



Standards for inspecting youth offending services

HMI Probation, March 2018



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1. Organisational delivery

1.1 Governance and leadership

The governance and leadership of the YOT supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.

- 1.1.1 Is there a clear local vision and strategy for the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?
- a) Does the YOT Management Board set the direction and strategy for the YOT, prioritising the quality of service and adherence to the evidence-base?
 - b) Does the YOT Management Board include all statutory partners and non-statutory partners where these would add value?
 - c) Are YOT Management Board members active in their attendance and participation, recognising the contribution their own agency makes to the YOT?
 - d) Is the Chair of the YOT Management Board well engaged with a sufficient understanding of the YOT's work?
- 1.1.2 Do the partnership arrangements actively support effective service delivery?
- a) Do YOT Management Board members advocate the work of the YOT in their own broader roles?
 - b) Do the YOT's partnerships arrangements facilitate the delivery of effective operational work?
 - c) Do staff understand their roles and responsibilities within the partnership arrangements, and what they are accountable for?
 - d) Do other relevant local strategic partnerships give priority to work to support desistance and prevent harm, supporting integration with wider services for children and young people?
- 1.1.3 Does the leadership of the YOT support effective service delivery?
- a) Does the YOT leadership team provide an effective link to the Management Board?
 - b) Does the YOT leadership team effectively communicate the vision and strategy of the YOT to staff and stakeholders?
 - c) Does the YOT leadership team successfully deliver and operationalise the vision and strategy?
 - d) Does the YOT leadership team promote openness, constructive challenge and ideas?
 - e) Are risks to the service sufficiently understood by the leadership team, with appropriate mitigations and controls in place?

1.2 Staff

Staff within the YOT are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.

- 1.2.1 Do staffing and workload levels support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?
- a) Are staffing levels planned and reviewed to meet the changing demands and case profiles?
 - b) Are practitioners and managers' workloads reasonable, given the profile of the cases and the range of work undertaken?
 - c) Are workloads actively managed?
 - d) Is there an effective strategy to maintain the quality of delivery during periods of planned and unplanned staff absences?
- 1.2.2 Do the skills of YOT staff support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?
- a) Do the skills and diversity of the workforce meet the needs of the children and young people?
 - b) Are cases allocated to staff who are appropriately qualified and/or experienced?
 - c) Are staff motivated to contribute to the delivery of a quality service?
 - d) Is there an appropriate strategy in place to identify and develop the potential of individual staff to support succession planning?
- 1.2.3 Does the oversight of work support high-quality delivery and professional development?
- a) Do staff receive effective supervision to enhance the quality of work with children and young people?
 - b) Is there an effective induction programme for new staff?
 - c) Is the appraisal process used effectively to ensure that staff are competent to deliver a quality service?
 - d) Is sufficient attention paid to identifying and addressing poor performance?
 - e) Is exceptional work recognised and rewarded, encouraging development and retention of staff?
- 1.2.4 Are arrangements for learning and development comprehensive and responsive?
- a) Does the YOT identify and plan for the learning needs of all staff?
 - b) Does the YOT provide sufficient access to in-service training to support the delivery of a quality service?
 - c) Does the YOT promote and value a culture of learning and continuous improvement?

1.3 Partnerships and services

A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children and young people.

- 1.3.1 Is there a sufficiently comprehensive and up to date analysis of the profile of children and young people, to ensure that the YOT can deliver well targeted services?
- a) Is there an up to date strategic and operational analysis of the desistance needs presented by the children and young people?
 - b) Does the analysis pay sufficient attention to factors for safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm?
 - c) Does the analysis pay sufficient attention to diversity factors and to issues of disproportionality?
 - d) Is there sufficient analysis of local patterns of sentencing and offence types?
 - e) Is the analysis used effectively to influence service delivery?
- 1.3.2 Does the YOT partnership have access to the volume, range and quality of services and interventions to meet the needs of all children and young people?
- a) Is there access to the right specialist and mainstream services and interventions to meet the desistance needs of children and young people?
 - b) Is sufficient attention paid to building on strengths and enhancing protective factors?
 - c) Are diversity factors and issues of disproportionality sufficiently considered in the range of services provided?
 - d) Is the quality of services reviewed and evaluated, with remedial action taken where required?
- 1.3.3 Are arrangements with statutory partners, providers and other agencies established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality services?
- a) Are there effective arrangements with partners and providers to support desistance through access to specialist and mainstream services?
 - b) Are there effective arrangements with partners and providers to support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people?
 - c) Are there effective arrangements with partners and providers to manage the risk of harm to others?
 - d) Are courts made sufficiently aware of the services available to support sentencing options?

1.4 Information and facilities

Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all children and young people.

- 1.4.1 Are the necessary policies and guidance in place to enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all children and young people?
 - a) Are the necessary policies in place that describe and guide effective service delivery?
 - b) Are policies and guidance communicated effectively to all those to whom they apply?
 - c) Do staff understand how to access the right services from partners and providers?
 - d) Are policies and guidance regularly reviewed?
- 1.4.2 Does the YOT's delivery environment(s) meet the needs of all children and young people and enable staff to deliver a quality service?
 - a) Does the YOT deliver its work to children and young people in accessible places?
 - b) Does the YOT delivery environment enable staff to undertake appropriate personalised work and engage effectively with children and young people?
 - c) Is the YOT delivery environment a safe place for staff working with children and young people?
- 1.4.3 Do the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) systems enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all children and young people?
 - a) Do the ICT systems enable staff to plan, deliver and record their work in a timely way, and to access information as required?
 - b) Do the ICT arrangements allow access to and exchange of the right information to and from partners, providers and other key stakeholders?
 - c) Do the ICT systems support the production of the necessary management information?
- 1.4.4 Is analysis, evidence and learning used effectively to drive improvement?
 - a) Do performance and quality assurance systems drive improvement?
 - b) Are service improvement plans supported through evaluation and development of the underlying evidence base?
 - c) Are processes in place to ensure that the YOT learns from things that go wrong?
 - d) Are the views of the children and young people, their parents/carers and other key stakeholders sought, analysed and used to review and improve the effectiveness of services?
 - e) Where necessary, is action taken promptly and appropriately in response to audit or inspection?

2. Court disposals

2.1 Assessment

Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.

- 2.1.1 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child or young person's attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?
 - b) Does assessment consider the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person, utilising information held by other agencies?
 - c) Does assessment focus on the child or young person's strengths and protective factors?
 - d) Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child or young person?
 - e) Is sufficient attention given to understanding the child or young person's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and their likelihood of engaging with the court disposal?
 - f) Does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim/s, and opportunities for restorative justice?
 - g) Is the child or young person and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?
- 2.1.2 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?
- a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve other agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
- 2.1.3 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?
- a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child or young person, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?
 - b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involve other agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to manage and minimise the risk of harm presented by the child or young person?

2.2 Planning

Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.

- 2.2.1 Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Does planning set out the services most likely to support desistance, paying sufficient attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing?
 - b) Does planning take sufficient account of the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person?
 - c) Does planning take sufficient account of the child or young person's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?
 - d) Does planning take sufficient account of the child or young person's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and seek to develop these as necessary?
 - e) Does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim/s?
 - f) Is the child or young person and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?
- 2.2.2 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?
- a) Does planning promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person, sufficiently addressing risks?
 - b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child or young person?
 - c) Does planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - d) Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?
- 2.2.3 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
- a) Does planning promote the safety of other people, sufficiently addressing risk of harm factors?
 - b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?
 - d) Does planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety of other people?
 - e) Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?

2.3 Implementation and delivery

High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.

- 2.3.1 Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Are the delivered services those most likely to support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales?
 - b) Does service delivery reflect the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person, involving parents/carers or significant others?
 - c) Does service delivery build upon the child or young person's strengths and enhance protective factors?
 - d) Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child or young person and their parents/carers?
 - e) Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration including access to services post-supervision?
 - f) Is sufficient attention given to encouraging and enabling the child or young person's compliance with the work of the YOT?
 - g) Are enforcement actions taken when appropriate?
- 2.3.2 Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child or young person?
- a) Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Is the involvement of other organisations in keeping the child or young person safe sufficiently well coordinated?
- 2.3.3 Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?
- a) Are the delivered services sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?
 - b) Is sufficient attention given to the protection of actual and potential victims?
 - c) Is the involvement of other agencies in managing the risk of harm sufficiently well coordinated?

2.4 Reviewing

Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.

- 2.4.1 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors linked to desistance?
 - b) Does reviewing focus sufficiently on building upon the child or young person's strengths and enhancing protective factors?
 - c) Does reviewing consider motivation and engagement levels and any relevant barriers?
 - d) Is the child or young person and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in reviewing their progress and engagement, and are their views taken into account?
 - e) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to support desistance?
- 2.4.2 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?
- a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to safety and wellbeing?
 - b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - c) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
- 2.4.3 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
- a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to risk of harm?
 - b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in managing the risk of harm?
 - c) Is the child or young person and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in reviewing their risk of harm, and are their views taken into account?
 - d) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to manage and minimise the risk of harm?

3. Out of court disposals

3.1 Assessment

Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.

- 3.1.1 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child or young person's acknowledgement of responsibility, attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?
 - b) Does assessment consider the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person, utilising information held by other agencies?
 - c) Does assessment focus on the child or young person's strengths and protective factors?
 - d) Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child or young person?
 - e) Is sufficient attention given to understanding the child or young person's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change?
 - f) Does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim/s, and opportunities for restorative justice?
 - g) Is the child or young person and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?
- 3.1.2 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?
- a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve other agencies where appropriate?
- 3.1.3 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?
- a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child or young person, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?
 - b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including any other assessments that have been completed, and other evidence of behaviour by the child or young person?

3.2 Planning

Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.

- 3.2.1 Does planning focus on supporting the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Does planning set out the services most likely to support desistance, paying sufficient attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing?
 - b) Does planning take sufficient account of the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person?
 - c) Does planning take sufficient account of the child or young person's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?
 - d) Does planning take sufficient account of the child or young person's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and seek to develop these as necessary?
 - e) Does planning take sufficient account of opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services following completion of out of court disposal work?
 - f) Does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim/s?
 - g) Is the child or young person and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?
- 3.2.2 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?
- a) Does planning promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person, sufficiently addressing risks?
 - b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child or young person?
 - c) Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?
- 3.2.3 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
- a) Does planning promote the safety of other people, sufficiently addressing risk of harm factors?
 - b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?
 - d) Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?

3.3 Implementation and delivery

High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.

- 3.3.1 Does service delivery support the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Are the delivered services those most likely to support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales?
 - b) Does service delivery reflect the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person, involving parents/carers or significant others?
 - c) Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child or young person and their parents/carers?
 - d) Is sufficient attention given to encouraging and enabling the child or young person's compliance with the work of the YOT?
 - e) Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services?
- 3.3.2 Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child or young person?
- a) Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Is the involvement of other agencies in keeping the child or young person safe sufficiently well utilised and coordinated?
- 3.3.3 Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?
- a) Is sufficient attention given to the protection of actual and potential victims?
 - b) Are the delivered services sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?

3.4 Joint working

Joint working with the police supports the delivery of high-quality, personalised and coordinated services.

- 3.4.1 Are the YOT's recommendations sufficiently well-informed, analytical and personalised to the child or young person, supporting joint decision making?
- a) Are the recommendations by the YOT for out of court disposal outcomes, conditions and interventions appropriate and proportionate?
 - b) Do the recommendations consider the degree of the child or young person's understanding of the offence and their acknowledgement of responsibility?
 - c) Is a positive contribution made by the YOT to determining the disposal?
 - d) Is sufficient attention given to the child or young person's understanding, and their parents/carers' understanding, of the implications of receiving an out of court disposal?
 - e) Is the information provided to inform decision making timely to meet the needs of the case, legislation and guidance?
 - f) Is the rationale for joint disposal decisions appropriate and clearly recorded?
- 3.4.2 Does the YOT work effectively with the police in implementing the out of court disposal?
- a) Does the YOT inform the police of progress and outcomes in a sufficient and timely manner?
 - b) Is sufficient attention given to compliance with and enforcement of the conditions?