

# Brighton & Hove Youth Justice Plan 2024-2025



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## Introduction, vision and strategy

Brighton & Hove is a unitary authority, bordered by the larger county councils of East and West Sussex. It is a vibrant seaside city with a population of around 277K (2021 census), of which approximately 47K are children and young people. With high student numbers, many visitors from surrounding areas and tourism, the population is transient and quite diverse. There is a large LGBT+ community and while residents are predominantly white British/European (89%), 27% of school age children and 21% of all children under 18 are Black, Asian, or mixed heritage (2022 school census:). We are therefore seeing some significant changes in the diversity of the city population.

Brighton & Hove is a relatively affluent city but has areas of social & economic deprivation and a higher than average rate of drugs deaths. It has the highest number of children living in households where there is substance use, mental health issues and domestic abuse are experienced (191.51 per 1000, compared to 182.1 nationally). A large proportion of serious and violent crime is linked to the drug trade and county lines activity and the associated exploitation is one of the biggest challenges for services working with vulnerable children in the city.

Brighton and Hove has a well established multi-disciplinary Adolescent Service, in which the Youth Justice Team sits. This service brings together the key teams that support the adolescents with most complex needs in the city, including children involved with the criminal justice system, experiencing exploitation, using substances or alcohol and those on the edge of coming into care. The teams work closely together whilst still retaining their distinct identities. The management structures, processes and staff recognise the need to work differently to meet the needs of this complex cohort of young people.

The Adolescent Service works closely with other key partners to deliver on the priorities of this plan. These priorities have been agreed and are led by the Brighton and Hove Adolescent Partnership Board, which has good attendance and participation from all of the key partners. There is a keen commitment to jointly own the vision to ensure we meet the needs of this cohort.

The Complex Adolescent Strategy (2023-25) is owned and governed by the Brighton & Hove Adolescent Partnership Board. The Youth Justice plan sits beneath this strategy. The partnership is committed to reducing first time entrants into the criminal justice system; to continue to improve practice to reduce reoffending; and to avoid the use of custody wherever possible. There is also a strong commitment to anti racist work and reducing areas of disproportionality across the system. The Brighton & Hove Adolescent Partnership Board has also prioritised increasing participation and the voice of the child and continuing to develop contextual safeguarding practice.

We were extremely proud of Outstanding HMIP inspection in 2021. Since then we have also achieved a level 1 SEND inspection in 2023, and an Outstanding Ofsted ILACS (Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services) in 2024. We feel this was a result of our strong partnerships and dedicated staff team, and the shared ambition to provide the best services possible for our children, their families, and the community. Whilst being really proud of this

achievement, we are clear that we will not be complacent. We have continued to strive to make improvements and will do so until we get it right for all our children.



**Deb Austin, Corporate Director, Chair of the Brighton & Hove Adolescent Partnership Board.**

## **Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements**

The Adolescent Service, with the Youth Justice integrated, sits within Children's Safeguarding and Care branch of Families, Children & Learning (FCL) Directorate of the city council. This promotes a good operational and strategic fit with the wider services for children, young people, and their families.

The key principle of the service is that we show young people we care for them, even when at times we do not condone their behaviours. We never give up trying to engage with young people, using reflective group supervision to explore new ideas when things feel stuck.

The service also strives to work with the wider community, for example we are aware young people are being exploited within some local hotels, so we are working with them to address this with an offer of advice and training for their staff.

The Adolescent Service has enabled teams to work in a child centred way focusing on how best to engage with this often-disaffected cohort. We aim to reduce the number of professionals working with each child, removing the need for the young person to have to tell their story several different times to different professionals. We have worked to ensure our office is a welcoming place for young people and they often spend time there with their friends talking with the adolescent workers. This has been a successful way of encouraging young people to engage with the service who were previously reluctant to do so.

The remit of the Youth Offending Service Management Board was extended to include the needs of the wider complex adolescent cohort, and therefore better support the local model. The Brighton & Hove Adolescent Partnership Board sits quarterly and is chaired by the Corporate Director for Families Children and Learning. All relevant statutory partners are represented at a senior level as well as a representative from the voluntary sector and a headteacher representative. The Board retains a strong focus on youth justice and sets the direction and priorities for the service, as well as overseeing youth justice performance and development. Likewise, in agreement with the Youth Justice Board, the Youth Justice Plan has been incorporated into a Complex Adolescents Strategy. We have ensured that this continues to give appropriate attention to the development of Youth Justice arrangements in the area, setting vision and direction to the service.

The Head of Service (Adolescents) sits within the Senior Leadership Team in FCL. She actively champions the needs of young people and Youth Justice within the relevant partnerships and strategic boards, including the Sussex Criminal Justice Board, the Community Safety Partnership Board, The Sussex Violence Reduction Partnership, and the Brighton and Hove Safeguarding Children Partnership. Along with other Adolescent Strategic Board members, she raises the needs of this particularly complex and vulnerable cohort of children and young people, and ensures others see them as "child first."

Partnerships are strong in Brighton and Hove, and there is a genuine will to work together to address issues associated with youth crime and support desistance and prevention of crime through provision of services for children, for example strategic partnerships with the police to promote contextual safeguarding and working arrangements with community projects AudioActive (outreach music project) and Brighton Streets (targeted youth work).

The Youth Justice Team has a good reputation internally with the Local Authority, being embedded in social work structurally and aligned with social work practice & policy. Externally, the Adolescent Service has well established and strong strategic and operational partnerships with Police, Probation, and courts, dealing with issues of risk and public protection in a robust manner. Strategically the Youth Justice Team is therefore well placed to meet the demands of welfare & justice.

## **5.1 Update on the previous year:**

### **Progress on priorities in previous plan**

The Youth Justice Team is fully integrated into the Adolescent Service. The Adolescent Partnership Board has set 3 main priorities:

- To increase participation and the voice of the child;
- To continue the anti-racist journey and address disproportionality; and
- To continue to develop contextual safeguarding practice to better meet the needs of this cohort.

In addition, there were Youth Justice specific outcomes, reducing first time entrants, reducing reoffending and reducing the use of custody.

- **To increase participation and the voice of the child**

There has been a lot of progress in this area. There is now a Participation Worker within the Adolescent Service, based with RUOK? There is ongoing work on developing the social media presence to engage with children and young people. We are engaging with young people through Instagram and are pleased to currently have 654 Instagram followers. Children and young people have been involved in recruitment of staff, meeting with inspectors and elected members and their views are sought throughout, and particularly at the end of interventions. The chair of the Adolescent Partnership Board has met with a group of young people to hear their views about access to services, and we also have had presentations at the board. We are working towards young people co-chairing the board in the long term. In addition there has been specific projects to increase participation.

We have been able to secure funding from Healthwatch to seek to engage a group of LGBTQ young people; gathering their views about how substance misuse services, sexual health services and therapeutic support services could better engage this often marginalised community. Surveys of young people within schools (e.g. School Safe and Well at School Survey) in Brighton and Hove have consistently identified that LGBTQ+ young people under the age of 18 have often felt there are barriers to accessing support from support services such as drug and alcohol services.

The aim of the sessions was to encourage co-design of tools that can enable service managers, social workers, frontline workers in drug, alcohol and sexual health services and commissioners of local health and social care services to better understand and serve this community of people. Young people were engaged in co-producing a guide that seeks to help services better engage and serve LGBTQ+ young people.

The Youth Justice Team have worked with Sussex police to provide 'Listening Circles' to galvanise young people from black and global majority backgrounds to talk about their experiences of Police and policing. They worked with pupils in two local schools and a college. The groups were asked the same four questions which were open-ended, designed to elicit detailed responses, including anecdotal material, and give participants the opportunity to react to what others are saying. A report was written by the Youth Justice Team outlining children's responses, which is being used in Police training & development.

The Amplifying Voices event, organised by Audio Active, stands as a testament to the commitment of Brighton and Hove City Council and various voluntary organisations in amplifying the voices of Global Majority Young People aged 11-25. The event aimed to provide a platform for young black musicians, dancers, and artists from Brighton to showcase their talents while fostering dialogue between young people and decision-makers within the city. The Event brought together a diverse audience comprising Global Majority young people, their families, friends, allies, and representatives from supporting organisations and statutory bodies. Through live performances, creative consultations, and testimonial recordings, attendees shared their thoughts, feelings, and recommendations, shedding light on crucial issues affecting the Global Majority young community in Brighton and Hove.

- **To continue the anti-racist journey and address disproportionality.**

There is a Children's Safeguarding and Care Anti Racist Action Plan in place, which the Youth Justice Team is part of. The plan has been produced by the project board, including senior managers and practitioners and has three main workstreams, staff support, how we are working with children and families and the voices of families, children and carers. We are beginning to see improvements from this including staff feeling more confident about talking about race and significantly more examples of good practice seen in audits. We recognise that this is a journey and there is still a lot of work to be done.

We have recently started some joint training between the Police and the Adolescent Service to support the difficult conversations required to challenge and address examples of racism and to encourage better joined up work in this area. There have been some very successful in person training and arrangements being put in place to continue the conversations moving forward as a result.

We continue to scrutinise the performance data and this is shared with and addressed at the Adolescent Management Board. We do continue to see disproportionality within the cohort of mixed heritage boys, and we will continue to look at ways to address this.

- **To continue to develop contextual safeguarding practice to better meet the needs of this cohort.**

There has been work completed with the Head of Children's Safeguarding to review the use of contextual safeguarding strategy meetings to give clarity to the process. The work now is to embed this ensure the practice in this area is consistent.

We now have a dedicated social worker within the Adolescent Service, and a couple of trained AMBIT facilitators to support the development and implementation of the AMBIT model of working across the team. The work has started through training and consultations across the teams.

We have had a multi-agency thematic audit conducted by the Brighton and Hove Children's Safeguarding Board (BHSCP). This identified some key strengths around partnership practices, effective systems and processes to safeguard children and the use of contextual safeguarding. It was acknowledged that even though the multi-agency arrangements and practice was strong, there remained inconsistency in the improvement of the lived experience for some of these children. The findings of this were shared through a learning event. We will use these findings to inform and continue to develop the work in this area.

Partnership work has been developed with Police in relation to Habitual Knife Carriers, named Operation Safety. Op Safety is one strand Sussex Police strategy to intervene early to disrupt and reduce serious youth violence by identifying children known to carry or at risk of carrying knives and ensuring they are receiving appropriate intervention. With increasing concerns about knife crime in Brighton and Hove, Op Safety has developed into a multi-agency oversight meeting, chaired by the Youth Justice manager and involving key partners in Trust for Developing Communities (TDC), Access to Education, Community Safety and the Police Exploitation team.

- **To reduce First Time Entrants**

There has been ongoing work with partners in Children's Services (including Front Door for Families and social work pods across Brighton & Hove), Police, Community Safety and Trust for Developing Communities (local Youth Work provision) to identify children coming to notice for ASB and offending for the first time and at risk of escalating into the formal Youth Justice System. B&H Youth Justice Service has developed wider network in the Police through attendance at the local Joint Action group, presenting at the Sussex Police Youth Ambassadors conference and Neighbourhood Policing Team events. Referrals into the Youth Justice Service are triaged and managed according to need, with pathways now including drugs diversion via Ru-ok? (substance misuse service), Reboot Mentoring, Immediate Justice, Turnaround and the Diversion pathway.

Turnaround is delivered in partnership between B&H Youth Justice Service and The Trust for Development Communities (TDC). There is a full time Youth Worker embedded in the Youth Justice Team, who works closely with TDC and the teams in the Adolescent Service as appropriate. The Turnaround worker is also part of Brighton Streets outreach engagement work into areas where there are vulnerable children & young people and reports of ASB, which has facilitated relationships with young people at risk of offending and developed trust, leading to better engagement of those children with Turnaround.

The Immediate Justice offer has continued to develop, with a full time Restorative Justice worker becoming well established and connected to community placements, working alongside the Youth Justice and Restorative Justice team. Brighton & Hove Youth Justice Service has delivered a significant proportion of Immediate Justice within Sussex. There is a strong link with the Immediate Justice Delivery Officers via regular Immediate Justice meetings facilitated by the Police & Crime Commissioners' Office (OPCC) and referrals have

increased in the past 6 months. Children referred to Immediate Justice are referred into Turnaround once they have completed their community Reparation for ongoing prevention work. There is a good range of community reparation placements, including gardening, charity work, food banks, maintenance of local parks and supporting community centres, so children can be matched to the placements according to their needs and / or offending behaviour.

The Diversion panel has continued to develop in partnership with Police In the last 12 months the new Child Gravity Matrix has been implemented. There are pan -Sussex meetings to ensure alignment of the Child Outcome Pathway across Sussex and an audit is being completed to look at decision-making and disposals across the three Youth Justice areas. There is oversight of the decision-making panel via the Youth Justice manager and Police Sergeant, with escalation to the specified Inspector where required.

- **To reduce reoffending**

Annual performance data (below) suggests that re-offending rates have continued to fall in Brighton & Hove. Following from the National Standards case audit in 2023, we have been working to improve practice via the audit improvement plan, which included five key areas Youth Justice work, Out of Court Disposals, At Court, In the Community, Secure Settings and On Transition. The results and improvement plans were shared with the Adolescent Partnership Board, with an update on provided in April 2024, which reviewed progress on the plan. Some of the examples of improved practice include:

- Adoption of the ChildFirst template for court reports such as PSRs and Referral Order Panel reports;
- Development of partnership work in relation to Diversion and Prevention, such as Reboot, Turnaround and Immediate Justice (as described above);
- Partnership work such as Op Safety (outlined above)
- Partnership work with the Courts in relation to ChildFirst Practice;
- Trauma Informed Practice;
- Development of Transitions through our partnership arrangements with National Probation Service (NPS).

We have a Probation Officer embedded in the Youth Justice who completes transition work and is able to hold young people on the cusp of 18 throughout their journey into adulthood due to her split role with Youth Justice Team and the VERU (18-15 team).

- **To reduce the use of custody**

In respect of custody rates, this has been very low in the past 2 years, with only one young person sentenced to custody (for GBH S 18 stabbing) between April 2023 and March 2024 and only one secure remand for a short period of 3 weeks, with two Remanded to the Care of the Local Authority (RLAA). Performance data on custody rates is shared at quarterly board meetings.

Children identified as at risk of custody are offered an enhanced multi-agency package. This can include for example, a personal Engagement and Support worker alongside their social worker; additional Youth Justice contacts; access to community provisions such as AudioActive, Boxing, gym membership and other sports opportunities; Ru-ok? (substance misuse); FFT (Functional Family Therapy); direct access to seconded Mental Health practitioner; and specialist 1:1 support with education, training or employment. For these children, interventions will be tailored to their needs and wishes, with a balance of statutory and voluntary contacts designed to enhance engagement.

In the Youth Justice, we have held a significant number of children at high risk of re-offending and/ or harm to others (and therefore at risk of custody) in the community in the past year and the vast majority have not entered custody. We have seen some positive outcomes for young people where custody was expected but they have been given the opportunity of an Intensive Referral Order or ISS.

In respect of children being held overnight in custody, there is a protocol in place to prevent this wherever possible, which is monitored and upheld by Police.

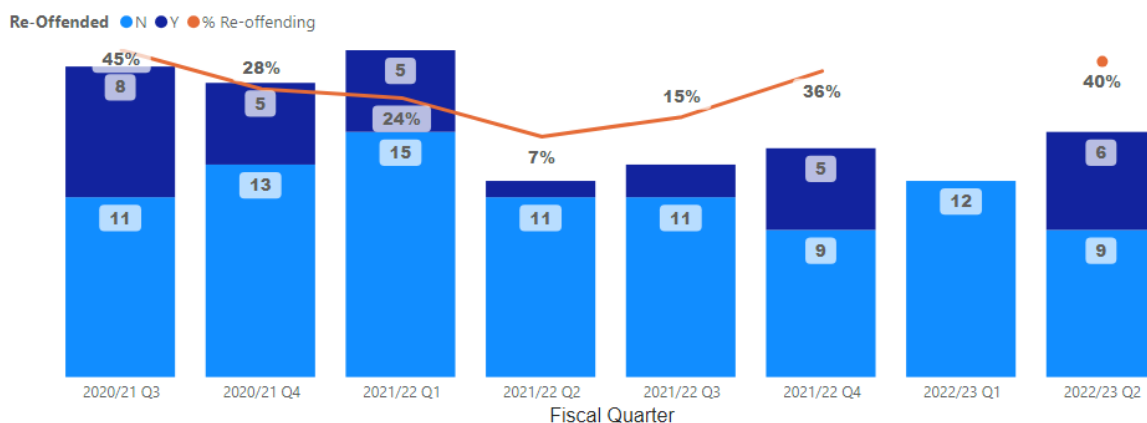
## Performance over the previous year

### 1. Re-offending rate

The first chart below shows the re-offending (binary) rate for Brighton & Hove Youth Justice Cohort for the last 2 years (substantive outcomes). There is significant variation in the rate, from 0% and 7% in some quarters to 40%, which is attributed to the small cohort. A broad overview is shown in the annual chart (b) below, which shows a drop in the overall re-offending rate to 24%. Youth Justice Board data shows an average of 25%, below the Youth Justice family average of 30.5%.

This is consistent with the gradual reduction in re-offending rates in Brighton & Hove since 2017. There are multiple factors that may contribute to this downward trend, which would need to be further explored. Overall, we have high engagement and completion rates in B&H, which is attributed to the relationship-based model and focus on building trust with young people. Breach rates are very low, with all options being explored before returning children to Court. There is strong multi-agency work within the Adolescent Service with co-location being key. This enables close working between professionals and a wrap-around service to children in Youth Justice.

Re-offending



b) Annual re-offending (binary rate) :



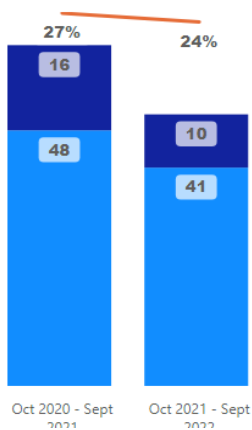
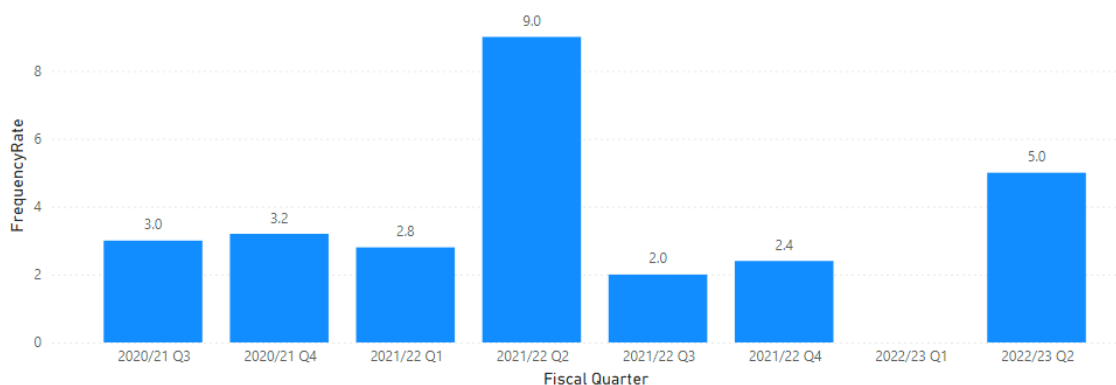


Chart (c) similarly shows that considerable variation in the frequency rate per quarter, again with the small cohort, this can be significantly influenced by a single re-offender. It is easier to understand the frequency rate on an average annual basis, as shown in chart (d). This shows an average rate for the year of 3.5 offences per re-offender, slightly above the previous year's average frequency rate.

Overall the data suggests that while we are seeing less young people re-offend, those that do re-offend are committing a consistent number of offences, slightly more re-offences than previously. This indicates that just under 25% of young people in the cohort are committing a slightly higher number of re-offences. This fits with our experience in Brighton & Hove, where the Youth Justice cohort are children with complex needs and significant vulnerabilities. A small proportion of the Youth Justice cohort present with more entrenched behaviour that takes longer to address through intervention. Previous analysis has shown these children to have a high number of ACEs, so experiencing developmental trauma, often combined with educational needs/ neurodiversity and being affected by exploitation. We are seeing this particularly in those committing multiple or violent offences.

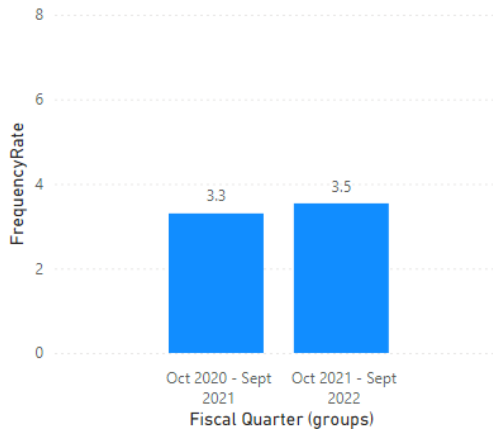
### c) Re-offending rate (frequency)

Frequency rate (offences per re-offender)



### d) Annual rate:

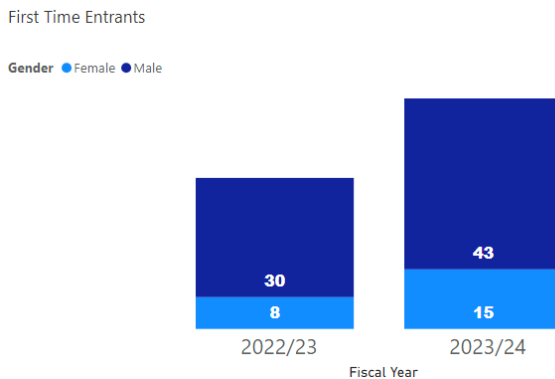
Frequency rate (offences per re-offen...



## 2. First Time Entrants

B&H have seen an increase in FTEs in the last year, from 38 in 2023-2023 to 58 in 2023-2024 (local data). Chart (a) below shows that the majority of FTEs are male, with females making up just over 25%.

### a) FTE data with gender split



Race/ ethnicity is shown in chart (b) below, which shows that mixed heritage children are not over- represented in FTEs, given mixed race children make up 10.4% of the school age population and although Black children are slightly over represented (2.1% of school age population) this only relates to 2 children. Of these, one child received a Caution and one received a YCC. Data taken from the 2022 school census.

### b) Racial identity/ ethnicity of FTEs

Ethnicity

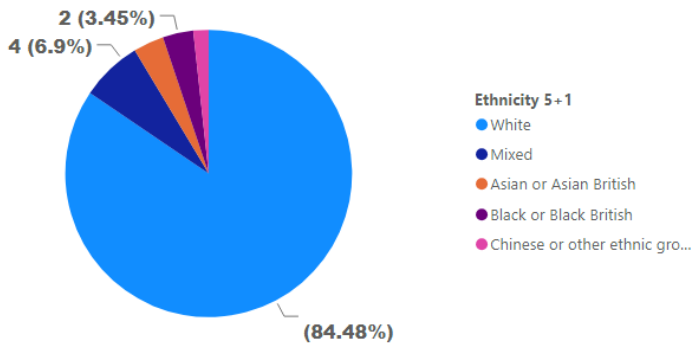
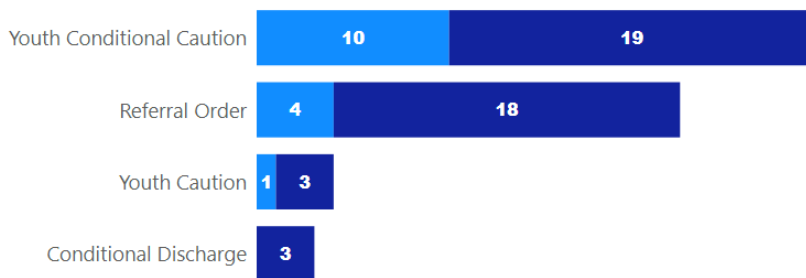


Chart (c) below shows that overall, Youth Conditional Cautions and Youth Cautions make up 57% of FTEs in the year 2023-2024. It's notable that the numbers of Referral Orders has risen significantly, from 8 the previous year (2022-2023) to 22. This is coupled with an overall increase in the Youth Justice cohort.

c) FTE Outcomes 2023-2024 with gender split

Main Substantive Outcome

Gender ● Female ● Male



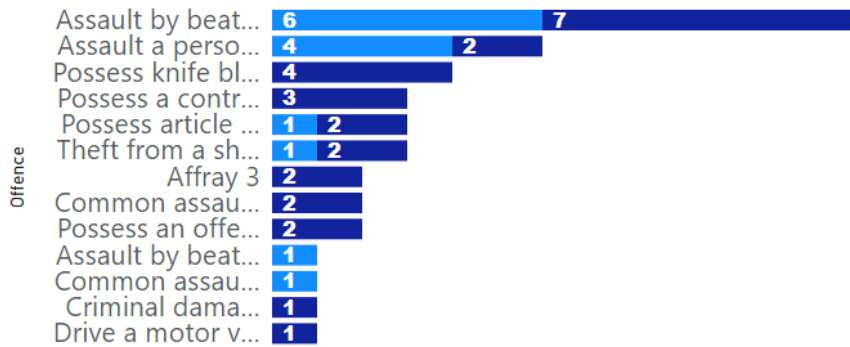
In relation to the increase in FTEs, there are a number of factors which have contributed. Offence young person data in chart (d) below shows a significantly higher level of violent offending compared to other young persons.

In 2023-2024, nine of the FTEs were knife / weapon related offences (possession), one was GBH S 18 and two were ABH. As shown below, the majority of violent offences were common assault / assault by beating. As would be expected, the more serious offences are leading to prosecution. Some of the numbers of court cases can be accounted for by delays in the justice system. The rise in FTEs and violent crime has been shared with the Board and a deep dive analysis has been requested to investigate this further, with a particular focus on knife crime.

d) Offence young person of FTEs 2023-2024

First Time Entrants

Gender ● Female ● Male



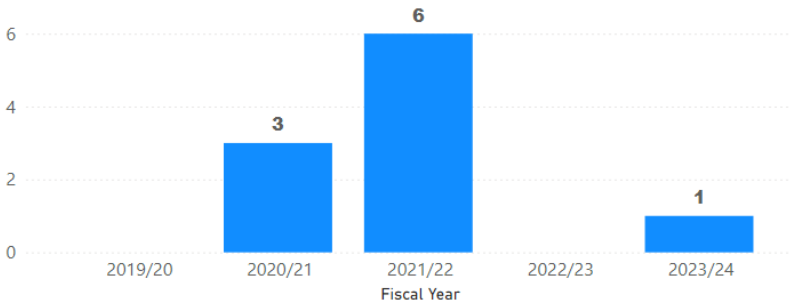
### 3. Custody

The use of custodial remand and sentences has remained low in Brighton & Hove, with only one child being sentenced to custody in year 2023-2024, following none in year 2022-2023, as shown below in chart (a). The only custodial sentence was for a 17 year old white male for serious violent offence (GBH S 18- stabbing) and has since been released into the community on Licence. It is perhaps noteworthy that the co-defendant (charged reduced to Robbery) received a Youth Rehabilitation Order with Intensive Supervision Surveillance. With a relatively small Youth Justice cohort in Brighton & Hove, low numbers over several years can be followed by a spike, as seen in 2021. However, the Brighton & Hove average remains low. The custody rate per 100,000 is 0.04 compared to the Youth Justice family rate of 0.07.

#### a) B&H custodial sentences over 5 years

Sentenced to Custody

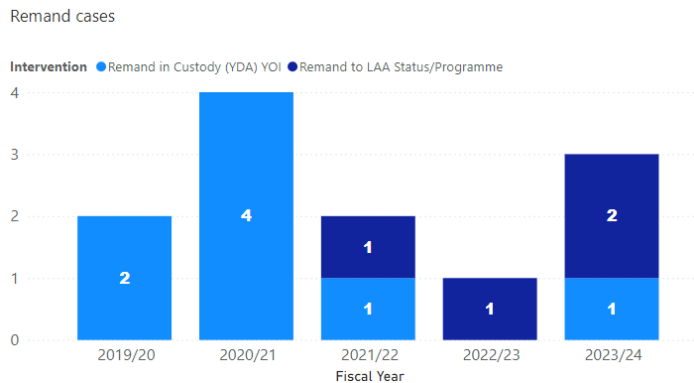
Intervention ● DTO/Custody Programme



Similarly, the use of secure remand has remained low, with only 1 secure remand and 2 Remand to Local Authority Accommodation in 2023- 2024. Chart (b) below shows remand data over 5 years, with a split between Remand to Youth Detention Accommodation and Remand to Local Authority Accommodation. The only secure remand in 2023- 2024 was for a short period (3 weeks). The young person was in Care, well known to the Youth Justice, with complex needs and high risk of re-offending and was subsequently released onto Remand to Local Authority Accommodation. The two young people who experienced custody in the past year were both white British, with one young person of mixed heritage

being subject to RLAA. However, numbers are too small to comment on disproportionality in any meaningful way.

b) B&H Remand data over 5 years:



**New KPIs**

A considerable amount of work has been undertaken in the Youth Justice to record the new KPIs. Unfortunately, the case management system, ChildView, does not allow for KPIs to be pulled from existing data sources, such as AssetPlus, so the staff team have been required to undertake additional recording to enable the data workers to pull off reports. Recording of KPIs is being completed and once we have accurate data, we plan to use this as a benchmark for future performance.

**Risks and issues**

The main risks to the delivery of Youth Justice services relates to funding. Any reduction in the level of funding to the service would result in a reduction in the level of service provision for this cohort. Reductions to funding to key voluntary sector partners is also likely to have an impact on this cohort as they provide additional support and support desistance related activities. Families are also struggling with the cost of living crisis, causing more pressure on families. This management board is cognisant of these pressures and this is regularly discussed at board in order to work together to find solutions, rather than retreating into silos.

The sufficiency concerns regarding residential placements for those that require it can also be a potential risk to Youth Justice service. This is particularly relevant where secure placements are required from police custody or where a robust care package is required to avoid a custodial sentence for children. The integrated model helps support this challenge, as the Youth Justice services works in partnership with social care to find creative solutions where possible.

There are times when so lack of understanding between the different partners can create some tension in the system, for example frontline Police being so concerned about particular children that they cannot understand why social care do not seek welfare secure placements for them. It may in fact be that this would not be the best long-term plan for the child, or they may not meet the criteria. The relationships at a senior level are robust enough to have

challenging conversations about these cases and agree on a plan on how to resolve such issues.

## **Plan for the forthcoming year**

### **Child First**

The Brighton & Hove Adolescent Partnership Board are fully committed to the Child First principle. The multi-disciplinary model of the Adolescent Service, in which the Youth Justice Service is fully integrated supports this principle. Under this model, children's needs are considered in a holistic way, with Youth Justice being one of the teams in the service and not treated as a separate service. This means that each child's particular needs, strengths, skills and potential are recognised and their best interests are prioritised. The model fully supports the treatment of children coming to the attention of Police as children first and offenders second, with their behaviour viewed through a trauma informed lens, as a symptom of unmet need.

Partner agencies have committed to the child first approach and work hard to keep children out of the criminal justice system. We try to involve children and young people and work with them to develop and improving the service. We regularly hear the child's voice through their workers or through them attending the board. Our aim is to have the board co-chaired by a young people, which is something we are working towards.

Since 2023, the Adolescent Service has re-branded, with a review of the purpose of each team and re-naming of teams to match their purpose and specialism whilst maintaining each team as part of the whole. The idea is to increase understanding of what the different teams do and can offer. As part of this, what was previously the Youth Offending Service has been renamed the Youth Justice Team. The model in Brighton is that the Youth Justice Service is fully integrated into the Adolescent Service. Some elements of the Youth Justice work sit within the wider Adolescent Service, for example, including family work, mentoring, mental health and wellbeing. The change of name, from offending to justice, clearly supports the Child First approach we are striving for.

The partnership is keen to work collaboratively with children and are seeking a young person to co-chair the board meeting. There are arrangements in place locally in which the Corporate Parenting Board is chaired by young people. This is working well, and we plan to learn from this model. The key partner agencies also have demonstrated a commitment to this, for example Sussex Police has Youth Ambassadors, supporting and promoting child centred policing. There have been specific pieces of work commissioned to ensure we gain the views and experiences of children and young people from global majority communities.

In respect of Youth Justice, we fund (via vouchers) young people with lived experience to be part of all Youth Justice recruitment processes, for example by being part of the interview panel. Young people are provided with advice and guidance, are asked to write their own questions for candidates and encouraged to take a full part in the interview process. They contribute to scoring and discussions about candidates at the end of interviews.

We regularly seek children's views throughout and at the end of their disposals and their views are shared with the team as part of developing practice. This has been particularly important as part of relationship -based practice. For the majority of children, their relationship with their Youth Justice worker is central to their experience of the system, and especially that they can trust their Youth Justice worker. We have had feedback from children and their parents/ carers about the quality of their relationships with their Youth Justice workers and what has helped. We developed a very simple format for feedback, with

3 key questions to keep the process simple and accessible for children who do not like multiple questions/ questionnaires. Conversations have happened as part of the supervision process and we have found that children are honest and open in their responses.

Further in terms of processes, assessments (including Diversion reports) are written to the young person and shared with them, to ensure these are accessible and child friendly. Partner, such as Police, have been involved in these developments. This development has aligned Youth Justice work with social work, where assessments are written to the child and family.

## **Resources and services**

The Youth Justice Service is integrated into the Adolescent Service. This provides value for money as it ensures that the children and young people get the right support from the right professionals. The budget is a pooled budget with contributions detailed in the table below. The Youth Justice Board grant provides approximately 10% of the total budget. This grant is sent in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant, and is used to achieve the outcomes and priorities as detailed within this plan.

In addition to this we have received funding for specific areas of work. This has included Turnaround funding, Home Office funding for Girls and Young Women, Reboot funding and funding for Immediate Justice. Whilst these funding pots are used to deliver discreet areas of work, this contributes to the delivery within this plan.

The majority of the funding goes on staffing which is our biggest resource. Any reduction in funding would result in a reduction in post, and therefore a reduction in service offer. In addition to this funding there are some contributions in kind, such as the seconded Probation Officer and the seconded Police Officer. We have attempted in the past to compare the resource allocation with local or similar demographic Youth Justice Services. This however has proved impossible, as every area has a very different set up and model.

## **Board development:**

The Strategic Adolescent Management Board incorporates the functions of the Youth Justice Management Board. The board is well attended, and Board members play an active role in setting direction and vision for the Youth Justice Service. The Board meets quarterly, and in addition to this there is a yearly extended meeting to review progress and set priorities for the upcoming year. All Board members receive an induction, so they are clear on their roles and responsibilities. Membership is reviewed regularly.

We have recently held a board development workshop to review the priorities and develop this plan. We also reviewed the arrangements and functioning of the board. It was agreed that going forwards the name of the board will change to the Adolescent Partnership Board. The meetings will have themed sessions each quarter, along with a case study which reflects the issues in the themes. The Corporate director for Work will continue to move towards a co-chairing arrangement with young people.

## **Workforce Development**

Brighton & Hove is committed to the continuous development of staff through induction, training, supervision, mentoring and coaching, to support staff progression and retention and offer a high quality service to our children & families. As a learning service, we provide placements to Sussex & Brighton University social work students, offering opportunities for staff to enable the learning of others and develop their own skills.

Youth Justice staff have mandatory BHCC training as part of their initial induction to the service and continuous development is tailored to individual needs via the Personal Development Plan. There are further opportunities for staff to learn through consultation, shadowing and co-working with partnership staff in the Adolescent Service. Learning is disseminated at team meetings, whole service events, from thematic audits and feedback from children, parents/ carers and victims, as well as stakeholders (Courts, Police, Education, etc).

A wide range of training courses are accessible to Youth Justice staff, volunteers and partnership staff via the Brighton & Hove City Council Learning Zone. This includes courses specific to working with children & families & social work CPD modules. The Brighton & Hove Children's Services Training Plan includes Youth Justice practitioners.

### **Staff Induction**

New staff have an induction for the first 4 weeks, including mandatory training, shadowing, peer mentoring, meeting partners and learning about the service, as outlined below. They are assigned a peer mentor, or 'buddy' to support them, alongside their line manager. An example of this is set out below:

- Meeting your line manager, buddy and team
- Attending Adolescent Service team meetings (Ru-ok?, FFT, SW Pod, Health team);
- Visits to the wider service, FDFP, Family Hubs, etc.
- Shadowing Youth Court, Reparation & Diversion panel
- AssetPlus, risk assessment & management training;
- Children Safeguarding training and safety planning;
- Shadow AVR (Adolescent Vulnerability & Risk Meeting)
- Training for access to Eclipse- Children's Services database
- Mandatory virtual & online training (CSE, CSE, County Lines, Fair & Inclusive Practice Health & Safety, etc.)
- Prevent/WRAP
- Substance Misuse Training
- Familiarisation with Youth Justice policies and protocols, Youth Justice Board case management guidance & National Standards.

### **Ongoing Professional Development**

The B&H Learning Zone provides the core training for practice with children & families and supports continuing professional development of staff. Youth Justice staff can request additional bespoke training relevant to their role or career progression.

The Adolescent Service practices the trauma-informed approach. All Youth Justice staff have received training & consolidation to embed the approach. Seconded MH practitioners and Forensic CAMHS practitioners offer consultation and advice. Staff can refer to Partners in Change (PiC) for consultation, learning and advice. Through PiC, we also provide



consultation and learning for social workers regarding children with sexually harmful behaviour.

In the past year, we have had CPD inputs for the Youth Justice Team on the following:

- Trauma and the Brain: Impact of childhood trauma on development; PTSD and complex PTSD. Options for support/ intervention
- Secondary trauma: Identification, treatment and prevention
- AMBIT model: theory and application to practice
- Mentalisation: Theory & practice;
- Autistic Spectrum Condition and neurodiversity
- LGBTQ+ and the impact of discrimination i9o9
- Substance Misuse and impact (Adolescent Service training)
- Restorative Justice and Mediation (new/ relevant staff)
- Coaching for managers (senior staff)
- Anti-racist training

BHCC aims to become an anti-racist council and a core part of the anti-racist plan is to increase awareness through training, consultation and open forum discussion. Families, Children & Learning (FCL) provides a monthly forum on Anti-Racist practice, which includes seminars led by the Lead Anti-Racist Practitioner. These sessions are designed for all staff and managers to reflect openly on the issues and improve practice with black, Asian and dual heritage children & families. This learning is included in PDPs as part of ongoing professional development.

### **Supervision & Support**

Under the B&H Children's Services Supervision Policy, the service provides weekly reflective group supervision as part of the Relationship -Based model. Alongside this, one to one line management supervision is provided (every 4-6 weeks).

Group supervision uses a reflective practice model to enable staff to explore case issues and reflect on the impact of Youth Justice work, with support from their peers. As mentioned above the trauma informed approach is used including consideration of secondary trauma on staff. Individual supervision is focussed on staff development and support, with space for case discussion and oversight of complex or high- risk cases as required. Managers have an 'open door' policy, whereby they are available to staff at all times for support and guidance.

### **Workforce training plan (Youth Justice Team) for 2024-2025**

- AMBIT : reflective practice 19<sup>th</sup> June, 14<sup>th</sup> August & 2<sup>nd</sup> October 24
- Mental Health, TIP & Neurodiversity 12<sup>th</sup> June, 17<sup>th</sup> July & 14<sup>th</sup> September 24
- Criminal Exploitation & OCGs TBC Autumn 2024
- Restorative Practice (Team Day) 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024
  
- Anti-racist practice forums Monthly
- Anti-racist Conference Annual

All other training is delivered by the B&H Learning Zone and agreed via individual PDPs, including mandatory training.

### **Evidence-based practice and innovation:**

## **VR knife crime programme**

The Youth Justice Service has continued to offer the Virtual Reality knife crime programme, which includes a short film developed by a London filmmaker with lived experience. The knife crime programme consists of three structured sessions, including the legal framework, the VR film and a session to reflect on learning and decision-making. The programme focusses particularly on the impact and consequences of knife crime from different perspectives, including the victim, perpetrator, parents, police, medical staff and friends.

The programme is delivered with up to three young people or on a 1:1 basis and is designed to be accessible to children who are neurodiverse or have learning needs. The programme is undertaken with all children referred to the service for knife crime, violence, or those known to associate with peers/ groups involved in knife crime. This includes children subject to informal and voluntary programmes as well as those on statutory disposals.

### Outcomes/ evaluation:

Feedback received from children and young people about the programme has provided insight into how children think about knife crime. Broadly, children divided into two groups, a younger group (aged 11-14), less criminalised/ not affected by exploitation and a slightly older group (15-17) who were more entrenched and/ or tended to be affected by exploitation and/ or violent peer groups, with some age exceptions.

The first group (younger participants) tend to say that the VR film is not realistic, whereas the second group (older/ more entrenched) participants say that the film is realistic, with some saying they have seen similar situations first hand.

When asked if these sorts of things happen in Brighton, the younger participants said this type of thing only happened in London. The second group said it can and does happen. This was also interesting when speaking to them about their fear of violence. The level of fear in the second group appeared much higher than first group. Another observation was that the first group related to the victim but the second group related more to and assumed the role of the perpetrator.

Fear of harm is given as the predominate reason for carrying a knife. Approximately 75% of children completing the programme stated that they carry a knife through fear of being attacked by others. The second (older) group carry to prevent conflict, for example saying that if they are seen in the wrong place without a knife, they would be targeted by their rivals. The notion of being able to defend themselves is more common in the first group, who are often naïve about what would happen in a confrontation if both attacker and victim had a knife.

We are in the process of completing a more formal evaluation of the knife crime programme, with re-offending data as well, as a deep dive analysis to examine the trends of violent crime in Brighton & Hove. The report will be shared with the Board in September 2024.

### Trauma Informed Practice

In Youth Justice we have continued to use the trauma-informed approach to practice, alongside relationship-based practice and using the AMBIT model to support practitioners. This model of practice is used across the Adolescent Service and wider Children's Social work, being especially important in building trust with children and families.

All initial assessments include a case formulation, using the 5 Ps model. Reflective group supervision allows exploration of the underlying issues and structural barriers affecting children, with a strong focus on supporting the practitioner and network to manage children's complex needs.

A senior MH practitioner (seconded from CAMHS) attends Youth Justice group supervision every month to facilitate clinical supervision, with consultation and advice. Youth Justice workers can refer for individual case consultations, case formulation and direct intervention as appropriate.

We also work closely with the Forensic CAMHS team, who offer case consultation, support and direct involvement where required. F-CAMHS offer oversight of SAVRY assessments and consultation where violence/ risk to others is a particular concern.

The outcomes for children & young people include a high levels of engagement, very little use of enforcement or breach proceedings and a high percentage of completions of disposals. Young people have reported that they felt "listened to" and understood, and feedback about their Youth Justice workers and the relationships have largely been very positive. This remains an area for continued training & development.

#### **Other developments 2023-2024:**

EAS has developed an offer for children discharged from mental health wards under Section 117 of the Mental Health act. We are working closely with colleagues from health and social care to ensure that we have robust plans in place to support those children and their families to reduce the risk of a return to hospital. The work involves providing the family with respite support and reintroducing the child or young person back into the community and their networks. We support them with a return to education and activities that improve their emotional well-being.

EAS are also looking at developing a group for young men at risk of criminal exploitation the plan is to engage them with activities and using positive male role models to explore risks linked to drugs, gangs, and exploitation. The idea will be to use peer influence to explore the risks and to try and change some of the behaviours. The group is informal and will be led by young people in terms of developing the programme content.

## Priorities for the coming year:

The priorities of this plan align with those of the Complex Adolescent Strategy 2023-2025. These were agreed at the Strategic Adolescent Board, and are 3 year priorities, as it was agreed that focus of these needed to be for a three year period in order to have the time for the achieve the desired change.

The Priorities are therefore as follows:

- To increase participation and the voice of the child;
- To continue the anti-racist journey and address disproportionality; and
- To continue to develop contextual safeguarding practice to better meet the needs of this cohort.

A workplan will outline how the service will achieve this, and how the Youth Justice Team will contribute to this. In addition, there will be the Youth Justice specific outcomes, reducing first time entrants, reducing reoffending and reducing the use of custody. The work plan will contain the following actions:

- To increase participate and the voice of the child.
  - Work to support a couple of young people to be part of the management board.
  - Work with young people to develop the service offer through the service user group.
  - Review of the website
  - Work with partners in the voluntary sector to look at ways to better understand the views and experiences of young people, particularly those of the global majority.
- To continue the anti-racist journey and address disproportionality
  - To the ambition to recruit a more diverse staff team
  - To continue the anti-racist work with the team, including attendance at the anti-racist drop ins.
  - Head of Service and Service Manager to be part of the Safeguarding and Care Allyship model.
  - To analyse data and bring issues of disproportionality to the board's notice for action.
  - To undertake some joint training with partners, such as the police.
- To continue to develop contextual safeguarding practice to better meet the needs of this cohort.
  - To continue to develop contextual safeguarding practices including location reviews.
  - To use the AMBIT model and tools to develop clear processes to further implement working within a contextual safeguarding context.
  - To use contextual safeguarding principles to address the needs of the Youth Justice cohort

## Standards for children

Below are the results of the National Standards self -assessment for At Court, completed by the Youth Justice Service in October 2023:

### Section B: Reports

1.Does your Youth Justice service consistently provide reports which are high quality to all courts - and for Referral Order Panels?	15/15= 100%	Case audits showed excellent quality reports with thorough information provided for courts via PSRs and response to SV reports, and for Referral Order panels. All 15 cases selected were assessed as good or outstanding.
2.Are reports child focussed, support desistance and contain the child's views?	15/15= 100%	Referral Order format is simple but there is a strong focus on desistance and the child's aspirations. Reports are now written to the child. Comment from audits below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a strong focus on victims and RJ work.</li> <li>• Child's views clearly outlined and evidenced with good engagement</li> <li>• Overall, reports are child focussed, with child's voice coming through clearly.</li> <li>• Written very well to make sure accessible for young person reading it.</li> <li>• PSR is child focussed and has the child's views and thoughts on his actions.</li> </ul>
3.Are all reports based on an up-to-date and relevant Youth Justice Board approved assessment?	15/15 = 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AssetPlus are of high standard and show child's perspective being central in assessment.</li> <li>• Reports/assessment completed in a timely manner</li> <li>• Assessments and reports show a sound knowledge of the young person, their needs, risk and vulnerability.</li> </ul>
4.Do all reports evidence engagement with parents and carers?	11/ 14= 79%  1 is NA - sentenced with verbal report.	Format of RO report is based on restorative practice, designed to be clear and child-friendly. Includes basic detail but does not specifically state parent engagement. However, reports are shared with the child and their parents and parents/ carers routinely attend panels.  AssetPlus does not ask this question specifically, so answers taken from case notes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In most cases, there was clear evidence in report, Asset and case diary of engagement with the parents/ carers.</li> <li>• Child and parents' voices came through strongly in the recording and subsequent reports. Engagement was clearly evidenced whether that be face to face, email/ phone engagement.</li> </ul>
5.Do reports take account of impact on victims?	9/9 relevant cases = 100%  6= NA as no direct victim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant heading in RO and PSR templates ensures that this area is addressed consistently by report writers</li> <li>• In cases where there is no victim, some reports comment on impact to community and all include indirect (community) reparation as part of plan.</li> </ul>
6.Does your service have an effective Quality Assurance process for reports?	13/14 = 92%  1= NA	Clear for PSRs but not always clear that RO reports have been QA'd. However, these reports are very basic, designed to be child friendly, with limited information, so less requirement for management oversight.

Section C: Process	Cases	Strengths/ areas of development
1. Do the YJS staff accurately record court outcomes?	15/15= 100%	Clear record of outcomes in all audited cases, with good practice seen where Youth Justice workers record details of bail conditions, victim related issues, education, etc.
2. Do the YJS staff check that the custodial warrant issued by the court is appropriate for children remanded or sentenced to youth detention accommodation? 3. Do the YJS staff comply with the Youth Custody Service requirements when a child is remanded/sentenced to the youth detention accommodation?	Only 1 relevant case.  100%  Only 1 custodial sentence in year.	No record on CV but Youth Justice officer feedback is that custodial warrants are checked when received to ensure correct information and placement. Youth Justice officers routinely visit child in cells and have good communication with cell staff for all custody cases to ensure welfare of the child.  AssetPlus sent via YJAF in timely way prior to court hearing (custody expected outcome)
4. Do the YJS staff inform the parents/carers of the court outcome, details of any youth detention accommodation, including written information about the youth detention accommodation and (where appropriate) the Assisted Prison Visit scheme?	13/15 = 86%	Youth Justice workers report that they routinely communicate with parents whose children are remanded or sentenced to custody on the day of court, if the parents are not in attendance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the majority of cases audited, parents were at court on the day and Youth Justice works had spoken to the parents to explain the process, provide information, etc.</li> <li>• In most cases, there are records of discussions with parents after the court hearing.</li> <li>• 1 not recorded but in 1 case, Youth Justice worker clearly attempted several times to contact father following court hearing</li> </ul>
5. Do the YJS staff explain the outcome to the child and check that they understand?	8/15=53%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth Justice workers routinely speak to children after court to ensure they understand the court outcome, however, this is not always recorded clearly on CV with details of the child's understanding.</li> <li>• There needs to be better and consistent recording of discussions that have taken place on the day of the court hearing.</li> </ul> <p>*In one case the hearings were virtual, so was not possible to explain outcome to child in person. However in conversations prior to court and prior to remand, the court process and likely outcome had been discussed with the child and their parent.</p>

Overall, the self- assessment score from the case audit was 89.8%, which was an improvement on the previous Court audit in April 2023. This is a rating of **Good**, almost Outstanding.

My overall rating would be Good, as while the main issues in the above audit were due to lack of detailed recording at court in some cases, I continue to have concerns about the experience children have in court, as I outline in the audit plan progress update below.

Since the October 2023 Audit, the results have been shared with the Youth Justice Team and our improvement plan includes prioritising recording of their contact with children and parents at court.

We continue to work on developing partnership work with the courts to ensure children are able to attend their local court, where they receive a good service and are able to fully participate in their court hearings. A key part of this is to ensure children with communication and learning needs are able to understand and participate in their proceedings.

The following outlines the National Standards Improvement Plan (from 2023) with a progress update, which was shared with the Board in April 2024.

## **1.Out of Court Disposals**

- Continue to develop closer links with Reboot
- Increase Turnaround referrals and uptake
- Embed new Gravity Matrix (2023) in Diversion pathway
- Performance data to include re-offending figures for informal disposals (e.g. CRs, Outcome 22)
- Continue partnership work with Sussex L&DS

Progress on Actions 2024:

- ✓ New Sussex Reboot Co-Ordinator, attends Turnaround meetings.
- ✓ Regular liaison/ meetings between Turnaround worker and B&H Reboot lead.
- ✓ Partnership meetings with TDC, Police, Youth Justice, Reboot and FDFP
- ✓ Turnaround Programme/ criteria raised with partners via JAG, MASH Golden hour meetings and Sussex neighbourhood policing meeting.
- ✓ New Gravity Matrix (2023) embedded in OOCB pathway and decision-making.
- ✓ Re-offending rates and data for OOCBs completed: to be presented at the next Board meeting.
- ✓ Youth Justice manager attendance at pan- Sussex Partnership Working Group with SPFT, Youth Justice & Youth Justice leads (re Liaison & Diversion Service).
- ✓ Lead Practitioner attendance at Pan- Sussex LDS task & finish group.
- ✓ Youth Justice agreed contract with Police to deliver Reboot Mentoring (May 2024), allowing joined up prevention work in the Youth Justice.

## **2.At Court**

- Increase sentencer's awareness of impact of racism and discrimination;
- Pre-Sentence / Court reports QA'd with attention to diversity/ anti-racist practice;
- Feedback from Magistrates/ court users;

- Feedback from young people about their court experience;
- Improve recording of contact with children & families at court;
- Ensure clear recording of child’s understanding of court proceedings.

Progress:

- ✓ Presentations delivered at Magistrates meetings October 2023 and January 2024 covered diversity, including the impact of racial discrimination, developmental trauma, neurodiversity, class / poverty.
- ✓ All Court reports and assessments are QA’d by Youth Justice manager with attention to diversity.
- ✓ B&H Youth Justice has adopted ChildFirst framework for PSRs and also adapted Referral Order panel paperwork to ChildFirst framework.
- ✓ Court Audit in October 2023 showed improvement in recording – has been raised again with court officers and since showing significant improvement.
- ❖ Children’s understanding of the court process remains a concern.
- ❖ Concerns remain that black and mixed -race children continue to be over-represented in the formal Youth Justice system.
- ❖ I am not convinced magistrates receive adequate training to promote awareness and understanding of the complex issues relating to the experiences of black and mixed-race children in the justice system.
  
- ✓ Feedback from chair of the bench, legal advisors and DJ sought through bi-annual court users’ meetings.
- Enables open discussion of court and service issues and ideas for best practice.
- ✓ Feedback from some young people sought, it is an ongoing action to collate feedback and share with court users.
- ✓ Youth Justice practitioners and SWs almost always attend court with children allocated to them to provide additional support and enable their understanding of the process.
- ✓ Feedback examples from young people below:

White male aged 16:

From Youth Justice worker: He [young person] is frustrated at the moment about adjournments and the court process but in terms of how he has been treated in court, he said it was “all fine”, he was “treated with respect”.

White female aged 15:

The judge was “nice, interested” in her asked about her football and “seemed like she knew what she was doing”.

White female aged 16:

“I didn’t really know what was going on. My dad stood with me and just told me what to say when I needed to say something”.

“I didn’t get it, it was all pretty confusing. I just went there and did what I was told. I didn’t get it really. It’s long.”



Feedback from magistrates:

"From my experience YOT do a great job. They seem to really care for the young people they have to work with, on one occasion recently I did feel the young officer cared a little too much - but that can't be a bad thing!"

"My view is that the service is excellent, and they have an understanding of the minds and actions of their 'clients' that is incredibly helpful to us".

"I have much respect for the YOS and the way it seeks to do well by the young people who appear before us".

"I think the YOS is helpful in returning orders (particularly referral orders) back to the Youth Court [for early revocation]. When the young person has successfully completed the order early, the opportunity for the youth court to dispense with the order and endorse the young person's positive development from within the court should only be encouraged"

### 3. Secure Settings

- Re-establish links with secure establishments following period of no custodial sentences or remands.

Progress:

- ✓ Connections with Head of Resettlement at HMYOI Cookham Wood
- ✓ Concerns have been escalated with Cookham Wood management via meetings/ correspondence.
- ✓ Regular liaison with relevant practice manager has improved communication & practice.
- ✓ YCS rep attended Youth Justice team meeting to share information re Medway Secure School (opening end May 2024).
- Noted that since these actions were completed, Cookham Wood has been closed down by YCS.
- Future actions in respect of Resettlement will involve contact with HMYOI Feltham and the Secure school.

**Service development:**

The Youth Justice Team, as part of the Adolescent Service works with partners in Families, Children and Learning and other statutory and voluntary partners to learn from local and national practice and reviews.

The Brighton and Hove Children’s Safeguarding Board carried out multi agency thematic audits on Exploitation and Arrangements around Missing Children. The findings of the Exploitation audit have been shared and learning and quality assurance have been developed as a result. We have held a well attended learning event as a result. The findings of the Missing audit will be disseminated later this year.

The recommendations from HMIP Joint thematic inspection of work with children subject to remand in youth detention have been considered and measures have been put in place to audit and learn from the children we have remanded to youth detention. Locally we have very low now numbers of children remanded, and the initial audits of these cases have shown that the remands have been appropriate at inevitable at this stage. Where appropriate they are taken to the sub group of the Brighton and Hove Childrens Safeguarding Board to explore further whether the agencies involved could have done more to avoid this.

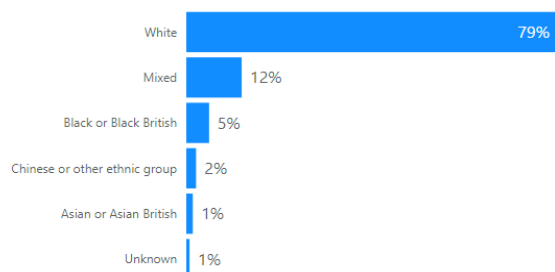
There is currently a learning review being conducted on a child known to the Youth Justice Service that sadly lost his life last year. The relevant learning from this review will be used to make improvements and in work with partners to look at ways we can prevent similar happening in the future. Learning from serious case reviews in other areas is also shared and utilised where relevant.

### **5.3 National priority areas**

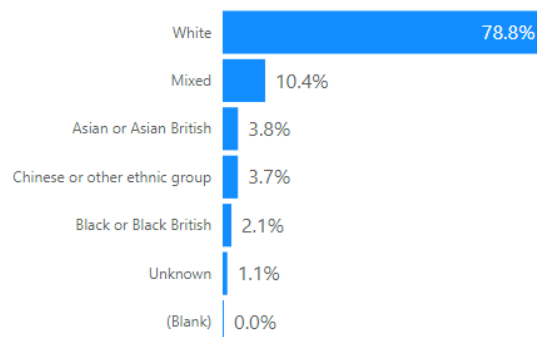
#### **Children from groups which are over-represented:**

The charts below show a) the race/ ethnicity of the Youth Justice cohort 2023-2024 in percentages and b) the school census 2022, which shows over-representation of Black and mixed- race children in the Youth Justice cohort, with other ethnic groups including Asian and Chinese children being under represented.

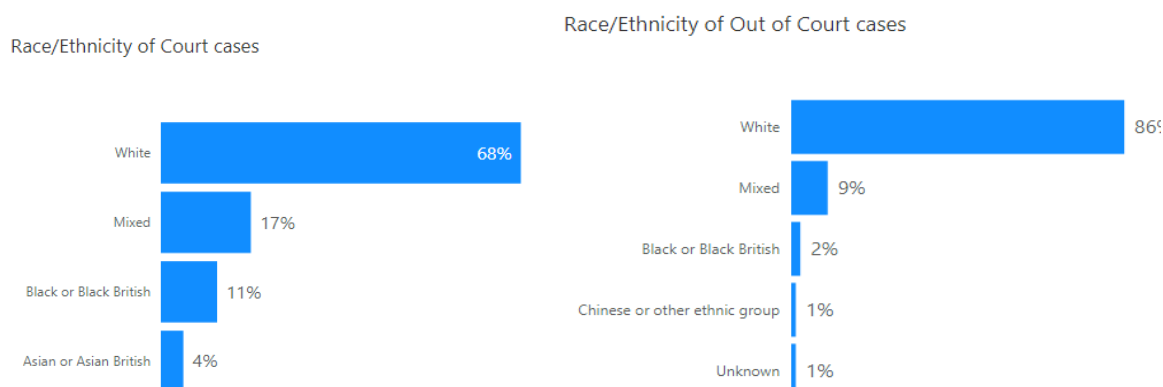
Race/Ethnicity of Caseload



Spring 2022 School Census population



The number of Black and mixed- race children is relatively small, given almost 78% of children are white. However, it remains a concern that we are seeing over representation of these children in the court cohort, compared to the out of court cohort.



Brighton & Hove is dedicated to tackling disproportionality in the Youth Justice System, this is one of our key priorities, as outlined in the Complex Adolescent Strategic Plan 2023-2025, fully endorsed and support by the Board, partners and senior leaders in the council.

Actions to tackle racism and address disproportionality include the following:

- The PACE non-admissions Child Outcome pathway: for first time offences which are in line with the Child Gravity Matrix for diversion, can be referred to the Youth Justice for an OOC if a 'no-comment' is given in Police interview:
  - This provides the opportunity for children to receive intervention without pressure to admit the offence formally.
  - Provided the child engages with the assessment process and are willing to complete intervention, they will receive an Outcome 22 (informal disposal).
  - An evaluation of the non-admissions scheme showed that this has also helped to reduce the proportion of Children in Care being charged to court.
- Children's racial identity is highlighted in assessments, Diversion reports and Court reports, with information on the impact of racism and discrimination, including intersectionality, so that this is taken into account in decision-making and plans.
- The QA process includes a strong focus on anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice, with attention to language and outcomes.
- There is regular discussion around racism and the impact of this on children and their families in group supervision;
- The Youth Justice Team are committed to anti-racist practice and group supervision provides a safe and open forum where people can raise and discuss these issues and best practice;
- All recruitment processes include anti-racist practice as part of the selection criteria, for example on application forms and interview questions;
- We strive to have at least one person from a black or mixed -race background as part of the interview panel for candidates across the service.
- We completed our second Anti-racist Practice audit (2023), which showed an improvement in practice.
- The Youth Justice team are committed to continue to achieve a high standard of practice in this area. Out of the second audit, we refined our Anti-racist Youth Justice practice plan.

- Part of the above plan is to seek feedback from Black, Asian, Arabic and mixed- race children on their experiences within the Youth Justice System and their views on what would improve things for them.
- The plan also includes challenging racism/ discrimination when this is experienced either from partners, staff, children or families in a way that is constructive, non-confrontational and facilitates learning.
- As part of the BHCC Anti-racist pledge, the Adolescent Service are committed to learning and development of best practice in anti-racism to improve outcomes for children and families and to creating a diverse workforce that feel safe and supported.
- Following completion of Me & White Supremacy workbook across the Adolescent Service (including all staff and managers) we have continued learning and reflection using books and media.
- There is a monthly Anti-Racist Forum which staff are required to attend (e.g. with reps from each team).
- Any concerns and issues around racism can be referred for consultation to the PiC (Partners in Change) hub and / or the Anti-racist lead practitioner.
- We have completed joint Anti-Racist training with Police (May 2024), which was extremely beneficial in respect of developing a mutual understanding of the issues with racism in B&H and developing ideas for improving partnership work.
- Through these actions, Adolescent Service staff are developing the skills and confidence to support children better and to challenge racism and discrimination when they come across this, in a constructive way that enables learning and reduces barriers.

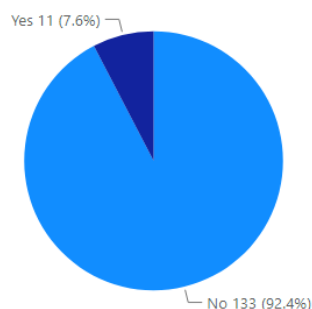
This strategy is designed so that children who are within the Adolescent service receive a high quality service and feel safe to talk about their experiences, that they are supported to be empowered and develop their skills and confidence.

Work with our partners in Police, Education and Health is also key to improving the outcomes for black, mixed race and global majority children. Building on the success of the joint training with Police, there are further events in planning to continue this important work.

## Children in Care

The chart below shows the numbers of Children in Care in the Youth Justice cohort for 2023-2024 including OOC and court disposals:

Children in care (including with other LAs)



In B&H we remain committed to reducing the numbers of Children in Care (CiC) entering the Youth Justice and continue to work jointly with Police to ensure that CiC are not unnecessarily criminalised. We have an agreement with Sussex Police via the pan- Sussex Joint Policy to Reduce Criminalisation of Children in Care and CiC status is taken into account in decision-making at Police level, the Diversion Panel and at Court (highlighted in Court reports). CiC in the Youth Justice caseload data is regularly monitored and shared with the Board, which unfortunately continues to show some disproportionality for this very vulnerable cohort. However, it is notable that the numbers over the year are relatively small, with 14 children receiving Cautions or court outcomes.

A deep dive of the data shows:

- 7 out of the 11 CiC were Brighton children, with four placed in Brighton from out of area;
- Six of the nine CiC received Referral Orders
- One was on Turnaround prevention programme
- Two were Community Resolutions (CRs)
- One was subject to a bail programme (placed out of area)
- One was subject to a DTO Licence (transfer in from out of area).

Of the seven B&H CiC, two received Referral Orders, 2 received CRs and one was on Turnaround. Therefore in terms of Brighton CiC in the formal Youth Justice, the percentage of the Youth Justice cohort is lower, at 4.3%.

### **Girls' and Young Women's Project**

In the past year, there has been an increase in the percentage of girls in the Youth Justice cohort, which previously was annually between 19% and 21%. In 2023-2024, girls made up 27% of the Youth Justice cohort. We have also an increase in violence towards others by girls, relative to boys, as shown in the FTE cohort, above. A deeper dive will be needed to look at the profile and specific needs of the female cohort but we know that many of the girls coming to the attention of the Youth Justice have significant vulnerabilities and are often affected by CSE and criminal exploitation.

The girls' project is a specialist service offering support for girls and young women affected by gang violence, CSE and criminal exploitation. The project has been running for over a year and has been successful in engaging vulnerable girls as part of their Exploitation Safety Plan.

This project, which is delivered by the Engagement and Support Service (EAS) in the Adolescent Service, was developed in response to an identified cohort of vulnerable girls who were being exploited and exposed to gang violence. It was recognised that girls' experiences were often different to those of boys, being gender specific, and tend to be hidden or masked, whether through rape and sexual assault behind closed doors or through internalised trauma, manifesting itself through self-harm, substance misuse or suicidal ideation. Their invisibility becomes an asset to perpetrators, who through emotional, physical, or sexual exploitation can coerce girls into storing or carrying drugs or weapons.

The Adolescent Service has worked closely with partnership agencies such as the local Youth Service and Children's Services, to identify girls in the cohort. We have found that they have engaged in the service and worked closely with the team to reduce risks and to gain a better understanding or exploitation.

## **Policing:**

Sussex Police are key members of the Youth Justice Partnership locally. We have senior level representation on the Adolescent Partnership Board, and at other relevant partnership boards such as the Brighton and Hove Children's Safeguarding Board, The Sussex Criminal Justice Board, The Combatting Drugs Partnership Board, The Prevent Board and the Community Safety Partnership Board. The head of Service for Adolescents also attends the Police led Children and Young People Board. These governance arrangements promote a strong and well established partnership.

In the past year, we have developed partnership and information sharing work with Sussex Police through Op Safety, the Joint Action Group, AVRMS, joint training and links to the Police Youth Team and Missing Team. The Youth Justice is active in submitting Partnership Intel forms and this has enabled our Police colleagues to recognise the importance of relationship-based practice.

The Youth Justice Team has a full time PC seconded to the Youth Justice, with the role split between OOC/ diversion and oversight of high-risk cases. We also have a dedicated Youth Sergeant (not seconded) who oversees decision-making at the OOC panel and promotes child centred policing in the force.

The effective partnership at both strategic and operational level has enabled joint working and appropriate challenge to resolve potential issues where required, for example to joint cultural competence training.

## **Prevention**

The integration of Youth Justice within the Adolescent Service and sitting under the umbrella of Families, Children and Learning in BHCC means that we are well positioned within children's services, with strong links to Early Help and access to relevant information databases.

## **Reboot**

Over the past year, there has been collaboration and joint working with the Sussex Police Reboot programme, with well established communication in respect of prevention referrals and triage. For example, the Turnaround worker and Brighton Reboot Co-Ordinator meet every six weeks to talk about children coming to notice for ASB and offending and cross reference names to ensure children are receiving the right level of support.

In April 2024, the three Sussex Youth Justice areas accepted the Reboot contract from Sussex Police and since May 2024, have been delivering Reboot mentoring programme. While it is early days, the plan is that this brings crime prevention services under the Adolescent Service, so that children can access services appropriate to their needs. This should improve consistency and avoid duplication.

## **Drugs diversion via Ru-Ok?**

Within the Adolescent Service, the Ru-ok? substance misuse service offer a point of arrest pathway via Police and Sussex Liaison and Diversion Service. Ru-ok also have skilled practitioners based in secondary schools in B&H, who offer a more informal drop-in service to children with advice about drugs and sexual health. Referral pathways have been established via the NHS A&E departments, paediatric hospital, Front Door For Families (FDFF), GPs and via self-referrals.

There has been discussion with Police to look at drugs diversion referrals in B&H and the concern has been raised formally with senior Police that 16 and 17 year olds are being referred to an online course Druglink instead of being referred to ru-ok? where they would receive 1:1 support from an experienced and qualified ru-ok? worker. The Ru-Ok manager is liaising with Police to promote referral to ru-ok for 16 and 17 year olds.

### Family Therapy

The offer of Family Functional Therapy is focussed on preventing children entering care or custody by strengthening parent-child relationships and building resilience within families. The model is proven to help reduce offending behaviour by giving children more stability and attachment to their families. The pathway to FFT is via Front Door for Families or Children’s social work, with families screened for specific criteria, which include children coming to notice of police, exploitation concerns and family breakdown. The FFT team are co-located with the Youth Justice team in the Adolescent Service, so there are close links to Youth Justice at operational and strategic level.

### Turnaround

The Turnaround Programme has developed in the past year, with an increase in referrals since 2023 as the scheme becomes more established. The referral pathway is via Police and FFFF, with some referrals from professionals such as social workers and schools.

The partnership with TDC (Trust for developing Communities) is working well, with improved connections, information sharing and joint working between the Youth Justice and the Youth Service. This closer working with TDC has helped in identifying children at risk of ASB and offending, targeting children in this cohort and highlighting particular localities where children are associating.

The Turnaround worker is a Youth Worker who is involved in outreach support for children via the Youth bus (evenings), so has been able to establish trust and relationships with children in the local area, improving the level of engagement with the Turnaround programme.

<p>Total Young People opened to Turnaround</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;"><b>23</b></p>	<p>Young People referred to Turnaround</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Young People Referred to Turnaround</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Support Elsewhere</th> <th>No Consent</th> <th>Below Threshold</th> <th>Accepted</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2022/23 Q4</td> <td>5</td> <td>8</td> <td>8</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023/24 Q1</td> <td>2</td> <td>12</td> <td>0</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023/24 Q2</td> <td>0</td> <td>24</td> <td>7</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023/24 Q3</td> <td>4</td> <td>6</td> <td>0</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023/24 Q4</td> <td>0</td> <td>4</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Quarter	Support Elsewhere	No Consent	Below Threshold	Accepted	2022/23 Q4	5	8	8	0	2023/24 Q1	2	12	0	2	2023/24 Q2	0	24	7	3	2023/24 Q3	4	6	0	6	2023/24 Q4	0	4	0	1	<p>Turnaround is a two year project which started March 2023. The target is <b>62</b> Young People to successfully complete a voluntary intervention.</p>
Quarter	Support Elsewhere	No Consent	Below Threshold	Accepted																												
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<p>Young People who have Successfully Completed Turnaround</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;"><b>9</b></p>	<p>Turnaround Referrals Received by Age</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Turnaround Referrals Received by Age</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Age at Referral</th> <th>Number of Referrals</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>12</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15</td> <td>22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16</td> <td>29</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td> <td>9</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Age at Referral	Number of Referrals	12	6	13	12	14	14	15	22	16	29	17	9	<p>Since the start of the project, <b>9</b> young people have successfully completed a voluntary intervention with <b>one</b> young person closed before finishing the intervention (given a Statutory Order)</p> <p>Of the 9 young people, none have reoffended since completing their Turnaround Intervention</p> <p>As of today there are 10 young people working with Grace</p>																
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## VRP & Brighton Streets Project

Brighton Streets is a citywide, coordinated detached (street-based) youth work project providing 6 sessions per week across Brighton & Hove in an effort to provide contextual safeguarding to thousands of young people. It is delivered by a partnership of three local charities, who are all long-term providers of local youth work. The project links closely with different parts of the local system in support of young people who are at-risk of coming to harm, or engaging in criminal activity. For example, it delivers joint operations with Sussex Police, attends and informs Adolescent Vulnerability Risk Meetings (AVRM), targets provision with intelligence from Joint Action Group (JAG) meetings (assessing crime/anti-social behaviour hotspots), and supports the local Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP) by targeting interventions to those young people identified as engaging in risky behaviour through their intelligence gathering. The sophisticated nature of the project led to it being awarded the national Children & Young People Now Award for Partnership in 2021. In the external evaluation of the Brighton Streets project, evaluators heard directly from young people on how they had changed their behaviour as a result of the intervention. One young interviewee said *“Youth workers teach you a easy way out of it [fights]... a way to not even get into it... If they ask you a job to do... you be like, no, thank you and walk away and stick by that every day.”*

Hospital Youth Work has been delivered in the Children’s A&E at the Royal Alexandra Children’s Hospital since May 2023. In that time, Hospital Youth Workers have supported hundreds of young people who attend A&E where there is social harm as a factor in their attendance (e.g. fights/violence, substance misuse, poor mental wellbeing). In an external evaluation conducted by the Centre for Education & Youth, one young beneficiary told the evaluators:

“[After spending time with the HYW] I've been staying out of trouble, to be fair. Yeah. It's just been better than what it was before I overdosed and all. Yeah. Haven't been doing as many drugs. Haven't been getting in fights and all that. Haven't been getting arrested.”

The Hospital Youth Work project also won a national Children & Young People Now Award, this time the Safeguarding Award, in 2023.

## **Diversion**

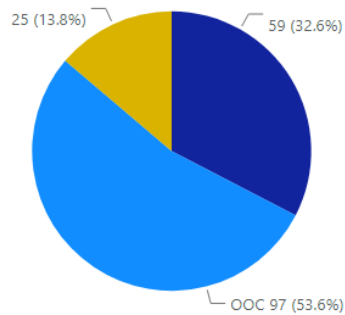
Diversion pathways are set out in the pan-Sussex Joint Out of Court Disposal protocol, reviewed 2024, drawn up in partnership with Sussex Police and the three Sussex Youth Justice Services. Since the launch of the Youth Disposal pathway in 2021, formalising existing diversion processes, the new Gravity Matrix has been implemented across Sussex and the Diversion pathway has been updated. In B&H, prevention and diversion includes Reboot (now delivered by the Youth Justice) and Turnaround. The diversion pathway has



been renamed the Child Outcome pathway, in line with Child First Policing and Youth Justice Practice.

As can be seen by the chart below, children accessing prevention and Diversion programmes make up the large majority of the Youth Justice cohort. Breakdown of OOCs is shown further down.

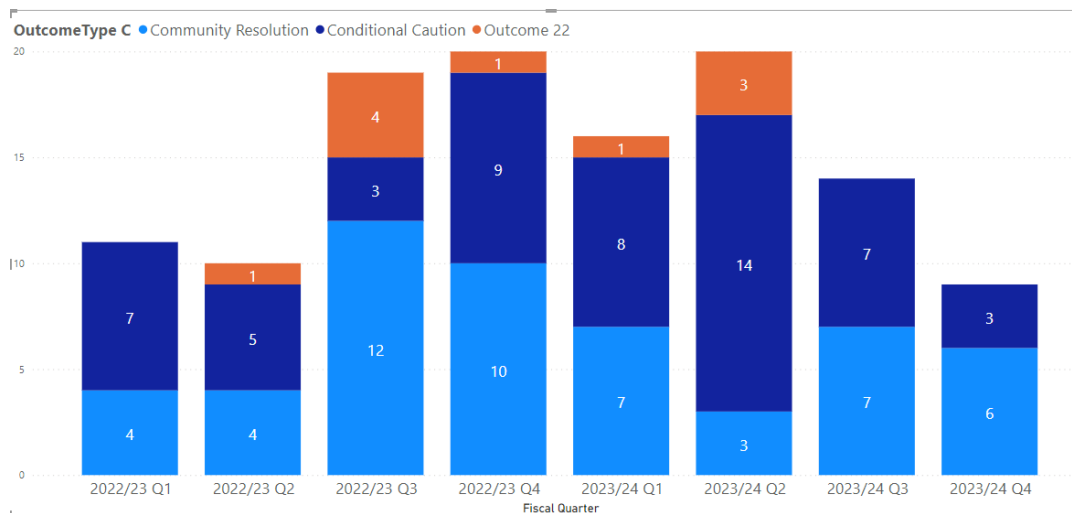
Interventions by Court or Out of Court (O...



In Brighton & Hove, the Child Outcome pathway is well established and there is consistent partnership and joint working with Police to ensure the best outcomes for children and divert all children from prosecution and court wherever possible. The PACE non-admissions pathway has become business as usual and is integrated into the Child Outcome Pathway.

All children being referred by Police via the diversion pathway are screened and assessed using the B&H Youth Justice assessment tool prior to decision-making at the joint panel. Victims' perspectives are a key part of decision-making as far as practically possible, with a clear restorative offer (see RJ section). Brighton & Hove will be utilising the new Prevention and Diversion assessment tool following staff training and a period of transition to the new tool. Processes are underway for the new assessment tool to be incorporated into case management systems (ChildView).

All children in B&H subject to Out of Court Disposals, including YCCs and informal outcomes, will be offered a comprehensive programme of intervention based on a full assessment of their needs, including any safety concerns. Children referred to the Youth Justice can access wrap around support and provisions of the B&H Adolescent Service, including intensive family therapy, 1:1 emotional & mental wellbeing support, tier 2 or 3 substance misuse service and outreach support from the Engagement and Support Service (EAS), which specialises in working with children affected by exploitation. In addition, they can access support with their education/ schooling in-house, or advice with Education, Training & Employment through the Youth Employability Service (YES). Engagement with OOCs is high, with very few cases being returned to Police for enforcement.



The drugs diversion pathway is well established and involves direct referrals from Police or custody suites to Ru-ok? substance misuse service (point of arrest). Children referred by Police for simple possession of Cannabis/ Class B drugs are diverted directly to the Ru-ok? substance misuse service for assessment and intervention.

Outcomes for children are overseen via the pan Sussex Multi-agency Scrutiny Panel and feedback in the past 12 months has confirmed that decision-making is robust and proportionate.

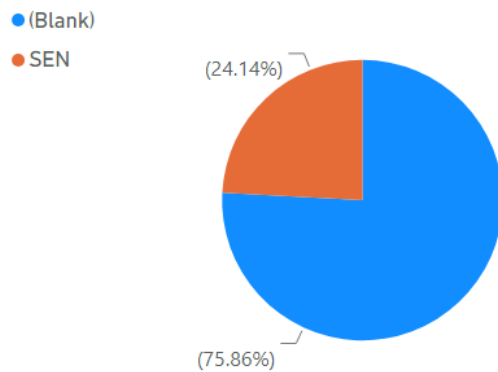
### Education:

The Partnership has strong links with Education providers in the city through representation both on the Adolescent Strategic Management Board (which also includes the Youth Justice Board) and at the Adolescent Vulnerability and Risk Management meeting. The former has both the Access to Education Manager and a Secondary School Headteacher as key members; and the latter includes regular attendance from an Education Lead who chairs the local Behaviour & Attendance Partnership (BAP) meeting with representation from all Secondary schools (including Academies) the Police, and key Primary schools. The Access to Education Manager is responsible for the prevention of school suspensions and exclusions and those who are electively home educated, as well as children with health needs not in school and Children Missing Education (CME). There is regular monitoring of all the children on part time timetables in the city and challenge to all schools regarding their use.

The Adolescent service includes an Education Advisor role, who acts as a conduit to all secondary schools in the city, meets regularly with the Education Adviser for all children with a Social Worker from the Virtual School and is part of the BAP which meets twice monthly. They also attend the joint agency suspension and exclusion meetings which strategically manages the reduction of suspension and exclusion across the city.

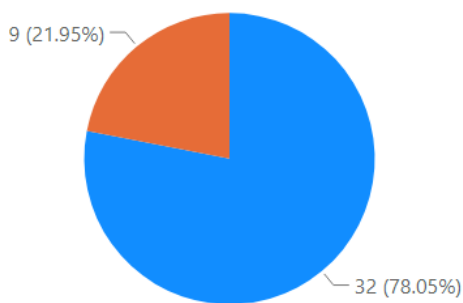
The chart below shows that almost a quarter of the Youth Justice cohort in 2023 had SEN.

SEN need from Impulse



The second chart below shows that of the Youth Justice cohort up until Dec 2023, 22% of 16-17 year olds were NEET, which was 9 young people in the year. Six of these young people were in the higher risk cohort with complex needs.

NEET Status ● Not NEET ● NEET



The data available at the time of writing was limited but we are planning a more in depth analysis of the education needs of the Youth Justice cohort alongside collation of the new KPIs.

## Restorative approaches and victims

Brighton & Hove Youth Justice Service is committed to listening to the victim's voice and keeping this in mind for assessment, planning and decision-making, with restorative practice being a model for youth justice intervention. We have been focussed in the past year on developing better practice in restorative justice, through feedback from the staff, victims, reparation worker, local projects and children. In B&H we have maintained that, while the needs of victims and children in youth justice may seem to be competing at times, by using a ChildFirst and Trauma Informed approach, we can keep in minds the best interests of both children and victims of crime. We are committed to listening to children's experiences but also ensuring that they are held to account for harmful behaviour. This is particularly important because many of the children we work with are victims in their own right, whether

due to adverse childhood experiences or being victims of crime in their communities. A high proportion of assaults, for example are against other children.

In order to manage some of the nuances and complexities of developing good RJ practice alongside the ChildFirst approach, we have used team meeting and group supervision to discuss the issues and develop a whole team approach.

The following outlines the key elements of operational strategy:

- There is a full time dedicated Restorative Justice worker who is trained in RJ and holds responsibility for victim liaison and contact, working closely with the seconded Police Officer.
- The RJ worker follows the Victim Code and is experienced in mediation.
- There is a clear process in place to ensure that all identified victims of youth crime are contacted where possible, offered support and consulted about their wishes in respect of involvement in restorative justice.
- Victims are contacted at the earliest opportunity, prior to the joint decision-making panel (for OOC), Referral Order panel or where possible prior to PSRs being completed.
- As part of all disposals, the RJ worker meets with the Youth Justice worker to draw up a restorative plan, to consider options for RJ (e.g. direct or indirect Reparation, mediation or apology). This is based on the victim's wishes and views and other considerations, such as safety, etc.
- The RJ worker offers direct restorative intervention with children, for example, where there is 'shuttle' RJ or letters of apology.
- Where a restorative justice conference is possible between the victim and young person, the RJ worker meets both parties (and parents) to prepare them for the conference and undertakes a risk assessment prior to the RJC.
- RJ and victim impact is highlighted in group supervision and good outcomes in RJ, such as successful RJs and direct reparation to victims are celebrated.

Below is some of the feedback we have received.

1. Quotes from victims:

Victim 1:

"Thank you for your email, you worded everything perfectly, I hope (the) young person will take that message for consideration. Thank you for your work, understanding and support"  
After hearing the young person's message she said "it was a really good outcome... it's nice he apologised" and she "wished him all the best".

Victim 2

'Thank you so much for letting me know the outcome, I really appreciate it. I'm pleased to hear that there have been consequences for her actions and I hope that going forward she thinks before she acts"

2. Feedback from staff:

“Seeing a restorative justice conference made me want to prioritise this work more- it should be the first thing we do on an order”.

“RJ work is what distinguishes Youth Justice workers from other professionals in children’s services”

“While we work in a multi-agency way to meet children’s needs and build resilience, we are specialists in offending behaviour and victim centred work. Crime is our business and it almost always involves victims by its nature, including the impact on society”.

“ we work in a relationship- based way; we meet young people with empathy, compassion and curiosity. Talking about the offence leads to an exploration of what was going on for the young person at the time and draws on their experiences and the impact of this.

The Youth Justice Service is committed to making Community Reparation meaningful to young people, by having individualised plans and matching children to community placements based on their offence and / or strengths and interests wherever possible. Projects include the Forest Garden, where young people maintain the allotments and pick and prepare for local community groups. B&H works with charities, community cafes and local food banks, helping to organise donations and prepare food for vulnerable/ elderly people. AQA’s have been attached to community projects, to develop skills and portfolios for young people.

### 3. Some examples of direct reparation:

A child was referred to the Youth Justice after police were called due to criminal damage at a Bowling Green in Brighton. The club requested the young person did their reparation at the Club. The boy (aged 14) stated he was “bored, found a shovel and dug a hole” and was although anxious, he agreed to make amends and apologise. At the club, he was polite and completed his tasks, chatting to the club member supervising him. When he had completed everything (sweeping up and clearing rubbish) the club member offered to teach him how to play bowls. Much to everyone’s surprise, he picked it up quickly and played really well. He enjoyed himself, saying ‘this is really fun!’. Others came out from the club room to watch him as he got the hang of the game and became engaged in improving his ‘bowl’ each time. Afterwards, the club members said he is welcome to go back and have lessons if he wanted to and he said that he did. In the car he told me he had no idea that this is what goes on at the club and he was genuinely keen to return. The members of the club also said how good he is, that ‘he’s a natural’ and they enjoyed teaching him their sport and showing him the value of their community.

A child with complex needs assaulted 4 teachers at school. As the child had already apologised to the teachers, they did not feel the need for an RJ conference but the RJ worker explored what would feel beneficial for them. They requested that she plant a pot plant for each of them and decorate the pots. The child completed two sessions at the school with the RJ worker. Firstly she decorated the 4 pots, then she set the plants in the pots and gave them to the teachers

individually. The staff were very positive about this outcome and it gave the girl an opportunity to show she was sorry.

## **Serious violence, exploitation and contextual safeguarding**

There is currently a 3 year Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) strategy that builds on the Violence Reduction Partnership's previous annual strategies. It uses evidence from our strategic needs assessment to set out the current picture of serious violence in Sussex and what collective action partners are taking to address it.

The strategy includes an explanation of our Public Health approach and our model of delivery, which is a devolved structure, allowing each of our three VRP areas to make their own decisions on where funding and resources are best placed.

We explain how we use and share data to understand the risks and drivers for serious violence and how this, combined with robust evaluation, also helps shape our intervention activity. Our performance indicators and how we continually measure our success are also included.

Central to our approach is our commitment to engaging and consulting with the individuals and communities most affected by serious violence. Our forward plan includes more work to ensure that their voices are represented in our VRP, and that they are informing everything that we do.

Our delivery plan will be reviewed and revised annually, and this highlights the breadth of activity going on across Sussex aimed at reducing individual and community vulnerability to serious violence, exploitation, and other criminal behaviour.

Much progress has been made in the four years since the inception of the VRP, and sustaining this momentum remains a priority for the partnership. This involves all partners working together to embed the response to serious violence in their day-to-day organisational delivery.

This is already happening through the creation of dedicated officers, teams, and structures and through additional funding sources, and we will continue to focus on this as we go into the final year of our current Home Office funding.

Over the next 12 months we will be collectively developing our plans to mitigate against the potential 'cliff edge' of intervention for those individuals and communities most at risk, ensuring that they continue to receive the support that they need.

We are also part of a joint National Referral Mechanism (NRM) decision making panel with East Sussex County Council. The panel has been established for over a year and we are seeing more timely decisions being made in respect for the vulnerable cohort of children. Another positive outcome is that this has enabled the voice of the child to be heard as part of the process.

## **Detention in police custody:**

The Pan Sussex Protocol on Transfer of Young People to Local Authority Accommodation from Police Custody is now well established and has recently been reviewed. We have seen a significant decrease in the numbers of young people being held overnight after charge. The process is scrutinised on a quarterly basis with senior members of the police, the HoS

and the EDS duty Manager. There is also a process to discuss any cases more immediately where appropriate.

### **Remand to Youth Detention Accommodation (RYDA) & Remand to Local Authority Accommodation (RLAA)**

Remand data for the year 2023-2024 is included in the performance data above, showing that the use of custodial remands remains very low, with only one secure remand and 2 RLAA in the year ending 2024. In 2022- 2023, there were no secure remands for Brighton & Hove Youth Justice Service, with just one RLAA. This is consistent with an overall decrease in secure remands over a period of 5 years, with the average at 1.5 secure remands per year. The use of RLAA is also low, with most children being released on bail. The only secure remand in the past 2 years has been for a period of 3 weeks and the young person (white male, aged 17, S 20 Care) was subsequently released subject to RLAA.

Avoiding the use of secure remands unless absolutely necessary for reasons of public protection remains one of the Youth Justice Service core aims and priorities. The B&H strategy to continue to minimise the use of secure is as follows:

- The pan- Sussex Courts agreement (reviewed 2023) outlines the service provided by the three Sussex Youth Justice areas to local magistrate courts. For example, the agreement that children at risk of remand are dealt with as a priority by courts.
- Agreement with courts to consider RLAA prior to secure remand for all children up to 17, as per legal guidelines.
- Strong partnership between Youth Justice and Children's Services and arrangements in place with Children's Placement Team (CPT). For example, all children at risk of remand are notified to the Social Worker and CPT so that placement searches can begin as soon as required.
- B&H Youth Justice Service adheres to the principle of children's right to bail. For all for children at risk of remand, the Youth Justice Service will assess suitability for bail and offer a robust bail programme unless the risk of harm to the community/ victims is deemed unacceptable. This principle is supported by the Senior Leadership Team and the Board.
- Across Sussex, we have developed good communication with Youth Leads in the Legal Advice team and built relationships with local magistrates and district judges.
- Brighton & Hove Youth Justice Service officers are trained, qualified and skilled in court work. The team provides a daily Bail & Remand service to local courts, including Saturday & Bank Holiday courts to ensure children are not unnecessarily remanded. Management oversight and support is provided by experienced Youth Justice managers for all court hearings.
- The high standard of Youth Justice practice means that risk and safety assessments, risk management planning and offers of robust intervention hold credibility with the courts and there is a high congruency rate with Youth Justice proposals.

Furthermore, the co-location of the Youth Justice Team within the Adolescent hub in Brighton enables provision of intensive wrap around programmes for children on bail programmes. There is close joint working between Youth Justice workers and other professionals in the Adolescent hub, and good links to the wider service and local voluntary sector.

The offer for children on bail is individually tailored to risk and need, with multi-agency intervention, close monitoring and enforcement as required. For example, this could include substance misuse work, family therapy, mentoring / constructive activities, education, training/ employment ETE advice and mental health support, in addition to Youth Justice sessions and monitoring via electronic tags/ buddi tags. It is highly unusual for children subject to intensive bail programmes to be subsequently remanded.

## **Use of custody and constructive resettlement**

As noted above, B&H has a low rate of custodial sentences. Keeping custodial sentences to an absolute minimum for children remains a key priority for the Youth Justice Service. In principle, the Youth Justice Service will always offer a community disposal for children, even those committing serious violent offences, where we believe that the safety of the child and others can be effectively managed in the community by appropriate intervention, monitoring and controls.

As an example, I noted in the performance section that a child charged with GBH S 18 which was reduced to Robbery at trial, was sentenced to a YRO with ISS for this offence- alongside multiple other offences. This young person remains in the community today and has made excellent progress, with no further violent offences. He is working full time, attending college and has participated in the Youth Justice Service selection process, being part of an interview panel.

There is a strong strategy in place to support this commitment to preventing children going into secure settings.

- Rates of custody are regularly monitored by the Board as part of quarterly performance data and deep dive analysis completed where custody rates increase.
- Through the use of Intensive Referral Orders, ISS or alternative intensive programmes, the Youth Justice Service offers individualised wrap around programmes for children based on their needs and abilities.
- Via the Adolescent Service, this may include intensive social work support, mentoring constructive activities such as outdoor pursuits, gym and sport (via Engagement and Support team), substance misuse work, family therapy, MH & wellbeing support, community Reparation and ETE.
- Highly skilled workforce in Youth Justice who have the expertise and ability to manage children presenting a high level of risk to others in the community in liaison with partners.
- Good connections with Police and regular multi-agency oversight via Op Safety and via YOS PC role.
- All children where there are significant risk and safety concerns are discussed at the Adolescent Vulnerability and Risk Meeting (AVRM), a weekly multi-agency forum with a focus on Exploitation. Risk management and safety plans receive multi-agency and HoS oversight.
- Strong relationship with Children's Services, who recently received an Outstanding Ofsted rating for the service to children and families in B&H. There is close collaboration and joint working with Children's Services, given the Youth Justice



Service integration within Children's Services, and lines of accountability being direct to the AD and director via the Head of the Adolescent Service.

In respect of Resettlement, the following is in place:

- Good partnership work with NPS and Children's Services to optimise opportunities for children on release from custody and those transitioning to probation.
- The Probation Lead (Advanced Practitioner for Youth Justice) manages the seconded probation officer and attends regular meetings regarding transition.
- The seconded Probation Officer is the allocated PO for 17-18 years olds transitioning to probation. The PO has a split role between the Youth Justice and in VERU (18-24 team). This promotes relationship-based practice and continuity for young people transitioning to the adult estate or to probation when subject to Licence.
- Youth Justice practice follows YJB case management guidance, using constructive resettlement and the identity shift model, focussing on developing pro-social identity, identifying and building on the young person's strengths and skills, with a strong desistance focus.
- Youth Justice workers are qualified, specialised professionals, with an in- depth knowledge of best practice in resettlement.
- There is a strong focus on relationship-based work and maintaining a high level of contact with young people via regular visits to secure facilities, phone calls and virtual contact. Youth Justice workers prioritise the child's safety and wellbeing throughout their detention.
- For example, Youth Justice workers facilitate parents and relevant professionals joining custody visits and reviews with the child to foster links with family and community, often physically taking parents or others to the secure facility. This additional work evidences the strong commitment Youth Justice workers have to ensuring the best outcomes for children in secure settings.
- ROTL is explored at the first possibility for all children in secure. In the one custody case for 2023-2024 ROTL was applied for but not facilitated by the YOI prior to release.
- Management oversight of all custody cases, with escalation processes in place for safety concerns.
- For example, in the past year, significant concerns have been raised regarding safeguarding and the conditions in HM YOI Cookham Wood and the lack of adequate educational and wellbeing support for young people. This was escalated by the Youth Justice Service manager via the YCS and Head of Resettlement, then again at the senior leadership (UN) managers meeting, with the Governor.

#### Future plans:

- Following closure of Cookham Wood, Youth Justice Service manager and the HoS will attend the open day at HMYOI Feltham on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024- information will be disseminated to the Youth Justice Service.
- Information and updates about Medway Secure School provided to the Youth Justice, with identification of appropriate young people who could potentially be transferred to the Secure School or who are currently at risk of custody.
- Deep dive of remand & custody cases in 2024.

## **Working with families:**

The Youth Justice Team are based within the Adolescent Service. This has enabled the team to work together with the other key teams that support complex adolescents. It encourages the relevant practitioners to work more effectively with the whole families. These working arrangements are further supported through the developments in place to develop the AMBIT model of practice. The Head of Service is part of the Senior Leadership Team in the Safeguarding and Care branch of the Families, Children and Learning Directorate. Whole Family working is therefore the embedded approach.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deborah Austin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Deb Austin

Corporate Director, Families, Children and Learning and Chair of the Adolescent Partnership Board

28<sup>th</sup> June 2024

# Glossary

ABH- Actual Bodily Harm

AMBIT- Adaptive Mentalisation Based Integrative Treatment

## **AQA**

ASB- Anti-social Behaviour

AVRM- Adolescent Vulnerability and Risk Meeting

B&H- Brighton and Hove

BAP- Behaviour & Attendance Partnership

BHCC- Brighton and Hove City Council

CAHMS- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

CiC- Child in Care

CME- Children Missing Education

CPD- Continuing professional development

CPR- Childrens Placement Team

CR- Community Resolution

CSE- Child sexual exploitation

CV- Childview

DJ- District Judge

DTO- Detention and Training Order

EAS- Engagement And Support

## **EDS**

ETE- Education Training Employment

FCAHMS- Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

FDFD- Front Door For Families

FFT- Functional Family Therapy

FTE- Full Time Equivalent

GBH- Grievous Bodily Harm

HMIP- His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons

HMYOI- His Majesty's Young Offender Institution

HoS- Head of Service

JAG- Joint Action Group

KPI- Key Performance Indicators

LGBTQ+ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and more.

MASH- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub

MH- Mental Health

NEET- Not in Education Employment Training

NHS- National Health Service

NRM- National Referral Mechanism

OOCD- Out of Court Disposal

OPCC- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

PACE- Police and Criminal Evidence

PC- Police Constable

PDP- Personal Development Planning

PiC- Partners in Change

PO- Probation Officer

PSR- Pre-Sentence Report

PTSD- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

QA- Quality Assured

RJ- Restorative Justice

RLAA- Remand to Local Authority Accommodation

RO- Referral Order

ROTL- Release on Temporary Licence

RYDA- Remand to Youth Detention

Accommodation

SAVRY- Structured Assessment of Violence Risk

## **SV**

SW- Social Worker

TDC- Trust for Developing Communities (

VR- Virtual Reality

VRP- Violence Reduction Partnership

YC- Youth Caution

YCC- Youth Conditional Caution

YCS- Youth Custody Service

YES- Youth Employability Service

YJAF- Youth Justice Application Framework

YJS- Youth Justice Service

YOT- Youth Offending Team

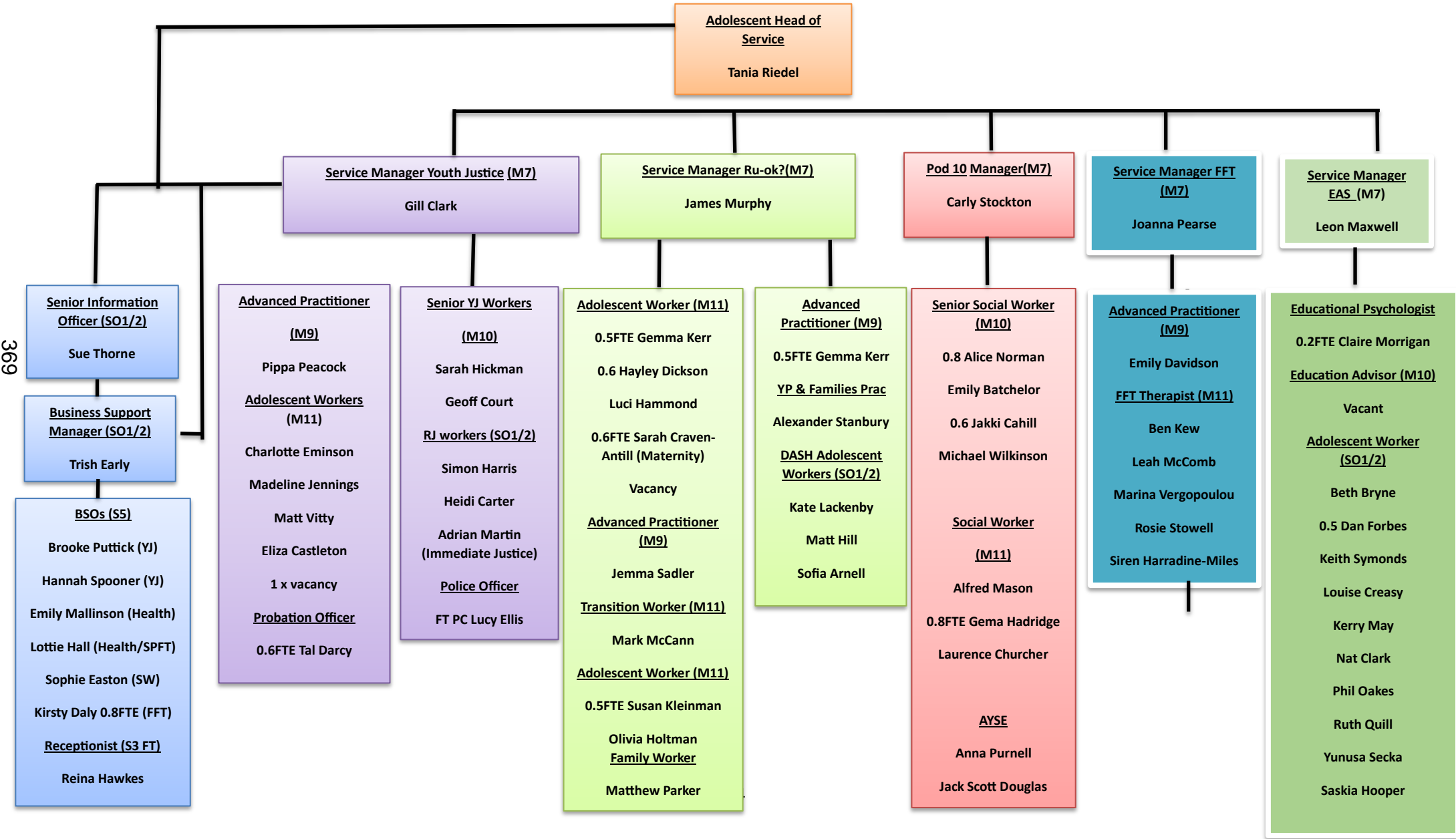
YRO- Youth Rehabilitation Order

# Appendix 1: Staffing Structure

## BHCC Adolescent Service Staff Breakdown

Male	19
Female	51
	70
Black British	3
White British	61
African/Chinese Malay	
Black African	1
White American	1
White European	4
	70
Disability (neurodiverse)	17
Disability "other"	4
	21

**Adolescent Service Structure Chart February 2024**



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