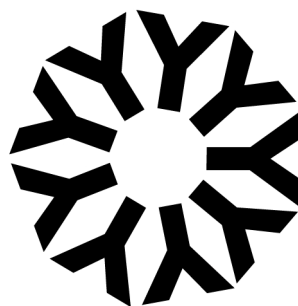


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# Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Report on:  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne  
Youth Offending Team

2007

## Foreword

The inspection of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne YOT revealed a service supported by committed staff and managers. A recent Youth Justice Board review had confirmed that it was underfunded and lacked the capacity to do all that was required of it. Staff worked efficiently with the resources available to them and the YOT manager in particular had clearly worked tirelessly to make up for some of the deficiencies.

We found a number of strengths. Work in the Youth Court, both on a day-to-day basis and through planned liaison, was well regarded; it was successful in achieving positive outcomes that the court found credible for children and young people who had offended. Assessments were routinely carried out and there was a high level of purposeful involvement with children and young people and parents/carers during custodial sentences. Services for those with mental health problems and/or substance misuse were impressive.

Specific areas for improvement centred on the links between assessment, planning and interventions. The assessment and management of Risk of Harm, particularly amongst custody cases, required attention. Development time was needed to improve the range of interventions available. Access to suitable education, training or employment opportunities was insufficient and was not supported by strategic planning.

The Partnership Board was now strong and able to support the YOT. It is important to ensure access to the full funding recommended in the recent Youth Justice Board review. Within the YOT and the Board there was clearly the will and the ability to make the necessary improvements. This report contains recommendations that we believe will assist the team to move forward and deliver significant improvements.

*Andrew Bridges*  
*HM Chief Inspector of Probation*

*January 2007*

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

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## Glossary

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity disorder
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
HMIC	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
PCEP	Professional Certificate of Effective Practice
ACPC	Area Child Protection Committee
APA	Annual Performance Assessment
Asset	Assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
CPO	Community Punishment Order
CPRO	Community Punishment and Rehabilitation Order
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CSCI	Commission for Social Care Inspection
DAT	Drug Action Team
DTO	Detention and Training Order
E2E	A learning programme for 16-18 year olds
Estyn	HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
ETE	Employment, Training and Education
EWO	Education welfare officer
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
HMIC	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMI Prisons	HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
ISP	Initial Supervision Plan
ISSP	Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme
IT	Information technology
JAR	Joint Area Review
KYPE	Keeping Young People Engaged
LCJB	Local Criminal Justice Board
LPSA	Local Public Service Agreement
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
National Standards	National Standards for Youth Justice Services
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NHS	National Health Service

NRF	Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
Onset	YJB tool for assessing children and young people at risk of offending
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act
PO	Probation officer
PPO	Prolific and other Priority Offender
PSR	Pre-sentence report
RAP	Resettlement and Aftercare Provision
RoH	Risk of Harm
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bounded
SSD	Social Services Department
SSIW	Social Services Inspectorate for Wales
SSR	Specific sentence report
VLO	Victim liaison officer
WPI	Wales Programme for Improvement
YIP	Youth Inclusion Programme
YISP	Youth Inclusion Support Panel
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOI	Young Offender Institution
YOT	Youth Offending Team

## Introduction

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

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

The YOT inspection covers five core areas of work:

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

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

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

## Overview of the area

- ◆ The metropolitan borough of Newcastle-upon-Tyne is located in the North East of England. Newcastle City Council is divided into the following 26 electoral wards: Benwell and Scotswood, Blakelaw, Byker, Castle, Dene, Denton, Gosforth (East and West), Elswick, Fawdon, Fenham, Heaton (North and South), Jesmond (North and South), Kenton, Lemington, Newburn, Ouseburn, Parklands, Walker, Walkergate, Westerhope, Westgate, Wingrove and Woolsington.
- ◆ Newcastle-upon-Tyne had a total population of 259,536, measured in the Census 2001. Of this population, 9.7% were aged 10-17 years at the time of the census. This figure was lower than the average for England, which was 10.4%.
- ◆ Newcastle-upon-Tyne had a predominantly white population, 93.1%, which was higher than the average for England of 90.9%. The percentage of Asian or Asian British residents, 4.4%, was lower than the average for England of 4.6%. The percentage of Black or Black British residents, at 0.4%, was also lower than the English average of 2.3%.
- ◆ The level of employment in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 50%, was lower than the average for England of 60.9%. The level of unemployment, 4.7%, was correspondingly higher than the average for England of 3.4%.
- ◆ There was a significantly high percentage of students resident in Newcastle-upon-Tyne at the time of the census, both economically active and inactive, at 13.8% compared to 7.3% in England. There was a higher percentage of permanently sick or disabled residents, 8.5% compared to 5.3% in England.
- ◆ Newcastle City Council was classified as a three star council in the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment 2005.
- ◆ The Youth Justice Board figures for youth offending for the period April 2005 to March 2006 show that 123.6 offences were committed per 1,000 children and young people aged 10-17 years in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
- ◆ The Youth Justice Board summary of overall YOT performance for April 2005-March 2006 awarded Newcastle-upon-Tyne YOT a performance level of 3.

## Scoring summary

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

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

### Overall assessment

Overall we found in Newcastle-upon-Tyne a YOT that was performing quite well given the inadequate level of funding that it had always had in comparison with other, similar YOTs. This was a tribute to the YOT manager in particular and to all of its committed and well motivated staff.

Early in 2006 a Youth Justice Board review had put forward suggestions for improvement. Recommendations had been accepted by the Partnership Board and some improvements, particularly in relation to the Board itself, were already having an impact. The full level of funding agreed needed to be put in place, however, before the important changes within the YOT could be made.

The core business had been properly prioritised. Court work was good and the needs of children and young people were generally appropriately assessed. Improvements were needed, however, in relation to planning and interventions. The assessment of Risk of Harm was too often not undertaken in relevant cases and staff needed training to develop their practice in this area.

Resources for mental health and substance misuse were good. Children and young people who had offended were not well served, however, with proper access to employment, training and education opportunities.

There were a number of initiatives established with monies, in addition to core funding, that the YOT had successfully bid for. Whilst this brought potential future problems, as all such funding was of a fixed term nature, there were good resources developing in the Youth Inclusion Programmes, Resettlement and Aftercare Provision, Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme and a planned Youth Inclusion Support Panel.

## Diversity issues

There was a growing minority ethnic population in Newcastle-upon-Tyne although the population was still predominantly white. The proportion of black and Asian residents was lower than for England as a whole. The minority ethnic population was growing proportionately in part due to the arrival of asylum seekers from many backgrounds. Services were being developed within the City Council to address their needs.

Whilst the staff group was predominantly white, particularly in the core YOT, the proportion reflected that of the local population. The YOT was aware of the need to attract more black and minority ethnic staff to keep up with changes. The Board had no representative from a minority ethnic group.

Children and young people aged 10 to 17 from black or minority ethnic groups were under-represented within the population of those who had offended in the same age range. 9.9% of Newcastle-upon-Tyne's children and young people were from black and minority ethnic groups, yet only 4.3% were known to have offended.

There was no over-representation of minority groups in any remand classification and no custodial remands from these groups.

The inspection found that:

- ◆ the YOT had completed its Race Equality Audit and Plan in 2005. However, it did not have a YOT specific plan to address how it would improve the way it promoted the diverse needs of those who had offended at all levels
- ◆ some staff had had diversity and equality training. However, understanding and experience of thinking about the needs of children and young people from minority groups was underdeveloped
- ◆ access to interpreters at court was at a good level, including several recent cases where a signer had been used. This was arranged via an interpreting service provided through the City Council. Where Asset identified literacy needs this would be picked up by the court staff in the first interview. They would go through the appointment time notice with the child or young person at court then send duplicates of appointment letters to parents/carers
- ◆ there were some links with agencies providing services for black and minority ethnic groups, but this was not done on a consistent basis. No processes were established to seek the views of those communities.

## Key statistics

File reading statistic	YOT file read score	Average for phase 3.1 YOTs	Range for phase 3.1 YOTs	YJB targets
	(% cases)			
Initial assessment completed in accordance with national standards requirements:				
– timeliness	89%	79%	41-100%	100%
– adequate quality	66%	68%	36-93%	
Full Risk of Harm to others completed on relevant cases	100%*	62%	0-100%	
Evidence of management oversight in Risk of Harm cases	N/A	40%	0-100%	
Initial supervision plan meets the content requirements of national standards and contain specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bounded objective	47%	27%	0-100%	100% <sup>(1)</sup>
Frequency of appointments arranged broadly conform to national standards, to the requirements of order/licence, and to any Risk of Harm considerations	73%	79%	45-100%	
Judgements about acceptability/unacceptability of absences are appropriate	70%	74%	40-100%	
Breach/recall action has taken place, if required, within the national standards timescale	25%	56%	0-100%	
No evidence of any criminal activity during the course of the order	77%	70%	55-83%	
Appropriate action has been taken if a child or young person is considered vulnerable to harm from self and others	63%	82%	20-100%	
Effective action is taken where there is evidence of educational difficulties.	63%	66%	33-100%	90% <sup>(2)</sup>
Appropriate referrals are made in cases of:				
– physical health	N/A	70%	0-100%	
– mental/emotional health	75%	70%	33-100%	100% <sup>(3)</sup>
– substance misuse	71%	73%	33-100%	100% <sup>(4)</sup>
Victim was consulted about restorative/reparative justice work with child or young person	71%	53%	13-84%	
Assessment of overall quality of pre-sentence reports	94%	50%	0-76%	

\* Note that this statistic refers to one case only.

(1) Relates to detention and training plans.

(2) In full-time employment, training and education.

(3) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service referrals.

(4) Screening and referrals.

## Key findings

- ◆ **Management** – The Partnership Board had commissioned a full review of the YOT by the Youth Justice Board in the previous year due to a significant dip in performance during the prolonged absence of the YOT manager for health reasons. This had uncovered the extent to which the YOT was suffering due to a lack of resources and which the manager had sought to compensate for. The newly appointed Executive Director of Children’s Services had taken up post earlier in that year and had used the evidence generated by the review to get agreement to an increase in funding and to strengthen the make-up and functioning of the Board. At the time of the inspection the YOT still lacked the managerial capacity for operational managers to develop performance and for the YOT manager to contribute fully to city-wide strategic development. This manifested itself in a variety of ways, in particular in relation to staff supervision, training and development. There were still also other gaps in the establishment.

The work of the YOT was fully integrated into partner strategies including collaboration to address antisocial behaviour and persistent offending. Several partners reported that alcohol misuse was a major issue for children and young people in Newcastle-upon-Tyne which had been exacerbated by the promotion of the city as an attraction for night life. The commissioning arrangements for substance misuse and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service ensured that the YOT had good access to these services. However, children and young people who had offended were less well served on the whole by Connexions and Education Services.

- ◆ **Work in the courts** – The YOT was well respected and was seen to work proactively and confidently within the Youth Court setting. It worked closely with a small number of legal advisors and prosecutors who specialised in Youth Court work. Despite serious shortcomings in court accommodation especially the use of adult magistrates’ courts, and within the capacity of the YOT, all bases were covered whenever the court was sitting and a high level of good quality reports were produced. There were good liaison arrangements with the panel and the YOT was an active member of the Youth Court User Group. The use of custody at the remand stage and as a sentence was low and the Bench tended to follow the recommendations made by the YOT. Relationships with the Crown Court were less well developed and were an area for improvement.
- ◆ **Work with children and young people in the community** – There was effective multi-agency partnership work between the Youth Inclusion Programme and key partners; Education Welfare and Children’s Services and others collaborated to identify and refer into the Youth Inclusion Programme the children and young people most at risk of offending. YOT staff were highly motivated and worked

positively with children and young people. Assessments of those under supervision were generally completed and on time. The assessment and management of Risk of Harm was underdeveloped, although work with those posing the highest risk to the public was seen to be effective. There was room for improvement in the quality of planning, and interventions often appeared to be unstructured. There was insufficient capacity to develop programmes, in particular for girls and young women and children and young people from minority ethnic groups. Reviews were often not done. The mental health and substance misuse needs of children and young people were well catered for. There were insufficient resources for employment, training and education for those who had offended both within the YOT and in the community.

- ◆ ***Work with children and young people subject to detention and training orders*** – There was a good level of purposeful liaison between YOT workers and the Young Offender Institution during the custodial part of the sentence. Contact levels with children and young people and their parents/carers were also good. Staff contributed consistently to planning and reviews in the institution. The quality of assessment generally and in particular the assessment of Risk of Harm was often less good than in the community sample. Work on release was of less good quality with little evidence of planning or of useful intervention, even with this highly recidivist group. Work commenced in custody was generally picked up on release, but not in relation to alcohol misuse.
- ◆ ***Victims and restorative justice*** – The seconded police officers acted as victim liaison officers and provided information on the various levels of intervention. Systems for gathering the views of victims and ensuring that they were available in final warnings and at referral panels were well organised. In most relevant cases there was evidence that victims had been consulted about reparation or restorative justice with those who had offended. Most victims did not come forward to have active involvement with the YOT, although they reported high levels of satisfaction with the process.

## Recommendations

*The Chair of the Partnership Board should ensure that:*

- ◆ an improvement plan is devised to address the following recommendations and forwarded to the lead inspector within four weeks of the publication of this report
- ◆ action is taken to implement fully the findings of the Youth Justice Board review that had been agreed by the Board
- ◆ the problem of the growing number of children and young people with excessive alcohol use, and the health and social consequences of this, is addressed through the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership
- ◆ consideration is given to the provision of a generic health worker post within the YOT
- ◆ an Education/Learning and Development Plan for the employment, training and education work of the YOT is developed in conjunction with the Education Department.

*The YOT manager should ensure that:*

- ◆ a staff development plan is written and implemented
- ◆ Assets are used to inform planning and interventions, reviewed in line with the national standard and used to evaluate outcomes for children and young people
- ◆ priority is given to the development of the use of the Risk of Serious Harm Asset supported by Risk of Harm training focused on case material and research rather than procedures
- ◆ increased management capacity is dedicated to developing the range of interventions available, in particular for girls and young women and children and young people from minority ethnic groups
- ◆ a systematic process is introduced for the screening of young people beyond school age without qualifications for basic skills, literacy and numeracy.
- ◆ the quality of post-release work in custody cases matches that of community-based cases
- ◆ sufficient staff are trained to assess potential reparation projects for risk and, where necessary, victims' views are obtained after sentence so that the range available for reparation orders can be extended.

*Partner organisations should ensure that:*

- ◆ a service level agreement with the Crown Court is developed
- ◆ there is access to a Police and Criminal Evidence Act bed
- ◆ sufficient resources from Connexions are invested in the YOT
- ◆ those who have offended are able to benefit from the full range of employment, training and education resources available to all children and young people in the city.

# 1. MANAGEMENT

## 1.1 Leadership

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

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

The YOT was located in the Social Services Directorate of the City Council. The Executive Director of Children's Services took the lead role on behalf of the Chief Executive and had chaired the Partnership Board (YOT Management Board) since April 2005. Through Board members and the manager the YOT was appropriately represented in key partnership groups including the Safe Newcastle Partnership (amalgamating the CDRP and DAT), Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, Young People's Substance Misuse Commissioning Group, Safeguarding Children Board, MAPPA and LCJB.

### ***Strengths:***

- ◆ In 2005 the Board had commissioned a full review of the YOT by the YJB Performance Development Section. The manager's absence on sick leave for six months had exposed the weaknesses in management capacity at the YOT; this was around the time when the newly appointed Executive Director of Children's Services had taken up post. The manager was very experienced and well respected; however, his original business case (1999) to the partner agencies to establish the YOT had not been accepted and it was now acknowledged that it had always had insufficient core funding.
- ◆ The Partnership Board was made up of representatives from the relevant partner agencies that were at an appropriate level of seniority. All were able to represent the needs of the YOT to their parent organisation; for example, the health representative was a senior level commissioning manager from the North Tyne Commissioning Partnership. She had close links with the Newcastle Public Health Director and was also a member of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership. This enabled the support needs of the YOT to be seen in the wider context of vulnerable children and young people.
- ◆ Recommendations from the review, which reported in November 2005 and which had been actioned, included a number that had strengthened the capacity of the Board. The membership had been widened with representatives from the Youth Service, Housing and

Connexions. Elected members brought two-way accountability and a raised profile for the YOT within the authority, with the potential for problem-solving at an early stage.

- ◆ Board meetings had been rescheduled to coincide with quarterly performance reporting to the YJB. A new performance management framework had been agreed in March and implemented by the new information officer, a post created in April. There was now evidence of the manager being held to account and also being supported by his Partnership Board.
- ◆ Performance reports were being developed in consultation with Board members and were user-friendly. There was evidence of work being undertaken within the YOT to ensure data accuracy and to use performance information to support improvements.

**Area for improvement:**

- ◆ As a consequence of further recommendations in the YJB review, funding for two extra manager posts had been agreed. However, these posts had not been filled due in part to some elements of the funding being as yet unclear and also to the recent resignation of an experienced manager. As a consequence, the YOT still lacked the managerial capacity for operational managers to develop YOT performance and for the YOT manager to contribute fully to city-wide strategic development. This was compounded by gaps in service delivery staffing which meant that all managers were pulled into acting outside of their brief to compensate.

## 1.2 Partnership and resources

**Key judgement:**

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

The work of the YOT was fully integrated into partner strategies including collaboration to address antisocial behaviour and persistent offending. Several partners reported that alcohol misuse was a major issue for children and young people in Newcastle-upon-Tyne which had been exacerbated by the promotion of the city as an attraction for night life. The commissioning arrangements for substance misuse and CAMHS ensured that the YOT had good access to these services. However, children and young people who had offended were less well served on the whole by Connexions and Education Services. When the current reorganisation of local health services was completed, it would be useful for the YOT Board to be informed of the relative roles of commissioners and providers in ensuring Health Service support to the YOT continued to be effective.

### **Strengths:**

- ◆ Following the YJB review, the Partnership Board had supported development proposals at a cost of £240,000 in addition to the annual budget of just over £2.5 million. Application for part of this had been made successfully to the City Council, with the result of a bid to the NRF Round 3 being as yet unclear. At a time when other budgets were subject to efficiency savings, the YOT was not highlighted for cuts.
- ◆ Involvement in community safety initiatives and contribution to achievement of partnership targets had attracted funding via the Safe Newcastle Partnership. This had supplemented YJB funding to maintain the YIP and was being used to develop a YISP. Funding from the LPSA meant YOT agreement to the stretch target of a 7% decrease in first-time entrants to the criminal justice system as a contribution to crime prevention in the city.
- ◆ Partner agencies had their own constraints to deal with. Both the Probation and Police Services had financial commitments to all six Northumbria YOTs; the Probation Service had not decreased its level of funding overall but had taken a decision to even out contributions across the six using the current YJB formula and, as a consequence, Newcastle-upon-Tyne had been one of the losers. The Police were about to review the level of their commitment.
- ◆ Most partner agencies had seconded the required levels of appropriately experienced staff; there was a low level of turnover amongst secondees.
- ◆ There were a number of up-to-date SLAs with providers of commissioned services, e.g. in relation to the different components of the RAP. The development of core protocols between statutory partners and the YOT was less well developed, including in relation to seconded staff and to information exchange with the Police and NHS.
- ◆ The YOT was represented at appropriate levels on the Safeguarding Children Board, MAPPa, the PPO Strategy Group and arrangements for addressing antisocial behaviour.
- ◆ There were secure arrangements for the recording and sharing of information across boundaries. Case managers were able to access 'Carefirst' the SSD database to check on child protection or other concerns. They also used the secure e-mail system to ensure that information about children and young people reached the custodial or secure estate in a timely manner.
- ◆ The YIPs were managed by external partners from the independent sector and the city Play and Youth Service. Targets for inclusion were being achieved, and the prevention agenda had recently been strengthened through the appointment of a dedicated manager to take responsibility for the YIPs and proposed YISP.

- ◆ Further work to refine the level and type of CAMHS needed for the YOT was continuing through the CAMHS commissioning plans. There was a specific focus on the needs of children and young people with dual diagnosis and on ensuring appropriate services for 16-18 year olds.
- ◆ The commissioned services for substance misuse had brought together workers to provide good access to preventative, early intervention and specialist services. The YOT had had the benefit of direct access through designated workers and was able to take up training being offered for Tier 2 level interventions in all children and young people's services. The substance misuse services linked well with programmes such as Positive Futures and the RAP work and contributed to the development of services for children and young people across the city.
- ◆ The YOT had developed positive relationships and access to resources under the Supporting People umbrella and had been an active member of the Core Strategy Group. The Housing Department was now also represented on the Partnership Board. There was a commitment in the city to preventing homelessness for children and young people and to a planned and staged progression to suitable accommodation for those who did need to leave home. Children and young people supervised by the YOT had priority for the one direct access facility and there were concrete plans to improve the range of what was available for 16 and 17 year olds in the most difficult to house group. The Board was addressing these using actual case examples where provision had not been found.

***Areas for improvement:***

- ◆ In common with all YOTs, much of the funding was of a fixed term nature; this currently added up to 37% of its revenue budget.
- ◆ There was no education plan for the YOT and this was the area of greatest weakness in service provision for children and young people involved with it.
- ◆ Connexions had had difficulty in recruiting a suitable worker. There had been gaps during the year and recently one worker stayed for only a few weeks. It was felt that the commitment of a 0.4 FTE post was inadequate.

## 1.3

### Staff supervision, development and training

#### **Key judgement:**

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

Given the level of acknowledged under-resourcing in the YOT since its inception, we found a remarkably positive staff group, working well in teams that provided a high level of mutual support. Sickness levels were relatively low and there had been a period of stability; unfortunately this was coming to an end as workers were starting to leave, for a variety of reasons. Staff reported that they did receive supervision and support from managers, but their span of control was such that this could not include appropriate attention to detail. Lack of sufficient manager capacity meant that there was no training strategy and there had been no YOT specific operational procedures until very recently.

#### **Strengths:**

- ◆ Staff worked positively in teams and demonstrated a clear commitment to working with children and young people and to supporting one another to improve their work.
- ◆ Most staff did report that they received monthly or six-weekly supervision from their manager. In addition they felt supported.
- ◆ There were formal arrangements for POs to keep in touch with their agency and for them to access area-wide training. Responsibility for the seconded police officers had recently moved from one department to another and had not yet settled down. There seemed to be some distance between seconded officers and their mainstream colleagues; however, there was an open invitation for officers to attend a weekly tasking meeting to keep up with developments. The education worker did not receive supervision or appraisal from her seconding department. Clinical supervision arrangements for the health workers in the YOT were sound, ensuring strong professional links with their employing organisations.
- ◆ A number of YOT workers had had 'C Card' training and were able to offer children and young people appropriate sexual health advice and give out condoms. The initial training was good and there had been continuing training on health related topics.
- ◆ Staff were suitably experienced or qualified. Located within the SSD they had access to all internal training including safeguarding. A number of them had also recently undertaken training around the new procedures for dealing with RoH.
- ◆ The 33 active referral panel volunteers had all received training in accordance with the YJB's Training Manual and had also participated in refresher training, covering areas such as substance misuse.

- ◇ All staff had had a CRB check, with employed staff having this updated on a three-yearly basis. Plans were in hand to require the seconding agencies to follow this procedure in the future. Volunteers had also had CRB checks.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ There was no training plan and this was an area of work identified as a priority should the YOT be able to recruit to the planned number of managers. Whilst some training was commissioned within the YJB region and found elsewhere, this lacked coherence. Significant gaps were perceived as the assessment and management of RoH (as distinct from use of procedures), working with both diversity and anger management. There was a suggestion that one of the psychologists might be able to assist with the latter.
- ◇ It was acknowledged that the YOT internal operational policies and procedures were so new that they had not in fact been implemented. Staff therefore lacked training, detailed oversight of their work and procedural guidance. They had been involved in putting the procedures together and were expected to put them into practice. This was unlikely to happen consistently until all posts were filled.
- ◇ Some posts in the YOT were paid at a lower rate than for similar jobs in neighbouring YOTs which, at times, had a negative impact on staffing. This was being addressed in the local authority.
- ◇ Whilst there was a staff supervision template which, if followed, would ensure a performance management framework, there had been insufficient resources to implement it consistently. Appraisals tended to be completed, but there was an acknowledgement that there was a need to adopt the YJB framework.
- ◇ Whilst some staff had received race equality training, understanding and experience of thinking about the needs of children and young people from minority groups was underdeveloped.
- ◇ Only one member of the team held the relevant qualification to assess the health and safety implications of in-house activities. The YOT was therefore vulnerable to being unable to make changes or develop a new reparation activity. Indeed, this one person had been on sick leave for some weeks at the time of the inspection.

### **Good practice**

The commissioned services for substance misuse had brought together workers to provide good access to preventative, early intervention and specialist services. The YOT had the benefit of direct access through designated workers and was able to take up training being offered for Tier 2 level interventions in all young people's services.

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT**

*This section is judged as adequate.*

## 2.

## WORK IN THE COURTS

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

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

Whilst the Youth Court buildings were less than ideal, positive and productive working relationships had been developed. These were fostered by a Court User Group and a regular formal YOT liaison meeting. There were operational links with probation staff at the Crown Court but there was no SLA. Most PSRs were of good quality and reports were valued by the court.

### ***Strengths:***

- ◆ There was an SLA with the Youth Court. A small number of legal advisors and prosecutors specialised in the Youth Courts and this, together with a stable court team in the YOT, had helped to establish very positive working relationships. The YOT was well respected and was seen to work proactively and confidently within the Youth Court setting. Its input was clearly welcomed. Changes to the YOT were planned due to retirements and the natural end of a secondment, but there was no reason to suspect that this effective relationship would not continue.
- ◆ Due to the absence of cells at the Youth Court, remand and potential custody cases were heard at the separate adult magistrates' court. All concerned acknowledged that this was an unsatisfactory arrangement. Despite the demand on its limited resources, the team was able to cover both courts satisfactorily. Saturday and bank holiday courts were also covered by them on a rota basis.
- ◆ There was a Youth Court User Group which met quarterly to address practical issues. This was attended by a member of the YOT.
- ◆ There was also a YOT Liaison Group that met three or four times per year. The Chair of the Youth Panel and YOT manager set the agenda together. Various members of the YOT had given presentations about new and developing aspects of work, e.g. parenting. There was also an opportunity to discuss any specific issues that had cropped up.

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

- ◆ Facilities for all court users at both the Youth Court and magistrates' court were inadequate. Although the former was more modern, it had no cells so that children and young people every week had to appear

in the adult court where physical conditions were not suitable and where they could be brought into contact with adult offenders. It also had insufficient interview space; as a high proportion of reports ordered were stand downs, workers often had to interview and assess children and young people in public spaces.

- ◆ There was no SLA with the Crown Court. Whilst YOT staff tracked the progress of its own cases through the process, there were times when a member of staff had been unable to attend when required. In addition, the remand and sentencing options for children and young people now differed so greatly from those for adults that it was difficult for the Crown Court probation team, who dealt with so few who had offended, to advise judges in the absence of YOT colleagues.

***Key judgement:***

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

The Youth Court sat on three days per week and children and young people could be produced on any day in the magistrates' court. They were staffed by four YOT workers including one bail support officer. It was acknowledged in the YJB review that resources were stretched and plans to increase the strength of the team had not yet been implemented.

***Strengths:***

- ◆ The YOT had access to its IT system in its Youth Court office. To ensure that an establishment received the relevant information about a child or young person sentenced to custody, they used the secure e-mail system to send the Asset, etc.
- ◆ A team member would aim to interview anyone sentenced to custody and would expect to be able to do this on most occasions. Occasionally, however, the transport would arrive before this was possible. If the child or young person was going to local authority secure accommodation, a court worker would sit with them until a bed was found.
- ◆ A system had been established for a worker to attend a case tracker meeting so that the YOT could use bail support to provide an escort to court when a child or young person had previously failed to attend.
- ◆ There was a good level of access to interpreters at court, including several recent cases where a signer had been used. This was due to the court having its own arrangements for interpretation.
- ◆ Where Asset identified literacy needs this would be picked up by the court staff in giving the first interview. They would go through the appointment time notice with the child or young person at court then send duplicates of appointment letters to parents/carers.

- ◇ Where possible the YOT carried out an induction interview at court. We observed a reparation order induction which involved giving the young person (aged 11) and his father the three appointments he would need to do the hours and explaining what he would do and how it would benefit the community.

**Key judgement:**

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

The use of remands to the secure estate and of custodial sentences was very low in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Appropriate bail support packages were offered in most cases and could have a positive impact on subsequent sentencing. There were, however, no PACE beds or remand fostering arrangements.

**Strengths:**

- ◇ Children and young people who were at risk of a custodial remand or sentence were always identified at an early stage so that they could be listed to appear at the magistrates' court where there was a secure dock.
- ◇ There was a low use of custodial remands: only 19 cases or under 3% of all remand decisions between April and September 2006 were custodial remands. The use of custody as a sentence was also very low (1.3% for the financial year up to the time of the inspection). This was a reflection of the view of the court that, if an alternative to custody was possible, it had confidence in the YOT to deliver what had been promised.
- ◇ Bail support packages were offered to support this work either at first or subsequent appearances. We saw an example of where a successful use of the ISSP as a condition of bail persuaded the Bench of the viability of its use as a condition of a supervision order instead of a custodial sentence. There was no over-representation of minority groups in any remand classification and no custodial remands.

**Area for improvement:**

- ◇ There were no PACE beds or remand fostering arrangements for the few that needed them. As a consequence, children and young people who could not go home would be remanded to Police cells overnight or Saturday to Monday. Magistrates were also concerned that at times children and young people remanded to the care of the local authority would be sent home due to the lack of places. Newcastle-upon-Tyne had closed most of its children's homes.

***Key judgement:***

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

Almost half of the reports written were stand downs. Most PSRs were written to both JYB and court deadlines. The quality of reports overall was good, with the court clearly valuing the advice of the YOT workers.

***Strengths:***

- ◇ 47% of Youth Court reports were produced as stand downs on the day in order to contribute to the swift administration of justice. This was a significant demand on the team but was achieved.
- ◇ In the first half of the year the YOT had almost achieved its 90% YJB target for the time taken to prepare full PSRs. This was a similar proportion to that found in the sample. In almost all cases it did meet the courts' deadline which was often different.
- ◇ The overall quality of reports was good in 94% of those read during the inspection. All were free of discriminatory language and stereotypes. Most included offence analysis as opposed to description, though there was room for improvement in 26% of reports.
- ◇ There was a clear proposal commensurate with the seriousness of the offence in every report. Proposals contained an outline of the work which would be undertaken. A range of suitable disposals was proposed and PSR authors were described by court users as having a good understanding of their purpose.
- ◇ Reports were based on an Asset and children and young people were interviewed specifically for the report in all cases. Most parents/carers were also seen.

***Area for improvement:***

- ◇ There was insufficient attention to the impact of offending on victims in almost half of the reports. Whilst the seconded police officers did feed back information to YOT colleagues from their contact with victims, this was limited. Staff did not routinely receive the formal victim impact statements from the Police.

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK IN THE COURTS**

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

### 3.

## WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

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

#### **Key judgement:**

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

There were three well established and resourced YIPs operating on a multi-agency basis with those most at risk of committing offences. A good range of provision, some selected by children and young people themselves, was on offer. Parenting interventions were available across the city in a variety of settings.

#### **Strengths:**

- ◆ The number of first-time entrants to the criminal justice system had reduced. The YOT had adopted the stretch target of a 7% reduction by 2007/2008 associated with its LPSA funding. At the time of the inspection it was on target to achieve the annual YJB 5% reduction target. Children and young people aged 10 to 17 from black or minority ethnic groups were under-represented in the population of those who had offended in the same age range. 9.9% of Newcastle-upon-Tyne's children and young people were from black and minority ethnic groups yet only 4.3% were known to have offended.
- ◆ The Scotswood YIP was jointly funded by 'New Deal for Communities' monies and the YJB. It was managed in partnership with the Scotswood Youth Strategy (originally set-up by trustees from the community following the disturbances in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in the early 90s).
- ◆ There was effective, multi-agency partnership work between the YIP and key partners, including Education Welfare and Children's Services, to identify and refer into the YIP the children and young people most at risk of offending. Up to 250 per year in addition to the 'top 50' were referred.
- ◆ A wide range of activities was available including residential weekends, training programmes accredited through the Open College and detached youth work. The project also used the 'Keyfund' model to encourage children and young people to have ownership of the activities. An external evaluation of the Scotswood YIP undertaken in 2004 reported it to be 'highly successful' and praised the quality of staff engagement with children and young people.

- ◇ Specific groups for girls and young women and activities that focused on engaging children and young people from the black and minority ethnic communities were on offer. The YJB Quality Assurance Audit 2005/2006 reported that the 'top 50' children and young people appeared to reflect the ethnic diversity of the YIP area and that the Steering Group addressed community cohesion issues.
- ◇ The two junior YIPs had been evaluated in April 2006; this report had identified that they were meeting original project aims and were able to provide evidence of meeting four of the five Every Child Matters Outcomes. They had put together a development plan for this year which included starting to use Onset. In this way they would be better placed to demonstrate the effectiveness of their work in the future.
- ◇ A new post of operational manager for prevention had recently been established, including responsibility for taking forward plans to develop a YISP. Under the umbrella of the Safe Newcastle Partnership, it would draw on funding from the YJB and LPSA2.
- ◇ The Newcastle-upon-Tyne support group for parents/carers of young substance misusers (PROPS) played a positive role in working with the YOT with one worker seconded to the RAP. There were currently 200 active parents/carers known to PROPS, and volunteers ran a help line which was accessible during the day and evenings throughout the week.

***Areas for improvement:***

- ◇ An evaluation of the Scotswood junior YIP identified that there was an absence of referral criteria by which referring agencies could determine what constituted a 'low', 'medium' or 'high' risk rating, to assist agencies in their assessment of children and young people.
- ◇ The use of Onset as an assessment tool was not yet embedded in practice. It was therefore not always clear how individual and group-based interventions were targeted in areas of assessed risk and need.
- ◇ Objectives in individual action plans were not SMART. (This had been an area for improvement during the last YJB Quality Assurance Survey in September 2005). Reviews of progress were not taking place.
- ◇ Action plans for proposed YIP project work were not sufficiently focused on how such work would address the participants' areas of concern or on what the anticipated outcomes would be.

## 3.2

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

#### **Key judgement:**

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

Operational management arrangements were in the process of being changed. Work with children and young people who had offended was carried out by three main teams: early interventions (first tier penalties), interventions (including reparation and restorative justice) and case management (community-based penalties and DTOs). Final warnings were administered by the four seconded police officers and managed thereafter by the early interventions team. The lack of both operational and management capacity was evident in the YOT's inability to deliver a diverse range of interventions; it had, however, sensibly prioritised assessment and compliance and was working effectively with the resources available to it.

#### **Strengths:**

- ◇ Asset was completed on time in most cases in the sample (89%) and was of sufficient quality overall in 66% of the files inspected. The child or young person was involved in the assessment in most cases as were their parents/carers. Where there were differences to take into account in relation to a child or young person's needs or situation, this was done in 75% of cases. YOT staff had access to 'Carefirst' the SSD database and used this appropriately.
- ◇ Final warning surgeries were conducted on a rota by one of the four YOT police officers, rather than a mainstream officer. All but one had undertaken training on delivering warnings within a restorative justice approach.
- ◇ In most cases the YOT was notified of a decision to administer a final warning within one working day and received details of the victim(s). Most were administered within 20 working days and included an intervention as part of the process.
- ◇ We read three MAPPA cases, which were outside of the sample, to illustrate procedures and practice in relation to children and young people posing the highest level of RoH. These were all appropriately assessed and managed.
- ◇ There was evidence that most children and young people understood the requirements of the order. Where specific needs were identified, which had to be addressed in order to support the child or young person through supervision, this was done in most cases.
- ◇ Commitment to motivating children and young people to complete their orders successfully was clear in most instances. Case managers would have benefited from access to a wider range of resources but lacked the time to find them. There were examples, however, of

some workers using their previous experience to track down external facilities or advice. Three staff in the early interventions team had also put together a group work programme to address offending behaviour related issues, e.g. victims' awareness and consequences.

- ◆ Commitment to motivating children and young people to complete their orders successfully was clear in most cases. We saw some good examples of case managers being very open with them about the consequences of further offending.
- ◆ Planned contacts were broadly in line with the national standard in 73% of cases, with appointments being kept in 69%. Home visits were carried out as required. We agreed with judgements about the acceptability of reasons for absence in 70% of relevant cases. Whilst the quality of enforcement action reflected in the statistical feedback appeared to be poor, there was good use of a Breach Panel; this was used in appropriate cases to motivate children and young people to comply with the requirements of supervision or face court or recall. However, it was used too late; if children and young people were summoned to attend after two failures rather than three, it could be genuinely seen to be a 'final warning' and would assist the YOT in meeting the national standard target for breach action.

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

- ◆ Progress on reducing reoffending had been mixed over a three year period. The trend was down overall in three of the four populations used by the YJB for monitoring purposes. However, rates had risen in all but first tier penalties last year after a more positive result in 2004/2005. Of most concern was the reoffending rate amongst the community penalty group which had been rising steadily over the period and was now at 89.6%, a rate higher than that in the smaller custody cohort which was 87.5%.
- ◆ There was evidence of criminal activity in 23% of the community-based sample.
- ◆ The YOT had made extensive use of Viewpoint 'What do you think' to assess need in order to develop services. In relation to final warnings, it was offered to children and young people immediately after the warning was administered at the YOT. Any further intervention was voluntary on the part of the child or young person. It was unfortunate that in the cases read by inspectors this was usually the only intervention regardless of apparent need as identified in Asset.
- ◆ Whilst supervision plans were written on time in two-thirds of relevant cases, they were judged to be of sufficient quality in only 47% of the sample inspected. In almost half of the cases there was no suitable victim or restorative justice plans identified.
- ◆ In 14 cases inspectors identified elements of potential risk to the public; in only five ISPs were these adequately addressed.

- ◆ Interventions lacked structure; there was often a good deal of contact but it lacked purpose and often did not address offending behaviour. The YOT did not have the capacity in the main to develop group work or diverse approaches to case supervision; techniques for addressing anger management issues were specifically mentioned as a gap. It followed therefore that work with children and young people had a focus on individual young white males. Staff development around working with diversity needed to be a priority when new posts were all in place.
- ◆ There were very few cases where a review of the plan had been carried out.

### Good practice

One of the ISSP interventions was run by a local drama group. Once per year, it involved young people in writing and making a short film on a topic relevant to their current situation. These had included wearing a tag, living on a council estate and an introduction to RAP. These films were then used with other young people on ISSPs as talking points during offending behaviour interventions. The film on wearing a tag had won an award at a film festival and the one about RAP had been submitted for a YJB award in the Communicating Youth Justice Category.

### **Key judgement:**

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

The level of specialist support to the YOT from substance misuse workers and CAMHS was good. YOT workers were supported in their work with individual children and young people by the specialist staff and were able to make timely referrals. There were two designated substance misuse workers with appropriate training and experience and through these workers access to other resources in the Young People's Substance Misuse Service. Two clinical psychologists provided the equivalent of one whole time CAMHS worker for the YOT. Target times for accessing specialist interventions were being met and there was good access to other services of CAMHS. The 'C Card' scheme provided sexual health advice and could supply condoms to children and young people.

### **Strengths:**

- ◆ There was a good level of understanding amongst YOT workers of the importance of health issues and Assets recorded health related information well.
- ◆ Sexual health advice was provided appropriately and the 'C Card' scheme was well managed within the YOT.

- ◆ Substance misuse and mental health screening was consistently carried out and a new screening tool was being piloted. Performance indicators for assessment and referral for substance misuse and CAMHS interventions were being met.
- ◆ The CAMHS workers in the team were clinical psychologists and recognised as senior professionals. They were able to access more specialist services such as those for ADHD, forensic CAMHS and the early intervention psychosis team. They were also able to offer consultation to YOT workers on specific cases and, being based within the YOT, could take the opportunity of making contact with children and young people attending the YOT. However, the premises were not suitable for the health workers to offer one-to-one or group work with children and young people in the desired therapeutic setting.
- ◆ Other initiatives associated with the YOT, such as parenting programmes and support to parents/carers of substance misusers, demonstrated a good understanding of the health issues facing children and young people and who were able to seek support from the specialist health workers at the YOT.
- ◆ There was continuing work to define the health needs of children and young people from diverse backgrounds and consultation with them were informing service delivery.

***Areas for improvement:***

- ◆ Whilst children and young people were assisted in accessing primary health care services, there was scope for more active generic health advice and the promotion of physical and mental health.
- ◆ The growing number of children and young people with problematic alcohol use was of concern to service providers and commissioners.

**Good practice**

The Young People's Substance Misuse Service was providing a number of services for vulnerable groups of children and young people. This allowed continuity for those who may have had involvement in a series of interventions, e.g. as Looked After Children and later through contact with the YOT or YIP. Children and young people were offered the choice of remaining with the same worker over a period of time if this was their preference.

**Key judgement:**

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

There was an effective approach to safeguarding vulnerable children and young people and a reasonable level of cooperation between agencies to sustain that.

**Strengths:**

- ◇ Vulnerability Assets were routinely completed. There were six children and young people in the sample who were assessed as vulnerable to harm from themselves or from others. In each instance, action had been taken that was appropriate to the needs of the case.
- ◇ Discussions with YOT workers disclosed a generally positive working relationship with Children's Services colleagues. Whilst there was some room for improvement in developing a mutual understanding of threshold criteria for safeguarding referrals, this was not a major issue.
- ◇ There were two Looked After Children in the sample. There had been a satisfactory level of liaison between the YOT and Children's Services staff during the period of supervision.

**Area for improvement:**

- ◇ Unpaid work or community payback hours for 16 and 17 year olds subject to CPOs or CPROs were managed by the Probation Service as in most areas of England and Wales. This inevitably meant mixing young and adult offenders and reliance on the ability of the service to assess and manage the adults who would be spending working days with potentially vulnerable young people.

**Key judgement:**

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

The education team within the YOT consisted of one seconded EWO, one 0.5 FTE teacher funded through KYPE – a YJB funded programme, and 0.4 FTE Connexions provision, currently vacant. In addition, some basic skills, literacy and numeracy assessments and support for up to five children and young people were provided by a 10.5 hour worker from the Northern Literacy Trust. Greater resources were needed to support young people into post-16 ETE. There was also a need for increased training provision for young people 16+ with lower ability levels (Pre E2E).

### **Strengths:**

- ◇ Children and young people of statutory school age with a score of 2+ on the ETE part of the Asset were routinely referred by the case manager to the EWO for her to ensure appropriate interventions. However, monitoring of outcomes of those referred was limited.
- ◇ Whilst there were insufficient resources for education within the YOT, they were used effectively in the main. KYPE funding was used to employ a 0.5 FTE teacher to work with children and young people on a one-to-one basis. Where possible materials used were obtained from the child or young person's school to provide a continuation of their curriculum work.
- ◇ Where the child or young person had been out of school for some time, the EWO would put together a package of support using the KYPE-funded worker or would buy in provision from external providers to ensure timely provision. However, as this was for children and young people for whom the local authority had a statutory responsibility, where it was successful schools were approached to provide the necessary funding.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ During the first half of the year only just over 57% of children and young people supervised by the YOT were in education, training or employment. This was a very similar figure to last year. There were significantly more children and young people who were NEET over statutory school age than of school age (60% against 34% April to June 2006). This may have been a result of the absence of a worker responsible for the ETE of this group of children and young people.
- ◇ Children and young people who ought to have been in full-time statutory education tended to be offered vocational training due to the reluctance of schools to take them back in following exclusion.
- ◇ The YOT was under-resourced by Connexions in that its allocation was just 0.4 FTE of a worker. There had been problems in identifying a suitable candidate and the post had been vacant for some time, with the last incumbent staying for only a few weeks. As a consequence, when the post had been filled case managers did not always find responses to referrals helpful so stopped making them. The YOT manager responsible for ETE had also been on sick leave for some months. Connexions was aware of the problem and had identified a new worker to start when the YOT manager returned. Work to develop this link would need to be prioritised.
- ◇ Not surprisingly, only a third of young people in the sample had had contact with Connexions and less than a half of the over 16s were engaged in education or training.
- ◇ Provision of basic skills, literacy and numeracy screening for children and young people in the YOT was very patchy which meant that responses to their needs were unlikely to be targeted appropriately.

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strengths:**

- ◇ The framework for involvement of children and young people in Children and Young People's Partnership work had been successful in informing substance misuse and YOT work. The planned launch of the Young People's Substance Misuse Service was to be led by children and young people themselves.
- ◇ In February 2004, in conjunction with the Children's Society Voices Project, the junior YIP had invited children and young people to become involved in planning and organising their own diversionary activities for the half-term week. A number of five to 18 year olds from the YIP consulted their peers in the community and came up with a timetable of costed activities that offered something for everyone. The programme was enjoyed by all and there was a noticeable increase in confidence amongst those who had participated in its development.
- ◇ The ISSP and RAP involved children and young people in identifying their own skills and interests in order to ensure that they would buy in to the planned work. The ISSP also had a suggestions box. The manager did look at any comments and had introduced or developed interventions in response to these.
- ◇ An IT version of 'What do you think?' using Viewpoint software had been piloted in the early interventions team. Outcomes had been shared with the Play and Youth Service in order to assess what resources were needed in which areas. It had also been found to be a useful basis for further discussion with children and young people and would be developed further.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ Only 57% of children and young people in the sample had completed a 'What do you think?' form.
- ◇ The feedback forms from children and young people on the ISSP were not routinely completed and those that were had not been collated and used to inform planning.
- ◇ There were some links with agencies providing services for black and minority ethnic groups, but this was not undertaken on a consistent basis. There were no processes established to seek the views of minority ethnic communities.

### 3.3

### Work with parents/carers

#### **Key judgement:**

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

The YOT had developed a network of support and resources for the parents/carers of children and young people who had offended and those at risk of committing offences.

#### **Strengths:**

- ◆ All of YIPs included a parenting dimension to their work. The YISP under development had a parenting support worker who was linked into the Antisocial Behaviour Unit.
- ◆ We observed a parenting group. Participants had their needs assessed prior to inclusion and could have special needs addressed on an individual basis if that was more appropriate. All parents/carers seen were extremely positive about the group and about the support worker in particular. They were able to be specific about what differences that work had made in their interaction with their children.
- ◆ The number of parenting interventions delivered by the YOT exceeded the YJB target. Those participating were reported as all being satisfied with the intervention.
- ◆ Case managers actively included parents/carers in their work with children and young people. In all of the DTO cases there was planned and purposeful liaison with parents/carers throughout the custodial sentence to support continued responsibility for the child or young person on release.
- ◆ There were five cases in the sample where parents/carers were involved in a parenting intervention; in all cases there was evidence that a proper assessment of their needs had been carried out.
- ◆ Parents/carers were kept informed of the development of the work with the child or young person in all but one case.

#### **Good practice**

Parents' comments included:

*"Gives you another way of dealing with problems"*

*"Can get it off your chest"*

*"I now listen to my kid rather than talk at him"* and

*"I try and separate the child and the behaviour".*

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

*This section is judged as adequate.*

## 4.

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

#### **Key judgement:**

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

Work with children and young people subject to DTOs was carried out in the main by two members of the case management team. There were very few children and young people who had offended in YOIs so no extensive liaison on other than a case-by-case basis was required. The ISSP team visited to undertake assessments and inform children and young people about the programme.

#### **Strengths:**

- ◆ There was almost uniform good practice in assessment in the seven DTO cases read. Asset was completed on time in all of them, sent to the institution within 24 hours and involved the child or young person and parents/carers if appropriate. In only one case was the quality of the assessment less than satisfactory.
- ◆ Where there was ISSP or RAP involvement, a thorough assessment was conducted in order to individualise the plan.
- ◆ Sufficient liaison took place between the YOT, institution and Children's Services in relation to vulnerable or Looked After Children.
- ◆ YOT workers contributed to the initial training plan in all cases.

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

- ◆ Whilst all but one ISP was completed on time, only half were of sufficient quality. There were also two cases where interventions planned did not adequately address the RoH issues identified.
- ◆ A full RoH Asset was completed in four cases, but inspectors judged that it should have been completed in two more. In the one case assessed as posing a medium or high RoH, there was no evidence that it had been referred to a manager at any stage.
- ◆ We were told of occasions when liaison between case managers and the ISSP team could have been improved, e.g. at least one child or young person had been referred to the ISSP too late for them to visit him in the YOI pre-release and he was clearly unprepared for the demanding package that was included in his licence.

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strengths:**

- ◇ There was a good level of attendance at planning and review meetings by YOT staff. Liaison between the YOT, the child or young person and the institution was satisfactory. Parents/carers were assisted to attend training plan meetings. In all but one case the YOT worker contributed to the final training plan satisfactorily and ensured that it was informed by Asset.
- ◇ There was good liaison between the YOT health workers and the health team in the local YOI.

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strengths:**

- ◇ Attention to work commenced in custody post-release was mixed, but in most cases did continue in relation to offending behaviour work, ETE and illicit substance misuse.
- ◇ Workers did monitor and address the child or young person's housing needs.
- ◇ Appropriate action was taken to implement additional licence conditions, e.g. ISSP.
- ◇ YOT staff worked positively to motivate children and young people by reinforcing work undertaken by others.
- ◇ In all but one case appointments were offered to the national standard. Compliance was less good, but appropriate judgements were made about reasons for absences. In the one case where recall was necessary this was done in a timely manner.
- ◇ There was high use made of the ISSP which included 25 hours of positive and enforceable contact per week.
- ◇ We saw some good examples of work focused on the impact of offending on victims and also some letters of apology which had been thoroughly prepared.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ In the two cases where work to address alcohol misuse had started in custody it did not continue on release.
- ◇ Post-release reviews did not take place.

**Key judgement:**

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

**Strength:**

- ◇ On release there was some evidence in Asset of improvements in the original factors that had been linked to offending prior to the custodial sentence. All had an improved attitude to offending and most said that they were more motivated to change; however, reoffending rates did not bear this out. All five who had previously had unsatisfactory living arrangements were now said to be experiencing an improvement in this important aspect of their life.

**Area for improvement:**

- ◇ Reoffending rates amongst the 2003/2004 cohort monitored by the YJB were high at 87.5 %; however, this was slightly lower than for the community penalty group. Within the DTO sample there was evidence of criminal activity in 57% of the sample (four cases).

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

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

## 5.

## VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

### **Key judgement:**

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

The victims and restorative justice team consisted of the four police officers and the restorative justice worker. One officer acted as the VLO in final warning cases and was the liaison point between the ISSP team and Police in terms of sharing intelligence. Another provided victim information for PSRs and stand downs, as well as for Referral Order Panels.

### **Strengths:**

- ◆ A 'victim perspective' form was completed for victims of final warning or referral order offences. This clearly outlined the impact of the offence on the victim and set out which interventions the victim was willing to consider. A database of corporate victims had been set up, informed by a 'corporate contract' which a company would draw up with the YOT, outlining their wishes. Panel volunteers reported that victims' views were always gathered.
- ◆ In 71% of the 24 relevant cases in the sample there was evidence that the victim(s) had been consulted about involvement in reparation or restorative justice with the child or young person. All but one of these were invited to participate in such an activity, although only five responded positively to the invitation.
- ◆ It was clear from the victim files that information had been provided about YOT interventions, letters of apology and referral panels. There was a 'Final Warning Information Sheet' which included information about the Victim Support scheme.
- ◆ High levels of victim contact were reported by the team; their own monitoring consistently reported 100% satisfaction rates from victims contacted.
- ◆ A number of reparation projects were well established, e.g. in a local park and offered a positive experience to children and young people by paying back to the community in tangible ways.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ Since the Victim's Charter had come into force, mainstream police officers were meant to ask victims on first contact whether they would like the YOT to contact them. This did not happen routinely according to the victims and restorative justice team.

- ◆ The range of reparation projects available on reparation orders was inadequate. This was a reflection of the lack of staff to undertake development work.

**Good  
practice**

The partner of a man who had been killed by a 17 year old in a car accident had wanted face-to-face contact with the young person so the restorative justice worker had set up a meeting at the YOI. The victim and young person talked through the impact that the offence had had on each of them. It was an emotional meeting. It ended positively for each and the victim was interested in seeing what work the young person had undertaken inside; she gave him a hug before leaving.

The YOT had corporate agreements with a number of organisations that were often the victims of crime. The representative from the Tyne and Wear Passenger Executive attended approximately eight referral panels per year. He organised restorative justice interventions with the YOT for children and young people who had committed offences on railway or Metro property. These included leaflet drops about safety, graffiti clearing and one-to-one sessions about safety on the railway. He believed that, as a consequence, there had been a reduction in the incidence of vandalism on the railway.

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

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

## The joint inspection of YOTs

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

### Home Office objectives

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

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

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

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

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

## Inspection arrangements

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

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

## Code of practice

Each inspection will:

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

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

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

## Scoring approach

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Next steps

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

## Inspection criteria for YOTs in England

### 1. Management

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#### 1.1: Leadership

##### Key judgement

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

##### Evidence

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

##### Key judgement

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

##### Evidence

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

#### **Key judgement**

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

#### **Evidence**

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

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#### **Key judgement**

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

#### **Evidence**

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

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

#### **Evidence**

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

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

**Evidence**

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

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

**Evidence**

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

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

**Key judgement**

3.1.1: Children and young people are prevented from offending.

**Evidence**

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

#### **Key judgement**

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

#### **Evidence**

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

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#### **Key judgement**

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

#### **Evidence**

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

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

**Evidence**

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

**Key judgement**

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

**Evidence**

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

**Key judgement**

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

**Evidence**

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

#### **Key judgement**

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

#### **Evidence**

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

### **4. Work with children and young people subject to DTOs**

#### **Key judgement**

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

#### **Evidence**

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

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

**Evidence**

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

**Key judgement**

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

**Evidence**

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

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

**Evidence**

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

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### **Key judgement**

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

### **Evidence**

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