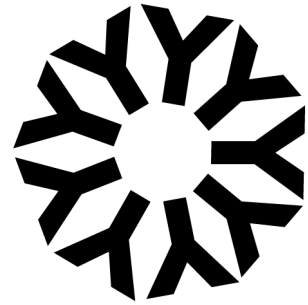


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# Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Report on:  
Camden  
Youth Offending Service

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2008

## Foreword

The inspection of Camden took place in the fourth phase of our YOT inspection programme and was undertaken in conjunction with the Enhanced Youth Inspection, the Joint Area Review of children's services and the Corporate Assessment. The findings also contributed to the latter two inspections.

In this, and concurrent inspections during September 2007, it emerged that there were discrepancies between Asset completion and entry dates. This was due to a number of reasons including software problems. There was no evidence to suggest that the YOTs concerned were intending to deliberately enhance their performance, but the effect of this was that it was not possible for inspectors to know definitely when an Asset had been completed. As timeliness affects the assessment of quality, a judgement as to the validity of the data had to be made. These findings are based on the recorded date of the Asset on the system. We have raised our concerns with the Youth Justice Board in the expectation that these problems are rectified.

We are pleased to find Camden YOS working well with other agencies and partners, especially the police. Particular strengths include work with parents/carers, victims, and children and young people at risk of offending and those subject to custodial sentences.

However, work in the courts and with children and young people in the community who have offended needs improvement specifically in areas of assessing and managing Risk of Harm to others and safeguarding. Finally, the governance of the YOS needs attention in the context of ongoing structural change.

This report includes a number of recommendations for improvement. Camden YOS is in a good position to continue to build on its current practice to provide an effective service in the future.

*Andrew Bridges*  
*HM Chief Inspector of Probation*

*April 2008*

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank all the staff from the YOS, 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 Ronke Martins-Taylor, YOS Head of Service, and Anthea Henry, Business Manager, for their commitment to the inspection.

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## Glossary

AQA	Assessment and Qualification Alliance
Asset	Assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board
BCU	Borough Command Unit
CAF/eCAF	Common Assessment Framework/ CAF electronic version
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CSF	Children, Schools and Families
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DAT	Drug Action Team
DTO	Detention and training order
DUST	Drug Use Screening Tool
EPQA	Effective Practice Quality Assessment
ETE	Employment, training and education
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
ISSP	Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LAA	Local Area Agreement
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
MALT	Multi-Agency Liaison Team (a joint service between CAMHS and CSF)
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MPCSB	Making a Positive Contribution Sub-Board
NEET	Not in employment, education or training
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PAYP	Positive Activities for Young People
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PNC	Police National Computer
PPO	Prolific and other Priority Offender
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
PSR	Pre-sentence report
PYO	Prolific Young Offender
RAP	Resettlement and Aftercare Programme
RoH	Risk of Harm
RoSH	Risk of Serious Harm
SEN	Special educational needs
SIFA	Screening Interview for Adolescents (Youth Justice Board approved mental health screening tool for specialist workers)
SLA	Service level agreement
SOVA	Supporting Others through Volunteer Action
SPRAY	Service provided on arrest for young people
SQIFA	Screening Questionnaire Interview for Adolescents (Youth Justice Board approved mental health screening tool for YOT workers)
YAP	Youth Advocacy Programme
YIP	Youth Inclusion Programme
YISP	Youth Inclusion Support Panel
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOI	Young Offender Institution
YOIS	Youth Offending Information System
YOT	Youth Offending Team
YOS	Youth Offending Service

## Summary

Criteria	Judgement
<b>Work in the courts</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Work with children and young people in the community</b>	
Work with children and young people at risk of offending	<b>3</b>
Work with children and young people who have offended	<b>2</b>
Work with parents/carers	<b>3</b>
Outcomes of work with children and young people in the community	<b>2</b>
<b>Work with children and young people subject to custodial sentences</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Victims and restorative justice</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Management and leadership</b>	<b>2</b>

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

### **Work in the courts**

- ◇ A good range of bail support packages were provided.
- ◇ Courts were very satisfied with the services they received from the YOS.
- ◇ Many aspects of pre-sentence reports were good and the courts were happy with their overall quality. Some important elements such as analysis still needed improvement.
- ◇ The use of custody both at remand and sentence stage required further attention and dialogue with the courts.

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

- ◇ The completion of the Onset assessment tool in prevention cases was generally sufficient, with plans sensitive to diversity issues and interventions carried out. Intervention plans did not address victim awareness or contain a clear exit strategy and objectives were not time-limited.
- ◇ Vulnerability plans were not completed when there were safeguarding issues.
- ◇ Although health and education provision for children and young people was good, too many were not engaging with those services.
- ◇ Children and young people generally received the appropriate employment, training and education interventions except those aged 16 or over. The recording, monitoring and review of these interventions could have been improved.
- ◇ Work with children and young people receiving reprimands or final warnings was well organised and included appropriate interventions.
- ◇ The majority of Asset assessments were completed sufficiently. There were certain parts of the overall assessment of a child or young person which required more attention by case managers, including the accuracy of the screening of Risk of Harm and the comprehensiveness of the Risk of Serious Harm to others form and the risk management plans.
- ◇ Youth offender panels were not sitting within 20 working days of the order being made.
- ◇ Parents/carers were actively engaged and received a good service.
- ◇ Too few children and young people were being invited to complete the appropriate self-assessment form.

### **Work with children and young people subject to custodial sentences**

- ◇ Initial assessments were generally good quality, although Risk of Serious Harm assessments required improvement.
- ◇ There were appropriate levels of contact by YOS staff with children and young people whilst serving custodial sentences. Work with secure

establishment staff to address health, employment, training and education was generally sufficient, although the attendance of home education and health staff at initial planning meetings could have been improved.

- ◆ Liaison between the YOS worker and children's services had taken place as appropriate but vulnerability plans were not always produced.
- ◆ Contact in the community in the majority of cases conformed to the national standard. Enforcement and breach action was timely and effective.

### **Victims and restorative justice**

- ◆ The quality of the initial contact with victims, the assessment of their needs and their level of involvement in restorative justice interventions was good.
- ◆ There was not enough reparation work available for children and young people.
- ◆ Victims who expressed a view were satisfied with the work of the YOS.
- ◆ Conditions in licences or orders had not always taken account of victim safety.

### **Management and leadership**

- ◆ Senior managers from the Chief Executive Officer down had a broad knowledge and understanding of youth crime.
- ◆ There was a strong performance culture and a determination to find solutions to achieve targets.
- ◆ There were a number of human resource issues that required attention.
- ◆ The Management Board had a wide remit, which was a strength, evidenced by a number of different departments working effectively together to address youth offending and antisocial behaviour in the borough. However, its scrutiny of the YOS needed to be clearly defined in the context of restructuring and the additional responsibilities of the YOS Head of Service.

## Recommendations

Changes are necessary to ensure that (*primary responsibility is indicated in brackets*):

- (1) all pre-sentence reports contain a clear analysis of the offence and an assessment of vulnerability and victim information in relevant cases (*YOS Head of Service*)
- (2) the use of custody at the remand and sentence stage is reduced (*YOS Head of Service*)
- (3) post-16 employment, training and education outcomes improve (*YOS Head of Service*)
- (4) staff accurately assess Risk of Harm to others and vulnerability in all cases, and where necessary produce management plans, particularly taking into account victim safety (*YOS Head of Service*)
- (5) youth offender panels are convened within the required timeframes (*YOS Head of Service*)
- (6) the assessment and recording of basic skills is formalised and individual education plans contain detailed and measurable targets (*YOS Head of Service*)
- (7) general health nursing resources are available within the YOS to address physical health needs of children and young people and deliver appropriate interventions, including the promotion of a healthy lifestyle (*Camden Primary Care Trust/Management Board*)
- (8) there is accessible evidence of the information sent to secure establishments when children and young people are either remanded or sentenced (*YOS Head of Service*)
- (9) in all cases children and young people are invited to complete a self-assessment form which contributes to the Onset or Asset and intervention plans (*YOS Head of Service*)
- (10) there is a review of the Management Board's Terms of Reference, membership, and agenda management, to achieve sufficient oversight and scrutiny of the YOS (*Chair of the Management Board*).

## Next steps

An improvement plan addressing the recommendations should be submitted to HMI Probation for approval four weeks after the publication of this inspection report. Once agreed, the plan will be forwarded to the YJB to monitor its implementation.

## Service users' perspective

### Children and young people

Fifty-one children and young people completed a questionnaire for the inspection, of which 43 questionnaires were interactive on computer software. The remainder were completed on paper, either independently or during an interview with an inspector.

- ◇ Almost all were clear about why they had to come to the YOS, what would happen during their appointments and the consequences of missing them.
- ◇ Less than two-thirds said they had been told how they could make a complaint about the YOS if they needed to.
- ◇ The majority were positive about their engagement with the YOS worker and felt they had been treated fairly and with respect. Where they identified particular issues that affected their attendance, like culture, religion or disability, these were taken into account by the YOS.
- ◇ The YOS had helped children and young people mainly with understanding their offending and making better decisions. There was not always an improvement in their ETE and health. More than three-quarters thought that their involvement with the YOS would lead to less offending.
- ◇ Specific comments included:
  - *"It was a nice experience for me that helped me although I didn't expect it to be. When I got a job I let my case manager know and others in the YOT and their overjoyed reaction made me feel proud."*
  - *"Trying to stay out of trouble and understanding what will happen if I behave wrong again. I have learnt how people feel when I am bad towards them and now I do not do those kind of things."*
  - *"Well apart from growing up and understanding when you do those wrong things you will get punished the YOT has helped me to understand that if I keep going down that road I will only end up in one place – prison."*

### Parents/carers

Twelve questionnaires were completed by parents/carers, either independently or during an interview with an inspector.

- ◇ Three-quarters considered that the YOS had been helpful at the initial contact point and it was clearly explained what services were available to them. All considered that they had been given sufficient information about sentences.

- ◇ A third did not know what work the YOS was doing with their child or young person.
- ◇ All were asked if they wanted or needed help with parenting and three-quarters were given help.
- ◇ Only half knew what to do if they had a complaint about the work of the YOS.
- ◇ The majority felt that things were better for them and their child because of their contact with the YOS. Comments were mixed and included:
  - *"I think the YOT does a fantastic job and young people can go forward with their lives, without the YOT my son would have gone in to care".*
  - *"Necessary service and good packages. Slow delivery but parenting worker made sense of the madness. When the child has things going on so does the parent – don't take over – give feedback, don't make me feel useless."*
  - *"More intensive support needed as a preventative option seems one has to wait before the full package of intervention was available."*

## Victims

Ten questionnaires were completed by victims of offending by children and young people, either independently or during an interview with an inspector.

- ◇ The first contact was helpful and clear with an explanation of what services were offered. Enough information was given about the sentence and what it would mean for the child or young person. The majority had had the chance to share any worries about the offence or the child or young person.
- ◇ They all had a chance to say how much they wanted to be involved in the work with the child or young person.
- ◇ Nearly all the victims knew how the YOS would keep their details confidential and how to make a complaint. Just under two-thirds had benefited from the work done by the child or young person who committed the offence.
- ◇ Where relevant, the YOS had paid attention to the safety of the victim and they all knew who to contact if they had such worries. All were completely satisfied with the service provided by the YOS. Two victims would have liked to have been informed about the progress of the child or young person. One victim commenting on the service provided said *"Cordial, very professional and appropriate and supportive."* Another commented *"Sensitive, friendly and supportive."*

## Sharing good practice

Below are examples of good practice we found in the YOS.

### **Work with children and young people at risk of offending**

**General criterion:  
2.1**

An intervention had been developed to work with Somalian children and young people who were coming to attention as at risk of antisocial behaviour or offending. However, girls were not attending. Through the use of home visits the reason was identified as parental reluctance to let the girls integrate in the same group as boys. A separate girls' group was created.

### **Work with children and young people at risk of offending**

**General criterion:  
2.1**

The SPRAY team was an innovative and positive development that sought to provide interventions and support within the local custody suites to children and young people who had been arrested, irrespective of whether further action had been taken. Interventions included the use of letters of apology to victims and a consequential thinking session offered to children and young people where the police decided to take no further action. Workers also sought to engage with parents/carers where this was appropriate.

### **Work with children and young people at risk of offending**

**General criterion:  
2.1**

All children and young people who received reprimands were offered an assessment and a programme of preventative services. A YOS worker was present when the reprimand was delivered in order to maximise the likelihood of further engagement. Typical interventions included a one-to-one session on consequences and a session on law and citizenship.

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

**General criterion:  
2.5**

The Silverdale Motorcycle Project aimed to increase self-esteem and self-discipline through the development of skills in mechanics and off-road riding. Skills developed included teamwork, concentration, self-restraint and concern for others. Successful completion of the scheme led to the award of an externally accredited certificate. Outcomes included Jay, a young person with long-term behavioural and relationship problems, who became a consistent attender at the project. Jay developed a positive relationship with another young person and now had an ambition in his life. This project was used as part of a reintegration package back into education.

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

**General criterion:  
2.6**

Lewis was 17, on a 12 month supervision order, and had been referred for anger management, low mood, cannabis and alcohol use. With appropriate interventions including cognitive behavioural therapy, he was now back to work full-time; cannabis and alcohol use had decreased and he had not offended again.

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

**General criterion:  
2.6**

Ryan, aged 15, was in contact with the YOS through arrest referral and a reprimand, and presented with severe mental health problems (suicidal thoughts, severe depression and generalised anxiety). Despite initial interventions from the psychologist, psychiatrist, and admission into New Beginnings adolescent psychiatric ward, he had made two suicide attempts when discharged home. He was then accommodated under section 2 and later section 3 of the Mental Health Act, which allowed intensive support and counselling input from the multi-systemic therapy team, leading to significant changes in the lives of both Ryan and his family. Since discharge in July, he had not been readmitted into hospital, had not been arrested, and was attending Sixth Form College.

**Victims and  
restorative justice**

**General criterion:  
4.1**

A young person had stolen and crashed a motorbike. He had a low level of literacy and found it difficult to express himself in writing, but could do so in pictures. The caseworker worked with him to produce a Picture of Apology. This described in drawings, as a storyboard, the emotions and motivation that led to him committing the offence and outlined the impact of the offence on the victim. This was received positively by the victim.

## 1. WORK IN THE COURTS

### **1.1 General criterion:**

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

Children and young people from Camden were usually dealt with at Thames youth court in Bow. The court was outside the borough and to get to it by public transport involved a complex journey. The Camden trial and sentencing court took place each Wednesday, when Camden YOS staff were present. The Court User Group and protocols were joint arrangements between the Thames youth court and the YOTs of Camden, Hackney, Islington and Tower Hamlets. Weekend and bank holiday appearances usually took place at the Highbury Corner magistrates' court.

### **Strengths:**

- (1) Within the protocol, arrangements were set out to alert the YOS of all children and young people who were at risk of secure or custodial remands. Whilst practically the arrangements were in place and working, the protocol was a second draft dated April 2007 and had yet to be signed off.
- (2) The YOS bail and remand officer had responsibility for presenting bail support packages to the court, directly addressing any issues raised by the court and CPS. The police liaison officer in court provided the YOS with copies of the charge sheet for all children and young people held in the cells each morning. The bail and remand officer used these to prioritise work according to the age of the child or young person and seriousness of the offence.
- (3) A bail Asset was completed for all children and young people held in the cells. If the SPRAY team (which provided a service to children and young people in police cells) became aware of a child or young person in police custody who was known to the YOS they informed the case manager.
- (4) There was a wide range of bail support packages available. Camden YOS was proactive in anticipating the requirements of the court for information and ensuring that this was prepared in advance. Requests would be responded to calmly and efficiently. As part of the bail package, the YOS had used ISSP, specialist foster placements and the YJB's Intensive Fostering Pilot.
- (5) The YOS was part of the Feltham YOI e-yellow envelope pilot which allowed

for post-sentence information to be sent electronically to the reception area in all DTO cases. For the period 1 January to the 1 December 2007 the majority of yellow envelopes either went with the child or young person or were sent electronically on the day they were remanded or sentenced.

- (6) In two cases where children and young people had been securely remanded, follow-up services were provided and further bail applications were made which were accompanied by commensurate support packages.
- (7) In 2006/2007 (April - March) the use of secure remands was 53% against a target of 30%. For 2007/2008 the target was reduced to 9% and secure remands for April – September 2007 for Camden YOS were 17.3%, which was less than 21% for the family group and 18.6% for London. Although the half-year result was an improvement, further work was required to reach the new target of 9%.

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

- (1) The YOS had identified specific court staff to be responsible for sending yellow envelope documents to the secure estate. The court duty procedure was clear about how they should do this. However, the specific details of which papers had been sent to the secure estate were not recorded on the case file.
- (2) The YOS had not engaged the courts in discussions to sustain the trend of a reduction in the use of secure remands.

#### **1.2 General criterion:**

*Courts are assisted in making informed, timely and effective decisions by the provision of good quality reports and appropriate information from the YOT.*

PSRs were gatekept in a two stage process. Firstly the PSR would be peer reviewed, with a gatekeeping form completed. Following any amendments, both the form and the PSR would be passed to the duty manager for final gatekeeping. When a PSR was requested by the court the YOS worker, by having a list of slots to be filled, would make an appointment for the child or young person to receive a substance misuse assessment and to meet the restorative justice worker at the YOS the next day.

#### **Strengths:**

- (1) There were seven staff who covered court and were General Social Care Council registered and had received additional training in court work, which had included diversity, vulnerability, risk assessments and report writing. They were assisted by a specialist administrator in court work. It was formally acknowledged by the Bench Legal Manager at Highbury Corner magistrates' court that Camden YOS had been instrumental in achieving reliable cover for Saturdays and bank holidays in rotation with the other three London

boroughs. Courts reported that they considered Camden YOS staff to be particularly competent, to have a clear focus on what they were trying to achieve, and that they trusted them.

- (2) Underground maps and clear guidance were given to children and young people and parents/carers on how to get to and from the court. If a child or young person had been brought into court via the cells, the YOS worker would often accompany them to the nearest underground station and ensure that they had a ticket and knew how to get home.
- (3) Camden YOS staff regularly attended and contributed to the combined Thames Court User Group. At the user group, the YOS had presented data on reoffending and seriousness. The YOS was proactive in providing opportunities for magistrates and District Judges to visit the YOS.
- (4) A PSR monitoring form was completed by sentencers who would score on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being poor and 5 excellent) for each heading. Internal monitoring of feedback from magistrates had shown a continual improvement in their satisfaction with an average score of 4 out of 5. The YOS local management team received an analysis of PSR feedback every quarter.
- (5) For the preparation of all reports the child or young person was interviewed at least once and when necessary parents/carers were too. Case managers discussed appropriate cases with the mental health worker. Two-thirds of PSRs were of the appropriate type; balanced, verified and factually accurate, and objective, impartial and free from discriminatory language. They differentiated between likelihood of reoffending and RoH and covered the potentially adverse impact of custody. The majority of reports made a clear proposal for sentence and addressed diversity issues. Of the PSRs we inspected, 71% were assessed to be of sufficient quality. Court representatives described PSRs as clear, succinct, appropriate and received on time.

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

- (1) In our sample of 21 PSRs we found that 57% were completed within national standard timescales and a community proposal was not followed by the court in 45% of cases. Where this had happened the reasons for the court's decision were either not clear or had not been recorded.
- (2) The majority of the reports were not based on an Asset, were too long and they did not address the victim's wishes or willingness to engage in reparation or restorative justice. In two-thirds of reports there was a description of the offence rather than an analysis. Magistrates also considered that the offences analysis could be improved. In some, it was quite difficult to pick out issues of health, safeguarding or RoH.
- (3) There was no specific reference to diversity in the PSR monitoring form that was completed by sentencers. The courts did not receive statistical output following their PSR feedback, nor details of how this had been used to

improve services.

- (4) Half the reports did not consider the child or young person's maturity in relation to their ability to understand the seriousness and consequences of the offence and carrying out the proposed sentence. For those children and young people already in contact with the YOS their progress or response to ETE was not reflected in PSRs.
- (5) In a number of cases a copy of the PSR had not been given to the child or young person and, where appropriate, the parent/carer. Nor had the contents of the report been explained to them.

**Conclusion:** These criteria are assessed as **adequate**.

## 2. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

### Work with children and young people at risk of offending

#### 2.1 General criterion:

*The YOT (or others on its behalf) undertakes appropriate activities to prevent children and young people from offending.*

There were five YISPs; one in each housing district (Camden Town, Gospel Oak, Hampstead, Holborn and Kentish Town). They received referrals on any child or young person aged eight to 17 who was at risk of or engaged in antisocial behaviour. YISPs were managed under community safety with oversight through the Growing Up Safely operational group and links with other groups, such as Prevent and Deter and Youth Crime Prevention. The YOS early intervention team was responsible for children and young people referred to YISPs. The YISPs were chaired by a variety of staff at principal officer level including a police inspector. The Chairs of the YISPs met regularly to ensure that panels operated consistency.

The YIP worked with 100 children and young people between the ages of eight and 16 in the Castlehaven area who were most at risk of offending and antisocial behaviour. The Senior YIP provided a programme of activities each Monday to Friday, commencing immediately after the school day ended, and occasionally also at weekends. During school holidays a programme of visits or other activities was also organised.

#### **Strengths:**

- (1) In seven out of eight relevant cases an Onset was completed in accordance with appropriate timescales and five of the eight were assessed as sufficient quality. Five reviews of Onset had taken place and three had informed the review of the intervention plan.
- (2) In the majority of cases the Onset was drawn from at least one interview with the child or young person and the parent/carer, and contact with children's services, education and the referring agency. No other relevant assessments were used.
- (3) In all prevention cases, race and ethnicity had been clearly identified. In two-thirds, diversity issues, potentially discriminatory/disadvantaging factors and any other individual needs were actively assessed at an early stage. In all cases where such factors were identified, plans were in place to minimise their impact on the child or young person. For example, a young person had learning difficulties and could not complete the *Over to you* self-assessment

form of Onset. The case manager helped them with the questions and recorded their answers.

- (4) In 70% of cases, attention had been paid to the methods likely to be most effective with each child or young person.
- (5) In all relevant cases an accurate screening of the indicators of serious harm had been completed and the classification of serious RoH appeared to be correct. One Onset RoSH to others form had been completed to a sufficient standard.
- (6) In two-thirds of cases a timely and purposeful home visit was carried out and repeated as necessary.
- (7) In seven out of eight cases an intervention plan was completed within appropriate timescales and outlined clearly who would deliver the interventions. In three out of five cases progress against the objectives was reviewed in line with guidelines.
- (8) The majority of plans identified interventions that would address the likelihood of offending, community integration and where appropriate RoH.
- (9) We found that in eight out of ten cases, interventions had been carried out that sufficiently addressed the likelihood of offending or antisocial behaviour (75%), community reintegration (63%) and safeguarding issues (50%). There was less evidence that interventions relating to staying safe and victim issues had been implemented (25%). If interventions were not carried out, reasons for departing from the plan were clearly recorded.
- (10) In five cases where diversity issues were identified, three intervention plans were sensitive to those issues. The joint Youth Project and Senior YIP dance group included members from a range of cultural backgrounds. They had put together a routine that was presented at a multi-cultural festival in Regents Park and also at the Camden Unity Cup. This activity supported increased understanding of multi-cultural issues by both performers and visitors.
- (11) In four cases there was joint working between the YOS and its partners engaged in the preventative programme and evidence of effective communication. In the majority of cases, the plan was achieved within reasonable timescales.
- (12) There was sufficient evidence that the worker demonstrated commitment to their work with the child or young person (90%), motivated and supported them throughout their engagement (60%) and reinforced positive behaviour (60%).

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

- (1) Only four out of ten children and young people had completed the self-assessment questionnaire *Over to you*.

- (2) RoH to others had been reviewed in two out of six relevant cases.
- (3) In only one out of eight cases was there appropriate sequencing of interventions in the plan.
- (4) The majority of intervention plans did not address victim awareness and staying safe or contain outcome-oriented objectives.
- (5) Seven out of eight plans did not include a clear exit strategy and four did not have interventions that were time-limited.

## **2.2 General criterion:**

*The health of children and young people who are at risk of offending is promoted by the work of the YOT and its partners.*

### **Strengths:**

- (1) In cases where physical health, mental health and substance misuse were assessed as a need using Onset, an appropriate intervention was delivered. All children and young people who were engaged with Camden YOS were screened for substance use using Onset and DUST.
- (2) In two relevant cases, preventative services helped to ensure that the children and young people were supported in accessing local services. There was a range of structured health interventions within the YOS and externally which included alcohol services. Substance misuse and sexual health information packs were distributed to all children and young people who attended the YOS. A 'Health Hub' had recently been formed in the YOS to, amongst other things, encourage key stakeholders in health to engage with health issues facing children and young people at risk of offending.
- (3) The sexual health worker provided an important and professional service for children and young people. There had been positive feedback from those who had attended sessions. In the quarter July to September 2007 referrals had doubled compared to the same quarter the previous year.
- (4) A draft health strategy for Camden YOS had been produced and was out for consultation with key stakeholders. A clear and explicit guidance for substance misuse intervention for children and young people was in place. All young people received Tier 1 basic drugs information which addressed the risks to their health. To ensure quick access to appropriate treatment, all children and young people engaging with the early intervention team who were identified as requiring a substance misuse assessment or intervention were referred directly to the substance misuse service.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- (1) There was no evidence of detailed physical health assessment of children and

young people and there was no general health nursing input into the team.

- (2) The YOS acknowledged that there was a need to improve access to primary healthcare, and health and lifestyle advice and guidance to promote improved physical health.
- (3) Children and young people were not attending mental health and substance misuse appointments. Referrals to the sexual health worker could have been increased. Referral pathways for accessing the sexual health service, particularly for young men, could also have been improved. The sexual health worker was able to provide a much more comprehensive service to children and young people; for example, sessions on relationships.

### **2.3 General criterion:**

*Children and young people who are at risk of offending are safeguarded through the work of the YOT and its partners, to contribute to the promotion of their welfare and, where applicable, their protection.*

#### **Strengths:**

- (1) In eight out of ten cases the status of the child or young person was checked with children's services on receipt of the referral and in seven their status was clearly recorded. In all six relevant cases there had been liaison between prevention staff and children's services. The YOS Safeguarding Social Care Protocol stipulated that cases should be co-worked with YOS workers forming part of the team 'around the child'. The safeguarding client database, Framework-I, allowed access by certain staff (managers and social workers within the YOS) to children in need information. All YOS staff had received CAF training.
- (2) Where necessary the worker made a referral to children's services.
- (3) In two relevant cases, joint working between prevention staff and children's services staff had been effectively communicated and achieved within reasonable timescales.

#### **Area for improvement:**

- (1) There were four cases where the child or young person had been a risk to themselves or were at risk from others either in the past or currently. A vulnerability action plan had only been produced for one out of the four cases. The content of that action plan had addressed the assessed need.

#### **2.4 General criterion:**

*Children and young people who are at risk of offending are enabled and encouraged to achieve their potential.*

#### **Strengths:**

- (1) There was evidence of prevention staff identifying ETE needs in four cases regarding mainstream statutory education, and in three of those cases, interventions related to the identified need were offered to the child or young person.
- (2) In all five relevant cases, the preventative services had helped to ensure that the child or young person was supported in accessing local services. There were good partnership arrangements and effective links with Connexions. Successful reintegration of the pre-16 cohort into full-time ETE was achieved for 81% of children and young people.
- (3) There was evidence of good prevention work, with responsive and effective interventions and some positive outcomes for children and young people. For example, regular weekly support was provided in literacy and numeracy for a young person on a hairdressing course. This was very helpful for her coursework. She was working at Level 1 and this support combined with extra academic help at college had enabled her to move onto Level 2 provision with confidence. The case manager had communicated effectively with partners involved and kept clear records, visiting the young person in the hairdressing salon at the college and observing her dealing with clients, with skill and confidence.
- (4) In another case, a young man was working on a professional AQA accredited music programme and the demonstration tape that was brought to the interview was of a good standard. He had relationship difficulties and the case manager had provided interventions in order to address this. Working with Connexions, he had produced a CV and was currently engaged in a job search.
- (5) There was good collaboration with the local PRUs. The Key Stage 3 PRU provided an effective 'safe haven' for children and young people who had been excluded from school. They focused on a behaviour modification programme, working in small groups up to a maximum of six, to reintegrate the child or young person back into mainstream school.
- (6) The motorbike project work was now accredited by AQA and had links with Heads of Years in local schools.
- (7) In one case where the child or young person had been formally permanently excluded or had had extended sanctioned absence from a mainstream school, the preventative services, YOS and its partners had taken action to reintegrate the pupil into full-time education.

### **Area for improvement:**

- (1) There was insufficient baseline data on literacy, numeracy, preferred learning styles and information on ETE outcomes for children and young people.

**Conclusion:** These criteria are assessed as **good**.

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

### **2.5 General criterion:**

*The YOT (or others on its behalf) undertake appropriate activities to prevent children and young people from reoffending.*

The reduction team mainly managed those children and young people who had offended. The team consisted of an operational manager, two senior practitioners (one specifically for referral orders), social workers, connexions workers, the housing worker, Prevent and Deter coordinator and probation worker/officer.

### **Strengths:**

- (1) The majority of Assets were completed in accordance with the national standard timescales. Assets were well populated, evidenced and of sufficient quality in 74% of cases. All children and young people subject to a final warning or a reprimand were assessed by the YOS early intervention team. At the same time, a police officer within the team assessed the children and young people regarding victim issues.
- (2) The initial Asset was informed by at least one interview with the child or young person and where applicable the parent/carer. Where parents/carers were involved in the assessment it reflected specific and individual needs identified by them in relation to the child or young person in 62% of relevant cases. Positive factors, such as supportive and pro-social factors were identified in 90% of cases, which was a good result.
- (3) In 90% of cases, race and ethnicity had been clearly recorded. In 77% of them, diversity issues, potentially discriminatory/disadvantaging factors and any other individual needs had been actively assessed at an early stage. In almost all cases where such factors had been identified, arrangements had been made by the case manager to minimise their impact.
- (4) Full attention had been paid to the methods likely to be most effective with the child or young person in 74% of cases.
- (5) Inspectors agreed with the RoH classification of those cases that had been assessed and with the majority of low RoH cases there was evidence that planning to address RoH had been recognised and acted upon. There was an internal multi-agency high risk panel, which consisted of the YOS

psychologist, a team manager, police officer, education worker, case worker and social worker who attended as appropriate. A referral form was completed on any child or young person who was assessed as high RoSH based on a RoSH assessment. The panel would agree and record actions that would be included in the risk management plan. The panel acted as a referral route to MAPPA Level 2. An operational manager attended MAPPA Level 2 meetings on a regular basis and there was evidence of communication between the YOS and the police jigsaw team (a specialist team concerned with public protection) about individual cases both past and present.

- (6) In the majority of relevant cases an initial intervention plan was completed within appropriate timescales and outlined clearly who was going to deliver the interventions. Reviews were mainly completed on time and were informed by a reassessment of Asset. Where appropriate, reviews integrated other plans.
- (7) For referral orders, interventions planned were likely to address reparation to the victim and/or the wider community.
- (8) The YOS Head of Service was the Looked After Children champion, which involved ensuring equitable service when children and young people were placed in or out of borough.
- (9) Final warnings were delivered with an intervention within 20 working days of the decision in 89% of cases. If interventions were not carried out in accordance with the plan (or contract) the reasons for departing from the plan were recorded in most cases.
- (10) There was evidence of victim work on the case files including, for example, letters of apology.
- (11) The YOS contracted the YAP to deliver the ISSP. YAP recruited workers that it called 'advocates' from the local community who, having successfully completed a three stage interview process and undertaken two days intensive training followed by shadowing other experienced advocates, would be allocated a young person subject to an ISSP. The advocate would have one-to-one contact, accompanying the child or young person to various places. A timetable of the following week's activities would be passed to case managers and the record of the advocate's contact would be sent to an administrator who would type the entries on YOIS.
- (12) A comprehensive induction was provided to the child or young person in most cases, although it was not always timely. The frequency of appointments supported the achievement of intervention plan objectives in 70% of cases. In two-thirds of referral orders the contract started within five days of the panel meeting.
- (13) In nearly all cases, steps had been taken to ensure the child or young person fully understood the requirements of the order and the penalties should it be breached. The case manager monitored attendance across all interventions and where necessary had taken action to ensure compliance. Judgements

about acceptability and unacceptability of absences were consistent and appropriate. In the majority of cases, breach action was instigated and resolved within the required timescales. The courts considered Camden YOS to be both robust and realistic in its approach to enforcement.

- (14) In the small number of cases subject to transfer, in most the process was timely and effective and there had been appropriate communication between all involved.
- (15) The YOS accommodation officer role was undertaken by a worker placed within the YOS and linked to the Borough Housing Advisory Service. The referrals of children and young people with a housing need were made from across the YOS and each case was supported either directly by the worker and or Supporting People models of floating support. A universal housing referral form was in operation providing a comprehensive picture of housing related risk and need, supporting effective decision making. The universal form reduced duplication of activity and provided relevant information that was shared between the housing service and YOS. There was a wide range of services, from direct access residential assessment centres to 'move through' and specialist services. For the case sample inspected, in just over half the relevant cases, action had been taken to address accommodation needs and the case manager had monitored that need during the course of the order.
- (16) In the majority of cases, case managers had demonstrated commitment to their work with the child or young person, had motivated and supported them throughout their sentence and reinforced positive behaviour.

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

- (1) The initial Asset was informed by contact with the education and training provider in only 53% of cases, which led to insufficient detail about the child or young person's achievements in ETE and consequently what plans were in hand to enable progress to be made. Also, other relevant assessments were not always taken into account.
- (2) The majority of children and young people were not invited to complete the self-assessment *What do you think?* form and not all those that were invited to do so actually completed it, so this source of information was rarely used to inform the Asset.
- (3) In 26% of cases the screening of the indicators of RoH was not accurate. In almost half of the relevant cases a RoH to others form had not been completed and there was no acceptable explanation recorded in the Asset. Where a RoH to others form had been completed half were not of a sufficient standard and where relevant they did not always cover victim issues. Asset risk management plans were not comprehensive. Reviews of RoH were not always timely or undertaken following a significant change.
- (4) Staff were not fully conversant with risk issues and MAPPA. A paper entitled *Principles of managing risk* unhelpfully combined issues of staff health and

safety with the management of RoSH of children and young people and did not accurately reflect MAPPA guidance.

- (5) Police officers regularly checked intelligence systems and the PNC as part of a risk assessment for staff who were planning home visits. However, in the majority of cases a timely and purposeful home visit had not been carried out.
- (6) In just under two-thirds of cases, the initial intervention plan did not include victim restorative processes, align with other agencies' plans or assessments and the child or young person and parent/carer had not seen or signed it. Objectives within the plans were not outcome focused.
- (7) In the majority of cases, requirements in initial intervention plans were not sequenced appropriately.
- (8) Apart from in referral orders, planned interventions did not sufficiently address the likelihood of reoffending, community integration and where relevant RoH, victim awareness and staying safe.
- (9) Interventions delivered sufficiently addressed the likelihood of offending (57%), RoH (38%), victim awareness (5%), staying safe (43%) and community integration (48%). In 29% of cases either interventions did not address those issues or no interventions were delivered.
- (10) Although the race and ethnicity of all Youth Offender Panel members reflected the local community, their availability meant that panels were often a different race and ethnicity to the children and young people, parents/careers and victims who were involved in the process.
- (11) In cases where diversity issues had been identified, just over half the intervention plans or referral order contracts were not sensitive to these issues.
- (12) In 62% of cases the first appointment with the child or young person following sentence did not take place in accordance with national standards and in many cases over ten working days had elapsed. In 65% of cases the frequency of appointments conformed to the national standard and where relevant met RoH (50%) and safeguarding (55%) considerations. In a small number of cases the frequency of appointments did not meet any of these. In all nine referral order cases the panel did not sit within 20 days of the order being made and it did not meet for over an additional ten days.
- (13) Due to issues managing the number of referral orders it was decided in April 2007 to save time by submitting copies of Asset to youth offender panels rather than a report. The Asset was difficult for children and young people to understand. The YOS planned to revert back to producing reports.

## **2.6 General criterion:**

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

The YOS had a full-time clinical psychologist, a substance misuse worker and sexual health sessions provided by the Terrence Higgins Trust. There was also a RAP. The substance misuse worker was line-managed within the YOS as part of the RAP team and with the mental health worker worked alongside a range of partners – e.g. SOVA, Family Alcohol Service, MALT, (a joint service between CAMHS and CSF) and The Brandon Centre (which worked with families using multi-systemic therapy).

### **Strengths:**

- (1) There were excellent links with the CAMHS based at the Tavistock Centre. For example, the YOS mental health worker would spend a day a week with the adoption, fostering and kinship care team. Existing arrangements with various partners such as MALT facilitated good communication, information sharing and the integration of health service delivery.
- (2) In most cases a referral for specialist assessment within the YOS had been made in relation to physical, emotional and mental health and substance misuse. The DUST and SQIFA/SIFA were used to screen and assess the substance misuse and mental health needs of children and young people. The mental health worker received regular supervision from the Mental Health Trust.
- (3) The RAP team had access to many resources which allowed for the variety of needs of children and young people to be addressed. These included PAYP, WAC (a music and dance project for young people), and support with housing and accommodation. There were RAP packs for participants in the RAP programme, which contained amongst other things a budgeting sheet and activity journal. There were good links and communication between the RAP team, SOVA, mental health worker, substance misuse worker and case managers.
- (4) Although the necessary tools were utilised, both the mental health and substance misuse workers still actively sought referrals and provided interventions across the YOS. When necessary, appropriate and timely external support and/or interventions were provided too. The mental health worker had developed beneficial networks. They were the designated lead for health within the YOS and had led the development of the draft health strategy. The case files indicated that the YOS supported the child or young person accessing local services and where there was evidence that health services were not provided this issue was referred to a manager.
- (5) Children and young people had access to a volunteer mentoring service (SOVA) within RAP. The RAP coordinator offered varied interventions including motivational interviewing and solution focused therapy. The mental

health worker was an experienced clinical psychologist who provided Tier 2 CAMHS work, parenting work and structured interventions. The mental health worker used the Child Depression Inventory Questionnaire for individual evaluation of outcomes where appropriate and had completed an analysis of access to the service by ethnicity. A one-off audit of SQIFA had been done. Exit interviews had been conducted with about 90% of children and young people for individual evaluation.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- (1) There was limited evaluation of outcomes. Outcomes tended to be based only on changes in the Asset score and/or individual feedback e.g. *What do you think?* The YOS acknowledged the need for more robust evaluation of outcomes, including routine audits.
- (2) There was insufficient evidence to indicate that interventions were delivered to children and young people by the health/substance misuse worker or that interventions promoted a range of health issues.

### **2.7 General criterion:**

*Children and young people who have offended are safeguarded through the work of the YOT to contribute to the promotion of their welfare and, where applicable, their protection.*

### **Strengths:**

- (1) The YOS had checked the status of the child or young person with children's services. In most cases the young person's status was clearly recorded and there had been liaison between the case manager and children's services.
- (2) Where a vulnerability plan had been produced the content of the action plan met assessed need.
- (3) Staff were using eCAF and were aware of the interface between eCAF and YOS processes. Whilst this was not fully operational, they were very much 'ahead of the game' compared with other areas. Where necessary the case manager had made a referral to children's services and in most cases the action taken was appropriate to the needs of the case.
- (4) There was evidence of good liaison, communication and partnership working between the YOS and children's services staff. Regular checks were made by the police officers on PNC and the intelligence system on children and young people engaged with the YOS. Staff attended Looked After Children reviews and understood processes around the needs of these children and young people. However, in a small number of cases joint working was not always delivered to plan or achieved within reasonable timescales.

**Area for improvement:**

- (1) A vulnerability plan had not been produced in all relevant cases.

**2.8 General criterion:**

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

The YOS educational hub was established in 2006 in order to ensure that all children and young people received a service directly related to their ETE needs. It was led by the YOS educational psychologist and included the reduction team manager, Connexions workers, a drug worker, reparation officer, school inclusion team officer and assistant educational psychologist.

**Strengths:**

- (1) There was evidence that staff identified ETE needs using Asset.
- (2) Referral for a specialist assessment within the YOS had been made in relation to 83% of cases for post-16 education and training. There were a small number of cases where a referral for specialist assessment outside the YOS had been made. The hub had improved access to SEN and communication in relation to truancy sweeps and inclusion services.
- (3) There were effective links with Connexions who had in several cases made a positive contribution in securing placements. There was good collaborative work with a local college. In most cases, the intervention (statutory and post-16 education and training) related to the identified need was offered to the child or young person by the education worker or the local authority.
- (4) Where a child or young person had a statement of SEN, there was evidence of contact with an educational psychologist. In most cases, the content of interventions promoted learning opportunities and attainment in respect of statutory and post-16 education and training.
- (5) In the majority of relevant cases where the child or young person had been formally and permanently excluded, or had extended sanctioned absence from mainstream schooling, the YOS had taken action to reintegrate the pupil into full-time education.

**Areas for improvement:**

- (1) The completion of more specialist assessments for statutory education (mainstream and other) and post-16 employment.
- (2) There was insufficient assessment in place in order to make effective judgements on the child or young person's competence in literacy, numeracy and preferred learning styles and consequently what their educational needs

were. There were no individual learning plans or system for recording, reviewing or monitoring ETE on the case file. Too often young people were not engaged in ETE post-16. In some cases all the preceding issues were exacerbated by a turnover of case managers. For example, one young person subject to a supervision order experienced three case managers in one year.

**Conclusion:** These criteria are assessed as **adequate**.

## Work with parents/carers

### **2.9 General criterion:**

*Parents/carers are supported in addressing their children's antisocial and offending behaviour.*

There was a designated parenting team that worked with parents/carers at all stages of their involvement in the YOS. This team consisted of two parenting workers (both National Occupational Standards qualified) and an Intensive Parenting Programme coordinator. They received professional supervision from a clinical psychologist in the team who was also involved in the strategic developments in parenting across the borough. The clinical psychologist also had links with specialist health resources. There were three specialist workers who had specific roles within the team.

### **Strengths:**

- (1) In the majority of cases parents/carers had been made aware of the requirements of interventions undertaken by the child or young person and had been kept informed about their progress during supervision.
- (2) Parenting workers and case managers were co-located and worked closely together to ensure that their work was integrated. Joint and parallel meetings with the child or young person and their parent/carer were undertaken. Active engagement of parents/carers in their child or young person's supervision was facilitated by the work of the YOS.
- (3) Very good processes were in place to ensure that assessments were carried out on the most appropriate parents/carers in a timely manner. Parenting workers were completing assessments on all children and young people aged under 16 and those aged 16 and over where a need had been identified, using the Trust for the Study of Adolescents assessment guidance, a formal assessment tool. Assessments were undertaken for those who were having a PSR prepared or were going to a youth offender panel and these were included in the main body of the reports. Normally assessments were available for the court but sometimes there was a request for an adjournment if there were any problems. Parenting workers had started to attend court to support parents/carers there and also pick up referrals more speedily. There was a good interface with CAF, where parents/carers were involved with or

needed other services.

- (4) Interventions with parents/carers were voluntary in 80% of cases. The team was very alert to the wide range of needs of the parents/carers with whom it worked. Parenting support was available within the borough for a number of specific groups and some structured programmes had been delivered in community languages. Camden YOS had commissioned several providers, which ensured diverse needs were met. Parenting support groups were run in a number of different languages; for example, 'Strengthening Families' was provided in Bengalian and Somalian. Specialist programmes were offered in the borough for parents/carers with learning disabilities and materials were available in audio for those with low levels of literacy. There was a deficit in provision for fathers and this was being addressed through an increase in programmes targeting this group. There did not appear to be an issue about accessing resources. Work with young parents was targeted through Surestart, rather than being offered by the YOS, but support could have been given if requested.
- (5) Parenting workers had been involved in and submitted reports to safeguarding networks. Interventions were planned in response to formal assessment. Contracts were developed with parents/carers to outline work planned. Individual and group programmes were available using a wide range of tools, for which staff had received the appropriate training. They also had access to many other programmes and support available across the borough, including from the Tavistock Institute.

**Conclusion:** This criterion is assessed as **good**.

### **Outcomes of work with children and young people in the community**

#### **2.10 General criterion:**

*The YOT promotes consultation with service users about the services they receive, and this information is used to improve outcomes.*

#### **Strengths:**

- (1) In March and April 2007 the YOS worked with Face2Face, a creative arts organisation, to find out the views of children and young people regarding their diverse identities and the provision of services. Three consultation workshops were run. At various times two questionnaires were completed, a visual image exercise was undertaken which encouraged participants to reflect on their identity and the YOS's image of them. They were asked about their likes and dislikes of the YOS and given the opportunity to suggest improvements. Seven children and young people had completed a multiple choice questionnaire about the service they received from Camden YOS. This exercise indicated the need for more inventive methods of engaging young

people, which resulted in the YOS purchasing the Teen Talk package.

- (2) The YIP had adapted its feedback forms to make them suitable for use with children and young people who had low levels of literacy, through the use of colours and stars.
- (3) The YOS was represented on a directorate-wide forum for consultation with young people called the Children and Young People's Participation and Engagement Group, a sub-group of the MPCSB, one of five sub-boards reporting to the Children and Young People's Partnership Board. The Board, sub-boards and sub-groups were all responsible for the delivery of the Camden Children and Young People's Plan.

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

- (1) Apart from the consultation exercise in April - March 2007, which involved a relatively small number of children and young people, there was not any formalised, regular discussion with children and young people about the services they received.
- (2) The YOS acknowledged that children and young people and parents/carers did not consistently receive any information about issues or actions taken as a result of consultation with them.
- (3) Although there was a complaints procedure, it was not well publicised. Not all children and young people, victims and parents/carers were aware or were made aware of how they could make a complaint.

#### **2.11 General criterion:**

*The YOT demonstrates positive outcomes in its work with children and young people in the community.*

#### **Strengths:**

- (1) The positive outcomes for children and young people at risk of offending included evidence of a reduction in factors linked to safeguarding; general compliance with the requirements of the preventative programme; progress in criminogenic factors such as thinking and behaviour and attitudes to offending, and demonstrable change in attitudes and behaviour.
- (2) For children and young people who had offended there was evidence of a reduction in factors linked to the risk of safeguarding in over half the relevant cases. Accommodation provision had improved in 67% of cases inspected. 68% of children and young people had complied with the requirements of the order. There was evidence of a demonstrable benefit to the community as a result of the order through reparation and a reduction in frequency and seriousness of offending. There had been some progress with thinking and behaviour.

- (3) There was a comprehensive written summary of cases on reprimand and final warning which outlined the outcomes of work with the child or young person.
- (4) Children and young people who were supervised by the YOS were able to describe a broad range of interventions that they had taken part in, clearly understood why they had to attend and what it would involve, spoke positively about their engagement with staff and considered themselves very satisfied with it. Examples were provided to inspectors of how engagement with the YOS had made them less likely to reoffend.
- (5) Based on figures produced by the YJB, the rate of reoffending for the 2002 pre-court cohort after 12 months was 13.3% compared to 8% for 2005. These results were better than those for England, Wales and London, and represented a 39% reduction in reoffending well above the national target of a 5% reduction.

**Areas for improvement:**

- (1) Since the start of the prevention programme in two out of ten cases the child or young person had been convicted of an offence. The Onset had been re-scored in seven out of ten cases. In five, the most recent score was not an improvement.
- (2) For those who had already attended, since the start of the order 38% had been convicted of a further offence. In cases where there had not been a reduction in factors linked to safeguarding just over half were not managed effectively. When Asset had been re-scored, in 57% the most recent score did not show an improvement. The demonstrable benefits to the community as a result of the child or young person's order were less evident in relation to a reduced threat to victims and potential victims and in some cases there was no obvious benefit to the community at all. In two-thirds of cases, learning outcomes and skills had not been applied by the child or young person and more evidence of a positive change in attitudes, behaviour and in particular victim awareness was required.
- (3) Camden YOS had not met the target of reducing the number of children and young people who were first-time entrants to the criminal justice system.
- (4) The YJB target for 2007/2008 was a reduction in reoffending of 5%. Although the number of children and young people who reoffended at first tier remained the same (18) for both the 2002 and 2005 cohorts proportionately there was an increase in the rate of reoffending of 113%. Reoffending for community orders had remained the same at 50%.
- (5) A regular report was submitted by the YOS Head of Service to the MPCSB. It contained performance data and addressed strategy, action plans and the implementation of policies rather than evaluating work with children and young people in relation to practice; for example, collating data from Asset to inform and improve future practice and resource allocation.

**Conclusion:** These criteria are assessed as **adequate**.

### **3. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUBJECT TO CUSTODIAL SENTENCES**

#### **3.1 General criterion:**

*The YOT (or others on its behalf), undertake appropriate activities during the custodial phase of the sentence to prevent children and young people from reoffending.*

The RAP workers visited children and young people in custody to promote their specialist service and attempted to engage them on a voluntary basis.

#### **Strengths:**

- (1) An initial Asset was completed in accordance with the national standard timescale in 75% of cases and all were assessed as being of sufficient quality.
- (2) In most cases the initial Asset was informed by at least one interview with the child or young person (88%) and contact with children's services and the education/training provider (63%). Other relevant assessments were used and positive factors identified in 75% of cases inspected. Where applicable, parents/carers were involved and the assessment reflected specific and individual need identified by them in relation to the child or young person.
- (3) Race and ethnicity had been recorded in all cases. In the majority, diversity issues, potentially discriminatory/disadvantaging factors and any other individual needs had been actively assessed at an early stage and where such factors were identified plans had been put in place to minimise their impact.
- (4) In 70% of cases, full attention had been paid to the methods most likely to be effective with the child or young person whilst in custody.
- (5) In relevant cases there was effective middle and/or higher management involvement in high RoH issues raised in the assessment.
- (6) The case manager ensured that a child or young person's accommodation needs were assessed and monitored and worked actively with others (mainly the accommodation officer) to secure appropriate provision on release.
- (7) In the majority of cases where there was evidence of specific risk factors, these were assessed and communicated both verbally and in writing to the secure establishment immediately.
- (8) In 89% of cases the case manager contributed to the initial training plan to ensure that the Asset informed it. Most plans were completed within

appropriate timescales, outlined who would deliver the interventions and the child or young person had signed it. The plan also clearly stated which elements were to be delivered in custody and which in the community. Interventions planned were likely to address reoffending behaviour and community reintegration.

- (9) All Crown Court cases and those with specified offences were referred to the internal multi-agency high risk panel for a risk and vulnerability management plan and review process.
- (10) Joint work between YOS staff, secure establishment staff and others to address physical health, emotional/mental health, substance and alcohol misuse and ETE was generally sufficient. Reviews at establishments were attended by YOS staff including the YOS Connexions personal advisor funded through the YJB's Keeping Young People Engaged pilot. Case managers had contributed actively to final review meetings.
- (11) In the majority of cases, frequency of appointments during the custodial phase conformed to the national standard and met RoH and/or any safeguarding considerations.
- (12) In all relevant cases, parents/carers and their child or young person had been encouraged by the YOS. Parents/carers had been assisted in attending planning and review meetings, in particular the final review meeting. In addition, travel warrants were provided to eligible parents/carers for visits to promote family contact and reintegration.

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

- (1) The child or young person was invited to and subsequently completed a self-assessment *What do you think?* form in three out of eight cases.
- (2) The screening of indicators of RoH was not always accurate. In relevant cases there was no acceptable reason in Asset as to why a RoSH to others form had not been completed. The quality of RoSH to others forms and Asset risk management plans was insufficient and neither had included victim issues. It was not clear whether in high RoSH or MAPPA cases all staff involved had been made aware of this classification.
- (3) According to the YOS's own data in 2006/2007 in 97.1% of custody cases an e-yellow envelope containing Asset, PSRs, risk and vulnerability information and other relevant assessments was sent from court and received by the secure institution within 24 hours. In our sample of custody cases there was evidence that Asset had been sent to institutions in 38% of cases and other relevant documents in 50% of cases or less. Several case managers did not know where to find this information on YOIS or in the case file, which may have accounted for the difference in results. This in itself was worrying as case managers may have assumed a transfer of information had taken place.
- (4) Attendance of other services (home education and PCT) at the initial planning

meetings was not consistent. Training plans did not always include victim restorative processes, information from other agencies' plans and assessments including *What do you think?* Requirements were not sequenced, and in appropriate cases did not sufficiently address victim awareness, RoH to others and staying safe.

### **3.2 General criterion:**

*Children and young people are safeguarded through the work of the YOT during the custodial phase of the sentence to contribute to the promotion of their welfare and, where applicable, their protection.*

#### **Strengths:**

- (1) The YOS had checked the status of the child or young person with children's services and in the majority of cases this had been clearly recorded.
- (2) In all relevant cases there had been liaison between the YOS worker and children's services.
- (3) The content of vulnerability plans met the assessed needs of the child or young person.

#### **Area for improvement:**

- (1) Where an Asset had been prepared, safeguarding was fully and accurately assessed; however, a vulnerability plan had not been produced in 60% of relevant cases.

### **3.3 General criterion:**

*The YOT (or others on its behalf), undertake appropriate activities during the community phase of the sentence, to prevent children and young people from reoffending.*

#### **Strengths:**

- (1) In 88% of cases a timely and comprehensive induction was provided to the child or young person on release.
- (2) 75% of intervention plans had been reviewed within ten days of release and had been informed by a review of Asset.
- (3) Specialist health services were provided in accordance with national standards for emotional and mental health. Where there was evidence that a child or young person had developed new health needs whilst in custody these had been sufficiently addressed. Apart from mainstream statutory education, all ETE services were provided in accordance with national

standards. In 75% of cases work in the community built sufficiently on activity started in custody. A number of examples were found of interventions commenced in custody to address RoH, offending behaviour, safeguarding and ETE needs that were continued on release, in particular from the Connexions team, leading to college placements and/or courses.

- (4) RAP was available for children and young people coming out of custody and those who scored 2 or more on either the substance misuse or mental health part of Asset (although there was virtually no service between April and September 2007 due to vacancies).
- (5) In the majority of cases the frequency of appointments in the community phase conformed to the national standard, met RoH and safeguarding considerations and supported the achievement of intervention plan objectives.
- (6) A timely and purposeful home visit was carried out in 75% of cases.
- (7) Case managers monitored attendance across all interventions and where necessary effective action was taken to ensure compliance where there had been absences. Judgements about acceptability and unacceptability were consistent. In all cases where breach action was taken it was instigated and dealt with in the required timescales.
- (8) In relevant cases the YOS had worked sufficiently with parents/carers to support their child or young person's successful integration into society.
- (9) In all cases there was sufficient evidence that case managers had demonstrated commitment to their work with the child or young person, and in most, motivated and supported them through their sentence and reinforced positive behaviour.

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

- (1) In a quarter of cases the intervention plan had not been reviewed at all and only in half had a review taken place at the three month point or at the end of the order - whichever was sooner. RoH to others had been reviewed within ten days of the child or young person's release in 63% of cases, every three months in 75%, and when a significant incident had occurred in 50%.
- (2) There was a lack of training and employment opportunities post-16 and not all local colleges were responding to the needs of young people in the YOS.
- (3) There were gaps in the provision of specialist healthcare concerned with physical health and substance misuse.
- (4) Constructive interventions had not successfully challenged the child or young person to accept responsibility for their offending behaviour and its consequences in a sufficient number of cases.
- (5) In nearly three-quarters of cases the child or young person's individual

learning plan had not continued, not been regularly reviewed or updated following release and in the majority of cases literacy had not been reassessed within ten working days.

### **3.4 General criterion:**

*The YOT demonstrates positive outcomes in its work with children and young people subject to custodial sentences.*

#### **Strength:**

- (1) Asset had been re-scored in all ten cases and in seven the most recent score had shown an improvement over the initial score. In three out of four cases safeguarding factors had been effectively managed, while in the community, only one out of nine children and young people had been convicted of an offence and the majority had complied with the requirements of the order.

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

- (1) In 60% of cases there was no demonstrable change in the attitudes, behaviour and victim awareness of the child or young person.
- (2) The reconviction rate for custody cases was 25% after 12 months for both the 2002 and 2005 cohort. Although the rate of recidivism had remained static over a three year period the YOS was aware that more work needed to be undertaken to reduce reoffending.

**Conclusion:** These criteria are assessed as **good**.

## 4. VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

### 4.1 General criterion:

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

Camden YOS was well resourced with four police officers and 75% of a sergeant's time, a restorative justice family group conference coordinator and a part-time Victim Support worker. The YOS kept a record of their workload. In the period 1 November 2006 to 31 October 2007, 210 victims were offered direct and 205 indirect reparation. As a result of the offers made, 78 victims accepted direct and 102 indirect reparation. 63 letters of apology were written.

### Strengths:

- (1) All vulnerable victims and young victims of crime were referred to Victim Support and received a joint visit by the victim coordinator and a police officer. There was a protocol between the YOS and probation regarding victim contact issues.
- (2) Camden YOS staff had trained youth offender panel members and other YOTs, inside and outside London, about managing victim issues. The victim coordinator had trained all staff to deliver a victim awareness package.
- (3) A police officer initially contacted the victim by phone after the child or young person who had offended had been assessed. The victim was invited to a face-to-face meeting at a venue of their choice. During this contact police officers assessed the victim's needs, and their views about involvement in restorative justice or attendance at a youth offender panel meeting. They informed the victim about the young person's level of victim awareness at that point in time. Victims were invited to participate in a restorative justice process related to the offence and in most cases valid reasons why this invitation had not been made were recorded.
- (4) The YOS had developed a letter of apology pack of three sessions; rights and responsibilities and ideas of citizenship, victims and the victims of your offence and writing the letter of apology.
- (5) Half the victims invited to a restorative justice intervention participated and there was evidence that the YOS had tried to engage the others.
- (6) The assessment of victims' needs was of a sufficient quality in the majority of cases.

- (7) There was evidence that victims were given the opportunity to participate in a number restorative processes including victim offender mediation, restorative conferencing and youth offender panels. Suitable support was provided to victims during and after the panel. Where the victim was a child or young person under the age of 18, the referral order contract facilitated a restorative intervention.
- (8) Victims were always offered the opportunity to be updated on the progress of the child or young person.
- (9) All YOS police officers were restorative justice trained. The police commander was keen to be involved in work with the police officers. He had taken part in restorative justice conferences where the police were victims of a crime and was happy for the YOS to use the command facilities at the police station for these meetings.
- (10) The YOS had a range of interventions including the involvement of victims either personally or via a statement in youth offender panel meetings, shuttle mediation, restorative justice, family group conferencing and also keeping victims informed. All children and young people were expected to have a reparative element as part of their intervention. There was a menu of reparation placements, in particular the graffiti removal project and 'Recycled', a bicycle repair scheme where unclaimed bikes from the police property store were restored and donated to local charities. YOS police officers conducted an assessment of each child or young person's suitability for a restorative justice intervention the day after they were sentenced to a referral order.
- (11) There was a victim of crime survey form given to those victims who had attended a youth offender panel. The data was submitted to the YJB and the forms were shared with Camden Victim Support for practice development.
- (12) All children and young people subject to reparation were asked for feedback. Information that was received on one project resulted in changes being made. The YOS sought to include a restorative element in its work with children and young people who had received a reprimand.
- (13) In April 2007 the YOS formed a Restorative Justice Action Group with the aim of raising the profile of restorative justice.

***Areas for improvement:***

- (1) Where there was a direct or potential victim, in just over one-third of cases, conditions in the licence or order did not reflect that appropriate priority had been given to victim safety by the case manager or other workers.
- (2) In the last 18 months the YOS had introduced new reparation projects; however, youth offender panel members commented on the lack of options and the need for more reparation projects to fulfil the purpose of community payback as well as personal development. Even though the YOS had created

an additional post of assistant reparation worker, which was filled in June 2007, there was limited capacity to deliver the amount of reparation required.

- (3) In 69% of relevant cases, children and young people had not been involved in any reparation.

**Conclusion:** This criterion is assessed as **good**.

## 5. MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

### Leadership and planning

#### **5.1 General criterion:**

*The Management Board works actively with others, including the YOT manager, in an integrated way to maximise the likelihood of improving outcomes for children and young people.*

The YOS Management Board was called the MPCSB, one of five sub-boards of the Children and Young People Partnership Board. The MPCSB had been in existence for about 12 months and met six times a year. This Board consisted of senior managers from the CSF Directorate (the former education and social services directorates, which were merged in October 2005); community safety, which was part of the Housing and Adult Social Care Directorate, Camden's Corporate Equalities, the PCT, police, probation and voluntary sector. The YOS Head of Service was line-managed by the Assistant Director for Access and Inclusion, who also chaired the MPCSB.

In April 2007, the role of the YOS Head of Service had been expanded to include the Youth Service and Connexions. Seven service managers reported to the Head of Service. A new structure for operational managers and staff was due to take effect from April 2008.

The change in structure was in recognition of the overlap of the work of the services involved particularly with children and young people at risk of offending and those that had offended. Senior managers in Camden had a clear vision and plan for the integrated service that was being introduced. The inspection had taken place during a period of transition when managers were working to minimise the business risks, to the YOS and the other two services, associated with such a significant change in the structure.

#### **Strengths:**

- (1) There was familiarity with the youth crime agenda at every layer of the organisation from the CEO down. The CEO had an understanding of the role of the YOS through preventative work and how its function overlapped with the remit of community safety and other parts of CSF. By visiting the YOS and attending relevant management meetings the CEO was aware of the current issues that it faced. The CEO was committed to the provision of good quality services for children and young people and had a broad knowledge of crime, prisons and the National Offender Management Service.
- (2) The Director of CSF represented colleague Directors from London Boroughs on the London Youth Crime Prevention Board, which was created to develop a programme of action for improving the prevention of crime in the capital. One

of the strands of work, which the Director was taking forward with others, was the development of a gold standard to support local authorities to use the LAA to improve youth crime prevention.

- (3) There was clear evidence that the Youth Justice Plan was integrated in the Safer Camden Strategy 2005-2008 and the Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009. The YOS Head of Service provided the MPCSB with a report at every meeting which described progress implementing the plan. A brief, well presented summary of the 2007/2008 achievements, actions and performance. The minutes of the MPCSB could be accessed by staff via the intranet.
- (4) The YOS Head of Service was linked effectively to local strategic planning and delivery groups such as the LSCB, the Borough Criminal Justice Group, Children's Fund, the Young Person's Substance Misuse Group, Community Safety Partnership Group, Connexions Management Board and the PPO Steering Group (Prevent and Deter).
- (5) In 2005 the YOS had published a Race Action Plan and in 2006, in collaboration with the borough, had carried out detailed equality impact assessments on PSRs and enforcement. In June 2007, the YOS Head of Service delivered a presentation entitled *Young black people and the criminal justice system* to the Judicial Studies Board.
- (6) A diversity forum open to all YOS workers had been formed in the summer of 2007 to promote working practices that would have been more responsive to the needs of children and young people and their families. It was too early to comment on the impact of the forum; however, the minutes of the meeting in October 2007 described a number of different initiatives such as an equality impact assessment on the planned restructuring of services, a lead YOS worker who would focus on the needs of Afro-Caribbean young men, activities for a girls' group and promoting the issue of learning styles. In staff team meetings, diversity issues were addressed under the agenda item 'team update'. Several members of the YOS had specialist knowledge about working with a diverse community, for example working with young men from the Bangladeshi community.
- (7) The YOS Head of Service was accountable via the Assistant Director to the divisional management team, which the Director of CSF chaired. That person was accountable to the corporate management team chaired by the CEO. Staff were held to account through supervision and appraisal.
- (8) There was a culture of performance management from the CEO down and an emphasis on finding the right people to tackle performance issues, which was the rationale for the appointment of the present Director and Head of Service who had achieved improvements in performance within the YOS. The MPCSB was regularly provided with performance figures with details of the background and recovery plan for each target if the result for a quarter indicated amber or red. For example, there were concerns about the number of children and young people who were NEET. The YOS Head of Service was

asked by the MPCSB to find a solution which led to the creation of the education hub. Another example was gaining support for the prevention agenda by addressing the first-time entrants target by working with community safety and YISPs.

- (9) There was a senior commissioning manager who was the young person lead within DAT. They managed a team with responsibility for the SLAs within the YOS with RAP, SOVA, YIP, SPRAY, ISSP and the sexual outreach worker. There was regular (quarterly and at times weekly) monitoring of SLAs and achievements against locally agreed targets. Quality assurance procedures included random dip sampling of YOIS and EPQAs on substance misuse and mental health.
- (10) Youth offender panel members were positive about the training and support they had received from the YOS and particularly from the referral order coordinator. They also felt that the panels were well organised. The calibre of the youth offender panel members was high. They had a detailed knowledge of the process, varied and relevant experience and a commitment to ensuring that panel meetings included the victim perspective and were effective and had a positive impact on the children and young people concerned. A single A4 prompt sheet for youth offender panel members had been developed which included a tick list covering the preparation for the meeting, the order of the agenda, victim reparation, suggested hours according to the length of the order and possible interventions.

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

- (1) The MPCSB had a remit which included the work of the YOS, anti-bullying, antisocial behaviour, SEN, the voluntary sector related to children and young people and community safety. The Terms of Reference did not clearly state that it had a specific role in the governance and scrutiny of all aspects of the YOS. The amount of time dedicated to and concerned solely with YOS strategic and operational matters was not sufficient. The meeting was not always well attended. Despite efforts by Camden YOS the court service was unable to provide a representative to sit on the MPCSB.
- (2) The MPCSB may have benefitted from identifying a lead for ETE on the Board. In 2006 the YOS had not achieved the ETE KPI and in response the YOS Head of Service successfully argued for the replacement of the post of education worker for the more qualified and specialist posts of education psychologist and assistant educational psychologist. The education hub, managed by an operational manager and a recently appointed educational psychologist, had been established over a year ago in response to concerns about the number of children and young people who were NEET. It had yet to have an impact. Currently there was no overall ETE strategy or a strategy for the hub and there remained some uncertainty about its development and direction. Case managers were not fully aware of the procedures, scope, scale and availability of suitable ETE programmes for children and young people.
- (3) From April 2007 when the YOS Head of Service had taken on new

responsibilities, the amount of time allocated directly to the management of the YOS halved. Even when taking into account the overlaps with the YOS and the Youth Service and Connexions, management tasks that they had been delegated and areas of work transferred to other parts of the directorate, this was a significant reduction. There was an intention to appoint a deputy for the combined services in 2008.

- (4) A large number of youth offender panels were taking place over 20 working days from the date of the court hearing and in some cases two months after. There were a number of reasons for this; long-term sickness, not enough panel members and in February 2007 a sudden increase in the number of referral orders. Local management decided to spread the workload and additional panel members were recruited. At the time of the inspection (November 2007) several young people who had appeared in court in August 2007 were still waiting for a panel meeting, with a total of 21 panel meetings pending. An action plan had been produced in October 2007 and an assistant was due to be appointed who would contribute to reducing the backlog; however, it was clear that management should have been more responsive and proactive earlier and brought this matter to the attention of the Board. It was anticipated that the backlog will have been cleared by December 2007.
- (5) The health contribution to the YOS budget was much lower than the YJB guidance. Most projects were grant funded. At the time of the inspection the YJB had not yet confirmed funding for 2008/2009. There were plans to mainstream the young people substance misuse grant as it fitted in with the community strategy and LAA. Some aspects of the SPRAY project had been prioritised for continued funding.

## Partnership and resources

### **5.2 General criterion:**

*Partner organisations and the YOT work together effectively to protect the public, reduce antisocial and offending behaviour and deliver positive outcomes for children and young people.*

### **Strengths:**

- (1) The YOS was staffed with resources from the key agencies and voluntary sector. Probation had been making a financial contribution and the YOS had employed agency staff with probation qualifications and background. By March 2009, London Probation Area aimed to second probation staff to all London YOTs or YOSs including Camden. The accommodation officer was linked to Camden's Supporting People. Victim Support and the Castlehaven Community Association were involved in the YIP. The early intervention manager was also the YIP identification manager and monitored the process for identifying 50 children and young people within that programme. There was evidence of a close working relationship with Connexions, leading to

positive outcomes for children and young people. The mental health worker felt well integrated within the YOS and was a member of the senior management team and was the identified lead for health.

- (2) There were a number of examples of the YOS maximising the benefits of resources allocated from local, regional and national sources. Locally both statutory and voluntary organisations were involved in the delivery of service for children and young people including various projects via the Children's Fund and mentoring from SOVA. Camden YOS had also attracted funding from the Home Office for an arrest referral project (SPRAY) that was due to conclude in March 2008. Police officers in the YOS had three police networked terminals that all had access to the PNC. Through the support of the Director of CSF, the MPCSB and the police, the YOS had moved from its previous premises at Gospel Oak to the Crowndale Centre, which had given it a higher profile within the local authority.
- (3) The YOS was involved in a variety of black and minority ethnic projects. For example in the Spring of 2006 the YOS consulted a group of young Somalians who had offended and who were keen to help other young people at risk of being involved in gangs, violence and crime. With the Somali Youth Development Resources Centre and in collaboration with Connexions, Youth Services and SOVA, using LAA funding, a mentoring scheme called the Somali Development Project was set up. Six volunteers completed SOVA's mentor training in November 2006. A member of staff from SOVA, seconded to the YOS coordinated the training, pairing and supervision of mentors. A steering group also met regularly to look at opportunities to develop the project further.
- (4) An operational manager checked case managers' caseloads to ensure that they had a balance of children and young people who were reporting twice weekly, in custody, Looked After Children, children in need or there was children services involvement, high RoSH or PPO.
- (5) At the time of the inspection the post of Prevent and Deter coordinator was unfilled and it was planned that an agency worker would be recruited in January 2008. The post was financed by housing. The post holder spent four days in the YOS and one day with Community safety and was jointly line-managed. The Prevent and Deter coordinator would attend the monthly Prevent and Deter Forum, be responsible for several cases, track all Prevent and Deter children and young people through the system, liaise with safer neighbourhood sergeants and attend police tactical assessment meetings. In this way they shared and gathered intelligence which was recorded on YOIS on those PYOs who were in contact with the YOS. Case managers submitted progress reports to the forum.
- (6) The police officers worked within a team that each day had a duty officer (separate from the YOS duty officer) who responded to all enquiries from the police, YOS and the general public.
- (7) There were good strategic links with the development and implementation of

CAF. The YOS Head of Service was a member of the LSCB. Camden was a pilot area for CAF and the YOS Head of Service was a member of the working group which examined, amongst other things, how CAF fitted with Asset. All staff had had e-CAF training. CAF was used as the referral tool for multi-agency referrals to preventative work by the early intervention team when there had been no involvement of any other agencies with the child or young person.

- (8) Arrangements were in place with the police through the police/YOS protocol and other partners (YISP and YIP) to contribute to the maximisation of the use of reprimands and final warnings in order to divert children and young people away from prosecution. Reparation was available for reprimands, which was not common in other YOTs. All final warnings and reprimands were delivered according to restorative justice principles. There was an 8% reoffending rate for final warnings compared to a national average of 20%. Interventions on final warnings were delivered by the early intervention team, which enabled the police officers to work on victim issues. There was a clear focus on victim work and a strong strategic commitment from the BCU to youth and schools.
- (9) The YOS provided an annual training input for magistrates and District Judges. The subject was selected by the YOS and staff often used real case examples.
- (10) A comprehensive range of protocols and SLAs existed between the YOS and its statutory partners. There were SLAs in relation to mental health and substance misuse. The YOS (with other partner authorities) had put out to tender the contract for the provision of ISSP.
- (11) The YOS employed a full-time housing worker who was seconded to the YOS and worked in line with Supporting People to tackle homelessness. Housing work linked strategically to Supporting People and provided a focus on 16 and 17 year olds as part of the response to provision for 16 – 19 year olds in the borough. This approach enabled young people to be fully integrated into the planning process. There was a range of supported housing services available offering a limited but flexible approach to matching needs and risks.
- (12) The working relationship between Camden YOS and the police was very good. The CEO met the Borough Commander regularly where communication between them was frank and open. An inspector who line-managed the YOS police officers also had responsibility for a sergeant and eight school constables, and chaired a YISP. The police sergeant was a part of the YOS management team. The police were embedded into the partnership and well represented on various initiatives, including Prevent and Deter, which also included a disorder sub-group chaired by the police. The police had a strong commitment to youth crime issues across the borough. The cohort of children and young people eligible for the YIP was reviewed every six months through a multi-agency forum with a broad spread of members, including street wardens. All those who had referred children and young people for consideration were invited to attend.

- (13) The profile of preventative services was maintained, for example, by presentations to councillors and others. The boundary of the YIP was recently extended to respond to groups of youths coming to attention from a different district. The Senior YIP shared premises, workers and some activities with a youth centre, thereby facilitating effective reintegration into community activities for those involved with the YIP. The YIP accounted for its performance both to its own Management Board and to the Camden Growing Up Safely delivery group, comprising representatives from a broad range of relevant agencies. Referrals came from a number of different agencies, particularly the police (53%); however, less than 8% of referrals came from education. Camden produced a comprehensive YISP implementation and information sharing protocol. This was supported by an impressive Terms of Reference leaflet designed to explain the YISPs both to potential referrers and to others who may have come into contact with them. Managers of preventative projects worked together well and clearly sought to coordinate their work.
- (14) The YOS was well linked into and played a key role in Camden structures to address antisocial behaviour by children and young people. There was a clear expectation that referral to the YISP or other preventative projects would happen at an early stage and well before the use of legislation was considered.

***Areas for improvement:***

- (1) The Prevent and Deter coordinator role produced good quality information and intelligence about PYOs; however, this was not always used by case managers in assessing and managing those cases.
- (2) The YOS participated in the Thames Court User Group and informed magistrates and District Judges about its work. However, more work with sentencers was necessary to ensure sentencing outcomes were achieved, particularly in reducing the use of custody.
- (3) There was a limited range of supported housing options available to YOS children and young people. Two areas the YOS recognised it could contribute to, in partnership with other agencies, were the development of accommodation for children and young people assessed as high RoH and foyer type provision providing a link with post-16 ETE. There had been no evaluation of the housing work model within the YOS and its impact on reducing offending behaviour.
- (4) Whilst there were current protocols between children's services and the YOS, these were lengthy and did not as yet take into account CAF.

## Staff supervision, development and training

### **5.3 General criterion:**

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

#### **Strengths:**

- (1) 79% of staff felt that managers demonstrated professional management approaches. Four YOS managers had obtained or were currently working towards a management qualification.
- (2) Case workers worked well together. Staff from other agencies felt they were a full part of the team. Good levels of training and information were provided for case managers, especially around substance misuse and mental health. The substance misuse and mental health workers were very well qualified for their jobs and had a clear understanding of their roles and boundaries.
- (3) Over two-thirds of staff felt well informed about policies and procedures that operated in the YOS. Procedures were highlighted in the staff induction pack and accessed from YOT.doc, the YOS manual, and more recently on Protos, an online mapping system. A well presented and useful staff newsletter, *YOS News*, included local and national developments, handy tips and stories about significant events in the lives of staff.
- (4) Staff felt that overall their training and development needs had been met (78%). Staff training and development was reviewed under the appraisal process. Training was available through the YJB, CSF Training and Development Service and other providers. Parenting workers had access to a good level of training through a training pool within the Borough.
- (5) The majority of staff (71%) received supervision monthly or more frequently and 78% were satisfied with the quality. 80% of staff had had an appraisal completed in the last 12 months which was linked to the Youth Justice Plan. From a sample of supervision notes and appraisal reports it was clear that in the previous eight months managers were addressing the quality and timeliness of the completion of Asset, RoSH, risk management and vulnerability plans and had included comments in YOIS for case managers to complete tasks agreed in supervision. This was good practice and should continue. Specialist workers received monthly, and sometimes almost weekly appropriate clinical supervision. The substance misuse worker had an annual appraisal. The mental health worker only came into post in April 2007.
- (6) Where appropriate, the London Borough of Camden's procedures for disciplinary, capability and grievances were used.
- (7) Seconded staff received supervision from both their host agency line-manager and from their YOS line-manager. Youth offender panel members and mentors received training and attended regular in-house support groups.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- (1) Over a third of staff did not think their managers modelled positive leadership behaviour.
- (2) The turnover of agency staff combined with sickness absence had resulted in a number of cases being managed by more than one case manager, which could have had an impact on the quality of service provision and the relationship with the child or young person.
- (3) There was not a costed staff training plan which linked individual development needs and performance to the achievement of the Youth Justice Plan.
- (4) There was no evidence that the results of complaints were used to improve practice.
- (5) All YOS staff were CRB checked but some staff had not had a CRB check for over three years. An Excel spreadsheet indicated when the CRB check was due for renewal. As of September 2007, ten staff were due to have a renewed CRB check and in all cases it was indicated that forms were being completed. A more responsive system was required.
- (6) The views of service users and stakeholders were not routinely collected and collated to improve service delivery.

**Conclusion:** These criteria are assessed as **adequate**.

## **Appendix 1: Contextual information**

### **Area**

Camden YOS was located in London, in South-East England, and as a single YOS it covered the Camden local authority.

The area had a population of 198,020 as measured in the Census 2001, 7.5% of which were aged 10-17 years old. This was lower than the average for England and Wales, which was 10.4%.

The population of Camden was predominantly white (73.2%). The population with a black and minority ethnic heritage (26.8%) was significantly above the average for England and Wales of 8.7%.

Reported crime levels for children and young people aged 10-17 years old across the area, at 39.1 per 1,000, were below the average for England and Wales of 53.

The proportion of Looked After Children aged ten and over sanctioned for an offence committed whilst Looked After was 5% in Camden, which was below the average for England and Wales of 9%.

### **YOS**

The YOS was covered by the London Probation Area and was co-terminus with Camden BCU of the Metropolitan Police and Camden PCT.

The Youth Justice Plan 2007/2008 showed that the YOS had 51 staff in post, with two vacancies. 61% of staff were female and 33% had a black or minority ethnic heritage.

The YOS was based in a single office located near Mornington Crescent Underground Station. Camden YOS was covered by Thames youth court and Thames ISSP consortium, which included Hackney, Islington and Tower Hamlets YOTs.

### **YJB performance data**

The YJB summary of overall YOT performance available at the time of the inspection for the period to June 2007 gave Camden a score of 3 on a scale where 5 was the maximum. This was the same as the national and regional performance and that of comparable YOTs. Performance on reducing reoffending received a score of 2, which was in line with London YOTs' performance, but below the national level.

## Appendix 2: Inspection data

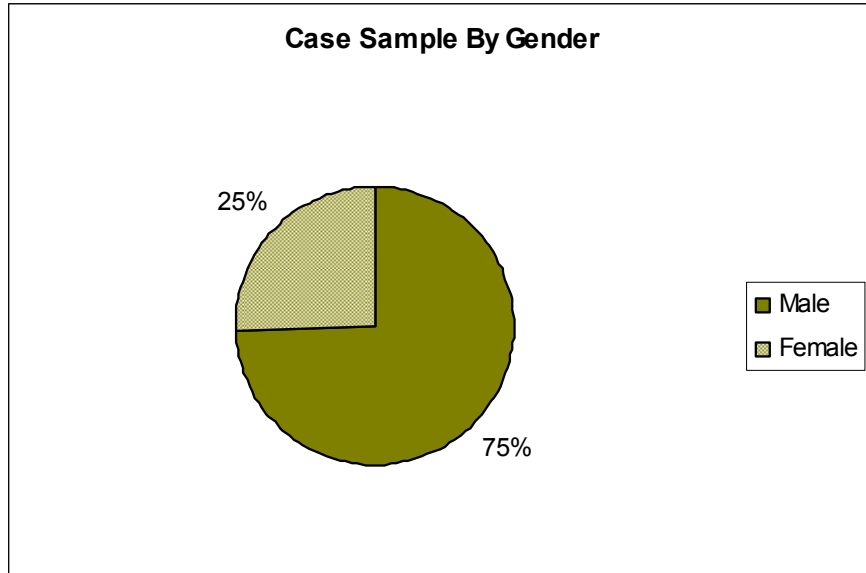
Fieldwork for this inspection was undertaken in November 2007 and during a contribution to the Camden Joint Area Review in December 2007.

The inspection consisted of:

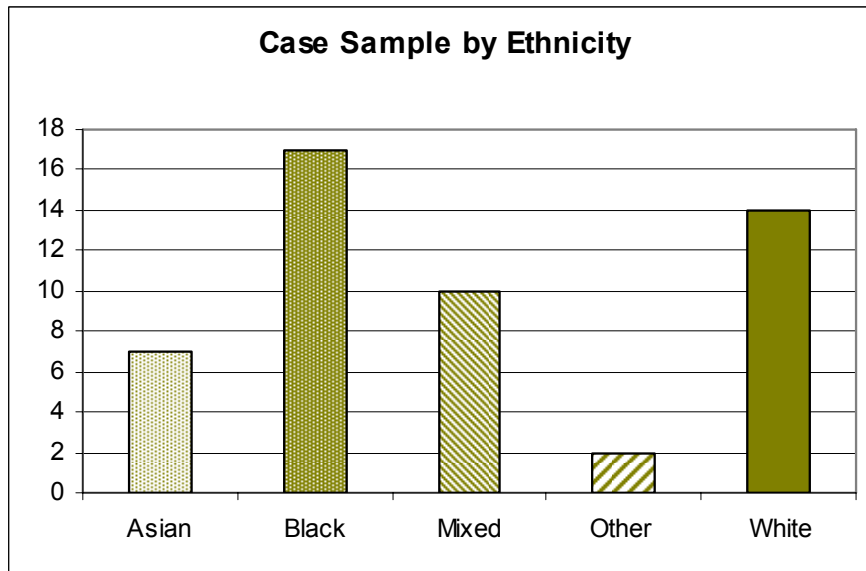
- ◇ evidence in advance
- ◇ examination of YJB performance data and assessments
- ◇ examination of practice in a sample of cases, normally in conjunction with the case manager or other representative, as follows:
  - 10 prevention files
  - 9 final warnings
  - 10 first tier penalties (referral orders, reparation orders)
  - 12 community sentences
  - 10 custodial cases
- ◇ interviews and questionnaire responses from children and young people, parents/carers, and victims
- ◇ interviews with children and young people in custody
- ◇ meetings with staff, managers and partners.

## Data charts

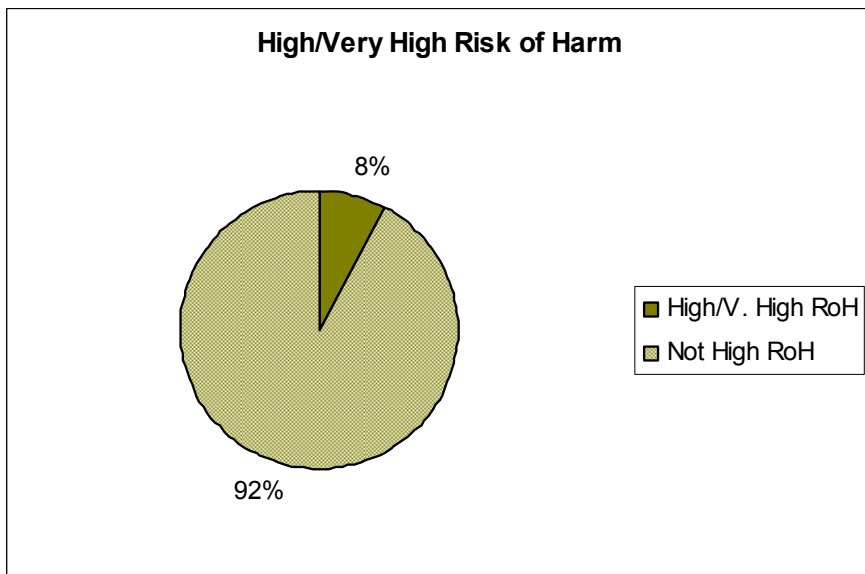
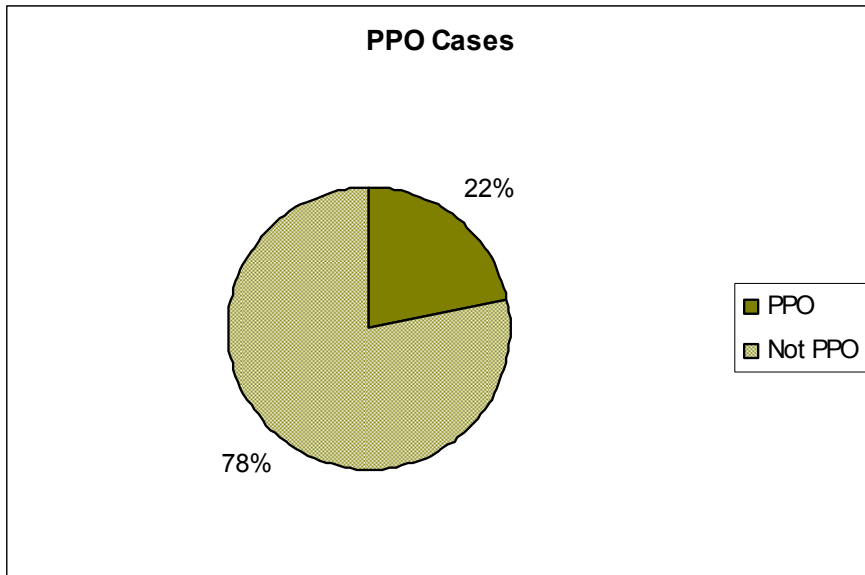
The chosen sample takes into consideration the percentage of girls or young women in contact with the YOT. A representative number is then included in the sample of cases.



The chosen sample takes into consideration the percentage of black and minority ethnic children or young people in contact with the YOT. A representative number is then included in the sample of cases.



The chosen sample includes a number of high RoH cases and ISSP/PPO cases. The numbers included depend on the size of the YOT/YOS involved, and range from 6-12 cases per sample.



### **Appendix 3: Joint inspection arrangements**

The joint YOT inspection programme began in September 2003 and is the first full inspection programme to examine the work of the YOTs. It has been implemented over four phases, covering all YOTs in England and Wales over a five year period. From September 2005, the findings in England have contributed to the Joint Area Reviews of children's services (led by Ofsted) and the Corporate Assessment of local authority services (led by the Audit Commission).

### **Appendix 4: Role of HMI Probation and code of practice**

HMI Probation is an independent Inspectorate, funded by the Ministry of Justice and reporting directly to the Secretary of State. Our purpose is to:

- report to the Secretary of State on the effectiveness of work with individual offenders, children and young people aimed at reducing reoffending and protecting the public, whoever undertakes this work under the auspices of the National Offender Management Service or the Youth Justice Board
- report on the effectiveness of the arrangements for this work, working with other Inspectorates as necessary
- contribute to improved performance by the organisations whose work we inspect
- contribute to sound policy and effective service delivery, especially in public protection, by providing advice and disseminating good practice, based on inspection findings, to Ministers, officials, managers and practitioners
- promote actively race equality and wider diversity issues, especially in the organisations whose work we inspect
- contribute to the overall effectiveness of the criminal justice system, particularly through joint work with other inspectorates.

HMI Probation aims to achieve its purpose and to meet the Government's principles for inspection in the public sector by:

- working in an honest, professional, fair and polite way
- reporting and publishing inspection findings and recommendations for improvement in good time and to a good standard
- promoting race equality and wider attention to diversity in all aspects of our work, including within our own employment practices and organisational processes
- for the organisations whose work we are inspecting, keeping to a minimum the amount of extra work arising as a result of the inspection process.

The Inspectorate is a public body. Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within its remit should write to:

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

**<http://www.inspectorates.justice.gov.uk/hmiprobation>**