



An inspection of youth offending services in

# Manchester

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HM Inspectorate of Probation

February 2019

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This inspection was led by HM Inspector Bob Smith, supported by a team of inspectors, as well as staff from our operations and research teams. HMI Probation was joined by colleague inspectors from police, health, social care and education. 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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## Foreword

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This is the second joint inspection carried out under our new inspection arrangements that commenced in 2018. In these inspections we involve specialist inspectors from the police, health, social care and learning and skills sectors who together examine the work of the youth justice partnership. Inspectors from HMI Probation also assess the quality of both court orders and out-of-court disposals delivered by Manchester Youth Justice Service (YJS).

Manchester is one of the UK's largest cities. It has a thriving city centre, some wealthy outlying areas and others that are deprived. Delivering high-quality public services in Manchester is challenging. The Youth Justice Service is a high-profile service within the city. It is well supported by local partnerships and they, in turn, influence local inter-agency activity in support of their objective of reducing offending and reoffending by children and young people. There is a strong commitment among staff and managers to do their best for children and young people.

There is much innovation in Manchester, and the YJS works collaboratively with the other Greater Manchester YOTs in areas such as harmful sexual behaviour and out-of-court decision-making processes. These collaborations bring economies of scale but can slow things down, as we saw in the implementation of new out-of-court decision-making arrangements.

Joint work with partner agencies is mostly good but work to help children and young people engage in education and training needs to improve. Too many young people are not receiving sufficient education.

Looking beyond collaborative and partnership working to the YJS itself, workloads for case managers are high and this inevitably affects their ability to deliver high-quality services. To compound matters in the north of the city, the premises in use there are unsuitable. There have been some testing incidents involving members of the local community, and staff from across the partnership told us that they felt unsafe working there. This YJS does need to get its own house in order: inadequate staffing levels and poor premises are holding it back at the moment.

The recommendations in this report are designed to assist Manchester YJS to build on its strengths and focus on areas for improvement.



**Dame Glenys Stacey**  
Chief Inspector of Probation

## Overall findings

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Overall, Manchester YJS is rated as: **Requires improvement**. This rating has been determined by inspecting the youth justice services in three domains of their work. The findings in those domains are described below.

	<b>Organisational delivery</b>
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Our key findings about organisational delivery are as follows:

- There is an effective Management Board with good representation and a clear understanding of frontline practice issues.
- Partnerships are strong and the YJS is well supported to deliver high-quality services to children and young people.
- There is a committed workforce with a range of specialist skills to work constructively with children and young people.
- Information systems are strong and enable managers to understand performance issues.
- There is a clear understanding of the issues facing children and young people in Manchester, such as exploitation and gang influences.
- The premises used to deliver the service in the north of the city are unsuitable and many staff feel unsafe working there.
- The vacancy level in the YJS is too high to sustain a good enough service to children and young people.
- The partnership with education services does not make sure that all children and young people known to the YJS are in receipt of sufficient suitable education.
- There are weaknesses in some information-sharing arrangements with partner agencies.

	<b>Court disposals</b>
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Our key findings about court disposals are as follows:

- Assessment and planning are generally good.
- There is good attention to building positive working relationships with children and young people as well as their parents/carers.
- A strengths-based approach to working with children and young people is embedded in the service.

- There is a wide range of resources and specialist staff to respond to the many difficulties children and young people under supervision faced.
- The YJS works effectively with other agencies.
- There is good recognition of the diversity factors in children and young people's lives.
- Implementation and delivery of effective interventions are made difficult because of issues with premises and caseloads.
- Too many children and young people are not receiving sufficient education or training.
- Shortcomings in management oversight identified in internal auditing have not been adequately tackled.
- The case planning forum meetings are not sufficiently focused on making sure that agreed actions are followed through.
- Direct restorative justice and work to keep victims safe are not well recorded.



### **Out-of-court disposals**

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

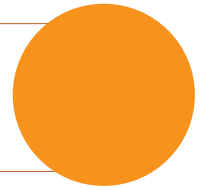
- Early indications of the new out-of-court disposal arrangements developed with Greater Manchester Police (implemented in June 2018) are promising.
- Engagement with children and young people in out-of-court disposals, including where their participation is voluntary, is good.
- Interventions to support children and young people's desistance are delivered well.
- The YJS needs to give more attention to the wishes of victims, and their protection.
- Children and young people, as well as their parents/carers, do not always understand the implications of receiving an out-of-court disposal.
- The design of the out-of-court processes needs further work to make sure that it is a sustainable delivery model, and that there is a proportionate balance between time spent on assessment and intervention.

Service: Manchester Youth Justice Service

Fieldwork started: October 2018

Overall rating

Requires improvement



### 1. Organisational delivery

1.1	Governance and leadership	Good	
1.2	Staff	Requires improvement	
1.3	Partnerships and services	Good	
1.4	Information and facilities	Inadequate	

### 2. Court disposals

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

### 3. Out-of-court disposals

3.1	Assessment	Requires improvement	
3.2	Planning	Requires improvement	
3.3	Implementation and delivery	Good	
3.4	Joint working	Requires improvement	

## Recommendations

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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 justice services in Manchester. This will improve the lives of the children in contact with youth justice services, and better protect the public.

### **The Manchester Youth Justice Service should:**

1. make sure that services are delivered in premises that are safe and accessible for children and young people, as well as staff
2. make sure that there are sufficient staff in post to deliver high-quality services to children and young people
3. make sure that children and young people receive effective support to improve their chances of success in education, training and employment, and increase the proportion who receive their full entitlement
4. continue to develop out-of-court decision-making processes to make sure that effective joint decision-making is in place, and that children and young people and their parents/carers understand the implications of the disposal
5. work with partner agencies to reduce the over-representation of black and minority ethnic children and young people in the custodial population.



## Introduction

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Youth offending teams (YOTs) 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.

YOTs are statutory partnerships, and they are multidisciplinary, 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.<sup>1</sup> Most YOTs are based within local authorities; however, this can vary.

YOT 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 YOTs. It also monitors their performance and issues guidance to them about how things are to be done.

In Manchester, the youth offending team is known as the Youth Justice Service.

### **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.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The *Crime and Disorder Act 1998* sets out the arrangements for local YOTs and partnership working.

<sup>2</sup> HM Inspectorate's standards are available here:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/about-our-work/our-standards-and-ratings/>

## Contextual facts

**First time entrant rate per 100,000**

389

Manchester YJS

273

Average for England and Wales

**Reoffending rates**

36.8%

Manchester YJS

41.6%

Average for England and Wales

**Number of offenders sent to custody per 100 of the population of 10-17 year olds**

0.94

Manchester

0.33

Average for England and Wales

**Black children and young people in Manchester in custody<sup>3</sup>**

11%

General population

35%

Custodial population

**Offences per 1,000 10-17-year olds:**

23.5

Manchester

13.8

England and Wales

### Population information



**Total population Manchester (2017)**

**545,501**

**Total youth population Manchester (2017)**

**46,667**

**Total black and minority ethnic youth population (2011 census)**

**19,363**

<sup>3</sup> Source: Manchester YJS Disproportionality Analysis 2018, children and young people self-identifying as Black African, Caribbean or any other Black background

# 1. Organisational delivery



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

<b>1.1 Governance and leadership</b>	<b>Good</b>
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.	

The Manchester YJS Management Board is chaired by the Director of Children’s Services. He demonstrates a detailed knowledge of the service and a commitment to ensuring its effectiveness. The Management Board has good representation from statutory partner agencies, and a number of non-statutory partners are also represented. Attendance at the board is good. Operational managers regularly attend to present information relating to the day-to-day delivery of the service. This enables board members to develop their understanding of the service. The board holds themed meetings from time to time, which explore a particular issue relating to children and young people. Representation at these meetings includes both board members and frontline staff.

There is a strategic youth justice plan in place, underpinned by a more operationally focused business plan. The head of the YJS attends many other strategic groups across Manchester and has a high profile in the area. They use their position to promote the work of the YJS and advocate for the best services for children and young people who offend.

Management Board members are very supportive of the work of the YJS and can provide examples of how they support its objectives in their own services, for example by tackling school exclusions or applying improved screening for learning disabilities. There is a strong commitment to the YJS from partner agencies, with a good range of seconded staff. There is an equally strong commitment to consistency across the 10 Greater Manchester authorities; for example, the authorities have developed regional approaches to dealing with sexually harmful behaviour and out-of-court processes. Some of these developments are supported financially by the Mayor’s Office and the Police and Crime Commissioner. Sometimes new developments can be slow to implement because of the many organisations involved.

Seconded staff are clear about their role within the YJS, have effective links with their parent agency and have access to clinical supervision where it is beneficial.

The YJS premises covering the north of the city are unsuitable. Strategic leaders have taken recent remedial action to find alternative premises, although frontline staff have been very concerned for some time.

The operational management team is well established; most members have worked in Manchester for many years, and have strong links with local services and deep knowledge of local issues affecting children and young people. Operational managers contribute to the development of the vision and strategy of the service and are clearly able to articulate that vision. There are examples of innovation in the service; for example, the drama therapy intervention – which is rarely seen in youth

justice – is valued by staff and partners, and is well used by children and young people.

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

At the time of the inspection, there were six vacancies out of a total complement of 43 practitioners in the service. Some vacancies had appointments pending and new post-holders were due to be in place soon. However, caseloads were higher than normal as a result. Case managers had less time to see children and young people and also less flexibility about where to see them, because they did not have time to travel.

The impact of high caseloads can be seen in the implementation of court orders, where inspectors judged the overall quality of work as requiring improvement. The impact on out-of-court interventions, where programmes tend to be shorter, is much less apparent. Workloads are reported regularly to the YJS Management Board, and trends in the volume and complexity of cases are monitored. The workloads of the non-caseholding partner, specialist staff are manageable.

Inspectors were impressed by the skills, knowledge and commitment of the staff they met. In the staff survey conducted as part of the inspection, all but one member of staff stated that they mostly or fully possessed the knowledge and skills to carry out their role effectively. There are two grades of staff: youth justice officers and youth justice support officers. There are clear differences in the responsibility levels, and career progression from the lower to higher level role is possible. Staff have a sound knowledge of thresholds in children’s services and understand when and how to make a referral. Education and skills work is less well developed, and too few case managers give priority to those areas. As a consequence, they fail to make adequate plans for the next steps in children and young people’s learning and skills.

In focus groups and in their responses to the electronic survey, staff were positive about the quality of supervision they receive. However, inspectors judged that, in domain two (court disposal) cases, management oversight was adequate in less than half of the cases reviewed. Managers stated that workforce performance management systems are robust within the council. Where formal performance processes are required, they receive good support from their human resources department. Managers believe that they recognise good work done by their staff, and gave examples of several who had received recognition through various awards. Partnership staff are positive about the support they receive from their seconding agency.

There is a comprehensive staff training programme in place. Staff can also access a range of online training programmes provided via the local authority and also the safeguarding board. YJS staff have participated in the ‘signs of safety’ training recently delivered by children’s services. Training in recognising and responding to adverse childhood experiences is a current priority. Inspectors judged that this training was particularly relevant given the histories of many of the children and young people whose cases were reviewed. Operational managers demonstrate a sound understanding of local patterns of exploitation and offending. The learning

gained from information-sharing and intelligence-gathering is applied to their work with children and young people.

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 an extensive array of information available on local trends in offending. Patterns of children and young people’s behaviour are changing all the time, and YJS managers use data and intelligence to understand these changes. Operational managers demonstrate a real insight into the pressures to offend that some children and young people experience.

The YJS recognises that there is a significant disproportionality issue: children and young people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds are over-represented in the custodial population. The YJS has carried out extensive analysis to develop an understanding of how and why this is happening. It also engages with other criminal justice agencies to develop strategies to reduce disproportionality. In response to data showing that looked after children were being criminalised as a result of offences committed in care homes, a 10-point checklist was established with local providers and the courts to ensure prosecution decisions were appropriate.


The YJS has access to a wide range of specialist services to meet the desistance needs of children and young people. Services available include emotional wellbeing through three seconded CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) workers, speech and language specialists and a drama therapist. There are a number of specialist roles attached specifically to the intensive supervision and surveillance (ISS) programme. Children’s services, including the YJS, have adopted the ‘signs of safety’ model, a well-established strengths-based approach. The model is used both in direct work with children and young people and as a planning and staff supervision tool.

YJS staff are committed to developing positive relationships with children and young people and using these relationships to achieve change in their lives. This is evident in the training and innovative approaches to children and young people’s learning needs. However, planning to meet children and young people’s learning needs is not effective. Records show that little attention is given to identifying needs and interests beyond the initial screening for maths and English. There is a good relationship with the pupil referral unit and there are several other partner organisations involved in providing services; however, the figure for those not in education, training or employment (NEET) is too high. Only around half of the children and young people receive their full entitlement to 25 hours of education a week.

YJS staff have access to the children’s services case management system. They make extensive use of the system to understand children and young people’s backgrounds and keep up to date with developments in their cases. The local authority Edge-of-Care Service provides a range of preventive services for children and young people, and has a panel to manage resettlement from custody. Children’s services have recently established the Complex Safeguarding Hub (CSH), which provides a multi-agency response to a wide range of child safeguarding issues,

including gangs and exploitation. Representatives of both the CSH and YJS attend the missing-from-home panels.

A YJS 'risk panel' has been established to assist in planning and reviewing the most complex cases. Inspectors found that, in practice, partner agencies make a limited contribution to these arrangements, and follow-through on agreed actions is inconsistent. There are good links with the National Probation Service, and arrangements to transition young people to the supervision of the National Probation Service or Community Rehabilitation Company are well developed.

<b>1.4 Information and facilities</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
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 an extensive range of policy and guidance in place. In our staff survey, all staff stated that they understood the policies and procedures that applied to their role quite well or very well. Access to partner agencies is mostly good and well understood by staff. The exception is in learning and skills, where planning and delivery are less effective. Most policies and procedures are up to date and kept under review.

The YJS is delivered from offices in the north and the south of the city. The south office is on a main road and well served by public transport. The north office is close to a housing estate that has frequent incidents of crime and disorder. Staff told inspectors that known gang members live in close proximity to the office. Many staff from the partner agencies told us that they felt unsafe in the north office and had done so for some time. They stated that there were regular confrontations between children and young people attending the office and members of the local community. Some city-wide services, such as ISS, are delivered from that office. Staff and partner agencies told inspectors that the requirement for children and young people to make lengthy journeys across the city to the north office was inappropriate. An incident occurred at the north office during the inspection that resulted in action taken to relocate the service temporarily elsewhere.

The YJS uses a well-established case management system, which functioned smoothly during the inspection fieldwork. Access to the children's services systems enables YJS staff to draw on social care records to inform their assessments. There has been some disruption to information-sharing with the police following a burglary at the south office when the police laptops were stolen, and it has taken some time for them to be replaced. As a consequence, the time spent by police officers at the YJS office has reduced. There are also difficulties in accessing police systems from the north office. Information-sharing between the YJS and its immediate health partners is generally good. However, CAMHS uses paper-based recording systems and this limits its ability to share information with other health professionals.

Extensive management reports are provided to the board and senior leaders in the city. There are significant challenges in addressing the high custody rate, as well as the disproportionate number of black and minority ethnic children and young people in the custodial population. The service makes significant efforts to understand the reasons for this through sophisticated analysis of patterns and trends. The children and young people's participation work is sophisticated, and documents provided to

inspectors were insightful in their analysis of the views expressed by children and young people. Internal audit processes are effective in identifying practice issues. However, although the issue of effective management oversight had been identified in internal audits, more work is required for this to reach a sufficient standard.

## Summary

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### **Strengths:**

- There is an effective Management Board with good representation and a clear understanding of frontline practice issues.
- Partnerships are strong and the YJS is well supported to deliver high-quality services to children and young people.
- There is a committed workforce with a range of specialist skills to work constructively with children and young people.
- Information systems are strong and enable managers to understand performance issues.
- There is a clear understanding of the issues facing some children and young people in Manchester, such as exploitation and gang influences.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- The premises used to deliver the service in the north of the city are unsuitable and many staff feel unsafe working there.
- The vacancy level is too high to sustain a good enough service for children and young people.
- Not enough children and young people known to the YJS are in receipt of sufficient stable education
- There are weaknesses in some information-sharing arrangements with partner agencies.

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

Initial assessments of the desistance factors that influence the child or young person's offending behaviour were sufficient in three-quarters of cases reviewed. In almost all cases, there was a sufficient analysis of the child or young person's attitudes and motivation to offend. Children and young people have a range of diversity factors in their lives and assessments considered these factors in over three-quarters of cases. A strengths-based approach to assessing children and young people was evident in most cases.

Many of the children and young people in our inspection sample faced structural barriers to achieving change in their lives. Where these barriers were present, they were identified in over two-thirds of cases. Inspectors identified lifestyle, living arrangements, education and substance misuse as the most frequently featuring factors in assessments. Assessments gave sufficient attention to the child or young person's maturity in three-quarters of cases. Parents/carers, as well as the child or young person, were meaningfully involved in assessments in just under three-quarters of cases.

There were identifiable victims of the offences committed by the child or young person in almost all of the cases reviewed. Sufficient attention was given to the needs of these victims or opportunities for restorative justice in less than half of these cases. In one case that illustrated this, inspectors found that the assessment identified general risks resulting from an offence of robbery but had not given consideration to specific victims and had not obtained information from the police or gangs unit.


Over a third of children and young people in our sample had been subject to a child protection plan or related enquiries. YJS staff had access to the children's services case management system, which they used well. They drew on information from children's services and other agencies to assess children and young people's safety and wellbeing in most cases. Assessments analysed the controls and interventions necessary to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person in two-thirds of cases.

All of the cases reviewed were classified as having a medium or above safety and wellbeing risk. Inspectors broadly agreed with the YJS rating. Overall, inspectors judged that there was a sufficient analysis of how to keep the child or young person safe in just over two-thirds of cases. In an assessment that illustrated the complexity of many of the cases examined, the inspector noted that:



*“The range of issues that affected his safety and wellbeing were assessed. Two suicide attempts, homelessness, strained relationship with mum, impact of him being a young carer to his disabled brother. Mental health and OCD also assessed. A referral to children's social care was made”.*

There was a risk of harm to others in most of the cases reviewed in this inspection, and inspectors agreed with the risk classification in the great majority of cases. Case managers drew on information such as past behaviour, convictions and information from other agencies in three-quarters of cases. There was sufficient analysis of the risk of harm to others in three-quarters of cases.

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

Overall, the planning of work with children and young people to help them desist from offending was done well in two-thirds of the cases examined. The strongest aspect of planning was in case managers evidencing that they had taken sufficient account of the child or young person’s level of maturity and motivation to change. In two-thirds of cases, the plan took account of strengths and protective factors, as well as involving the child or young person and/or their parents/carers. In one of the stronger plans reviewed, there was a comprehensive plan covering all of the identified desistance factors. The plan also enlisted the support of partner agencies, including social care and education. The needs and wishes of victims were taken into account in less than half of the cases examined.

Planning for the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person was done well in just under two-thirds of cases. No child or young person was assessed as a low safety and wellbeing risk, and in some cases the initial plan included further specialist assessments that were required before meaningful work could begin. Some children and young people had complex needs, many of which had not been properly identified at an earlier stage in their life. In one case that exemplified this issue, the inspector commented that:

*“The YJS case workers suspected that this boy had ADHD; the CAMHS nurse undertook an assessment carefully and with sensitivity to enable his compliance. He developed a trusting relationship with the CAMHS worker. He then attended the appointment for his formal assessment and received a diagnosis. The CAMHS nurse then supported him to get his prescriptions. There was a marked improvement in his behaviour when he took his medication”.*


Where planning involved working with other agencies, there was sufficient alignment of plans in nearly three-quarters of plans. The complexity of the cases required effective contingency planning, which was done well in less than two-thirds of cases.

Planning to address specific concerns and risks in relation to actual and potential victims was done well in just over half of the cases reviewed, and planning took into account the needs and wishes of victims in less than half of the cases reviewed. In

one case that demonstrated the weaknesses of planning for victims, the inspector noted that:

*“There was no active planning in relation to the known victim. Interventions were planned around a violent crime programme; however, this did not match his known behaviour”.*

There were also gaps in joint working with other agencies and contingency planning; however, overall planning to reduce risk of harm to others was done well in two-thirds of cases.

<b>2.3 Implementation and delivery</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.	

Manchester has a wide range of specialist resources to support the implementation of court orders. Some of these are specific to children and young people undertaking the ISS programme; others are available for all children and young people, such as the drama therapist. Some staff told inspectors that high caseloads meant that they could not spend as much time with children and young people as they felt was necessary.

The implementation and delivery of orders are not as strong as assessment and planning. Positive features of their practice include developing an effective working relationship and enabling compliance. Enforcement action was taken when required in most cases. Practitioners were able to build on children and young people’s strengths in almost three-quarters of cases. Overall, the implementation and delivery of services that supported the child or young person’s desistance were sufficient in 62 per cent of cases.

The case of James illustrates the positive approach taken in many cases:

*“Work has been done to build on and strengthen factors for desistance, such as family work. The family were punitive and angry with the young person for his offending. The case manager worked to change their perspective. Work was undertaken to address all important factors linked to desistance, particularly around mental health. The young person was assessed by CAMHS as suffering from longstanding depression and was given medication, which he felt helped him and reduced his feelings of anger and frustration”.*

Implementation to support safety and wellbeing and risk of harm to others was less well developed. In just two-thirds of cases, the work of the YJS was sufficiently well coordinated with other agencies. Overall, in only slightly more than half of the cases examined, the implementation and delivery of services effectively supported the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person.

Sufficient attention was given to the protection of actual and potential victims in less than half of the cases reviewed. The involvement of other agencies in managing risk of harm to others was sufficient in less than two-thirds of cases.

The inspector’s comments on the case of Ben illustrate the weaknesses in implementation and delivery to manage the risk of harm to others:

*“The only meaningful intervention undertaken in the six months of the order has been two sessions on anger management. This is not sufficient. There is no evidence of any partnership working or any evidence on how the prohibited activity to safeguard the victim is being monitored”.*

Overall, the implementation and delivery of services to support the safety of others were sufficient in slightly less than half of the cases reviewed.

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

Many of the children and young people in our case sample had complex lives, and the work done with them required adjustments as their circumstances changed. Overall, reviews focused on supporting the child or young person’s desistance in just under two-thirds of cases. These reviews considered motivation and barriers, strengths, and parent/carer engagement in between half and two-thirds of cases.

In one case, the inspector noted that:

*“The case manager gave a good example of how he has adapted his working style to fit in with the young person. He has taken a strengths-based approach to supporting the young person and building on their motivation to gain employment”.*

In two-thirds of cases, inspectors judged that reviews focused sufficiently on promoting the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person. Case managers liaised well with partner agencies and obtained their input in three-quarters of cases.

Risk of harm was reviewed well in less than two-thirds of cases. The YJS has a case planning forum (CPF) that is used to plan and review cases with a high or very risk of serious harm or safety and wellbeing classification. Inspectors observed a planning forum and, although there was some evidence of partnership working, key stakeholders were absent, most notably the police. Up-to-date intelligence was missing, which in both cases discussed hindered the Chair’s ability to identify correctly the current level of risk posed by the child or young person.

The case of Kyle illustrates the weaknesses in the CPF, where the inspector commented:

*“Reviews are taking place through CPF meetings, although there is no one clear plan which reviews the changes to his situation, i.e. he is now 18 and practical changes are required to the plan around accommodation, benefits, finances and health. A review is underway, although not yet completed four months after him turning 18”.*

## Summary

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### **Strengths:**

- Assessment and planning are generally good.
- There is good attention to building positive working relationships with children and young people as well as their parents/carers.
- A strengths-based approach to working with children and young people is embedded in the service.
- There is a wide range of resources and specialist staff to respond to the many difficulties that children and young people under supervision face.
- The YJS works effectively with other agencies.
- There is good recognition of the diversity factors in children and young people's lives.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Implementation and delivery of effective interventions are made difficult because of unsuitable premises and high caseloads.
- Too many children and young people are not receiving sufficient education or training.
- Shortcomings in management oversight identified in internal auditing have not been adequately tackled.
- The case planning forum meetings are not sufficiently focused on making sure agreed actions are followed through.
- Direct restorative justice and work to keep victims safe are not well recorded.

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

A new out-of-court disposals process is being developed across Greater Manchester. The developments involve Greater Manchester Police and the 10 youth offending teams, as well as a local university. The new arrangements were partially implemented in the City of Manchester in June 2018, and further changes will take place in 2019. Changes implemented in June 2018 include greater joint decision-making between the YJS and police. These developments partially take account of the recommendations of HMI Probation and HMI Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services' thematic review of out-of-court disposal work in YOTs published in March 2018.<sup>4</sup> The sample of cases reviewed on inspection straddled the two processes: 15 were managed under the earlier system and 14 under the newer system. The inspection results are based on the whole sample, although we make separate comments on the smaller sample dealt with since June 2018.


Overall, the assessment of children and young people receiving out-of-court disposals requires improvement. Assessment of specific desistance factors is good and aspects of assessment of desistance are done well, included identifying strengths and motivation to change as well as the involvement of the child or young person or their parents/carers. Assessment of the needs and wishes of victims and opportunities for restorative justice were given sufficient attention in less than half of the cases reviewed.

A third of the sample had been subject to a child protection plan or enquiries, and many of the children and young people in the sample were vulnerable. In nearly half of the cases, inspectors judged that the classification of the safety and wellbeing risk level was incorrect – mostly too low – or it was not assessed at all. Overall, the assessment of how to keep the child or young person safe was sufficient in two-thirds of cases.

Despite being dealt with by out-of-court disposals, many of the children and young people presented a risk of harm to others. Inspectors found that assessments sufficiently identified factors that placed others at risk of harm in just over half of the cases reviewed.

<sup>4</sup> HMI Probation and HMI Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. (2018). *Out-of-court disposal work in youth offending teams*, [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/inspections/out-of-court-disposal-work-in-youth-offending-teams/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/inspections/out-of-court-disposal-work-in-youth-offending-teams/)

Assessments carried out under the new processes implemented in June 2018 were stronger, and the quality of out-of-court disposals assessments would have been judged good on those 14 cases alone.

<b>3.2 Planning</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.	

Although out-of-court disposals are normally of short duration, it is important that a clear plan is in place. Overall, less than two-thirds of plans had a sufficient focus on supporting the child or young person’s desistance. Plans took account of maturity and motivation to change in three-quarters of cases. Plans were weakest when considering the needs and wishes of victims, where less than half of plans were sufficient.

In one case, the inspector commented that:

*“The planning did not consider any form of mediation between the victim and young person who had offended. As they were likely to have ongoing contact at school, this should have been considered”.*

Aspects of planning to keep the child or young person safe were stronger than desistance. More than two-thirds of plans had a sufficient focus on the child or young person’s safety and wellbeing. However, there was effective contingency planning for a change in circumstances in just half of the cases reviewed.

Overall, planning to keep other people safe was done well in two-thirds of cases. Planning to address risks to individual victims was sufficient in 61 per cent of cases, and in a similar proportion of cases other relevant agencies were involved.

In one of the stronger out-of-court disposal plans seen, the inspector commented that:

*“Constructive work was carried out on risk of harm to others through intervention around burglary and potential consequences. Information was gained from the police to establish if there were any gang links. Within the context of the sanction and the risks posed, this was appropriate to manage the risk of harm.”*

As with assessment, the planning of work on the cases managed under the processes implemented in June 2018 were stronger.

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

Implementation and delivery of programmes were stronger in the out-of-court cases than the court cases. In a large majority of cases, there was sufficient focus on developing an effective working relationship with the child or young person, and also


on enabling compliance with the programme, recognising that some children and young people were participating in the programme voluntary. In three-quarters of the cases, the intervention was proportionate to the type of out-of-court disposal, and the service delivery promoted opportunities for community integration and access to mainstream services. The service delivered supported the child or young person's desistance from offending in two-thirds of cases.

In three-quarters of cases reviewed, the service provided promoted the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person, and the involvement of other agencies, where necessary, was well coordinated.

The case of Hayley illustrates the effective joint work undertaken with a vulnerable young person whose offending had been assessed as being triggered by domestic abuse in the family.

*"The YJS case manager and social worker communicated well and joint home visits were undertaken. When the social worker became aware of videos on social media that showed that the stepdad was in contact with the children and mother, steps were taken by social care to try and strengthen the written agreement and warn stepdad and mum of the consequences of contact".*

Interventions to protect potential and actual victims were sufficient in two-thirds of cases and, overall, the implementation was sufficient to support the safety of other people in a similar proportion of cases.

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

Manchester YJS implemented a joint decision-making panel with the police in June 2018. Inspection data shows that, in just over half of the cases reviewed, the YJS made an appropriate and proportionate recommendation for an out-of-court disposal. In most of these cases, the YJS made a positive contribution to determining the proposal. The case of Tom illustrates the quality of the YJS's contribution:

*"The case manager successfully put an argument forward to the out-of-court disposals decision-makers that there should be a change in the disposal that the young person received from a youth caution to a community resolution; this was validated by the team manager. There is evidence of discussion with the police in terms of the recommended change in the disposal."*

Depending on the type of out-of-court disposal given, there will be a record of the outcome, which could have an impact on the child or young person later in life. In less than half of the cases reviewed was there sufficient attention to the child or young person's and their parents/carers' understanding of the implications of receiving an out-of-court disposal.

Overall, in just under two-thirds of cases, the YJS worked effectively with the police in implementing the out-of-court disposal. This figure was higher in the cases managed under the new processes implemented in June 2018.

## Summary

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### **Strengths:**

- Early indications are that the new out-of-court disposal arrangements developed with Greater Manchester Police, implemented in June 2018, are promising.
- Engagement with children and young people in out-of-court disposals, including where their participation is voluntary, is good.
- Interventions to support children and young people's desistance are delivered well.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- The YJS needs to give more attention to the wishes of, and protection of, victims.
- Children and young people, as well as their parents/carers, do not always understand the implications of receiving an out-of-court disposal.
- The design of the out-of-court processes needs further work to make sure that the delivery model is sustainable and that there is a proportionate balance between time spent on assessment and on intervention.



## Annex 1 – Methodology

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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 outgoing and new Chairs of the 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 37 individual case managers, asking them about their experiences of training, development, management supervision and leadership. The second fieldwork week is the joint element of the inspection. HMI Probation was joined by colleague inspectors from police, health, social care and education. We explored the lines of enquiry which emerged from the case inspections. Various meetings and focus groups were then held, allowing us to triangulate evidence and information.

### **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. In some individual cases, further enquiries were made during the second fieldwork week by colleague inspectors from the police, health, social care or education.

We examined 42 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. In some individual cases, further enquiries were made during the second fieldwork week by colleague inspectors from police, health, social care or education.

We examined 29 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

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### 1. Organisational delivery

Standards and key questions	Rating
<p><b>1.1. Governance and leadership</b></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>	<b>Good</b>
<p><b>1.2. Staff</b></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>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
<p><b>1.3. Partnerships and services</b></p> <p>A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children and young people.</p>	<b>Good</b>

- 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?
- 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**

**Inadequate**

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**

**Good**

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? 74%
- 2.1.2. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe? 69%

2.1.3. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?	74%
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<b>2.2. Planning</b>	<b>Good</b>
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?	69%
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2.2.2. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?	69%
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2.2.3. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	66%
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<b>2.3. Implementation and delivery</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
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?	62%
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2.3.2. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child or young person?	51%
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2.3.3. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?	48%
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<b>2.4. Reviewing</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
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?	61%
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2.4.2. Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?	68%
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2.4.3. Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?	59%
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### 3. Out-of-court disposals

Standards and key questions	Rating and % yes
<p><b>3.1. Assessment</b></p> <p>Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.</p>	<p><b>Requires improvement</b></p>
<p>3.1.1. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person’s desistance?</p>	<p>69%</p>
<p>3.1.2. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?</p>	<p>66%</p>
<p>3.1.3. Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?</p>	<p>55%</p>
<p><b>3.2. Planning</b></p> <p>Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person and their parents/carers.</p>	<p><b>Requires improvement</b></p>
<p>3.2.1. Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person’s desistance?</p>	<p>59%</p>
<p>3.2.2. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?</p>	<p>68%</p>
<p>3.2.3. Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?</p>	<p>68%</p>
<p><b>3.3. Implementation and delivery</b></p> <p>High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.</p>	<p><b>Good</b></p>
<p>3.3.1. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child or young person’s desistance?</p>	<p>67%</p>
<p>3.3.2. Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child or young person?</p>	<p>72%</p>
<p>3.3.3. Does the implementation and delivery of services</p>	<p>68%</p>

effectively support the safety of other people?

<b>3.4. Joint working</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Joint working with the police supports the delivery of high-quality, personalised and coordinated services.	
3.4.1. Are the YOT's recommendations sufficiently well-informed, analytical and personalised to the child or young person, supporting joint decision-making?	57%
3.4.2. Does the YOT work effectively with the police in implementing the out-of-court disposal?	61%

## Annex 3 – Glossary

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<b>AssetPlus</b>	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.
<b>CAMHS</b>	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.
<b>Community resolution</b>	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 generic term, in practice many different local terms are used to mean the same thing.
<b>Court disposals</b>	The sentence imposed by the court. Examples of youth court disposals are referral orders, youth rehabilitation orders and detention and training orders.
<b>CPF</b>	Case planning forum: a process used by the YJS to bring together key staff to plan the intervention with the child or young person
<b>Desistance</b>	The cessation of offending or other antisocial behaviour.
<b>Enforcement</b>	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.
<b>HMIP</b>	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation.
<b>ISS</b>	Intensive supervision and surveillance: an intensive programme of up to 25 hours of contact time per week for those young people most at risk of receiving a custodial sentence.
<b>LA</b>	Local authority: YOTs are often a team within a specific local authority.
<b>Out-of-court disposal (OCD)</b>	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.
<b>Personalised</b>	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.
<b>Risk of Serious Harm</b>	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 that 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.
<b>RO</b>	Referral order: a restorative court order which can be imposed when the child or young person appearing before the court pleads guilty, and where the threshold for a youth rehabilitation order is not met.
<b>RO</b>	Referral order: a restorative court order which can be imposed when the child or young person appearing before the court pleads guilty, and where the threshold for a youth rehabilitation order is not met.
<b>Safeguarding</b>	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.
<b>YOT management board</b>	The YOT management board holds the YOT to account to ensure it achieves the primary aim of preventing offending by children and young people.
<b>YJB</b>	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.





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