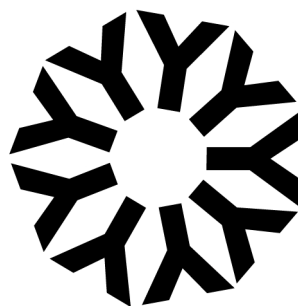


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# Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Report on:  
Brighton and Hove  
Youth Offending Team

2006

## Foreword

The inspection of Brighton and Hove Youth Offending Team took place during the third phase of our programme. We found a team with a number of strengths reinforced by effective partnership work and a committed staff group that together provided a sound basis for further development. The Management Group was chaired by the Chief Executive and had appropriately senior attendees. Governance arrangements were being reviewed to ensure that the group could provide better opportunities for scrutiny of the Youth Offending Team's performance.

The team was well linked into preventative programmes and was working to ensure that promising early interventions were sustainable. Good work was being undertaken within the courts, including notable improvements to bail and remand services. Some innovative practice was seen with children and young people coming to the Youth Offending Team and diversity issues were taken into account in the vast majority of interventions seen. Work to support parents and carers was well received by those involved.

There were, however, areas for improvement. The quality of assessment and management of Risk of Harm required development and the Youth Offending Team also needed to consolidate its efforts around evaluating the effectiveness of interventions. Work with victims was not yet sufficiently embedded across the team.

Whilst recognising the work required, we are confident that the Youth Offending Team has the determination and expertise to progress. The report contains a number of recommendations that we believe will assist the team to move forward.

*Andrew Bridges*  
*HM Chief Inspector of Probation*

*September 2006*

Fieldwork for this inspection was undertaken in April and June 2006.

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## Glossary

ACE	Alternative Centre for Children
ACPC	Area Child Protection Committee
APA	Annual Performance Assessment
APIS	Assessment Planning Interventions Supervision
ASB	Antisocial behaviour
Asset	Assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
CFSD	Children, Families and School's Directorate
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CSCI	Commission for Social Care Inspection
CYPT	Children and Young People's Trust
DAAT	Drug and Alcohol Action Team
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DTO	Detention and Training Order
eB4U	East-Brighton4U
EPQA	Effective Practice Quality Assurance
Estyn	HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
ETE	Employment, Training and Education
HMIC	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMI Prisons	HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
ISP	Initial Supervision Plan
ISSP	Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme
JAR	Joint Area Review
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LAA	Local authority accommodation
LAC	Looked After Children
LSC	Learning Skills Council
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements

NEET	Not in Education, Employment and Training
NHS	National Health Service
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
Onset	Assessment tool used with children at risk of offending
PA	Personal Assistant
PAYP	Positive activities for young people
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PIMS	Patient Information Management System
PSR	Pre-sentence report
PYO	Persistent young offender
RAP	Responsible Authorities Partnership
RoH	Risk of Harm
RUOK	Children and young people's substance misuse service
SEN	Special educational need
SLA	Service level agreement
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bounded
SQIFA	Mental health screening interview for adolescents
SSIW	Social Services Inspectorate for Wales
STC	Secure Training centre
TACT	Treatment, Assessment, Consultation and Training
VLO	Victim liaison officer
WPI	Wales Programme for Improvement
YIP	Youth Inclusion Programme
YISP	Youth Inclusion Support Panel
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YMCA	Christian charity supporting young people
YOI	Youth Offender Institution
YOIS	Youth Offender Information System
YOT	Youth Offending Team

## Introduction

The joint Youth Offending Team inspection programme began in September 2003 and is the first full inspection programme to examine the work of the Youth Offending Teams. The programme is being implemented in three phases and covers all 155 Youth Offending Teams in England and Wales over a five year cycle.

This, the third phase of the inspection, started in September 2005 and includes all Youth Offending Teams not previously inspected in phases one and two. Its methodology has been developed to complement that of the Joint Area Reviews of Children's Services in England, and inspections undertaken as part of the Wales Programme for Improvement, and of Youth Support Services under the Learning and Skills Act 2000 in Wales. Although the Youth Offending Team programme remains a separate process in both England and Wales, inspections are conducted within a similar timeframe as these other inspection arrangements wherever possible, so that any areas of potential overlap or duplication can be rationalised and reduced.

The Youth Offending Team inspection covers five core areas of work:

- ◆ management and partnership arrangements, including the role and functioning of the local Board
- ◆ work in the courts
- ◆ work with children and young people in the community
- ◆ work with children and young people subject to detention and training orders
- ◆ victims and restorative justice.

Findings from the Youth Offending Team inspection inform not only the Joint Area Review but also the Corporate Assessment, Annual Performance Assessment and Comprehensive Performance Assessment in England, and in Wales inspections undertaken as part of the Wales Programme for Improvement and of Youth Support Services.

On conclusion of the inspection, the Youth Offending Team is asked to prepare an action plan responding to the recommendations. Once agreed, the action plan is forwarded to the Youth Justice Board to monitor its implementation.

## Overview

- ◆ Brighton and Hove City Council is a unitary authority on the south coast of England and one of the country's most famous seaside city resorts. It sits between East and West Sussex and is bordered to the north by the South Downs.
- ◆ Unemployment in Brighton and Hove is above national and regional averages and earnings are below national averages. There are significant pockets of deprivation principally within the centre and east of the city. The city has five wards that include areas ranked within the 5% most deprived in England.
- ◆ The city has a total population of 247,817, measured in the Census 2001. Of this population, 18.6% were aged 0-17 years at the time of the census. This figure was lower than the average for England, which was 22.7%.
- ◆ Brighton and Hove has a predominantly white population, 94.3%, above the average for England of 90.9%. The percentage of Asian or Asian British residents, 1.24%, was much lower than the average for England of 4.6%. The percentage of Black or Black British residents, at 1.5%, was lower than the English average of 2.3%. However, 8.8% of the city's children and young people aged 0-19 are black or minority ethnic.
- ◆ The area also has significant lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities that are believed to be among the highest in the country.
- ◆ There were a higher percentage of students resident in Brighton and Hove at the time of the census, both economically active and inactive, at 11.1% compared to 7.3% in England. The percentage of permanently sick or disabled residents equalled the English average of 5.3%.
- ◆ Brighton and Hove Council was classified as good in the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment 2004.
- ◆ The Youth Justice Board figures for youth offending for the period April 2005 to March 2006 show that 59 offences were committed per 1000 children and young people aged 0-17 years in Brighton and Hove.
- ◆ The Youth Justice Board summary of the Youth Offending Team's overall performance for year end March 2006 awarded Brighton and Hove YOT a performance level of 4.

## Scoring summary

**4: Excellent; 3: Good; 2: Adequate; 1: Inadequate.**

	Section score
Management	<b>2</b>
Work in the courts	<b>3</b>
Work with children and young people in the community	<b>2</b>
Work with children and young people subject to DTOs	<b>3</b>
Victims and restorative justice	<b>2</b>
<b>Overall assessment</b>	

The Responsible Authorities Partnership functioned as the Youth Offending Team's Steering Group and also as the drug and alcohol action team. It was chaired by the Chief Executive of the local authority and was well attended by appropriately senior representatives from the statutory partners. The structure of the Responsible Authorities Partnership/drug and alcohol action team did not allow sufficient opportunity to focus on the Youth Offending Team and provide the necessary strategic steer. Performance management within the Youth Offending Team was not yet sufficiently rigorous across all areas of practice.

Work with the courts was good. There was a wide range of preventative programmes that the Youth Offending Team was well linked into, and effective partnership work in this area was further enhanced by a strong relationship between the Youth Offending Team and the multi-agency community safety team. An adequate range of interventions to address offending behaviour was seen, with some examples of innovative practice. Work to reintegrate children and young people into the community following a custodial sentence was good. Parenting interventions were well regarded by many of those who took part, but work with victims required a higher profile across the Youth Offending Team. Further attention needed to be given to the quality of assessment of risk and need. The multi-agency response to the lack of training opportunities for children and young people aged 16 and over had yet to achieve a system wide change and opportunities were still limited.



## **Diversity issues**

The Youth Offending Team was working to attract minority ethnic staff and volunteers to make it more representative of the population it served. We were encouraged to find that actions arising out of the Race Audit, such as diversity training to develop practice in this area, had been pursued. The Youth Justice Plan was scrutinised by the Racial Harassment Forum and a manager of the hate crime team sat on the Responsible Authorities Partnerships/drug and alcohol action team.

The analysis in the Youth Offending Team's Race Audit suggested that black and minority ethnic children and young people were not over-represented in the youth offender population. There was no evidence that these children and young people were treated differently or discriminated against within the criminal justice system locally. The Youth Offending Team was committed to continually monitoring its service delivery by race, and planned to conduct a comparative study of black, minority ethnic and white children and young people who offend.

Appreciation of diversity issues amongst staff was generally good, and children and young people's diversity needs were taken into account in both the planning and delivery of interventions in the vast majority of cases. An innovative project to promote inclusion had been undertaken with a group of socially excluded girls and young women. However, there was no specific practice guidance or interventions for children and young people from minority ethnic backgrounds or those with disabilities.

## Key statistics

Assessment of YOT case files	YOT score	Average for phase two YOTs	Range for phase two YOTs	YJB targets <sup>(1)</sup>
	(% cases)			
Initial assessment completed in accordance with national standards requirements:				
– timeliness	77%	84%	70-97%	100%
– adequate quality	63%	71%	29-93%	
Full Risk of Harm to others completed on relevant cases	60%	54%	17-83%	
Evidence of management oversight in Risk of Harm cases	25%	41%	0-100%	
ISP meets the content requirements of national standards and contains SMART objectives	46%	52%	17-96%	100% <sup>(1)</sup>
Frequency of appointments arranged broadly conform to national standards, to the requirements of order/licence, and to any Risk of Harm considerations	86%	75%	52-100%	
Judgements about acceptability/unacceptability of absences are appropriate	78%	71%	40-96%	
Breach/recall action has taken place, if required, within the national standards timescale	80%	49%	13-100%	
Evidence of any criminal activity during the course of the order	37%	29%	15-48%	
Appropriate action has been taken if a child or young person is considered vulnerable to harm from self and others.	80%	95%	67-100%	
Effective action is taken where there is evidence of educational difficulties	67%	60%	33-81%	90% <sup>(2)</sup>
Appropriate referrals are made in cases of:				
– physical health	33%	n/a	n/a	
– mental/emotional health	52%	n/a	n/a	100% <sup>(3)</sup>
– substance misuse	42%	n/a	n/a	100% <sup>(4)</sup>
Victim was consulted about restorative/reparative justice work with child or young person	81%	45%	6-72%	

- (1) Relates to detention and training plans.  
 (2) In full-time ETE  
 (3) CAMHS referrals.  
 (4) Screening and referrals.

## Key findings

- ◆ **Management** – The Responsible Authorities Partnerships/drug and alcohol action team functioned as the Youth Offending Team’s Steering Group. It was chaired by the Chief Executive and had appropriate senior attendees from both statutory and wider partners. However, the broad remit and correspondingly wide membership undermined its ability to provide a strategic steer to the Youth Offending Team and hold it sufficiently to account. The Youth Offending Team linked well with both children’s services and community safety agencies and was generally held in high regard by its partners. However, work was required to ensure that a service level agreement was in place, outlining roles, responsibilities and issues such as information exchange, with each statutory partner. Though there were some good examples within the Youth Offending Team, performance management was not yet sufficiently rigorous to enable effectiveness to be measured and quality assured across all areas of practice.
- ◆ **Work in the courts** – There were effective working relationships with sentencers and the Youth Offending Team’s work in the courts was described as ‘invaluable’. Remand management was good and court representatives were satisfied with the quality and availability of all bail packages and the willingness of the Youth Offending Team to propose these. Although there were several excellent examples, the standard of court reports was inconsistent and detracted from the overall high quality of work in the courts.
- ◆ **Work with children and young people in the community** – A close working relationship between the partnership community safety team and the Youth Offending Team enhanced the work to divert children and young people from offending and the target for reducing first time entrants into the criminal justice system had been met.

The Youth Offending Team provided an adequate range of interventions to address offending behaviour, with some good examples of innovative practice. Staff were committed to and enthusiastic about their role with children and young people. Specialist health and education staff promoted children and young people’s access to mainstream services and an increasing proportion were in full-time employment, training and education. However, the assessment and referral of health needs to specialist workers in the Youth Offending Team lacked rigour. A Youth Offending Team led ‘Employment Project’ had contributed to an 8% rise in employment. Nonetheless, there remained insufficient training opportunities for children and young people post-16. Greater attention needed to be paid to the use of Asset in general and the assessment and management of high Risk of Harm in particular. More work was required to seek and understand the views of children and young

people involved with the Youth Offending Team. A number of parents/carers were engaged in interventions and the vast majority felt well supported by the Youth Offending Team.

- ◆ ***Work with children and young people subject to DTOs*** – The Youth Offending Team worked hard to facilitate good contact and constructive interventions with children and young people in custody, and promoted the attendance of parents/carers at relevant meetings. However, assessments required some improvement. Overall, work to support children and young people’s reintegration into the community following a custodial sentence was good.
- ◆ ***Victims and restorative justice*** – The victim liaison officer was experienced and committed to the principles of restorative justice. However, work with victims was not supported by a coherent strategy and had too low a profile within the Youth Offending Team. Although the number of victims invited to participate in restorative justice was high, levels of involvement, particularly in the referral order process, were disappointing. A varied programme of reparation work was available and a promising initiative to involve volunteers in victim work was intended to increase the Youth Offending Team’s capacity to engage children and young people in such activity.

## Recommendations

*The Chair of the Management Board should ensure that:*

- ◇ an action plan is devised to address the following recommendations and forwarded to the lead inspector within three months of the publication of this report
- ◇ the Youth Offending Team and the Responsible Authorities Partnership/drug and alcohol action team develop a robust performance management framework to monitor and review the implementation of the Youth Justice Plan and inform the strategic direction of the Youth Offending Team.

*The Youth Offending Team manager should ensure that:*

- ◇ further training is provided to staff to promote:
  - the use of Asset and consistency of assessment across the team
  - a full understanding of internal risk management and Multi-Agency Public Protection processes (ask Andy about case)
  - policy and procedures for the assessment and management of high Risk of Harm are reviewed
- ◇ annual appraisals are conducted with all staff and inductions include a focus on specialist and generic case work, where appropriate
- ◇ performance information, for example from Asset, is monitored and used to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- ◇ referrals to the health team are comprehensive and appropriate and that their specialist skills are being fully utilised
- ◇ children and young people are more widely consulted and their views inform service delivery
- ◇ the profile of victim work using restorative justice principles is raised across the team.

*Partner organisations should ensure that:*

- ◇ protocols, service level agreements and seconding arrangements are appropriately reviewed and updated.

*The Youth Offending Team and the Primary Care Trust should ensure that:*

- ◇ a service level agreement is written governing the delivery of services to the Youth Offending Team and covering issues such as confidentiality and information exchange.

*The Youth Offending Team and Sussex Police should ensure that:*

- ◇ there is good exchange of information, including through better Youth Offending Team representation at appropriate meetings.

*The Youth Offending Team and the local authority should ensure that:*

- ◇ practice continues to develop in between individual schools and the Youth Offending Team in accordance with the relevant service level agreement
- ◇ there is a reduction in the number of children and young people participating in preventative programmes who are not in Employment, Training and Education.

*The Youth Offending Team and the children's social care services should ensure that:*

- ◇ the service level agreement is amended to reflect children's social care service's status as the responsible body for all children and young people remanded to local authority accommodation and practice is in line with this agreement.

*The Youth Offending Team, Sussex Learning Skills Council and Connexions should ensure that:*

- ◇ sufficient training opportunities are provided for children and young people aged 16 and over who offend.

# 1. MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

## 1.1 Leadership

### **Key judgement:**

- ◆ *The Management Board provides strategic oversight and direction, and coordinates the provision of youth justice services by the YOT and partner organisations.*

The council's education and children's social care provision was merged in 2002 under the CFSD. In December 2005 it was agreed that children's services provided by the Children and Families Directorate of South Downs NHS Trust would also be joined to the CFSD to become a single organisation. The CYPT came into existence in April 2006 with area based teams to be established from October 2006.

The YOT was located in the CFSD. It reported locally to the RAP, which acted as its Steering Group and the city's DAAT. The RAP/DAAT also had responsibility for ensuring the effectiveness of the CDRP's work. A performance and monitoring meeting had been set up that sat beneath the RAP/DAAT and whose purpose was to scrutinise performance against targets in the 13 priority areas of the Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy. At the time of inspection this group had only met once and the extent to which it would scrutinise YOT performance was not clear.

The Head of Service was line managed through the Assistant Director for Social Care within the council's CFSD.

### **Strengths:**

- ◆ The RAP/DAAT was chaired by the Chief Executive and had appropriately senior representation from both statutory and wider partners, such as housing, as well as good representation from all the community safety partners.
- ◆ The YOT was held in high regard by members of the RAP/DAAT, including the Chief Executive, who described the YOT as a "model" for other multi-agency teams in the city. Strategically, the YOT was considered to fit well within the city's vision for children and young people, as set out in the Children and Young People's Plan.
- ◆ The YOT manager submitted quarterly performance reports to the RAP/DAAT, which outlined the YOT's performance against the YJB's KPIs. Particular developments linked to national initiatives, such as the emergent Parenting Strategy, were flagged up by the YOT manager for consideration.

- ◆ The council's inclusivity strategy had informed the YOT's '*Statement of Purpose and Values*', which emphasised the importance of anti-discriminatory practice and diversity. A race equality policy was in place and service delivery to children and young people was monitored by race.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ The broad remit and corresponding wide membership of the RAP/DAAT undermined its ability to provide a strategic steer to the YOT and to hold it sufficiently to account. Evidence from the minutes of meetings and from some interviewees suggested that there was not enough time available for discussion of YOT related issues or for rigorous scrutiny of performance. We were told that the RAP/DAAT's confidence in the YOT was the rationale for this 'lighter touch' approach. However, though confidence was justified to some extent by the YOT's performance against KPIs and EPQAs, we felt that the arrangement placed the onus too squarely on the YOT manager to flag up potential problems and possible solutions. Further checks and balances needed to be in place, particularly as the YOT manager was due to take up a fixed-term post outside the YOT in the autumn. This issue had been recognised, and a review of the YOT's governance arrangements in relation to both the CYPT and CDRP/community safety structures, was underway.
- ◆ There were no representatives from the voluntary sector or of service users on the RAP/DAAT.

## 1.2 Partnership and resources

**Key judgement:**

- ◆ *Partner organisations and the YOT work together to deter children and young people from offending.*

From October 2006, the delivery of the council's children's social care services was to be largely integrated into three areas.

**Strengths:**

- ◆ The Youth Justice Plan linked effectively with the Children and Young People's Plan and the Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy.
- ◆ There was adequate investment in the YOT from all partners including health, who contributed 6.5% of the funding. Commissioning of health services for the YOT was well integrated with arrangements for children's services in general and was based on a shared commitment to address inequalities.



- ◇ A pool of YOT volunteers was heavily involved in delivering appropriate adult and mentoring services to vulnerable adults as well as children and young people. Plans were progressing to involve volunteers in the delivery of reparation work.
- ◇ Partnership agreements existed with most key partners including education, Connexions and the police, to support the delivery of the Youth Justice Plan. The YOT manager was proactive in consulting with partners on wider issues thought to affect children and young people. For example, on the role of diet in antisocial behaviour.
- ◇ The relationship between the YOT and probation was described as good by both parties and some joint work was evident around improving the transition of children and young people into the adult estate. The YOT represented the other Sussex YOTs on the MAPPA Steering Group.
- ◇ Probation was aware of its responsibilities as the only criminal justice agency on the Supporting People Commissioning Body, in terms of advocating for the accommodation needs of children and young people. The YOT manager represented CDRP on the Supporting People Strategy Group and had ensured a commitment to children and young people in the Supporting People Plan.
- ◇ There were a number of strategic forums within the local authority, such as the education sub-group, through which the YOT could raise concerns and feed in information on the progress of children and young people who offend. The parent and pupil protocol was reviewed at least every six months.
- ◇ The YOT was a member of the emergent Local Safeguarding Children Board and was involved in the development of a city-wide preventative strategy with the community safety team and CYPT, to provide a tiered response to children and young people and families at risk. The draft strategy was informed by an analysis of risk factors to help determine the areas most in need of preventative input.
- ◇ Strong links between the YOT and the multi-agency community safety team, including joint supervision of the antisocial behaviour coordinator, enhanced partnership work to divert children and young people from antisocial behaviour and offending.

***Areas for improvement:***

- ◇ The SLA with children's social care services and the courts stated that the YOT was the responsible body for those children and young people remanded to LAA who were not already known to social services, and as such, would undertake all LAC procedures. Whilst it was creditable that the YOT was in a good position to discharge its responsibilities for the remand element, it did not have the delegated authority for the accommodation element, which should have sat with children's social care services. This arrangement was therefore unsatisfactory.

- ◇ Sussex Constabulary had taken the decision to withdraw police inspectors from the three YOTs in the county, including Brighton and Hove. There had been a delay in the recruitment of a police constable to the role of YOT police officer, and during this interim period, the quality and extent of communication between the YOT and police had deteriorated.
- ◇ There was no SLA with health, governing issues such as confidentiality and information exchange.
- ◇ SLAs with partner agencies did not consistently include a race equality component.
- ◇ A shared understanding had not yet been reached between staff in the YOT and the ASB teams on the right balance between engagement and enforcement. This apparent difference in ethos had the potential to hamper the further development of effective joint working with children and young people at risk of anti-social behaviour and offending. Managers were taking steps to address this issue.
- ◇ Not all seconded workers within the YOT were subject to formal secondment arrangements. These were being reviewed and rewritten at the time of inspection.

### 1.3 Staff supervision, development and training

**Key judgement:**

- ◇ *Positive outcomes for children and young people are enhanced by effective staff.*

**Strengths:**

- ◇ Clear performance management information specific to KPIs was regularly produced by the information manager and used to inform service managers of performance against national targets. The use of the secure estate and ETE was a particular focus, and information on work with victims had been used to inform service delivery.
- ◇ All but one of the 16 members of staff consulted, said that they received supervision at least every two months and the provision was generally seen as supportive. Arrangements had been made in several cases for specialist staff to receive additional supervision to maintain their professional development.
- ◇ YOT operational managers had an ongoing commitment to maintaining the skills and abilities of experienced court staff, to ensure that the YOT maintained its good service to the courts.
- ◇ Volunteers involved in referral order panels and appropriate adult work had received training in accordance with the YJB's training

manual. There were also regular support meetings to which external speakers would contribute.

- ◆ The administrative team was seen as part of the wider YOT and there was good understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- ◆ All staff, volunteer and sessional workers had been CRB checked to an enhanced level. Plans were in place to ensure that checks would be reviewed at three-year intervals in accordance with YJB good practice.
- ◆ Health and safety risk assessments were carried out on all aspects of the YOT operation by trained staff and systems were in place for lone working.
- ◆ A leaflet on how to comment or complain about the YOT was given to children and young people as part of an information pack provided on first contact. Translations of the leaflet were available on request, and this information was stated on the leaflet in 13 different languages.

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

- ◆ Despite some examples of good performance management, information was not always used effectively by the YOT management team to drive change. Certain areas of practice had been slow to improve, in particular the level of recording in general and quality of Assets in particular. This had originally been identified in 2003's APIS EPQA. Although the information and practice manager provided valued guidance to staff on day to day practice and performance issues, overall quality assurance in the YOT lacked rigour, and there was limited evaluation of the effectiveness of the YOT's interventions.
- ◆ The quality of induction for specialists holding generic cases varied and this had resulted in at least one specialist worker not knowing what interventions were available to them.
- ◆ There had been no recent training on areas such as risk management or diversity, although this was planned to take place soon after the inspection.
- ◆ Three of the 16 members of staff consulted (out of a total staff team of 40) reported that they had not had a written appraisal in the last financial year. Given that appraisal is the primary means by which the objectives in the Youth Justice Plan can be disseminated and tailored to individuals, this was an area for improvement.
- ◆ There was no system in place to quality assure the work of volunteers. Panel members did not go through the re-accreditation process and generally, unless there were reports of poor performance, it was incumbent upon volunteers to request supervision as and when they felt they needed it.
- ◆ Despite a leaflet and clear process for complaints, over a third of children and young people reported that they did not know how to make a complaint. While it was possible that a number of children

and young people had forgotten about being given this information at the commencement of an intervention, it would be beneficial for the YOT to consider how awareness of the complaints process could be refreshed during the course of an order.

## **OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT**

***This section is judged as adequate.***

## 2.

## WORK IN THE COURTS

### **Key judgement:**

- ◆ *Good working relationships exist between the YOT and the local court.*

A YOT court officer and an administrative officer routinely sat in the scheduled youth courts each Monday and Friday and had access to YOIS, although the connection was unreliable. The YOT operated a court duty rota and ensured that all courts, including those taking place on Saturdays and bank holidays, were covered. (The rota system allowed for flexibility and allowed all staff to develop their court skills.)

Youth courts took place on a Monday and Friday at Brighton magistrates' court, which was in close proximity to the YOT in the centre of Brighton.

Representatives of the YOT management team attended the quarterly Youth Court User and Local Implementation Group meetings, as well as the twice-yearly youth panel and fortnightly PYO progression meetings.

### **Strengths:**

- ◆ The delivery of YOT services to the courts was covered by an inter-agency protocol, which also addressed the local authority's responsibilities towards LAC and was signed by various social services' teams.
- ◆ The district judge, clerk to the justices and chair of the youth panel were all very positive about the YOT's work in the courts, describing its input as "*invaluable*". Court representatives were particularly impressed by the YOT's ability to "*get under the skin*" of children and young people and their refusal to "*give up*" on them. Nevertheless, the representatives had few doubts that court orders were properly enforced.
- ◆ Comprehensive performance information was provided by the YOT to the Youth Court Users Group, where YOT feedback was a standing item. This sought to identify sentencing trends and other patterns in court activity and was felt by court representatives to be helpful. Case studies were also presented at these meetings illustrating how particular orders had progressed. This gave sentencers some idea of outcomes, both good and bad.
- ◆ The YOT was involved in the training of new sentencers.

- ◆ In addition to the regular forum for discussion provided by the Youth Court Users Group, and the valuable ad hoc dialogue between sentencers and YOT court staff, the YOT had surveyed court users' views on its own performance.

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

- ◆ Further awareness training was required to ensure that non-youth panel magistrates were kept up to date with YOT programmes and interventions.
- ◆ Suggestions from court representatives of possible areas for improvement included a clearer synopsis of YOT/court performance that was easier for sentencers to digest, and a more routine survey of court users' views.

#### **Key judgement:**

- ◆ *Effective practice with children and young people who have offended is promoted by the work of the YOT within the courts.*

#### **Strengths:**

- ◆ The first appointment with the child or young person following a community order took place within one working day of the court appearance in 85% of cases. A leaflet containing information on all three Sussex YOTs was given to children and young people attending court, along with a range of leaflets on the various court outcomes.
- ◆ Case workers would attend court with children and young people wherever possible. In both of the remand to custody cases seen, welfare issues were managed in order to prepare the child or young person for custody and their parents/carers were engaged with appropriately.

#### **Key judgement:**

- ◆ *Children and young people are safeguarded and the likelihood of their further offending reduced by the provision of appropriate services, including bail supervision and support programmes.*

The YOT had a remand management worker who, along with the court duty officer, was responsible for completing bail Assets, providing bail information to the courts and proposing bail support packages where required. In cases where there was a particularly high risk of custody, ISSP bail assessments were undertaken.

Children and young people remanded to LAA could be placed in one of the YOT's two contract beds at a local young person's YMCA hostel, which was willing to have electronic curfew monitoring equipment installed.

### **Strengths:**

- ◆ In three of the four cases seen, a report was prepared regarding the child or young person's suitability for bail. It was impressive that in each case where bail support was granted, an interview was conducted immediately with the child or young person and their parents/carers in relation to the requirements of bail support. The support itself was tailored to individual needs and the remand management worker could draw on resources from across the wider YOT team.
- ◆ We judged that the bail support provided had helped to prevent reoffending and addressed vulnerability. Contact with the child or young person during bail support, in accordance with the national standard, was likely to have contributed to this success.
- ◆ The YOT had developed good relationships with key court partners, including Premier Prisons, who would routinely notify YOT staff of a child or young person's arrival in court cells if the YOT had not already identified them. YOT staff were allowed to sit in with children and young people who were distressed following court-ordered secure remands, until the escort arrived.

### **Good practice**

Due to poor performance against the KPI for remands into custody in 2004/2005, the YOT worked with YJB consultants to establish the problem. It was determined that, although the individual remands were justified due to the risk posed by the children and young people concerned, there was an issue for some YOT workers on the rota who lacked confidence in the court arena. This situation was thought to be contributing to inconsistencies in the promotion and use of bail support and bail ISSP.

To address this, the YOT ran internal training on court work for its staff and implemented its action plan. The YOT had received a rating of 3 in its remand management EPQA and in recent quarters, the remand KPI had been met. More importantly, given the vulnerability of performance against the KPI to small changes in the actual numbers of children and young people remanded, court representatives were satisfied with the quality and availability of bail packages and the willingness of the YOT to propose these.

### **Area for improvement:**

- ◆ The YOT's remand fostering scheme had folded due to lack of consistent demand, and consequently there was a lack of local fostering resources for adolescents remanded.

**Key judgement:**

- ◇ *Courts are assisted in making informed decisions by the provision of good quality reports from the YOT.*

**Strengths:**

- ◇ The court representatives felt YOT staff to be very pro-active about providing information to the court. Stand-down reports and verbal updates to PSRs were routinely presented when appropriate, to avoid the need for unnecessary adjournments.
- ◇ The format of the PSRs complied with the national standard in all cases seen, and information was collated from all relevant sources in 85% of cases. This figure included three reports that were rated as 'excellent' in this regard, the case worker having gone to great lengths to assimilate a wide range of information pertaining to the child or young person.
- ◇ PSRs were well written, being verified and factually accurate, free from discriminatory language and stereotypes and understandable to the child or young person in the vast majority of cases seen.
- ◇ 90% of PSRs contained a clear proposal that was commensurate with the offence. This clarity contributed to a concordance rate of 95%.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ The analysis of the offence section needed attention. In over 50% of cases it was overly descriptive and too often seemed to accept the child or young person's version of events without sufficient critique. Two factors thought relevant to this lack of analysis were: a) the variable quality of the Assets upon which the PSRs were meant to be based; and b) the fact that 15% of PSRs did not appear to be based on an Asset at all.
- ◇ Despite some good work around the completion of full RoH Assets, we found that the risk section differentiated between likelihood of reoffending and RoH in only just over half of the PSRs
- ◇ In only 29% of PSRs was the impact on the victim adequately addressed.
- ◇ Less than half the PSRs specifically considered the child or young person's maturity in terms of their ability to understand the seriousness of the offence.
- ◇ We judged only 52% of PSRs to be of sufficient quality overall, mainly due to the lack of analysis in a significant number of reports. This was disappointing, although we were confident that the good understanding of key issues demonstrated by the quality of proposals allied to staff's diligence would provide a solid foundation for driving up the standard of PSRs.



**OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK IN THE COURTS**

*This section is judged as good.*

### 3. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

#### 3.1 Work with children and young people at risk of offending

**Key judgement:**

- ◇ *Children and young people are prevented from offending.*

Overall there was a good range of preventative programmes active in the city and the YOT was well linked into them. The draft preventative strategy recommended that planning of services be routed through the LAA, to ensure that pooled budget funding led to sustainable interventions, and moved away from the proliferation of short-term preventative projects currently in existence. The challenge was likely to be in linking the crime prevention agenda with the CYPT and developing Family Support Services in the absence of any increased funding.

**Strengths:**

- ◇ The YOT was represented on the steering groups of diversionary programmes such as Positive Futures and PAYP.
- ◇ Partnership work between the YOT, eB4U and Hove YMCA had led to the creation of a YIP (working with 13-17 year olds) and a YIP+ (working with 8-13 year olds), which targeted the top 50 most at risk children and young people in two deprived areas of the city. The YIP and YIP+ had been quality assured by the YJB and recognised as examples of good practice. The projects had clear referral criteria and aimed to deliver interventions, based on an assessment of risk and need using Onset, in accordance with individual action plans for the children and young people.
- ◇ The YIP and YIP+ had consistently been able to engage with 75% of the top 50 children and young people at risk of offending. interventions conducted had led to reductions in arrest amongst the target group.
- ◇ Effective joint work between the YOT and the Children's Fund had been responsible for the creation of a successful YISP. The YOT provided casework supervision to the YISP manager, and also to the manager of the specialist Intensive Family Intervention Project. Children and young people referred to the YISP had successfully met 95% of the targets for change agreed in their individual support plans.
- ◇ The YOT had set up a regular meeting between staff involved in different preventative programmes as an opportunity to share

learning and good practice. The most recent meeting focused on increasing engagement with the parents/carers of children and young people in the programmes.

- ◆ The numbers of first-time entrant to the criminal justice system reduced during 2005/2006 to 399; from 420 the year before. This exceeded the 5% target and suggested that the preventative initiatives were starting to impact on crime.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ Work needed to continue to ensure that preventative programmes supported by short-term funding were mainstreamed.
- ◆ The majority of children and young people in the YIP were not in suitable full-time ETE. The closure of the secondary school in one of the areas had reduced the educational opportunities for many of those involved in the YIP, and staff shortages within the projects had compounded this problem.

### 3.2 Work with children and young people who have offended

**Key judgement:**

- ◆ *Children and young people who have offended are prevented from reoffending.*

The YOT management team considered it essential to the effective functioning of the team that specialist workers held a 'generic' caseload, to ensure that specialists shared the culture of the team and did not become marginalised or out of touch. This approach was endorsed by managers in partner agencies such as health.

There was a well established ISSP in partnership with East Sussex YOT, targeting the most serious and prolific offenders. Reoffending, though still above the national average, was falling overall.

**Strengths:**

- ◆ An ISP was completed in accordance with the national standard in 85% of cases and in the same number of cases, there was a close fit between the interventions planned and the assessed RoH. The figure for referral order interventions was an impressive 100%.
- ◆ Appropriate interventions had been carried out in 75% of cases. The YOT's range of interventions to address offending behaviour included *Targets for Change* and videos for use with children and young people convicted of driving offences. We found some innovative practice, the multi-media project (described in the *good practice* example) and specialist interventions provided by the educational psychologist.

- ◇ YOT workers enthusiasm for their work and commitment to trying to do the best for children and young people was evidenced by the frequency with which they motivated the child or young person to engage with interventions and liaised actively with others providing them.
- ◇ The child or young person was involved in the initial Asset assessment in 93% of cases.
- ◇ It was encouraging that in all cases seen, the resources allocated to the child or young person were commensurate with the identified RoH. This reinforced our perception that caseworkers' use of YOIS did not always do justice to the nature and extent of their work with children and young people.
- ◇ Diversity issues were taken into account in the vast majority of cases in both the planning and delivery of interventions, which was good to see. For example, 91% of all ISPs and 100% of the contact with children and young people whilst on referral orders was sensitive to the individual needs. Three racially aggravated offences were committed in 2005/2006 and all interventions with these children and young people included work on their racist behaviour and attitudes.
- ◇ A good level of contact with children and young people was achieved by the ISSP team.
- ◇ A written report was prepared for referral order panels in all cases seen. The contract was delivered appropriately in all but one case. In addition, contact with the child or young person took account of their individual needs in a similar number of cases.

### Good practice

A YOT worker, in partnership with a digital arts company and two local artists, had devised and managed a project to promote social inclusion amongst a group of girls and young women. Entitled *A House of Our Own*, work around notions of community membership, art as a life enhancing activity and future expectations culminated in the group putting on a multi-media exhibition open to the public. Since the end of the project, a number of participants have been enrolled on further education and training placements and, despite several being persistent young offenders, only one girl or young woman had been convicted of a further offence.

### Good practice

S was a chaotic, somewhat institutionalised 17 year old care leaver with numerous needs. The YOT's assessment identified his learning disability and the YOT worker consulted the team's educational psychologist regarding the best way to work with him. Excellent motivational work using the visual medium saw him engage in interventions to address his substance misuse needs.

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

- ◆ The initial Asset was completed in accordance with the national standards on timeliness and quality in 77% and 63% of cases respectively. This was below the average for comparator YOTs inspected. Feedback from some caseworkers suggested that YOIS in general and Asset in particular were seen as an administrative burden that impeded effective work with children and young people, rather than tools that could facilitate targeted interventions. Though the standard of Assets was reportedly much higher than it had been three years ago at the time of APIS EPQA, when the YJB regional manager had raised similar concerns in scoring the EPQA 2, there still remained work to be done.
- ◆ There was also considerable variation between caseworkers in the scoring of similar risk and need factors and current guidance was not sufficient to ensure consistency. The fortnightly practice meetings held by YOT workers were a potential means of addressing this issue, though the focus of these meetings had reportedly drifted in recent months.
- ◆ The assessment and management of risk of serious harm required improvement. In four of ten cases, a full risk of serious harm Asset should have been triggered but was not. Of the four cases identified as 'risk aware' or 'risk concern', only one received regular review from a manager. Although discussions with caseworkers around RoH were encouraging in the sense that, as with assessment in general, they were aware of the risk factors, it was of concern that there was some uncertainty about what type of behaviour might trigger a fuller risk assessment. And also about whether this behaviour needed to have been present at the time of the offence. Some caseworkers were concerned about completing the risk of serious harm Asset for fear of 'labelling' the child or young person. In the absence of the YJB's new guidance and training on risk assessment and management, which was yet to be rolled-out in the YOT, the current policy did not provide sufficient guidance for staff.
- ◆ In a number of cases there was limited evidence in the file of the interventions that were said to have been carried out with children and young people.
- ◆ Although there were some good examples of joint-working, we felt that some YOT workers would benefit from 'taking a step back' from their work at times, to examine whether the support provided through continuing one-to-one work was improving outcomes for the child or young person, or whether they could usefully link in with other services available to them.

**Key judgement:**

- ◆ *The health of children and young people who have offended is promoted by the work of the YOT.*

There was good provision of health care services within the YOT, with a full-time (job share) mental health nurse, a 30 hours substance misuse worker seconded from RUOK, a day per week of a child and adolescent psychiatrist and a half day a week of a sexual health worker. At the time of inspection, the psychiatrist post was vacant and had been for some months, although it had recently been filled and the post-holder had already put in place plans to tackle the area for improvement identified in the inspection.

Commitment to maintaining and developing the health input had been demonstrated by provision of cover for some posts during absences, replacement of vacant posts in a timely manner and development of a new post dealing with sexual health.

**Strengths:**

- ◆ The mental health and substance misuse workers provided a good range of interventions for children and young people and had good access to higher tier services within their host organisations. There was direct access to the PIMS, which provided continuity of care for children and young people both pre and post-YOT involvement.
- ◆ The health team possessed all the necessary equipment to conduct physical health checks on children and young people.
- ◆ There was a multi-disciplinary forum, the Therapeutic Interventions Group, to which all caseworkers could bring cases for discussion. This group had the support the consultant psychiatrist.
- ◆ The health workers were enthusiastic and committed and took a very professional approach to their work. They were keen to develop services such as those for young carers.
- ◆ There were good links between the substance misuse worker and RUOK.
- ◆ The substance misuse worker used a structured evaluation toolkit to monitor the outcomes with the children and young people he worked with.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ The YOT needed to assure itself that the referrals to the mental health and substance misuse workers were comprehensive and appropriate and that their specialist skills were being fully utilised. Neither the mental health nor the substance misuse workers followed-up cases scoring two or more on Asset. They therefore could not be sure that all the necessary referrals were being made. Although we saw a number of relevant referrals where good work was

done using a range of specialist skills, referral to the health workers took place in only half of the 24 cases where emotional and mental health needs had been identified.

- ◇ The lack of rigour around the assessment and referral on of health needs was compounded by inconsistencies between Asset scores and the fact that the YOT did not use the YJB's SQIFA screening tool, or an equivalent, to further facilitate appropriate referrals to the mental health workers. The Therapeutic Intervention Group was potentially an example of good practice which we thought could aid allocation, but variable attendance limited its potential.
- ◇ The YOT also needed to assure itself that the existing practice of health workers carrying a small generic caseload was not adversely affecting their capacity for handling specialist work.
- ◇ The effectiveness of the interventions provided by the health staff was not evaluated in a systematic and standardised way. The mental health workers did not use an evaluation tool; the substance misuse worker did, but it was not clear that the information generated from this was used within the YOT itself or at a strategic level.

***Key judgement:***

- ◇ *Children and young people who have offended are safeguarded through the work of the YOT.*

YOT workers described their practice as 'child centred', in that they considered the welfare of the child to be paramount.

***Strengths:***

- ◇ The YOT was represented on the ACPC and emergent Safeguarding Children Board. It also contributed to the TACT programme for sex offenders (including family work input) in partnership with the Clermont Child Protection Unit.
- ◇ Social care services had been involved or consulted in all six LAC cases. Carefirst was available on site and was accessed by administrative staff on receipt of a case.
- ◇ The number of children and young people Looked After who offended was below the average for unitary authorities.
- ◇ Neary all staff had undergone child protection training and the Practice Manager was currently undertaking a Masters degree in child protection.

***Area for improvement:***

- ◇ More appropriate action could have been taken in some cases where the child or young person was considered vulnerable to harm from self or others. Swift roll-out of the YJB's 'vulnerability action plan'

would no doubt help caseworkers to decide on the right course of action.

**Key judgement:**

- ◆ *Children and young people who have offended are enabled and encouraged to achieve their potential.*

The YOT ETE team was made up of the Employment Service manager and coordinator, 0.5 of an Educational Psychologist and 0.1 of a Connexions PA. Plans were in place to increase the time available to the PA for YOT cases to 2.5 days. The Head of the ETE team was a former headmaster.

There was a high rate of truancy and school refusal amongst the inspection sample, compared to other inspected YOTs, although this pattern was not reflected amongst the wider population within the JAR.

**Strengths:**

- ◆ Action taken by the YOT to address educational difficulties was judged to be effective in most cases. Strong links between the YOT and the ACE at both an operational and strategic level helped support children and young people excluded from mainstream education. The head of the YOT ETE team met with the Head of the ACE on a monthly basis to monitor access to education by children and young people at the YOT. In some cases, the YOT had liaised with the ACE to secure tuition for the child or young person to be delivered at the YOT. The YOT ETE team had access to a good range of literacy programmes for children and young people.
- ◆ The YOT's own figures suggested that 90% of school-age children and young people were in full-time ETE, which, considering the disengagement of the YOT population, was a significant achievement. Overall, the performance against the ETE KPI was 77%, which represented year-on-year improvement from a figure of 42% in 2001.
- ◆ There was evidence that the requirement for the local authority to treat those children and young people who offended and had been excluded as a priority was being met. For example, in one case a young person was offered a full-time ACE place within 12 days of exclusion, and the YOT had access to the Head of Parent and Pupil Services for attention to individual cases when the protocol failed.
- ◆ The educational psychologist had led on the development of innovative approaches to working with children and young people and their families, such as the Video Interactive Project, which tackled communication and relationship issues. The psychologist acted as a consultant to YOT workers and also provided SEN assessments. She had good links with school educational psychology teams.



## Good practice

The YOT's ETE figures, having proved relatively resistant to improvement, had been interrogated. It was discovered that the figures were consistently poorer for the 16+ age group. As a result, with the backing of Connexions the ETE team manager had developed an Employment Project with European funding that worked with employers to provide placements to children and young people and introduced them to work structures and requirements. A protocol had been agreed with a local employment organisation to provide support to young people after they left the Employment Project. The YOT had actively worked with local employers to maximise the opportunities provided by the project. The project, which started June 2005, contributed to an 8% rise in employment of young people who offend.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ There was evidence from a number of sources that ensuring children and young people involved with the YOT received a satisfactory education remained an ongoing challenge. Referral order panel members reported that one panel was run during the day each week as so many children and young people were not in school. Similarly, we were told that running a daytime group for children and young people in parallel to the parents'/carers' group was not a problem as most of those involved were on restricted timetables or excluded. The YOT reported that children and young people would never be taken out of school to attend YOT groups or panels, and that their participation was authorised following liaison with schools. However, whilst we could understand this as a pragmatic response to the logistical difficulties of coordinating panels and interventions for parents/carers, we were concerned that children and young people could get the message that school was of lesser importance.
- ◆ Over a quarter of Assets had not been informed by an educational assessment. This was despite the existence of a comprehensive 'Statement of Working Arrangements with Schools', which outlined the liaison required between the YOT and schools when a child or young person entered the YOT. Information needed to be exchanged promptly between the YOT and schools in accordance with the statement, to facilitate good quality assessments. The lack of a formal agreement with the Education Welfare Service was likely to have contributed to this problem.
- ◆ Training provision for post-16s was inadequate and the role of the LSC underdeveloped. Although two-thirds of the sample had had contact with a Connexions PA, only half of children and young people aged 16+ were involved in further ETE. The YOT's own figure for this group was 67%. The problem with accessing further ETE was well known to the YOT. LSC research in 2004 showed Brighton and Hove to have, "twice the proportion of disengaged learners of the rest of Sussex" and to have a, "culture of poor provision for them". The

inspection findings suggest that not enough has changed since this research was conducted. A contract to provide Skills for Life and vocational training for NEETs, including children and young people who had offended, was out to tender at the time of the inspection.

- ◇ At the time of inspection, the operational input of Connexions into the work of the YOT was not sufficiently advanced. Although the partnership agreement stipulated a Connexions PA in the YOT one day per week, the actual commitment was currently running at half that and had been since August 2005. The PA's time had originally been scaled back due to a lack of take up of appointments by children and young people. However, joint work between Connexions and the YOT had seen a new PA recently take up post and the hours were set to go up, as outlined above.

**Key judgement:**

- ◇ *Outcomes for children and young people are improved by their involvement through consultation about the services provided by the YOT.*

**Strengths:**

- ◇ Feedback forms on YOT services were available to children and young people.
- ◇ The parallel group run for children and young people by the parenting team asked for feedback from children and young people, though it was not clear how this had been used.
- ◇ Forty children and young people were consulted as part of the inspection. This was a testament to the good working relationship the YOT enjoyed with many of its service users. 95% reported that the YOT was helpful to them *"at least some of the time"* and that YOT workers talked to them in a way they could understand. Many of those consulted commented on the value of having someone who listened to them and several mentioned practical help, such as *"getting me into rehab"* and *"helping a lot with my family"*.
- ◇ 92% knew about what would happen if they did not come in for appointments.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ The feedback forms were not being completed with any regularity and therefore the views of children and young people could not inform service delivery.
- ◇ The *what do you think?* self-assessment form was only evident in 30% of cases. As with Assets, this had been an issue raised in the

EPQA that remained current. Where it was completed, however, the links into Asset could be seen.

### 3.3 Work with parents/carers

#### **Key judgement:**

- ◇ *Parents/carers are supported in addressing their children's offending.*

An experienced full-time parenting coordinator was in post at the YOT. A parenting worker, funded jointly by the YOT and neighbourhood renewal fund monies, also operated in the YOT and East Brighton. The YOT parenting team had been involved in developing parent-led 'whole parent' and domestic violence support groups in neighbourhood renewal fund areas of the city.

The YJB prevention monies were being used to support parenting work across the three CYPT areas and had led to Brighton and Hove submitting a 'Parenting Pathfinder' bid to the DfES, in which the YOT had a lead role.

#### **Strengths:**

- ◇ Asset was used to identify parenting needs and YOT workers could then make a referral to the parenting coordinator. A home visit followed whereby the needs of the parents/carers and their personal circumstances would be assessed by the coordinator. Referrals were also received from the antisocial behaviour team and social workers.
- ◇ A parenting group had been established in the YOT, co-facilitated by a worker from the local duty and assessment team, the educational psychologist and the parenting coordinator, ensuring a wide skills base. It focused on communication skills. A group for the children and young people was run in parallel to the parent/carer group, the model based on evidence of effective practice from the Trust for Study of Adolescence.
- ◇ Eleven parents/carers were consulted as part of the inspection. Of these, three had been involved in parenting interventions. The others reported on the YOT's work with their children and young people. Almost all were overwhelmingly positive about the support and assistance provided by the YOT to both them and their children. Typical comments included:
  - *"They (the YOT) have never, ever given up on L"*
  - *"They are doing an amazing job and making a difference. They genuinely care. They aren't patronising and really help the kids"*
  - *"Unconfrontational (sic) but firm in their work with him. They kept me in the loop all the time and were very supportive."*

- ◇ According to the YOT's figures, nearly all parents/carers who participated in parenting interventions were satisfied with the input.
- ◇ The YOT had achieved its 2005/2006 target of engaging 10% of parents/carers in interventions.

***Areas for improvement:***

- ◇ There were no operational guidelines for working with parents/carers and no standardised tool for the assessment of parenting needs. It was not clear from the files reviewed how appropriate interventions were determined for individual parents/carers.
- ◇ The effectiveness of parenting interventions was not fully evaluated, except through participants' self report.
- ◇ The parenting coordinator felt that too few parenting referrals were made by YOT workers. There had not been any recent audit of cases to see if all those scoring two or more on the Asset family section were referred.
- ◇ The number of parenting orders made had remained static over the last two years. Although the draft parenting strategy rightly emphasised the importance of consent-based engagement, there was room for greater recognition of the part that compulsory orders could play with those parents/carers unwilling to participate voluntarily.

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY**

***This section is judged as adequate.***

## 4.

### WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUBJECT TO DTOs

#### **Key judgement:**

- ◆ *The likelihood of reoffending for children and young people who receive DTOs is minimised through the intervention of the YOT by assessment.*

Brighton and Hove YOT, in common with many other YOTs, was geographically distant from the YOIs and STCs it dealt with. Face-to-face relationships between YOT and secure establishment, effective contributions to planning meetings and the attendance of parents and carers at such meetings, consequently required a good deal of effort. It was therefore particularly pleasing that the YOT performed well in relation to these and other measures. The recent Resettlement EPQA rating of 3 had been approved and an ambitious improvement plan endorsed.

DTO cases were allocated to all caseworkers by rota, and generally report writers continued to hold cases. All the YOT's resources were available to DTO planning and children and young people on DTOs were regarded as having a priority call upon those resources.

#### **Strengths:**

- ◆ The initial Asset was completed in accordance with the national standard on timeliness in all six cases. It was available to the secure establishment within 24 hours in all but one of these cases.
- ◆ The full risk of serious harm Asset was completed appropriately in all relevant cases, which was good to see. Management oversight of 'medium and high risk' was generally well evidenced.
- ◆ It was also good that appropriate action was taken where the child or young person was assessed as being vulnerable to harm.
- ◆ Referrals were made in all cases where there was evidence of health or substance misuse needs.

#### **Area for improvement:**

- ◆ The same issues, in respect of the quality of Assets and use of what *do you think?* were found in the DTO sample as the main sample.

**Key judgement:**

- ◇ *The likelihood of reoffending for children and young people who receive DTOs is minimised through the intervention of the YOT by contact with the child or young person and effective liaison with the secure establishment during the custodial period.*

**Strengths:**

- ◇ The YOT worker was actively involved in the sentence planning and review meetings and contributed to the final training plan in all but one case.
- ◇ Parents/carers were encouraged and assisted to attend training planning meetings.
- ◇ There was a close fit between interventions planned and the assessed RoH in almost all cases.
- ◇ Good arrangements were made to meet the child or young person's assessed educational needs prior to release. Arrangements to meet health needs were made in all but one case. Accommodation needs were also assessed and monitored by YOT staff.
- ◇ The YOT was in regular contact with the secure establishment staff to discuss the child or young person's progress. Nonetheless, this was an area that the YOT wished to improve further and promote a more interactive monitoring role in the custodial phase, supported by protocols.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ The initial training plan was of a sufficient standard in less than two-thirds of cases. The YOT was exploring the possibility of its staff chairing planning and review meetings, so they could have more control over the quality of the plan.
- ◇ At sentence end the child or young person had been reassessed for literacy and numeracy using YJB approved tools in only half the relevant cases seen.
- ◇ The Resettlement EPQA improvement plan identified a need for the YOT to establish closer working relationships between YOT specialist staff and specialist staff working in YOIS e.g. ETE. This would increase the ability of the YOT to influence the delivery of services to the child or young person, and hopefully improve both long and short term-outcomes.

**Key judgement:**

- ◇ *The likelihood of reoffending for children and young people who receive DTOs is minimised through the intervention of the YOT by reintegration into the community.*

**Strengths:**

- ◇ Work on alcohol and substance misuse that started in custody continued in the community in all cases. Work on offending behaviour continued in all but one case.
- ◇ The YOT worked to raise the child or young person's awareness of the impact of the crime on the victim.
- ◇ YOT workers motivated children or young people on custodial sentences for example, by reinforcing the work done by others.
- ◇ Steps were taken to ensure that the child or young person fully understood the requirements of the order.
- ◇ The YOT promoted compliance with the terms of the order and judgements about the acceptability of absences were appropriate.
- ◇ Partner agencies were working well to support children and young people on their transfer into the community. The local authority had provided suitable education and the PCT provided planned services on release.

**Good practice**

The admissions section of the local authority treated children and young people in custody as a priority, listing them as 'Category 1' (medical and other special reasons) for admission to school.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◇ Home visits were not always made in accordance with the national standard.
- ◇ The learning plans for children and young people were not always sufficiently reviewed and updated following release. This was in contrast to the YOT's self-assessment.
- ◇ There were insufficient training opportunities available to children and young people post-16.

**Key judgement:**

- ◆ *The YOT demonstrates positive outcomes in its work with children and young people subject to DTOs.*

**Strengths:**

- ◆ Although there had been no change in a number of the children and young people's criminogenic factors, reflecting in part the challenging nature of their circumstances, progress had been achieved in a number of areas such as ETE, family and personal relationships and substance misuse. No factors had got worse.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◆ There was evidence of criminal activity on three quarters of the orders seen, although the YOT had taken enforcement action as appropriate.
- ◆ The YOT's own figures suggested that the reoffending rate for those on a DTO was 50%, although the frequency and severity of offending was decreasing.

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUBJECT TO DTOS**

***This section is judged as good.***



## 5.

## VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

### **Key judgement:**

- ◇ *Victims of children and young people who have offended feel that they have been assisted by the intervention of the YOT in achieving closure.*

The YOT's VLO had recently updated the comprehensive policy on restorative justice and work with victims. As a result of performance data suggesting that the involvement of private victims had been dwindling, an 'opt out' clause had been introduced, to help emphasise that the victim's involvement was entirely voluntary. The inspection findings suggested that this clause was not having the desired effect and the VLO was considering alternative strategies.

Two part-time restorative justice coordinators ran the YOT's reparation work.

### **Strengths:**

- ◇ The VLO was experienced and committed to the principles of restorative justice. He had good links into Victim Support and the Witness Service. All victims were contacted by letter and provided with an information leaflet, followed up by a face-to-face meeting to obtain their views. Repeat victims were sent a personalised letter.
- ◇ The police notified the YOT of the victim's details in accordance with the final warning guidance in 89% of cases.
- ◇ 81% of victims in the sample had been consulted about reparation or restorative justice with children and young people, which was twice the average figure for YOTs inspected. The YOT's own figure was 90%.
- ◇ There were some particularly good reparation placements where outcomes were visible to the wider community. Reparation started within the first three months of the child or young person's order in all but one of the cases seen.
- ◇ The YOT's figures show that 90% of all victims (against a target of 75%) were offered the opportunity to participate in restorative justice in 2005/2006. Of the 15% that participated, all but one were satisfied with their involvement.
- ◇ Work that took place with victims took account of their individual diversity needs in 89%, which was good. The figure for children and young people was 83%.

- ◊ Sussex police was implementing the new victim charter and the YOT's victim provision was fully compliant with this charter.
- ◊ The YOT monitored its contact with victims and stored it on a victim's register held within the team's own shared drive. This enabled the YOT to extrapolate statistical information and identify patterns and repeat victims.

**Areas for improvement:**

- ◊ Work with victims was not supported by a coherent strategy and had too low a profile within the YOT. Although there had been some initiatives to encourage YOT workers to become more involved in work with victims and restorative justice, these had not been sustained. This was due in part to a feeling amongst some YOT staff that working with victims would make it difficult to maintain a productive relationship with children and young people. Indicative of this was the finding that victim awareness work had been undertaken with the child or young person in just over half the cases seen.
- ◊ The level of engagement with victims was an ongoing challenge for the YOT and indirect reparation in particular took place relatively infrequently.
- ◊ There was no written, standardised assessment of victims' needs. Continuity of assessment would be difficult to achieve in the event of the VLO leaving or others becoming involved in assessments.
- ◊ The two restorative justice coordinators were operating at capacity and there was limited scope to match the wishes of victims and the skills of children and young people to specific reparation projects. However, volunteers were being recruited to the team to assist service delivery in a number of areas, and in particular the supervision of reparation work.

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK WITH VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

***This section is judged as adequate.***

## The joint inspection of YOTs

The joint inspection of YOTs is an independent programme, funded by the Home Office and reporting to the Secretary of State. Inspections are conducted jointly, involving CSCI, Estyn, the Healthcare Commission, the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, HMIC, HMI Prisons, HMI Probation, Ofsted and SSIW as appropriate. The joint inspection team is located within and led by HMI Probation.

### Home Office objectives

The joint inspection contributes primarily to the achievement of Home Office Objective II – 'more offenders are caught, punished and stop offending and victims are better supported', and to the requirement to ensure that custodial and community sentences are more effective at stopping offending.

It also contributes to the achievement of Objective III, through the scrutiny of work to address drug and other substance misuse, and to other relevant criminal justice system and Children's Services' objectives in England and Extending Entitlement objectives in Wales.

The **purpose** of the joint inspection is to report to the Secretary of State and, through him Parliament and the public, on the effectiveness of the YOTs in fulfilling their statutory duties to prevent offending by children and young people, and thereby protect the public, whilst still safeguarding their rights and promoting their welfare.

The **aims** of the programme are to:

- ◆ assess the impact made by YOTs and partner organisations on the prevention of offending by children and young people through effective supervision
- ◆ appraise the work undertaken by YOTs and partner organisations to meet the needs of children and young people at risk of offending and enable them to lead law-abiding and constructive lives
- ◆ evaluate the role of the YOTs in safeguarding the rights and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- ◆ assess the extent to which the YOTs are meeting the required standards and targets set by the YJB
- ◆ promote good practice in the management arrangements of YOTs and service delivery to the courts and community
- ◆ identify underperformance and make recommendations to promote improvements
- ◆ evaluate the effective use of resources
- ◆ actively promote race equality and diversity as an integral part of the inspection process
- ◆ produce timely reports which contribute to improved performance by informing policy and practice.

## Inspection arrangements

- ◇ The joint YOT inspection is conducted in line with the Government's commitment to proportionate and coordinated inspection in local government. It:
  - is proportionate to risk, with fieldwork adapted to the circumstances of the YOT and only carried out to identify findings or to disseminate good practice
  - complements, and is coordinated with, other inspection programmes, including the JARs in England, and inspections undertaken as part of the WPI and of Youth Support Services in Wales
  - informs judgements made in the APA and CPA in England.
- ◇ The criteria for the third phase of the inspection focus on:
  - management and partnership arrangements
  - work in the courts
  - work with children and young people in the community
  - work with children and young people subject to DTOs
  - victims and restorative justice.
- ◇ Prior to the inspection, each YOT is asked to submit selected advance information and complete a self-assessment, identifying strengths and areas for improvement.
- ◇ In England, fieldwork for each individual inspection takes place over one week, prior to the JAR. It consists of:
  - an assessment of a representative sample of individual case files
  - meetings with relevant managers, representatives of partner organisations and members of the YOT staff
  - contact with children and young people, their parents/carers and the victims of offences committed by children and young people supervised by the YOT.
- ◇ Fieldwork in Wales includes the same elements but is linked to inspections undertaken as part of the WPI and of Youth Support Services. The assessment of case files may, therefore, be conducted in advance of the meetings with managers and staff. However, the total amount of inspection time spent within the YOT remains the same as in England.
- ◇ The assessment of case files consists of a representative sample of between 30 and 80 children and young people (dependent on the YOT's workload) who have been subject to some form of intervention in the previous months. The cases cover most orders, including licences and are examined in detail. The case manager and any other person significantly involved in delivering the intervention are interviewed as part of the file reading exercise and, where possible, the child or young person themselves and their parents/carers.

- ◆ In order to encourage self-assessment and increase ownership of the inspection findings, we are inviting YOTs to second a member of their staff, usually an experienced practitioner, as a representative accompanying the inspection team, for the fieldwork week. We consider this to be a positive way of developing mutual understanding and strengthening the links between inspection and practice.
- ◆ The inspection findings will be compiled in a report which includes recommendations for improvement. These recommendations will be designed to encourage the YOT in its work, to support good practice and to promote improvements.
- ◆ The report is submitted to the Home Secretary, as the Secretary of State responsible for youth justice, with simultaneous copies to the Education and Health Secretaries. In Wales, reports are also submitted to the Ministers for Social Care and Regeneration, Lifelong Learning, Health and Social Care as well as the Minister for Children.
- ◆ Reports on YOTs in Wales are published in both Welsh and English. We also aim to fulfil our other responsibilities under the Welsh Language Act 1993 in accordance with the central principle of equality embodied in the Act.
- ◆ A copy is sent to the YJB. Copies are also made available to the press and placed on the website of HMI Probation at:  
<http://www.inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmiprobation>

## Code of practice

Each inspection will:

- ◆ be undertaken with integrity in a professional, impartial and courteous manner
- ◆ enable the development of independent judgements, based on evidence
- ◆ seek to energise and engage with staff
- ◆ promote race equality and diversity throughout its processes
- ◆ be concluded with the timely publication of a report containing findings and recommendations for improvement.

Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within the remit of this inspection programme should write to:

*HM Chief Inspector of Probation  
2nd Floor, Ashley House  
2 Monck Street  
London SW1P 2BQ*

## Scoring approach

The scoring approach has been significantly changed in phase three of the inspection programme to ensure compatibility with that of the JAR and Corporate Assessment in England, and the similar judgements used in inspections undertaken as part of the WPI and of Youth Support Services in Wales.

**In phase three, each of the five sections of the inspection** are individually assessed against the relevant criteria. Assessments are based on:

- ◇ information supplied by the YOT
- ◇ interviews with chief officers, managers and staff both from the YOT and other partner organisations
- ◇ examination of case files
- ◇ discussions with case managers and other people significantly involved in the supervisory process
- ◇ the perspectives of the children and young people, their parents/carers and, where possible, their victims, contacted during the course of the inspection
- ◇ information supplied by the JAR, Corporate Assessment and other relevant inspection findings in England and inspections as part of the WPI and of Youth Support Services in Wales.

The judgements and their descriptors are given in the table below:

Judgement	Descriptor
<b>4</b>	Excellent – performs strongly, well above minimum requirements with outstanding features
<b>3</b>	Good – performs well, consistently above minimum requirements with no important shortcomings
<b>2</b>	Adequate – only meets minimum requirements
<b>1</b>	Inadequate – does not deliver minimum requirements, with many important shortcomings

We summarise the judgements of the five sections in an overall assessment. We have decided that in phase three we will not give a general categorisation of the performance as a whole, as we wish each YOT to focus attention on its own specific areas for improvement.

## Next steps

- ◆ The YOT will be asked to send a response to the recommendations, to the lead inspector, together with an action plan within three months of the publication of the report. It is anticipated that the recommendations will normally be addressed within 12 months of publication to allow sufficient time for integration within existing developments.
- ◆ Once the action plan has been agreed by the lead inspector, it will be passed to the YJB who will monitor the recommendations' implementation.
- ◆ The joint inspection programme does not normally include any follow-up action unless issues were to emerge during the course of the programme that were of such serious concern to require immediate attention. The inspection of the Brighton and Hove YOT has not revealed any such concerns.
- ◆ In addition to the reports on individual YOTs, the joint inspection team also publishes periodic reports on findings across a number of teams. Such reports include comments on race equality and diversity issues and other trend information. They also include comparisons between the performance of YOTs with similar characteristics.

## Inspection criteria for YOTs in England

### 1. Management

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#### 1.1: Leadership

##### Key judgement

1.1.1: The Management Board provides strategic oversight and direction, and coordinates the provision of youth justice services by the YOT and partner organisations.

##### Evidence

- 1.1.1.1 There is a clear line of accountability for the YOT to the local authority Chief Executive and YOT plans are integrated with those of the wider council.
  - 1.1.1.2 The Management Board is made up of representatives of partner organisations who attend and participate actively in meetings.
  - 1.1.1.3 Members of the Management Board represent the needs of the YOT to their parent organisations.
  - 1.1.1.4 The Management Board gives support and guidance to the YOT Manager to ensure that they engage with local and national priorities and promote race equality and wider diversity issues.
  - 1.1.1.5 The Management Board ensures that the Youth Justice Plan is implemented.
  - 1.1.1.6 The Management Board ensures the provision of accurate and timely data returns, both for its own use and that of the YJB.
  - 1.1.1.7 Partners regularly and collectively review, monitor and evaluate service information to ensure that the YOT is contributing to improving outcomes for children and young people.
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#### 1.2 Partnership and resources

##### Key judgement

1.2.1: Partner organisations and the YOT work together to deter children and young people from offending.

##### Evidence

- 1.2.1.1 The Youth Justice Plan reflects partner strategies.
  - 1.2.1.2 Resources have been identified and capacity exists to meet assessed need.
  - 1.2.1.3 YOTs are appropriately staffed by partners according to legislation and Home Office/YJB guidance.
  - 1.2.1.4 Protocols, contracts and SLAs have been agreed between the YOT, its statutory partners and other relevant organisations to address the coordination of work, delivery of services, information sharing, human resources and funding arrangements. They are regularly reviewed and updated.
  - 1.2.1.5 The YOT is a member of the ACPC/Local Children's Safeguarding Board, and operates according to local child protection procedures.
  - 1.2.1.6 The YOT contributes to a joint-agency approach to the management of high-risk offenders in the community, including MAPPA and registration with the police.
  - 1.2.1.7 There are secure arrangements for the recording and sharing of information on children and young people at risk, including those moving across service boundaries.
  - 1.2.1.8 A range of interventions and services, including health and education, are provided across the authority to meet the needs of children and young people who have offended and those at risk of offending.
  - 1.2.1.9 The YOT contributes to community regeneration initiatives that are targeted at the most needy areas and address the broad range of family needs in an integrated way.
  - 1.2.1.10 The YOT contributes to successful outcomes in reducing anti-social behaviour, in particular through effective partnership working.
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### **1.3 Staff supervision, development and training**

#### **Key judgement**

1.3.1: Positive outcomes for children and young people are enhanced by effective staff.

#### **Evidence**

- 1.3.1.1 Practice is defined by written policies and procedures.
  - 1.3.1.2 Staff are regularly supervised within a performance management framework, in accordance with their developmental needs and assessed level of competence.
  - 1.3.1.3 Annual appraisals contain objectives that are linked to local and national targets.
  - 1.3.1.4 All staff are appropriately qualified and provided with training opportunities to equip them to meet the requirements of the Youth Justice Plan to identify and manage risks and to raise safeguarding concerns.
  - 1.3.1.5 Training needs are regularly reviewed.
  - 1.3.1.6 Volunteers are appropriately trained and are available for YOT activities.
  - 1.3.1.7 CRB checks are undertaken on all staff and volunteers who have access to children and young people or their case files, and are updated at least every three years.
  - 1.3.1.8 Joint agreements are in place for the management of disciplinary, capability and grievance procedures.
  - 1.3.1.9 There is a written complaints procedure, which is well publicised and easily accessible. Complaints are properly managed against the procedure.
  - 1.3.1.10 Health and safety assessments of facilities and activities are undertaken, acted on and updated regularly.
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## **2. Work in the courts**

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#### **Key judgement**

2.1: Good working relationships exist between the YOT and the local court.

#### **Evidence**

- 2.1.1 An agreement is in place between the YOT, justices' clerk or his/her nominated senior lawyer and the local Crown Court covering arrangements for court services.
  - 2.1.2 The YOT provides trained and knowledgeable staff to ensure adequate representation in any courts within its geographical area, including Saturday/bank holiday cover and the Crown Courts.
  - 2.1.3 The YOT attends and contributes to a Youth Court User Group, which meets regularly and whose purpose is detailed in the national standard.
  - 2.1.4 The YOT provides regular inputs to magistrates' court and Crown Court staff about a range of programmes and sentencing options.
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#### **Key judgement**

2.2: Effective practice with children and young people who have offended is promoted by the work of the YOT within the courts.

#### **Evidence**

- 2.2.1 Information and first appointments are provided to all children and young people who are made the subject of community sentences or bail supervision and support programmes.
  - 2.2.2 All children and young people remanded or sentenced to secure or custodial detention are interviewed, assessed for vulnerability, and the information is passed to the establishment within the national standard timescale.
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**Key judgement**

2.3: Children and young people are safeguarded and the likelihood of their further offending reduced by the provision of appropriate services, including bail supervision and support programmes.

**Evidence**

- 2.3.1 Arrangements are in place between the YOT and the appropriate local Children Service's Department regarding the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984), remands from Saturday/bank holiday courts and the completion of the appropriate paperwork for children and young people remanded to the care of the local authority.
  - 2.3.2 There are arrangements in place, to which the YOT has agreed, to identify and alert the YOT of all children and young people who are at risk of secure or custodial remand.
  - 2.3.3 Differentiated support/supervision services are offered, commensurate with likelihood of remand, to address objections to bail.
  - 2.3.4 Follow-up services are provided to securely remanded children and young people to ensure that, where appropriate, further bail applications are made and accompanied by commensurate support packages.
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**Key judgement**

2.4: Courts are assisted in making informed decisions by the provision of good quality reports from the YOT.

**Evidence**

- 2.4.1 PSRs are produced in accordance with the relevant national standards, of a good quality, to time and in the agreed format.
  - 2.4.2 PSRs are impartial, free from discriminatory language and stereotypes.
  - 2.4.3 Proposals are appropriate and commensurate.
  - 2.4.4 A copy of the PSR is provided to the child or young person and their parents/carers, where appropriate, and in good time.
  - 2.4.5 SSRs and stand-down reports are available and assist the court in timely decision-making.
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### **3. Work with children and young people in the community**

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#### **3.1: Work with children and young people at risk of offending**

**Key judgement**

3.1.1: Children and young people are prevented from offending.

**Evidence**

- 3.1.1.1 The YOT contributes to the provision of services in the local authority to divert children and young people from offending.
  - 3.1.1.2 A process has been agreed by the YOT and its partners to identify and assess children and young people at risk of offending.
  - 3.1.1.3 Assessments are sensitive to cultural difference and diversity, and linked to criminogenic needs.
  - 3.1.1.4 Interventions are inclusive and address the specific needs of girls and young women, children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities.
  - 3.1.1.5 Attention is given to safeguarding children and young people.
  - 3.1.1.6 Interventions demonstrate effectiveness in reducing offending and promoting positive outcomes.
  - 3.1.1.7 There is a reduction in the number of children and young people who are first-time entrants into the criminal justice system.
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## **3.2: Work with children and young people who have offended**

### **Key judgement**

3.2.1: Children and young people who have offended are prevented from reoffending.

### **Evidence**

- 3.2.1.1 An Asset form is fully completed at the beginning of all interventions and reviewed as appropriate. It is informed by contact with social services and the self-assessment, and takes account of cultural difference, diversity and safeguarding issues.
- 3.2.1.2 Risk of harm to others is fully assessed in all cases identified as posing a potential risk, through the initial Asset form or alternative accepted tool.
- 3.2.1.3 Supervision plans are written in accordance with national standards, with a victim restorative process, emanate from Asset and contain SMART objectives.
- 3.2.1.4 Interventions address offending behaviour, are targeted in areas of assessed need and are evaluated and consistent with the principles of effective practice.
- 3.2.1.5 Interventions are inclusive and address the specific needs of girls and young women, children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities.
- 3.2.1.6 Contact with children and young people is consistent with national standards and Home Office/YJB guidance.
- 3.2.1.7 Enforcement activity follows non-compliance within the national standard timescale.
- 3.2.1.8 Action is taken to challenge and reduce discrimination and harassment by children and young people.
- 3.2.1.9 Examination of the case file provides evidence of progress.
- 3.2.1.10 The YOT demonstrates a reduction in offending in the pre-court, first tier and community bands of penalties.
- 3.2.1.11 Indicative accounts of outcomes from children and young people, parents/carers and other relevant persons asked, show improvements in behaviour, attitude and family relationships.

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### **Key judgement**

3.2.2: The health of children and young people who have offended is promoted by the work of the YOT.

### **Evidence**

- 3.2.2.1 Staff working with children and young people are advised and supported in identifying possible physical and mental health problems and in making appropriate referrals.
  - 3.2.2.2 Specialist assessments are undertaken on those with health needs.
  - 3.2.2.3 Children and young people who have offended are discouraged from substance misuse.
  - 3.2.2.4 Children and young people with health problems are supported in accessing services that address their assessed needs.
  - 3.2.2.5 Examination of the case file shows evidence of improved health outcomes.
  - 3.2.2.6 Indicative accounts of outcomes from children and young people, parents/carers and other relevant persons asked, suggest an improvement in physical and mental health.
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**Key judgement**

3.2.3: Children and young people who have offended are safeguarded through the work of the YOT.

**Evidence**

- 3.2.3.1 Risk of harm, either to self or to/from others (vulnerability), is fully assessed in all cases.
  - 3.2.3.2 The YOT refers cases where safeguarding concerns have been identified, to the local Children's Services and contributes to child protection plans on a case-by-case basis.
  - 3.2.3.3 Threshold criteria for making and responding to safeguarding referrals are clear and widely understood by staff from both the YOT and Children's Services.
  - 3.2.3.4 Interventions take account of safeguarding children and young people.
  - 3.2.3.5 There is evidence of joint working and the sharing of information and plans with the allocated social worker, particularly in the cases of Looked After Children.
  - 3.2.3.6 Looked After Children who have offended receive specific guidance and support.
  - 3.2.3.7 The YOT contributes to the reviews of Looked After Children who have offended.
  - 3.2.3.8 Examination of the case file reveals a reduction of risk factors.
  - 3.2.3.9 Indicative accounts of outcomes from children and young people, parents/carers and other relevant persons asked, show a reduction in vulnerability.
- 

**Key judgement**

3.2.4: Children and young people who have offended are enabled and encouraged to achieve their potential.

**Evidence**

- 3.2.4.1 Specialist assessments are undertaken on those with specific educational needs.
  - 3.2.4.2 Interventions promote attainment and are targeted in areas of assessed educational need.
  - 3.2.4.3 Support is given to children and young people who have offended and their parents/carers, to promote good behaviour, attendance at school and educational attainment.
  - 3.2.4.4 Action is taken to ensure that children and young people who have been permanently excluded from school attend alternative settings aimed at securing reintegration into mainstream education.
  - 3.2.4.5 Children and young people who have offended are supported in securing further education, training or employment.
  - 3.2.4.6 Examination of the case file provides evidence of improved achievement and/or attainment.
  - 3.2.4.7 Indicative accounts of outcomes from children and young people, parents/carers and other relevant persons asked, show improved achievement and/or attainment.
- 

**Key judgement**

3.2.5: Outcomes for children and young people are improved by their involvement through consultation about the services provided by the YOT.

**Evidence**

- 3.2.5.1 The YOT involves children and young people in consultations about the services they receive.
  - 3.2.5.2 Proactive measures are taken to ensure that children and young people in minority groups, younger children and those with communication problems are able to give their views.
  - 3.2.5.3 Consultation with children and young people makes a significant difference to the quality of service provision.
  - 3.2.5.4 Staff give effective feedback on action following consultation, or on issues raised by individual children and young people, including reasons for not acting on particular issues.
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### **3.3: Work with parents/carers**

#### **Key judgement**

3.3.1: Parents/carers are supported in addressing their children's offending.

#### **Evidence**

- 3.3.1.1 Assessments of parenting skills are carried out in a timely manner, in accordance with YJB effective practice guidelines and are used to inform interventions.
  - 3.3.1.2 Parents/carers are made aware of the requirements of the interventions and are kept informed about progress during the course of the intervention.
  - 3.3.1.3 Parents/carers are referred to interventions that are sensitive to the diverse needs of parents/carers from a range of cultural backgrounds and are available on a voluntary and statutory basis.
  - 3.3.1.4 Parents/carers are supported in addressing their children's behaviour.
  - 3.3.1.5 Interventions promote effective parenting in relation to the parents'/carers' ability to care, control and safeguard the child or young person.
- 

### **4. Work with children and young people subject to DTOs**

#### **Key judgement**

4.1: The likelihood of reoffending for children and young people who receive DTOs is minimised through the intervention of the YOT by assessment.

#### **Evidence**

- 4.1.1 An initial Asset form is completed that takes account of cultural difference, diversity, health, education, safeguarding and family issues, and forwarded immediately to the secure establishment.
  - 4.1.2 Specific risk factors (e.g. risk of harm, either to self or to/from others, health or substance misuse) are assessed and communicated to the secure establishment immediately.
  - 4.1.3 The YOT worker forwards copies of all relevant assessments, including care plans, PSRs, previous convictions, health and educational plans, to the secure establishment within 24 hours of the court appearance.
  - 4.1.4 The YOT worker contributes to the initial training plan and ensures that it is informed by Asset.
  - 4.1.5 The YOT works proactively with the secure establishment to ensure that the child's or young person's educational, training and health needs are assessed and addressed.
  - 4.1.6 Action is taken to identify and address the specific needs of Looked After, or otherwise vulnerable children and young people, girls and young women, children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities.
  - 4.1.7 The child's or young person's housing needs on release are assessed and action taken, where relevant, to prevent the loss of existing accommodation or to secure new settled arrangements.
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**Key judgement**

- 4.2: The likelihood of reoffending for children and young people who receive DTOs is minimised through the intervention of the YOT by contact with the child or young person and effective liaison with the secure establishment during the custodial period.

**Evidence**

- 4.2.1 The YOT communicates regularly with key people in secure establishments.
  - 4.2.2 The YOT worker contributes effectively to sentence planning and review meetings and to reviews of the training plan.
  - 4.2.3 The YOT facilitates contact with all service providers who are relevant to the needs of the child or young person and the risk they present.
  - 4.2.4 Arrangements to meet the child's or young person's assessed needs, particularly in relation to health, education and accommodation, are established in preparation for their release.
  - 4.2.5 Provision is made to address the specific needs of Looked After or otherwise vulnerable children, girls and young women, children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those who are disabled.
  - 4.2.6 The YOT worker contributes actively to the final review meeting, in accordance with the national standard.
  - 4.2.7 Parents/carers are encouraged to attend sentence planning and review meetings, in particular, the final review meeting.
- 

**Key judgement**

- 4.3: The likelihood of reoffending for children and young people who receive DTOs is minimised through the intervention of the YOT by reintegration into the community.

**Evidence**

- 4.3.1 The training plan is reviewed within ten working days and subsequently on a three-month basis or at the end of the order, whichever is soonest.
  - 4.3.2 The YOT worker assesses and monitors the child's or young person's housing needs.
  - 4.3.3 The YOT worker monitors the provision of health and education services, and the Management Board is informed where these services are not provided, in accordance with the national standard.
  - 4.3.4 The child's or young person's individual learning plan continues following release and is regularly reviewed, updated and shared with relevant providers and organisations, particularly Connexions.
  - 4.3.5 Interventions commenced in custody to address offending behaviour, health, safeguarding and education are continued on release, where appropriate.
  - 4.3.6 Interventions are inclusive and address the specific needs of girls and young women, children and young people from minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities.
  - 4.3.7 YOT contact with children and young people released from custody is consistent with the national standard and Home Office/YJB guidance.
  - 4.3.8 Enforcement activity follows non-compliance within the national standard timescale.
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**Key judgement**

- 4.4: The YOT demonstrates positive outcomes in its work with children and young people subject to DTOs.

**Evidence**

- 4.4.1 Examination of the case file provides evidence of progress, demonstrated, for example, by attitude to offending, improved family relationships, health outcomes, educational attainment and reduced vulnerability.
  - 4.4.2 The YOT demonstrates a reduction in reoffending for the custody band of penalties.
  - 4.4.3 Indicative accounts of outcomes from children and young people, parents/carers and other relevant persons asked, show improvements in behaviour and attitude.
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## **5. Victims and restorative justice**

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### **Key judgement**

5.1: Victims of children and young people who have offended feel that they have been assisted by the intervention of the YOT in achieving closure.

### **Evidence**

- 5.1.1 Assessments of victims' needs are consistently carried out in a timely manner, in accordance with effective practice guidelines.
  - 5.1.2 All victims are given the opportunity to make informed decisions about their involvement in direct/indirect restorative processes with children and young people who have offended and are supported in doing so.
  - 5.1.3 Communications are undertaken in a sensitive manner, responsive to individual needs, circumstances, preference and diversity.
  - 5.1.4 Victims are offered the opportunity to influence any reparative element of the child's or young person's supervision plan and to be informed of their progress.
  - 5.1.5 Victims have access to a restorative intervention tailored to their needs.
  - 5.1.6 Restorative and reparative interventions are provided that are appropriate to the age, vulnerability, culture, ethnicity, language needs, literacy levels and gender of the victims and children and young people who have offended.
  - 5.1.7 All victims are offered the opportunity to give feedback that is used to inform the work of the YOT.
  - 5.1.8 Children and young people involved in restorative interventions make a positive contribution to the victim and community.
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