



Inspection of  
Youth  
Offending

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Arolygiad ar y Cyd Cyfiawnder Troseddol

# Core Case Inspection of youth offending work in England and Wales

Report on youth offending  
work in:

**Croydon**

ISBN: 978-1-84099-509-1

2012



## Foreword

This Core Case Inspection of youth offending work in Croydon took place as part of the Inspection of Youth Offending programme. We have examined a representative sample of youth offending cases from the area, and have judged how often the Public Protection and the Safeguarding aspects of the work were done to a sufficiently high level of quality.

We judged that the Safeguarding aspects of the work were done well enough 65% of the time. With the Public Protection aspects, work to keep to a minimum each individual's *Risk of Harm to others* was done well enough 56% of the time, and the work to make each individual less likely to reoffend was done well enough 72% of the time. A more detailed analysis of our findings is provided in the main body of this report, and summarised in a table in Appendix 1. These figures can be viewed in the context of our findings from Wales and the regions of England inspected so far – see the Table below.

We found an enthusiastic and committed group of staff who were keen to deliver a high quality service and who focused on making and sustaining positive relationships with children and young people and their parent/carers. However, although management oversight was undertaken, particular attention was needed to ensure the effective management of *Risk of Harm to others* presented by children and young people to be fully effective in bringing about the desired outcomes.

Overall, we consider this a reasonable set of findings. We are confident that if the recommendations in this report are implemented the improvement required can be achieved and sustained.

*Liz Calderbank*  
*HM Chief Inspector of Probation*

*March 2012*

	Scores from Wales and the English regions that have been inspected to date			Scores for Croydon
	Lowest	Highest	Average	
<b>'Safeguarding' work</b> <i>(action to protect the young person)</i>	37%	91%	68%	<b>65%</b>
<b>'Risk of Harm to others' work</b> <i>(action to protect the public)</i>	36%	85%	63%	<b>56%</b>
<b>'Likelihood of Reoffending' work</b> <i>(individual less likely to reoffend)</i>	43%	87%	71%	<b>72%</b>

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank all the staff from the Youth Offending Service, members of the Management Board and partner organisations for their assistance in ensuring the smooth running of this inspection.

*Lead Inspector*

*Bobbie Jones*

*Practice Assessor*

*Lise Bird*

*Local Assessor*

*Scott Hampshire*

*Support Staff*

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*Publications Team*

*Alex Pentecost; Christopher Reeves*

*Assistant Chief Inspector*

*Andy Smith*

## Contents

	Page
Acknowledgements	4
Scoring and Summary Table	6
Recommendations for improvement	7
Next steps	7
Making a difference	8
Service users' perspective	9
1. ASSESSMENT AND SENTENCE PLANNING	11
1.1 Risk of Harm to others (RoH)	11
1.2 Likelihood of Reoffending (LoR)	12
1.3 Safeguarding	15
2. DELIVERY AND REVIEW OF INTERVENTIONS	17
2.1 Protecting the public by minimising Risk of Harm to others	17
2.2 Reducing the Likelihood of Reoffending	18
2.3 Safeguarding the child or young person	19
3. OUTCOMES	22
3.1 Achievement of outcomes	22
3.2 Sustaining outcomes	23
Appendix 1: Scoring summary of sections 1-3	24
Appendix 2: Contextual information	25
Appendix 3: Inspection Arrangements	26
Appendix 4: Characteristics of cases inspected	27
Appendix 5: Scoring approach	28
Appendix 6: Glossary	29
Appendix 7: Role of HMI Probation and Code of Practice	31

## Scoring and Summary Table

This report provides percentage scores for each of the 'practice criteria' essentially indicating how often each aspect of work met the level of quality we were looking for. In these inspections we focus principally on the *Public Protection* and *Safeguarding* aspects of the work in each case sample. Accordingly, we are able to provide a score that represents how often the *Public Protection* and *Safeguarding* aspects of the cases we assessed met the level of quality we were looking for, which we summarise here<sup>1</sup>. We also provide a headline 'Comment' by each score, to indicate whether we consider that this aspect of work now requires either **MINIMUM, MODERATE, SUBSTANTIAL** or **DRASTIC** improvement in the immediate future.

<b>Safeguarding score:</b>	
This score indicates the percentage of <i>Safeguarding</i> work that we judged to have met a sufficiently high level of quality. This score is significant in helping us to decide whether an early further inspection is needed.	
<b>Score:</b> <b>65%</b>	<b>Comment:</b> <b>MODERATE improvement required</b>

<b>Public Protection – Risk of Harm score:</b>	
This score indicates the percentage of <i>Risk of Harm</i> work that we judged to have met a sufficiently high level of quality. This score is significant in helping us to decide whether an early further inspection is needed.	
<b>Score:</b> <b>56%</b>	<b>Comment:</b> <b>SUBSTANTIAL improvement required</b>

<b>Public Protection - Likelihood of Reoffending score:</b>	
This score indicates the percentage of <i>Likelihood of Reoffending</i> work that we judged to have met a sufficiently high level of quality.	
<b>Score:</b> <b>72%</b>	<b>Comment:</b> <b>MODERATE improvement required</b>

We advise readers of reports not to attempt close comparisons of scores between individual areas. Such comparisons are not necessarily valid as the sizes of samples vary slightly, as does the profile of cases included in each area's sample. We believe the scoring is best seen as a headline summary of what we have found in an individual area, and providing a focus for future improvement work within that area. Overall our inspection findings provide the 'best available' means of measuring, for example, how often each individual's *Risk of Harm to others* is being kept to a minimum. It is never possible to eliminate completely *Risk of Harm* to the public, and a catastrophic event can happen anywhere at any time – nevertheless a 'high' *RoH* score in one inspected location indicates that it is less likely to happen there than in a location where there has been a 'low' *RoH* inspection score. In particular, a high *RoH* score indicates that usually practitioners are 'doing all they reasonably can' to minimise such risks to the public, in our judgement, even though there can never be a guarantee of success in every single case.

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<sup>1</sup> An explanation of how the scores are calculated can be found in Appendix 5

## **Recommendations for improvement**

(primary responsibility is indicated in brackets)

Changes are necessary to ensure that, in a higher proportion of cases:

- (1) a good quality assessment and plan, using Asset, is completed when the case starts (YOS Head of Service)
- (2) specifically a good quality assessment of the individual's vulnerability and *Risk of Harm to others* is completed at the start, as appropriate to the specific case (YOS Head of Service)
- (3) as a consequence of the assessment, the record of the intervention plan is specific about what will now be done in order to safeguard the child or young person from harm, and to minimise any identified *Risk of Harm to others* (YOS Head of Service)
- (4) there is a timely review of assessments and plans, consistent with national standards for youth offending services; and following receipt of significant new information, intelligence, reports of harmful behaviour or the commission of new offences (YOS Head of Service)
- (5) sufficient attention is given to the safety of victims throughout the course of the sentence (YOS Head of Service)
- (6) management oversight is effective in ensuring the quality of assessment and plans to manage vulnerability and *Risk of Harm to others*, and ensures that planned actions are delivered (YOS Head of Service).

## **Next steps**

An improvement plan addressing the recommendations should be submitted to HM Inspectorate of Probation four weeks after the publication of this inspection report. Once finalised, the plan will be forwarded to the Youth Justice Board to monitor its implementation.

## Making a difference

Here are some examples of Croydon YOS work that impressed.

<b>Assessment and Sentence Planning</b>  <b>General Criterion: 1.2</b>	Roman, aged 13 years was convicted of violent disorder and sentenced to a DTO. He had a reputation for anti-social behaviour, had experienced disruption to his care and had been excluded from school. Following an assessment, the case manager found much of his reputation for involvement in ASB to be unsubstantiated. In addition, despite clear indications of possible learning difficulties relevant assessments had not been undertaken. The case manager worked effectively with Roman's parents and other workers to draw up a release plan that included: a secure home with his father; a placement in a NACRO project for children and young people excluded from mainstream educational provision; and an assessment by an educational psychologist with a view to identifying relevant support. Since his release, Roman had remained settled with his father. He had regularly been attending school and the relevant assessments were scheduled. He had not reoffended.
<b>Delivery and Review of Interventions</b>  <b>General Criterion: 2.3</b>	Following Maciej's disclosure to his case manager about sexual exploitation, the case manager made an immediate referral to children's social care services. She also sought help for Maciej from multi-agency projects for those at risk of sexual exploitation and, suspecting post traumatic stress disorder, she referred to mental health services. The case manager also supported Maciej's mother, who found it difficult to accept that her son was struggling with his sexual identity. The case manager became part of the core group set up to manage Maciej's child protection plan where her role was crucial to delivery of the plan and she continuously held colleagues to account for their actions. Maciej had continued his involvement with mental health services, and as a result of their interventions, those of the YOS worker and children's social care services he had been protected and his vulnerability minimised.
<b>Outcomes</b>  <b>General Criterion: 3.2</b>	Against a background of significant and serious substance misuse Sara received a DTO for theft. Recognising the risks for Sara of decreasing tolerance and potential overdose following release the substance misuse worker visited Sara in custody to talk with her about keeping herself safe. On release, the substance misuse worker established swift contact with Sara and, as she had turned 18 years, supported her through the transition into adult services. Appropriate services were accessed for Sara ensuring that her ongoing need for support to abstain from substances continued to be met.

All names have been altered.



## Service users' perspective

### Children and young people

Twenty-one children and young people completed a questionnaire for the inspection.

- ◇ Fifteen of the children and young people who responded said that staff had told them what to expect when they came to the YOS and 16 of them said that they knew why they had to attend.
- ◇ A *What do YOU think?* self-assessment questionnaire had been completed by 88% of respondents.
- ◇ Thirteen children and young people said that YOS staff listened to what they had to say.
- ◇ All but one of the children and young people reported that YOS staff were completely or mostly interested in helping them and 82% reported that staff took action to deal with things that they needed help with.
- ◇ Of 17 children and young people who responded all said that the YOS workers made it very or quite easy to understand the help available to them. For example: "*explained it carefully and listened when i needed help*"; "*explained things to me...Sent letters*"; and "*made a written plan*".
- ◇ Of the 15 children and young people with referral orders, all but one of them knew what the order entailed and had discussed their contract with their YOS case manager. Twelve of them had been given a copy of the contract to keep.
- ◇ Two out of three children and young people said they knew what a supervision or sentence plan was and recalled a YOS worker discussing their plan with them. One of them said that they had been given a copy to keep.
- ◇ Of the three respondents who reported that something in their life had made them feel afraid whilst in contact with the YOS, two of them said that YOS staff had helped a lot or quite a lot to alleviate their fear. One child or young person said that their YOS worker had not helped at all.
- ◇ From the children and young people asked, 36% said they had received help from the YOS with making better decisions and understanding their offending.
- ◇ Of the children and young people who responded, 53% said that the YOS had helped them with their schooling or with getting a job. For example: "*on a training course given me more confidence*"; "*Am more structured with my timetable*"; and "*I am now in school*".
- ◇ One child or young person who felt it relevant reported that their health was better since working with the YOS.

- ◇ From the responses, 11 out of 15 children and young people reported that their life was better as a result of working with the YOS. One respondent commented: *"completed my course and havent got into trouble"* (sic) another said: *"I dont know but feel like life is better"* (sic).
- ◇ Fifteen children and young people said that they thought working with the YOS had made them a lot or a bit less likely to offend. In particular, one child or young person said: *"i no what the consquences are now and would not want to do it all over again and doing victim work made me understand"* (sic).
- ◇ Fifteen children and young people reported satisfaction levels with the YOS of 50% or over. Seven of these reported complete satisfaction. One child or young person commented *"everything is cool."*

## **Victims**

Five questionnaires were completed by victims of offending by children and young people.

- ◇ Four respondents were satisfied with the services provided by the YOS. They reported that the YOS had explained what services could be offered and said they had the chance to talk about any worries they had about the offence or about the child or young person who had committed it.
- ◇ Three of the respondents reported that their needs were taken into account and two of them said that the YOS had paid attention to their safety.
- ◇ One victim reported that they had benefited from work done by the child or young person.

## 1. ASSESSMENT AND SENTENCE PLANNING

**OVERALL SCORE: 65%**

### 1.1 Risk of Harm to others (RoH):

**General Criterion:**

*The assessment of RoH is comprehensive, accurate and timely, takes victims' issues into account and uses Asset and other relevant assessment tools. Plans are in place to manage RoH.*

**Score:**

**65%**

**Comment:**

**MODERATE improvement required**

**Strengths:**

- (1) An Asset RoSH screening had been completed in all 38 cases. It was timely in all but two cases.
- (2) Where there was a clear RoSH classification we assessed this as accurate in 76% of cases. In eight of the nine cases where we judged the classification to be incorrect the risk level was understated.
- (3) A full RoSH assessment had been completed in 90% of cases where the information in the RoSH screening indicated that this was required. This was timely in 80% of cases.
- (4) An RMP was produced at the start of sentence in 22 out of 26 cases (85%) that required one.
- (5) Where there was no requirement for an RMP, the need for planning for *RoH* issues had been recognised in 9 out of 11 cases (82%).

**Areas for improvement:**

- (1) We assessed that the RoSH screening was inaccurate in 39% of cases. This was often due to a failure to fully update information copied from previous assessments.
- (2) RoSH assessments were not of sufficient quality in 63% of cases. Too often previous relevant behaviour and the risk to victims were not fully considered. There was an over-reliance on current convictions, which did not give a full picture of the child or young person's potential to cause serious harm.

- (3) In the 26 cases where we judged that an RMP should have been completed, 38% of these were not timely. Only five RMPs were deemed to be of sufficient quality. The main limiting factors were that roles and responsibilities and planned responses were unclear or inadequate and that.
- (4) In five of the ten cases where there was no requirement for an RMP and there were *RoH* issues, these issues had not been acted upon when required.
- (5) The assessment of *RoH* did not draw adequately on all appropriate information including other agencies'; previous assessments; and information from victims in 42% of cases. In a similar proportion of cases details of *RoH* were not appropriately communicated to all relevant staff and agencies.
- (6) Management oversight of the *RoH* assessment and of the RMP had been effective in 35% of relevant cases; reflecting that assessments and plans of insufficient quality had been countersigned.

<b>1.2 Likelihood of Reoffending:</b>	
<p><b>General Criterion:</b></p> <p><i>The assessment of the LoR is comprehensive, accurate and timely and uses Asset and other relevant assessment tools. Plans are in place to reduce LoR.</i></p>	
<p><b>Score:</b></p> <p><b>66%</b></p>	<p><b>Comment:</b></p> <p><b>MODERATE improvement required</b></p>

**Strengths:**

- (1) There was an assessment of the LoR in all 38 cases. These assessments were timely in 84% of cases.
- (2) When carrying out initial assessments YOS workers had engaged actively with children and young people in just over three-quarters of the cases. In 86% of relevant cases parents/carers had been actively engaged at the assessment phase.
- (3) There had been initial contact with children's social care services and ETE providers in 92% and 78% of cases respectively. Information from secure establishments had informed assessments in all ten relevant cases as had substance misuse services in all eight relevant cases. In five out of the six cases that had warranted a contribution from other relevant agencies, such as preventive services, this had been made.
- (4) Initial assessments were reviewed at appropriate intervals in 74% of cases.
- (5) A custodial sentence plan had been completed in all relevant cases; all but one of the plans were timely. All of the sentence plans, that required it,

addressed ETE and substance misuse. Where relevant, almost three-quarters of plans addressed family and personal relationships and two-thirds of plans addressed motivation to change. Thinking & behaviour was addressed in 60% of plans that required it. Positive factors were included in 63% of custodial sentence plans.

- (6) YOS workers were actively and meaningfully involved throughout the planning process in all of the custody cases in our sample and sentence plans were reviewed at appropriate intervals in 90% of cases.
- (7) There was an intervention plan or referral order contract in 97% of community cases. These were completed on time in 78% of cases. In a similar proportion, we assessed that the plans sufficiently addressed offending-related factors. Most plans that required it addressed thinking & behaviour, ETE, lifestyle, substance misuse and attitudes to offending. Where relevant, motivation to change was addressed in almost three-quarters of plans. Emotional/mental health and perception of self were addressed in a smaller proportion of cases that required this; 68% and 62% respectively.
- (8) The majority of intervention plans or referral order contracts focused on achievable change, set relevant goals and included positive factors. Plans responded appropriately to identified diversity needs in 71 % of cases and objectives were sensitive to diversity issues in a similar proportion of cases. Intervention plans, in the community, were reviewed at appropriate intervals in 72% of cases.
- (9) Objectives within custodial plans were inclusive of appropriate Safeguarding work in six of the eight cases that required it and in 73% of relevant community cases.
- (10) Children and young people had been actively and meaningfully involved in the planning process in most cases. Parents/carers had been involved in the planning process in 69% of relevant cases.
- (11) In just over two-thirds of all cases that required it, active engagement in the planning process from ETE and substance misuse services was forthcoming.

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

- (1) We judged the initial assessment of LoR to be insufficient in 47% of cases. There were three common reasons for this. Firstly, whilst an assessment was completed for the PSR it was often not reviewed at the start of sentence/release from custody, when we would have expected to see the child or young person's response to sentence/release explored and any circumstantial changes updated. Secondly, an inconsistent approach to updating copied assessments often led to out of date, unclear and/or insufficient information. And finally factors related to offending, particularly those linked to vulnerability, were not always clearly articulated.
- (2) Case Managers had not assessed the learning style of the child or young person in 42% of cases nor had the *What do YOU think?* self-assessment form been used in 57% of the cases in our sample. In half of all cases where assessment could usefully have been informed by

emotional/mental health services no such enquiries had been made. Similarly, assessments had not been informed by police in just under half of relevant cases or by the ASB team in seven out of ten.

- (3) Factors linked to offending were not sufficiently addressed in intervention plans in half of the custody cases in the sample. The factors most frequently omitted were: attitudes to offending; emotional/mental health issues; living arrangements; perceptions of self and others; neighbourhood issues; and lifestyle.
- (4) Six out of ten custodial sentence plans did not incorporate the child or young person's learning style nor respond appropriately to identified diversity needs. Objectives were sensitive to diversity issues in only three out of seven relevant cases.
- (5) Half of the community intervention plans failed to reflect national standards. Just over half failed to set realistic timescales and 43% did not incorporate the child or young person's learning style. Three-quarters of the plans did not address living arrangements, family and personal relationships or neighbourhood when this was required.
- (6) Safeguarding was taken into account in five out of eight relevant custodial sentence plans and in 62% of community intervention plans that required this.
- (7) Only 27% of community intervention plans and one of nine custodial sentence plans integrated RMPs when this was required. Very few objectives within custodial or community intervention plans were prioritised according to the *RoH* posed when this was required. Fewer than half of all objectives took account of victim's issues nor were objectives sequenced according to offending-related needs in 64% of cases.
- (8) In the majority of cases we would have expected to see more active and meaningful involvement in the planning process from other agencies. For example, children's social care services were actively engaged in only 4 of the 18 cases where they had an involvement with the child or young person. Similarly, the ASB team had been involved in the planning of only one out of nine relevant cases and the police had contributed in only 5 out of the 19 cases with which they had involvement. Accommodation services were not involved in planning in two-thirds of relevant cases nor were emotional/mental health services engaged in almost half of cases that required it.

### 1.3 Safeguarding:

**General Criterion:**

*The assessment of Safeguarding needs is comprehensive, accurate and timely and uses Asset and other relevant assessment tools. Plans are in place to manage Safeguarding and reduce vulnerability.*

**Score:**

**65%**

**Comment:**

**MODERATE improvement required**

**Strengths:**

- (1) An Asset vulnerability screening had been undertaken in all 38 cases and this was on time in 92%.
- (2) Safeguarding needs were appropriately reviewed in 71% of cases.
- (3) Of the nine children and young people sentenced to custody who were judged to be vulnerable, this was clearly communicated effectively to the custodial institution in all cases.

**Areas for improvement:**

- (1) Assessments of vulnerability were not of sufficient quality in 55% of cases.
- (2) Of the 25 cases where we judged that a VMP was needed, only 15 were completed, 11 of which were timely. As a result, VMPs did not routinely inform intervention plans or other plans when this was applicable. Only seven of the VMPs were considered to be of sufficient quality, mainly because the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the case were not clear and because a planned response was lacking.
- (3) In 62% of relevant cases a contribution was made by the YOS to other assessments and plans designed to safeguard the child or young person; copies of other agencies' plans were on file in only 36% of relevant cases.
- (4) Management oversight of vulnerability assessments was not considered effective in 65% of the cases inspected.

**COMMENTARY on Assessment and Sentence Planning as a whole:**

We found YOS staff worked with children and young people from diverse backgrounds and with complex needs, some of whom posed a high *Risk of Harm* to themselves and to others. This included involvement in organised crime and gang culture. We were also mindful that Croydon was home to the largest youth population in London. Further, the August 2011 countrywide civil unrest, which

included disorder in Croydon, put additional pressures on the service. Demands from courts for PSRs had risen, as had caseloads, exacerbated by the disproportionately high number of children and young people convicted who were not previously known to the YOS. Assessments were always undertaken at the start of orders, although the quality of these was often insufficient. A significant number had been copied from previous assessments and some had been repeatedly copied, without amendment or addition. As a result some of the cases we saw were confusing, with classifications of *RoH* or vulnerability that clearly required plans but had none. Often, salient information in the core Asset was not recognised as being pertinent to the assessment of LoR, vulnerability or *RoH*.

Croydon YOS had introduced systematic performance measures for ensuring management oversight of all cases in June 2011. A quality assurance checklist was completed by managers three weeks after case allocation. Whilst we saw many examples of such management involvement on the case record, this was often process driven rather than focused on quality improvement. The quality assurance process also included a formal supervision review meeting at three months chaired by the line manager, with the child or young person and their parent/carer also invited to attend. This process had been implemented too recently to impact upon our findings.

The multi-agency group, the Complex Case Panel, which reviewed cases with concerns about *RoH* and vulnerability, was a positive initiative as it enabled all the agencies to exchange information and was clearly valued by case managers. However, there was limited evidence that RMPs and VMPs were strengthened as a result and agreed actions were often not integrated into plans. There were a number of cases inspected where we thought the panel could have been used more effectively to progress a case or to access resources.



## 2. DELIVERY AND REVIEW OF INTERVENTIONS

**OVERALL SCORE: 67%**

### 2.1 Protecting the public by minimising Risk of Harm to others (RoH):

**General Criterion:**

*All reasonable actions have been taken to protect the public by keeping to a minimum the child or young person's RoH.*

**Score:**

**53%**

**Comment:**

**SUBSTANTIAL improvement required**

**Strengths:**

- (1) Case managers and other relevant staff had contributed effectively to multi-agency meetings on *RoH* presented by children and young people in all relevant custody cases.
- (2) We found that appropriate resources had been allocated according to *RoH* throughout the sentence in most cases.
- (3) Specific interventions to manage *RoH* were delivered as planned in 78% of community cases.

**Areas for improvement:**

- (1) *RoH* was reviewed thoroughly in line with required timescales in 54% of cases and following a significant change in circumstances in 5 out of 16 relevant cases. Specific interventions to manage *RoH* had been reviewed following significant change in half of all relevant community cases.
- (2) Changes in *RoH* factors had not been anticipated, where feasible, in 42% of relevant cases nor were changes identified swiftly in 37% of relevant cases. Changes in *RoH* factors were not acted upon appropriately in 10 of the 16 cases that required this.
- (3) Case managers and other YOS staff had not contributed effectively to multi-agency meetings on *RoH* presented by children and young people in 45% of relevant community cases.
- (4) Purposeful home visits had been carried out throughout the course of the sentence, in accordance with the level of *RoH* posed or Safeguarding needs, in 57% and 58% of cases respectively.

- (5) Insufficient attention had been given to assessing the safety of victims in 78% of relevant cases. We found that a high priority had been given to victim safety throughout the sentence in only 3 out of 17 relevant cases.
- (6) Specific interventions to manage *RoH* were delivered as planned in three out of six custodial cases. None of these were reviewed following a significant change when required.
- (7) Where required, there had been effective management oversight of *RoH* in 44% of community cases and in three of six relevant custody cases.

## 2.2 Reducing the Likelihood of Reoffending:

### **General Criterion:**

*The case manager coordinates and facilitates the structured delivery of all elements of the intervention plan.*

### **Score:**

**75%**

### **Comment:**

**MINIMUM improvement required**

### **Strengths:**

- (1) Interventions incorporated all diversity issues in 74% of cases and were appropriate to the child or young person's learning style 66%.
- (2) YOS staff had been appropriately involved in the review of interventions in custody in all cases.
- (3) Based on the assessment of LoR and RoSH, we judged the initial Scaled Approach level to be correct in all of the cases in our sample. In most cases appropriate resources had been allocated according to the assessed LoR throughout the sentence.
- (4) Case managers actively motivated children and young people and reinforced their positive behaviour throughout sentence, in the majority of cases.
- (5) Good levels of engagement with parents/carers were sustained throughout sentence in most cases.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- (1) We found that interventions delivered in the community were designed to reduce LoR in 70% of cases. These were of good quality in 61% of cases and were reviewed appropriately in 37%. Interventions were implemented in line with the sentence plan in 65% of cases and sequenced appropriately in 55%.
- (2) All requirements of the sentence had been implemented in 60% of cases.

## 2.3 Safeguarding the child or young person:

### **General Criterion:**

*All reasonable actions have been taken to safeguard and reduce the vulnerability of the child or young person.*

### **Score:**

**67%**

### **Comment:**

**MODERATE improvement required**

### **Strengths:**

- (1) All necessary and immediate action was taken to safeguard and protect children and young people in the one custodial case and three out of the four community cases where this was required.
- (2) All necessary and immediate action was taken to safeguard and protect other affected children and young people, such as brothers and sisters in the one custody case that required it.
- (3) In all five of the custodial cases and in 14 out of 16 community cases that required it, all necessary referrals had been made to ensure the Safeguarding of children and young people.
- (4) Overall, YOS workers and other agencies had worked well together to promote the Safeguarding and well-being of children and young people in custody and the community. There was evidence of effective joint working with ETE and substance misuse services in most cases and with emotional/mental health services in three-quarters of cases. Where involvement of other relevant agencies was required, such as voluntary sector agencies supporting children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation, YOS staff had worked well with these agencies to promote Safeguarding in the majority of cases.
- (5) In community cases we judged that YOS workers and police had worked well together to promote the Safeguarding and well-being of children and young people in 69% of cases that required it.
- (6) In custodial cases we judged that YOS workers and children's social care services had worked well together to promote the Safeguarding and well-being of children and young people in three out of four cases.
- (7) We also found evidence of joint work between YOS staff and some other agencies to ensure a smooth transition from custody to community. This was evident with emotional/mental health, substance misuse and ETE services in most cases and with children's social care services in three out of the four cases in which they were involved with children and young people.
- (8) Specific interventions to promote Safeguarding in the community incorporated those identified in the VMP in 71% of relevant cases.

- (9) Specific interventions to promote Safeguarding in custody were identified in five out of the seven cases that required it.
- (10) Croydon YOS staff had supported and promoted the well-being of the child or young person, in all custodial and three-quarters of community cases.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- (1) All necessary and immediate action was not taken to safeguard and protect other affected children and young people, such as brothers and sisters in two out of three relevant community cases.
- (2) When required, YOS workers had not worked well together to promote the Safeguarding and well-being of children and young people with children's social care services or with the ASB team in 41% and 50% respectively of community cases.
- (3) Specific interventions to promote Safeguarding in the community had not been identified in 9 out of 23 relevant cases (39%) nor were they delivered in 11 out of 23 cases (48%) or appropriately reviewed in 14 out of 22 (64%).
- (4) Specific interventions to promote Safeguarding in custody did not incorporate those identified in the VMP in any of four cases that required this. Nor were specific interventions to promote Safeguarding in custody delivered in two out of six cases or reviewed in three out of four relevant cases.
- (5) We judged that management oversight of vulnerability was effective in half of all custody cases and in 46% of community cases.

### **COMMENTARY on Delivery and Review of Interventions as a whole:**

Assessments and plans were not regularly reviewed, nor did significant changes in children and young people's circumstances, such as reports of harmful behaviour, reoffending or release from custody usually trigger a review. Where reviews had been undertaken, as at the assessment and planning stage many Assets had continued to be copied and had become an amalgamation of previous assessments rather than a contemporary review. This resulted in some irrelevant information and/or objectives being retained, whilst up to date key factors were sometimes missed.

YOS staff were able to access a wide range of interventions on behalf of children and young people that were developed to meet local need, for example: Pathways Gang Project; Weapons Awareness Programme; YOS Healthy Living Project; ETE programmes; and accommodation support. As well as actively motivating children and young people and sustaining good levels of engagement with parents/carers, it was also evident, that overall, YOS staff worked well together with other agencies to promote the Safeguarding and well-being of children and young people, especially in respect of the transition for children and young people from custody to the community.

Work to prioritise the safety of victims or potential victims was underdeveloped. We saw examples of work aimed at ensuring the safety of children and young people who had offended but were also the victim or potential victim of crime. However, we did not see any routine effort to seek victim impact statements or use of intelligence to substantiate the ongoing safety of victims or potential victims. The YOS Head of Service had already recognised this as an area for improvement and a victim liaison coordinator had been appointed to the team. It was anticipated that with this resource the YOS would be able to place a much greater emphasis on victim safety. This appointment had been implemented too recently to impact significantly upon our inspection findings.

### 3. OUTCOMES

#### OVERALL SCORE: 65%

Our inspections include findings about initial outcomes, as set out in this section. In principle, this is the key section that specifies what supervision is achieving, but in practice this is by necessity just a snapshot of what has been achieved in only the first 6-9 months of supervision, and for which the evidence is sometimes only provisional.

#### 3.1 Achievement of outcomes:

**General Criterion:**

*Outcomes are achieved in relation to RoH, LoR and Safeguarding.*

**Score:**

**60%**

**Comment:**

**MODERATE improvement required**

**Strengths:**

- (1) Sufficient appointments were arranged for the purpose of carrying out the sentence of the court in almost all cases.
- (2) Seventeen children or young people had not complied with the requirements of their sentence. Appropriate action was taken by the YOS in relation to this lack of compliance in 76% of cases.
- (3) There appeared to be a reduction in the frequency of offending, since the start of the sentence, in 52% of cases where there was sufficient offending history to assess this. There was a similar level of improvement in the seriousness of offending.

**Areas for improvement:**

- (1) Where there was an identifiable or potential victim there was evidence that the *Risk of Harm* to them had been effectively managed in only 32% of cases. *RoH* had not been effectively managed in half of the cases where this was relevant, mainly due to insufficient assessment and/or planning.
- (2) There had been some overall progress on the most significant factors related to offending in 53% of cases. However, progress was limited. We judged that the least improvement had taken place in the areas of substance misuse in 2

out of 18 cases (11%); emotional/mental health 4 out of 24 cases (17%) and motivation to change 5 out 34 cases (15%).

- (3) In 8 out of 26 cases, where there were assessed risk factors linked to the child or young person’s Safeguarding, there had been no reduction in those risk factors. We considered that all reasonable action had been taken to keep the child or young person safe in 62% of relevant cases.

<b>3.2 Sustaining outcomes:</b>	
<b>General Criterion:</b> <i>Outcomes are sustained in relation to RoH, LoR and Safeguarding.</i>	
<b>Score:</b> <b>80%</b>	<b>Comment:</b> <b>MINIMUM improvement required</b>

**Strengths:**

- (1) Full attention had been given to community integration issues in 87% of cases in the community and in 90% of custody cases.
- (2) Action had been taken or plans were in place to ensure that positive outcomes were sustainable in three quarters of relevant custody cases.

**Area for improvement:**

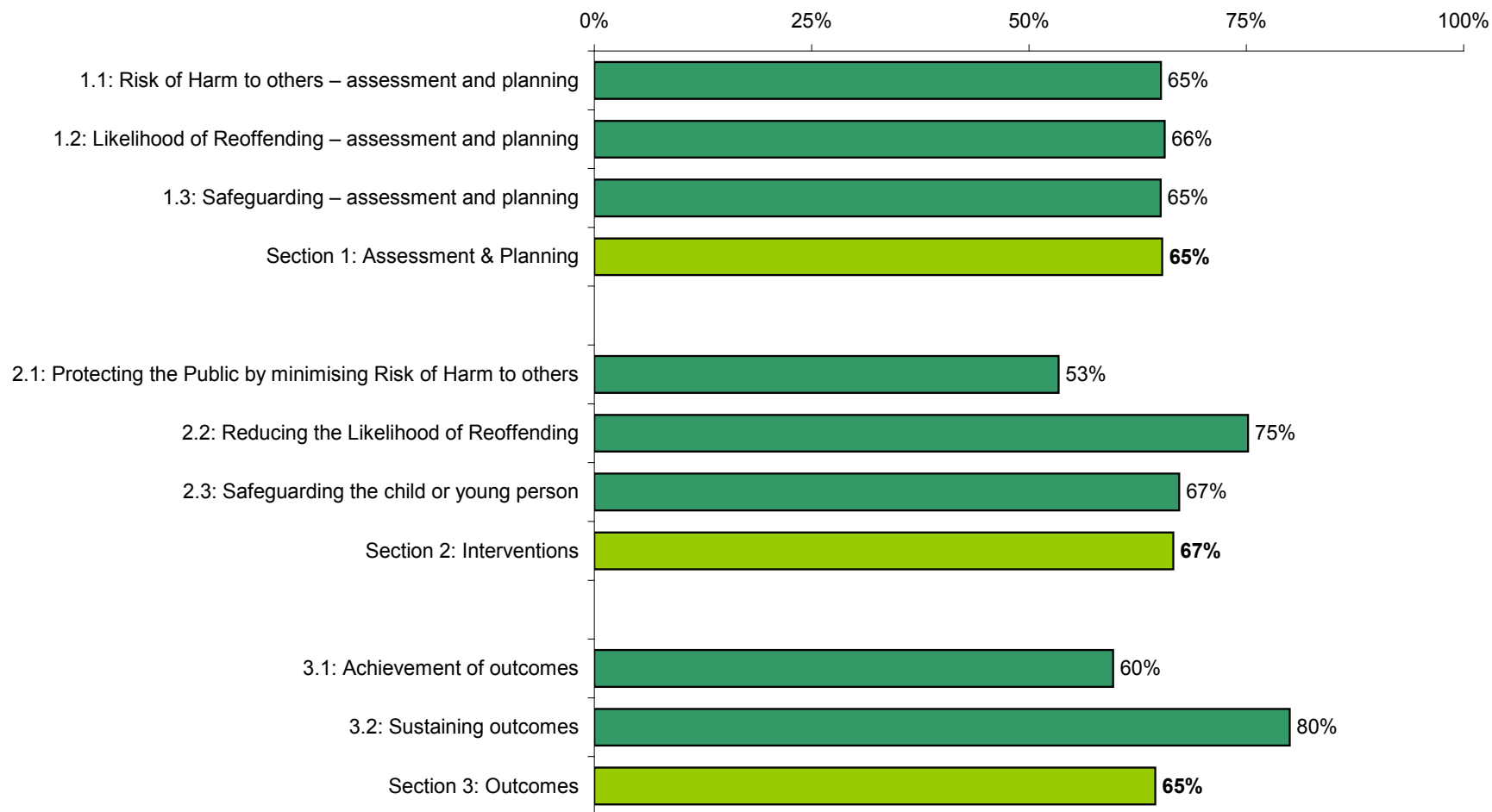
- (1) Action had been taken or plans were in place to ensure that positive outcomes were sustainable in 63% of relevant community cases.

**COMMENTARY on Outcomes as a whole:**

YOS staff had made commendable efforts to sustain work with children and young people when requirements were completed or orders ended. In particular, we noted continuing work with ETE and substance misuse services and we saw examples of children and young people continuing to engage in constructive activities to which they had been introduced during their contact with the YOS. This work built upon individual efforts made by staff to initiate constructive relationships with children and young people and their parents/carers during the orders, some of whom presented significant barriers to engagement. Such diligent investment had resulted in many positive changes evidenced by a reduction in the known frequency and seriousness of offending amongst some of the children and young people in our inspection sample.

## Appendix 1: Scoring summary of sections 1-3

### CCI Croydon General Criterion Scores





## Appendix 2: Contextual information

### Area

Croydon YOS was located in London in the south of the capital.

The area had a population of 345,600 as measured in the ONS Mid Year Estimates 2010, 10.8% of which were aged 10 to 17 years old (Census 2001). This was higher than the average for England/Wales, which was 10.4%.

The population of Croydon was predominantly white British (68%) (Resident Population Estimates by Ethnic Group 2009). The population with a black and minority ethnic heritage (32%) was above the average for England/Wales of 12%.

Reported offences for which children and young people aged 10 to 17 years old received a pre-court disposal or a court disposal in 2009/2010, at 39 per 1,000, were worse than the average for England/Wales of 38.

### YOS

The YOS boundaries were within those of the London Metropolitan Police area. The London Probation Trust and the Croydon Primary Care Trust covered the area.

The YOS was located within the Social Care and Family Support Division of the Children, Families and Learning Directorate of Croydon Council. It was managed by the Head of Youth Offending Services.

The YOS Headquarters and the operational work of the YOS were based in the south of the borough in the town of Croydon. ISS was provided in-house.

### Youth Justice Outcome Indicators 2011/2012 onwards

The national youth justice indicators for England have been replaced by three outcome indicators. These indicators will also be used in Wales.

**1. The reoffending measure** is a count of the number of 10 to 17 year olds who reoffend within 12 months of their conviction.

**2. The first time entrants measure** counts the number of young people given their first pre-court or court disposal and thus entering the youth justice system within each year.

**3. The use of custody** for young people aged 10 to 17 years.

For further information about current data, the YJB and the performance management of YOSs, please refer to:

<http://www.yjb.gov.uk/en-gb/practitioners/Monitoringperformance/>

## Appendix 3: Inspection Arrangements

Fieldwork for this inspection was undertaken in December 2012 and involved the examination of 38 cases.

### Model

The Core Case Inspection (CCI) involves visits to all 158 Youth Offending Teams in England and Wales over a three year period from April 2009. Its primary purpose is to assess the quality of work with children and young people who offend, against HMI Probation's published criteria, in relation to assessment and planning, interventions and outcomes. We look at work over the whole of the sentence, covering both community and custody elements.

### Methodology

The focus of our inspection is the quality of work undertaken with children & young people who offend, whoever is delivering it. We look at a representative sample of between 38 and 99 individual cases up to 12 months old, some current others terminated. These are made up of first tier cases (referral orders, action plan and reparation orders), youth rehabilitation orders (mainly those with supervision requirements), detention and training orders and other custodial sentences. The sample seeks to reflect the make up of the whole caseload and will include a number of those who are a high *Risk of Harm to others*, young women and black & minority ethnic children & young people. Cases are assessed by a small team of inspection staff with Local Assessors (peer assessors from another Youth Offending Team in the region). They conduct interviews with case managers who are invited to discuss the work with that individual in depth and are asked to explain their thinking and to show where to find supporting evidence in the record. These case assessments are the primary source of evidence for the CCI.

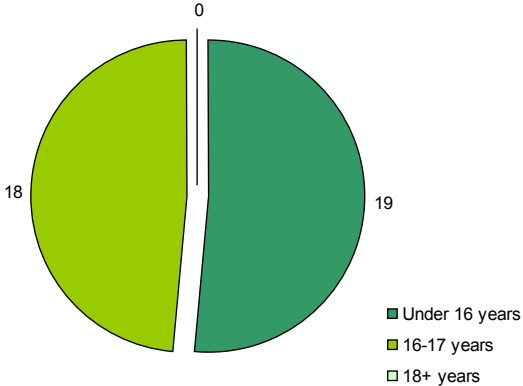
Prior to the inspection we receive copies of relevant local documents and a brief report from the Youth Justice Board. We also gather the views of service users (children & young people and victims) by means of computer and paper questionnaires.

### Publication arrangements

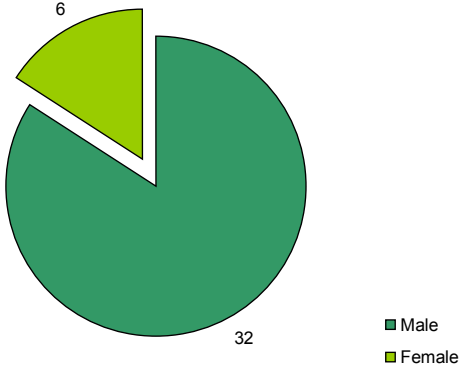
- Provisional findings are given to the YOS two weeks after the inspection visit takes place.
- A draft report is sent to the YOS for comment 4-6 weeks after the inspection, with publication following approximately 6 weeks later. In addition to a copy going to the relevant Minsters, other inspectorates, the Ministry of Justice Policy Group and the Youth Justice Board receive a copy. Copies are made available to the press and placed on our website.
- Reports on CCI in Wales are published in both Welsh and English.

# Appendix 4: Characteristics of cases inspected

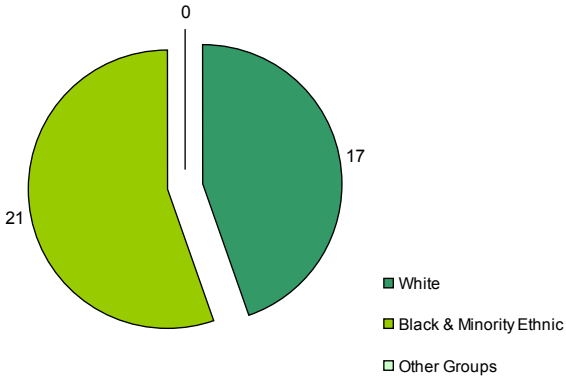
Case Sample: Age at start of Sentence



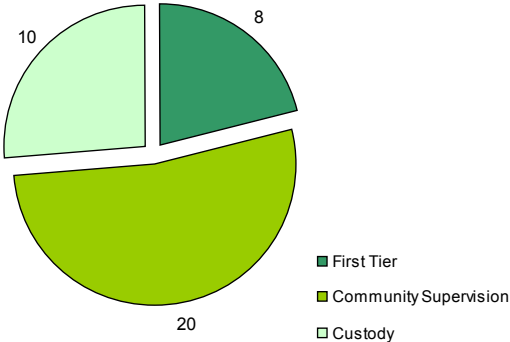
Case Sample: Gender



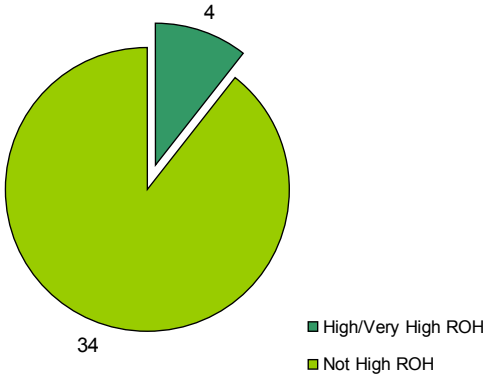
Case Sample: Ethnicity



Case Sample: Sentence Type



Case Sample: Risk of Harm



## Appendix 5: Scoring approach

This describes the methodology for assigning scores to each of the general criteria and to the *RoH*, *LoR* and Safeguarding headline scores.

A typical case consists of elements of work that were done well enough and others where there is room for improvement. Therefore, the question "what proportion of cases were managed well enough?" does not itself provide a meaningful measure of performance and is not useful to inform improvements.

Rather HMI Probation measure the more focused question "how often was each aspect of work done well enough?" This brings together performance on related elements of practice from all inspected cases.

Each scoring question in the HMI Probation inspection tool contributes to the score for the relevant general criterion and section in the report. The performance of the YOS on that aspect of practice is described within the section of the report linked to that criterion. Key questions then also contribute to one or more of the headline inspection scores. In this way the headline scores focus on the key outcomes whereas the general criterion scores include the underlying detail.

The **score for a general criterion** is the proportion of questions relating to that criterion, across all of the inspected cases, where the work assessed by that question was judged sufficient (i.e. above the line). It is therefore an average for that aspect of work across the whole of the inspected sample.

For **each section in the report** the above calculation is repeated, to show the proportion of work related to that section that was judged 'above the line'.

Finally, for each of the **headline themes**, the calculation is repeated on the key questions that inform the particular theme, to show the proportion of that aspect of work that was judged 'above the line'; thereby presenting the performance as an average across the inspected sample.

This approach enables us to say how often each aspect of work was done well enough, and provides the inspected YOS with a clear focus for their improvement activities.

## Appendix 6: Glossary

ASB/ASBO	Antisocial behaviour/Antisocial Behaviour Order
Asset	A structured assessment tool based on research and developed by the Youth Justice Board looking at the young person's offence, personal circumstances, attitudes and beliefs which have contributed to their offending behaviour
CAF	Common Assessment Framework: a standardised assessment of a child or young person's needs and of how those needs can be met. It is undertaken by the lead professional in a case, with contributions from all others involved with that individual
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services: part of the National Health Service, providing specialist mental health and behavioural services to children and young people up to at least 16 years of age
Careworks	One of the two electronic case management systems for youth offending work currently in use in England and Wales. See also YOIS+
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
DTO	Detention and training order: a custodial sentence for the young
Estyn	HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
ETE	Education, Training and Employment: work to improve an individual's learning, and to increase their employment prospects
FTE	Full-time equivalent
HM	Her Majesty's
HMIC	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMI Prisons	HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
Interventions; <i>constructive</i> and <i>restrictive</i> interventions	<p>Work with an individual that is designed to change their offending behaviour and/or to support public protection.</p> <p>A <i>constructive</i> intervention is where the primary purpose is to reduce Likelihood of Reoffending.</p> <p>A <i>restrictive</i> intervention is where the primary purpose is to keep to a minimum the individual's <i>Risk of Harm to others</i>. Example: with a sex offender, a <i>constructive intervention</i> might be to put them through an accredited sex offender programme; a <i>restrictive intervention</i> (to minimise their <i>Risk of Harm</i>) might be to monitor regularly and meticulously their accommodation, their employment and the places they frequent, imposing and enforcing clear restrictions as appropriate to each case. NB. Both types of intervention are important</p>
ISS	Intensive Surveillance and Supervision: this intervention is attached to the start of some orders and licences and provides initially at least 25 hours programme contact including a substantial proportion of employment, training and education
LoR	Likelihood of Reoffending. See also <i>constructive</i> Interventions
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board: set up in each local authority (as a result of the Children Act 2004) to coordinate and ensure the effectiveness of the multi-agency work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality

MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements: where probation, police, prison and other agencies work together locally to manage offenders who pose a higher <i>Risk of Harm to others</i>
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills: the Inspectorate for those services in England (not Wales, for which see Estyn)
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PPO	Prolific and other Priority Offender: designated offenders, adult or young, who receive extra attention from the Criminal Justice System agencies
Pre-CAF	This is a simple 'Request for Service' in those instances when a Common Assessment Framework may not be required. It can be used for requesting one or two additional services, e.g. health, social care or educational
PSR	Pre-sentence report: for a court
RMP	Risk management plan: a plan to minimise the individual's <i>Risk of Harm</i>
RoH	<i>Risk of Harm to others</i> . See also <i>restrictive Interventions</i>
'RoH work', or 'Risk of Harm work'	This is the term generally used by HMI Probation to describe work to protect the public, primarily using <i>restrictive interventions</i> , to keep to a minimum the individual's opportunity to behave in a way that is a <i>Risk of Harm to others</i>
RoSH	Risk of Serious Harm: a term used in Asset. HMI Probation prefers not to use this term as it does not help to clarify the distinction between the <i>probability</i> of an event occurring and the <i>impact/severity</i> of the event. The term <i>Risk of Serious Harm</i> only incorporates 'serious' impact, whereas using ' <i>Risk of Harm</i> ' enables the necessary attention to be given to those offenders for whom lower <i>impact/severity</i> harmful behaviour is <i>probable</i>
Safeguarding	The ability to demonstrate that all reasonable action has been taken to keep to a minimum the risk of a child or young person coming to harm
Scaled Approach	The means by which YOSs determine the frequency of contact with a child or young person, based on their RoSH and LoR
SIFA	Screening Interview for Adolescents: Youth Justice Board approved mental health screening tool for specialist workers
SQIFA	Screening Questionnaire Interview for Adolescents: Youth Justice Board approved mental health screening tool for YOS workers
VMP	Vulnerability management plan: a plan to safeguard the well-being of the individual under supervision
YJB	Youth Justice Board for England and Wales
YOI	Young Offenders Institution: a Prison Service institution for young people remanded in custody or sentenced to custody
YOIS+	Youth Offending Information System: one of the two electronic case management systems for youth offending work currently in use in England and Wales. See also Careworks
YOS/YOS/YJS	Youth Offending Service/ Team/ Youth Justice Service. These are common titles for the bodies commonly referred to as YOSs
YRO	The youth rehabilitation order is a generic community sentence used with young people who offend

## **Appendix 7: Role of HMI Probation and Code of Practice**

Information on the Role of HMI Probation and Code of Practice can be found on our website:

**<http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/hmi-probation/>**

The Inspectorate is a public body. Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within its remit should write to:

*HM Chief Inspector of Probation  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Trafford House  
Chester Road, Stretford  
Manchester, M32 0RS*