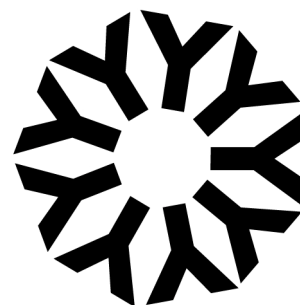


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# Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Report on:  
Bromley  
Youth Offending Team

2007

## Foreword

The inspection of the Bromley YOT was carried out during the third phase of the inspection programme of youth offending teams in England and Wales, and was conducted at the same time as the local Joint Area Review.

We found a limited number of elements to commend within the service. Since April 2006 the YOT had been managed within the recently restructured Children's Services Department of the local authority. A new focus was being provided in the delivery of leadership and performance management of the YOT. There was much activity taking place to remedy some of the shortcomings in the service provided. This had begun to have an impact, particularly within work with the courts. The staff in the team exhibited considerable energy, commitment and enthusiasm for developing the service for children, young people and their families. There was some positive work being undertaken in the areas of prevention and parenting support. A number of programmes being undertaken were positive, relevant and focused, particularly work within Black History Month.

We also found a large number of areas for improvement in the service provided by the YOT. The YOT was not a sufficiently safe service. There had been a loss of corporate and operational performance management. Urgent changes were required to the assessment and oversight of Risk of Harm and the reduction of vulnerability and safeguarding duties. An effective corporate commitment was needed from the Management Board and the local authority. This was required in areas of resourcing and the delivery of better performance. A sufficiently qualified staff group was needed. Services to victims and the use of restorative justice were limited and often absent. Core areas of planning, delivery, enforcement and evaluation all required substantial development.

There was a clear 'watershed' between the small amounts of the most recent work produced by the YOT and the majority of the work seen during the inspection. The new operational management had been active in addressing the need for change. This urgency needed to be adopted by the Management Board. There was an acceptance that the YOT had failed to deliver the essential services. Whilst Bromley YOT had shown many failings, and some serious ones, there was a realistic determination to improve. This report contains a number of recommendations that we believe will assist the team.

*Andrew Bridges*  
*HM Chief Inspector of Probation*

*January 2007*

Fieldwork for this inspection was undertaken in October and November 2006.

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## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the staff from the YOT, members of the Management Board and partner organisations for their assistance in ensuring the smooth running of this inspection.

We would particularly like to express our gratitude to Michelle Dunkley and Merlin Joseph for their commitment to the inspection.

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## Glossary

Asset	Assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board
ACPC	Area Child Protection Committee
APA	Annual Performance Assessment
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
COOME	Children Out of Mainstream Education
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CSCI	Commission for Social Care Inspection
DAT	Drug 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
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HMI Prisons	HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
HMIC	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
ICAN	Group work programme with persistent young offenders
ISSP	Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme
JAR	Joint Area Review
LDD	Learning difficulties or a disability
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
National Standards	National Standards for Youth Justice Services
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
Onset	Early assessment tool produced by the Youth Justice Board
PA	Personal adviser
PAYP	Positive Action for Young People
PCEP	Professional Certificate of Effective Practice
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
PSR	Pre-sentence report

RoH	Risk of Harm
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bounded
SSIW	Social Services Inspectorate for Wales
SSR	Specific sentence report
WPI	Wales Programme for Improvement
YIP	Youth Inclusion Programme
YISP	Youth Inclusion Support Panel
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOI	Young Offender Institution
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

- ◆ The London Borough of Bromley is situated in the South-East of London, England.
- ◆ Bromley had a total population of 295,532 measured in the Census 2001. Of this population, 9.67% were aged 10-17 years at the time of the census. This figure was slightly lower than the average for England, which was 10.7%.
- ◆ Bromley had a predominantly white population, 91.6%; this was slightly higher than the average for England of 90.9%. The percentage of Asian or Asian British residents, 2.6%, was lower than the average for England of 4.6%. The percentage of Black or Black British residents, at 2.9%, was higher than the English average of 2.3%.
- ◆ The level of employment in Bromley, 64.6%, was higher than the average for England of 60.9%. The level of unemployment, 2.7%, was correspondingly lower than the average for England of 3.4%.
- ◆ There were a lower percentage of students resident in Bromley at the time of the census, both economically active and inactive, at 5.6% compared to 7.3% in England. There were a lower percentage of permanently sick or disabled residents, 3.2% compared to 5.3% in England.
- ◆ Bromley Borough Council was classified as a 3 star council in the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment 2005.
- ◆ The Youth Justice Board figures for youth offending for the period April 2004 to March 2005 show that 29.9 offences were committed per 1000 children and young people aged 10-17 years in Bromley.
- ◆ The Youth Justice Board summary of overall YOT performance for April 2005-March 2006 awarded Bromley YOT a performance level of 2.

## Scoring summary

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

	Section score
Management	<b>1</b>
Work in the courts	<b>1</b>
Work with children and young people in the community	<b>1</b>
Work with children and young people subject to detention and training orders	<b>1</b>
Victims and restorative justice	<b>1</b>

### Overall assessment

Bromley YOT was an organisation that consistently failed to deliver on its statutory requirements to a sufficiently acceptable level. The YOT presented two different facets: one that was in place until spring 2006 – that showed a persistently underperforming organisation, not well supported by its Management Board, with low morale and a low skills/qualification mix. The other facet, in place since spring 2006, was one that had shown a vibrant energy and enthusiasm to rebuild the team. This was a team that had become self-aware and had taken a wide range of measures over a very short period of time in an effort to make Bromley YOT a safe service. Staff at all levels of the YOT showed integrity, motivation and an aspiration for significant improvements to be achieved.

The inspection took place before a number of the initiatives had made an impact on service delivery and found too many core elements of YOT functions that were below required standards, or even poor. It could not be described as a safe service.

The energy shown by the staff needed to be matched by the support of, and the performance management by, the Board and operational managers. The early signs of improvement needed to be encouraged, with the professional skills and knowledge improved before this service could demonstrate that it no longer required what Bromley Children's Services itself has called a 'special measures' approach.

## Diversity issues

Bromley YOT had embraced, to a degree, the diversity of its area. The Race Action Plan, developed from data available in the summer of 2004, clearly indicated an over representation, within the youth justice system, of black/black British children, although white/white British children predominated in the higher tariff disposals. There was no systematic monitoring or analysis of the individual needs' profile of children and young people. Additional data was available to enhance the understanding of need in Bromley communities that were disproportionately affected by youth crime. These data remained unused. There was clear evidence that children and young people with diagnoses of autistic spectrum disorder and other learning difficulties were disproportionately represented within the group of children and young people involved with the YOT. There was an awareness of the particular learning styles of some children and young people from the settled traveller communities, though they were not over-represented in the cohort of children and young people involved with the YOT. Efforts had been made by staff to communicate more effectively with these children and young people using this knowledge.

The staff profile of the YOT broadly reflected the diverse nature of the borough though the Management Board did not, particularly with regard to gender. Diversity was an integrated component in the staff development and training plan, devised for delivery in the months following the inspection.

Diversity in pre-sentence reports required significant improvement. The proportion of referral panel reports that sufficiently addressed individual needs was an improvement on this but still short of the consistently high level of consideration that was needed.

During the inspection there was a positive, and sensitively thought through, programme of sessions focused on Black History Month. There was much to commend in this and much that engaged children and young people in a variety of ways. No clear interventions specifically addressed the needs of girls and young women, though there was one session within the group work programme that addressed issues of relationships, particularly sexual.

There was limited information about victims as a whole, and thus within the whole area of reparation and restorative justice, there was no clear understanding of the profile of victims of the various types of crime or by location. This was an acknowledged and significant gap. There were plans to address this during the period immediately after the fieldwork element of the inspection process.

## Key statistics

Assessment of YOT case files	YOT score	Average for phase 3.1 YOTs	Range for phase 3.1 YOTs	Youth Justice Board targets
	(% cases)			
Initial assessment completed in accordance with national standards requirements:				
– timeliness	57%	79%	41-100%	100%
– adequate quality	50%	68%	36-93%	
Full Risk of Harm to others completed on relevant cases	60%	62%	0-100%	
Evidence of management oversight in Risk of Harm cases	60%	40%	0-100%	
Initial Supervision Plan meets the content requirements of national standards and contains specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bounded objectives	17%	27%	0-100%	100% <sup>(1)</sup>
Frequency of appointments arranged broadly conform to national standards, to the requirements of order/licence, and to any Risk of Harm considerations	48%	79%	45-100%	
Judgements about acceptability/unacceptability of absences are appropriate	63%	74%	40-100%	
Breach/recall action has taken place, if required, within the national standards timescale	42%	56%	0-100%	
No evidence of any criminal activity during the course of the order	66%	70%	52-94%	
Appropriate action has been taken if a child or young person is considered vulnerable to harm from self and others.	100%	82%	20-100%	
Effective action is taken where there is evidence of educational difficulties	57%	66%	33-100%	90% <sup>(2)</sup>
Appropriate referrals are made in cases of:			0 – 100%	
– physical health	67%	70%		
– mental/emotional health	82%	70%	33 – 100%	100% <sup>(3)</sup>
– substance misuse	85%	73%	33 – 100%	100% <sup>(4)</sup>
Victim was consulted about restorative/reparative justice work with child or young person	9%	53%	13-84%	
Assessment of overall quality of pre-sentence reports	58%	50%	0 – 76%	

- (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** – There had been a lack of constructive performance focused management. It is likely that these failings had been in place for some time. Until the spring of 2006, when the YOT was transferred to the social care branch of children’s services, there had been an acknowledged and considerable lack of support for, and managerial oversight over, the functioning of the YOT. It was only when a service audit undertaken by the new managing department revealed substantial shortcomings, that a robust programme of change was initiated. This inspection found a lack of corporate commitment and sense of responsibility for the state of the service. Children’s services could not carry the whole responsibility for the future improvement of the service by itself. Rapid change was found in all areas of the service, but none had translated itself into consistently effective, safe practice by the time of the inspection. The aspirational outlook of and energy shown by, the staff group were a significant credit to the current operational managers. It was not possible for sustained improvement to be achieved without the long-term active commitment of the Management Board.
- ◆ **Work in the courts** – This was inconsistent with much evidence of inadequate quality across the range of responsibilities. There had, undoubtedly, been rapid short-term improvements in the production of reports, a draft protocol and improved administrative liaison between the YOT and the courts. There had been a new, positive relationship struck between the YOT and the legal adviser to the youth court. The quality of pre-sentence reports, enforcement activity and communication with the magistrates, however, remained both limited and uncertain. The lack of effective gatekeeping arrangements for reports and the level of skill and knowledge of the case managers impaired the capacity of the YOT to deliver sustained improvements. The court duty arrangements that had recently been put in place were, however, likely to improve consistency of service to the court and the children and young people attending.
- ◆ **Work with children and young people in the community** – This was found to be inadequate in key elements of performance, notably around assessment and management of Risk of Harm and vulnerability and safeguarding issues. The lack of a minimum level of skill and knowledge, combined with the relatively recent development of managerial systems produced a less than adequate service. There were elements that showed promise, notably in the developing of prevention and early intervention services, parenting support, and some programmes of intervention. There were, however, significant areas for improvement in effective assessment, translation of these into targeted interventions, progress reviewing and attention to compliance. There had been a noticeable improvement in the issuing of warnings and breach action in the period immediately prior to the

inspection. There were a number of positive accounts by children and young people and parents/carers about the engagement and effectiveness of individual case managers despite the levels of workload and inexperience within the team.

- ◆ ***Work with children and young people subject to detention and training orders*** – This was frequently below expected levels of performance with insufficient inter-agency communication and planning. Whilst the YOT managed to provide timely information at the commencement of custodial orders and contributed to many of the planning meetings, the level of visiting (despite clear encouragement to parents/carers to do so) was not sustained. The themes of insufficient attention to Risk of Harm and victim vulnerability continued on transfer back to the community. There was a lack of continuity of work with the children and young people on release with poor levels of enforcement and a lack of support for ensuring other key services were in place. Whilst the numbers of children and young people in this group were small, this had continued to grow over the previous year. This was at the same time as the Youth Justice Board was establishing a target of seeking reductions to the number of children and young people in custody.
- ◆ ***Victims and restorative justice*** – This was also an inadequate area of service. Whilst there was a passionate commitment to ensuring that victims were at the heart of the service the evidence, on inspection, gave a contrary view. Victim data had not been provided to the YOT by the police at the outset, leaving all the other parts of the YOT without this key focus for its work. Thus, final warning and referral order processes did not have victim context or content; pre-sentence reports rarely had any victim impact information beyond speculation; interventions were limited to a small number of general victim awareness sessions. Indicative accounts by children and young people who had offended showed a lack of empathy towards victims. Overall, there was an absence of a restorative justice approach both within the offender based work as well as the prevention and intervention areas.

## Recommendations

*The Chair of the Management Board should ensure that:*

- ◇ an improvement plan is devised to address the following recommendations and forwarded to the lead inspector within four weeks of the publication of this report
- ◇ there is a clear corporate commitment both within the Board and the local authority (including elected members), to achieve the sustainable improvements required
- ◇ membership, attendance and the roles of the members, particularly those that relate to the performance management of the YOT are understood and supported by all. The inclusion of the voluntary sector on the Board should be considered
- ◇ there are clear lines of communication and accountability to the Chief Executive of Bromley Borough Council with regular, formal reports on the improvement plan and performance targets
- ◇ the YOT occupies a settled accommodation base that meets both its developing operational needs and those of its service users.

*The YOT manager should ensure that:*

- ◇ the YOT is located within the new operational Adolescent Service structure improving its capacity for service integration and coordination of services
- ◇ the performance of the team is assured and improved by operational managers who are suitably qualified, trained and permanently in post
- ◇ the staff group is appropriately qualified, experienced and trained, delivering the sustained improvements in services to all areas of work, within a performance management framework
- ◇ a high priority is given to a quality assurance framework in relation to the assessment, managerial oversight and review of all cases where issues of Risk of Harm and/or vulnerability and safeguarding are evident
- ◇ the:
  - regulation of work through policy, procedure and practice guidance is completed and firmly rooted in the practice of all staff, through the induction and training plan
  - arrangements for joint operational responsibilities with other agencies through agreed protocols are confirmed and adhered to
  - reviewing and establishing the commissioning of relevant services, through service level agreements, is completed as a matter of urgency, and particularly in relation to the provision of Intensive Supervision Surveillance Programme services
- ◇ work with victims and restorative justice within the YOT is significantly enhanced to deliver the core elements requiring victim

services, reparation and victim related work with children and young people who offend.

*Partner organisations should ensure that:*

- ◇ they perform a proactive role as part of the Management Board; that representation is at a sufficiently senior level to act authoritatively; and that the representative is adequately briefed on the requirements of Board membership
- ◇ secondment requirements and other funding arrangements are honoured, including the provision of cover arrangements in the case of significant absence or vacancy
- ◇ **children's services** – maintain the substantial early investment in enforcing the improvement of the YOT and sustain its support, resourcing and enforcement of performance standards
- ◇ **the police** – provide an assured flow of information in relation to victim details, access to police national computer checks by YOT staff and support the compliance of the provision of final warnings in accordance with national standards
- ◇ **Bromley Youth Court** – consider the reinstatement of a Youth Court User Group to support the continued improvement of relationships between the YOT and all parts of the administration of the criminal justice system
- ◇ **education services** – firmly establish the recent temporary teacher provision within the YOT; enable pathways back into mainstream learning for pupils who are excluded or detached from statutory education; and develop further learning opportunities for the 16+ Not in Employment, Education or Training
- ◇ **Bromley and Oxleas Primary Care Trusts** – provide sufficient resourcing to support the YOT's targets, particularly in relation to timely access to services designed to support and improve the emotional and mental wellbeing of children (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- ◇ **probation** – provide the required seconded probation officer resource, creating the necessary skill mix within the YOT and stronger links to the probation service.

# 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.*

Bromley YOT was located in the council's Children's Services Department, under the management of the Assistant Director of Social Care following a restructuring by Bromley in spring 2006. Prior to this it had been managed within the Community Safety Department. Plans were in place to locate the YOT within a newly created Adolescent Service by spring 2007. This would incorporate targeted elements of the Youth Service, Connexions and the 16+/Leaving Care Service. There had been a number of changes within the Management Board (previously the Steering Group), including several changes of Chair since its inception. The YOT had moved several times, including most recently at short notice from a police station to a short-life property. It was faced with a further such move during 2007.

### ***Strengths:***

- ◆ There had been substantial activity on the part of children's services to audit and address the shortcomings identified in the YOT. The audit was followed by an action plan. There was clear evidence that this plan was being robustly pursued by the host department, but it had commenced implementation only three months prior to the inspection.
- ◆ The continued 'direction of travel' of the service was to locate it within the adolescent section, as outlined above. This was likely to deliver greater integration between services, particularly in the area of ETE which required attention.
- ◆ Whilst there was universal agreement that the present office location and much of the refurbishment was a strength, the short-term nature of the building served to diminish its positive impact. Both staff and service users felt devalued using this building.

### ***Areas for improvement:***

- ◆ The lines of accountability to the Chief Executive were no longer clear resulting in a lack of integration of the local authority's criminal justice and child welfare responsibilities. This was notable in the limited YOT input into both the Children and Young People's Strategic Plan and Building a Better Bromley.

- ◇ There had been persistent deficits in the Management Board's oversight of and support for the YOT. These were exemplified through:
  - a lack of rigorous oversight of and challenge to the YOT's performance
  - inconsistent and insufficient attendance and involvement by a number of the statutory partner representatives
  - changes in the 'ownership' of the YOT within the local authority as seen through the numerous managerial changes the YOT had been subject to over time.
- ◇ The Management Board had not been operating in a performance management framework, reducing its effectiveness in delivering the 'critical friend' role required. There was evidence, from the most recent meeting of the Board (July 2006) that change was recognised as necessary but had yet to be translated into action. The YJB had recently become involved in order to support the Board's development in this area.
- ◇ During the inspection, none of the operational managers in place were permanently in post. There was also an acting YOT manager from July 2006, who was not from a criminal justice background. There was an interim Director of Children's Services in post at the time of the inspection, pending recruitment processes. It was also known that there was to be an impending change in Chief Executive of the Borough. These uncertainties and temporary arrangements did not provide a stable basis for the confident development of YOT services.
- ◇ There was an absence of the non-statutory sector in the Management Board. This diminished its capacity to draw upon expertise across the whole of Bromley as well as reducing opportunities to address potential Trust and other future planning, coordination and integration opportunities.

## 1.2 Partnership and resources

### ***Key judgement:***

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

The YOT's location within children's services was seen as positive in engaging with other targeted services to children and young people and their families. The plans were advanced for bringing the delivery of youth services within children's services as well as specific elements of Connexions and Leaving Care. Although the YOT had been previously

managed under Community Safety, the links were not as evident within the strategic direction of this aspect of work as might have been expected.

### **Strengths:**

- ◆ There was a clear, robust and coordinated information sharing protocol between the key partners in the Youth Offending Partnership, though a finally signed off version was not available at the time of the inspection.
- ◆ The YOT contribution to community regeneration and ward targeted services was provided through PAYP. The staff had a clear understanding of the neighbourhoods under pressure and had adapted their inputs to meet the diverse needs. This approach was neither planned nor systematic. There were no other contributions identified by the YOT either strategically or operationally.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ The YOT did not have a clear input into, and integration of, the Youth Justice Plan into the other key strategic plans. It did not have a significant profile in the current Children and Young People's Strategic Plan (2006-2009). There was little role identified for the YOT in the Bromley Community Safety Strategy (2005-2008) and no reference to the role of the YOT in the draft Local Area Agreement (2007-2010). The latter was described as an overarching mechanism drawing together the other plans in the borough.
- ◆ Capacity presented as an issue requiring significant work to identify whether sufficient resources were allocated to meet the needs of children and young people and the YOT's responsibilities. Levels of professional qualification were very low, turnover of staff very high and secondment agreements largely absent. There had been no analysis undertaken by the Management Board, or operational management of the resourcing levels required by the service. Children's services had declared a commitment to do so in the period immediately following the fieldwork period of the inspection.
- ◆ Some members of the Management Board needed to be re-engaged with discussions to maximise the level and effect of contributions from:
  - Probation – there had not been a qualified probation officer in the YOT for several years
  - Oxleas Healthcare Trust – the level of resourcing to the YOT and the pathways to accessing Tiers 3 & 4 services in CAMHS needed to be both clarified and improved
  - Bromley Youth Court – to improve communication and coordination of court-related activity to ensure a greater effectiveness
  - Voluntary sector – there was no representative on the Board, not even from the Children's Fund, nor had there been prior to the

inspection. The lack of cross sector activity was evident in the limitations in both interventions and referrals for other services by the YOT

- Police – whilst there had been a very recent change in representation from the Metropolitan Police, this had not by the time of the inspection, resulted in improved levels of coordination and intelligence exchange. The change of representation to the level of superintendent was a most welcome development.
- ◇ There had been a dearth of agreements that regulated and systematised the shared, commissioned or partnership work of the YOT. Many draft documents (mainly commenced since June 2006) were incomplete and/or not 'signed off'. Some SLAs for services to the YOT were about to be reviewed but until the middle of 2006, there had not been a culture of outward-facing partnership work or a commissioning approach.
- ◇ A lack of cross-discipline partnership activity was evident. There were effective links with Connexions and developing links with education and social care, but partnership activity with the crime and disorder, antisocial behaviour, community and mental health and probation services were weak. Limited partnership activity with the non-statutory sector was seen beyond commissioned work regulated by such SLAs as were in place.
- ◇ There were no reciprocal arrangements with 'near neighbours' around cross-boundary information sharing. Examples of delays and difficulties where young people from one borough offended and appeared in the court of another borough were seen.

### 1.3 Staff supervision, development and training

**Key judgement:**

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

The staffing of Bromley YOT had suffered considerable turnover for some time, and the two operational managers present at the time of the inspection were both 'acting up' into their positions. The general staffing levels relevant to the inspection period were below establishment, displacing case manager work to specialist members of staff within the YOT. The YOT manager was not in post during the inspection; the then Head of Social Care and Young People (West), acted down into this position. A further acting up arrangement was planned to take effect immediately following the inspection fieldwork period.

### **Strengths:**

- ◆ There was a high level of motivation and commitment evident across the whole workforce of the YOT. It was abundantly clear that considerable effort and energy had been invested, over a period of several weeks, by staff at every level, to drive the action plan that had been devised for the recovery of the service.
  - ◆ At every level along the operational line of management there was a strong determination to deliver a range of improvements designed to address the capacity of the service to improve:
    - regulation of practice by effective policies and procedures
    - instilling a performance management culture
    - delivering effective supervision, support and training commensurate with qualifications and experience.
- Unfortunately there was limited evidence that these provisions had taken effect by the time of the inspection.
- ◆ There was a very clear 'watershed' in relation to supervision of staff. Since July 2006, staff were clear that they were being supervised effectively and had open access consultation with their manager. It was not possible to find any staff member who had received adequate supervision, appraisal or development planning prior to July 2006. In many instances supervision had not been recorded at all prior to this date.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ The formal professional qualification base of the staff in post was, generally, low. This had impaired the capacity of the service to deliver effective assessments, particularly around RoH and safeguarding. Whilst some staff had more recently been supported in undertaking the PCEP, this was insufficient to ensure that even the core elements of the service were in place. This left the public, children and young people and staff in potentially unsafe circumstances at times.
- ◆ Whilst there were a large range of very new policies and procedures which held considerable promise for the future, practice in the period relevant to the inspection did not appear to be based on these regulated expectations. Case holding staff welcomed the new developments with hope, but they were not embedded in the practices of the team.
- ◆ There were no appraisals or development plans for staff in existence although they had been consulted over the development of a detailed and comprehensive training plan. Whilst this had been very thoroughly produced (embracing a wide range of targeted materials) and held significant promise for the future, there was insufficient evidence of delivery and impact upon service delivery.
- ◆ Formal aspects of the service that should provide assurance of safety and protection (i.e. CRB checks, health and safety assessments and

accessible complaints and representation systems) were not fully in place and compliant with legislation and good practice.

**Good  
practice**

From the time it was recognised that action was required to improve a range of infrastructure elements of the YOT, two key temporary appointments were made. One was to completely overhaul and systematise the regulation of the service as well as its relationships with key partners. The other was to work alongside staff and managers to generate an overall training and development plan. Whilst not before time, they did positively target two of the key areas that had been adversely affecting the performance of the YOT.

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT**

***This section is judged as inadequate.***

## 2.

## WORK IN THE COURTS

### **Key judgement:**

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

Bromley Youth Court is located in a large, new multi-purpose building within the same town centre setting as the YOT. The YOT had a recently reorganised duty rota system that covered everyday including weekends and bank holidays. New administrative systems were in place for information exchange between the court and the YOT on all cases.

### **Strengths:**

- ◆ The court clearly welcomed the recent changes in the YOT. These included information/data exchange and the effective planning and delivery of reports. The court's legal adviser considered that there had been a marked recent improvement in the relationship with the YOT.
- ◆ The YOT had renewed its provision of a duty rota of staff available to attend the youth court on Saturdays and other non-court days, as required, although the level of take up was limited.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ The resourcing to this aspect of the service with staff having sufficient levels of training and expertise was insufficient to deliver consistently high quality reports and other services to the court. This had been recognised and was in the process of being addressed by the YOT management.
- ◆ A comprehensive draft protocol between the YOT, the court, CPS and Serco (the contract court escort and custody service) formalised existing working practices. It held the opportunity to deliver clear, accountable levels of service to victims, children and young people who have offended and their parents/carers. This had not been formally agreed due to a small but important element that was not in place – the responsibility within the court precincts for children and young people made subject to secure remands. Social care services were required to play a part in the delivery of this element. This potentially positive step needed to be completed.
- ◆ Both the Youth Court User Group and regular liaison with the magistrates had fallen into disuse. Recent meetings, however, had taken place between the YOT and the court legal adviser. These had

produced some immediate results in terms of the courts information and communication over proceedings. There remained gaps in overall coordination of youth court activity, a creative dialogue with the magistrates and the development of a shared agenda.

- ◇ There was no provision for access to live or 'snapshot' information from the YOT database to assist the court and further inform their decisions.
- ◇ The YOT did not promote or engage in any magistrates' training programme or sessions

***Key judgement:***

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

Printed information was available for children and young people and their parents/carers following on from a court appearance and receiving a community disposal, including a parenting order.

***Strength:***

- ◇ Children and young people were assessed, as required, for issues around their own personal vulnerability at the point of custodial sentence or secure remand and information was provided to the establishment within the required timescales.

***Areas for improvement:***

- ◇ The printed materials, for parents/carers and children and young people, were not easily understood or presented in an accessible manner (size of font, use of particular colours for print and backgrounds). All had directions to the YOT showing a different location to the address on the front (in fact three different YOT locations in total were described). One leaflet had typographical errors. There were no materials available informing children and young people and parents/carers about what happens when appearing before court or being subject to custodial remands or sentences.
- ◇ Without pre-empting or prejudging decisions or disposals, it would assist the YOT if earlier indications of thinking, by the court, were available, thereby allowing a little more planning and assessment time for the YOT in conducting its duties.

**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.*

The YOT had a rota of staff to attend any weekend and bank holiday courts; after hours arrangements were also in place to provide cover. ISSP services were organised via a South London consortium. This amounted to the provision of under one full-time equivalent worker, dedicated to delivering the service to the Bromley YOT. Bail support was offered through an in-house service by one full-time equivalent resource.

**Strengths:**

- ◇ The council's emergency duty team provided out of hours representation and service to the court. In the event of remands into secure or local authority accommodation this service would complete all necessary assessments and paperwork required.
- ◇ The court reported satisfaction with the provision, and quality of bail support proposals. Some examples of a positive and measured approach to proposals for bail support were demonstrated.
- ◇ The YOT followed-up on secure remands by presenting realistic, safe bail proposals.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ Levels of custodial or other remands to accommodation away from home were higher than expected in Bromley. In fact, there had been a 21% increase in the use of remand to a secure establishment in the year 2005/2006, and an 11% increase in the use of custodial sentences over the same period. There was no evidence presented of any work undertaken (by the YOT or with the magistrates) to track or evaluate the reasons for these outcomes.
- ◇ The effectiveness of the provision of ISSP and bail support services was mixed. Whilst bail support packages were perceived as generally appropriate and commensurate with RoH, there was considerably less clarity within the YOT around the provision of ISSP services. Recording was placed on the intervention screen but no electronic version of the programme was produced. Insufficiently robust cover arrangements were in place for absence of the ISSP worker, leaving the high intensity interventions vulnerable to breakdown. The effectiveness of the ISSP arrangements was not evident. This included the requirement for action when an offender became non-compliant with conditions of bail/transfer.
- ◇ Arrangements were not clearly in place to alert the YOT of a likelihood of secure or custodial remand. This diminished its capacity to inform the YJB and ensure that a place in an institution had been allocated.

Where feasible, there was evidence that assessments of vulnerability were undertaken.

- ◆ There were examples in bail support and its implementation where a bail report was not provided to the court. Examples were noted where failure to comply with conditions that did not result in appropriate breach action and a lack of requisite level of home visiting during the bail period.

**Key judgement:**

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

Reports were undertaken by a range of staff within the YOT, several having a large number of reports to complete contemporaneously. There was no culture of requests for SSRs or of seeking, or providing, stand down reports.

**Strength:**

- ◆ The quality and content of the PSRs in the inspection sample were variable, with those more recently completed (since August 2006) showing a distinct improvement over those from an earlier time period in the sample.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ Proposals within PSRs were, generally, appropriate in addressing the relevant factors, but examples were seen of 'creative', or unusual, proposals and some that (according to the court's legal adviser) had not been legally feasible. Not only did 17% of the sample not have a clear recommendation but, where there was a proposal, 21% of the sample did not have a proposal commensurate with the offence.
- ◆ Little evidence was seen of effective analysis, planning and managerial oversight of RoH assessments. In only 42% of the sample was the RoH to the public sufficiently addressed. In 32% of the reports this was judged poor and 11% of reports were considered poor in differentiating between the RoH and the risk of reoffending.
- ◆ Greater concerns were observed in safeguarding issues with only one-quarter of reports sufficiently addressing this. In 37% of reports insufficient information had been sought from other relevant agencies. In 42% of the cases insufficient attention had been given to the vulnerability of the child or young person.
- ◆ The gate keeping of PSR quality had largely been missing with evidence of poor attention to basic textual detail, factual accuracy, and analysis. Only 63% were factually accurate. Diversity in PSRs was sufficient in just over half of the reports (56%), while over a quarter were deemed poor in this regard (26%).

- ◇ There was insufficient attention to analysis, rather than description, in many reports. Only 47% of the sample had a sufficient analysis of the offence. 26% of the reports did not have an Asset assessment in place to support them.
- ◇ Effective communication with the children or young people and their parents/carers was not strong. PSRs were not considered sufficiently understandable to children and young people in 37% of the reports. There was a large group of reports (32-42%) where the maturity of the child or young person had not been properly considered in relation to responsibility for the offence or capacity to carry out the proposed sentence.
- ◇ The perspective of, and impact upon, the victim was only sufficient in one-third of the cases. It was poor in 22% of the reports.
- ◇ The timely presentation of reports was acknowledged to be an area of difficulty for the YOT. Others were produced just within timescales which made any quality assurance process difficult to impact. 26% of the reports were outside national standards timescales. There were also examples involving delays in proceedings, including where a written apology was sent to the court for not producing a report. Another example was where the quality of the report was considered insufficient and an adjournment of the case was required for further information. Only 32% of reports conformed to general presentation requirements.

### **OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK IN THE COURTS**

***This section is judged as inadequate.***

### **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.*

The contribution to prevention and early intervention services was limited to the delivery of PAYP. This had been in place for several years and had delivered a range of approaches and interventions with over 400 children in total. There were indoor and outdoor activities; creative and technical skills development as well as physically challenging activities. These were organised on both individual and small group basis, including residential experiences. There was no YIP or YISP in place but funding had been agreed some time earlier for a YISP. Although the posts had been established, the recruitment programme had not been completed by the time of the inspection. In the weeks prior to the fieldwork element of this inspection, the Social Care branch of children's services had collocated its intensive support team, Family Focus, within the YOT building as part of aligning the YOT within the range of other adolescent support services. Referrals to PAYP came through a wide range of sources, including self-referral.

***Strengths:***

- ◇ The PAYP service was as an energetic and committed part of the service, describing a wide range of interventions, targeting the areas within Bromley known to exhibit social and economic stress. Individual needs were sensitively addressed by the staff and both individual and group work programmes were delivered, with the clear focus on out of school periods and meeting individual need.
- ◇ There were positive links with the group of staff with specialist roles in the YOT, but improvement was needed to ensure better levels of communication with the court and community orders team within the YOT.
- ◇ Links with a multi-agency panel, which identified vulnerable children and young people and referred to appropriate interventions, had been made. Further contact with COOME, organised through the Education Welfare Service, was possible. Their active engagement within this forum should both strengthen the position of PAYP within the borough and enable it to concentrate on its key target group of children and young people.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ The PAYP service had a very wide remit, including maintaining involvement with young people after they had entered the criminal justice system. They also worked with Looked After Children and numbers of children and young people diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder. The remit was too wide, threatening to dilute the outcomes of interventions. The provision of a YISP would enable PAYP to refocus its efforts upon its designated target group.
- ◆ Historically, PAYP was felt to operate on the periphery of the YOT, but recent efforts had been made to give early intervention and PAYP in particular a greater prominence in the YOT. Further work was indicated to ensure that the differing elements of the prevention and early intervention services 'dovetailed' well with each other, and showed a greater level of coordination.
- ◆ The whole process of assessment, review and evaluation was in the process of change during the inspection. This was a relatively underdeveloped area, though the training for, and use of, Onset promised to provide better foundations for a more effective and integrated service.
- ◆ Bromley had not delivered a reduction in the levels of first time offenders expected within the target key performance indicator up until December quarter 2005, though the figure was improved by the end of the year to achieve a reduction of 2.4% overall.

## **3.2 Work with children and young people who have offended**

### **Key judgement:**

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

Most interventions with children who had offended were delivered by the YOT from within its base. The referral panels operated solely from the YOT building. This was located centrally in the borough, although remaining a temporary arrangement for the service, and provided good transport and access links.

### **Strengths:**

- ◆ There were some programmes that did deliver promising inputs, with the capacity to accommodate children and young people with different learning styles. During the inspection the ICAN programme and the large-scale, and richly varied, programme during Black History Month were examples of positive, thoughtful and challenging interventions. These would be even stronger with the benefit of effective evaluations of outcomes, though individual feedback was integrated in the programmes.

- ◇ Social Care had had a computer link installed in the YOT to enable read only access to its database to support the development of assessments. This remained 'read only' at the point of the inspection; social care remained unable to benefit from YOT assessment information.

#### ***Areas for improvement:***

- ◇ Assessment, using Asset as the core tool, was in place within this YOT, but a number of shortfalls in practice were noted. Work on both risk of serious harm and safeguarding requirements within this area of work were also, too often, poor. Specifically:
  - assessments of RoH were not undertaken on all cases where it would be expected. In one-third of cases where one was indicated only 60% had been done. Where completed, only 60% of such cases showed evidence of managerial oversight. Just 36% of cases evidenced any review of the Asset
  - attention to safeguarding and vulnerability was not sufficient. Within the sample, there were children and young people who were vulnerable to self-harm (25%) or harm from others (31%). In 30% of such cases insufficient action was taken as a result of this assessment (albeit none of these were in the self-harm category). Some children and young people were left potentially at risk. Liaison with social care was evidenced in 71% of the cases inspected. One child or young person was referred for urgent further enquiries. Similarly, others would have required urgent action if they had been less than 18 years of age at the time of the inspection
  - there was some recognition of diversity (particularly where the child or young person had LDD or black and minority ethnic background) but this needed to be more consistent. In 24% of cases the individual needs of the child or young person were not sufficiently considered
  - the quality of information and the review of assessments was not consistent or rigorous. Across all community penalties there was no Asset review in between one-quarter and a third of the cases. In fact, the file records had insufficient information in 43% of cases
  - home visits were not undertaken in a third of referral order cases. In 37% of cases the parents/carers were not interviewed for a post-sentence assessment.
- ◇ There was a poor link between the assessment of need, the supervision plan and the targeting of interventions. The link between the RoH and the intervention, for example, was sufficient in only 27% of the cases. The standard of supervision planning was insufficient, with improved attention to SMART targets being required. In fact, only two cases showed evidence of such objectives and in 58% the standard was considered poor.

- ◇ The final warning arrangements were not sequenced appropriately with it being administered before the assessment of the child or young person was undertaken. Although a high proportion of final warnings were delivered within 20 days (89%), no assessments were completed within ten days of notification. The police were aware of a range of deficiencies in this area and plans were known to have been made to address these issues at the time of the inspection.
- ◇ Attention to the individual and diverse needs of the child or young person and their family was not sufficient with only 30% of the cases giving this sufficient attention. Reports for the referral panels fared better with three-quarters showing evidence of consideration of individual needs.
- ◇ There was insufficient evidence of progress made in relation to reoffending (indeed 34% offended whilst subject to a community order). Indicative accounts showed some effectiveness through the consistent dedication to the task by individual YOT officers. Some staff were held in high regard and were described as effective by children and young people.
- ◇ Contact with children and young people on orders was not sufficient. Less than half the children and young people were (48%) being given appointments in line with national standards. An even greater proportion (52%) failed to meet these requirements. The failures to comply (58%) had not been followed through by timely warning letters, breach activity or return to the referral panel. In fact only two-thirds of children and young people in the sample completed their referral order contract as originally established. There were also examples where inappropriate enforcement action had taken place, dependent upon the nature of the order involved. There was a considerable improvement noted in the weeks immediately prior to the inspection fieldwork in all of these aspects of performance.

***Key judgement:***

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

There were two specialist posts within the YOT, a half-time mental health worker (linked with CAMHS) and a full-time drugs worker (through the DAT). It was acknowledged that workload pressures had led to the displacement of inappropriate case management work onto these workers.

***Strengths:***

- ◇ There was a universally positive regard for the focused assessment and interventions in relation to drug misuse, but the impact of alcohol on offending was less strongly addressed. There were several examples where children and young people reported moderating the use of illegal substances, or ceasing altogether. This had a range of

consequentially beneficial effects, including the reduction of related offending. There was also evidence that the highest rate of improvement in criminogenic factors was made in the area of substance misuse (22%).

- ◆ There was a high level of identification of health related need by the team with 23% identified as having physical health needs, between 43-55% with various substance misuse issues, and 63% with emotional or mental health needs. In high proportions of these cases (respectively 66%, 85% and 82%) the identified needs were referred for further assessment or support services.

***Areas for improvement:***

- ◆ With the proportions of children and young people with identified needs, it was evident that the resource allocated to supporting this area of work was insufficient. This was compounded by three factors:
  - the specialist workers had been expected to support the case manager role in the team by supervising a generic caseload of children and young people on orders. This was inappropriate for both the children and young people and the performance of the designated role
  - there had been staff absences but no clear cover/support arrangements were effectively in place for such eventuality, leaving the needs of some children and young people unmet and others delayed
  - the specialist workers were seen as primarily responsible for delivering interventions rather than also being the conduit through which referrals would be made for Tier 3 and 4 services. The workers undertook such direct work as they felt that they could, and in the particular case of the drugs worker the impact was very positive, but the full range of the designated role was not being undertaken effectively. This was further exacerbated by limited access to CAMHS.
- ◆ Improvements were noted in the emotional and mental health of children and young people in only 5% of cases, as opposed to 10% showing deterioration over the period of their order. Further EPQA assessments/reviews were indicated in both substance misuse and mental health.
- ◆ There were significant numbers of children and young people with learning difficulties within the inspection sample; often they had diagnoses of autistic spectrum disorder. This substantial proportion (28% within the community order sample) was also described, by staff, as representative of the prevalence of this group of children and young people through the whole YOT service population. No specific work or resource allocation had been made to understand the prevalence; design interventions that they could benefit from; or provide a link in with other statutory and non-statutory agencies, to address the issue.

- ◇ The temporary position of the contract for the drugs worker post did not assist the worker or the team, given that this was a core element of the work of the YOT. In practice, it served to reduce the confidence of all involved in the efforts to ensure that the valuable work already undertaken was fully embedded in the service.

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strengths:**

- ◇ With the YOT being located within children's services and, particularly, under the direct management of the social care work stream, there was much evidence of active work towards a substantial improvement in performance in this area. New systems, liaison and training had been identified and planned for implementation across 2006/2007. The previous relative isolation of the YOT was being vigorously addressed. The evidence of the impact of much of this activity had yet to be seen.
- ◇ There was a universal view that access to, and relevant engagement by, the social care services (where individual children and young people may be 'in need') had improved markedly and was clearly a positive development for the YOT staff. This improvement was much needed as there was evidence that the small number of Looked After Children the YOT were involved with did not show evidence of a coordinated range of activity and a YOT contribution to their plans. The tendency had been for social care to assume managerial control in relation to Looked After Children. There were no specific procedures in place for ensuring that they had identified support services when offending became an issue.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ Reference has already been made of one case where urgent safeguarding action was considered necessary. There were other individual cases (all over 18 years by the time of the inspection) where harm had been evidenced or the RoH from others had been present. The shortcomings in practice were such that performance improvement needed to use specific experiences. The need for performance improvements to safeguard children and young people were demonstrated in the three following examples:
  - a chaotic drug using young person with a history of self-harm within a relationship with an adult where there were clear signs and description of physical assault, with references to domestic violence. This young person was Looked After but child protection procedures appeared not to have been implemented at the time

- a young person with a diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, a clear history of self-harm and periods of homelessness. No vulnerability assessment, or other action was evidenced in addressing these significant vulnerabilities
- a young person who had made statements and other references to being engaged in sexual exploitative behaviour with no referral under the specific procedural requirements to provide a safeguarding plan.
- ◇ The development of the CAF in Bromley was in its early stages. There were no plans for the engagement of the YOT in this. Given the recent restructuring arrangements, and the need to significantly strengthen the safeguarding focus of this service, the YOT needed to be engaged in the strategic planning for the further implementation of this development.
- ◇ There were statements made by staff, at various levels of the organisation, about their gaps in knowledge in relation to thresholds and duties in safeguarding. There was a particular lack of clarity about duties and procedures where children and young people posed a 'Risk to Children' with a requirement to engage with MAPPA. The lack of effective structures and low levels of knowledge by practitioners were serious inhibitors to effective practice. The absence of internal risk management arrangements added to the important gap in this critical element of the work of the YOT.
- ◇ There was no evidence from Asset reviews, case file examination or indicative accounts by children and young people of any measurable reduction in actual or risk of vulnerability as the result of the involvement of the YOT in the lives of children and young people.

***Key judgement:***

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

The YOT had a full-time EWO and a recently appointed full-time temporary teacher within the team as well as a half-time Connexions PA. There were active links to the 'home' agencies and other learning providers within the borough. The education room became an accredited learning environment during the inspection period.

***Strengths:***

- ◇ There was evidence of good collaboration between the three staff operating as the interface with statutory education and post-16 ETE, although the presence of the temporary additional teacher had been very recent to the inspection. This was bolstered by active and valued support from the Behaviour Support Service, which had responsibility for this service, the COOME group and the PRU. The proposed strategy for reducing those who were NEET during 2007 was

welcomed, particularly the commissioning of trial project work targeting those who are over-represented in this group, including those involved with the YOT. It would, however, be some time before services were delivered or outcomes of this targeting could be evaluated.

- ◆ Where educational need was identified in the cases inspected, action was taken in 93% of those cases. This demonstrated the active nature of this group of staff. Unfortunately, the action taken was only considered effective in just over a half (57%) of those cases. There was a lack of flexibility and range of provision as an alternative to the mainstream opportunities that were available.
- ◆ There were individual examples where the determination and focus of a case manager combined with effective liaison with the EWO or Connexions PA had resulted in re-attachment to ETE in a sustainable way for the child or young person.

### Good practice

When a young person was without mainstream education, the YOT intervention enabled and supported obtaining a new school place. This placement, however, failed because of bullying experienced by this young person. The YOT then arranged a meeting of all involved – agencies and parents. Funding was secured for the pupil to undertake her GCSE studies at the local further education college. The pupil was successful in gaining good outcomes and was intending to continue her education beyond the statutory requirement.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ Over three-quarters of children and young people on community orders had experienced difficulties at school. The key themes within this were being permanently excluded (47%), persistently truanting (50%), and being subject to bullying (69%). It was of concern that the number of permanent exclusions had increased in Bromley in 2005/2006 over the previous year. The proportion of children and young people involved with the YOT who were in ETE had suffered a small reduction over the previous year (2004/2005), at just 78% of the cohort. Whilst ETE was a core issue for so many children and young people, the efforts made by this service, in conjunction with mainstream providers, were not producing the required outcomes for learners. This remained an underdeveloped part of the service.
- ◆ Despite there being a strong working relationship with the Connexions PA, only 56% of those eligible for a PA contact had received one, and only 35% of post-16 children and young people were in full-time ETE. From the Asset reviews it was evident that the greatest level of deterioration in criminogenic factors, across the period of YOT intervention, was in the area of ETE (25%). The links with providers and the range of alternatives to mainstream provision for children and young people in this area of activity were limited. There was also a lack of guidance on the processes and eligibility for

ETE. Overall, this was an area of service requiring substantial additional and urgent work within the area. The YOT could then benefit from such an improvement.

- ◇ As a response to the pressures within the service, both the EWO and the Connexions PA carried significant case management responsibilities. These additional duties diminished their capacity to focus on delivery of improved attachment to learning services, let alone being able to provide evidence of improved attainment. It was inappropriate that such posts should be used for purposes other than those which they are contracted for, particularly when outcomes in this area were inadequate.
- ◇ Only a minority of children and young people interviewed for the inspection indicated that they had been helped with their education and other learning needs.

**Key judgement:**

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

There were no systematic or effective consultation mechanisms embedded within the operation of the YOT at the time of the inspection.

**Strengths:**

- ◇ The proposed model for future policy and procedure development, which would synthesise feedback from children and young people, partners and staff, was considered to hold promise. The establishment of a local multi-agency reference group was seen as potentially adding further strength in ensuring systematic quality feedback about the services provided.
- ◇ Indicative accounts gathered during the inspection showed that the majority of children and young people considered that they had been helped to stop offending by the helpful, friendly staff. There were further individual examples in which children and young people described how their views had been obtained by the case manager but these had been neither systematised nor formally recorded.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ The absence of quality consultation and feedback systems left children and young people relatively disengaged from the service being delivered.
- ◇ Extensive recent consultation within the YOT did not appear to highlight the importance of feedback from children and young people on what was effective and on the areas that needed improvements to enhance their engagement.

### 3.3

### Work with parents/carers

**Key judgement:**

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

Parenting interventions were still developing within the YOT. 15% of parents/carers had received some level of intervention with the YOT over the year 2005/2006. There were a small but growing number of parents/carers subject to parenting orders through the youth court.

**Strengths:**

- ◆ The energetic development of parenting work, in the period immediately prior to the inspection, had been recognised by the YJB in lodging the policy and procedural developments within their *Directory of Emerging Practice*. The extensive documentation that had been produced was clear and pertinent to the intervention.
- ◆ Parenting work had been commissioned by the YOT from a local provider 'Parentline'. The SLA had recently been renewed to improve the monitoring and evaluation of the service to improve assessment of the impact of work on behaviour and reoffending.
- ◆ Parents/carers, when interviewed for the inspection, considered YOT staff had been supportive on a personal one-to-one basis. They had kept them informed of their child's progress; and had explained the requirements of the court order.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ The role of the parenting worker was not as firmly established within the YOT as was needed. Whilst there had been some very recent positive developments, it was evident that this element of the service remained attached to, rather than integrated with, assessment and intervention planning. Further focused training (including on safeguarding issues) and engagement with other parenting workers in the borough were needed, to improve knowledge, skills, efficiency and effectiveness.
- ◆ The issuing of parenting orders was not a consequence of failed voluntary interventions with parents/carers, as most had not had this opportunity prior to the making of the court order. More proactive use of voluntary parenting intervention should be pursued with the court, to reduce the number of court orders.
- ◆ Accounts by parents/carers indicated that the YOT had only a limited effectiveness on both the thinking and behaviour of their children.

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

***This section is judged as inadequate.***

## 4.

### WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUBJECT TO DTOs

#### **Key judgement:**

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

Bromley had a relatively small number of children and young people sentenced to custody (13 in 2005/2006) but this was an increase (20%) over the previous year. The local YOI for this YOT was Huntercombe, but there was evidence of children and young people being placed in other establishments in the South and South West of England. Six cases were inspected. Almost all the children within the sample had substance misuse behaviour and four cases had emotional and/or mental health needs. Three also had learning difficulties and two showed vulnerability - one from self-harm and the other from the behaviour of other children and young people.

#### **Strength:**

- ◆ There was evidence that this YOT was active and timely in its communication with the establishments as well as in sending copies of its reports to the unit. There was demonstrable good liaison throughout with parents/carers, with support to assist them to maintain contact with the child or young person throughout the custodial element of the sentence.

#### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ From the documentation produced by the YOT, there was evidence of contact with social care services in only two of the six. The initial assessment within the institution was informed by the Asset assessment in only a third (two) of the cases. Whilst there was immediacy about the contact by the YOT staff after sentence, this was not sufficiently informed by the depth and range of information nor by an effective assessment.
- ◆ There was insufficient evidence of the production, or review, of literacy and numeracy assessments with the children and young people (only evident in two of the six cases).

**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.*

**Strength:**

- ◇ Once identified, both the health and post-16 ETE needs of the child or young person were dealt with sufficiently or better within the YOI.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ The YOT worker did not maintain contact sufficiently during the period of custody. The minimum visiting pattern, identified by national standards, was only achieved in half of the cases.
- ◇ In two cases, SMART objectives were identified in the planning meetings. In only half of the cases there was evidence of work in relation to offending behaviour and victim empathy. In practice, the interventions in relation to victims were sufficient in only one case.

**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:**

- ◇ The YOT was undertaking assessments of the potential for, and prospects of, reoffending by children and young people whilst they were in custody. This work was adequately undertaken prior to transfer of the child or young person to the community.
- ◇ There were no indications, from the cases seen, or reports from the YOT itself, of any significant difficulties in acquiring or ensuring a stable accommodation upon transfer to the community. There were no cases in the sample that were Looked After Children or eligible for or entitled to Leaving Care services.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ In two cases a full risk of serious harm assessment was not completed, when it was clearly indicated as necessary by both the seriousness and context of the offence involved. When such assessments had been done there were two examples where they had not had the requisite managerial oversight.
- ◇ ETE has been noted, above, as a general deficit for children and young people involved in crime. There were no additional programmes/efforts put into identifying and meeting these needs for

those transferring from custody to the community. Of the two children and young people transferring who were of statutory school age, only one returned to any educational provision.

- ◆ Compliance with timescales, reviewing and contact requirements all fell short of the required standards in the post transfer to the community period of the sentence. Compliance by the children and young people with the terms of their transfer was poor in four out of the six cases. While half of the cases had an ISSP requirement, it was unclear what this comprised of, how it was undertaken or when contact was made. There evidence was of limited contact during the post-transfer period, with only one of the six children or young people having more than one hour of intervention per week from the YOT.

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strength:**

- ◆ There was no evidence that the frequency of reoffending for this group of children and young people was higher than that of the 'family' of like YOTs. There was, however, no evidence of a comparable lowering of the seriousness of offences where reoffending did take place.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ The failures to ensure contact with, and compliance by, the majority of children and young people, combined with an evident deterioration (on review of the Asset) in the thinking and behaviour component in half of the cases, did not inspire confidence that positive outcomes were being sought. There was no evidence of warnings for non-compliance, or recall activity, where failure to comply was clear.
- ◆ The recording practices of the YOT, in capturing all the necessary information throughout its involvement with the child or young person, was not good enough in half of the cases.

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUBJECT TO DTOs**

***This section is judged as inadequate.***

## 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.*

There had been recent changes in the systems for identifying and engaging with victims and restorative justice issues in the months immediately prior to the inspection. For a long time the post of victim liaison officer, funded through the police, was vacant and the function was not delivered. This post was, ultimately, disestablished and, in 2006, an SLA with Victim Support Bromley was established. The intention was that it made contact and undertook the work with the victims of crime once the police had provided the information to the YOT. This was not in operation during the inspection and it was, therefore, not possible to interview any victims.

### **Strengths:**

- ◇ There was clear evidence of a new, positive will to engage fully with both the victim and restorative justice agendas, notably at the managerial level within the YOT. There was a keen awareness of the shortfall of performance in this aspect of work and how it impacted upon so many other parts of their duties.
- ◇ The work of Victim Support Bromley was being designed to make substantial contributions to four key areas of YOT performance:
  - restorative justice approaches – including prevention and early intervention
  - informing the authors of PSRs in relation to the impact of the crime upon the victim
  - contributing to referral panel reports, the supporting of victims who may wish to attend and ensuring as much direct reparation to be delivered as possible
  - ensuring that the needs and views of victims (including child victims) are heard in relation to the development and delivery of indirect reparation.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ This was a significant area for improvement in practice at the time of the inspection. Virtually all areas that should have had a victim or restorative justice component or perspective did not, or where it was there, it was insufficient. In 91% of the community penalty cases

examined there was no evidence of victim consultation or engagement in any restorative justice activity. Particular areas that fell short of expected standards were:

- the low levels of knowledge by case managers of these requirements. The recording of victim factors and needs was poor in over half of the relevant cases inspected. This was a clear training issue for the whole service
  - an almost complete absence of any victim perspective in either PSRs, referral panel reports or the programmes of intervention
  - a failure to engage with victims in attending, or establishing their views to present to referral panels specifying any desired direct or indirect reparation
  - a lack of substantial victim work with children and young people who had offended (both direct and indirect) as part of programmed interventions
  - within the indirect reparations that were available. Some reparation to the community was designed to be very indirectly delivered. Even so, only 26% of community disposals involved even indirect reparation. Whilst 61% of cases showed evidence of some community reparation, the nature of this did not impact upon the community in Bromley as a whole. Community reparation did not commence within three months of the start of the order in 29% of cases
  - there was no engagement with corporate victims, despite reference in the Children and Young People's Strategic Plan to a *Retail Theft Initiative* scheme, engaging shopkeepers in Bromley with a restorative justice approach. This was not in place at the time of the inspection.
- ◇ From interviews with children and young people there was little insight into, or description of, victim impact or reparation, though there was the occasional file reference to letters of apology being produced. The indicative interviews from children and young people fell short of identifying victim needs, restorative justice or reparation as any part of the intervention they had received.
- ◇ The lack of information in this area extended to questions of whether there were individual needs or other diversity issues that remained unaddressed with the child or young person who had offended. There was so much that was unknown in this area of work. It was reasonable to infer that there were unassessed needs and services that should have been offered.

### **OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK WITH VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

***This section is judged as inadequate.***

## 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
<b>4</b>	Excellent – performs strongly, well above minimum requirements with outstanding features
<b>3</b>	Good – performs well, consistently above minimum requirements with no important shortcomings
<b>2</b>	Adequate – only meets minimum requirements
<b>1</b>	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. In the light of the inspection findings for the Bromley YOT we intend to conduct a brief follow-up inspection in early 2007.
- ◆ 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

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#### 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.
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#### 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**

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#### **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.
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**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.
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### **3. Work with children and young people in the community**

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#### **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.

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### **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.
- 

**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.
- 

**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.
- 

### **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**

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### **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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