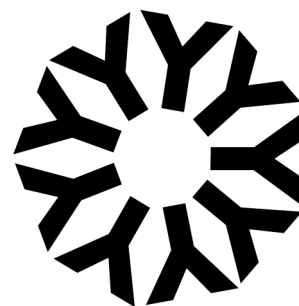


*Commission for Social Care Inspection
Estyn
Healthcare Commission
Healthcare Inspectorate Wales
HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HM Inspectorate of Probation
Office for Standards in Education
Social Services Inspectorate for Wales*



Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Report on:
Barnsley
Youth Offending Team

2006

Foreword

The inspection of Barnsley YOT showed a service that was performing well in an area characterised by considerable social deprivation. The YOT staff were talented, enthusiastic and well led and the atmosphere in the office was one of support and cooperation. The Senior Management Group was working well together and managers were developing some good systems to help ensure consistency of practice across the team.

There were some specific areas of practice that required improvement, most notably in ensuring that supervision planning and review were developed, not least by giving some attention to the documentation used.

Specialist staff provided good levels of support to children and young people and their parents/carers, but opportunities to access mental health services, employment, training and education, although being developed, were limited.

We were confident that the Board and the operational management team were well positioned to ensure that the recommendations made following the inspection would be properly implemented.

Andrew Bridges
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

December 2006

Fieldwork for this inspection was undertaken in June 2006.

Glossary

ACPC	Area Child Protection Committee
APA	Annual Performance Assessment
ASBO	Antisocial behaviour order
Asset	Assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board
BIP	Behaviour Improvement Programme
BSS	Behaviour Support Service
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CSCI	Commission for Social Care Inspection
DAAT	Drug and alcohol action team
DTO	Detention and training order
EPQA	Effective Practice Quality Assurance
Estyn	HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
ETE	Employment, Training and Education
E2E	Entry to Education
HMI Prisons	HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
HMIC	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
ISP	Initial Supervision Plan
JAR	Joint Area Review
KYPE	Keep Young People in Education
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
ONSET	Assessment tool for use in prevention work
PA	Personal advisor
PCEP	Professional Certificate in Effective Practice
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PLUS Curriculum	A teaching support pack approved by the YJB

PSR	Pre-sentence report
RAP	Resettlement and Aftercare Provision
RoH	Risk of Harm
SLA	Service level agreement
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bounded
SMG	Senior Management Group
SOVA	Supporting others through voluntary action
SSIW	Social Services Inspectorate for Wales
SSR	Specific sentence report
WPI	Wales Programme for Improvement
YISP	Youth Inclusion Support Panel
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOT	Youth Offending Team

Introduction

The joint YOT inspection programme began in September 2003 and is the first full inspection programme to examine the work of the YOTs. The programme is being implemented in three phases and covers all 156 YOTs in England and Wales over a five year cycle.

This, the third phase of the inspection, started in September 2005 and includes all YOTs not previously inspected in phases one and two. Its methodology has been developed to complement that of the Joint Area Reviews of Children's Services in England, and inspections undertaken as part of the Wales Programme for Improvement, and of Youth Support Services under the Learning and Skills Act 2000 in Wales. Although the YOT programme remains a separate process in both England and Wales, inspections are conducted within a similar timeframe as these other inspection arrangements wherever possible, so that any areas of potential overlap or duplication can be rationalised and reduced.

The YOT inspection covers five core areas of work:

- ◆ management and partnership arrangements, including the role and functioning of the local Board
- ◆ work in the courts
- ◆ work with children and young people in the community
- ◆ work with children and young people subject to detention and training orders
- ◆ victims and restorative justice.

Findings from the YOT inspection inform not only the Joint Area Review but also the Corporate Assessment, Annual Performance Assessment and Comprehensive Performance Assessment in England, and in Wales inspections undertaken as part of the Wales Programme for Improvement and of Youth Support Services.

On conclusion of the inspection, the YOT is asked to prepare a replacement plan responding to the recommendations. Once agreed, the replacement plan is forwarded to the Youth Justice Board to monitor its implementation.

Overview of the area

- ◆ The Metropolitan Borough of Barnsley is located in the Yorkshire and Humberside region in the North of England.
- ◆ Barnsley had a total population of 218,063, measured in the Census 2001. Of this population, 10.5% were aged 10-17 years at the time of the census. This figure was slightly higher than the average for England, which was 10.4%.
- ◆ Barnsley had a predominantly white population, 99.1%, higher than the average for England of 90.9%. The percentage of Asian or Asian British residents, 0.3%, was much lower than the average for England of 4.6%. The percentage of Black or Black British residents, at 0.1%, was also lower than the English average of 2.3%.
- ◆ The level of employment in Barnsley, 54.9%, was much lower than the average for England of 60.9%. The level of unemployment, 3.9%, was correspondingly higher than the average for England of 3.4%.
- ◆ There was a significantly lower percentage of students resident in Barnsley at the time of the census, both economically active and inactive, at 4.8% compared to 7.3% in England. There was also a higher percentage of permanently sick or disabled residents, 10.4% compared to 5.3% in England.
- ◆ Barnsley Council was classified as a three star council in the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment 2005.
- ◆ The Youth Justice Board figures for youth offending for the period April 2005 to March 2006 show that 63.2 offences were committed per 1,000 children and young people aged 10-17 years in Barnsley.
- ◆ The Youth Justice Board summary of overall YOT performance for April 2005-March 2006 awarded Barnsley YOT a performance level of 3.

Scoring summary

4: Excellent; 3: Good; 2: Adequate; 1: Inadequate.

	Section score
Management	3
Work in the courts	3
Work with children and young people in the community	3
Work with children and young people subject to detention and training orders	3
Victims and restorative justice	4

Overall assessment

Barnsley YOT's governance and leadership were of a high standard, with a sound sense of strategic vision. There were good relationships with the courts, and service provision was strong, although pre-sentence reports needed to be improved, particularly in the analysis of Risk of Harm and victim impact. Preventative work with children and young people was a relatively new area of work that needed to be maintained whilst the scale of provision grew across the area. However, that which was delivered was of a high standard. Good support was available to parents/carers. Considerable attention had been paid to gathering the views of children and young people involved with the YOT and a useful report had been prepared. There were positive and effective links between the teams and with other organisations working with children and young people.

There was a reasonable range of interventions available for children and young people who had offended, although the timeliness of enforcement action and the quality of some supervision planning needed to improve. Attention was being paid to Risk of Harm assessment and management through the introduction of new quality assurance systems. These had been implemented to complement risk training that had been commissioned for the whole team and were intended to bring about steady improvement in practice.

Work with victims and restorative justice approaches were areas of strong performance. The *Remedi* team who delivered this service in Barnsley and across South Yorkshire, contacted by letter, all victims of youth crime identified by the police. Enhanced contact by phone or visit was made in cases where the child or young person had been made subject to a referral order or at the specific request of the case manager. There were plans in hand to provide additional resource so that this level of service could be made available more routinely.

Diversity issues

Barnsley was one of the poorest boroughs in England and had a relatively low level of black and other minority ethnic communities. Figures indicated that members of these communities were not disproportionately represented in the YOT generally, nor in custody. All staff undertook some basic diversity training as part of their induction, but the YOT management team had collaborated with the other South Yorkshire YOTs to commission some specific and more relevant diversity training for all YOT staff. This was to be attended by mixed groups from the different YOTs, thus furthering knowledge and maximising opportunities for sharing experiences. Staff were confident in describing their learning and experiences of working with a range of diversity issues.

The YOT office was designated as one of a small number of reporting centres for hate crime across Barnsley. This was advertised outside the building and in leaflets and meant that anyone wanting to report any hate crime could ask to do so. Their complaint would be recorded on a standard pro forma by the duty officer and then forwarded for action via the multi-agency panel.

Good practice

During a supervision session, K expressed both racist and homophobic views. The case manager discussed this with colleagues and as a result was able to identify some age appropriate worksheets. These were used in the next session as a start to challenging K's attitude.

Key statistics

File reading statistics	YOT file read score for relevant cases	Average for phase two YOTs	Range for phase two YOTs	YJB targets
	(% cases)			
Initial assessment completed in accordance with national standards requirements:				
- timeliness	82%	84%	70-97%	100%
- adequate quality	72%	71%	29-93%	
Full Risk of Harm to others completed on relevant cases	58%	54%	17-83%	
Evidence of management oversight in Risk of Harm cases	33%	41%	0-100%	
Initial supervision plan meets the content requirements of national standards and contain specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bounded objective	10%	52%	17-96%	100% ⁽¹⁾
Frequency of appointments arranged broadly conform to national standards, to the requirements of order/licence, and to any Risk of Harm considerations	90%	75%	52-100%	
Judgements about acceptability/unacceptability of absences are appropriate	79%	71%	40-96%	
Breach/recall action has taken place, if required, within the national standards timescale	57%	49%	13-100%	
No evidence of any criminal activity during the course of the order	57%	71%	52-85%	
Action taken for children considered vulnerable to harm from self and others was appropriate	83%	95%	67-100%	
Effective action taken where there is evidence of educational difficulties	71%	60%	33-81%	90% ⁽²⁾
Appropriate referrals are made in cases of:	33%	n/a	n/a	
- physical health				
- mental/emotional health	83%	n/a	n/a	100% ⁽³⁾
- substance misuse	88%	n/a	n/a	100% ⁽⁴⁾
Victim was consulted about restorative/reparative justice work with child or young person	54%	45%	6-72%	
Assessment of overall quality of pre-sentence reports	58%	n/a	n/a	

(1) Relates to detention and training plans

(2) In full-time Employment, Training and Education

(3) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service referrals

(4) Screening and referrals

Key findings

- ◆ **Management** – Barnsley YOT benefited from being led by a well-run strategic Management Board which had improved its own performance during the 12 months preceding the inspection. Attendance had increased significantly and the Board had developed a routine of requiring detailed performance information from the YOT manager. There was now scope to consider the quality of the work being undertaken.

There was an imbalance in the range of responsibilities in the management team which needed attention and a review of structures and responsibilities was planned and awaiting the inspection findings. There was a mix of management styles which was causing a little concern amongst some staff. There were some good systems in place, albeit recently implemented, such as the consistency panels, particularly for Risk of Harm assessments and plans. However, more systematic approaches to file checking during individual supervision were required.

There were a number of service level agreements in place and there would be some merit in agreeing one with the Children Service's Department.

- ◆ **Work in the courts** – A court liaison officer attended court each weekday to provide a duty service, which included an increasing number of stand down reports. Staff from SOVA, a partnership organisation, provided a daily bail assessment and a bail support service, including Saturdays and bank holidays. All of these staff were specifically praised by the Chair of the youth court bench for the quality of the service they provided. Pre-sentence reports were generally of an acceptable standard, although were weak in terms of Risk of Harm analysis.
- ◆ **Work with children and young people in the community** – The YOT was very involved in the wider prevention structure and was seen as a key player in this arena. There were some innovative and impressive prevention projects which specifically included provision for children and young people known to the YOT. Although the YOT had developed its own supervision plan pro forma for use with community orders and detention and training orders, it did not help workers formulate or review specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bounded objectives and needed attention. Some staff described a poor response from children's services staff when trying to secure non-statutory involvement. There was good cross-agency support for parents/carers and the YOT gave priority to receiving children and young people's views.
- ◆ **Work with children and young people subject to detention and training orders** – As a result of work with the courts, Barnsley had

moved from a high to a low use of custody area. This meant that the overall numbers of detention and training orders was small, therefore, it was difficult to draw general practice analysis from the six cases inspected. Although it was noteworthy that in the four cases where the Risk of Harm screen indicated a full assessment, this had been well completed. In general the sentence and supervision planning were inconsistent and relatively weak.

- ◆ **Victims and restorative justice** – *Remedi*, a voluntary organisation, provided victim contact and reparation services under contract for the YOT. Separate staff dealt with victim contact and support issues and victim awareness work with the children and young people. This was an excellent service, although it was limited in its provision. Plans were in place to secure additional resource to extend the level of victim contact routinely. The police officers involved in final warnings contacted and engaged with victims in those cases.

Recommendations

The Chair of the Senior Management Group should ensure that:

- ◇ an action plan is devised to address the following recommendations and forwarded to the lead inspector within three months of the publication of this report
- ◇ the YOT manager and children's services manager develop a service level agreement to clarify who does what when a child or young person needs the services of both departments at the same time
- ◇ it considers ways of satisfying itself about the quality of the work done as well as the performance against targets
- ◇ it actively supports the management review due to take place.

The YOT manager should ensure that:

- ◇ the management review is conducted speedily, and considers making use of an external facilitator and that it takes account of both process and style issues as well as looking at management structures and responsibilities
- ◇ the consistency panels do not flounder because of the time requirement they generate
- ◇ a systematic approach to file checking during staff supervision is developed and adopted by managers
- ◇ a template for supervision planning for community and detention and training orders is developed or adopted which is fit for purpose. Staff need to be appropriately trained in its use and there needs to be systematic management oversight of its use.

Partner organisations should ensure that:

- ◇ all agreements and contracts with the YOT are reviewed if more than three years old.

1. MANAGEMENT

1.1 Leadership

Key judgement:

- ◆ *The Management Board provides strategic oversight and direction, and coordinates the provision of youth justice services by the YOT and partner organisations.*

Barnsley YOT was located within the Social Services Department. The Director of Social Services line managed the YOT manager and also chaired the SMG. Until late 2005, the team had operated from two locations within the town, both of which were considered unsuitable. The move to the current location was the culmination of three years work to secure and refurbish an appropriate workplace. It was clear that it had not only improved the environment for all, but had also allowed professional relationships between teams to develop for the benefit of the children and young people with whom they worked.

Strengths:

- ◆ The SMG had been through a period of low attendance, but the Chair had written to all partners pointing out the need for commitment and this action had resulted in full attendance for recent meetings.
- ◆ The Chair showed a good knowledge of YOT issues and was instrumental in linking the YOT into the wider strategic community safety structure.
- ◆ All the SMG members commented on how well the meetings were chaired and how businesslike the agenda had become. All welcomed the attention given to performance over the past year.
- ◆ Many of the members sat on a variety of other groups within Barnsley and were therefore well placed to hold a good, strategic perspective of the wider agenda and the role played in it by the YOT. This overview consequently informed their role as a member of the YOT SMG.
- ◆ The YOT manager was clearly held to account by the SMG but also felt fully supported in new developments.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Accommodation for children and young people was identified as a major problem in the Borough and agreement had been reached for the Supporting People coordinator to become a member of the SMG.

- ◊ Whilst the focus on performance had brought about steady improvement, there was little in the way of information about the quality of that performance and the SMG needed to give thought to how it might access that information.

1.2 Partnership and resources

Key judgement:

- ◊ *Partner organisations and the YOT work together to deter children and young people from offending.*

Barnsley had a well-developed crime prevention structure within the town, which benefited from the knowledge and expertise of the relevant contributing managers and agencies, including the YOT.

Strengths:

- ◊ The YOT had a range of appropriate agreements and protocols with partner agencies covering both staff secondment and process matters.
- ◊ There were secondees from all of the required partners.
- ◊ Some key roles within the crime prevention structure had been taken by the YOT, such as chairing the YISP and the Safer Schools Partnership.
- ◊ The YOT had dedicated significant resources to preventative work, without undermining its statutory work.
- ◊ *Remedi* was contracted to provide reparative work. One particular project involved children and young people making a video about offending behaviour and its consequences. This was then passed to *Remedi's* school team who used it in their crime prevention work with local pupils. One particular video that was seen was of impressive quality, it had positively engaged the two young people involved in its making and provided several good talking points for classes.
- ◊ There were good relationships with the MAPPA coordinator and a training day on MAPPA issues had been provided for all staff.
- ◊ The YOT manager was a member of the Barnsley Safeguarding Committee. Basic safeguarding training was provided for all staff as part of their induction.
- ◊ The ETE workers and learning mentors provided direct remedial literacy and numeracy support to those under supervision of the YOT.

Areas for improvement:

- ◊ Some staff experienced difficulty when trying to engage the non-statutory involvement of the Children Service's Department because

there was no SLA or other agreement in place specifying roles and responsibilities in such circumstances.

- ◇ The PCT contributed 4.8% of the YOT funding i.e. below the 6% recommended level, through the cost of staffing and the provision of other services. There was no SLA for CAMHS and related mental health services provided to the YOT, although it was noted that a draft had been prepared. Access to mental health services had been limited and, although there were plans to improve support using RAP funding, it was not clear that this action would resolve some of the existing difficulties in access to Tier 3 and 4 services. The SMG should express strongly its concern about this to the PCT representative.
- ◇ Barnsley had a high level of young people who were not in ETE. There were two primary providers of post-16 E2E training provision and courses were aimed at young people who were able to achieve level 2. As a number of young people under the supervision of the YOT had literacy and numeracy issues, this meant that there were few opportunities for them to get on training courses. There was also a lack of employment for young people in the area.

1.3 Staff supervision, development and training

Key judgement:

- ◇ *Positive outcomes for children and young people are enhanced by effective staff.*

Barnsley YOT was organised into a series of functional teams. Since moving into the new premises at the end of 2005, working relationships, which had been positive to begin with, had improved further. The ease of referring a child or young person between teams had been enhanced by the move and the overall atmosphere within the YOT was one of cooperation and a positive approach to the work.

The YOT operated to the local authority supervision and appraisal policy. The local authority provided rolling programmes of core training which was freely available to all staff although it could not provide YOT specific training: (Software, YJB training, RoH training, etc) which was harder to access.

Strengths:

- ◇ Morale within the team was high and there was relatively little staff turnover. Many staff spoke very positively about the benefit of moving between teams and types of work, both in terms of the personal advantages, but also in a belief that the combining of skills and experience also served the children and young people themselves.

- ◆ Almost all staff reported receiving monthly structured supervision. Seconded individuals reported three-way supervision and appraisal arrangements between the YOT and their home organisation as standard.
- ◆ Staff routinely accessed the local authority's intranet to identify training opportunities and many staff reported attending courses provided in this way. In particular, this was useful for general induction training such as safeguarding, health and safety at work and diversity.
- ◆ About 80% of eligible practitioners had completed the YJB PCEP and two workers have joined the first tranche of the new foundation degree course.
- ◆ All staff and volunteers had been CRB checked and the three year reviews were in the process of being sorted out.
- ◆ Barnsley YOT, in partnership with the other South Yorkshire YOTs, had commissioned diversity training for all staff.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ The team management arrangements were in need of review; this work had already been planned, but was waiting the outcome of the inspection.
- ◆ Managers needed to develop a more systematic and consistent approach to file reading as part of staff supervision.
- ◆ Learning from the PCEP and foundation degree course was not cascaded across the team. Managers needed to ensure that staff made use of that learning in their work with children and young people.
- ◆ Consideration was being given to recruiting a panel of volunteers to engage with the children and young people under supervision. This would provide a valuable resource to the staff for a relatively modest management overhead and was to be encouraged.

Good practice

Attendance at the SMG had fallen off and the progression of business had been affected. The Chair of the group wrote to all agency representatives reminding them of their organisational commitment to the YOT and the importance of their presence at meetings. The letter was written in such a way that members commented that it was both powerful and personable and quite clearly had been effective.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT

This section is judged as good.

2.

WORK IN THE COURTS

Key judgement:

- ◆ *Good working relationships exist between the YOT and the local court.*

As a result of the YOT and the youth court working together and the subsequently increased confidence of the court in the services offered by the YOT, Barnsley had moved from a high to a low use of custody area.

The YOT had contracted with SOVA to provide bail and bail support schemes. Staff were available on every occasion the court sat, including Saturdays and bank holidays, to provide these services and also to pass information to colleagues within the YOT where relevant. There was also a court officer employed directly by the YOT and attached to the case management team. Her work was supported or covered by colleagues from the community sentence, early interventions and SOVA teams at busy times or during leave. All of the staff who worked regularly in court were known to the Chair of the youth bench, who praised each of them for their work and emphasised the high regard in which the YOT was held by the youth panel.

Strengths:

- ◆ The YOT enjoyed excellent working relationships with the court. The district legal director was a member of the SMG and there was a SLA in place.
- ◆ Both the YOT and operations managers were members of the Youth Court User Group and had the freedom to involve any of the operational management team for specific agenda items. The meetings comprised of clerks, solicitors, YOT staff and others and were designed to ensure the smooth running of the youth court process.
- ◆ There was a Youth Court Liaison Committee that met on a quarterly basis. It provided an opportunity for the YOT to keep sentencers up to date with developments and to consider issues of common interest. The group was well attended, although it was voluntary so not all members of the youth court bench attended and heard directly from the YOT. However, it was estimated that 50% of youth panel members attended either the User Group or the Liaison Committee.
- ◆ The YOT managers and bench chairs in South Yorkshire had begun to network and share practice. As well as improving relationships, this

contact had the potential to keep the Barnsley YOT and youth court informed about useful developments.

- ◇ SOVA staff had developed very good relationships with the CPS, police and the defence solicitors, so that their role was understood by all and supported in their work.

Key judgement:

- ◇ *Effective practice with children and young people who have offended is promoted by the work of the YOT within the courts.*

Strengths:

- ◇ There was a consistent court officer present in court, delivering an increasing number of stand down reports. This work was covered by team colleagues for leave and other absence and by the SOVA staff on Saturdays and bank holidays.
- ◇ A system was in place to ensure that documentation travelled with any child or young person sentenced to custody. These arrangements were enhanced by telephone contact when they were considered to be vulnerable.
- ◇ Staff had access to interpreters if needed, although this service had not been called upon during the last year.
- ◇ Children and young people were interviewed immediately after court and given first appointments. 80% of first contacts took place within one day of sentencing.

Key judgement:

- ◇ *Children and young people are safeguarded and the likelihood of their further offending reduced by the provision of appropriate services, including bail supervision and support programmes.*

Strengths:

- ◇ Comprehensive bail packages were quickly available whenever the court sat. SOVA had gained the confidence of the youth panel members and the court considered that bail support packages were well managed.
- ◇ Bail assessments were written down and copies provided for all relevant parties.
- ◇ When a child or young person was initially remanded, a further bail support package was always made available for subsequent appearances, following liaison with the holding establishment.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ There was insufficient accommodation for YOT and SOVA staff at the court. This was the case both in terms of appropriate interview space in the custody area and office accommodation.
- ◇ Because of the limited availability of security staff in the cell area, SOVA staff had very little time to engage with children and young people who appeared in custody. There was scope to negotiate a better arrangement to ensure that SOVA staff were fully able to cover all of the necessary issues.

Key judgement:

- ◇ *Courts are assisted in making informed decisions by the provision of good quality reports from the YOT.*

Nineteen PSRs were inspected and found to be, in broad terms, sufficient for purpose. However, in 11, there was insufficient identification of the impact of the offence on the victim, although this in part was the result of inconsistent receipt of relevant information from the police. Overall, RoH issues were inadequately addressed in these reports. This should be improved by the recently established risk panel. More positively, inspected reports were found to be clearly written and to contain specific and appropriate proposals which were followed in 13 cases.

Strengths:

- ◇ The YOT had introduced the use of PSR feedback forms by magistrates to help improve practice. Information from these forms had not been collated at the time of the inspection.
- ◇ The youth court was making increased use of short format and stand down reports to enable decisions to be taken on the day, where appropriate. This required careful oversight by the court officer and manager to ensure that they were not used inappropriately and that there was sufficient resource available to prepare them.
- ◇ Comments from the bench chair and legal staff highlighted the 'can do' approach of the YOT. This had led to the courts being able to meet their targets for sentencing and disposal and ensure children and young people who had offended were dealt with in a timely manner. Cracked and ineffective trials had been reduced and it was rare for cases to be continually adjourned because reports or information were not available.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ The court-based PSR quality assurance system was under review by managers to ensure a form was attached to all reports. There needed to be a clear and shared understanding of the purpose of this system

and regular analysis of the data gained. A routine way of ensuring that staff made use of the findings was also required.

- ◆ The quality of PSRs needed to be improved so that there was a more consistent approach to their production.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK IN THE COURTS

This section is judged as good.

3. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

3.1 Work with children and young people at risk of offending

Key judgement:

- ◆ *Children and young people are prevented from offending.*

There was a significant prevention focus across the whole of the local authority into which the YOT was fully integrated. The YOT manager had a leading role in supporting the strategic developments, ensuring the assessment of children and young people referred to the YISP and assigning YOT staff to manage prevention programmes.

Strengths:

- ◆ The YOT had made a good start in establishing the YISP and engaging partners in its work. The YJB had an annual target of a 5% reduction in first-time entrants into the criminal justice system by March 2008 as compared with the March 2005 baseline. Barnsley delivered an impressive 35% against that target, compared to a national average of 19% (April 2005-March 2006). In numbers, there was an average of 130 first-time offenders per quarter in Barnsley. For Jan-March 2006 there were 107 and April-June 116.
- ◆ Children and young people at risk of a civil ASBO were prioritised by the YISP. There was also recognition of the need to coordinate the different prevention elements and in particular, to synchronise the use of ONSET with the CAF; this work had been identified as a priority.
- ◆ There was a significant partnership between the YOT and schools, chaired by the YOT manager, which provided many opportunities for joint working.
- ◆ Work done by children and young people under supervision about their offending and its consequences was used within the schools-based crime prevention team.
- ◆ A number of prevention case files were inspected. These demonstrated thorough assessments using the YJB's ONSET tool, as well as good contact records. This practice enabled the relevant YOT worker to gauge progress and report back effectively to review panels, so that appropriate decisions could be taken about further involvement.
- ◆ The youth service ran the *New Routes Girls Group* on behalf of the YOT, taking referrals of those on orders or considered at risk. This

group provided a range of appropriate interventions and was well run by very enthusiastic staff, making engagement with group members more successful.

Area for improvement:

- ◇ Consideration needed to be given to streamlining the YISP process and providing a clearer direction by the Chair as to the purpose of the panel.

3.2 Work with children and young people who have offended

Key judgement:

- ◇ *Children and young people who have offended are prevented from reoffending.*

Final warnings and referral orders were handled within the early interventions team, whilst longer-term work such as supervision orders and DTOs were held by staff in the case management team.

The early interventions team had systematic links with colleagues from *Remedi*, so victim contact work and reparation work, which would be a routine feature of a referral order contract, were handled consistently. Many final warning interventions were delivered directly by the police officers concerned, who referred to *Remedi* for more specialised work when necessary.

There was an effective system for final warnings. Initial and review Assets were completed on all cases dealt with and most involved an intervention. The officer responsible made contact with victims when they were identified and whenever appropriate included information about victim impact in any interventions. Work was carried out speedily which kept the warning and intervention close to the offending behaviour and so the more relevant to the child or young person. This work had received the maximum 3* rating by the YJB's EPQA process.

The case management team had fewer routine systems and links with *Remedi* and whilst they did make use of them, 80% of *Remedi's* work was with children and young people on referral orders.

Strengths:

- ◇ 80% of cases were assessed on time, to a sufficient quality and with evidence of the child or young person's active involvement in the process.
- ◇ All staff had attended a day's briefing on MAPPA.
- ◇ Cases that were assessed as medium or high RoH were appropriately referred to managers and, where relevant, to MAPPA.

- ◇ The YOT had recently introduced a RoH panel which involved managers in quality assuring risk assessments and feeding back to the worker concerned, as well as drawing general lessons for circulation over time. This approach should enhance the consistency of risk assessments and plans considerably.
- ◇ Supervision plans overall paid suitable attention to victim issues and there was a good emphasis on reparation work.
- ◇ Initial appointments generally occurred within one working day of court and there was a good induction system to ensure that children and young people understood the requirements of their order.
- ◇ The frequency of appointments, judgements about absences and implementation of breach action were generally good and all above the average found during phase two YOT inspections.
- ◇ There was a good emphasis on home visiting, thus ensuring that the worker had a contextual understanding of the child or young person's life. In the one case where a home visit had not taken place, the reasons for that decision had been considered and properly recorded.
- ◇ The seconded police officers who dealt with all final warnings had good links with the local police and received notifications of final warning cases within 24 hours.
- ◇ Good quality initial and review Assets were regularly produced for final warnings.
- ◇ Appropriate emphasis was placed on victim impact in final warning interventions.
- ◇ There was a large and enthusiastic group of referral panel volunteers who were well trained and many had been in post for several years.
- ◇ The majority of panels sat within the national standard of 20 days and on the occasions when this could not happen, fewer than five extra days elapsed.
- ◇ Panel members received written reports and had the opportunity to go through them with a YOT worker before the meeting began.
- ◇ Where a victim chose not to attend a meeting, their views would either be read out from a statement or represented to the panel by the *Remedi* victim contact worker who had visited them.
- ◇ There was a system in place to provide feedback to victims who did not attend the panel.
- ◇ Where a victim did attend a panel meeting, they were supported by the victim contact worker.
- ◇ In the majority of cases the referral panel contract appropriately met the needs of the RoH assessment.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ The YOT had developed a supervision plan pro forma that was not fit for purpose. In particular, it did not lead the user to develop SMART objectives and thus also limited the quality of reviews.
- ◆ The timeliness of both initial and review supervision planning needed to be improved, with only 66% of the cases inspected meeting the national standard requirement.
- ◆ Although RoH assessments when completed were generally good, there were five out of 12 relevant cases where a full assessment was not completed.
- ◆ Of the seven cases that required breach or recall action, three were not managed within the national standard.
- ◆ Whilst accepting that there were regular discussions and managerial involvement in medium and high RoH cases, this was not sufficiently reflected in the case record and managers needed to improve their recording practice in these circumstances.

Good practice

Two young men who had both committed several offences involving drugs and violence were brought together in a *Remedi* project to make a video about their offending and its consequences as part of their reparation. They developed the storyline, took part in the acting and one of them wrote a lengthy rap to serve as the narrative. This impressive video was to be used in prevention work by *Remedi* in local schools.

Key judgement:

- ◆ *The health of children and young people who have offended is promoted by the work of the YOT.*

Strengths:

- ◆ The YOT was a member of the CAMHS Strategy Group, so contributing to driving forward improvements.
- ◆ The health service funded two secondees, who both worked part-time; their remit was particularly on mental health and supporting children and young people awaiting access to mainstream services in CAMHS. Using other funding, the YOT had made one of these posts full-time to focus on general health screening and in particular those using drugs alcohol or tobacco. The post holders had the relevant experience and skills for the role and had effective management and clinical supervision.

- ◇ The health needs of the children and young people in contact with the Barnsley YOT were increasingly complex. The opportunity to promote physical and mental health, healthier lifestyles and to access health services appropriately was recognised by the YOT. The provision to support this had been developed by the health workers within the YOT and was now effectively addressing mental health needs and substance misuse.
- ◇ There was a clear SLA for provision of the substance misuse work to the YOT. The provision included alcohol misuse services. Linkages existed to behaviour support services and provision was made through *THE BARN*, a voluntary sector organisation with considerable experience in the field, to children and young people likely to be excluded from school for substance misuse.
- ◇ The substance misuse services available to the YOT were accessible and appropriate with continuity between the workers in the YOT and the mainstream services for children and young people based at *THE BARN* drop-in centre, commissioned through a voluntary agency.
- ◇ Structured arrangements for transition to adult services had been effectively developed.
- ◇ The substance misuse workers employed by *THE BARN* had regular three-way supervision and were able to access relevant training and personal development opportunities.
- ◇ The links between substance misuse and offending behaviour were well recognised. There was a DAAT Young Peoples Substance Misuse Plan which appeared to have sound multi-agency input and to reflect the local population needs. *THE BARN* was hoping to extend its information, education and general preventative work by providing more multi-agency training as the common assessment process was rolled out. *THE BARN* provided progress reports on children and young people as appropriate to the YISPs.
- ◇ This provision meant a range of experience and expertise was available and responsive to YOT needs. The targets for screening referral and treatment were all met. The substance misuse workers provided training and continuing support to the other YOT workers and audited Assets to check if referrals were being made appropriately.
- ◇ A range of interventions was used by the YOT substance misuse workers. These were age appropriate and evidence based. An Australian programme for cannabis misusers, which had been evaluated and was considered effective, was being adapted for use in the YOT.
- ◇ RAP funding was to be used to support an additional half-time post, seconded from CAMHS. The RAP programme would enable more integrated work by the health workers in the YOT.

- ◇ There were good links with smoking cessation services, which were supportive to the children and young people with whom the YOT worked.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ Although the CAMHS worker in the YOT had relevant experience and skills, they had not received regular three-way supervision and appraisal.
- ◇ The YOT targets for accessing CAMHS were not met. YOT workers were screening for mental health issues and made appropriate referrals to the YOT mental health worker. This worker was seconded half-time to the YOT and also worked in CAMHS half-time under a separate contract. Prioritising the referrals from the YOT workers was problematic, and as general CAMHS capacity had been low it was difficult for the YOT mental health worker to refer any outstanding work on to CAMHS colleagues. Primary mental health workers had now been appointed for Tier 2 CAMHS with the intention of freeing up capacity at Tiers 3 and 4. The additional half-time post appointed to the YOT from RAP funding should also improve the situation. However recruitment into new posts tended to be from existing CAMHS staff so, in the short-term, capacity was not increased.
- ◇ Adult psychiatrists had been providing reports for court on 16/17 year olds. The quality and relevance of these reports had not been good.

Key judgement:

- ◇ *Children and young people who have offended are safeguarded through the work of the YOT.*

Of the cases inspected, only two were Looked After Children and none were subject to care or child protection arrangements.

Strengths:

- ◇ In the Looked After cases, there was clear evidence of good liaison between the YOT and social services.
- ◇ Action had been taken in the six cases where there was concern about self-harm or vulnerability. In five of those cases, we considered that the action was appropriate.
- ◇ There was good evidence of parental involvement in the assessment process and regular home visits were a feature of supervision work.

Area for improvement:

- ◇ There should be more routine contact with social services even when the child or young person is not Looked After, to ensure that they had not recently come to the notice of the department.

Key judgement:

- ◇ *Children and young people who have offended are enabled and encouraged to achieve their potential.*

Connexions seconded one PA to the YOT, and education seconded an education welfare officer. The YOT also commissioned a behaviour support worker half-time using KYPE funding. In addition, the ETE team had link mentors as sessional workers funded through the YJB KYPE programme. Capacity existed within the YOT to meet identified need.

YJB returns for Barnsley YOT for 2004/2005 showed that 78.5% of children and young people who had offended were in ETE against a target of 90%. Returns for Jan – March 2006 indicated that 85% of school age children and young people who had offended were in ETE, but only 59% of those over the age of 16.

The YOT had a small education team which was working well and had developed systems to ensure that every child or young person who was involved with the YOT had their ETE status reviewed in the first week of supervision and again towards the end. There was a clear referral process to the ETE team and actions undertaken in response to referrals were recorded and monitored. The team was managed within the resources team. Staff were supervised on a monthly basis with the agenda for discussion, including individual cases, agreed beforehand, all supervision sessions were recorded and signed by participants.

There was an awareness of the importance of providing a greater focus on ETE at a strategic level, as the increase in staffing demonstrated. There was however a need for the YOT to develop its own education plan to ensure educational priorities were addressed, and issues such as the impact of the end of YJB KYPE funding in March 2007 are considered as a priority.

Recently staff have worked to promote the PLUS curriculum material which was used in BIP schools, BSS, Grimethorpe Action Zone and New Route. The ETE team coordinated a meeting of deliverers twice a year to share good practice.

Strengths:

- ◇ Link mentors funded through the YJB KYPE programme supported individuals in schools and by providing personal development opportunities.
- ◇ Recent developments included the introduction of formal assessments for literacy and numeracy.
- ◇ ETE staff held meetings with children and young people, parents/carers and schools to resolve issues of non-attendance and behaviour in schools.

- ◇ Children and young people who had other issues in school such as bullying were referred to *Remedi's* school team for restorative justice or mediation work.
- ◇ An ETE worker, whose post was split between the YOT and the behavioural support service, ensured that all children and young people excluded from school had a place in alternative provision.
- ◇ Where children and young people were placed in alternative provision, the worker ensured that the caseworker had a copy of their timetable so that appointments could be arranged when they were not attending education.
- ◇ 60% of children and young people involved in New Route had training or work placements secured.
- ◇ The appointment of the seconded worker from Connexions and the safer schools developments were the result of a needs analysis led by the Management Board.
- ◇ In accordance with the YOT view that it was its role to provide a conduit back into education, ETE staff did not directly deliver programmes. However they bought in time from programmes such as New Route, SOVA (literacy and numeracy), *Remedi* (mediation work in schools) and Grimethorpe Action Zone.

Key judgement:

- ◇ *Outcomes for children and young people are improved by their involvement through consultation about the services provided by the YOT.*

Barnsley YOT set great store by consultation with children and young people. Along with the other YOTs in South Yorkshire, it had commissioned a *Voice and Influence* report into children and young people's views of the YOT. This work was conducted on their behalf, so that it was not subject to any internal bias.

Strengths:

- ◇ Once the *Voice and Influence* report was available and had been considered by the YOT manager, the children and young people who had taken part received a newsletter informing them of its completion and of the work that would flow from it.
- ◇ In half of the cases inspected, the child or young person had completed a *What do you think?* form about themselves.
- ◇ Feedback was routinely sought from victims and from children and young people involved in reparation work. The information was used on a case-by-case basis, usually when it was either very positive or critical.

Area for improvement:

- ◇ There was insufficient routine analysis of the qualitative feedback collected. This could inform general improvement over time. The recent appointment of an information officer may provide some scope for such a development.

3.3 Work with parents/carers

Key judgement:

- ◇ *Parents/carers are supported in addressing their children's offending.*

The YOT employed a parenting worker to engage with and support parents/carers who were struggling with their responsibilities. Emphasis was placed on maintaining parents/carers in voluntary contact whenever possible, as this approach was more likely to ensure positive compliance. Parenting work was organised across agencies, with staff trained together and able to work together on a wide range of issues. Formal assessments were conducted by the YOT parenting worker to help identify the most appropriate intervention.

Strengths:

- ◇ There were very good inter-agency group work arrangements, with staff from different agencies leading programmes for parents/carers referred from different sources.
- ◇ When the court indicated that it was considering a parenting order, the YOT offered to prepare a written assessment within a week.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

This section is judged as good.

4.

WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUBJECT TO DTOs

Key judgement:

- ◆ *The likelihood of re-offending for children and young people who receive DTOs is minimised through the intervention of the YOT by assessment.*

Barnsley YOT had worked successfully with its youth court to effect a significant reduction in the overall numbers of children and young people being sentenced to custody. One result of this development was that there were only six DTO cases that fitted within the inspection timescale.

DTO cases were held within the case management team by suitably qualified staff who had access to all of the specialist partners and colleagues within the YOT. The ETE team's *assertive screening* procedure was applied on release and again towards the end of the licence period.

Strengths:

- ◆ Full RoH assessments had been completed when indicated by the screening process.
- ◆ Where a specific risk had been identified, the case was referred to a manager. In these cases, we agreed with the assessment.
- ◆ In the one case where the child or young person was considered vulnerable, appropriate action had been taken.
- ◆ There was evidence in the files that children and young people had been actively involved in the assessment process.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ In cases where there was a raised RoH, there was not sufficient evidence in the files of ongoing management oversight.
- ◆ Initial assessments were not all completed in line with the national standard requirements.

Key judgement:

- ◇ *The likelihood of reoffending for children and young people who receive DTOs is minimised through the intervention of the YOT by contact with the child or young person and effective liaison with the secure establishment during the custodial period.*

Strengths:

- ◇ Case supervisors made an active contribution to the initial training plan, ensuring that it was informed by their Asset assessment.
- ◇ There was evidence of good levels of contact with parents/carers and of their attendance at planning meetings being encouraged, or actively supported, as appropriate.
- ◇ In addition to the six cases inspected, five children and young people currently in custody completed questionnaires for the inspection. Four out of the five were very positive in their comments about the frequency and nature of contact they had received from their YOT worker and could not identify any concern that had not been addressed.
- ◇ There was evidence of good levels of contact between YOT and establishment staff to discuss progress.

Key judgement:

- ◇ *The likelihood of reoffending for children and young people who receive DTOs is minimised through the intervention of the YOT by reintegration into the community.*

Strengths:

- ◇ It was clear that steps were taken to ensure that children and young people understood the requirements of their order.
- ◇ The number of appointments arranged and kept were in line with the national standard requirements and appropriate for the RoH identified.
- ◇ The full range of specialist assessments and interventions, around mental health and substance abuse in particular, were available for this group.
- ◇ Particular emphasis was given to the accommodation needs of children and young people released from custody, notwithstanding that this was an area of difficulty across Barnsley as a whole.

Area for improvement:

- ◇ Judgements about failed appointments were inconsistent and there needed to be some clearer guidance as to how these should be made.

Key judgement:

- ◇ *The YOT demonstrates positive outcomes in its work with children and young people subject to DTOs.*

Strengths:

- ◇ When work was begun in custody to address a criminogenic need, there was evidence that it was appropriately followed-up after release.
- ◇ Although housing provision for children and young people in Barnsley was an area of poor provision, YOT workers paid specific attention to housing needs so as to be better prepared to deal with them in a timely manner.
- ◇ There was evidence of work being done routinely on children and young people's thinking and behaviour and ETE in every case.
- ◇ There was a good level of compliance with licence requirements.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ Supervision plans did not contain SMART objectives, nor was sufficient attention paid to victim impact awareness.
- ◇ Interventions were not sufficiently linked to RoH considerations.
- ◇ Reviews of supervision plans were of insufficient quality.

Good practice

Despite the general problem of accommodation for children and young people in Barnsley, it was impressive that all DTO cases inspected had better living arrangements following release than before sentence.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUBJECT TO DTOS

This section is judged as good.

5.

VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Key judgement:

- ◇ *Victims of children and young people who have offended feel that they have been assisted by the intervention of the YOT in achieving closure.*

Barnsley YOT, along with the other South Yorkshire YOTs, had contracted with *Remedi*, a voluntary organisation which provided victim contact, mediation and reparation work. The team was based within the YOT office as was the manager for the whole of South Yorkshire *Remedi*. The YOT also provided space for other staff from the organisation, for example the school's team, who did not work directly with the children and young people under supervision as part of their partnership approach.

Strengths:

- ◇ The police officers involved in final warnings contacted victims in those cases and were trained in restorative justice. Final warning interventions included an element of victim impact work whenever relevant.
- ◇ The *Remedi* team had a very structured process in place for all cases with which they dealt. All identified victims were contacted by letter, provided with information and offered the opportunity to comment on or take part in a restorative process. 80% of their work was based on referral orders in which the victim received enhanced level of contact by phone or visit. These matters were sequenced appropriately, ensuring that victims had the opportunity to comment on any reparation work to be undertaken.
- ◇ The enhanced level of contact was also available to victims in other types of cases should the case manager request it and there were plans in hand to increase the team's resources to enable this level of contact to be made to all victims routinely.
- ◇ One member of staff had the responsibility to check on a monthly basis that the police had notified the YOT of all cases via the 'Warn 2' form completed when a child or young person was arrested and charged. If any gaps were found, these were followed-up with the police and a late contact was made. This approach had led to a very low rate of missed notifications.
- ◇ There was a good range of reparation work available which was well publicised in an information brochure.

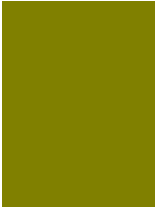
- ◆ Four victims were visited as part of the inspection. Each described themselves as surprised but pleased at being contacted at all, as their expectations of the justice system had been that they would not have any involvement. Each also spoke very positively about both the manner of the staff who contacted them and the generally positive outcomes in terms of how they felt about the overall process. Most importantly, each had a significantly better experience than they had expected.
- ◆ Reparation was a standard element of referral order contracts. Work on victim impact was routinely delivered as part of the preparation for reparation work. Victims were able to indicate their view as to appropriate reparation. Direct reparation featured in a third of relevant cases inspected.
- ◆ All members of the team were trained in restorative justice and able to run direct mediation sessions, although these did not occur very often.
- ◆ Victims were well supported if they chose to attend a referral panel meeting and had options for their views to be appropriately presented to the panel should they prefer. Feedback on the outcomes of the panel was provided.
- ◆ Statistical data on work with victims and children and young people involved in reparation were collected, collated and reported on a regular basis.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Whilst all contacts with victims were recorded by *Remedi*, there was not always a note made on the child or young person's file. This would contribute to supporting case managers in recognising that there was a specific victim and help maintain focus on the need for victim impact work to be done.
- ◆ Feedback comments were collected from victims and from children and young people and used on an individual basis where a specific issue was identified. However, there was no analysis of this qualitative information to inform strategic developments.

Good practice

The police officers dealing with final warnings knew that they had to 'sell' what an intervention could offer to both victims and children and young people and their families. After ascertaining that E and his parents were receptive to the need to make reparation to the victim, he went to meet the victim whose car had been damaged by E and his co-defendant. He asked her what she wanted to get out of reparation – she wanted the young person to understand what he had done and to feel that in future he would behave differently and not reoffend. The officer felt that this was a case where a restorative justice conference could work. It was arranged and took place in E's head teacher's office. It went so well that the victim felt able to expand on what she wanted from the process and asked if



the family would be prepared to contribute to the excess payment she had had to pay her insurers. They agreed at once to pay half as E had responsibility for half of the damage. All were satisfied with this process and E in particular was very clear about the consequences of his actions.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK WITH VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

This section is judged as excellent.

The joint inspection of YOTs

The joint inspection of YOTs is an independent programme, funded by the Home Office and reporting to the Secretary of State. Inspections are conducted jointly, involving CSCI, Estyn, the Healthcare Commission, the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, HMIC, HMI Prisons, HMI Probation, Ofsted and SSIW as appropriate. The joint inspection team is located within and led by HMI Probation.

Home Office objectives

The joint inspection contributes primarily to the achievement of Home Office Objective II – 'more offenders are caught, punished and stop offending and victims are better supported', and to the requirement to ensure that custodial and community sentences are more effective at stopping offending.

It also contributes to the achievement of Objective III, through the scrutiny of work to address drug and other substance misuse, and to other relevant criminal justice system and children's services' objectives in England and Extending Entitlement objectives in Wales.

The **purpose** of the joint inspection is to report to the Secretary of State and, through him Parliament and the public, on the effectiveness of the YOTs in fulfilling their statutory duties to prevent offending by children and young people, and thereby protect the public, whilst still safeguarding their rights and promoting their welfare.

The **aims** of the programme are to:

- ◆ assess the impact made by YOTs and partner organisations on the prevention of offending by children and young people through effective supervision
- ◆ appraise the work undertaken by YOTs and partner organisations to meet the needs of children and young people at risk of offending and enable them to lead law-abiding and constructive lives
- ◆ evaluate the role of the YOTs in safeguarding the rights and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- ◆ assess the extent to which the YOTs are meeting the required standards and targets set by the YJB
- ◆ promote good practice in the management arrangements of YOTs and service delivery to the courts and community
- ◆ identify underperformance and make recommendations to promote improvements
- ◆ evaluate the effective use of resources
- ◆ actively promote race equality and diversity as an integral part of the inspection process
- ◆ produce timely reports which contribute to improved performance by informing policy and practice.

Inspection arrangements

- ◇ The joint YOT inspection is conducted in line with the Government's commitment to proportionate and coordinated inspection in local government. It:
 - is proportionate to risk, with fieldwork adapted to the circumstances of the YOT and only carried out to identify findings or to disseminate good practice
 - complements, and is coordinated with, other inspection programmes, including the JARs in England, and inspections undertaken as part of the WPI and of Youth Support Services in Wales
 - informs judgements made in the APA and CPA in England.
- ◇ The criteria for the third phase of the inspection focus on:
 - management and partnership arrangements
 - work in the courts
 - work with children and young people in the community
 - work with children and young people subject to DTOs
 - victims and restorative justice.
- ◇ Prior to the inspection, each YOT is asked to submit selected advance information and complete a self-assessment, identifying strengths and areas for improvement.
- ◇ In England, fieldwork for each individual inspection takes place over one week, prior to the JAR. It consists of:
 - an assessment of a representative sample of individual case files
 - meetings with relevant managers, representatives of partner organisations and members of the YOT staff
 - contact with children and young people, their parents/carers and the victims of offences committed by children and young people supervised by the YOT.
- ◇ Fieldwork in Wales includes the same elements but is linked to inspections undertaken as part of the WPI and of Youth Support Services. The assessment of case files may, therefore, be conducted in advance of the meetings with managers and staff. However, the total amount of inspection time spent within the YOT remains the same as in England.
- ◇ The assessment of case files consists of a representative sample of between 30 and 80 children and young people (dependent on the YOT's workload) who have been subject to some form of intervention in the previous months. The cases cover most orders, including licences and are examined in detail. The case manager and any other person significantly involved in delivering the intervention are interviewed as part of the file reading exercise and, where possible, the child or young person themselves and their parents/carers.

- ◆ In order to encourage self-assessment and increase ownership of the inspection findings, we are inviting YOTs to second a member of their staff, usually an experienced practitioner, as a representative accompanying the inspection team, for the fieldwork week. We consider this to be a positive way of developing mutual understanding and strengthening the links between inspection and practice.
- ◆ The inspection findings will be compiled in a report which includes recommendations for improvement. These recommendations will be designed to encourage the YOT in its work, to support good practice and to promote improvements.
- ◆ The report is submitted to the Home Secretary, as the Secretary of State responsible for youth justice, with simultaneous copies to the Education and Health Secretaries. In Wales, reports are also submitted to the Ministers for Social Care and Regeneration, Lifelong Learning, Health and Social Care as well as the Minister for Children.
- ◆ Reports on YOTs in Wales are published in both Welsh and English. We also aim to fulfil our other responsibilities under the Welsh Language Act 1993 in accordance with the central principle of equality embodied in the Act.
- ◆ A copy is sent to the YJB. Copies are also made available to the press and placed on the website of HMI Probation at:
<http://www.inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmiprobation>

Code of practice

Each inspection will:

- ◆ be undertaken with integrity in a professional, impartial and courteous manner
- ◆ enable the development of independent judgements, based on evidence
- ◆ seek to energise and engage with staff
- ◆ promote race equality and diversity throughout its processes
- ◆ be concluded with the timely publication of a report containing findings and recommendations for improvement.

Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within the remit of this inspection programme should write to:

*HM Chief Inspector of Probation
2nd Floor, Ashley House
2 Monck Street
London SW1P 2BQ*

Scoring approach

The scoring approach has been significantly changed in phase three of the inspection programme to ensure compatibility with that of the JAR and Corporate Assessment in England, and the similar judgements used in inspections undertaken as part of the WPI and of Youth Support Services in Wales.

In phase three, each of the five sections of the inspection are individually assessed against the relevant criteria. Assessments are based on:

- ◇ information supplied by the YOT
- ◇ interviews with chief officers, managers and staff both from the YOT and other partner organisations
- ◇ examination of case files
- ◇ discussions with case managers and other people significantly involved in the supervisory process
- ◇ the perspectives of the children and young people, their parents/carers and, where possible, their victims, contacted during the course of the inspection
- ◇ information supplied by the JAR, Corporate Assessment and other relevant inspection findings in England and inspections as part of the WPI and of Youth Support Services in Wales.

The judgements and their descriptors are given in the table below:

Judgement	Descriptor
4	Excellent – performs strongly, well above minimum requirements with outstanding features
3	Good – performs well, consistently above minimum requirements with no important shortcomings
2	Adequate – only meets minimum requirements
1	Inadequate – does not deliver minimum requirements, with many important shortcomings

We summarise the judgements of the five sections in an overall assessment. We have decided that in phase three we will not give a general categorisation of the performance as a whole, as we wish each YOT to focus attention on its own specific areas for improvement.

Next steps

- ◆ The YOT will be asked to send a response to the recommendations, to the lead inspector, together with an action plan within three months of the publication of the report. It is anticipated that the recommendations will normally be addressed within 12 months of publication to allow sufficient time for integration within existing developments.
- ◆ Once the action plan has been agreed by the lead inspector, it will be passed to the YJB who will monitor the recommendations' implementation.
- ◆ The joint inspection programme does not normally include any follow-up action unless issues were to emerge during the course of the programme that were of such serious concern to require immediate attention. The inspection of the Barnsley YOT has not revealed any such concerns.
- ◆ In addition to the reports on individual YOTs, the joint inspection team also publishes periodic reports on findings across a number of teams. Such reports include comments on race equality and diversity issues and other trend information. They also include comparisons between the performance of YOTs with similar characteristics.

Inspection criteria for YOTs in England

1. Management

1.1: Leadership

Key judgement

1.1.1: The Management Board provides strategic oversight and direction, and coordinates the provision of youth justice services by the YOT and partner organisations.

Evidence

- 1.1.1.1 There is a clear line of accountability for the YOT to the local authority Chief Executive and YOT plans are integrated with those of the wider council.
 - 1.1.1.2 The Management Board is made up of representatives of partner organisations who attend and participate actively in meetings.
 - 1.1.1.3 Members of the Management Board represent the needs of the YOT to their parent organisations.
 - 1.1.1.4 The Management Board gives support and guidance to the YOT Manager to ensure that they engage with local and national priorities and promote race equality and wider diversity issues.
 - 1.1.1.5 The Management Board ensures that the Youth Justice Plan is implemented.
 - 1.1.1.6 The Management Board ensures the provision of accurate and timely data returns, both for its own use and that of the YJB.
 - 1.1.1.7 Partners regularly and collectively review, monitor and evaluate service information to ensure that the YOT is contributing to improving outcomes for children and young people.
-

1.2 Partnership and resources

Key judgement

1.2.1: Partner organisations and the YOT work together to deter children and young people from offending.

Evidence

- 1.2.1.1 The Youth Justice Plan reflects partner strategies.
 - 1.2.1.2 Resources have been identified and capacity exists to meet assessed need.
 - 1.2.1.3 YOTs are appropriately staffed by partners according to legislation and Home Office/YJB guidance.
 - 1.2.1.4 Protocols, contracts and SLAs have been agreed between the YOT, its statutory partners and other relevant organisations to address the coordination of work, delivery of services, information sharing, human resources and funding arrangements. They are regularly reviewed and updated.
 - 1.2.1.5 The YOT is a member of the ACPC/Local Children's Safeguarding Board, and operates according to local child protection procedures.
 - 1.2.1.6 The YOT contributes to a joint-agency approach to the management of high-risk offenders in the community, including MAPPA and registration with the police.
 - 1.2.1.7 There are secure arrangements for the recording and sharing of information on children and young people at risk, including those moving across service boundaries.
 - 1.2.1.8 A range of interventions and services, including health and education, are provided across the authority to meet the needs of children and young people who have offended and those at risk of offending.
 - 1.2.1.9 The YOT contributes to community regeneration initiatives that are targeted at the most needy areas and address the broad range of family needs in an integrated way.
 - 1.2.1.10 The YOT contributes to successful outcomes in reducing anti-social behaviour, in particular through effective partnership working.
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1.3 Staff supervision, development and training

Key judgement

1.3.1: Positive outcomes for children and young people are enhanced by effective staff.

Evidence

- 1.3.1.1 Practice is defined by written policies and procedures.
 - 1.3.1.2 Staff are regularly supervised within a performance management framework, in accordance with their developmental needs and assessed level of competence.
 - 1.3.1.3 Annual appraisals contain objectives that are linked to local and national targets.
 - 1.3.1.4 All staff are appropriately qualified and provided with training opportunities to equip them to meet the requirements of the Youth Justice Plan to identify and manage risks and to raise safeguarding concerns.
 - 1.3.1.5 Training needs are regularly reviewed.
 - 1.3.1.6 Volunteers are appropriately trained and are available for YOT activities.
 - 1.3.1.7 CRB checks are undertaken on all staff and volunteers who have access to children and young people or their case files, and are updated at least every three years.
 - 1.3.1.8 Joint agreements are in place for the management of disciplinary, capability and grievance procedures.
 - 1.3.1.9 There is a written complaints procedure, which is well publicised and easily accessible. Complaints are properly managed against the procedure.
 - 1.3.1.10 Health and safety assessments of facilities and activities are undertaken, acted on and updated regularly.
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2. Work in the courts

Key judgement

2.1: Good working relationships exist between the YOT and the local court.

Evidence

- 2.1.1 An agreement is in place between the YOT, justices' clerk or his/her nominated senior lawyer and the local Crown Court covering arrangements for court services.
 - 2.1.2 The YOT provides trained and knowledgeable staff to ensure adequate representation in any courts within its geographical area, including Saturday/bank holiday cover and the Crown Courts.
 - 2.1.3 The YOT attends and contributes to a Youth Court User Group, which meets regularly and whose purpose is detailed in the national standard.
 - 2.1.4 The YOT provides regular inputs to magistrates' court and Crown Court staff about a range of programmes and sentencing options.
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Key judgement

2.2: Effective practice with children and young people who have offended is promoted by the work of the YOT within the courts.

Evidence

- 2.2.1 Information and first appointments are provided to all children and young people who are made the subject of community sentences or bail supervision and support programmes.
 - 2.2.2 All children and young people remanded or sentenced to secure or custodial detention are interviewed, assessed for vulnerability, and the information is passed to the establishment within the national standard timescale.
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Key judgement

2.3: Children and young people are safeguarded and the likelihood of their further offending reduced by the provision of appropriate services, including bail supervision and support programmes.

Evidence

- 2.3.1 Arrangements are in place between the YOT and the appropriate local Children Service's Department regarding the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984), remands from Saturday/bank holiday courts and the completion of the appropriate paperwork for children and young people remanded to the care of the local authority.
- 2.3.2 There are arrangements in place, to which the YOT has agreed, to identify and alert the YOT of all children and young people who are at risk of secure or custodial remand.
- 2.3.3 Differentiated support/supervision services are offered, commensurate with likelihood of remand, to address objections to bail.
- 2.3.4 Follow-up services are provided to securely remanded children and young people to ensure that, where appropriate, further bail applications are made and accompanied by commensurate support packages.

Key judgement

2.4: Courts are assisted in making informed decisions by the provision of good quality reports from the YOT.

Evidence

- 2.4.1 PSRs are produced in accordance with the relevant national standards, of a good quality, to time and in the agreed format.
- 2.4.2 PSRs are impartial, free from discriminatory language and stereotypes.
- 2.4.3 Proposals are appropriate and commensurate.
- 2.4.4 A copy of the PSR is provided to the child or young person and their parents/carers, where appropriate, and in good time.
- 2.4.5 SSRs and stand-down reports are available and assist the court in timely decision-making.

3. Work with children and young people in the community**3.1: Work with children and young people at risk of offending****Key judgement**

3.1.1: Children and young people are prevented from offending.

Evidence

- 3.1.1.1 The YOT contributes to the provision of services in the local authority to divert children and young people from offending.
 - 3.1.1.2 A process has been agreed by the YOT and its partners to identify and assess children and young people at risk of offending.
 - 3.1.1.3 Assessments are sensitive to cultural difference and diversity, and linked to criminogenic needs.
 - 3.1.1.4 Interventions are inclusive and address the specific needs of girls and young women, children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities.
 - 3.1.1.5 Attention is given to safeguarding children and young people.
 - 3.1.1.6 Interventions demonstrate effectiveness in reducing offending and promoting positive outcomes.
 - 3.1.1.7 There is a reduction in the number of children and young people who are first-time entrants into the criminal justice system.
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3.2: Work with children and young people who have offended

Key judgement

3.2.1: Children and young people who have offended are prevented from reoffending.

Evidence

- 3.2.1.1 An Asset form is fully completed at the beginning of all interventions and reviewed as appropriate. It is informed by contact with social services and the self-assessment, and takes account of cultural difference, diversity and safeguarding issues.
- 3.2.1.2 Risk of harm to others is fully assessed in all cases identified as posing a potential risk, through the initial Asset form or alternative accepted tool.
- 3.2.1.3 Supervision plans are written in accordance with national standards, with a victim restorative process, emanate from Asset and contain SMART objectives.
- 3.2.1.4 Interventions address offending behaviour, are targeted in areas of assessed need and are evaluated and consistent with the principles of effective practice.
- 3.2.1.5 Interventions are inclusive and address the specific needs of girls and young women, children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities.
- 3.2.1.6 Contact with children and young people is consistent with national standards and Home Office/YJB guidance.
- 3.2.1.7 Enforcement activity follows non-compliance within the national standard timescale.
- 3.2.1.8 Action is taken to challenge and reduce discrimination and harassment by children and young people.
- 3.2.1.9 Examination of the case file provides evidence of progress.
- 3.2.1.10 The YOT demonstrates a reduction in offending in the pre-court, first tier and community bands of penalties.
- 3.2.1.11 Indicative accounts of outcomes from children and young people, parents/carers and other relevant persons asked, show improvements in behaviour, attitude and family relationships.

Key judgement

3.2.2: The health of children and young people who have offended is promoted by the work of the YOT.

Evidence

- 3.2.2.1 Staff working with children and young people are advised and supported in identifying possible physical and mental health problems and in making appropriate referrals.
 - 3.2.2.2 Specialist assessments are undertaken on those with health needs.
 - 3.2.2.3 Children and young people who have offended are discouraged from substance misuse.
 - 3.2.2.4 Children and young people with health problems are supported in accessing services that address their assessed needs.
 - 3.2.2.5 Examination of the case file shows evidence of improved health outcomes.
 - 3.2.2.6 Indicative accounts of outcomes from children and young people, parents/carers and other relevant persons asked, suggest an improvement in physical and mental health.
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Key judgement

3.2.3: Children and young people who have offended are safeguarded through the work of the YOT.

Evidence

- 3.2.3.1 Risk of harm, either to self or to/from others (vulnerability), is fully assessed in all cases.
 - 3.2.3.2 The YOT refers cases where safeguarding concerns have been identified, to the local Children's Services and contributes to child protection plans on a case-by-case basis.
 - 3.2.3.3 Threshold criteria for making and responding to safeguarding referrals are clear and widely understood by staff from both the YOT and Children's Services.
 - 3.2.3.4 Interventions take account of safeguarding children and young people.
 - 3.2.3.5 There is evidence of joint working and the sharing of information and plans with the allocated social worker, particularly in the cases of Looked After Children.
 - 3.2.3.6 Looked After Children who have offended receive specific guidance and support.
 - 3.2.3.7 The YOT contributes to the reviews of Looked After Children who have offended.
 - 3.2.3.8 Examination of the case file reveals a reduction of risk factors.
 - 3.2.3.9 Indicative accounts of outcomes from children and young people, parents/carers and other relevant persons asked, show a reduction in vulnerability.
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Key judgement

3.2.4: Children and young people who have offended are enabled and encouraged to achieve their potential.

Evidence

- 3.2.4.1 Specialist assessments are undertaken on those with specific educational needs.
 - 3.2.4.2 Interventions promote attainment and are targeted in areas of assessed educational need.
 - 3.2.4.3 Support is given to children and young people who have offended and their parents/carers, to promote good behaviour, attendance at school and educational attainment.
 - 3.2.4.4 Action is taken to ensure that children and young people who have been permanently excluded from school attend alternative settings aimed at securing reintegration into mainstream education.
 - 3.2.4.5 Children and young people who have offended are supported in securing further education, training or employment.
 - 3.2.4.6 Examination of the case file provides evidence of improved achievement and/or attainment.
 - 3.2.4.7 Indicative accounts of outcomes from children and young people, parents/carers and other relevant persons asked, show improved achievement and/or attainment.
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Key judgement

3.2.5: Outcomes for children and young people are improved by their involvement through consultation about the services provided by the YOT.

Evidence

- 3.2.5.1 The YOT involves children and young people in consultations about the services they receive.
 - 3.2.5.2 Proactive measures are taken to ensure that children and young people in minority groups, younger children and those with communication problems are able to give their views.
 - 3.2.5.3 Consultation with children and young people makes a significant difference to the quality of service provision.
 - 3.2.5.4 Staff give effective feedback on action following consultation, or on issues raised by individual children and young people, including reasons for not acting on particular issues.
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3.3: Work with parents/carers

Key judgement

3.3.1: Parents/carers are supported in addressing their children's offending.

Evidence

- 3.3.1.1 Assessments of parenting skills are carried out in a timely manner, in accordance with YJB effective practice guidelines and are used to inform interventions.
 - 3.3.1.2 Parents/carers are made aware of the requirements of the interventions and are kept informed about progress during the course of the intervention.
 - 3.3.1.3 Parents/carers are referred to interventions that are sensitive to the diverse needs of parents/carers from a range of cultural backgrounds and are available on a voluntary and statutory basis.
 - 3.3.1.4 Parents/carers are supported in addressing their children's behaviour.
 - 3.3.1.5 Interventions promote effective parenting in relation to the parents'/carers' ability to care, control and safeguard the child or young person.
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4. Work with children and young people subject to DTOs

Key judgement

4.1: The likelihood of reoffending for children and young people who receive DTOs is minimised through the intervention of the YOT by assessment.

Evidence

- 4.1.1 An initial Asset form is completed that takes account of cultural difference, diversity, health, education, safeguarding and family issues, and forwarded immediately to the secure establishment.
 - 4.1.2 Specific risk factors (e.g. risk of harm, either to self or to/from others, health or substance misuse) are assessed and communicated to the secure establishment immediately.
 - 4.1.3 The YOT worker forwards copies of all relevant assessments, including care plans, PSRs, previous convictions, health and educational plans, to the secure establishment within 24 hours of the court appearance.
 - 4.1.4 The YOT worker contributes to the initial training plan and ensures that it is informed by Asset.
 - 4.1.5 The YOT works proactively with the secure establishment to ensure that the child's or young person's educational, training and health needs are assessed and addressed.
 - 4.1.6 Action is taken to identify and address the specific needs of Looked After, or otherwise vulnerable children and young people, girls and young women, children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities.
 - 4.1.7 The child's or young person's housing needs on release are assessed and action taken, where relevant, to prevent the loss of existing accommodation or to secure new settled arrangements.
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Key judgement

- 4.2: The likelihood of reoffending for children and young people who receive DTOs is minimised through the intervention of the YOT by contact with the child or young person and effective liaison with the secure establishment during the custodial period.

Evidence

- 4.2.1 The YOT communicates regularly with key people in secure establishments.
 - 4.2.2 The YOT worker contributes effectively to sentence planning and review meetings and to reviews of the training plan.
 - 4.2.3 The YOT facilitates contact with all service providers who are relevant to the needs of the child or young person and the risk they present.
 - 4.2.4 Arrangements to meet the child's or young person's assessed needs, particularly in relation to health, education and accommodation, are established in preparation for their release.
 - 4.2.5 Provision is made to address the specific needs of Looked After or otherwise vulnerable children, girls and young women, children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those who are disabled.
 - 4.2.6 The YOT worker contributes actively to the final review meeting, in accordance with the national standard.
 - 4.2.7 Parents/carers are encouraged to attend sentence planning and review meetings, in particular, the final review meeting.
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Key judgement

- 4.3: The likelihood of reoffending for children and young people who receive DTOs is minimised through the intervention of the YOT by reintegration into the community.

Evidence

- 4.3.1 The training plan is reviewed within ten working days and subsequently on a three-month basis or at the end of the order, whichever is soonest.
 - 4.3.2 The YOT worker assesses and monitors the child's or young person's housing needs.
 - 4.3.3 The YOT worker monitors the provision of health and education services, and the Management Board is informed where these services are not provided, in accordance with the national standard.
 - 4.3.4 The child's or young person's individual learning plan continues following release and is regularly reviewed, updated and shared with relevant providers and organisations, particularly Connexions.
 - 4.3.5 Interventions commenced in custody to address offending behaviour, health, safeguarding and education are continued on release, where appropriate.
 - 4.3.6 Interventions are inclusive and address the specific needs of girls and young women, children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities.
 - 4.3.7 YOT contact with children and young people released from custody is consistent with the national standard and Home Office/YJB guidance.
 - 4.3.8 Enforcement activity follows non-compliance within the national standard timescale.
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Key judgement

- 4.4: The YOT demonstrates positive outcomes in its work with children and young people subject to DTOs.

Evidence

- 4.4.1 Examination of the case file provides evidence of progress, demonstrated, for example, by attitude to offending, improved family relationships, health outcomes, educational attainment and reduced vulnerability.
 - 4.4.2 The YOT demonstrates a reduction in reoffending for the custody band of penalties.
 - 4.4.3 Indicative accounts of outcomes from children and young people, parents/carers and other relevant persons asked, show improvements in behaviour and attitude.
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5. Victims and restorative justice

Key judgement

5.1: Victims of children and young people who have offended feel that they have been assisted by the intervention of the YOT in achieving closure.

Evidence

- 5.1.1 Assessments of victims' needs are consistently carried out in a timely manner, in accordance with effective practice guidelines.
 - 5.1.2 All victims are given the opportunity to make informed decisions about their involvement in direct/indirect restorative processes with children and young people who have offended and are supported in doing so.
 - 5.1.3 Communications are undertaken in a sensitive manner, responsive to individual needs, circumstances, preference and diversity.
 - 5.1.4 Victims are offered the opportunity to influence any reparative element of the child's or young person's supervision plan and to be informed of their progress.
 - 5.1.5 Victims have access to a restorative intervention tailored to their needs.
 - 5.1.6 Restorative and reparative interventions are provided that are appropriate to the age, vulnerability, culture, ethnicity, language needs, literacy levels and gender of the victims and children and young people who have offended.
 - 5.1.7 All victims are offered the opportunity to give feedback that is used to inform the work of the YOT.
 - 5.1.8 Children and young people involved in restorative interventions make a positive contribution to the victim and community.
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