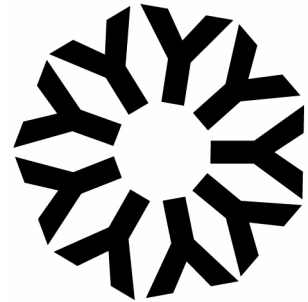


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Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Report on
Derby City
Youth Offending Service

2005

Foreword

This inspection was undertaken during the second phase of the inspection programme for Youth Offending Teams across England and Wales.

The management of the Youth Offending Service had been incorporated into a new Community Safety Partnership, with an active Board that gave strong multi-agency leadership to tackling crime in the city. One demonstration of the success of this partnership was a significant decrease in overall youth crime in the last 12 months.

Effective prevention measures had been put in place and work on restorative justice and parenting interventions were of a high standard, but we found that performance on some aspects of work on community orders required significant improvement. These included assessment and planning of work with children and young people, contact and enforcement, with better use of specialist resources. Work with victims also required attention.

Some of these areas of work had been identified prior to the inspection and were being addressed with improvements in practice over recent months. As a result, performance measures were moving in the right direction.

Our overall assessment of the Derby City Youth Offending Service was that it required improvement. This report contains a number of recommendations which we believe will assist the Youth Offending Service to make further progress on improving performance.

Andrew Bridges
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

November 2005

Fieldwork for this inspection was undertaken in 2005.

- ◆ The file reading took place week commencing 28 February.
- ◆ The second week commenced on 18 April.

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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the staff from the Youth Offending Service, members of the Community Safety Partnership Board and partner organisations for their assistance in ensuring the smooth running of this inspection.

We would particularly like to express our gratitude to Des Morrison for his commitment to the inspection, and Dawn Littlewood and Elaine Munroe for their administrative support.

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Glossary

ACPC	Area Child Protection Committee
APIR	Assess Plan Implement and Review (Connexions)
ASB/ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour/Anti-Social Behaviour Order
Asset	Assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CSCI	Commission for Social Care Inspection
CSP/CSPB	Community Safety Partnership/Community Safety Partnership Board
DAAT	Drug and Alcohol Action Team
DTO	Detention and Training Order
Estyn	HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
HMI Prisons	HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
HMIC	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ISSP	Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme
IT	Information technology
KEEP	Key Elements of Effective Practice
LCJB	Local Criminal Justice Board
MAPPP	Multi-Agency Public Protection Panel
MORI	Market and Opinion Research International
National Standards	National Standards for Youth Justice Services
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
ONSET	YJB tool for assessing children and young people at risk of offending
PAYP	Positive Activities for Young People
PCEP	Professional Certificate of Effective Practice
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PO	Probation Officer
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bounded
SOVA	Supporting Others through Voluntary Action
SSD	Social Services Department
SSIW	Social Services Inspectorate for Wales
VLO	Victim Liaison Officer
YIP/YIPMIS	Youth Inclusion Programme/Youth Inclusion Programme Monitoring Information System
YISP	Youth Inclusion Support Panel
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOIS	Youth Offender Information System
YOS	Youth Offending Service
YOT	Youth Offending Team

Introduction

The joint YOT inspection programme commenced in September 2003 and is the first full inspection to examine the work of YOTs, established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The programme is being implemented in three phases, the first of which was completed in July 2004 and focused on establishing benchmarks for the later phases of the inspection.

This, the second phase of the inspection, started in September 2004 and builds on the findings from the first. Few changes have been made. Emphasis has continued to be placed on two core areas:

- ◆ the management and partnership arrangements, including the role and functioning of the local Management Board
- ◆ work with children and young people, which now encompasses prevention of offending, work with children and young people who have offended and work with their parents/carers.

The third core area to be covered by the inspection is work with victims and restorative justice. Whilst these issues are seen as no less important, it is acknowledged that YOTs may be at different stages of development in this area of work. We do, however, expect a high level of engagement with victims to be demonstrated, with appropriate arrangements for restorative justice.

Key findings

Management and partnership arrangements

- ◆ The YOS Management Board had been integrated into the CSPB which gave clear strategic direction, with operational oversight provided by the performance subgroup and the CSP Director.
- ◆ The performance subgroup had produced a data pack which provided a comprehensive overview of all the Community Safety Plan's strategic objectives. The data pack was not sufficient in itself to account for YOS activities and outcomes and there was evidence that performance in some areas was slipping.
- ◆ An excellent Community Safety Audit had been produced with helpful information on children and young people and patterns of crime.
- ◆ All partners seconded staff into the YOS, but there had been difficulties in filling a number of posts.
- ◆ Protocols with other agencies, including the YOS's statutory partners, needed to be amended to include contingency arrangements to cover absences and be subject to regular review.
- ◆ All workers were co-located, including ASB and SOVA teams, and there were opportunities to improve communication significantly between teams and the YOS.
- ◆ Liaison between the community supervision/resettlement team and other YOS teams and specialists needed to improve to promote joint work and best use of specialist resources.
- ◆ Training provision was well planned and delivered for both staff and volunteers.
- ◆ Most staff received regular supervision recorded on a helpful pro forma.
- ◆ The deployment of some staff, including police, probation and administrative, required reassessment and review to ensure effective working practices and best use of staff resources.

Work with children and young people and their parents/carers

- ◆ There was some effective prevention work taking place with children and young people at risk of offending, with a broad variety of projects offering different depths of interventions that would benefit from a more consistent approach to assessment and recording.
- ◆ Arrests of children and young people had reduced significantly in areas with prevention schemes and children and young people spoke positively of the help they received from the YOS.
- ◆ The YOS had developed a comprehensive risk of harm policy, but greater attention needed to be given to the assessment of risk of

harm to other cases and identifying the needs of vulnerable children and young people.

- ◆ A number of different group work programmes were currently available, including at weekends, for those on ISSP, and further programmes were being planned. However, some diversity issues needed attention.
- ◆ The content of a significant proportion of supervision plans was unacceptable.
- ◆ The levels of contact with children and young people needed to be increased: only just over half the cases examined were offered appointments in accordance with the national standard.
- ◆ Enforcement practices were inconsistent across the YOS.
- ◆ Final warnings were not administered in accordance with Home Office/YJB guidance 2002.
- ◆ There was no consistent review of progress and monitoring undertaken by case managers.
- ◆ Whilst there were some good examples of parenting interventions, parenting policy and practice needed to be unified across the YOS.
- ◆ Outcome data demonstrated an overall reduction in reoffending by children and young people in all but the community penalty cohort.

Victims and restorative justice

- ◆ At the time of the inspection the VLO had been absent from work for several months and this had impacted on the level of victim work undertaken.
- ◆ There was a wide range of restorative justice options available for children and young people.
- ◆ Work to raise awareness about the effects of crime on the victim was undertaken in just over half of all cases.

Overall assessment

The overall performance of the Derby City YOS was assessed as **requiring improvement**. Derby City YOS had recently been incorporated into a new CSP, the Board of which provided strategic management for the service. Whilst this gave a strong sense of being part of a significant partnership tackling crime, structures were still bedding in and we were concerned at some key aspects of the YOS's practice with children and young people who had offended.

These concerns included Asset completion, an issue which was being addressed by the YOS but had, in its turn, impacted on the quality of supervision plans which required significant improvement. Other issues related to the use and availability of specialist staff, the level of contact with children and young people, enforcement practice and the assessment of risk.

There were, however, a number of positives: effective prevention, restorative justice and parenting interventions were of a high standard and there was an impressive commitment at all levels of the service to improve on current performance. We were confident in the determination of the Chief Executive and YOS management to ensure that the inspection recommendations would be progressed to make the service more effective in the future and saw evidence of this happening during the course of the inspection.

Recommendations

The Chair of the Management Board should ensure that:

- ◇ an action plan is devised to address the following recommendations and forwarded to the lead inspector within three months of the publication of this report
- ◇ YOS performance management and reporting is expanded beyond the YJB indicators within the CSPB structure
- ◇ all partners to the YOS are aware of and fulfil their statutory responsibilities in terms of the provision of appropriate staff
- ◇ protocols are updated, amended to include contingency arrangements for absence and regularly reviewed.

The YOS Manager should ensure that:

- ◇ the operational managers work together to develop the performance of the YOS and are held accountable for improvements
- ◇ roles and responsibilities of staff are reviewed, including administrative staff, to ensure that tasks and responsibilities maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of the YOS
- ◇ staff are supervised and appraised consistently within a performance management culture
- ◇ the quality of supervision plans is improved to include sufficient detail and enable easy monitoring of progress
- ◇ there is better ongoing communication between those providing interventions (such as the police), and the YOS
- ◇ implementation of the risk policy is routinely monitored to make sure there is a consistency of approach: risk of harm assessments to be completed in all relevant cases; cases to be regularly reviewed by managers and records annotated
- ◇ levels of contact with children and young people who offend are improved to meet the requirement of the national standard
- ◇ national standards in relation to enforcement are consistently applied across the service
- ◇ parenting policy and practice is developed across the YOS to unify and communicate provision to all staff
- ◇ victim work is developed so that all victims are consulted and their views obtained.

Derbyshire Police should ensure that:

- ◆ final warnings are administered in accordance with Home Office/YJB guidance 2002
- ◆ a joint review of police personnel in Derby City and Derbyshire YOTs is undertaken, with YOT Managers, to assess the appropriateness, effectiveness and consistency of current roles and responsibilities.

Derbyshire Probation Area should ensure that:

- ◆ a joint review of probation personnel in Derby City YOS is undertaken, with the YOS Manager, to assess the appropriateness, effectiveness and consistency of current roles and responsibilities.

The PCT should ensure that:

- ◆ a specialist health worker is seconded to the YOS as a priority to ensure that children and young people with mental health needs are assessed and appropriately supported.

Partner organisations should ensure that:

- ◆ protocols in relation to seconded staff are up to date and include appropriate contingency arrangements for absent staff.

Overview

- ◆ The City of Derby is in South Derbyshire which is located in the East Midlands. Derbyshire is bordered by several counties including Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire to the South East and Cheshire and Staffordshire to the South West.
- ◆ Derby City had a total population of 221,708, measured in the Census 2001. Of this population, 23.6% were aged 0-17 years at the time of the census. This figure was similar to the average for England and Wales of 22.7%.
- ◆ Derby City had a predominantly white population, 87.4%, this was slightly lower than the average for England of 90.9%. The percentage of Asian or Asian British residents, 8.4%, was much higher than the average for England of 4.6%. The percentage of Black or Black British residents, at 1.8%, was slightly lower than the English average of 2.1%.
- ◆ The level of employment in Derby City, 57.6%, was lower than the average for England and Wales of 60.6%. The level of unemployment was 4.0%, higher than the average for England and Wales at 3.4%. 18% of those unemployed in Derby City were aged 50 and over, 10% had never worked and 33% were long-term unemployed. There was a higher percentage of retired residents in Derby City at the time of the census, 14.4% compared to 13.6% in England and Wales. There was a higher percentage of students resident in Derby City, both economically active and inactive, 8.3% compared to 7.3% in England and Wales.
- ◆ Derby City Council was classified as excellent in the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment 2004.
- ◆ The YJB figures for youth offending for the period April 2004 to March 2005 show that 53.8 offences were committed per 1,000 children and young people aged 0-17 years in Derby City.
- ◆ The YJB summary of YOT performance against the key performance indicators for 2004/2005 ranked Derby City YOS in 140th position.

1. MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

1.1 Leadership

Inspection criteria

The Management Board:

- ◆ *provides strategic oversight and direction and coordinates the provision of youth justice services by the YOT and partner organisations*
- ◆ *is made up of appropriate representatives who attend and participate actively in meetings*
- ◆ *ensures the provision of accurate and timely data returns, both for its own use and that of the YJB*
- ◆ *gives support and guidance to the YOT Manager, ensuring that they engage with local and national priorities*
- ◆ *ensures that the Youth Justice Plan is implemented.*

Following a review of structures and meeting arrangements early in 2004, the YOS Management Board was incorporated into the CSPB with a range of bodies including the DAAT, ASB Board and the Domestic Violence group. The new Board was chaired by the Chief Executive and generated two subgroups – performance, and finance and resources management – that reported to each of the quarterly CSPB meetings. Financial reporting was strong with clear prioritisation and transparency. The CSPB had agreed three year funding cycles with annual reviews of budgets and approval of growth in 2005/2006.

The two subgroups undertook much of the day-to-day business, only reporting on items which were not progressing according to the plan, to allow the CSPB to concentrate on strategic issues. Members of the CSPB felt that the new arrangements were more efficient of their time and had facilitated good links with other structures such as the Safeguarding Board.

The Board was serviced by the CSP team, which comprised of a small group of staff, some of whom had been employed in the YOS. This team was headed up by a Director who had been the previous YOS Manager and now line managed the current YOS Manager.

The YOS Manager, as an adviser, reported to the CSPB at each meeting along with other advisers such as the Head of Service for Anti-Social Behaviour, the Crime Reduction Manager and the Chief Executive of the Enthusiasm Prevention Project. The Board had adopted an effective 'presentation mode' of operation, where strategic lead officers (for each strategic priority of the Community Safety Plan) undertook a short input followed by questions in order to communicate important points to the participants without them being expected to read vast amounts of

paperwork. The meeting we observed was conducted purposefully and there was attentive debate of the issues.

**Good
practice**

An excellent Community Safety Audit had recently been completed (November 2004) that underpinned the new Community Safety Plan (2005/2008) and contained some very helpful information in relation to children and young people and patterns of crime. The proposed response in the Strategic Priority 4 'Prevention and Reduction of Youth Crime' key actions section could usefully shape YOS services in the future.

Members and representatives to the CSPB demonstrated a high degree of understanding about working in partnership, with regular attendance by most Heads of Service. The Connexions Manager had not been able to attend due to a clash with internal management meetings, although that was now changing. Representation from the court was currently being considered.

The commitment of CSPB members to partnership working was shown by the linked agendas of the Prolific and Priority Offenders project, Drug Intervention Programme and Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy. The development of crime prevention schemes for children and young people, for example, was well advanced and produced evidence of reducing significantly the number of children and young people entering the criminal justice system.

The performance subgroup, which was chaired by the police superintendent, had the role of holding the YOS Manager to account. A detailed quarterly data pack for the subgroup members had been developed that outlined performance using the traffic light system over all the Community Safety Plan's strategic objectives. The pack included the key YJB targets for the YOS and showed the previous quarter, current quarter, target, and trend indication with comments relating to the performance. It had been presented to the full CSPB and was felt to be too detailed, hence a move to exception reporting only on red and amber targets with red trends. In addition to the subgroup accountability, the YOS Manager was held to account on performance by his line manager through regular monthly supervision.

Although the data pack provided a comprehensive overview of all the Community Safety Plan's strategic objectives, it was not sufficient, in itself, to account for YOS activities and outcomes. There had been ideas to develop additional areas of YOS performance (i.e. in addition to those provided for the YJB) but these had not yet been progressed. We were told the CSPB had received reports about the work of the YOS against targets in the Youth Justice Plan, although we saw little evidence of their consideration. There were queries about the integrity of the data (linked to the computer system) which were being addressed.

Performance in some areas, particularly community Asset completion, had started to slip from mid 2004. This issue had been picked up both in the

subgroup and in supervision and performance review meetings. Derby City YOS had been part of the YJB Data Quality Review undertaken in September 2004 that had described the accuracy of performance reports as 'poor'. As a result, an external consultant had been commissioned to undertake a robust review of data quality. This work had been completed and appropriate action plans then prepared, one of which, the Data Quality Performance Action Plan, was being implemented over a four month timescale (January-April 2005) in order to address some of the performance issues.

Being part of the CSPB had been a positive experience for the YOS Manager, and had provided considerable support for the work of the YOS in strategic terms. Examples of this were the difficulties identified with the data system and the importance of securing suitable accommodation for children and young people. Monies had been successfully obtained from a budget outside the service to replace IT hardware and provide an accommodation officer post. The YOS Manager had undertaken a number of tasks on behalf of the CSPB that had broadened his role beyond managing the YOS. This provided the advantage of being able to see the contribution of the YOS in the context of a wider partnership and to have the opportunity to hold the partners to account for their contribution. YOS managers linked into other services through a number of means including the YOS Manager's membership of the Children's Strategic Partnership Board, an assistant manager's attendance at the Youth Court User Group and the Director of the CSP was a member of the Derbyshire LCJB to name a few. This enabled the YOS to have clear links, beyond the CSPB, into both the criminal justice and children's strategic arenas, with joint developments such as the scoping exercise on integrated parenting being undertaken.

Strengths:

- ◆ The CSPB provided clear strategic direction within the CSP boundaries, with operational oversight provided by the performance subgroup and the CSP Director.
- ◆ The data pack, developed by the performance subgroup, provided a comprehensive view of all the Community Safety Plan's strategic targets.
- ◆ Participation by the YOS Manager in the CSPB had demonstrable benefits for the YOS.
- ◆ An excellent Community Safety Audit had been produced with helpful information on children and young people and patterns of crime.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ The data pack was not sufficient, in itself, to account for all YOS activities and outcomes and there was evidence that performance in some areas was slipping.
- ◆ Although detailed in the recently issued Community Safety Plan, the YOS had not yet made use of the information available through the Community Safety Audit to shape its services.

1.2

Partnership and resources

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *A range of interventions and services are provided to meet the needs of children and young people who have offended and those at risk of offending.*
- ◇ *YOTs are appropriately staffed by partners according to legislation and Home Office guidance.*
- ◇ *The Youth Justice Plan reflects partner strategies.*
- ◇ *Protocols have been agreed between the YOT, its statutory partners and other organisations, outlining the level of service, human resources issues and funding arrangements.*
- ◇ *Contracts are in place with other agencies to ensure the coordination of work and the appropriate delivery of services to meet the needs of children and young people.*

The YOS was divided into five teams, each headed by an Assistant Head of Service:

- ◇ community supervision/resettlement
- ◇ courts and remand management/ISSP
- ◇ interventions/partnerships/referral orders/restorative justice/volunteers (including specialist education and Connexions staff)
- ◇ prevention/interventions/health (including specialist post)
- ◇ drugs/parenting/final warnings.

There were good working relationships between the ASB team and the YOS, with both teams being physically located in the same room. The ASB workers had access to YOIS and could immediately identify existing YOS involvement, liaise with the relevant case manager to ensure that an appropriate approach could be taken, and always consulted prior to an ASBO being sought. Whilst this was accepted practice, it was not recorded in formal protocol.

Excellent relationships existed between the YOS and the prevention projects, with an annual stakeholder consultation exercise undertaken by one of the projects on behalf of the YOS. Apart from formal strategic contact through the CSPB and the development of contracts and service level agreements, YOS and prevention staff worked together on advisory boards, ACPC reference groups and through the delivery of the prevention strategy, coordinated by the Assistant Head of Service.

Each of the five YOS teams had developed interventions for their area of work, but some case managers were unaware of the work of specialists or of the range of resources and facilities available across the YOS. This lack of cohesion resulted in poor cooperation between the case management team and the other teams, demonstrated by both the referral

order/restorative justice team and education worker bypassing case managers to find appropriate cases on which to offer inputs. It was also reflected in the results of our file reading exercise which showed that less than half the case managers reinforced work undertaken by others.

All partners provided seconded staff to the YOS. Two police officers worked full-time in the YOS undertaking the parenting coordinator role and the final warning case worker role, with additional work on a range of other cases. The full-time education worker and the half-time Connexions post holder worked to reduce the number of NEET. Since taking up appointment the worker had contacted all secondary schools to agree strategies to support children and young people involved in the YOS. Derbyshire Probation Area seconded two POs who worked in the courts and community supervision/resettlement teams respectively, and social services seconded a number of posts which were based in the latter. A health worker had been in post until December 2004, since when the post had been vacant.

There had been a pattern of long-term absence (due to vacancies at different times in social services, education, probation and health posts), and sickness (in victims post) over the previous months that had adversely affected performance. For some time, these difficulties were mirrored in the management team which experienced several changes in personnel. Evidence of the impact was provided to us from a number of settings – the court who found that the turnover of staff impacted on the quality and presentation of information, to referral panel members who reported poor coordination of processes when the organiser changed and a lack of continuity in case managers supervising referral order plans. Whilst the YOS had attempted to put various contingencies into place to cover these gaps, they had not been sufficient to prevent difficulties arising in performance, as outlined above.

The shortages in staff and some apparently high caseloads had inhibited the opportunity to address different models of intervention, with some staff who appeared to be operating a youth justice welfare model. We felt that a cultural change was required to move to real multi-agency intervention with children and young people, coordinated and encouraged by the case manager and incorporating better enforcement and improved risk management.

There would also be merit in examining the role of seconded staff. We questioned, for example, the deployment of the PO on regular court duty as an effective use of limited resource, and whether it was appropriate for police officers to be taking on other tasks when the final warning arrangements were not operating within the national standard.

One of the operational managers had started the task of setting up a resource facility that would provide a range of structured interventions and activities to be used with children and young people.

The Youth Justice Plan clearly reflected agency partners and allied themes.

There were a number of protocols in existence between the various agencies and the YOS, but they were rarely signed and dated or reviewed.

Many of the secondment agreements did not sufficiently address the provision of service when the posts became vacant. This issue was particularly pertinent in relation to the PCT as the CAMHS post was vacant at the time of the inspection, with contingency arrangements that could only cater for the most serious of mental health cases. The court wanted to develop the same protocols between themselves, Derby City YOS and Derbyshire YOT, but this matter was with the Courts' Chief Executive and had been for some time.

A number of contracts existed for service between the YOS and various organisations but these needed to be updated for 2005/2006. A draft policy for Looked After Children had been developed for those children and young people in children's homes and education.

The issue of contracts and protocols was being addressed by the CSP who had produced a draft common protocol for the secondment of staff in order to regularise arrangements.

Strengths:

- ◆ Liaison and cooperation with the ASB team, who were co-located with the YOS, were good.
- ◆ All partners seconded staff to the YOS.
- ◆ A common protocol for seconded staff was being developed.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Liaison between community supervision/resettlement team and other YOS teams and specialists needed to improve to promote joint work.
- ◆ A number of long-term staff absences had affected performance.
- ◆ Protocols with other agencies, including the YOS's statutory partners needed to be amended to include contingency arrangements to cover absences and be subject to regular review.
- ◆ The deployment of some staff within the YOS, in particular police, probation and administrative, required review to ensure best use of resources.

1.3

Staff supervision, development and training

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *Staff are regularly supervised in accordance with their developmental needs and assessed level of competence.*
- ◆ *Annual appraisals contain objectives which are linked to local and national targets.*
- ◆ *All staff are provided with appropriate training opportunities to equip them to meet the requirements of the Youth Justice Plan.*
- ◆ *Staff are appropriately qualified and have had a satisfactory enhanced criminal record check within the past three years.*
- ◆ *Volunteers are appropriately trained, available for YOT activities and have had a satisfactory enhanced criminal record check within the past three years.*
- ◆ *Joint agreements are in place for the management of disciplinary, capability and grievance procedures.*
- ◆ *Complaints are properly managed.*

Good practice

Use of the supervision record pro forma for recording sessions that included factual information, discussions, action points, overall evaluation, date of next session, and signatures of both parties.

Most staff had regular supervision with their line manager at six to eight week intervals in accordance with the YOS policy. There was some evidence that the frequency was increased for new staff. Staff supervision largely focused on cases, using a management checklist for consistency. Diversity issues rarely featured as specific issues in supervision. For some seconded staff (Connexions and health) supervision took place with their parent organisation in addition to their YOS manager, whilst others had minimal contact with their seconding agency. The YOS had developed an excellent supervision record form, but it was not always fully completed by all the managers.

ISSP weekly team meetings were used to discuss all cases and share ideas for intervention.

Simple achievement and development plans were in existence, completed annually (with interim reviews) for staff which covered a mixture of local and national targets. Some appraisals were undertaken by the parent agency, whilst the majority were completed within the YOS. YOS staff delivering YIP did not have an annual appraisal.

Whilst the format and approach to supervision was adequate, supervision and appraisal processes could have been used more proactively to move performance forward. In particular, it would be useful to tackle the relationships between the different teams in order to develop a culture of cooperative joint working.

The YOS had recognised that induction should improve and become more clearly structured, adapted to the needs of new staff members. There had been a number of developments on this front – the YJB had worked with staff across the region to roll out an induction programme for new YOS post holders in June 2005, and a whole recruitment process including an induction, training and development framework for community safety staff had been developed, along with an existing written introduction to the CSP. The YOS needed to integrate these two processes along with the provision of early training on Asset, YOIS and victim awareness.

Training provision was generally good. A number of joint training opportunities had taken place within the CSP to enable YOS staff to understand their role within this wider structure. Twelve people had completed the PCEP, with a further 11 undertaking the programme by the end of the year when the target of 17 should be achieved. This included prevention and other non YOS staff. The previous year's training plan had been delivered and there was good contact with the regional link group for training personnel which advised the YJB regional manager of the YOS's training and development needs. The CSP personnel and training link officer also identified that she would be looking at the YOS's needs in the future as part of her role for CSP training. Connexions provided training for its YOS staff and there was funding in the contract for the provision of training for the education worker. The Training Plan for 2005/2006 had been devised from last year's Youth Justice Plan, achievement and development plans, and other documents such as the ACPC training plan, SSD plan, YJB training, PCEP, targets, health and safeguarding issues. Diversity training was included. Training was also accessed by seconded staff from both the YOS and agencies.

Good practice

All YOS staff were registered with an agency 'Guardian Angels' which monitored lone workers. Visits were registered with the agency, address and expected log in time. If a worker did not contact the agency, a procedure was set in place that ultimately led to contact with the police.

Most staff were appropriately qualified for their area of work. Due to continuing vacancies in the social work posts, the YOS had negotiated, with appropriate safeguards, with the SSD that they could recruit suitably experienced staff who were not necessarily social work qualified. The need for further training had been identified for the education post holder to address the same issue.

The SOVA restorative justice team had recruited over 100 volunteers who were trained across all services, including several as appropriate adults. This involved 28 hours of core training. Of those who had participated in mentoring activities, nearly a quarter were from black and minority ethnic communities, whilst almost a half were aged between 18 and 25. This was an excellent initiative to match positively against the profile of children and young people. Unfortunately, due to the demand for volunteers, there was

often a waiting list of several months before a child or young person could use the service.

The initial training course for volunteers had received unanimous approval as providing an excellent introduction to the work of the YOS and their role within it. Ongoing optional training was given, but volunteers would have appreciated some opportunities for supervision. We considered some periodic compulsory training would have been useful. The volunteer meetings were appreciated as an opportunity to hear about developments and discuss issues in a group setting.

All but three staff and all volunteers had had a satisfactory CRB check. The outstanding ones were being pursued. The YOS had recently taken over responsibility for maintaining the up-to-date list.

We had concerns that the administrative resource to both managers and staff was insufficient. It is worthy of note that these staff felt undervalued in part because of the way they were treated by other staff but also due to the perceived lack of attention to their needs, in particular their career development. The line management of administrative staff had moved to the CSP as part of the new arrangements. This development had been to the detriment of the YOS in that it had caused problems in integrating the YOS administrative manager into the YOS management group, which in turn had affected her management of YOS administrative staff. There were a number of practices in terms of staff not directly inputting data and other staff undertaking tasks which could have been more appropriately undertaken by administrative staff.

Joint agreements for discipline, grievance and complaints had not yet been developed.

Good practice

Leaflets about the work of the YOS were available, attractively designed and presented in three languages offering translated copies on request.

The YOS leaflets outlined how to complain and a specific complaints form was also available. It would be useful to collate the complaints on an annual basis to identify and act on any themes which had emerged. Complaints were satisfactorily managed.

Strengths:

- ◆ The supervision record pro forma.
- ◆ The Training Plan for 2005/2006 had been devised from last year's Youth Justice Plan, achievement and development plans, and other plans.
- ◆ Volunteers rated their initial training as excellent and considered that it provided a good introduction to the work of the YOS.
- ◆ Training provision was good with plans prepared and implemented.
- ◆ The majority of staff and all volunteers had had CRB checks.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Greater consideration needed to be given to diversity practice issues, for example through supervision especially considering the ethnicity of the children and young people in the city.
- ◆ A structured, coordinated induction process both for the CSP and specifically for the YOS to incorporate regional initiatives.
- ◆ Supervision and appraisals could be more effectively used to promote effective working practices.
- ◆ The deployment of administrative staff required reassessment and review to ensure effective working practices.
- ◆ The ongoing training needs of volunteers were not being addressed.

**Good
practice**

The YOS had achieved the Investors in People standard and was due for reassessment as part of the CSP in due course.

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP
ARRANGEMENTS**

This section is judged as satisfactorily met.

2. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR PARENTS/CARERS

2.1 Assessment

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF OFFENDING

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *There is a mechanism to identify those children and young people within the area who are at risk of offending.*
- ◇ *There are arrangements to assess the needs of those individuals identified as being at risk of offending and these arrangements take account of cultural differences, diversity and safeguarding issues.*

A strategy and action plan had been written to develop a more coordinated approach to prevention activities across the city. Several partners were involved in delivering and supporting YISP, YIP and PAYP. The hardest to reach children and young people were identified through the Sin Fin Project, which involved both the YOS and Connexions. Connexions had appointed staff as keyworkers but there were vacancies at the time of the inspection.

Programmes such as the YISP and YIP had been set up to work with those children and young people most at risk including a programme called *Enthusiasm*. Criteria had been agreed to determine whether a child or young person was at risk. Referrals for prevention work emanated from a wide range of sources including schools, SSD, police and voluntary organisations.

Assessments were undertaken using Asset, ONSET and APIR. SOVA had its own assessment which it recorded onto YOIS. Not all the cases we examined had a clear assessment and it was difficult to make judgements across the groups given the number of different tools being used. The Common Assessment Framework that was being planned for implementation across the city, including use in prevention projects, may improve consistency in this process in future. Some Asset scores were very high in comparison to those on statutory orders, suggesting a lack of consistency in approach between prevention and statutory assessments. Diversity was monitored in some projects and demonstrated a high level of engagement of black and minority ethnic children and young people.

A prevention steering group, chaired by the YOS Manager, involved all the projects in development work to implement the Prevention Strategy. Projects also met periodically with the Assistant Head of Service with responsibility for prevention.

The YOS spent 24% of its budget on prevention work.

Strengths:

- ◆ Strategy and action plan for preventive work with a steering group to implement the plan.
- ◆ Some excellent work taking place with children and young people – a broad variety of projects offering different depths of interventions.

Area for improvement:

- ◆ Greater consistency of assessment and recording between prevention and statutory cases.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE OFFENDED

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *An Asset assessment is satisfactorily completed at the beginning and end of all interventions which takes account of cultural differences, diversity and safeguarding issues.*
- ◆ *Risk of harm to others is fully assessed.*
- ◆ *Risk of harm, either to self or from others, is fully assessed.*
- ◆ *Specialist assessments are undertaken on those with specific needs or who are assessed as a risk of harm to others.*
- ◆ *Resources have been identified and capacity exists to meet assessed need.*

Our case file read showed that Asset assessments were completed within the national standard timescale in 76% cases and were of acceptable quality in 70%. These findings were congruent with the figures recorded by the CSPB (October-December 2004) and submitted to the YJB. Although this was comparable to many YOTs, we were concerned that the trend was downwards.

Managers had already identified problems with Asset completion that they had attributed to poor data quality and were seeking to rectify through the Data Quality Performance Action Plan. Whilst acknowledging that the issue was being addressed, the quality and completion of Asset, seen at the time of the inspection, was well below the expected standard and, given the implementation period of the Data Quality Performance Action Plan (January-April 2005), not expected to improve until late 2004 or early 2005.

Only 58% of parents/carers were interviewed and contributed to the assessment process, which was low in comparison to many other YOTs, some of whom have achieved over 90%. However, 76% of children and young people were involved in the assessments.

To its credit, the YOS had developed a management of risk policy, prior to receiving the YJB guidance, which outlined that cases should be discussed

in supervision. The policy provided a good framework, but greater attention needed to be given to the assessment process if it was to be implemented successfully. Our case file read showed that a full risk of serious harm assessment was completed in 62% (16 out of 26) relevant cases. Only eight of the 12 identified as risk concern or risk aware had been referred to a manager, and just half the cases files examined contained evidence that they had been reviewed on a regular basis. There was evidence in supervision notes of this taking place in some cases, although it would benefit to being undertaken in a more systematic way.

Although we had concerns about the identification and assessment of high risk of harm to other cases, once such cases were known they appeared to be well managed. Cases identified as risk concern were to be discussed at a risk strategy meeting, called by the case manager and chaired by a manager, at which a police representative was present. A risk management plan was then produced with referral to MAPPP considered. The case was to be reviewed every three months or whenever there was a change in circumstances.

According to the case file read, 11 (25%) children and young people were considered vulnerable to harm from self, and 12 to harm from others, but in three (19%) of these cases it was not clear from the record whether action had been taken to address this. Given that the CSP audit identified research (MORI Youth Survey 2003) which showed that 75% of children and young people had experienced being bullied and 54% physical violence, we were surprised vulnerability had not been given greater attention.

Although there was evidence of various health needs (physical, mental, drugs, alcohol) in a significant proportion of the cases examined, an appropriate referral had been made in only half the relevant cases considered. As mental health constituted 57% of these needs, the absence of a health worker may have impacted on the ability of the YOS to engage with these issues.

The YOS was in a process of transition in relation to screening and assessment of substance misuse. It believed that significant numbers of children and young people who misused drugs were not being picked up. We could not tell from the inspection whether this was a true reflection of reality. The data from our inspection suggested that in 48% of cases drug misuse was an issue, which was in the top two-thirds of the Phase 2 YOT inspections with a range of 31-69%. This issue could be further explored using information from Asset, *What do you think* questionnaires and other sources of data.

A new qualitative screening tool for substance misuse had been developed and was being rolled out across the YOS and a number of partner agencies. Staff had been encouraged to implement the new tool ahead of the training and were consequently not using it consistently. It was therefore essential that the impact of the screening tool should be systematically monitored to ensure previous problems relating to the identification of young drug misusers did not continue.

According to the file read, 80% of children and young people were having difficulty with schooling and effective action had been taken in 69% of these cases. The education worker did not contribute to Asset but was referred cases by the case workers: this system was currently subject to review as it had resulted in interventions being delayed in some instances. A surprisingly low number of referrals (40% of the relevant cases) had been made to the Connexions personal adviser, a figure which would benefit from investigation.

Problems entering inputting data into YOIS had caused considerable frustrations amongst staff who had reported difficulty in finding time to input Assets and insufficient training. The upgrading of the server, with appropriate coaching for staff, should enable the service to update YOIS and maximise its use amongst all staff.

To his credit, once the inspection findings were available, the YOS Manager had immediately started the process of improving performance through a number of action plans.

Strengths:

- ◇ Problems with the ICT system were currently being analysed and addressed.
- ◇ The management of risk of harm policy provided a good framework for working with high risk of harm cases.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ The proportion of satisfactory Asset completions was dropping.
- ◇ A full risk of harm to others assessment was not undertaken in all relevant cases.
- ◇ Greater attention needed to be given to identifying the needs of vulnerable children and young people.
- ◇ Despite a high incidence of mental health needs amongst the caseload, a suitably qualified worker had not been seconded to the YOS.
- ◇ The education worker did not have access to Asset.

PARENTS/CARERS

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *An assessment of the parenting skills and needs of the parents/carers of children and young people who have offended or are at risk of offending has been undertaken and is used to inform any intervention.*

The YOS did not have a parenting policy and parents/carers were not included in the YOS Youth Crime Prevention strategy.

The YIP Enthusiasm team had not undertaken much work with parents/carers but were starting to engage with them. The extent of the involvement of parents/carers in other prevention projects was unclear.

Parents/carers were encouraged to complete a parental self-assessment questionnaire to help them decide whether they wanted further parenting advice. The YOS workers used this questionnaire, with their own informal assessment of parental abilities and Asset, to make a referral to the parenting coordinator. They monitored the number of referrals, including whether they were self-referrals or suggested by the YOS officer.

The parenting coordinator participated in a city-wide parenting provision network, which facilitated liaison between agencies providing parenting support. The EWOs, for example, had developed a programme that focused on parents/carers whose children offended.

Good practice

One of the parents had written to the junior YIP worker to thank her and to say that the programme had had a positive impact on her son.

Strength:

- ◆ All parents/carers were asked to undertake a self-assessment in relation to their parenting skills.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Parents/carers were not included in the YOS Youth Crime Prevention strategy.
- ◆ A comprehensive parenting policy needed to be developed, linking practice between the case manager, parenting coordinator and other interventions work.

2.2 Interventions

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF OFFENDING

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *There are arrangements in place to provide interventions for those children and young people who are assessed as at risk of offending.*

The YOS had started to develop a coordinated approach to the delivery of interventions to meet the needs of children and young people at risk of offending. Work was undertaken by the YOS preventions team and monitored by YIPMIS. There were Junior YIP, YIP and PAYP and Positive Futures projects which engaged nearly 400 children and young people at risk of offending for at least one session per week. Activities offered were aimed at meeting different needs and took account of gender and cultural

issues as identified at neighbourhood level. One of the programmes had been accredited by the Open College Network.

The PAYP, YIP, YISP programmes involved schools, Connexions and the voluntary and statutory sector in work with children and young people identified through referral and assessment as being at risk. Ongoing projects included arts, sports and life skills. There were good links between the YOS and education so that the role of education in prevention was promoted.

A YJB YIP Quality Assurance Survey had taken place in November 2004 which showed exceptionally strong performance in all areas of project management.

The YIP *Enthusiasm* outlined a clear purpose enshrined in a mission statement. The project was well thought out, emphasising the importance of the relationship between worker and the child or young person, and the need to provide long-term care (up to four years). It worked jointly with others, using young volunteers who had been through the process themselves, and offered four levels of intervention for 11-19 year olds. The most intensive, level 4, targeted 50 children who were offered intensive mentoring of at least five hours contact per week and achieved a 98% completion rate (YIPMIS data March 2005). Intervention was contract focused. Level 3 included behaviour improvement projects in school that were undertaken jointly with education and Connexions and involved a range of courses in different subjects such as independent living, physical activities and problem solving.

SOVA was contracted by the YOS to deliver different schemes, i.e. mentoring, restorative justice, appropriate adult, out of hours service, volunteers and sessional workers. All staff were based in the YOS full-time. SOVA undertook individual, usually one-to-one work, with cases referred by the police, schools and social services but did not undertake group work. As the mentoring scheme was oversubscribed, there was a waiting list of up to 40 at any one time.

The YOS had good links with a number of organisations catering for the specific needs of children and young people such as through The Edge (a project for young people who were already experiencing, or were at risk of sexual exploitation) and the Teenage Pregnancy Partnership Board.

The inspection of prevention files identified a range of different intervention/action plans, but little evidence of these being systematically reviewed. There was an excellent range of activities available, although it was often not clear from the file what was being addressed and the outcomes expected or achieved.

Strengths:

- ◆ The start of a coordinated approach to prevention work by the YOS.
- ◆ Good range of prevention activities with a high level of engagement amongst children and young people.

- ◆ Exceptionally strong performance of YIP project management as monitored by the YJB Quality Assurance Survey 2004.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Interventions were not systematically reviewed to assess whether further work was required.
- ◆ There was a lengthy waiting list for the SOVA schemes.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE OFFENDED

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *Interventions with children and young people who have offended are targeted in areas of assessed need, such as education, health and parental relationships, etc.*
- ◆ *Interventions with children and young people who have offended are specific to the needs of girls and young women, children and young people from minority ethnic groups, those with disabilities and take account of safeguarding issues.*
- ◆ *Supervision plans are written in accordance with national standards, emanate from Asset and contain SMART objectives.*
- ◆ *Interventions are structured, evaluated and consistent with the principles of effective practice.*
- ◆ *Frequency of appointments for children and young people who have offended is consistent with national standards and Home Office/YJB guidance for final warnings, referral orders, community penalties, DTOs (custody and post-custody) and ISSPs (where they exist).*
- ◆ *For those children and young people who have offended, enforcement follows non-compliance.*

The overall quality of supervision plans was not satisfactory. A high proportion (80%) of plans did not meet the content requirements of the national standard. Although there was a close fit between the interventions planned and the assessed risk of harm, with half the plans having taken account of individual diversity needs, there was little evidence of prioritisation or SMART objectives.

Greater effort needed to be made to ensure that children and young people understood the requirements of their order or licence and were involved in the development of the intervention plan. Less than half the cases showed the case manager working to reinforce interventions by others. YJB figures in quarter 3 for middle and end Assets (a good way of measuring progress) suggested the proportion of completions were dropping. There was no evidence of using YJB KEEPs.

A number of different group work programmes were available to those on ISSP in addition to *Teen Talk* which was used individually. The ISSP team had been trained to run groups in cognitive behavioural work, drama

therapy, drugs and alcohol, job shop and was planning future programmes linking into art and sports. The groups took place over weekend periods as well as during normal office hours. The programmes demonstrated a good response to need and there were plans to evaluate their effectiveness with results available in May 2005. There was no timed record of contact on YOIS for ISSP, although this could be easily undertaken. The team was aware they did not appropriately cater for girls, young women, or children and young people from minority ethnic groups and the ex-project manager of *Fusion*, now an ISSP worker, was using his links in the community to explore appropriate provision. The YOS referred to other community resources such as ARC (the Lesbian, Gay, Transsexual and Bi-sexual support group), The Teenage Pregnancy Partnership and a local project for streetworkers, The Edge.

Good practice

The Derbyshire Police, and Fire and Rescue Service delivered constructive interventions on particular aspects of offending to children and young people, focusing on victim awareness, through the restorative justice team. Firearms and bladed instruments awareness interventions were delivered by the police, each a two hour session, specifically targeted at children and young people who had been involved with the particular weapon. The Fire Setting Programme was a specified activity and therefore emanated from a court order following referral from a case manager. The programme involved specialist assessment and monitoring by the fire service and ran for an hour over a period of 10 weeks. Parents/carers or a volunteer attended too in an observation role. At the end of the police or fire sessions the YOS received confirmation of attendance.

Whilst impressed by the Police and Fire and Rescue Service intervention programmes, greater attention needed to be paid to communication with the case worker so that they could reinforce the content during other contacts.

There was a waiting list for specialist services for children and young people who had committed sex offences and no offence specific work was undertaken with them by the YOS during the waiting period. The YOS could consider dealing with the lower risk cases with only the more serious cases going to the NSPCC, to enable more rapid intervention, but there was currently no access to psychological support or consultancy for staff. Children and young people convicted of Schedule 1 offences were not clearly identified nor was there any evidence of information being made available to them about the implications of such a conviction and the impact it may have on their lives. There did not appear to be a system to inform the SSD of these convictions.

The provision of mental health services was, in our view, inadequate given the lack of a mental health worker. It would appear that only the severe end of the spectrum of mental health disorders were being addressed. A number of sources indicated that those at the moderate/mild end of the spectrum were simply not being seen.

Once a child or young person was identified as manifesting a substance misuse issue, then a range of appropriate interventions were provided to meet their needs. In particular, we were impressed by the provision of a ten week targeted package for those children and young people on ISSP which was delivered at the weekends by the YOS substance misuse worker.

Final warnings were not administered in accordance with Home Office/YJB guidance (2002). The police notified the YOS of its decision to deliver a final warning in only 40% of the cases examined. Delivery of interventions were slow although the range was good, and an above average proportion of cases (80%) contained an intervention. There were opportunities for greater sharing of intelligence between police and YOS which were not being utilised at present.

DTO reviews were attended in 80% of cases. We were concerned to note that a number of interventions were planned but not delivered in the custodial institution. Similarly, where work had been undertaken, little detailed information was available to the YOS case manager so it could not be followed up and reinforced. There were some very stark examples of the difficulty of securing appropriate accommodation for children and young people on release from custody despite early notification to SSD, with at least two children and young people not knowing until the day of release where they were going to live.

The education worker had developed partnership agreements with secondary schools to keep children and young people in mainstream school as far as possible. Having worked in the YOS before taking up this post, the worker was aware of the difficulties and used her prior knowledge to work with schools, education social workers, social workers and other providers as well as case managers to work to improve the education targets.

Education work with children and young people serving DTOs started a month before their release and involved follow-up interviews on their return to the community. We saw an excellent example of an education worker attending the first and final review of a young person in secure training centre to provide a smooth transition into and out of custody. The education worker reported that placing over 16 year olds in training and employment was not easy and the withdrawal of one provider (due to the behaviour of the young people) had made this more difficult.

The frequency of appointments arranged and kept were disappointingly low (53% and 49% respectively), with less than half the judgements about acceptability deemed to be sufficient and only 13% of cases breached or recalled within the national standard timescales. Enforcement information was not clearly recorded on file: absences were not detailed as acceptable or unacceptable, nor was subsequent action identified.

Good practice

ISSP recently implemented a system, of 'buying back' missed appointments which had been approved by the YJB. After a warning letter, a failure to attend could be 'bought back' by ten successive successful appointments.

Strengths:

- ◆ A number of different group work programmes were currently available, weekdays and weekends, including cognitive behavioural work, drama therapy, drugs and alcohol, job shop and further programmes were being planned.
- ◆ The YOS substance misuse worker delivered a ten week targeted package at the weekends for children and young people on ISSP.
- ◆ There was a high level of attendance at DTO reviews.
- ◆ The Police and Fire and Rescue Service interventions demonstrated a joint responsibility for reducing youth crime.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ The content of a significant proportion of supervision plans was unacceptable.
- ◆ There was a waiting list for specialist services for children and young people who had committed sex offences and no offence specific work was undertaken with them by the YOS during the waiting period.
- ◆ Only the severe mental health disorders were being addressed at present and those at the moderate/mild end of the spectrum were simply not being seen.
- ◆ Just over half the cases examined were offered appointments in accordance with the national standard.
- ◆ Enforcement practices were inconsistent across the YOS.
- ◆ Final warnings were not administered in accordance with Home Office/YJB guidance 2002.

PARENTS/CARERS

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *Parents/carers (where appropriate) are made aware of the requirements of the interventions and are kept informed about progress during the course of the intervention.*
- ◆ *Interventions which are appropriate to the diverse needs of parents/carers are provided for, and taken up by parents/carers of children and young people who either have offended or are at risk of offending in accordance with assessed need.*

The parenting coordinator outlined three tiers of service – Tier 1 provision of information, Tier 2 parenting intervention through another agency, and Tier 3 the YOS parenting programme. The Tier 3 programme was developed by an organisation called *Future Child Care*, based in Coventry and used across the country. It covered handling teenage behaviour and was based on a group work approach. Some parents/carers were also referred to a parenting course run by the Race Equality Unit which,

although it addressed diversity issues, was not specifically targeted at people from black and minority ethnic communities.

SOVA undertook work with parents/carers, mainly utilising a family support model which included mediation with children and young people.

The parents/carers interviewed were very positive about the parenting interventions they had received. They felt that it helped them understand their children's behaviour and found them effective in improving relationships. Some parents/carers went beyond the basic eight week programme to undertake further courses.

Whilst strategic linkages between the YOS, ASB and education were well developed, parenting work needed to be better integrated into that of the YOS. Staff did not appear to have a unified approach to engagement with parents/carers and some case workers lacked awareness, skills and knowledge of parenting interventions to be undertaken either by themselves or by others.

Strengths:

- ◆ Different levels of intervention were available to parents/carers.
- ◆ Parents/carers were very positive about the help they had received.

Area for improvement:

- ◆ Staff did not have a unified approach to work with parents/carers.

2.3

Outcomes

Inspection criterion

- ◆ *Those assessed as being at risk of offending and undertaking interventions are engaged in activity to reduce their risk of offending and address their needs.*
- ◆ *For those children and young people who have offended examination of the case file provides evidence of progress and a reduction of risk factors.*
- ◆ *The YOT demonstrates a reduction in reoffending for all bands of penalties (pre-court, first tier, community penalties and custody).*
- ◆ *Indicative accounts of outcomes from children and young people, parents/carers and other relevant persons show positive outcomes.*
- ◆ *For those children and young people who have offended, supervision plan objectives are met in areas of assessed need.*
- ◆ *Interventions for parents/carers promote effective parenting.*

There was little evidence of systematic individual reviews in prevention cases that identified outcomes for individual children and young people, although in global terms excellent outcomes such as a reduction in arrest rates were available. March 2005 figures showed a reduction of 95%

against a national target of 70%. 2004 recidivism rates (40%) across all four sentencing groups showed an encouraging 4% reduction against 2003 figures (44%) compared with a national average of 50%.

Offending behaviour

In all but one sample group (community penalties), outcome data showed an improvement in the reduction of offending post-intervention in cohort 04 over cohort 03. These figures demonstrate excellent outcomes, although the room for improvement in the community penalty group reinforced our concerns about the quality of work with these children and young people.

	Cohort 03	Cohort 04
Pre-court	34.7%	29.7%
First Tier	47.1%	42.9%
Community Penalties	66.7%	68.9%
Custody	52.9%	33.3%
Overall	50.4%	39.8%

There was little or no monitoring of outcomes or evaluation as case managers did not see this as part of their role. Although there was good evidence on files of worksheets and exercises undertaken, over a third of cases did not have a review of Asset recorded. Evidence of progress was therefore sometimes difficult to obtain. However, examination of the file read suggested that 41% of the cases examined, a relatively high level, had engaged in some form of criminal activity whilst subject to supervision by the YOS.

All parents/carers who were offered interventions completed a pre- and post-questionnaire regarding their own abilities as parents/carers, as well as their satisfaction with the parenting support offered. The parenting coordinator monitored these data. A concern was the downward trend of satisfied parents/carers (61% against a target of 75% during quarter three, September to December 2004).

Fire setting monitoring was undertaken and available centrally through the Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service. It was unclear whether any of this information was available to the YOS, or whether it was used. Similarly, SOVA undertook monitoring and evaluation of their mentoring inputs but kept the information within its own organisation and did not share it with the YOS.

Children and young people were generally positive about the service they had received from the YOS, and described good relationships with staff, a feeling of being listened to, accepted and trusted, giving them a better understanding of their behaviour and its consequences. One young woman described how she had changed her perspective on life after she had been asked to describe how others might see her in terms of the offence (robbery).

Education

Where children and young people were experiencing difficulty with their schooling, there was evidence of action having been taken in 74% of cases. Of these, 69% or (16 cases) were considered to be effective. This was a good achievement in terms of other YOTs who have been inspected in Phase 2, placing Derby City in the top quartile. Less encouraging was the percentage of children and young people in full-time education, training and employment which was 66% in the YJB return for the third quarter, against a target of 90%, but again the trend was downwards.

Health issues

There was some outcome monitoring in relation to substance misuse work but this was not systematic enough to monitor or inform practice.

Safeguarding

There was no systematic communication with SSD to check if cases were known to them: regrettably this was seen as a case manager process rather than a routine administrative function. However, contact was made with SSD in all cases of Looked After Children, examined as part of our file read, and in 30% of all others. Of those cases identified as vulnerable either to harm to self or from others, appropriate action was taken in all but one case.

Strengths:

- ◇ 2005 arrest rates of children and young people engaged in prevention activities had reduced significantly and were well ahead of the national target.
- ◇ Outcome data showed a reduction in youth crime in all but the community penalty cohort.
- ◇ Children and young people spoke positively of the help they had received.
- ◇ Contact was made with SSD in all cases of Looked After Children.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ Individual interventions were not systematically evaluated or assessed.
- ◇ There was no consistent review of progress and monitoring undertaken by case managers.
- ◇ Cases were not routinely checked to see if they were known to SSD.

**Good
practice**

Following intervention from a prevention project, several outcomes for a young person had been achieved: his attendance and attainment at school had improved, aggressive incidents had reduced, there was no evidence of offending, and targets which had been set regarding on-call incidents at school had shown a marked reduction.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR PARENTS/CARERS

This section is judged as partly met.

3.

VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

3.1 Assessment of the needs of victims of children and young people who have offended

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *An assessment of victims' needs should be made and used to inform planned interventions.*
- ◇ *All victims are given the opportunity to make informed decisions about their involvement in cases of children and young people who have offended and are supported in doing so.*

At the time of the inspection, the VLO had been away from work on sick leave for several months. This absence had impacted on the victim work undertaken. Despite this, the file read showed 40% of victims had been consulted about restorative justice work. This figure was similar (34%) to the YJB returns for the third quarter of 2004/2005. However, there was no evidence of consistent assessment of victims needs being undertaken.

We were told that many children and young people wrote apology letters to their victims with sessional or case workers. Copies of these letters were not always retained in the case file, but there was considerable variation in those seen, with some inappropriate information provided. There did not appear to be a standard pack of information.

The anonymised YOIS victim information screens were not being utilised: as a result, case managers did not have easy access information about progress on victim work which they could then use for work with children and young people.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ There were no contingency arrangements for absent staff.
- ◇ The quality of letters to victims was inconsistent.
- ◇ YOIS was not being sufficiently used to inform victim work.

3.2

Restorative interventions with the victims of children and young people who have offended

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *Victims have access to a restorative intervention tailored to their needs.*
- ◇ *Victims are offered the opportunity to specify any reparative element of the child's or young person's supervision plan and to be informed of their progress.*
- ◇ *Restorative and reparative interventions are provided that are appropriate to the age, vulnerability, culture, ethnicity, language needs, literacy levels and gender of the victims and children and young people who have offended.*

According to our case file read, 37% of children and young people were involved in restorative justice interventions, and victims were consulted about the type of inputs in 32% of cases.

There was a good range of reparation work, although it was almost exclusively indirect, which included victims sessions with links made to the type of offence committed. Restorative work was available in city parks, at a riding school for the disabled, a play and recycle centre, Rainsway residential, the schools community programme and Peartree school. Weekend work included leaflet delivery, helping out at local sporting events, the RSPCA and recently reparation had been carried out for the Arriva bus service. Some projects took place in neighbourhoods with a high crime rate, which provided a positive contribution to these local communities. The restorative justice organiser, ably supported by an administrative worker, ensured that placements were culturally appropriate and included in their assessment appropriate questions, for example about working on certain days of the week. There were some diverse placements, e.g. a Pakistani Muslim Centre, but the need to broaden these and recruit more women supervisors from black and minority ethnic communities was recognised. Health and safety checks were undertaken at each placement on an annual basis.

The restorative justice administrator would benefit from training on victim work as she had contact with victims when they telephoned the office.

We were impressed by the commitment and enthusiasm of the staff and their considered thinking about how they might develop restorative justice interventions in the future.

Our case file read showed that work was undertaken to raise the awareness of the child or young person of the effect of their crime on the victim in only 53% of cases. Little restorative justice work was pursued as part of final warnings, although one youth involvement officer was piloting restorative interventions. Unless on ISSP, when they received a session on victim awareness, children and young people released on licence did not participate in restorative interventions.

Strengths:

- ◇ There was a wide range of restorative justice options.
- ◇ Consideration of diversity issues and acknowledgement of the need to improve further was apparent.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ Work to raise awareness about the effects of crime on the victim was undertaken in just over half of all cases.
- ◇ The majority of children and young people serving DTOs did not take part in reparative work.
- ◇ Training for the restorative justice administrator on work with victims.

3.3 Restorative outcomes for victims of children and young people who have offended

Inspection criterion

- ◇ *Victims are satisfied with the work undertaken by the YOT.*

Due to the absence of the VLO, only one victim was interviewed. They expressed satisfaction with the process.

There was no evidence produced of victim views.

Area for improvement:

- ◇ There was no regular evaluation of victims' views or, with permission, use of case studies, collated and used for a range of purposes.

3.4 Restorative and reparative outcomes for children and young people who have offended

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *Children and young people involved in restorative interventions make a positive contribution to the victim and community.*

There was a wide range of interventions which appeared to benefit the city, but no systematic or routine monitoring of the impact of these restorative justice activities. This therefore needed to be collated through regular evaluation such as beneficiary surveys.

Area for improvement:

- ◇ The collation of outcome measures from restorative interventions.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK WITH VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

This section is judged as partly met.

The joint inspection of YOTs

The Government announced the establishment of an independent inspection of YOTs in December 2002. The inspection programme is to be conducted jointly by CSCI, Estyn, the Healthcare Commission, HMIC, HMI Prisons, HMI Probation, Ofsted and SSIW. The joint inspection team is located within and led by HMI Probation, and is funded by the Home Office.

Home Office objectives

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

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

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

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

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

Code of practice

Each inspection will:

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

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

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

Inspection arrangements

- ◇ The joint inspection programme started in September 2003, following two pilot inspections. All 155 YOTs in England and Wales are to be inspected over a five to six year cycle. As this was a long programme, we decided from the outset to break it down into three phases in order to ensure that the inspection retained its relevance and continued to address local and national concerns.
- ◇ The three phases are:
 - **from September 2003 to July 2004**, when the inspection concentrated on key issues, with emphasis placed on establishing benchmarks and the dissemination of good practice. Fifteen YOTs were inspected during this phase of the programme, all of whom were volunteers
 - **the current phase, up to September 2005**, when the inspection process will be based on the methodology established in the first phase. In so far as possible, fieldwork will be individually tailored to each YOT, informed by examination of the data available and the findings from other inspection programmes
 - **from September 2005 onwards**, when the YOT inspection methodology will be congruent with the five outcomes in the Children's Services inspection framework and complement that of the Joint Area Reviews in England. Although the YOT inspection will remain a separate process, inspections will run within a similar timeframe as the Joint Area Reviews where possible, so that areas of potential overlap and duplication can be reduced and rationalised. Findings from the YOT inspection will, therefore, inform not only the Joint Area Review but also the Annual Performance Assessment and the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. Work is currently being undertaken to ensure that this process is compatible with the different governance arrangements in Wales.
- ◇ The inspection will be carried out in line with the Government's commitment to proportionate and coordinated inspection in local government. It will:
 - be proportionate to risk, and fieldwork will only be undertaken where necessary to support findings or to disseminate good practice
 - complement, and be coordinated with other inspection programmes, including the Joint Area Reviews and comparable inspection processes in Wales
 - take account of YOTs' recent development as organisations.
- ◇ The standards and criteria developed for the first phase of the inspection have been slightly modified and focus on:
 - management and partnership arrangements
 - work with children and young people and their parents/carers
 - victims and restorative justice.

- ◆ The fieldwork for each individual inspection will take place over two weeks, about two to three weeks apart. The first week will consist of a file reading exercise for which the YOT will be asked to identify a random sample of between 30 and 80 children and young people (dependent on the workload) who have been subject to some form of intervention in the previous months. The cases will cover most orders, including licences.
- ◆ These case files will be examined in detail. In half the cases selected, we will also undertake in-depth interviews with the case manager, any other person significantly involved in delivering the intervention and, where possible, the child or young person themselves and their parents/carers. Where appropriate, we also hope to meet and hear from victims of crimes by children and young people supervised by the YOT.
- ◆ In order to encourage self-assessment and increase ownership of the inspection findings, we are inviting YOTs to second a member of their staff, usually an experienced practitioner, to the inspection team for the duration of the file reading week. We have found this to be a positive way of developing mutual understanding and strengthening the links between inspection and practice.
- ◆ As before, the second week of the inspection will involve meetings with the Chief Executive, Management Board members, YOT Manager and staff. It will cover the management of the YOT, its performance and the contribution made by its partner organisations. Discussions will be informed by the findings of the examination of case files conducted in the first week of inspection.
- ◆ The inspection findings will be compiled in a report which will include recommendations for improvement. These recommendations will be designed to encourage the YOT in its work, to support good practice and to promote improvements.
- ◆ The report will be submitted to the Home Secretary, as the Secretary of State responsible for youth justice, with simultaneous copies to the Education and Health Secretaries, and where relevant, the Ministers for Education & Lifelong Learning, Finance, Local Government & Communities, and Health & Social Services in Wales. A copy will be sent to the YJB. Copies will also be made available to the press and placed on the website of HMI Probation at:

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

Scoring approach

We have decided to continue a similar approach to scoring in phase two as in phase one, in order to allow some broad comparisons of performance, but with certain provisos. First of all, it should be noted that this second phase of the inspection covers only three core areas, rather than five as in the first phase. In addition, as part of our aim of continually improving performance, two of the categorisations, 'good' and 'good basis for development' (formerly described as 'satisfactory with good basis for development'), have been amended, and whilst exacting a more rigorous standard of performance from the YOT also, we believe, allow for better representation of their actual achievements.

The three sections of the inspection will be individually assessed against the relevant standards, using the supporting criteria. Judgements will be based on:

- ◆ information supplied by the YOT
- ◆ interviews with chief officers, managers and staff both from the YOT and other partner organisations
- ◆ examination of case files
- ◆ discussions with case managers and other people significantly involved in the supervisory process
- ◆ the perspectives of the children and young people, their parents/carers and, where possible, their victims
- ◆ other relevant inspection findings.

The judgements are defined as:

- ◆ **Fully met** – exceptional performance beyond the requirements of national standards and other relevant guidelines
- ◆ **Satisfactorily met** – a sufficient level of performance to assure the joint inspection team that the YOT is progressing satisfactorily
- ◆ **Partly met** – less than sufficient performance on the majority of items
- ◆ **Not met** – inadequate performance on most items.

Some discretion is allowed to lead inspectors for scores to be adjusted if this seems appropriate due to other findings or contextual evidence.

The overall assessment will be determined by the judgements of the individual sections. As in the first phase of the inspection process, no score or grading will be given during this second phase, but instead a general categorisation highlighting particular achievements as well as areas for improvement. This approach was initially adopted as we felt that a more rigid scoring mechanism would be inappropriate given the developmental nature of much of the work of the YOTs and their relatively recent inauguration as organisations.

The overall performance of the YOT will be assessed as:

- ◆ **Commendable** – there is strong management performance and exemplary work with both children and young people and in relation to victims and restorative justice. These YOTs will be setting a standard of excellence which will act as an example to others.
- ◆ **Good** – either the section relating to management or work with children and young people is fully met and the other sections are at least satisfactorily met. YOTs within this category will have addressed most, if not all, key areas of work and be achieving a high standard of performance.
- ◆ **Good basis for development** – the sections relating to management arrangements and work with children and young people are both assessed as satisfactorily met and work with victims and restorative justice is being taken forward. Although some key areas will still require attention, these YOTs will have demonstrated good potential and their work will be sufficient to promote confidence in their future development.
- ◆ **Requiring improvement** – either the section on management arrangements or work with children and young people is assessed as partly or not met. In these instances, the inspection will have revealed concerns about key aspects of the YOT's performance which need to be addressed.
- ◆ **Requiring significant improvement** – neither the section on management arrangements or work with children and young people is considered to have been satisfactorily met. YOTs within this category will need to take immediate action to address major concerns about core areas of work.

Next steps

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