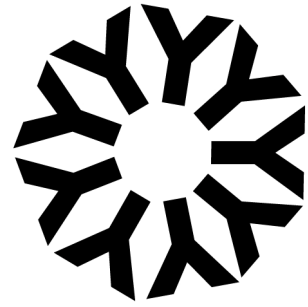


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Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Report on:
Cornwall & Isles of Scilly
Youth Offending Team

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2008

Foreword

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

We found a team with a number of strengths reinforced by effective partnership work and a committed staff group that together provided a sound base for further development. The Management Board, known locally as the *Youth Justice Board* (as distinct from the national Youth Justice Board), had recently undergone a change of Chair, and had appropriate senior representatives from key partner agencies.

There were a number of areas of practice that required development, in particular the assessment and management of Risk of Harm and vulnerability, and the engagement of victims in core work. Other areas where improvements to current service were needed included referrals to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, accommodation provision and access to employment, training and education for young people post-16.

Andrew Bridges
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

August 2008

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We would particularly like to express our gratitude to Telie Tarrant and Christine Walker-Booth for their commitment to the inspection.

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Contents

	Page
Acknowledgements	2
Glossary	4
Summary	5
Recommendations	8
Next steps	8
Service users' perspective	9
Sharing good practice	11
1. WORK IN THE COURTS	14
2. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY	17
Work with children and young people at risk of offending	17
Work with children and young people who have offended	22
Work with parents/carers	29
Outcomes of work with children and young people in the community	30
3. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUBJECT TO CUSTODIAL SENTENCES	34
4. VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE	40
5. MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP	42
Leadership and planning	42
Partnership and resources	43
Staff supervision, development and training	45
Appendix 1: Contextual information	48
Appendix 2: Inspection data	49
Appendix 3: Joint inspection arrangements	52
Appendix 4: Role of HMI Probation and code of practice	52

Glossary

ASBO	Antisocial Behaviour Order
Asset	Assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board
BSSP	Bail Support and Supervision Programme
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
DAAT	Drug and alcohol action team
EEFO	A scheme that accredits child friendly services within Cornwall
ETE	Employment, training and education
EWO	Education welfare officer
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
ISSP	Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme
IT	Information technology
LoR	Likelihood of Reoffending
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
NCH	National Children's Homes
NHS	National Health Service
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
OLASS	Offender Learner and Skills Service
PA	Personal advisor
PCR	Post-court report
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PPO	Prolific and other priority offender
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
PSR	Pre-sentence report
RoH	Risk of Harm
RoSH	Risk of Serious Harm
SEN	Special educational needs
SQIFA	Screening Questionnaire Interview for Adolescents (Youth Justice Board approved mental health screening tool for YOT workers)
YISP	Youth Inclusion Support Panel
YJB	Youth Justice Board (National)
<i>YJB</i>	<i>Youth Justice Board (Local YOT Management Board)</i>
YOA	Youth offending assistant
YOI	Young Offender Institution
YOIS	Youth Offending Information System
YOS	Youth Offending Service
YOT	Youth Offending Team
YOTO	Youth offending team officer
YZUP	Wise-UP Substance Misuse Service

Summary

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

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

Work in the courts

- ◆ Effective bail support and an Appropriate Adult scheme were available throughout the county.
- ◆ The Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme team offered intense interventions, with the focus being on the provision of employment, training and education services.
- ◆ There was an arrangement between the YOT, the two youth courts and Crown Court; however, there were no signatories or dates to confirm this was a joint protocol.
- ◆ The proportion of remand episodes resulting in custody remained high.
- ◆ Pre-sentence reports were descriptive rather than analytical and did not differentiate between Likelihood of Reoffending and Risk of Harm.

Work with children and young people in the community

- ◆ We found a clear referral process linked to the criteria of the prevention scheme.
- ◆ The use of the Onset referral and screening form was inconsistent and not completed within the appropriate timescales.
- ◆ In all relevant prevention cases we found an accurate screening of the indicators of serious harm with the correct classification in all but one case.
- ◆ Whilst the health needs of children and young people were being accurately assessed, subsequent referrals to specialist services were not being undertaken.
- ◆ Safeguarding issues were fully assessed in all cases. However, where needs were identified, no vulnerability management plans had been completed.
- ◆ The assessment of literacy and numeracy skills was not routinely being undertaken by the prevention services.
- ◆ The induction provided to children and young people about to commence their order was timely and comprehensive.
- ◆ For children and young people who had offended, Risk of Harm and safeguarding issues were not effectively managed.
- ◆ Diversity issues, potentially discriminating or disadvantaging factors and other individual needs were actively assessed at an early stage.
- ◆ Not all assessments of health needs were being undertaken. Of those children and young people identified with health needs, very few were being referred for specialist intervention.
- ◆ Of the cases identified and referred for educational assessment within the YOT, all contained evidence that an intervention related to the identified need had been offered to the child or young person.

Work with children and young people subject to custodial sentences

- ◇ Case managers regularly attended planning and review meetings resulting in all plans being completed within the national standard timescales.
- ◇ The YOT ensured that the child or young person's accommodation needs were assessed and monitored.
- ◇ There was evidence in all cases that contact between the parent/carer and their child or young person had been encouraged by the YOT.
- ◇ Although Risk of Serious Harm indicators were accurately assessed, no Risk of Serious Harm forms had been completed and subsequently no risk management plans.
- ◇ Individual learning plans had not been continued following release and literacy and numeracy skills had not been reassessed in a number of cases.

Victims and restorative justice

- ◇ The YOT was proactive in trying to engage victims in a restorative justice process. However, of those invited to participate, very few did so.
- ◇ There were very few examples of good victim work with children and young people.
- ◇ Community reparation commenced within the first three months of the order in all but one case.
- ◇ In just over half of the relevant cases inspected, the child or young person had not been involved in any reparation to the victim or community.
- ◇ The victim officer had delivered restorative justice training to almost all YOT staff and other victim training to key partner agencies.

Management and leadership

- ◇ The YOT was appropriately placed within the local authority, with good linkages to the main strategic partnerships.
- ◇ The performance data provided to the *Youth Justice Board* was not comprehensive or detailed enough.
- ◇ Deficits had been found in the interface between the YOT and children's social care services.
- ◇ The quality assurance systems adopted by the YOT were not robust enough to ensure a consistent and quality service was delivered.
- ◇ Not all service level agreements, protocols and staff secondment agreements with key partner agencies were up to date.
- ◇ There was a misunderstanding within the YOT of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements. The current protocol did not specifically encompass the YOT as an agency with a 'duty to cooperate'.

Recommendations

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

- (1) there is a reduction in the number of children and young people remanded into secure establishments (*YOT Manager and Youth Justice Board*)
- (2) there is a prevention provision for those children and young people aged 13-17 years old (*YOT Manager and Youth Justice Board*)
- (3) Risk of Harm and vulnerability issues are accurately assessed, managed and reviewed in line with the national standard. Where appropriate, subsequent plans are completed, endorsed and monitored through the YOT management group (*YOT Manager*)
- (4) performance management is improved through a robust quality assurance process (*YOT Manager*)
- (5) education and health needs are appropriately assessed, and referrals to specialist workers are consistently made (*YOT Manager in conjunction with relevant partners*)
- (6) each child or young person post-16 years is provided with 16 hours of employment, training and education per week (*YOT Manager and the local authority*)
- (7) there is a clear and timely pathway to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services for children and young people engaged with the YOT and preventative services (*YOT Manager, Youth Justice Board and Primary Care Trust*)
- (8) suitable accommodation for those children and young people with identified needs is available (*YOT Manager, Youth Justice Board and relevant partners*)
- (9) the number of victims engaged in the restorative justice processes is increased (*YOT Manager*)
- (10) the safeguarding provision delivered to children and young people improves through the coordinated work of the YOT and children's social care services (*YOT Manager, Youth Justice Board and children's social care services*).

Next steps

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

Service users' perspective

Children and young people

Sixteen children and young people completed a questionnaire for the inspection. These were completed on paper, either independently or during an interview with an inspector.

- ◇ All children and young people knew why they had to attend the YOT, what would happen if they missed appointments and what was expected of them during visits.
- ◇ All but one child or young person felt that the YOT staff were really interested in helping them, maximising their input, and at all times treating them fairly and with respect.
- ◇ All children and young people had identified areas of their lives in which they had received help from the YOT. The most significant areas were relationships and family, making better decisions, ETE, feeling less stressed and happier, and understanding their offending.
- ◇ All but one child or young person involved in the questionnaire said that as a result of the involvement of the YOT things had got better for them and almost all said they were less likely to reoffend.
- ◇ All except two children and young people were very positive about their experience of supervision; their comments included:
"I think they are doing a good job as they are. They are always willing to listen to you. I always felt comfortable with the YOT staff."

Eight interviews were conducted with children and young people in custody.

- ◇ All children and young people stated that they knew where they were going and what would happen when they got there, although two stated they did not know how to contact their YOT worker.
- ◇ All but one of the children and young people involved in the questionnaire said that the YOT worker attended all the training plan meetings.
- ◇ Six of the eight children and young people interviewed said that the YOT worker did not have any input into the training programme or offered any help to address offending behaviour work and substance misuse.
- ◇ Three children and young people stated that the YOT had not been involved in the preparations for their release and that where release was imminent no plans were in place.
- ◇ Most of the children and young people felt the YOT workers helped them cope with custody and were genuinely interested in helping them. Parents/carers were kept informed and in touch in relation to half of those children and young people interviewed.

- ◇ All but one of the children and young people felt they were treated fairly and with respect by the YOT, and if the need arose they knew how to make a complaint.

Parents/carers

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

- ◇ All but one of the parents/carers considered the initial contact from the YOT, which included requirements and resource information, to be helpful and informative.
- ◇ The great majority of parents/carers felt their needs were taken into account and that they were given enough information about the work their child or young person was undertaking.
- ◇ Only half of those interviewed stated that they had been offered parenting support and the great majority, for whatever reason, did not receive assistance from the YOT with their parenting skills.
- ◇ As a result of contact with the YOT, almost all felt things had got better for themselves and their children and young people.
- ◇ Almost all parents/carers were satisfied with the work of the YOT and specific comments included:
"Our worker was fantastic, there to talk to at all times, always rang back. Came to the house to go through papers and was very good with my child, and she has told us to ring anytime if we have problems in the future."

Victims

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

- ◇ All victims who responded to the questionnaire said that the first contact from the YOT had been helpful and informative. The service on offer was explained, as were the sentence implications for the child or young person.
- ◇ Only half the victims felt their individual needs had been taken into account and that they were able to influence the work to be undertaken, or benefited from the actual work completed by the child or young person.
- ◇ All but one victim stated they knew how to make a complaint if they needed to.
- ◇ All victims who engaged in the inspection questionnaire were largely satisfied with the service provided by the YOT.

Sharing good practice

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

Work in the courts

General criterion: 1.2

It was agreed practice at court that should a child or young person fail to appear for a hearing, the YOT would be consulted and, where appropriate, a warrant not backed for bail would be produced but not issued. The YOT undertook to contact the child or young person and bring them before the court within seven days. This process ensured that children and young people were returned to court efficiently and without recourse to further arrest and detention. If the YOT was unable to secure the attendance of the child or young person, the warrant would be issued.

Work with children and young people at risk of offending

General criterion: 2.1

Due to the diverse nature of the Isles of Scilly, the YOT instigated regular multi-agency preventative meetings on the island. These meetings were well attended by key partners including the police, children's social care services, Connexions, YOT and a youth worker.

Work with children and young people who have offended

General criterion: 2.5

At 15 years of age, Steven was referred to the YOT and Connexions PA. He had very low self-esteem and poor literacy and numeracy skills. He agreed to attend some alternative skills training but failed to do so as he thought he would be asked to read aloud. The PA accompanied Steven to a learning centre where dyslexia was diagnosed. The centre provided coping strategies for the development of his literacy skills and by the second session Steven was brimming in confidence. Both the YOT worker and Steven's mother reported a positive change in his behaviour. Steven had since gained a place at college and his attendance and progress was good. He continues to receive support from the YOT, Connexions and Link into Learning.

Work with children and young people who have offended

General criterion: 2.5

A case manager, having identified an active learning style took the child or young person to a local supermarket and observed the behaviour of customers in the car park. The child or young person was encouraged to reflect on the selfish or thoughtful interactions that they observed between individuals.

Work with children and young people who have offended

**General criterion:
2.5**

During an initial interview held at the family home the case manager encountered problems with Shola and her mother. This created tensions that negatively impacted on the ability of the case manager to conduct the session. To complete the Asset comprehensively, and identify appropriate needs, the case manager arranged for the follow-up session to be held at a local youth centre with which Shola was familiar. This enabled the session to run smoothly, without interruption, and appropriate interventions were arranged.

Outcomes of work with children and young people in the community

**General criterion:
2.10**

Shaun was deaf and mute, and had refused a voluntary intervention on the final warning programme. His parents were hostile to any form of intervention and Shaun, whilst being identified as vulnerable, was at risk of entering the criminal justice system further. Despite a lack of cooperation from his parents the White Gold Project (see the final good practice example) became involved on a voluntary basis and, through creative methods of communication, engaged with Shaun. This resulted in Shaun getting back into education and settling down. To date he has not reoffended.

Outcomes of work with children and young people in the community

**General criterion:
2.10**

Scott was on a final warning for an offence of assault. The case manager delivered an intervention package including assessment of his learning style and took an approach tailored to his auditory and kinaesthetic learning. The case manager focused on Scott's use of cannabis, which affected the way he perceived the behaviour of others and made anger responses more likely. The YOT provided Scott with a gym membership for three months - this gave him a focus and structured activity, which helped him to become fitter and more motivated to give up cannabis. Scott realised the impact of cannabis use on his fitness level and as a consequence he did not enjoy smoking as much and subsequently stopped.

Work with children and young people subject to custodial sentences

**General criterion:
3.4**

Despite concerted efforts by agencies, including the YOT, Julie, who had a history of truancy and school exclusions, was sentenced to an eight month custodial sentence. There was a high level of involvement by the YOT with the secure establishment to support her educational progress whilst in custody and plan for the continuation of training in the community. Upon release, with the support of the YOT case worker and Connexions, Julie secured a place on the 'Cornwall Fifteen' (Jamie Oliver) catering training initiative and to date has continued to make good progress.

Victims and restorative justice

**General criterion:
4.1**

Victims were encouraged to identify reparative work within the community. Where possible, arrangements were made for the child or young person to undertake this work. Victims were kept informed about progress, by, for example, being shown 'before' and 'after' photographs of the project.

Management and leadership

**General criterion:
5.2**

The White Gold Project (police assertive outreach scheme) was available for children and young people across the YOT spectrum. The project was managed by a seconded police officer and aimed to:

- 1) identify, through intelligence led methods, serial and acquisitive children and young people who offend
- 2) offer intensive support for the problems that they are experiencing in order to help them stop offending
- 3) ensure the child or young person is charged and brought before the court if offending continues.

The project worked within the preventative and criminal justice arena targeting children and young people aged ten to 19 years. A whole host of interventions to target identified needs, including signposting to other relevant agencies, was offered.

1. WORK IN THE COURTS

1.1 General criterion:

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

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly YOT provided court services to two youth courts sitting in Bodmin and Truro, and a Crown Court that also sat in Truro. The Isles of Scilly court convened special hearings in Truro magistrates' court. The YOT provided a dedicated YOTO and a YOA for all 'fixed' courts and a YOTO for all remand courts. The ISSP team, contracted for approximately 20 cases per year, consisted of a coordinator, two workers and a number of sessional staff.

Strengths:

- (1) Systems were in place to ensure YOT staff were aware of children and young people who had been held in police cells on remand or were attending court for the first time.
- (2) Bail supervision packages including ISSP and BSSP, managed by the YOT staff, were offered in cases where there was a risk of secure or custodial remand.
- (3) The ISSP team offered intense interventions, with the focus being on the provision of ETE services. However, this proved challenging and problematic during the school breaks when ETE providers took time off.
- (4) YOT staff interviewed all children and young people who were remanded or sentenced to secure accommodation. Systems were in place to ensure that all the relevant documentation was passed to the secure establishment promptly.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) There was an arrangement between the YOT, the two youth courts and Crown Court; however, there were no signatories or dates to confirm this was a joint protocol.
- (2) None of the courts had dedicated YOT IT facilities to ensure speedy access to up-to-date information. Neither did the YOT have access to suitable dedicated rooms to conduct interviews, inductions or assessments with children and young people, and parents/carers.

- (3) There was a lack of remand fostering or other alternative accommodation provision, both secure and non-secure, for children and young people held in police cells or those with identified accommodation needs.
- (4) The communication and working relationship between the YOT and children's social care services had not been fully embraced, particularly around alternative accommodation provision for those non-Looked After Children.
- (5) The proportion of remand episodes resulting in custody remained high. For the period April-December 2007 the number of remand episodes stood at 19%, which was a significant distance from the YJB target of less than 9%.

1.2 General criterion:

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

Strengths:

- (1) The YOT had a system in place to ensure a service was provided to the Saturday and bank holiday remand courts. This was supported by an on-call duty manager.
- (2) The YOT was represented at the respective youth panel meetings and court user groups.
- (3) During the inspection process, feedback received from sentencers was satisfactory on the quality of PSR and stand-down reports; however, they did state that some reports were too formulaic, with the same phrases appearing time after time.
- (4) Where a written report was prepared for the court (68% of cases) the great majority contained a community proposal, of which 73% were followed fully by the court.
- (5) Most of the court reports were based on relevant evidence from Asset, and were balanced, verified and factually accurate. All but one of the reports were assessed as being of the appropriate type, objective, impartial, free from discriminatory language and stereotype, and completed within the national standard timescale.
- (6) The overwhelming majority of PSRs inspected included at least one interview with the child or young person and, where appropriate, their parent/carer, for the specific purpose of preparing the report. Most of the reports specifically considered the child or young person's maturity and ability to understand the seriousness and consequence of the offence.

- (7) The potentially adverse impact of custody was clearly presented in the great majority of reports and almost all contained a proposal for sentence.
- (8) Of the PPO cases contained within the inspection sample, most outlined the seriousness of the offence and LoR, with more than two-thirds containing a clear and proportionate proposal for sentence. However, only half the relevant reports avoided labelling the child or young person with PPO status.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) The YOT used to have a dedicated court team, but this provision was disbanded some time ago. YOT staff undertook this role on an infrequent basis and this approach had led to dissatisfaction from staff and sentencers alike as to the knowledge, skills and confidence of those performing this role.
- (2) Staff did not receive any form of induction to prepare them for the role and duties of court officer.
- (3) Although there were ad hoc presentations from the YOT to sentencers there were no joint training events to facilitate communication or partnership working.
- (4) The YOT did not carry out any internal evaluation or actively seek feedback from sentencers on pre- and post-sentence work with a view to improving effective practice.
- (5) Inspectors found that court reports had been completed using the nationally approved report format in 69% of cases and were judged suitably concise in only 62%. In a third of cases the reports were descriptive rather than analytical, and in 14 of the 24 identified reports there was no assessment of the victims' wishes regarding, and willingness to engage in, reparation and restorative justice processes.
- (6) Only half of the court reports contained an assessment of vulnerability and just over half differentiated between LoR and RoH. In a third of reports inspected, diversity issues had not been sufficiently addressed.
- (7) There was a lack of clarity amongst key partners as to who had responsibility for the undertaking of mental health assessments for those children and young people that had offended.
- (8) There was little evidence to suggest that the YOT fully explained the purpose of the PSR to the child or young person and their parents/carers or that they provided them with a copy of the report.

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

2. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

Work with children and young people at risk of offending

2.1 General criterion:

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

Cornwall is divided into six districts. In all districts the prevention service, known locally as Compass, was in the structure of a YISP targeting those children and young people aged eight to 13. In four of these districts the YOT provided the prevention services directly; in the remaining two the service was provided by NCH. The future of the entire prevention service across Cornwall was out for tender, with the YOT having decided against applying for the contract.

Strengths:

- (1) In all prevention cases inspected, we found a clear referral process linked to the criteria of the scheme, having been verified through locally agreed processes.
- (2) In all but two cases there was a nominated lead professional/keyworker.
- (3) The Compass panels, chaired by an independent member, met regularly at least every three weeks to ensure a consistent service was applied across the county.
- (4) In all identified cases the initial Onset assessment was informed by at least one interview with the child or young person, their parent/carer, contact with children's social care services, the child or young person's education/training provider and the actual referring agency.
- (5) The initial Onset assessments were all completed to a sufficient quality.
- (6) Diversity issues, potentially discriminatory and disadvantaging factors, including where parents/carers had been involved and identified specific or individual needs in relation to their child or young person, had been actively assessed at an early stage in the great majority of cases within the sample; in most of those cases, plans had been put in place to minimise their impact.
- (7) Full attention had been paid to the methods likely to be most effective with the child or young person in three-quarters of the cases.

- (8) In all relevant cases we found an accurate screening of the indicators of RoSH with the correct classification in all but one case. Where required (two cases) an Onset *RoSH to others* form had been completed; however, one was not to the required standard.
- (9) Home visits were carried out and repeated as necessary in all 12 cases.
- (10) Of the ten cases that contained an intervention plan we found all the plans clearly outlined who would deliver the interventions.
- (11) Of the cases inspected, the planned interventions were sensitive to diversity issues (70%) and addressed the likelihood of offending behaviour (80%), RoSH (80%), and staying safe (70%).
- (12) The interventions delivered sufficiently addressed the likelihood of offending behaviour or antisocial behaviour (78%).
- (13) There was a strong commitment from Compass panels and staff to deliver the best possible prevention services to children and young people. This included the use of key partners to assist in the process e.g. involvement of the local police and sharing of information and intelligence.
- (14) In the great majority of cases inspected there was evidence that joint working between the YOT, NCH and other partners engaged in the preventative programme had been effectively communicated. This joint working facilitated the sharing of information and delivery of the intervention plan, particularly in cases of Looked After Children.
- (15) In all but one case within the sample, there was sufficient evidence that the prevention services worker had demonstrated commitment to their work, and motivated and supported the child or young person throughout their engagement whilst reinforcing positive behaviour in all but two of those cases.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Seven of the 12 cases inspected did not have an Onset referral and screening form completed for the child or young person, nor were they completed within the appropriate timescales.
- (2) The Compass referral criteria were set out very clearly, covering a wide range of considerations including possible risk factors and personal characteristics. Whilst it was commendable that this process was used across the county, it was equally obvious that most children and young people could be included. This had the potential to take the focus away from those most in need.
- (3) Whilst accurate assessment was important, and a voluntary process may take some time, it was often too long before assessment was completed and any focused work commenced.

- (4) We found evidence that in only half the prevention cases inspected was the child or young person invited to complete an *Over to you* self-assessment questionnaire; of those that were invited all but one completed the assessment.
- (5) RoSH to others had not been reviewed in line with local guidelines in four of the identified cases, nor following a significant change.
- (6) There was a lack of management oversight and detailed awareness amongst staff on the assessment and management of RoH, vulnerability and the associated management plans to minimise the identified factors.
- (7) The initial intervention plans were completed within the appropriate timescales and aligned with other agencies' plans and assessments in only four cases. The plans did not contain evidence that the child or young person, and parents/carers had seen and signed the plans in almost half those cases. Planned objectives were not outcome oriented or appropriately sequenced in less than half of the cases inspected.
- (8) The planned interventions were not likely to address victim awareness (20%) and community reintegration (30%).
- (9) Reviews of Onset assessment were not routinely undertaken and did not inform the review of the intervention plans in any of the appropriate cases.
- (10) The delivered interventions did not sufficiently address staying safe (56%), victim awareness (33%), safeguarding issues (56%) and community reintegration (44%).
- (11) Although the YOT had the White Gold Project there was a lack of prevention interventions for those children and young people aged 13-17.
- (12) We found cases that remained active beyond the commitment of six months, the great majority of intervention plans were time limited. However, there were no suitable exit strategies with commitments from other partners in 92% of relevant cases.

2.2 General criterion:

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

The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly PCT provided or commissioned most health services for Cornwall residents. A specialist nurse practitioner on permanent secondment from the PCT was employed within the YOT. CAMHS were mainly provided by the Cornwall Partnership NHS Trust although the Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust provided the service for the north and east of the county. A specialist substance misuse service for children and young people was provided through YZUP (Wise-up), which was co-located with the DAAT service. All these services

were available to children and young people at risk of offending, as well as those who had offended.

Strengths:

- (1) The YOT, through core funding from the YJB, seconded a senior practitioner to Gweres Kernow; a specialist service for those children and young people displaying inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- (2) Staff accurately identified the health needs of children and young people, including emotional and mental health, substance misuse and physical health in all cases.
- (3) YZUP took referrals from the YOT and other sources without the necessary completion of the substance use screening tool; however, referrals were only accepted with the voluntary agreement of the child or young person; funding to continue this service had recently been secured.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Gweres Kernow had not had a service review for five years and no annual reports had been made of the service provided. However, a member of the team had recently been allocated one day a week for researching the effectiveness of the service delivered.
- (2) Whilst the health needs of children and young people were being accurately assessed and identified, subsequent referrals to specialist services, particularly substance misuse and emotional and mental health, were not being routinely undertaken.
- (3) Of the relevant cases almost a third of children and young people with identified health needs were not supported in accessing appropriate services.
- (4) In only six of the 11 cases with identified emotional and mental health needs was there evidence of an appropriate intervention being delivered to the child or young person. Neither of the two identified cases with substance misuse needs contained evidence of an intervention having been delivered.
- (5) Where health services were not provided, there was no evidence to judge that this information had been referred to a manager and/or the YJB.

2.3 General criterion:

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

Strengths:

- (1) In all cases inspected, the prevention services had checked the status of the child or young person with children's social care services on receipt of the referral; this status was clearly recorded in all those cases.
- (2) In the identified two cases, children's social care services had been involved during engagement and there had been good liaison between the prevention services and children's social care services in all other cases.
- (3) Safeguarding issues were fully and accurately assessed in all cases. Three of the children and young people were assessed as presenting a risk to themselves through being reckless or wilfully disregarding their own health and safety; five were assessed as being at RoH from others.

Area for improvement:

- (1) Safeguarding factors had not been effectively managed in 56% of the identified cases and there had only been a reduction in factors linked to the risk of safeguarding in a third of cases.

2.4 General criterion:

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

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly YOT benefited from an education worker and 1.8 full-time equivalent Connexions PAs.

Strengths:

- (1) The YOT had delivered preventative input sessions across five of the identified secondary schools explaining the work of the YOT, an overview of the criminal justice system and the consequence of offending behaviour; this work was much valued by the schools.
- (2) Cases examined during the inspection revealed that staff routinely and accurately identified ETE needs.
- (3) In the one relevant case we found evidence that contact had been made with the educational psychologist and a statement of SEN obtained.
- (4) The YOT worked closely with the EWOs, schools and the PRUs to make

assessments of the educational needs of the school-aged children referred to the prevention service.

- (5) In the three identified cases, we found evidence that the prevention services had helped to ensure the child or young person had been supported in accessing local services.
- (6) Interventions promoted appropriate learning and attainments targeted in areas of assessed needs for those of school age.
- (7) Appropriate action was taken to ensure those permanently excluded from school attended alternative settings aimed at securing reintegration into mainstream education.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) The prevention files within the sample did not contain sufficient evidence that the routine assessment of basic skills in literacy and numeracy was being undertaken by Compass.
- (2) The planning and reviewing of interventions was not systematic and lacked clear, measurable and time related educational outcomes and targets.

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

Work with children and young people who have offended

2.5 General criterion:

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

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly YOT was divided into two core generic teams located at Bodmin and Truro; each office was supported by administration officers. The teams were led by an operational manager who reported to a team leader. The YOT had a dedicated Isles of Scilly worker who formed part of the generic team but performed the dedicated role as and when required. At the time of the inspection no cases were being managed on the island.

Strengths:

- (1) The induction provided to the child or young person about to commence their order was found to be timely in almost three-quarters of the cases inspected, and comprehensive in almost two-thirds.
- (2) The great majority of initial Assets inspected during our fieldwork week were of a sufficient quality and completed on time in accordance with the national standard. The initial assessment drew on a range of sources, including at least one interview with the child or young person (96%), parents/carers

(78%), children's social care services (67%) and educational/training providers (51%).

- (3) Where parents/carers were involved in the initial assessment, specific and individual needs were identified by them in relation to their child or young person in almost three-quarters of appropriate cases. Positive factors, such as supportive and pro-social, were identified in the great majority of cases.
- (4) Cornwall & Isles of Scilly YOT had devised a useful booklet entitled 'Help!' which it offered to children and young people when they first came into contact with the service. This booklet contained, amongst other items, information on support, ETE, health, housing, parenting, relationships and rights. However, there were not always enough copies available to ensure all children and young people received them.
- (5) Diversity issues, potentially discriminating/disadvantaging factors and any other individual needs had been actively assessed at an early stage in 88% of cases. Of those cases, 68% had factors identified, with 90% containing evidence that arrangements had been made to minimise their impact.
- (6) Full attention to the methods likely to be most effective with the child or young person was judged sufficient in 84% of cases.
- (7) In the three identified cases where RoSH was classified as high or very high this information had been communicated to all staff involved in the case.
- (8) The YOT held monthly risk management panels. There were set criteria for referring a case to the panel, including RoSH, vulnerability, an Asset score over 25 and other areas of concerns. These were internal meetings but representatives from other relevant agencies were invited where appropriate.
- (9) Timely and purposeful home visits had been carried out, and repeated where necessary in 86% of cases.
- (10) In the great majority of cases inspected, the final warning was delivered within 20 working days of the decision and appropriate interventions were delivered in all but two of the relevant cases.
- (11) In well over three-quarters of the referral orders inspected, a written report was produced for the youth offender panels and the YOT was proactive in securing the attendance of parents/carers at the panel meeting.
- (12) Referral order contracts were sensitive to diversity issues in more than two-thirds of cases inspected.
- (13) Despite the challenges faced geographically, the YOT arranged to hold youth offender panels in multiple locations across the county to minimise travelling for children and young people, parents/carers and panel members. Travel assistance, where required, was offered to encourage/secure attendance of victims.

- (14) To encourage reassurance and consistency for panel members, the child or young person and parents/carers, the YOT tried, where possible, to ensure that members of the initial youth offender panel were the same representatives throughout all reviews including the final review/sign off meeting.
- (15) Youth offender panel members had produced a panel members' handbook and an evaluation form to assist in improving service delivery.
- (16) The YOT had recently recruited and trained volunteers to operate an Appropriate Adult scheme offering a service seven days a week.
- (17) The initial intervention plans were completed within national standard timescales and clearly outlined who would deliver the interventions in the great majority of cases.
- (18) Of the cases inspected, the planned interventions for children and young people subject to referral orders were judged to sufficiently address reparation to the victim and/or wider community (75%) and the LoR (92%).
- (19) The YOT had set up a Programme Work Group with the specific remit to evaluate different risk based and offence focused materials and programmes. It also identified any gaps in service provision, particularly around diversity, and sourced and introduced new programmes to 'plug' any identified gaps. All this information was being built into a database of material for use by case managers.
- (20) The YOT had access to several creative and innovative intervention programmes e.g. Bishops Forum, which addressed confidence and self-esteem, and Real Base Training, which offered several training opportunities including vehicle motor programmes, health and beauty training and carpentry, and Creative Expressions for delivering art therapy.
- (21) Progress against the objectives in the intervention plan had been reviewed in line with the national standard timescales in 15 of the 20 relevant cases.
- (22) The frequency of appointments arranged broadly conformed to national standards, supported the achievement of the intervention plan objectives, and met RoH and safeguarding considerations in almost three-quarters of the cases inspected.
- (23) The YOT workers monitored attendance across all interventions in all but two cases within the sample. Where necessary, effective action to ensure compliance had been taken in three-quarters of cases and judgements about acceptability/unacceptability were judged appropriate in all cases but consistent in less than three-quarters.
- (24) The YOT took appropriate action to address the accommodation needs of children and young people in the great majority of cases. This need was monitored throughout the course of the order in all those identified cases.

- (25) In more than three-quarters of the cases inspected, case managers demonstrated a commitment to their work and motivated and supported the child or young person throughout their sentence. Positive behaviour was reinforced in more than two-thirds of cases.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) The review of Asset was not routinely undertaken and did not inform the review of the intervention plan.
- (2) The YOT had a risk management policy and most staff had undergone RoH training. However, there was a lack of understanding amongst staff as to the rationale to managing risk and the associated measures to be taken.
- (3) RoH to others was not accurately assessed in all cases. Of the 50 relevant cases, we judged that nine were inaccurately assessed against the RoH indicators. In total, this should have triggered the completion of 20 RoSH assessments but only half this number was undertaken. We found evidence to explain this in only one Asset.
- (4) Of the ten cases that did contain a RoSH assessment only five were completed to a sufficient standard. Subsequent risk management plans, where appropriate, were not completed in five of the cases and, on the whole, RoH indicators, RoSH assessments and subsequent management plans were not routinely being reviewed in line with national guidelines.
- (5) There was very little evidence found of management oversight of RoH issues. Discussions with staff and managers at the YOT revealed an apparent lack of knowledge, understanding and oversight as to the application of assessing RoH and the subsequent completion of risk management plans.
- (6) In principle the risk management panels were effective, but in practice we found inconsistencies in their ability to capture all appropriately identified cases and record the identified issues through supporting documentation.
- (7) There was a lack of understanding and clarity amongst case managers about the MAPPA referral process.
- (8) Youth offender panels failed to sit within required timescales in just over a third of cases inspected and in only seven of the 13 cases was there evidence that the contract started within five days of the panel meeting.
- (9) There were insufficient numbers of youth offender panel members. Although a recruitment drive was underway the present cohort was not representative of the community at large.
- (10) The interventions planned for children and young people subject to other orders, excluding referral orders, did not sufficiently address the LoR (61%), RoH (11%), victim awareness (28%), staying safe (17%) and community reintegration (56%).

- (11) The delivered interventions did not sufficiently address the LoR (58%), RoH to others (24%), victim awareness (42%) staying safe (27%) and community reintegration (55%).
- (12) Whilst the Programme Work Group was seen as a really energetic, creative and positive forum, it was rather disjointed with no clear evaluation mechanisms.
- (13) Of the ten identified cases, only four of those inspected contained evidence that joint working between the YOT, children's social care services and other partners had been delivered to the plan and achieved within reasonable timescales. However, information had been effectively communicated in seven of the ten cases.
- (14) Where breach action was taken this was instigated within the required timescales in five of the 12 identified cases and resolved timely in four of those cases.

2.6 General criterion:

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

Strengths:

- (1) In the great majority of appropriate cases we found that case managers were using the SQIFA form as a screening tool for the identification of emotional and mental health needs.
- (2) The YOT specialist nurse had a wide range of experience and comprehensive training to suit her role within the YOT, both in terms of providing direct services to children and young people, acting as a knowledgeable referrer and providing consultancy to staff.
- (3) The YZUP service was able to provide a useful range of support for children and young people willing to engage with the organisation.
- (4) Cornwall & Isles of Scilly YOT had the 'EEFO' programme, aimed at reducing inequalities for children and young people aged 13-19; this programme accredited services as 'children and young people friendly'.
- (5) The YOT supported children and young people in accessing appropriate and local services in three-quarters of the identified cases. Where services had not been provided this information had been referred to a manager and/or the YJB.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Not all assessments of health needs were accurately undertaken. The inspection revealed that in all three categories – emotional and mental

health, physical health and substance misuse – children and young people had needs but these were not consistently identified.

- (2) Of those children and young people identified with health needs very few were being referred for specialist assessment both internally and externally.
- (3) There was no CAMHS provision for those post-16. This caused some children and young people difficulty in accessing both medication and mental health services.
- (4) Whilst we found evidence to judge that interventions related to physical health needs were being delivered (75%), this was not the case for emotional and mental health (29%) and substance misuse needs (33%). As a result, the delivered interventions promoted physical health in 75% of cases, emotional and mental health wellbeing in 36% and discouraged substance misuse in 44%.

2.7 General criterion:

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

Strengths:

- (1) The YOT, through the YOT Manager, was represented on the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- (2) The YOT had checked the status of the child or young person with children's social care services and this status was clearly recorded in the overwhelming number of cases.
- (3) In the great majority of cases examined there was evidence that there had been liaison and involvement of children's social care services in the work being delivered to the child or young person by the YOT.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) The vulnerability section of the Asset was not routinely being completed by case managers and there was very little evidence of YOT management providing oversight and direction to case managers.
- (2) For those children and young people that were identified as vulnerable, either as a risk to themselves (14 cases) or from others (12 cases), there were only two vulnerability management plans produced to reduce the identified needs. Of these two plans, only one was assessed as sufficiently meeting the identified needs.
- (3) Safeguarding issues were not fully and accurately assessed in all cases and

it was apparent that not all staff had sufficient safeguarding knowledge.

- (4) Of the nine identified cases only six had been subject to a referral to children's social care services.
- (5) In less than half the relevant cases examined did we determine that appropriate action to address the safeguarding needs of the case had been taken.
- (6) We found evidence of a reduction in factors linked to safeguarding in only seven of the 15 identified cases.

2.8 General criterion:

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

Strengths:

- (1) The YOT worked closely with local educational establishments and partners to secure provision for children and young people who had offended.
- (2) The majority of children and young people of school age were well supported in accessing appropriate services for full-time education and training.
- (3) Of those cases identified and referred for specialist assessment within the YOT, all contained evidence that an intervention related to the identified need was offered to the child or young person by the worker. The content of the interventions promoted learning opportunities and attainment in respect of statutory mainstream and statutory other provision.
- (4) The local authority had provided required services in relation to all areas of ETE provision in over three-quarters of the cases examined. Where services were not provided (three cases) this information had not been referred to a manager and/or the YJB.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) In most cases, staff accurately identified ETE needs. However, of those identified, not all children and young people were referred for specialist assessment within the YOT, particularly those in statutory mainstream education.
- (2) Of the five identified cases, only one referral for specialist learning difficulties and disabilities assessment had been made and only three contained a statement of SEN.
- (3) Delivered interventions were not consistently effective in promoting learning

and attainment in the assessed area of educational needs for post-16 ETE.

- (4) Of the ten identified cases where the child or young person had been formally permanently excluded, or had extended sanctioned absence from mainstream school, the YOT had taken action to reintegrate the pupil into full-time education in six of those cases.
- (5) There was a significant number (from YJB data for April-September 2007 the figure stood at 32%) of young people post-16 who had offended and were not engaged in a sufficient range of activities to reach the YJB target of 16 hours of ETE per week.

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

Work with parents/carers

2.9 General criterion:

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

Within the prevention team the YOT had two full-time parent support workers, although one post had become vacant just prior to the inspection. To support these keyworkers, the YOT had recruited and trained a group of parenting mentors; currently there were 15 active mentors across the county.

Strengths:

- (1) We found a parenting service that contained committed, energetic and creative staff who had formed good links within the YOT and with other partners.
- (2) In all but one case parents/carers were made aware of the requirements of the interventions undertaken by their child or young person and the progress being made.
- (3) The parent support workers had produced several leaflets outlining the service that was available to encourage parent/carer participation.
- (4) The YOT facilitated active engagement of parents/carers in their child or young person's supervision in the great majority of cases inspected.
- (5) Of the ten appropriate cases, parenting skills were assessed in eight of those. These assessments were conducted in a timely manner in five of those cases, identifying risks and proactive factors in all but one case.
- (6) In almost three-quarters of cases an intervention was proposed, with the resulting planned intervention being informed by an assessment of needs, and sensitive to the diverse needs of the parents/carers in the

overwhelming majority of cases.

- (7) The delivered interventions promoted effective parenting in relation to the parents'/carers' ability to care, control and promote the welfare of their child or young person in all cases.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Due to the large geographical area, maintaining a consistent, comprehensive and universal service across the county was proving a challenge to the parenting support workers.
- (2) Of the 27 appropriate cases, the inspection team did not agree with the case manager's view on eight occasions that there was no requirement to refer the parent/carer for a parenting intervention, whether voluntarily or by order of the court.

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

Outcomes of work with children and young people in the community

2.10 General criterion:

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

The YOT used the *What do you think?* and *Over to you* forms as standard practice to engage with children and young people about the service they received.

Strengths:

- (1) In all Onset, and almost all Asset assessments, the child or young person and parents/carers had been involved in the initial assessment. Where appropriate, specific and individual needs identified by the parent/carer had been addressed.
- (2) Parents/carers were involved in three-quarters of the Asset assessments.
- (3) In all but a few cases, children and young people and parents/carers were satisfied with the service provided to them by the YOT and Compass.
- (4) The county council's complaints procedure was used by the YOT and most service users consulted during the inspection process stated that they were provided with details on how to make a complaint should this become necessary.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) In only half of the prevention cases inspected had the child or young person been invited to complete an *Over to you* form. Of those children and young people that were invited to complete the form all but one did. In almost two-thirds of the inspection cases with those children and young people who had offended we found evidence that they had been invited to complete the *What do you think?* form; of those that were invited to complete the form almost all did.
- (2) Case managers were neither rigorous nor consistent in recording the expressed views of children and young people in the case diary/contact records.
- (3) The YOT did not routinely seek or collate feedback from service users. There was no system in place to encourage this process or for the YOT to provide feedback to service users on how their views had been used to improve the design and delivery of the service.

2.11 General criterion:

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

Strengths:

- (1) All children and young people invited to become involved in prevention cooperated with the programme. Of those children and young people who had undertaken activities not one had gone on to offend.
- (2) During the inspection, examination of the delivered interventions with children and young people who were at risk of offending revealed positive demonstrable changes in their attitude and behaviour in half those cases inspected.
- (3) Resources were used effectively to achieve the outcomes planned for the child or young person in more than two-thirds of the preventative cases inspected. In particular, in more than three-quarters of the cases, resources allocated to the child or young person were consistent with RoH to others, safeguarding and LoR and/or antisocial behaviour.
- (4) Asset had been rescored in three-quarters of the cases and the most recent score showed an improvement over the initial score in more than two-thirds of those cases.
- (5) For those children and young people who had offended, resources had been used effectively to achieve the planned outcomes in three-quarters of the cases inspected. Resources allocated to the child or young person were consistent with the risk of safeguarding (76%) and RoH to others and LoR

(79%).

- (6) In the majority of cases, progress against the measured outcomes (criminogenic factors) for children and young people who had offended was judged as 'some progress' made.
- (7) In 68% of cases inspected, children and young people engaged with the YOT had not been convicted of an offence since the start of the order, and 72% had complied with the requirements of that order.
- (8) The majority of children and young people and parents/carers who responded to our questionnaire viewed the interventions delivered by the YOT to be appropriate. Two of the main areas that had significantly improved were family and personal relationships and understanding their offending behaviour.
- (9) YJB data showed, from the period April-December 2007, the YOT's performance against the <-5% reduction in first-time entrants to be an achievement of -17.4%. The most recent data showed an excellent overall fall of -35.9% in first tier reoffending and -17.1% in community penalty reoffending comparing the 2002 12 month cohort to that of the 2005 12 month cohort.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) None of the prevention cases inspected contained evidence that a review of the Onset had taken place. As a result, Onset had not been rescored and progress against the objectives in the intervention plan had been reviewed in only a few cases.
- (2) Where appropriate, safeguarding factors for those involved in the preventative programme had not been effectively managed in two-thirds of those cases.
- (3) Two-thirds of the preventative cases inspected did not contain evidence that learning outcomes/skills had been applied.
- (4) Whilst there was progress recorded against the measured outcomes (criminogenic factors) for children and young people at risk of offending, the majority were judged as 'no change'.
- (5) Of all cases (preventative and statutory orders) inspected during the fieldwork we judged that the accommodation provision for six children and young people had not improved.
- (6) For those children and young people who had offended, safeguarding factors had not been effectively managed in 56% of the identified cases and there had only been a reduction in factors linked to the risk of safeguarding in a third of cases.
- (7) During the inspection, examination of the delivered interventions with

children and young people who had offended revealed positive demonstrable changes in their attitude (51%), behaviour (49%) and victim awareness (33%).

- (8) In just over half the identified cases, resources were allocated consistently with the child or young person's PPO status.
- (9) As a result of the child or young person's order and the work undertaken by the YOT there had been limited evidence found of actual demonstrable benefits to the community.
- (10) Less than half of the cases of children and young people who had offended contained evidence that learning outcomes/skills had been applied.
- (11) There was no evaluation of the information collated on outcomes for children and young people and, as such, this was not informing service delivery.

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

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

3.1 General criterion:

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

The majority of children and young people involved with Cornwall & Isles of Scilly YOT served the custodial phase of their sentence at Ashfield YOI (male) and Eastwood Park (female).

Strengths:

- (1) The great majority of initial Assets in the sample were completed on time within the national standard timescales and were informed by at least one interview with the child or young person.
- (2) The overall quality of the custodial assessments undertaken during the inspection was deemed sufficient in well over three-quarters of cases.
- (3) In almost all cases, race and ethnicity had been clearly and accurately recorded, and diversity issues, potentially discriminating/disadvantaging factors, and any other individual needs, were actively assessed at an early stage. Where factors had been identified, plans had been put in place to minimise their impact in almost three-quarters of cases.
- (4) Full attention was paid to the methods likely to be most effective with the child or young person whilst in custody in the great majority of cases.
- (5) There was an accurate screening of RoSH indicators and the classification was judged to be correct in almost all cases.
- (6) The YOT worker ensured that the child or young person's accommodation needs were assessed and monitored, actively working with others to secure appropriate provision in most of the cases inspected.
- (7) In almost all cases, the YOT provided the secure/custodial establishment with an up-to-date core Asset within one hour of the arrival of the child or young person. Other relevant assessments and information, including PSRs and PCRs, were sent to the establishments within 24 hours. In all cases, specific risk factors were assessed and communicated, both verbally and in writing, to the establishment immediately.

- (8) There was evidence that in almost all cases, the YOT worker had attended the initial training plan meeting. All plans were completed within the national standard timescale and clearly outlined which elements would be delivered in custody, which in the community and by whom. Well over three-quarters of the plans were sensitive to diversity issues and contained evidence that the child or young person had seen and signed the plan.
- (9) It was considered that the planned interventions were likely to address reoffending behaviour in more than three-quarters of cases and raise victim awareness in more than two-thirds.
- (10) The transfer of three cases from the YOT to the probation service was handled in a planned, timely and effective manner. There was insufficient communication between all parties involved in one of those cases.
- (11) The frequency of appointments during the custodial phase conformed to the national standard and supported the achievement of the training plan objectives in almost all cases.
- (12) There was evidence in all cases that contact between the parent/carer and their child or young person had been encouraged by the YOT, and in almost all cases the YOT assisted parents/carers to attend planning and review meetings.
- (13) The YOT worker attended and contributed to the final review meeting in all cases. However, the allocated social worker only attended one of the three possible meetings.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Just over half the initial Assets were informed by the parent/carer and contact with children's social care services. Less than half contained evidence that contact with the child or young person's education/training provider had been considered.
- (2) In very few cases was the child or young person invited to complete the *What do you think?* form. Of those who were invited to complete the form all did so.
- (3) In more than two-thirds of the identified cases, no RoSH form had been completed. There were no acceptable reasons for this recorded in the Asset and subsequently no risk management plans had been completed.
- (4) At the initial training plan meetings, the views of the home education provider and PCT were not represented in any of the cases.
- (5) In very few cases was there evidence that the initial training plan had appropriate sequencing (29%), included victim restorative processes (43%) and was aligned with other agencies' plans and assessments, including the *What do you think?* form (21%).

- (6) The planned interventions were judged to address the RoH to others in 54% of cases, staying safe in 38% and community reintegration in 59%.

3.2 General criterion:

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

Strengths:

- (1) The YOT had checked the status of the child or young person with children's social care services and this was clearly recorded in all the cases.
- (2) In all identified cases there had been liaison between the YOT worker and children's social care services.
- (3) Safeguarding issues were fully and accurately assessed in all cases. Seven of the children and young people were deemed as presenting a risk to themselves and three as being at RoH from others.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Of the five appropriate custodial cases identified, a vulnerability action plan had not been produced in any of these cases to reduce the identified needs.
- (2) Not all actions appropriate to the safeguarding needs of the case were taken in four of the five identified cases.

3.3 General criterion:

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

Strengths:

- (1) The review of Asset informed the review of the intervention plan in 70% of those cases.
- (2) RoH to others had been reviewed within ten days of release from custody in the great majority of cases, and subsequently on a three monthly basis in three-quarters of cases.
- (3) The provision of specialist health services, particularly physical health (two of two) and substance misuse (seven of nine) were provided in accordance with the national standard.

- (4) Upon release, specialist ETE services were provided in accordance with the national standard in relation to statutory education (mainstream and other), post-16 education and training and all but one in post-16 employment.
- (5) The work in the community sufficiently built upon the activity that had started in custody in all cases within the sample. The interventions delivered in the community were sensitive to diversity in all cases, and constructive interventions successfully challenged the child or young person to accept responsibility for their offending behaviour and its consequences in all but one case.
- (6) The frequency of appointments in the community phase conformed to the national standards in all cases, and almost all supported the achievement of the intervention plan objectives and met the RoH and safeguarding considerations. The YOT worker monitored attendance across all interventions.
- (7) Timely and purposeful home visits were carried out and repeated as necessary in the overwhelming majority of cases.
- (8) Effective action was taken to ensure compliance, and judgements about acceptability/unacceptability were consistent and appropriate in all cases.
- (9) Breach or recall action, in particular with those children and young people identified as high or very high RoH, was instigated within the required timescales in three of the four cases.
- (10) There was good work with parents/carers to support successful reintegration into the community.
- (11) The YOT workers demonstrated commitment to their work and motivated, supported and reinforced positive behaviour with children and young people throughout their sentence in all cases inspected

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Whilst the induction provided to the child or young person on release from custody was timely in three-quarters of cases it was only judged comprehensive in half those cases.
- (2) Just over half the intervention plans had been reviewed within ten days of the child or young person's release, and subsequently on a three monthly basis.
- (3) The provision of specialist health services, in particular emotional and mental health (three of four) were not provided in accordance with the national standard.
- (4) It was not routine for YOT staff to receive appropriate health information about children and young people being released from secure establishments.

- (5) In 50% of the custodial cases inspected the child or young person's individual learning plan had not continued following release. No cases within the sample contained evidence that the child or young person's literacy or numeracy ability had been reassessed within ten days of release.

3.4 General criterion:

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

Strengths:

- (1) Asset had been rescored in almost all cases and this showed an improvement in 73% of cases over the initial score.
- (2) The great majority of children and young people had complied with the requirements of the order and since the start of the community phase only one child or young person had been convicted of an offence.
- (3) In the majority of cases, progress against the measured outcomes (criminogenic factors) for children and young people subject to custodial sentences was judged as 'significant and some progress' made.
- (4) We found that there had been positive demonstrable change in the child or young person's attitude and behaviour in 64% of cases; however, we considered that victim awareness was raised in only 36%.
- (5) Resources were allocated consistently with the child or young person's RoH and LoR in almost all cases and risk of safeguarding in almost three-quarters. For those children and young people designated as PPO status, resources were allocated consistently in all but one case. Resources had been used effectively to achieve the outcomes planned for the child or young person in the overwhelming majority of cases.
- (6) Full attention had been given by the YOT worker to long-term community reintegration in almost all cases.
- (7) From the period April 2006-March 2007, Cornwall & Isles of Scilly YOT achieved a target of 2.3% towards the YJB 'use of custody' target of less than 5%. Whilst the most recent figure, April-December 2007, had seen a slight increase to 4.2%, this was still within the national target.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) We found evidence of a reduction in factors linked to the risk of safeguarding in four of the six cases.
- (2) Of the eight relevant cases, the accommodation provision for the child or young person had improved in three cases.

- (3) As a result of the child or young person's order there had been demonstrable benefits to the community relating to community reparation undertaken (15%), reduction in seriousness of offending (23%), reduction in frequency of offending (31%), reduced threat to victims and potential victims (38%) and reduced vulnerability/risk of safeguarding (23%).
- (4) In 57% of cases there was no evidence that learning outcomes/skills had been applied i.e. what the child or young person had learned being put into practice.
- (5) There was no system in place to capture feedback from children and young people, parents/carers or other relevant persons to enable service development and improve outcomes for those concerned.

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

4. VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

4.1 General criterion:

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

The YOT employed a police officer to undertake victim contact work. This officer was supported by an administrative officer. Reparation was the responsibility of all YOT practitioners and undertaken by sessional workers.

Strengths:

- (1) Following a court hearing or delivery of a final warning the victim officer or administrator obtained the victim's details and made contact via letter to inform the victim of the outcome and invite further contact. The officer also had access to all the police IT systems, which facilitated information to make contact.
- (2) All victims' details were held separately and securely. The administration officer used the YOIS victim screen to inform case managers as to the degree of involvement the victim desired.
- (3) Appropriate priority had been accorded to victim safety by the YOT workers in 80% of cases where there had been direct/potential victims or safeguarding concerns.
- (4) In the cases inspected we found the assessment of victims' needs was timely in 86% and of sufficient quality in 71%.
- (5) The victim officer had delivered restorative justice training to almost all YOT staff and other victim training to key partner agencies.
- (6) All reparation projects were subject to a risk assessment prior to commencement of any work. The YOT had approximately 30 sessional workers to deliver reparation projects, most of which were conducted on a one-to-one basis. The importance of these workers acting as pro-social role models, in a supportive, mentoring capacity, was promoted by the YOT.
- (7) The YOT had a limited number of reparation projects. Considering the difficulties posed by the geographical challenges, it was pleasing that all but one child or young person had commenced their reparation within the first three months of the order.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) The victim officer, although very committed to his role, was unable to deliver a qualitative service across the entire county of Cornwall.
- (2) Having assessed the circumstances of the case, the victim officer would decide if it would be inappropriate to contact the victim. However, there was no clear audit trail for this decision making process.
- (3) In general, case managers did not have sufficient knowledge of what contact, involvement and work had been undertaken by the victim officer with the victims of those children and young people who had offended.
- (4) Of the interventions delivered, there were only a few examples of good victim awareness work with children and young people who had offended
- (5) Of the 45 relevant cases, we found no evidence in 19 that the victim had been invited to participate in a restorative justice process related to the offence. Of the 26 victims that were invited to participate only eight did so.
- (6) The number of victims attending youth offender panels was reported as poor.
- (7) Victim related work had been sensitive in identifying diversity needs or other individual factors of the child or young person in less than half the cases and of the victim in only one.
- (8) Although the relationship between the YOT, police family unit, victim support and probation was reported as good, it was recognised that roles and responsibilities, particularly those of a statutory and duty of care nature, could be clarified and enhanced through a multi-agency victim strategy document.
- (9) There was no restorative justice protocol between the YOT, police, children's homes and educational establishments to prevent unnecessary criminalisation of Looked After Children.
- (10) Due to the limited number of reparation projects available, the connection between the offence committed and the reparation undertaken by the child or young person was not always apparent. In just over half of the relevant cases, the child or young person had not been involved in any reparation to the victim or community.
- (11) Although feedback was gathered from those victims who engaged in the RJ process, it was not clear how, or if, this influenced/improved the work of the YOT. No feedback was sought from those who did not engage with the service to improve the participation level.

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

5. MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Leadership and planning

5.1 General criterion:

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

The local authority was developing the Integrated Youth Support Service, linked into local plans across Cornwall; the YOT was seen as integral to this development. The YOT was within the Secondary, Post-16 & Youth Services Division of the Services for Children, Young People & Families Directorate. The strategic management of the YOT was provided by the YOT Management Board, known locally as the *YJB*. This Board had relatively recently undergone a change in Chair from that of the Chief Executive to the Director of Children's Services Authority.

Strengths:

- (1) The Youth Justice Plan was integrated with the Community Safety Plan and other partner agencies' plans where there was an involvement of children and young people.
- (2) The YOT was appropriately placed within the local authority, with good linkages to the main strategic partnerships for both children's services and criminal justice.
- (3) The YOT Manager was line managed by the Assistant Director of Secondary, Post-16 & Youth Services Division, who was also a member of the *YJB*.
- (4) The Chair of the *YJB* was well placed to link into the wider children and young people's arena.
- (5) Cornwall as an authority was currently undergoing a period of change that consisted of the amalgamation of the six districts into the new 'One Cornwall'. This would integrate service delivery and was seen by the YOT to offer new and creative opportunities for it to develop its services.
- (6) The *YJB* was made up of appropriate representatives from the statutory key partner agencies; this had just been increased to include UNITY from the voluntary sector (UNITY represented the black and minority ethnic community within Cornwall).
- (7) The YOT was well represented in the planning and commissioning of

structures or meetings for developing the health provision for children and young people.

- (8) The YOT had formed a partnership with the charity St Petric's, to help address the accommodation needs of children and young people across the county.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Whilst the YJB was made up of a number of disciplines, which were by their nature statutory and financially committed partners, there was limited involvement of other agencies that could support the challenges currently facing the YOT, such as housing and the LSC.
- (2) Although membership of the YJB was at an appropriate senior management level, minutes from its meetings revealed that attendance of members or their deputies was sporadic and inconsistent.
- (3) There was no induction provided to new Board members.
- (4) A strategy to address accommodation needs with clear timescales for delivery was lacking.
- (5) The CAMHS provision available to the YOT was inconsistent and not fully effective. The impact was that not all children and young people were receiving specialist health intervention and the YJB had yet to intervene.
- (6) The performance data provided to the YJB was not comprehensive or detailed enough, particularly around operational issues, diversity implications and ETE performance. This resulted in a lack of communication and understanding amongst YJB members on issues that currently impacted on the YOT's performance.

Partnership and resources

5.2 General criterion:

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

Strengths:

- (1) The YOT had been quite effective at securing additional monies to enhance service delivery. This included OLASS, the Extended Learner Fund and YJB prevention funding.
- (2) There was clear commitment from partner agencies to resource the YOT, with identified gaps in provision having been addressed e.g. additional

resources provided through Connexions.

- (3) Arrangements had been made for members of YOT staff to gain access to data held by children's social care services on any child or young person involved with the YOT.
- (4) The YOT had good partnership working with schools, colleges, education welfare services, PRUs and other training providers.
- (5) The YOT, through the YOT Manager, was represented on the Local Safeguarding Children Board and other strategic groups including Supporting People Advisory Group, Children and Young People's Partnership, MAPPA Strategic Management Board, CAMHS Commissioning Group and the Community Safety Strategic Group which encompassed representation from all the six CDRPs.
- (6) Good links existed between the YOT and other agencies working to reduce antisocial behaviour through a YOTO or manager attending the local Community Safety Partnership meetings. This was additionally supported through a three stage ASBO protocol which all respective agencies complied with.
- (7) The YOT worked closely with the DAAT to support children and young people into services where needs had been identified; this included the provision of YZUP, which the DAAT funded, and a psychologist who supported the work of YZUP.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Despite having policies and procedures, RoH and safeguarding issues, not solely with PPOs but across the range of children and young people within the YOT service, were not being actively assessed, managed or proportionately resourced. Where this was appropriate, partner agencies were not consulted or engaged to assist in the effective delivery of service to both the child or young person and the community.
- (2) The thresholds for engagement of children's social care services appeared too high. A review of this had taken place and a draft working document produced, but at the time of the inspection this was not working practice.
- (3) The current partnership arrangements between children's social care services and the YOT consisted of a management grade social worker being seconded into the YOT. This worker performed the role of team leader for the east of the county. Whilst value was seen in this role, inspectors felt a gap had been left in the delivery and supporting of coordinated work at an operational level.
- (4) The MAPPAs in place did not specifically encompass the YOT as an agency with a 'duty to cooperate'. There was a clear misunderstanding within the YOT of the MAPPA process.

- (5) The YOT benefited from a seconded EWO management grade. This officer was the main education worker within the YOT, but also performed the role of team leader for the prevention team. We found no current job description for this officer and there was a degree of uncertainty about her role in relation to ETE. This had left gaps in the systematic approach to the assessment and planning of educational needs.
- (6) The YOT was not using IT to its full potential, given the challenges it faced geographically e.g. YOIS was not available offline to assist staff when working remotely and there were no video conferencing facilities with secure establishments to facilitate contact with children and young people.
- (7) CAMHS provision had been recognised by the PCT as being in need of improvement. A forthcoming tendering exercise for a single, county-wide provider was being established. This had been delayed due to deficiencies in service provision for learning disabilities services following inspections by the Healthcare Commission and Children's Social Care Inspectorate.
- (8) Although the YOT regularly attended the Children and Young People's Partnership there was little evidence found to suggest that children and young people who were involved with the YOT featured in the discussions. It was not clear if the YOT had sufficient voice within this group.
- (9) The YOT did not actively provide feedback on sentencing outcomes or the progression the child or young person had made throughout the duration of the order to sentencers.
- (10) Not all service level agreements, protocols or staff secondment agreements were up-to date with key partner agencies to ensure consistency in roles and responsibilities.

Staff supervision, development and training

5.3 General criterion:

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

Strengths:

- (1) The YOT operational managers held weekly meetings where performance information and issues were shared and discussed. This fed into the staff monthly team meetings covering best practice, court work and general performance issues.
- (2) We found managers and staff to be open, responsive and collaborative with a high level of commitment and dedication to the role they undertake.
- (3) The YOT health workers, including Gweres Kernow, were well supervised in

clinical and management supervision.

- (4) The great majority of staff considered that their managers demonstrated a professional management approach.
- (5) Policies and procedures were communicated to staff primarily through team meetings, but supported through information communication technology facilities and supervision.
- (6) Almost all staff reported receiving regular supervision; the great majority received it monthly, with several more frequently. All but two of those staff spoken to described the quality of supervision as excellent or sufficient.
- (7) The YOT adopted the Cornwall County Council's arrangements for the management of discipline, capability and grievance procedures.
- (8) We found evidence during the inspection that the YOT had properly managed complaints and used the results to inform and improve practice e.g. a complaint made against the disclosure of personal information. This prompted a review and amendment of the information sharing and management policy.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Of those staff interviewed, 21% did not feel well informed about policies or procedures that operated in the YOT, nor did they feel that their managers modelled positive leadership behaviour.
- (2) Across the YOT we found inconsistencies and a lack of clarity and direction between the working practice, roles and responsibilities of the YOA and YOTO.
- (3) Only three-quarters of staff interviewed considered their training and development needs were being met and said that they had received an appraisal in the last 12 months.
- (4) The quality assurance approach adopted by the YOT was not robust. Performance management information was not being used effectively by the YOT management team to improve practice.
- (5) There was a lack of certainty around funding of posts for administrative staff. This caused a great deal of anxiety and the decision not to replace temporary staff was viewed as putting the remaining staff under too much pressure.
- (6) Not all staff, including administrative staff, reported having received a full induction programme into specific roles.
- (7) The administration team felt very much integral to the work of the YOT and were committed and dedicated to their role. At times they felt detached through poor levels of communication and involvement displayed by

management. They felt they had to be proactive to discover the training and development opportunities available to them.

- (8) Not all staff and volunteers had undertaken structured diversity awareness, safeguarding and RoH management training. This was evident throughout the inspection as there was limited understanding of the potential range of diversity needs, safeguarding and management of RoH.
- (9) There were systems in place to ensure that permanent, temporary and volunteer staff members had been subjected to initial CRB checks and reviews. However, this system did not readily capture those staff seconded from other agencies e.g. police and local authority.
- (10) Completion of the race and ethnicity category on YOIS was undertaken by the administration staff. It was therefore unclear how accurate the information recorded reflected the views of the child or young person.

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

Appendix 1: Contextual information

Area

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly YOT was located in South-West England and, as a single YOT, covered the Cornwall & Isles of Scilly local authority.

The area had a population of 501,267, as measured in the Census 2001, 10% of which were aged ten to 17 years old. This was slightly lower than the average for England and Wales, which was 10.4%.

The population of Cornwall was predominantly white British (99%). The population with a black and minority ethnic heritage (1%) was significantly below the average for England and Wales of 8.7%.

Reported crime levels for children and young people aged ten to 17 years old across the area, at 40.2 per 1,000, were below the average for England and Wales of 53.

The proportion of Looked After Children aged ten and over sanctioned for an offence committed whilst Looked After was 7% in Cornwall & Isles of Scilly, which was below the average for England and Wales of 9%.

YOT

The YOT boundaries were co-terminus with those of Cornwall Probation Area, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary and Cornwall & Isles of Scilly PCT.

The Youth Justice Plan 2007/2008 showed that the YOT had 92 staff and 38 volunteers. 53% of staff were female and there were no staff from a black or minority ethnic heritage.

The work of the YOT was based in two main offices located in Truro and Bodmin, as were the youth courts; the Crown Court for the area was located in Truro.

YJB performance data

The YJB summary of overall YOT performance available at the time of the inspection for the period April-December 2007 gave Cornwall & Isles of Scilly YOT a score of 3 on a scale where 5 was the maximum. This was slightly above the national and regional performance, and that of the most comparable YOTs.

Performance on reducing reoffending received a score of 3, which was significantly above that of all comparators.

Appendix 2: Inspection data

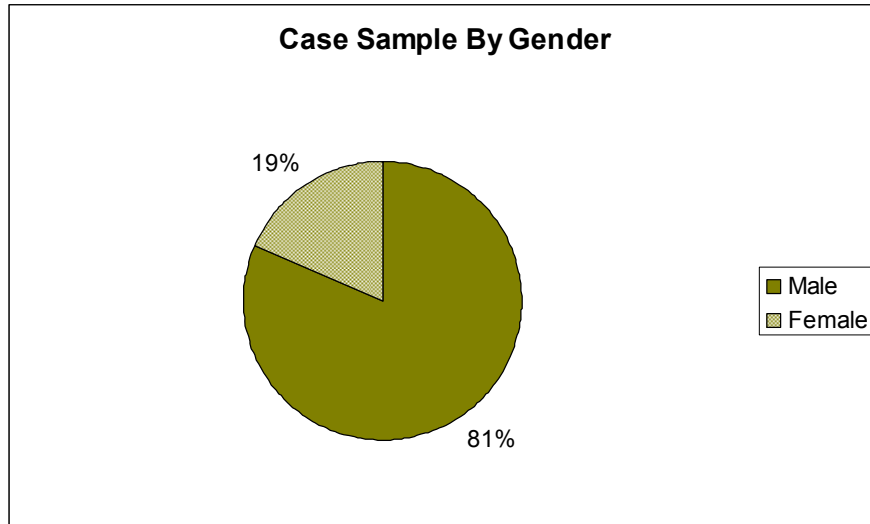
Fieldwork for this inspection was undertaken in April 2008 and during a contribution to the Cornwall Joint Area Review in May 2008.

The inspection consisted of:

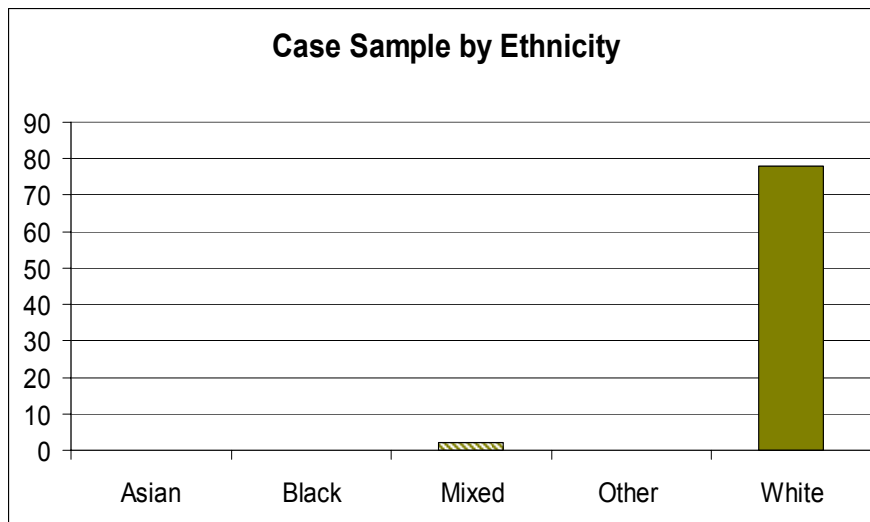
- ◇ evidence in advance
- ◇ examination of YJB performance data and assessments
- ◇ examination of practice in a sample of cases, normally in conjunction with the case manager or other representative, as follows:
 - 12 prevention files
 - 16 final warnings
 - 15 first tier penalties (referral orders,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

Data charts

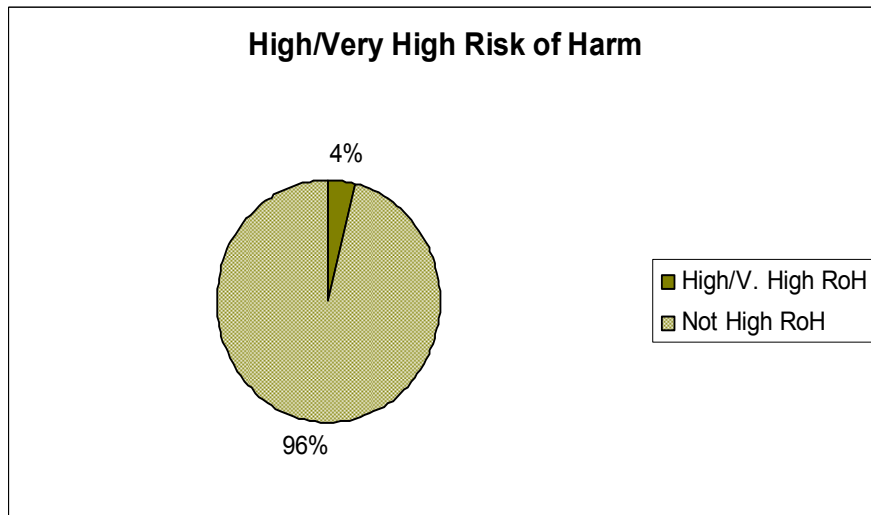
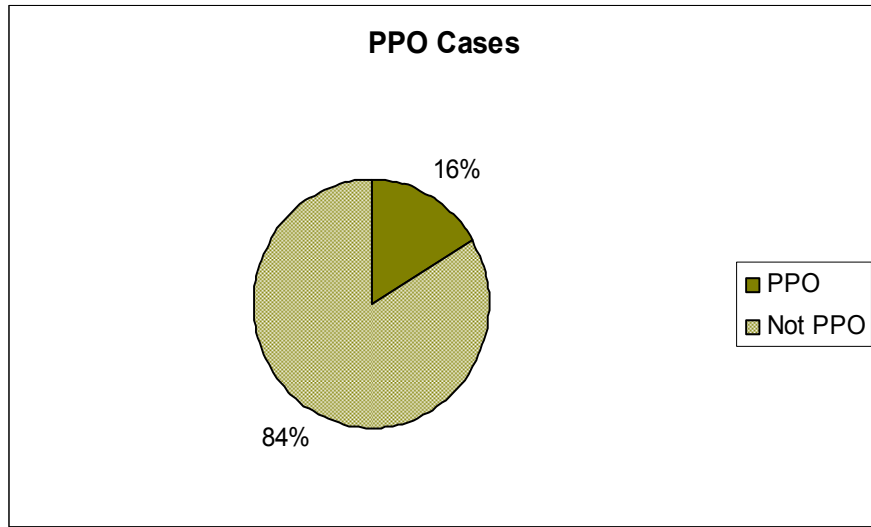
The chosen sample takes into consideration the percentage of girls or young women in contact with the YOT. A representative number is then included in the sample of cases.



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



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



Appendix 3: Joint inspection arrangements

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

Appendix 4: Role of HMI Probation and code of practice

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

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

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

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

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

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

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