

12.5.2017

Dear Parent/Carer

Thanks to all who attended our 16+ meeting at Boston Spa this week. I thought the meeting was extremely positive and I know you were encouraged by our response to the current 16+ Leeds funding situation. As promised on the evening, this is a summary of the main points discussed.

I briefly outlined how we are working collaboratively with Leeds to come up with the right solution for all our 16+ learners.

Leeds LA have recently provided us with additional funds to support our 16+ provision, which are very welcome. As a direct result of this action, I am pleased to inform you that our Governing body met last night (11.5.2017) and decided to defer any decision on making any changes to our 16+ provision without extensive consultation.

We will continue to work with you and the LA to ensure through the consultation, that all our young people with SEND at 16+ have access to high-quality learning and packages of alternative support.

I am encouraged by the conversations I have had with Senior Officers of the LA recently and note their commitment and ambition to ensure:

- All young people with SEND to achieve their potential and be as independent as possible.
- The starting point for each young person is based on an individual assessment of their needs, including preparation for adulthood.
- The Leeds approach will be grounded in strong collaboration between SILC principals, the governing body, Local Authority and key partners across health, care and the voluntary sector.
- There will be a new and defined offer for September 2018.

Crucially, Leeds LA have now committed to undertaking a full review of the High Needs Block which funds provision for children with SEND. This will start in June and be complete by September 2017. This is a significant action point and will, I hope, provide child friendly Leeds the funding source to support a tiered approach to post 16 provision for the most vulnerable in the city.

At the meeting Chris Walton, our vocational consultant, outlined aspects of our 16+ offer, with a particular emphasis on the WeCanDoCo enterprise initiative.

We also welcomed the opportunity to speak to you regarding your thoughts on appropriate programmes and preparation for adulthood for your son/daughter. The four initial questions shared at the meeting will form the basis of ongoing workshops and consultations with you regarding any potential 16+ changes. We are asking parents to describe:

1. What should preparation for adulthood look like?
2. What input would they wish to see from Education/Health/Adult Social Care?
3. How should the education offer (600 guided learning hours) be made? Over three days, over five mornings or five afternoons? What would be the advantages/disadvantages of each of these?
4. The three day education offer (600 guided learning hours) will be teacher led. The two-day enrichment/vocational offer, if offered by West Oaks, would be led by associate staff. Would this raise any issues for you? What would you expect the health/social care input to look like?

The responses to these questions will help us frame our 16+ offer. It will provide the opportunity for parents to share their thoughts and concerns and support our conversations with other agencies. Thanks to those who have already returned the questionnaire and I look forward to receiving the others in due course. Please email your comments to me at [andrew.hodkinson@westoaksschool.co.uk](mailto:andrew.hodkinson@westoaksschool.co.uk).

During the meeting, parents asked about our aspirations to deliver provision for learners aged 19-25. At this stage, we are focusing on delivering high quality provision for learners 2-19 and in particular developing a new offer with partners in other agencies for 16+ learners from 2018. The contribution of other partners, e.g. Health and Social Care will be key as we take this forward over the coming year.

Parents expressed their support for the existing provision and the range of opportunities it provides for their children to develop and flourish. Provision will continue to be personalised to meet the needs of individual learners. This will include specific tailored programmes for the more able learners as well as those with complex learning needs. For some students, internships, supported employment may be appropriate.

I have included in this letter a brief capture of some of the comments/questions you raised on the evening and there will be an opportunity for Woodhouse parents/carers to discuss on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May at 4pm at Woodhouse Learning.

I am meeting the LA Project Lead on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May to discuss next steps and to help shape and drive this process.

A follow up meeting with parents/carers is planned for July 17<sup>th</sup> at 5pm-6pm at Boston Spa to update you on your collective feedback and from any conversations/meetings with the LA.

**BOSTON SPA LEARNING** - Westwood Way, Boston Spa, Leeds, LS23 6DX Tel: 01937 844772 Fax: 01937 845122

**WOODHOUSE LEARNING** - Crowther Place, Leeds, LS6 2ST Tel: 0113 3235871

Don't forget to look at our website [www.westoaksschool.co.uk](http://www.westoaksschool.co.uk) or follow us on Twitter @westoaksleeds

A Leeds Local Offer Live Event is taking place - Preparing for Adult on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 10 a.m. to 2p.m. in the Banqueting Suite at Leeds Civic Hall. The event is for young people aged 13-25 with special educational needs or disabilities and their families.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/leeds-local-offer-live-event-preparing-for-adulthood-tickets-34242771050>

Please be re-assured that West Oaks is committed to shaping the appropriate offer based on individual need and will work with all agencies to find the right solution. Should you require any further information or wish to offer any opinions, please do not hesitate to contact me at the School.

Best wishes



Andrew Hodkinson

