

Every Child Matters update

Oct 29
2009
Issue 57

Remember, remember, attend school in November!

The attendance strategy team are hosting the Give it 100% competition throughout November, encouraging every school age child in Leeds to attend school every day. The winners will be drawn in January 2010.

For more information, contact Jo Groves, phone: 0113 256 0555 or 07891 276 474 or email: joannegroves@educationleeds.co.uk

Please pass this publication on to colleagues with an interest in outcomes for children and young people

If your organisation or colleagues do not have access to email or the internet, or would like this update in another format, please let us know. You can call us on 0113 395 0247.

Improving attendance in Leeds

The second of our ten immediate priorities in the new Children and Young People's Plan is around improving attendance and reducing persistent absence in schools.

Leeds has already reduced persistent absence, particularly in targeted schools. By the end of 2011, we aim to achieve the DCSF's target for persistent absence in secondary schools to be 5 per cent. To do this, services and schools need to work together to tackle the often complex reasons why children and young people are not attending school.

Illness is the biggest reason for absence, both in Leeds and nationally. The Education Leeds attendance strategy team has established wellbeing panels, in partnership with school health, to target this cause. A successful pilot has taken place at Royds Specialist Language College, and more than 80 per cent of children and young people improved their attendance, after meeting with their parents or carers, the attendance improvement officer and the school nurse.

The team is now working with partners to produce the attendance strategy to help deliver the improvements we need to benefit our children and young people.

You can help to improve attendance in Leeds schools by:

- supporting children, young people and their families who find attendance challenging, through shared ownership of the attendance strategy;
- building on the success of the attendance strategy team's attendance champions initiative; and
- working with parents and carers to share the benefits of good attendance.

To find out how you can help deliver this priority, read the Working Together Better update on the Children Leeds website visit: www.childrenleeds.gov.uk and click on 'Working Together Better update' on the left hand menu.



A positive response

The process for inspecting and grading a growing number of our services and settings is creating new considerations and challenges for many of us.

I understand the pressure inspections create; we must turn this around and use them as a mechanism that helps us make sure we have both the fundamental practice, the vision and the ambition in place to deliver safer, better services for children and young people.

Our children's homes are amongst the services that have adapted to this new inspection regime and I'm really pleased that we're seeing a positive response. We're now in a position where all our homes are rated as either 'satisfactory', 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted, with the majority being 'good'.

This reflects a lot of hard work, but we must keep building on it. It's not the inspections themselves, but rather how we use inspections to learn, grow and improve that will ultimately make a positive difference.

Rosemary K Archer

Rosemary Archer
Director of children's services

Children Leeds

Dates for your diary

Investors In Pupils twilight briefing session

Tuesday 17 November 2009,
Morley Victoria Primary School

Investors in Pupils seeks to empower all pupils, increase motivation, improve school cohesion, and raise achievement throughout the Key Stages. Morley Victoria Primary School will showcase how they have embedded Investors in Pupils and the difference it has made.

For a course booking form and flyer contact Richard Cracknell, phone: **07891 277 433** or email: richard.cracknell@educationleeds.co.uk

Annual Children's Services Lecture

Thursday 26 November 2009, 6 to 7.30pm, Leeds Metropolitan University, Civic Quarter, Rose Bowl, Lecture Theatre A

Quality Matters in Children's Service, a lecture by Mike Stein, research professor in the social policy research unit, University of York.

To book your place contact Jody Richardson, email: j.l.richarson@leedsmet.ac.uk or phone: **0113 812 4487**

This is your publication...

so let us know about the great work you are doing in your organisation. How are you including children and young people in the changes you are making? We all want Leeds to have the very best children's services to make sure that every child matters.

Please send all your comments and suggestions about this update to the children's services unit, email: children.leeds@leeds.gov.uk, phone: **0113 395 0247**.

Promises to keep

The Leeds Care Promise launch event took place at Tiger Tiger in Leeds, last month. Looked after children and young people from across the city attended the event, along with their friends and supporters.

The Care Promise was developed through consultation with over 100 looked after children and young people, aged 10 and over. They identified the things that are important to them, and what Children Leeds can do to meet their needs.

The Leeds Care Promise covers:

- helping children and young people to stay safe;
- involving children and young people to make the decisions that affect their lives;
- supporting them to achieve their goals;
- reviewing care or pathway plans;
- helping them live a healthy lifestyle; and
- listening what children and young people have to say.

For more information contact Pat Case, phone: **0113 247 5554**, email: pat.case@leeds.gov.uk or go to: www.childrenleeds.org.uk

To request a leaflet and CD email: promise@leeds.gov.uk

Ed Balls helps to launch Lanch race equality standard nationally

Ed Balls, Secretary of State for children, schools and families attended the Stephen Lawrence Education Standard Award Ceremony 2009 earlier this month. He praised the race equality initiative and announced plans to promote the Standard to all local authorities, across the country.

The Standard helps schools to promote race equality, and formally recognises good practice. Its creation responded to the tragic murder of Stephen Lawrence in 1993.

Two-thirds of schools in Leeds are already taking part, many of which were awarded

Building Bridges: intergenerational work in Leeds

Building Bridges is a Leeds intergenerational project that has been running in schools within the city for five years. The project brings older people in the community and pupils from local schools together.

There are a number of projects taking place in Leeds that bring together older and younger people for mutually beneficial activities; such as promoting community cohesion, raising attainment and supporting individual development.

Building Bridges is now part of the Leeds primary scheme for all Leeds primary schools. The project has influenced hundreds of children and young people from across Leeds, including 230 children at Whitkirk Primary School, where Building Bridges is now part of the PSHCE curriculum.

The project's toolkit has been published nationally. Ofsted commended one Leeds school for integrating Building Bridges into its curriculum, and in 2007 the project won a European community cohesion award.

An intergenerational strategy for Leeds, and Green Generations, a celebration festival, are currently being developed and will both be launched in April 2010.

For more information about intergenerational practice in Leeds and the Neighbourhoods for All Ages Network, contact Sufia Khan, email: sufia.khan@leeds.gov.uk or Caroline Starkey, email: caroline.starkey@leeds.gov.uk

the standard at the ceremony this month.

Ed Balls said: "Schools have a key role to play in building a fair, integrated and tolerant society for all children growing up in Britain today. I believe a Stephen Lawrence Education Award is a sign of a good school. It means they're committed to doing all they can to show that racism has no place in their school and that pupils understand different cultures and backgrounds."

For more information about the Stephen Lawrence Education Standard, go to: www.educationleeds.co.uk/sles