



JOINT INSPECTION OF YOUTH OFFENDING TEAMS
HM INSPECTORATE OF PROBATION
6th Floor, South Wing, Trafford House, Chester Road,
Stretford, Manchester M32 0RS
Tel: Media enquiries: 0207 035 3535
Other enquiries: 0161 869 1301

**Press
Notice**

EMBARGOED UNTIL 13 SEPTEMBER 2006

**HACKNEY YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM -
PUBLICATION OF FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION REPORT**

Today sees the publication of a follow-up inspection of Hackney Youth Offending Team (YOT). This inspection took place some six months after the publication of our initial report on the Hackney Youth Offending Team and was undertaken at the same time as the Joint Area Review of Children's Services.

Andrew Bridges, HM Chief Inspector of Probation, said:

"We were pleased to find significant work had been undertaken to address the position and structure of the YOT, and the Board, management and staff were enthusiastic about the future.

The immediate focus was to induct the new Youth Offending Team Manager and to establish the new staff structure to improve the framework and build on the progress made so far. Inevitably, there were some areas of work, such as enforcement and vulnerability, that required further attention, but staff training had been significant and resulting improvements were beginning to show. The management of children and young people posing a risk of harm to others had also improved considerably.

We would therefore like to commend the managers and staff of the Hackney Youth Offending Team for the progress they have made thus far and look forward to hearing of their continuing improvement in the future."

The report's main findings are:

Management and partnership arrangements

- With leadership from the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Management Board, significant work had been undertaken to reposition the YOT and develop the Board.
- The changes and improvements made had strengthened its ability to respond to the challenges presented in Hackney and placed the partnership in a strong position to deliver against a complex set of needs and risks.
- The recent support from Thames Youth Court had added to the strength of the partnership.
- Team restructuring had been agreed and work was underway to prepare staff for this change.
- Staff training had taken place over the last six months and the results of this investment were beginning to be reflected in improved service delivery. However, a future training plan needed to be developed as part of the overall strategy for the YOT.

Work with children and young people and their parents/carers

- Although a range of issues still needed continued development, staff had responded to the initial inspection report constructively and their positive change in the approach had been recognised and appreciated, both internally by the managers and the Management Board, and externally by the Thames Youth Court.
- Areas of work to be addressed included enforcement, safeguarding and following-up on vulnerability.
- Home visits also required attention as part of a more integrated approach to working with parents/carers as well as parenting groups. In addition, there was a clear need to develop and improve working relations with social services.

Victims and restorative justice

- Work with victims was still underdeveloped and the existing partnership was being reviewed at the time of the re-inspection. There had been a subsequent agreement with the provider to take the service back in-house.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. The follow-up inspection of Hackney YOT took place in February and March 2006..
2. The local authority of Hackney had a total population of 202,824, measured in the Census 2001. Of this population, 26.0% were aged 0-17 years at the time of the census. This figure was much higher than the average for England and Wales of 22.7%.
3. Nine Inspectorates conduct the Youth Offending Team Inspections. They are Commission for Social Care Inspection, Estyn (HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales), Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, Healthcare Commission, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, HM Inspectorate of Probation, Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales.
4. The YOT inspection programme started in June 2003. All 155 YOTs within England and Wales are being inspected over a five to six year cycle.
5. The inspection will be carried out in line with the Government's commitment to proportionate and coordinated inspection in local government, informed by the Comprehensive Performance Assessment results and the Wales Programme for Improvement. A programme has therefore been developed that:
 - is proportionate to risk and only inspects those areas of work where a team is performing well in order to disseminate good practice
 - complements, and is coordinated with, other inspection programmes, including those currently being developed following the publication of the Green Paper, *Every Child Matters* (2003)
 - takes account of YOTs' recent development as organisations.
6. Comprehensive standards and criteria have been developed to cover the first phase of the inspection, focusing on:
 - management and partnership arrangements
 - children and young people considered at risk of offending
 - children and young people who offend
 - parents/carers of children and young people who are at risk of offending or who offend
 - work with victims of crime.