

# Changes to services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and disabilities: what do families need to know?



## Where have the changes come from?

New legislation has been proposed to improve services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The proposals are part of the Children and Families Bill, which is likely to become law in spring 2014, and will need to be put into practice from September 2014.

Partners across Leeds City Council, education services, health services, parents/carers groups and third sector groups are all working together to make these changes happen here in Leeds.

## What are the changes?

The changes include:

- Making sure education, health and social care services work together better to make services more streamlined for families.
- Changing the statutory assessment process from current Statements of SEN and Learner Difficulty Assessments, which focus on education, to new joint Education, Health and Care Plans. These will make education, health and social care practitioners work together to provide a more co-ordinated assessment and care plan covering all these needs.
- Making sure children and young people and their parents /carers have more choice and control in the services they access, and how money is spent on their services. Families with an Education Health and Care plan will be able ask to manage the budget for their services themselves in some cases.
- Making Education Health and Care plans available where appropriate to young people with complex needs aged up to 25 if they are in education or training (current Statements only go up to 19)
- Making the process of statutory assessment quicker in future – 20 weeks instead of 26 weeks - which will be better for families.
- Making sure there is better information about services for families. All Councils must publish a 'Local Offer' of all the services available for children and young people with SEND.
- Making sure families are more involved in planning and developing services.

## How will this affect families?

- If your child or young person already has a Statement of SEN now, this will be converted to a new Education Health and Care Plan. This will happen over the next 3 years.
- If your child or young person has complex needs and it is agreed that they need a statutory assessment, after 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 they will not get a Statement of SEN. Instead, if the LA think it is necessary they will get the new Education Health and Care Plan.
- You will be able to find better information about what education, health and social care services are available in your area, including the support you can expect from your child's school, college or training provider, and information about things like transport and leisure. A new website will be up and running from 1st September 2014, for development with families' input. The website will also be a place where families can comment on the range of services available and identify improvements.

## How can families find out more or get involved?

Leeds City Council and our partners across education, health and social care are responsible for making these changes happen in Leeds.

We think it is essential that children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers play a central role in making decisions about how we make these changes happen.

You can find out more and get involved as follows:

- Sign up for our newsletter - email your details to [bpteam@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:bpteam@leeds.gov.uk) asking to be put on the mailing list, or call 07891 279105 and leave a message to receive copies through the post

Check out our web pages at [www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/Children-and-Families-Bill.aspx](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/Children-and-Families-Bill.aspx)

- Follow the Child Friendly Leeds twitter account which we will use to give updates: [@child\\_leeds](https://twitter.com/child_leeds)
- Get involved in our working groups: we have parents/carers on all of our working groups making these changes happen. You can also be a 'virtual' member and have input by email
- If you know a group of parents/carers who want to know more and get involved: email or call us as above to arrange a visit. We will also visit groups of children and young people who want to know more and have their views taken into account.
- If you have any other ideas about how we can share news about these changes with families, please get in touch using the details above.

**Making  
Leeds a child  
friendly city**