

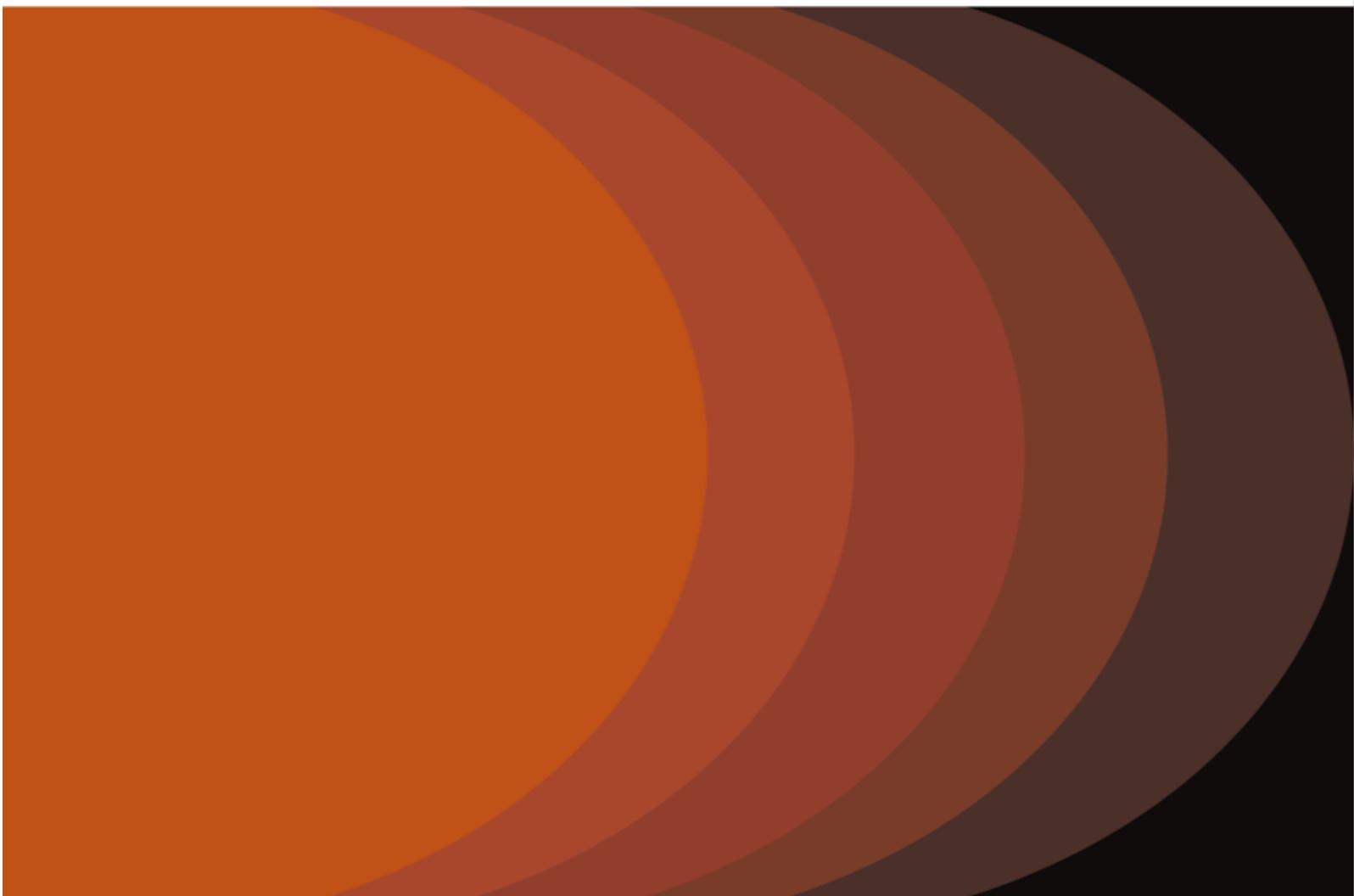


Her Majesty's  
Inspectorate of  
Probation

An inspection of youth justice services in  
**Hull**

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HM Inspectorate of Probation, September 2021



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## Acknowledgements

This inspection was led by HM Inspector Pauline Burke, 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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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 Justice Service work with adults and children. We inspect these services and publish inspection reports. We highlight good and poor practice and use our data and information to encourage high-quality services. We are independent of government and speak independently.

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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This publication is available for download at: [www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation](http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation)

Published by:

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation  
1st Floor Civil Justice Centre  
1 Bridge Street West  
Manchester  
M3 3FX

Follow us on Twitter [@hmiprobation](https://twitter.com/hmiprobation)

ISBN: 978-1-914478-29-1

## Foreword

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This inspection is part of our programme of youth justice service (YJS) inspections. We have inspected and rated Hull Youth Justice Service across three broad areas: 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. Overall, Hull YJS was rated as 'Good'.

The inspection found a very strong service with most elements of post-court cases and out-of-court disposal work rated as 'Outstanding'. Hull YJS's arrangements for staffing are good and for information and facilities are outstanding; however, its governance and leadership, and its partnerships and services were rated as 'Requires improvement'.

In recent months, effort has focused on raising the profile of Hull YJS and improving the strategic responsibilities of the management board. New members have been recruited at the right level of seniority and an investment made in ensuring they understand their roles and responsibilities. Although it has now been addressed, inconsistent attendance by Humberside Police has led to a lack of strategic oversight in monitoring the number of first-time entrants into the youth justice system.

The inspection found that YJS children benefit from access to their own centre which they helped to design. The Kastor Centre has excellent facilities, access to other supportive services and a 'drop-in' opportunity if children are in need of support.

The service has established links with specialist workers in other agencies to ensure YJS children are receiving the right provision for their needs. The Clinical Commissioning Group, however, needs to ensure that children are able to access speech, language and communication interventions when the current commissioning arrangements end.

Staff are offered the opportunity for development through their roles as champions in specific areas of practice and are motivated and engage well with children. The inspectors found some confusion, though, on the process for managing high-risk children. We recommend a review of the risk management framework so that there is clear accountability of how risk is managed by the service.

For both post-court and out-of-court disposal work, we rated the assessment of risk of harm to others is good. We rated the quality of planning, delivery of services, case reviewing and joint working across the three areas of desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others as outstanding. The YJS delivers exceptional work with victims and ensures that they are safe, supported and their needs and wishes taken into account throughout the service.

In this report, we make a number of recommendations that if implemented will enable Hull to make the improvements needed to deliver a high-quality service for children.



Justin Russell  
**Chief Inspector of Probation**

## Ratings

**Hull Youth Justice Service** **Score** 29/36

**Overall rating** **Good** 

### 1. Organisational delivery

<b>1.1</b>	Governance and leadership	<b>Requires improvement</b>	
<b>1.2</b>	Staff	<b>Good</b>	
<b>1.3</b>	Partnerships and services	<b>Requires improvement</b>	
<b>1.4</b>	Information and facilities	<b>Outstanding</b>	

### 2. Court disposals

<b>2.1</b>	Assessment	<b>Good</b>	
<b>2.2</b>	Planning	<b>Outstanding</b>	
<b>2.3</b>	Implementation and delivery	<b>Outstanding</b>	
<b>2.4</b>	Reviewing	<b>Outstanding</b>	

### 3. Out-of-court disposals

<b>3.1</b>	Assessment	<b>Good</b>	
<b>3.2</b>	Planning	<b>Outstanding</b>	
<b>3.3</b>	Implementation and delivery	<b>Outstanding</b>	
<b>3.4</b>	Joint working	<b>Outstanding</b>	

## Recommendations

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

**Humberside Police should:**

1. Ensure attendance at strategic partnership meetings in order to lead on the monitoring of first-time entrants to the youth justice system.

**Clinical Commissioning Group should:**

2. Make sure there is no gap in the provision of speech, language and communication services for youth justice service children.

**The chair of management board should:**

3. Put a multiagency framework in place for the management of all youth justice service high-risk cases.

**The Hull Youth Justice Service manager should:**

4. Improve the quality of management oversight in out-of-court disposal work.

## Executive summary

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Overall, Hull Youth Justice Service (YJS) is rated as 'Good'. This rating has been determined by inspecting the YJS 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 who have offended.<sup>1</sup> Published scoring rules generate the overall YJS rating.<sup>2</sup> The findings and subsequent ratings in those domains are described below.

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### 1. Organisational delivery



The YJS arrangements for staffing are good and for information and facilities are outstanding. However, for governance and leadership and for partnership and services they are rated as requires improvement.

There has been a focused effort on raising the profile of the YJS and improving the strategic responsibilities of the management board. New members have been recruited at the right level of seniority and there has been an investment in training to help members understand their roles and responsibilities. Inconsistent attendance by the police at the board has led to a lack of strategic oversight in monitoring the number of first-time entrants into the youth justice system.

Staff are comfortable with their workload, receive regular supervision and are offered the opportunity for development through their roles as champions in specific areas of practice. Excellent work by the victim officer ensures that the victim is safe and supported, and their needs and wishes are taken into account throughout the service.

The YJS has a performance officer who provides comprehensive performance reports that allow the YJS to analyse data and profile children known to the service. Although the YJS does not have seconded staff, other than the police officer and the probation officer, the links with specialist workers in other agencies allow access to provision for YJS children. The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) needs to ensure that the provision for YJS children accessing speech, language and communication interventions is still available when the current independent commissioning arrangements end. The YJS framework for managing risk needs clarity so that there is clear accountability for how the service manages all types of risk.

The facilities available to YJS children at the Kastor Centre are excellent and it is a place they want to visit. They took part in designing the building and can access it as a 'drop-in' facility if they are in need of support.

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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'.

We interviewed the YJS service manager and the chair of the management board. We held meetings with other members of the board and key stakeholders. Key findings about organisation delivery were as follows:

- The chair of the management board has reviewed and refreshed its membership and ensured representation at the right level of seniority.
- All new board members have received an induction, and workshops have been introduced in between board meetings to continue developing their knowledge of the service.
- The profile of the YJS has been raised within the local authority and across the partnership.
- The service has a motivated and passionate victim officer who has put a structured framework in place to ensure that the victim is included, supported and their views heard.
- Service volunteers feel well supported, receiving regular supervision and relevant ongoing training.
- There is an excellent interventions catalogue which is used by all staff.
- Management oversight of post-court cases is outstanding.
- The YJS has its own performance dashboard which gives it access to an excellent suite of data.
- The Kastor Centre is an exceptional facility that enables children who will not always access mainstream provision to have their own place to visit.

But:

- There has been inconsistent attendance at the management board from Humberside Police.
- Monitoring the number of first-time entrants and the delivery of out-of-court disposals have been limited due to the lack of police attendance at strategic meetings.
- The improvements to the board have been very recent and need to be maintained for it to continue to develop the momentum of the changes.
- The quality of management oversight of out-of-court disposal work needs to improve.
- There is a risk of a gap in speech, language and communication services once the commissioning agreement has ended and the CCG begins to arrange access to provision.
- The framework and process for managing all high-risk cases is not clear.

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## 2. Court disposals



We took a detailed look at 20 community sentences managed by the YJS. 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 done to address desistance. For services to keep the child safe, we assessed the quality of planning, implementation and reviewing in the 20 cases where we expected meaningful work to take place. Similarly, for work to keep others safe, we assessed the quality of planning, implementation and reviewing in the 19 cases where meaningful work was required.

In this service, over 80 per cent of cases met all our requirements for planning, service delivery and reviewing for desistance, safety and wellbeing and risk of harm to others, which has led to our judgement of 'Outstanding' against this standard. Similarly, a judgement of 'Outstanding' was given to assessing desistance and a child's safety and wellbeing.

For assessing risk of harm to others less than 80 per cent of cases met all our standards, which led to our judgement of 'Good' for this element of work.

Professional discretion was applied to this rating. As the lowest percentage achieved at the key question level was close to the rating boundary, the case data was reviewed. According to the inspectors, the level of risk in some cases regarding very high and high risk of harm to others was assessed too highly. This impacted on the quality of how the assessment analysed controls and interventions to manage and minimise the risk of harm presented by the child, with only 45 per cent being sufficient. The ratings panel agreed that professional discretion should be applied to assessing risk of harm to others and the judgement moved from 'Outstanding' to 'Good'.

Our key findings about court disposals are as follows:

- Assessment was outstanding in the areas of desistance and assessing a child's safety and wellbeing.
- Planning, implementation and delivery of services and reviewing were outstanding in all three areas of desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others.
- Case managers considered the child's strengths and protective factors as well as their level of maturity and motivation to change.
- There was an excellent interventions catalogue that staff regularly used.
- Case managers included children and their parents or carers and took account of their views at each stage of case management.

But:

- The level of risk in some cases regarding very high and high risk of harm to others was assessed too highly.
- Case managers needed to consider the wishes of victims and use the services provided by the victim officer in all relevant cases.

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### 3. Out-of-court disposals

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We inspected 13 cases managed by the YJS that had received an out-of-court disposal. These consisted of one youth conditional caution (YCC) and 12 community resolutions. We interviewed the case managers in all 13 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 services to keep the child safe, we only assessed the quality of planning and implementation in the 11 cases where we expected meaningful work to take place. Similarly, for work to keep others safe, we assessed the quality of planning and implementation in the eight cases where meaningful work was required. We inspected the quality of YJS recommendations and joint decision-making in all cases, and the effectiveness of joint working with the police in one YCC case only. The quality of the work in each factor needs to be above a specified threshold for each aspect of supervision to be rated as satisfactory to achieve a particular score.

In this service, over 80 per cent of cases met all our requirements for planning, service delivery and joint working for desistance, safety and wellbeing and risk of harm to others, and are therefore rated 'Outstanding'. Similarly, a judgement of 'Outstanding' was given to assessing desistance and a child's safety and wellbeing. For assessing risk of harm to others, 77 per cent of cases met all our standards, which led to our judgement of 'Good' for this element of work.

- Assessment was outstanding in the areas of desistance and supporting a child's safety and wellbeing.
- Planning and delivering services were outstanding in all three areas of desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others.
- Case managers took into account the child's strengths and protective factors and included their parents' and carers' views in the assessment.
- The needs and wishes of victims and opportunities for restorative processes were considered as part of the assessment.
- Case managers took into account the protection of actual and potential victims when supporting the safety of other people.
- Staff focused on developing and maintaining a good working relationship with children and families.

But:

- Case managers needed to assess a child's level of maturity and ensure that planning takes account of the child's strengths and protective factors.
- Contingency arrangements were needed when planning to support the child's safety and wellbeing and managing their risk of harm to others.
- Staff should ensure that in every case the child and their parents or carers understood the implications of receiving an out-of-court disposal.

## Background

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Youth offending teams (YOTs) work with children aged 10 to 18 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 justice 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.

Youth justice services (YJSs) are statutory partnerships, and they are multidisciplinary, 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>3</sup> Most YOTs are based within local authorities; however, this can vary.

YJS 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 upon Hull (Hull) is a port city in East Yorkshire and is a unitary authority governed by Hull City Council. It is placed among the two per cent most deprived local authorities in the country and is fourth out of 317 local authority areas on the indices of deprivation scale (IMD 2019).<sup>4</sup> According to the 2011 census,<sup>5</sup> 5.9 per cent of Hull residents are from a black, Asian or minority ethnic background and the largest individual ethnic group is 'white other', which includes many economic migrants from Eastern Europe.

In 2019, Hull YJS moved from being a part of the local authority's community safety partnership to being placed within Children, Young People and Family Services. It was initially part of the Children Looked After and Leaving Care Service, but in October 2020 it moved to become part of the Early Help Service alongside youth services, family support and post-16 support. Both Hull YJS and wider children's services have faced significant challenges over the past few years with a number of changes to senior leadership at both directorate and service level. As a result, this led to changes to the chair of the YJS management board and impacted on its membership. Despite this, the YJS management team has remained stable and the YJS service manager has been a part of the organisation for over 16 years.

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<sup>3</sup> The *Crime and Disorder Act (1998)* set out the arrangements for local YOTs and partnership working.

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. (2019). Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Office for National Statistics. (2012). *Census 2011*, December 2012.

## Contextual facts

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### Youth justice information

<b>305</b>	First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in Kingston upon Hull <sup>6</sup>
<b>222</b>	First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in Yorkshire
<b>207</b>	First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in England and Wales
<b>56%</b>	Reoffending rate in Kingston upon Hull <sup>7</sup>
<b>39%</b>	Reoffending rate in England and Wales

### Population information<sup>8</sup>

<b>259,778</b>	Total population Kingston upon Hull
<b>23,231</b>	Total youth population (10-17 years) Kingston upon Hull

### Caseload information<sup>9</sup>

Age	10–14	15–17
Hull YJS	<b>27%</b>	<b>73%</b>
National average	22%	78%

Race/ethnicity	White	Black and minority ethnic
Hull YJS	<b>92%</b>	<b>7%</b>
National average	69%	28%

Gender	Male	Female
Hull YJS	<b>87%</b>	<b>13%</b>
National average	85%	15%

<sup>6</sup> Youth Justice Board. (2020). *First-time entrants, January to December 2019*.

<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Justice. (2019). *Proven reoffending statistics, January to December 2018*.

<sup>8</sup> Office for National Statistics. (2020). *UK population estimates, mid-2019*.

<sup>9</sup> Youth Justice Board. (2021). *Youth justice annual statistics: 2019-2020*.

## Additional caseload data<sup>10</sup>

55	Total current caseload: community sentences
2	Total current caseload in custody
2	Total current caseload on licence
0	Total current caseload: youth caution
0	Total current caseload: youth conditional caution
13	Total current caseload: community resolution or other out-of-court disposal

## Education and child protection status of caseload

29%	Proportion of current caseload Looked After Children resident in the YJS area
5%	Proportion of current caseload Looked After Children placed outside the YJS area
13%	Percentage of current caseload with child protection plan
9%	Percentage of current caseload with child in need plan
31%	Percentage of current caseload aged 16 and under not in school/pupil referral unit (PRU)/alternative education
69%	Percentage of children 16 and under in a PRU or alternative education (this will include some children included under the previous heading)
42%	Percentage of current caseload aged 17+ not in education, training or employment

## For children subject to court disposals:

Offence types <sup>11</sup>	%
Violence against the person	45%
Burglary	10%
Theft and handling stolen goods	20%
Arson	5%
Drug offences	5%
Summary motoring offences	10%
Indictable motoring offences	5%

<sup>10</sup> Data supplied by the YJS, reflecting caseload at the time of the inspection announcement.

<sup>11</sup> Data from the cases assessed during this inspection.

# 1. Organisational delivery



The youth justice service (YJS) arrangements for information and facilities are outstanding and their staffing is good. The arrangements for governance and leadership and partnership and services are rated as requires improvement.

There has been a focused effort on raising the profile of the YJS and improving the strategic responsibilities of the management board. New members have been recruited at the right level of seniority and there has been an investment in training to help members understand their roles and responsibilities. There has been inconsistent attendance by the police which has led to a lack of strategic oversight in, for example, the monitoring of out-of-court disposals and the impact on first-time entrants' performance. Although this was addressed in the last six months, we would need to see evidence of these improvements being sustained before we considered this in relation to the rating.

Staff are comfortable with their workload, receive regular supervision and are offered the opportunity for development through their roles as champions in specific areas of practice. Training is prioritised and they are encouraged to be creative in their work with children and families. The change in the delivery of interventions due to Covid-19, away from groupwork delivered by programme workers to individual sessions from case managers, has improved relationships with children and families. There is excellent victim work by the victim officer who ensures that the victim is safe and supported and their needs and wishes are taken into account throughout the service.

The YJS performance officer provides comprehensive performance reports which allow the YJS to analyse data and profile children known to the service. Although the YJS does not have seconded staff, other than the police officer and the probation officer, the links with specialist workers in other agencies allow access to provision for YJS children. A wide range of prevention and early help services are available. The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) needs to ensure that access for YJS children to speech, language and communication interventions is still available when the current commissioning arrangements end. The YJS risk management framework needs clarity so that there is a clear accountability for how all types of risk are managed by the service.

The facilities available to YJS children at the Kastor Centre are excellent and it is a place they want to visit. They took part in designing the building and can access it as a drop-in facility if they are in need of support. Case managers see children there to deliver interventions, as well as life skills sessions, and can introduce them to other partner agencies who attend. The kitchen, shower and washroom facilities are also helpful for children who may be sofa surfing.

## Strengths:

- The chair of the management board has reviewed and refreshed its membership and ensured representation at the right level of seniority.
- All new board members have received an induction, and workshops have been introduced to continue developing their knowledge of the service.

- The profile of the YJS has been raised within the local authority and across the partnership.
- The service has a motivated and passionate victim officer who has put a structured framework in place to ensure that the victim is included, supported and their views heard.
- Service volunteers are well supported, receiving regular supervision and relevant ongoing training.
- There is an excellent interventions catalogue which is used by all staff.
- Management oversight of post-court cases is outstanding.
- The YJS has its own performance dashboard which gives it access to an excellent suite of data.
- The Kastor Centre is an exceptional facility that enables children who may not always access mainstream provision to have their own place to visit.

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

- There has been inconsistent attendance at the management board by Humberside Police.
- Monitoring the number of first-time entrants and the delivery of out-of-court disposals have been limited due to the lack of police attendance at strategic meetings.
- The improvements to the board have been very recent and the momentum of the changes need to be maintained for the board to continue to develop.
- The management oversight of out-of-court disposals needs to improve.
- There is a risk that there will be a gap in speech, language and communication services once the current commissioning arrangement has ended and the Clinical Commissioning Group begins to arrange access to provision.
- The framework and process for managing all high-risk cases is not clear.

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 YJS supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children.

Requires improvement

### Key data

Total spend in previous financial year	£1.0 million
Total projected budget current for financial year	£1.1 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?**

The inspection assessed the governance and leadership arrangements as 'Requires improvement'. The director of Children's Services joined Hull City Council in December 2020 and became chair of the YJS management board in March 2021. They have previous experience of overseeing youth justice services and quickly realised that the YJS in Hull needed to be championed and promoted both within the council and with partner agencies. Under their direction, the management board has been reviewed and refreshed, ensuring that its membership includes all statutory partners, as well as some non-statutory agencies, such as a representative from the voluntary and community sector and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

All new board members have received an induction into their role and workshops have been introduced in between the quarterly management board meetings. The workshops so far have looked at specific themes, including enhancing the board members' understanding of their roles and responsibilities, as well as improving their knowledge of the performance of the YJS. The Youth Justice Board (YJB) head of region has been offering guidance to the chair on the developments that are needed to ensure the board is working effectively.

In 2020, the YJS submitted its Covid-19 recovery plan to the YJB. It is still developing its current three-year youth justice plan and has held development days with board members and partners to agree the priorities and set the direction for the YJS. The plan was intended to be presented to the board in June 2020 for comment before being signed off. It will be reviewed annually.

The service completed its national standards self-assessment in 2020 and submitted it to the YJB. It was discussed at a board development day and it was agreed that board members would be allocated lead roles in specific areas of practice to take improvements forward.

There has been inconsistent attendance at the board by Humberside Police over a continued period. The chair escalated this to senior police personnel. It has recently been addressed, and police representatives with the appropriate seniority now attend and contribute to the board.

The improvements to the board's membership, attendance and influence have happened under the direction of the new board chair since late 2020. The impact of these changes, however, must be sustained if the high quality of services for children and families known to the YJS are to be maintained.

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

The YJS management board has links to other strategic meetings and issues impacting on youth offending are prominent on the agendas of other key strategic groups, including the Better Together Partnership, Criminal Justice Board, Safer Hull Community Partnership, Safeguarding Partnership Board and the Contextual Safeguarding Group. The move to the Early Help Service in October 2020, alongside Youth Services, Family Support and Post-16 Support, has integrated the YJS into the wider prevention agenda and raised its profile.

As part of the board development days, all partners have reviewed their commitment and contribution to the YJS. This included all board members attending the various YJS panels so that they could improve their understanding of YJS children's specific needs. As a result, although previously the YJS has commissioned its own speech, language and communication service, the CCG has now recognised this as a gap and will be reviewing its provision.

There is a clear framework for the out-of-court disposal process and initial referrals are coordinated by the seconded police officer. However, some children are not referred to the YJS and can proceed to court unnecessarily. Monitoring of this area of practice and its possible impact on the number of first-time entrants has been limited. This is due to the lack of consistent representation from Humberside Police on the management board where strategic oversight of their contribution to operational practice should have been monitored and challenged. As there is now a commitment to have regular police representatives on the board, this matter can be taken forward.

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

Until September 2020, the YJS service manager was the assistant YOT manager and, overall, has been with the service for 16 years. Both the service manager and the three senior youth justice officers are knowledgeable about youth justice and work well together in supporting the team.

The service manager attends the board while the senior youth justice officers attend to present specific pieces of work. Communication from the board is shared through the management and team meetings. More recently, staff have got to know board members because they observe YJS practice, including attending panels and meetings, as part of their induction. This was evidenced in our survey of staff, in which 95 per cent of the 19 who completed this question stated they were aware of the activities of the board and understood its role. In addition, 84 per cent of staff felt they were updated on strategic issues.

In dealing with Covid-19, Hull City Council put in place a business continuity plan that outlined the prioritisation of digital services across the local authority. The YJS introduced a red-amber-green rated system based on risk of harm, risk of reoffending, and safety and wellbeing for working with children and families. The service undertook doorstep visits to the most vulnerable children, made weekly telephone calls and used smartphones and computer tablets for intervention work. It

purchased e-readers and dongles for children who did not have access to these items to maintain contact. Buildings were made Covid-19 secure, and a balance of home working and office working was promoted. Email accounts were set up with the secure estate so that staff could stay in contact with children on remand and serving custodial sentences, as well as with their parents and carers. Supervision for staff continued monthly on Microsoft Teams and daily check-ins were initiated. In addition, weekly practice discussions take place, and in full lockdown there was a weekly round-up on Friday afternoons. When face-to-face appointments were allowed during the summer of 2020, the service began a three-week summer activities programme with an arts teacher, which produced sculptures and artwork in the gardens of the Kastor Centre.

## 1.2. Staff



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

Good

### Key staffing data <sup>12</sup>

Total staff headcount (full-time equivalent, FTE)	27
Vacancy rate (total unfilled posts as percentage of total staff headcount)	1.35
Vacancy rate case managers only (total unfilled case manager posts as percentage of total case manager headcount)	1.35
Average caseload case managers (FTE)	5
Average annual working days sickness (all staff)	1.5
Staff attrition (percentage of all staff leaving in 12-month period)	7%

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?**

Hull YJS has four teams, an administration team managed by the performance officer and three teams managed by senior youth justice officers. The teams include youth justice officers who work with statutory cases, and assistant youth justice officers who work with out-of-court disposals. The service also has a volunteer coordinator, a victim officer, a seconded police officer and a seconded probation officer. The probation officer post is currently vacant as the National Probation Service deals with reunification and it will then be advertised in the new service for probation officers to apply.

The service uses a workload allocation tool that considers caseload weighting, including the number of cases, the level of risk and complexity of cases, as well as the specific circumstances and needs of the child. It also takes into account which staff have previously been involved with the family to prioritise consistency of

<sup>12</sup> Data supplied by YOS and reflecting staffing at the time of the inspection announcement.

workers. At the time of the inspection, case managers had approximately five cases each, although it is acknowledged that this number has been affected by Covid-19 and will probably rise. In the staff survey, 94 per cent of respondents said their workload or caseload was manageable.

There was evidence in the inspected cases that staff do all they can to encourage good engagement and compliance from the child, and both staff and managers are child-centred and know their children well. During the pandemic, staff have had to be creative in delivering interventions and have used 'walk and talk' and 'doorstep' home visits to engage children and families. They dropped off packages of work at the children's homes and used WhatsApp to continue to engage them. The service bought e-readers and dongles so staff could stay in contact, and these devices also enabled children to access the internet for their school and college work.

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

The YJS has a volunteer coordinator and the service volunteers are well supported, receiving regular supervision and relevant ongoing training. The volunteers state that they feel listened to and valued by the service and are comfortable raising issues if required. The number of volunteers was low, but this was managed to ensure that they were happy with the amount of work they took on. Following recruitment, 10 volunteers were being inducted at the time of the inspection. The service has also commissioned Change Grow Live (CGL) to provide mentoring services to YJS children, including befriending children, delivering one-to-one interventions and helping with transport.

The service has a motivated and passionate victim officer who has put a structured framework in place to ensure that the victim is included, supported and their views heard. The victim officer attends the out-of-court disposal diversion panel to represent the victim's views. They also complete a victim safety matrix for every victim, which measures how safe they feel at different stages of their involvement with the service. This is shared with the child's case manager to influence the work they are doing. The matrix also determines which safety measures need to be put in place for the victim and, for example, will contribute to the conditions put on a detention and training order licence. The victim officer has held mediation sessions and family group conferencing and offers individualised work to the victims. All restorative processes are evaluated using a bespoke victim 'impact of crime' scale that measures how the victim feels pre- and post-interventions.

The victim officer is also responsible for overseeing the completion of reparation. Reparation is delivered one to one and the projects include gardening at the Kastor Centre, where the food grown is given to community centres. There is also access to a gym and boxing sessions, and working with a dog rescue centre and the Salvation Army. Children can complete their construction skills certification scheme (CSCS) card so that they can work on construction sites. Reparation arrangements are flexible and respond to the victim's wishes, as far as is practicable.

There is a seconded police officer and a seconded probation officer post, which was vacant at the time of the inspection as the previous postholder had recently secured a senior youth justice officer post.

Before the pandemic, there was a division between case management, which was the responsibility of youth justice officers, and delivery of groupwork programmes, which was the responsibility of assistant youth justice officers. One-to-one work is

now the primary intervention method with all staff delivering programmes to the children they supervise. Staff prefer this approach as they can build stronger individual relationships with children and families. They can still turn to a programme lead for advice on developing and delivering interventions to fit the individual needs of the child.

All staff are champions in specific areas of practice and represent the service at different boards and meetings. A number of staff are trained in AIM (Assessment, Intervention & Moving-on project) 3 for working with those displaying harmful sexual behaviour and all cases are jointly assessed. Staff can also access parenting programmes delivered through the early help parenting team.

There is an excellent interventions catalogue used by all staff, which was developed from in-house programmes, as well as using interventions recommended by other YJSs. Staff share good practice and new ideas at weekly practice discussions. All staff take part in these discussions, and partner agencies are invited to update people on what is happening in their agencies and across the wider partnership.

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

Staff receive regular supervision and annual appraisals. Seconded staff receive supervision from their home agency, who complete an appraisal, as well as supervision from their YJS line manager. Staff reported feeling supported by both their managers and their peers.

There is an induction process for new staff and procedures for addressing staff competency. However, induction and training for staff who have joined recently have been hampered by Covid-19 restrictions.

Staff can access reflective 'pods', which are chaired by a senior youth justice officer, and other partnership staff can be invited. Their purpose is to offer reflective discussion on cases that are new, 'stuck' or have compliance issues or where there are concerns regarding risk.

Management oversight was good and met the needs of the case in 84 per cent of post-court cases. For out-of-court disposals, however, management oversight only met the needs of the case in 58 per cent of cases and this is an area that needs to improve. We raised an alert<sup>13</sup> on one post-court case owing to concerns about safeguarding, and the YJS resolved these issues during the inspection.

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

Training and development needs are identified through supervision and appraisals. There is a team training schedule and staff are encouraged to take up training opportunities. Safeguarding training is mandatory across the directorate, and recently staff have completed courses in trauma-informed practice and AIM3. There is a staff training champion and people have access to a variety of training provision, including online sessions.

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<sup>13</sup> An individual alert encompasses practice, or practice omissions, that require immediate remedial action to be taken (usually by the organisation responsible for the case) to reduce or contain an identifiable, serious and imminent risk.

A training needs analysis completed in April 2021 took account of staff training records, the youth justice plan, individual personal development plans and the skills matrix completed by the staff team.

The service actively encourages staff development through offering management opportunities within the service and supporting staff to complete external qualifications.

### 1.3. Partnerships and services



A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children.	Requires improvement
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Percentage of current caseload with mental health issues	85%
Percentage of current caseload with substance misuse issues	93%
Percentage of current caseload with an education, health and care plan	12%

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 YJS can deliver well-targeted services?**

The population of Hull is 94 per cent white, 92 per cent of children who are cautioned or sentenced are white and very few children who identify as black, Asian and minority ethnic become known to the YJS.

The YJS has its own dashboard with access to an excellent suite of data. Comprehensive management performance reports are provided for the management board, which include national and local indicators and very detailed profiling and analysis. The performance of the YJS is monitored across the partnership and the performance reports are shared with other partners, including the Community Safety Partnership and the Criminal Justice Board.

Performance on first-time entrants, reoffending and custody is above the national average. There is evidence of work to analyse and monitor the performance for both out-of-court disposals and post-court orders. The service uses the reoffending live tracker for monitoring its reoffending rates, which shows that the local trend is improving.

The partnership is aware that a high number of Looked After Children are known to the service and this is a reflection of their number generally in Hull. This was a concern raised by the most recent Ofsted inspecting local authority children's services report, which rated children's social care services as 'inadequate' and led to some strategic changes. Children's services strategic leaders have plans to deal with this issue across children's social care and its partners to ensure policies and practices do not result in children being brought into the criminal justice system unnecessarily.

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

There is a clear framework for out-of-court disposals and all referrals are coordinated by the seconded police officer. The referral documentation includes the arresting police officer's view on what they think the outcome for the child should be. The referral is presented to the diversion panel, a triage process that checks if the child or their family are already known to other agencies. A decision is made on whether a restorative process can be used for a specific focused session with the child, whether a community resolution, youth caution or youth conditional caution is appropriate or whether an assessment is required. For cases where an assessment is required, an 'asset lite' is completed and presented to the youth outcome panel. The panel then agrees the out-of-court disposal and the interventions to be delivered.

By moving into Early Help Services, the YJS has enhanced its partnership arrangements with targeted youth support, the children's alcohol and substance misuse service, parenting services, youth outreach services and Headstart, which is the children's emotional, mental health and wellbeing team.

The 'Refresh' organisation provides the children's alcohol and substance misuse service. It prioritises YJS referrals and works alongside YJS colleagues in providing interventions to children. Targeted youth support works with 16 to 25-year-olds who are at risk of homelessness. This includes prevention work with families when the child is referred by the YJS to try and keep them, if appropriate, in the family home.

The neighbourhood nuisance team has a dedicated worker to provide interventions for children on 'acceptable behaviour contracts' who works alongside YJS staff. They work with families on tenancy agreements and provide parenting support. The YJS also has links with the voluntary and community sector, including Cornerhouse, which provides specific interventions for girls.

Feedback from the local court sentencers is that input from YJS officers in court, and information in pre-sentence reports, demonstrates that they have a good knowledge and are well prepared; they provide high-quality reports and there are regular updates and feedback from the YJS.

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

There are no health or education staff seconded to the YJS, although there are pathways for children to access provision through link workers. For example, forensic child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) aim to start work with children within a few weeks of referral and, if there is consent, will complete a forensic assessment and intervention sessions, if needed. There is access to a psychiatric nurse and a psychologist who will offer consultation sessions as well. If the child is displaying harmful sexual behaviour and there is an identified mental health need, then they will work alongside the YJS case manager. CAMHS will fast-track any referrals received from the YJS, although there is a lengthy delay for assessments for neuro-developmental disorders. The YJS can access Mind, which deals with children's low mood and anxiety, and Headstart, a child psychology service providing emotional resilience coaching. Although there is a waiting list for Headstart, children known to the YJS are prioritised.

The YJS has commissioned its speech, language and communication services through Bridge Speech & Language Therapy Services, although this arrangement is due to

finish. The CCG has recognised that this is a gap for the local authority generally and is working with the YJS to ensure future provision is established at the Kastor Centre.

The YJS has a strong relationship with Rise, the pupil referral unit (PRU). It ensures that the child's curriculum considers the work being undertaken by the YJS and other agencies in order to complement and support the interventions. It is acknowledged that more work with outreach services is needed to support schools in managing children's emotional, mental health and wellbeing needs. Work to prevent school exclusion is ongoing, including multi-agency discussions before a child is excluded.

Hull still has a Connexions service, which aims to tackle children not in education, employment or training. It has close links to the YJS and works with post 16-year-olds. Children in year 11 at risk of becoming not in education, employment or training are offered further support, interventions and advice from the careers advisors. There is also a youth employment initiative team based in the Kastor Centre who work alongside the YJS case manager in identifying education, training and employment opportunities. In the cases that were inspected, there was evidence of these two services working together successfully to find education, training and employment provision for children.

There is a recognition that staff in children's social care have been through some challenging times recently. Although there is no joint work on harmful sexual behaviour, YJS staff are invited and attend all meetings regarding children in need, children on a child protection plan and Looked After Children. There is an 'edge-of-care' service (Connect) and a YJS representative sits on the weekly edge-of-care panel. Multi-agency plans are shared, and there are joint interventions to work with children and their families to prevent them escalating into care proceedings.

Hull has a 'vulnerable exploited missing' team, who have daily meetings that include a YJS representative to track these vulnerable children who are often known to the YJS. Multi-agency plans agreed encourage a creative response to reduce the risk of these children becoming exploited. The strategic lead for early help and youth justice services leads the contextual safeguarding group, recently re-established to coordinate the partnership response to child criminal exploitation.

The probation officer (now the senior youth justice officer) works with those children transitioning to probation services from aged 17 and six months and coaches them through the process. They include parents and carers so that they understand the differences in processes and expectations between the children's and the adult criminal justice agencies. They ensure that all interventions are either completed or adapted to be delivered by the probation service. They lead the three-way transition meetings with the new responsible officer and the child.

All high risk of harm, reoffending, and safety and wellbeing cases are expected to be referred to a 'pod' for a reflective discussion. However, in practice the inspection found that this did not always happen. The inspectors were concerned about whether this was the appropriate arena for the risk management of high-risk cases. The risk management process was further complicated by the recent introduction of a multi-agency risk management panel chaired by a senior probation officer. Its purpose is to hear cases that need escalating and require additional resources from agencies in order to manage the risk that is posed. The relationship between these two meetings, the framework and the process for managing all high-risk cases are confused and need clarity.

## Involvement of children and their parents and carers

Feedback from all surveys, including those completed by children, families and the court, are collated and reported to the management board quarterly. In the ongoing development of the Kastor Centre, the views of children and families were sought about its set-up, design and decoration. Children's artwork is part of the décor in both the Kastor Centre and Kenworthy House (where YJS staff share premises with partner agencies).

As part of the inspection process, children are invited to participate in a text survey. Unfortunately, the number of children who returned the survey was low, but all of the five responses rated the YJS as seven or more out of 10 (with 10 being 'fantastic'). One child said:

*"I have a good working bond with my worker and the work we do is alright."*

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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
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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?**

There is a full range of policies and guidance, including relevant safeguarding policies and procedures, which are accessible to staff. Staff are kept up to date with any changes in guidance through the weekly practice discussions.

Information-sharing protocols are in place across the partnership, and there is evidence of a shared understanding of their application. There is an escalation process for all partners to help in challenging another agency, which is used by YJS, and staff reported feeling supported by managers when raising concerns.

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

In a previous role in the YJS, the service manager highlighted to partners the need for a suitable venue in which to see YJS children. Given an old run-down school building, the service manager's determination and tenacity over the years led to funds becoming available for its renovation; the Kastor Centre is now a multi-agency delivery centre for children known to the YJS. It is an excellent facility that enables children who will not always access mainstream provision to have their own centre that they can use at their own convenience. They can access showers and clothes-washing facilities, computers and phones, and there is a kitchen for teaching life skills. A range of partner agency staff use the centre throughout the week, including the youth employment initiative team, substance misuse services and a resident artist who leads weekly sessions.

Staff can work either from the Kastor Centre or Kenworthy House, where the YJS shares an office with other partners, has access to interviewing facilities and jointly

runs the duty system with other agencies. Both offices are city-centre-based and easily accessible for children and families. Post-Covid-19 restrictions, it is envisaged that staff will balance their time between working in the office accommodation available and home working.

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

Information sharing is promoted by YJS staff having access to the children's social care system and relevant partners having access to the YJS case management system. The YJS case management system enables performance management data to be produced.

As a result of Covid-19, all staff, including those normally office-based, were issued with laptops and phones. The service bought e-readers and dongles for children with no access to the internet.

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

The YJS has a monitoring system for quality assuring work. All assessments are countersigned, and feedback is given to practitioners. Managers complete a monthly full case review based on a theme and the audit findings, which are benchmarked, are fed back to staff in a reflective one-to-one discussion. Any themes that emerge from the audit are cross-referenced and shared at the practice discussion meeting. The service has recently introduced peer reviewing and will monitor the impact of this on improving the quality of casework. Service managers across the partnership will complete multi-agency audits on cases from different services and share the findings to improve the quality of joint working.

There is evidence that the YJS reviews cases when serious incidents occur and learns from the outcomes of other areas' inspections to improve practice.

## 2. Court disposals

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We took a detailed look at 20 community sentences managed by the YJS and 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 done to address desistance. For services to keep the child safe, we assessed the quality of planning, implementation and reviewing in all cases. Similarly, for work to keep others safe, we assessed the quality of planning, implementation and reviewing in the 19 cases where meaningful work was required.

Over 80 per cent of cases met all our requirements for planning, service delivery and reviewing for desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others, which has led to our judgement of 'Outstanding'. Similarly, a judgement of 'Outstanding' was given to assessing desistance and a child's safety and wellbeing. For assessing risk of harm to others, less than 80 per cent of cases met all our standards, which led to our judgement of 'Good' for this element of work.

Professional discretion was applied at the ratings panel to the results of the assessing standard. As the lowest percentage at the key question level was close to the rating boundary, the case data was reviewed. According to the inspectors, the level of risk in some cases regarding very high and high risk of harm to others was assessed too highly. This impacted on the quality of how the assessment analysed controls and interventions to manage and minimise the risk of harm presented by the child, with only 45 per cent being sufficient. The ratings panel agreed that professional discretion should be applied to assessing risk of harm to others and the judgement moved from 'Outstanding' to 'Good'.

Assessment is outstanding in the areas of desistance and assessing a child's safety and wellbeing. Case managers consider the child's strengths and protective factors and include their parents' and carers' views in the assessment. Assessing a child's risk of harm to others is good, but improvements should be made to analysing controls and interventions to manage and minimise the risk of harm to others.

Planning is outstanding in all three areas. It takes account of the diversity and social context of the child, considers their strengths and protective factors as well as their level of maturity and motivation to change. When planning for the child's safety and wellbeing, their risks are addressed, and other agencies are appropriately involved. The concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims are considered when planning for the risk of harm to others, although setting out the contingency arrangements to manage risk could be improved.

Implementation and delivery of services are again outstanding in all three areas of desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others. There is an excellent interventions catalogue that staff regularly use, and an assistant youth justice officer is the programme lead and gives advice and help to practitioners to develop one-to-one interventions.

Reviewing is outstanding in all three areas. Case managers consider the child's motivation, include the involvement of other agencies and adjust the ongoing plan accordingly.

In assessments, case managers need to consider the wishes of victims and use the services provided by the victim officer in all their cases, as only 13 out of 19 cases

evidenced that victims had been contacted or their views sought. This was improved when case managers were developing plans as 15 out of 19 relevant cases considered the victims' wishes. Including children and their parents or carers and taking account of their views, however, was evident in 80 per cent of cases.

### Strengths:

- Assessment is outstanding in the areas of desistance and assessing a child's safety and wellbeing.
- Planning, implementation and delivery of services and reviewing are outstanding in all three areas of desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others.
- Case managers consider the child's strengths and protective factors as well as their level of maturity and motivation to change.
- There is an excellent interventions catalogue that staff regularly use.
- Case managers include children and their parents or carers and take account of their views at each stage of case management.

### Areas for improvement:

- The level of risk in some cases regarding very high and high risk of harm to others was assessed too highly.
- Case managers need to consider the wishes of victims and use the services provided by the victim officer in all relevant cases.

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 and carers.

Good

Our rating<sup>14</sup> for assessment is based on the following key questions:

	% yes
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	<b>80%</b>
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	95%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	<b>80%*</b>

\*Professional discretion applied.

<sup>14</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 Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

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

In most cases inspected, the assessment had sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child's attitudes towards, and motivation for, their offending. In 80 per cent of cases, staff considered the diversity and wider social context of the child by using information held by other agencies. In all but two cases, the assessment focused on the child's strengths and their protective factors, and most cases recognised their level of maturity, ability and motivation to change.

One inspector noted:

*"The assessment provides a clear view of the child's life factors that may have contributed to their offending, such as attitudes to weapons, drugs and peer influences, balanced against protective factors, such as their educational ability and appropriate goal setting."*

The views of the child and their parents or carers were considered in 80 per cent of cases. The needs and wishes of the victim were taken into account in only 68 per cent of the relevant cases, therefore limiting the opportunity for restorative justice.

The factors that are most related to a child's offending are self-identity, lifestyle, substance misuse and living arrangements. In 80 per cent of cases, the assessment sufficiently analysed how to address these factors and support desistance.

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

In 85 per cent of cases, staff identified and analysed the risks to a child's safety and wellbeing. In all cases, assessments drew appropriately on assessments or information held by other agencies. In only 65 per cent of cases had staff given enough attention to analysing the controls or interventions that best promoted the child's safety and wellbeing. Inspectors judged that the safety and wellbeing classification was reasonable in 90 per cent of cases. Overall, the assessment sufficiently analysed how to keep the child safe in 95 per cent of the cases inspected.

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

In three-quarters of cases, assessments identified and analysed any risk of harm to others posed by the child, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk. Similarly, in 75 per cent of cases, staff used available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involved other agencies where appropriate in the assessments.

Inspectors judged that the case manager's assessment of the level of risk of serious harm was reasonable in 79 per cent of cases. In 80 per cent of cases, the assessment analysed how to keep other people safe.

In the opinion of the inspectors, the level of risk in some cases regarding very high and high risk of harm to others was assessed too highly. This impacted on the quality of how the assessment analysed controls and interventions to manage and minimise the risk of harm presented by the child with only 45 per cent being sufficient. As the lowest percentage at the key question level was close to the rating boundary, the case data was reviewed. Professional discretion was applied, and the rating moved from 'Outstanding' to 'Good'.

One inspector noted:

*“Assessment is not based on imminency and impact. Whilst it considered previous behaviours ... there was insufficient analysis and understanding of the risks these represented.”*

Overall, the quality of assessments of a child’s desistance, and safety and wellbeing were judged to be ‘Outstanding’ and when assessing their risk of harm to others this was rated as ‘Good’.

## 2.2. Planning



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

Outstanding

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

	% yes
Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child’s desistance?	90%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe? <sup>16</sup>	85%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe? <sup>17</sup>	<b>84%</b>

### Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child’s desistance?

Overall, planning supported the child’s desistance in 90 per cent of the cases inspected.

In all but two cases, staff set out the services most likely to support desistance, took account of the diversity and social context of the child, and considered the child’s strengths and protective factors. In 95 per cent of cases, staff thought about the child’s level of maturity and how this affected their ability and motivation to change. In nearly all cases, there was evidence that the child and their parents or carers had been involved in the planning and their views taken into account. The needs and wishes of victims were considered in 15 of the relevant 19 cases. This was demonstrated in one case, where the inspector noted:

*“Planning identified education, training and employment and substance misuse services to be involved and, drawing from information collected by the victim officer, was guided by the victim’s wishes.”*

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

Overall, planning focused on keeping the child safe in 85 per cent of the cases inspected. The risks to a child’s safety and wellbeing were addressed in 90 per cent

<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, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

<sup>16</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping the child safe.

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

of cases, and in most cases planning involved other agencies; however, contingency arrangements to manage those risks were not identified in six of the 20 relevant cases.

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

There was sufficient planning to promote the safety of others in 89 per cent of the cases inspected, and most cases involved other agencies, where appropriate. Planning to address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims was evident in 79 per cent of relevant cases.

Planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety of other people in 79 per cent of cases. Effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that had been identified, however, were not evident in seven out of the relevant 19 cases inspected. There was sufficient planning to keep other people safe in 84 per cent of cases and, overall, the quality of planning was judged to be 'Outstanding'.

<b>2.3. Implementation and delivery</b>	
High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child.	Outstanding

Our rating<sup>18</sup> for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

	% yes
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance?	<b>90%</b>
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child safe? <sup>19</sup>	<b>90%</b>
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people? <sup>20</sup>	100%

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

Overall, the delivery of services supported the child's desistance in 90 per cent of cases inspected. In all but two cases, the services delivered were those most likely to support desistance, and all cases reflected the diversity and wider social context of the child. The child's strengths and protective factors were built on in 90 per cent of cases.

In all but one case, it was clear that staff focused on maintaining an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers.

<sup>18</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 Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

<sup>19</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping the child safe.

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

The following comment from an inspector demonstrates this:

*“The case manager worked hard to try to establish a working relationship with the child, being flexible to their needs, appointments via telephone, video calls, doorstep visits and within the children’s home when Covid-19 restrictions allowed.”*

In all cases, the case manager had encouraged the child’s compliance with their court order and had taken enforcement action when this was appropriate.

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

The delivery of services to promote the child’s safety and wellbeing was evident in 90 per cent of cases, and the case manager had coordinated the involvement of other organisations in all but one of the relevant cases. Overall, the implementation and delivery of services effectively supported the safety of the child in nearly all of the cases inspected.

One inspector noted:

*“Given the complex needs of the child there has been an appropriate level of partner engagement, managed through monthly core group meetings, which have been well represented by children’s social care, health agencies, education services and psychologists.”*

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

Services delivered to keep other people safe, by managing and minimising the risk of harm, were evident in 89 per cent of the cases inspected, and in all of the relevant cases staff had coordinated the involvement of other agencies. The protection of actual and potential victims had been considered in all of the cases and, overall, the safety of other people was effectively supported in every case inspected.

## **2.4. Reviewing**



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

**Outstanding**

Our rating<sup>21</sup> for reviewing is based on the following key questions:

	<b>% yes</b>
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child’s desistance?	100%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	100%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	<b>92%</b>

<sup>21</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 Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

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

Case managers are aware that children's circumstances can change rapidly, and that this can result in an increase, or sometimes decrease, in the likelihood of reoffending, risk of harm to others or risks to their safety and wellbeing.

Reviews resulted in the identification of, and a subsequent response to, changes in the factors linked to desistance in all of the cases inspected. They built on the child's strengths in most cases, and considered their motivation and engagement levels in all cases. The child and their parents or carers had been meaningfully involved in the process, and their views taken into account, in all but one case.

In the majority of cases, the review led to changes in the plan of work and, overall, every case inspected focused sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance.

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

As with desistance, the quality of reviewing a child's safety and wellbeing was outstanding. Case managers identified and responded to changes in their safety and wellbeing in 93 per cent of relevant cases. In all cases, information from other agencies had been considered, and the reviewing process had led to the necessary changes in the ongoing plan. Overall, reviewing focused sufficiently on keeping the child safe in all 14 cases inspected.

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

In all relevant cases, the case manager had identified, and responded to, changes in risk, and had taken account of information from other agencies. In nearly all cases, the child and their parents or carers had been meaningfully involved in reviewing the risk of harm to others, and had their views considered. In 11 out of 12 relevant cases, the reviewing process led to necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to manage and minimise these risks. Overall, reviewing focused on keeping other people safe in 92 per cent of cases. For example, one inspector noted:

*"There is evidence of an ongoing review in terms of safety of others and classification reduced to medium risk. The initial plan has been revised in light of some requirements being completed. Police intelligence has been actively sought and incorporated into the review."*



### 3. Out-of-court disposals

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We inspected 13 cases managed by the YJS that had received an out-of-court disposal. These consisted of one youth conditional caution (YCC) and 12 community resolutions. We interviewed the case managers in all 13 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 services to keep the child safe, we only assessed the quality of planning and implementation in the 11 cases where we expected meaningful work to take place. Similarly, for work to keep others safe, we assessed the quality of planning and implementation in the eight cases where meaningful work was required. We inspected the quality of YJS recommendations and joint decision-making in all cases, and the effectiveness of joint working with the police in the one YCC case only.

In this service, over 80 per cent of cases met all our requirements for planning, service delivery and joint working for desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others, which has led to our judgement of 'Outstanding'. Similarly, a judgement of 'Outstanding' was given to assessing desistance and a child's safety and wellbeing. For assessing risk of harm to others, 77 per cent of cases met all our standards, which led to our judgement of 'Good' for this element of work.

Assessment was outstanding in the areas of desistance and assessing a child's safety and wellbeing. Case managers considered the child's strengths and protective factors and the needs and wishes of victims and included their parents' or carers' views in the assessment. Improvement can be made when assessing a child's level of maturity and motivation to change. Assessing a child's risk of harm to others was good, but inspectors judged that the case managers level of risk classification was not reasonable in four out of 13 cases.

Planning was outstanding in all three areas. It set out the services most likely to support desistance and took account of the diversity and social context of the child. Opportunities for community integration were considered, as was the child's level of maturity and motivation to change. More could be done, however, to ensure that planning takes account of the child's strengths and protective factors. Case managers considered the needs and wishes of victims and included the child and parents or carers in the planning process. When planning for the child's safety and wellbeing and their risk of harm to others, there could be improvement in setting out the contingency arrangements to manage risk.

Implementation and delivery of services were also outstanding in all three areas of desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others. Case managers focused on developing and maintaining a good working relationship with children and families. Other organisations were involved in delivering services to help support the safety of the child, and consideration was given to the protection of actual and potential victims when supporting the safety of other people.

Case managers considered the child's understanding of the offence and their acknowledgement of responsibility when making out-of-court disposal recommendations. More could be done, however, to ensure that in every case the child and their parents or carers understand the implications of receiving these disposals.

### **Strengths:**

- Assessment was outstanding in the areas of desistance and supporting a child's safety and wellbeing.
- Planning and delivering services were outstanding in all three areas of desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others.
- Case managers took into account the child's strengths and protective factors and included their parents' or carers' views in the assessment.
- The needs and wishes of victims and opportunities for restorative processes were considered as part of the assessment.
- Case managers took into account the protection of actual and potential victims when supporting the safety of other people.
- Case managers focused on developing and maintaining a good working relationship with children and families.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Case managers needed to assess a child's level of maturity and ensure that planning took account of their strengths and protective factors.
- Contingency arrangements were needed in planning to support the child's safety and wellbeing and managing their risk of harm to others.
- Staff needed to ensure that in every case the child and their parents or carers understood the implications of receiving an out-of-court disposal.

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 and carers.

Good

Our rating<sup>22</sup> for assessment is based on the following key questions:

	<b>% yes</b>
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	85%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	85%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	<b>77%</b>

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

There was sufficient analysis of offending behaviour in 85 per cent of cases. The assessment considered the diversity of the child and their strengths and protective factors in all but two cases. Case managers had involved the child and their parents or carers in the assessment and taken their views into account in most cases. The child's level of maturity, ability and motivation to change were considered in 69 per cent of cases. The needs and wishes of victims had been taken into account in nearly all of the relevant cases.

In one case, the inspector noted:

*"The assessment is well informed by the child and parent interviews, as well as contact with the social worker already linked to the child. There is also a speech and language screening tool completed to determine any communication issues. The concluding document gives a clear view of the child's life, at home, in school and their attitude towards others."*

The factors in out-of-court disposals that relate most to a child's offending are substance misuse, lifestyle and resilience, and in 85 per cent of cases the assessment sufficiently analysed how to address these factors and support desistance.

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

As with assessing desistance, assessing a child's safety and wellbeing was also rated as 'Outstanding'. In 11 out of 13 cases, the risk to the child's safety and wellbeing had been identified and analysed appropriately by the case manager. Staff had used information from other agencies in 85 per cent of the cases inspected. Inspectors judged that the case manager's safety and wellbeing risk classification was

<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, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

reasonable in most of the relevant cases. Overall, the assessment analysed how to keep the child safe in 85 per cent of cases.

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

In six out of eight relevant cases, the assessment identified and analysed the risk of harm to others, including who is at risk and the nature of the risk. The case manager had used available sources of information, including other assessments, to inform their own judgement in three-quarters of the cases. Inspectors judged that the level of risk of harm to others was reasonable in 69 per cent of cases and, overall, the assessment sufficiently analysed how to keep other people safe in 77 per cent of cases.

## 3.2. Planning



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

Outstanding

Our rating<sup>23</sup> for planning is based on the following key questions:

	<b>% yes</b>
Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?	85%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe? <sup>24</sup>	<b>82%</b>
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe? <sup>25</sup>	88%

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

Overall, planning sufficiently supported the child's desistance in 85 per cent of cases. In all but one case, staff delivered the services most likely to support desistance, paying attention to appropriate timescales and sequencing. In most cases, planning took sufficient account of the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child, and in 85 per cent of cases, the case manager considered their level of maturity and motivation to change. In five out of 13 cases, staff had not taken account of the child's strengths and protective factors, and planning was not proportionate to the disposal type, meaning interventions might not be completed within the timescales.

In 92 per cent of cases, staff had involved the child and their parents or carers in the planning process, and in all cases the needs and wishes of victims had been considered.

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

In 82 per cent of cases, planning promoted the safety and wellbeing of the child and most cases included information from other agencies where relevant. Contingency

<sup>23</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 Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

<sup>24</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping the child safe.

<sup>25</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping other people safe.

arrangements for any changes to the level of risk were only evident in just over half of the cases and, overall, planning focused on keeping the child safe in 82 per cent of the cases inspected.

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

Overall, planning that focused on keeping people safe was evident in all but one case. Planning to address the factors related to the risk of harm to others was evident in 88 per cent of cases and involved other agencies in all of the relevant cases. Planning contingency arrangements to manage those risks was not identified in three out of eight cases, but planning to address concerns related to actual and potential victims was evident in 86 per cent of the relevant cases inspected. The following, noted by an inspector, demonstrated this:

*“There is a clear plan to develop the child’s understanding of their role within the family and family relationships. The victim officer spoke with the mother in preparation for planning to ensure that her wishes, as the victim, were taken into account and a victim safety matrix completed.”*

### 3.3. Implementation and delivery



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

Outstanding

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

	<b>% yes</b>
Does service delivery effectively support the child’s desistance?	<b>85%</b>
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child? <sup>27</sup>	91%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people? <sup>28</sup>	88%

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

Overall, support for the child’s desistance was evident in 85 per cent of the cases inspected. Interventions to support desistance had been delivered in good time in most cases. They reflected the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child, involving parents or carers in all cases.

The delivery of the interventions was proportionate to the disposal in 77 per cent of cases and promoted opportunities for community integration and access to mainstream services in 92 per cent of cases.

With interventions now delivered one to one and no longer as part of a groupwork programme, case managers were able to develop an effective working relationship

<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 Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

<sup>27</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping the child safe.

<sup>28</sup> This question is only relevant in cases where there are factors related to keeping other people safe.

with the child and their parents or carers. This was evident in all of the cases inspected. Similarly, there was evidence that they encouraged and enabled the child’s compliance in all of the cases.

One inspector noted:

*“During the duration of the disposal the case manager has maintained regular contact with the family and partner agencies to help in delivering interventions to the child and monitoring their behaviour. In terms of interventions, there is good evidence of joint working with the social worker to deliver an emotional resilience programme. The case manager has also been creative [in] delivering a victim awareness session during a dog walking session to adapt to the child’s learning style. In addition, the exit plan links to continued support, a community mentor and ongoing work from the social worker.”*

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

Promoting the safety and wellbeing of the child through service delivery was evident in nearly all of the cases, and case managers involved other agencies in keeping children safe in all but one of the relevant cases. Overall, service delivery supported the safety of the child in 91 per cent of the cases inspected.

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

For keeping other people safe, case managers had considered the protection of actual and potential victims in all but one of the relevant cases. The services delivered, managed and minimised the risk of harm in nearly all of the relevant cases and, overall, the safety of other people was supported effectively in 88 per cent of the cases inspected.

## **3.4. Joint working**



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

**Outstanding**

Our rating<sup>29</sup> for joint working is based on the following key questions:

	<b>% yes</b>
Are the YJS’s recommendations sufficiently well-informed, analytical and personalised to the child, supporting joint decision-making?	100%
Does the YJS work effectively with the police in implementing the out-of-court disposal? <sup>30</sup>	100%

<sup>29</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 Annexe 1 for a more detailed explanation.

<sup>30</sup> This question is only relevant in youth conditional caution cases.

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

The recommendations made by the YJS were appropriate and proportionate in 83 per cent of cases, although no recommendation had been made in one out of 13 cases. In all cases, the case manager considered the child's understanding of the offence and their acknowledgement of responsibility. Again, in all cases there was evidence that the YJS had made a positive contribution to determining the out-of-court disposal.

In four out of 13 cases, however, case managers had not ensured that the child and their parents or carers understood the implications of receiving an out-of-court disposal.

In all cases, the information provided to inform decision-making was timely and met the needs of the case. Overall, every case inspected showed that the YJS recommendations had been well informed, analytical and personalised to the child and therefore supported joint decision-making.

One inspector noted:

*“There was a clear outline of the child's views and their understanding, along with their mother's, and the recommendation was appropriate given the nature of the offence and lack of any previous involvement with services.”*

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

In the case sample, only one case required the case manager to report on progress to the police, and this had been completed promptly. Evidence in the case indicated that sufficient attention had been given to compliance with, and enforcement of, the conditions. Overall, this case showed that the YJS worked effectively with the police in implementing the out-of-court disposal.

## Annexe 1: Methodology

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### HM Inspectorate of Probation standards

The standards against which we inspect youth justice 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>31</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 justice services, regardless of size, are inspected to highlight good practice and to identify areas for improvement. Of course, some YJSs have very small caseloads and so any percentages or figures quoted in these reports need to be read with care. However, all domain two samples, even for the smallest YJS, meet an 80 per cent confidence level, and in some of the smaller YJSs inspectors may be assessing most or all of that service's cases.

### Domain one: organisational delivery

The youth justice service submitted evidence in advance and the board chair delivered a presentation covering the following areas:

- How do organisational delivery arrangements in this area make sure that the work of your youth justice service 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 33 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 12 meetings, which included meetings with managers, partner organisations and staff. The evidence collected under this domain was judged against our published ratings characteristics.<sup>31</sup>

### 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 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 closely involved in the case also took place.

We examined 20 court disposals. The sample size was set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of five), 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.

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<sup>31</sup> HM Inspectorate of Probation standards are available here:

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

### 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 who had received out-of-court disposals three to five months earlier. This enabled us to examine work in relation to assessing, planning, implementing and joint working. Where necessary, interviews with other people closely involved in the case also took place.

We examined 13 out-of-court disposals. The sample size was set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of five), 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.

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 20 court disposals and 13 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.

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 ☆

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 when 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 10 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 0-36 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.