

**Voice and influence of young people with SEND within schools**

**2024/25**

The Voice, Influence and Change Team work in partnership with schools across Leeds to provide opportunities for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities to have a voice and influence on SEND services.

By taking part in the various voice and influence projects students have grown in confidence and gained valuable skills such as team working, organisational skills, employability skills, increased awareness of voting and democracy as well as making friends from across the city.

This report shares voice and influence highlights from the 2024/25 academic year.

You can view this report, previous reports and the voice and influence offer to schools on the [Leeds Local Offer website.](https://www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk/have-your-say/voice-and-influence-schools)

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For more information about any of the projects, or to register your interest in being involved contact [VIC@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:VIC@leeds.gov.uk)

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| **Takeover of the Leeds Area SEND and AP Partnership Board** |
| Every November students with SEND from across Leeds schools takeover the Leeds Area SEND and Alternative Provision Partnership Board. The Takeover is an opportunity for students to share with board members the issues that are most important to them.  On Tuesday 12 November 2024, 40 students from Broomfield South SILC, West SILC, Power House, Priesthorpe, John Jamieson, Bridge Church, Temple Moor and Green Meadows took over the Leeds Area SEND and AP Partnership Board as part of national takeover challenge.  The aim of the takeover was to:   * Learn about each other. * Learn about the [issues that are important to young people](https://www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk/have-your-say/children-and-young-people/issues-tracker) with SEND. * Learn about what we are doing in Leeds to address the issues.   The full takeover report can be [downloaded here](https://www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk/have-your-say/voice-and-influence-schools). |
| **SEND Summit** |
| The SEND Summit provides an opportunity for secondary aged students with SEND to come together to give their views and opinions on service delivery and development as well as finding out about services that are available to them.  The event is a great opportunity for students to meet others, hear about services, visit Leeds Civic Hall and make a difference.    On Wednesday 12 February 2025, 47 students from learning settings across Leeds came together at Leeds Civic Hall to take part in consultations and activities that enabled them to have a voice and influence.   * Broomfield South SILC * Cardinal Heenan * Green Meadows Academy * John Jamieson, East SILC * Lighthouse Futures Trust * Lighthouse School * Oulton Academy * Springwell Academy East * West SILC   Students took part in the what is working well / not working well in Leeds consultation, Family Hubs consultation and Youth Activity Fund consultation as well as having the opportunity to visit service stalls to find out what is available to them in the city.  The full event report can be [downloaded here](https://www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk/have-your-say/voice-and-influence-schools). |
| **Compass House** |
| In 2017; 102 students from across the SILCs took part in the Mark Your Mark ballot (largest youth consultation in the UK). From the ten issues, the students collectively voted that a Curriculum to Prepare us for Life as the top issue for them. Students took over the Leeds Area SEND and AP Partnership Board in November 2017 and spoke to the board about what a curriculum for life means to them and how they would like valuable work experience.  In response, the Compass House work experience project was set up in 2018. With support from Leeds City Council, staff from specialist schools across Leeds supported students to come together to plan and open their very own pop-up shop for one week during the month of December in Kirkgate Market. Students meet monthly from September to December to make all the decisions about the shop (known as Compass House) including making all the products to sell.  Due to the success of the project in 2018, this has now become an annual event.  In December 2024; 91 students from East SILC, West SILC, Broomfield South SILC, Gree n Meadows Academy, The Lighthouse School and Future Horizons had the opportunity to work at the Compass House pop up shop, with hundreds of students contributing to making products to sell.  The full project report can be [downloaded here](https://www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk/have-your-say/voice-and-influence-schools). |
| **2025/26 voice and influence projects** |
| **Takeover of the Leeds Area and AP Partnership Board**  The takeover will take place on Tuesday 25th November 2025, 10.30am till 12.30pm at Leeds Civic Hall. The takeover will be delivered as an event at which students and board members will work together on local issues raised by students in specialist settings in Leeds.  **Compass House (specialist settings only)**  Planning meetings will take place in September, October and November 2025 with the pop up shop opening for one week in December 2025.  **SEND Summit**  The SEND Summit will take place on Wednesday 11th February 2026, 10am till 1.45pm at Leeds Civic Hall.  **Make Your Mark**  Make Your Mark is the largest youth consultation in the UK, and is a bi-annual ballot. The next ballot will take place in 2026, all schools will receive an opportunity to have a pop-up voting station within their school.  **Democracy sessions**  The Voice, Influence and Change Team offer 60-minute democracy sessions which can be delivered within the school setting at any point during the school year. The sessions focus on local democracy and introducing young people to voting. Sessions can be booked by emailing [VIC@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:VIC@leeds.gov.uk)  **Consultations**  Services across Leeds contact the Voice, Influence and Change Team when they are seeking the views of young people in their service review and developments. When these requests are made the team will contact schools and offer to run consultation sessions within the school setting to provide students with the opportunity to have their voices and views heard and listened to.  ***For more information about any of the projects, or to register your interest in being involved contact*** [*VIC@leeds.gov.uk*](mailto:VIC@leeds.gov.uk) |