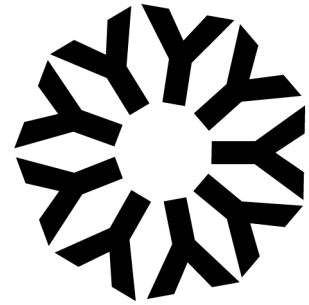


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Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Reinspection Report on: Powys Youth Offending Service

ISBN: 978 1 84099 128 4

2008

Foreword

The inspection of the Powys YOS, conducted in April and June 2006 under phase three of the YOT inspection programme revealed a number of shortcomings. Actions were being taken at that time to address these concerns but had still to produce tangible results. We therefore conducted a reinspection in September 2007, focusing on the recommendations contained in the original report.

We were pleased to see that the Management Board had responded positively to the action plan following the original inspection. New Terms of Reference had been signed, membership had been reviewed and new staff appointed including two new operational managers. The Management Board had a better understanding of its role and responsibilities and the staff team impressed the inspectors with their enthusiasm, knowledge, skill and overall commitment. Improvement in the quality of practice was evidenced, but there was still work to do in some key areas of service delivery. Although the process of change and improvement in management and practice was still at a formative stage, we have more confidence that the YOS has the leadership and resource potential to ensure that children and young people will be given a good service in the future.

*Andrew Bridges
HM Chief Inspector of Probation*

February 2008

Acknowledgements

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

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Glossary

Asset	Assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
CYPP	Children and Young People's Partnership
DTO	Detention and training order
Estyn	HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
HM	Her Majesty's
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
ISSP	Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme
LAC	Looked After Children
LEA	Local Education Authority
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
NACRO	National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders
National Standards	National standards for Youth Justice Services
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PDAC	Powys Drug and Alcohol Centre
PSR	Pre-sentence report
RoH	Risk of Harm
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMART	Smart, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bounded
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YISP	Youth Inclusion Support Panel
YOS/T	Youth Offending Service/Team

Summary

Management and partnership arrangements

- ◆ We found a reconstituted Management Board that had responded positively to the recommendations of the previous inspection report. New Terms of Reference had been agreed and signed by partner agencies, and appropriate representation and attendance across a range of interests had been achieved. Members were beginning to have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The Management Board had recognised the need to be more effective regarding performance management and the Youth Justice Board had made available consultancy time and expertise for this purpose.
- ◆ There was evidence to show that the YOS was becoming more closely linked within the authority and better placed with both the Young People's Partnership and the Community Safety Partnership. It was also fully engaged in the work of producing a new Children's Plan by February 2008.
- ◆ Service level agreements had been reviewed and were either signed or in the process of being finalised. New senior key staff appointments had been made in social services and education and were making a positive impact. In addition, new appointments had been or were in the process of being made to strengthen the YOS teams in both the north and south of the county. The appointment of two operational managers was beginning to influence practice and had freed up some of the YOS Manager's time.
- ◆ Significant improvements were noted with regard to the YOS office in Brecon but the Newtown YOS office still failed to meet the operational needs of the YOS. It was evident that there was an imbalance of resources between the north and south offices and there were some practice shortfalls that needed to be addressed.

Work in the courts

- ◆ The YOS had responded positively to the recommendations of the original inspection. The National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders was commissioned to undertake pre-sentence report training and also to review practice. A gatekeeping system had been introduced and magistrates had agreed to complete feedback forms. The YOS had a positive relationship with court staff and attended Court User Groups and magistrates' panel training.
- ◆ The inspection noted that there had been good progress in the preparation of pre-sentence reports with regard to format, sources of information, timeliness, and use of the Asset assessment. The weak areas were analysis of the offence as distinct from a description, impact on the victim as contained in the original police impact

statement (Crown Prosecution Service papers), vulnerability to Risk of Harm from self or others and diversity.

Work with children and young people in the community

- ◇ The YOS had responded positively to a critical inspection report at both strategic and operational levels. Resources had been made available and the commitment of the partners was being seen in the work being undertaken with children and young people in the community. New staffing appointments had been made, and others had been agreed but were not in place at the time of the inspection.
- ◇ Whilst arrangements had been made to improve information sharing with children's services, education, Careers Wales, police and health, there continued to be staffing deficits with regard to a social work post, two education staff appointments, a nursing vacancy in the north, and the role of the YOS police officer, which was mainly focused in the south of the county.
- ◇ We noted some very good work with regard to the introduction of the 'Risk Led Guidance Policy' and the introduction of the multi-agency planning forums.
- ◇ Developments with education were promising but at the time of the inspection had not yet made a significant impact.
- ◇ A number of children and young people did not have individual learning plans and were not routinely screened for literacy and numeracy. However, Careers Wales was beginning to have an impact, with the introduction of an automatic referral process from the YOS to Careers Wales, and an information exchange with consent to monitor progress.
- ◇ Since the previous inspection the YOS had appointed a Youth Inclusion Support Panel team. We found good links to partner agencies for referrals and appropriate interventions, and robust processes for recruiting volunteers to assist with the Youth Inclusion Support Panel work.

Work with children and young people subject to detention and DTOs

- ◇ The YOS staff were now working more effectively with children and young people sentenced to detention and training orders. Initial assessments were completed in accordance with national standards with regard to timeliness and information sent to the secure establishment within 24 hours in all cases. The initial training plan was completed to national standard timescales and the YOS worker contributed to ensure that it was informed by Asset in all cases. The four young people discharged to the community had complied with the conditions of their supervision.
- ◇ In the recommendation relating to education, training and employment there was room for further improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS - Action by:

The Chief Executive

Recommendation

The Chief Executive of Powys County Council should ensure that the Management Board is properly constituted, has clear Terms of Reference, is supported effectively by partner agencies and new members are properly inducted and prepared for their role.

- ◆ We noted that new Terms of Reference had been agreed and signed by each member of the Management Board. There had been a review of membership that ensured an appropriate representation across a range of interests and an improvement in attendance. Members of the Management Board had received 'Guidance for Members' and an away day was being planned. The Management Board was, therefore, properly constituted, and members were beginning to have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Recommendation

The Chief Executive of Powys County Council should ensure that the YOS has a clear strategic role within the CSP and CYPP and is able to increase its capacity with their support.

- ◆ Developments had taken place in these areas since the previous inspection with both the CSP and CYPP being represented on the Management Board.
- ◆ The YOS Manager was a member of the CYPP and CSP officers' group and the YOS was represented on their respective sub-groups.
- ◆ The CYPP had identified the need to increase joint working to provide school-aged children and young people in the youth justice system with suitable full-time education provision.
- ◆ There were clear and well considered plans in the authority for addressing social inclusion and meeting the needs of the more vulnerable children and young people, including those in contact with the YOS.
- ◆ The authority was in the process of reviewing and restructuring its children's planning arrangements and Social Information Systems had been engaged to help develop the Children's Plan on a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary basis. The YOS was fully engaged in this process.

- ◇ The YOS had benefited from an increased capacity by participating in sub-groups of the CSP. The Safer Communities Fund was funding a prevention manager and social work post until March 2008. The prevention manager post would be reviewed, but a commitment had been made by children's services to fund the social work post on a permanent basis. Individual children and young people referred to the YOS were benefiting directly from the Diversionary Activities Fund that was being accessed by YOS staff on their behalf.
- ◇ The YOS was well placed to influence both the crime and children's agendas through the YOS Manager and members of the Management Board.

The Chair of the Management Board

Recommendation

The Chair of the Management Board should ensure that an action plan is devised to address the recommendations of this inspection report and forwarded to the lead inspector within three months of the publication of the original report.

- ◇ A timely action plan had been agreed and forwarded to the lead inspector as required.
- ◇ The Chief Executive of Powys County Council had ensured that this plan was discussed fully by the Management Board and its progress monitored.
- ◇ Two new key senior appointments in social services and education had been made since the first inspection and were beginning to have an impact at both the strategic and operational levels of the YOS.

Recommendation

The Chair of the Management Board should ensure that the YOS is fully staffed, and that its offices have sufficient space and are suitably equipped, resourced and located to meet the needs of the service throughout the authority area.

- ◇ Improvements had been made in the Brecon office in the south of the county, which had been refurbished through the YJB and contributions from the council. It now offered a base for the YOS Manager, appropriate office facilities both for staff and for interviewing children and young people.
- ◇ Both offices had been equipped with CCTV for compliance with health and safety requirements.
- ◇ Office and meeting space was available in Llandrindod Wells in the middle of the county, and other council properties were accessible and could be booked if required by staff.

- ◇ Video conferencing facilities were available and had been used for a YOS Managers' meeting.
- ◇ Two new operational managers had been recruited externally and had taken up their new roles.
- ◇ A new social work post for the north, and two education officer posts covering the north and south had been funded and agreed and were in the process of being advertised. Both of these appointments had involved imaginative and creative use of funding from Community Safety, social services and the YJB, demonstrating positive, and partnership working between education and children's services.
- ◇ A new YISP service had been established, with a successful launch on 9 May 2007. Local multi-agency panels had been set up at an appropriate level in the three shire areas and inspectors found evidence of very good practice.
- ◇ The YOS Management Board was also the YISP Steering Group and was in the process of being included under the CSP.
- ◇ The probation service had provided a qualified probation officer for two days per week in the south of the county, but could only provide a probation service officer for two days in the north, which reduced the range of services available. The YOS had access to the mainstream probation service, should it have been required, but this was not very effective given the rural location and the fact that only one probation officer covered the north of the county.
- ◇ Health had increased its services but had a vacancy in the north that was being advertised. CAMHS provided a service for the south only.
- ◇ The YOS police officer was located in the south with operational responsibilities for the whole county. In practice the police officer's work was mainly in the south of the county.

Outstanding issues

- ◇ The Newtown office in the north of the county had not seen any improvement. Consideration was being given to the provision of an alternative since the lease was short-term but there were no definite plans in place.
- ◇ Given these anomalies it was of concern that whilst the heavier workload was located in the north of the county there was a disparity in the number of staff available to undertake the work.

Recommendation

The Chair of the Management Board should ensure that the YOS and partner agencies promote efficient service delivery by reviewing and developing protocols, policies and SLAs with regard to staffing and providing resources for the YOS.

- ◇ The Management Board meeting on 9 May 2007 decided that in future all protocols, policies and SLAs, once completed, would be formally reported to the Management Board.
- ◇ During the reinspection these agreements were seen by the inspectors and it was clear that the YOS Manager, supported by some additional resources from the council, had made significant progress. A process had been established to complete the task and for reviewing these agreements, involving managers at various levels.
- ◇ A total of approximately 20 documents were seen and provided the basis for the YOS to undertake its work effectively. Most of the documents had been completed and signed.

Outstanding issues

- ◇ The police, education and health agreements were still at a draft stage, and housing had not been signed. The inspectors were pleased with the progress made but would urge that this task be completed and signed off by the Management Board to support and strengthen partnership working. As the documents were still at a relatively early stage, it was not possible to assess the impact of these in promoting efficient service delivery.

Recommendation

The Chair of the Management Board should ensure that the YOS Management Board develops its performance management framework to monitor and review the implementation of the Youth Justice Plan and inform the strategic direction of the YOS.

- ◇ The Youth Justice Plan for 2006/2007 had been completed and submitted on time to the YJB by the Management Board but a number of amendments were required by the YJB. These, in the main, related to performance improvement, data review and clarification of performance measures and targets that had not been formally resolved at the time of the inspection. Nevertheless, the Youth Justice Plan contained the framework to provide the strategic direction for the YOS.
- ◇ Since the inspection there had been five Management Board meetings and performance improvement had been identified as an area for development.
- ◇ The YOS Manager had recently presented the Management Board with performance reports following the publication of the YJB

quarterly returns but we did not find any evidence of these being used to promote service development.

- ◇ The YOS Manager had also discussed performance information with the Management Board in the context of its own specific requirements and this was being developed.
- ◇ To enhance this process, arrangements had also been established for the two new operational managers to have quarterly meetings with partners to identify trends, resolve local issues and provide feedback to the YOS Manager and Management Board on performance.
- ◇ Bi-monthly meetings of the Management Board had focused on the Inspection Action Plan, and given full consideration to the visit made to the YOS by the Chair of the YJB, and follow up visits by its officers.

Outstanding issues

- ◇ The performance management framework was not yet sufficiently developed to inform the strategic development of the YOS. YJB internal consultants had been provided to promote development in this area. Introductory visits had taken place at the time of the inspection. The consultant's brief was to focus on the development of performance management for the Management Board, including quality assurance systems and reporting procedures to the YJB. This needed considerable steer from the Chair of the Board as well as the YOS Manager.

Recommendation

The Chair of the Management Board should ensure that the YOS Manager receives formal and planned supervision.

- ◇ Arrangements had been made for the YOS Manager to be supervised by the Head of Children's Services. Formal meetings were scheduled monthly and informal contact more frequently as opportunities arose. The YOS Manager reported significant and valued support from her line manager.

Outstanding issues

- ◇ The recording of the formal planned supervision was an area that needed to be improved in the context of the local authority agreed supervision processes and linking in to the YOS Manager's annual appraisal.

The YOS Manager

Recommendation

The YOS Manager should ensure that all staff, including administrative staff, are regularly supervised and appraised within a performance management framework.

- ◇ We were pleased to see evidence that monthly supervision for all staff had been introduced and was planned for six months in advance.
- ◇ The YOS used a standardised Departmental Staff Supervision Policy with a basic format that could be adapted for a particular role. Staff signed a supervision agreement and were able to contribute to the agenda and provide their own observations. The agenda covered:
 - action points from the previous supervision
 - A review and discussion of cases
 - training and development undertaken and planned
 - evidence relevant for the annual appraisal
 - general issues and any other business.
- ◇ Most of the supervision records inspected were signed by both the line manager and supervisee.
- ◇ Staff annual appraisals had been introduced and were being implemented for all YOS staff using the departmental policy. Partner agency staff were appraised in accordance with that individual agency's policy.

Recommendation

The YOS Manager should ensure that interventions undertaken with children and young people are informed by a thorough assessment, completed to a satisfactory standard and regularly reviewed.

- ◇ Staff training on Asset assessments and intervention plans had been delivered since the previous inspection.
- ◇ Initial Asset assessments had been completed within the national standard requirements for timeliness and quality in 81% and 63% of the cases examined, compared with 75% and 42% at the time of the original inspection.
- ◇ The case assessment analysis indicated that children and young people were usually involved with the Asset assessments and there was a positive involvement in 12 out of 16 cases in the sample.
- ◇ Practitioners had made significant progress with regard to reviewing Asset at the required intervals in 14 out of the 16 cases inspected.

- ◇ The *What do you think?* form was completed in 88% of the sample compared with 56% in the previous inspection.
- ◇ The inspectors found during the previous inspection that none of the cases identified as 'risk concern' or 'risk aware' had been referred to a manager, mainly because none had been available. Two new managers had been appointed and a case planning forum introduced with all new referrals being checked routinely via the social services database, Draig.
- ◇ The first appointment with the child or young person following a community order took place within one working day of the court appearance in 82% of cases compared with 50% previously. Of the remaining cases, 93% had their first appointment within five days, which was a significant improvement.
- ◇ Enforcement action had been strengthened since the previous inspection. Judgements about acceptability/unacceptability met the national standard in all cases inspected, and breach recall action in 75% compared with 43% of cases previously.
- ◇ Referral order panels sat within 20 working days in three out of the four cases inspected, which was an improvement on previously. The contract was delivered in accordance with the agreed requirements in all cases.
- ◇ Practice in the Brecon office was, on the whole, of a higher standard than in Newtown, in respect of Asset assessment and intervention planning. Initial assessments were completed in accordance with national standards regarding timeliness, quality and with the involvement of the child or young person in all of the six cases inspected.

Outstanding issues

- ◇ The case assessment analysis indicated that decision making on assessment and management of RoH had improved but the link between the interventions planned and the assessed RoH was not sufficient in five out of the six cases inspected.
- ◇ We found during the original inspection that initial supervision and training review plans were only completed satisfactorily in 8% of cases. They did not meet the content requirements of the national standard or contain SMART objectives. Only a third of the plans included suitable victim and restorative processes and just half addressed the individual needs of the child or young person with regards to diversity. Unfortunately progress had been slow and at the time of the reinspection, the YOS had failed to meet the national standards in these areas. From a case sample of six: initial supervision and review plans were not completed in accordance with national standards timescales, did not contain SMART objectives, or include suitable victim and restorative processes in any of the cases inspected. The individual needs of the child or young person with regards to diversity was not sufficient in four out of the six cases.

- ◇ Progress against the objectives contained in the initial supervision/training plan had been satisfactorily reviewed in line with the national standard in 40% of the case sample compared with 42% in the previous inspection, which was disappointing.
- ◇ Steps had been taken to ensure that the child or young person fully understood the requirements of the order/licence in 67% of cases compared with 42% previously.
- ◇ The level of contact with children and young people continued to be too low. The frequency of appointments arranged, and kept, broadly conformed to national standards, to requirements of the order/licence, and to any RoH considerations in six (55%) out of the 11 cases inspected.
- ◇ Referral order contract reviews continued to be a weak area of practice with none of the case sample meeting the required national standard.
- ◇ It was of some concern to the inspection team that the overall performance of the YOS had improved but practice in the Newtown office was having a negative impact in some areas due to workload and inadequate staffing levels. For this office, out of a case sample of ten cases, initial assessment was completed in accordance with national standards regarding timeliness in seven cases, quality in four cases, and the child or young person involved in six of the cases inspected.
- ◇ The previous inspection revealed insufficient progress in some key criminogenic areas. However, the file reading for this inspection showed some encouraging improvements in living arrangements, statutory education, employment, training and further education, substance use, emotional and mental health and attitude to offending.

Recommendation

The YOS Manager should ensure that the YOS's risk policy is fully implemented and RoH assessments are completed on all relevant cases, and that these are regularly reviewed and endorsed by managers as appropriate.

- ◇ All children and young people referred to the YOS had an Asset or Onset assessment.
- ◇ A risk led policy had been fully adopted and staff trained to implement this.
- ◇ The 'Risk Led Guidance Booklet' covered risks of reoffending, RoH to self and others.
- ◇ When an assessment indicated a high risk in any of these areas the case was referred to a multi-agency planning forum based in either the south or north of Powys. Meetings were chaired by a suitably

qualified person and were used to develop an individual risk management and intervention plan that was formally reviewed.

- ◇ Suitable cases meeting the criteria were also referred through MAPPA and prolific offender arrangements.
- ◇ Prevention cases were discussed and managed through the YISP processes. Since the previous inspection, the YOS had appointed a YISP team and procedures had been established for dealing with children and young people at risk of offending.
- ◇ We found good links to partner agencies for referrals and appropriate interventions and robust processes for recruiting volunteers to assist with the YISP work.
- ◇ All cases deemed to be high risk in any of the three categories were discussed in staff supervision sessions.
- ◇ There was evidence on the case files that the risk booklet was being used regularly and appropriately in YISP and other case files.

Recommendation

The YOS Manager should ensure that the quality of PSRs is improved and that all are based on Asset; address the impact on the victim as required, identify any safeguarding concerns, differentiate between RoH and risk of reoffending and contain a full analysis of the offending behaviour.

- ◇ The YOS responded positively to this recommendations in the original inspection. NACRO was commissioned to undertake PSR training and also to review the reports in the context of national standards.
- ◇ A gatekeeping system was introduced and magistrates had agreed to complete feedback forms. This was beginning to have an impact on the quality being achieved.
- ◇ A court officer attended each court and the PSR author was also available to answer any questions arising from the report.
- ◇ From our inspection of a sample of seven PSRs:
 - all were completed to national standard timeframes, and five (71%) were based on an Asset assessment
 - all of the children and young people had been interviewed at least once for the purpose of the report.
- ◇ Where appropriate, parents/carers were interviewed in three (50%) out of six cases, and information from all relevant sources was deemed to be sufficient in five (71%) of the cases.
- ◇ The format complied with national standards in all cases.
- ◇ This was an improvement from the previous inspection when we found that PSRs were not based on Asset in 83% of the sample; information obtained from relevant sources was not sufficient in 58%; and did not comply with national standard format in 63%.

Outstanding issues

- ❖ PSRs did not include a sufficient analysis of the offence as distinct from a description in six cases.
- ❖ The reports did not sufficiently assess the child or young person's maturity to understand the seriousness of the offence in 88% of the reports compared with 95% previously. The child or young person's ability to carry out the proposed sentence had improved marginally from 17% to 38%.
- ❖ The impact on the victim as contained in the original police impact statement was not sufficiently addressed in 88% of the PSRs inspected compared with 76% previously, and fell short of sufficient and relevant information in 75% compared with 74% previously. Therefore, progress continued to be below the required standard.
- ❖ The previous report found serious concerns with regard to safeguarding the child or young person and vulnerability to RoH from self or others. Safeguarding issues identified in Asset were not sufficiently addressed in 63% of the sample compared with 95% previously.
- ❖ Attention to RoH was not sufficient in 76% compared with 84% previously, and risk of reoffending was poor or insufficient in 76% compared with 90% previously.
- ❖ Differentiating between likelihood of reoffending and RoH was not sufficient in 78% of the sample compared with 74% previously. Diversity was poor or not sufficient in 75% compared with 95% previously. Therefore, in these areas we found that progress had only marginally improved.

Recommendation

The YOS Manager should ensure that record keeping through the Careworks electronic system and other filing systems is coordinated as efficiently as possible in order to provide quickly a full picture of each individual case including the ISSP.

- ❖ Since the previous inspection the Careworks recording system had become web based and its introduction had been a challenge. Nevertheless, staff were able to participate in training for the new system. Practitioners were recording all contacts on Careworks but the standard varied between individuals and the two offices.
- ❖ A new rigorous administrative process had been introduced whereby all referrals were entered onto the system via an administrative officer and assigned to an operational manager for allocation within 24 hours. At the same time arrangements were in place for the careers, education and health services to be contacted formally by letter so that essential information could be exchanged. This was backed by a signed letter of consent from parents/carers and young people for their consent for this information to be shared.

- ◇ Case records were on the whole well organised in 14 out of the 16 community cases inspected (87%) and contained relevant information in 12 out of the 16 cases (75%).

Recommendation

The YOS Manager should ensure that in partnership with the local authority and training organisations, the quality of education and training plans for young people subject to DTOs is improved.

- ◇ During the period between the first and second inspections, five children and young people had been sentenced to a DTO and each case was reviewed by an inspector.
- ◇ Developments had been initiated with both the careers and education services and some progress had been made. The agreement with Careers Wales had been reviewed and signed with an undertaking that Careers would visit a child or young person in custody to help prepare for their release.
- ◇ For two of the three relevant children and young people, arrangements to meet the assessed needs regarding education had been established prior to release but the views of home education had only been represented at one planning meeting. Out of the case sample, two young people had been engaged in further education or training, post-16, and three had had contact with a Careers Wales personal adviser.
- ◇ Despite the mixed picture, appropriate interventions pre- and post-release relating to education and training in the community was deemed to be sufficient in four of the five cases inspected.
- ◇ Two children and young people had made progress on criminogenic factors relating to education, training and employment, with two showing no change.
- ◇ Four of the children and young people released to the community had, at the time of the inspection, complied with the conditions of the order/licence.
- ◇ YOS staff were working more effectively with young people sentenced to DTOs. Initial assessments were completed in accordance with national standards with regard to timeliness, and information was sent to the secure establishment within 24 hours in all cases.
- ◇ The initial training plan was completed to national standard timescales and the YOS worker contributed to ensure that it was informed by Asset in all cases.

Outstanding issues

- ◇ The SLA with education was still form in draft but discussions and short-term actions were positive.

- ◇ Of the four cases released, only one individual learning plan had continued following release and been regularly reviewed, updated and shared with relevant providers.

Recommendation

The YOS Manager should ensure that interventions are formally evaluated to assess their effectiveness and used to develop practice and policy.

- ◇ The YOS Manager had started the process of formally evaluating the effectiveness of the service. With the appointment of two operational managers, this resource had provided space for this to develop.
- ◇ The reoffending cohort for 2006/2007 indicated that the YOS was achieving beyond its target. Pre-court had an 11.7% reduction, first tier 21.5%, community penalties 8.7% and custody no change against the target. The reasons for these improvements in performance such as more staff and more effective support, and improved practice, were being shared and explored with staff in team meetings as part of a new learning culture.
- ◇ Formal reviews were being undertaken through the case planning forums for children and young people assessed as high RoH to themselves and/or the community, or subject to referral orders. These took place after the initial planning meetings, youth offender panel reviews and three monthly statutory reviews.

Outstanding issues

- ◇ Whilst consideration was being given to evaluating prevention programmes, there was, as yet, no clear evidence of evaluation being used to improve effectiveness and develop practice and policy.

Partner Organisations

Recommendation

Partner organisations should ensure that representation on the Management Board is at a sufficient level of seniority for effective decision making.

- ◇ Membership of the Management Board had been revised and at the time of the inspection representation was at a sufficient level of seniority for effective decision making.
- ◇ New membership included senior managers in children's services, education, probation, the Local Health Board and housing.
- ◇ The reconstituted Management Board had the capacity to link effectively with its home agencies and partnerships (CSP and CYPP) at both strategic and operational levels.

Recommendation

Partner organisations should ensure that both their direct financial and indirect financial contributions to the work of the YOS are reviewed to ensure that they are adequate to meet the YOS's statutory responsibilities.

- ◇ The Youth Justice Plan for 2007/2008 contained a detailed breakdown of the budget contributions of partners. This included staffing costs, payments in kind and other delegated funds but the YOS continued to rely on unreliable short-term funding to cover its core services. Nevertheless, extra resources had been made available since the original inspection.
- ◇ Two operational manager posts were funded by Powys County Council. The social worker, YISP coordinator, and two YISP keyworker posts, were funded by the Safer Communities Fund, CSP and YJB.
- ◇ An ISSP worker funded by the YJB and education posts jointly funded by education and social services. The police had provided a one-off payment of £5,000 to assist prevention projects and cover for the police officer on leave. The probation and, health services had reviewed their contributions and appointed staff from within existing resources to cover vacant posts.

Outstanding issues

- ◇ The Management Board had planned a meeting to discuss a funding formula for the statutory partners but this had not taken place by the time of the inspection.
- ◇ Whilst ad hoc additions to the budget had been made, a real, strategic long-term agreement to meet statutory responsibilities was still outstanding.

Recommendation

Partner organisations should ensure that their strategic plans link effectively, in operational terms, to the Youth Justice Plan 2006/2007.

- ◇ The Management Board had started to address this issue in its Youth Justice Plan 2007/2008. The plan clearly recognised the importance of working in partnership and linking the Youth Justice Plan to each agency's individual plan at both strategic and operational levels.
- ◇ The Head of Social Inclusion, Head of Children's Services and the YOS Manager were working closely together to develop the new Children's Plan. The Head of Inclusion and the YOS Manager were leading on the two key areas of behaviour management and modernising learning.
- ◇ *'All the Partners in the Powys YOS partnership have committed themselves to true partnership working for the greater good. This is well understood to be a difficult undertaking, not less so in view of the number of YOS partners. This has shown to be achievable in other areas, which we want to learn from. We also want to be innovative in*

our thoughts for the future to ensure that young people in Powys receive the best possible service, not solely from the YOS but from other partners as well'. Chief Executive Officer and Chair of the Management Board, Introduction to the Youth Justice Plan 2007/2008.

- ◆ We were pleased to find a commitment to this approach at a number of levels during this inspection, which provided a good basis for effective joint planning.

Outstanding issues

- ◆ We found that the Education Strategic Plan did not link to the Youth Justice Plan.
- ◆ Whilst there had been a clear commitment to partnership working, this had yet to be demonstrated in practice effectively.

Community and Housing

Recommendation

Community and housing should ensure that a practice protocol is developed that promotes clear and close working relationships with the YOS in order that young people are safeguarded.

- ◆ The YOS Manager and staff were closely involved with a number of groups under the umbrella of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- ◆ Clear procedures were in place for managing child protection concerns.
- ◆ A new protocol and referral procedure for working jointly with children and young people in need had been developed with children's services.
- ◆ Staff from children's services and the YOS were invited and attended case discussions and meetings such as YISP, Child Protection and LAC.
- ◆ The two new operational managers had established regular liaison meetings with team managers to progress their work for the benefit of the young people known to both agencies.
- ◆ YOS staff had been provided with access to Draig, the social services database, which helped to further facilitate joint working through the exchange of information.
- ◆ New guidance on homelessness had been issued and an agreement established on working with the Housing Department that involved the YOS, and children's services after care and Supporting People teams.

Outstanding issues

- ◆ The joint protocol with children's services had yet to be signed and implemented. The joint protocol clarified the relationship between the YOS and children's services with particular regard to communication between the teams, and safeguarding children and young people.

Recommendation

Community and housing should ensure that a range of suitable accommodation is available as an alternative to bed and breakfast accommodation.

- ◆ We were informed that significant improvements had taken place in this context and the use of bed and breakfast accommodation was being phased out. Housing had engaged with partner agencies to maximise the availability of suitable accommodation and had acquired new stock under private sector leasing arrangements. This new stock as well as local authority owned stock was available for YOS referrals. The YOS Manager was now a member of the Supporting People Planning Group and the Principal Housing Officer was a member of the YOS Management Board.
- ◆ A good practice guide had been developed and a project team involving the YOS, children's services after care team and housing formed to develop a joint housing policy.

Dyfed Powys Police

Recommendation

Dyfed Powys Police should ensure that the YOS is informed of its decision to issue a final warning within one day of deciding to do so

- ◆ Dyfed Powys Police had established a new procedure whereby the Powys YOS was informed of decisions to issue final warnings by secure e-mail within 24 hours from the two designated Powys police stations with custody suites.
- ◆ Referrals were allocated within the YOS by the operational managers at weekly team meetings.
- ◆ Where applicable, victims were invited to become involved in the final warning process and participated in two of the four relevant cases.
- ◆ Assessment of children and young people was undertaken by the YOS within ten days of notification by the police, and the police informed of the outcome of the assessment within 15 working days of bail in all cases.

- ◆ Final warnings were delivered within 20 working days of the decision and interventions delivered as part of the final warning process in all of the cases inspected.

Outstanding issues

- ◆ In the case sample inspected, the 24 hour national standard was not being met consistently in the five cases inspected. General access to the police systems by the YOS police officer was poor, hence the reliance on secure e-mail.

Recommendation

Dyfed Powys Police should ensure that greater consistency and effectiveness is achieved through one basic protocol or SLA covering funding and staff secondments for the four YOTs situated within its area.

- ◆ A first draft of the Dyfed Powys Youth Offending Teams' Police Officer Secondment Agreement had been prepared by the police. Following consultation it had been agreed by the four YOS Managers covering the police area. The agreement was in the process of being formally agreed and signed.

Outstanding issues

- ◆ Arising from the reinspection, the police service was mainly based in the south of the county and appeared to focus predominantly on prevention and information initiatives. Our view was that the focus should change to final warning work, victim liaison and intelligence sharing.
- ◆ A Police National Computer terminal had been available in the Brecon YOS office for several months but had not been used for these purposes due to lack of training. Instead the YOS had relied on secure e-mails and daily visits to the police station.
- ◆ Whilst it was stated that a protocol for sharing information was in place, the inspectors found that this was not fully understood and as such was not being applied consistently or to the best effect.

The Local Health Board

Recommendation

The Local Health Board should ensure that children and young people with mental health needs receive the appropriate level of attention and intervention, and that provision is underpinned by written and agreed protocols.

- ◆ A draft SLA had been developed between the YOS and CAMHS and was due to be ratified following the inspection. The SLA covered

arrangements for referral and the health assessment of children and young people under statutory and voluntary supervision.

- ◇ A monthly dedicated CAMHS consultation session had been established involving primary mental health workers. Dates for these were agreed in advance, with YOS workers bringing cases forward for discussion. These sessions could result in referral to other organisations, further consultations, joint working or an emergency referral to a specialist.
- ◇ Designated health representatives attended team meetings and the case planning forum to discuss individual cases.
- ◇ The case assessment analysis showed an improvement, with an appropriate referral being made in relation to physical and emotional and mental health in three (60%) out of five cases compared with 45% previously.
- ◇ The YOS Manager was a member of the CAMHS Implementation Group for Powys and was also represented by a YOS Manager colleague on the Mid and West Wales CAHMS Regional Planning Forum.

Recommendation

The Local Health Board should ensure that the YOS has an appropriate level of specialist health staff input to its team to fulfil its duties and responsibilities and is also able to access other specialist provision as required.

- ◇ Since the previous inspection, developments had taken place and an action plan to improve the service had been established. On a day-to-day basis a referral process had been agreed, underpinned by an arrangement for consents to be obtained, and initial health assessments undertaken by school nurses using the relevant sections of Asset.
- ◇ Where more specialist assessment was required, referrals were made to the relevant person concerned.
- ◇ YOS staff had been invited to joint training organised by the Local Health Board.
- ◇ The YOS had an appropriate SLA in place with PDAC, with performance being reviewed monthly. This service appeared to be well structured and managed with three specialist drug and alcohol workers employed across the Powys area.
- ◇ The YOS had available the service of one full-time equivalent member of staff.
- ◇ YOS and child protection cases were a priority for PDAC. Children and young people had an appointment confirmed within five days and were seen within ten days.

Outstanding issues

- ◇ It was noted that the YOS did not have a dedicated substance misuse post either directly in, or part of, the team.

The Local Authority

Recommendation

The local authority should ensure that a sufficient range and number of places are available to meet the individual needs of vulnerable children and young people to ensure that they receive their statutory entitlement to education.

- ◇ At the time of the original inspection the authority was reviewing its approach to the social inclusion agenda and was in the process of restructuring the social inclusion unit.
- ◇ Arrangements had been agreed for the creation of two YOS/LAC education advisor posts to be based in the social inclusion unit but allocated to the north and south YOS offices. These posts were in the process of being advertised.
- ◇ Plans were being put into place for YOS staff to access the LEA's Education Management System so that children and young people's attendance, statutory entitlement and exclusion status could be tracked. Details of children and young people supervised by the YOS would be shared, allowing both agencies to monitor attainments and achievements of individuals and the group.

Outstanding issues

- ◇ During the reinspection we found that a high proportion of the case sample were not receiving their statutory minimum of 25 hours education per week. From the total case sample of 16 children and young people, two had been excluded on a temporary basis with three permanently, and seven others had had difficulties with their schooling. Children and young people in the YOS did not have individual learning plans and were not routinely screened for literacy and numeracy difficulties. Powys Challenging Mentoring Project provided support to children and young people but this depended upon individual initiative rather than a systematic approach to a young person's learning needs.
- ◇ Whilst developments were encouraging in this context, at the time of the reinspection they were mainly in the planning stage. Education managers appeared to recognise their corporate responsibility and the need for a flexible workforce to meet the fluctuating needs of vulnerable children and young people.

Recommendation

The local authority should ensure that the YOS has an appropriate level of specialist education staff within its team to fulfil its duties and responsibilities and is also able to access other specialist provision as required.

- ◇ The authority had agreed the appointment of two jointly funded posts as outlined under the previous recommendation and these were in the process of being advertised.
- ◇ As part of the review of the social inclusion agenda, it had been accepted that children and young people who were not able to maintain their positions in mainstream school had to have appropriate resources available to meet their educational needs. This was being actively considered through the children's planning framework.
- ◇ YOS staff had built up good relationships with schools and as a consequence, education staff had been attending monthly YOS team meetings. These had facilitated a positive exchange of information about children and young people, and policies and practices impacting on this vulnerable group.

Outstanding issues

- ◇ Despite these positive developments there continued to be areas requiring improvement. Youth workers were engaged on an individual basis but there was not enough structured leisure time for children and young people under supervision.
- ◇ The YOS did not have access, for example, to a Duke of Edinburgh Award worker and the availability of information from the education welfare service on children and young people when first referred was not adequate.

Careers Wales

Recommendation

Careers Wales should ensure that it fulfils its existing SLA with the YOS and improves its attendance at pre-release meetings for young people over 16 years of age, and ensures that suitable training is available for them on discharge to the community.

- ◇ As previously stated in this report the SLA between the YOS and Careers Wales had been reviewed and signed in June 2007. The agreement set out clearly the responsibilities of both the YOS and Careers Wales and established that a careers personal adviser would visit a young person in custody to ensure that children and young people in custody or on ISSP were given priority.

- ◇ Out of the custody case sample of five, three young people had been visited by a careers personal adviser during their sentences and post-release training opportunities made available as appropriate. The SLA established that a review would be undertaken between the YOS and Careers Wales on a quarterly basis.

Recommendation

Careers Wales should ensure that young people over 16 years of age who offend are tracked and engaged in training and employment opportunities.

- ◇ The SLA between the YOS and Careers Wales had been reviewed and signed in June 2007.
- ◇ An automatic referral process from the YOS to Careers Wales had been established and information exchanged by the two agencies on an individual case basis.

Outstanding issues

- ◇ There were more opportunities for young people to attend Skillbuild, a 13 week preparatory course for young people between 16 and 18 years of age, but practitioners reported that training was more readily available in the north than the south of the county.
- ◇ There appeared to be inconsistent use of Youth Gateway opportunities for young people between 16 and 19 years of age across the county.

Powys County Council

Recommendation

Powys County Council, in partnership with others, should ensure that a sufficient range of suitable accommodation is available for children and young people on bail or who are effectively homeless and/or have special support needs.

- ◇ Since publication of the original inspection report, the YOS Manager had become a member of the Supporting People Planning Group and the Principal Housing Officer a member of the YOS Management Board. These changes had facilitated closer and more effective working relationships.
- ◇ The Housing Department had become more aware of the needs of children and young people and had been able to maximise the availability of suitable accommodation through its work with the private sector (private sector leasing arrangements), Registered Social Landlords and the authority's own stock.

- ◇ Arrangements were in place for specialist accommodation to be managed and supported by partner agencies, allowing increased occupancy and improving quality.
- ◇ A procedure was in place to ensure that any child or young person deemed to be homeless was referred for assessment to children's services as a child in need.
- ◇ We were informed that 96% of children and young people who had completed their involvement with the YOS over the previous year had been assessed as being in appropriate accommodation.

Appendix 1 Contextual information

- ◆ The unitary authority of Powys was located in Mid-Wales, and covered the counties of Montgomeryshire, Radnorshire, and most of Brecknockshire.
- ◆ Powys had a total population of 126,354, measured in the Census 2001. Of this population, 22% were aged between 10-17 years at the time of the census. The figure was slightly lower than the average for Wales, 22.8%.
- ◆ Powys had a predominantly white population, 99.1%, higher than the average for Wales of 97.9%. The percentage of Asian or Asian British residents was lower than the national average of 0.9%, being 0.3% in Powys. The percentage of Black or Black British residents, at 0.1%, was lower than the national average of 0.3%.
- ◆ The level of employment in Powys was 62% and this was much higher than the average in Wales, which was 55.2% at the time of the census. The level of unemployment was 2.7%, which was correspondingly lower than the average for Wales of 3.5%. There was a lower percentage of students, both economically active and inactive, living in Powys than nationally at the time of the census; 5.1% compared with 7.4% across Wales.
- ◆ The Census 2001 recorded that 16% of the population of Powys, who were aged three and over, could either speak, read or write Welsh. This was slightly lower than the average for Wales of 16.3%.

YOS

- ◆ The YOS was located within the Dyfed Powys Probation and Dyfed Powys Police Areas. The Powys Local Health Board covered the Powys local authority area.
- ◆ The work of the YOS was based in two main offices located in Brecon and Newtown. The youth court was based in Brecon and Llandrindod Wells.

YJB Performance data

The YJB summary of YOT performance for April 2006 – March 2007 awarded Powys a performance level of 1 on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest, compared with a performance level of 2 for the period April 2005 – March 2006.

Appendix 2 Inspection data

Fieldwork for this reinspection was undertaken in September 2007.

The inspection consisted of:

- ◇ evidence in advance against the recommendations
- ◇ examination of YJB performance data and assessments
- ◇ examination of practice in a sample of cases, normally in conjunction with the case manager or other representative, as follows:
 - 5 prevention files
 - 5 final warnings
 - 5 first tier penalties
 - 6 community sentences
 - 6 custody cases
- ◇ meetings with staff, managers and partners.

The chosen sample takes into consideration the percentage of girls or young women in the YOT; in this case the total was two cases.

Appendix 3 Key statistics

Key case assessment statistics	Re-inspection	Original inspection	Average for phase three YOTs	Range for phase three YOTs	YJB targets
	(% cases)				
Initial assessment completed in accordance with national standards requirements: – timeliness	81% (n=16)	75% (n=32)	79%	41-100%	100%
– adequate quality	63% (n=16)	42% (n=31)	68%	36-93%	
Full risk of harm to others completed on relevant cases	17% (n= 6)	75% (n=16)	62%	0-100%	
Evidence of management oversight in risk of harm cases	100% (n=1)	0% (n=5)	40%	0-100%	
ISP meets the content requirements of national standards and contains SMART objectives	0% (n=6)	8% (n=12)	27%	0-100%	100% (1)
Frequency of appointments arranged broadly conform to national standards, to the requirements of order/licence, and to any risk of harm considerations	55% (n=11)	68% (n=22)	79%	45-100%	
Judgements about acceptability/unacceptability of absences are appropriate	100% (n=9)	64% (n=11)	74%	40-100%	
Breach/recall action has taken place, if required, within the national standards timescale	75% (n=4)	43% (n=7)	56%	0-100%	
Appropriate action has been taken if a child or young person is considered vulnerable to harm from self and others.	67% (n=3)	67% (n=8)	82%	20-100%	
Effective action is taken where there is evidence of educational difficulties	100% (n=7)	62% (n=13)	66%	33-100%	90% (2)
Appropriate referrals are made in cases of: – physical health	60% (n=5)	67% (n=9)	70%	0-100%	
– mental/emotional health	60% (n=5)	45% (n=11)	70%	33-100%	100% (3)
– substance misuse	75% (n=12)	72% (n=18)	73%	0-67%	100% (4)
Victim was consulted about restorative/reparative justice work with child or young person	92% (n=12)	63% (n=30)	53%	13-84%	
Assessment of overall quality of PSRs	25% n= 7	0%	50%	0-76%	

Appendix 4: Joint inspection arrangements

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

Appendix 5: Role of HMI Probation and code of practice

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

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

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

- working in an honest, professional, fair and polite way
- reporting and publishing inspection findings and recommendations for improvement in good time and to a good standard
- promoting race equality and wider attention to diversity in all aspects of its work, including within its own employment practices and organisational processes
- minimising the amount of extra work arising for probation areas or youth offending teams [those inspected] as a result of the inspection process.

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

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