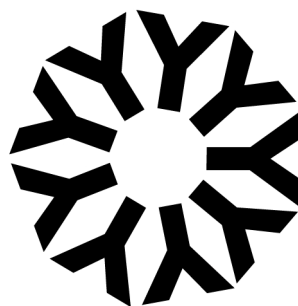


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# Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Report on:  
Ceredigion  
Youth Offending Team

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## Foreword

The inspection of the Ceredigion YOT took place in autumn 2006, in the third year of our programme. We found a new service that had made good progress since being established in April 2005. The Management Board chaired by the Chief Executive of Ceredigion County Council, was well positioned to lead the strategic development of the YOT through a number of established partnerships. The funding achieved through Cymorth and the Community Safety Partnership provided clear evidence of this. However, these provided short-term funding, and the Management Board needed to address the issue with its partner organisations to ensure that the YOT's core funding was secure, that it was adequately resourced in kind, and that the partners met their statutory responsibilities.

The status of the Welsh language was also of concern since in this context it was not being given equal status in the YOT, did not comply with the authority's Welsh Language Scheme, and did not reflect education and youth service policies. Whilst having available some documentation in Welsh and some staff fluent in the language, the predominant culture of the YOT did not reflect the needs of the area. This was an issue for the Management Board to address.

We found examples of good work by very committed staff, with an enthusiasm for both service and personal development. The staff group was also well led by the YOT manager and senior practitioner and had made good progress in developing its operational structure. A number of significant policies and procedures were in place or at a draft stage of development. Practice was sound, but the focus on prevention should be reviewed so that a better balance is achieved between resource packages applied to preventative and statutory work.

Whilst recognising the work required, we are confident that the YOT has the will, determination and ability to progress. The report contains a number of recommendations that we believe will assist the team to move forward.

*Andrew Bridges*  
*HM Chief Inspector of Probation*

*January 2007*

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

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## Glossary

ACPC	Area Child Protection Committee
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
APA	Annual Performance Assessment
Asset	Assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
CPN	Community psychiatric nurse
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CSCI	Commission for Social Care Inspection
DEWIS	Direct Engagement Work in Schools (also the Welsh word for choice)
DipSW	Diploma in Social Work
DTO	Detention and training order
Estyn	HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
GP	General Practitioner
HMIC	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMI Prisons	HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
ISP	Intensive Support Programme
ISSP	Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme
JAR	Joint Area Review
LEA	Local Education Authority
LHB	Local Health Board
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
NACRO	National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders
National Standards	National Standards for Youth Justice Services
NHS	National Health Service
OCN	Open College Network
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education

Onset	YJB tool for assessing children and young people at risk of offending
PO	Probation officer
PPO	Prolific & Other Priority Offenders
Prism-SUDDS	Prism-Specialist Under 18s Drink and Drug Service
PSR	Pre-sentence report
RoH	Risk of Harm
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bounded
SSD	Social Services Department
SSIW	Social Services Inspectorate for Wales
SSR	Specific sentence report
VLO	Victim liaison officer
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WPI	Wales Programme for Improvement
YIP	Youth Inclusion Project
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOI	Young Offender Institution
YOT	Youth Offending Team
YPP	Young People's Partnership

## Introduction

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

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

The YOT inspection covers five core areas of work:

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

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

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

## Overview

- ◆ The Unitary Authority of Ceredigion is located in Mid Wales, and covers the areas of Aberaeron, Aberarth, Aberystwyth, Cardigan, Lampeter, Llanddewi Brefi, Llandysul, Llanilar, Llanrhystud, New Quay, Newcastle Emlyn and Tregaron.
- ◆ Ceredigion had a total population of 74,941, measured in the Census 2001. Of this population, 19.3% were aged 10-17 years at the time of the census. This figure was slightly lower than the average for Wales of 22.8%.
- ◆ Ceredigion had a predominantly white population, 98.6%, and this was higher than the average for Wales of 97.9%. The percentage of Asian or Asian British residents was lower than the national average of 0.9%, being 0.4% in Ceredigion. The percentage of Black or Black British residents, at 0.2%, was also lower than the national average of 0.3%.
- ◆ The level of employment in Ceredigion was 50.2% and this was much lower than the average for Wales, which was 55.2% at the time of the census. The level of unemployment was 2.9%, and this was correspondingly lower than the average for Wales of 3.5%. There was a higher percentage of students, both economically active and inactive, living in Ceredigion than nationally at the time of the census; 16.6% compared with 7.4% across Wales.
- ◆ The Census 2001 recorded that 43% of the population of Ceredigion, who were aged three and over, could either speak, read or write Welsh. This was higher than the average for Wales of 16.3%.
- ◆ The Youth Justice Board summary of YOT performance against the key performance indicators for April 2005-March 2006 awarded Ceredigion YOT a performance level of 2.

## Scoring summary

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

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

### Overall assessment

The Ceredigion YOT had only been established in April 2005, having been disaggregated from the former Mid Wales YOT made up of Ceredigion and Powys. The YOT had made significant progress since then. It had established the Management Board, chaired by the Chief Executive of the authority, and had appointed a number of new staff including the YOT manager who started in July 2005. The YOT manager was responsible for the operational management of the team, but also made a significant contribution to the development of strategy by the Management Board. Furthermore, the YOT was providing a range of valuable services for children and young people in Ceredigion.

We felt that this was both a strength and an area for improvement. It was a strength in the sense that significant development had taken place over a relatively short period of time, and an area for improvement owing to the fact that further progress was required to meet minimum national standards in some key areas. Examples of these included developing the effectiveness of the Management Board to ensure that resources were targeted effectively, and improving practice in the context of the management and Risk of Harm, compliance with statutory orders, and offence analysis and impact on the victim. However, given the context, this was not unexpected. Nevertheless, we found that the YOT had enthusiastic and committed staff with the capacity to improve at both management and operational levels.

We saw examples of very good work and individuals of ability and potential during our inspection. However, there were some gaps at a strategic level involving the use of performance management information and the services provided by health and education in particular, and probation to a lesser extent. These needed to be addressed since they impacted on the volume and quality of services available to children and young people. It was also apparent that the balance between preventative work and work with statutory orders needed to be reconsidered. In our view a significant proportion of the YOT's resources

were being channelled into work with children and young people at risk of offending, reprimands and final warnings, to the possible detriment of other work.

The Management Board, through its various multi-agency partnerships and connections within the authority, was well placed to take the service forward. However, it needed to take a more strategic approach to the development of the YOT, using performance management information to monitor the YOT's work, and ensuring that partners were not only connected but fulfilling their statutory responsibilities to the required standards.

### **Diversity issues**

The Youth Justice Plan 2006/2007 recognised that Ceredigion was ranked fourth in Wales with regard to the number of Welsh speakers. The 2001 Census found that 43% of people over three years of age could speak, read or write Welsh. However, the plan did not address the fact that the Welsh language had a significant place in both primary and secondary schools and youth work in the area, and was the main language in many of the smaller villages and rural communities. This was significant not only for Welsh speaking children and young people but also those who with their parents/carers were new to the area and perhaps not aware of this situation.

Whilst recognising that bilingualism was a very significant dimension of service delivery, we found that the YOT, whilst having a minority of Welsh speaking staff, was not representative of the local population in terms of language and culture. Furthermore, we found no evidence that staff had received any training with regard to the implications of delivering services to children and young people in such an area from two perspectives. Given the culture of the YOT service, children and young people with Welsh as their preferred language had to 'opt in' to a Welsh speaking service, whilst children and young people with little understanding of the Welsh language could experience great difficulty in adapting to both school and community activities resulting in possible exclusion and an increased risk of offending. We noted that the number of children and young people in the case sample receiving YOT services were from this latter group who sometimes found difficulty in accessing mainstream services to meet their particular needs. This had been recognised as an issue by the YOT and preventative services had been developed to meet this challenge.

Ceredigion had a predominantly white population above the Welsh average, and a percentage of Asian or Asian British residents below the national average. In addition within this relatively small geographical area there were two universities that brought in an additional population of approximately 8,500 students representing a range of cultures, and a transient holiday population. These groups did not appear to impact significantly on the YOT's workload but Aberystwyth University students did

provide significant support by providing volunteers through the 'Dim Problem' Volunteer Agency.

During the inspection we found that there was no YOT strategy or policy for working with black and minority ethnic children and young people and their parent/carers in place, although we were provided with a copy of the YOT Managers' Cymru Policy dated July 2006, and the Ceredigion Race Relations Consultation Plan 2005-2008. The latter, together with the Social Services Training Plan, contained proposals for training on diversity, but to date from the information provided we noted that YOT staff had not attended any such training.

## Key statistics

File reading statistic	YOT file read score	Average for phase two YOTs	Range for phase two YOTs	YJB targets
	(% cases)			
Initial assessment completed in accordance with national standards requirements:				
– timeliness	83%	79%	41-100%	
– adequate quality	74%	68%	36-93%	
Full Risk of Harm to others completed on relevant cases	60%	62%	0-100%	
Evidence of management oversight in Risk of Harm cases	100%	40%	0-100%	
Initial supervision plan meets the content requirements of national standards and contain specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bounded objective	88%	27%	0-100%	100% <sup>(1)</sup>
Frequency of appointments arranged broadly conform to national standards, to the requirements of order/licence, and to any Risk of Harm considerations	87%	79%	45-100%	
Judgements about acceptability/unacceptability of absences are appropriate	54%	74%	40-100%	
Breach/recall action has taken place, if required, within the national standards timescale	25%	56%	0-100%	
No evidence of any criminal activity during the course of the order	70%	70%	6-48%	
Action taken for children considered vulnerable to harm from self and others was appropriate.	100%	66%	20-100%	
Effective action is taken where there is evidence of educational difficulties	100%	66%	33-100%	90% <sup>(2)</sup>
Appropriate referrals are made in cases of:				
– physical health	100%	70%	0-100%	
– mental/emotional health	63%	70%	33-100%	100% <sup>(3)</sup>
– substance misuse	80%	73%	33-100%	100% <sup>(4)</sup>
Victim was consulted about restorative/reparative justice work with child or young person	55%	53%	13-84%	
Assessment of overall quality of pre-sentence reports	69%	50%	0-76%	

- (1) Relates to detention and training plans.
- (2) In full-time employment, training and education.
- (3) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services referrals.
- (4) Screening and referrals.

## Key findings

- ◆ **Management** – We found a YOT with committed and innovative staff and a developing management structure that had good potential. The Management Board was well connected into various partnership arrangements and also internally within Ceredigion County Council. However, there were issues regarding core funding, commitment of partner agencies and the use and status of the Welsh language and diversity in general that required closer attention. The need to develop capacity with regard to a more strategic focus, based on robust performance management information, was being addressed.

The YOT's operational management had made a good start in establishing a sound staffing structure and on the whole was delivering some very good services. However, consideration should be given to changing the balance between the resources applied to preventative work and diversion, and more serious statutory cases.

- ◆ **Work in the courts** – Relationships between the YOT and the Ceredigion Youth Court were very good and a protocol had been agreed and signed in September 2006. This complemented a more detailed service level agreement covering the Dyfed Powys courts that at the time of the inspection had not been agreed and signed. The quality of work in the courts, including the pre-sentence reports examined, was good although there was room for improvement with regard to some aspects such as offence analysis and impact on the victim.

- ◆ **Work with children and young people in the community** – There was an emerging authority-wide approach to diverting children and young people from offending and a number of activities available for this purpose. However, we felt that the additional programmes available for reprimands and final warnings were excessive.

Although we found some good quality work with regard to assessment and individual work with children and young people, management and Risk of Harm required attention. We felt that staff needed to be more proactive in ensuring that children and young people on statutory orders were not only supported to improve compliance, but also understood the meaning of these orders, and were fully aware that action would follow a failure to comply.

- ◆ **Work with children and young people subject to drug treatment and testing orders** – In the small sample, the YOT worked effectively with children and young people before and during the custodial part of their sentence but there were areas requiring improvement in respect of supervision in the community. Contact levels with children and young people and their parents/carers during the custodial parts of their sentence were good, and the YOT had facilitated transport so that parents/carers could attend meetings.

Arrangements had been made for one young person to communicate by telephone with his parents in India. Work started in custody on offending behaviour, education, training, careers and health needed to be followed through more effectively in the community. In addition judgements about non-compliance whilst on licence needed further attention.

- ◆ ***Victims and restorative justice*** – The victim liaison officer post became a full-time post in July 2006, and was beginning to make an impact. Good working relationships were being developed with victims, the YOT police officer, restorative justice coordinator and case managers. Previously work with victims had concentrated on reprimands and final warnings but this had now been extended to referral orders. We found that systems and procedures were now beginning to be put in place, but the YOT needed to be more effective in contacting victims to establish their views and to prepare impact statements. Greater effectiveness in raising children and young people’s awareness of the impact of crime on the victim was needed.

The YOT had recruited and trained suitable volunteers to run the referral panel that met in convenient places throughout the county. The YOT also had in place direct and indirect restorative activities and worked imaginatively with both individual and corporate victims, and in one case a community where a number of people had had their cars damaged by children and young people from that community. We felt that there was good potential for development, but also that clearer criteria were required regarding the role of the victim liaison officer and Victim Support services.

## Recommendations

*The Chief Executive of Ceredigion County Council should ensure that:*

- ◇ an action plan is devised to address the recommendations of this inspection report and forwarded to the lead inspector within three months of the publication of the report
- ◇ the Management Board is properly constituted, supported effectively by partner agencies and new members are properly inducted and prepared for their role
- ◇ the Management Board secures funding to increase its strategic role and operational capacity
- ◇ the YOT is proactive with regard to the Ceredigion Welsh Language Scheme
- ◇ the YOT and partner agencies promote efficient service delivery by reviewing and developing protocols, policies and service level agreements with regard to staffing and providing core funding and resources for the YOT
- ◇ the YOT office has sufficient space and is suitably equipped, resourced and located to meet the needs of the service throughout the authority area
- ◇ the Management Board develops its performance management framework to monitor and review the implementation of the Youth Justice Plan and inform the strategic direction of the YOT
- ◇ the Management Board explores the allocation of resources across prevention and intervention with children and young people who have offended to ensure that it is proportionate to Risk of Harm and likelihood of offending.

*The YOT manager should ensure that:*

- ◇ all staff are consistently and regularly supervised and appraised within a performance management framework
- ◇ all staff and volunteers are Criminal Records Bureau checked and that these checks are renewed every three years
- ◇ interventions undertaken with children and young people are informed by thorough assessments, completed to a satisfactory standard and undertaken by a range of suitably trained staff
- ◇ the YOT's risk policy is fully implemented and Risk of Harm assessments are completed on all relevant cases, regularly reviewed and endorsed by managers as appropriate
- ◇ the quality of pre-sentence reports is improved to contain a full analysis of the offending behaviour, differentiate between Risk of Harm and likelihood of reoffending, and address the impact on the victim
- ◇ in partnership with the local education authority and training organisations the quality of education and training plans for children

and young people subject to detention and training orders is improved

- ◆ interventions are formally evaluated to assess their effectiveness and used to improve practice and policy
- ◆ staff have the knowledge and skills to recognise health needs and make general health and mental health referrals.

*Partner organisations should ensure that:*

- ◆ representation on the Management Board is at a sufficient level of seniority for effective decision making
- ◆ direct financial and indirect contributions to the work of the YOT are reviewed to ensure that these are adequate to meet the YOT's statutory responsibilities
- ◆ strategic plans link effectively, in operational terms, to the Youth Justice Plan 2006/2007.

*Social Services and Housing should ensure that:*

- ◆ clear and close working relationships with the YOT are maintained so that children and young people are safeguarded
- ◆ a range of suitable accommodation for children and young people is available.

*Dyfed Powys Police should ensure that:*

- ◆ it improves its efficiency of informing the YOT of its decision to issue a final warning within one day of deciding to do so.

*The Local Health Board should ensure that:*

- ◆ the YOT Management Board has a nominated health representative of sufficient status and authority to fulfil this statutory role
- ◆ the YOT has an appropriate level of specialist and dedicated health staff input to its team to fulfil its duties and responsibilities and is also able to access other specialist provision as required
- ◆ these health arrangements are underpinned by written and agreed protocols.

*The Local Education Authority should ensure that:*

- ◆ vulnerable children and young people receive their statutory entitlement to education through a diverse range of places available to meet their individual needs.

*The Careers Wales should ensure that:*

- ◆ it fulfils its existing service level agreement with the YOT and makes sure that suitable training and work placements are available
- ◆ children and young people over 16 years of age who offend are engaged in training and employment opportunities.

# 1. MANAGEMENT

## 1.1 Leadership

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

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

Ceredigion YOT was established on 1 April 2005, having previously been part of the Mid Wales YOT that had also included Powys. It was located within the Children and Families Division of the County Council SSD and was connected to the Children's Services planning arrangements and both the Community Safety and Young People's Planning Partnerships.

Ceredigion YOT held its first meetings of the Ceredigion Youth Offending Team Shadow Management Board in February and March 2005, and the first meeting of the Management Board in April 2005. It has continued to meet since then on a regular basis chaired by the Chief Executive of Ceredigion County Council.

The Management Board confirmed its membership and adopted its Terms of Reference in April 2005. In addition, the YJB Regional Manager for Wales met the Management Board in July 2005 to discuss progress and expectations against the standards contained in the YJB 'Sustaining the Success' Extending the Guidance *Establishing Youth Offending Teams* October 2004.

The first Youth Justice Plan 2005/2006 was submitted on time and approved by the YJB in August 2005. The YOT manager took up his duties in July 2005.

### ***Strengths:***

- ◆ The Management Board was chaired by the Chief Executive of Ceredigion County Council and met on a bi-monthly basis. It had had an appropriate level of representation from partner organisations (see first bullet point below under areas for improvement). Through the Chief Executive the Youth Justice Plan was integrated with the plans of the wider council.
- ◆ Members of the Management Board were represented on the Community Safety Partnership, both the Children and Young People's Partnerships and other relevant groups that had the potential to enhance the work of the YOT.
- ◆ The YOT Manager was provided with support and guidance by the Management Board to ensure that the Annual Youth Justice Plan was

submitted on time. It also had in place arrangements for monitoring progress through the half-year review of its Business Plan, and review of the quarterly returns to the YJB.

- ◆ The Management Board had successfully attracted additional resources for developing the YOT from the YJB, WAG (Cymorth) and Safer Communities Fund.

***Areas for improvement:***

- ◆ Although all the statutory partners had been represented on the Management Board, education and health in particular were not meeting their responsibilities. At the time of the inspection the Management Board did not have nominated health representatives to replace two members who had or were in the process of leaving. In practice we found that there was not a functioning health representative on the Management Board.
- ◆ Attendance at meetings was on the whole quite good, but there were a minority, including the Director of Social Services and Probation Service representative, who frequently missed meetings.
- ◆ We found during interview that despite receiving a YJB induction booklet, some members of the Management Board did not appear to fully understand what was expected of them which suggested the need for further developmental work in this area.
- ◆ Members of the Management Board were not consistently making the best use of their influence at a strategic level to ensure better quality services for children and young people from their own mainstream agencies. In this context education was unable to provide the statutory minimum education for children and young people excluded from school, and health did not have arrangements in place with the YOT to assess and provide support for meeting the general health needs of children and young people, and CAMHS provided only a minimum service.
- ◆ There was a lack of knowledge about the functioning of the YOT at both officer and member levels in the local authority. Understanding YOT issues was crucial to the development of an agreed strategic vision, backed by an adequately resourced operational plan that was monitored and reviewed regularly.
- ◆ Health issues did not appear to have been a regular item on the Management Board agenda. CAMHS had been discussed and an Operational Protocol agreed in May 2006, but the unmet physical health needs, as mentioned in the Youth Justice Plan, did not appear to have been addressed specifically.
- ◆ The status of the Welsh language was not being given equal status in the YOT. It did not comply with the authority's Welsh Language Scheme, did not reflect education and youth service policies, or the linguistic profile of the Ceredigion area. Whilst having available some

documentation in Welsh and some staff fluent in the language, the predominant culture of the YOT was English.

- ◆ The capacity and use of performance management information by the Management Board was not sufficient to inform both the strategic direction and operational needs of the YOT.

**Good  
practice**

The Management Board met with the YJB Regional Manager (Wales) in July 2005 based on the 'Sustaining the Success' Extending the Guidance *Establishing Youth Offending Teams* issued by the YJB October 2004. The meeting examined achievements and areas for development, and concluded with recommendations for action and introduction of the self-assessment template.

## 1.2 Partnership and resources

***Key judgement:***

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

From its formation in April 2005, the Ceredigion YOT had completed two Annual Youth Justice Plans covering the periods 2005/2006, and 2006/2007. Both plans emphasised the importance of working together to prevent and divert children and young people from offending. The aspirations of the plan had been discussed fully by the Management Board and practical support had been provided to develop prevention and diversionary services within the YOT management structure.

The Management Board had intended to develop its prevention services earlier in 2006 from core YJB funding. However in January 2006, faced with a reduction of the core grant, this development had to be postponed. Alternative funding was obtained from the Community Safety Partnership, and WAG (Cymorth). This had enabled a part-time prevention manager's post to be established from October 2006. The YOTs commitment to this approach could be evidenced from the fact approximately 30% of its total budget had been committed to prevention services for 2006/2007.

The Assistant Director of Children and Families Services represented the YOT on the Ceredigion Safeguarding Group (Strategic), and the YOT manager would be attending the Ceredigion Safeguarding Group (Operational) which was scheduled to meet for the first time in February 2007.

***Strengths:***

- ◆ The Youth Justice Plan had been submitted to timescale following consideration by the Management Board and subsequently approved by the YJB. The plan reflected the contribution of partner agencies.

- ◆ The YOT had successfully achieved short-term funding from the YJB and the Safer Communities Fund to develop its prevention services and from WAG (Cymorth) to develop parenting work.
- ◆ A multi-agency Youth Crime and Antisocial Behaviour Strategy for Ceredigion had been agreed for the period 2005-2008. This strategy linked with other key strategies such as The Community Safety Strategy, the Health and Social Care and Well-Being Strategy, Education and Behavioural Support Plan and the YOT Annual Plan. It also contained operational criteria for YIP referrals and arrangements for dealing with individual cases. The strategy provided a good example of how planning could be coordinated at both strategic and operational levels.
- ◆ The Ceredigion YOT had developed a Prevent and Deter Strategy that included a range of structured activities, schools-based programmes, YIP, and a rapid response/crisis intervention service.
- ◆ The child protection coordinator for the authority normally attended local MAPPA meetings, but the YOT attended appropriate cases and at the right level as one of the agencies under a 'duty to cooperate'. The Pembrokeshire YOT manager attended the Dyfed Powys MAPPA Group as a representative of the YOT managers in the area and reported back directly and through the two-monthly meetings. This arrangement recognised the geography of the area and the need to make the most efficient use of the management resources available.
- ◆ The YOT manager was a member of the Prolific and other Priority Offenders Multi-agency Prevent and Deter Panel, the Young People's Partnership, the WAG (Cymorth) Planning Group, and the Social Services Children and Families Management Group as well as other relevant working groups.
- ◆ The YOT had a part-time substance misuse worker employed by Prism (SUDDS). This member of staff was based in the YOT office on one day per week and worked in the community on behalf of the YOT a further one and a half days. This post focused on a target group of children and young people aged between 10 and 17 years who had been referred due to concerns about substance or alcohol abuse. Following an assessment of their vulnerability, these children and young people were offered appropriate advice and guidance and participated in suitable one-to-one work, either with the substance misuse worker or another member of YOT staff guided by the worker, depending upon the seriousness of the case. The input of the substance misuse worker was evaluated for each individual case on a 12 weekly basis as part of the normal Asset review. The SLA also had arrangements in place for monitoring and evaluating the service.
- ◆ The YOT had in place a Parenting Scheme and had appointed a parenting coordinator funded through Cymorth (WAG). She had previously worked for the YOT for several months prior to Cymorth funding and was involved in establishing the scheme. We were

impressed with the quality of a leaflet produced for parents/carers advertising the next parenting course.

- ◆ The scheme was funded for one year, from 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007. Cymorth provided 80% of the funds and the YOT the other 20%. It was planned, during a 12 month period to provide one-to-one support for 30 parents/carers and three parenting groups for six parents/carers lasting 12 weeks. The parents/carers qualified for referral if they had children aged between 10 and 18 years of age. Groups were run separately for parents/carers and their children, but could be brought together if considered appropriate to break down barriers and improve communication. The SLA covered mutual responsibilities of Cymorth and the YOT plus arrangements for monitoring and evaluation.
- ◆ Signed and dated SLAs were in place with probation, police, CAMHS, Area 43 Scheme for ISSP referrals, Prism (SUDDS), Careers Wales and Cwmni Arad Goch Drama Company. They had also been reviewed or were due for a planned review in accordance with their individual SLAs. Others were in the process of being developed with education and the youth service.

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

- ◆ The YOT was represented on a number of other relevant groups and initiatives, but these links appeared to be informal and did not always have clear processes for linking with the Management Board at a strategic level. Minutes of the meetings did not provide any evidence of reports to or from these organisations.
- ◆ The funding arrangements for the YOT were restricting its development. The Management Board had accepted the business case for increased resources but had not been able to achieve this from its partner agencies. The funding and indirect resources received from health, education and probation were in particular need of review since they were either difficult to quantify or did not meet the required level.
- ◆ The health contribution to the YOT was 1.47%, whilst the YJB recommendation was 5.80% of the total budget. A CAMHS protocol was in place and effective from 1 April 2006 providing a minimum level service of telephone contact for advice with regard to Tier 1 cases and a monthly meeting with the CPN to discuss Tier 2 and 3 cases. This was not sufficient for the needs of the YOT and required review since it failed to cover referrals for psychiatric and psychological assessments. There were a low number of referrals, which could be explained by screening processes not being sufficiently robust, and YOT staff not being suitably trained and skilled in recognising and making mental health referrals.
- ◆ There were no specialist nursing services available to meet the basic health needs of children and young people referred to the YOT. Health

services were not meeting their statutory responsibilities. This issue did not appear to have been addressed by the Management Board.

- ◆ There were no agreements in place for the funding of seconded and replacement health service staff, or any protocols addressing their roles, responsibilities and training needs. Furthermore, there were no agreements covering which screening, assessment and intervention processes would take place. The LHB and YOT also needed to identify the channels through which workers would liaise with other health professionals, such as primary care and other health settings, and review its information sharing protocol.
- ◆ The YOT did not have an agreed SLA in place with education, but had been working on a draft agreement since July 2005, but this had not been finalised. At 3.5 hours per week, education resources were inadequate and further resources needed to be made available to ensure that children and young people received their entitlement to education, tailored to their assessed individual needs.
- ◆ The youth service and the YOT had agreed a final draft Memorandum of Understanding as a basis for further work in July 2006. The memorandum recognised that there had been an exchange of staff and expertise between the two services in the past but developments had been restricted due to a lack of a formal agreement and resources. It contained proposals for further development, including collaboration to secure external funding, and arrangements for a service review on a quarterly basis. We were informed that the youth service had no additional resources to support community-based interventions to tackle antisocial behaviour.
- ◆ The probation contribution was based on a figure for the former Mid Wales YOT and had not been reviewed since being set up initially in 1999/2000. We found it very difficult to establish the exact nature of the contribution, since it included other elements such as management, administration, unpaid work, befriending and other probation services as well as the seconded PO's salary and on costs.
- ◆ The SSD had established substantive and therefore permanent social worker posts in the YOT. However, this arrangement did not appear to be covered by any SLA outlining this or the SSD's overall contribution to the YOT.
- ◆ We found that the YOT office accommodation was insufficient to enable the service to meet its workload commitments and provide support for staff. The interview facilities in the YOT offices were inadequate. There was also a need to have interview and contact facilities closer to the child or young person's home.

## Good practice

The YOT had developed a Multi-Agency Youth Crime and Antisocial Behaviour Strategy for the period 2005-2008, which contained the basis of its successful bid to the YJB for funding for its YIP project. The strategy took into consideration the statutory partners' plans and strategies and aimed to address: offending and reoffending, anti-social behaviour, disengagement with education and employment and risk of being socially disengaged.

In addition, the strategy covered criteria for referral, and the referral process and allocation. It was planned that each child or young person accepted would receive five hours of structured activities per week for a period of six months.

Monthly meetings involving a range of agencies were put in place to allocate children and young people and monitor the project's effectiveness. The YIP Project became operational in August 2006. We found evidence that it was dealing effectively with referrals and children and young people were beginning to participate in the programme, but it was too early to measure whether it was successful or not.

### 1.3

#### Staff supervision, development and training

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

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

The YOT manager had, with the support of the Management Board, been able to appoint additional staff and had established a staffing structure divided into four specialist areas covering court, supervision, information, diversionary and prevention services.

The responsibilities for supervising staff were shared between the YOT manager and senior practitioner, with line management to the senior practitioner. The YOT manager in turn was held accountable by the Assistant Director, Children and Families Services.

##### **Strengths:**

- ◆ Arrangements were in place for all YOT staff to have formal monthly supervision with their line manager in line with the standards contained in the Social Services Staff Supervision Policy. The YOT used a standard format covering an agreed agenda. There was clear evidence from reading the supervision records, and from interviews with staff, that supervision was taking place both formally and informally and was valued. Supervision sessions were documented, dated and signed by both parties and followed an agreed list of agenda items – case and other work areas, development and training needs, team and organisational issues, workload management and

any other business. Actions were identified together with personal responsibility for their implementation within agreed timescales.

- ◆ The primary mental health workers had regular clinical group supervision for nurses, peer supervision and management supervision with their line manager every two months. They were also able to access psychotherapy supervision as part of their contribution to the YOT Parenting Programme.
- ◆ The YOT had a system in place through the senior practitioner for gatekeeping PSR reports, and also for monitoring case recording through regular meetings between staff and the information officer. This work was then reinforced through individual supervision sessions to improve both practice and the quality of information provided quarterly for the Management Board and the YJB.
- ◆ A range of staff with suitable qualifications and experience had been recruited by the YOT. During the last year it had developed its structure and reviewed staff roles, thereby ensuring that qualified social work staff were accountable for all statutory cases and court work and other roles were more clearly defined.
- ◆ There was a positive attitude to training, with staff having been seconded for DipSW and the Certificate of Effective Practice training. They were also able to access training provided by the local authority, the YJB and other external specialist courses when available. At the time of the inspection the YOT senior practitioner was due to start a relevant MSc course at Swansea University. Training needs were discussed and agreed in supervision, and were intended to inform the new Personal Performance Progress Plans adopted by the County Council as part of the annual appraisal process. At the time of the inspection these were not in place but training was being cascaded from the authority's senior management but would be available to the YOT in the near future.
- ◆ Referral panels and Appropriate Adult volunteers were appropriately trained to undertake their roles through basic induction and core training, followed by ongoing support and a training element in quarterly meetings.

***Areas for improvement:***

- ◆ The appraisal system and Personal Performance Progress Plans had not as yet been implemented.
- ◆ Formal training had not been undertaken in the implications of the Welsh language and culture, and diversity in general.
- ◆ The YOT had a system in place for ensuring that all staff and volunteers had a current CRB check and that these were reviewed every three years. However, on examination of the records it was found that there were some gaps and these were brought to the attention of the YOT manager for immediate action.

- ◆ Whilst arrangements were in place for supervision, there were some significant gaps for the administrative staff in particular.
- ◆ We also found during the inspection that one member of staff appeared to be responsible for training and carrying out direct intervention work with children and young people.
- ◆ Whilst staff interviewed demonstrated a high level of commitment to their work, they also reported feeling stressed from working excessive hours.

### **OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT**

***This section is judged adequate.***

## 2.

## WORK IN THE COURTS

### **Key judgement:**

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

The Youth Court covered a large geographical and mainly rural area. Children and young people who had offended were often isolated and faced with difficult and expensive journeys to attend courts and to meet with YOT staff. The area's population was changing through inward migration. Significant numbers of children and young people from outside the authority were being placed with foster families in Ceredigion. This was placing pressure on education and health services in particular but, at the time of the inspection, did not appear to be significant for the YOT.

Ceredigion Youth Court was held weekly at alternative venues: Aberystwyth in the North and Cardigan in the South, separated by a distance of over 40 miles. In addition the nearest Crown Courts were based in Swansea and Carmarthen and could involve return journeys of up to 180 miles.

### **Strengths:**

- ◆ A protocol had been agreed with Ceredigion Youth Court in September 2006 covering the work of the court and in particular the role and responsibilities of YOT staff. However, the Dyfed Powys Youth Court Overarching Agreement had not yet been ratified.
- ◆ Servicing the Youth Court was considered to be a top priority for the YOT team, as was reflected in the positive responses received during the inspection about this aspect of its work. The YOT had a positive relationship with all court legal advisers, CPS solicitors and others involved in the court processes.
- ◆ The YOT had taken into consideration the difficulties associated with access and, as a consequence, arranged transportation for children and young people when necessary, and also worked with them in one-to-one contact covered by a Lone Working Policy. In addition, following representations from the YOT, the Youth Court had changed one of its court days from a Friday to a Thursday to improve access for children and young people and to enable the YOT to achieve national standards for appointments
- ◆ Bail and support packages suitable for children and young people were provided by the YOT and in appropriate circumstances through the Social Services fostering services. This was rarely used but was

available if required and had been used once since the YOT had been established.

- ◆ We found that credible community disposals and ISSPs were made available to the court and valued. This was reinforced by the availability of an ISSP worker in court to explain the proposed programme to magistrates.
- ◆ Experienced staff were provided by the YOT to ensure adequate representation to scheduled courts in its area. In addition, an Appropriate Adult was also available when required through the YOT duty system and the Appropriate Adult coordinator.
- ◆ Staff attended and contributed to the Youth Court User Groups held on a six monthly basis.
- ◆ Court duty officers attended Youth Court magistrates' meetings for general discussion on the work of the YOT, reoffending patterns and sentencing trends.
- ◆ The YOT had participated in court promotion days and had held training events involving magistrates and referral panel volunteers that had been very successful. Magistrates and volunteers were pleased to learn more about their respective roles.

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

- ◆ Although Saturday and bank holiday courts were rare, there were no formal arrangements in place to cover court on these days. In addition, there were no arrangements in place to cover basic requirements such as office facilities for interview, with phone, fax and computers available and linked to the YOT systems. Carmarthenshire YOT provided an out-of-hours service covering special courts on week ends and bank holidays, but this was being reviewed due to the time and distances involved.
- ◆ The YOT provision for the Crown Court was not subject to any agreement. A protocol did not exist for the Crown Court and the YOT did not attend the Crown Court User Group.
- ◆ At the time of the inspection, the YOT had in place a range of draft leaflets covering court orders and YOT services available in English only but we were informed that these were being translated into Welsh. These needed to be formally adopted and translated and reproduced in Welsh to comply with Statute, the authority's Welsh Language Scheme and the needs of this Welsh speaking area.
- ◆ An informal arrangement existed for the probation area court duty officer to inform the YOT when children and young people were due to appear before the magistrates' court. However, this was not covered by a protocol or SLA between the YOT, probation area and the adult court.

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strengths:**

- ◇ Court duty officers were experienced and fully conversant with the role expected of them. They saw children and young people and their families before the hearing and tried to make them feel as comfortable as possible with the court process, through discussion and providing them with appropriate information about sentencing options, and the contents and recommendations of their PSRs.
- ◇ Children and young people and their parents/carers were interviewed by court duty officers immediately following sentence and provided with information about the sentence passed by the court and the date of their first appointment.
- ◇ Post-sentencing cell interviews, including assessment for vulnerability, were routinely conducted on the rare occasions when children and young people were sentenced or remanded into custody, and the information passed to the establishment within the national standard timescale.

**Good practice**

Through the Court Users Group the YOT had a very good working relationship with the Youth Court. Following representations, the court had agreed to change its court day from Friday to Thursday to maximise its support for the YOT and in general had adopted a positive approach to resolving operational problems concerning court practice. In addition, magistrates had been encouraged to attend a successful joint training event with referral panel members.

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strengths:**

- ◇ The YOT court duty officers covered the routinely held Youth Courts and also emergency/special courts held during the normal working week to ensure that children and young people could be properly assessed and information provided for the court to consider.
- ◇ The role of Appropriate Adults was undertaken by trained and CRB checked workers provided by the YOT. They worked closely with the

police to ensure that children and young people were supported in police custody and returned safely to their homes. The YOT was planning to improve its effectiveness in this area by increasing the number of volunteers trained and available out of hours.

- ◆ The YOT had a positive relationship with the local police and a low rate of reoffending on bail. Bail packages were available including remand fostering in suitable cases.
- ◆ PSRs were completed as quickly as possible so that time on bail was reduced. The Ceredigion YOT operated to the standards contained in the Dyfed Powys PSR Protocol signed by the CPS, police, probation area and the four YOTs in the area.
- ◆ An ISSP support worker had only recently started work at the time of the inspection with a brief to further enhance the availability of ISSPs and reduce the likelihood of further offending.

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

- ◆ We found that there were no formal arrangements in place to identify and alert the YOT of children and young people at risk of secure or custodial remand. Being a relatively small authority, the YOT depended upon informal processes and personal relationships between staff representing their respective agencies. This appeared to have worked but, nevertheless, we felt that it should be formalised and not left to informal processes that were dependent on some key individuals.
- ◆ The YOT was in the process of developing a joint family placement proposal with Social Services (Children and Families Services) to ensure a better range of suitable accommodation for children and young people on bail and remanded to the care of the local authority.

#### **Key judgement:**

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

#### **Strengths:**

- ◆ Leaflets were available for children and young people and their parents/carers with information regarding the court process, including PSRs, and were generally issued and explained by the court duty officer at the first hearing.
- ◆ The YOT, through the senior practitioner, had a gatekeeping process in place for all court reports to ensure compliance with national standards. Efforts were made to make sure that PSRs were appropriate, factually correct, impartial, and free of jargon and discriminating language. The latter was found to be sufficient in all of the PSR sample inspected. Furthermore, 92% of the reports inspected were considered to be factually accurate and based on information

from all relevant sources. They were also understandable to the child or young person in 85% of the sample.

- ◆ All staff responsible for writing PSRs used the NACRO PSR Guidance materials. Reports were completed to national standard timeframes in 92% of cases inspected and all were based on an Asset assessment. The child or young person was interviewed at least once for the specific purpose of the report in all of PSR sample, as were parents/carers.
- ◆ Proposals in the reports were considered to be appropriate and commensurate and contained a clear proposal for sentencing in all reports inspected. The impact on the victim was sufficiently addressed in 73% of the PSRs inspected.

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

- ◆ We found that the PSR did not include a sufficient analysis of the offence as distinct from a description in 54% of the sample, and the reports did not sufficiently assess the child or young person's level of maturity to understand the seriousness of the offence in 50% of the PSR sample.
- ◆ The child or young person's vulnerability of RoH from self and others had been addressed in 38% of the sample, and reports differentiated between risk of offending and RoH in 62% of the sample.
- ◆ The YOT did not have a process for evaluating feedback from court users about its services. Opportunities for further use of gatekeeping were not being utilised.

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

***This section is judged as good.***

### **3. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY**

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

***Key judgement:***

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

Ceredigion YOT covers a large rural geographical area with limited public transport. The rural nature of the area was therefore a challenge and had been taken into consideration by the YOT with regard to the deployment of staff and resources, and cooperation with a range of agencies.

The Youth Justice Plan had adopted a twin track approach of prevention and intensive supervision. The YOT had developed an Antisocial Behaviour Strategy for 2005-2008 to maximise its capacity to reduce the number of children and young people appearing before the Youth Court. It had also, through various packages including the ISSP, developed the intensive supervision of high-risk young offenders, to reduce the risk of further offending, and to increase community safety.

***Strengths:***

- ◇ A Multi-Agency Youth Crime and Antisocial Behaviour Strategy for Ceredigion had been agreed for the period 2005-2008. This strategy linked with other key strategies, and contained operational criteria for YIP referrals and arrangements for dealing with individual cases.
- ◇ The YOT had developed a Prevent and Deter Strategy that included a Direct Intervention Service responsible for the development of structured activity programmes aimed at diverting children and young people from offending. Activities included community work, drama, dance, football and outdoor pursuits. These were reinforced by a range of preventative services plus YIP and ISSP.
- ◇ Schools-based programmes (DEWIS) were aimed at the prevention of exclusion and to challenge antisocial and offending behaviour. The programme worked with groups of children and young people in the school setting who met to explore their hopes, dreams and aspirations and were also able to engage and reflect in drama activities.
- ◇ A YIP programme for 30 children and young people, funded through the YJB, had only just started at the time of the inspection and had engaged with eight. This linked with the youth service and was able to access resources and participate in the County Youth Forum. A 'Young Fire Fighters Course' had been piloted in August 2006, which had been very successful. An individual mentoring programme was

being developed. The YIP was also able to access the Urdd (Welsh Youth Organisation) camp facilities based in the county. Plans were being considered with the Sports and Leisure Department of the council to provide children and young people with a 'passport to leisure'.

- ◆ A rapid response/crisis intervention service for children and young people was identified through the YOT prevention programme. Funded by the Safer Communities Fund, this service was aimed at the prevention of offending and further social exclusion in the short-term and the re-introduction to community resources in the longer term.
- ◆ Processes were in place for considering YIP referrals and allocation every quarter through the YIP Strategy Group. Children and young people were assessed using Onset, but this was at an early stage of development. The YOT made appropriate use of preventative activities as well as reprimands and final warnings with interventions when an appropriate risk had been identified. In this context the YOT had a clear commitment to restorative justice practice and to resolve issues arising from crime as close to the local community as possible.

### Good practice

We were informed of one young person who had been engaged over many months in improving a recreational area in his home village.

Also, a group of young people who had been damaging cars in their village were then engaged in reparation with their local community.

In both examples offences had been committed locally and reparation was visible and successful.

- ◆ The YOT and the youth service were jointly planning a research project covering a specific geographical area of Aberystwyth. The research would involve children and young people and consider the factors contributing to offending and antisocial behaviour. It would also look at ways of addressing these issues.
- ◆ We found that assessments took into account specific needs in relation to diversity in 95% of the case sample.
- ◆ Where children and young people were considered vulnerable to harm from self or others, appropriate action had been taken in 86% of the cases where this had been identified, and in all of these cases the action was considered appropriate.

## Good practice

The YOT had in place a summer creative preventative programme in partnership with Cwmni Theatr Arad Goch (an independent professional drama group), and Ysgol Ceredigion (a local authority supported performing arts group) and funded by Community Safety Partnership.

The scheme offered places for 12 young people aged from 13 to 16 years who had been involved in and/or were at risk of offending. Following a weekly drama programme arranged by the YOT during the year, the young people were referred to Cwmni Arad Goch and, during a ten day period, created and performed in July 2006 an original drama called 'Fairy-Tale Cake' to a live audience. In this production the young people had reflected sensitively about such issues as crime, violence, alcohol and abuse.

The project was evaluated by the partners and was assessed to have been a resounding success. The young people involved had reduced their offending and attitude to offending, were more confident, had improved self-esteem and showed that they were far more capable than they themselves thought.

Cwmni Arad Goch had been contracted through an SLA to run similar projects for the next two summer holidays.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ We found that the same children and young people could be referred to both the YIP and voluntary prevention programmes and their respective roles were not always clear.
- ◆ The YIP and prevention projects did not monitor the progress and achievements of children and young people sufficiently. However, the YOT had recognised the need to develop systems for capturing progress of children and young people in both informal and formal learning settings.
- ◆ We saw little evidence of the YOT and partner agencies working together to make best use of their resources. Several of the YOT projects such as DEWIS (Schools Project), YIP, Prevention Activities Programme and Parenting Project were not planned or coordinated effectively. A substantial amount of the preventative work came under the umbrella of the YPP, but we were unable to see how it contributed to the assessment of need or development of services for this particular group of children and young people.
- ◆ We found no empirical evidence to demonstrate the YOT's effectiveness in reducing offending and first time entrants to the criminal justice system and this needed to be addressed.

## 3.2

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

#### **Key judgement:**

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

The YOT was committed to working with children and young people and we saw some good examples of innovative and constructive work. Bearing in mind that the YOT had only been established from April 2005, and had since then been faced with a range of challenges that included the appointment of a new YOT manager and most of the staff group.

The need to coordinate and develop the YOT's early intervention services and the work of the Young People's Partnership was regarded as a priority by the YOT. We were informed that there was little tolerance of offending or antisocial behaviour in this mainly rural area, and the risks of becoming socially excluded from school and the community was therefore deemed to be high. The YOT had developed its early intervention and preventative work to respond to this.

#### **Strengths:**

- ◆ On the files we inspected 83% of assessments were completed within the timescale contained in the relevant national standard, and 74% were of adequate quality. In addition, children and young people were involved in 96% of the assessments.
- ◆ Parents/carers were involved in 90% of the assessments for children and young people under 16 years of age, and their views with regard to the child or young person's specific and individual needs was reflected in all of these cases. They were also kept informed of development throughout the order in 94% of the cases.
- ◆ The initial supervision plan met the requirements of national standards and contained SMART objectives in 88% of the case sample, and Asset was reviewed at the required intervals to inform supervision planning in 86%.
- ◆ Frequency of appointments arranged conformed to national standards and to the requirements of the order/licence and any RoH consideration in 87% of cases.
- ◆ Steps were taken in the initial supervision and training review plan to ensure that children and young people were aware of the order or licence in 88% of cases. In addition, appropriate action was taken to implement any additional conditions in two of the three cases inspected.
- ◆ Account was taken of individual needs with regard to diversity in all cases and the case supervisor actively liaised with others involved in 82% of cases.

- ◇ The child or young person completed a *What do you think?* form or an alternative in 75% of cases.
- ◇ The YOT had in place a range of direct intervention services that were used in the main by specialist staff such as the direct interventions officer and substance misuse worker, although other staff were 'trained' to undertake this work. Programmes had been developed for children and young people at risk and for offenders and addressed: Thinking Straight (offending behaviour), Properly Angry (anger management), Shoplifting and Stealing, Carrying Offensive Weapons, Choices (why drink or smoke?), Smoking Cessation, Self-Esteem, Gambling and Arson Prevention. The programmes were delivered one to one up to a maximum of ten sessions and were used to motivate change in the children and young people concerned. The YOT was seeking accreditation of these programmes from the University of Glamorgan.
- ◇ Referral orders were delivered to a good standard. Written reports were prepared for the panel that sat within 20 working days in all cases inspected. The contract was delivered to agreed requirements in four out of the six cases seen, with one ending prematurely.
- ◇ We found through the case files, interviews and direct observation that on the whole final warnings were delivered effectively, although a mixed picture. The police were not able to notify the YOT within one working day of the decision to issue a final warning. This information was communicated manually on a planned basis in the absence of a common electronic information system. Nevertheless, the YOT police officer was fully aware of the process and the delays were managed effectively.
- ◇ The YOT carried out the assessment of the child or young person within ten working days in three of the seven cases and informed the police of the assessment within 15 working days of bail in all cases. In addition, the final warning was delivered within 20 working days of decision in 86% of cases, and an intervention was delivered as part of the final warning in 71% of the sample.
- ◇ Where RoH had been identified there was evidence of management oversight and contact with Social Services (Children and Families Services) in all cases examined. Also action taken for children and young people considered vulnerable to harm from self and others was appropriate in 86% of cases inspected.
- ◇ There was no evidence of criminal activity during the course of the order in 70% of the cases inspected and the most recent Asset score showed an improvement in 57%.
- ◇ We found that the YOT had adopted a high tolerance in its approach to case management. Maximising compliance and using enforcement as a process to support was not seen as appropriate by some of the staff. Case managers were very reluctant to use breach proceedings, as this was seen in negative terms as a failure.

- ◆ Appropriate referrals were made in 80% of referrals of substance misuse.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ Case assessment evidence indicated that some members of the team were not sufficiently skilled in differentiating between assessing RoH and vulnerability. Staff had some difficulty in distinguishing between RoH and likelihood of reoffending.
- ◆ Information was not consistently recorded on Careworks or shared effectively between the case manager and a range of specialist staff.
- ◆ The case assessment analysis indicated that the case manager motivated the child or young person by reinforcing the work undertaken by others, including programmes delivered by a partner agency, in 50% of cases. This was of concern since it was clear that children and young people were being provided with a range of interventions and activities but these were not being coordinated effectively.
- ◆ Direct intervention programmes developed in-house should be supplemented by nationally available programmes, such as Teen Talk, and be delivered as appropriate by all staff working with children and young people. Our interviews and case file analysis indicated that this was seen as a specialist area of work. The number of sessions available for the child or young person should also increase, since an average of between 22 and 30 sessions is considered appropriate for higher risk cases.
- ◆ The child or young person complied with the conditions of the order/licence, including any additional requirements, in 64% of the case sample, but judgements about acceptability/unacceptability of absences were only appropriate in 54%, and breach recall action had taken place within the national standards timescale in only 25%.
- ◆ Victims were also consulted about restorative/reparative justice work in 55% of the sample.

**Key judgement:**

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

Health resources were provided by the Ceredigion LHB and two NHS Trusts: The Pembrokeshire and Derwen, and Ceredigion and Mid Wales.

The Youth Justice Plan 2006/2007 had identified the healthcare needs of children and young people known to the YOT and these were listed as: smoking cessation, diet issues including eating disorders and obesity, exercise and healthy life style, sexual health and education, emotional and behavioural problems such as ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder including Asperger's Syndrome.

### **Strengths:**

- ◆ An operational agreement and procedures were in place to deal with Tier 1, 2, and 3 referrals. Tier 1 involved telephone advice and levels 2 and 3 discussion with a CPN. CAMHS had also participated prior to the inspection in a pilot parenting group which had been successful.
- ◆ The YOT senior practitioner attended the Substance Misuse Action Team meeting and chaired the subgroup established for children and young people. This multi-disciplinary forum provided an opportunity to address the specific needs of children and young people referred to the YOT. We were informed during the inspection that the forum had been able to achieve funding, and was in the process of consulting with children and young people before producing user-friendly information leaflets.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ At the time of the inspection there was no specialist health nurse provision allocated to the YOT, as required by statute, and only a very basic CAMHS. This meant that the YOT did not have the training or systems in place to screen physical health and only minimal arrangements for mental health. There were no systems to check whether the child or young person was registered with a GP, had regular dental and eye checks, or advice/counselling on sexual health or any other general health matter.
- ◆ The health representation on the Management Board, at LHB and Trust levels, had changed recently, but at the time of the inspection new appointments had not been confirmed. We therefore found great difficulty in arranging meetings with the appropriate levels of staff to discuss the health service's contribution and future plans.
- ◆ It was not clear how the LHB had undertaken its statutory responsibility to provide services to meet the physical and mental health needs of children and young people who had offended or were at risk. A local agreement had been made with CAMHS, but the service had no dedicated time available to the YOT. Children and young people's mental health needs were mentioned in the Youth Justice Plan but did not appear to be part of any strategic plan, such as the Social Care and Well Being Strategy 2005-2008 and the Local Health Board Annual Report 2005/2006.
- ◆ The YOT had difficulty in meeting the YJB standard that children and young people with mental health needs should have access to mental health assessment services within the specified times of five days for acute, and 15 days for those with non-acute need. We were informed during the inspection that this was in conflict with the advice received by LHBs from the Welsh Assembly Government. LHBs had apparently been set the strategic and financial framework target of ensuring that no child waited no longer than six months for routine CAMHS assessment and intervention. Should this be the case then further clarification of the position of LHBs was required.

- ◇ We found evidence of emotional and mental health needs in 39% of the case sample, and evidence that these had only been dealt with in 63% of the sample.
- ◇ In general, there was some work with children and young people on healthy lifestyles, but this was not captured effectively to demonstrate the increased knowledge and changes evidenced as a consequence of the advice and interventions received. We found that physical health showed no change, and for emotional and mental health only 45% had shown an improvement.

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strengths:**

- ◇ Vulnerability assessments were undertaken as part of Asset. Any child or young person considered at RoH was referred to Children's Services under the ACPC procedures. YOT staff contributed to child protection plans as appropriate, and basic child protection training was part of the core training for all YOT staff and included in the Social Services Annual Training Programme. Other more advanced training was also available for selected staff.
- ◇ A working protocol had been developed between the YOT and Children and Families team for the management of cases held by the two services. The YOT manager was also a member of the Children and Families team and therefore in a position to ensure that any issues arising could be addressed quickly and effectively.
- ◇ We were very impressed by the commitment of YOT staff and the efforts made to ensure that children and young people were safeguarded through their work.
- ◇ The YOT contacted the Children's Services in the five cases of Looked After Children in the case sample, and contributed fully to their care plans and statutory reviews.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ In 63% of the case sample the YOT contacted Children and Families Services to check whether children and young people were known to them or not.
- ◇ Staff were not fully aware of the content of the practice protocols and we found that the level of understanding of the respective roles of the YOT and Children and Families Services staff could be improved.
- ◇ We were pleased to note that the YOT had recognised the need for improving its expertise with regard to risk management. It had therefore developed a draft Risk Management Strategy covering low, medium and high risk of serious harm and vulnerability based on

Asset and Onset, with clear procedures for identifying and taking appropriate action including MAPPA and the Prevent and Deter strand of the PPO scheme. Whilst not implemented, discussions had taken place with the Dyfed Powys YOT Regional Group to deliver training in the near future for all staff in the region.

- ◆ At the time of the inspection the YOT was not represented on the ACPC, but would be when the new arrangements became operational under the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The YOT was not represented on the MAPPA Strategic Management Board.

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strengths:**

- ◆ DEWIS based in the YOT addressed the impact of exclusions on offending behaviour. The project targeted exclusions and aimed to reduce the number. It had the support of all secondary schools in Ceredigion, and was used by each school according to need. Asset and Onset were used to assess together with a grading system to identify what level of additional work was required with the child or young person concerned. The impact of the work was being evaluated and included the perspectives of the teacher, children and young people and parents/carers. The project had identified the need to encourage all schools to make better use of the programme since a number of children and young people were not being referred until exclusion had taken place. We were also informed that the rate of exclusions had been reduced in those schools which had participated.
- ◆ The Careers Service had allocated a named link careers advisor who attended weekly meetings to discuss individual cases. Arrangements had been established for a careers outreach officer to work on an individual basis with young people living in the most geographically isolated area.
- ◆ The authority, in partnership with the YOT, was extending preventative and parenting work to the primary schools through the Early Years and Sure Start programmes.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ We found that children and young people had experienced difficulty with their schooling in 67% of cases inspected. There were problems related to bullying, truancy and temporary and permanent exclusions. Of those excluded, 33% did not have adequate access to 25 hours of education, training or employment per week. Approximately two-thirds of young people known to the YOT entering 'skill build' post-16 left within two weeks, which suggested that the required support was inadequate.

- ◆ Under the Ceredigion YPP Framework, a multi-agency group 'Keeping in Touch' had been established to focus on children and young people 'at risk' of exclusion from mainstream services. The aim being to ensure that young people were offered standardised assistance to enter training, education, employment and other pathways to develop personal fulfilment. Data collected were not being used to inform the work of the YOT, education providers, and Careers Service. At the time of the inspection the information was not in place to coordinate services to the target group of young people.
- ◆ There was no systematic training in place for YOT staff in educational matters relevant to their work, and children and young people involved with the YOT did not have individual learning plans.
- ◆ Young people had had contact with a Careers Wales adviser in only 38% of the case sample inspected.
- ◆ The child young person's education provider only informed Asset in 58% of the case sample. Statutory education had only shown an improvement in 40% of cases, and employment, training and further education in 33% of cases.

### Good practice

We were pleased to directly observe a DEWIS development in one secondary school faced with challenging students. The school had identified nine students at risk of being excluded and had developed an alternative curriculum for them. It was evident from our direct observation of a group discussion in the school involving the young people concerned and from discussion with YOT and teaching staff that the young people had been re-engaged, and their risk of exclusion and associated behaviour such as offending had been reduced considerably. It was also evident that the school believed that exclusion should be avoided and appropriate provision developed to make school a more positive experience.

### **Key judgement:**

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

### **Strengths:**

- ◆ The draft Young People's Partnership Participation Strategy was available at the time of the inspection. The Youth Service had appointed a participation officer and this person, in partnership with the YOT activities social worker and the YIP project worker, had arranged for a group of children and young people known to the YOT to receive training and support to attend the County Youth Forum.

- ◇ Children and young people were interviewed and their views included in PSRs and referral panel reports. They were also included in assessment and planning meetings, as were their parents/carers.
- ◇ The YOT operated to the standards contained in the Ceredigion Social Services Complaints Procedure, and children and young people were made aware of these procedures from their first involvement with the YOT. All of the relevant information leaflets explaining the YOT services contained a section with information on how to make representations, complaints and comments.

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

- ◇ The YOT was included in the Children's Services Participation and Consultation Strategy that it had started to implement in February 2006. The strategy was comprehensive and outlined how consultation would take place and contained arrangements for monitoring. However, this was in its early stages and we were not provided with any evidence of its application in the YOT during the inspection.
- ◇ Levels of formal feedback were low and it was not used routinely to review and inform practice and strategic plans.
- ◇ Disappointingly we were only able to interview one young person and received two completed questionnaires. Other interviews had been arranged but the young people concerned refused at the last minute to attend. Questionnaires were distributed but it did not appear that young people had been supported to complete. We also directly observed them participating in a number of other activities and these were very positive experiences for the young people and the observer.
  - *"My YOT worker listens and understands me".*
  - *"My YOT worker turns up on time and I know what will happen if I don't come in".*
  - *"The YOT has helped me with work and has stopped me getting into trouble".*
- ◇ The inspectors found that in general the team's culture was empowering young people to make their views clear. However, this was not the case with regard to the Welsh language.

### 3.3

### Work with parents/carers

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strengths:**

- ◆ At the time of the inspection one parenting group for eight parents/carers had been completed successfully. They attended on a voluntary basis with the exception of one parent/carer made subject of a parenting order. The court had made three parenting orders since April 2005. CAMHS provided a significant input to a pilot parenting project in early 2006 and its staff worked with the children and young people and assisted the parenting coordinator in direct work with their parents/carers. Feedback was positive with regard to the experience and also ideas for improvement, such as 'more variety' and 'more working in pairs'.
- ◆ At the time of the inspection, 12 parents/carers were working on one-to-one programmes. The YOT had some good ideas for developing this work with parents/carers and included a support group for practitioners, with clinical supervision provided by a psychologist.
- ◆ The parenting coordinator was a member of the Ceredigion Multi-Agency Parenting Strategy Group, which ran a successful Parenting Conference to launch its strategy in March 2006. The YOT also worked in partnership with Sure Start who had its own parenting coordinator working with parents/carers of younger children.
- ◆ Where the child or young person was under 16 years of age, the parents/carers were interviewed and involved in the assessment in 90% of cases, and the assessment reflected their specific views of the children's needs in all of the cases.
- ◆ The majority of children and young people lived at home with their parents/carers. Home visits for all orders, excluding final warnings, met the national standard in all of the case sample.
- ◆ Parents/carers of children and young people supervised by the YOT were appropriately advised and kept informed of developments throughout the order in 94% of cases.
- ◆ Three of the four parents/carers contacted during the inspection said that the YOT had been very supportive. The fourth parent/carer was also positive in general, but when interviewed was involved in a very difficult situation with her son which she felt was not being addressed by the YOT or Children and Families Services. This matter was referred back to the YOT for immediate action and dealt with appropriately.

***Areas for improvement:***

- ◇ Work with parents/carers was not fully recorded on Careworks.
- ◇ Evaluation and evidence of progress was not systematically undertaken following individual and group programme intervention.
- ◇ The YOT was unable to deliver parenting programmes through the Welsh language and did not have a strategy/policy in place for working with black and minority ethnic parents.

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

***This section is judged as adequate.***

## 4.

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

#### **Key judgement:**

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

At the time of the inspection only two young people were subject to DTOs. The YOT had only a very limited experience of working with these cases and therefore information from the case file reading analysis needs to be approached with caution and can only be seen as indicative. One young person had been discharged to the community and the other, an illegal immigrant, was serving the custodial element of the sentence.

Ceredigion is located on the West coast of Mid Wales and therefore some distance from the nearest Secure Unit in Neath and YOIs in Bridgend, Cardiff and Bristol. These distances impacted on the capacity of the team.

#### **Strengths:**

- ◆ One young person was Looked After and Social Services had been consulted/involved during supervision. In addition, the YOT had contributed to the Looked After Children reviews. With regard to the second young person, who was not looked after, liaison had taken place between the YOT and Social Services.
- ◆ Both young people, one male and one female, were interviewed immediately following sentence. Asset and all other relevant assessments and information were sent to the establishment within 24 hours.
- ◆ The initial assessment met the national standard in terms of timeliness and quality, and was informed by Asset in both cases. It also addressed health, education and training needs.
- ◆ Action was taken in one case where the young person was considered to be vulnerable to harm from self and others, and was considered appropriate to the needs of the case. Action was also taken to address identify and address the specific needs of Looked After Children.
- ◆ The YOT had an ISSP service and was in a position to provide an intensive package of supervision for young people, and interventions programmes on return to the community. In the case of the individual who had returned to the community, ISSP had been utilised on the second occasion.

- ◇ The YOT had explored the use of a video link to provide additional support to young people in custody and also to increase the capacity of support staff to support the work of case managers. We were informed that video link had been attempted for one young person with the support of local court services but difficulties had been experienced from the custodial unit and could not be resolved by the Ceredigion YOT.
- ◇ In one case regular contact with their parents/carers was not maintained in accordance with national standards since the young person concerned was an illegal immigrant with no immediate family available to visit. However, the YOT had arranged for him to maintain contact by telephone with his parents in India.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ A full RoH Asset had not been completed in either case, although the inspection concluded that it should have been in one case.
- ◇ The young person discharged to the community had been identified by the court on a previous occasion as a dangerous offender and went on to assault her social worker in front of a YOT worker. Despite this background her Asset had recorded her as low risk at the start of the sentence, and medium and low at subsequent reviews. Given the background and the assault on the social worker we looked for but did not find any supporting evidence to support this assessment.

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strengths:**

- ◇ In the two case files inspected the YOT staff had highlighted and communicated specific risk factors to the secure establishment immediately.
- ◇ The case supervisor was actively involved in the training plan meetings and reviews in both cases seen and ensured where applicable in one case that all of the necessary arrangements for release were discussed and agreed at the final review meeting. Good levels of contact were maintained with the establishment by telephone, fax, electronic mail, letter and personal visits.
- ◇ The initial training plan was completed in accordance with national standards timescales. Looked After Children meetings included the local authority social worker and the views of education and health were presented to the initial planning meeting.
- ◇ Parents/carers were encouraged to attend training plan meetings.

- ◇ YOT staff facilitated transport arrangements so that parents/carers could attend meetings wherever possible.
- ◇ Progress against objectives in the initial training plan had been satisfactorily reviewed in line with national standards. The quality and degree of pre-release work was appropriate to the assessment, and there had been regular contact with staff to discuss progress in both cases.
- ◇ Planning for one of the cases was particularly difficult since the place of discharge was not known. The preferred option had been another YOT area, but this was not considered suitable following child protection and welfare assessments involving the YOT and Social Services in the proposed area of release. This young person was eventually released to another area, not Ceredigion, in October 2006.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ The initial training plan did not meet the content requirements of national standards, and there was not a close fit between the interventions planned and the actual RoH in one of the cases.
- ◇ Neither of the two young people had completed the '*What do you think?*' form, and no alternative appeared to be used by the YOT.
- ◇ There was insufficient work undertaken to raise awareness of the impact of the crime on the victim.

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strengths:**

- ◇ Preparation for meeting children and young people's needs was made at pre-discharge meetings, by the attendance of YOT staff or through liaison with partner agencies.
- ◇ The YOT staff made commendable efforts to work with one of the young people concerned during their sentence and to reintegrate them into the community. Efforts were made to find suitable accommodation and address educational needs.
- ◇ Steps were taken to ensure that the young person fully understood the requirements of supervision, and frequency of appointments and number of appointments kept, conformed broadly to national standards.
- ◇ The training plan was reviewed within ten working days and subsequently on a three monthly basis or at the end of the order.

- ◆ The YOT had the ISSP, Direct Intervention and SUDDS resources available to provide individual support for the child or young person and parents/carers on return to the community.
- ◆ For children or young people of school age returning to Ceredigion from the secure estate, Careers Wales and West provided the required support to a good standard. The children and young people met with a careers advisor before discharge and information was transferred effectively from Connexions in England to help meet their needs.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ One of the young people returned to a similar social situation and as a consequence continued to be vulnerable to reoffending. The YOT staff made commendable efforts to work with the young person concerned during the sentence and to reintegrate her into the community. Nevertheless, when discharged to the community she failed to keep some appointments and judgements about these failures were not considered sufficient.
- ◆ In this case, the case manager did not appear to motivate the young person by reinforcing work undertaken by others, including arranging sufficient contact while she was on a programme delivered by a partner agency.
- ◆ Work started in custody relating to offending behaviour was not continued in the community following release. Similarly, work started in custody relating to education and training was continued but not always effectively following release.
- ◆ From the case file analysis we found that one young person had not been reassessed at sentence end for literacy and numeracy using the YJB approved assessment tool.
- ◆ Furthermore, the young person's individual learning plan had not continued following release and had not been regularly reviewed, updated and shared with relevant providers.

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strength:**

- ◆ In one of the cases inspected a review of Asset indicated that living arrangements had shown an improvement following release and progress had been made with regard to education, neighbourhood, lifestyle, substance use and attitude to offending and motivation to change.

***Areas for improvement:***

- ◇ There was evidence of further criminal activity while on licence which was complicated by the fact that several orders were running concurrently and matters would have been simplified if these had been revoked when a new order was made.
- ◇ Judgements about acceptability and unacceptability of absences, was not considered sufficient in the one case where the young person was discharged home. The team as a whole was proud of the fact that it had only ever breached one young person and had adopted a flexible approach. Some appointments were deemed to be voluntary and therefore not subject to national standards and this was inappropriate.
- ◇ Indicative accounts of outcomes from the case manager and others involved in the one case released home showed a deterioration in behaviour and attitude resulting in a sentence of a further period in custody.

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

***This section is judged as adequate.***

**Key judgement:**

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

In July 2006 the YOT increased the time worked by the VLO from two to five days, funded by Community Safety. This appointment, initially for a period of three years, had enabled the YOT to develop a draft Victim Strategy and draft SLA with the local Victim Support service, as well as undertake direct work with children and young people.

The victim was first contacted by the YOT police officer and was provided with an information leaflet explaining the work of the team in relation to restorative processes and the types of reparation that the child or young person might carry out. Following an agreement to participate, the case was then taken up by the VLO, who prepared the victim, and provided support. Reprimand and final warning cases were coordinated by the YOT police officer and the referral panel by the restorative justice coordinator.

**Strengths:**

- ◆ The YOT had five accredited and trained staff in restorative justice processes, including the seconded police officer. Victim data were available through the police officer, and information kept on a separate file with a unique identification number. The YOT had also recruited and trained suitable volunteers to run the referral panel that met in convenient places throughout the county.
- ◆ Once the victim had decided to participate in victim mediation with the child or young person, the police officer or restorative justice coordinator discussed the request with the case manager to ensure that the child or young person was prepared and ready to participate in the process.
- ◆ The YOT had in place direct and indirect restorative activities. These involved writing a letter of apology, or attending a meeting to make a direct apology, with the victim having an opportunity to ask questions of the child or young person, and informing them of the impact that it had on them. The victim could also opt for the child or young person to undertake reparation tasks directly to repair the harm done, or carry out work for the benefit of the community. A further option allowed the victim to brief the VLO who then took their views to a meeting where the child or young person was accompanied by their parent/carer.

- ◇ From the case sample of 23 cases, one undertook direct reparation, seven indirect reparation and ten were involved in community reparation.
- ◇ The police notified the YOT of victim details to the requirements of national standards in all seven final warning cases and all were invited to participate. Two victims participated in direct restorative processes and both reported that they were satisfied with the process.
- ◇ In referral order cases four out of six cases (67%) were invited to participate in the panel meeting but none attended. In two cases the victim was under 18 years of age and the contract facilitated a restorative intervention in one case.
- ◇ Work with victims took account of the individual needs with regard to culture, language, gender and other diversity issues of the children and young people in all of the cases inspected.
- ◇ All children and young people were accompanied on reparation by a suitably trained and CRB checked adult. The placements were risk assessed.

### Good practice

We were able to interview both individual and corporate victims who expressed satisfaction with both the process and outcome.

One elderly lady was interviewed, her car having been vandalised by a group of youths. Initially she stated that she had been very reluctant to have any contact with the youth justice team but was persuaded to meet with the VLO following initial contact by telephone. At this meeting she was provided with a full explanation of what was involved and the options available. She opted for a restorative conference supported by the victim worker and met the young person face to face who had damaged her car. They apologised at the conference, bought her some flowers and later made a token payment of £20 towards damage to the car. As a result she said that she was not so afraid and was less angry with the perpetrator.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ Since the formation of the Ceredigion YOT priority had been given to the victims of crime and their involvement in restorative justice processes with regard to supported reprimands and final warnings. Initially a decision had been taken not to concentrate on work with victims involved in court orders so this was not developed. At the time of the inspection victim work had recently been extended to referral orders and was being introduced incrementally to all aspects of the service.
- ◇ Victim work in the YOT had only recently had the resources to develop from a part-time to a full-time post and the VLO was beginning to develop the appropriate policies and procedures for

managing referrals. In this context we found that the role of the VLO required clarification since some victims would have been more appropriately dealt with by a referral to the Victim Support service.

- ◆ Victims were consulted about reparation or restorative justice work in 55% of the total case sample. The YOT was investing a disproportionate amount of its resources in reprimand and final warning cases.
- ◆ With regard to the referral panel, community reparation commenced within the first three months of the order in six out of the ten cases, and the victim's views were presented to panel in only one case.
- ◆ We saw evidence to suggest that the YOT's engagement with victims was becoming more proactive. Nevertheless, we found that more work was required to include victims' views in impact statements that were used to inform restorative action.
- ◆ Work with victims was tailored to meet the requirements of race/ethnicity, language and gender in 50% of the case sample.
- ◆ Work was undertaken with the child or young person to raise their awareness of the impact of the crime on the victim in 48% of the cases inspected. In addition, this work failed to meet the minimum standard with regard to the requirements of race and ethnicity, language and gender.
- ◆ There was no system in place to evaluate the services provided.

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

***This section is judged as adequate.***

## The joint inspection of YOTs

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

### Home Office objectives

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

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

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

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

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

## Inspection arrangements

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

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

## Code of practice

Each inspection will:

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

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

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

## Scoring approach

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Next steps

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

## Inspection criteria for YOTs in England

### 1. Management

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#### 1.1: Leadership

##### Key judgement

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

##### Evidence

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

##### Key judgement

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

##### Evidence

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

#### **Key judgement**

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

#### **Evidence**

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

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#### **Key judgement**

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

#### **Evidence**

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

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

#### **Evidence**

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

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

**Evidence**

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

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

**Evidence**

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

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

**Key judgement**

3.1.1: Children and young people are prevented from offending.

**Evidence**

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

### **Key judgement**

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

### **Evidence**

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

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### **Key judgement**

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

### **Evidence**

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

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

**Evidence**

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

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

**Evidence**

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

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

**Evidence**

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

#### **Key judgement**

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

#### **Evidence**

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

#### **Key judgement**

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

#### **Evidence**

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

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

**Evidence**

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

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

**Evidence**

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

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

**Evidence**

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

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### **Key judgement**

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

### **Evidence**

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