfriendlyleeds.com/raising-awareness-of-disabilities/). |
| **Sessions**  Each month members of the Leeds SEND Youth Council are invited to join sessions, the sessions are an opportunity for members to share their feedback and views with SEND services. |
| **Commissioning digital short breaks image –** Members voted for their preferred image for the new digital short breaks platform.  **SEND Youth Alliance –** The Yorkshire and Humber SEND Youth Alliance members attended a session to gather the views of Leeds young people for their new EHCP appeals video. Members of the SEND Youth Council will be involved in helping to develop the video that will be aimed at young people.  **Health needs assessment** –The Public Health Children and Families team (Leeds City Council) aims to ensure that every child has the ‘Best Start in Life’ and that children and young people experience and achieve their best, in terms of health and wellbeing. Members took part in a consultation to gather their feedback to help decision makers to further understand the health needs of young people, help in the planning of future health services for young people and to identify future priorities for the Children and Families Team and wider health services.  **Leeds Local Offer (SEND) user testing** –The Leeds Local Offer (SEND) website provides information about education, health and social care services for 0 to 25 year olds with special educational needs and disabilities and their families. In April 2024 the new website was launched. Members of the SEND Youth Council undertook user testing of the website. Amends were made to the website based on the feedback received by young people.  **Career exploration tool –** Colleagues from the Leeds Teaching Hospital Trust NHS spoke to members about the developments of the new career exploration tool (health and care horizons). Members were shown the website developments and gave their feedback and suggestions for improvements.  **Leeds (SEND) Local Offer –** members reviewed potential new logos for the Leeds SEND Local Offer. They made suggested amends to the logos, which were then implemented with members choosing the final local.  **Young people’s experiences of accessing activities and group –** members developed a video to share their experiences of accessing groups and activities. The video will be used by Scope in their provider training. Alongside the video, members also developed tasks for the training participants to participate in.  **STARS Team Lead interviews** – members developed two interview questions for the STARS Team Lead interviews. The questions will be asked by the adult panel on behalf of the young people.  **Transitions –** Lighthouse Futures Trust met with members of the Leeds SEND Youth Council to gather their feedback and experiences of transitioning between year groups, and then onto college. Lighthouse Futures Trust are developing resources and information to support young people with transitions and will use the feedback members shared.  **Raising awareness of disabilities through artwork –** members took part in a session to design artwork to raise awareness of disabilities. The Voice Influence and Change Team, Child Friendly Leeds and Town Centre Securities are working in partnership to develop posters based on the artwork developed by young people to raise awareness of disabilities. A lunch till take place in 2024.  **Short Breaks Review –** members took part in a focussed session, sharing their views on short breaks and fun activities in Leeds. They spoke about activities they like, take part in and what the barriers are to access fun activities and groups. Those members who weren’t able to attend the session were given the opportunity to share their views and feedback via an online survey.  **Chid Poverty Board Consultation –** Leeds want to help children, young people and families who live in poverty. The Child Poverty Board are updating their Child Poverty Strategy and consulted with groups of young people. Members of the SEND Youth Forum took part in the consultation and shared their views and about what should be included.  **SEND Next Choices –** members met with the Employment and Skills Service (LCC) to share their feedback on the SEND Next Choices event, they shared their suggestions for future events. The team who organise the event are collating all the feedback and will implement some of the suggestions when planning the 2024 event. |
| **Consultation surveys**  Consultation surveys are shared with the Leeds SEND Youth Council to enable them to give their views and feedback via online surveys. |
| **Serious Violence Duty Consultation** - The West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Partnership want to understand young people’s perception of the causes of violence and the effect it has on the area, and what they feel should be done locally to prevent and tackle violence.  The online survey was shared with members of the SEND Youth Council to share their feedback and thoughts which will inform and shape future delivery of services.  **Leeds 3 in 1 Refresh -** Leeds City Council are partnering with youth marketing agency, Nerds, to refresh our 3 in1 sexual health services in the borough.  “3 in 1” is the current name used to describe sexual health services for young people in the Leeds area, you may already have had some experience using the service but not previously heard it referred to as “3 in1”.  Members of the SEND Youth Council shared their feedback about the new name, logo design and branding via an online feedback survey.  **Leeds Area SEND Partnership Board Takeover –** students from specialist learning settings in Leeds tookover the Leeds Area SEND Partnership Board as part of National Takeover challenge on 22nd November 2023. Students shared with the board which of the 12 Child Friendly Leeds wishes are most important to young people with SEND. Members of the SEND Youth Forum shared their views on the wishes via an online survey.  The top three wishes for young people were:   * Wish 12 – Leeds in an inclusive city for children and young people with SEND. * Wish 1 – children and young people know how and where to get support for their mental health. * Wish 10 – all children and young people are in learning settings that meet their needs.   The full report can be [found here](https://leedslocaloffer.org.uk/#!/model/page/service/34323). |