

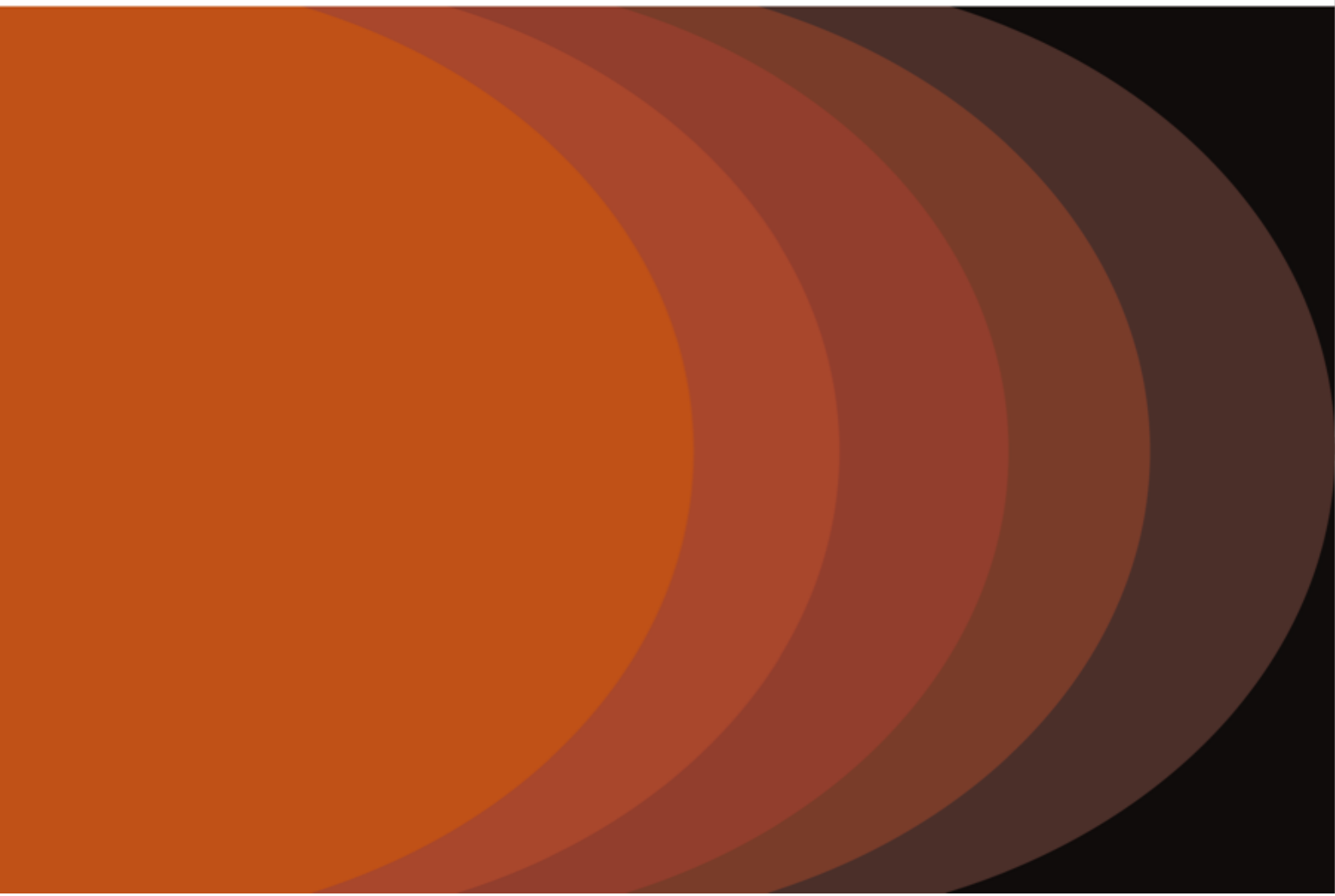


Her Majesty's
Inspectorate of
Probation

An inspection of youth offending services in

West Sussex

HM Inspectorate of Probation, June 2022



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The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

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

We inspect these services and publish inspection reports. We highlight good and poor practice and use our data and information to encourage high-quality services. We are independent of government and speak independently.

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

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Foreword

This inspection is part of our programme of youth offending service inspections. We have inspected and rated West Sussex Youth Justice Service (YJS) across three broad areas: the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service, the quality of work done with children sentenced by the courts and the quality of out-of-court disposal work. Overall, West Sussex YJS was rated as 'Good'. We also inspected the quality of resettlement policy and provision, which was separately rated as 'Good'.

Governance and leadership were rated as 'Good'. The board and managers are driving forward improvements against a background of considerable change in children's services. We rated staff as 'Outstanding'. There is a stable staff group, comprising many experienced case managers who are confident in addressing diversity. Together with a range of specialists, they are embedding trauma-informed practice and contextual safeguarding. Partnership and services were also rated as 'Good', although there are significant challenges in ensuring that children are accessing appropriate education, and there is a lack of provision to address children's speech, language and communication needs. Information and facilities were rated as 'Good'. There are effective arrangements for quality assurance; however, there is a need to secure more child-friendly premises to deliver interventions.

Assessment and planning of work with children on court orders were both rated as 'Good'. However, implementation and delivery, and reviewing were rated as 'Requires improvement'. The shortfall here relates to work to keep others safe; the needs of victims are not always considered and there needs to be a consistent, robust and timely response when there are indicators of increasing risk to others.

Case work on out-of-court disposals was rated as 'Outstanding'. The assessments using the YJS's own tool are sound and there is plenty of evidence of children's involvement in planning. It is pleasing to see the involvement of both children's social care and early help services on the out-of-court panel. This ensures that children and their parents have access to the most appropriate services to address their needs and keep others safe. Together, they are ensuring that children are kept out of the formal justice system, while ensuring that their needs are met and reducing reoffending. Resettlement services also show promise, with few children entering the secure estate and effective partnership working to address the needs of those who do.

The management board is striving to reduce disproportionality within the local youth justice cohort and recognises that there is more to do to reduce the over-representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic children, Looked After Children and those with special educational needs. I would encourage them also to look at the specific needs of girls, who make up a substantial proportion of the local caseload.

In this report, we make six recommendations to improve the work of West Sussex YJS further. We trust that they will assist the YJS as it continues on its improvement journey and encourage them to move on from a good to an outstanding service.



Justin Russell
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

Ratings

West Sussex YJS




Fieldwork took place in March 2022

Score 26/36

Overall rating

Rating 



1. Organisational delivery

1.1	Governance and leadership	Good	
1.2	Staff	Outstanding	
1.3	Partnerships and services	Good	
1.4	Information and facilities	Good	


2. Court disposals

2.1	Assessment	Good	
2.2	Planning	Good	
2.3	Implementation and delivery	Requires improvement	
2.4	Reviewing	Requires improvement	

3. Out-of-court disposals

3.1	Assessment	Outstanding	
3.2	Planning	Outstanding	
3.3	Implementation and delivery	Outstanding	
3.4	Out-of-court disposal policy and provision	Good	

4. Resettlement

4.1	Resettlement policy and provision	Good	
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Recommendations

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

The West Sussex Youth Justice Management Board should:

1. increase the proportion of school-aged YJS children who are accessing appropriate full-time education
2. ensure that children supervised by the YJS are assessed for, and have access to, services that address their speech, language and communication needs.

The West Sussex Youth Justice Service should:

3. ensure that victims' views are incorporated in all assessments where there is an identified victim and that arrangements are in place to support their safety
4. improve the quality of reviews of court disposals and ensure that timely action is taken in response to increasing concerns for the safety of children and other people
5. develop a strategy and response that meets the needs of girls supervised by the YJS.

The Probation Service should:

6. increase the probation officer resource to the YJS, to support effective transitions and risk management.

Background

We conducted fieldwork in West Sussex over the period of a week, beginning on 14 March 2022. We inspected cases where sentences and licences had begun between 14 June and 10 September 2021; out-of-court disposals that had been delivered between 11 October 2021 and 07 January 2022; and resettlement cases sentenced or released between 15 March and 17 December 2021. We also conducted 40 interviews with case managers.

West Sussex Youth Justice Service (YJS) is based within the Children, Young People and Learning directorate of West Sussex County Council (WSCC). The YJS service manager reports to the head of service for the Integrated Front Door, the multi-agency safeguarding hub, the emergency duty team, and the exploitation, youth homelessness, and youth justice teams.

Following an 'Inadequate' judgement from Ofsted in March 2019, WSCC is on an improvement journey. It is currently restructuring and implementing the family safeguarding model, a new practice model for children's services. This includes incorporating adolescent services into the wider service. Phase one of implementation began in February 2022.

West Sussex covers a large geographical area, comprising rural and urban areas; while there are good rail links, travel by road is slow. The YJS is based in offices in Horsham, Worthing and Bognor Regis, with most cases located in areas of higher deprivation on the coastal strip, and in Crawley, in the north-east of the county.



Covid-19 restrictions have largely been lifted and previous backlogs in the youth court have been addressed. However, levels of mental ill-health and substance misuse are high, especially for children on court orders, and a high proportion of school-aged children supervised by the YJS are not in full-time education. Ethnic minority children, Looked After Children and those with special educational needs are all over-represented on the YJS caseload. A high proportion of girls are supervised by the YJS compared with the national average.

The YJS is one of three in the area covered by Sussex Police. The YJS has good links with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Sussex Criminal Justice Board. Pan-Sussex protocols set out the arrangements for deciding on out-of-court disposals, which currently form 63 per cent of the YJS caseload, of which nearly one-fifth are cautions. The proportion of children receiving criminal convictions for the first time is low, as is the number of children entering the secure estate. By far, the largest group of offences for which children receive court and out-of-court disposals is offences of violence.

Domain one: organisational delivery

Key findings about organisational delivery were as follows:

1.1. Governance and leadership



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

Good

Strengths:

- The YJS management board has a comprehensive strategy to improve the quality of service delivery, which builds on an accurate assessment of practice and examination of the factors underpinning offending.
- The board vision actively champions diversity and inclusion, as set out in an assessment of disproportionality and subsequent action plan.
- Most board members are active in their attendance and participation. They receive a comprehensive induction booklet in which they sign up to the expectations of their role, and their responsibilities as board members.
- The board chair is very active and knowledgeable, and holds board members to account for their individual actions, as set out in the improvement plan.
- The provision of health and education services is a priority, and the board works flexibly to influence change.
- A strong and committed leadership team communicates the board's vision and strategy effectively. The team is open to challenge, responds to staff ideas and motivates staff to deliver high-quality services.
- A detailed risk register, with risks identified and appropriate mitigations, is reviewed quarterly by the board.

Areas for improvement:

- The names and responsibilities of board members should be shared with staff, to improve communication about strategic issues.
- The Probation Service should attend the management board more consistently and focus on improving work to manage risk of harm and youth-to-adult transitions.
- The management board should incorporate the views of children into its strategy and plans, building on the recent appointment of a board member with lived experience of the YJS.
- The effectiveness of the board's activity to address its key challenges depends on wider service improvements to children's social care; it is critical that the board ensures that children receive the necessary services.

1.2. Staff



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

Outstanding

Strengths:

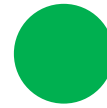
- The YJS has a comprehensive workforce development strategy. The average caseload is 7.4 cases, which is reasonable, and 94 per cent of staff say they have a manageable workload.
- 75 per cent of case managers are qualified. Cases are allocated according to the level of risk posed and whether the case manager is known to the child, to achieve continuity; managers also take account of diversity issues and children's perspectives.
- Staff are supported to help them develop, but with a very stable staff group the opportunities for progression are limited.
- Almost all staff say that the frequency of supervision is about right, and 74 per cent say that the quality of supervision is very good.
- Inspectors judged that, in 80 per cent of cases, management oversight met the needs of the case.
- Where cases are held by both the YJS and children's services, there is a model of joint supervision to ensure consistency.
- The service has a well-trained workforce, who are strong advocates for the needs of children. Understanding the effects of trauma is a central focus for staff.
- Staff have received training in cultural competency and there was a Black Lives Matter and diversity practice workshop for all staff in 2021.
- Staff sickness averages 6.3 days per person, staff attrition (5 per cent) is low and there is currently only one vacancy.
- Almost all staff said that their diversity needs are very well or quite well met.

Areas for improvement:

- The level of probation officer resource needs to increase from 0.6 FTE, to support effective transitions and risk management. This is a significant gap, given the levels of serious violence being managed by the service. We recognise that this allocation is decided by the Probation Service.
- All cases begin with the court and initial assessment team, which also holds a large proportion of the out-of-court disposals. However, many cases are transferred to the community supervision or intensive interventions team, requiring a change of case manager. The service should consider whether this arrangement is still appropriate, given the high proportion of out-of-court cases.

- While 16 per cent of YJS volunteers come from ethnic minority groups, action is needed to increase the proportion of ethnic minority staff, who are under-represented in the YJS.

1.3. Partnerships and services



A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children.

Good

Strengths:

- The YJS has completed a comprehensive analysis of disproportionality by ethnicity, identifying which groups and locations are currently over-represented, to focus specific plans and interventions.
- An analysis of the disproportionate number of children in the YJS with special educational needs has resulted in a protocol with the special educational needs assessment team, to inform joint working and adapt interventions.
- A well-resourced therapeutic and family interventions team provides assessment, interventions and referrals for children with emotional, mental health and substance misuse issues.
- A forensic psychologist and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) nurse provide support with case formulation, to enable staff to embed trauma-informed practice.
- There is strong evidence that restorative justice and reparation are given priority. The 'Who am I?' series covers the perspective of a range of victims, including emergency workers, police and paramedics. There was a dip in restorative outcomes while a new worker came into post; however, shuttle mediation has continued.
- Approaches to contextual safeguarding and exploitation are developing, with the YJS involved in peer group conferencing groups, considering places and groups of children, and engaging schools in addressing issues. For example, Operation Manners is a multi-agency contextual safeguarding approach to working with a group of girls who have committed violent offences. Planned interventions and disruption activities have resulted in a marked reduction in violent offending.
- There is effective liaison with the courts; sentencers feel that interventions recommended are focused and properly reasoned, which is confirmed by a high concurrence rate with proposals in pre-sentence reports

Areas for improvement:

- Gaps in data need addressing, including data on religion and sexuality, and on mental health and substance misuse needs for those on out-of-court disposals.
- Access to speech, language and communication services is limited, and a pathway for assessment and therapeutic intervention should be devised.

- Children’s services have gone through a major reorganisation; managers should keep the working arrangements under review, to ensure effective communication and joint working, with attention to reducing the number of Looked After Children supervised by the YJS.
- YJS staff need support from the partnership, to enable children to access appropriate education provision.

1.4. Information and facilities



Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all children.

Good

Strengths:

- A comprehensive range of policies is accessible to staff, to support the delivery of high-quality services. These are tracked and reviewed on a regular cycle.
- A directory of young people’s services is updated regularly, and staff know how to access most services.
- The non-PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence Act) admissions pilot used diversity data to judge its impact in addressing disproportionality in sentencing and cautions for ethnic minority children and Looked After Children.
- Issues of staff and children’s safety are addressed sufficiently when attending appointments and undertaking reparation activity.
- Staff are confident that the information technology enables them to access records and record information in a timely way.
- Staff and partner agencies are able to access and exchange the right information as needed, and data is used to map patterns of offending and deprivation, along with the location of children, to identify trends.
- A dashboard provides timely data to managers and the board, covering children’s needs, performance indicators and service objectives, and a reoffending tracker provides up-to-date information to target activity.
- The board and managers have an accurate understanding of quality through regular audits of cases, pre-sentence reports and assessments.
- Systems are in place to learn from incidents. Peer reviews are commissioned where managers consider that they would add value. Reviews are shared with the board and the lessons learned are shared at all-staff meetings.

Areas for improvement:

- Not all premises are child friendly or suitable for undertaking interventions with children. Managers should ensure that appropriate, confidential and safe environments are found for undertaking individual and group activities.

- The YJS is working with a substantial number of girls, many of whom are committing violent offences. The service should examine why this is and whether a gendered approach to working with these girls should be developed.
- The service is in the process of developing a voice, engagement and participation strategy and has added a former service user, and a representative of an organisation supporting black survivors of abuse, to its management board. This initiative requires further development to ensure that children, parent and victim voices are heard in the design and delivery of services.

Involvement of children and their parents or carers

The YJS recognises that its engagement and participation work is in its infancy and needs to continue to grow. The management board has set a priority to improve and enhance the engagement and participation of children and their parents or carers in the YJS. To that end, it has started work on an action plan and recruited a former service user to the management board. It has also included a section in its out-of-court disposal assessment reports specifically to include the voice of the child.

The YJS contacted, on our behalf, children who had open cases at the time of the inspection, to obtain their consent for a text survey. We delivered the survey independently to the 19 children who consented, and five children and one parent replied.

They were asked to rate the YJS on a scale of 1 to 10. Four gave it a 10, one a 7 and one a 1. Children commented:

“Since I joined YJS, they've been helpful and supportive in finding educational and job opportunities, they are supportive in whatever help you may need”.

“They have been a great support to both me and my friend”.

The parent who responded commented:

“She was able to connect with my son quickly and understand that his frustrations are due to lack of support or any activities provided by his school, despite it being a social, emotional and mental health school, and he has an EHCP [education, health and care plan]. Without her I would never of got the school to admit they couldn't meet his needs. She has gone over and beyond because what she sees is a child who is not getting or being able to access the right support. That he's not a criminal, just a child with a lot of need not being met by those that should”.

Children and parents or carers were asked to rate the YJS on a scale of 1 to 10 on how much it had helped them stay out of trouble. One scored it a 10, one a 9 and one a 5. Children commented:

“They helped me find job and educational opportunities to improve”.

“I kept myself out of trouble as no one can do it for you”.

“She worked with me to push for a tag when ‘X’ kept breaching her court curfew. It gave me some much-needed respite and ‘X’s’ offending went down. By attending twice weekly, they are keeping tabs on ‘X’ throughout the week”.

The parent commented:

“Helping him to discover his self-worth”.

Nine children whose cases were inspected consented to a telephone interview; however, in the end we were only able to speak with one of them, who commented:

“She's been amazing. She's really understanding and not judging, which you find a lot with professionals. I've been really lucky with my allocation. I find it quite hard to trust professionals, but I have a lot of trust in her. The lady on the panel and 'X' met me halfway. I don't get pushed into things. They wanted me to do work on drugs and alcohol. I agreed to do the work on drugs but not to do the alcohol. The support has been really good”.

Diversity

The YJS management board has had a consistent focus on addressing diversity and disproportionality. It has set a priority to understand and address disproportionality in the youth justice cohort. Its monitoring has identified that black and mixed-race children, Looked After Children and those with special educational needs are over-represented. The board has plans to address this. Ethnic minority children make up 18 per cent¹ of children supervised by the YJS, compared with 8 per cent² of the 10–17-year-old population of West Sussex. Specific initiatives to address this over-representation include establishing a disproportionality community of practice and implementing a non-PACE admissions pilot to divert children from court who may not have made formal admissions of guilt because of a lack of trust in authority figures.

Girls form 22 per cent of the YJS court caseload, compared with 13 per cent nationally, and many have committed violent offences. The reasons for this have yet to be identified by the YJS. Inspectors saw some impressive work being delivered with a group of girls, using a contextual safeguarding approach. The YJS needs to consider the drivers of this offending and whether a gendered approach to delivering services is required.

Ethnic minority communities form 6.4 per cent of the population of West Sussex; however, only one member of staff (2.2 per cent) is from such a background. Managers recognise that future recruitment needs to take account of this disproportionality, building on recent success in recruiting ethnic minority volunteers, who now form 16 per cent of the cohort. All staff have received training on avoiding unconscious bias and 80 per cent have had training on delivering culturally competent services.

While the YJS has good data on race, ethnicity and gender, there is a gap in terms of recording data on children's religion and sexuality, which needs addressing to ensure that all children are receiving appropriate services.

Inspectors judged that case managers are effective in taking account of the diversity needs of children in their assessments, planning and the way that they implement services. We saw some very responsive work with children to understand their heritage and to help them to address the racism and discrimination they have experienced. We also saw good work in adapting interventions so that they are appropriate for children with different abilities.

¹ Data supplied by the YJS.

² Data supplied by the YJS.

Domain two: court disposals

2.1. Assessment



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

Good

Our rating³ for assessment is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	94%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	88%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	76%

Assessment of desistance was consistently impressive, presenting a balanced analysis of positive and negative factors. Case managers demonstrated a well-developed understanding of children's adverse childhood experiences, the impact of these on their behaviour and the implications for working effectively with them. The assessments provided a good understanding of the child, their family and their personal circumstances. Diversity factors were explored sufficiently in most cases, in relation to the child's heritage, religion, experiences of racism and discrimination, and any learning disability or neurodivergence. However, in the cases of the girls inspected, there was little exploration of how their gender impacted on desistance factors and the best way to tailor interventions for these children. In some cases where there were direct victims, insufficient attention was paid to their needs and wishes or the potential for restorative justice.

Assessment of children's safety and wellbeing was a strength and made full use of information and assessments provided by other agencies. In the large majority of cases, there was a detailed understanding of any risks of potential adverse outcomes for the child and any concerns that may impact on their wellbeing, such as substance misuse or parental neglect. Inspectors agreed with case manager's classification of concerns in all but two cases; in both instances, this was because insufficient attention had been given to the risk of potential criminal or sexual exploitation.

In the large majority of cases, inspectors agreed with the case manager's assessment of risk to others. These assessments drew on information from other agencies. They were detailed and demonstrated a good analysis of the nature and focus of specific risks, internal and external controls, and whether risk was escalating. Where inspectors disagreed with the risk assessments, this was because insufficient attention had been paid to the impact of children's behaviour on identified individuals.

³ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

2.2. Planning



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

Good

Our rating⁴ for planning is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?	94%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	75%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	69%

Planning to support the child's desistance was a consistent strength and built on the assessment of desistance factors, and agreements made at the panels in the case of referral orders. Children were fully involved in planning, as were parents or carers, where appropriate. A child-friendly planning template had been devised, which incorporated the child's perspective. Plans took full account of the child's goals and their diverse needs, although a focus on gender was sometimes lacking. Support with education, training, substance misuse, and emotional and mental health were common areas for intervention. However, planning took insufficient account of the needs and wishes of victims in half of the relevant cases.

Planning to keep the child safe and to promote their wellbeing was sufficient in a reasonable majority of cases. This was supported in some cases by joint supervision arrangements with children's social care and other key individuals, which set out each agency's responsibilities for specific actions. There were positive examples of effective planning with children's social care, the police and other agencies through complex safeguarding meetings to address concerns about neglect, emotional and physical harm, and risk of exploitation. However, in a couple of cases, the case manager did not follow through on coordinated actions such as disruption techniques to address criminal exploitation following a referral to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). Contingency planning to address escalating concerns about children's safety and wellbeing were sufficiently detailed in most cases.

Inspectors saw a range of interventions planned to reduce the risk to others. These included interventions to reduce the risk of alcohol-related violence and address emotional dysregulation, and programmes to address knife-related offending and the dangers of committing motoring offences. Plans involved other agencies, where appropriate, and in most cases included sufficient contingencies should there be concerns that risks to others were increasing. While there were examples of planning to address the safety of specific victims, there were also cases where it was unclear who the victim was or where the case manager had not considered how best to reduce the risk to the victim.

⁴ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

2.3. Implementation and delivery



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

Requires improvement

Our rating⁵ for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child's desistance?	75%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child?	69%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	63%

Case managers were effective at engaging with children and their parents or carers to support children's desistance. They achieved a good level of compliance. They were very creative in building on the children's strengths, supporting them to engage in a range of educational, work-related and reparative activity, as described in the example here:

Good practice example

The reparation worker talked with Steve about his culture, identity, experience of racism, the consequences of offending, and substance misuse. He sought a project that linked directly to Steve's interest in coaching football and contacted the Football Association to seek permission to involve Steve in voluntary work coaching children. Steve continues to volunteer with the team.

Inspectors noted that there was a high level of coordination and information exchange between the agencies involved with most of the cases to keep the children safe and to improve their wellbeing. Services were provided to address previous trauma and adverse childhood experiences through the in-house emotional wellbeing team, including CAMHS, substance misuse and dual diagnosis staff, underpinned by the development of comprehensive case formulations.⁶

While, in general, there was good inter-agency coordination to monitor the risks that some of the children posed to others, there were gaps in the services to address some of these risks. Inspectors saw some examples of indirect restorative justice to help children appreciate the victim's perspectives and to make some amends; however, this was not consistent, was not always directed at the original offence and did not give the child a proper understanding of the impact of their behaviour. There were positive examples of suitable interventions to address excessive alcohol use, violent behaviour and knife crime, such as 'Behind the Blade'. Case managers also

⁵ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

⁶ A case formulation is a hypothesis about the psychological mechanisms that cause and maintain an individual's symptoms and problems

used restrictive interventions, such as bail conditions, where necessary, to address escalating concerns.

2.4. Reviewing



Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.	Requires improvement
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Our rating⁷ for reviewing is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?	81%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	75%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	56%

In most cases, formal reviews were completed at key points in the order, such as referral order review panels or further court appearances. What was pleasing to see in many cases was the ongoing reviewing of desistance factors as orders progressed. This was timely and responded to fluctuations in motivation, resulting in changes to planned interventions, including amendments to the frequency of reporting, referral to training and employment initiatives, and the introduction of specialist workers where appropriate. In most cases, reviewing involved the children and their parents or carers and was an opportunity to warn or reward good progress and recognise achievement.

Written reviews of safety and wellbeing were completed in most cases, often in consultation, and following meetings, with other professionals. Most of these reviews were timely. The better ones were detailed, noting important changes and responding appropriately. However, in a few cases multi-agency meetings appear to have failed to attract the right level of resources, or the most appropriate responses, as in this case:

Practice example

John was sentenced to a youth referral order for theft and possession of a bladed article. An NRM concluded he was a victim of modern slavery linked to these offences. He had ongoing involvement in drug dealing. Despite multi-agency meetings, there was no consideration of disruption activity or low-level information sharing with the police, which could have supported effective management of risk, and safety and wellbeing concerns. John's behaviour escalates and there are further instances of exploitation and increasing risk to others; however, a sufficient response to this is lacking.

While reviews of other people's safety were mostly completed, often with input from other agencies, they were ineffective in too many cases. Some reviews should have been completed when concerns arose, and others failed to identify and respond to

⁷ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

changes in risk factors or to make the necessary adjustments to plans. The better reviews resulted in changes to reporting, increased structure and positive activities, or allocation of additional police resource, as determined by the needs of the case.

Domain three: out-of-court disposals

3.1. Assessment



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

Outstanding

Our rating⁸ for assessment is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	96%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	89%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	89%

In all but one case, inspectors judged that assessment sufficiently analysed how to support the child's desistance, identifying both positive and negative influences. The YJS has developed its own assessment tool, which was used to good effect to capture and analyse information from interviews with children and their parents or carers, and information obtained from schools, children's services and health providers. The assessments for the out-of-court disposal panel provided a good understanding of the child, their attitudes and motivation for offending. While opportunities for reparation were considered in most cases, there were some examples where inspectors judged that insufficient attention had been paid to the needs and wishes of the victim.

Analysis of diversity factors and personal circumstances was a particular strength. Inspectors saw good examples of how staff had addressed sensitively issues related to the child's cultural heritage, including those from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, and considered children's experience of racism and its impact on their offending. There was a good analysis of the extent to which children had experienced early trauma, such as witnessing domestic abuse, neglect and family disruption, and the impact this had on their behaviour and emotional wellbeing. This was balanced with an understanding of children's strengths and aspirations.

In the majority of cases, there was a clear written record of the child's wellbeing and how to keep them safe. Assessments were comprehensive and drew sufficiently on information from other agencies, such as CAMHS, and education and children's services. Inspectors judged that the classification of concerns about the child's safety and wellbeing was correct in most cases, in one case where they considered it should have been high rather than medium because of the risk of exploitation. Staff had considered carefully relevant social, emotional and physical factors, such as attachments, mental health, substance misuse and risks from others. Assessments

⁸ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

identified clearly where children were vulnerable, resulting in further exploration of concerns and liaison with other agencies.

In the majority of cases, risks to others were identified, analysed and recorded clearly. Inspectors judged that the level of risk to others was appropriate in all but three cases. In two of these, it should have been low rather than medium, and in the third it should have been medium rather than low. Assessments drew on relevant information and considered who, if anyone, was likely to be at risk from the child's behaviour, internal and external controls, and the nature and imminence of any risk occurring.

3.2. Planning



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

Outstanding

Our rating⁹ for planning is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?	100%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	96%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	96%

Comprehensive plans, with the input of the child and their parents or carers, were produced for the panel meetings. These built on the assessment of needs and risks. They were translated subsequently into more child-friendly plans, which were agreed with the children. Plans set out an appropriate programme of activity, which was sequenced and able to be completed in the time available. They took account of the child's diversity needs, such as religious observance, their learning needs and any disabilities, although gender was not addressed specifically. Plans addressed the factors underlying behaviours, such as understanding the law, conflict with police, emotional dysregulation and substance misuse. In many cases, they were co-produced with the children and built on their strengths and personal goals, such as preparation to go into the army or improving boxing skills. There were good examples of planned reparation activity, including interventions to get a better understanding of victims' perspectives.

Planning to address children's health and wellbeing is supported by the attendance of children's social care and early help services on the out-of-court disposal panel. Plans addressed identified concerns, such as substance misuse, poor mental health and emotional resilience, sufficiently. Appropriate referrals were made to the therapeutic and family intervention team. Planning linked to other plans completed and reviewed by the complex safeguarding and high-risk cases meetings, and there was evidence of good coordination with children's social care, health and education services. Contingency planning was detailed and specific to the concerns that applied to each individual child.

⁹ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annexe 2 for a more detailed explanation.

Planning to address risk to others was consistently of high quality, with many good examples of inter-agency planning with schools to address identified risks. Creative interventions, including restorative activities, were planned with the RSPCA, the fire service and the police, to increase children's understanding of the victim's perspective. Plans were also agreed to address alcohol misuse, knife carrying, anger control and conflict management, to minimise the potential for violence. Once again, contingency planning was clear and robust, and specific to the situations that might appertain to each individual child's situation and the potential for harm being caused to others.

3.3. Implementation and delivery



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

Outstanding

Our rating¹⁰ for implementation and delivery is based on the following key questions:

	% 'Yes'
Does service delivery effectively support the child's desistance?	93%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child?	89%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?	89%

Delivery of services to support children's desistance was consistently good, building on the assessments and plans made. However, there were a few gaps in linking some children into mainstream services after the interventions had ended. There was good engagement and compliance with interventions, which were mainly voluntary. Case managers demonstrated persistence in gaining the support of children and their parents or carers. They matched interventions to children's needs and learning styles, and took account of their diversity and other commitments. There were good examples of interventions to reduce the likelihood of assaults on emergency workers, as in this example:

Good practice example

An excellent piece of work involved a police officer from an ethnic minority background meeting with Paul, who had been given a community resolution for an assault on a police officer, to share their experiences of dealing with racism within the workplace and with the public. This included how they deal with it through their encounters with people, taking part in sport and using assertive rather than aggressive responses. The session addressed Paul's negative views of the police and supported him in dealing with his own encounters of racism.

Examples of interventions delivered with children to support their safety and wellbeing included sessions on healthy relationships, independent living skills,

¹⁰ The rating for the standard is driven by the lowest score on each of the key questions, which is placed in a rating band, indicated in bold in the table. See Annex 2 for a more detailed explanation.

emotional resilience, substance misuse, bereavement counselling and personal safety. In most cases, there was good liaison with other agencies, such as CAMHS, children's services and schools, and positive engagement with parents or carers to keep children safe.

Interventions with children to support the safety of other people appear to have been effective in most cases where the children engaged. This often involved developing a better understanding of the victim's perspective, using a number of restorative justice techniques. There were also good examples of interventions to improve understanding of the dangers and consequences of knife crime, and work to reduce conflict within the family.

3.4. Out-of-court disposal policy and provision



There is a high-quality, evidence-based out-of-court disposal service in place that promotes diversion and supports sustainable desistance.

Good

We inspected the quality of policy and provision in place for out-of-court disposals, using evidence from documents, meetings and interviews. Our key findings were as follows:

Strengths:

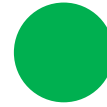
- The YJS had an effective out-of-court disposal scheme that enabled children to be diverted from prosecution where appropriate.
- Governance of the scheme sat with the board, with additional scrutiny from an independent multi-agency panel.
- The terms of reference for the scheme had been amended to widen membership of the joint decision-making panel to include representatives from children's social care and early help services; this ensured that all options for addressing the children's safety and wellbeing were considered.
- A full range of out-of-court disposals was considered; there was a graduated response that took into account the seriousness of the offence, the needs of the child, their willingness to engage and the views of victims.
- A wide range of interventions was available to support children's desistance, including options for restorative justice where victims agreed.
- In most instances, the panel was able to reach agreement on the most appropriate disposal, and there were clear arrangements for escalating and resolving differences when these occurred.
- A pilot scheme to engage children who have not made formal admissions had successfully diverted individuals, many of whom had social care involvement or came from ethnic minority communities. The scheme had been refined and was due to continue following a thorough review.
- The new panel arrangements had been reviewed and found to be effective at improving assessment and timely decision-making.

Areas for improvement:

- The out-of-court protocols and procedures required updating, in conjunction with Sussex Police, to reflect that community resolution interventions were voluntary and could not be breached, leading to alternative disposals or court action. This needed to be communicated clearly to all staff involved in the delivery of out-of-court disposals.
- The police needed to work with the YJS to improve the timeliness of referrals to the decision-making panel.
- The YJS needed to consider why the views of some victims were not ascertained or brought to the panel to aid decision-making about the most suitable disposal and planned interventions with the child.
- The amount of police resource seconded to the YJS needed to be reviewed, to ensure that it is sufficient to manage the volume of out-of-court disposals and other duties.

Resettlement

4.1. Resettlement policy and provision



We inspected the quality of policy and provision in place for resettlement work, using evidence from documents, meetings and interviews. To illustrate that work, we inspected two cases managed by the YJS that had received a custodial sentence.

We do not provide a separate rating for the quality of work in resettlement cases inspected under this standard.

Our key findings were as follows:

Strengths:

- The number of custodial sentences passed on West Sussex children was low and remained below all national and regional comparators.
- The YJS board reviewed each child who had been remanded or sentenced to custody, to review progress with their resettlement plans.
- A comprehensive resettlement policy had been drafted recently, setting out pathways for addressing children's needs to support their desistance.
- Children's services ensured that children requiring an accommodation placement on release had this identified at least one month in advance.
- The YJS ensured that information about children's education and any education, health and care plans were communicated to the secure estate, and that there was appropriate education provision on release.
- The YJS therapeutic and family intervention team completed a trauma-informed case formulation for all children released from custody, to ensure that interventions met children's emotional and mental health needs.
- In the cases inspected, resettlement planning was timely and involved children, their parents or carers, and key agencies involved in their care.
- Case managers were assertive in their liaison with the custodial estate, escalating concerns where they considered that children's needs were not being met or their safety and wellbeing might have been compromised.
- There was good management of children's safety and wellbeing, and the risk that they posed to others, through internal and multi-agency meetings.

Areas for improvement:

- The new resettlement policy and procedures needed to be communicated to YJS staff and partnership agencies.
- The resettlement policy should set out clearly how victims' safety needs will be addressed.
- Managers should ensure that staff carrying resettlement cases are fully trained to address children's resettlement needs.
- The voices of children and their parents should be sought and used to inform the evaluation of resettlement services.

Annexe 1: Contextual facts

Population information¹¹

74	First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in West Sussex ¹²
167	First-time entrant rate per 100,000 in England and Wales
31.7%	Reoffending rate in West Sussex ¹³
34.2%	Reoffending rate in England and Wales

867,635	Total population West Sussex
79,864	Total youth population (10–17 years) in West Sussex

Caseload information¹⁴

Age	10–14 years	15–17 years
West Sussex YJS	22%	78%
National average	18%	82%

Race/ethnicity ¹⁵	White	Black, Asian and minority ethnic	Unknown
West Sussex YJS	76%	18%	6% ¹⁶
Youth population (10–17 years) in West Sussex YJS	91.4%	8.6%	-

Gender	Male	Female
West Sussex YJS	76.7%	23.3% ¹⁷
National average	86%	14%

Additional caseload data¹⁸

136	Total current caseload, of which:
51	Court disposals
85	Out-of-court disposals

¹¹ Office for National Statistics. (June 2021). *UK population estimates, mid-2020*.

¹² Youth Justice Board. (2021). *First-time entrants, January to December 2020*.

¹³ Ministry of Justice. (2022). *Proven reoffending statistics, April 2019 to March 2020*.

¹⁴ Youth Justice Board. (2022). *Youth justice annual statistics: 2020 to 2021*.

¹⁵ Data supplied by the YJS.

¹⁶ Data supplied by the YJS.

¹⁷ Data supplied by the YJS.

¹⁸ Data supplied by the YJS, reflecting the caseload at the time of the inspection announcement.

Of the 51 court disposals:

49	Total current caseload: community sentences
2	Total current caseload in custody
0	Total current caseload on licence

Of the 85 out-of-court disposals:

12	Total current caseload: youth caution
7	Total current caseload: youth conditional caution
66	Total current caseload: community resolution or other out-of-court disposal

Education and child protection status of caseload:

18.4%	Percentage of current caseload 'Looked After Children' resident in the YJS area
0.7%	Percentage of current caseload 'Looked After Children' placed outside the YJS area
12.7%	Percentage of current caseload with child protection plan
15.7%	Percentage of current caseload with child in need plan
42.9%	Percentage of current caseload aged 16 and under in full-time school
39.5%	Percentage of children aged 16 and under in a pupil referral unit, alternative education or attending school part-time
31.1%	Percentage of current caseload aged 17+ not in education, training or employment

For children subject to court disposals (including resettlement case):

Offence types¹⁹	%
Violence against the person	74%
Sexual offence (contact)	5%
Robbery	11%
Summary motoring offences	5%
Other indictable offences	5%

¹⁹ Data from the cases assessed during this inspection.

For children subject to out-of-court disposals:

Offence types ²⁰	%
Violence against the person	56%
Criminal damage	26%
Drug offences	4%
Other summary offences	15%

Caseload characteristics

Percentage of current caseload with mental health issues ²¹	83.2%
Percentage of current caseload with substance misuse issues ²²	77.6%
Percentage of current caseload with a learning disability, learning difficulty or an education, health and care plan	55.2%

Key staffing data²³

Total staff headcount (full-time equivalent (FTE))	45
Total headcount qualified case managers (FTE) ²⁴	15.4
Vacancy rate (total unfilled posts as percentage of total staff headcount)	2.2%
Average caseload case managers (FTE equivalent) ²⁵	7.4
Average annual working days sickness (all staff)	6.3
Staff attrition (percentage of all staff leaving in 12-month period)	4.4%

²⁰ Data from the cases assessed during this inspection.

²¹ This data only relates to court disposals.

²² This data only relates to court disposals.

²³ Data supplied by YJS and reflecting staffing at the time of the inspection announcement.

²⁴ Qualified case managers are those with a relevant social work, youth justice or probation qualification.

²⁵ Data supplied by YJS, based on staffing and workload at the time of the inspection announcement.

Annexe 2: Methodology

HM Inspectorate of Probation standards

The standards against which we inspect youth offending services are based on established models and frameworks, which are grounded in evidence, learning and experience. These standards are designed to drive improvements in the quality of work with children who have offended.²⁶

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

Domain one: organisational delivery

The youth offending service submitted evidence in advance and the chair of the YJS management board delivered a presentation covering the following areas:

- How do organisational delivery arrangements in this area make sure that the work of your YOS is as effective as it can be, and that the life chances of children who have offended are improved?
- What are your priorities for further improving these arrangements?

During the main fieldwork phase, we conducted 38 interviews with case managers, asking them about their experiences of training, development, management supervision and leadership. We held various meetings, which allowed us to triangulate evidence and information. In total, we conducted 13 meetings, which included meetings with managers, partner organisations and staff. The evidence collected under this domain was judged against our published ratings characteristics.²⁷

Domain two: court disposals

We completed case assessments over a one-week period, examining case files and interviewing case managers. Forty per cent of the cases selected were those of children who had received court disposals six to nine months earlier, enabling us to examine work in relation to assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing. Where necessary, interviews with other people significantly involved in the case also took place.

We examined 17 court disposals. The sample size was set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of five), and we ensured that the ratios in relation to gender, sentence or disposal type, risk of serious harm, and risk to safety and wellbeing classifications matched those in the eligible population.

Domain three: out-of-court disposals

We completed case assessments over a one-week period, examining case files and interviewing case managers. Sixty per cent of cases selected were those of children who had received out-of-court disposals three to five months earlier. This enabled us

²⁶ HM Inspectorate's standards are available here: <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-our-work/our-standards-and-ratings/>.

to examine work in relation to assessing, planning, and implementation and delivery. Where necessary, interviews with other people significantly involved in the case also took place.

We examined 27 out-of-court disposals. The sample size was set based on the proportion of out-of-court disposal cases in the YJS.

Resettlement

We completed case assessments over a one-week period, examining two case files and interviewing case managers, in cases where children had received custodial sentences or been released from custodial sentences four to 12 months earlier. This enabled us to gather information to illustrate the impact of resettlement policy and provision on service delivery. Where necessary, interviews with other people significantly involved in the case also took place.

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

Annexe 3: Inspection data

In this inspection, we conducted a detailed examination of a sample of 17 court disposals and 27 out-of-court disposals. In each of those cases, we inspect against standards regarding assessment, planning and implementation/delivery. For court disposals, we also look at reviewing. Each of these elements was inspected in respect of work done to address desistance, keeping the child safe and keeping other people safe. For each standard, inspectors answer a number of key questions about different aspects of quality, including whether there was sufficient analysis of the factors related to offending; the extent to which children were involved in assessment and planning; and whether enough was done to assess the level of risk of harm posed, and to manage that risk. We reviewed a further two resettlement cases to obtain data to illustrate our findings about resettlement policy and provision.

To score an 'Outstanding' rating for the sections on court disposals or out-of-court disposals, 80 per cent or more of the cases we analyse have to be assessed as sufficient. If between 65 per cent and 79 per cent are judged to be sufficient, then the rating is 'Good' and if between 50 per cent and 64 per cent are judged to be sufficient, then a rating of 'Requires improvement' is applied. Finally, if less than 50 per cent are sufficient, then we rate this as 'Inadequate'. Resettlement cases are not separately rated; the data is for illustrative purposes only.

As we believe that each aspect of quality is equally important and each needs to be of a satisfactory standard, the rating for each standard is driven by the key question for which the lowest proportion of cases was judged to be sufficient. Therefore, if we rate two key questions for a standard as 'Good' and one as 'Inadequate', the overall rating for that standard is 'Inadequate'.

Lowest banding (proportion of cases judged to be sufficient key question level)	Rating (standard)
Minority: <50%	Inadequate
Too few: 50-64%	Requires improvement
Reasonable majority: 65-79%	Good
Large majority: 80%+	Outstanding ☆

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

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

Domain one standards, the qualitative standard in domain three (standard 3.4) and the resettlement standard (standard 4.1) are judged using predominantly qualitative evidence.

The resettlement standard is rated separately, and does not influence the overall YOT rating. We apply a limiting judgement, whereby any YOT that receives an 'Inadequate' rating for the resettlement standard is unable to receive an overall 'Outstanding' rating, regardless of how they are rated against the core standards. Where there are no relevant resettlement cases, we do not apply a rating to resettlement work.

Data from inspected cases:²⁸

2.1. Assessment (court disposals)	
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child's desistance?	
a) Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child's attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?	94%
b) Does assessment sufficiently analyse diversity issues?	71%
c) Does assessment consider personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child?	94%
d) Does assessment utilise information held by other agencies?	88%
e) Does assessment focus on the child's strengths and protective factors?	100%
f) Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child?	65%
g) Is enough attention given to understanding the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and their likelihood of engaging with the court disposal?	94%
h) Does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of victims, and opportunities for restorative justice?	47%
i) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?	82%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	
a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child?	88%
b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	88%
c) Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	82%

²⁸ Some questions do not apply in all cases.

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	
a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?	75%
b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	88%
c) Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to manage and minimise the risk of harm presented by the child?	65%

2.2. Planning (court disposals)

Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?	
a) Does planning set out the services most likely to support desistance, paying sufficient attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing?	94%
b) Does planning sufficiently address diversity issues?	69%
c) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child?	100%
d) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?	94%
e) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and seek to develop these as necessary?	100%
f) Does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of victims?	38%
g) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?	100%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	
a) Does planning promote the safety and wellbeing of the child, sufficiently addressing risks?	75%
b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child?	63%
c) Does planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	75%

d) Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?	69%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	
a) Does planning promote the safety of other people, sufficiently addressing risk of harm factors?	69%
b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate?	63%
c) Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?	56%
d) Does planning set out the necessary controls and interventions to promote the safety of other people?	69%
e) Does planning set out necessary and effective contingency arrangements to manage those risks that have been identified?	69%

2.3. Implementation and delivery (court disposals)

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

a) Are the delivered services those most likely to support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales?	75%
b) Does service delivery account for the diversity issues of the child?	69%
c) Does service delivery reflect the wider familial and social context of the child, involving parents or carers, or significant others?	94%
d) Does service delivery build upon the child's strengths and enhance protective factors?	88%
e) Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers?	100%
f) Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration, including access to services post-supervision?	94%
g) Is sufficient attention given to encouraging and enabling the child's compliance with the work of the YOT?	94%
h) Are enforcement actions taken when appropriate?	38%

Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child?	
a) Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	69%
b) Is the involvement of other organisations in keeping the child safe sufficiently well-coordinated?	56%
Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	
a) Are the delivered services sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?	56%
b) Is sufficient attention given to the protection of actual and potential victims?	63%
c) Is the involvement of other agencies in managing the risk of harm sufficiently well-coordinated?	56%

2. 4. Reviewing (court disposals)

Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance?	
a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors linked to desistance?	69%
b) Does reviewing focus sufficiently on building upon the child's strengths and enhancing protective factors?	81%
c) Does reviewing include analysis of, and respond to, diversity factors?	44%
d) Does reviewing consider the personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child?	88%
e) Does reviewing consider motivation and engagement levels and any relevant barriers?	81%
f) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in reviewing their progress and engagement, and are their views taken into account?	63%
g) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to support desistance?	69%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	
a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to safety and wellbeing?	75%

b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of the child?	50%
c) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	44%
Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	
a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to risk of harm?	47%
b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from other agencies involved in managing the risk of harm?	44%
c) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan all of work to manage and minimise the risk of harm?	25%

3.1. Assessment (out-of-court disposals)

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

a) Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child's acknowledgement of responsibility for, attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?	96%
b) Does assessment sufficiently analyse diversity issues?	89%
c) Does assessment consider personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child?	100%
d) Does assessment utilise information held by other agencies?	93%
e) Does assessment focus on the child's strengths and protective factors?	96%
f) Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child?	54%
g) Is sufficient attention given to understanding the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change?	96%
h) Does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of victims, and opportunities for restorative justice?	74%
i) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?	93%

Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child safe?	
a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child?	85%
b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve other agencies where appropriate?	96%
Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	
a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?	93%
b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including any other assessments that have been completed, and other evidence of behaviour by the child?	96%

3.2. Planning (out-of-court disposals)

Does planning focus on supporting the child's desistance?	
a) Does planning set out the services most likely to support desistance, paying sufficient attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing?	100%
b) Does planning sufficiently address diversity issues?	93%
c) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's personal circumstances, including the wider familial and social context of the child?	100%
d) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?	100%
e) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's levels of maturity, ability and motivation to change, and seek to develop these as necessary?	100%
f) Does planning take sufficient account of opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services following completion of out-of-court disposal work?	85%
g) Does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victims?	70%
h) Are the child and their parents or carers meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?	93%

Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child safe?	
a) Does planning promote the safety and wellbeing of the child, sufficiently addressing risks?	100%
b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child?	81%
c) Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?	96%
Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	
a) Does planning promote the safety of other people, sufficiently addressing risk of harm factors?	96%
b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate?	81%
c) Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?	85%
d) Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?	93%

3.3. Implementation and delivery (out-of-court disposals)

Does service delivery effectively support the child's desistance?	
a) Are the delivered services those most likely to support desistance, with sufficient attention given to sequencing and the available timescales?	93%
b) Does service delivery account for the diversity issues of the child?	89%
c) Does service delivery reflect the wider familial and social context of the child, involving parents or carers, or significant others?	93%
d) Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child and their parents or carers?	93%
e) Is sufficient attention given to encouraging and enabling the child's compliance with the work of the YOT?	96%
f) Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services?	85%

Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child?	
a) Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child?	93%
b) Is the involvement of other agencies in keeping the child safe sufficiently well utilised and coordinated?	70%
Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?	
a) Are the delivered services sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?	89%
b) Is sufficient attention given to the protection of actual and potential victims?	85%

Case manager interviews

We interviewed conducted 40 interviews with case managers and asked them the following questions:

Have you received effective management oversight in this case?	
Yes	39
No, I didn't need management oversight	0
No, and I would have appreciated management oversight	1
Case manager not interviewed	6
Did you have access to the services needed to support desistance in this case?	
Yes	37
No, there were gaps in available services	5
No services required to support desistance	0
Case manager not interviewed	4
Did you have access to the services needed to support safety and wellbeing in this case?	
Yes	37
No, there were gaps in available services	5
No services required to support safety and wellbeing	0
Case manager not interviewed	4
Did you have access to the services needed to support the management of risk of harm in this case?	
Yes	37
No, there were gaps in available services	2
No services required to support management of risk of harm	0
Case manager not interviewed	4

We also asked inspectors to record their views about the same questions:

In the opinion of the inspector, does management oversight meet the needs of the case?	
Yes	37
Inadequate management oversight	8
No management oversight required	1
In the opinion of the inspector, does the case manager have access to the services needed to support desistance in this case?	
Yes	39
No, there were gaps in available services	6
No services required to support desistance	0
In the opinion of the inspector, does the case manager have access to the services needed to support safety and wellbeing in this case?	
Yes	32
No, there were gaps in available services	12
No services required to support safety and wellbeing	1
In the opinion of the inspector, does the case manager have access to the services needed to support the management of risk of harm in this case?	
Yes	39
No, there were gaps in available services	6
No services required to support management of risk of harm	0