



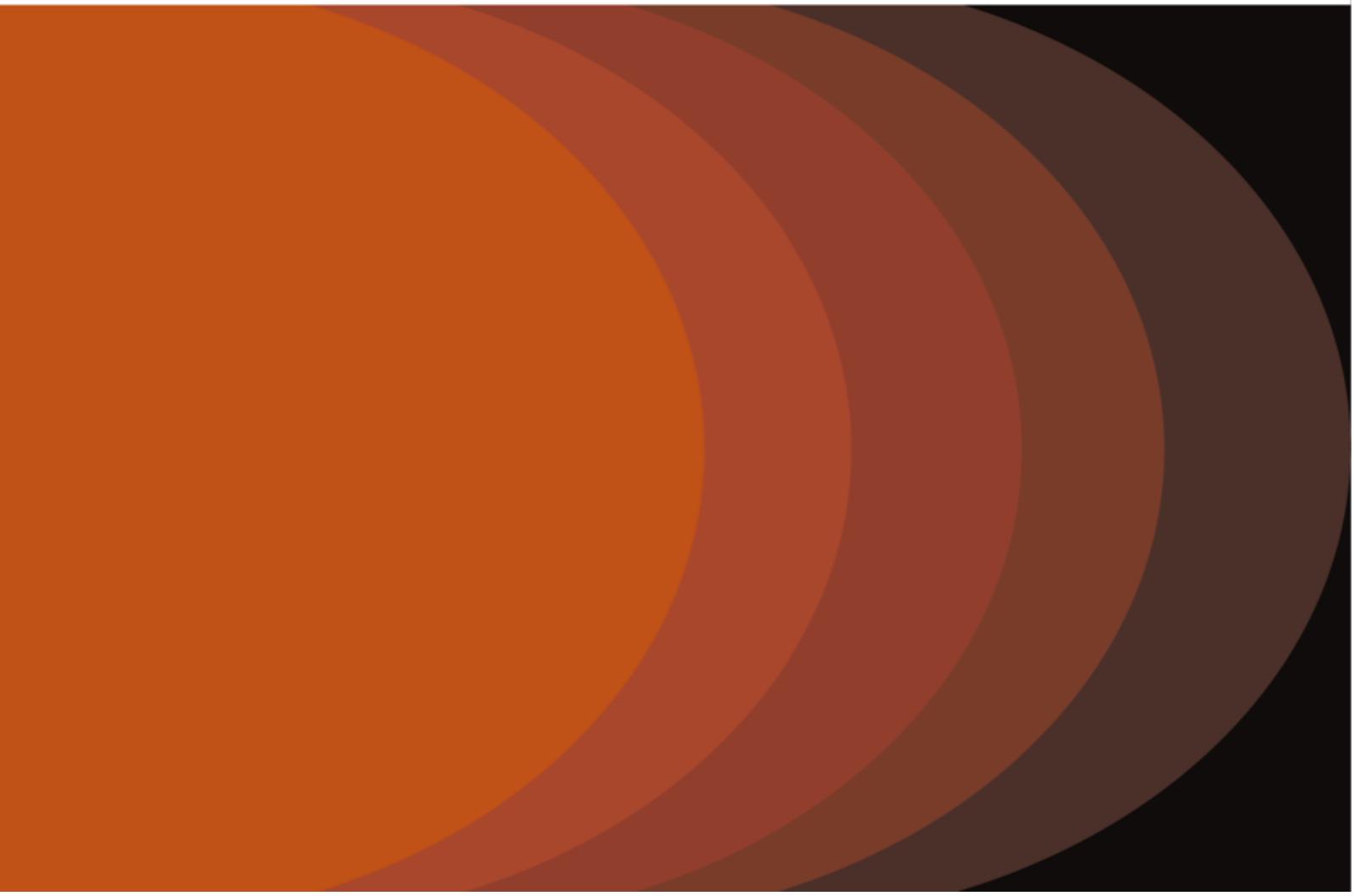
Her Majesty's  
Inspectorate of  
Probation

An inspection of youth offending services in

# Gloucestershire

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HM Inspectorate of Probation, January 2020



## **Acknowledgements**

This inspection was led by HM Inspector Vivienne Raine, supported by a team of inspectors and colleagues from across the Inspectorate. 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.

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## Foreword

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This inspection is part of our four-year programme of youth offending service (YOS) inspections. We have inspected and rated Gloucestershire YOS across three broad areas: the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service; the quality of work done with children and young people sentenced by the courts; and the quality of out-of-court disposal work. Overall, Gloucestershire YOS was rated as 'Requires improvement'.

The strategic management of Gloucestershire YOS provides a strong framework for achieving the partners' shared vision for children and young people. Leaders understand the context within which the county's children and young people behave, and have implemented ambitious strategies to support their desistance and divert them from the criminal justice system.

This is a partnership that values improvement, and continuously reviews and develops its policies and practice in order to achieve fair and equitable service provision to Gloucestershire's children and young people.

While we have rated the work this YOS does with cases sentenced by the court as generally good, and outstanding in relation to the implementation and delivery of services, the YOS may be disappointed with our findings on the management of its out-of-court cases. While I welcome the investment that Gloucestershire has put into its Children First initiative since January 2018 to divert children and young people from the criminal justice system, our inspectors found issues with the quality of work undertaken with the sample of out-of-court cases we looked at. In particular, at the time these cases entered the YOS caseload, arrangements for assessing the potential risk of harm posed by these young people were inadequate. Recent changes to this process have already addressed some of our concerns. Providing a consistently good level of support to staff, and appropriate management oversight, should help to improve practice further.

We have made a small number of recommendations to the YOS which, if implemented, should strengthen its work with children and young people.



**Justin Russell**  
Chief Inspector of Probation

## Ratings

Gloucestershire Youth Offending Service		Score	18/36
<b>Overall rating</b>		<b>Requires improvement</b>	
<b>1. Organisational delivery</b>			
1.1	Governance and leadership	<b>Good</b>	
1.2	Staff	<b>Good</b>	
1.3	Partnerships and services	<b>Good</b>	
1.4	Information and facilities	<b>Requires improvement</b>	
<b>2. Court disposals</b>			
2.1	Assessment	<b>Good</b>	
2.2	Planning	<b>Requires improvement</b>	
2.3	Implementation and delivery	<b>Outstanding</b>	
2.4	Reviewing	<b>Good</b>	
<b>3. Out-of-court disposals</b>			
3.1	Assessment	<b>Inadequate</b>	
3.2	Planning	<b>Requires improvement</b>	
3.3	Implementation and delivery	<b>Requires improvement</b>	
3.4	Joint working	<b>Requires improvement</b>	

## Executive summary

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Overall, Gloucestershire YOS is rated as: 'Requires improvement'. This rating has been determined by inspecting the YOS in three areas of its work, referred to as 'domains'. We inspect against 12 'standards', shared between the domains. The standards are based on established models and frameworks, which are grounded in evidence, learning and experience. They are designed to drive improvements in the quality of work with children and young people who have offended.<sup>1</sup> Published scoring rules generate the overall YOS rating.<sup>2</sup> The findings and subsequent ratings in those domains are described below.

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### 1. Organisational delivery



We undertook this inspection in October 2019. Gloucestershire YOS is well led. The Youth Justice Partnership Board demonstrates strong, collaborative decision-making. It provides intelligent leadership and scrutiny of the YOS's priorities. The YOS ensures that the children and young people with whom it works are central to the Gloucestershire partnership's vision for children and young people. It embraces improvement and innovation, drawing on the views of stakeholders, including the families with which it works, to inform service developments. The organisational structure that the YOS sits within enables children and young people to access well-coordinated, timely services. However, there is too little strategic focus on the specific needs of girls working with the YOS.

This is a busy YOS. Practitioners have complex workloads and are working to full capacity, leaving little flexibility to cover for colleagues' leave. In the main, they are empowered to work creatively, but quality assurance systems do not always ensure they are working effectively or drive improvement in their practice.

We interviewed the YOT manager and the chair of the Management Board. We held meetings with other members of the Board and key stakeholders.

Key findings about organisational delivery are as follows:

- The YOS plays a central role in Gloucestershire partnership decisions and initiatives.
- The Children First initiative is producing positive outcomes for children and young people.
- The YOS staff are skilled and knowledgeable, and demonstrate their motivation to achieve the best outcomes for the children and young people with whom they work.
- The organisational structure that the YOS sits within ensures that children and young people have timely access to a good range of services.

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<sup>1</sup> HM Inspectorate of Probation's standards can be found here:

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

<sup>2</sup> Each of the 12 standards is scored on a 0–3 scale in which 'Inadequate' = 0; 'Requires improvement' = 1; 'Good' = 2; 'Outstanding' = 3. Adding these scores produces a total score ranging from 0–36, which is banded to produce the overall rating, as follows: 0–6 = 'Inadequate', 7–18 = 'Requires improvement', 19–30 = 'Good', 31–36 = 'Outstanding'.

- The YOS leadership works continually to increase its understanding about Gloucestershire’s children and young people, and to implement strategies to reduce their likelihood of offending.
- Issues relating to disproportionality are understood, and work to address some of these has produced positive results.
- The YOS provides a range of opportunities for stakeholders, including children and young people and their parents/carers, to contribute to its improvement work.

But:

- Practitioners work to their full capacity on complex cases, leaving little scope for effective cover during periods of staff absence.
- The Youth Justice Partnership Board provides too little scrutiny of the quality of case management.
- Lack of laptop provision for YOS case managers prevents effective remote working.
- Girls are disproportionately represented among children supervised by the YOS, compared with the national average, but there has been no strategic response to this.

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## 2. Court disposals



We took a detailed look at 21 community sentences and 2 custodial sentences managed by the YOS. We also conducted 20 interviews with the relevant case managers. We examined the quality of assessment, planning, and implementation and delivery of services. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work to address desistance. However, for services to keep the child or young person, or others, safe, we only assess the quality of planning and implementation in cases where we expect meaningful work to take place. For this reason, for work to keep others safe, we assessed the quality of planning and implementation in 18 cases. For work to keep the child or young person safe, assessed the quality of planning and implementation in 19 cases. The quality of each factor needs to be above a specified threshold to achieve a particular score.

In this YOS, the quality of work in post-court cases varied considerably across the standards. Desistance scores were consistently strong. More than 83 per cent of cases met our requirements for implementation and delivery, hence our judgement that this work was ‘Outstanding’. Assessment was originally given a rating of ‘Requires improvement’. However, following an internal ratings panel review, we used professional discretion to increase this to ‘Good’.<sup>3</sup>

Overall, the quality of planning was the weakest area of work and was rated as ‘Requires improvement’.

Our key findings about court disposals are as follows:

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<sup>3</sup> The score relating to keeping people safe was within five per cent of the rating boundary, providing the opportunity to exercise professional discretion. The YOS scored well for its work to assess desistance, and safety and wellbeing factors. For this reason, we raised the overall rating for assessment to ‘Good’ in order to provide a more accurate reflection of its performance.

- Building relationships is an important focus of the YOS's work with children and young people, and case managers enhance their engagement by offering them home visits and appointments in their local communities.
- The YOS takes an effective coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach to supporting desistance and keeping the children and young people and others safe.
- The victim's voice and work to repair harm are integrated well into case management.
- Children and young people participate in reparation activities that enhance their skills and support vulnerable groups in the community.
- YOS practitioners draw on information from partners and families to review progress in their cases.

But:

- Practitioners are not collating and analysing the full range of information available about a child or young person to understand the full picture of their safety and wellbeing needs, and risk of harm they pose to others.
- Plans do not reflect the multi-disciplinary nature of the work being undertaken with a child or young person.
- Contingency planning bears little relation to the needs of individual cases.
- Management oversight does not make enough positive difference to the quality of case management.

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### 3. Out-of-court disposals



We inspected 15 cases managed by the YOS that had received an out-of-court disposal. All of these involved youth restorative interventions (YRI - introduced as an alternative voluntary out-of-court disposal as part of Gloucestershire's Children First initiative). We interviewed the case manager for all 15 cases.

We examined the quality of assessment, planning, and implementation and delivery of services. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work to address desistance. However, for services to keep the child or young person, or others, safe we only assess the quality of planning and implementation in cases where we expect meaningful work to take place. For this reason, for work to keep others safe, we assessed the quality of planning and implementation in five cases. For work to keep the child or young person safe, we assessed the quality of planning and implementation in 11 cases. We also looked at the quality of joint working with local police. The quality of each factor needs to be above a specified threshold to achieve a particular score.

In this YOS, less than 50 per cent of the 15 cases inspected met all of our standards relating to assessment. This led to our judgement of 'Inadequate' for this element of work. Originally, work relating to planning, and implementation and delivery was rated as 'Inadequate'. However, following an internal ratings panel review, we used professional discretion to increase this to 'Requires improvement'.<sup>4</sup> Between 50 and

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<sup>4</sup> The score relating to keeping other people safe for both planning, and implementation and delivery relates to only five cases. A change of score in only one case would have made a difference to the

65 per cent of cases met all our standards for joint working, hence the judgement of 'Requires improvement'.

For the period from which our case sample was taken, liaison and diversion programme managers managed low-level substance misuse cases. The YOS was experiencing a time of staffing crisis and had recently restructured. As a result, and to make sure that children and young people were able to participate in timely interventions, YRI cases were allocated to YOS police officers trained in the management of YRIs and use of BASE.<sup>5</sup> They had no training or experience in YOS case management. Seven of the cases in our inspection sample had been managed by a liaison and diversion programme manager or YOS police officer. One of these was among the cases we judged to have been incorrectly assessed as posing a 'low' risk of serious harm to others.

Six of the cases involved possession of cannabis. Considered low-level offences, these would have been assessed using the BASE episode tool. This has been designed for use by agencies across the county and focuses on restoration, relationships and resilience. It does not provide for an analysis of factors relating to risk of harm. After a review of the YRI initiative, the YOS decided to complete an AssetPlus assessment for all out-of-court cases. This change had yet to be fully implemented by the time of our inspection and only 9 of the 15 cases inspected had been through this more thorough assessment process.

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

- The YOS pays good attention to the individual needs of children and young people, making sure they understand their strengths, interests, social environment and barriers to engagement.
- The delivery of services to support desistance is proportionate, well-coordinated and appropriately focused on keeping children and young people and their parents/carers engaged with the YRI.
- Work to protect children and young people is good, with risks addressed as they become apparent during the YRI.

But:

- Practitioners do not draw on all the information available about a child or young person to understand the risk of harm they pose to others.
- Too little attention is given to assessing, planning and implementing work to keep other people safe.
- Not enough is being done to protect victims.
- YOS practitioners do not speak to families or gain enough understanding about a case before the decision-making panel convenes, and so are unable to influence out-of-court decisions effectively.

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score and rating. Taking account of the overall picture of the quality of planning and the YOS's good work to deliver services to support desistance and the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person, we raised the overall rating for planning, and implementation and delivery to 'Requires improvement' in order to provide a more accurate reflection of its performance.

<sup>5</sup> BASE is a Gloucestershire practice framework for working with vulnerable adolescents which focuses on restorative, relationship and resilience-based practice. BASE episode is the assessment tool that supports the framework.

- There is no system to make sure that children and young people and their parents/carers understand the full implications of receiving a YRI.
- Management oversight fails to address deficits in the quality of practice.

## Recommendations

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

### **Gloucestershire Youth Offending Service should make sure that:**

1. all practitioners are provided with sufficient information, development opportunities and management oversight to work effectively
2. the full context and patterns of a child or young person's behaviour are taken into consideration when assessing the risk of harm they pose to others
3. its recommendations for out-of-court disposals are supported by sufficient analysis of all relevant factors in the case
4. the views of children and young people and their parents/carers are taken into account in out-of-court disposal decisions, and they are enabled to understand the nature and full implications of the YRI.

### **Gloucestershire Youth Justice Partnership Board should:**

5. be more visible in the YOS to gain a better understanding of the work of youth justice practitioners
6. provide greater scrutiny of case management
7. consider service provision for girls as part of its work to address disproportionality.

## Background

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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 or young person. They are required to have staff from local authority social care and education services, the police, the National Probation Service and local health services.<sup>6</sup> 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.

Gloucestershire YOS is delivered by Prospects, part of the Shaw Trust. It is fully integrated into the local authority's multi-disciplinary youth support team (YST), and has access to a range of specialist services.

Gloucestershire's population is less ethnically diverse than the average across England and Wales. The YOS is aware that some groups of children and young people are disproportionately represented among those with whom it works. This includes children and young people of black and minority ethnic heritage, girls and children looked after by the local authority. A high percentage of children and young people known to the YOS are not in education, employment or training.

Gloucestershire's Children First initiative, introduced in January 2018, helps to divert children and young people from the criminal justice system and has led to the YOS focusing more on out-of-court work. The initiative introduced the Youth Restorative Intervention (YRI), which encourages voluntary engagement with the YOS. YRIs constitute half of the YOS's caseload.

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<sup>6</sup> The *Crime and Disorder Act 1998* set out the arrangements for local YOTs and partnership working.

## Contextual facts

<b>82</b>	First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in Gloucestershire YOS <sup>7</sup>
<b>222</b>	First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in England and Wales <sup>7</sup>
<b>28.4%</b>	Reoffending rate for Gloucestershire YOS <sup>8</sup>
<b>39.2%</b>	Reoffending rate in England and Wales <sup>8</sup>

### Population information<sup>9</sup>

<b>633,558</b>	Total population Gloucestershire
<b>56,312</b>	Total youth population (10–17 years) in Gloucestershire
<b>3,905</b>	Total black and minority ethnic youth population Gloucestershire <sup>10</sup>

### Caseload information<sup>11</sup>

Age	10–14	15–17
Gloucestershire YOS	24%	76%
National average	24%	76%

Race/ethnicity	White	Black and minority ethnic	Unknown
Gloucestershire YOS	77%	16%	7%
National average	71%	26%	3%

Gender	Male	Female
Gloucestershire YOS	78%	22%
National average	84%	16%

<sup>7</sup> Youth Justice Board. (2019). *First Time Entrants, April to March 2019*.

<sup>8</sup> Ministry of Justice. (2019). *Proven reoffending statistics, October 2016 to September 2017*.

<sup>9</sup> Office for National Statistics. (2019). *UK Population estimates, mid-2018*.

<sup>10</sup> Office for National Statistics. (2012). *Census 2011*.

<sup>11</sup> Youth Justice Board. (2019). *Youth Justice annual statistics: 2017 to 2018*.

## Additional caseload data<sup>12</sup>

53	Total current caseload: community sentences
2	Total current caseload in custody
1	Total current caseload on licence
0	Total current caseload: youth caution
1	Total current caseload: youth conditional caution
56	Total current caseload: community resolution or other out-of-court disposal
50%	Proportion of current caseload subject to court disposal
50%	Proportion of current caseload subject to out-of-court disposal
23%	Proportion of current caseload 'looked after children' resident in the YOS area
3.5%	Proportion of current caseload 'looked after children' placed outside the YOS area

For children and young people subject to court disposals:

Offence types <sup>13</sup>	%
Violence against the person	57%
Sexual offence (contact)	4%
Burglary	9%
Theft and handling stolen goods	4%
Drug offences	9%
Summary motoring offences	17%

<sup>12</sup> Supplied by YOS and reflecting the caseload at the time of the inspection announcement.

<sup>13</sup> Data from the cases assessed during this inspection.

# 1. Organisational delivery



Gloucestershire YOS is well led. The Youth Justice Partnership Board (YJPB) demonstrates strong, collaborative decision-making. It provides intelligent leadership and scrutiny of the YOS's priorities. The YOS ensures that the children and young people with whom it works are central to the Gloucestershire partnership's vision for children. It embraces improvement and innovation, drawing on the views of stakeholders, including the families with which it works, to inform service developments. The organisational structure that the YOS sits within enables children and young people to access well-coordinated, timely services. However, there is too little strategic focus on the specific needs of girls working with the YOS.

This is a busy YOS. Practitioners have complex workloads and are working to full capacity, leaving little flexibility to cover for colleagues' leave. In the main, they are empowered to work creatively, but quality assurance systems do not always ensure they are working effectively or drive improvement in their practice.

## Strengths:

- The YOS plays a central role in Gloucestershire's partnership decisions and initiatives.
- The Children First initiative is producing positive outcomes for children and young people.
- The YOS staff are skilled and knowledgeable, and demonstrate their motivation to achieve the best outcomes for the children and young people with whom they work.
- The organisational structure that the YOS sits within ensures that children and young people have timely access to a good range of services.
- The YOS leadership works continually to increase its understanding about Gloucestershire's children and young people, and implement strategies to reduce their likelihood of offending.
- Issues relating to disproportionality are understood, and work to address some of these has produced positive results.
- The YOS provides a range of opportunities for stakeholders, including children and young people and their parents/carers, to contribute to its improvement work.

### Areas for improvement:

- Practitioners work to their full capacity on complex cases, leaving little scope for effective cover during periods of staff absence.
- The YJPB provides too little scrutiny of the quality of case management.
- Lack of laptop provision for YOS case managers prevents effective remote working.
- Girls are disproportionately represented among children supervised by the YOS, compared with the national average, but there has been no strategic response to this.

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



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.

Good

### Key data<sup>14</sup>

Total spend in previous financial year	£2.4 million
Total projected budget current financial year	£2.3 million

In making a judgement about governance and leadership, we take into account the answers to the following three questions:

### **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?**

Gloucestershire YOS's overarching aim is to support children and young people to achieve their potential and prepare them to make a successful transition to adulthood. The chair of the YJPB provides stable and knowledgeable leadership to Board members. Members of the Board work collaboratively and actively to help the YOS achieve this vision, and keep the profile of children and young people who work with the YOS high on the agenda of the individual agencies.

The YOS has a strong and effective relationship with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). The YOS manager, as lead for the Young People Becoming Adults (YPBA) initiative (a priority in the Police and Crime Plan) works in partnership with the chair of the YJBP (the police lead for the initiative) to develop and implement the YPBA delivery plan. The YOS service manager is seconded one

<sup>14</sup> Provided by YOS.

day a week to the OPCC to help implement this scheme, which improves the flow of information between partners and strengthens their focus on the YOS.

The Board continually seeks to expand its knowledge and understanding of the patterns and context of offending behaviours of Gloucestershire children and young people. Recognising the breadth of behaviours categorised as violence, it has commissioned research to explore the nature and demographics of violence attributed to children and young people in Gloucestershire. It receives a wealth of data and information from the YOS and uses this intelligently to: help measure the success of its strategic initiatives; identify and address risks to the delivery of these strategies; and identify further areas for consideration.

On balance, the strategic focus of the YJPB centres more on desistance and safety and wellbeing than on public protection.

### **Do the partnership arrangements actively support effective service delivery?**

The partners' strategic vision, reflected in the YPBA plan, promotes a collaborative approach to keeping children and young people safe and preventing them from entering the criminal justice system. This has led to a significant investment in Children First. Implemented from January 2018, this introduced the Youth Restorative Intervention (YRI), an out-of-court disposal offered to children and their parents/carers on a voluntary basis. Those who agree to its terms are provided with a multi-disciplinary service to support their desistance and help improve their life chances. In the year to April 2019, 275 children and young people accepted a YRI disposal. Since its introduction, the number of children and young people entering the criminal justice system has fallen significantly.

The YOS also manages Gloucestershire's youth custody coordinators. Introduced as part of the YPBA plan, they provide liaison and diversion in custody, dealing with the immediate needs of arrested children and young people and considering opportunities to divert them from the criminal justice system.

Gloucestershire YOS's first-time entrant<sup>15</sup> rate for the year ending December 2018 stood at 72, which is noticeably smaller than the rate for the South West region (242) and England and Wales (236).<sup>16</sup> This appears to be a genuine decrease, as few children and young people are offered two or more YRIs.

The YJPB is part of a wider network of groups and boards that focus on public protection and child safety and wellbeing. This facilitates the cross-fertilisation of ideas and decisions across the network, including Restorative Gloucestershire.<sup>17</sup>

The Board recognises that it would benefit from establishing stronger links with children's social care to better understand and address the high proportion of looked after children who come into contact with the criminal justice system. YOS leaders are working towards this through their participation in strategic children's social care meetings and in work with Ofsted to help implement its inspection recommendations.

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<sup>15</sup> First-time entrants – children and young people who receive their first reprimand, warning, caution or conviction for an offence.

<sup>16</sup> First-time entrant data per 100,000 10–17-year-olds provided by the YJB. Regional data is unpublished.

<sup>17</sup> Comprises statutory, non-statutory and voluntary sector organisations. The aim of this initiative is to support people in conflict in the community, or who come into contact with the criminal justice system, to resolve their differences using restorative rather than adversarial approaches.

Senior strategic leaders across the partnership are clear about how they and their operational staff contribute to the local youth justice agenda. Operational staff also understand the vision of the partnership and the importance of working together to achieve this. However, new structures and roles in the youth support team (YST), where the YOS is located, are not fully understood by operational staff, which could reduce the effectiveness and coordination of services.

### Does the leadership of the YOT support effective service delivery?

Strategic leadership of the YOS is strong. The integration of the YOS into the YST and current staffing structure help support the delivery of holistic, coordinated services and keep local priorities, such as missing and exploited children, victims and Children First, high on the agenda.

The YOS service manager is seen by practitioners as the visible face of the Board. Although some practitioners are familiar with the chair of the YJPB, many are unaware of the role of the Board and how its decisions and strategies impact on their practice. For instance, they did not know about the Board's focus on disproportionality and how this could affect their practice. Structures have recently been introduced to improve the flow of information between strategic decision-makers and operational staff. These are too new to have fully embedded. About two-thirds of YOS staff reported that they understand the YOS's vision, challenges and development plan.

#### 1.2. Staff



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

Good

#### Key staffing data<sup>18</sup>

Total staff headcount (full-time equivalent, FTE)	91
Vacancy rate (total unfilled posts as percentage of total staff headcount)	2.20%
Vacancy rate: case managers only (total unfilled case manager posts as percentage of total case manager headcount)	0%
Average caseload: case managers (FTE)	8.2 <sup>19</sup>
Average annual sickness days (all staff)	10.7
Staff attrition (percentage of all staff leaving in 12-month period)	26%

<sup>18</sup> Supplied by YOS and reflecting the caseload at the time of the inspection announcement

<sup>19</sup> Calculated using the total number of cases managed by the equivalent of 20 full-time case managers; caseloads range from 1 to 17 and include post-court and out-of-court work. Source: September 2019 monthly caseload list provided by the YOS.

In making a judgement about staffing, we take into account the answers to the following four questions:

**Do staffing and workload levels support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?**

The YST's recent restructure took account of staffing roles and capacity, and maximised partnership working to meet strategic priorities. Recognising the growing focus on out-of-court work, the new structure provides for one senior case responsible officer focusing on court work and one on Children First. The majority of case responsible officers have generic caseloads that include both post-court and out-of-court disposals. However, two have specialist roles, focusing either on children and young people who go missing or those at risk of criminal exploitation. This provides for specialist support on individual cases and aims to enhance the flow of information between relevant strategic groups and practitioners.

The ethnic diversity of the YOS's staff compares favourably with the profile of Gloucestershire's children, and measures are taken to bring together workers and children and young people who might understand or share each other's cultural heritage.

The YST has a number of partner practitioners embedded into its teams. They include three mental health workers, a physical health nurse (0.6 FTE), a speech and language therapist (0.8 FTE) and a substance misuse worker. The YOS is also supported by a seconded probation officer and two police officers. Most staff feel resourced to fulfil their roles.

The county has done well to retain a youth worker team. Children and young people benefit from this provision, but the small number of team members means they struggle to provide a comprehensive level of service.

Workloads and arrangements for covering leave are part of the agenda for management meetings but there is little capacity, with the current sickness levels, to provide adequate cover for those on short-term leave.

The vast majority of staff (93 per cent) reported that their workloads are manageable. However, 5 case responsible officers (over 20 per cent) were managing 14 or more cases<sup>20</sup> during our inspection. Given the complex needs of many of the children and young people working with the YOS, and the additional roles that some case responsible officers fulfil, this constitutes a high workload. The size and rural nature of the county impact considerably on the workloads of practitioners, who tend to travel to the children and young people's communities to work with them.

**Do the skills of YOT staff support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?**

Practitioners and managers are knowledgeable, experienced and motivated to achieve the best possible outcomes for the children and young people with whom they work. The YOS has a stable workforce who value the shared knowledge and support offered by their colleagues. A large proportion of the cases held by the YOS involve children and young people with complex issues, and the majority of practitioners say that they have the ability to manage these effectively and have access to good advice from others in their team, including two qualified social workers.

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<sup>20</sup> Calculated as the full-time equivalent for part-time practitioners.

The YOS provided examples of staff being encouraged to expand their experience within the organisation, and of the successful transition of volunteers into paid employment and progression in the YOS.

### **Does the oversight of work support high-quality delivery and professional development?**

Staff are recognised at three-monthly award ceremonies. Children and young people working with nominees are invited to attend and participate in these events. Staff generally valued this recognition of their work; one practitioner described the experience as 'humbling'.

Nearly all staff who identified as having diversity needs felt that managers had responded well to these.

Supervision was described, by those who received it, as regular, reflective and helpful. Practitioners valued the reflective practice meetings and practice forums that provide opportunities for them to share ideas and learn from their colleagues.

Staffing issues at middle management level have left some practitioners without sufficient support and supervision. Just under half the staff who responded to our survey rated the oversight and support they receive from managers as very good.

A small number of practitioners reported that not all managers had the necessary YOS or managerial training and experience to fulfil their role effectively. Less than half the staff who should have had a performance review reported that they had had one, and that it had been helpful to them.

### **Are arrangements for learning and development comprehensive and responsive?**

The YOS encourages a culture of learning and development. The YST practice and development manager actively identifies and facilitates learning and development linked to the organisation's strategic priorities and case management practice.

Staff are encouraged to attend training, some of which is designated as mandatory. A training plan links with current partnership and YOS priorities. Staff are expected to attend sessions, for example, on risk management planning and interventions. About three-quarters of those responding to our survey reported that all or most of their training and development needs had been met.

While most staff appreciated the training opportunities available, some expressed concern that they had little time to attend.

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## **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.

Good

In making a judgement about partnerships and services, we take into account the answers to the following three questions:

**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?**

Managers and practitioners, from Board to operational level, understand the demographics of the children and young people working with the YOS and conscious of the over-representation of children of black and minority ethnic heritage, and girls.

Census data for 2011<sup>21</sup> indicates that 6.9 per cent of 10–17-year-olds in Gloucestershire were black and minority ethnic. However, 16 per cent of children and young people working with the YOS identified as black and minority ethnic.<sup>22</sup> Girls made up 22 per cent of the total children cautioned or sentenced in Gloucestershire compared with 16 per cent in England and Wales.

Partners are equally sighted on the high proportion of children and young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), in part a result of the high level of school exclusions. They are also mindful that more than half of those working with the YOS are known to children’s social care services.

Service commissioners, as Board members, maintain an active focus on the specific needs of children and young people working with the YOS and help make sure that resourcing reflects need. The current youth justice plan recognises the Board’s ambition to address known areas of disproportionality. For example, steps are being taken at a partnership level to address the high numbers of children and young people who are NEET (exclusions reduced by 18 per cent in the last 12 months), and more than 50 per cent of out-of-court disposals are given to children and young people who are looked after by the county, thus diverting them from the criminal justice system.<sup>23</sup> The Board has also recently commissioned research to better understand the nature and context of violent behaviour attributed to children and young people working with the YOS.

**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?**

YOS workers have access to and work collaboratively with substance misuse, mental and physical health, pregnancy, education, speech and language, and accommodation practitioners on a case-by-case basis. These specialists assess the needs of children and young people shortly after they are added to the YOS caseload. As such, they have appropriate and timely access to mainstream support.

YOS programme workers and a small team of youth workers engage children and young people in lifestyle and diversionary activities on a one-to-one and group basis. Programme workers collaborate with case responsible officers to identify and deliver offending behaviour interventions. Children and young people participate in varied reparation projects depending on where they live in the county. These include supporting local community groups, recycling bicycles, and baking for YOS and other local events. Children and young people can also participate in woodwork projects, for example making bird tables and benches in the well-equipped workshop in Gloucester.

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<sup>21</sup> Office for National Statistics (2012). *Census 2011*.

<sup>22</sup> Youth Justice Board (2019), 2017-2018 data.

<sup>23</sup> Data provided by the YOS partnership.

YOS practitioners were content that they have access to sufficient services and interventions to support their casework. However, practitioners across the partnership said they miss the mentoring service, suggesting that this added an extra layer of support for children and young people that they do not have the capacity to provide. Responsive to this need, the YOS is working with partners to introduce an alternative scheme.

There is yet to be an effective strategic response to reflect the high proportion of girls working with the YOS. The youth workers facilitate girls' groups in the community on a voluntary basis, but do not have the capacity to do this equitably across the county.

### **Are arrangements with statutory partners, providers and other agencies established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality services?**

Workers across most specialties are co-located, and communicate and work well together to support children and young people.

The YOS is working to strengthen its links with children's social care services, for instance by giving YOS practitioners access to appropriate case management systems. However, at the time of the inspection, practitioners found it difficult to make initial contact with, and keep up with changes in, children's social workers. Additionally, they were not consistently receiving feedback on their safeguarding referrals.

The YOS is central to a number of multi-agency initiatives to improve services to Gloucestershire children and young people. It has made a considerable contribution to increase the capacity of the existing harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) team and to introduce a countywide 'virtual' team focusing on HSB. It is also part of the police-led initiative providing a place of safety (Trevone House) that will increase the level of safe accommodation for children and young people working with the YOS. The YOS has also taken a leading role in two recent successful operations to address child criminal exploitation.

The Children First YRI diversionary scheme is a good example of a holistic partnership service. YOS practitioners link with appropriate partners to identify the best approach to addressing desistance and safety and wellbeing factors. This may mean that another agency, already working with the child or young person, will take the lead in delivering interventions, increasing the potential for positive outcomes.

### **Involvement of children and young people and their parents and carers**

The YOS works well to gather the views of children and young people and their parents/carers. This includes an online survey and the provision of postcards for children and young people and parents/carers to provide comments on service provision. Additionally, the YOS runs focused feedback periods during which every case manager is expected to gather feedback from at least one of the children and young people with whom they work.

Children and young people are asked to participate in improvement processes, for instance looking at the quality of services alongside the YOS and contributing questions to the service user questionnaire. Reports collating results are shared with all staff so that they can incorporate feedback into their practice. However, it is not clear how children and young people's views are fed into strategic development plans.

The views of service users are captured as part of the monthly case audits and also during service reviews, such as that completed for Children First.

Sentencers are represented on the YJPB and say that they are well apprised of both strategic and operational projects and services. However, volunteers reported the need to be more informed about developments in YOS services and for improved systems to take account of their views.

About three-quarters of staff reported that they are asked formally for their views about working in the YOS. The majority advised that the YOS listens to and acts on their views.

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#### 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.

Requires improvement

In making a judgement about staffing, we take into account the answers to the following four questions:

##### **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?**

Policies and practice guidance are available for a range of corporate and operational processes. The majority of practitioners, who have a long experience with the YOS, are content that they know their roles and understand YOS policies.

Some practitioners reported that they cannot always easily access policies and guidance on their ICT systems, relying on colleagues to provide them with information when necessary. The inherent risk in this approach is that those being asked may not be up to date with current guidelines and effective practice. We saw evidence of this in our case assessments; for example, some practitioners did not fully understand processes to implement the YRI policy successfully.

##### **Does the YOT's delivery environment(s) meet the needs of all children and young people and enable staff to deliver a quality service?**

The YOS's two primary bases are adapted youth centres. They are well equipped with kitchens, comfortable sitting areas, private spaces for meetings, computer pods and activity halls. Both are set in residential estates, which creates barriers for some children and young people who feel unable to mix across geographical boundaries. However, they provide safe access for the staff.

The geography of the county can render these offices inaccessible for children and young people who live in more rural settings. Recognising this, YOS practitioners work flexibly to enhance the engagement of children and young people, delivering services from the YOS's five satellite venues and other community buildings throughout Gloucestershire. Supported by a lone working policy, they will also collect children and young people or work with them during home visits.

**Do the information and communication technology (ICT) systems enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all children and young people?**

ICT systems enable staff to record their work. However, practitioners do not always have timely access, as systems can be slow and non-responsive. Case responsible officers visiting children and young people in their communities do so without the support of laptops, and this poses a barrier to effective remote working and timely recording.

Partners working in the YOS either have, or have been offered, access to the YOS's case recording system. This enhances the flow of information between specialists, providing for a more coordinated approach to individual cases.

**Are analysis, evidence and learning used effectively to drive improvement?**

The YOS's culture of learning and development extends to its strategic commitment to improve services and outcomes for children and young people.

YOS management welcomes scrutiny and challenge, reporting openly to the YJPB on areas that are working well and those that need improvement. It continually draws on and learns from external inspection, including HMIP's thematic and rolling inspection programmes.

The YOS's youth justice plan is relevant and evidence-based, dovetailing into priorities identified across the partnership, making it more likely that its objectives will be met.

The YJPB, helped by thorough reporting from YOS leaders, has a good understanding of the YOS's performance against national indicators. However, it does not provide sufficient scrutiny for the quality of case management. We found that quality assurance systems had not made a sufficient difference to the quality of practice in the cases we inspected. In many, management oversight only focused on process and timeliness. In others, suggestions for improvement were not implemented or chased up. Quality audit systems were not driving improvement at this time, and we are pleased to see the positive steps the YOS has recently taken to improve the benefits of this process.



## 2. Court disposals

We took a detailed look at 21 community sentences and 2 custodial sentences managed by the YOS. We also conducted 20 interviews with the relevant case managers. We examined the quality of assessment, planning, and implementation and delivery of services. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work to address desistance. However, for services to keep the child or young person, or others, safe, we only assess the quality of planning and implementation in cases where we expect meaningful work to take place. For this reason, for work to keep others safe, we excluded the 5 cases where we judged the child or young person posed a 'low' risk of harm to others and assessed the quality of planning and implementation in 18. For work to keep the child or young person safe, we excluded the 4 cases where we judged safety and wellbeing to be 'low' and assessed the quality of planning and implementation in 19. The quality of each factor needs to be above a specified threshold to achieve a particular score.

In this YOS, the quality of work in post-court cases varied considerably across the standards. Desistance scores were consistently strong. More than 83 per cent of cases met our requirements for implementation and delivery, hence our judgement that this work was 'Outstanding'. Assessment was originally given a rating of 'Requires improvement'. However, following the ratings panel we used professional discretion to increase this to 'Good'.<sup>24</sup>

Overall, the quality of planning was the weakest area of work and was rated as 'Requires improvement'.

Gloucestershire YOS works well to support the desistance of the children and young people with whom it engages. The consistency with which practitioners work effectively with partners to deliver personalised, holistic services is to be commended. There is a lack of consistency in the quality of assessment and planning relating to safety and wellbeing and the risk of harm children and young people pose to others. However, the YOS gives due regard to victims, working well to protect them and encouraging children and young people to repair the harm they have caused. Management oversight is provided by a range of partnership meetings, but managers' oversight of cases focuses more on process than the quality of decisions.

### Strengths:

- Building relationships is an important focus of the YOS's work with children and young people, and case managers enhance their engagement by offering them home visits and appointments in their local communities.
- The YOS takes an effective coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach to supporting desistance and keeping the children and young people and others safe.
- The victim's voice and work to repair harm are integrated well into case management.

<sup>24</sup> See footnote 3.

- Children and young people participate in reparation activities that enhance their skills and support vulnerable groups in the community.
- YOS practitioners draw on information from partners and families to review progress in their cases.

### Areas for improvement:

- Practitioners are not collating and analysing the full range of information available about a child or young person to understand the full picture of their safety and wellbeing needs, and risk of harm they pose to others.
- Plans do not reflect the multi-disciplinary nature of the work undertaken with a child or young person.
- Contingency planning bears little relation to the needs of individual cases.
- Management oversight does not make enough positive difference to the quality of case management.

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



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

**Good<sup>25</sup>**

Our rating<sup>26</sup> for assessment is based on the following key questions:

	% yes
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person's desistance?	87%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?	65%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	61%

### Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person's desistance?

Work to assess how to support a child or young person's desistance was sufficient in the vast majority of cases inspected. It was recorded well and completed early enough to enable relevant services to engage with the child or young person as soon as appropriate after sentence.

<sup>25</sup> See footnote 3

<sup>26</sup> The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annex 2 for a more detailed explanation.

Assessments demonstrated the commitment of practitioners to understanding the child or young person and their personal circumstances. They routinely drew on information from other agencies and the families and children and young people themselves to consider their individual needs and their personal circumstances. They were equally interested in learning about the child or young person's strengths and how to remove barriers to their engagement.

Overall, assessment to support desistance was outstanding.

### **Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?**

Practitioners did enough to understand issues relating to a child or young person's safety and wellbeing in 65 per cent of cases. Children and young people participated in a range of specialist assessments early in their sentences to help identify the factors that impacted on their safety and wellbeing.

In some cases, YOS case responsible officers worked with other specialists involved with the child or young person, pulling together all the information available to understand the full context of their life. We were assured to see the intelligent analyses of the potential for children or young people to be exploited, which led to referrals to the National Referral Mechanism.<sup>27</sup>

However, in about one-third of cases there had been too little identification and analysis of a child or young person's vulnerability, and in more than one-quarter, the overall level of need had been underestimated.

Overall, assessment of safety and wellbeing was good.

### **Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?**

Assessments of risk of harm to others were completed within an appropriate timeframe and recorded well. The voice of victims was evident in file records and featured in many of the cases inspected.

Case responsible officers were not making enough use of information available from other agencies, looking at the pattern of a child or young person's offending behaviour or analysing the current controls and interventions already in place. All of these would have helped to better understand future risks to others.

Having considered all the information available, we judged that the YOS had underestimated the level of risk of harm in too many cases. Ten cases had been given a 'low' risk of serious harm classification at the start of the sentence. We agreed with this decision in five.

Overall, assessment of risk of harm required improvement.

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<sup>27</sup> The National Referral Mechanism is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and ensuring that they receive the appropriate protection and support.

## 2.2. Planning



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

Requires improvement

Our rating<sup>28</sup> for planning is based on the following key questions:

	% yes
Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?	78%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?	58%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	72%

### **Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?**

Case responsible officers took an inclusive approach to planning, involving the child or young person and their family, and taking particular account of their diversity needs, social and family environment and barriers to their engagement with the YOS and its partners.

In the main, planning addressed the needs identified during the assessment process and considered the appropriate sequencing of the work to be delivered. There were only a small number of areas where planning was less than effective, for example in supporting changes in a child or young person's lifestyle or addressing substance misuse issues. This may have been because these objectives were delivered by specialists in the YOS and recorded less well in the intervention plan.

The needs of victims were given due attention and their wishes for reparation taken into account as part of the planning process.

Intervention plans did not always relate sufficiently well to referral order contracts, with the latter sometimes including extra work that had not been agreed by the child or young person and panel members.

Planning was timely, and practitioners set achievable objectives, which were proportionate to the needs of the cases we inspected.

Overall, planning to support desistance was good.

### **Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?**

YOS plans did not align well enough with the plans of other agencies, such as child protection plans. Cases were discussed at relevant multi-agency meetings, but YOS plans, which tended to be drafted before these meetings were convened, were not updated to reflect the decisions made there. As such, case management was not supported by multi-agency plans that set out in sufficient detail the roles of specialists and how these would translate into a coordinated service to children or young people and their families.

<sup>28</sup> See footnote 26.

Planning would have benefited from greater consideration of controls and measures to protect the child or young person, for instance how countywide operations to disrupt child exploitation related to individual children and young people known to the YOS. This would have helped to draw up effective contingency planning, which, in about half the cases we inspected, lacked enough detail.

Some case responsible officers were over-optimistic about the benefits of protective factors and interventions, such as moving home to avoid the negative influence of peers. This reduced the likelihood that planning would meet the needs of the case or of effective contingency planning.

Planning to keep children and young people safe required improvement.

### **Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?**

Practitioners promoted and protected the safety of others, even in some cases assessed as 'low' risk of harm.

Due regard was given to the importance of control measures (for instance, restraining orders), and the needs and wishes of victims and potential victims. Cases were referred appropriately and discussed at high-risk planning meetings. This facilitated effective planning with other agencies and coordination of their response to risk of harm issues.

Case responsible officers did not give enough thought to contingency planning, which was good enough in less than half of the cases inspected.

Overall, planning to keep others safe was good.

Our rating<sup>29</sup> for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

	% yes
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child or young person's desistance?	96%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child or young person safe?	84%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	83%

### **Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child or young person's desistance?**

The YOS worked effectively with partners to deliver a service that was meeting the assessed needs of each case. Delivery was tailored to the specific needs of the individual child or young person.

We saw good work to engage children and young people. Joint home visits were the norm, and children and young people were given timely and relevant opportunities to engage with, for instance, mental health, education, training and employment, and substance misuse workers. This was balanced well with the need to complete offence-focused work, such as work relating to knife crime. Case responsible officers liaised well with colleagues to identify who was best-placed to deliver work with the child or young person. In one case, the case responsible officer sought the

<sup>29</sup> See footnote 26.

involvement of a practitioner who had previously worked with the child and who reflected her cultural identity.

Activities such as cooking or sport were used to help build relationships with children and young people. They were also used to help facilitate more effective communication, especially where children and young people needed to explore difficult issues with their practitioners.

Work to understand the victim's perspective and repair harm were integral to the YOS's approach to case management. In most instances, the views and wishes of victims helped to shape the nature of the work completed. Children and young people participated in a range of reparation activities, many of which helped to develop their skills or provide a constructive service to the community.

Work undertaken with children and young people to support their desistance was outstanding.

### **Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child or young person?**

The YOS worked effectively to coordinate a multi-agency response to keeping children and young people safe. Case responsible officers worked well with children's social workers and cases were discussed at multi-disciplinary meetings. Children and young people participated in appropriate assessments and were offered support from relevant workers, for instance mental health specialists, which they could access without delay.

Work undertaken with children and young people to support their safety and wellbeing was outstanding.

### **Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?**

The YOS worked effectively to protect victims and potential victims. Practitioners and the police took a coordinated approach, sharing information as necessary to manage risk of harm. Enforcement was also used well to help manage cases presenting the highest level of risk of harm.

In one case, the case responsible officer recognised that a young male was demonstrating serious negative views about females, and worked with colleagues to produce a programme to help enhance attitudes towards and relationships with girls and women.

Work to keep other people safe was outstanding.

## 2.4. Reviewing



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

Good

Our rating<sup>30</sup> for reviewing is based on the following key questions:

	% yes
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?	78%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?	71%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	92%

### **Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?**

Case responsible officers regularly reviewed work to support desistance, encouraging the involvement of the child or young person and their parents/carers where relevant. They were particularly adept at monitoring engagement and changing their approach to help improve this or to play to the strengths or interests of the child or young person. Plans were adapted to reflect progress and objectives re-sequenced or amended, as the case required. In the vast majority of cases, reviews were recorded to reflect progress and changes in the child or young person's circumstances.

Reviews for referral orders were set out clearly at the first panel meeting. The initial review took place a month after the sentence to test out and reinforce engagement, if necessary.

Overall, reviewing to support desistance was good.

### **Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?**

Changing circumstances in a child or young person's life can greatly affect their level of vulnerability. There was a need to review how changes had impacted on a child's or young person's safety and wellbeing in 14 of the cases inspected. This was completed well enough in 10 of these.

Helped by the high-risk planning meetings, reviews took account of information from other agencies. However, the plan of work was not necessarily adapted to reflect the changing safety and wellbeing factors in a case.

In one meeting, information from the case responsible officer helped to inform a decision to reduce a child's status from requiring child protection to being a child in need. Conversely, case responsible officers were not averse to increasing the safety and wellbeing classification of a case to 'high' and arranging support to help the child or young person.

<sup>30</sup> See footnote 26.

Overall, reviewing to support safety and wellbeing was good.

**Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?**

It is important to review factors linked to keeping other people safe, especially after a significant event in the life of a child or young person. We judged that there was a need to review the risk of harm a child or young person posed to others in 12 of the cases inspected, and that this was completely effectively in 11. High-risk planning meetings were used well to share information about work undertaken or changes in a child or young person's circumstances that could affect the safety of others. Where there was no need for such a meeting, case responsible officers liaised well with others involved in a case to make sure their reviews were properly informed.

Case responsible officers did not always understand the benefits of reducing the risk of harm classification – that this could help reinforce and encourage positive behaviours of the children and young people with whom they were working. In one case, however, effective decision-making about the level of risk of harm meant that a young person could be appropriately transferred to a Community Rehabilitation Company, rather than the National Probation Service, when he turned 18.

Overall, reviewing to support the safety of other people was outstanding.



### 3. Out of court disposals

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We inspected 15 cases managed by the YOS that had received an out-of-court disposal. All of these involved YRIs (introduced as an alternative voluntary out-of-court disposal as part of Gloucestershire's Children First initiative). We interviewed the case manager for all 15 cases.

We examined the quality of assessment, planning, and implementation and delivery of services. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work to address desistance. However, for services to keep the child or young person, or others, safe we only assess the quality of planning and implementation in cases where we expect meaningful work to take place. For this reason, for work to keep others safe, we excluded the ten cases where we judged that the child or young person posed a 'low' risk of harm to others and assessed the quality of planning and implementation in five. For work to keep the child or young person safe, we excluded the 4 cases where we judged safety and wellbeing to be 'low' and assessed the quality of planning and implementation in 11. We also looked at the quality of joint working with local police. The quality of each factor needs to be above a specified threshold, to achieve a particular score.

In this YOS, less than 50 per cent of the 15 cases inspected met all of our standards relating to assessment. This led to our judgement of 'Inadequate' for this element of work. Originally, work relating to planning, and implementation and delivery was rated as 'Inadequate'. However, following the ratings panel, we used professional discretion to increase this to 'Requires improvement'.<sup>31</sup> Between 50 and 65 per cent of cases met all our standards for joint working, hence the judgement of 'Requires improvement'.

For the period from which our case sample was taken, liaison and diversion programme managers managed low-level substance misuse cases. The YOS was experiencing a time of staffing crisis and had recently restructured. As a result, and to make sure that children and young people were able to participate in timely interventions, YRI cases were allocated to YOS police officers trained in the management of YRIs and use of BASE. They had no training or experience in YOS case management. Seven of the cases in our inspection sample had been managed by a liaison and diversion programme manager or YOS police officer. One of these was among the cases we judged to have been incorrectly assessed as posing a 'low' risk of serious harm to others.

Six of the cases involved possession of cannabis. Considered low-level offences, these were assessed using the BASE episode tool. This had been designed for use by agencies across the county and focused on restoration, relationships and resilience. It did not provide an analysis of factors relating to risk of harm. After a review of the YRI initiative, the YOS decided to complete an AssetPlus assessment for all out-of-court cases. This change had yet to be fully implemented by the time of our inspection, and only 9 of the 15 cases inspected had been through this more thorough assessment process.

The decision to offer a YRI was appropriate in all the cases we inspected. The YOS took a fully integrated, holistic approach to supporting the desistance and safety and wellbeing of children and young people accepting this disposal. The YRI agreement form, signed by children and young people and their parents/carers, set out the terms of engagement for this disposal. However, not all practitioners had enough in-depth

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<sup>31</sup> See footnote 4.

knowledge about out-of-court disposals to enable them to explain the options and make sure that children and young people, and their parents/carers, were fully informed before giving their consent. Case managers were not doing enough to understand the risk of harm a child or young person posed to others. This was underestimated in five cases, with the consequence that too little action was taken to plan and deliver an appropriate response.

#### **Strengths:**

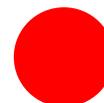
- The YOS pays good attention to the individual needs of children and young people, making sure they understand their strengths, interests, social environment and barriers to their engagement.
- The delivery of services to support desistance is proportionate, well-coordinated and appropriately focused on keeping children and young people and their parents/carers engaged with the YRI.
- Work to protect children and young people is good, with risks addressed as they become apparent during the YRI.

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

- Practitioners do not draw on all the information available about a child or young person to understand the risk of harm they pose to others.
- Too little attention is given to assessing, planning and implementing work to keep other people safe.
- Not enough is being done to protect victims.
- YOS practitioners do not speak to families or gain enough understanding about a case before the decision-making panel convenes, and so are unable to influence out-of-court decisions effectively.
- There is no system to make sure that children and young people and their parents/carers understand the full implications of receiving a YRI.
- Management oversight fails to address deficits in the quality of practice.

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 cases, we inspect against four standards.

### 3.1. Assessment



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

Inadequate

Our rating<sup>32</sup> for assessment is based on the following key questions:

	% yes
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person's desistance?	73%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?	60%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	40%

#### Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person's desistance?

Assessments were based on a sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child or young person's acknowledgement of responsibility, attitudes towards and motivation for their offending in 10 of the 15 cases inspected. Practitioners paid attention to the individual needs of the children and young people in every case, including giving due regard to their strengths and protective factors and barriers they had to overcome, for instance lack of a school placement. The majority of assessments also looked at the child or young person's social and family environment and how motivated they were to change.

It was evident that the children and young people and their parents/carers had been engaged in the assessment, and that the views of victims had also been taken into account.

In 11 cases there was a clear written record of the YOS's assessment; in 5, the assessment had been completed too late to meet the needs of the case.

Overall, assessment of desistance factors was good.

#### Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?

Practitioners gathered all the information available about a child or young person's safety and wellbeing, liaising with other partners where appropriate in 11 of the 15 cases inspected. In the majority, there was a clear record of the analysis of safety and wellbeing factors and we agreed with the classifications assigned.

There was sufficient assessment, completed within an appropriate time of the delivery of the YRI, in 11 cases. Practitioners did not always draw all the information

<sup>32</sup> See footnote 26.

together to analyse the lived experience of children and young people or record what they understood about this. There was evidence in 9 of the 15 cases that practitioners identified and analysed any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person. There was a clear written record of their assessment in nine.

Overall, assessment of safety and wellbeing required improvement.

### **Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?**

There was a clear, written assessment of how to keep other people safe in nine cases, although a number had been completed too late.

There was no evidence that there were issues relating to risk of harm in 5 of the 15 cases inspected.

Of the remaining ten, practitioners looked sufficiently at the wider context of the offence in only four. They were not making enough use of the information available. Some limited the focus of their assessment on only one aspect of the behaviour for which the child or young person had been given the out-of-court disposal, rather than looking at the wider context and patterns of their behaviour.

*“Charlie was given a YRI for possessing cannabis. He was already known to the police and YOS. He had a previous conviction for assault, he was known to carry a knife, and had made serious threats to harm others. As a result, Charlie posed a ‘medium’ risk of serious harm to others. The YOS practitioner completing the assessment had not considered the entirety of Charlie’s behaviour and incorrectly attributed a ‘low’ risk of serious harm classification to his case. This reduced the YOS’s ability to work effectively with partners to protect victims and potential victims, and to tailor their work to meet Charlie’s specific needs.”*

Each of the 15 cases inspected had been assigned a ‘low’ risk of serious harm classification by the YOS. The classification was not recorded clearly in every case; neither was it always possible to understand how the YOS had reached this decision.

We expect to see an assessment that addresses all aspects of harm a child or young person may cause, and considers who is at risk of harm, and the nature, impact and imminence of this. While a child’s or young person’s behaviour may be directly linked to their personal circumstances and needs, it is important to pay equal attention to those they have harmed or may harm in the future. On this basis, we considered that in five of the cases we looked at the child or young person posed a ‘medium’ risk of serious harm to others.

Overall, assessment of risk of harm was inadequate.

### 3.2. Planning



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

Requires improvement<sup>33</sup>

Our rating<sup>34</sup> for planning is based on the following key questions:

	% yes
Does planning focus on supporting the child or young person's desistance?	60%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?	64%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	40%

#### **Does planning focus on supporting the child or young person's desistance?**

YOS practitioners were good at making sure their plan of work took account of the child or young person's motivation to engage with services, their diversity needs, and family and social environment.

Planning did not always address all the desistance factors identified during assessment. It was not clear whether this was an oversight; it may have been due to practitioners' focus on incorporating and building on the views, strengths and interests of the child or young person and their parents/carers. As such, there was too little structured planning to support, for example, children and young people's mental health, lifestyle, and employment, training and education.

Victims views were integral to the intervention planning process. Practitioners worked with children and young people and the YOS victim worker to consider victim awareness work, reparation and restorative justice.

Planning was timely and proportionate, with the intensity of the work planned governed by the needs of the case. This could range from the inclusion of one objective focusing on reparation to the provision of a range of services for an extended period. Practitioners were under no pressure to complete the work themselves but would, if a child or young person was already involved with other agencies, liaise with them about who could best support their desistance.

Some plans were not completed well and lacked detail, especially about the work to be undertaken by partner specialists.

Overall, planning to support desistance required improvement.

#### **Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?**

We expected to see planning to keep children and young people safe in 11 cases; this was done sufficiently well in 7 in these.

<sup>33</sup> See footnote 4

<sup>34</sup> See footnote 26.

Practitioners worked well with partners, such as children’s social care, to coordinate their plans. This was facilitated through their attendance at appropriate meetings, such as core group, ad hoc multi-agency case management, and missing children meetings. Plans were also discussed and reviewed during the YOS’s high-risk planning meetings. This enabled the YOS to withdraw should adequate services already be in place, ensuring that children or young people would not be overwhelmed by the number of professionals working with them.

Contingency planning was poor: in some cases, there was none; in others, there was too little detail linked to the specific needs of the case.

Overall, planning to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person required improvement.

### Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?

We assessed planning to keep other people safe in the five cases we judged to present ‘medium’ risk of harm.

Practitioners focused too little on this area of work. We judged that in only two cases did planning pay enough attention to keeping victims safe and address specific factors linked to the risk of harm the child or young person posed.

There was too little joint planning, and contingency planning lacked the necessary detail to help address specific issues should they arise.

The fact that the YOS had assessed every case we inspected as a ‘low’ risk of harm affected the quality of planning.

Overall, planning to keep other people safe was inadequate.

## 3.3. Implementation and delivery



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

Requires improvement<sup>35</sup>

Our rating<sup>36</sup> for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

	% yes
Does service delivery effectively support the child or young person’s desistance?	93%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child or young person?	91%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?	40%

<sup>35</sup> See footnote 4

<sup>36</sup> See footnote 26.

### **Does service delivery effectively support the child or young person's desistance?**

In 12 of the 15 cases inspected, the YOS ensured that children and young people accessed services that were most likely to support desistance, and at the right time to meet their needs.

Practitioners took the child or young person's living environment into account and engaged well with the whole family. Service delivery took account of their individual needs, with YOS workers travelling to the child or young person's community to encourage their engagement. Practitioners tried repeatedly to encourage reluctant children and young people to participate so that they could successfully complete their YRI objectives.

Children and young people were encouraged to understand the experiences of, and make amends to, their victims. In most cases, careful thought was given to tailoring this work to the needs of the case. Intervention could include writing a letter of apology, attending victim awareness sessions or participating in shuttle mediation.<sup>37</sup>

Case responsible officers took a proportionate approach to their work, handing over to other agencies as appropriate and encouraging children and young people to work with, for instance, the YOS education worker, and to access mainstream services, as part of their exit strategies.

Overall, delivery of work to support the child or young person's desistance was outstanding.

### **Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child or young person?**

YOS practitioners worked well with their partners to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people with whom they worked.

Practitioners showed appropriate professional curiosity to learn more about the children and young people. Examples of good work included:

- uncovering risks of child exploitation, which were properly escalated in one case, and led to a review and increase in safety and wellbeing classification in another
- work with the YOS police secondee to seek intelligence in response to parents' concerns that their child went missing during the day
- a successful intervention by the speech and language therapist that enabled the YOS to better understand and address the issues in a child's life.

There were appropriate links with children's social care services. YOS practitioners attended relevant meetings and took a coordinated approach with social workers to support children and young people.

Overall, work to support the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person was outstanding.

### **Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?**

Work to protect other people was not good enough. This reflected the quality of assessment in the cases inspected. Of the five 'medium' risk of harm cases in which

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<sup>37</sup> A form of restorative justice in which the child or young person and their victim are based in different locations and communicate through a mediator rather than through direct contact.

there was a need to manage and reduce risk of harm, enough work was implemented in two. There was enough focus on protecting victims in three.

Overall, work to support the safety of other people was inadequate.

### 3.4. Joint working



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

Requires improvement

Our rating<sup>38</sup> for joint working is based on the following key questions:

	% yes
Are the YOT's recommendations sufficiently well-informed, analytical and personalised to the child or young person, supporting joint decision making?	57%
Does the YOT work effectively with the police in implementing the out of court disposal?	Not applicable for the cases inspected

#### **Are the YOT's recommendations sufficiently well-informed, analytical and personalised to the child or young person, supporting joint decision-making?**

The YOS did not always make a recommendation, but where it did, in the main these were proportionate and appropriate. For the period from which our case sample was chosen, a range of assessment tools were used and not always completed before the joint decision panel convened. Thus, the YOS was unable to influence decisions based on its analysis of all the facts in the case. YOS practitioners were enthusiastic about the inclusive approach used to make out-of-court decisions, but we found that the YOS had made a good enough contribution to determining the disposal in only seven of the cases inspected. Panels were attended by a range of specialists. In a small number of cases, it was clear that the police had made a decision about the disposal to be offered before the panel had discussed the case. Practitioners, however, were content that the panel would consider their challenge to police decisions.

We were pleased to find that decisions to offer a YRI disposal were not given automatically. In one case, the panel had considered all the evidence and appropriately agreed that the offending behaviour was too serious to offer the child an out-of-court disposal. We agreed with the decision to offer a YRI in each of the out-of-court cases we inspected.

There was a rationale for the joint disposal decision for each of the cases assessed. However, these did not always provide enough information to explain why a YRI was to be offered or to support the delivery of this disposal.

The YOS did not contact children and young people and their parents/carers for their views before out-of-court disposal decisions were made. Police records did not always provide enough detail about the child or young person's attitude to their behaviour or to accepting a YRI. As such, the YOS was unable to consistently advise

<sup>38</sup> See footnote 26.

the joint decision-making panel about the degree to which children and young people accepted responsibility for their offending behaviour.

Some practitioners understood fully the nature and implications of the YRI. Others did not and so were unable to explain this sufficiently well to families. Of the 14 cases where we were able to assess this, sufficient attention had been given to ensuring that the child or young person and their parents/carers understood the implications of receiving this out-of-court disposal in only half.

Overall, the YOS's contribution to the out-of-court decision-making process required improvement.

### **Does the YOT work effectively with the police in implementing the out-of-court disposal?**

The YRI is a voluntary disposal and children and young people offered this option are not obliged to accept it. However, those who do consent to accepting the YRI also agree to actively engage with the work planned by the YOS, and failure to do so may result in their case being referred back to the joint decision-making panel.

In reality, the panel is asked to reconsider only a small percentage of YRI decisions. In the previous year, 315 YRIs were delivered, and 13 (4 per cent) were returned to the panel for review. Some were then given a youth caution. In others, a decision was taken to terminate the YRI. A small number of cases were taken to court.<sup>39</sup>

Of the 15 cases inspected, 13 had not reoffended.<sup>40</sup> This equated to a 13.3 per cent reoffending rate, which was consistent with the overall reoffending rate for children and young people receiving YRIs in Gloucestershire during the first year of this initiative.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Data provided by the YOS.

<sup>40</sup> See footnote 39.

<sup>41</sup> See footnote 39.

## Annex 1: Methodology

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### HM Inspectorate of Probation standards

The standards against which we inspect youth offending services 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 children and young people who have offended.<sup>42</sup>

The inspection methodology is summarised below, linked to the three domains in our standards framework. We focused on obtaining evidence against the standards, key questions and prompts in our inspection framework.

### Domain one: organisational delivery

The youth offending service submitted evidence in advance and the chair of the Youth Justice Partnership Board delivered a presentation covering the following areas:

- How do organisational delivery arrangements in this area make sure that the work of your YOS 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 conducted 35 interviews with case managers, asking them about their experiences of training, development, management supervision and leadership. We held various meetings, which allowed us to triangulate evidence and information. In total, we conducted 11 meetings with managers, partner organisations and staff. We completed one observation and attended two presentations. The evidence collected under this domain was judged against our published ratings characteristics.

### 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 23 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.

### 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

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<sup>42</sup> HM Inspectorate's standards are available here:

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

earlier. This enabled us to examine work in relation to assessing, planning, implementing and joint working.

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

In this inspection, we conducted a detailed examination of a sample of 23 court disposals and 15 out-of-court disposals. In each of those cases, we inspect against four standards: assessment, planning, and implementation and delivery. For court disposals, we look at reviewing, and in out-of-court disposals, we look at joint working with the police. For each standard, inspectors answer a number of key questions about different aspects of quality, including: whether there was sufficient analysis of the factors related to offending; the extent to which children and young people were involved in assessment and planning; and whether enough was done to assess the level of risk of harm posed – and to manage that risk.

To score an 'Outstanding' rating for the sections on court disposals or out-of-court disposals, 80 per cent or more of the cases we analyse have to be assessed as sufficient. If between 65 and 79 per cent are judged to be sufficient, then the rating is 'Good' and if between 50 and 64 per cent are judged to be sufficient, then a rating of 'Requires improvement' is applied. Finally, if less than 50 per cent are sufficient, then we rate this as 'Inadequate'.

The rating at the standard level is aligned to the lowest banding at the key question level, recognising that each key question is an integral part of the standard. Therefore, if we rate three key questions as 'Good' and one as 'Inadequate', the overall rating for that standard is 'Inadequate'.

Lowest banding (key question level)	Rating (standard)
Minority: <50%	Inadequate
Too few: 50-64%	Requires improvement
Reasonable majority: 65-79%	Good
Large majority: 80%+	Outstanding

Additional scoring rules are used to generate the overall YOT rating. Each of the 12 standards are scored on a 0–3 scale in which 'Inadequate' = 0; 'Requires improvement' = 1; 'Good' = 2; and 'Outstanding' = 3. Adding these scores produces a total score ranging from 0-36, which is banded to produce the overall rating, as follows:

- 0–6 = Inadequate
- 7–18 = Requires improvement
- 19–30 = Good
- 31–36 = Outstanding.

## 1. Organisational delivery

Standards and key questions	Rating
<p><b>1.1. Governance and leadership</b></p> <p>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.</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 YOT support effective service delivery?</p>	<b>Good</b>
<p><b>1.2. Staff</b></p> <p>Staff within the YOT 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 YOT 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>	<b>Good</b>
<p><b>1.3. Partnerships and services</b></p> <p>A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children and young people.</p> <p>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?</p> <p>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?</p>	<b>Good</b>

- 1.3.3. Are arrangements with statutory partners, providers and other agencies established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality services?

<b>1.4. Information and facilities</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
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 YOT'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
<b>2.1. Assessment</b>	<b>Good<sup>43</sup></b>
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?	87%
2.1.2. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?	65%
2.1.3. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	61%
<b>2.2. Planning</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.	

<sup>43</sup> The score relating to keeping people safe was within five per cent of the rating boundary, providing the opportunity to exercise professional discretion. The YOS scored well for its work to assess desistance, and safety and well-being factors. For this reason, we raised the overall rating for assessment to 'Good' in order to provide a more accurate reflection of its performance.

2.2.1. Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?	78%
2.2.2. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?	58%
2.2.3. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	72%

<b>2.3. Implementation and delivery</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
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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?	96%
2.3.2. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child or young person?	84%
2.3.3. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	83%

<b>2.4. Reviewing</b>	<b>Good</b>
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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?	78%
2.4.2. Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?	71%
2.4.3. Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	92%

### 3. Out-of-court disposals

Standards and key questions	Rating and % yes
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<b>3.1. Assessment</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
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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%
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3.1.2. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?	60%
3.1.3. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	40%

<b>3.2. Planning</b>	<b>Requires improvement<sup>44</sup></b>
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?	60%
3.2.2. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?	64%
3.2.3. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	40%

<b>3.3. Implementation and delivery</b>	<b>Requires improvement<sup>45</sup></b>
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?	93%
3.3.2. Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child or young person?	91%
3.3.3. Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?	40%

<b>3.4. Joint working</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
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?	57%
3.4.2. Does the YOT work effectively with the police in implementing the out-of-court disposal?	Not applicable for the cases inspected.

<sup>44</sup> The score relating to keeping other people safe for both planning, and implementation and delivery relates to only five cases. A change of score in only one case would have made a difference to the score and rating. Taking account of the overall picture of the quality of planning and the YOS's good work to deliver services to support desistance and the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person, we raised the overall rating for planning, and implementation and delivery to 'Requires improvement' in order to provide a more accurate reflection of its performance.

<sup>45</sup> See footnote 44.

## Annex 3: Glossary

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<b>AssetPlus Asset+</b>	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.
<b>AssetPlus</b>	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.
<b>Community resolution</b>	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 a generic term; in practice, many different local terms are used to mean the same thing.
<b>Case Responsible Officer</b>	YOS case managers, responsible for assessing and planning the needs in a case; making sure appropriate services are delivered to support desistance, the safety and wellbeing of the children and young people with whom they work, and safety of other people; and making sure the requirements of the sentence are met.
<b>Court disposals</b>	The sentence imposed by the court. Examples of youth court disposals are referral orders, youth rehabilitation orders and detention and training orders.
<b>Child protection</b>	Work to make sure that all reasonable action has been taken to keep to a minimum the risk of a child experiencing significant harm.
<b>Child exploitation</b>	Child sexual exploitation is a type of child abuse, occurring when a child or young person is encouraged, forced or manipulated to take part in sexual activity for something in return, for example presents, drugs, alcohol or emotional attention. Criminal exploitation occurs when children or young people are exploited, forced or coerced into committing crimes.
<b>Desistance</b>	The cessation of offending or other anti-social behaviour.
<b>Enforcement</b>	Action taken by a case manager in response to a child or young person's failure to comply with the actions specified as part of a community sentence or licence. Enforcement can be punitive or motivational.
<b>ETE</b>	Education, training and employment: work to improve learning, and to increase future employment prospects.
<b>FTE</b>	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.

<b>HMIP</b>	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation.
<b>Local authority</b>	The local council responsible for providing children's social care services.
<b>NEET</b>	Children or young people not in any form of full or part-time education, training or employment
<b>National Referral Mechanism</b>	The national framework for identifying and referring potential relevant victims to the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Unit to gain help to support and protect them.
<b>Out-of-court disposal</b>	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
<b>Personalised</b>	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.
<b>Risk of Serious Harm</b>	Risk of Serious Harm (ROSH) is a term used in AssetPlus. All cases are classified as presenting a low, medium, high or 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 in order 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.
<b>Referral order</b>	A restorative court order which can be imposed when the child or young person appearing before the court pleads guilty, and the threshold for a youth rehabilitation order is not met.
<b>Safeguarding</b>	Safeguarding is 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.
<b>Safety and well-being</b>	AssetPlus replaced the assessment of vulnerability with a holistic outlook on 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" (AssetPlus Guidance, 2016).
<b>Shuttle mediation</b>	A form of restorative justice in which the child or young person and their victim are based in different locations and communicate through a mediator rather than through direct contact.

<b>Youth caution</b>	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.
<b>Youth conditional caution</b>	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.
<b>YOT/YOS</b>	Youth Offending Team is the term used in the <i>Crime and Disorder Act 1998</i> 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.
<b>YOT Management Board</b>	The YOT Management Board holds the YOT to account to ensure it achieves the primary aim of preventing offending by children and young people.
<b>Youth rehabilitation order</b>	Overarching community sentence to which the court applies requirements (e.g. supervision requirement or unpaid work).
<b>YJB</b>	Youth Justice Board: government body responsible for monitoring and advising ministers on the effectiveness of the youth justice system. The YJB provides grants and guidance to the youth offending teams.
<b>YJPB</b>	In Gloucestershire, the YOT Management Board is called the Youth Justice Partnership Board.



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