



One minute guide

Workforce Development

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What is it?

Our ambition is for Leeds to be a [child friendly city](#) with children at the heart of all decisions and issues that affect them. The children's workforce across the city are critical to making this happen, as the values, behaviour, insight and approach that leaders, managers and practitioners bring to their work determines the quality of the service that children, young people and families receive. In recognising this, Leeds has invested in a variety of programmes, partnerships and initiatives that aim to create an environment in which our workforce can flourish.

Learning and development is a key way to create a more integrated, skilled and confident children's workforce and find common language and common purpose— these are key objectives of legislation such as the [Children Act 2004](#), national reviews such as [Stable Homes, Built on Love \(2023\)](#) and our [Children and Young People's Plan \(CYPP\)](#) for Leeds.

What do we have in Leeds?

Leeds has a dedicated Children's Workforce Development Team responsible for ensuring that the key behaviours and values outlined in the CYPP underpin practice and professional development across the children's workforce. The learning and development offered is based on research and is regularly reviewed in response to feedback; and the team works with external experts where appropriate to develop training based on best practice and objective analysis of the need and context in Leeds.

A wider corporate training offer for all council staff complements the Children's Workforce Development Team offer and should link to appraisal objectives and team priorities.

What does the Children's Workforce Development Team offer?

The Workforce Development Team provides a mixture of statutory and tailored training, combining a free core package internally within Leeds City Council, with a traded offer to external partners. Our core offer for all includes training on: restorative practice, supervision, assessment, safeguarding, equality diversity, & inclusion, attachment, and child development.

In addition, the team is responsible for developing and managing a wide range of learning and development programmes. This includes induction programmes for new staff from social work and residential teams as well as a number of specific apprenticeships for colleagues working in children and families who wish to become social workers or who work in specific roles in residential childcare.

Approximately 70% of the team's work is directed by statutory requirements for training. This is primarily delivered to social workers, foster carers and residential staff. The team also offer tailored learning and development, based on bespoke needs. In addition, the team leads the restorative practice training for other local authorities, as part of Leeds's commitment to sector-led improvement.

Is there a specific development offer for social work in Leeds?

The Workforce Development Team and Advanced Practitioners together with the Principal Social Worker have worked together to offer a comprehensive package so social work practitioners can continually develop their knowledge and skills. This enables them to practice effectively in supporting vulnerable families as well as meeting the skills and knowledge required for their professional registration. The social work offer includes:

- A comprehensive programme of **induction and support** in a social worker's first year, which includes Action Learning Sets, academic learning, a training and development pathway, mentoring and continual assessment to support practice and development;
- Regular training linked to the **progression pathway** and to the [Professional Capability Framework](#) and [post-qualifying statements](#). Updates to guidance and legislation are regularly reviewed to ensure that Leeds social workers have the latest knowledge, advice and support. This is informed by links with leading academics across the country who advise on practice improvement in Leeds;
- An **aspiring manager** programme; an **aspiring leader** programme, and a **team manager induction and training programme**, which offers a calendar of individual, team and bespoke activities designed to support and develop management and leadership skills;
- A rolling programme of **research-informed master-classes**;
- Leeds subscribes to and makes available events from **Research in Practice** and **Making Research Count**.

All of this work is underpinned by a commitment to [restorative practice](#) across children's social work, doing things with children, young people and families, instead of for them, to them or doing nothing.

The commitment from Leeds is that all social workers have the opportunity to have at least five days of learning and development per year in order to develop and enhance their skills and maintain their registration with [Social Work England](#).

For more information

You can contact the Workforce Development Team at: workforcedevelopment@leeds.gov.uk for enquiries about the workforce development offer and restorative practice training, including for other local authorities through our sector-led improvement work.

If you work for Leeds City Council, you can find all of the information about the workforce development offer on the [Child Leeds Learning site](#).

Our traded offer can be found on the [Leeds for Learning](#) website, and enquiries made via tel: 0113 37 87212.

The Head of Workforce Development in children's services is Julie Devonald, Julie.Devonald@leeds.gov.uk

Information on training through the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership is available [here](#).