



HM Inspectorate  
of Probation



# **Joint thematic inspection of work with children subject to remand in youth detention**

## **Findings and recommendations**

Launch event: Tuesday 19 December 2023



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# Methodology

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## Pre fieldwork YJS survey

## Fieldwork

- 11 YJS and children's services visited
- 125 YJS cases
- 3 YOIs, 1 STC and 2 secure children's homes visited
- National bodies (MoJ, DfE, YCS, YJB etc)



# Governance and management

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## Local

- **Limited scrutiny** of remand from YJS Boards
- Policy and procedure framework in place **in most YJSs** but **few children's services**
- Staff did **not always understand or follow guidance**
- **Lack of shared understanding** of exploitation across agencies





# Police interview, charge and detention

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- YJS supported police bail **has the potential to reduce** overnight court appearances and short RYDAs but many areas not using it
- **Little use** of PACE 38(6) release
- Sometimes legal advice to children to make no comment **may have made RYDA more likely**





# Court

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- Joint working arrangements between YJSs who share courts are not always working well
- Suitable accommodation was the key concern at first appearance
- More children could be bailed and bailed earlier





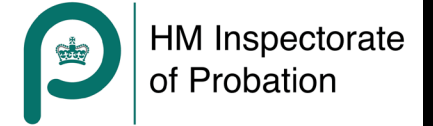
# Secure estate - STC and YOIs

- **Little information** provided to the child on arrival in custody
- **Confusing** array of meetings
- Child in care status **not understood**
- **Limited** practical help from local authority social workers
- Education provision not **consistent**

# Returning to the community

- Despite the number of planning meetings many children were released in an unplanned and **poorly coordinated** way
- Release date and status was sometimes **unpredictable**
- Children who were eighteen and were eligible for care leaver support had **rarely met** their personal adviser
- Some YJSs **provided** post acquittal voluntary support





**THE VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE FOR  
THE YOUTH ON REMAND INSPECTION  
LAUNCH EVENT**



# KEY FINDINGS FROM THE VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH EXPERIENCE OF REMAND

- Exclusion from school can lead to offending.
- Not being in education or employment can lead to offending.
- Being in care/from an unstable family environment can often lead to offending.
- Once involved in an offending group or gang, it is difficult to get out.
- There's a lack of information about what was happening and why when being remanded.
- Legal advice variable, not always sure when bail applications would be made.
- Many young people have underlying mental health issues.
- YOT staff are not always relatable, but generally supportive.

User Voice conducted semi-structured interviews with young people with experience of remand to map their journey from their life experiences pre-arrest to their YOT experience.

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PEOPLE HAD  
THEIR SAY

# MARCUS'S VOICE REGARDING HIS LIVED EXPERIENCE

- Mental health concerns – not coping with feelings (eg anger/frustration).
- Not in education or employment.
- Wished he was treated like a juvenile, not a criminal.
- Legal advice explained well.
- Poor communication from staff in YOIs.
- YOT workers were unrelatable for him.

## CASE STUDY 1:



**MARCUS**

# NOAH'S VOICE REGARDING HIS LIVED EXPERIENCE

- Grew up in the care system & then lived in supported accommodation.
- Family members have also been in prison.
- Little understanding of the sentencing process.
- Struggling with mental health issues.
- Staff in custody settings were not consistent – some caring, but others were more punitive.
- YOT staff supportive and helped with housing.

## CASE STUDY 2:



**NOAH**

# **KATIE'S VOICE REGARDING HER LIVED EXPERIENCE**

- Poor family relationships.
- Legal advice explained well.
- Got into fights and was kicked out of school.
- Lack of a consistent regime when in custody.
- Feeling that she had to “kick-off” in custody to get any attention.
- Felt respected and cared for by her YOT worker.

## **CASE STUDY 3:**



**KATIE**

# PEER-LED SOLUTIONS FROM YOUNG PEOPLE WITH EXPERIENCE OF REMAND



**Incorporate more lived experience into the YOT service and employ more relatable staff**



**Improve modes of communication at all stages of a young person's journey through the criminal justice system**



**Hire more and better abled staff at Youth Offenders institutes to reduce incidents of violence**



**Consistency with regime at Secure Training Centres and rewarding good behaviour rather than bad behaviour**



# Recommendations

## The report makes 22 recommendations

- Department for Education
- Youth Custody Service
- Youth Justice Board
- Local authority children's services departments
- YJS Management boards
- Police area forces (agreed with HMICFRS)
- YJS Managers





# Recommendation themes

## **Understanding the characteristics of children who are RYDA**

- Case studies and data

## **Multi-agency working and consistency**

- YJS, children's services, police,

## **Provision of services e.g. police bail support, PACE beds, accommodation**

## **National systems**

- Information exchange between YJSs and secure estate
- Guidance for social workers when managing RYDAs

## **Secure estate**

- Streamline planning
- Access to social workers and families

# Effective practice guide

“ where we see our standards delivered well, in practice. ”



## Finding your way



Tools for practitioners



Recorded interviews



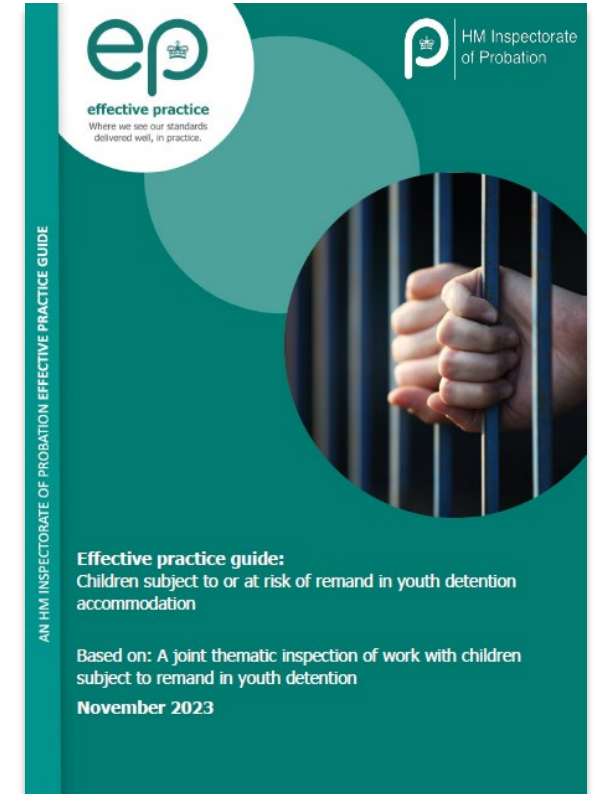
Reflection questions



Useful links



Denotes a task to undertake, alone or within a group







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# Effective practice guide



## Reflection Questions

- ? What are the barriers to effective work with children on remand and what can be done?
- ? How do you ensure you have captured the voice of the child and their parents or carers in your assessment and planning activity?
- ? What does trauma informed practice mean to you? How do you take a trauma informed approach with remanded children?



# Examples of Effectiveness

**Example of effectiveness:** a trauma informed approach at the Custody Intervention Hubs in Barnsley and Shepcote Lane custody suites, South Yorkshire Police



**Example of effectiveness:** Alternatives to custody; Roundabout Service, Sheffield





# Examples of Effectiveness

**Example of effectiveness:** Continuity of care and support; Transitions Workers, Kent

*"... transition workers are very much working with the child, sometimes even before custody... the transitions (worker) working ... to support them into their secure estate and then they work with them in the secure estate when they're helping them with many aspects with settling into what secure estate life looks like with helping with family arrangements..."*

*"... it's a bit like a reachable moment ... they can talk to someone. They can feel that there's someone there for them and then it extends back out of the estate. It's that continuity..."*

**Example of effectiveness:** Meeting foreign national need, Waltham Forest

*"Consideration was given to ensuring that Luca's experiences as a foreign national in a secure estate setting were not adversely impacted by cultural differences. Planning activity actively considered how best to make him feel at ease during his time on remand."*





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