



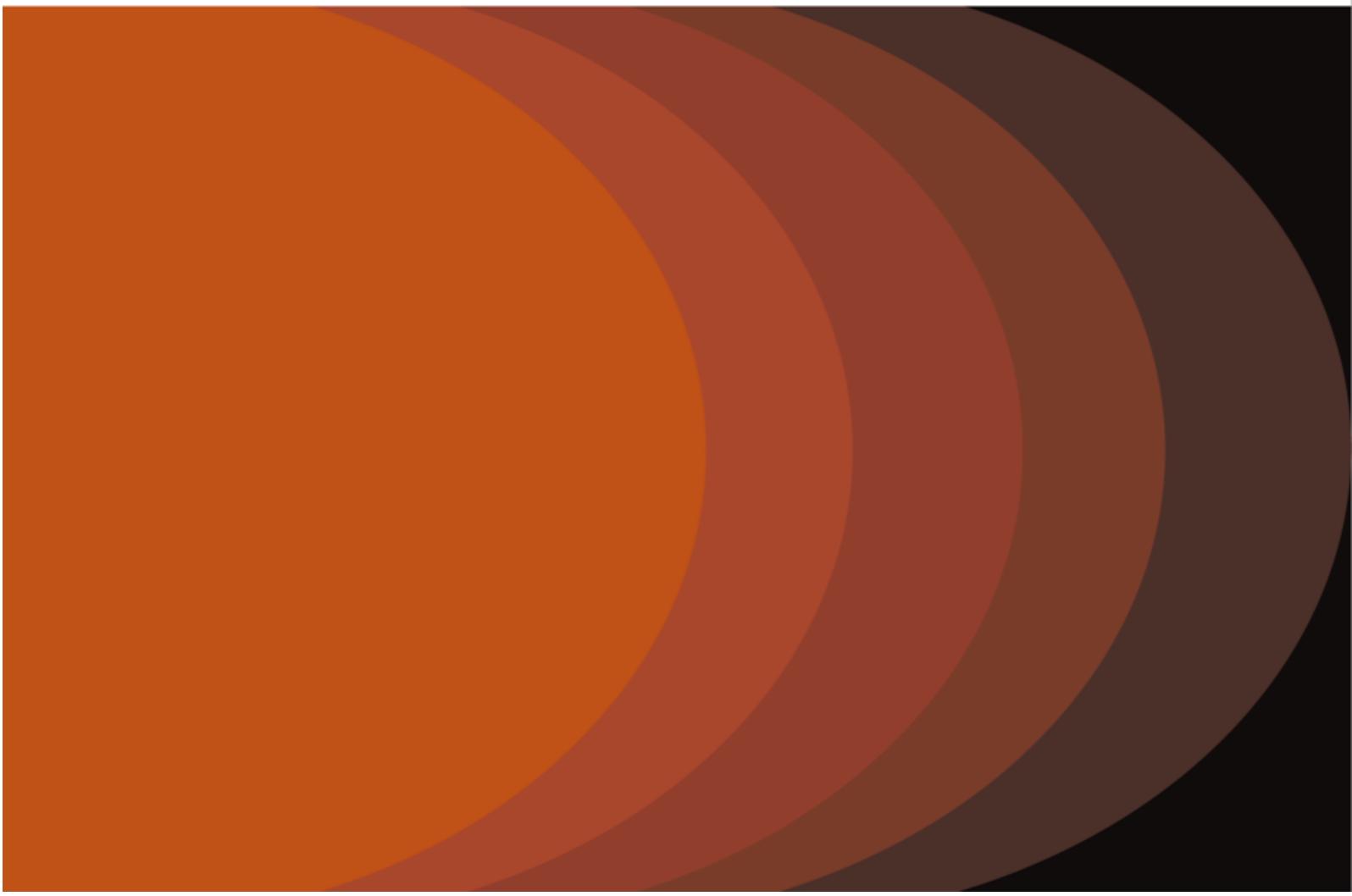
Her Majesty's  
Inspectorate of  
Probation

An inspection of youth offending services in

# **Kingston and Richmond**

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HM Inspectorate of Probation, January 2021



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## Acknowledgements

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## The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth offending and probation services in England and Wales. We report on the effectiveness of probation and youth offending service work with adults and children.

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

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## Introduction

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This inspection is part of our four-year programme of youth offending service (YOS) inspections. We have inspected and rated Kingston and Richmond Youth Justice Service (YJS) across three broad areas of its work, referred to as 'domains': the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the courts, and the quality of out-of-court disposal work. We inspect against 12 'standards', shared between the domains. Overall, Kingston and Richmond YJS was rated as 'Good'.

Our 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 who have offended. Published scoring rules generate the overall YOS rating. The findings and subsequent ratings in those domains are described in this report. Our fieldwork, conducted through off-site analysis of case files and phone and video conferencing, took place between 21 September and 24 September 2020.

Kingston and Richmond YJS has a clear vision and strategy, which is well-communicated to staff and stakeholders. The YJS Management Board has an independent Chair, and includes all statutory partners. Board members advocate for YJS children, both within their own organisations and through attendance at other strategic groups. The partnership has an in-depth understanding of the issues and challenges facing YJS children, with excellent use of national and local performance data to inform strategic decisions and help shape service delivery. There is a strong mix of targeted, specialist and mainstream services, but pathways should be strengthened to enable children to access the full range of health services more easily.

The management of court disposals was of a consistently high standard. Assessments were based on a wide range of sources, and we saw good analysis of factors to support desistance, address safety and wellbeing, and understand the risk of harm to others. Planning, implementation and review were outstanding, with strong evidence of effective partnership working in many cases. The YJS focused on making sure that each child was treated as an individual, with service provision tailored to meet their specific needs, while management oversight of court orders consistently promoted high-quality casework practice.

The joint work associated with out-of-court disposals was of a good standard. Assessments were strengths-based, enabling the development of effective working relationships with children and their parents or carers. However, there were shortfalls in the quality of planning, implementation and delivery to address the child's safety and wellbeing, and in managing some children's risk of harm to others, with management oversight failing to address these deficiencies. The YJS provided timely information and made a positive contribution to decision-making in all cases, although the rationale was not always clearly recorded.



**Marc Baker**  
Director of Operations

## Ratings

Kingston and Richmond Youth Justice Service		Score	24/36
<b>Overall rating</b>		<b>Good</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>Outstanding</b>	
<b>2. Court disposals</b>			
2.1	Assessment	<b>Good</b>	
2.2	Planning	<b>Outstanding</b>	
2.3	Implementation and delivery	<b>Outstanding</b>	
2.4	Reviewing	<b>Outstanding</b>	
<b>3. Out-of-court disposals</b>			
3.1	Assessment	<b>Good</b>	
3.2	Planning	<b>Inadequate</b>	
3.3	Implementation and delivery	<b>Inadequate</b>	
3.4	Joint working	<b>Good</b>	

## Recommendations

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

**The Kingston and Richmond YJS Management Board should:**

1. implement the findings of the YJS Management Board health review
2. formalise induction processes for YJS Management Board members.

**The YJS Head of Service should:**

3. review the YJS management lines of accountability to clearly define tasks and responsibilities across operational and senior roles
4. ensure improvement in out-of-court-disposal casework, specifically in planning, implementation and delivery, to keep the child safe and manage the risk of harm to others
5. strengthen management oversight for out-of-court disposal cases.

**NHS South West London Clinical Commissioning Group should:**

6. support the YJS Management Board to ensure that the YJS has a full range of pathways, and access to mainstream and specialist health services.

## 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. HM Inspectorate of Probation inspects both these aspects of youth offending services. We use the terms child or children to denote their special legal status and to highlight the obligations of relevant agencies such as social care, education and health to meet their safety and wellbeing needs.

YOTs are statutory partnerships, and they are multi-disciplinary, to deal with the needs of the whole child. They are required to have staff from local authority social care and education services, the police, the National Probation Service and local health services.<sup>1</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.

Kingston and Richmond YJS is located within the Targeted Youth Support Service of Achieving for Children (AfC)'s Early Help Directorate. AfC is a community interest company (a not-for-profit social enterprise) created in 2014 by the Royal Borough of Kingston and the London Borough of Richmond. Both councils jointly own and commission AfC to deliver children's services (including the Youth Justice Service) on their behalf. Children's services in Kingston and Richmond (early help, education and social care, and the YJS) are delivered through a shared service model under the management of the Director of Children's Services (DCS). AfC has recruited a new Associate Director, who started in April 2020 and has a substantive background leading and managing youth justice services.

The Youth Justice Service was redesigned in November 2018 into the Youth Resilience Service led by a Head of Service, overseeing the delivery of youth justice services, edge of care and vulnerable adolescent services at Child in Need level, and a health and wellbeing hub. The ambition had been to develop an integrated service that provided support for all adolescents, irrespective of any label given to the child at their point of entry to the system.

However, the organisation's evaluation of the early implementation stage and case file audits highlighted risk, due to the dilution of effective YJS practice. Subsequently, the YJS underwent a further management restructure in 2019-2020, and has now been aligned under a Head of Targeted Youth Support (YJS, health and wellbeing hub, and Project X-targeted youth work) to deliver a focused partnership response for children at risk of offending and risk of harm to others.

Late 2019 into early 2020 saw unprecedented staff sickness and vacancies across the YJS. AfC leaders acted swiftly to appoint 'over establishment' an interim strategic manager and a full-time caseworker. While all vacancies were filled by February 2020 and the additional caseworker was in place by March, due to extended staff sickness

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

it was decided to temporarily suspend triage and first youth caution assessments and interventions in March 2020.

The Covid-19 lockdown meant the (largely) group work programmes – for out-of-court interventions – were temporarily suspended until May 2020. Following lockdown, the YJS drew up a business continuity plan for RAG (red, amber, green) - rated contacts with YJS-supervised children, with prioritisation given to public protection and safeguarding issues. Since June 2020, the YJS has been implementing business recovery plan arrangements, which include a return to face-to-face meetings wherever possible.

Performance against the three national key performance indicators (first time entrants, custody, and reoffending) are all below the London average, and below the England and Wales average.

## Contextual facts

### Population information

<b>375,526</b>	Total population Kingston and Richmond (2019) <sup>2</sup>
<b>35,866</b>	Total youth population (10–17 years) in Kingston and Richmond (2019) <sup>2</sup>

### Demographics of children cautioned or sentenced <sup>3</sup>

Age	10–14	15–17
Kingston and Richmond YJS	<b>20%</b>	<b>80%</b>
National average	23%	77%

Race/ethnicity	White	Black and minority ethnic	Unknown
Kingston and Richmond YJS	<b>37%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>4%</b>
National average	70%	26%	4%

Gender	Male	Female
Kingston and Richmond YJS	<b>80%</b>	<b>20%</b>
National average	85%	15%

### Additional caseload data<sup>4</sup>

<b>49</b>	Total current caseload: community sentences
<b>4</b>	Total current caseload in custody
<b>3</b>	Total current caseload on licence
<b>148</b>	Total current out-of-court-disposal caseload (last 4 quarters submission): including community resolution, youth caution and youth conditional caution

<sup>2</sup> Office for National Statistics. (2020). *UK Population estimates, mid-2019*.

<sup>3</sup> Youth Justice Board. (2020). *Youth Justice annual statistics: 2018 to 2019*.

<sup>4</sup> Information supplied by YJS, reflecting caseload on 14 September 2020.

# 1. Organisational delivery



## Strengths:

- The YJS Management Board benefits from an independent Chair (in place since December 2018), who is also the Independent Scrutineer for the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children’s Partnership Board.
- There is a clear vision and strategy for the YJS, which is well-communicated to staff and stakeholders.
- The Board has clear terms of reference and includes all statutory partners as well as other partners, such as the courts and community safety.
- There is a comprehensive Youth Justice Plan, approved by the Management Board, for 2020-2024. This plan is supported by five YJS Board sub-groups.
- Board members advocate for the YJS within their own organisations, and there are good links with, and attendance by, many Board members on other strategic groups.
- The Board is well-served by a broad range of national and local performance data and feedback from audits, which allows it to develop plans to address upcoming issues, and cross-cutting strategies (such as the Youth Safety Strategy).
- There are strong links between YJS operational managers and the Board.

## Areas for improvement:

- The current YJS management structure fails to clearly define tasks and responsibilities.
- Induction processes for Board members are ad hoc and lack structure
- The YJS Board strategic sub-groups’ work is not properly sequenced and coordinated.
- The findings of the YJS Management Board health review have yet to be implemented, and there are not the full range of pathways and access to mainstream and specialist health services.
- Management oversight of out-of-court-disposals lacks quality and rigour.

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.

Good

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?**

There is a clear vision and strategy for the YJS, which is well-communicated to staff and stakeholders.

The YJS Management Board benefits from an independent Chair (in place since December 2018), who is also the Independent Scrutineer for the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board.

There is a comprehensive Youth Justice Plan for 2020-2024, which has been approved by the Management Board. This plan is supported by five YJS Board sub-groups (first time entrants, reoffending, custody, disproportionality, and participation of children and families, focused on supporting identity development), and a joint serious youth violence/child criminal exploitation vulnerable adolescent sub-group with the Safeguarding Children's Partnership. Board members have responsibility for specific sub-groups and feed information into the full YJS Management Board.

The Board has clear terms of reference and includes all statutory partners as well as other partners, such as the courts and community safety. There have been several recent additions to board membership, including the Associate Director for vulnerable pupils, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) health lead, and the police detective chief inspector (DCI) for public protection and safeguarding, which have strengthened the YJS partnership strategically and operationally. Induction processes for Board members are ad hoc and lack structure.

Board members are active, and the Chair and other members have visited YJS staff and children in various settings. A virtual Board development day in July 2020 was well-attended and led to a comprehensive strategic and operational self-assessment against HM Inspectorate of Probation standards.

Senior leaders across the YJS partnership are well-served by a broad range of national and local performance data and feedback from audits, which allows them to develop plans to address upcoming issues and cross-cutting strategies, such as the Youth Safety Strategy.

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

Board members advocate for the YJS, both within their own organisations and through good attendance at other strategic groups. This representation means that issues impacting on youth justice and YJS children are prominent on the agendas of other key strategic groups, including: the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership (KRSCP); Safer Kingston Partnership (SKP); Community Safety Partnership (CSP) in Richmond; the KRSCP vulnerable adolescent strategic group; and the AfC Quality, Performance and Innovation Board.

There is evident challenge across the partnership within the YJS Management Board. Recent examples include: a review of health therapies and provision to the YJS; the securing of additional funding streams for preventative projects such as Project X; and action to reverse a decision by Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service

(HMCTS) to remove a youth court day. However, senior leaders still acknowledge that the YJS strategic priority sub-groups require ongoing focus, and recognise the challenge to ensure that such work is sequenced and coordinated effectively.

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

There are strong links between YJS operational managers and the Board. YJS managers said that they receive regular and purposeful supervision from their senior line managers. Our staff survey found that almost all staff were aware of the role and activities of the Management Board, and that they were updated on strategic issues affecting the YJS. This awareness is strengthened by staff attending the Board to present items on different aspects of practice, alongside communications from the Board being shared through team meetings.

The YJS management team has experienced some capacity challenges over the previous 18 months, due to changes of personnel, periods of sickness and new appointees to roles. The YJS has responded by ensuring that management roles have been covered and recruitment has taken place. Senior leaders acknowledge the need to review lines of accountability to clearly define tasks and responsibilities across operational and senior roles. This will provide a consistent base to further develop the service.

YJS managers are well-sighted on business risks, with a comprehensive operational action plan to mitigate them. An example is the succession planning for recruiting a new seconded probation officer in the approach to the end of the current postholder's secondment.

Operationally, YJS managers have designated lead responsibilities and sit on relevant multi-agency operational groups. These include: Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA); court user groups; Multi Agency Risk Vulnerability and Exploitation (MARVE); contextual safeguarding; Youth Integrated Offender Management (YIOM); school exclusion meetings; and other complex case meetings.

### **1.2. Staff**



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

Good

### **Key staffing data<sup>5</sup>**

Total staff headcount (full-time equivalent, FTE)	12.5 (not including 4 FTE police officers and YJS volunteers)
Average caseload per case manager (FTE)	7

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

<sup>5</sup> Data supplied by YJS and reflecting the caseload at the time of the inspection announcement.

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

The average caseload in August 2020 had stabilised at seven cases. The staff survey showed that almost all staff members felt that their caseload and workload was manageable. However, staff reported that prior to the outbreak of Covid-19, cases had been high for both pre- and post-court case managers and staffing capacity has been an issue within the service.

That said, good partnerships with the youth service and wider early help and social care have provided some resilience. YJS managers gave examples where they had sourced an experienced YJS sessional worker to offer additional pre-sentence report capacity, and where the partnership had committed additional youth work resource to deliver face-to-face contacts for black and minority ethnic staff during the early part of the Covid-19 lockdown.

In addition to case managers, a restorative justice/reparation worker and a victim worker, the YJS has four seconded police officers, a 0.5 part-time seconded probation officer, substance misuse worker, nurse and a family therapist worker.

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

The staff team is positive about working in the service. Staff are experienced in YJS work, with almost two-thirds having worked in the YJS for over three years. The skills and diversity of the workforce reflect the needs of the YJS children. Steps have been taken to ensure the staff profile matches the boroughs' protected characteristics (50 per cent are black or minority ethnic, 50 per cent female, 12.5 per cent have a disability and nine per cent are LGBTQ+), and recent recruitment activity has actively supported this.

The majority of the 12 respondents to the staff survey felt they had the skills and knowledge to undertake their role. Likewise, the staff survey returns from volunteers were overwhelmingly positive about training, role satisfaction, communication and their view of the YJS.

There was evidence in the cases we inspected that staff do all they can to encourage good engagement and compliance from the child and their family. Both staff and managers are child-centred and know their children well, with an evident collaborative approach in which practitioners share their expertise to upskill each other.

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

Supervision is regular and involves a range of methods, including one-to-one, group, reflective and clinical supervision. Most permanent and seconded staff have appraisals, although formal induction for staff lacked structure. In the staff survey, all respondents rated the quality of their supervision as 'very good' or 'quite good'.

Inspectors found that management oversight was sufficient in all but one of the inspected post-court cases, with clear and consistent management case recording, supervision discussions and countersignature of work. However, management oversight of out-of-court-disposal cases was insufficient in half the cases inspected. We judged that this was due to a lack of quality assurance, effective challenge and management recording.

There was insufficient ongoing quality assurance and evaluation of rapid assessments used for some out-of-court-disposals. From June 2020, all rapid assessments for triage (community resolutions) have been quality assured, rather than dip-sampled as previously, but this was too recent to be reflected in the case sample inspected.

There are reward and recognition processes for staff, and some have benefited from this. There are clear AfC policies in relation to capability and disciplinary measures, which YJS managers apply where necessary.

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

There is a comprehensive training plan in place, with individual staff training plans containing a mix of organisational and personal/professional development objectives. Access to training is good and varied, including through: bitesize training online; the AfC training and development catalogue; safer children's partnership programme of training; and the YJB annual calendar.

All staff in the survey felt that their training needs were fully or mostly met. However, no staff have had specialist training in structured assessment of violence and risk in youth (SAVRY), and AIM3 (assessment, intervention & moving-on) training could be extended to more staff. Given the complexity of the caseload, this would bring additional benefits in the management of YJS children who have multiple risks and needs.

Team meetings are regular, including specific inputs from specialists or academics where requested by YJS managers. Staff participate in the strategic sub-groups that contribute to the YJS Management Board and were able to give examples of where they have had the opportunity to feed up to senior leaders about YJS policies, such as the risk of harm and contextual safeguarding. Nearly all respondents to the survey felt that YJS managers listened to and acted on the views of staff.

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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.

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, to ensure that the YOT can deliver well-targeted services?**

There is a comprehensive strategic and operational analysis of the YJS cohort, and the complex issues faced by these children.

Kingston and Richmond YJS local data indicates that black, Asian and minority ethnic children are disproportionately overrepresented in both boroughs and in almost all youth justice pre- and post-court referrals. More detailed analysis indicates that the most over-represented group for the last two years have been children with mixed heritage, who represent 21 per cent of all YJS referrals over this period (32 out of 150 children), compared with both boroughs' combined populations of 7.1 per cent. This group was noticeably over-represented in custodial sentences in 2019-2020,

accounting for 60 per cent (three of five children sentenced to custody), compared with 25 per cent (one of four children) in 2018-2019. Furthermore, the partnership's recent knife crime thematic audit found that 67 per cent of children referred for a knife-related offence in 2019-2020 came from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Addressing disproportionality is a key strategic priority for the YJS in the 2020-2024 Youth Justice Plan. Partnership work and interventions are strong and informed by a sub-group reporting to the YJS Management Board. Activities to combat disproportionality include: black, Asian and minority ethnic staff recruitment; unconscious bias training for YJS staff; scheduled further training on mixed race and identity; intervention work by Project X (such as podcasts); task and finish groups; wider AfC diversity champions; and a black, Asian and minority ethnic staff forum.

The YJS hopes to introduce a trauma-informed case formulation approach to the management of children with complex needs. Securing psychologist staff would enable this to be achieved, and support staff in managing any vicarious trauma from their case management and intervention work. The new YJS manager (due to take up post in November 2020) is a forensic psychologist with a background in YJS.

### **Does the YOT partnership have access to the volume, range and quality of services and interventions to meet the needs of all children?**

YJS children can access a good mix of mainstream, targeted and specialist services and interventions. There is a range of one-to-one, groupwork and online provision, with clear pathways of support for children once they have completed their involvement with the YJS. Senior leaders and operational staff acknowledge that the YJS would benefit from a dedicated speech language therapist, as well as strengthening pathways to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) tier three.

Although there is no specific education, training and employment (ETE) worker in the YJS, there are positive relationships with schools and colleges, primarily due to the use of an ETE single point of contact, who acts as a conduit and shares information on the ETE status of YJS children. Current figures for the YJS cohort not in education, employment or training are 11 per cent for pre-court children and 31 per cent for post-court children. Senior leaders have brought the assistant director for vulnerable pupils on to the YJS Management Board to address these concerns at a strategic level.

Project X is an intervention for YJS children funded through the Violence Reduction Unit, with a focus on prevention and early intervention. However, the project also offers supplementary support (alongside specialist services) to help those at high risk of serious harm or the most vulnerable to exploitation. Engage X has been an additional service since May 2020, supporting children in custody at Kingston police station. Of 88 children starting Project X since March 2020, 33 per cent were from YJS, of whom 48 per cent continue to engage with it on completion of their order. No children who have worked with Project X and completed their order have returned on a new order. Given the positive impact of this work to date, senior leaders are aware of the need to explore arrangements to extend the service beyond March 2021, when the current funding ends.

The YJS approach to restorative justice and reparation is thorough and thoughtful. Reparation sessions are delivered with individual children, and the range of projects available include a cycle project, allotment work and the 'open chances' bus project.

Alongside these projects, more tailored one-to-one indoor and outdoor reparation activities have been adapted to ensure delivery following the Covid-19 restrictions. A designated victim worker works with all relevant pre- and post-court cases. Victim work has also been extended under the umbrella of Project X (through the 'Xtend a Hand' initiative), which offers support to children who have been victims of serious youth violence or exploitation.

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

The YJS is a key organisation within daily multi-agency risk briefings. These are attended by YJS, police, social care, contextual safeguarding and mental health staff across the partnership. The briefings allow for the effective and swift sharing of information and subsequent responses to issues affecting YJS children.

There is an established out-of-court-disposal scheme and a joint decision-making panel operates effectively. The out-of-court-disposal panel is attended by police, YJS, victim/restorative justice worker, YJS psychotherapist, youth worker and the allocated social worker, if the child has one.

Feedback from the sentencer survey (and from the Deputy Chair of the youth bench who sits on the YJS Management Board) was very positive, with strong links to the youth bench. Sentencers clearly have confidence in the services provided by the YJS and in the quality of work. The courts are willing to send cases back for consideration of out-of-court-disposals where appropriate.

Public protection and safeguarding agencies are linked effectively, including MAPPA, MARVE meetings, contextual safeguarding and a dedicated LAC (Looked After Children) lead in AfC. Joint working with police youth IOM is strong, working with children on both a statutory and non-statutory basis. The YJS also has good transition arrangements with the National Probation Service (NPS) and the Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC), with transition decisions made according to the circumstances and needs of the child.

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

Children's feedback is gathered through analysis of Assetplus reviews and feedback questionnaires at the end of orders or out-of-court-disposals. This information is presented to the Management Board. This work, to capture the child's view, would be strengthened by creating a children's participation group. Children have sat on recruitment panels for YJS posts, and a former YJS child has attended a Management Board meeting. Obtaining feedback from children and parents or carers is included as an important element of the YJS strategic plan.

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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.

Outstanding

In making a judgement about information and facilities, 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?**

The YJS has a suite of policies and procedures, which are regularly updated when required and are accessible to all staff. Alongside this, there are current service level agreements and working protocols across a range of organisations and services. Where required, escalation processes are in place across the YJS partnership. There had been no community safeguarding and public protection incidents (CSPPIs) in the evidence supplied in advance for this inspection. However, the YJS has aligned CSPPi and Ofsted serious incident notification (SIN) processes and re-established the serious incidents policy from April 2020, which ensures that learning can be shared across the partnership.

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

The Youth Justice Service has a designated office space and facility within the Guildhall complex in Kingston, based alongside the Family Resilience Service. The service is conveniently located next to Kingston police station, with a youth custody suite that serves both Kingston and Richmond boroughs. Guildhall is set up to provide a separate youth reception and youth facilities, including meeting rooms and a treatment room, rather than children having to come into a corporate building and reception. There are security arrangements to manage risk. The service also uses community youth facilities for the delivery of some of its programmes to children.

Since June 2020, the YJS has been implementing its business recovery plan arrangements, which include a return to face-to-face meetings wherever possible (through home visits and in parks or open spaces), and preparing office space and facilities within a youth centre, The Venue, at Heatham House, Twickenham. As a youth centre, The Venue appears to have a child-friendly feel, and there are good bus and rail links.

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

AfC invested in a new dedicated case management system (Core Plus) in recognition that Careworks (the previous YJS case management system) no longer met the needs of the service. Core Plus has been successfully implemented and was launched in January 2020.

Staff and managers report that IT systems are reliable, with YJS staff also able to access children's services systems. Partnership staff (such as seconded police, probation and the health nurse) have access to YJS and their own systems, which supports effective information-sharing.

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

There is strong evidence of self-assessment and evaluation in the YJS partnership. In a YJS Management Board exercise and subsequent evaluation report (July 2020), the partnership self-assessed itself against four previous HM Inspectorate of Probation inspections (Cardiff, Luton, Bury & Rochdale and Camden) and gave a candid appraisal of where its strengths and areas for improvement lay, with subsequent adjustments to strategic and operational plans.

The YJS is well-supported by a data analyst manager, who works across the AfC organisation and understands YJS systems and performance management.

A range of data reports are provided, which include performance against local and national indicators, although YJS managers acknowledge that victim information and restorative justice evaluation work need to be better analysed and presented to the Board.

The YJS has used external consultants and support from the wider project management team within AfC to better understand and strengthen its performance. Feedback is sought from key stakeholders, such as courts. The recent thematic audit, in June 2020, of YJS children convicted of knife crime, provides a strong example of multi-agency data analysis to inform work across the YJS partnership.

There has been good evaluation of data on the work around out-of-court-disposals, specific interventions and reoffending. This analysis evidences the success of the out-of-court-disposal scheme and indicates that 76 per cent of triage/community resolution cases did not reoffend. Just 14 out of 146 out-of-court-disposals (9.6 per cent) reoffended, based on data from April 2019-March 2020. Initial evaluation of Project X revealed that, since February 2020, 33 YJS children had accessed the project and, at the time of inspection, none had received a further court order.



## 2. Court disposals

We took a detailed look at eight community sentences and no custodial sentences managed by the YJS. We also conducted eight interviews with the relevant case managers. We examined the quality of assessment; planning; implementation and delivery of services; and reviewing.

### Strengths:

- The YJS focused on making sure that each child was treated as an individual, with service provision tailored to meet their specific needs.
- Assessment work was based on a wide range of sources, and we saw good analysis of information to support desistance, address safety and wellbeing, and understand the risk of harm to others.
- Planning across desistance, keeping the child safe and keeping others safe was sequenced, coordinated and responded to changes in circumstances.
- There was an outstanding level of involvement of children and their parents or carers in the delivery of casework.
- There was evidence of effective partnership working in many cases.
- Reviewing for desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others was outstanding.
- Management oversight of court orders consistently promoted high-quality casework practice.

### Areas for improvement:

- Assessment of safety and wellbeing could be enhanced through more consistent use of information from other agencies, where relevant.

Work with children 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 and their parents/carers.

Good

Our rating<sup>6</sup> for assessment is based on the following key questions:

<sup>6</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. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

Of the 8 cases inspected	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	8	7
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	8	6
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	8	7

The quality of assessment in this YJS was rated as 'Good'. The majority of the cases inspected were of a sufficient standard regarding supporting the child's desistance, keeping the child safe and managing the risk of harm for individual or potential victims.

### **Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?**

Of the 8 cases inspected:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child's attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?	8	7
Does assessment consider the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child, utilising information held by other agencies?	8	8
Does assessment focus on the child's strengths and protective factors?	8	8
Where applicable, does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child?	7	7
Is sufficient attention given to understanding the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and their likelihood of engaging with the court disposal?	8	7
Does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim/s, and opportunities for restorative justice?	7	5
Is the child and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?	8	8

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

Of the 8 cases inspected:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child?	8	6
Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	8	6
Where applicable, does assessment analyse controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	8	7

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

Of the 8 cases inspected:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?	8	7
Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	8	7
Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to manage and minimise the risk of harm presented by the child?	8	6

Inspectors found that assessments were well-informed, sufficiently analytical and correctly classified risk. Case managers were able to draw together current and historical issues or behaviours, which in turn resulted in well-reasoned assessments. Most cases contained information from other agencies and sources (including social care, police, education and health). The involvement of the child and parents and carers was evident in all cases, as was consideration of the diversity and wider social and familial context of the child.

## 2.2. Planning



Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents/carers.	Outstanding
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Our rating<sup>7</sup> for planning is based on the following key questions:

<sup>7</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. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

Of the 8 cases inspected	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?	8	7
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe? <sup>8</sup>	7	6
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe? <sup>9</sup>	7	7

Overall, the quality of planning in this YJS was rated as 'Outstanding'. In a majority of cases, inspectors judged that planning met our required standards for desistance, and in all cases met our required standards for managing any risk of harm the child posed to others. In a large majority of the cases inspected, planning was sufficient in keeping the child safe.

### Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?

Of the 8 cases inspected:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does planning set out the services most likely to support desistance, paying sufficient attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing?	8	8
Does planning take sufficient account of the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child?	8	8
Does planning take sufficient account of the child's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?	8	8
Does planning take sufficient account of the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and seek to develop these as necessary?	8	7
Where applicable, does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim/s?	7	5
Is the child and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?	8	8

<sup>8</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping the child safe.

<sup>9</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping other people safe.

### Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

Of the 7 cases with factors related to keeping the child safe:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does planning promote the safety and wellbeing of the child, sufficiently addressing risks?	7	6
Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child?	7	6
Does planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	7	7
Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?	7	6

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

Of the 7 cases with factors related to keeping other people safe:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does planning promote the safety of other people, sufficiently addressing risk of harm factors?	7	7
Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate?	7	7
Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?	6	5
Does planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety of other people?	7	7
Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?	7	6

Planning in relation to desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others was very well sequenced and involved other agencies. Strong consideration was given to victims and, as with assessment, planning was responsive to the diversity needs, social and familial context of the child. Involvement of children and parent or carers in plans was excellent. Children's circumstances can change rapidly, however, and contingency planning needs to be in place to respond to these changes. Inspectors judged that contingency planning was evident and sufficient in almost all cases.

## 2.3. Implementation and delivery



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

Outstanding

Our rating<sup>10</sup> for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

Of the 8 cases inspected	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance?	8	8
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child safe? <sup>11</sup>	7	7
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people? <sup>12</sup>	7	7

The quality of implementation and delivery was rated as 'Outstanding'. In all cases, inspectors judged that implementation and delivery met our required standards in relation to desistance, keeping the child safe and managing the risk of harm the child posed to others.

### Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance?

Of the 8 cases inspected:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Are the delivered services those most likely to support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales?	8	8
Does service delivery reflect the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child, involving parents/carers or significant others?	8	8
Does service delivery build upon the child's strengths and enhance protective factors?	8	8
Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child and their parents/carers?	8	8

<sup>10</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. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

<sup>11</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping the child safe.

<sup>12</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping other people safe.

Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration including access to services post-supervision?	8	7
Is sufficient attention given to encouraging and enabling the child's compliance with the work of the YOT?	8	8
In cases when it is required, are enforcement actions taken when appropriate?	4	4

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

<b>Of the 7 cases with factors related to keeping the child safe:</b>	<b>Relevant cases</b>	<b>Number 'Yes'</b>
Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	7	7
Where applicable, is the involvement of other organisations in keeping the child safe sufficiently well-coordinated?	7	7

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

<b>Of the 7 cases with factors related to keeping other people safe:</b>	<b>Relevant cases</b>	<b>Number 'Yes'</b>
Are the delivered services sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?	7	7
Where applicable, is sufficient attention given to the protection of actual and potential victims?	6	6
Where applicable, is the involvement of other agencies in managing the risk of harm sufficiently well-coordinated?	7	7

In all cases, children were given access to services to support desistance and it was clear that the case managers took a strengths-based approach to their work. The YJS had access to a wide range of specialist staff and other resources to deliver suitable and innovative interventions to children. Case managers responded to children's diversity and wider social/familial context, and developed good working relationships. Enforcement was used appropriately where required, with enough attention to the protection of victims in nearly all relevant cases. The involvement of other agencies was evident and well-coordinated, where there were issues around safety and wellbeing and/or risk of harm to others. We also found clear arrangements to support children who were looked after, open to social care, criminally exploited, or had emotional wellbeing or substance misuse issues.

## 2.4. Reviewing



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

Outstanding

Our rating<sup>13</sup> for reviewing is based on the following key questions:

Of the 8 cases inspected <sup>14</sup>	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?	8	8
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	7	7
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	6	5

We rated the work on reviewing cases as 'Outstanding'. In all the cases we inspected, there was sufficient review of desistance factors and of issues concerning the wellbeing of the child. Reviewing in relation to the risk of harm posed by the child met our standard in all but one case. This responsiveness to changing circumstances helped to maintain children's engagement, enabled safeguarding and public protection issues to be managed, and ensured that the work delivered was effective and meaningful.

### Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?

Of the 8 cases where there were changes in factors related to desistance:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors linked to desistance?	8	8
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on building upon the child's strengths and enhancing protective factors?	8	8
Does reviewing consider motivation and engagement levels and any relevant barriers?	8	8
Is the child and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in reviewing their progress and engagement, and are their views taken into account?	8	8

<sup>13</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. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

<sup>14</sup> We only expect to see evidence of reviewing, in cases where there have been changes in factors related to desistance, keeping the child safe and/or keeping other people safe.

### Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

Of the 7 cases where there were changes in factors related to keeping the child safe:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to safety and wellbeing?	7	7
Where applicable, is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of the child?	6	6
Where applicable, does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	6	6

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

Of the 6 cases where there were changes in factors related to keeping other people safe:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to risk of harm?	6	5
Where applicable, is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in managing the risk of harm?	5	4
Is the child and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in reviewing their risk of harm, and are their views taken into account?	6	5
Where applicable, does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to manage and minimise the risk of harm?	5	4

Inspectors found that reviewing focused sufficiently on building on the child's strengths, enhancing protective factors, and assessing the level of motivation and engagement in all cases. Reviews completed by case managers led to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work in many of the relevant cases. Several children supervised by the YJS had complex needs, and their circumstances could change rapidly. In most cases, reviewing was informed by the necessary input from other agencies to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child.

### 3. Out-of-court disposals



We inspected six cases managed by the YJS that had received an out-of-court disposal. These consisted of three youth conditional cautions, one youth caution, and two community resolutions. We interviewed the case managers in five cases.

We examined the quality of assessment; planning; and implementation and delivery of services. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work done to address desistance. For the three cases where there were factors related to harm, we also inspected work done to keep other people safe. In the five cases where safety and wellbeing concerns were identified, we looked at work done to safeguard the child. We also looked at the quality of joint working with local police.

When children receive an out-of-court-disposal, we expect to see the YJS maximising the likelihood of successful outcomes by addressing desistance factors, effectively engaging with children and their parents/carers, and responding to relevant diversity factors. We also expect to see children being kept safe and their safety and wellbeing needs addressed. Finally, we expect everything reasonable to be done to manage the risk of harm posed by children who have offended. This should be through good-quality assessment and planning with the delivery of appropriate interventions, effective leadership and management, and good joint decision-making and partnership working across all statutory and voluntary agencies.

#### Strengths:

- The joint work associated with out-of-court disposals was of a good standard, underpinned by a joint decision-making panel and a clear protocol.
- The YJS provided timely information and made a positive contribution to decision-making in all cases.
- Assessment of desistance and keeping the child safe was outstanding.
- Assessments were strengths-based and focused sufficiently on developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers.

#### Areas for improvement:

- There were serious shortfalls in the quality of planning to address the child's safety and wellbeing, and to manage some children's risk of harm to others.
- Implementation and delivery of work to address safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others was inadequate.
- Management oversight of out-of-court-disposals was insufficient in half of the inspected cases.
- The rationale for joint decision-making was not recorded clearly in some cases.

Work with children 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 and their parents/carers.

Good

Our rating<sup>15</sup> for assessment is based on the following key questions:

Of the 6 cases inspected:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	6	6
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	6	5
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	6	4

Assessment work to address desistance, and safety and wellbeing was outstanding, with the large majority of cases of sufficient quality for both of these aspects. The overall rating for this standard, however, was driven by the score of assessment to keep other people safe, where inspectors found that not all cases met our requirements, therefore resulting in a rating of 'Good'.

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

Of the 6 cases inspected:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child's acknowledgement of responsibility, attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?	6	6
Does assessment consider the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child, utilising information held by other agencies?	6	5
Does assessment focus on the child's strengths and protective factors?	6	6
Where applicable, does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child?	5	4

<sup>15</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. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

Is sufficient attention given to understanding the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change?	6	6
Where applicable, does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim/s, and opportunities for restorative justice?	3	2
Is the child and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?	6	6

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

Of the 6 cases inspected:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child?	6	5
Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	6	4

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

Of the 6 cases inspected:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?	5	3
Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including any other assessments that have been completed, and other evidence of behaviour by the child?	5	3

We found sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, good involvement of children and parents or carers, and a strengths-focused approach in all cases. Assessments routinely drew on information from multiple sources to gain the best understanding of a child's circumstances and history. Full and detailed assessments were completed before the joint decision-making panel met, which assisted in decision-making. Assessments also considered the support and intervention required. There was a good focus on safety and wellbeing issues, with appropriate classification of cases. Risk of harm assessment work was good, but there were shortfalls in the identification of all relevant factors relating to risk of harm to others. Not all cases drew sufficiently on available sources of information from other agencies.

### 3.2. Planning



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

Inadequate

Our rating<sup>16</sup> for planning is based on the following key questions:

Of the 6 cases inspected	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?	6	4
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe? <sup>17</sup>	5	3
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe? <sup>18</sup>	3	1

We rated the planning work for out-of-court disposals as 'Inadequate'. Inspectors found that several cases were insufficient in relation to planning for keeping the child safe and planning to address the risk of harm that some children presented to others.

#### Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?

Of the 6 cases inspected:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does planning set out the services most likely to support desistance, paying sufficient attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing?	6	4
Does planning take sufficient account of the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child?	6	3
Does planning take sufficient account of the child's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?	6	6
Does planning take sufficient account of the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and seek to develop these as necessary?	6	4
Does planning take sufficient account of opportunities for community integration, including access to	6	6

<sup>16</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. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

<sup>17</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping the child safe

<sup>18</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping other people safe

mainstream services following completion of out of court disposal work?		
Where applicable, does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim/s?	4	2
Is the child and their parents/carers meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?	6	4

### Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?

Of the 5 cases with factors relevant to keeping the child safe:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does planning promote the safety and wellbeing of the child, sufficiently addressing risks?	5	4
Where applicable, does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child?	4	2
Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?	5	2

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

Of the 3 cases with factors relevant to keeping other people safe:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does planning promote the safety of other people, sufficiently addressing risk of harm factors?	3	1
Where applicable, does planning involve other agencies where appropriate?	3	2
Where applicable, does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?	3	0
Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?	3	0

Planning for desistance was strengths-based, proportionate and offered opportunities for community integration in most cases. However, attention to diversity and wider social/familial context was lacking in half of the cases inspected. Planning for safety and wellbeing often did not align with other agencies' plans, and there was a lack of focus on victims. Contingency planning was lacking for safety and wellbeing, and in all cases was insufficient for risk of harm to others.

### 3.3. Implementation and delivery



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

Inadequate

Our rating<sup>19</sup> for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

Of the 6 cases inspected	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does service delivery effectively support the child's desistance?	6	3
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child? <sup>20</sup>	5	1
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people? <sup>21</sup>	3	0

Implementation and delivery were rated as 'Inadequate'. The majority of cases did not meet our standards for work to keep the child safe or for keeping others safe from the child.

#### Does service delivery effectively support the child's desistance?

Of the 6 cases inspected:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Are the delivered services those most likely to support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales?	6	3
Does service delivery reflect the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child, involving parents/carers or significant others?	6	3
Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child and their parents/carers?	6	5
Is sufficient attention given to encouraging and enabling the child's compliance with the work of the YOT?	6	5

<sup>19</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. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

<sup>20</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping the child safe.

<sup>21</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping other people safe.

Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services?	6	4
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### Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child?

Of the 5 cases with factors related to the safety of the child:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	5	1
Where applicable, is the involvement of other agencies in keeping the child safe sufficiently well utilised and coordinated?	5	1

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

Of the 3 cases with factors related to the safety of other people:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Where applicable, is sufficient attention given to the protection of actual and potential victims?	3	0
Are the delivered services sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?	3	0

Implementation and delivery of services to address both safety and wellbeing and/or the risk of harm to others were poor. There was insufficient attention given to victims in all relevant cases, and the involvement of other agencies was not sufficient or coordinated. Although case managers established positive working relationships with children and their parents or carers to encourage compliance, the services delivered supported desistance sufficiently in only half the inspected cases.

### 3.4. Joint working



Joint working with the police supports the delivery of high-quality, personalised and coordinated services.	Good
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Our rating<sup>22</sup> for joint working is based on the following key questions:

Of the 6 cases inspected	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Are the YOT's recommendations sufficiently well-informed, analytical and personalised to the child, supporting joint decision making?	6	6

<sup>22</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. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

Does the YOT work effectively with the police in implementing the out-of-court disposal? <sup>23</sup>	3	2
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Overall, joint working for delivery of out-of-court-disposals was rated as 'Good'. We looked at three youth conditional caution (YCC) cases as part of the sample of six out-of-court-disposal cases.

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

Of the 6 cases inspected:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Where applicable, are the recommendations by the YOT for out-of-court disposal outcomes, conditions and interventions appropriate and proportionate?	6	4
Do the recommendations consider the degree of the child's understanding of the offence and their acknowledgement of responsibility?	6	6
Where applicable, is a positive contribution made by the YOT to determining the disposal?	5	5
Is sufficient attention given to the child's understanding, and their parents/carers' understanding, of the implications of receiving an out of court disposal?	6	4
Is the information provided to inform decision-making timely to meet the needs of the case, legislation and guidance?	6	6
Where applicable, is the rationale for joint disposal decisions appropriate and clearly recorded?	6	2

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

Of the 3 cases with youth conditional cautions:	Relevant cases	Number 'Yes'
Where applicable, does the YOT inform the police of progress and outcomes in a sufficient and timely manner?	3	1
Is sufficient attention given to compliance with and enforcement of the conditions?	3	3

The YJS provided timely information and made a positive contribution to decision-making in all cases, with many indicating that the child and their parent or

<sup>23</sup> This question is only relevant in youth conditional caution cases.

carers understood the implications of the disposal. We saw a clearly recorded rationale for disposals in only a minority of cases. Although attention was paid to compliance and enforcement of YCCs, in some cases the YJS did not inform the police about progress and outcomes promptly.

## Annexe 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 who have offended.<sup>24</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. It is important that all Youth Offending Services, regardless of size, are inspected to highlight good practice and to identify areas for improvement. Of course, some YOTs have very small caseloads and so any percentages or figures quoted in these reports need to read with care. However, all domain two samples, even for the smallest YOTs, meet an 80 per cent confidence level and in some of the smaller YOTs inspectors may be assessing most or all of that service's cases.

#### Domain one: organisational delivery

- The youth offending service submitted evidence in advance and the Chair of the YJS Management Board and Associate Director 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 who have offended are improved?
- What are your priorities for further improving these arrangements?

During the main fieldwork phase, we conducted 13 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 eight meetings, which included meetings with managers, partner organisations, and staff. The evidence collected under this domain was judged against our published ratings characteristics.<sup>24</sup>

#### Domain two: court disposals

We completed case assessments over a one-week period, examining case files and interviewing case managers. Eight of the cases selected were those of children who had received court disposals five to 12 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 eight court disposals. The sample size was set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of five), and where possible we ensured that the ratios in relation to gender, sentence or disposal type, risk of serious harm,

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<sup>24</sup> HM Inspectorate's standards are available here:

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

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. Six cases selected were those of children who had received out-of-court disposals five to 12 months earlier. This enabled us to examine work in relation to assessing, planning, implementing and joint working. Where necessary, interviews with other people significantly involved in the case also took place.

We examined six out-of-court disposals. The sample size was set so that the combined case sample size comprises 60 per cent domain two cases and 40 per cent domain three. Where possible, we ensured 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.

In some areas of this report, data may have been split into smaller sub-samples – for example, male/female cases. Where this is the case, the margin of error for the sub-sample findings may be higher than five.

### **Ratings explained**

Domain one ratings are proposed by the lead inspector for each standard. They will be a single judgement, using all the relevant sources of evidence. More detailed information can be found in the probation inspection domain one rules and guidance on the website.

In this inspection, we conducted a detailed examination of a sample of eight court disposals and six out-of-court disposals. In each of those cases, we inspect against four standards: assessment, planning, and implementation/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 were involved in assessment and planning; and whether enough was done to assess and manage the safety and well-being of the child, and any risk of harm posed to others.

For each standard, the rating is aligned to the lowest banding at the key question level, recognising that each key question is an integral part of the standard.

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

We use case sub-samples for some of the key questions in domains two and three. For example, when judging whether planning focused sufficiently on keeping other people safe, we exclude those cases where the inspector deemed the risk of serious harm to be low. This approach is justified on the basis that we focus on those cases where we expect meaningful work to take place.

An element of professional discretion may be applied to the standards ratings in domains two and three. The ratings panel considers whether professional discretion should be exercised where the lowest percentage at the key question level is close to the rating boundary, for example between 'Requires improvement' and 'Good' (specifically, within five percentage points of the boundary; or where a differing judgement in one case would result in a change in rating; or where the rating is based upon a sample or sub-sample of five cases or fewer). The panel considers the sizes of any sub-samples used and the percentages for the other key questions within that standard, such as whether they fall within different bandings and the level of divergence, to make this decision.

### Overall provider rating

Straightforward scoring rules are used to generate the overall provider rating. Each of the ten standards will be scored on a 0-3 scale as listed in the following table.

Score	Rating (standard)
0	Inadequate
1	Requires improvement
2	Good
3	Outstanding ☆

Adding the scores for each standard together produces the overall rating on a 0-30 scale as listed in the following table.

Score	Rating (overall)
0-6	Inadequate
7-18	Requires improvement
19-30	Good
31-36	Outstanding ☆

We do not include any weightings in the scoring rules. The rationale for this is that all parts of the standards framework are strongly linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes, and we have restricted ourselves to those that are most essential. Our view is that providers need to focus across all the standards, and we do not want to distort behaviours in any undesirable ways. Furthermore, the underpinning evidence supports including all standards/key questions in the rating, rather than weighting individual elements.