



Information booklet

The Leeds Local Offer is where children and young people up to 25 years old with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their parents and carers can find information, advice and guidance about support, services and activities that are available to those living in Leeds.



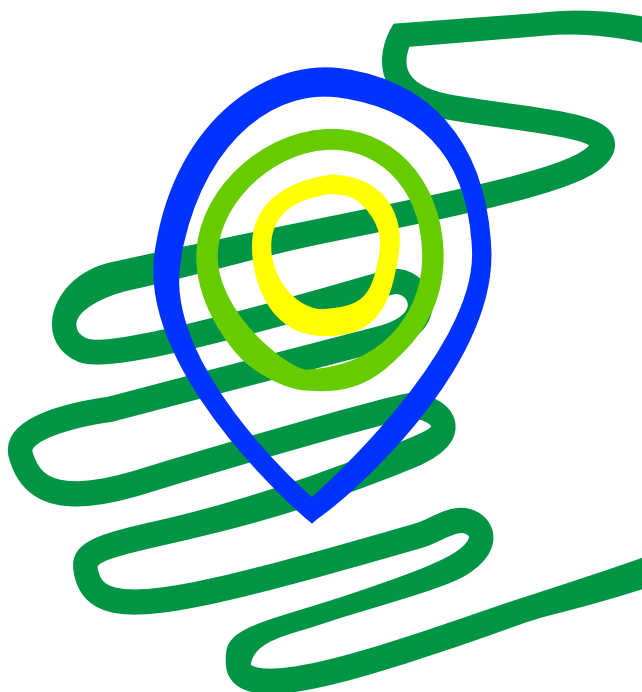
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Welcome and introduction

Welcome to the Leeds Local Offer, we have produced this booklet to help families of a child with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) find out about information, help and support available to them in Leeds.

The information in this booklet can be found on the Leeds Local Offer website (www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk).

If you are unable to find what you are looking for, you can email LLO@leeds.gov.uk

The Leeds Local Offer has a Facebook page, where we provide regular updates about what is happening in Leeds for those with SEND and their families. Just search Leeds Local Offer on Facebook.

What is the Leeds Local Offer?

The Leeds Local Offer is where children and young people up to 25 years old with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their parents and carers can find information, advice and guidance about support, services and activities that are available to those living in Leeds.

The Leeds Local Offer has two key purposes;

- To provide clear, comprehensive, accessible and up to date information about available provision and how to access it.
- To make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations directly involving children and young people with SEND, their parents and carers and service providers in its development and review.

We are committed to continually working with young people with SEND and their families to make our service better, if you would like to get involved then please contact us at LLO@leeds.gov.uk

What are special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

A child or young person has SEND (special educational needs / or disability) if they have a learning difficulty or disability which means they need special educational provisions to be made for them.

Your child might need extra support at school or college if they:

- find it harder to learn than other children their age
- have a condition which means their school or setting is not accessible to them
- struggle with social, emotional or mental health difficulties
- have sensory or physical needs
- have speech, language or communication needs, including autism

By law, every school and nursery must provide support for pupils with SEND. This includes state schools, academies and free schools. Speak to your school special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) if you have any questions or concerns.

Schools must contact you if they think your child has any special educational needs. Your child does not need a medical diagnosis first.

Often a person is identified as having SEND early on in their life. If you are worried about your child, you can speak to your doctor or a healthcare professional. If they think your child has SEND, they will share this with the Learning Inclusion Services who will then be able to offer you help and advice.

SEND law and policies

Below you will find information about Leeds and National SEND Law and Policies.

SEND Code of Practice 2015

The SEND Code of Practice 2015 sets out the legal framework for SEND services. It describes how education, health, and social care services must provide support for children and young people with SEND and their families in line with the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.

National SEND and Alternative Provision

In 2023, national government introduced a new national SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan. This plan responds to a national review of the SEND system which was published in 2022: The SEND review: right support, right place, right time.

The review proposed some big changes to the system, including development of new national standards which services will be expected to meet.

Leeds SEND and Inclusion Strategy: Everyone's Included

Leeds published 'Everyone's Included: the Leeds SEND (special educational needs and disability) and Inclusion Strategy' in January 2023. It sets out the shared plans across services to improve experiences and outcomes for children and young people with SEND, and those with additional needs due to their circumstances, including children who are: looked after (by the local authority); in need (of support from a social worker); living with financial disadvantage; and who have experienced trauma.

The plans focus on improving outcomes for these children and reducing any inequalities they may face in relation to their learning, health, and well-being.

All policies can be found on the Leeds Local Offer website.

SENDIASS

special educational needs and disabilities information, advice and support service

Leeds SENDIASS provide free and confidential information, advice and support (IAS) on matters relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to children and young people (aged 0-25), to their parents and carers and to professionals supporting children and young people with SEND.

The team is legally trained to provide accurate information and impartial advice on matters such as:

- What SEND means and what it can include
- SEND Law and Guidance
- SEND support in mainstream schools and settings
- Specialist schools and settings
- Education, Health and Care needs assessments and plans (EHCPs)
- Mediation and SEND Tribunal appeals

IAS is tailored to meet individual needs and is available in a range of formats including:

- A dedicated website (www.leedssendiass.co.uk)
- A voicemail service to request advice (0113 378 5020)
- Email advice (sendiass@leeds.gov.uk or via the get in touch page on the website)
- Information Videos (YouTube search: @leedssendiass4614)
- Social media (Facebook and Instagram search: Leeds SENDIASS)
- Face to face and virtual IAS sessions and workshops
- Community sessions and training

Early help

Early help is the term used in Leeds to describe Leeds' approach on a whole range of individual social, health and educational issues when providing support to children, young people and their families as soon as problems emerge, or re-emerge.

Families should be enabled and supported to have the right conversations, with the right people and at the right time about their needs or concerns, so that statutory interventions can be avoided where this is appropriate.

Early help is voluntary and consent from children, young people and their families to work with them should always be sought.

Intervening as early as possible, regardless of the age of the child or young person, can positively improve their outcomes.

Family hubs

The Family Hubs are multi-disciplinary teams in the East, West and South of Leeds. The seven hubs are a key part of the Leeds early help offer, with a focus on providing 'more help' to families when needed.

The Family Hubs provide advice and support to clusters and partners working in localities to ensure seamless, co-ordinated and effective early help support and a 'getting it right first time' response. They deliver direct one to one work to families, as well as a number of evidence based parenting programmes.

Family Help Hubs are based in:

- The Compton Community Hub
- Chapeltown Children's Centre
- Deacon Community Hub
- Horsforth Community Hub
- Armley Community Hub
- Dewsbury Road Community Hub
- Rothwell Community Hub

For more information contact the Families First Team

Telephone: 0113 37 81840

Email: families.first@leeds.gov.uk

Localised cluster support

There are 22 clusters in the city, 21 locality based and 1 SILC cluster.

The core purpose of clusters is to identify support for those families, children and young people most in need of help and, to ensure they are offered the right intervention at the right time, by the right people.

Clusters are a partnership with education, health and the Local Authority. Not all schools are in clusters but ask your school or look on the link below.

The cluster works closely with universal, targeted and specialist services for children and families in each local area including schools, health services, Area Inclusion Partnerships, Early Start teams in children's centres, police, social work, the third sector, and other relevant services such as housing.

There are different ways in which children and their families can access cluster early help services: through referrals for support made by the child's school; from others such as the family GP or other services; and directly from families referring themselves. Usually referrals are made through completing a request form available from the cluster or can come through MindMate Single Point of Access (SPA).

The majority of clusters are focused on family support and emotional wellbeing and have directly employed or commissioned services to meet these two key early intervention needs. Equally, most clusters have established proactive partnerships or a traded service with other agencies who are able to meet a range of needs, for example Educational Psychology.

For more information visit the Localised Cluster Support section on the Leeds Local Offer website: www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk.

Leeds Parent Carer Forum

The Leeds Parent Carer Forum is a voluntary organisation led by passionate parents and carers, who are working in partnership with the Local Authority, Education, Health and Social Care services to improve the quality of life for children and young people with additional needs, and their families, across Leeds.

To find out more about the Leeds Parent Carer Forum and to become a member visit their website at www.leedsparentcarerforum.co.uk.



Parent carer support groups

Parent support groups are a great way to meet other parents for practical and emotional support. Most support groups are set up and run by parents and carers of children with additional needs. Some professionals and organisations, particularly children centres, run their own groups.

You can find out about Leeds parent carer support groups on the Leeds Local Offer under Advice and Support - Parent Carer Support groups.

website www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk.

A graduated approach

SEND support in schools

A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which means they need special educational provisions to be made for them.

Your child might need extra support at their educational setting (pre-school, school or college) if they:

- find it harder to learn than other children their age
- struggle with social, emotional or mental health difficulties
- have sensory or physical needs
- have speech, language or communication needs, including autism

The graduated approach allows parents and the setting to get a better understanding of the child's strengths and needs and what support they need to make progress. Key staff will work with parents to make sure that the right level of support is in place. This involves regular reviews of the child's progress.

The graduated approach is a cyclical and ongoing process and there are four stages:

Assess – teachers and key staff, with the support of the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), discuss and assess your child's current strengths and needs so that they can plan suitable support and measure any progress.

Plan - make a plan of specific support and provision to meet your child's needs and agree progress deadlines.

Do - provide the extra support in the plan and measure progress.

Review - your child's progress and decide the next steps with you and your child.

If a setting has taken every possible action available to identify, assess and meet the child or young person's needs but they are still not making expected progress, it may be appropriate to request specialist support from outside agencies to support and/or consider requesting an education, health and care needs assessment.

Education, Health and Care Plans

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is a legal document for an individual child or young person aged 0-25 years with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), which sets out a description of their educational, health and social care needs and the provision that must be implemented in order to help them achieve key life outcomes. It also includes information about the child or young person's aspirations, and for those in Year 9 or above, information about preparation for adulthood.

EHCPs bring together practitioners from different agencies to contribute to a single assessment and plan for the child or young person. In Leeds, the Special Educational Needs Statutory Assessment.

The majority of children and young people with SEND can have their needs met within their local mainstream school, early years setting, college or training provider through the setting's existing resources without the need for an EHCP.

The SENSAP team is the local authority's Special Educational Needs Statutory Assessment and Provision team.

SENSAP's aim is to enable children and young people with complex Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to access the right educational support and provision and to achieve their life aspirations.

The SENSAP team have a number of functions, including:

- creating Education Health and Care Plans
- Monitoring and quality assuring special educational provision within educational settings
- Managing the delegation of funds to educational settings
- Supporting accessibility in educational settings for students with disabilities

For general enquiries and more information about EHCPs, monitoring and quality assurance, you can contact SENSAP.

Email: sensap@leeds.gov.uk

Telephone: 0113 378 5256

The EHCP process

The school should provide the evidence required for an education, health and care (EHC) needs assessment. They should never ask you to make an application for them.

You can request an assessment if you do not want the school to make one. This should always be your decision.

Completing an application

To make a request for an EHC needs assessment, the school/setting will need to complete the referral form online.

Parents, carers or other legal representatives of the child or young person can request an EHC needs assessment (under section 36 of the Children and Families Act 2014), by completing the online education, health, and care needs assessment - parents and carers request form.

If your child is over the age of 16, they can apply for an EHC needs assessment themselves (under section 36 of the Children and Families Act 2014) using the online education, health, and care needs assessment - self-request form.

We highly recommend that you read the important information and full guidance in the link below as this will help you complete the online application form.

<https://www.leeds.gov.uk/schools-and-education/support-for-pupils-with-send/support-with-learning/education-health-and-care-needs-assessments-and-plans>

Assessments

Assessments take around 20 weeks to complete. They focus on a child's educational needs and the support that they need to be able to learn.

- Making a decision - the Local Authority (SENSAP) have up to six weeks to decide if your child needs an assessment. To do this, SENSAP hold a panel to discuss the child's needs and decide if an assessment is needed.
- Gathering evidence - In the six weeks after the decision is made, if SENSAP think your child does need an assessment, they will gather any further evidence from our own teams, the school SENCo (special educational needs coordinator), parents and carers and any healthcare professionals involved.
- Writing a draft plan - Within twelve weeks of the request, if it is agreed that your child needs an education health and care plan (EHCP), SENSAP will start to write a draft. This can take between two and three weeks. SENSAP will send you a copy of the draft EHCP and you will have 15 days to respond in writing.

Once all the evidence is gathered, and within 12 weeks of the request, this will be considered at a multi-agency panel to decide if an Education, Health, and Care Plan needs to be issued. If a plan is to be issued, then SENSAP will start to write a draft. This can take between two and three weeks. Once complete SENSAP will send you a copy of the draft EHCP and you will have 15 days to respond in writing.

- Right to request a meeting - Sixteen weeks from the initial request, if it is agreed that your child needs an education health and care plan (EHCP), you have the right to request a meeting. SENSAP will do their best to accommodate your request and arrange a virtual or face to face meeting, depending on capacity.
- Final version of the plan - Within 20 weeks of the request for an assessment, a final version of the plan must be available.

EHCP's must be reviewed at least every 12 months to make sure that they are up to date and still needed. For children under five years old, reviews are at least every six months.

Funding Education, Health and Care Plans

High Needs Funding (previously FFI)

High needs funding is used to support children and young people who have special educational needs. It is accessed through an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This was previously known as Funding for Inclusion (FFI) which has now ceased. Children and young people already receiving FFI will continue to be funded until they transition towards the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) process.

SENDIF

SENDIF provides additional funding for early years settings to support children with low-level and emerging needs of (SEND). This funding is available to any Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) eligible children aged 9 months to school age.

SENDIF+

SENDIF+ is an enhanced level of funding designed to support children aged 9 months to school age identified with higher level SEND that go beyond the criteria for SENDIF. This can be accessed through the Education, Health and Care needs assessment (EHCNA) process and cannot be applied for directly.

SENDIF+ was introduced following the ending of the Early Years Funding for Inclusion (EYFFI) process on 31 March 2025.

Personal Budgets

Section 42 of the Children's and Families Act (2014) is clear that Local Authorities must consider whether the provision outlined in Section F of the EHC Plan requires funding in addition to what the educational setting has already been allocated. For example, the EHC Plan may state there is a requirement for a specific type of therapy, specialist teaching or additional educational support, which is not currently available within that setting, and therefore they need to fund this additional resource. For the purposes of this information, this is referred to as "Top Up" funding.

Although "Top-Up" funding is normally allocated by the Local Authority to educational settings, EHC Plans allow parents, carers and young people to have more of an input into what support is required and should be provided to fully support the person named in the EHC Plan. This can include taking control of some of the "Top-Up" funding that is attached to the EHC Plan, and this is known as an Education Personal Budget. The mechanism for paying a Personal Budget to parents/carers or young people is called a Direct Payment.

Parents, carers or a young person aged over 16 years old can request information about their personal budget. Personal budgets can be managed either by:

- direct payments - money that is paid into an account for you to buy and manage services yourself.
- a virtual budget - the local authority, school or college manages parts of the personal budget and buys the support identified in your assessment.
- a third-party budget - a service provider or broker can manage some of the money for you as part of the assessment process, SENSAP will discuss personal budgets with you.

Financial advice and support

There are a wide range of disability-related financial support, including benefits, tax credits, funding, grants and concessions.

To find out what financial support is available to carers visit <https://www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled>

Disabled Living Allowance (DLA)

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for children may help with the extra costs of looking after a child who:

- is under 16 year olds,
- has difficulties walking or needs much more looking after than a child of the same age who does not have a disability.

More information about DLA can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children>

Carers Allowance

SENDIF provides additional funding for early years settings to support children with low-level and emerging needs of (SEND). This funding is available to any Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) eligible children aged 9 months to school age.

Information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance>

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) can help you with some of the extra costs if you have a long term ill-health or disability.

The amount you get depends on how your condition affects you, not the condition itself. You'll be assessed by a health professional to work out the level of help you can get. Your rate will be regularly reviewed to make sure you're getting the right support.

- Telephone: 0800 917 2222
- Textphone: 0800 917 7777
- Website: <https://www.gov.uk/pip/overview>

Early years (0 to 5 years old)

The early years foundation stage (EYFS) sets standards for the learning, development and care of your child from birth to 5 years old.

Your child's progress will be reviewed when they are between 2 and 3 by an early years practitioner or health visitor.

Their class teacher will assess them at the end of the school year when they turn 5.

The assessment is based on classroom observation - your child will not be tested. The seven areas of learning and development are used to assess a child's progress and include Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional development, Physical development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the world and expressive arts and design.

Support for families

Families are able to access support from their local children's centre to enable them to encourage their child's learning and early development at home.

Family Help Workers can be contacted via the local Children's Centre to provide support on ideas for play & learning in the home.

Finding a nursery of childminder

A full list of childminders in Leeds is available on the Family Information Service website www.familyinformation.leeds.gov.uk.

You can contact the Family Information Service on 0113 378 9700 or by emailing family.info@leeds.gov.uk.

If you are looking for a nursery setting, you can find a full list of nurseries in Leeds on the Leeds Local Offer website www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk.

Leeds portage service

Portage is a home visiting teaching service for families of children 0-3 with additional needs, delivered by the SEN & Inclusion Team (SENIT) which is part of Leeds Learning Inclusion Service.

Portage project workers work in partnership with parents to help them become teachers of their own child, working together to identify goals to help children learn in all areas of their development e.g. physical, communication, social, play and learning. A small steps teaching approach is used to achieve these goals.

The service is for children who have a developmental delay of 50% or more in 2 areas of their learning.

Referrals to the team are usually made by health services when your child is first identified with additional needs.

Types of schools in Leeds

Mainstream Schools

A mainstream school teaches pupils of a wide range of abilities and aptitudes. Mainstream schools are not special schools or pupil referral units.

What is available may differ from school to school, but all schools have a legal duty to support children with SEND and make 'reasonable adjustments' for them.

This means adapting learning approaches and styles and/or physical resources and equipment to support your child to access their education, learn and make progress.

Specialist Inclusive Learning Partnerships (SILCs) and specialist academies

The main site of a SILC or specialist academy will provide teaching to children and young people who have severe and complex difficulties, meaning they can't go to mainstream school.

SILCs and specialist academies are also able to provide access to mainstream, please see information on partnership provisions.

To be offered a place at a specialist provision, a child must have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This is because they fall outside of the usual admissions protocol.

Social Emotional and Mental Health Provision

Leeds offers city wide specialist provisions for children and young people with Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH).

Specialist Free School

There is one specialist free school in Leeds for young people aged 11 to 19 who have an autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) or related communication disorders.

This school is funded by the government but ran independently (meaning they have more control over how they do things).

Partnership Provisions

Partnership provisions are for children and young people who are working at a higher level and are able to go to some mainstream lessons, but also need specialised support in some areas.

There are mainstream schools that have an agreement with their local SILC to provide additional specialist trained staff and resources. The children are on the roll of the SILC but often wear the uniform and follow the daily routines of the host mainstream school.

Resourced Partnerships

A resourced provision is a mainstream school that has additional resources in a specialist area. These include resource provisions for children with:

- hearing and visual impairments (secondary only)
- physical and medical difficulties
- complex communication disorders (primary only)
- specific learning difficulties (secondary only)
- general learning difficulties

Children are on the roll of and are fully included in the mainstream school, whilst receiving the specialist interventions they need for their individual needs.

Post 16 Specialist Provision

There are citywide foundation learning and supported courses in Leeds, designed to meet the needs of young people aged 16 to 24 who have SEND.

Area Inclusion Partnerships (AIPs)

These are partnerships of schools in different areas of the city, who work together to support learners who need extra help when they are vulnerable to exclusion from school, or missing time in learning. The local authority (Leeds City Council) works with these partnerships of schools, providing funding to support them to meet their aims. This is an innovative approach unique to Leeds, and has helped us achieve very low levels of permanent exclusion from Leeds schools.

Almost every school in Leeds belongs to an AIP. AIPs have outreach workers who can go into a mainstream school to support the staff where a child or young person is struggling with their learning due to social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. They may work with the child or young person, their family, and the school. Many AIPs have also developed local inclusion bases, which is a place where learning can be offered, often on a temporary basis, outside the mainstream school setting. These bases are always led by a mainstream school and the provision is usually based at, or close to, that school.

If your child's school thinks it would be a good idea for them to access support from their AIP, they will always talk about this with you first. If this hasn't been suggested, but you think it might be a good idea, you can talk about it with any of the staff in their school who you feel comfortable talking to.

You could show them this information to help start the conversation.

Alternative Provision

Schools can organise and fund alternative provision for children and young people where it is felt that some learning outside the mainstream school setting would be helpful. Alternative provision, is usually a short-term measure that offers intensive support to both the learner and their mainstream school (or a new mainstream school for the learner, in some cases). From the start, the expectation is that the learner will be going back into school ('re-inclusion') and regularly attend school.

The learner may need to learn new skills to manage their SEMH needs and help to catch up, if they are behind in their learning. The family may need help to support their child to develop these skills and enable their attendance at school. The school may need help to make some changes in how they support the learner, or the learning environment they provide. High quality alternative provision will support all these things, with the goal being long-term re-inclusion in mainstream school, and regular attendance.

Not attending school regularly means that children miss out not only on academic learning, but also other benefits, like access to health and well-being services that work around schools, opportunities to make friends, and opportunities to develop skills, like work experience or volunteering in the community.

Alternative provision can be offered in a number of different settings. Some of these are managed by local schools (see AIP), others are offered by independent providers – some who are registered with Ofsted as independent schools or alternative provision academies, and others where they only provide limited hours for learners as part of their overall learning offer.

If your child's school thinks it would be a good idea for them to access support from an alternative provision, they will always talk about this with you first. If this hasn't been suggested, but you think it might be a good idea, you can talk about it with any of the staff in their school who you feel comfortable talking to.

You could show them this information to help start the conversation.

Elective Home Education (EHE)

Educating your child at home, instead of sending them to school full time is called elective home education.

If your child is of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16 years old) and you want to teach them at home, you need to contact the Local Authority.

You can provide learning opportunities yourself or employ a tutor to support you. You will be fully responsible for making sure that they receive a suitable, full-time education for their age, aptitude, skills and special educational needs (if any).

Where a child has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and attends a specialist setting (in Leeds, a Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre) through arrangements made by a local authority, they cannot be removed from that school without the consent of the local authority.

All children with an EHCP who are electively home educated, continue to have EHCP reviews.

If your child has an EHCP and goes to a mainstream school, you do not need to seek permission to electively home educate your child.

There is no funding provided if a family choose to home educate and families undertake full responsibility for all education and access to exams.

Contact details

Email: EHE@leeds.gov.uk

Tel: 0113 378 5028

Education other than at school (EOTAS)

Education other than at school (EOTAS) EOTAS refers to educational provision arranged by the local authority for a child or young person when it is satisfied that it would be inappropriate for the special educational provision to be made in a school or post-16 institution. This is governed by Section 61 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Where the local authority determines that Section 61 criteria are met, any provision will be commissioned and delivered solely through an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan.

While families may express a preference for a particular provider, the local authority is not obliged to use that provider. Instead, it must conduct a best value assessment and ensure that any commissioned provision is quality assured and meets all safeguarding requirements as part of its due diligence process. This is distinct from: Alternative Provision (AP): Arranged under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, which places a duty on local authorities to make suitable education available for children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion or otherwise, may not receive it unless such arrangements are made. This provision is not dependent on an EHC Plan and is typically used to ensure continuity of education in the short or medium term.

Elective Home Education (EHE): This is education that is arranged and funded by parents, who assume full responsibility for the curriculum, resources, and outcomes. (Section 7 of the Education Act 1996).

Contact details

email: sensap@leeds.gov.uk

Choosing the right school for your child

A school's website is a good place to start. It can give you a sense of the school's character. Each school must also have a special educational needs (SEN) policy and information about managing health needs.

The school's website will also include a copy of its most recent Ofsted report or a link to the report on the Ofsted website. Ofsted inspections include looking at how a school is supporting children with SEN.

Visiting a potential school is important. You will be able to see the school environment, meet staff, and see children learning.

Mainstream schools have open days for families of children starting primary or secondary school. The local authority's school admission team sends information about these. You can also find details on school websites.

You can also make an appointment to visit a school at a different time. You should call or email the school to arrange this. You may want to ask to meet the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) on your visit or speak to them before you go.

Special schools and integrated resources do not tend to have open days. Instead, they show families around by appointment.

Children's transport

The Children's Transport Team help children and young people to access the support they need to get to and from school or college. The team follow the rules set out in a document called the Children's Transport policy.

Many young people will receive a pass that allows them to travel on public transport for free e.g. buses, trains etc. The team support young people to travel on public transport on their own –this is called independent travel training. Independent Travel training gives young people the skills, knowledge and experience they need to be able to make these journeys with confidence and safety. The team can also offer a 50p mileage allowance, where for every mile travelled, 50p will be reimbursed. This gives you more control with your travel arrangements. Some young people will need extra help getting to and from school this may include minibus, taxi etc.

Travel support for children and young people with SEND

We offer home to school travel support for children and young people who have SEND, disabilities or medical conditions. The support available will depend on your child's needs, age and your family circumstances. The types of support available are:

- A bus pass
- Independent travel training
- Mileage allowance
- Personal travel allowance

Reception to year 11

Check to see if your child meets the eligibility criteria set out in the Children's Transport policy.

Young people aged over 16

We offer eligible young people in post 16 learning a free bus pass where possible. If they need further support, we offer daily travel support to help young people travel to college.

Check to see if your child meets the criteria in the Children's Transport Policy. The Children's Transport Policy can be found at:

<https://www.leeds.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-transport/post-16-transport-policy-statement/draft-post-16-transport-policy-statement-2025-to-2026>

Applying for transport

If you think that your child is eligible after reading the transport policy, you should request an application form. You can apply digitally using the forms available on our website:

<https://www.leeds.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-transport/travel-support-for-children-and-young-people-with-send>

Independent Travel Training

We help children and young people and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to travel more independently.

Independent travel training is free for children and young people who are:

- eligible for transport assistance
- children who are looked after.

A dedicated travel buddy will join you on public transport to and from school or college. As your confidence grows, we will help you to become more independent and prepare you for adulthood. You will receive a tailored travel plan so that you can track your progress.

If your child is already receiving transport assistance and you would like to access independent travel training, email ITTLeeds@leeds.gov.uk.

If your child is not receiving transport assistance and you would like to access Independent travel training, apply for support using the link on our website <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-transport/travel-support-for-children-and-young-people-with-send>

Contact details

For SEND transport applications email Send.TransportApplications@Leeds.gov.uk

Short breaks and fun activities

Leeds City Council is committed to delivering a range of Short Breaks for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), their parents/carers and families. Short Breaks are activities for children and young people with SEND that enable them to have fun, spend time with friends and build their confidence and skills in a safe environment.

Who is eligible?

Short Breaks in Leeds are available to children and young people who:

- have a special educational need or disability
- are aged between 0 and 18 years old
- live in Leeds

Types of short breaks

In Leeds there are lots of different short breaks to give children with SEND a chance to try new experiences, have fun and make friends. They also give families the chance to enjoy a break from their caring responsibilities.

Universal Services offer children with SEND the opportunity to join local sport or youth groups etc.

Targeted Short Breaks are for children with specific SEND needs. Short breaks include weekends activities, holiday clubs/play schemes, evening activities and residential opportunities.

For more information see the Targeted Short Breaks & Fun Activities Catalogue and complete an Expression of Interest form which can be found on the Leeds Local Offer website.

Specialist Short Breaks are for disabled children with the most complex needs. Packages can comprise of access to additional adult support or residential provision for instance. For Specialist Short Breaks your child must have a Social Worker or a Lead Professional, who will complete an assessment and apply for services based on identified need.

For more information about Short Breaks and Fun Activities email short.breaks.coordinator@leeds.gov.uk

Child health and disability team (CHAD)

The Child Health and Disability Service, often known as CHAD, is made up of a number of teams working with children and young people aged 0-18 with complex health needs and disabilities, where their disability has an impact on their ability to be safe, develop skills for life and be part of their local communities growing up.

The service, which sits with Children and Families Services in the local authority, aims to ensure that every child in Leeds with a complex health need and disability benefits from child-centred, high-quality, flexible and responsive services to help them live a successful and fulfilling life.

Within CHAD there are three locality social work teams, the Regional Specialist Team and the Occupational Therapy Team.

Where are the locality social work teams and what do they do?

The three locality CHAD social work teams cover different areas within the city, East North-East, West North-West and South and work with children with complex health needs and disabilities.

CHAD social workers specialise in working with children and young people who have additional needs, which includes those with difficulties with communicating and/or challenging behaviours. They use a wide range of different communication aids and skills to ensure the child remains the focus and that their voice is heard.

The CHAD social work teams work to the same statutory requirements as other social work teams. Each team undertakes assessments, safeguarding and care management activities. In line with statutory safeguarding procedures and investigations, the teams work directly with children who need help and protection and those subject to care proceedings. They also work with children who are looked after by the local authority.

The teams assess on-going care needs and develop specialist packages of support for these children. This includes assessing the impact of caring responsibilities on the family as a whole, including consideration of the needs of siblings. This is done through Child and Family Assessments, Parent Carers Assessments, regular reviews and attending review panels.

CHAD social work teams work closely with health practitioners, Specialist Inclusion Learning Centres (SILCs) and Early Help leads to provide robust rounded support. The CHAD teams also work closely with the SILC cluster to provide targeted services and interventions.

What is the Regional Specialist Team and what do they do?

The Regional Specialist Team provides emotional and practical support to children and young people with specific medical conditions, and their families.

The children and young people may be from Leeds but the team also work with those from other local authorities who are receiving specialist treatment at Leeds General Infirmary through specialist hospital departments which include the Renal, Oncology, Haemophilia, and Cystic Fibrosis Care and the Paediatric Intensive Care teams.

What is the Occupational Therapy Team?

The Occupational Therapy (OT) Team cover the whole of the Leeds area and assess the long-term needs of children, young people and their parents and carers. They can recommend equipment and adaptations to the home as well as advising families on safe moving and handling techniques.

How are referrals made to CHAD?

Referrals to CHAD are made by practitioners contacting the Duty and Advice Team at the front door. Duty and Advice discuss potential referrals with whoever is making the contact so that it can be demonstrated that the child's identified needs cannot be met by universal or targeted services. If it is felt that a social work response is appropriate, Duty and Advice may refer the child to a cluster social work team, but depending on the level of the child's disability or complex needs, they may decide that a referral to CHAD social work is more appropriate.

Key contacts or for more information

- CHAD WNW Social Work tel: 0113 3784068
- CHAD South Social Work tel: 0113 3784915
- CHAD ENE and OT tel: 0113 3785140
- Regional Specialist Team tel: 0113 5351504 or 0113 5351499

Transitions

planning for a future as an adult with SEND

'Transition' is the process when a young person is preparing to move from childhood into adulthood.

Life for adults is different to life for children, which may include moving to adult services if you have care and support needs. It is important that you have the right information at the right time to make sure you're preparing for adulthood.

From year 9 (age 13 – 14 years) preparing for adulthood conversations should begin at school, which should include:

- what jobs you might like to do when you're an adult
- your options for education or training
- your future goals
- where you might want to live and how to be as independent as possible
- things you want to do in your community, like your hobbies, interests, and meeting friends
- how you're going to be as healthy as possible

Transitions Team at Leeds City Council

The Transitions Team are a team of social workers, learning disability nurses and wellbeing workers that work alongside other professionals including health and education.

They work with young people who have a diagnosis of either a learning disability, autism or complex health needs, who also have a package of care in place funded by Children's Services, such as a direct payment or respite. The young person will either have an active early help plan, an allocated Children's Social Worker or funding from Children's Continuing Health Care. The age of young people in this team ranges from 16-25 however this is dependent on the individuals' circumstances. Transitions Duty Workers may also attend some young people's Year 9 review when they reach 14 years old. This is also dependent on the circumstances of the young person.

The Transitions Team work together to develop the right level of social care support, built around the young person's needs, working with the young person, their family and professionals to increase independence in preparation for adulthood. A strengths-based approach and work to build on and promote existing support within the family and wider community.

To make a referral to the Transitions Team, call the Adult's Contact Centre on 0113 222 4401.

For those under an Early help plan a referral should be made from the young person's 17th birthday.

For young people with a social worker, a referral can be made by the social worker through 'Mosaic' (their case recording system).

If the young person is not eligible for the Transitions Team, the referral will be passed to the relevant adult social care team.

If the young person is under 18 years and has current care needs but no package of care, a referral can be made to the Children's Contact Centre on 0113 222 4403, who will assess and offer support / guidance.

You can also contact the transitions team at transitions.team@leeds.gov.uk

SENDIASS Leeds

Leeds Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice Support Service ([SENDIASS](#)) have a duty to provide information, advice and support to disabled children and young people, and those with Special Educational Needs (SEN), and their parents. They are a statutory service. They are free, impartial and confidential.

SENDIASS can provide information, advice and support to families about transitions.

- Website: www.leedssendiass.co.uk
- Email address: leedssendiass@leeds.gov.uk
- Advice Line: 0113 3785020 please leave a message

Health

Children and Young People with SEND may need support from a range of health professionals, they may work for lots of different organisations.

If you are not sure about the role of a health professional or who they work for, please ask them or another health professional you feel comfortable talking to.

If you are accessing any health service and feel you require extra support to be able to access or require reasonable adjustments, please contact the service prior to your appointment to discuss your needs.

Primary care services provide the first point of contact in the healthcare system, acting as the 'front door' of the NHS. Primary care includes general practice, community pharmacy, dental, and optometry (eye health) services.

Find out more about Primary Care at
<https://www.healthandcareleeds.org/health/primary-care-services/>

Secondary care services are specialist health services that support children and young people when their needs go beyond what can be managed by a GP or 0-19 PINS (health visitor / school nurse). These services usually involve care from doctors, nurses, or therapists who are based in a community health setting or a local hospital. In Leeds these are:

Community health services are provided by **Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust (LCH)** who deliver services across a variety of settings including health centres, community hubs, schools, hospital clinics, and sometimes at the place where the person lives. Their 3,000 strong workforce includes nurses, therapists, pharmacists, non-registered and registered clinical staff.

Find more information about Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust at
<https://www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/>

The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (LTHT)

Provides healthcare through local hospital facilities for the Leeds community and regional and national specialist services covering all ages.

Care and clinical expertise is spread over seven hospitals and medical facilities:

- Leeds General Infirmary
- St James's University Hospital
- Chapel Allerton Hospital
- Leeds Children's Hospital
- Leeds Dental Institute
- Seacroft Hospital
- Wharfedale Hospital

More information about Leeds Teaching Hospital NHS Trust can be found at <https://www.leedsth.nhs.uk/>

If you are visiting one of the Leeds Teaching Hospitals and have a learning disability and / or Autism diagnosis or you support someone who does, The Learning Disability and Autism Team are available to offer advice and support whilst accessing any of the Leeds Teaching Hospitals services.

Find out more about the support they offer by visiting <https://www.leedsth.nhs.uk/services/learning-disability-and-autism/>

Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LYPFT)

The trust is the main provider of specialist mental health and learning disability services for adults in Leeds. They are also the provider for the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) inpatient unit.

As a trust they also provide specialist services across York, the Yorkshire and Humber region, and some highly specialised national services.

Find out more information about Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust at <https://www.leedsandYorkpft.nhs.uk/>

More information on individual health services can be found on provider trust websites or on the Local Offer in the Health Services in Leeds section (www.leedslocaloffer.org.uk)

Neurodiversity

The neurodiversity information hub hosted on the MindMate website is a one-stop site to support all neurodivergent children, young people and their families in Leeds.

This online resource is designed to provide information and support for those with and without formal diagnoses. Autism and ADHD are the main neurotypes covered.

The site covers a huge range of topics including:

<https://www.mindmate.org.uk/nd/>

Mental health support

If you need support with your mental health, as well as national mental health resources, people in Leeds can access a wide range of support including self-help resources, helplines and crisis services.

Find out more information at

<https://www.healthandcareleeds.org/health/mental-health-services/>

The NHS commission two websites in Leeds to support mental health.

MindMate – for children and young people

<https://www.mindmate.org.uk/>

MindMate was designed with young people, for young people, to provide a central information hub about support services, advice and information on common issues, self-help guidance, plus young people's stories and experiences.

Within the Getting Help Section you can find information categorised by 16 or under; 16 to 18; 18 to 25 and parent or carer?

MindWell - for adults

<https://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/>

MindWell is the mental health website for adults in Leeds - it is the go-to online source for mental health and wellbeing support in Leeds. The website supports finding information about support in the city, advice and information you might need and different ways to take care of your mental health.

Urgent Mental Health Support in Leeds for Young People and families

If you've seriously injured yourself or taken an overdose [call 999](#) or get immediate medical treatment from [A&E](#).

If you are feeling suicidal or in a crisis and feel like you can't cope, speak to somebody straight away. If possible, make sure you're not on your own.

The services below are free and available to you immediately:

- Leeds CAMHS Crisis Call Line (0-18 yrs) – 0800 953 0505
open Mon – Sun 8am – 8pm
- NHS 111 – people of all ages in West Yorkshire are able to access local crisis services 24/7 directly by calling 111 and selecting the mental health option.

There are a wide range of services available across Leeds, specific to certain needs and age brackets available for you, [24 hours per day](#).

- 18 and under : <http://mindmate.org.uk/urgent-help-all-services/>
- over 18 : <http://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/need-urgent-help/>

Preparing for adulthood

Children and young people will experience a number of changes over their life and in education. These are known as transitions.

We want to make sure young people with SEND are prepared for adulthood and are able to:

Stay well and healthy

Being as physically and mentally healthy as possible in adult life

Be a part of the community and have friendships

Having friends and supportive relationships, and participating in, and contributing to, the local community

Achieve paid employment

Exploring different employment options, such as support for becoming self-employed and help from supported employment agencies

Live independently and have housing options

Young people having choice, control and freedom over their lives and the support they have, their accommodation and living arrangements, including supported living.

The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) is designed to protect and empower individuals who may lack the mental capacity to make their own decisions about their care and treatment. It is a law that applies to individuals aged 16 and over.

What happens and when?

Education

Transition planning and preparing for adulthood should start as early as possible but no later than year 9.

All annual reviews should focus on the young person's aspirations and ideas for their adult life and how these can be met.

This is an opportunity to look beyond educational needs and to include wider aspects of life such as:

- health needs
- personal and social development
- training and employment
- transport and independent travel
- housing and leisure

It is the responsibility of the school to make sure that the young person, their family and other agencies are informed in good time about the planned annual review meeting and that it will have a focus on transition planning so they can prepare in advance.

Health

It is important the key health professionals involved in the young person's life attend the year 9 review and start discussing with the young person and their family when the key health service provision changes, from children to adult health services, will occur.

Social care

The Child Health and Disability Team and Transitions Team will take the lead role in attending year 9 reviews for all young people known to them and will also represent adult social care, providing a range of adult services information to individuals and parents if they wish to receive it at this point.

The review meeting should result in a transition plan which records the actions needed to help the young person achieve their short and long-term goals.

Who else is involved?

The key roles involved in the transition process at this stage are:

Lead practitioner – acts as a contact point and provides additional support as required by the young person and or their family, makes sure assessments and other documents are completed by all agencies and keeps a detailed record of all activity.

SENSAP (Special Educational Needs Statutory Assessment and Provision Team) – makes sure that EHC plans are completed with the young person and their family.

Health transitions – are the most complex and often involve lots of people; a person centred approach is taken based on the specific circumstances of the young person. A health lead professional will be identified as a single point of contact who will liaise with other health professionals.

Making a complaint

Services don't always get it right first time and we welcome feedback on our services so that we can get it right first time, more often.

Feedback on Leeds City Council's Children's Services

If you're not happy with a service, you have the right to complain. Complaining helps us improve and fix issues. We aim to understand your concerns and work with you to resolve them. However, if there's a formal appeal process, it will be used to address your concerns.

You can email your complaint to complaints.children@leeds.gov.uk and the children and families customer relations team will be able to offer advice and support to access the complaints procedure.

Feedback about schools

Schools are self-governing and so you should usually contact them directly in the first instance to resolve any concerns. If you do wish to make a complaint all schools have procedures to deal with their complaints, usually available online or by request to the school.

Feedback on Leeds City Council's Adult Social Care services

It's easier and quicker to first raise a complaint directly with the service involved. You should speak to a member of staff as soon as possible before making a formal complaint.

If you wish to make a formal complaint email complaints.SOCS@leeds.gov.uk

Feedback on Health services

If you wish to raise a concern or complaint about Health service, please contact the PALS team for advice.

Telephone: 0113 2066261

Email: patientexperience.leedsth@nhs.net

Glossary of send terms

You may find lots of terms, abbreviations and words that you might not know what they mean when you are using this site or any other sites about special needs and disabilities. We have made a list of the most common ones to help.

Additional Learning Support (ALS) - a term used education colleges to describe the special education needs of young people.

Annual Review - all Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are to be reviewed each year.

Appeal – a process for requesting a change to a decision.

Aspirations - the things you hope to achieve.

Assessment - finding out what a child's needs are, what they can do and struggle with, usually through observing them at home, school, and settings and by talking with people who know the child well.

Statutory assessment - documenting advice and evidence of the child or young person's special educational needs and disabilities.

Child and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS) - offers assessment and help to children and young people with significant emotional and behavioural difficulties (e.g., anxiety, depression, eating disorders) and their families.

Carer - someone who cares, unpaid, for a family member or friend who due to illness, frailty, disability, substance misuse or physical or mental health conditions cannot manage without their carer's support.

Integrated Care Board (ICBs) - the ICBs plans and arrange the delivery of health care provision for people in its area.

Clusters - clusters are what we call the model of locality working / working in the community with children and families in Leeds.

Collaborative - working together to achieve shared goals.

Children Looked After (CLA) - Children Looked After by the Local Authority.

Commissioning - paying someone to deliver a service.

Co-production - equal partnership working between service providers, those in receipt of the service and their families.

Direct Payment (DP) - payments made to individuals who have been assessed as needing services and who would like to arrange and pay for care and support services themselves instead of receiving them directly from their Local Authority or Health Trust.

Disagreement Resolution - arrangements to help prevent or resolve disagreements between parents, whose children have special educational needs, and a local education authority or a school.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) - a tax-free benefit for people with disabilities who need help with mobility or care costs.

Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) - a grant to help with any extra study related you may have as a direct result of your disability, including a long-term health condition, mental-health condition, or specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia or dyspraxia.

Early Help - providing support to potentially vulnerable children, young people, and their families as soon as problems start to emerge.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) - the Early Years Foundation Stage. A statutory framework which covers children both in pre-school settings and in reception classes up to their fifth birthday.

Early Years Settings - all pre-school education provision such as nursery school, day nurseries and play groups.

Educational Psychologist - the person who helps children or young people who are experiencing problems within an educational setting with the aim of enhancing their learning.

EHCP or EHC plan (Education, Health, and Care Plan) - a legal document that sets out a child's needs and the specific help they must receive.

Funded Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) - a central government scheme funded through local authorities. The scheme provides up to 15 or 30 hours per week of funded childcare (subject to eligibility criteria) for children aged 9 months until they reach compulsory school age.

Funding for Inclusion (FFI) – This funding has now ended for new applications. Children and young people already receiving FFI will continue to be funded until they transition towards the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) process.

High needs funding- funding for all schools and settings to support children and young people who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Further Education - education after school, it includes education colleges, sixth form colleges, specialist colleges and adult education institutions. It does not include universities.

High Needs Funding - funding for all schools and settings to support children and young people who have an EHCP.

Higher Education (HE) - higher education is third level education after you leave school. It takes places at universities and Further Education colleges and normally includes undergraduate and postgraduate study.

Impartial - decisions should be based on objective criteria, rather than based on bias, prejudice, or preferring the benefit to one person over another.

Implementation - making something that is set out in law happen.

Inclusion - when anyone, regardless of differences or needs is welcomed and supported to be involved. Inclusion should mean disabled and non-disabled people are supported to take part in activities together.

Independent Travel Training - Help for young people to learn how to travel safely on their own.

Joint Commissioning - working collaboratively across agencies to assess need, identify resources, plan how to use resources and arrange service delivery. This also involves reviewing the services and reassessing need, with the aim of improving outcomes.

Local Authority (LA) - responsible for managing public services in your local area such as social care, libraries, housing benefit and complex needs services i.e. Leeds City Council.

Mainstream School - a school that caters for all pupils, including those with SEN.

Mediation - mediation is a way of resolving disputes between two or more parties. Typically, a third party, the mediator assists the parties to negotiate a settlement.

NEET - refers to someone who is Not in Education, Employment or Training.

OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) - the organisation that makes sure schools and social care services are meeting set standards.

Occupational Therapist (OT) - help children and young people take part in the daily activities (occupations) that are important to them – at home, at school and elsewhere for example self-care activities – getting dressed, eating and sleeping; productive occupations – learning, writing, doing PE; play and leisure – playing with friends and doing sports or hobbies.

Outcomes - what children and young people achieve and how their lives improve. For example, going to college, learning new skills, living on their own or getting a job.

Personal Budget (PB) - a sum of money that parents/carers or young people may request be redeployed from a setting via a Direct Payment to give them some control over specific provision outlined in the EHCP.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) - money that can help you with some of the extra costs if you have a long term physical or mental health condition or disability.

Personal Travel Allowance - A set amount of money given to families to help pay for travel to school or college.

Policy - Information that explains who can get help and what support they are entitled to.

Portage - home-based educational support for pre-school children with special educational needs.

Provision - the action of providing a service. The extra or different help given to children with special educational needs.

Preparing for Adulthood - information, advice, and support to prepare young people for adulthood.

SENDIF - Additional funding for early years settings to support children with low-level and emerging SEND needs. Available for FEEE eligible children aged 9 months to school age.

SENDIF+ - Enhanced funding for children aged 9 months to school age with higher level SEND needs, accessed through the EHCNA process.

Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) - a type of special educational need where children and young people experience difficulties in managing their emotions, behaviour, and social interactions, which can impact their mental well-being and ability to learn.

Specials Educational Need (SEN) - a learning difficulty / disability that makes it harder for a child to learn or access education.

Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) - the teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating special help for children with SEN at their school.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - a learning difficulty and/or a disability that means they need special health and education support.

SENDIASS - SEND Information, Advice Support Service provides legally based, impartial, confidential, and accessible information, advice and support for parents of children and young people with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities.

Special Educational Needs Inclusion Team (SENIT) - the team provide advice and training to staff, parents and other professionals in schools and further education colleges around all aspects of SEND.

Special Educational Needs Statutory Assessment and Provision (SENSAP) - a statutory local authority service responsible for implementing the legislative framework of the Children and Families Act 2014, including EHCP's.

SEN Support - all additional support provided to students by schools, nurseries, colleagues without an EHCP is called SEN support.

Short Breaks - opportunities for disabled children and young people to spend time away from their family and do something fun. For example, a day, evening, overnight or weekend activity.

Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre (SILC) - the term used in Leeds to describe special school provision.

Social Care - the provision of social work, personal care, protection or social support services to children or adults in need or at risk, or adults with needs arising from illness, disability, old age, or poverty.

Special School - a school which is specifically organised to make special educational provision for pupils with SEN.

Statutory Services - services that are set up and regulated by central government, for example education, health, or social care services.

Strategy - a plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim.

Specialist services - services for children and young people with complex or specialist needs. This type of need will require a Children and Families Assessment to be undertaken by a social worker following referral to Children's Social Work Services.

Targeted services - services designed to meet the needs of children and young people with a disability where extra support is provided to access a service that is universally provided to all children.

Transition - a period of change for your child or young person that could be starting primary school, leaving secondary school to go to college, changing from children's to adult services.

Transport Assistance - Help from the council to get a child or young person to school or college, like a bus pass or taxi.

Universal services - a service that is available to everyone, without assessment.

Voice and Influence - giving children and young people opportunities to have their voice heard and to use that voice to influence the decisions that affect them.