



An inspection of youth offending services in

Essex

HM Inspectorate of Probation

DECEMBER 2018

This inspection was led by HM Inspector Ian Menary, supported by a team of inspectors, as well as staff from our operations and research teams. The Head of Youth Offending Team Inspections, responsible for this inspection programme, is Alan MacDonald. We would like to thank all those who helped plan and took part in the inspection; without their help and cooperation, the inspection would not have been possible.

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

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This publication is available for download at:

www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation

Published by:
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation
1st Floor Civil Justice Centre
1 Bridge Street West
Manchester
M3 3FX

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Foreword

This inspection is part of our new programme of youth offending service (YOS) inspections. As planned, we have inspected and rated Essex YOS across three broad areas: the arrangements for organisational delivery first of all, and then the quality of court disposals work, and out-of-court disposals work.

We have given Essex YOS an overall rating of 'Outstanding'. Many aspects of work in Essex to prevent offending by children and young people are impressive and successful.

The arrangements for youth offending work and the focus given to it by strategic leaders are clear and well understood. The work is led well by both strategic leaders and operational managers. There is a sense of professionalism, commitment to achieving positive outcomes and effective working together, both within the YOS and among its partners. Relationships at all levels are constructive, and healthy challenge is encouraged.

Essex is one of the largest youth offending teams (YOTs) in the country, running its services out of four offices, yet it manages to achieve a consistent approach and performance across the whole area. Work with children and young people subject to both court orders and out-of-court disposals is done to an exceptionally high standard. We rate its work on court disposals as 'Outstanding' across each of our four standards. Assessment and planning for young people subject to out-of-court disposals are also outstanding. Children and young people, together with their parents/carers, are involved meaningfully at every stage and, unusually, make a valuable contribution to quality assurance of cases.

There are a few areas for improvement. Plans to implement an improved out-of-court disposal scheme consistent with best practice are at an early stage of implementation, barriers to involvement of children and young people in suitable education or training need to be overcome, and greater national support is required to help the YOS deal with gang-based drug dealing managed from outside Essex, often referred to as 'county lines'. Essex YOS also needs to reflect on its strengths and put in place plans to make sure these are sustained and further developed.

The recommendations in this report have been designed to help Essex YOS build on its strengths and focus on a small number of areas for improvement.



Dame Glenys Stacey
Chief Inspector of Probation

Overall findings

Overall youth offending work in Essex is rated as: **Outstanding**. This rating has been determined by inspecting the youth offending services in three domains of their work. The findings in those domains are described below.

	Organisational delivery
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Our key findings about organisational delivery were as follows:

- There is a strong strategic and operational leadership and a well-functioning Board that has a good understanding of performance and the challenges of practice.
- The staff group is skilled and highly motivated to achieve the best outcomes for the children and young people they work with.
- Management oversight and supervision are effective and well received.
- Relationships between partners are constructive.
- The approach taken to quality assurance is an exemplar of good practice.
- Information systems work well and have been developed to provide valuable facilities to support staff, managers and provision of performance data.
- The YOS and its partners have an impressive understanding of current offending patterns, including the impact of 'county lines', and have undertaken creative work to address their impact.
- The revised out-of-court disposals scheme is in the initial stages of implementation; it is, therefore, too early to assess its effectiveness.
- Involvement of children and young people in education, training or employment is not yet good enough, although the YOS and partners are working hard to improve this.
- The effectiveness of the YOS's work to deal with cases involving county lines is limited by insufficient national guidance and support.

	Court disposals
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Our key findings about court disposals were as follows:

- Assessments and plans are of a high standard, clearly identifying and planning to address those factors that were most likely to lead to desistance, improvement in safety and wellbeing, and the management of risk of harm to others.

- Case managers understand the children and young people they work with well and have good relationships with them.
- Children and young people and their parents/carers are involved well in all aspects of work undertaken with them.
- The case planning forum and the case planning and review meeting both make valuable contributions to the quality of work.
- Delivery of services to support desistance, improve safety and wellbeing, and protect others is done well.
- There is good attention to making sure that children and young people comply with the requirements of their sentence.
- There needs to be greater account taken of the needs, wishes and safety of victims in the work undertaken by case managers.



Out-of-court disposals

Our key findings about out-of-court-disposals were as follows:

- Assessment and planning to support desistance, to protect others and to support the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person are strong.
- Planning and delivery of out-of-court disposal work are proportionate to the nature of the disposal.
- Joint working with the police makes sure that youth conditional cautions contained appropriate conditions.
- Good attention is given to ensuring compliance with out-of-court work.
- Implementation and delivery of work to support desistance are done well.
- Children and young people and their parents/carers are involved positively in all aspects of work undertaken with them.
- The YOS has had insufficient opportunity to influence disposal decisions, because the revised scheme is in the initial stages of implementation.
- Case managers need to give more consideration to victims in their assessments, plans and delivery of services.
- Recording and providing feedback on progress in youth conditional caution cases need to be more systematic.

Service: Essex Youth Offending Service

Fieldwork started: October 2018

Overall rating

Outstanding



1. Organisational delivery

1.1 Governance and leadership

Outstanding



1.2 Staff

Outstanding



1.3 Partnerships and services

Good



1.4 Information and facilities

Outstanding



2. Court disposals

2.1 Assessment

Outstanding



2.2 Planning

Outstanding



2.3 Implementation and delivery

Outstanding



2.4 Reviewing

Outstanding



3. Out-of-court disposals

3.1 Assessment

Outstanding



3.2 Planning

Outstanding



3.3 Implementation and delivery

Good



3.4 Joint working

Good



Recommendations

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

Essex Youth Offending Service (YOS) and Essex Constabulary should:

1. fully implement plans for a revised out-of-court disposal scheme to deliver a scheme that reflects best practice, and diverts children and young people away from the criminal justice system at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

Essex County Council and the YOS Management Board should:

2. make sure that children and young people known to the YOS receive their full entitlement to suitable high-quality education or training.

The Executive Director, Children and Families and the YOS Management Board should:

3. ensure that strategic and operational plans to prevent youth offending recognise the strength and effectiveness of current work, and seek to sustain and further develop it.

The Youth Justice Board should:

4. provide support and guidance to youth offending teams on dealing with county lines, and ensure that there are national arrangements to support information sharing between partners and areas in these cases.

Essex YOS should:

5. always take account of the needs, wishes and safety of actual and potential victims in the assessment, planning and delivery of its work.

Introduction

Youth Offending Services (YOSs) supervise 10–18-year-olds who have been sentenced by a court, or who have come to the attention of the police because of their offending behaviour but have not been charged – instead, they were dealt with out of court. HMI Probation inspects both these aspects of youth offending services.

YOSs are statutory partnerships, and they are multi-disciplinary, to deal with the needs of the whole child. They are required to have staff from local authority social care and education, the police, the National Probation Service and local health services.¹ Most YOSs are based within local authorities; however, this can vary.

YOS work is governed and shaped by a range of legislation and guidance specific to the youth justice sector (such as the National Standards for Youth Justice) or else applicable across the criminal justice sector (for example multi-agency public protection arrangements guidance). The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) provides some funding to YOSs. It also monitors their performance and issues guidance to them about how things are to be done.

Essex Youth Offending Service (YOS) is one of the largest YOT areas in England and Wales, with the fifth highest volume of post-court cases² and the second highest population.³ It is organised on a traditional YOT model in which there is a discrete management board and YOT team, containing a broad range of specialist and partner roles devoted to addressing offending by children and young people. The YOS operates out of a central office and four local offices, each providing services in one quadrant of the county. National indicator outcomes are consistently better than both the average for England and Wales and comparator YOT performance.

The role of HM Inspectorate of Probation

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation is the independent inspector of youth offending and probation services in England and Wales. We provide assurance on the effectiveness of work with adults and children who have offended to implement orders of the court, reduce reoffending, protect the public and safeguard the vulnerable. We inspect these services and publish inspection reports. We highlight good and poor practice, and use our data and information to encourage good quality services. We are independent of government, and speak independently.

HM Inspectorate of Probation standards

The standards against which we inspect are based on established models and frameworks, which are grounded in evidence, learning and experience. These standards are designed to drive improvements in the quality of work with people who have offended.⁴

¹ The *Crime and Disorder Act 1998* set out the arrangements for local YOTs and partnership working.

² *Youth justice annual statistics 2016/2017*. Youth Justice Board (January 2018)

³ *Population estimates for UK: Mid 2017*, Office for National Statistics.

⁴ HM Inspectorate's standards are available here: <https://www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-our-work/our-standards-and-ratings/>

Key facts

**First-time entrant rate⁵
per 100,000**

160

Essex YOS

301

Average for
England and Wales

Reoffending rates⁶

35.5%

Essex YOS

41.9%

Average for
England and Wales

Population and caseload information

2nd highest

Essex population compared with other local authorities in England and Wales⁷

5th highest

Essex YOS post-court commencements compared with other YOTs in England and Wales⁸



⁵ *First-time entrants, October 2016 to September 2017*, Youth Justice Board (YJB).

⁶ *Proven reoffending statistics, July 2015 to June 2016*, Ministry of Justice, (April 2018).


⁷ *Population estimates for UK: Mid 2017*, Office for National Statistics.

⁸ *Youth Justice annual statistics 2016/2017*, Youth Justice Board (January 2018).

Organisational delivery



Organisations that are well led and well managed are more likely to achieve their aims. We inspect against four standards.

1.1 Governance and leadership	Outstanding
The governance and leadership of the YOT supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.	

Essex YOS is organised on the traditional YOT model, with a multi-agency team devoted to dealing with all aspects of preventing offending by children and young people. Frontline staff hold a mixed caseload of post-court and out-of-court cases. Essex County Council considers that having a specialist YOS team helps keep a clear focus and priority on work to prevent offending. The outcomes from this inspection indicate that Essex has been successful in that objective.

The YOS is managed within the Children, Families and Education Directorate of Essex County Council. The Management Board is chaired by the Executive Director for Children, Families and Education. There are strong links between the Board and the overarching Essex Children's Strategic Partnership, and with other partnership boards. The latest children's strategic plan focuses on working with the most vulnerable children and young people to achieve positive outcomes. It identifies children and young people who have offended and those at risk of committing serious violence, among others, as priority groups.

All statutory partners are represented on the Management Board at a senior level. There is good attendance at Board meetings. The Board Chair's knowledge about youth offending work, and current needs and patterns of offending in Essex, is impressive. Board members are also knowledgeable about youth offending work, recognising the specific needs of the YOS cohort of children and young people. They have a good understanding of their role on the Board. When the Board identifies areas of concern it commissions task-and-finish subgroups, that can also contain operational managers from partner agencies, to ensure these concerns are fully dealt with.

Board membership includes a lead elected member of the local authority, who has a good understanding of the work. This helps maintain the visibility and priority of its work, as does the seniority of the Chair and board members. The local Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) is not represented on the Board. There are, however, strong operational and strategic relationships between the YOS and the CRC.

There is a current YOS strategic plan, which is revised annually. Board members have been able to influence the development of the plan, to ensure it matches other strategic and partner priorities. Board members and managers have a good understanding of the risks facing the YOS and take steps to mitigate them.

Each Board meeting includes a thematic focus on practice. These deep-dives prove valuable in helping Board members to remain aware of the current challenges of practice and evidence of what works. Managers and staff present their area of work, which also helps maintain links between the Board and YOS staff.

Board members advocate for the work of the YOS in their wider roles. Examples include the Children’s Strategic Partnership, the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Strategic Management Board, challenging partners when their plans could have unintended consequences for the work of the YOS, and dealing with structural barriers to education, training and employment (ETE) engagement. This latter work was heavily influenced by the specific needs of the YOS.

The YOS has a pooled budget, which provides flexibility in how it can respond to changing needs. A rigorous approach to budget management ensures that resources are used effectively on the required services.

Ninety-six per cent of YOS staff said they understood their roles and responsibilities in local partnership arrangements. The use of weekly case planning forums supported the effectiveness of these arrangements. Management arrangements within children’s services, including regular meetings of managers across all functions, also helped make sure that each other’s roles and priorities were understood and that joint working was effective. Our case assessments undertaken during this inspection confirmed that the arrangements generally worked well.

Overall leadership by the Board, YOS managers and partners is strong. Leadership is clear, accessible and committed to the achievement of positive outcomes. There is a common vision at all levels and across the partnership about the outcomes that are sought through the work of the YOS. Ninety-four per cent of staff said they understood the vision, strategy and development plans. The YOS is considered a safe place where constructive challenge is welcomed and responded to positively. The strategy was put into operation effectively, including through a training and development plan, quarterly development days and regular management meetings.

1.2 Staff	Outstanding
Staff within the YOT are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.	

There is a skilled, committed and stable workforce in place. Over 50 per cent of the workforce are qualified social workers or probation officers, which helps the YOS make sure that cases are allocated to suitably skilled staff. Inspectors were consistently impressed with the quality of staff and managers who they met.

Workloads are monitored by managers and are reported regularly to the board. All case managers said that their caseloads were manageable. Restorative justice staff have a good understanding of their work. They present examples of important outcomes that had been achieved from restorative conferences in some difficult cases. The YOS has access to a broad range of creative and valuable reparation projects.

All staff said they were motivated to deliver high-quality services, with 92 per cent saying they were very motivated. This was also apparent from the way that staff engaged with inspectors. Volunteers who undertook referral order panel work also said they were motivated to fulfil their role.

There is, though, a shortage of mentors, particularly those who can provide a positive male role model when children and young people are involved in or at risk of becoming involved in gangs. This has been recognised and there was agreement to further develop this aspect of work.

Case management forums (weekly team meetings in each locality) help ensure that planned and unplanned staff absences are covered, and provide peer oversight of cases. The value of these was illustrated in many of the inspected cases. In one youth conditional caution (YCC) case, the inspector wrote:

“The case manager used the case management forum to share and discuss barriers to engagement and the resistance of R’s mother to work with the YOS, which was affecting R’s engagement. The meeting was useful. It helped the case manager identify methods of engaging R’s mother and identify suitable interventions to address his behaviour.”


Supervision of staff and management oversight of cases are of a high standard. Staff were complimentary about the supervision and oversight they received, which they found valuable. Inspectors considered, positively but unusually, that oversight had been effective in all cases where they assessed this. The risk register system (see 1.4) is a valuable tool that helps managers manage workloads and provide effective oversight. Managers also found it valuable to help them support performance improvement where that was needed.

A broad range of approaches is used to recognise exceptional work. These include making nominations for local and national awards, letters from the board Chair to individual members of staff, and other informal opportunities in teams.

A comprehensive learning and development plan is in place that includes a good range of induction activities. Staff also have access to learning provided through the Essex Social Care Academy (ESCA). Newer staff said the induction they had received was very good. Almost all staff said that their training and development needs were, at the least, mostly met. Volunteers also said their training needs were met, including through an annual volunteers’ conference.

Overall, staff and managers impressed inspectors with their skills, knowledge, openness to challenge and further improvement, and commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes for those they worked with. These comments from an inspector following an interview with a case manager were typical:

“She showed knowledge and passion for her work, and this was clearly reflected in her holistic and individualised approach.”

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

There is in place a comprehensive forensic analysis of current offending patterns, profiles of children and young people, and identified desistance needs. This is understood and used well by the Board and managers. The analysis has identified

issues of disproportionality within aspects of the youth justice system. A range of actions has been taken in response to this, including a presentation of the analysis and challenges to sentencers, and making diversity and disproportionality a development objective in the YOS. Diversity was also the topic of a recent deep-dive quality assurance exercise. Inspectors assessed that enough attention had been given to diversity factors in almost all cases that were inspected.

Analysis has also identified the rapid growth and development of 'county lines' as a factor in cases, particularly possession of illegal substances with intent to supply and the risks of youth violence. This has led to actions intended to reduce the risk of children and young people becoming involved in county lines, such as the 'gangs' prevention strategy'. The approach to the county lines problem in Essex is positive and creative. There is, though, much frustration that there is not enough national guidance and support available to YOTs, including national information-sharing protocols. This limits Essex YOS's ability to deal with an issue which, in individual cases, has its source outside Essex. An example from one of the inspected cases illustrates how case managers often did the best they could:

"There was a lot of multi-agency work between police, social care and YOS to consider planning and protection for the young person in the context of organised crime and exploitation. The YOS referred this case to the multi-agency case audit, which prompted assessment of a younger sibling and reflection on the long-term emotional impact on the children. Further action points included sharing the historical picture of key individuals to assist with their pending involvement. A mapping exercise took place to explain the links in the group of concern with which this young person associated."

A broad set of performance information is provided at each board meeting, combining both the latest national indicator data and internal data that reflects current practice. Board members understand this and are confident in interrogating and challenging it. Essex YOS benchmarks its performance against national averages and that of comparator areas. Its response to disproportionality is, however, illustrative of its ambition. There is a culture of wanting to be the best that it can be, irrespective of current performance or other benchmarks.

Inspectors assessed that the YOS has access to the services it needs to support desistance, safety and wellbeing, and management of risk of harm to others in the great majority of cases inspected. Joint working with children's services is good. A helpful culture of cross-fertilisation and engagement was reported within the children's services management group. There are several well-developed partnership arrangements. These include educational psychologist provision and educational support to help prepare children and young people for engagement in ETE. Others include substance misuse work and the provision of good support relating to emotional and mental health.


There are, though, difficulties ensuring that children and young people known to the YOS are engaged in suitable full-time education or training. The YOS and board have a good understanding of the issues, and have worked hard to overcome structural barriers to improving outcomes, but performance is still not as good as it should be. A further range of actions recently taken in Essex County Council have the potential to enable substantial progress, but it is too early to assess their effectiveness. Children and young people involved in intensive supervision and surveillance (ISS)

were more likely to become engaged in ETE. This was encouraging, given the challenges presented by this complex group, but also needed further improvement.

A review of out-of-court disposal work by the YOS and Essex Constabulary has identified a range of weaknesses. This, alongside learning from the joint thematic inspection of out-of-court disposals⁹ has led to the development of a new scheme that is in the early stages of implementation. The proposals include changes in the way that the police deal with alleged offending by children and young people. If this is accepted, and fully implemented, it has the potential to provide a high-quality scheme that will be in line with best practice, and that will increase the likelihood of children and young people being diverted away from the criminal justice system without being criminalised. It is, though, too early to assess its effectiveness.

A good service is provided to the local court, and there is a good understanding of MAPPA. The inspection found one case that was eligible for MAPPA. This was identified and acted on as required. There is evidence of an appropriate risk-based approach to the involvement of managers in MAPPA meetings. There is also, unusually, good engagement and relationships at a management level with a local youth custodial establishment, which has a valuable impact on joint working.

Good relationships and joint working are apparent with children’s services and others to support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. The YOS and children’s services try to combine internal case planning meetings with Looked After Child reviews or child protection meetings. This supports integration and consistency between the different agencies’ plans. Overall, there is a culture across the partnership that has mutual objectives, respect for differences, providing complementary services and delivering them in a spirit of trust. The YOS has a strong commitment to transparency with the children and young people it works with and to the importance of good relationships with children and young people; this was evident within the management and staff groups, and with partners.

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

There is a full suite of up-to-date policies and procedures, which are of good quality and reviewed regularly. Identified named managers are responsible for the policy and its review. Policies and procedures are accessible directly from the case management system, which is helpful. The performance management policy is an exemplar of good practice, with a range of different processes contributing to quality assurance. These include seeking the views of children and young people and their parents/carers.

⁹ HM Inspectorate of Probation and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service. (March 2018). *Out-of-court disposal work in youth offending teams*. <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/cji/inspections/out-of-court-disposal-work-in-youth-offending-teams/>

Good practice example: Essex YOS performance management framework

Quality assurance included clear expectations within regular supervision processes. It also included a programme of thematic deep dives. Cases were selected at random, based on specific characteristics, and a local manager undertook an assessment of the case. A second manager from another team then repeated the exercise, but would also contact the child or young person and their parent/carer to seek their views on how well the work had gone. They would then compare their judgements. Learning from individual cases was brought together to develop improvement plans.

Staff make use of a combination of offices, community facilities and home visits for their work with children and young people. They have a good understanding of the travelling difficulties and rural nature of many parts of Essex, and work hard to overcome these. The ISS scheme has access to a youth centre for its work, which is valuable and enables the delivery of a broad range of independent living skills, offending-focused work and positive activities. The centralised approach to delivery did, though, mean that for some children and young people ISS was a substantially more onerous programme than for others, as they spent more time travelling to the youth centre to attend activities.

Staff said that facilities used for work with children and young people were safe and appropriate. They described a comprehensive and effective set of processes for supporting their safety while working away from YOS offices. However, volunteers said that some rooms used for referral order panels were too small and could not be organised in a way that best suited engagement with children and young people.

The case management system (CareerVision) is stable and performs well. Staff find it straightforward to use and helpful. Essex YOS has developed a pen picture facility on the front screen, which case managers are expected to update frequently. This provides staff other than the designated case manager with a very quick and easy-to-access overview of individual children and young people in often complex cases. This is a valuable development. Case managers also have access to the local children's services database, which supports joint working along with the sharing and integration of each other's plans. The risk register system developed in Essex is an impressive facility that staff and managers like and use well. Managers are confident in their use of data.

Good practice example: risk register

Essex YOS has developed a risk register database. It provided tools to help case managers manage their workload, and managers to support quality assurance and oversight of their staff and caseloads. The information manager could also easily extract performance or other management information. It was generated through an automatic download each morning from the main case management system. A simple interface had then been developed, using a standard business intelligence tool, to enable users to extract information from it.

Audit and inspection are used routinely to improve practice. In addition to use of the out-of-court-disposals joint inspection,¹⁰ the inspection of desistance¹¹ has informed the approach to reparation projects. The internal deep-dive and broader quality assurance processes are supplemented by children's services-wide case audits that include YOS cases.

The views of children and young people and other service users are sought in a wide variety of ways to help improve services. For example, in addition to their involvement in deep-dive quality assurance, children and young people have been involved in interviewing for a staff member, and victims have presented their experience of restorative justice to the board and to a staff meeting. The valuable case planning and review meeting (CPRM) also provides multi-agency oversight to planning in more complex cases, and includes the child or young person and their parent/carer. This is a particularly effective way of making sure they understand and engage in their work with the YOS.

Learning from serious incidents is reported to and reviewed by the Board. The national serious incident reporting requirements had been removed, but the Board decided to retain an equivalent process. Essex YOS is a safe place in which lessons can be learned from things that go wrong, and as an opportunity to improve practice.

Summary

Strengths:

- There is a strong strategic and operational leadership and a well-functioning Board that has a good understanding of performance and the challenges of practice.
- The staff group is skilled and highly motivated to achieve the best outcomes for the children and young people they work with.
- Management oversight and supervision are effective and well received.
- Relationships between partners are positive.
- The approach to quality assurance is an exemplar of good practice.
- Information systems work well and have been developed to provide valuable facilities to support staff, managers and the provision of performance data.
- The YOS and its partners have an impressive understanding of current offending patterns, including the impact of 'county lines', and have undertaken creative work to address their impact.

¹⁰ HM Inspectorate of Probation and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service. (March 2018). *Out-of-court disposal work in youth offending teams*.
<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cji/inspections/out-of-court-disposal-work-in-youth-offending-teams/>

¹¹ HMI Probation. (May 2016). *Desistance and young people*.
<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/inspections/desistance-and-young-people/>

Areas for improvement:

- The revised out-of-court disposals scheme is in the initial stages of implementation; it is, therefore, too early to assess its effectiveness.
- Involvement of children and young people in ETE is not yet good enough, although the YOS and partners are working hard to improve this.
- The effectiveness of the YOS's work to deal with cases involving 'county lines' is limited by insufficient national guidance and support.



2. Court disposals

Work with children and young people sentenced by the courts will be more effective if it is well targeted, planned and implemented. In our inspections we look at a sample of cases. In each of those cases we inspect against four standards.

2.1 Assessment	Outstanding
Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.	

Case managers have comprehensive knowledge about the children and young people they work with. This is reflected in assessments that are of a high standard. Many of the cases are complex, so the comments of one inspector helpfully illustrate the quality of assessments that we found:

“K had a complex history that included being in care, emotional and physical abuse as a child, witness of domestic abuse and sustained parental substance abuse, death of a father, and a pro-offending family. Despite these complexities and the multi-faceted nature of the case, the case manager made a superbly clear and comprehensive assessment that showed a good understanding of K and provided a good basis for planning how to manage the case.”

Other comments by inspectors often included words or phrases such as *“demonstrated excellent professional curiosity”, “analytical rather than narrative”, “insightful”* and *“well-balanced”*.

Engagement of children and young people and their parents/carers in assessment is impressive. Their views are reflected in most cases, and triangulated with other evidence. There is good assessment of their maturity and their likelihood of engagement with the work of the YOS. The YOS is rightly proud of what it describes as a transparent approach to the involvement of children and young people and their parents/carers in all aspects of their supervision. Case managers put a lot of effort into developing good relationships with those they work with. The positive impact of this is apparent throughout the work. Case managers have a good understanding of desistance approaches. This is reflected in strong assessment of positive or protective factors, and of structural barriers that could face the child or young person.

There are, though, some areas which, while still strong, would benefit from further attention. Not all initial assessments are completed quickly enough. Consideration of the needs and wishes of victims in recorded assessments, including assessments of risk of harm to others, is not as well developed as other aspects.

Assessment of safety and wellbeing is also strong. A broad range of risks to the child or young person, both those from others and those arising directly from the child or young person’s behaviour, are often recognised. In one positive example, consideration was given to the locations that the child or young person frequented

and the risks arising from that. There is consistent recognition that being a child who is looked after is an indicator that the level of their vulnerability is raised. Information from children’s social care services is used well in assessments.

Case managers are determined in making sure they obtain information they need. For example, where a request to a school had not been responded to, the case manager persisted in contacting the school until it was received. On occasions, though, there needs to be better recognition of the fact that actions to manage the risks to the child or young person do not necessarily reduce the underlying risks to them, as those actions could become ineffective.

Assessments of the risk of harm to others are again strong. There is effective use of intelligence from the police or others. Case managers look beyond the presenting facts and offences to unpick and understand risks to others. A good example of their holistic approach is a case where there was a full assessment of the risks presented to the child or young person’s family that resulted from their behaviour and the people who were coming to their front door, even though the offences had not been against the family. There was one case in the inspected sample that needed to be managed under MAPPA; this had been correctly identified and was managed at the right level.

We found, overall, that an impressive 95 per cent of initial assessments of factors related to desistance, 95 per cent of assessments of safety and wellbeing, and 98 per cent of assessments of the risk of harm to others met the needs of the case.

2.2 Planning	Outstanding
Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.	

Planning for work to support the child or young person’s desistance, manage their safety and wellbeing, and protect others from harm are also a strength in Essex.

The YOS uses two different approaches to the support and oversight of planning, in addition to oversight by managers during staff supervision. A case management forum held weekly in each local YOT, which includes both case holders and partnership workers, provides peer and management advice on lower risk cases. A case planning and review meeting (CPRM) provides oversight in cases with raised risks. The CPRM includes relevant professionals, a manager, the child or young person and their parent/carer. This helps make sure that children and young people understand and are actively involved in managing the risks that presented in their cases. The YOS considers that this is important to its approach of transparency and the effectiveness of its working relationships with children and young people. Evidence from this inspection shows that these approaches are effective.

Planning takes account of the diversity and wider familial context of the child or young person, their strengths and protective factors, and of their maturity and level of motivation in almost all cases.

There are areas that, while strong, could benefit from further attention. For example, not enough consideration is always given to the needs and wishes of victims, and a few plans are not proportionate, containing more than was reasonably achievable bearing in mind the nature of the sentence. There are also some cases where the

case manager had identified, and was dealing with, factors that are important to create a positive environment for desistance, or to enable other work to be done, but these were not reflected in the planning. Giving such critical activities priority helps provide the child or young person with an important signpost to how the sentence will be managed and what needs to happen to help them desist from offending. It also helps communicate these to others who may need to know.


Recorded intervention plans in referral order cases do not always match the contract agreed with the child or young person at the referral order panel. The form used for contracts is not flexible enough to help panel members develop a fully individualised and meaningful contract. We are pleased this has been recognised and a new contract template is ready for release.

Planning in cases where the child or young person is currently known to children’s social care services is often undertaken in joint meetings with allocated social workers. This is valuable in helping make sure that all agencies work together well and their plans are aligned. The impact of this is illustrated in one example where the inspector wrote:

“It is good to see the correlation between the YOS plan and the child in need plan; each identifying the same issues and being very clear who will complete which piece of work.”

Planning for work to keep other people safe, and that to manage the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person, are both strong. Plans promote the safety of others or the child or young person, address the risk factors that have been identified, and set out the controls and interventions that are needed in almost all cases. Other agencies have been involved in most cases where this is needed. Contingency planning, though, while much stronger than we often find, would benefit from further attention.

We found, overall, that planning is sufficiently focused on supporting the child or young person’s desistance in 90 per cent of cases, on keeping them safe in 88 per cent of cases and on keeping other people safe in 90 per cent of cases.

2.3 Implementation and delivery	Outstanding
High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.	

Interventions to support desistance, improve the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person, and protect others are delivered impressively well.

Case managers deliver the right services to support desistance in almost all cases, even when the priorities are not clear from planning. Service delivery almost always reflects the diversity and wider familial and social context in which the child or young person lives, and promotes opportunities for community integration. In one positive example, joint work to deal with excessive alcohol consumption was undertaken both with the child or young person and with his mother, who was also a drinker, as the case manager realised that one could not change without the other. Case managers take a constructive approach to their work, based on building on the child or young person’s strengths and seeking to enhance protective factors.

Where reparation is undertaken, there is frequent use of projects that benefit the community and help develop the skills and self-esteem of the child or young person, and hence support their desistance. An example of this is the case of R (male), where an inspector wrote:

“The placement at a care home for people with dementia was agreed with R – this encouraged his engagement with it. He used his time playing board games and talking with residents. He made a poster for one resident who had an interest in history, which was well-received. R received a certificate from the care home in recognition of his achievement.”

Relationships between case managers, children or young people and their parents/carers are good. This is particularly pleasing to find, since it is a critical factor in enabling effective engagement and supporting change. It also helps support compliance with the work of the YOS, without which work becomes less effective. Enough focus was given to encouraging compliance in all except two cases. Comments from one inspector typified the positive approach that we found:

“The case manager evidenced a consistent and persistent approach to seeking out alternative methods to engage with the young person and gain his compliance.”


We are impressed with the approach of the ISS team to compliance. These are intensive sentences used for often chaotic children and young people, yet, through a consistent and robust approach to supporting compliance and dealing with enforcement, most ISS cases are completed without being returned to court.

An inspector’s observations on the case of J (male) reflect the sensitivity to the child or young person, persistence and reflective approach that we found in many cases:

“The assessment, plan and delivery were sensitive to his learning and behavioural difficulties. The case manager regularly reflected with J on ways to manage his emotions. For example, she helped him to learn from examples where he had walked away from challenging situations. She helped to reinforce the lessons he had learned and linked this to his motivation, such as his desire to keep his job.”

Service delivery had promoted safety and wellbeing of the child or young person in all except two cases. Where other partners needed to be involved, their work was usually well coordinated. Implementation and delivery of services to reduce the risk of harm to others are also done well in almost all cases. Other agencies were involved in this in all except one case where it was needed. Not enough attention, though, is always clearly given to the protection of victims.

We found that, overall, the delivery of services effectively supported the desistance of children and young people in 93 per cent of cases, supported their safety and wellbeing in 92 per cent of cases and supported the safety of other people in 92 per cent of cases.

2.4 Reviewing	Outstanding
Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.	

It is essential that work is reviewed to make sure that it remains appropriate to the child or young person's circumstances, which can change rapidly. Essex YOS takes a tougher approach to regular reviews than is required by national standards. This approach is to be commended, and is supported by staff. Case managers should also be alert for unexpected changes to circumstances, which should lead to review.

The quality of reviewing in Essex YOS is high. There is a developing culture of undertaking reflection, and recording this following each contact with a child or young person. Case managers identify and respond to changes in factors related to desistance in the great majority of cases where these occur, and continue to focus on building the child or young person's strengths and enhancing protective factors. They consider how the motivation and engagement of the child or young person are changing, and deal with any barriers to this that may be developing. The child or young person and their parent/carer are meaningfully involved in the reviewing in most cases, with the necessary adjustments usually made to the plan of work to support desistance.

The case of R (male) illustrates the creative approach often taken that is tailored to the child or young person's skills and interests. The inspector wrote:

“R had strong creative talents. He and the case manager agreed that he would write his letter of explanation to the victim in poetry. This helped R express his thoughts in a medium with which he was familiar. It resulted in a thoughtful and powerful account of his offence and its impact. This exercise was repeated for a periodic review. R produced a poem that reflected on his experience of the YOS and the changes he had made. He presented it to the referral order panel to share the progress he thought he had made, in a style he was comfortable with.”

Reviewing identifies and responds to changes relating to the safety of the child or young person in most cases. It usually involves other agencies and leads to adjustments in plans of work when these are needed. Similar strong performance is found in reviewing intended to help keep other people safe.

There are, though a small number of cases where AssetPlus does not reflect the reviewed circumstances identified elsewhere in the case, and where the recorded plan does not reflect changes agreed at the CPRM. The quality of case recording is variable, so that it would not always have been clear what work had been done and its impact without the opportunity to speak to the case manager.

We found that, overall, reviewing focused well enough on supporting the child or young person's desistance in 88 per cent of cases, on keeping them safe in 85 per cent of cases and on keeping other people safe in 81 per cent of cases.

Summary

Strengths:

- Assessments and plans are of a high standard, clearly identifying the factors that are most likely to lead to desistance, improvement in safety and wellbeing, and management of risk of harm to others.
- Case managers understand the children and young people they work with well and have constructive relationships with them.
- Children and young people and their parents/carers are involved well in all aspects of work undertaken with them.
- The case planning forum and the CPRM make valuable contributions to the quality of work.
- Delivery of services to support desistance, improve safety and wellbeing, and protect others is done well.
- There is good attention to making sure that children and young people comply with the requirements of their sentence.

Area for improvement:

- Case managers need to take greater account of the needs, wishes and safety of victims in their work.

3. Out-of-court disposals



Work with children and young people receiving out-of-court disposals will be more effective if it is well targeted, planned and implemented. In our inspections we look at a sample of cases. In each of those cases we inspect against four standards.

3.1 Assessment	Outstanding
Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.	

Under the scheme operating at the time the inspected cases commenced, most out-of-court disposal decisions had already been made by the police before the case was referred to the YOS. YOS assessments are used solely to inform the work undertaken by the YOS, and in youth conditional caution (YCC) cases to identify conditions to be proposed.

Essex YOS operates a generic approach to case management, with individual case managers holding a mix of out-of-court and post-court cases. A full AssetPlus assessment is used in YCC cases. Short assessments are used in other cases. The cases in the inspection sample were a mix of YCCs (20) and community resolutions (or equivalent) (eight).

Assessments of how to support the child or young person's desistance are, where completed, done to a high standard. Inspectors used similarly positive terms when commenting on these as they had for assessments in post-court cases. The strengths in this work also closely match those found in post-court work, in both full and shorter assessments. Social care history is considered where this is relevant. The comments of one inspector illustrate how good assessments usually led to good plans and delivery of the right work:


"The assessment clearly identified the two most important desistance factors. These then carried through into the agreed plan, which was delivered as intended."

As with post-court work, however, there is not always enough consideration of the needs and wishes of victims in the recorded assessment.

Involvement of the child or young person and their parent/carers is good. This is consistent with the impressive approach to this throughout the YOS's work.

Where there is evidence that an assessment of the child or young person's risk of harm to others had been completed, these had usually been done well. The same applies to assessment of safety and wellbeing. There are, however, a small number of cases where it was unclear that these had been completed, or they had not been completed well enough. While the assessment effort should be proportionate to the nature of the out-of-court disposal, it is important, in all cases, that there is evidence that the case manager has checked, considered and recorded the risk of harm, safety and wellbeing factors that may have applied in that case.

We found, overall, that 93 per cent of assessments of factors related to desistance, 81 per cent of assessments of safety and wellbeing, and 89 per cent of assessments of the risk of harm to others met the needs of the case.

3.2 Planning	Outstanding
Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.	

In common with our findings on assessment, planning is generally strong. Similar themes as we had found in post-court work were identified. Planning to support desistance usually identifies the correct services that are needed, takes good account of diversity and the wider social and familial context, and usually seeks to reinforce the child or young person’s strengths and protective factors. It reflects the child or young person’s maturity and seeks to develop their motivation to change. The child or young person and their parent/carer are meaningfully involved in the planning in all cases where it has been undertaken. A greater focus, though, sometimes needs to be given to victims. When making proposals to the police for conditions to be included in YCCs, the right conditions are proposed.

Due to the short-term and often voluntary nature of out-of-court work, it is particularly important that planning is proportionate to the opportunity presented by this work, and is clearly targeted on the highest priorities. We found that this was the case whenever a plan had been completed. The high quality of planning is illustrated by one case where the inspector wrote:

“The plan focused on the crucial factors, rather than trying to include everything. Previous work is taken into account as is the limited time available for intervention.”

Three-quarters of the cases have identified significant concerns about the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person. Planning has addressed these risks in the great majority of cases. Intervention by the YOS in out-of-court disposals is necessarily only of a short duration. It is, therefore, important that planning includes identification of contingency arrangements if the required actions have not been effective during that time. This part of the work could sometimes be done better. The same comment applies to planning to keep other people safe.

We found, overall, that planning is sufficiently focused on supporting the child or young person’s desistance in 85 per cent of cases, on keeping them safe in 86 per cent of cases and on keeping other people safe in 80 per cent of cases.

3.3 Implementation and delivery	Good
High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.	

Implementation and delivery of work following an out-of-court disposal focus strongly on supporting desistance, and promoting the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person. Work to support the safety of others is also done well enough in almost three-quarters of cases.

The required services to support desistance are delivered in almost all cases. This includes work to ensure the right environment is in place for future progress, even if this has not been clearly prioritised in the planning. The strengths of work to support desistance closely mirror those found in post-court work. Compliance with out-of-court disposal work, by children and young people, is good.

Due to the short-term nature of out-of-court disposals, it is particularly important that opportunities are taken to promote integration with community facilities that could support desistance once the YOS intervention has ended. This is done well enough in about three-quarters of cases. The following is an example of how reparation is used to support this:

“K had secured a football apprenticeship. Reparation was included in his YCC conditions to strengthen his positive factors and encourage his engagement with other aspects of the plan. A placement was secured at a local football club. K helped with football coaching and gained a nationally recognised certificate in this. Following completion of his work with the YOS, K went to college and commenced his apprenticeship.”


It is also important that the work delivered by the YOS is proportionate to the nature of the out-of-court disposal. The case of A (male) illustrates the thoughtful way that work is typically delivered; the inspector wrote:

“The intervention is structured and focused, addressing safety and risk of harm, and is proportionate to the offences. It is particularly helpful that the young person’s viewpoint and engagement in each session is noted.”

Delivery of interventions to support the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person is undertaken as required in almost all cases, although sometimes the involvement of other agencies could be coordinated better.

There is an identifiable raised risk to others in just over half the cases. Work to deal with this is not quite as well developed as other aspects of out of-court disposal work, due primarily to not enough consideration sometimes being given to victims’ needs.

We found that, overall, implementation and delivery of out-of-court disposals effectively support the desistance of children and young people in 93 per cent of cases, support their safety and wellbeing in 86 per cent of cases and support the safety of other people in 73 per cent of cases.

3.4 Joint working	Good
Joint working with the police supports the delivery of high-quality, personalised and coordinated services.	

Essex YOS and Essex Constabulary are, as described elsewhere in this report, implementing a new out-of-court disposals scheme intended to provide a consistent and robust approach to decision making. We commend the approach being taken.

Most of the inspected cases fell under the previous scheme, in which the decision about which disposal to give was usually made before referral to the YOS. There are, though, some strengths and lessons from the inspected cases that could usefully inform the new arrangements.

Where recommendations are made for conditions to be included in YCCs they are usually proportionate, based on the assessment and match the needs of the individual child or young person. This means that YCCs contain the correct conditions. Sometimes, however, recommendations do not specify the desired outcomes, clearly identifying how the child or young person's behaviour needs to change. YCC conditions should meet the same outcome-focused standards that apply to other agreed intervention plans. Addressing this should help YCCs be more meaningful to children and young people. YOS recommendations for YCC conditions usually take account of the degree of the child or young person's acknowledgement of their responsibility. Overall, the YOS makes a positive contribution to determining the detail of the final disposal in almost all the cases where it has the opportunity.

It is important, even where the YOS has not been involved in the decision making, that the case manager understands the rationale for the decision, since it can then inform their priorities for work. The rationale was not available in most cases that we inspected. This should be straightforward to resolve in the new scheme.

A specific requirement of YCCs is that the child or young person complies with their conditions and that information about their progress and compliance is provided back to the police. The YOS has given attention to compliance with the YCC conditions in almost all cases. A more systematic process is, however, required for recording and sharing progress, as this is needed by the police and could also be valuable to the YOS if the child or young person receives a further post-court or out-of-court disposal.

Case managers could sometimes do more to make sure that the child or young person and their parent/carer fully understand the implications of receiving an out-of-court disposal. This would be consistent with the transparent approach that the YOS aims for in its engagement with those it works with.

Summary

Strengths:

- Assessment and planning to support desistance, to protect others and to support the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person are strong.
- Planning and delivery of out-of-court disposal work are proportionate to the nature of the disposal.
- Joint working with the police makes sure that YCCs contain appropriate conditions.
- There is good attention to ensuring compliance with out-of-court work.
- Implementation and delivery of work to support desistance are done well.
- Children and young people and their parents/carers are involved positively in all aspects of work undertaken with them.

Areas for improvement:

- The YOS has insufficient opportunity to influence disposal decisions, as the revised scheme is in the initial stages of implementation.
- Case managers need to give more consideration to victims in their assessments, plans and delivery of services.
- Recording and providing feedback on progress in YCC cases needs to be more systematic.

Annex 1 – Methodology

The inspection methodology is summarised below, linked to the three domains within our standards framework. Our focus was on obtaining evidence against the standards, key questions and prompts within the framework.

Domain one: organisational delivery

The youth offending service submitted evidence in advance and the Executive Director, Children and Families, who was also chair of the YOS Management Board, delivered a presentation covering the following areas:

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

During the main fieldwork phase, we surveyed 52 individual case managers and 36 volunteers, asking them about their experiences of training, development, management supervision and leadership. Various meetings and focus groups were then held, allowing us to triangulate evidence and information. In total, we conducted 14 meetings or focus groups and undertook observation of out-of-court disposal work.

Domain two: court disposals

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

We examined 43 post-court cases. The sample size was set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of 5), and we ensured that the ratios in relation to gender, sentence or disposal type, risk of serious harm, and risk to safety and wellbeing classifications matched those in the eligible population.

Domain three: out-of-court disposals

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

We examined 28 out-of-court disposals. The sample size was set to achieve a confidence level of 80 per cent (with a margin of error of 5), and we ensured that the ratios in relation to gender, sentence or disposal type, risk of serious harm, and risk to safety and wellbeing classifications matched those in the eligible population.

Annex 2 – Inspection results

1. Organisational delivery

Standards and key questions	Rating
<p>1.1. Governance and leadership</p> <p>The governance and leadership of the YOS supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.</p> <p>1.1.1. Is there a clear local vision and strategy for the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?</p> <p>1.1.2. Do the partnership arrangements actively support effective service delivery?</p> <p>1.1.3. Does the leadership of the YOS support effective service delivery?</p>	Outstanding
<p>1.2. Staff</p> <p>Staff within the YOS are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.</p> <p>1.2.1. Do staffing and workload levels support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?</p> <p>1.2.2. Do the skills of YOS staff support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?</p> <p>1.2.3. Does the oversight of work support high-quality delivery and professional development?</p> <p>1.2.4. Are arrangements for learning and development comprehensive and responsive?</p>	Outstanding
<p>1.3. Partnerships and services</p> <p>A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children and young people.</p> <p>1.3.1. Is there a sufficiently comprehensive and up-to-date analysis of the profile of children and young people, to ensure that the YOS can deliver well-targeted services?</p>	Good

- 1.3.2. Does the YOS partnership have access to the volume, range and quality of services and interventions to meet the needs of all children and young people?
- 1.3.3. Are arrangements with statutory partners, providers and other agencies established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality services?

1.4. Information and facilities	Outstanding
Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all children and young people.	
1.4.1. Are the necessary policies and guidance in place to enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all children and young people?	
1.4.2. Does the YOS's delivery environment(s) meet the needs of all children and young people and enable staff to deliver a quality service?	
1.4.3. Do the information and communication technology (ICT) systems enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all children and young people?	
1.4.4. Is analysis, evidence and learning used effectively to drive improvement?	

2. Court disposals

Standards and key questions	Rating and % yes
2.1. Assessment	Outstanding
Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.	
2.1.1. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person's desistance?	95%
2.1.2. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?	95%
2.1.3. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	98%

2.2. Planning	Outstanding
Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.	
2.2.1. Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?	90%
2.2.2. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?	88%
2.2.3. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	90%
2.3. Implementation and delivery	Outstanding
High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.	
2.3.1. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child or young person's desistance?	93%
2.3.2. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child or young person?	92%
2.3.3. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	92%
2.4. Reviewing	Outstanding
Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.	
2.4.1. Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?	88%
2.4.2. Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?	85%
2.4.3. Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	81%

3. Out-of-court disposals

Standards and key questions	Rating and % yes
<p>3.1. Assessment</p> <p>Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.</p>	Outstanding
<p>3.1.1. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person's desistance?</p>	93%
<p>3.1.2. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?</p>	81%
<p>3.1.3. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?</p>	89%
<p>3.2. Planning</p> <p>Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.</p>	Outstanding
<p>3.2.1. Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?</p>	85%
<p>3.2.2. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?</p>	86%
<p>3.2.3. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?</p>	80%
<p>3.3. Implementation and delivery</p> <p>High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.</p>	Good
<p>3.3.1. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child or young person's desistance?</p>	93%
<p>3.3.2. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child or young person?</p>	86%
<p>3.3.3. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?</p>	73%

3.4. Joint working

Good¹²

Joint working with the police supports the delivery of high-quality, personalised and coordinated services.

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|--|-----|
| 3.4.1. Are the YOT's recommendations sufficiently well-informed, analytical and personalised to the child or young person, supporting joint decision-making? | 93% |
| 3.4.2. Does the YOT work effectively with the police in implementing the out-of-court disposal? | 63% |

¹² HMI Probation has used its professional discretion to rate this as good rather than requires improvement following a review of cases, as the score for 3.4.2 is within the 5 per cent margin of error from the next grade.

Annex 3 – Glossary

AssetPlus	Assessment and planning framework tool developed by the Youth Justice Board for work with children and young people who have offended, or are at risk of offending, that reflects current research and understanding of what works with children.
Child exploitation	This occurs when children and young people are exploited, forced or coerced into committing crimes.
Community resolution	Used in low-level, often first-time, offences where there is informal agreement, often also involving the victim, about how the offence should be resolved. Community resolution is a generic term; in practice, many different local terms are used to mean the same thing.
Court disposals	The sentence imposed by the court. Examples of youth court disposals are referral orders, youth rehabilitation orders and detention and training orders.
County lines	Young people who are coerced into transporting drugs or money on behalf of gangs across the country, mostly from urban to more rural areas.
Child protection	Work to make sure that all reasonable action has been taken to keep to a minimum the risk of a child experiencing significant harm.
Desistance	The cessation of offending or other antisocial behaviour.
Enforcement	Action taken by a case manager in response to a child or young person's failure to comply with the actions specified as part of a community sentence or licence. Enforcement can be punitive or motivational.
ETE	Education, training and employment: work to improve learning, and to increase future employment prospects.
First-time entrants	A child or young person who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome (youth caution, youth conditional caution or conviction) for the first time.
Local Authority	YOSs are often a team within a specific local authority.
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements: where probation, police, prison and other agencies work together locally to manage offenders who pose the highest risk of harm to others. Level 1 is single agency management

	where the risks posed by the offender can be managed by the agency responsible for the supervision or case management of the offender. Levels 2 and 3 require active multi-agency management.
Out-of-court disposal	The resolution of a normally low-level offence, where it is not in the public interest to prosecute, through a community resolution, youth caution or youth conditional caution
Personalised	A personalised approach is one in which services are tailored to meet the needs of individuals, giving people as much choice and control as possible over the support they receive. We use this term to include diversity factors.
Risk of Serious Harm	Risk of Serious Harm (ROSH) is a term used in AssetPlus. All cases are classified as presenting either a low/medium/high/very high risk of serious harm to others. HMI Probation uses this term when referring to the classification system, but uses the broader term 'risk of harm' when referring to the analysis which should take place in order to determine the classification level. This helps to clarify the distinction between the probability of an event occurring and the impact/severity of the event. The term 'risk of serious harm' only incorporates 'serious' impact, whereas using 'risk of harm' enables the necessary attention to be given to those young offenders for whom lower impact/severity harmful behaviour is probable.
Referral order	A restorative court order which can be imposed when the child or young person appearing before the court pleads guilty, and whereby the threshold does not meet a youth rehabilitation order.
Safeguarding	A wider term than child protection that involves promoting a child or young person's health and development and ensuring that their overall welfare needs are met.
Safety and wellbeing	AssetPlus replaced the assessment of vulnerability with a holistic outlook of a child or young person's safety and well-being concerns. It is defined as "those outcomes where the young person's safety and well-being may be compromised through their own behaviour, personal circumstances or because of the acts/omissions of others" (<i>AssetPlus Guidance</i> , 2016).
YC	Youth caution: a caution accepted by a child following admission to an offence where it is not considered to be in the public interest to prosecute the offender.
YCC	Youth conditional caution: as for a youth caution, but with conditions attached that the child is required to comply with

	for up to the next three months. Non-compliance may result in the child being prosecuted for the original offence.
YOT/YOS	Youth Offending Team is the term used in the <i>Crime and Disorder Act 1998</i> to describe a multi-agency team that aims to reduce youth offending. YOSs are known locally by many titles, such as youth justice service (YJS), youth offending service (YOS), and other generic titles that may illustrate their wider role in the local area in delivering services for children.
YOS management board	The YOS management board holds the YOS to account to ensure it achieves the primary aim of preventing offending by children and young people.
YJB	Youth Justice Board: government body responsible for monitoring and advising ministers on the effectiveness of the youth justice system. Providers of grants and guidance to the youth offending teams.



HM Inspectorate of Probation
1 Bridge Street West
Civil Justice Centre
Manchester
M3 3FX

ISBN: 978-1-84099-842-9