



Inspection of
Youth
Offending

Archwilio Rhaglen Troseddwyr Ifanc



Arolygiad ar y Cyd Cyfiawnder Troseddol

Core Case Inspection of youth offending work in England and Wales

Report on youth offending work in:

Essex

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Foreword

Our Core Case Inspection of youth offending work in Essex was undertaken as part of our Inspection of Youth Offending programme. This inspection focuses exclusively on the work undertaken by Youth Offending Teams with children and young people who have already committed an offence.

Its purpose is to assess if the work is of a sufficiently high standard to protect both the public from any harm resulting from the child or young person's offending behaviour and the child or young person themselves, whether from their own behaviour or any other source.

The inspection is based on a rigorous examination of a representative sample of cases supervised by the Youth Offending Service. Our findings are shown in the table below, outlined against those for Wales and the regions of England inspected so far. A more detailed analysis is provided in the main body of this report, and summarised in a table in Appendix 1.

Essex is a large area with a diverse population and the caseload of Essex YOS has grown increasingly complex. In this context, we found the performance of the YOS to be very encouraging. Management and staff were committed to improving outcomes for children and young people and embraced a multi-disciplinary approach using a range of thoughtful and sometimes innovative methods to help address offending behaviour.

There is scope, however, to improve practices, especially in relation to *Risk of Harm* and Safeguarding. We have made recommendations to reflect this and have confidence that Essex YOS will successfully implement them.

Liz Calderbank
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

May 2012

	Scores from Wales and the English regions that have been inspected to date			Scores for Essex
	Lowest	Highest	Average	
'Safeguarding' work <i>(action to protect the young person)</i>	37%	91%	67%	73%
'Risk of Harm to others' work <i>(action to protect the public)</i>	36%	86%	62%	68%
'Likelihood of Reoffending' work <i>(individual less likely to reoffend)</i>	43%	87%	70%	77%

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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 here¹. 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.

Safeguarding score:	
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.	
Score: 73%	Comment: MODERATE improvement required
Public Protection – Risk of Harm score:	
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.	
Score: 68%	Comment: MODERATE improvement required
Public Protection - Likelihood of Reoffending score:	
This score indicates the percentage of <i>Likelihood of Reoffending</i> work that we judged to have met a sufficiently high level of quality.	
Score: 77%	Comment: MINIMUM improvement required

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.

¹ 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 timely and good quality assessment and plan, using Asset, are completed when the case starts (YOS Head of Service)
- (2) specifically, a timely and 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, to make them less likely to reoffend, and to minimise any identified *Risk of Harm to others* (YOS Head of Service)
- (4) the response to changes in *Risk of Harm to others* is timely and appropriate (YOS Head of Service)
- (5) management oversight is effective in ensuring the quality of assessment and plans to manage vulnerability or *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 Essex YOS work that impressed us.

Assessment and Sentence Planning

General Criterion:
2.2

Curtis's case manager assessed that he had learning and communication problems coupled with mental health concerns. He was encouraged to take up a sport, and received a sports award for his efforts. In addition, his case manager devised a series of laminated cards which Curtis could carry with him to remind him of what could happen when faced with the opportunity to offend, and strategies she had taught him to turn away from offending. Curtis continued with his sporting activities and had also undertaken work experience. It was the longest period he had managed without reoffending and family members described him as a 'different boy'.

Delivery and Review of Interventions

General Criterion:
1.2

The case manager working with Ali felt that his family had an adverse impact on his offending and vulnerability. He helped Ali to complete a family tree, with a block of flats representing his family and members assigned places in the building, according to how significant they were in his life. The tree was used to assess and record Ali's emotions surrounding his family. This approach enabled the case manager to gain a better understanding of the family's dynamics, drawing on the information to improve her assessments and identify effective interventions to reduce the likelihood of Ali offending in the future.

Outcomes

General Criterion:
2.2

Eric was curfewed to his room in supported accommodation. Eric's case manager recognised his learning and disability needs. She realised that he would not be able to meet this requirement if he were to panic and needed to seek help or support from accommodation staff. She agreed with the support staff and the electronic monitoring company that any violations would be discussed with her in order to verify if Eric had left the grounds of the accommodation or, as often happened, had left his room to seek help or support from staff. In such instances, breach proceedings would not be brought against Eric, thereby assisting him to meet the requirements of his sentence whilst not increasing his anxieties. The benefits were that Eric's LoR was managed to protect the public whilst meeting his needs and making him less vulnerable.

All names have been altered.

Service users' perspective

Children and young people

Ninety-two children and young people completed a questionnaire for the inspection.

- ◇ All the children and young people who responded to the survey knew why they had to attend the YOS and nearly all (98%) recalled being told by the YOS what would happen when they visited.
- ◇ Almost all respondents felt the YOS staff completely, or mostly, listened to what they said and were interested in helping them (94% and 93% respectively). One child or young person explained that his case manager *"arrange(d) my sessions for a later time so i could attend around my work hours"*.
- ◇ Nearly all said their YOS worker had made it easy to understand how they (the YOS worker) could help them, 85% felt that the YOS team took action to deal with things they needed help with.
- ◇ Three-quarters of the respondents remembered completing a *What do YOU think?* self-assessment form or other form about themselves.
- ◇ When asked, 42 of the 51 children or young people who responded knew what a referral order contract or supervision or sentence plan was. In addition, 40 out of the 42 said the YOS worker had discussed these documents with them, 35 out of 40 recalled being given copies to keep and 32 out of 39 said their plan or referral order contract had been reviewed.
- ◇ A total of 12 stated that there had been something in their lives that had made them feel afraid during the period of contact with the YOS and seven of these (58%) said the YOS had helped with this.
- ◇ Less than half of those responding said the YOS had helped them to better understand their offending (43%) and make better decisions (45%). One respondent added that what had improved was, *"My understanding of why others behave in certain manners. With this I have learnt other means of dealing with someone that I may think is behaving in an irrational way. This has helped me in both college and work, it has also been handy in general every day life"*.
- ◇ More than one-third (33) said the YOS had helped them with their education, training or getting a job and more than one-quarter (23) that they had been helped with their drug or alcohol use. Eighteen stated that they had been helped to improve family relationships and feel less stressed.
- ◇ For 69% of respondents, their lives had improved since coming to the YOS; More than half stated things were better with their education or work prospects, and more than one-third felt their health had improved. Nearly 90% of respondents thought they were less likely to offend. One respondent added, *"I have thought about what will happen to me and I think its better if I do walk away,"*

- ◇ On a scale of 0 to 100 (100 being completely satisfied), 63% of the children and young people rated the service given to them by the YOS as 70 or more, with 16% rating it as 100.

Victims

Twenty-seven questionnaires were completed by victims of offending by children and young people.

- ◇ Twenty-six victims reported that the YOS explained what service they could offer or felt they had had the opportunity to talk about their worries relating to the offence or the person who had committed the offence.
- ◇ Twenty-four of the twenty-six who responded to the question, felt their needs had been taken into account, while 17 felt the YOS had paid attention to their safety, for example, in regards to the child or young person who had committed the offence contacting them.
- ◇ A total of 24 respondents said they were satisfied, and three dissatisfied, with the service offered by the YOS. One respondent commented, *"YOT and victim support were both marvellous - supportive, sensitive and practical. Nothing to improve, huge amounts of work put in with young person concerned both of practical and supportive nature"*.
- ◇ Nearly three-quarters (19) felt they had not benefited from any work done by the child or young person who committed the offence.

1. ASSESSMENT AND SENTENCE PLANNING

OVERALL SCORE: 72%

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:

72%

Comment:

MODERATE improvement required

Strengths:

- (1) An Asset RoSH screening was completed in 94% of cases; 83% were completed on time and 73% were accurate.
- (2) We agreed with the *RoH* classification in 85% of the sample. A full RoSH analysis was completed for 80% of appropriate cases, 74% of which were on time. An RMP was completed in 81% of these.
- (3) Notification and/or referral to MAPPA was undertaken in all three relevant cases and each was allocated to the correct MAPPA level.
- (4) All details of *RoH* assessment and management had been appropriately communicated to relevant staff and agencies in 41 of the cases (73%).

Areas for improvement:

- (1) The RoSH assessment was of sufficient quality in only 27 of the 46 relevant cases (59%). In many, risk to victims or previous relevant behaviour had not been adequately considered.
- (2) The *RoH* assessment drew adequately on all appropriate information including MAPPA, other agencies' and previous assessments and information from victims in 50 cases (65%). In many cases, important information had either not been sought or insufficiently analysed, so that it was difficult to make accurate, informed judgements about *RoH*.
- (3) Effective management oversight of the *RoH* assessment was evident in 52% of cases. There were cases in which *RoH* assessments had been carefully reviewed by managers, who had made recommendations for improvement which had not been implemented.

- (4) In the 32 cases where there should have been an RMP, 18 (56%) had been completed on time and 15 (47%) to sufficient quality.
- (5) In 18 (55%) of relevant case, management oversight of the RMP had not been effective.
- (6) Where there was no requirement for an RMP, or an RMP had not been produced, the need for planning for *RoH* issues had been recognised in 18 of the cases (62%).

1.2 Likelihood of Reoffending:	
<p>General Criterion:</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>Score:</p> <p>72%</p>	<p>Comment:</p> <p>MODERATE improvement required</p>

Strengths:

- (1) An initial assessment of LoR was completed in all but two cases, and was timely in 85% of cases.
- (2) There was active engagement to carry out the initial assessment with the child or young person and their parents/carers in 85% and 77% of cases respectively. In many of the instances where parents/carers had not been actively engaged, case managers had consciously and reasonably made the decision not to do so.
- (3) There was evidence that contact with or previous assessments from other agencies, especially children's social care services, ETE providers and the police, had informed the assessment of LoR in a large number of relevant cases.
- (4) The initial assessment was reviewed at appropriate intervals in three-quarters of the cases inspected. In many instances reviewed Assets were an improvement on that drafted at the start of order.
- (5) Every relevant case had a custodial sentence plan, 95% of which were completed on time. Fourteen took account of Safeguarding needs (74%), 15 proposed objectives that were inclusive of appropriate Safeguarding work (79%) and 16 (76%) included positive factors in the child or young person's life.

- (6) A community intervention plan or a referral order contract was completed in 99% of appropriate cases and 93% of these had been completed on time. Forty-eight community intervention plans/referral order contracts took account of Safeguarding needs (76%), 63 included positive factors in the child or young person's life (81%), 73 focused on achievable change (90%) and 57 set relevant goals (71%). Three-quarters contained objectives that took victims' issues into account.
- (7) The child or young person was actively and meaningfully involved in the planning process in the majority of cases.
- (8) A range of relevant agencies were actively and meaningfully involved in the planning process throughout the sentence: education and training providers in 60 relevant cases (87%); physical health services in 12 (92%); substance misuse services in 38 (78%); and the secure establishment in 19 (86%).
- (9) YOS workers were actively and meaningfully involved in the planning process in three-quarters of the cases throughout their custodial phase and, where necessary, most custodial sentence plans were reviewed at appropriate intervals.
- (10) Community intervention plans/referral order contracts were reviewed at appropriate intervals in 80% of cases.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) A *What do YOU think?* questionnaire informed only 43% of initial assessments and contacts with/previous assessments from other relevant agencies, for instance the police, substance misuse services, and emotional and mental health services, were often not utilised when it was appropriate to do so.
- (2) In eight of the relevant custodial cases (50%), the sentence plan did not respond appropriately to identified diversity needs. In six (43%), it did not integrate the RMP. The objectives within the custodial intervention plan were sensitive to diversity issues in six of the cases (40%); took account of victims' issues in eight (47%); sequenced according to offending-related need in ten (48%); and prioritised according to *RoH* in nine (50%).
- (3) The community intervention plan/referral order contract integrated RMPs in 21 of the relevant cases (64%). The objectives were sequenced according to offending-related need in 42 (54%); prioritised according to *RoH* in 34 (57%); and sensitive to diversity issues in 38 (61%).
- (4) Ten custodial sentence plans (48%) and 36 community intervention plans/referral order contracts (48%) did not incorporate the child's or young person's learning needs/style.
- (5) National standards were reflected in community intervention plans/referral order contracts in 32 of the cases (40%).

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:

72%

Comment:

MODERATE improvement required

Strengths:

- (1) An Asset vulnerability screening was completed in 95% of cases inspected. It was completed on time in 85%.
- (2) The VMP contributed to, and informed, interventions in 22 (71%) of the appropriate cases.
- (3) Safeguarding needs were reviewed as appropriate in 76% of cases in our sample.
- (4) The secure establishment was made aware of vulnerability issues prior to, or at the point of, sentence in each of the relevant 20 cases.
- (5) There were copies of documents, such as care, pathway or protection plans on file in 30 out of the 40 relevant cases (75%).
- (6) In 33 of the relevant 43 cases (77%), there was evidence that a contribution had been made to other assessments and plans to safeguard the child or young person.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) A VMP had been completed in 60% of appropriate cases and was timely in 53%.
- (2) In 20 of the 53 cases that merited one, the VMP had not been completed to a sufficient quality. In many, the planned responses set out in the documents were inadequate or not clear, roles/responsibilities were unclear, or the VMPs were lacking in victim or diversity issues.
- (3) Of the 60 relevant cases, only 26 showed evidence of effective management oversight of vulnerability assessment (43%).

COMMENTARY on Assessment and Sentence Planning as a whole:

Custody and community plans and contracts did not always address factors related to offending sufficiently. Custodial plans tended to focus on ETE, substance misuse and physical health, with fewer cases containing objectives relating to more general offending work. This often reflected limitations related to short DTO sentences or the lack of programmes available in custodial establishments. Community plans and contracts were more holistic but included little focus on living arrangements and family and personal relationships. Case managers were less inclined to include these objectives in cases where children and young people were not living with their parents during their period of supervision, even when these were strongly linked to offending.

2. DELIVERY AND REVIEW OF INTERVENTIONS

OVERALL SCORE: 76%

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:

67%

Comment:

MODERATE improvement required

Strengths:

- (1) Decisions taken within MAPPA were recorded clearly, followed through and acted upon, and reviewed appropriately in all relevant cases.
- (2) Case managers and all other relevant YOS staff contributed effectively to MAPPA processes in the one relevant case in custody.
- (3) Case managers and other relevant staff contributed effectively to other multi-agency meetings to manage *RoH* in 15 cases in custody (88%) and 46 in the community (88%). Cases were referred appropriately to case planning and review meetings and case managers worked hard to ensure representatives from other specialist areas attended these to improve outcomes for the children, young people, their families and victims.
- (4) Appropriate resources were allocated according to *RoH* throughout the sentence in 86% of cases. Specific interventions to manage *RoH* were delivered as planned in 45 cases in the community (79%) and in nine during the custodial phase of the sentence (69%).
- (5) There was effective management oversight of *RoH* in 10 of the relevant cases in custody (71%).

Areas for improvement:

- (1) There was a significant change that could give rise to concern in 46 of the cases inspected; for example, the child or young person reoffending or displaying harmful behaviour. *RoH* was reviewed thoroughly in slightly fewer than half of these (22). In many instances there was no review of *RoH* at all after the significant change.

- (2) *RoH* had been reviewed thoroughly in line with the required timescales in 43 of the 64 relevant cases (67%). Timeliness was an issue in some of these cases but 15 were of insufficient quality.
- (3) Changes in *RoH*/acute factors were anticipated wherever feasible in 39 relevant cases (66%); identified swiftly in 24 (69%) and acted on appropriately in 22 (63%).
- (4) Purposeful home visits had been carried out throughout the sentence in accordance with levels of *RoH* posed in 40 relevant cases (69%), and in accordance with Safeguarding issues in 43 (69%).
- (5) Where relevant, case managers gave high priority to the safety of victims in 31 cases (52%), and sufficient attention to the assessment of their safety in 38 (58%).
- (6) Specific interventions to manage *RoH* were reviewed following significant change in 20 relevant cases in the community (50%) and in three during the custodial phase of the sentence (60%).

2.2 Reducing the Likelihood of Reoffending:	
General Criterion: <i>The case manager coordinates and facilitates the structured delivery of all elements of the intervention plan.</i>	
Score: 81%	Comment: MINIMUM improvement required

Strengths:

- (1) The majority of interventions, delivered by the YOS and external agencies in the community, were of good quality (82%) and designed to reduce the LoR in 81% of the cases inspected. They were implemented in line with the intervention plan in 87%, reviewed appropriately in 72% and sequenced appropriately in 70%.
- (2) In many instances, interventions delivered in the community took into account the individual needs of the child or young person: 71% took account of learning style and 76% diversity considerations. Case managers used a range of approaches to tailor interventions; they arranged appointments to work around ETE needs, helped with travel by issuing travel warrants or ensuring the children and young people had lifts, made referrals to girls' and women's issues groups, and used a range of techniques to enhance supervision meetings such as the delivery of short, focused sessions or the use of visual aid cards.

- (3) The YOS worker was appropriately involved in the review of interventions in custody in nearly every case (18 of a possible 19) and often supported the attendance of parents/carers to ensure they too could participate.
- (4) The initial Scaled Approach intervention level was correctly applied in 96% of cases and appropriate resources were allocated according to the assessed LoR throughout the sentence in 89%.
- (5) All requirements of the sentence had been implemented in 35 out of the 42 relevant cases (83%).
- (6) The YOS worker had actively motivated and supported the child or young person in custody in 75% of cases, reinforced positive behaviour in 89% and actively engaged parents/carers, where appropriate, in 81% and in the community in 77%, 83% and 80% of cases respectively.

2.3 Safeguarding the child or young person:	
<p>General Criterion:</p> <p><i>All reasonable actions have been taken to safeguard and reduce the vulnerability of the child or young person.</i></p>	
<p>Score:</p> <p>79%</p>	<p>Comment:</p> <p>MINIMUM improvement required</p>

Strengths:

- (1) All necessary immediate action was taken to safeguard and protect the child or young person in six of the seven relevant cases in the community, and in the one case in which it was necessary during the custodial phase of the sentence. Where another child or young person was affected, immediate action was taken in every case.
- (2) Specific interventions to promote Safeguarding in custody were identified in 85% of relevant cases, delivered in 92% and reviewed every three months or following significant change in 73%.
- (3) All necessary referrals were made to other agencies to ensure Safeguarding in nine of the ten relevant cases during the custodial phase. Referrals were made in 36 of the 46 cases, which necessitated this, in the community (78%).
- (4) There was effective inter-agency working between the YOS and most other relevant agencies. This included the ASB team, ETE providers and services related to physical and emotional/mental health, and substance misuse, to promote the Safeguarding and well-being of the child or young person in the community and in custody, and to ensure the continuity of service provision in the transition from custody to community.

- (5) Specific interventions to promote Safeguarding in the community were identified in 55 of the relevant cases (85%), incorporated those identified in the VMP in 21 (72%), and delivered in 53 (80%).
- (6) All relevant staff supported and promoted the well-being of the child or young person throughout the course of the sentence in 89% of cases during the custodial phase and 77% of cases in the community.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) YOS workers worked together with children's social care services and emotional/mental health services to promote the Safeguarding and well-being of the child or young person in custody in half the cases inspected.
- (2) The YOS worked together with accommodation services to ensure continuity in the provision of mainstream services in the transition from custody to community in half the cases inspected.
- (3) Specific interventions to promote Safeguarding in custody were incorporated into the VMP in only one out of four cases.
- (4) Specific interventions to promote Safeguarding were reviewed every three months or following significant change in 36 of the relevant 55 cases in the community (65%).
- (5) There was effective management oversight of Safeguarding and vulnerability needs in five cases in custody (42%) and 40 in the community (63%).

COMMENTARY on Delivery and Review of Interventions as a whole:

Although three-quarters of community intervention plans/referral order contracts contained objectives which took account of victims' issues, greater attention needed to be given to victim safety throughout the sentence. The YOS had a dedicated victims lead, and there were some good examples of carefully thought through and effective reparation and restorative justice work. However, there was a sense that some of this work was process driven and did not always reflect the needs of victims in each case. This was especially evident in a small number of cases where the victims were members of the family and lived with the child or young person who had offended against them.

Case managers had access to a range of services and programmes, but, in many instances, there was also evidence of their using carefully thought through and sometimes innovative approaches for the delivery of proposed interventions. There were also some very positive examples of ISS work.

3. OUTCOMES

OVERALL SCORE: 75%

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:

72%

Comment:

MODERATE improvement required

Strengths:

- (1) In 95% of cases, the reporting instructions given were sufficient for the purpose of carrying out the sentence of the court.
- (2) Where the child or young person had not complied with the requirements of their sentence, the enforcement response to this was sufficient in 78% of cases inspected. YOS workers commenced breach proceedings where necessary but also used pre-breach panel meetings to promote compliance.
- (3) There was an overall reduction in Asset score in 46 cases (58%), most notably in factors related to ETE, living arrangements, physical health, lifestyle and thinking and behaviour.
- (4) Sufficient overall progress had been made in relation to the factors which were linked to reoffending in 52 of the cases (61%).
- (5) There was a reduction since the start of sentence or release from custody in the frequency and/or the seriousness of offending in nearly three-quarters of the cases.
- (6) Safeguarding had been effectively managed in 52 of relevant cases (73%).

Areas for improvement:

- (1) *RoH* had been successfully managed in 37 applicable cases (61%); in only about half of these had the assessment or planning been sufficient. Where there was an identifiable victim or potential victim, there was evidence that the *Risk of Harm* to them had been effectively managed in 40 (63%).
- (2) There had been a reduction in factors linked to Safeguarding in 39 of the cases (57%).
- (3) The child or young person had complied with the requirements of their sentence in just over half the cases inspected.

3.2 Sustaining outcomes:	
General Criterion: <i>Outcomes are sustained in relation to RoH, LoR and Safeguarding.</i>	
Score: 83%	Comment: MINIMUM improvement required

Strengths:

- (1) Full attention was given to community integration issues in 77% of cases during the custodial phase and in 86% in the community.
- (2) Action was taken or there were plans in place to ensure positive outcomes were sustainable in 83% of cases during the custodial phase of the sentence and in 80% of cases in the community.

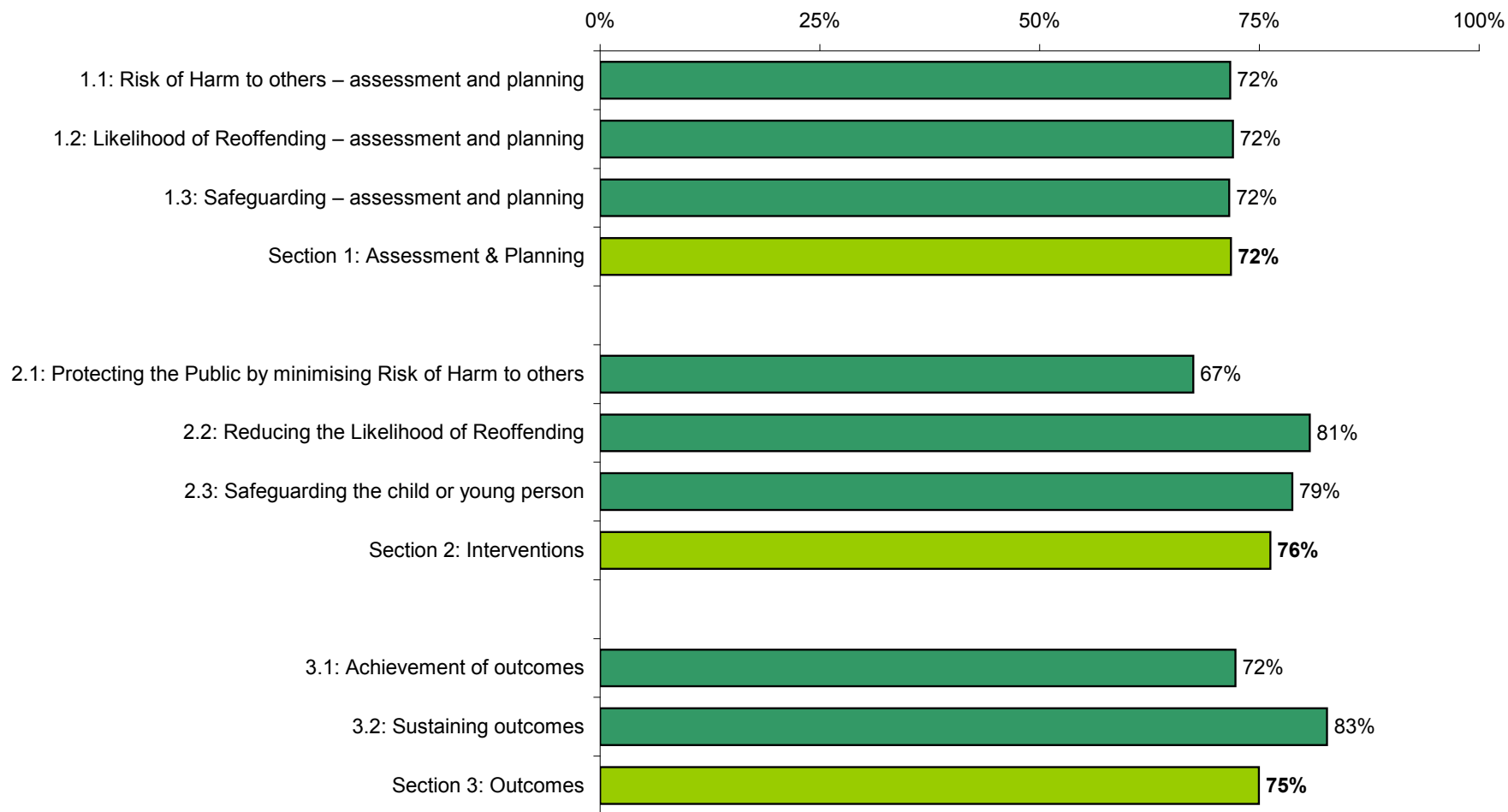
COMMENTARY on Outcomes as a whole:

Essex YOS was committed to improving outcomes and had forged effective partnerships to offer a range of services. Many of its children and young people benefited from strategies that offered ongoing support after they had completed their sentences from, for example, mental health and substance misuse services.

It was pleasing to see the YOS' involvement in the development of a range of innovative projects. Examples included a project to provide intensive family support to prevent the need for children and young people entering the care system, and a part-YOS funded scheme with the construction industry to enable direct referrals to accredited training in construction, with a view to helping children and young people find relevant work experience and employment.

Appendix 1: Scoring summary

CCI Essex General Criterion Scores



Appendix 2: Contextual information

Area

Essex YOS was located in the East of England.

The area had a population of 1,412,900 as measured in the ONS Mid Year Estimates 2010. 10.2% of the population were aged 10 to 17 years old (Census 2001). This was slightly lower than the average for England/Wales, which was 10.4%.

The population of Essex was predominantly white British (92%) (Resident Population Estimates by Ethnic Group 2009). The population with a black and minority ethnic heritage (8%) was below 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 36 per 1,000, were better than the average for England/Wales of 38.

YOS

The YOS covered the whole of the county of Essex, which was also covered by Essex Police, the Essex Probation Trust and the five Essex Primary Care Trusts.

The YOS was located within Children's Social Care Services. It was managed by the Head of the Youth Offending Service.

The YOS Headquarters was in Chelmsford, central to the county. There were four operational YOS teams – South, Mid, North and West Essex. ISS was provided and managed internally by the YOS.

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 YOTs, please refer to:

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

Appendix 3: Inspection Arrangements

Fieldwork for this inspection was undertaken in February 2012 and involved the examination of 85 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.

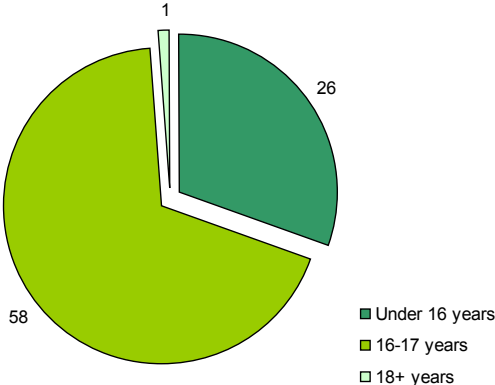
Prior to the inspection we receive copies of relevant local documents and a brief report from the Youth Justice Board. We also gather the views of service users (children & young people and victims) by means of computer and paper questionnaires.

Publication arrangements

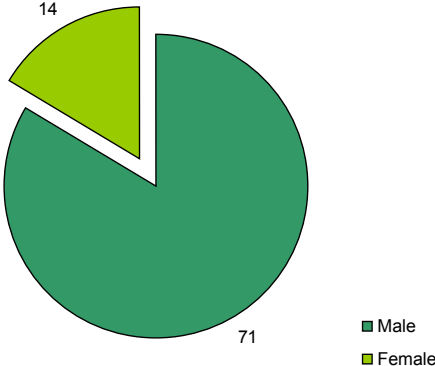
- Provisional findings are given to the YOS two weeks after the inspection visit takes place.
- A draft report is sent to the YOS for comment 4-6 weeks after the inspection, with publication following approximately 6 weeks later. In addition to a copy going to the relevant Ministers, other inspectorates, 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

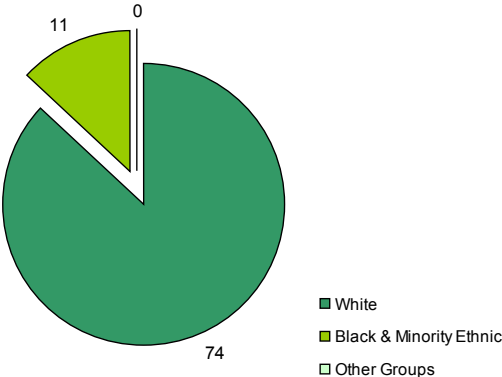
Case Sample: Age at start of Sentence



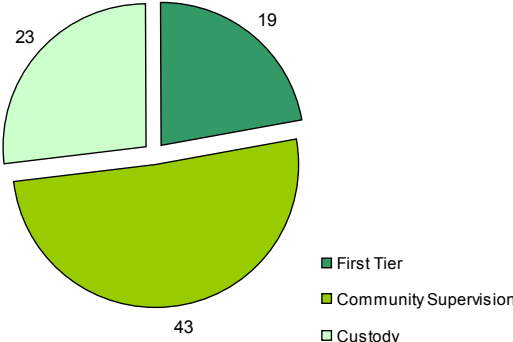
Case Sample: Gender



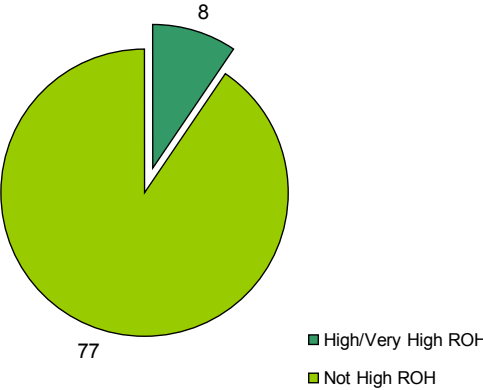
Case Sample: Ethnicity



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 education, training and employment
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/YOT/YJS	Youth Offending Service/ Team/ Youth Justice Service. These are common titles for the bodies commonly referred to as YOTs
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:

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6th Floor, Trafford House
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Manchester, M32 0RS*