

An inspection of youth offending services in

Oldham

HM Inspectorate of Probation

APRIL 2019

This inspection was led by HM Inspector Ian Menary, supported by a team of inspectors, as well as staff from our operations and research teams. The Head of Youth Offending Team Inspections, responsible for this inspection programme, is Alan MacDonald. We would like to thank all those who helped plan and took part in the inspection; without their help and cooperation, the inspection would not have been possible.

Please note that throughout the report the names in practice examples have been changed to protect the individual's identity.

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Contents

Foreword	4
Overall findings.....	5
Summary of ratings	7
Recommendations.....	8
Introduction	9
Contextual facts	10
1. Organisational delivery.....	11
1.1 Governance and leadership.....	11
1.2 Staff	13
1.3 Partnerships and services	14
1.4 Information and facilities.....	16
Summary.....	18
2. Court disposals	19
2.1 Assessment	19
2.2 Planning	20
2.3 Implementation and delivery	21
2.4 Reviewing.....	22
Summary.....	23
3. Out-of-court disposals.....	24
3.1 Assessment	24
3.2 Planning	26
3.3 Implementation and delivery	26
3.4 Joint working	28
Summary.....	28
Annex 1 – Methodology.....	30
Annex 2 – Inspection results.....	31
Annex 3 – Glossary.....	36

Foreword

This inspection is part of our programme of youth offending service inspections. As planned, we have inspected and rated Oldham Youth Justice Service across three broad areas: the arrangements for organisational delivery of services first, and then the quality of court disposals work, and out-of-court disposals work.

We have given Oldham Youth Justice Service (YJS) an overall rating of 'Good'. Many aspects of its work are impressive, particularly in post-court work and work to support desistance from offending.

Partners work together well. The YJS has been instrumental in making sure that the challenges presented by changes in offending patterns have been recognised and given priority by the local authority. Staff and managers are respected, skilled and highly motivated. There is a positive ethos among staff of working constructively with the child or young person, and their families, to achieve good outcomes for them and reduce the likelihood of future offending. We have rated the involvement of children and young people in work to improve the services provided to them as 'Outstanding'.

Oldham is the only local authority in England and Wales where youth offending services are contracted out to a charitable trust. This arrangement works well, with a good integrated service offer and access to mainstream services. We have rated its work with children and young people subject to court sentences as 'Outstanding' across three of our standards, and 'Good' on the remaining one. Work on out-of-court disposals suffered from limitations in the assessment framework used on many of the cases, and other shortcomings. This meant that, while much excellent work was found, inspectors could not always be confident that it was done to the required standard overall.

There are a few areas for improvement. The Management Board needs to be more effective in holding the YJS and its partners to account. For example, the delivery of out-of-court work requires improvement, particularly to ensure that it takes good account of the broad range of risks posed both to and by children and young people. More attention should also be given to the concerns of victims.

The recommendations in this report have been designed to help Oldham YJS focus on the small, but important, number of areas for improvement.



Dame Glenys Stacey
Chief Inspector of Probation

Overall findings

Overall, Oldham Youth Justice Service is rated as: **Good**. This rating has been determined by inspecting the Youth Justice Service in three domains of its work. The findings in those domains are described below.

	Organisational delivery
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Our key findings about organisational delivery are as follows:

- Partners in Oldham work together well.
- The YJS has been influential in raising awareness of, and encouraging a positive response to, the needs of children and young people at risk of offending.
- A well-integrated service offer is in place that supports access to mainstream services and community re-integration.
- The YJS's premises are well located, welcoming and of a high standard, and support access to mainstream and targeted services.
- There is a positive approach to quality assurance and improvement.
- There is a high-quality staff group, who are motivated and well trained.
- The approach taken to involving children and young people in improving services is impressive.
- The Management Board needs to be more effective in holding the YJS and its partners to account.
- YJS staff need direct access to information from children's services.
- The joint case-working model for out-of-court cases does not always work as intended, and shortcomings in the tool used for many out-of-court assessments were not recognised quickly enough.

	Court disposals
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Our key findings about court disposals are as follows:

- Work on post-court cases is generally impressive.
- Case managers have a very good understanding of the children and young people they work with.
- Assessments and plans are of a high standard. They clearly identify the factors that are most likely to lead to desistance, improvement in safety and wellbeing, and management of risk of harm to others.

- Children and young people, and their parents/carers, are involved in all aspects of work with them. Assessments, plans and intervention take good account of their views.
- Work with children and young people is good; attention is given to those factors most likely to support their desistance from offending.
- Case managers give priority to making sure that children and young people comply with the requirements of their sentence.
- All staff identify and respond to diversity factors.
- More attention needs to be given to the needs, wishes and protection of victims.
- Case managers are not always invited to children's services' meetings and are not always aware of current plans for children and young people who are also known to children's services.



Out-of-court disposals

Our key findings about out-of-court disposals are as follows:

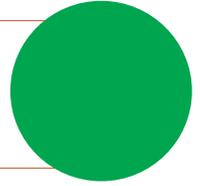
- Work focuses clearly and appropriately on diverting children and young people away from offending behaviour.
- Partners work together well to divert children and young people from offending.
- Assessment, planning and delivery of work to support desistance is good.
- Home visits are used well to help build relationships with the child or young person and their family, and to understand their family context.
- Case managers identify and respond well to relevant diversity factors.
- Work to encourage the child or young person's desistance focuses on developing their strengths and resilience. Case managers understand and address structural and other barriers.
- Positive restorative justice work is delivered in some out-of-court cases, despite the difficulties caused by its short timescales.
- The out-of-court 'screening' tool is being used as an assessment tool.
- As a result of this the assessment tool used for many out-of-court disposals does not give enough attention to risk of harm to others and safeguarding.
- Planning and delivery of work to protect others did not always reflect the factors that were present in the case.
- Staff did not sufficiently consider the needs, wishes and protection of the victims.
- Recommendations, plans and the rationale for out-of-court decisions are often unclear; recording of these does not support external oversight and scrutiny.

Service: Oldham Youth Justice Service

Fieldwork started: November 2018

Overall rating

Good



1. Organisational delivery

1.1 Governance and leadership

Good



1.2 Staff

Good



1.3 Partnerships and services

Good



1.4 Information and facilities

Outstanding



2. Court disposals

2.1 Assessment

Outstanding



2.2 Planning

Outstanding



2.3 Implementation and delivery

Outstanding



2.4 Reviewing

Good



3. Out-of-court disposals

3.1 Assessment

Inadequate



3.2 Planning

Inadequate



3.3 Implementation and delivery

Requires Improvement



3.4 Joint working

Inadequate



Recommendations

As a result of our inspection findings, we have made five recommendations that we believe, if implemented, will have a positive impact on the quality of youth offending services in Oldham. This will improve the lives of the children in contact with youth offending services, and better protect the public.

Oldham Youth Justice Service manager should:

1. make sure that tools used for assessment, planning and decision-making in out-of-court cases enable full consideration of safety and wellbeing and risk of harm to others
2. make sure that plans to set up a joint decision-making panel for out-of-court cases are carried out and that all decisions are supported by clear proposals and appropriate plans. It is important that a clear rationale for the final decision is recorded, thereby enabling effective scrutiny and oversight of this work
3. consider the needs and wishes of victims in all cases, as well as any risks to their safety.

The Chair of the Oldham Youth Justice Management Board should:

4. make sure that statutory Board members attend regularly and that the Board holds the YJS to account effectively for its performance.

The Oldham Youth Justice Management Board should:

5. make sure that joint working arrangements between the YJS and local authority children's services are effective including access to relevant records for YJS staff.

Introduction

Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) supervise 10-18-year-olds who have been sentenced by a court, or who have come to the attention of the police because of their offending behaviour but have not been charged – instead, they were dealt with out of court. HMI Probation inspects both these aspects of youth offending services.

YOTs are statutory partnerships, and they are multi-disciplinary, to deal with the needs of the whole child. They are required to have staff from local authority social care and education, the police, the National Probation Service and local health services.¹ Most YOTs are based within local authorities; however, this can vary.

YOT work is governed and shaped by a range of legislation and guidance specific to the youth justice sector (such as the National Standards for Youth Justice) or else applicable across the criminal justice sector (for example Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements guidance). The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) provides some funding to YOTs. It also monitors their performance and issues guidance to them about how things are to be done.

Oldham YJS is managed by a charitable trust, Positive Steps, under contract from the local authority. Positive Steps also provides a range of other services for children and adults. The YJS is located in the centre of Oldham, in modern premises that are convenient for public transport. Many of its partner services are shared with other parts of Positive Steps and delivered from the same location.

The proportion of the population aged 10-17 is higher in Oldham than the national average (10.8 per cent compared with 8.9 per cent).² The proportion of black and minority ethnic 10-17-year-olds is substantially higher in Oldham than the national average (31.9 per cent compared with 18.9 per cent).³

The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth offending and probation services in England and Wales. We provide assurance on the effectiveness of work with adults and children who have offended to implement orders of the court, reduce reoffending, protect the public and safeguard the vulnerable. We inspect these services and publish inspection reports. We highlight good and poor practice, and use our data and information to encourage good-quality services. We are independent of government, and speak independently.

HM Inspectorate of Probation standards

The standards against which we inspect are based on established models and frameworks, which are grounded in evidence, learning and experience. These standards are designed to drive improvements in the quality of work with people who have offended.⁴

¹ The *Crime and Disorder Act 1998* sets out the arrangements for local YOTs and partnership working.

² Office for National Statistics. (2018). *UK population estimates, mid 2017*.

³ Office for National Statistics. (2012). *Census 2011*.

⁴ HM Inspectorate's standards are available here:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-our-work/our-standards-and-ratings/>

Contextual facts

First-time entrant rate per 100,000⁵

329

Oldham YJS

273

Average for England and Wales

Reoffending rates⁶

41.1%

Oldham YJS

41.6%

Average for England and Wales

Population information



Total population **233,759**

Total youth population (10-17)⁷

25,160

Total black and minority ethnic youth population⁸

7,861

⁵ Youth Justice Board (YJB). First-time entrants, April 2017 to March 2018.

⁶ Ministry of Justice. (July 2018). *Proven reoffending statistics, January 2016 to December 2016*.

⁷ Office for National Statistics. (2012). *UK population estimates mid-2017, based on Census 2011 data*.

⁸ Office for National Statistics. (2012). *Census 2011*.

1. Organisational delivery



Organisations that are well led and well managed are more likely to achieve their aims. We inspect against four standards.

1.1 Governance and leadership	Good
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.	

The YJS has an appropriate strategic plan in place that reflects the strong local ethos of working together to support desistance. The plan responds well to both national and local priorities. It includes robust evidence to support the local priorities.

Accountability in Oldham for work to prevent offending is shared by the Safeguarding Children Board and the Community Safety Partnership, with additional accountability provided by the local authority scrutiny committee. The strategic plan considers many of the potential risks to the effectiveness of the YJS. However, the authors of the plan did not clearly recognise one critical risk – that contractual arrangements for the delivery of services provided by the YJS are subject to annual renewal.

The Youth Justice Management Board is scheduled to meet regularly. It consists of all statutory members and a broad range of others. However, one meeting has been cancelled over the past year due to a high number of apologies. Not all members have attended consistently and there has been too much use of substitutes.

While members meet each other in different forums, often dealing with similar business, the Management Board is where the YJS and its partners are held to account for work to reduce offending by children and young people. It should, therefore, be a priority, particularly for members who represent statutory partners. The Chair of the Board has taken positive steps to deal with non-attendance.

It is encouraging that the Board membership has been enhanced recently. For example, the head of the local virtual school has joined the Board in order to improve representation from the education sector and understanding of the challenges facing that sector.

Links between the Board and the local Community Rehabilitation Company are unclear.

Only 59 per cent of staff reported that they understood the role of the Board, and there were no direct routine links between staff and board members to help them understand each other's roles.

The Chair of the Board has changed recently. The new Chair is the Director of Children's Services. Both the previous and the new Chair have a good understanding of youth justice work, its importance to improving lives in Oldham, and current priorities for its development. They have a strong commitment to the work and to Oldham's integrated delivery model.

Members of the Board understand their individual agencies' contribution to the work of the YJS. There is convincing evidence that they advocate for the needs of the YJS, and the children or young people it works with, in their wider roles. However, it was not always clear that all members understood their role on the board, particularly in actively challenging the YJS and holding it to account for its performance.

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council is strongly committed to reducing offending and, encouragingly, it recognises that children and young people who offend are a specific vulnerable group.

The YJS, along with its partners, has been instrumental in working to reduce reoffending. An example of the impact of this work has been the focus in the Oldham Cares strategic agenda on young people at risk of offending. The Chair of the Management Board has also made sure that the changing profile of offending by children and young people, in particular, the issue of serious youth violence, has been understood at a senior strategic level within the local authority, including by elected members.

Local strategic partnerships, such as the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the Community Safety Partnership, give due consideration to, and prioritise, work with children and young people at risk of offending. Other local strategic partnerships are strong. For example, there is a good understanding of, and arrangements in place to address, serious youth violence. A local reducing reoffending board is in place, chaired jointly by the YJS and probation services.

The culture of the YJS supports innovation. A recent example of this is its keenness to pilot the new Participatory Youth Practice pre-court framework (PYPF) for out-of-court disposals. This is being developed by Manchester Metropolitan University as part of a Greater Manchester knowledge transfer initiative sponsored by the YJB. The initiative aims to improve the effectiveness of work to divert or prevent young people from further offending. However, as explained elsewhere in this report, the PYPF has important limitations that should have been recognised sooner.

Oldham YJS has a clear approach to, and focus on, diverting children and young people away from the criminal justice system. This is an appropriate response, given the rate of first-time entrants to the youth justice system is higher than comparator areas. We commend Oldham YJS's willingness to develop innovative approaches to reducing the number of children and young people entering the criminal justice system. There are positive links between out-of-court and other early help or diversionary work, with confirmed plans to develop these further.

The YJS is located in the same building as Positive Steps, which helps it to integrate its work successfully with a range of services that are important to desistance and safety and wellbeing of children and young people. These include careers advice, substance misuse and health services.

The leadership of the YJS is highly regarded by both staff and partners. It has a clear vision for its work and communicates this regularly to staff, for example through an annual away-day, quarterly staff meetings and other electronic means. Staff understand and own the vision for the service. Staff and managers are ambitious and focused on improving outcomes for children and young people through high-quality, child-centred practice (i.e. what is most likely to improve outcomes for that child or young person).

There is a positive, transparent culture within the YJS, with a strong emphasis on empowering staff to develop and improve. The YJS is a safe place for staff to raise concerns, suggest improvements and learn from mistakes.

The YJS has a comprehensive operational development plan. However, there is no specific implementation plan so it is unclear how some of the strategic objectives are to be delivered.

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

There is a positive and highly capable staff group, supported by generally good management and oversight. This is complemented by an effective learning and development strategy.

Workload levels for case managers are appropriate and enable good quality work with children and young people. YJS policy is to make sure all cases are allocated to both a case manager and a support worker. This is a positive way of ensuring that engagement with individual children and young people is consistent, which is a key element of good desistance practice. It also helps promote consistency and continuity of casework during planned and unplanned absence.

The YJS needs to make sure that its positive case manager/support worker approach always works well in out-of-court cases. While managers believed that the expectations for these cases were clear, it was apparent to inspectors that out-of-court cases were not always being delivered in the way that they expected, or that case managers felt sufficiently skilled to undertake this work.

The YJS is flexible in adjusting its staffing to support developing priorities. Good examples are the new resettlement and education officer role, development of the probation officer role and work to involve children and young people in improving the service, referred to in section 1.4.

Staff are well trained and highly motivated. Good attention is given to development and succession – many staff and managers had been promoted during their time with the YJS. There is a collaborative approach to individual staff development. The bi-weekly practitioners’ forum, where any member of staff can suggest a way to improve practice, is a positive example of the collaborative approach to training. It is a highly valued and well-used opportunity to ensure that training is led by practitioners, draws on their skills and responds directly to innovative ideas to develop practice.

External secondments have been used to support staff development. Staff feel recognised and acknowledged for their skills and knowledge. There is a positive culture of recognition, including through staff conferences, newsletters and emails, as well as through one-to-one supervision.

Staff have been recruited from a wide range of backgrounds. Some have strong local knowledge and some have previous direct experience of the criminal justice system. Having staff with a good personal understanding of the experiences faced by children and young people at risk of offending can be important in overcoming barriers to engagement. The case allocation process helps support an individualised approach to matching the needs of children and young people to the skills of case workers.

There is a ‘team-around-the-professional’ approach to working, which means that, where appropriate, one person leads all work with an individual child or young person and their family. This is consistent with minimising the number of different professionals involved with an individual child or young person, and the centrality of the key professional relationship in work to support desistance from offending. It also further builds the skills of individual practitioners.

Good supervision and appraisal policies and procedures are in place. Staff are positive about the supervision they receive from their managers, reporting that they find it helpful and appropriate. There were, however, a small number of appraisals that were outstanding.

Unusually, team managers had access to beneficial external supervision to complement the supervision from their manager. Where performance management concerns had been identified, they were managed sensitively and effectively. Regular group supervision is valued by staff, and supports development of an open, problem-solving approach to effective casework.

Managers' oversight of practice was described as active, and focused on improvement and quality to meet the needs of the case, rather than just countersigning. While cases were not always countersigned within the timescales required, this was appropriate where an extended period for countersigning led to necessary and timely improvements in the work. There were, however, a small number of instances where inspectors found insufficient evidence of oversight in the records of more complex cases.

An impressive training offer is available through a range of sources, including the LSCB, internal and external training. There is a positive approach to training and engagement with and motivation of staff, which is illustrated by Positive Steps' inclusion in The Times list of the 100 best voluntary sector employers.

Recent training has included cutting-edge topics such as the current understanding of brain development, and a strong focus on understanding the impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences on the behaviour of children and young people.

The YJS took the lead on developing the approach to childhood trauma that is taken across the local authority. There is an individualised approach to training; for example, staff have the opportunity to undertake masters-level training, sponsored by the YJS. There is also a positive approach to the induction and training of new staff, which works well.

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

The YJS has a good understanding of the data that relates to its priority areas for development, such as offending by looked after children. Its analyses of these areas are comprehensive and understandable. One example of its positive response to the analysis of local priorities is the appointment of an education and resettlement coordinator. Another is its work to develop the response to serious youth violence, which is described elsewhere in this report.

Both the YJS and its partners have a good understanding of the demographic challenges in Oldham and how these relate to offending by children and young people. They also have a good understanding of sharp variations that have occurred in both offending and the use of custodial sentencing. However, they have not carried out an overarching analysis of offending patterns and desistance needs. They could use this to confirm that the current offer of services and interventions matches the full range of desistance needs of children and young people.

YJS staff understand the specific needs of children and young people from black and other minority ethnic (BAME) communities. The Board has given particular attention to the disproportionately high number of young people from BAME communities who are given custodial sentences. This has led to further work with the LSCB to increase their understanding of this issue. A member of staff is working specifically to build community understanding and awareness.

Working arrangements with partners are generally strong and partners collaborate well. Staff reported that they understand how to access partner services. This was broadly supported by our inspection of casework. Referral pathways are clear and are supported by the co-location of many services.

Relationships with children's social care services are generally good. However, YJS staff do not have direct access to electronic records held by children's services for children and families that the YJS worked with. This is an important barrier to timely and effective assessment of cases where a child or young person or their family had been, or is still, known to children's services. While the YJS is not under the direct control of the local authority, this should not impact on information sharing and safeguarding work and a suitable information-sharing protocol is needed. YJS staff were not always made aware of meetings or plans that had been put in place by children's social care for children and young people that they were working with.

There is a strong, integrated offer of services to support desistance and the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. This is available across both post-court and out-of-court work. Services include careers information, advice and guidance, and substance misuse, sexual health and physical and emotional health services. The YJS benefits greatly from being co-located in the same building and same organisation as Positive Steps, which means it can offer a one-stop-shop.

Many services are used jointly by the YJS and other parts of Positive Steps. This enables Positive Steps to make economies of scale, so that it can provide more services. We also noted the provision of a specific Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service to the YJS (jointly with Positive Steps). This service was limited by difficulties with recruitment. Inspectors were told that this problem had recently been resolved, and that the service is expected to be in place shortly.

In the interim, case workers had access to other emotional or mental health services offered by Positive Steps. The location of the YJS enables it to re-integrate children and young people into mainstream services and the community, and to avoid unhelpfully labelling them as offenders. The Bike Project, which provides reparation services alongside a mainstream project within Positive Steps, is a good example of this. The approach to reparation also focuses on community re-integration. Impressive examples were provided of the use of restorative interventions, including restorative justice conferences.

There is a consistent culture throughout the partnership of working together and building on each other's strengths. The important team-around-the-professional approach, described elsewhere in this report, is a positive manifestation of this. There is a suitable local policy targeted at providing services for girls.

The YJS has undertaken valuable work with the National Probation Service to ensure that its provision supports transition to adult services. The YJS understands and makes a positive contribution to Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). YJS staff are among the most consistent attendees at MAPPA meetings across Greater Manchester.

The YJS engages well with the LSCB and is well represented on it. Positive arrangements are in place with other local fora that focus on community safety and address youth

violence. The YJS has, usefully, taken the lead in Oldham in developing social workers' and other partners' understanding of the impact that trauma and adverse childhood experiences have on the likelihood that children and young people will offend and the nature of those offences.

YJS staff are recognised as local experts on assessing and dealing with sexually harmful behaviour. Their work has been influential in making sure that the problems presented by serious youth violence are recognised, and encouraging development of a local public health approach to this.

A useful risk management meeting is in place for cases assessed as posing a high risk of serious harm to others or to the child or young person, or a high likelihood of reoffending. This would, however, benefit from including more rigorous independent challenge. Inspectors described it as being more like a strategy meeting than active multi-agency oversight of the management of the case.

Services provided to the local youth court were reported by magistrates as being of high quality, with good, timely, direct access to information about children and young people from YJS staff working in the court. It is noted that the local youth court sits in Tameside, and that travel by public transport between Oldham and Tameside is not straightforward for children and young people or their parents and carers.

1.4 Information and facilities	Outstanding
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.	

Inspectors were impressed by the positive environment presented by the building in which the YJS is located. The use of evidence to drive improvement is particularly strong in Oldham.

A full range of policies and procedures are in place and are subject to regular review. They are clear and appropriate to the needs of the YJS. The YJS has ensured that they are aligned with each other and with those of partners. Staff understand the policies and procedures that apply to their work. Managers use a variety of suitable approaches to brief staff on changes to policies and practice. For example, a presentation was put together for a practitioner forum to introduce recent changes to referral order guidance.

The YJS's premises are clean, welcoming, and provide a positive setting for work with children and young people. Drop-in support and advice on the wide range of mainstream services provided at the one location are available directly from the front desk.

Children and young people have access to a one-stop-shop for many of the services they need. The environment supports community re-integration, as it enables children and young people to access both youth justice and other mainstream services directly without being identified as an offender.

The office is in the town centre, so it is easy to access, convenient for public transport and safe for children and young people. The facilities are easily accessible to those with disabilities. The office is an attractive location for working. Facilities have been enhanced as a direct consequence of engagement with staff.

There is a positive approach to the use of home visits and work in the community. There are suitable safe working and remote working procedures to support this approach, and these work well.

A good range of information is provided to managers to assist them with overseeing work. The YJS has access to a specialist management information officer within Positive Skills, skilled in producing information from the YJS database. Good-quality information is produced to support decision-making (including analysis of specific local priorities), and is well understood by staff. A broad range of local data is also produced, which has informed both strategic and operational development plans. This is consistent with the YJS's strong focus on understanding the evidence about what works and developing or adapting services to respond to that.

The YJS's involvement in the Manchester-wide knowledge transfer initiative and its leading role in a range of youth justice developments across Greater Manchester are further good evidence of this approach.

The YJS benchmarks its performance against national, Greater Manchester and similar YOTs. It seeks to understand and explain variances from them, to help it improve its services. The YJS has made positive changes to its approach to out-of-court disposals and early help arrangements following a change in offending patterns, which it identified by analysing data gathered locally.

Managers have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the YJS, and have put in place plans to improve its services.

There is a stable ICT system in place, which staff understand well. It supports the provision of good, timely information. It is integrated with the careers system, providing valuable access to information for YJS staff where this is needed.

There is an effective system in place for exchanging intelligence with the police. Similarly, there is an effective system for undertaking initial safeguarding checks on all children and young people who become known to the YJS.

The YJS has a positive approach to commissioning and undertaking quality assurance, and encouraging and accepting evaluation of its work from others, leading to development plans. Examples include a peer review undertaken by other YOTs, and an evaluation of contextual safeguarding led by the LSCB, which involved a nationally recognised expert in the field. More broadly, the YJS has responded positively to case audit work undertaken by the LSCB and others. There is a good, documented, quality assurance process in place, which has led to improvements being made.

Following cessation of the national process for reporting and monitoring serious further incidents related to children and young people known to YOTs, Oldham has decided, appropriately, to include any such cases within its established Serious Case Review (SCR) system.

Feedback is requested from the courts on all pre-sentence reports. This is reviewed and acted on, and has informed the current operational improvement plan.

The YJS's use of engagement with children and young people to improve services is impressive. It is led by a member of staff with a good understanding of engagement with children and young people at risk of offending, and of their life experiences.

Examples of how services have been improved include introducing girl-only Giving Back (reparation) sessions; developing projects suited to girls; improving the language in the out-of-court disposal tool used for lower-level cases; a clear focus on outcomes in written tools used with children and young people to help them get a clearer sense of their

progress; changing Giving Back from group-based activities to mainly individual placements that are more responsive to the skills and interests of the child or young person; and developing a local exit questionnaire that is undertaken with the engagement worker rather than the allocated case manager.

Children and young people have also been involved in work leading to development of the Oldham violent youth crime strategy. This is fully consistent with the philosophy that is apparent throughout Oldham YJS, which is to put the child or young person at the heart of everything they do, recognising that long-term desistance from offending is more likely to be achieved if their wider needs have been met.

Summary

Strengths:

- Partners in Oldham work together well.
- The YJS has been influential in Oldham in raising awareness of, and encouraging a positive response to, the needs of children and young people at risk of offending.
- A well-integrated service offer is in place that supports access to mainstream services and community re-integration.
- The YJS's premises are well located, good quality, and support access to mainstream and targeted services.
- There is a positive approach to quality assurance and improvement.
- There is a high-quality staff team, who are motivated and well trained.
- The approach taken to involving children and young people in improving services is impressive.

Areas for improvement:

- The Management Board needs to be more effective in holding the YJS and partners to account.
- YJS staff need direct access to children's services information.
- The joint case-working model for out-of-court cases is not always working as intended.
- Shortcomings in the assessment tools used for many out-of-court disposals need to be addressed.
- Provision of a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service remains outstanding.

2. Court disposals



Work with children and young people sentenced by the courts will be more effective if it is well targeted, planned and implemented. In our inspections we look at a sample of cases. In each of those cases we inspect against four standards.

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

Post-court work in Oldham was impressive. It was supported by knowledgeable, positive and highly motivated staff who had a clear understanding of what they were seeking to achieve, and the necessary steps to get there.

Staff were positive about the opportunities presented by the AssetPlus assessment and planning system. They recognised that it provided the opportunity to take a holistic approach to work with children and young people that is consistent with their child-centred ethos.

Assessments of how to support the child or young person's desistance, keep the child or young person safe, and keep others safe, were almost all of high-quality. Inspectors frequently used the terms "*analytical*", "*accurate*" and "*thorough*" when commenting on assessment of desistance factors.

In all the inspected cases, staff understood the structural barriers facing the child or young person that may affect their desistance, and considered their maturity, motivation and likelihood of engaging with the court disposal. Staff considered the diversity and wider context of the child or young person consistently.

This comment from one inspector is representative of the approach that we found:

"The assessment clearly recognises the diverse needs of this young man with learning disabilities and understands what is needed to effect change".

Assessments at the start of the sentence were timely and clearly recorded.

There were, however, some assessments where the needs and wishes of the victim, and opportunities for restorative justice, had not been reflected within AssetPlus.

Assessments of the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person at the start of the sentence drew well on all the sources of information that were available to the case manager at the time the assessment was undertaken. Inspectors agreed with the case manager's classification of the level of risk presented to the child or young person in all except one case.

Assessments of the risks to the child or young person were clearly identified. Controls and interventions to promote the safety of the child or young person were analysed well. One inspector wrote:

"Good knowledge of the young person and the adverse childhood experiences that have affected his life and made him vulnerable".

This was representative of the way that case managers had a good understanding of the impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences, and used this well in their assessments and planning.

Similar comments apply to the strengths of assessments of how to keep other people safe. In each of the aspects of work that inspectors recorded, there were a small number where the inspector considered that improvement was needed. Inspectors commented in several cases that the potential impact of driving offences on the risk of harm to others was recognised well. The need for continued care was, however, illustrated by one case where a non-harassment notice had been issued but this had not been reflected in the assessment or planning.

In some cases, more attention could have been given to making sure that the case manager had access to current children's social care plans, where these were in place. This would make sure that assessment and planning were consistent across all partners involved in a case.

We found case managers had a good understanding of both the risk of harm to others and risks to the child or young person in court disposal cases. This provides some confidence that out-of-court work cases can reach the same standard, once systemic difficulties are addressed.

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

Planning for work to be undertaken on post-court cases was also impressive. There were only two cases where planning for work to support desistance needed improvement, two where planning to support safety and wellbeing needed improvement, and three where planning for work to manage the risk of harm to others needed improvement. Case managers had a good understanding of how to use the integrated planning tools in AssetPlus. Oldham YJS has played an active part in a North West AssetPlus development group, sharing best practice relating to pathways and planning. Oldham is also part of a Greater Manchester delivery team relating to AssetPlus training.

Planning for work to support desistance did not sufficiently consider the needs and wishes of victims. It was encouraging that the YJS had changed the way it managed work with victims on post-court cases. More recent data provided by the YJS on its level of engagement with victims, and their take-up of services, was positive.

The YJS took a positive approach to diversity throughout its work. Planning took sufficient account of the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person in all cases. Staff made appropriate use of interpreters, where needed, in both assessment and planning.

Consistent with the ethos of the YJS, there was sufficient evidence that the child or young person and their parents/carers had been involved meaningfully in planning in all except three cases. There was evidence that staff sought to reinforce or build on the child or young person's strengths and positive factors in all except two cases. There were, however, a few cases where the volume of work in the plan exceeded what could be delivered reasonably within the limitations of the sentence. For example, in one referral order case, the contract covered too many items and should instead have focused on the critical objectives.

Planning for work to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person usually set out the necessary controls and interventions. It also identified effective contingency arrangements in most cases. The latter is particularly encouraging, since case managers in other YOTs often have difficulties with this. It illustrates how well trained staff in Oldham were in their use of AssetPlus, and how well they understood it.

However, there were a few cases where contingency arrangements for work to manage the risk of harm to others could have been SMARTer and more precise. For example, a plan that primarily relies on phrases such as “discuss with manager” rather than describing a clear and time-bounded detailed response to the occurrence is not usually sufficient. In most cases there would be a specific action that is needed.

Greater attention could have been given during planning to addressing any specific concerns and risks related to known victims in just over one-third of cases. More attention could sometimes have been given to involving other agencies in planning for work to address the risk of harm to others.

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

The quality of work to support desistance, protect the child or young person and protect others was very strong. While there were sometimes small areas for improvement in individual cases, overall the implementation and delivery of services to support desistance were sufficient in every case that was inspected.

Inspectors commented in several cases that positive work had been undertaken on the transition to adult criminal justice services. Relationships with the probation service were good. For example, in one case the child or young person’s mother was subject to an adult community sentence. In that case, there was good communication between the case manager and the mother’s probation officer.

Work was undertaken to deal with lifestyle, living arrangements and education or training in all cases where these had been identified as important factors. This is particularly encouraging since these can all be vital in creating a context in which a pro-social life can be successfully encouraged, and desistance from offending achieved.

There were many cases where inspectors commented that the case manager was also undertaking work with the child or young person’s family. One example is where the inspector wrote:

“A lot of work is done with mum to try and help the young person's motivation and engagement especially with ETE”.

In another, the inspector wrote:

“clearly focuses on building a good relationship with the young person and his family from the start”.

Inspectors frequently commented positively on the emphasis case managers gave to building relationships and engagement. There were also good examples of case managers (and in one case also a social worker) being willing to deliver interventions in custody, where these would not otherwise have been available. This is very pleasing to find, and further illustrates the commitment of staff to achieving positive outcomes with children of young people, despite any logistical or other difficulties.

It is important that the child or young person complies with the requirements of the sentence. Good engagement is necessary if work to help them desist from offending is to be effective. Staff clearly encouraged and enabled children and young people to comply with the work of the YJS. There were 11 cases where specific action was needed to enforce the requirements of the sentence, because the child or young person had not engaged with the work. Staff took the necessary action in response to the non-compliance in each of these cases.

The delivery of work reflected the diversity and wider context of the child or young person in every case that was inspected. For example, one case manager arranged for reparation to be undertaken at the weekend, to avoid Friday prayers. This reflected the strength of this YJS, found throughout its work, in seeking to understand and respond positively to diversity factors.

In almost all inspected cases, case managers tried hard to keep partners involved in work to keep the child or young person safe. In a few cases, this involvement could have been better coordinated. Very similar comments apply to the involvement of other services in work to protect others from harm.

Staff sometimes needed to pay more attention to the protection of known victims from harm, in the delivery of work.

The creative and responsive approach taken by case managers was illustrated by the following case example:

Ali was convicted of motoring offences. The case manager enabled Ali to undertake his reparation in a project that supported his interests but also provided a positive benefit to the community. The case manager also led sessions on driving safety and helped Ali

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

Reviewing of work to support desistance was generally strong. There were, however, three cases where reviews of progress had not led to necessary adjustments in the plan of work.

Children and young people, and their parents/carers, were meaningfully involved in reviewing progress. Reviews both reflected and considered their views. Similarly, good attention was given to their motivation and engagement levels, and identifying any barriers, as part of the review. Staff considered the engagement with, and motivation of, children and young people consistently well across all aspects of the YJS's work.

Reviews of the safety and wellbeing of children and young people recognised relevant changes in every case where these had occurred. They were usually informed by information from other partners, where that was necessary. There were, however, four cases where the plan should have been adjusted following review, but this was not done. Similarly, there were five cases related to risk of harm work, in which changes were not made to plans when necessary, along with three cases where changes in factors related to risk of harm to others had not been recognised by the case manager. Overall, while reviewing was generally good, case managers needed to recognise the importance of adjusting plans when appropriate.

It was encouraging to find that in all except two cases where it was required, written reviews were completed regarding desistance, risk to the child or young person, and risk of harm to others.

Summary

Strengths:

- Work on post-court cases is generally impressive.
- Case managers have a very good understanding of the children and young people they work with.
- Assessments and plans are of a high standard. They clearly identify the factors that are most likely to lead to desistance, improvement in safety and wellbeing, and management of risk of harm to others.
- Children and young people, and their parents/carers, are involved well in all aspects of work with them. Assessments, plans and intervention take good account of their views.
- Work with children and young people is good; attention is given to those factors most likely to support their desistance from offending.
- Case managers make sure that children and young people comply with the requirements of their sentence.
- Positive attention is given throughout the work of the YJS to identifying and responding to diversity factors.

Areas for improvement:

- More attention needs to be given to the needs, wishes and protection of victims.
- Case managers are not always invited to children's services' meetings and are not always aware of current plans for children and young people who are also known to children's services.

3. Out-of-court disposals



Work with children and young people receiving out-of-court disposals will be more effective if it is well targeted, planned and implemented. In our inspections we look at a sample of cases. In each of those case we inspect against four standards.

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

Oldham used two different tools to support assessment and planning in out-of-court disposal cases, depending on the complexity and nature of the case. Staff used a Participatory Youth Practice pre-court framework (PYPF) in most cases. AssetPlus was used where either the assessor considered that there were complexities in the case that required more extensive investigation, or where a youth conditional caution was being considered. This was an appropriate approach.

Manchester Metropolitan University developed the PYPF as part of a positive knowledge transfer initiative. The YJB supports the knowledge transfer protocol that also involves other YOTs across Greater Manchester. Oldham had volunteered to pilot the PYPF on behalf of other YOTs that were involved in the partnership.

Inspectors were complimentary about many aspects of this tool, which is in many respects a very good approach to initial work with children and young people at an identified risk of offending. It is proportionate to the nature of the work and the desire to divert children and young people away from offending at the earliest appropriate opportunity, and with the minimum necessary engagement with a criminal justice service.

It takes a cooperative approach to working the child or young person and their family, and helps case managers to understand their needs and develop an action plan. This is generally recognised as being critical to engaging effectively with children and young people to make the changes that are needed. The approach taken in Oldham also recognises the importance of bringing the child or young person back into mainstream services for support, wherever appropriate.

HMI Probation commends Oldham YJS for its desire to divert children and young people from offending behaviour at the earliest appropriate opportunity, and its willingness to act as a pilot area. The YJS had made important improvements to the language used in the tool, provided an opportunity to identify offending and other information available from partners, and added a valuable facility to summarise factors for and against desistance arising from the assessment, to then inform planning priorities.

HMI Probation recognises the importance of a strengths-based approach to early prevention and work to divert children and young people from offending. Oldham YJS seeks to take this approach. It is, however, essential that a strengths-based approach takes full account of the relevant context, which includes any factors relating to safeguarding and risk of harm to others.

The PYPF tool did not provide a clear opportunity to pull together factors related to risk of harm and safety and wellbeing that may apply in the case, nor to consider how they may affect the work that needed to be undertaken. This was because this OOCDC 'screening' tool was being used as an assessment tool. The limitations of the PYPF tool had not been

recognised soon enough. We believe that these elements (risk of harm to others and safety and well-being), along with desistance, need to be considered as a whole in all cases. Further information about this can be found in our inspection standards and in our thematic inspection of out-of-court disposal work.⁹

To reach any particular rating, desistance, safety and wellbeing and risk of harm work must each have been done to the required standard, in order for that phase of work to then achieve that standard. The approach being piloted through use of the PYPF tool, which was used for many of these cases, did not enable inspectors to be confident that staff had sufficiently identified and considered any risk of harm to others, nor any safety and wellbeing factors that may have applied in the case.

It was, however, positive that assessment of work to support the child or young person's desistance was often good, whichever tool was used. It clearly focused on the child or young person's strengths and protective factors, considered the key structural barriers facing the child or young person, and often gave good attention to understanding the child or young person's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change. The initial assessment was usually completed in a timely manner.

On occasions, there was evidence that some consideration had been given to safety and wellbeing factors, even though these had not been incorporated into the conclusions arising from the assessment. More effort was needed to make sure that information available in children's services records was reflected in assessment.

Inspectors commented that home visits were routinely used as part of the assessment process. This is important to gaining an understanding of the child or young person's context and the effect of the family situation on their behaviour.

In many respects, the strengths reported in the previous paragraphs give inspectors confidence that if the shortcomings in the PYPF tool are addressed, case managers are clear about the importance of considering all aspects of work in their conclusions, then the out-of-court work itself should be able to meet the high standards found in the post-court cases.

The strengths reported in the previous paragraphs demonstrate that case managers are clear about the importance of considering all aspects of work in their conclusions. If the shortcomings in the assessment tool are addressed, the quality of out-of-court work can reach the same high standards found in the post-court cases.

Assessment in those more serious or complex cases where AssetPlus was used was good. Some good examples were found where, because of the complexities identified in the case, staff had escalated the case appropriately to completion of an AssetPlus assessment.

An early evaluation of Oldham YJS's changed approach to out-of-court work, showed that the PYPF tool had helped to embed effective diversion work across the local partnership, which was encouraging.

⁹ Office for National Statistics. (2012). *UK population estimates mid-2017, based on Census 2011 data*

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

Many aspects of planning for work to support desistance were good in individual cases. Staff took account of the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person, their strengths and protective factors, and their maturity and motivation.

Children and young people, and their parents/carers were meaningfully involved in planning in the overwhelming majority of cases. There were some cases where inspectors were told that planning had been undertaken with the child or young person, for example when the out-of-court disposal was administered, but where there was no supporting evidence of this.

There was good liaison with partners in planning for work to support desistance, where this was needed.

Greater attention, however, needs to be given to routinely identifying and considering the needs and wishes of victims in out-of-court cases, although, as described in the next section, staff undertook some impressive restorative justice work.

Planning was sufficient in two-thirds of cases where the inspector had identified relevant factors, despite the limitations in one of the available tools. Planning in cases where Asset Plus was used was generally good.

Similarly, inspectors formed their judgements on planning for risk of harm work from the six cases where they identified that relevant factors existed at the time of the assessment, which should have been considered. Not enough consideration had been given to addressing specific concerns and risks relating to actual and potential victims. In some of these cases, key factors were present that indicated a risk of serious harm to others, but these had not been reflected in the planning. Planning was not sufficient in four of these six cases.

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

The quality of work to support the child or young person's desistance in out-of-court cases was generally good. It was proportionate to the type of disposal and was completed within an appropriate timescale in most cases. It almost always promoted opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services, which is one of the key diversionary objectives of out-of-court work. In one positive example of this, the case manager had successfully intervened with the young person's college to avoid him being excluded due to his offending behaviour.

The voluntary nature of most out-of-court disposals delivered in Oldham means that case workers need to carry out early motivational and other work with children and young people, to encourage them to engage with the work of the YJS and its partners. This is critical to the YJS then having the opportunity to undertake its valuable work.

It was, particularly pleasing to find that strong attention was given to encouraging and enabling the child or young person to comply with the work being undertaken with them

and a similar focus on developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child or young person and their parents/carers. As a result, the children and young people's engagement with out-of-court disposal work was good. These and other aspects of work to support the child or young person's desistance mirror the positive outcomes from work on post-court cases.

Valuable restorative justice had been delivered in some of the inspected cases. A particularly positive example of this illustrates what can be achieved through a commitment and determined approach to delivering restorative justice in complex situations, even within the time constraints that apply to out-of-court disposals:

A group of young people each received a community resolution following criminal damage to a tram, including throwing stones and breaking a glass panel. An assessment of suitability for restorative justice was carried out on each of the young people, and a decision made to progress a restorative approach in conjunction with the tram's owners. Each of the young people accepted responsibility for their behaviour and actions, and demonstrated remorse. They wanted to do something to repair the harm that had been caused.

Interventions were delivered with the children and young people and their families to help support their understanding of what had happened, and to prepare them for a meeting with the tram owner. A restorative conference was held, where the young people were helped to understand the immediate and wider impact of their behaviour, which shocked them and their parents. An agreement was made that they would create some safety posters to highlight the dangers posed by their behaviour. Once these were complete the young people also attended the tram depot and helped clean a tram. The tram's owners found the restorative approach helpful.

The parent of one of the young people reported: "He has a new positive attitude to social behaviour and walks away from uncomfortable situations... the experience has been an eye-opener for him."

Work to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people was done well enough in those cases where the need for it had been identified during the planning. There were, however, a few cases where the need for work to support safety and wellbeing had not been identified by the case worker, and had not subsequently been delivered as needed.

Sufficient attention had been given to the protection of actual or potential victims in only half the small number of cases where this was needed. Consequently, the implementation and delivery of services effectively supported the safety of other people in only half the cases where it was needed. For example, there was a case involving a knife and homophobic comments, but there was insufficient evidence that these issues had been addressed. In one positive example, a case was escalated to 'high risk of serious harm', and an internal risk management meeting convened, because the case manager had identified that risks were increasing rapidly during delivery of the out-of-court disposal.

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

Inspectors were concerned by a case where there was evidence that the child or young person had been told that if he did not engage with the intervention being delivered under the community resolution (CR) he received, then he could be returned to court. Inspectors considered that this approach was oppressive. It did not recognise that once a CR disposal is accepted, any engagement thereafter is entirely voluntary.

Inspectors were also told that information about the engagement of children and young people on out-of-court disposals is routinely fed back to the YJS police officer and recorded. This is not appropriate, other than for youth conditional cautions (YCCs), where adherence to their conditions is mandatory and information on engagement must be provided to the police.

Engagement with all other out-of-court disposals is entirely voluntary. Therefore, while it is important that the YJS retains information about engagement and uses it to inform any future assessments of the child or young person, it should not be available to inform the initial response to contact with that child or young person.

The process for making recommendations to the YJS police officer following assessment, the decision-making process in individual cases, and the rationale for that process were often unclear to inspectors. Case managers described a conversation, rather than a robust process that could be subject to scrutiny and oversight. There was little evidence of the factors that had been considered in the final decision and the rationale for considering them, although there were also some cases where the influence of the assessment on the final decision was clear.

Inspectors could not be confident in many cases that appropriate proposals had been made and disposal outcomes agreed. It is important that decisions on out-of-court disposals are subject to external scrutiny, indeed there is an expectation of this in the national guidance on this work. The degree of the child or young person's understanding of the offence, and their acknowledgement of responsibility, had been considered by the case manager in all cases.

We are encouraged by the plans to move out-of-court decision-making in Oldham to a formal multi-agency panel. If delivered well, including with clearly recorded recommendations and rationales, these plans have the potential to quickly resolve our concerns with this area of work.

Once the decision on disposal had been made, staff ensured that children and young people complied with the conditions of the disposal, voluntary or otherwise.

Summary

Strengths:

- Out-of-court disposal work focuses clearly and appropriately on diverting children and young people away from offending behaviour.
- Partners work together well to divert children and young people from offending.

- Assessment, planning and delivery of work to support desistance are good.
- Home visits are used well to help build relationships with the child or young person and their family, and to understand their family context.
- Case managers identify and respond well to relevant diversity factors.
- Work on more complex, and statutory, out-of-court cases is generally strong.
- Work to encourage the child or young person's desistance focuses on developing their strengths and resilience. Case managers understand and address structural and other barriers to desistance.
- Positive restorative justice work is delivered in some out-of-court cases, despite the difficulties caused by its short timescales.

Areas for improvement:

- The PYPF 'screening' tool is being used as an assessment tool for many out-of-court disposals meaning that not enough attention is given to risk of harm to others and safeguarding.
- Planning and delivery of work to protect others do not always reflect the factors that were present in the case.
- Staff do not sufficiently consider the needs, wishes and protection of victims.
- Recommendations, plans, and the rationale for out-of-court decisions are often unclear; recording of these does not support external oversight and scrutiny.
- Information on the engagement of children and young people with voluntary interventions is shared too widely.

Annex 1 – Methodology

The inspection methodology is summarised below, linked to the three domains within our standards framework. Our focus was on obtaining evidence against the standards, key questions and prompts within the framework.

Domain one: organisational delivery

Oldham Youth Justice Service submitted evidence in advance and the outgoing Chair of the Youth Justice Management Board delivered a presentation covering the following areas:

- How do organisational delivery arrangements in this area make sure that the work of your YJS is as effective as it can be, and that the life chances of children and young people who have offended are improved?
- What are your priorities for further improving these arrangements?

During the main fieldwork phase, we surveyed 23 individual members of staff, asking them about their experiences of training, development, management supervision and leadership. We also surveyed volunteers and conducted a text survey with children and young people. Various meetings and focus groups were then held, allowing us to triangulate evidence and information. In total, we conducted 13 such meetings.

Domain two: court disposals

We completed case assessments over a one-week period, examining case files and interviewing case managers. Sixty per cent of the cases selected were those of children and young people who had received court disposals six to nine months earlier, enabling us to examine work in relation to assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing. Where necessary, interviews with other people significantly involved in the case also took place.

We examined 24 post-court cases. The sample size was set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of 5), and we ensured that the ratios in relation to gender, sentence or disposal type, risk of serious harm, and risk to safety and wellbeing classifications matched those in the eligible population.

Domain three: out-of-court disposals

We completed case assessments over a one-week period, examining case files and interviewing case managers. Forty per cent of cases selected were those of children and young people who had received out-of-court disposals three to five months earlier. This enabled us to examine work in relation to assessing, planning, implementing and joint working. Where necessary, interviews with other people significantly involved in the case also took place.

We examined 15 out-of-court disposals. The sample size was set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of 5), and we ensured that the ratios in relation to gender, sentence or disposal type, risk of serious harm, and risk to safety and wellbeing classifications matched those in the eligible population.

Annex 2 – Inspection results

1. Organisational delivery

Standards and key questions	Rating
<p>1.1. Governance and leadership</p> <p>The governance and leadership of the YOS supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.</p> <p>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?</p> <p>1.1.2. Do the partnership arrangements actively support effective service delivery?</p> <p>1.1.3. Does the leadership of the YOS support effective service delivery?</p>	Good
<p>1.2. Staff</p> <p>Staff within the YOS are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.</p> <p>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?</p> <p>1.2.2. Do the skills of YOS staff support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?</p> <p>1.2.3. Does the oversight of work support high-quality delivery and professional development?</p> <p>1.2.4. Are arrangements for learning and development comprehensive and responsive?</p>	Good
<p>1.3. Partnerships and services</p> <p>A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children and young people.</p>	Good

- 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 YOS can deliver well-targeted services?
- 1.3.2. Does the YOS partnership have access to the volume, range and quality of services and interventions to meet the needs of all children and young people?
- 1.3.3. Are arrangements with statutory partners, providers and other agencies established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality services?

1.4. Information and facilities

Outstanding

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?
- 1.4.2. Does the YOS's delivery environment(s) meet the needs of all children and young people and enable staff to deliver a quality service?
- 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?
- 1.4.4. Is analysis, evidence and learning used effectively to drive improvement?

2. Court disposals

Standards and key questions	Rating and % yes
<p>2.1. Assessment</p> <p>Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.</p>	Outstanding
<p>2.1.1. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person's desistance?</p>	96%
<p>2.1.2. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?</p>	96%
<p>2.1.3. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?</p>	96%
<p>2.2. Planning</p> <p>Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.</p>	Outstanding
<p>2.2.1. Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?</p>	92%
<p>2.2.2. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?</p>	90%
<p>2.2.3. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?</p>	86%
<p>2.3. Implementation and delivery</p> <p>High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.</p>	Outstanding
<p>2.3.1. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child or young person's desistance?</p>	100%
<p>2.3.2. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child or young person?</p>	89%
<p>2.3.3. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?</p>	95%

2.4. Reviewing	Good
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?	87%
2.4.2. Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?	89%
2.4.3. Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	76%

3. Out-of-court disposals

Standards and key questions	Rating and % yes
3.1. Assessment	Inadequate
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?	73%
3.1.2. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?	53%
3.1.3. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	33%
3.2. Planning	Inadequate
Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.	
3.2.1. Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?	67%
3.2.2. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?	67%
3.2.3. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	33%

3.3. Implementation and delivery	Requires Improvement
High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.	
3.3.1. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child or young person's desistance?	80%
3.3.2. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child or young person?	67%
3.3.3. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	50%

3.4. Joint working	Inadequate
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?	40%
3.4.2. Does the YOT work effectively with the police in implementing the out-of-court disposal?	71%

Annex 3 – Glossary

AssetPlus	Assessment and planning framework tool developed by the Youth Justice Board for work with children and young people who have offended, or are at risk of offending, that reflects current research and understanding of what works with children.
Community Resolution	Used in low-level, often first-time, offences where there is informal agreement, often also involving the victim, about how the offence should be resolved. Community Resolution is generic term; in practice many different local terms are used to mean the same thing.
Contextual Safeguarding	The concept of contextual safeguarding has emerged in the child safeguarding sector in recent years. It is defined in paragraph 33 of Working Together 2018, the definitive government guidance on child safeguarding, as abuse or exploitation from outside the family. It groups together threats to children and young people that might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online.
Court disposals	The sentence imposed by the court. Examples of youth court disposals are referral orders, youth rehabilitation orders and detention and training orders.
Child protection	Work to make sure that all reasonable action has been taken to keep to a minimum the risk of a child experiencing significant harm.
Curfew	Restrictive intervention requiring a service user to remain at an agreed address during a pre-determined period. The curfew may be monitored electronically (electronic tag) or by the police (doorstep curfew).
Desistance	The cessation of offending or other antisocial behaviour.
ETE	Education, training and employment: work to improve learning, and to increase future employment prospects.
FTE	First-time entrants: a child or young person who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome (youth caution, youth conditional caution or conviction) for the first time.
HMIP	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation.
MAPPAs	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements: where probation, police, prison and other agencies work together locally to manage offenders who pose the highest risk of harm to others. Level 1 is single agency management where the risks posed by the offender can be managed by the agency responsible for the supervision or case

	management of the offender. Levels 2 and 3 require active multi-agency management.
Out-of-court disposal	The resolution of a normally low-level offence, where it is not in the public interest to prosecute, through a community resolution, youth caution or youth conditional caution.
Personalised	A personalised approach is one in which services are tailored to meet the needs of individuals, giving people as much choice and control as possible over the support they receive. We use this term to include diversity factors.
PYPF	Participatory Youth Practice pre-court framework (PYPF)
Risk of Serious Harm	Risk of Serious Harm (ROSH) is a term used in AssetPlus. All cases are classified as presenting either a low/medium/high/very high risk of serious harm to others. HMI Probation uses this term when referring to the classification system, but uses the broader term 'risk of harm' when referring to the analysis which should take place to determine the classification level. This helps to clarify the distinction between the probability of an event occurring and the impact/severity of the event. The term 'Risk of Serious Harm' only incorporates 'serious' impact, whereas using 'risk of harm' enables the necessary attention to be given to those young offenders for whom lower impact/severity harmful behaviour is probable.
Safeguarding	A wider term than child protection and involves promoting a child or young person's health and development and ensuring that their overall welfare needs are met.
Safety and wellbeing	AssetPlus replaced the assessment of vulnerability with a holistic outlook of a child or young person's safety and well-being concerns. It is defined as "...those outcomes where the young person's safety and well-being may be compromised through their own behaviour, personal circumstances or because of the acts/omissions of others" (<i>AssetPlus Guidance</i> , 2016).
SMART	An acronym often used to describe good-quality objective-setting. The letters stand for specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-based.
YC	Youth Caution: a caution accepted by a child following admission to an offence where it is not considered to be in the public interest to prosecute the offender.
YCC	Youth Conditional Caution: as for a youth caution, but with conditions attached that the child is required to comply with for up to the next three months. Non-compliance may result in the child being prosecuted for the original offence.
YJB	Youth Justice Board: government body responsible for monitoring and advising ministers on the effectiveness of

the youth justice system. Providers of grants and guidance to the Youth Offending Teams.

YOT/YOS/YJS

Youth Offending Team is the term used in the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998* to describe a multi-agency team that aims to reduce youth offending. YOTs are known locally by many titles, such as youth justice service (YJS), youth offending service (YOS), and other generic titles that may illustrate their wider role in the local area in delivering services for children.



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