

Parents Carers and Families – Opportunities to have your say in Leeds!



Here is a list of some of the ways you could have your voice heard, influence decisions and make a positive change for your family and other families in Leeds.

These opportunities could also provide you with the chance to build your confidence and self-esteem, learn new skills and meet different people.

Top Tips

1. Ask to speak to other parents/ carers who are involved to hear their experiences
2. Ask about any training available to help you in your role
3. If you have younger children ask if it is ok to bring them along or if a crèche is provided
4. If you have to catch a bus or pay for parking to access any of these opportunities- ask if your travel costs can be reimbursed
5. Learn about how parents and carers are having a voice and influence in Leeds at <http://tinyurl.com/LeedsPCF>

Parent Carer Voice in Schools

- Learn more about being a governor, skills and experience required, time commitment and training available. <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/School-governor-support.aspx>
- Contact your children's school to find out if they have any vacancies for the role of parent governor.
- Contact your school to find out if they run any parent voice sessions, have set up a parent council or the PTA has any opportunities to help make decisions about how the school is run.

For ideas on how your school could further develop parent voice – this is a useful guide.

<https://www.pta.org.uk/Parents/Get-involved-at-school/Developing-parent-voice-at-your-school>

Parent Carer Voice in Childrens Centres

- If your children go to a local children's centre, ask the staff if they have a parent's forum or run parents drop in sessions as this is often the way children's centres will work with parents and carers to help improve the service they provide and listen to ideas and suggestions. There may also be opportunities to get more involved in making decisions about the children's centre by being a parent representative on the advisory board.

Citizens Panel

- Thousands of people living in Leeds are already members of the Leeds Citizens panel and it is one of the ways Leeds City Council listens and respond to the views and ideas of Leeds residents. You have to be over 18 and for more information about what this would involve visit the website.

<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/council/Pages/Citizens-panel.aspx>

- Find out about more opportunities to have your say and influence the services provided by Leeds City Council including giving compliments, complaints and feedback, comment on applications, take part in public health, parks and countryside consultations, learn about volunteering opportunities and community committees.

<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/council/Pages/Consultations-and-feedback.aspx>

Patient Voice

Here are some of health providers in Leeds and the different ways parents and carers can get involved;

Leeds Community Healthcare NHS

Leeds Community Healthcare welcomes feedback from parents and carers on our services. Your views are important to us. For example you can talk to staff, you can share your story, or you can complete our Friends and Family Survey. Whatever level of expertise and knowledge you have, or how much time you can spare, your contribution is invaluable. Take a look at our website. <https://www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/contact-us/patient-experience-team/>

NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups

Have your say in local NHS services by becoming a patient champion, joining a patient assurance group or GP patient participation group, take part in local consultations and be the first to find out about opportunities by joining the NHS community involvement network "Community Voices". There are some great examples on the link below of how Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have listened and responded to feedback and directly involved parents and carers in the improving services. <https://www.leedsccg.nhs.uk/>

Leeds Maternity Voices

Leeds Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP), which was known as the Maternity Service Liaison Committee, is a friendly group of parent representatives and professionals, who work together to help shape and develop maternity services in Leeds.

Becoming a volunteer you will help to raise awareness around the importance of maternity services. You will help to make sure that seldom heard voices are heard and contribute to future developments in maternity services.

Visit their website for more information <https://www.mvpleeds.com/>

Leeds and York NHS

There are lots of ways you can have your say in the Leeds and York NHS Trust. All you need is an interest in mental health and learning disabilities services and plenty of enthusiasm! You can help improve services by giving feedback, by providing support to others or becoming a member or a governor. There are lots of other exciting involvement opportunities such as, taking part in planning and research projects, joining steering groups and helping to recruit the right people for the right jobs. Whatever level of expertise and knowledge you have, or how much time you can spare, your contribution will be invaluable. Take a look at some of the ways you can get involved by visiting their website <https://www.leedsandYorkpft.nhs.uk/get-involved/>

MindMate Leeds

[MindMate.org.uk](https://www.mindmate.org.uk) is a Leeds website all about young people's mental health and wellbeing, including [information for parents and carers](#) on how to support their child's mental health. The MindMate team are always looking for feedback from parents and carers and ideas from them about how to improve the parent pages. Please leave your suggestions in the feedback boxes on the MindMate pages - or if you're keen to get more involved please email liz.neill@commonroom.uk.com to find out how.

Healthwatch Leeds

Healthwatch Leeds helps local people get the best out of their local health and care services by bringing their voice to those who plan and deliver services in Leeds. If you have something to say, good or bad, about a health or care service you or your family have used, they would love to hear from you. You can also get involved as a volunteer, helping out with all kinds of things like going into hospitals and care homes to talk to people about their experiences. It's a great way to volunteer in health and care settings and they provide some good training and support too. <http://www.healthwatchleeds.co.uk/>

Parents, Carers and Families with children who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Leeds City Council Complex Needs Service work in partnership with parents and carers who have children with SEND to help them ensure the services they provide are meeting their needs. You can join the parent carer stakeholder network (virtual group) and will receive regular newsletters and be the first to hear about consultations and opportunities to shape and improve services provided including the local offer website. To find out more about the different complex needs services, local offer website and download latest newsletters visit <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/Welcome-to-Leeds-City-Council-complex-needs-service.aspx>

Families can share their views on the local offer of SEND services at any time on the Local Offer website. Parents, Carers and family members can join the stakeholder network (see above) or email their views directly to the best practice team bpteam@leeds.gov.uk

EPIC LEEDS is a parent participation forum for parents, carers and families of disabled children and young people with additional needs. To find out more about EPIC LEEDS including volunteering opportunities, events, training and consultations you can get involved in contact epicleeds@gmail.com or visit www.epicleeds.org.uk

For more information about voice and influence opportunities in Leeds for...

Young Parents contact john.may@leeds.gov.uk

Foster Carers contact stuart.wilson@leeds.gov.uk

Kinship Carers contact wendy.gledhill@leeds.gov.uk

Adoptive Parents contact sarah.johal@oneadoptionwy.leeds.gov.uk