

Hastings Draft Local Plan Preferred Options (Regulation 18) Consultation 2026 – Response form

Part B: Complete this part for each comment you make (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Which part of the Plan or evidence base are you commenting on (enter policy number, paragraph or section)?

Provision for Children and Young People
Community Facilities, paragraphs 7.259, 7.381, 7.382,
Policy ID3: paragraph 7.423, 7.424, 7.425

Do you support or object to the policy, paragraph or section?

Support Object **Comment**

If your response is over 100 words, please enter an optional summary here (up to 100 words)

There is very little in the Local Plan about provision for children and young people. We propose some ideas for rectifying this.

Enter your comments here (provide evidence/ references where possible, and tell us what changes you suggest that would address your concerns)

The forum would like the Local Plan to recognise that in West St Leonards there is a notable lack of provision for children and young people. For example, playgrounds are limited and poorly kept; there is no youth centre; and it is challenging for children and young people to travel around the area without access to a car. We believe it will benefit people of all ages if children and young people in West St Leonards are more central to the Local Plan, specifically:

1. **Children and young people should have opportunities to share their ideas and opinions for the neighbourhood, including via a West St Leonards youth council.** A youth council could be established as part of an existing organisation in West St Leonards such as the Education Futures Trust or within the Sea Cadets building. Education Futures Trust already have the use of a building in Bexhill Road
2. **Creating space for children and young people to play and be outside safely is a priority.** Improving and expanding playgrounds was the most popular idea for development during our consultation event. There is a desire for play areas to be developed for children and young people of all ages. We suggest that the priority opportunities for developing play areas are:

- Developing and reinstating the playground where Edinburgh Road meets Harley Shute Road
- Scoping the possibility of an indoor play centre, potentially on/linked to the Sea Cadets site
- An adventure playground for all age ranges, potentially linked to the Combe Valley Discovery Centre and built in co-operation with Rother District Council

This recommendation also includes:

- a. Safe and accessible travel routes (e.g. to school, library, youth club, playground). One specific example of this is to re-make the path from Filsham Rd. to St. Leonard's Academy as it is currently very muddy and obstructed
- b. More traffic free areas
- c. Opportunities for play woven throughout the neighbourhood, not just in designated play spaces
- d. Activities and facilities to support children and young people to access and learn about the sea/seashore and green areas/woodland
- e. A greater variety of outdoor play equipment, e.g. an adventure playground, skate/bike park etc

3. There is a need for more organised activities/targeted services, e.g.:

- a. A West St Leonards youth centre/youth hub
- b. A programme of clubs and activities in partnership with existing providers, such as Wave Arts at the Compound, the Education Futures Trust, Friends of Combe Valley and Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC, In2Play and Project Rewild

4. There is a need for more Early Years provision: If additional nursery places are being created, we recommend that attention is given to expanding nurseries in or close to West St Leonards, as nursery provision is concentrated in other areas meaning families in West St Leonards typically have to travel by car to nursery/pre-school.

5. More visible and accessible facilities for children, young people and their parents/carers should be considered as part of improvements and new developments (e.g. baby changing and toilets for young children)

All comments will be taken into account ahead of the next stage, the Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) version of the Plan, due to be published later in 2026.