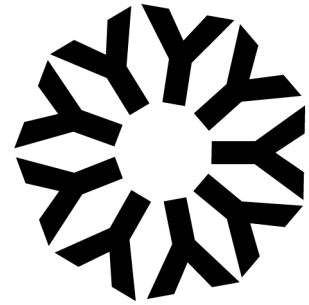


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Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Report on:
Calderdale
Youth Offending Team

2006

Foreword

This is one of the first reports to be published in the third phase of the inspection of Youth Offending Teams across England and Wales. We found an enthusiastic and actively engaged staff team that was well supported by its Management Board and committed to the work with children and young people. The team was firmly integrated into both the community safety and children's agendas. Partnership work was strong and, as a result, there were a number of imaginative projects.

There was still work to do around some of the work with children and young people, however. The assessment and management of risk required particular attention. Outcomes of the work undertaken should be evaluated, with the results informed by consultation with children and young people and their parents/carers.

The management team showed itself to be open regarding the outstanding issues, receptive to feedback and keen to use the findings of the inspection to develop further the work of the team. Many of the areas for improvement had already been recognised and work was in hand to address them. This report contains a number of recommendations that we believe will assist the Calderdale Youth Offending Team in consolidating its existing work and continuing to make progress.

Andrew Bridges
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

December 2005

Fieldwork for this inspection was undertaken in July and September 2005.

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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the staff from the Youth Offending Team, 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 Stephen Toye, Youth Offending Team Manager, and Paula Dawtrey, Business Manager, 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
ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour Order
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CSCI	Commission for Social Care Inspection
CYPMG	Children and Young Person's Management Group
CYRIL	Calderdale YOT Resource and Information Library
DAAT	Drug and Alcohol Action Team
DTO	Detention and Training Order
E2E	Entry to Education
EPQA	Effective Practice Quality Assurance
Estyn	HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
ETE	Employment, Training and Education
GCSE	General Certificate in Secondary Education
GP	General Practitioner
HMIC	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMI Prisons	HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
ISP	Initial supervision plan
ISSP	Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme
JAR	Joint Area Review
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
National Standards	National Standards for Youth Justice Services
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
PAYP	Positive Activities for Young People
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PSA	Public Service Agreement
PSR	Pre-sentence report
RAP	Resettlement and Aftercare Programme
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bounded
SSIW	Social Services Inspectorate for Wales
SSR	Specific sentence report
VLO	Victim Liaison Officer
WPI	Wales Programme for Improvement
YIP	Youth Inclusion Programme
YISP	Youth Inclusion & Support Panel
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOIS	Youth Offending Information System
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 155 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 JARs of Children's Services in England, and inspections undertaken as part of the WPI, 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 DTOs
- ◆ victims and restorative justice.

Findings from the YOT inspection inform not only the JAR but also the Corporate Assessment, APA and CPA in England, and in Wales inspections undertaken as part of the WPI and of Youth Support Services.

On conclusion of the inspection, the YOT is asked to prepare an action plan, responding to the recommendations. Once agreed, the action plan is forwarded to the YJB to monitor its implementation.

Overview of the area

- ◆ The metropolitan district of Calderdale is located in West Yorkshire in the North of England.
- ◆ Calderdale had a total population of 192,405, measured in the Census 2001. Of this population, 24.0% were aged 0-17 years at the time of the census. This figure was higher than the average for England and Wales of 22.7%.
- ◆ Calderdale had a predominantly white population, 90.8%, and this was similar to the average for England of 90.9%. The percentage of Asian or Asian British residents, 5.7%, was higher than the average for England of 4.6%. The percentage of Black or Black British residents, at 0.2%, was much lower than the English average of 2.1%.
- ◆ The level of employment in Calderdale, 62.7%, was much higher than the average for England and Wales of 60.6%. The level of unemployment was 3.8%, slightly higher than the average for England and Wales at 3.4%. There was a much lower percentage of students resident in Calderdale, 5.5% compared to 7.3% in England and Wales.
- ◆ Calderdale Council was classified as 'good' in the Audit Commission's CPA 2004.
- ◆ The YJB figures for youth offending for the period April 2003 to March 2004 show that 71.8 offences were committed per 1,000 children and young people aged 0-17 years in Calderdale.
- ◆ The YJB summary of YOT performance against the key performance indicators for 2003/2004 ranked Calderdale YOT in 51st position.

Scoring summary

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

	Section score
Management	3
Work in the courts	3
Work with children and young people in the community	2
Work with children and young people subject to DTOs	3
Victims and restorative justice	3

Overall assessment

Overall, we found the Calderdale YOT to be a well managed, forward thinking YOT with much innovative work being carried out with children and young people. The Management Board was engaged, knowledgeable and supportive and meetings were largely well attended. The YOT Manager showed clear vision and was well respected and influential across both the Children's Services and the Safer Communities Partnership and, as a result, the YOT was involved in, and aligned with partner strategies.

The staff group was enthusiastic and creative and committed to the work with children and young people. They demonstrated a willingness and ability to absorb, and work with change.

There was some work to do to consolidate assessments and interventions with children and young people. Evidencing management oversight on risk of harm cases required immediate attention. The YOT also needed to focus on planning interventions and evaluating the outcomes and the effectiveness of the various programmes it used. There was no consultation with either children or young people or their parents/carers: their views should be used to inform service delivery. Work was also required to ensure that children and young people serving DTOs received adequate provision from social services during the custodial part of their sentences.

Many of the findings of the inspection had already been identified by the YOT and work was already in hand to make the necessary changes.

Key statistics

File reading statistic	YOT file read score	Average for phase two YOTs	Range for phase two YOTs	YJB targets*
	(% cases)			
Initial assessment completed in accordance with national standards requirements:				
– timeliness	93%	84%	70-97%	
– adequate quality	82%	71%	29-93%	
Full risk of harm to others completed on relevant cases	73%	54%	17-83%	
Evidence of management oversight in risk of harm cases	0%	41%	0-100%	
ISP meets the content requirements of national standards and contains SMART objectives	23%	52%	17-96%	
Frequency of appointments arranged broadly conform to national standards, to the requirements of order/licence, and to any risk of harm considerations	81%	75%	52-100%	
Judgements about acceptability/unacceptability of absences are appropriate	80%	71%	40-96%	
Breach/recall action has taken place, if required, within the national standards timescale	67%	49%	13-100%	
Evidence of any criminal activity during the course of the order	48%	29%	15-48%	
Appropriate action has been taken if a child or young person is considered vulnerable to harm from self and others.	92%	95%	67-100%	
Effective action is taken where there is evidence of educational difficulties	65%	60%	33-81%	
Appropriate referrals are made in cases of:	80%	n/a	n/a	
– physical health				
– mental/emotional health	93%	n/a	n/a	
– substance misuse	64%	n/a	n/a	
Victim was consulted about restorative/reparative justice work with child or young person	57%	45%	6-72%	

*if appropriate

Diversity issues

Although the population of Calderdale was predominantly white, it also included a higher than average percentage of Asian or Asian British residents and a smaller percentage of Black or Black British residents. The Management Board did not have a representative from these communities to inform the work of the YOT. The YOT staff group itself was diverse both in terms of gender and ethnicity. Individual staff had attended a number of training events around particular diversity issues but there had been no specific diversity training.

The consideration of diversity issues during the assessment of children and young people who had offended was inconsistent. Additionally, as there was no assessment tool in place for those taking part in diversionary activities, it was impossible to tell whether diversity was being taken into account. This issue also applied to the assessment of victims' needs.

The YOT offered a wide range of interventions which were available to all children and young people. The ETE provision was particularly wide-ranging and was considered to be addressing diversity issues. Both practitioners and managers believed they were meeting diverse needs on an individual basis, but were unable to demonstrate that they were actually doing so. There was a lack of evaluation of many of these interventions, however, and no wider consultation with children and young people and their parents/carers.

Parenting work was judged to be largely taking diversity into account and improvements had been made in the interventions available. Some, particularly those delivered in partnership with the Women's Centre, should be formalised.

Overall, the YOT needed to address diversity issues in a more structured way both strategically and operationally.

Key findings

- ◆ **Management** – The inspection team found a forward-looking YOT, with strong leadership and an enthusiastic and innovative staff group. Partners were very supportive of the YOT and, with very few exceptions, attendance at Board meetings was good. The YOT Manager was fully engaged in the planning and delivery of services across both the community safety and children's agendas. Existing protocols and SLAs were inadequate, however, and needed reviewing and updating; there was no SLA with the PCT.
- ◆ **Work in the courts** – Relationships, at all levels, with the magistrates' court were very positive. Court work was well organised, proactive and fully integrated into the work of the YOT.
- ◆ **Work with children and young people in the community** – There was a strong focus on diversionary activity and a wide range of programmes and activities available. The delivery of final warnings also required attention and changes to the process were in hand. The risk policy was not fully embedded in practice and the assessment and management of risk required attention, as did recording of management oversight. The quality of supervision planning needed improvement, with particular reference to the use of SMART objectives and the inclusion of restorative processes. There was neither formal evaluation of YOT interventions nor any broader consultation with children and young people. Individual outcomes were not being monitored adequately.
- ◆ **Work with children and young people subject to DTOs** – Contact levels with children and young people during the custodial part of their sentence were good and efforts were also made to stay in contact with parents/carers. There was little involvement of the home education, health and social services with children and young people during the custodial part of their sentence. Whilst individual learning plans had continued following release, there was little evidence of progress in relation to ETE and initial gains were not sustained.
- ◆ **Victims and restorative justice** – Victim work had improved following the employment of the VLO on a permanent contract. The agreement with the probation area for post-sentence victim contact had led, in some cases, to both agencies contacting the victim. This issue needed to be resolved swiftly.

Recommendations

The Chair of the Management Board should ensure that:

- ◆ an action plan is devised to address the following recommendations and forwarded to the lead inspector within three months of the publication of this report
- ◆ Board membership is reviewed so that representatives from the appropriate agencies attend, are fully engaged and proactive account is taken of the needs and concerns of minority ethnic communities in the work of the YOT
- ◆ all protocols and SLAs are reviewed and up dated. A SLA with the PCT is agreed
- ◆ staff in the YOT, and in the partner agencies used by the YOT, are systematically CRB checked.

The YOT Manager should ensure that:

- ◆ Asset reviews are carried out in line with national standards
- ◆ supervision plans contain appropriate content, including restorative interventions where appropriate, and are used by case managers in planning and reviewing work with children and young people
- ◆ the risk policy is fully implemented, with particular emphasis given to the assessment and management of risk and management oversight
- ◆ timely action is taken to make sure that children and young people comply with the conditions of their orders or licences
- ◆ the views of the home education and health authorities are represented at DTO planning meetings during the custodial part of the sentence
- ◆ a system is in place requiring all staff to be trained to the appropriate level in child protection and safeguarding issues
- ◆ diversity training is provided to all staff to make sure that it is taken into account at all stages of a child's or young person's involvement with the YOT
- ◆ information on the number of children and young people held in custody overnight is used proactively so that they are not held unnecessarily and that the PACE bed is deployed effectively
- ◆ monitoring and evaluation systems are in place across all YOT interventions
- ◆ consultation is undertaken with both children and young people and parents/carers about their individual situations and the services available to them from the YOT.

The local PCT should ensure that:

- ◆ an appropriate representative from the health service attends Management Board meetings on a regular basis and makes a positive contribution.

The West Yorkshire Police should ensure that:

- ◆ information on final warnings is provided to the YOT within one working day in accordance with Home Office/YJB guidance.

The Education Department should ensure that:

- ◆ an appropriate representative attends Management Board meetings on a regular basis
- ◆ there is work with the YOT to reintegrate children and young people into mainstream education.

Social Services should ensure that:

- ◆ appropriate services are provided to children and young people who are the subject of DTOs throughout the custodial part of their sentence.

The West Yorkshire Probation Area should ensure that:

- ◆ the arrangements for delivering services to victims are reviewed so that there is no duplication of unnecessary contact.

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.*

The YOT was located within the Community Services Directorate and the Safer Communities Partnership structure; the latter also included the DAAT and the Community Safety Partnership Team. The Management Board met three times a year and was co-Chaired by the Group Director of Community Services on behalf of the Chief Executive and a Divisional Commander on behalf of the police. The DAAT, the Community Safety Partnership Team and the Safer Communities Partnership Executive met in consecutive months, thereby establishing a four monthly meeting cycle. A significant number of people were common members of all Boards, including the YOT Manager.

Strengths:

- ◆ The cycle of meetings and the cross-cutting nature of the agendas of all the Boards within the Safer Communities Partnership meant that YOT business was discussed on a monthly basis. This ensured that any urgent issues could be dealt with speedily. It also aided the integration of YOT business into the wider agenda of Community Safety and improved links with partner agencies. Two of the council's 13 identified priorities involved the YOT.
- ◆ The Chief Executive had strategic oversight and had given considerable thought to the position of the YOT and to its future positioning within the changing environment of Children's Services. The YOT Manager had direct access to the Chief Executive, both on an informal basis and more formally through the Safer Communities Partnership meetings.
- ◆ Members felt that the Management Board meeting was an open forum where debate was encouraged and challenge accepted. It was described variously as dynamic, knowledgeable and robust.
- ◆ It was clear from interviews with members of the Management Board, partner agencies and court representatives that the YOT Manager had their trust and support and was held in high regard. As a result, he was fully engaged in the planning and delivery of services to children and young people both in the criminal justice and wider Children's Services arenas.

- ◆ Members of the Board clearly represented the needs of the YOT to their parent organisations, as shown by a recent increase in funding from the police and significant input from Connexions.
- ◆ The Management Board monitored information on performance against YJB targets. It was evident from minutes that the reports had been scrutinised and discussed, and explanation sought where performance had dipped. The Board had asked for some additional information on trends, which had been provided. A local PSA target of reducing the offending of Looked After Children was also being monitored. The YOT Manager was working to improve the information for both the Board and the YOT operational managers. Measures were being developed around Youth Inclusion, ISSP, and other local issues as well as a post code analysis. There was also evidence that the Board had used the data to target resources, for example, performance towards the ETE target.
- ◆ The YOT Manager had carried out a self-assessment against the YJB's *Sustaining the Success* which had been circulated and presented to the Management Board, but had still to be discussed in detail at the meeting.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Attendance at the Management Board was recognised as requiring attention and efforts had been made to facilitate the presence of certain members by the Chief Executive who had recently asked for attendance lists.
- ◆ Additionally there appeared to be some confusion about membership. The court representative was clear that he was not a member, nor would it be appropriate for him to be so. However, he had attended a meeting, although the reason for his presence was not apparent. The fire service representative had never attended any meetings and was unclear about the purpose of his role.
- ◆ The diversity of the Management Board had been recognised as deficient by the YOT Manager and the local authority co-Chair as there was no minority ethnic presence. Nevertheless, they felt that Board members were able to ensure that their work was culturally sensitive and that services had not been adversely affected. They also considered that the ethnic composition of the YOT itself was more important than that of the Board. Despite their concerns, there was no evidence in minutes that the issue had ever been raised in discussion about services.
- ◆ Information on outcomes had again been acknowledged as an area in which there needed to be improvement and work was already underway to address this issue. It had been recognised for some time that Asset data were valuable sources of information and there had been plans to develop their use, which had not, however, been progressed. Although the Board was monitoring the local PSA target to reduce the offending of Looked After Children, the information

produced was not adequate to improve performance. The YOT Manager was considering the possibility of linking Asset to the five outcomes under *Every Child Matters* and was developing a 'performance booklet' which would include information on the ISSP, the YIP and appeal decisions.

1.2 Partnership and resources

Key judgement:

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

The YOT was appropriately staffed with both employed and seconded workers from other statutory agencies. There was a significant amount of partnership working with both statutory and voluntary agencies. The YOT was fully integrated into partner strategies, including work to address anti-social behaviour.

Strengths:

- ◆ The strategic location of the YOT meant that it was not only positioned with the DAAT and Community Safety but also libraries, sports and leisure and housing. This had resulted in close links with those services and the consequent development of a number of projects for children and young people. There were also instances where funds had been used across boundaries, for example the DAAT had put money into the YIP and helped to fund an arts project.
- ◆ The YOT had good relationships with its partners and enjoyed an excellent reputation. The strategies of the YOT and its partners were particularly well aligned and the Youth Justice Plan reflected the close working relationships with those agencies. Partnership working with the DAAT had resulted in an Arrest Referral Scheme, one of ten in the country being piloted.
- ◆ There were good links with Children's Services at both operational and strategic levels. The YOT Manager was a member of the CYPMG (the strategic vehicle for the implementation of integrated Children's Services) and was linked to the ACPC through his line manager. An operational manager also sat on the ACPC subgroup dealing with the sexual exploitation of children. There was a half-time worker with responsibility for developing work with Looked After Children. Joint work with social services was carried out with children and young people who had sexually harmed. There was a formal partnership agreement with the Health and Social Care Directorate detailing the division of responsibilities. Work was ongoing to continue to strengthen the links with social services and the partnership agreement needed to be reviewed as part of these developments.

- ◆ Single, countywide protocols existed with the police and probation area which had been negotiated alongside the other four YOTs in West Yorkshire. There was a Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield-wide inter-agency framework for sharing information between the police, probation, local authorities and health services.
- ◆ There was a good range of interventions and services available, although some were not Calderdale wide. Parenting provision was being redesigned to make it more accessible and the YISP also needed to be widened. Innovative projects had been established with a number of providers enabling children and young people to get involved in sport, arts, creative writing, mechanics, photography and other activities.

Good practice

The accommodation officer, together with the local authority young person's housing advice worker and a representative from the youth service, had put together a presentation on preventing and dealing with homelessness. It had already been given to schools and youth clubs in the area and the intention was to continue the presentations on a monthly basis.

- ◆ There was a wide range of provision for young people post-16 with seven E2E providers in the borough. Each of these programmes included children and young people from the YOT and work had been undertaken to ensure that they adequately addressed the needs of girls, young women and children and young people from minority ethnic groups. Provision for those of compulsory school age also incorporated a range of alternative services, including some engagement with the youth service.
- ◆ The reduction in offending by Looked After Children was one of the council's top priorities and the work had attracted PSA funding.
- ◆ The YOT, together with the police and social services, had developed a joint protocol and was attempting to introduce a systematic approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour in residential units by the use of restorative justice techniques.
- ◆ The YOT was described as being 'firmly embedded' in anti-social behaviour work. Additional funding from the police had allowed the provision of a full-time post to facilitate this work and the process had improved. An Early Intervention Panel had been established to intervene with children and young people who were considered likely to attract ASBOs. The YOT also contributed to the use of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts with children and young people.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ A number of protocols and SLAs needed attention. Some were out of date or undated; others appeared to have been drawn up by the YOT without reference to the partner agency and were unsigned. Few detailed arrangements for information sharing or monitoring and none

had been reviewed. There was no protocol or SLA with the PCT. The recent appointment of a business manager was intended to resolve this matter.

- ◆ Strategic links to the MAPPA process were weak. There had previously been an arrangement between the West Yorkshire YOTs to send a sole representative to the Strategic Management Board but it was unclear whether these arrangements had continued following staff changes.
- ◆ Although the annual target for children and young people identified and supported through the YISP had been exceeded, the number of first time entrants into the criminal justice system had increased. It was thought that this was as a result of the police target under *Offences Brought to Justice*, but the Management Board had not discussed ways to resolve the conflicting targets.
- ◆ The funding for the accommodation officer was time-limited to one year; the contract had been extended on a short-term basis twice. The YOT Manager was exploring ways of establishing a permanent position as a priority.

Good practice

Small Voices, an arts and multi-media project, was involving children and young people in poetry, art, drama and film making. YOT staff were included, alongside a local artist and writer. Amongst other outcomes, there had been a drama production, a published book of poetry and an art exhibition at a local gallery.

Good practice

The YOT had created a website where it not only explained the work of the team and its partners but also promoted good news about children and young people and their achievements.

1.3

Staff supervision, development and training

Key judgement:

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

The YOT had a full range of policies and procedures held electronically. Supervision took place regularly and generally in line with experience. Appraisal was undertaken annually using the local authority format. The creation of a training officer post had recently been agreed.

Strengths:

- ◆ The YOT had a stable and knowledgeable operational management team with a broad range of skills and experience. The team clearly

worked well together and had the trust of the YOT Manager. Management meetings were held weekly, with specific meetings about performance on a monthly basis to which relevant practitioners were invited.

- ◆ We found the practitioners in the team to be innovative, enthusiastic and committed to working in partnership. A number of interventions had been developed by practitioners. Full team meetings were held monthly, with outside agencies and speakers invited to alternate meetings.
- ◆ Of the members of staff who completed our questionnaires, all reported that they were supervised regularly and over 90% had had annual appraisals. It was the policy to offer more frequent supervision to new members of staff.
- ◆ The composition of the staff team was diverse, both in terms of gender and ethnicity.

Good practice

CYRIL was an electronic database that had been developed by one of the police officers in the team. It was still being worked on at the time of the inspection but was already an invaluable tool for practitioners and managers. It held the YOT's policies and procedures, together with a range of other information including programmes and resources for working with children and young people.

- ◆ A training database had been developed which held a record of the training undertaken by each member of staff. It was broken down into categories, a number of which had been linked to the YJB's *Key Elements of Effective Practice*. Members of staff had individual training logs.

Good practice

Each member of staff received quarterly input from the information officer on YOIS; certificates of competence were issued.

- ◆ All volunteers had been appropriately inducted and trained and had access to the same training as staff. They reported that they felt very much a part of the team. Support groups were held every 12 weeks and there had been a celebration event as part of National Volunteers week.

Good practice

As part of the Appropriate Adult training the volunteer coordinator had organised a visit to Halifax Police Station. This included a session where police officers had taken part in role-playing PACE interviews in a custody area.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ A number of staff had received no induction: of those who had, some described it as inadequate. This issue had already been recognised and was being addressed by the implementation of a structured induction programme.
- ◇ The supervision guidance had been reviewed but was undated. Although a pro forma for use in supervision had been developed, it was not widely used.
- ◇ Although the guidance identified training and development as agenda items, they did not appear to be consistently discussed in supervision. There had been no skills audit undertaken and there was no formal YOT training plan in place. Whilst there was clearly a commitment to ongoing training and development, the delivery appeared to be unsystematic. It was anticipated that the appointment of the training officer would address this problem.
- ◇ Administrative staff were not being supervised regularly or consistently, but all had been appraised.
- ◇ No specific diversity training had been undertaken, although individual staff had attended a number of training events around particular diversity issues.
- ◇ Whilst most staff had been trained, there was no system in place to ensure that all staff received child protection training.
- ◇ Although there was a system to ensure that all new staff and volunteers were CRB checked, there was no systematic approach to ensuring that all outside partners were checking their staff. Additionally the renewal of checks on existing staff was not up to date.
- ◇ Although there was promotional literature explaining a written complaints procedure, it was not consistently brought to the notice of children and young people. Of the children and young people who answered our questionnaire, nearly half said that they did not know how to make a complaint.

Good practice

Training for volunteers was accredited where possible, working with Manchester College of Art and Technology, through the Open College Network.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT

This section is judged as good.

2.

WORK IN THE COURTS

Key judgement:

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

Links with the youth court panel and other key court staff were good and there had been regular presentations by the YOT. A YOT operational manager attended the Youth Court User Group. A protocol with the youth court was in place. Good operational links existed with Bradford and Leeds Crown Courts.

Strengths:

- ◆ A daily feedback sheet for magistrates had recently been introduced to monitor performance in court. Magistrates and court staff felt well informed and regular presentations by the YOT were described as carefully planned and pertinent. They were well attended and received, although not all magistrates engaged in the process.
- ◆ Well-established arrangements were in place for covering Saturday courts which were about to be extended to bank holidays.
- ◆ Data and background information on all remands, custodial sentences and appeal decisions were collated and taken to the Youth Court User Group. The relationship between the YOT and the magistrates' court appeared to be particularly positive. It was felt that both agencies were engaged in helping each other, with performance towards targets; these were discussed at Youth Court User Group. The magistrates' court legal manager had attended a team meeting to discuss court work.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ The protocol covering court work was undated, unsigned and in need of review. It did not include arrangements for the cover of Crown Courts or Saturday and bank holiday courts.
- ◆ The links with Crown Courts were less well developed. There was no representation on Crown Court User Groups nor had there been any presentations or training events with Crown Court staff. It was believed that this work would be carried out by two of the other West Yorkshire YOTs which were geographically nearer to the Crown Courts.

Key judgement:

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

The youth court was staffed by three practitioners, with part-time administrative support. Additional help was provided by the education specialist. Tasks were divided broadly into preparation and staffing of court, bail assessments and contact as part of supervision on bail.

Strengths:

- ◆ Court work was well organised, with a strong emphasis on ensuring that children and young people and their parents/carers were fully informed, delays minimised and the YOT was able to exert influence on the process. Efforts were made, prior to court commencing, to identify problems, predict requests for information and agree potential courses of action.

Good practice

A meeting was held prior to the start of court proceedings between the court Legal Executive, the manager of the cells, the YOT court officer and, where possible, the CPS representative to ensure that children and young people who were remanded were given priority and actions could be taken to ensure that they were dealt with swiftly.

- ◆ Well-organised systems ensured that children and young people received initial office appointments for the following day in all cases and that court orders and reports were allocated on the same day, or the day after court at the latest.

Area for improvement:

- ◆ The information sent to secure placements did not include previous convictions.

Key judgement:

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

Strengths:

- ◆ A PACE bed was available in a short stay residential unit and a foster carer was reserved for YOT use.
- ◆ Procedures were in place to ensure that the YOT was aware of any children and young people being held in cells and was able to respond speedily.

Good practice

Where it was identified that children and young people appearing in court should have received a final warning, a YOT police officer was contacted, who met and escorted the child or young person to the police station where the final warning was given.

- ◆ There was a graduated response to objections to bail ranging from the proposal of additional conditions through bail supervision services to bail with an attached ISSP. The need to target supervision at a level appropriate to the risk of harm or reoffending was fully understood and was achieved by early liaison with the CPS.
- ◆ Following a secure remand, consideration was given to further bail applications and progressive support and supervision packages were offered to the courts. Where an application supported by an ISSP was made to the Crown Court, practitioners attended in person to promote and support the application.

Area for improvement:

- ◆ Although there was a system in place to monitor the children and young people kept in cells overnight, the information was not used proactively to ensure that alternative arrangements were considered where appropriate and that the PACE bed was used effectively.

Key judgement:

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

A full range of reports was available to the court including specific sentence and stand-down reports and PSRs. Gatekeeping arrangements for PSRs were in place to ensure quality.

Strengths:

- ◆ All PSRs had been based on an Asset assessment and specific interviews with both the child or young person and a parent/carer. In 95% of cases, all relevant sources of information had been accessed; verification had been sought and factual accuracy checked in all cases.
- ◆ The majority (89%) of PSRs had been produced within the national standard timeframe. All had clear proposals for sentencing which were generally commensurate with the seriousness of the offence, although there was some inconsistency.
- ◆ The majority of reports were judged to be focused, balanced, impartial and largely free from discriminatory language and stereotypes. All were considered to contain sufficient and appropriate relevant information.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ The format of the reports differed slightly from that prescribed by the national standard and should be amended.
- ◆ The assessment of risk required some attention as the distinction between risk of harm and of reoffending was not always drawn. As a result over 50% were judged not to have assessed risk of harm adequately.
- ◆ The arrangements for sharing of PSRs with children and young people and their parents/carers needed strengthening. It was not unusual for this to happen at court on the day of sentencing.
- ◆ Gatekeeping of PSRs was supposed to be carried out by peers, but a high turnover of staff had meant that it had actually fallen to managers and senior practitioners. There was no collation of the information gained from the gatekeeping process to inform practice.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK IN THE COURTS

This section is judged as good.

3. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

3.1 Work with children and young people at risk of offending

Key judgement:

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

The YOT's prevention strategy was described as having two broad themes – geographic and clusters. The former deployed resources where the prevalence of youth crime was high and the latter channelled resources into groups considered at risk, such as Looked After Children or those involved in anti-social behaviour.

The YIP targeted the top 50 'at risk' children and young people aged 13-16 years and operated in North Halifax alongside the YISP which was designed to work with children and young people aged eight to 13 years. The management of the latter was about to be transferred from the voluntary sector to the YOT. A *Positive Futures* scheme was also active in the area engaging children and young people aged 13-16 years through sporting activities.

A PAYP scheme was managed by the youth service and had mechanisms to ensure that the work was appropriately targeted at those children and young people most at risk of offending. Additionally there were targets to ensure that the programme was accessed by girls and young women, and children and young people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Strengths:

- ◆ The North Halifax Area Coordination Group had been set up to co-ordinate and streamline the management of the YIP, the YISP, Positive Futures and other preventative services in the area; it was chaired by the YOT Manager.
- ◆ There was a strong focus within the YOT on diversionary activity as evidenced by the appointment of a diversionary projects coordinator who was responsible for developing the services.
- ◆ The Arrest Referral Scheme had dealt with 452 children and young people in the year to 31 March 2005, the majority of whom had received police reprimands. Previously there had been no intervention offered to these children and young people.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ There was no assessment tool in place for children and young people taking part in diversionary activities through the YISP.
- ◇ It had been recognised that work needed to be carried out to establish, align and coordinate the measuring of outcomes for preventative work. Targets had recently been agreed to attempt to 'join up' the outcomes.
- ◇ The funding for the Arrest Referral Scheme was due to cease in March 2006. It was not clear, at the time of the inspection, what the plans were for continuation after that date. This uncertainty had led to a decline in morale amongst the staff. Since the inspection, it has been announced that funding has been extended until September 2006.
- ◇ The functioning of the North Halifax Area Coordination Group, and in particular its role in performance management, needed to improve. This had already been recognised and a meeting to review the terms of reference and deal with governance issues had been arranged.
- ◇ With the exception of the PAYP scheme, the provision of services for girls and young women and minority ethnic children and young people needed to be further developed.

3.2 Work with children and young people who have offended

Key judgements:

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

The YOT was divided into four teams covering prevention, early intervention, court and supervision and administration, each with an operational manager. The ISSP scheme operated across two YOTs, Calderdale and neighbouring Kirklees, and was part of the 12 month pilot of Extended ISSP.

Strengths:

- ◇ Assets were completed within YJB timeframes in 93% of cases and were of adequate quality in 82%. In all of the cases sampled, children and young people had been involved in the assessment.
- ◇ The frequency of contact with children and young people was broadly in line with the national standard; 81% had had appointments arranged in line with the requirements of the order or licence and 71% of appointments had been kept. Judgements about the acceptability of absence were judged to have been appropriate in 80% of cases.

Good practice

A young person, who had been experiencing difficulties at school, was nominated for awards for improvement and achievement. The case manager attended the presentation, in addition to his usual contacts, and spent the afternoon with the young person.

- ◆ Referral panels were working well. Panels took place within 20 days of the order being made and there were written reports in all cases, which took the form of copies of the profile section of Asset. It was reported that panel members preferred this approach as they had previously felt that they were 'rubber stamping' proposals. The interventions matched the assessed risk of harm in all cases. Of the children and young people on referral orders who answered our questionnaire, all had understood the process and felt supported.
- ◆ The YOT delivered interventions as part of a final warning to 88% of cases and had met the YJB target for this measure consistently over the past two years.
- ◆ The recidivism rates for pre-court and first tier penalties showed good progress being made, with downward trends for the 2001 and 2002 cohorts.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Consideration of diversity issues during assessment was inconsistent, needing particular work in the areas of ethnicity and language (43% and 33% respectively).
- ◆ The assessment and management of risk required some attention. A full risk of harm assessment had not been completed on three of the 11 cases where indicators had been identified, and seven of the remaining 15 relevant cases examined should, in our view, also have been subject to a full risk of harm assessment. Whilst five of the six cases assessed as medium or high risk had been referred to a manager, none of the files contained any evidence of having been regularly reviewed.
- ◆ Asset scores had not been reviewed in around 30% of cases.
- ◆ Whilst supervision plans were largely completed on time (85%), only 23% were considered to be of adequate quality. Although there was a close fit between interventions planned and the assessed risk of harm (83%), examination of the case files revealed a number of discrepancies between the issues identified and the work that was actually been carried out. Few plans contained SMART objectives and only around half included restorative processes.
- ◆ Consideration needed to be given to some aspects of enforcement. 44% of children and young people in the sample had not complied with the requirements of their order and appropriate action to implement conditions had been taken in only 57% of cases. Breach action had not been taken within the national standard timescale in 33% of cases.

- ◇ Arrangements for the management and delivery of final warnings did not appear to be embedded in the work of the local police. The failure to notify the YOT of the decision to deliver a final warning within one working day in 63% of the cases sampled hampered the work of the police officers in the YOT. Changes to the process were in hand, with various awareness raising and training events planned to support their implementation.
- ◇ It was apparent from discussion with case managers that a considerable amount of imaginative and constructive work with children and young people was being developed and carried out. There was no evaluation of the work, however, and no consultation with children and young people about the programmes. Asset scores showed an improvement in only 31% of cases and there was evidence of criminal activity in 48% of cases.
- ◇ At the time of the inspection, a number of changes were envisaged in the work of the ISSP designed to improve the relationship with the YOT and the work with children and young people. The team was not using YOIS consistently or appropriately, and had developed separate paper files. Plans were in hand to rectify this. Its location in a separate building had not facilitated close working relationships between staff. There were plans for the YOT to move to a new building and it was envisaged that the ISSP would then co-locate.

Key judgement:

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

There was a full-time health worker within the YOT, funded by the PCT, who provided health screening to all children and young people identified through Asset as having health needs. There was a delay of about two weeks for children and young people referred to CAMHS, although there was a 'fast-track' service should it be needed.

Strengths:

- ◇ In 93% of cases where there was evidence of emotional or mental health issues and in 80% of cases where there was evidence of physical health needs, appropriate referrals had been made. Access for children and young people to CAMHS, substance misuse and other health services was well managed by the health worker.
- ◇ A clinical psychologist provided consultation and supervision, on a monthly basis, to YOT staff working with children and young people with mental illness.
- ◇ The Lifeline Service for young people misusing substances had been commissioned by the DAAT and took all referrals made by the YOT. It provided needle exchange, prescribing, counselling and group work

services. It had a GP-based clinic and a community-based de-tox service.

Good practice

The health worker had negotiated a trial project with a local supplier to provide fresh fruit on a weekly basis to distribute to children and young people.

Area for improvement:

- ◆ Appropriate referrals had been made in only 64% of cases where there was evidence of substance misuse.

Key judgement:

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

The percentage of children and young people in the sample who were Looked After was significantly higher than expected. There were several private residential units and schools in the area and the YOT was supervising a number of children and young people on behalf of other authorities. The impact and implications of this situation had not been explored by the YOT.

Strengths:

- ◆ Liaison with social services was excellent in the case of Looked After Children and had taken place in all the cases sampled. We saw evidence of some good work across agency boundaries.

Good practice

Following the making of a referral order, a parenting assessment was undertaken by the YOT which revealed severe difficulties in the family. The case manager informed social services and, as a result, the child was placed on the Child Protection Register. The case manager continued to work with the child and his family, with contact considerably in excess of the required standard, and introduced other support.

- ◆ Where children and young people were identified as vulnerable to harm from self or others, action had been taken in 93% of cases and was considered appropriate in 92%.
- ◆ Work had been started to improve links with the residential units. The YOT Manager had visited two units and was planning to visit the rest to explore the further development of joint work with Looked After Children. YOT team managers had been assigned individual units with a brief to build on the relationships.
- ◆ Through Supporting People the YOT had five tenancies plus three directly funded by RAP a resettlement scheme, targeted at children

and young people with substance misuse and mental health needs. The eight tenancies were supported by Foundation Housing.

Area for improvement:

- ◇ Although the activities offered by the YOT were available to all children and young people irrespective of their level of offending, it was not clear how assessments were being made to protect the more vulnerable or immature children and young people in group situations.

Key judgement:

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

Assessment of the educational needs of children and young people was undertaken by case managers in the first instance, with written procedures in place for referral to Connexions where appropriate. All children and young people who were not attending school, employment or training were referred to the education specialist. There were opportunities for the assessment of literacy and numeracy levels of children and young people particularly on the ISSP programme.

Strengths:

- ◇ The YOT had taken action to address difficulties experienced by children and young people in education in 95% of the cases examined.
- ◇ There was a clear system in place to manage referrals between the YOT and Connexions, with lead responsibilities well delineated. A monthly audit was carried out, supported by Connexions, to track all children and young people and to assess whether they were engaged in ETE.
- ◇ The education specialist had responsibility for ensuring that materials in the YOT, used with children and young people, took account of all levels of literacy. The *PLUS* strategy, a reading programme, had also been introduced and was being developed more widely.
- ◇ There was a good understanding of the need for children and young people to work towards accredited outcomes, supported by a range of awards, including Youth Achievement Awards, *PLUS* intensive reading and GCSEs.

Good practice

The YOT was working with a young person of 16 years with special needs who was very withdrawn. He attended the arts project for six months and made significant progress. His work was subsequently commissioned and he was in the process of attending interviews for Art College. He had also continued to attend the arts project on a voluntary basis to help with younger children.

- ◆ Negotiations had taken place with Calderdale College to extend its provision specifically to children and young people supervised by the YOT; this was to include 'taster days'.
- ◆ In addition to the 25 hours of the programme, the ISSP provided two/three hours education per week to children and young people who were not in education. Work was carried out to prepare for a return to mainstream education.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ In 21% of cases examined, there had been no contact with the education provider to inform Asset. Only 42% of over 16s had been engaged in further education or training and only 53% had had contact with a Connexions advisor.
- ◆ There were issues with the ability of the YOT to reintegrate children and young people into mainstream education. The YOT Manager had met with the local Secondary Heads' Association and had identified the need to develop protocols with the schools.

Key judgement:

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

Strengths:

- ◆ A suggestion box was available to children and young people in the reception area of the YOT.
- ◆ Through the *Small Voices* project, children and young people were encouraged to 'say what they really mean' in poetry, painting and other arts media. Some of the work was available to the public through the YOT website.

Area for improvement:

- ◆ Consultation with children and young people needed to be improved. During assessment children and young people had only completed the *What do you think?* form in 52% of cases and there was no other system in place to obtain their views. There had previously been individual feedback forms for children and young people to complete at the end of sessions but these had fallen into disuse.

3.3 Work with parents/carers

Key judgement:

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

Parenting work had previously been contracted out and most recently had been carried out in Bradford, some miles away, by the Family Support Unit, a voluntary agency. These arrangements had presented some problems with access to the group and the YOT Manager had decided to take over the delivery of the work in partnership with Barnardo's. The initial parenting group was being delivered during the first week of the inspection.

An assessment process had been designed by the Trust for the Study of Adolescence and included three home visits and a two stage assessment document. Each intervention was subject to a contract and a review document and a satisfaction questionnaire. The parenting worker made referrals to other agencies and undertook some individual work with parents/carers such as supporting them in the Crown Court.

Strengths:

- ◆ The YOT had involved 95% of parents/carers in the assessment process where the child or young person was under 16 years. Where there was a parenting intervention, it had taken account of the specific needs of parents/carers in relation to diversity in 88% cases. Home visits took place in 94% of the cases sampled.
- ◆ The YOT had access to help from the local Women's Centre. A psychologist was available who would accompany the parenting worker on home visits and, on one occasion, informal help had also been provided with interpreting. A protocol was needed to formalise the arrangements.
- ◆ The EPQA process had identified improvements made in a number of areas, including the assessment process, the development of a range of resources to meet diverse need and the information available to parents/carers on their rights and responsibilities.
- ◆ The YOT was consistently achieving 100% satisfaction rates for parents/carers undergoing a parenting intervention.

Good practice

The YOT website included a section on parenting, offering general advice on coping with teenagers and links to other relevant websites.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ The referral to the parenting worker was intended to take the form of an initial assessment following a home visit. This was not always

carried out and referrals were sometimes made verbally with little supporting information.

- ◆ A self-evaluation sheet measuring parents'/carers' achievements and asking for more in-depth feedback about the contribution of the YOT had poor return rates. It was not clear what had been done to improve this or how those returned had been used. This had previously been identified as an area for development in the EPQA process.
- ◆ 25% of parents/carers were not kept advised of the progress of their children's order or intervention.

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

This section is judged as adequate.

4.

WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUBJECT TO DTOs

Key judgements:

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

Work with children and young people subject to DTOs was originally concentrated with a number of specialist case managers to whom the case would be transferred when a DTO was made. It was felt that this system could be disruptive for children and young people, however, and it had been changed to allow an existing case holder to continue to hold the case where possible.

Strengths:

- ◆ Assets were completed and reviewed appropriately in all cases: the majority were of good quality, taking individual needs into account.
- ◆ Case managers were actively involved in sentence planning. In most cases, the plans were judged to have taken specific needs into account with reference to diversity issues.
- ◆ In the main, there was a close fit between the planned interventions and the assessed risk of harm.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ The views of the PCT were not represented at any of the initial planning meetings, although a number of children and young people had identified physical and/or emotional or mental health needs and all had substance misuse needs. In a significant proportion of cases, services from the home PCT had been needed on release.
- ◆ There was no representation from either social services or education at the planning or review meetings for the one young person in the sample who was a Looked After Child and had been excluded from school. Nor was there any evidence that a Looked After Children review had taken place. Services had become involved on release.
- ◆ In a third of cases, the assessment of risk was not sufficient.

Key judgement:

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

Strengths:

- ◇ Where a need had been identified in relation to either physical or mental health or substance misuse, appropriate referrals had been made in all cases.
- ◇ Parents/carers had been encouraged to attend both planning and review meetings and the YOT endeavoured to facilitate this by providing transport.
- ◇ Visits to children and young people met the national standard in all cases and the case manager had kept in contact with parents/carers in five out of six cases.
- ◇ Case managers were actively involved in sentence planning and reviews in all cases and progress against objectives was satisfactorily reviewed. Connexions visited most children and young people prior to release to assess educational need.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ Although there had been regular contact with secure staff to discuss progress in most cases, it had been inconsistent in some, with no apparent explanation for the differing levels.
- ◇ Whilst the contribution to sentence planning was generally judged sufficient, the quality of the contribution to the final review meeting was less well evidenced.

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:

- ◇ In all cases, initial training plans had been completed within ten working days and had then been reviewed within the national standard timeframe.
- ◇ In all appropriate cases, the child's or young person's individual learning plan had continued following release, been reviewed and updated, and shared with relevant providers.

- ◇ Interventions commenced in custody had largely been continued following release. In some cases the work was described as excellent although there was some inconsistency in the standard provided.
- ◇ Contact and enforcement were sufficient or excellent in all cases, with home visits carried out in all cases except one.
- ◇ The RAP provided high levels of support to children and young people serving custodial sentences. The scheme was offered on a voluntary basis to those with substance misuse and mental health needs, beginning, where necessary, in the custodial period and available until six months after sentence end. It was in its infancy and its success was, as yet, difficult to determine. However, case managers reported that children and young people were engaging well, despite the scheme's voluntary status.

Area for improvement:

- ◇ In most cases, literacy and numeracy had not been reassessed at the end of sentence.

Key judgement:

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

Strengths:

- ◇ There was no evidence of criminal activity in the period since release for the majority of the children and young people.
- ◇ Most had had work on thinking and behaviour, attitude to offending and motivation to change and some improvements had been seen.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ The figures for recidivism amongst children and young people who had received a custodial penalty were high. This had been recognised and it was hoped that the additional support provided by the RAP would result in a reduction in reoffending.
- ◇ There was limited evidence of progress for children and young people in relation to ETE. The education specialist did not monitor progress against Asset scores and initial gains were not sustained.
- ◇ Half of the cases reported a deterioration in family relationships, whilst the rest were assessed not to have changed.

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

This section is judged as good.

5.

VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Key judgements:

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

The work with victims had been through a number of changes. Prior to December 2004, it had been carried out by Victim Support. The VLO had initially worked on a sessional basis but was now employed on a permanent, part-time contract and was soon to take on the final warning victim work.

There was an agreement with the local probation area to carry out the post-sentence contact work with the victims of children and young people serving a custodial sentence of 12 months or more for a sexual or violent offence.

Strengths:

- ◇ All victims contacted were given the opportunity to make decisions regarding the extent and nature of their involvement. If they did not wish to attend referral panels, for example, the VLO attended on their behalf, represented their views and reported back to them. The appointment of the VLO had improved the level and consistency of contact.

Good practice

The YOT had a proactive policy of attempting to ensure that victims' views were represented in PSRs. The VLO actively promoted the use of victim impact statements with the victim. This had resulted in a considerable increase in the number of PSRs with information about the victim and his/her wishes.

- ◇ The work undertaken was judged to have met the known individual needs of both the victim and the child or young person, with some cases judged as excellent.
- ◇ There was a broad range of reparation schemes provided in partnership with local groups and organisations, covering a spectrum of work from involvement in arts and the environment, work with the elderly and disabled and in the minority ethnic community.
- ◇ A number of staff, including link workers in the children's residential units and referral panel members, were trained in restorative justice techniques. Conferencing had been offered and carried out.

- ◇ A female sessional worker was available to work with victims if required.
- ◇ The involvement of victims in referral panels was good; 86% were invited to attend the panel and of those 83% attended. The panel worked hard to attempt to link the reparation activities with the offences committed by the children and young people, in order to make them more relevant.
- ◇ There was an informal arrangement with Victim Support that cases where the YOT identified the need for continued support would be referred to them. A protocol needed to be put in place to cover this agreement.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ As the YOT did not use a formal tool to assess victims' needs, it was difficult to judge whether proper account had been taken of individual need or issues of diversity.
- ◇ Feedback forms were used, which were returned to the YOT information manager but not shown to the VLO.
- ◇ Only 45% of supervision plans included a restorative or reparative element and less than 50% of children and young people had carried out any form of reparation. Of the children and young people who responded to our questionnaire, only three out of nine thought that making amends to victims was part of the work expected of them by the YOT.
- ◇ Although there was an agreement with the probation area around victim work, there had been some duplication and, of concern, occasions where victims had been contacted by both organisations. This issue needed to be resolved.

Good practice

The Town Centre Initiative was a project funded by the YOT and Action Halifax which had been set up to reduce offending and anti-social behaviour by children and young people in the centre of Halifax. The project relied on the contribution from the local community, both to highlight the problems and participate in schemes, such as work for a local shop for those convicted of shop lifting.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK WITH VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

This section is judged as good.

The joint inspection of YOTs

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

Home Office objectives

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

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

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

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

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

Inspection arrangements

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

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

Code of practice

Each inspection will:

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

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

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

Scoring approach

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

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

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

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

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

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

Next steps

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

Inspection criteria for YOTs in England

1. Management

1.1: Leadership

Key judgement

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

Evidence

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

1.2 Partnership and resources

Key judgement

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

Evidence

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

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.
-

2. Work in the courts

Key judgement

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

Evidence

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

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.
-

Key judgement

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

Evidence

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

Key judgement

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

Evidence

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

3. Work with children and young people in the community

3.1: Work with children and young people at risk of offending

Key judgement

3.1.1: Children and young people are prevented from offending.

Evidence

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

Key judgement

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

Evidence

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

Key judgement

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

Evidence

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

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.
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4. Work with children and young people subject to DTOs

Key judgement

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

Evidence

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

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.
-

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.
-

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.
-

5. Victims and restorative justice

Key judgement

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

Evidence

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