

# VOICE AND INFLUENCE IN LEEDS – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

## What is voice and influence?

Leeds wishes for you to express your views, feel heard and be involved in decisions that affect your lives (have a voice and influence). This guide will help you:

- Have a greater awareness of the ways you can share your views and ideas.
- Know how to influence change within your school and community.
- Have access to support and training to develop your skills and confidence.



**You have the right to be listened to and taken seriously.**

**(UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12)**

**You have the right for adults to do what's best for you.**

**(UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 3)**

**You have the right to say what you think about decisions that affect you.**

**(UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12)**



Keep updated about voice and influence opportunities in Leeds by following the Leeds Youth Voice Whatsapp Channel.



Find out more about city wide voice and influence opportunities in Leeds by visiting the Leeds Youth Voice webpage.

## What are the benefits of having a voice and influence?

- Develop confidence to have a voice, take action and make a difference.
- Learn new skills to drive positive change such as communication, planning and delivering campaigns.
- Develop an understanding of, and shape, what's happening in Leeds for children and young people.
- Learn about and contribute to improving services for children and young people in Leeds.
- Represent children and young people in Leeds and be a role model to your peers.
- Learn about politics, share ideas and experiences with decision makers, and work with Councillors.
- Meet lots of different people including other children and young people with similar experiences.
- Make friends and have fun!



## CITY WIDE OPPORTUNITIES

**Leeds Youth Voice Network:** “I have enjoyed being involved in meetings, workshops and projects.”

**Leeds SEND Youth Council:** “I joined to help young people similar to me get the support and help they deserve.”

**Leeds Members of Youth Parliament:** “I have a deeper understanding of the socio-political climate, developed leadership skills and shaped my ability to campaign and advocate effectively.”

**Leeds Children’s Mayor:** “I was scared before, now I can speak to loads of people.”

**Leeds Youth Council:** “I get from this group skills for my CV and new friends with similar interests.”

**The Children in Care Council:** “At first I was really nervous about joining the group, but now I am so happy I did. It is fun and I enjoy it!”

**The Care Leavers Council:** “I’ve gained a lot of experience and I feel like I am helping make a difference.”



**Contact your elected members,** the Leeds Children’s Mayor and Members of Youth Parliament, if you want to learn more or support their campaigns. Email [vic@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:vic@leeds.gov.uk).

**Contact the Voice, Influence and Change** team to learn more or to get involved in any of these groups. Email [vic@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:vic@leeds.gov.uk).

## OPPORTUNITIES IN THE OUTER NORTH EAST



**Contact your local Member of Parliament (MP)** to raise a campaign, or request support for a campaign. Find out who your local MP is by visiting the UK Parliament webpage.



**Contact your local Children’s Champions (Councillors)** to raise issues that affect children and young people in your local area (find out more about the things they can help with by visiting the Child Friendly Leeds 12 Wishes webpage). Email Cllr Ryan Stephenson at [ryan.stephenson@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:ryan.stephenson@leeds.gov.uk).

**Contact your local youth service worker** to get involved in activities and opportunities in your local area run by Leeds City Council. Email Lynne Cherry at [lynne.cherry@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:lynne.cherry@leeds.gov.uk) or Andrew Derra at [andrew.derra@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.derra@leeds.gov.uk).

**Contact your local youth alliance worker** to get involved in activities and opportunities in your local area run by third sector organisations. Email Amanda Sykes at [amanda@barca-leeds.org](mailto:amanda@barca-leeds.org).

