

Transforming Children's Services in Leeds: Key messages

See the bigger picture – This is another chapter in a long-term change programme that is about improving what isn't working and doing more of what is working. We are all committed to improving outcomes for children, young people and families in Leeds. We need to keep a focus on our vision that all children and young people in Leeds should be happy, healthy, safe and secure, living in strong families, supported by strong communities.

Shape the bigger picture – We need to build on what works well to improve outcomes. We need to know from you what makes a difference. Take the opportunity to influence the future.

Think team – We all need to understand the importance of working together better. We can only succeed if we are all team players. We need to share more, trust more, celebrate more and look after each other. We cannot afford to have blame as part of the culture.

Aspire to excellence – We have made a commitment in our children and young people's plan to deliver excellent integrated working. The children and young people of Leeds deserve the very best. Our work and our practice need to reflect a commitment to excellence across all areas, demonstrating innovation, leadership and exceptional practice.

Build on what works well – We need to seek out and promote the things that we know work. These should be the cornerstone of what we will do in the future. If it doesn't work, we should stop doing it.

Keep it simple – Really simple. Design it so that everyone can understand. Cut down on the paper, the meetings, and emails. Focus on the things that matter and that make a difference.

Be flexible – The pace of change will at times be very fast. We all need to be prepared to do things differently, often at very short notice. We all need to co-operate and take time to understand different perspectives. Some colleagues may be affected by change more than others, but all will be affected in some way. Managers need to work with colleagues in their teams to encourage and develop the culture that allows this to happen.

Make the best use of resources, especially our people – We all know that resources will become even more scarce in the future. We need to prioritise rigorously and use what we have well. There will be some difficult decisions ahead. Our people are the best resource we have and we are committed to providing the right conditions for them to do their best and deliver excellent children's services for the people of Leeds.

Transforming Children's Services in Leeds: Principles for Progress

1. Put children and young people at the heart of our transformation by ensuring everything we do supports our ambition to improve outcomes for them.
2. Build on what works well to improve outcomes within current arrangements, enhance and improve on it and not lose it.
3. Be flexible in maximising development and secondment opportunities for staff to support moves towards an integrated directorate approach, including considering any recruitment decisions in that light.
4. Where existing groups and projects can contribute to the current agenda, they will be used, but may need terms of reference and membership changed. Other groups not delivering current priorities will be reviewed.
5. The overall programme of change is multi-agency and multi-disciplinary and we will ensure that this is reflected in all aspects of what we do, including the leadership of issues, and in all groups as far as is possible.
6. Communication will be regular and widespread to all staff and stakeholders and will be in a variety of different forms. Senior managers will ensure that they give consistent, clear messages.
7. Ensure staff, managers and stakeholders are involved in and contribute to the development and delivery of options and implementation plans.
8. Minimise duplication of effort and maximise use of everyone's time.
9. Where possible we will seek to develop integrated services prior to April 2011 as long as this is consistent with the overall objectives.
10. Improving performance and making best use of all resources, including people, ICT, budgets and buildings, will underpin all activity.
11. We will find ways to use the principles in practice, for example in project paperwork, to ensure we stick to the agreed approach.