



HM Inspectorate  
of Probation

# **Response to our consultation on the inspection of youth justice services**

October 2024

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## Introduction

During 2023, we consulted with our stakeholders about how we inspect youth justice services. We proposed important changes in recognition of the changing landscape of those services. These changes were to enable us to focus our resources on where we can have most impact, provide a proportionate approach to inspection and to place children and victims at the centre of what we do.

As part of our consultation activity, we engaged in face-to-face and online events with YJS leaders, children, parents, and carers with experience of working with YJSs. We also engaged with the Youth Justice Board (YJB), the Ministry of Justice, leading academics, other regulators and inspectorates and others with an interest in youth justice. We ran our online consultation in December 2023. This breadth of consultation activity has been incredibly useful and allowed us to reach an approach that we think is now well understood by the YJSs that we inspect. We are grateful to everyone involved in all of this activity as well as those who responded to our online consultation.

In our consultation activities we asked you for views on our proposed changes to standards. Our focus through the revised standards is on driving practice to achieve positive change for children and keep children and communities safe. Our proposals reduced the number of standards upon which we make our judgements and increased the breadth of work that we will inspect, including a new focus on work with victims. Our proposed standards were well received.

We also asked about the way in which we deliver our inspections. We want to visit each YJS more frequently and undertake different types of inspections determined by where we can maximise our impact. We outlined our plans for two types of inspections that would enable us to achieve this. These proposals garnered support as well as lots of questions. We have developed our thinking through the consultation activities and testing out of our proposals in pilot inspections and we are now able to set out our intentions in more detail.

We are publishing this response to the consultation now to provide YJSs with sufficient time to familiarise themselves with the new requirements ahead of the first inspections in early 2025. We will deliver a number of face-to-face events in November 2024, alongside a virtual event to inform stakeholders about the final changes.

## Consultation questions

We asked the following ten questions:

Question 1- Is our focus on 'achieving positive change' and 'keeping children and communities safe' the right approach?

Question 2 - In the standards is there a sufficient balance between work to achieve positive change and work to keep children and communities safe?

Question 3 - Is the inclusion of reviewing into assessing, planning and delivery the right way to inspect reviewing work?

Question 4 - Is inspecting all work with children against the same standards the right approach for us to take?

Question 5 - Are there any drawbacks to inspecting all work with children against the same standards? If so, how can we mitigate these?

Question 6 - Is inspecting a YJS' work with victims in this way the right approach to take?

Question 7 - What are the benefits and drawbacks of the overall approach and of each type of inspection?

Question 8 - Where we see concerning practice, is returning within a four-to-six-week period practicable?

Question 9 - Which of the proposed approaches to rating is fair, valid, consistent, and reliable and most likely to drive improvements?

Question 10 - How can we mitigate any consequences of discontinuing FJIs?

## Summary of responses

We received 17 responses to our online consultation. The online consultation document outlining our proposals [can be found here](#).<sup>1</sup> Some were from organisations, and others from individuals in their personal or professional capacity. We received responses from professional bodies involved in the delivery of youth justice services, local government, fellow inspectorates, academics and others interested in our proposals. Through our events we spoke to 189 people across England and Wales. This summary of responses includes feedback from all of these events as well as from the online consultation.

### **Question 1 - Is our focus on 'achieving positive change' and 'keeping children and communities safe' the right approach?**

There was majority support for this approach. One respondent said that:

*'This is the right approach as it works in line with a strength based and child first approach which emphasises a reasonable balance between positive outcomes for the child and also ensuring that communities are kept safe, which are often inextricably linked and help to ensure a more holistic approach to looking at work in the round as opposed to a siloed approach of looking at the quality of work across a YJS.'*

Another respondent said that:

*'I think this gets the right balance between trauma informed, Child First ethos and also the risk management elements of what a youth Justice Service needs to achieve.'*

Some respondents noted that there is a mismatch in our proposed language with the language used by the YJB. For example:

*'It does, however, entail a change of language from the terminology used by the YJB and contained in the assessment tools mandated by the YJB. It would be preferable for [HM Inspectorate of Probation] and the YJB to use the same terminology.'*

and

*'We would hope to see the language of achieving positive change and keeping children and communities safe reflected in YJB communications and mandatory assessments.'*

### **Question 2 - In the standards is there a sufficient balance between work to achieve positive change and work to keep children and communities safe?**

There was majority support that the approach is balanced. For example,

*'There does appear to be an appropriate balance between these headings. The supporting questions for each heading are differentiated.'*

and

*'We believe that the changes suggested are balanced and fair as long as we don't lose the ability to comment separately on children's safety and management of risk.'*

A small number of respondents said it was unclear what a 'sufficient balance' was and how this would be measured fairly and objectively.

One respondent recognised the challenge in applying standards consistently:

*'A more significant challenge will be achieving consistent interpretation of these standards which promotes balance and consistency across inspections.'*

And there was an acknowledgment that the two areas are not mutually exclusive:

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<sup>1</sup> [Consultation on our inspection of youth justice services \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)

*'It will be important that the standards don't lose sight of the fact that making children safer does lead to safer communities. They shouldn't be seen as mutually exclusive.'*

### **Question 3- Is the inclusion of reviewing into assessing, planning and delivery the right way to inspect reviewing work?**

There was majority support for this approach with respondents welcoming the streamlined approach. For example:

*'Including reviewing into assessment, planning and delivery supports the decision to move away from process and focus more on quality and I would therefore agree that it is the right way to impact reviewing of work; it becomes less of a tick box exercise and more of a discussion about what, why and how decisions have been made.'*

and

*'We cannot consider another conceivable way in which reviewing could be separated out from assessment, planning and delivery of services for children.'*

One respondent queried what sort of reviewing activity we would expect to see within the assessment standard.

One respondent was concerned about a potential risk of incorporating reviewing into the assessing, planning, and delivery standards in the way proposed, on the basis that this could disproportionately impact inspection ratings:

*'If services review inadequately, this will mean an inadequate grade across assessment, planning and delivery, [which will] impact on the grade for domain two.'*

### **Question 4 - Is inspecting all work with children against the same standards the right approach for us to take?**

There was majority support for this approach with respondents recognising that it puts children's needs at the centre of inspection. For example:

*'It removes a two-tier system and identifies the complexity of cases that are currently coming through the Youth Justice System.'*

and

*'We agree that inspecting a personalised whole-child approach where each child's needs have been assessed and planned for effectively and that the right delivery is offered is the right approach to take.'*

Respondents also wanted the inspectorate to make sure that our judgements remain proportionate in terms of the work that the YJS is able to undertake as follows:

*'This should see YJSs praised for appropriate light-touch work which minimises the impact of the formal justice system on children. Equally, the framework needs to be able to capture the full rigor of work which applies in the cases of resettlement and ISS or intensive YROs.'*

### **Question 5 - Are there any drawbacks to inspecting all work with children against the same standards? If so, how can we mitigate these?**

There was majority support for this approach. For example:

*'We welcome that [HM Inspectorate of Probation] will expect to see a personalised whole-child approach where each child's needs have been assessed and planned for effectively and that the right delivery, referrals and exit planning arrangements have been made.'*

There were some potential drawbacks identified as follows:

*'A potential drawback being that the differences between children's intervention and support by OOCR and court orders are not fully appreciated/recognised by the inspection teams, and*

*this then impacts upon overall grading.'*

*'If each 'case' is given equal weighting, with the assessment, plan and intervention on a Community Resolution being given equal weight to the work on an intensive custodial sentence, this will not reflect the appropriate differential deployment of YJS and partnership resources. Good work on multiple Community Resolutions is not necessarily more valuable than the quality of work on one high-risk custodial or community sentence.'*

*'Partnership arrangements differ between Early Help and Youth Justice, and we would like assurance that the Inspectorate recognise different models of assessment and delivery which could be explained by the Local Authority within a context presentation.'*

A small number of respondents questioned whether resettlement practice could suffer given that it will not be scrutinised as it currently is through a separate standard.

### **Question 6 - Is inspecting a YJS' work with victims in this way the right approach to take?**

All respondents welcomed our focus on this area of work and recognised that inspection of victim work is the right thing for the inspectorate to do. Doing so through the lens of the victims and by a dedicated standard was welcomed by the majority of respondents. For example:

*'Yes the focus on support to victims in their own right is welcomed as this will showcase this often under reported aspect of Youth Justice Services. Having its grading will also elevate the platform of Youth Justice support to victims'*

and

*'It is a positive approach and a good way to focus on strategic work to ensure compliance with the victim code of practice and demonstrate how we engage with commissioned and partner services to meet this statutory requirement.'*

A number of respondents felt that the proposed prompts did not capture the experience of the victim instead still centring around work done with the child and being too process focussed. For example:

*'The standards and questions.... still appear to focus on work with children, i.e. informing the victim about the YJS's work with the child who has harmed them, rather than on meeting victims' needs. The questions should consider whether victims are given a range of suitable options, whether their preferences are recorded by the YJS and whether the YJS meets the victim's preferences.'*

One respondent asked for clarity in terms of how the victim cohort will be selected as follows:

*'Will they be the victims of children on the inspection short list, so the voice of victims is triangulated with the child's records?'*

One respondent called for a clearer definition of a victim as follows:

*'Consideration also needs to be given to what the definition of 'victim' is as this is open to interpretation (e.g., is this the victim of a reported offence? victim of neglect/physical abuse etc? Self-identified as a victim?).'*

There was a theme from some respondents that we must focus on the quality of individual work with victims not just processes of data. For example:

*'In assessing this area, [HM Inspectorate of Probation] will need to be conscious of how they are assessing the quality of the victim work that has been delivered and take into account the unique experience of the victim and factor in what is important to them.'*

There was a recognition that child victims can also be or become perpetrators and we must account for this as we assess the work delivered to children and victims. For example:

*'We would highlight that often victims can also be perpetrators (and vice versa). We would therefore highlight that – on some occasions - there may be challenges with separately judging the work done with a child in their capacity as a victim versus the quality of work done with them as part of a disposal.'*

### **Question 7 - What are the benefits and drawbacks of the overall approach and of each type of inspection?**

This was the question which most divided respondents. Many saw the two types of inspection as positive, understood the rationale and could see the benefit it brought in terms of enabling us to inspect more frequently and flexibly. For example:

*'Ongoing service developments and improvements should not be driven from inspection alone however more agile response is welcomed and agree 6 years is too long for a re-inspection regardless of initial grade.'*

One respondent acknowledged the benefit of more inspections in terms of the learning that this would bring:

*'There is a benefit of learning from more inspections across the country where good practice and ideas can be shared.'*

Others welcomed the more regular cycle of inspection to prevent service complacency and welcomed inspection that focusses on front line delivery and outcomes for children. For example:

*'I like that more of the focus to be on Domain two as this is a focus upon core practice.'*

and

*'Prioritising the inspection of practice and delivery to children, in line with the evidence.'*

Other benefits noted by respondents were:

*'A more flexible and agile approach to inspections, ensuring that any serious concerns can be swiftly dealt with.'*

and

*'Reducing periods between inspections, which further incentivises good performance.'*

Some respondents however felt that this added to the burden of inspection and could lead to low staff morale. For example:

*'It is felt that this proposal is problematic- the notion of a children and victims' inspection potentially followed up very rapidly by another inspection of youth justice services was seen as unreasonable.'*

Other respondents felt that all YJSs should have the same type of inspection and that not inspecting partnership arrangements in all inspections could have consequences if partners did not see the relevance of inspection to their work. For example:

*'By just having an inspection of work with children and victims may miss vital aspects of the governance and wider partnership arrangements which may be impacting, positively or negatively on the delivery of services. Not judging on governance arrangements is not in keeping with other inspection frameworks e.g., OFSTED and risks not placing the required emphasis on the partnership to contribute towards effective YJ practice.'*

A small number of respondents were concerned that we would have a two-tier system of overall ratings in existence if some YJS were rated on the basis of four standards and some on the basis of seven.



### **Question 8 - Where we see concerning practice, is returning within a four-to-six-week period practicable?**

There was some confusion amongst respondents about our intention here. Some respondents had thought we were returning within a four-to-six-week period with the intention of seeing improvements in the services since our initial inspection, and therefore felt there needed to be a longer period between initial inspection and a return visit. However, seeing improvements in the intervening period is not the intention or purpose of a reactive inspection, therefore these responses have not been reflected.

The purpose of the proposed quick turnaround is that we will see domain one arrangements that help us understand the work with children and victims that we have inspected. There was support for this approach as follows:

*'If the return visit is aimed at assessing the Domain One position at the time of the inspection of work with children and victims, then it needs to happen as soon as possible, to avoid changes being made during the interim period.'*

and

*'Returning within a four-to-six-week period when concerning practices are identified allows for timely intervention and follow-up.'*

There was concern from some respondents that the approach would not be practical. For example;

*'Two inspections happening so closely on the authority's duty to continue to provide services, while also preparing for the second inspection and the significant impact this will have on the wellbeing of all staff but in particular the senior managers (Head of Service (HoS) and Service Manager). There would have been high levels of activity in preparation for the Child & Victim inspection, followed by significant internal scrutiny due to concerns identified, then further preparation and engagement for the Domain one inspection.'*

One respondent was concerned about the logistics of achieving an inspection at short notice:

*'That would depend on what level of input [HM Inspectorate of Probation] will be expecting from senior partners. It probably is not realistic to ask colleagues to provisionally make themselves available considering they will be facing many competing demands.'*

### **Question 9 - Which of the proposed approaches to rating is fair, valid, consistent and reliable and most likely to drive improvements?**

We proposed two options to rating YJSs as follows:

Option A was that we rate domain one standards in inspections of youth justice services but only the domain two and victims' ratings would contribute to the overall rating.

Option B is that we rate four standards for our inspections of youth justice work with children and victims and seven for our inspections of youth justice services. We would accept that the overall ratings are based on different numbers of standards for each type of inspection and are therefore limited in terms of comparability.

This question generated a mixture of comments. There was no overall agreement with respondents seeing different benefits and drawbacks to each approach. For example:

*'Whilst both A and B provide levels of fairness and B provides a fuller picture of the service as a whole, I believe that option A gives better consistency and reliability to allow for review and comparison with other services.'*

and

*'Option B, i.e. basing the rating on all the Domains that have been inspected, is the better approach. One of the problems with Option A, i.e. only basing the YJS rating on Domains Two and Three, is that it downplays the importance of Domain One and may lead to it being given reduced priority.'*

## **Question 10 - How can we mitigate any consequences of discontinuing Full Joint Inspections (FJIs)?**

There was widespread support for discontinuing FJIs with most respondents satisfied that mitigations were already in place. Respondents felt that joint thematic inspections and our continued involvement in Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAs) were important. For example:

*'I think the case for discontinuing FJIs outlined within the consultation sufficiently justifies the case for discontinuing this type of inspection. I can only see this as a positive move. This is an appropriate model and in itself mitigates the risks, if there are any of dispensing with a full joint inspection regime.'*

and

*'The proposed mitigations appear sufficient.'*

By way of further mitigation one respondent suggested that:

*'The use of other partnership arrangements to support this work would also provide appropriate mitigation including community safety partnerships and criminal justice boards.'*

*'Recruit a wider range of inspectors (e.g. education, health, police) to form future inspection teams.'*

## Summary of HM Inspectorate of Probation decisions

Following a review of all of the consultation feedback along with extensive testing through pilot inspections, the HM Chief Inspector of Probation and the inspectorate's Senior Management Team have made the following decisions.

Question	Post-consultation decision
<p>1. Is our focus on 'achieving positive change' and 'keeping children and communities safe' the right approach?</p>	<p>We will inspect against standards based on 'achieving positive change' and 'keeping children and communities safe.' The full set of standards can be seen at <a href="#">Annex one</a>.</p> <p>The standards accommodate the broad evidence base that includes child-first, risk-based approaches, contextual safeguarding and trauma-informed practice but does not favour one over the other. Instead, our standards require a personalised, responsive approach that achieves positive change and keeps children and communities safe. This is based on assessing the child's needs, planning to meet those needs, delivering interventions to meet those needs and doing so in the context of regular and dynamic reviews.</p>
<p>2. In the standards is there a sufficient balance between work to achieve positive change and work to keep children and communities safe?</p>	<p>Respondents felt that there was a sufficient balance achieved and we will proceed with this approach.</p> <p>It is important that we get the balance right in focusing on work to achieve positive change and work to keep children and communities safe. In our domain one and domain two standards we put equal focus on these two areas, and we also recognise that they are not mutually exclusive.</p> <p>Our judgements in the key questions focusing on work to achieve positive change and work to keep children and communities safe will be based on the <u>sufficiency</u> of work in each area. We will further explain this in our guidance materials, and we will make sure through our report narrative that we pinpoint the specific areas where improvements need to be made.</p>
<p>3. Is the inclusion of reviewing into assessing, planning and delivery the right way to inspect reviewing work?</p>	<p>Our proposal to inspect work with children through three standards was well received. We will continue to follow the structure on the well-established and recognised ASPIRE model for case management.</p> <p>We will include reviewing in our definitions of assessing, planning and delivery. This recognises that reviewing is a dynamic process that should happen continually as YJSs carry out each of the assessing, planning and delivery elements of their work. It also reflects that our inspections focus on the quality of the work rather than whether a process is being followed.</p>

4. Is inspecting all work with children against the same standards the right approach for us to take?

We will inspect all work with children against the same set of standards. The standards are firmly based in research and inspection evidence including child-first, risk-based approaches, contextual safeguarding and trauma-informed practice. All of this applies regardless of the type of intervention being undertaken with the child.

We will not give resettlement work a separate rating, but where we see resettlement work, we will comment on this in our reports, and we will make specific recommendations where appropriate. We will also include children who are subject to bail and remand arrangements and look at the quality of the work done with them.

Question	Post-consultation decision
<p>5. Are there any drawbacks to inspecting all work with children against the same standards? If so, how can we mitigate these?</p>	<p>Three potential drawbacks were identified, and we will take actions to mitigate these.</p> <p>First, there was a concern that our standards may not be proportionate to the work done with children on shorter and/or voluntary out-of-court disposals. We recognise that on a short voluntary order it may not be realistic for a YJS to meet all of a child’s needs. What we expect to see in such instances is that children’s needs are appropriately identified, the right referrals are made and that there are strong partnership arrangements and effective exit planning. We will ensure effective training and comprehensive guidance materials for our inspectors to assure this approach.</p> <p>Second, one respondent recognised that partnership arrangements and models of assessment, planning and delivery will vary across services and was concerned that this could lead to YJS’s being penalised. Our standards framework is not based on any specific model of delivery. We are adept at inspecting against different models of delivery and will ensure that we continue to train our inspectors to do so. We will continue to undertake regular quality assurance activity of our inspections of work with children and will continue to do so.</p> <p>Third was a concern that resettlement practice, which has benefitted from the scrutiny of a standalone standard, could suffer without the specific focus of a standalone standard. Although when we rate against our standards, we will not rate resettlement separately we will through the narrative in our reports maintain the ability to report on different cohorts of children separately.</p>
<p>6. Is inspecting a YJS’ work with victims in this way the right approach to take?</p>	<p>Through the victims’ standard we will inspect the service provided to individual victims as well as examining the organisational arrangements and activity that underpin the service to victims.</p> <p>Some victims will be adults, and some will be children; some may be children who are working with the YJS already because they have committed an offence. In such instances the work done with them in their capacity as a victim will be judged separately from the quality of work done with them as part of their disposal. We will include services for all victims within the scope of our inspections, including corporate victims.</p>

	<p>As with all of our standards, full guidance will underpin the two key questions to ensure validity, fairness and consistency in inspecting work with victims.</p>
<p>7. What are the benefits and drawbacks of the overall approach and of each type of inspection?</p>	<p>Through our consultation events, we were assured by a majority support for our proposal for two types of inspection. However, there was a concern that inspections of work with children and victims would have no emphasis on the YJS as a partnership, and that partnerships may lose their focus on the YJS if their work were not to be directly inspected.</p> <p>Although we are confident that we will continue to see the impact of organisational arrangements and activity through the cases that we inspect we will also carry out a small number of interviews and focus groups, along with some written evidence such as policies and management board minutes, to provide the context for our domain two findings. We will also have a presentation from the Chair of the YJS Management Board at the start of the inspection fieldwork week.</p>
<p>8. Where we see concerning practice, is returning within a four-to-six-week period practicable?</p>	<p>Where we see concerning practice or potential significant effective practice through an inspection of youth justice work with children and victims' we will return to inspect the domain one standards four to six weeks after the inspection of work with children and victims. This means that the evidence will best align with what we have seen in cases. This approach will also minimise the impact on the YJS by avoiding a long lead in time to inspection.</p>
<p>9. Which of the proposed approaches to rating is fair, valid, consistent, and reliable and most likely to drive improvements?</p>	<p>The overall rating for all inspections will be based only on the domain two and victims' standard rating, regardless of whether it is an inspection of work with children and victims or an inspection of youth justice services. The benefits of this approach are that our inspection and rating of frontline work is equal across both types of inspection and overall ratings are comparable across YJSs. All overall inspection ratings will be based on four standards regardless of the type of inspection. We will continue to rate the individual domain one standards in an IYJS inspection.</p>

Question	Post-consultation decision
<p>10. How can we mitigate any consequences of discontinuing FJIs?</p>	<p>A large part of our thematic programme is joint inspectorate work. Working with our partner inspectorates on JTAIs and thematic pieces of work gives us significant national reach and we will continue with both of these programmes of inspection.</p> <p>We continue to value the expertise and depth of knowledge of our partner inspectorates and want to benefit from this through our core YJS inspections. We will work with partner inspectorates to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• better share intelligence to target inspections where they will have maximum impact</li> <li>• coordinate activity across inspectorates</li> <li>• increase learning across the findings of partner inspectorates</li> <li>• maintain our JTAI commitment</li> <li>• strengthen our joint thematic work</li> </ul>

## Annex one: Youth inspection standards

### Domain one: organisational delivery

This domain covers the arrangements and activity that support all areas of a Youth Justice Service's (YJS) work with children, including out-of-court disposals, court disposals, appropriate adult work, bail and remand, and resettlement. These standards are inspected and rated in Inspections of Youth Justice Services.

#### 1.1 Governance and leadership

*The governance and leadership of the YJS drives a high-quality service to achieve positive change and safety for children and communities.*

##### **1.1.1 Do the YJS's strategic arrangements drive a high-quality, personalised, and responsive service to achieve positive change, and keep children and communities safe?**

- a) Does the YJS management board set the direction and strategy for the YJS, enabling it to achieve positive change and keep children and communities safe?
- b) Are there effective governance arrangements and clear delivery plans that enable relational practice and effective evidence-based work with children?
- c) Can the YJS management board explain any disproportionality and has it taken sufficient action to address this?
- d) Does the YJS management board analyse and use the views of children and parents and carers, and use them in the YJS's vision and strategy?
- e) Does the YJS management board include all statutory and non-statutory partners at the right level where these would add value?
- f) Are YJS management board members well engaged and active in their contribution to achieving positive change and keeping children and communities safe?
- g) Does the YJS management board sufficiently understand and appropriately challenge the YJS's data and information?
- h) Do other relevant local strategic partnerships give priority to work to achieve positive change and keep children and communities safe?
- i) Are strategic arrangements and activity, and their impact on delivery, monitored and regularly reviewed?

##### **1.1.2 Does the YJS leadership team drive a high-quality, personalised, and responsive service to achieve positive change and keep children and communities safe?**

- a) Does the YJS leadership team provide an effective link to the YJS management board?
- b) Do the YJS's partnership arrangements enable it to deliver effective operational work to achieve positive change and keep children and communities safe?
- c) Does the YJS leadership team successfully deliver and operationalise the vision and strategy?
- d) Does the YJS leadership team seek, analyse, and use the views of children, parents and carers?



- e) Can the YJS leadership team explain any disproportionality in their delivery area, and have they taken sufficient action to address this?
- f) Do staff understand their roles and responsibilities within the partnership arrangements, and what they are accountable for?
- g) Are the necessary policies in place and understood by all those to whom they apply?

**1.1.3 Does the YJS leadership team actively engage with staff to deliver a high-quality, personalised, and responsive service to achieve positive change and keep children and communities safe?**

- a) Does the YJS culture promote openness, constructive challenge, and ideas?
- b) Are staff well engaged and motivated?
- c) Are the views of staff sought, analysed, and used to review and improve the effectiveness of services?
- d) Do managers equitably recognise and reward exceptional work?
- e) Is appropriate attention paid to staff safety and wellbeing, and building staff resilience?
- f) Is there support for staff if they feel discriminated against or experience any form of discrimination?
- g) Is there a clear and understood process for staff complaints?
- h) Is there a clear and understood process for complaints from children, parents and carers?
- i) Do YJS leaders understand and promote the meeting of diverse needs, including the need to make reasonable adjustments for staff in accordance with protected characteristics?

**1.1.4 Do leaders use analysis, evidence, and learning to drive a high-quality, personalised, and responsive service to achieve positive change and safety for children and communities?**

- a) Are policies regularly evaluated and reviewed, including responding to changes in the evidence base and paying due regard to diversity issues?
- b) Is the delivery of partnership services informed by regular, robust, evidence-based monitoring, evaluation, and review, including a review of the impact on diverse groups?
- c) Are service improvement plans regularly evaluated and reviewed, including responding to changes in the evidence base?
- d) Does evaluation include the use of data and information, and is it informed by necessary input from other agencies, including those delivering out-of-court, post-court, bail and remand, appropriate adult and resettlement services?
- e) Does evaluation include active consideration of diversity issues?
- f) Do performance and quality assurance systems drive improvement?
- g) Does the YJS learn systematically and communicate effectively when things go wrong, including serious incidents?

**1.2 Staffing**

***Staff are enabled to deliver a high-quality, personalised, and responsive service to achieve positive change and keep children and communities safe.***

**1.2.1 Do staff and workload levels support staff to deliver a high-quality, personalised, and responsive service to achieve positive change and keep children and communities safe?**

- a) Are YJS staffing levels sufficient?
- b) Do YJS practitioners have manageable workloads, given the nature of their workload and the range of work undertaken?
- c) Do YJS specialist staff have manageable workloads, given the nature of their workload and the range of work undertaken?
- d) Do support staff have manageable workloads, allowing them to support YJS work effectively?
- e) Do leaders and managers have manageable workloads?
- f) Are workloads managed actively, with resources being redeployed when this is reasonable and necessary, in response to local pressures?

**1.2.2 Do the skills and profile of staff support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised, and responsive service to achieve positive change and keep children and communities safe?**

- a) Does the workforce reflect adequately the diversity of the local population?
- b) Do the skills and diversity of the workforce meet the needs of children?
- c) Is work with children allocated to staff who are appropriately qualified and/or experienced?
- d) Are the learning needs of staff identified and met?
- e) Is a culture of learning and continuous improvement actively promoted?
- f) Is the potential of staff identified and developed?

**1.2.3 Does the oversight of work support high-quality delivery and professional development to achieve positive change and keep children and communities safe?**

- a) Is an effective induction programme, that addresses issues of diversity and is accessible to all, delivered to all new staff?
- b) Do staff receive effective child-focused supervision that supports them, and enables them to take a relational approach to working with children?
- c) Are there effective management oversight arrangements that enhance and sustain the quality of work with children?
- d) Is the appraisal process used effectively to ensure staff are delivering a high-quality service?
- e) Is poor staff performance identified and addressed?
- f) Where volunteers and mentors are used, are they supported to fulfil clearly defined roles?

**1.3 Partnerships and Services**

***A comprehensive range of high-quality, personalised, and responsive services are in place, achieving positive change and keeping children and communities safe.***

**1.3.1 Does the YJS have a comprehensive and up-to-date analysis of the profile of children that it uses to deliver well-targeted services?**

- a) Is there an up-to-date analysis of all children's needs?
- b) Does the analysis pay sufficient attention to factors relating to achieving positive change and keeping children and communities safe?
- c) Does the analysis pay sufficient attention to diversity factors and to issues of disproportionality?
- d) Is there sufficient analysis of local patterns of sentencing, offence types and the use of out-of-court disposals?
- e) Is the analysis used effectively to drive service delivery?
- f) Does the analysis incorporate the views of children, parents and carers about the services they receive?

**1.3.2 Does the YJS partnership provide the volume, range, and quality of services and interventions required to meet the individual needs of all children?**

- a) Are there effective arrangements to ensure access to the right specialist, mainstream and follow-on services and interventions to meet the needs of all children?
- b) Are services available in a timely manner for all children?
- c) Are building strengths, future focus, and enhancing resilience central to the delivery of services?
- d) Are services to children delivered in safe places?
- e) Are services to children delivered in accessible places?
- f) Do delivery environments enable appropriate relational, strengths-based, personalised work to be undertaken?
- g) Are diversity factors and issues of disproportionality addressed sufficiently in the way that services are delivered?

**1.3.3 Are arrangements with statutory partners, providers and other agencies established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality, personalised, and responsive services?**

- a) Are there effective collaborative arrangements with partners and providers to achieve positive change for all children?
- b) Are there effective collaborative arrangements with partners and providers to achieve safety for children and communities?
- c) Are there effective arrangements for the provision of appropriate adults?
- d) Are arrangements set out and understood by staff to ensure that children are actively signposted, referred, and supported into the most appropriate services?
- e) Is there a clear joint protocol in place with the police, setting out a locally agreed out-of-court disposal policy and practice, including joint and defensible decision-making?
- f) Does the out-of-court disposal eligibility criteria include an escalation process which avoids the inappropriate overuse of specific disposals?
- g) Are there suitable arrangements for out-of-court joint decision-making that are informed by assessment and include contributions from the YJS, police and social care as a minimum?
- h) Are courts made sufficiently aware of the services available to support sentencing options?

## **Domain two: Work with children**

This domain covers work with children across all areas of the YJS's delivery, including out-of-court disposals, court disposals, bail and remand and resettlement.

These standards are inspected and rated in Inspections of Youth Justice Work with Children and Victims (IYJWCV) and Inspections of Youth Justice Services (IYJS).

### **2.1 Assessing**

*Assessing is well-informed and personalised, effectively analysing how to achieve positive change and keep children and the community safe.*

#### **2.1.1 Does assessing sufficiently analyse how to achieve positive change for the child?**

- a) Does assessing analyse the context of the child, including the wider familial and social environment?
- b) Does assessing draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve other agencies where appropriate?
- c) Does assessing include the active participation of and co-production with the child?
- d) Does assessing sufficiently analyse whether work could be undertaken collaboratively with the child's parents or carers, that would achieve positive change for the child?
- e) Does assessing analyse the child's strengths and protective factors including the key structural factors affecting the child?
- f) Does assessing analyse capacity for change, participation, and community integration?
- g) Does assessing sufficiently recognise and analyse diversity issues?
- h) Does assessing analyse the child's attitudes, motivations, and behaviour within the context of the child?
- i) Is assessing responsive to change, including to ensure continued effective arrangements to manage those issues that have been identified to achieve positive change?

#### **2.1.2 Does assessing sufficiently analyse how to achieve safety for the child and the community?**

- a) Does assessing clearly identify and analyse risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child?
- b) Does assessing clearly identify and analyse what is needed to achieve safety for other people, sufficiently considering risks?
- c) Does assessing sufficiently identify and analyse issues of vulnerability, victimisation, and exploitation?
- d) Does assessing incorporate the needs and wishes of the victims?
- e) Does assessing sufficiently analyse whether work could be undertaken collaboratively with the child's parents or carers that would keep the child and community safe?
- f) Is assessing responsive to change, including to ensure continued effective arrangements to manage those issues that have been identified to achieve safety for the child and the community?

## **2.2 Planning**

***Planning is well-informed, holistic and personalised, focusing on how to achieve positive change and keep children and communities safe.***

### **2.2.1 Does planning focus sufficiently on how to achieve positive change for the child?**

- a) Does planning take sufficient account of the context of the child, including the child's wider familial and social environment?
- b) Does planning include the active participation of and co-production with the child?
- c) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's strengths and protective factors, including the key structural factors affecting the child and seek to reinforce or develop these in order to build resilience?
- d) Does planning create opportunities for change, participation and community integration?
- e) Does planning sufficiently include and consider all the child's diversity factors?
- f) Is there sufficient planning of delivery with other services, including for exit planning and referral to mainstream services?
- g) Does planning take sufficient account of the child's ability and motivation to change, and seek to develop these as necessary?
- h) Does planning address the child's attitudes, motivations, and behaviour within the context of that child?

### **2.2.2 Does planning focus sufficiently on how to keep the child and community safe?**

- a) Does planning set out how to achieve safety and stability for the child as foundations for change?
- b) Does planning set out what is needed to keep other people safe, sufficiently addressing risks?
- c) Does planning sufficiently address issues of vulnerability, victimisation, and exploitation?
- d) Does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victims, and opportunities for restorative justice?
- e) Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to actual and potential victims?
- f) Does planning set out how work will be undertaken collaboratively with the child's parents and carers to keep the child safe?
- g) Does planning pay sufficient attention to the available timescales, coordinating with any other agencies' planning and the need for sequencing?
- h) Is planning responsive to change, including to ensure continued effective arrangements to manage those issues that have been identified?

## **2.3 Delivery**

***High-quality, well-focused, personalised, and coordinated services are delivered, achieving positive change and keeping children and communities safe.***

### **2.3.1 Does the delivery of well-focused, personalised and coordinated services achieve positive change for the child?**

- a) Does the YJS focus sufficiently on developing and maintaining a working relationship with the child, with their active participation, that encourages and enables engagement?
- b) Does delivery take sufficient account of the context of the child, including the child's wider familial and social environment?
- c) Does delivery take sufficient account of the child's strengths and protective factors, including the key structural factors affecting the child and seek to reinforce or develop these in order to build resilience?
- d) Does delivery achieve opportunities for change, participation and community integration, including access to services post-supervision?
- e) Does delivery sufficiently include and consider all the child's diversity factors?
- f) Do interventions address the child's attitudes, motivations and behaviour within the context of that child?
- g) Is the YJS's work sufficiently aligned and coordinated with the delivery of other services including exit planning and referral to universal services?
- h) Is the quality of the work with the child reviewed and adapted where necessary?

### **2.3.2 Does the delivery of well-focused, personalised, and coordinated services achieve safety for the child and the community?**

- a) Are the right services delivered to achieve safety and stability for the child as foundations for change?
- b) Are services delivered collaboratively with the child's parents and carers to build safety and protection for the child and the community?
- c) Does delivery of services sufficiently address issues of vulnerability, victimisation and exploitation?
- d) Are the right services delivered to keep other people safe, sufficiently managing risks?
- e) Is sufficient attention given to the protection of actual and potential victims in the delivery of services?
- f) Do the interventions delivered pay sufficient attention to the available timescales and the need for sequencing?
- g) Does delivery respond effectively to changes when required?
- h) Is engagement supported effectively, including by taking enforcement action when appropriate?

## Victims

This standard is inspected and rated in Inspections of Youth Justice Work with Children and Victims (IYJWCV) and Inspections of Youth Justice Services (IYJS).

V1 Work with victims is high-quality, individualised, and responsive driving positive outcomes and safety for victims.

### **V1.1 Is work with victims high-quality, individualised, and responsive?**

- a) Are victims supported to make informed choices about their needs including any direct work with children?
- b) Is clear information given to victims about what they can expect at different points in a child's work with the YJS?
- c) Are the individual needs of the victim well understood?
- d) Does the support offered to the victim sufficiently promote their safety and wellbeing?
- e) Is there effective engagement and relationship building with victims that enables individualised, responsive support and access to services?
- f) Are there effective arrangements and relationships with practitioners across the YJS to enable the needs of the victim to be met?
- g) Does the support delivered meet the needs of the victim?

### **V1.2 Do organisational arrangements and activity drive a high-quality, individualised, and responsive service for victims?**

- a) Are management board members well engaged and active in their contribution to work with victims?
- b) Are there effective arrangements in place with police for obtaining consent and the sharing of victim details?
- c) Is there an effective policy and process in place for delivering high-quality, individualised, and responsive work with victims?
- d) Do staff that work with victims have manageable workloads?
- e) Do staff that work with victims have the right skills to deliver a high-quality, individualised, and responsive service to victims?
- f) Are staff that work with victims effectively supported in the delivery of their work?
- g) Is there a range of support and services available, with effective risk management processes in place?
- h) Are services to victims regularly monitored, evaluated, and reviewed?
- i) Are the views of victims sought, analysed, and used to inform an effective service for victims?

## Contacts

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