



Department  
for Education

## Leeds' Partners in Practice proposal

Leeds' Partners in Practice programme will focus on three elements that explore practice improvement and provide sector led improvement:

### Understanding excellence:

#### Restorative Early Support Team (REST)

Leeds will build up sixteen REST teams who will target interventions towards children identified in schools and clusters as most vulnerable to poor outcomes. The REST teams will be managed through existing structures, with REST Team Managers reporting to the local Service Delivery Manager to strengthen joint working between cluster early help and statutory social work teams. These teams are being developed in partnership with schools, NHS and other local partners. Each team will be tailored to local needs, but at a minimum will include:

- One social work Team Manager
- Two social workers
- Three Family Intervention workers
- A specialist restorative practice worker

Social workers' presence in REST will add their leadership and expertise to localities working with children, families and schools, building capacity. Practitioners in these teams will receive additional in-depth training to develop their existing skills. This will include training in restorative practice that will enable them to provide direct support to children and families through leading restorative meetings and conducting Family Group Conferences, Motivational Interviewing and the use of Outcomes Based Accountability.

#### Restorative Adolescent Service (RAS)

This will bring together services which support adolescents across the social work, targeted services and learning areas of the directorate into one holistic service working in partnership with the children's social work service to support the delivery of statutory services. The proposed structure for the adolescent service builds on what Leeds already do well in terms of innovative approaches to residential care and edge of care work through the Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) service, and looks to increase their capacity to offer this support on an outreach and out of hours basis. This will be further enhanced through increased therapeutic capacity, i.e. additional clinical psychologists and speech and language therapists.

## Sector improvement

Leeds will set up a Centre for Excellence in Restorative Practice and Leadership. The Centre will strengthen Leeds' existing networks of practitioners and academic research to create a valuable source of expertise, innovation and support for the region and the sector as a whole. The Centre will formalise, further develop and share the work Leeds have done to establish a Leeds model of practice, informed by a wide network of leading practitioners, academics and research evidence. Key features include:

- Development of a range of publications and products outlining the Leeds approach to early help, social work and restorative practice, based on building relationships with families through good authority, empathy, and aligning practitioner goals with those of the family.
- Create the capacity within Leeds' leadership, management and practice structures to articulate the Leeds models of early help, social work and restorative practices in children's services in a standardised way, which can be shared with other local authorities for them to adapt and implement within their own culture and ways of working.
- Build on their restorative approach to further develop and articulate their conceptual framework for managing risk, and use the Centre as a mechanism for sharing this across the wider children's services workforce. This will involve bringing leadership development in social work and in schools closer together, as well as developing and delivering a knowledge and skills framework for supporting families across early help and targeted services, underpinned by knowledge, research and best practice in relation to child development and neglect.
- Further develop their support for local authorities which have been judged inadequate or as requiring improvement by Ofsted and to begin to provide 'early help' for those at risk of failure. Using lessons learned through supporting local authorities such as Sunderland and Manchester to discuss and agree with the Department a more formalised, standardised process to agree priorities for improvement at the earliest possible opportunity, and to fund some staff capacity to co-ordinate and deliver Leeds' improvement partner offer.
- Leadership development for aspiring leaders from other local authorities. Leeds City Council does not believe that their model can be fully understood through publications or documents, though these do have their place. They propose to establish a range of development opportunities for aspiring leaders to come to Leeds for secondments, coaching and mentoring from our senior officers, and networking opportunities.
- Hosting events to share best practice and lessons learned from Leeds' improvement journey. Releasing capacity within their service to develop the content for these events and to manage the logistics and communications such as a programme requires.
- The Centre will provide additional expertise and capacity for programme management, monitoring and evaluation of the Innovation change programme.