

Quick guide: support for children and young people with social, emotional and mental health needs in Leeds



This is a quick guide only. To find out more, please see our detailed guide to services on the Leeds Local Offer website. Go to www.leedslocaloffer.org and search for 'mental health'. If you don't use the internet, call the SEND IASS service on 0113 3951 200 (Mon-Fri to 3pm) to find out more.

What do we mean by 'social, emotional and mental health' needs?

Everyone has 'social, emotional and mental health'. In very simple terms, when we are in good emotional and mental health, we can cope with the stresses of everyday life, fulfil our potential, and feel good or okay about life and ourselves most of the time. Our 'social' life is the things around us like our family, friends, and the situations we experience in everyday life. This can really affect our emotional and mental health.

If a child or young person has social, emotional and mental health needs, they may not be able to cope with everyday life, feel okay about life and themselves, or fulfil their potential. This may be related to something in their social life, like a bereavement, abuse, violence, or bullying. It may be linked to other special educational needs, for example autism. It may have no obvious cause.

This may affect their behaviour. They may behave in a way that causes or risks causing harm to themselves, to others, or to the things around them. Some may abuse drugs and alcohol or take risks with their sexual wellbeing. They may have poor attendance at school or be excluded from school. These things can have a big impact on their future.

In Leeds we want all children and young people to have good social, emotional and mental health (which we call 'SEMH' in the rest of this guide). We have written this quick guide to tell you how to get more advice and access support if a child or young person has social, emotional and mental health needs.

What support is available and how can you get it?

Support from your GP: your GP (family doctor) can give you advice on any aspect of your child's health and development, including mental health and behaviour. They can also refer you to specialist health services if you decide together that this is needed.

If you think any child or young person is at risk of harm, please contact Children's Social Work Services on 0113 222 4403 (9 am to 5 pm) or 0113 240 9536 (out of office hours). If you think a child is at immediate risk, contact the emergency services on 999.



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Support from schools, nurseries, preschools, and colleges:

All early years education settings (like nurseries), schools, and post-16 education settings (like colleges) are required by law to support children and young people who need extra help with SEMH needs and any related issues with behaviour. They should also promote good social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing for all learners.

In Leeds all schools offer a 'core' offer of support for SEMH needs. This is part of the local offer for special educational needs and disabilities. By law, all schools must provide the 'local offer' of support in their area. You can find out more about this in the longer version of this guide at www.leedslocaloffer.org (search for 'mental health').

Every school, early years setting and post -16 setting has a **special educational needs coordinator**, or 'SENCo' who can advise you and help get support for SEMH needs.

In Leeds every school belongs to an area of the city called a 'cluster'. That cluster provides services that help with additional needs, called **targeted services**. This always includes emotional and mental health support.

A good way to get extra help from targeted services is to have an **early help plan**. If a child or young person and their family needs extra help, they can ask for an early help plan. An education or health worker might also suggest this. The early help plan is a way to bring together different people from across education, health, and social care services to meet with the family and talk about their needs and what their goals are. Together they will draw up a plan to help the family work towards those goals and support the child or young person to be happy, healthy, safe, and to learn and develop. The plan might include support from targeted services, like family support, counselling or other services.

To find out more about early help plans, talk to any of the people working with your child like your GP, the SENCo (see above) at your child's school, or any other worker. If you can't talk to them, you can also call the early help team direct on 0113 24 76830.

Support for under 5s: Every community in Leeds has an Early Start Children's Centre which offers information, advice and activities for children aged under 5 and their families. They also deliver 'the Healthy Child Programme' which provides activities to help young children and their families to be in good health, including emotional and mental health. Find contact details for your local Centre at www.familyinformationleeds.co.uk or call 0113 24 74386.

Other useful contacts:

The Mindmate website has more information about emotional and mental health and also has short films and self- help tools: www.mindmate.org.uk

The Leeds Family Information Service has details of all kinds of support and services for families in Leeds: www.familyinformationleeds.co.uk or call 0113 24 74386.

The Leeds Local Offer website has information about services and support in Leeds for any kind of special educational needs or disability (SEND), including SEMH needs: www.leedslocaloffer.org

The Leeds Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Information Advice Support Service (IASS) offers impartial advice about any kind of SEND, including SEMH needs, to families in Leeds: www.leedssendiass.co.uk