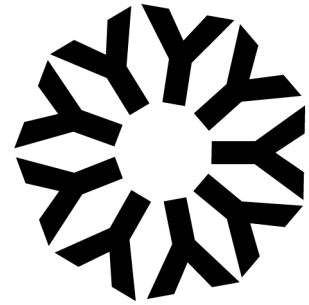


*Commission for Social Care Inspection
Estyn
Healthcare Commission
Healthcare Inspectorate Wales
HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HM Inspectorate of Probation
Office for Standards in Education
Social Services Inspectorate for Wales*



Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Follow-up Inspection Report on:
Stockport
Youth Offending Team

2006

Foreword

This inspection took place some six months after the publication of our initial report on the Stockport Youth Offending Team and was undertaken at the same time as the Joint Area Review of Children's Services. We were pleased to find an energetic and vibrant team who had responded positively to the criticisms contained in our earlier report, with significant developments at both an operational and a strategic level. Emphasis was now being placed on the development of a performance management approach. Inevitably, some areas of work, such as supervision planning, still required further attention, but levels of contact with children and young people were high, and the assessment and management of those posing a risk of harm to others had improved considerably.

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

Andrew Bridges
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

February 2006

| |
|--|
| Fieldwork for this inspection was undertaken in October and November 2005. |
|--|

Contents

| | Page |
|--|------|
| Acknowledgements | 3 |
| Glossary | 4 |
| Introduction | 5 |
| Next steps | 5 |
| Key findings | 6 |
| Key statistics | 8 |
| 1. MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS | 9 |
| 2. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR PARENTS/CARERS | 14 |
| 3. VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE | 18 |
| The joint inspection of YOTs | 20 |
| Inspection arrangements | 21 |

Acknowledgements

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

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <i>Lead Inspector</i> | <i>Mike Mullis HM Inspectorate of Constabulary</i> |
| <i>Inspectors</i> | <i>Liz Calderbank HM Inspectorate of Probation, Jude Holland HM Inspectorate of Probation, Ray Wegrzyn HM Inspectorate of Probation</i> |
| <i>Practice Assessor</i> | <i>Stephanie Mason</i> |
| <i>Support Staff</i> | <i>Natalie Dewsnap, Grace Dickin, Rachel Dwyer</i> |
| <i>Programme Manager</i> | <i>Liz Calderbank HM Inspectorate of Probation</i> |

Glossary

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| APIS | Assessment, Planning, Intervention and Supervision |
| ASBAT | Anti-Social Behaviour Action Team |
| Asset | Assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board |
| CAMHS | Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services |
| CDRP | Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership |
| CRB | Criminal Records Bureau |
| CSCI | Commission for Social Care Inspection |
| E2E | Entry to Education |
| Estyn | HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales |
| ETE | Employment, Training and Education |
| FTE | Full-time equivalent |
| GMP | Greater Manchester Police |
| HMIC | HM Inspectorate of Constabulary |
| HMI Prisons | HM Inspectorate of Prisons |
| HMI Probation | HM Inspectorate of Probation |
| ISP | Initial Supervision Plan |
| KPI | Key Performance Indicator |
| MAPPA | Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements |
| National Standards | National Standards for Youth Justice Services |
| Ofsted | Office for Standards in Education |
| ONSET | YJB tool for assessing children and young people at risk of offending |
| PDR | Performance Development Review |
| PNC | Police National Computer |
| SLA | Service Level Agreement |
| SMART | Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bounded |
| SSIW | Social Services Inspectorate for Wales |
| VLO | Victim Liaison Officer |
| YIP | Youth Inclusion Programme |
| YISP | Youth Inclusion Support Panel |
| YJB | Youth Justice Board |
| YOIS | Youth Offending Information System |
| YOT | Youth Offending Team |

Introduction

The joint YOT inspection programme commenced in September 2003 and is the first full inspection to examine the work of YOTs. The programme is being implemented in three phases, and will cover all 155 YOTs in England and Wales over a five year cycle.

The initial inspection of the Stockport YOT, conducted in November and December 2004 during the second phase of the programme, revealed a range of shortcomings in the work of the YOT. Actions were being taken at the time of the inspection to address these concerns but had still to produce tangible results. We therefore decided to conduct a brief follow-up inspection in 2005, focusing on the recommendations contained in the initial report.

This follow-up inspection was conducted at the same time as the Stockport JAR of Children's Services and Corporate Assessment Judgements and findings from the follow-up inspection informed both processes.

Next steps

The report will be submitted to the Home Secretary, as the Secretary of State responsible for youth justice, with simultaneous copies to the Education and Health Secretaries. A copy will be sent to the YJB. Copies will also be made available to the press and placed on the website of HMI Probation at:

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

Key findings

Management and partnership arrangements

We found a strong Executive Group, chaired by the Assistant Chief Executive, with good attendance by the majority of members. Links with the YOT's statutory partners had been significantly strengthened by the development of protocol agreements and the YJB Plan now reflected partners' strategies.

A new management team was in place and the YOT was now developing a strong performance culture, evident at both an operational and a strategic level. Links between the YOT, education and Connexions were good: a partnership agreement had been drawn up between the YOT and Connexions, supported by a structure of regular meetings.

We found structured supervision and appraisal processes supported by a comprehensive training programme for all staff in conjunction with a rolling programme for updating enhanced CRB checks. A Safe Working Policy had been developed and implemented, supported by a duty rota for managers to cover out of hours contact.

Work with children and young people and their parents/carers

The YOT had developed a borough-wide inter-agency prevention strategy, with a range of prevention programmes. A prevention team had been established under a newly appointed manager. Referrals were assessed using ONSET pending the development of the Common Assessment Framework. A junior YIP had been set up and plans were in hand regarding a YISP which, it was hoped, would be in place from April 2006. Apart from the YIP programmes, whose evaluation was undertaken by the YJB, none of the prevention initiatives were subject to any form of structured monitoring process to demonstrate their effectiveness.

The quality and timeliness of Asset completion was good. The assessment and management of risk of harm cases had also improved considerably, with the implementation of a risk policy and establishment of a system of case review panels. The quality of supervision plans required significant improvement, but levels of contact with children and young people were high and there was a strong enforcement policy with management oversight of cases. We found there was now good information exchange with education and also noted some positive diversity-based interventions and assessments. The police still need to adopt the Home Office/YJB Final Warning Guidance of 2002.

Victims and restorative justice

Levels of contact with victims still needed to improve, as did the timeliness of victim information supplied by the police. There were some positive reparation schemes, but the range was limited by the availability of staff or volunteers to supervise sessions. A number of other potential activities

were, however, being considered and the YOT was in the process of recruiting and training more volunteers.

Overall assessment

We were pleased to find significant improvement in the performance of the YOT and it was evident, from the follow-up inspection, that much work had been undertaken at both an operational and a strategic level. We found that there was a strong performance culture developing, and that protocols with partner organisations were now in position or being developed. There were structured supervision and appraisal processes being actively used. The quality of Asset completion was good, and levels of contact with children and young people high. Much work had been done to improve the assessment and management of risk of harm, which should now be consolidated. Further attention needed to be given to supervision planning and work with victims still required development. Nevertheless, we came away with a positive impression of the work undertaken, and the commitment and enthusiasm of managers and staff alike. Our overall assessment of the performance of the YOT was therefore that it provided a **good basis for development.**

Key statistics

| File reading statistic | YOT file read score | Average for phase two YOTs | Range for phase two YOTs | YJB targets ⁽¹⁾ |
|--|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| | (% cases) | | | |
| Initial assessment completed in accordance with national standards requirements: | | | | |
| – timeliness | 87% | 84% | 70-97% | 100% |
| – adequate quality | 93% | 71% | 29-93% | |
| Full risk of harm to others completed on relevant cases | 89% | 54% | 17-83% | |
| Evidence of management oversight in risk of harm cases | 40% | 41% | 0-100% | |
| ISP meets the content requirements of national standards and contains SMART objectives | 50% | 52% | 17-96% | 100% ⁽²⁾ |
| Frequency of appointments arranged broadly conform to national standards, to the requirements of order/licence, and to any risk of harm considerations | 90% | 75% | 52-100% | |
| Judgements about acceptability/unacceptability of absences are appropriate | 71% | 71% | 40-96% | |
| Breach/recall action has taken place, if required, within the national standards timescale | 75% | 49% | 13-100% | |
| Evidence of any criminal activity during the course of the order | 27% | 29% | 15-48% | |
| Appropriate action has been taken if a child or young person is considered vulnerable to harm from self and others. | 100% | 95% | 67-100% | |
| Effective action is taken where there is evidence of educational difficulties | 75% | 60% | 33-81% | 90% ⁽³⁾ |
| Appropriate referrals are made in cases of: | | | | |
| – physical health | 100% | n/a | n/a | |
| – mental/emotional health | 89% | n/a | n/a | 100% ⁽⁴⁾ |
| – substance misuse | 44% | n/a | n/a | 100% ⁽⁵⁾ |
| Victim was consulted about restorative/reparative justice work with child or young person | 29% | 45% | 6-72% | |

- (1) If appropriate.
- (2) Relates to detention and training plans.
- (3) In full-time ETE.
- (4) CAMHS referrals.
- (5) Screening and referrals.

1. MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

1.1 Leadership

Recommendation

The Chair of the YOT Executive should ensure that its terms of reference, which were in draft form at the time of the inspection, are adopted and implemented to reflect its strategic role and those of its partner agencies.

Terms of Reference for the YOT Executive had been adopted and implemented. We were impressed by the commitment shown by the Chief Executive and the Chair of the YOT Executive in developing the group into an effective strategic body, and the YOT into a more sustainable organisation. The Executive was currently chaired by the Assistant Chief Executive of the Authority, thereby ensuring a direct line of accountability with the Chief Executive. The YOT had been moved into the Children and Young People's Directorate after full consultation with its partners, and the YOT Manager was line managed by the Assistant Director for Inclusive Communities, where the YOT now sat. These moves demonstrated the authority's support to the YOT and gave an explicit message about the strategic changes to all involved.

The YOT's statutory partners generally showed strong commitment to the Executive who had organised a day's training to set a new framework of leadership for the partnership, with a focus on performance and staff. Most members regularly attended meetings and were of an appropriate level of seniority to make decisions and provide a strong strategic lead.

Since the original inspection, the YOT now had a strong new management team in place, which supported the drive from the Executive. We were aware that the current Manager was to move to another YOT but were confident that her departure would not affect the effectiveness of the YOT, given the structures and support now in place.

Recommendations

The Chair of the YOT Executive should ensure that Connexions are effectively represented at a strategic level on the YOT Executive.

The Education Department should ensure that shared strategic targets are agreed with the YOT and a strategy developed to improve the engagement of children and young people in ETE for the YOT for the post-16 age group.

Connections was now represented on the YOT Executive. We found good evidence of improvements in the relationship between the YOT and Education Department and Connexions, driven by the establishment of regular joint meetings. Reports from that meeting were to be presented to future YOT Executive meetings. A Partnership Agreement Delivery Plan had been developed for June to December 2005 which set out the shared vision of both organisations, to maximise the potential of children and young people, and included a joint target of increasing the proportion in ETE to 90% by 2006. Regrettably, this target had not been taken forward in the Partnership Agreement for 2006.

The YOT had also developed formal links with all the schools within the borough, including signed information exchange protocols, and had run *Introduction to YOT* sessions for school governors to promote and explain its role.

Recommendation

The YOT Manager should ensure that a strong focus on performance issues is adopted at both strategic and operational level.

The YOT performance figures were now provided quarterly to the Executive, and also to the Safer Stockport Partnership (CDRP). The YOT had begun to develop a performance culture, with individual team managers responsible for specific KPIs. Data were supplied to the managers on a fortnightly basis to ensure that any remedial action necessary was taken before service delivery was affected. The YOT Manager also met monthly with the Chair of the Executive to review the performance information.

1.2 Partnership and resources

Recommendation

The YOT Manager should ensure that effective formal protocols and SLAs with partner agencies are adopted. In particular, links and communication channels with Children's Services must be significantly improved.

We were presented with a range of protocols and SLAs with various partners. Although some were still being developed and were in draft form, many had been signed off, and we felt that the linkages between the YOT and partners were secure.

The local authority had taken serious note of the comments made in the initial inspection report about safeguarding issues and their resolve to address the issues had been one of the driving factors for moving the YOT into the Children and Young People's Directorate.

In order to improve the working relations between the YOT and their social worker colleagues within the Children and Young People's Directorate, the two teams had agreed a shadowing process. It was anticipated that this practice would not only promote greater understanding between the respective workers but also help social workers seconded to the YOT to maintain their contacts with their new parent organisation. In addition, all staff had received training in safeguarding and other child protection issues, and weekly meetings had been established to discuss Looked After Children to ensure that they were receiving appropriate support from the relevant agencies.

Good practice

Staff from the YOT were taking part in a job shadowing project, instigated through the YOT to enable staff from different agencies to understand the issues others faced when referrals were being made.

We found information to support the claims by the YOT of improved relationships with Children's Services. Liaison regarding Looked After Children had risen from 30% of cases reviewed during our initial inspection to 100% of those examined in the follow-up. The YOT was now working closely with them and would represent their social work colleagues in court to prevent unnecessary remands to local authority care.

Good practice

Children's Services were not able to staff the seconded post from establishment, so had agreed to advertise jointly with the YOT for the post. They then employed the person appointed to the post, thereby ensuring the bridge between the two departments and also agreed that the staff member could return to them at the end of their secondment.

Recommendation

The Chair of the YOT Executive should ensure that the Youth Justice Plan fully reflects the strategies of partner agencies.

The YOT had produced its most recent Annual Youth Justice Plan within the required timescale. The document had been agreed by all the partners, and was reflective of their own strategies. From the interviews conducted we

discovered strong supporting evidence of how this process had been carried out that included the report being presented to a number of the local authority scrutiny panels and consultation with the member responsible for crime and disorder.

The YOT was now appropriately fully staffed, including secondees from different partners. We were pleased to see that the Executive had now agreed to second a social worker to the YOT, as well as an education worker.

1.3 Staff supervision, development and training

Recommendation

The YOT Manager should ensure that staff are consistently supervised and appraised within a performance management framework, and there is regular and effective management oversight of casework.

Staff informed us that there had been a dramatic change within the YOT since the last inspection and that they were now receiving well structured, regular supervision. Sessions were normally held every four weeks, although there were slight variations depending on experience and team. The YOT management team had developed a standard format for supervision notes and all staff received a copy electronically. Supervision also linked into the appraisal system (PDR) which, as the management team was supplied with performance details on individual members of staff, formed an intrinsic part of the YOT's approach to performance management. All staff had received their PDR, which covered training and developmental needs as well as achievement of their work objectives.

All the management team, including the YOT Manager, also received regular supervision and appraisal.

It was apparent that, with the exception of the local probation area, links between workers and their seconding parent organisations had improved, with joint appraisal and supervision.

Recommendation

The YOT Manager should ensure that an effective training programme is implemented and core areas of training in the use and completion of Asset, child protection and risk management are fully addressed. The YOT should establish an effective diversity training programme.

The YOT had instigated a comprehensive training programme during the past ten months and workers were generally complimentary about the availability of both local and national training courses. All staff, including the administration team, had either taken part in diversity training or were

about to do so. In addition, managers had attended a specific course on managing inclusion.

Specialist staff were able to access appropriate professional training as necessary to maintain their individual skills. Supported by the Executive and partners organisations, the YOT had developed a robust strategy for ensuring cover for specialist workers, such as the victim officer and information officer, by training up other members of staff or managers. The YOT now had a lead worker for most areas, who was supported by others, often utilising skills gained in previous roles. As a result, absences due to leave, sickness, etc., were now being covered to provide a seamless service.

The YOT had developed a Safe Working Policy that had been recently reviewed. The policy placed explicit expectations on both managers and staff and covered both core working and out of hours time. A duty rota had been established for managers to ensure support and back-up were available out of hours.

The YOT had implemented a rolling system to update enhanced CRB checks through the local authority, and the first cohort of workers had recently had their CRB checks renewed.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

This section is judged as satisfactorily met.

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

2.1 Children and young people at risk of offending

Recommendation

The YOT Manager should ensure that a formal prevention strategy is established to inform work with children and young people who are at risk of offending.

The YOT had consolidated its work on prevention. A new manager had been appointed in September 2005 and had developed a prevention strategy for the YOT. It had been approved by the Prevention Management Board, which consisted of representatives of the relevant partner organisations and took an overview of prevention work across the borough. The Board was linked to the Child In Need process and took strategic as well as operational decisions. The Youth Crime and Reduction Action Group, on which the YOT Manager was a member, coordinated actions on behalf of the Safer Stockport Partnership.

The YOT had set up a range of preventative programmes: a junior YIP had been successfully established and had recently come under the management of the YOT. A YISP was currently being developed and was expected to be in place by April 2006. The YIP was currently being evaluated by the YJB, as the YISP would be, but none of the other prevention initiatives were subject to any form of structured monitoring to demonstrate their effectiveness. These processes now needed to be developed.

The YOT, along with other partners, was currently involved in the development of the Common Assessment Framework. Whilst this work was being progressed, the prevention programmes were using ONSET as an assessment tool. Both ONSET and YOIS were accessible in a number of locations outside the YOT to assist partners with information on children and young people at risk of offending.

Good practice

The YOT and Youth Services had linked up in one part of Stockport, with the Youth Service tackling the larger groups of youths and the YOT workers working with the more difficult children and young people. They were now studying the project to develop strategies to deal with the issues identified.

The YOT also employed five youth crime prevention officers, who were responsible for a given area within Stockport. They were delivering well-constructed interventions and received referrals from other agencies,

including the ASBAT team which was based within Community Safety, and parents/carers. They also spent one day a week in the local secondary school supporting children and young people.

2.2 Children and young people who have offended

Recommendation

The YOT Manager should ensure that the quality of initial Assets, supervision plans and their reviews is improved to meet the requirements of national standards and other relevant guidance, and to assist case workers in planning and reviewing work with children and young people.

Following the initial inspection, all staff had been given training in Asset completion and on APIS. Subsequently, any new member of staff appointed received in-house sessions on Asset together with fortnightly supervision until they were considered competent in assessment and other areas of work.

This approach had clearly proved effective. The file read revealed an overall improvement in the quality of Asset completions since the previous inspection with 93% being assessed as satisfactory or better, compared with 61% previously. We also found increased use (from 48% to 60% of cases) of the *What Do You Think* form.

The quality of supervision plans had also improved, albeit marginally, with 50% meeting the national standard compared to 39% at the first inspection. Although the plans examined focused on the needs of the child or young person in most areas, few contained SMART objectives. Most were not sufficiently specific around interventions planned or time bound with regard outcomes.

The YOT used a range of individual interventions, designed to suit different needs, but was now considering adopting *Teen Talk* to ensure some consistency in approach. It had also improved its level of contact: 70% of children and young people attended appointments in accordance with the national standard, compared with 42% at the time of the last inspection.

The file read also showed that appropriate referrals were made to specialist workers. We also found good exchange of information between local schools and the YOT. All court reports contained information about the child's or young person's education situation. We were also pleased to hear that an education worker had been appointed on secondment and would join the YOT in January 2006. Connexions had now set itself a target, which would be monitored monthly, of seeing all children and young people within ten days of the order being made to carry out an assessment. It was now working with the Youth Service to develop a package to meet the needs of the more difficult children, aged 12 to 15, which would lead into the E2E programmes.

The standard of case files had been improved, partly due to the regular supervision of staff by the new management team, supported by proactive work of the information officer. He identified individuals who did not follow set procedures, so that steps could be taken to rectify issues early, both at team as well as an individual level.

These improvements in process appeared to have resulted in better outcomes for children and young people. A review of final warnings and referral orders undertaken at our request showed a reduction in recidivism of over of 9% between corresponding periods in 2004 and 2005. The snapshot also showed a decrease of 36% of children and young people entering the criminal justice process at the final warning or referral order stage in 2005 compared with 2004.

Recommendation

The YOT Manager should ensure that risk of harm assessments are completed on all relevant cases, regularly reviewed and endorsed by managers where appropriate.

Since the previous inspection, the YOT had published a Management of Risk Policy that provided guidance on the action to be taken once a child or young person had been identified through Asset as being a risk to the community.

Although staff were still awaiting the accredited YJB training at the time of the re-inspection, in-house training and briefing sessions had been provided by managers and, through consultation with probation, on the MAPPA process.

We saw significant improvement in the assessment and management of risk, with completion of the full risk of harm assessments rising from 30% to 87% of relevant cases. Furthermore 86% of cases identified as *risk concern* or *risk aware* had been referred to managers, compared to 20% previously.

A system had recently been implemented, whereby cases designated as *risk concern* or *risk aware* were reviewed quarterly at panel meetings, chaired by the YOT Manager. We were therefore surprised to find that only 40% of the cases examined during the follow-up inspection contained evidence that they had been overseen by a manager. Further discussion with the YOT Manager suggested that this deficit related to the recording and storage of panel meeting minutes, and was immediately rectified.

Recommendation

The YOT Manager should ensure that orders are enforced consistently across the YOT.

The enforcement of orders had improved considerably. Judgements about the acceptability of absences were considered appropriate in 71% of cases, and enforcement action was taken in 75%, compared to 53% at the time of

the initial inspection. Training had been provided and enforcement practice was regularly checked in staff supervision, informed by additional information on national standards compliance provided fortnightly by the information manager. Random sampling of cases was also undertaken by the deputy YOT Manager.

Recommendations

Greater Manchester Police should ensure that it adopts the Home Office/JYB 2002 guidance for final warnings.

Greater Manchester Police should ensure that the YOT is informed of all final warnings and charges involving children and young people within 24 hours, to include the victim details, until the YOT has full access to the GMP systems via its police officer.

GMP had still not adopted the 2002 Home Office/YJB final warning recommendations at the time of the follow-up inspection, although we were informed that they were in the process of doing so and that the new system would be operational by December 2005.

The exchange of information between the police and the YOT had, however, improved considerably and the police officer seconded to the YOT worked proactively with children and young people subject to final warnings. He had access to GMPICs, OPUS and the PNC.

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

This section is judged as satisfactorily met.

3. VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

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

Recommendation

The YOT Manager should ensure that victims' needs are consistently identified and addressed through restorative interventions.

Recommendation

Greater Manchester Police should ensure that the PNC located in the YOT has access to all GMP standard programmes (e.g. Custody) to enable access to victim details.

The YOT had appointed a worker who spent 50% of their time as the YOT VLO, and we were informed a second 0.5 FTE worker was to take up post after the inspection to increase the victim work. The YOT police officer, who was responsible for contacting all victims of final warnings, supported these two workers.

Although the YOT aimed to send letters out to all known victims, our file read showed only 29% were contacted. Again, this finding may be indicative of recording rather than actual practice and a member of the administrative staff had been given a specific brief to ensure the adequate storage and monitoring of victim information.

As the police did not notify the YOT of the victim's details or take impact statements every time, victims' views were not always represented at court and the police officer had to trace them through the PNC, at the caseworker's instigation. The victim would then be contacted by post, with the letter followed up by a telephone call to ascertain their wishes. Most of the victims were said to want little involvement with the YOT, but to be kept informed of how the child or young person had performed on their order.

The YOT also had a number of volunteers to supervise reparation sessions, but still had insufficient staff to cover the hours available. As a result, reparation work was limited. The YOT was actively recruiting more volunteers as a means of addressing the problem and had received over 60 responses, which were currently being processed.

At the time of the inspection, the YOT had developed a number of practical reparation initiatives that had resulted in positive reparation to the local community. As well as challenging activities based around a few venues, the programme ensured that participating children and young people

developed appropriate skills. Although currently limited, these schemes were being utilised to raise the profile of the YOT and reparation within the community. We were informed of a number of other potential activities that were currently being developed, including the Fire Service, Help the Aged and a local hospice. Direct reparation was considered in a few cases: each was judged on its own merits, with risk to the victim being the paramount concern.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK WITH VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

This section is judged as partly met.

The joint inspection of YOTs

The joint inspection of YOT is an independent programme, funded by the Home Office and reporting to the Home Secretary. 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.

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 being carried out in line with the Government's commitment to proportionate and coordinated inspection in local government. It is:
 - proportionate to risk, and fieldwork will only be undertaken where necessary to support findings or to disseminate good practice
 - coordinated with, and complements, other inspection programmes, including the JARs and inspection of Young People's Partnership in Wales
- ◇ The Stockport YOT follow-up inspection focused on implementation of the recommendations contained in the initial inspection report. It involved a file reading exercise and meetings with relevant managers, representatives of partner organisations and members of the YOT staff.
- ◇ Performance was scored, using a similar approach to that adopted in phase two of the inspection programme. Each section of the inspection was individually assessed. Judgements were defined as:
 - **Fully met** – exceptional performance beyond the requirements of national standards and other relevant guidelines
 - **Satisfactorily met** – a sufficient level of performance to assure the joint inspection team that the YOT is progressing satisfactorily
 - **Partly met** – less than sufficient performance on the majority of items
 - **Not met** – inadequate performance on most items.
- ◇ **The overall performance of the YOT** was assessed as:
 - **Commendable** – indicating strong management performance and exemplary work with both children and young people and in relation to victims and restorative justice.
 - **Good** – either the section relating to management or work with children and young people is fully met and the other sections are at least satisfactorily met.
 - **Good basis for development** – the sections relating to management arrangements and work with children and young people are both assessed as satisfactorily met and work with victims and restorative justice is being taken forward.
 - **Requiring improvement** – either the section on management arrangements or work with children and young people is assessed as partly or not met.
 - **Requiring significant improvement** – neither the section on management arrangements or work with children and young people is considered to have been satisfactorily met.

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*