

# Takeover of the Leeds Area SEND and AP Partnership Board

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**Young people from specialist provisions and schools in Leeds takeover the Leeds Area SEND and AP Partnership Board every November as part of National Takeover Challenge.**

**The takeover is an opportunity for young people to share with the board the issues that are most important to them.**

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**71 young people have been involved in four takeovers of the board since 2021.**

**The board have listened to and responded to the issues that young people have raised.**

# SEND Next Choices: Getting ready for adult life

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Students with SEND are invited to city wide apprenticeship fair, however they find this quite overwhelming as they cannot always access the apprenticeships on offer.

Students would like an event specifically aimed at students with SEND and the options available to them post 16. This would include apprenticeships, careers and also services that can support them in preparing for adulthood.

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The Employment and Skills Team, Leeds City Council, committed to hosting an event for young people to showcase services that can support them as they move into adulthood.

The SEND Next Choices (getting ready adult life) event first ran in June 2022, and is now an annual event in Leeds. The event brings together a wide range of organisations who can answer your queries about your post 16 options if you have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The 2024 event was attended by over 2000 people, with over 70 services in attendance.



*“A brilliant event – I learned so much and was able to find out about support available in the city.”*

*“A very well organised and insightful event to find out more about support and opportunities for SEND young people in Leeds”*

# Give it a Go Event

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**Students feedback that there may be lots of activities happening, but students don't know if they will enjoy the activities and if they do want to attend it isn't always possible due to transport**

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The Voice, Influence and Change Team, Leeds City Council, hosted the first ever 'Give it a Go' event in July 2023.

The event brought together activity providers in Leeds to provide over 60 students with the opportunity to try different activities.

In May 2025, Child Friendly Leeds and Leeds Trinity University partnered together to run the Give it a Go event for a second time. The event was attended by over 100 students.

Leeds Trinity University will be delivering the event annually to enable students to try out different activities and sports.



*"It was really fun and I don't really get chance to do these activities elsewhere."*

*"I didn't want to attend the event, I am so pleased I did as it was amazing!"*

*"It was my first time riding a bike."*

# Playground Resources

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**Students often find when they hit secondary age the playgrounds don't have any play equipment which can often make playtimes quite 'boring'. Students would like some additional play equipment in the playgrounds.**

**Students would like places to play, relax and spend time with their friends.**

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The Voice, Influence and Change Team, Leeds City Council, supported specialist provisions in Leeds to apply for funding to purchase playground equipment.

With support from the VIC Team; students from John Jamieson East SILC applied for further funding to develop their playground provision.

In the summer of 2025; John Jamieson students launched their new playground facilities that included an outdoor café, potting benches and troughs, sensory garden, trampolines and scooters.



*“One of the most successful purchases were the trampolines, they are an effective way for students to regulate themselves.”*

*“Students cannot wait to spend time in the outdoor spaces.”*

# Compass House Work Experience Project

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**Students with the more complex needs are often unable to get valuable work experience and this results in them doing work experience in their own school setting which isn't ideal and doesn't give them an understanding or awareness of work outside the SILC.**

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The Voice, Influence and Change Team worked with students from specialist settings to set up the Compass House work experience project.

The project has been running for 7 years, students come together from settings across Leeds to plan and open their very own pop up shop for one week during the month of December at Leeds Kirkgate Market. Students made all decisions about the shop (known as Compass House) including making all the products to sell.

In the last 7 years; six specialist provisions and over 330 young people have taken part in the project.



*“It might have been the best day ever”*

*“Students gain so many skills and experiences from taking part in the project.”*

*“Compass House has been an amazing opportunity.”*

# Resources developed by students

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**As part of takeover, students have developed resources over the years to share with board members and their services.**

**The resources aim to help practitioners in their practice when working with young people with special, educational needs and disabilities.**

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## **Workers who support us**

The resource was developed by the students to highlight the qualities they would like to see in a range of different workers.

## **Raising awareness of disabilities and how to support us**

The resource was developed by the SEND Youth Council to highlight the various journeys and challenges of young people with SEND and how professionals can support them.

## **Communicating with young people (eLearning)**

The eLearning was developed by the SEND Youth Council to support professionals when communicating with young people with SEND.

**All resources can be [downloaded here](#)**