



BIRMINGHAM YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE

Strategic Youth Justice Plan: 2023 – 2028

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1. Introduction, Vision, and Strategy

1.1 Foreword from the Chair of the Birmingham YOS (Youth Offending Service) Partnership Board

This Youth Justice Plan of the Birmingham Youth Justice Partnership represents a comprehensive assessment of the challenges and opportunities facing Britain's second largest city and largest youth justice service, drawing heavily on the learning from the 2022 inspection of our services by HM Inspector of Probation. This inspection showed us that we had made considerable progress since their previous visit but also highlight the further work we need to undertake to achieve our long-standing ambitions of becoming first a 'good' and then an 'outstanding' service. There is a strong determination in Birmingham Youth Justice Service (YOS) and also amongst its partners, particularly the Children's Trust and the City Council, to take stock and really get to grips with returning the service to its proper position as a model of modern youth justice for the children, their caregivers, victims, and the whole community in Birmingham, and also as a beacon to other services in the country.

It is neither possible nor necessary to summarise the plan here. What I do wish to highlight are a couple of key objectives. The first is to continue a hard focus on intersectionality - the ways in which different groups of children are better or less well served by our youth justice service. Here there are particular issues relating to race but also in the other areas of diversity in our most diverse of cities. We are determined to reduce the disproportional benefits of our service, which we recognise are the very opposite of the 'child first' tenets that we hold dear. Secondly, we recognise that all of our staff have much to offer, not only in their individual and group work with children but also in their insights into how we can improve our services and reach our objectives. We are redoubling our efforts to engage all staff in our plans for the future.

As I wrote last year there remains much work to be done. We are not in any way in denial about this. But, led by our dynamic team of senior leaders in the Youth Justice Service directed by our outstanding Head of YOS, Janine Saleh, we are building our service, based on the bedrock that everyone in the service shall know what they need to do personally to make our service 'good' and then 'outstanding.' Birmingham has been a byword for civic pride and ambition in the past; our aim is to locate youth justice firmly within this tradition.

John Drew, Independent Chair

1.2 Executive Summary

This strategic Youth Justice Plan embraces the city's ambition¹ to make Birmingham a great place for our children to grow up: to be healthy, safe, confident, included, happy, respected and connected to opportunities. This plan sets out how the Birmingham Youth Offending Service Partnership can deliver services in a way that enables our children to thrive, and in a way that prepares them for adulthood.

We know that children entering the Youth Justice System experience abuse, neglect, poverty, school exclusion, poorer health and overall disadvantage at levels that are disproportionate to the general 10-17 population.

This plan is underpinned and influenced by the Birmingham Children & Young Peoples Partnership, Change for Children & Young People: 2023 – 2028 Strategy. It is based upon what we know of our children, what we know of our city and its opportunities and challenges, our strengths as a service, and our areas for

¹ Reference here to Change for children and young people.

development². It is informed by what we hear from our staff, from our children, victims, and caregivers and what we know is happening across the wider partnership, locally and regionally.

As a YOS we aspire to be creative, different, and modern in its approaches. We will show care for those we work alongside. We will be tenacious in our efforts, we will believe in, and aspire high for, those we encounter, and we will continue to hold hope for them, where often we know they can find this difficult.

Despite the successes of the modernisation programme since 2021, this plan demonstrates and responds to the fact that we know there remains more for us to do. We know we must strengthen our work around those children who are over-represented within the youth justice system; we must improve access for victims of youth crime so that they can benefit from the support available; we have work to do to improve opportunities for collaboration and co-production with our children; we must improve how we are supporting our children resettling from custody and we must work with our staff to engage them and collaborate differently.

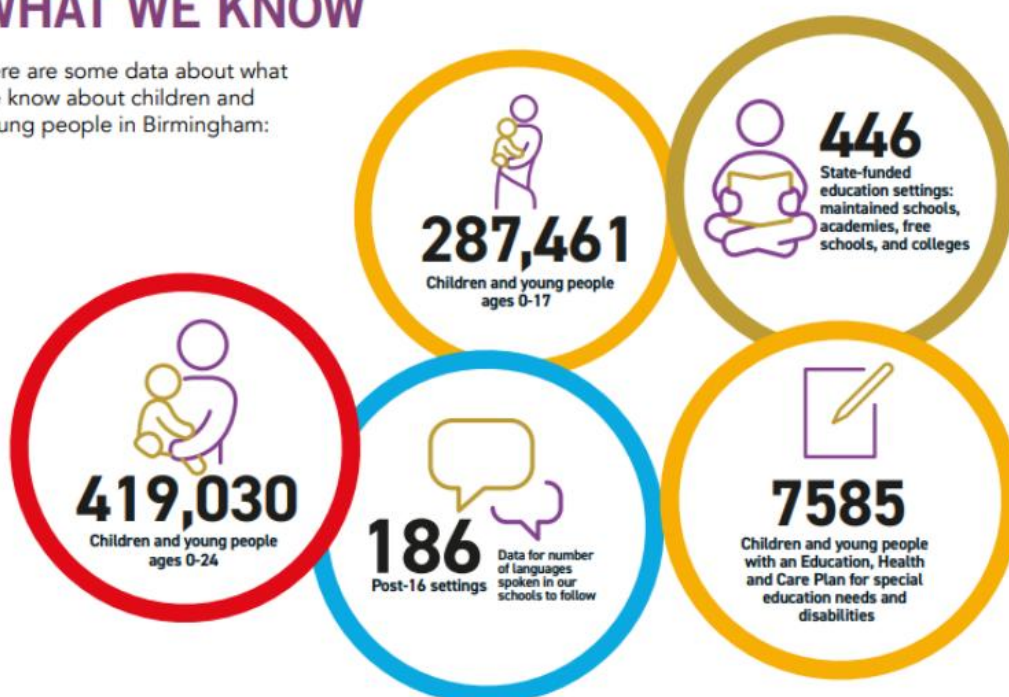
Our strategic plan is rightly ambitious. There is a clear set of priorities, underpinned by a vision, a strategy, and a detailed development plan, all of which has been informed by learning from the 2022 HMIP (HM Inspectorate of Probation) Inspection.

We remain committed to listening, reflecting, learning and to continuing to transform and modernise. We are determined to deliver the very best services to our children and their care givers, to victims of youth crime, to our partners and to our communities.

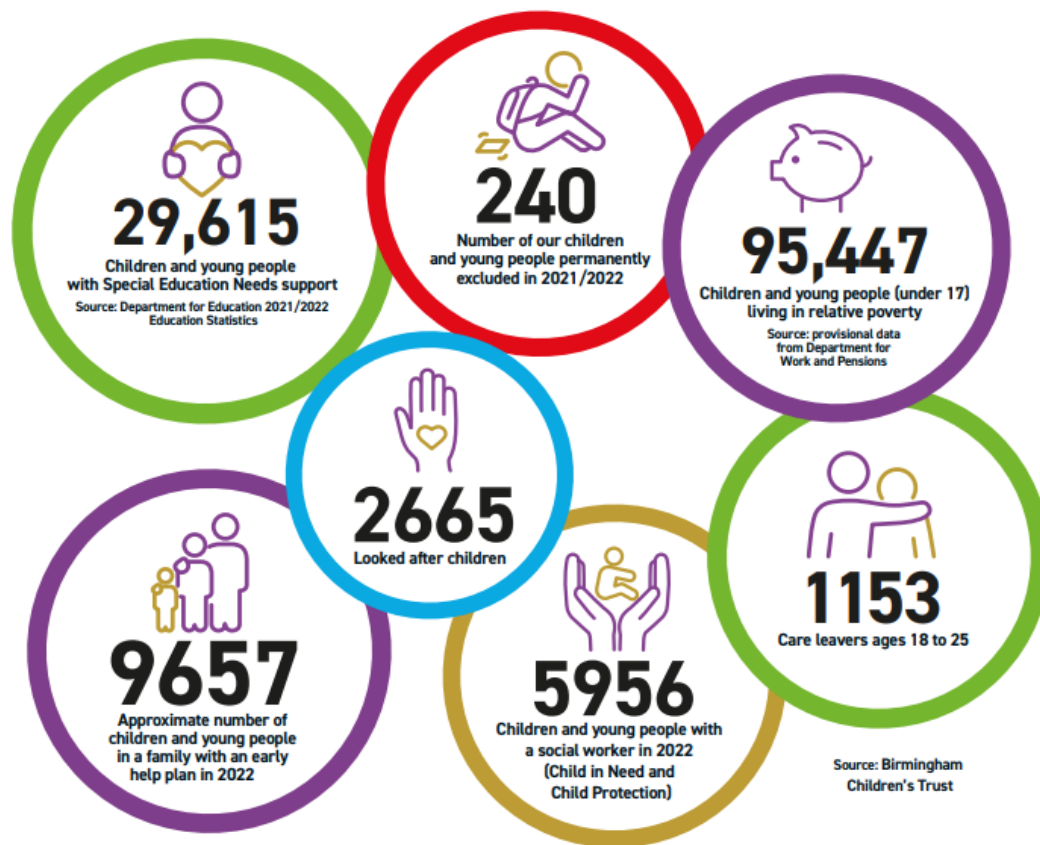
2. Knowing Birmingham and Our Children

WHAT WE KNOW

Here are some data about what we know about children and young people in Birmingham:



² [An inspection of youth offending services in Birmingham \(justiceinspectors.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk)



The local context is critically important when we consider the behaviour and offending committed by our children. As a diverse city, we recognise and understand that challenges and strengths can vary across our communities, and we seek to respond in a bespoke, place-based way.

However, for children at risk of offending or committing offences, we know that they face interconnected and complex challenges. These require multi-dimensional, systemic solutions. Within the youth justice sector and work across the wider partnership there has been a genuine attention paid to the impact of early childhood adversity and the risks these create in child development and lifelong outcomes.

It is widely accepted that children within the Youth Justice System have experienced disproportionate levels of trauma and adversity. We know that this does not mean children forfeit their right to be seen and treated as children, but there is work to do to ensure that this recognition is embedded across the partnership. Many children entering the Youth Justice System should themselves be considered and recognised as victims, either as a result of the exploitation of others, but also as victims of their life experiences.

3. What Do We Know About Our Children in the Youth Justice System?

More children are being diverted from the formal youth justice system and we are intervening earlier in Birmingham.

In 2022/23, 434 offences committed by 352 children resulted in 368 diversionary outcomes (Community Resolutions, Outcome 21 and 22). In comparison to 21/22:

- the number of offences resulting in diversionary outcomes represented an **increase** of 104.7% from 212.
- the number of children being diverted from the formal YJS (Youth Justice System) increased by 95.6% from 180 and
- the number of diversionary outcomes issued increased by 103.3% from 181.

Fewer children are entering the formal youth justice system in Birmingham.

In 2022/23, 585 'proven' offences resulted in 327 cautions or court outcome. 293 children committed these offences. In comparison to 2021/22:

- the number of proven offences **decreased by** 18.2% from 715.
- the number of children decreased by 9.3% from 323 and
- the number of outcomes decreased by 12.6% from 374.

In 2022/23 we worked with a total of 977 children. 332 of these children had not offended in 2022/23, but their involvement either continued into 2022/23, or they received an intervention through a preventative or Think Family Intervention during this time, neither of which are offence driven.

Of these 977 children:

- 84.0% were male, 15.5% female.
- 170 (18.6%) had a current or previous Child in Need Plan
- 111 (14.8%) had a current or previous Child Protection Plan
- 130 (14.3%) were currently or had previously been a looked after child.

The ethnicity our 977 children was broken down as follows:

	Number of children	% of 10 - 17 population	Children we worked with	% of 10 - 17 offending population
Asian or Asian British	39,459	33.5%	204	23.9%
Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African	12,633	10.7%	189	18.4%
Other ethnic group	2,804	2.4%	18	1.8%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	9,936	8.4%	156	16.0%
White	53,042	45.0%	377	38.6%
Not Recorded			33	1.0%
Total	117,874		977	

The Health of Our Children

In 2022/23 we assessed the health of 291 of our children using the AssetPlus assessment framework. This told us that:

- 246 (85.5%) were registered with a GP
- 39 (13.4%) children had an assessed physical health need.
- 161 (55.3%) children had an assessed substance misuse need.
- 163 (56.0%) children had an assessed mental health need.
- 176 (60.4%) children had an assessed speech and language need.

What Do Our Children Tell Us?

In the development of Change for Children and Young People: 2023-28 by the Birmingham Children and Young People's Partnership, 899 children and young people shared their views on what was important to them in the city. We know that it is important that we respond to this through our delivery.



In 2022/23, 314 children working with us completed a self-assessment. This information is used to help them to develop their 'My Plan'³. However, our understanding of the needs of our children influences our partnerships and commissioning priorities. It shapes 'what we do'. This is what our children told us about where they need our help and support:

I drink too much	17	5.4%
I get angry and lose my temper	205	65.3%
I have lost someone special from my life	125	39.8%
I have thought about hurting myself	26	8.3%
I have thought about killing myself	22	7.0%
I live with people who get into trouble	28	8.9%
I miss/missed school	130	41.4%
I take too many drugs	21	6.7%
I want help with reading	36	11.5%
I want help with writing	47	15.0%
My friends get into trouble	134	42.7%

4. Children First

As a partnership we are committed towards delivering a child first youth justice system in Birmingham, in line with the YJB's Child First Principles set out below.

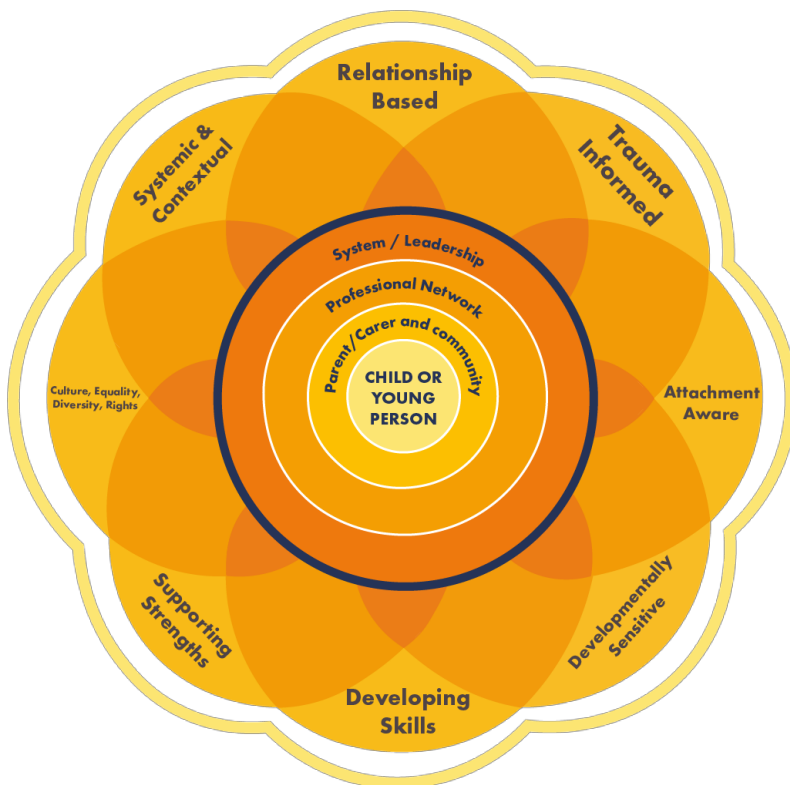
³ My Plan is the child's plan, which is co-created with the child with their caregiver. It sets out the priority support and intervention agreed, based on the child's assessment, and is reviewed a minimum of every 3 months. There is also a Moving on Plan at the end of our involvement, which again is co-created and focuses on achievements and successes, the support in place at the end of the child's work with our service and provides contact details for other supports.

As children	Prioritise the best interests of children and recognising their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential. All work is child-focused, developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children.
Building pro-social identity	Promote children's individual strengths and capacities to develop their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.
Collaborating with children	Encourage children's active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.
Diverting from stigma	Promote a childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system.

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The Trust Practice Model, which will be adopted across the wider partnership, aligns perfectly with these principles. It names the core elements that we need within our practice to **nurture** our children, to **counterbalance** the risks and vulnerabilities that are created by early childhood adversity and to allow professionals to **focus** on and **build** the counter-conditions that enable our children and their caregivers to thrive.

Children must be at the heart of all that we do: their voice, their felt and lived experiences, their individual story, their needs. We know however that they do not live in isolation. They live, grow, develop, and function in the context of relationships and communities. To become truly child first, trauma informed, trauma responsive, and relationship based in our approaches, we must work at all levels. This commitment must extend to organisational and culture change, leadership, front line practice and staff well-being.



⁴ https://yjresourcehub.uk/images/YJB/Child_First_Overview_and_Guide_April_2022_YJB.pdf

As we work with our children who are at risk of or involved in offending, we must remain curious.

- **How do we see behaviour and offending by children as symptomatic of their experiences, of their lived experiences, trauma, and adversity?**
- **How does this act as our driver for change around wider systems and practices within our service?**

Our Values

We will promote children's strengths and capacities to develop their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims by:

- Focussing on the root causes of childhood offending using a strengths-based, skills development approach to effect changes and protect communities.
- Holding the hope for those we work alongside.
- Championing those we work alongside and aspiring high for our children.
- Maximising opportunities for our children both internally and external through effective commissioning and partnership arrangements.

We will encourage children's active participation, engagement, and wider social inclusion by:

- creating opportunities for authentic participation and co-creation.
- Ensuring that children, their caregivers, and victims have assorted opportunities to influence how we work together and shape service development.

We will continue to promote a childhood removed from the justice system, through prevention and diversion by:

- Embedding and expanding our Prevention offer through the addition of Turnaround delivery.
- Proactively ensuring that at every opportunity children are prevented from entering or diverted from the youth justice system.

In all that we do, we will:

- Listen to the voice of the child, caregivers, and victims.
- Assess and analyse in a trauma informed and holistic way.
- Plan and work alongside children, caregivers, and victims.
- Understand and do all we can to break down structural barriers.
- Help to keep people safe from harm.
- Create opportunities for safe, supportive, and nurturing relationships.
- Support those we work alongside to develop a strong sense of self, identity, belonging and connection.
- Help children to understand and make sense of their experiences.
- Support those we work alongside to achieve, develop skills and benefit from new positive experiences.
- Prepare our children for adult life and support caregivers to make positive changes.
- Connect our children and families to community-based services and support.

We recognise that a child's behaviour is a form of communication. We understand that as professionals, it is

our responsibility to be curious, to get underneath their behaviour and to understand the root causes. This will be the golden thread through our development and transformation programme.

In addition to the local work happening within the City and Trust, the Youth Improvement Board (YIB), a subgroup to the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB), is driving developments at a regional level. Comprising of all agencies within the Youth Justice System, the YIB is determining key strategic priorities based on research, evidence, and data to ensure a more standardised approach for children, victims, and communities within the Police Force area. Trauma informed practices and child first principles underpin all of this activity.

5. Voice of our Children, Caregivers, and Victims

*Evidence tells us that children’s active participation supports desistance from offending.*⁵

We know this and as such have strengthened how we hear and respond to the voices of our children, victims and their caregivers and have retained this as a strategic priority in 23-28 (see plans as set out in section 8.1).

The appointment of a transformation and media apprentice will further allow us to develop innovative, age appropriate and accessible ways to promote engagement, participation, and co-creation opportunities within our service. We will develop age appropriate and accessible information for our children, victims and caregivers and we will work across the Partnership to maximise opportunities for joint work and collaboration in this area. Our new Partnership and Communities Lead will be taking a key role in developing the work in this area at a strategic and operational level.

How ‘We Be’ in our practice is a core component of our Practice Model. To promote engagement, we will:

- Develop safety, stability, consistency, and trust.
- Work in collaboration, treating people with compassion, care, dignity, and respect.
- Support co-regulation and co-creation of meaning.
- Have courageous conversations and make difficult decisions with honesty and transparency.
- Value the inevitability of relational rupture and repair.
- Understand that language matters.

This plan details some of the work started in 2022/23 and our ambition for 2023-28. Collaboration with those we work alongside, is not a discrete piece of work in its own right. It is woven through all of our priorities and will continue to influence our direction of travel and commissioning activity.

In 2022/23, many of our children provided us with feedback on how they found their involvement with our service.

Did you find it easy to go to your YOT (Youth Offending Team) appointments?	16 = no	110 = yes	
I know where to get help if I need it in the future	2 = no	94 = yes	
I worry about what might happen after I finish at the YOT	No = 81	Yes = 7	Sometimes = 10
There are things I find it difficult telling a worker about	No = 110	Yes = 16	A bit = 31

We asked them to think about the things that they had been doing with us and asked them: What helped you sort out any problems in your life?

⁵ [YJB business plan, 2023 to 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114444/yjb-business-plan-2023-to-2024.pdf)

- I have talked about what happened, my work with you about knives and victims and motivation.
- completing CV and registering at job centre and obtaining benefits, getting work.
- Having the support of a worker and having someone to talk things through and help me to see things clearer.
- Someone who always answered my calls.
- Talking about different things including my behaviour, offences, victims, how I am feeling, I was able to gain a skill working in the workshop.
- Taught me how to think differently and stay out of trouble. My worker explained to me about the law, dangers of carrying weapons, how to be safe and talking about my future and this was good for me.
- I was able to talk about any problems and encouraged to gain qualifications and supported when I found a job.
- Having someone who believed in me.
- School and the music project have given me something to do positive with my time.
- I was put in touch with mental health services. I was able to talk to people about what I was going through.
- Getting onto the apprenticeship has been the biggest help, my family respect me.
- I have learned how my actions affect others.
- Road Peace⁶ helped with perspective taking.

We asked them to tell us what things in their lives had got better?

- i feel i have become a lot calmer that i used to be, before I would have walked off if we were having a conversation, now i feel comfortable talking to you.
- I have completed my first year at college and I have started an Applied Science course.
- I have a part time job; I have stopped offending and I have stopped drinking and smoking cannabis as much.
- My relationship with father and other family members have got better.
- I feel more confident in myself, and I have a girlfriend.
- I have finished at imedia school and have a chance of getting into Erdington skill centre to complete a construction course.
- I have been diagnosed with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder), and sleep disorder; I am receiving medication and support to help me.
- I have got more independent; I go out more by myself.
- I have the support of the Liaison and Diversion team helping me to learn skills, cook and budget.
- I've changed my life; I realised that my friends were not good for me.
- I'm going to boxing and I have got myself onto an apprenticeship.

One of our Parents told us:

"I would like to say thank you for all the help and support. My son's attendance has improved a lot... After you spoke to the school, they have called me and discussed his behaviour. Also, I would like to thank you for getting his reference for college. Thank you for all your help and support. Overall, I am so happy that I had someone like you to support me in these difficult times. Once again thank you".

Victims told us:

*"The YOS Victim Worker had a positive impact on *victim* and *victim* was comfortable sharing things that she wouldn't have before." Professional, supporting victim of youth crime.*

"Fantastic Victim Worker, very supportive and dedicated to make sure we understood and were aware of everything," victim of youth crime.

"All of it was excellent. Great. Very caring. We didn't know this service was available". Partner of Victim of youth crime.

⁶ <https://www.roadpeace.org/> The National Charity for Road Crash Victims

*“When the incident happened *victim* was 82 and it was their birthday. After the work delivered by the YOS, the child who caused harm bought *victim* a new walking stick. They also wrote a letter of apology. *Victim* was over the moon with the apology and the walking stick” Family member of victim of youth crime.*

“I want to thank you and your team for arranging this today and all the work that you do..... throughout this entire process your worker is the only one who has listened to me and treated me like I was a human.” Victim of youth crime

Based on what we have heard in 2023-24, we will:

- **Sustain** the commissioning arrangements around ETE activity.
- **Increase** our investment into our Music Project.
- **Develop** further opportunities for internal skills-based learning.
- **Continue** to upskill practitioners in restorative, relational and trauma informed practices, weaving this through policies, procedures, and practice expectations.
- **Sustain** arrangements around the Forensic Psychologist and continue to **improve** pathways into emotional and mental health support.
- **Continue** to deliver bespoke services and support to care-givers and victims of youth crime.

In 2023/24: We will develop Participation and co-creation opportunities with all the people we provide services to

Scope out and establish an Interventions Hub, which will include staff with a specific participation and co-creation remit. Longer term, the vision is that this Hub will provide a single point of access for interventions for all of our children, bringing together Trust, YOS partnership, and our commissioned services under a single front door and referral mechanism. This will be influenced by the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) Toolkit, which contains evidence of what works in reducing offending.⁷

Progress the 'A Safe Youth Justice Service?' Research project. This research is a collaboration between Birmingham Childrens Trust Youth Offending Service and University of Birmingham. The purpose is to help understand children's perceptions and experiences of safety in connection with their involvement with us, encompassing their journeys and the full range of appointments/contacts they participate in. It will also inform of any changes needed to improve children's safety in this context.

Train more children and young people to take part in interview panels and create separate interview panels.

Deliver children's forums to hear from our children on topics, chosen by them. The plan is to undertake three forums per year in school holidays supported by our social media apprentice.

Support Birmingham children to get involved in the West Midlands Youth Assembly organised by Positive Futures and West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership.

Involve our children in the making of podcasts, leaflets, social media content and training materials.

Involve our children in the development of questionnaires that helps us to find out information.

Invest resource and appoint to a Partnership and Communities Lead to support participation and co-creation.

Contribute to the Trust's Participation and Engagement Strategy and produce our own supporting procedure document. We will develop a 'you said.... We did....' approach to feedback that we receive.

6. Governance, Leadership, and Partnership Arrangements

Youth Offending Teams were established under the statutory provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Act sets out the requirement for local Youth Offending Teams and primary duties on key agencies and individuals involved in the delivery and governance of those services. Over time, the governance and leadership of youth justice services, though Youth Justice Management or Partnership Boards have evolved and within Birmingham this journey continues. As a Birmingham Youth Offending Service Partnership, we have retained a distinct Partnership Board and members have strong cross cutting connections across a wide range of local and regional partnership arrangements.

Birmingham Youth Offending Service sits within Birmingham Children's Trust (BCT), a wholly owned company of Birmingham City Council. Working in close partnership, together with our partners we work to improve outcomes for children in the city.

In recognition of the scale of Birmingham YOS, we have a Head of Service with sole responsibility for the delivery of local youth justice services. We have a Senior Leadership Team and a large Operational Leadership Team. Collectively they are leading and driving service developments.

⁷ [Youth Endowment Fund Toolkit](#)

6.1 The Board

The primary duty of our management board is to ensure appropriate youth justice services are in place within the local authority area. There are different local arrangements that will ensure appropriate governance and oversight of youth justice services.

- leadership and oversight of justice services for children
- contributing to local multi-agency strategies and work with local and national criminal justice organisations
- safeguarding children who receive youth justice services⁸

The Birmingham Youth Offending Service Partnership Board meets four times per year and is chaired by an independent chair, a decision taken in 2021/22 and an arrangement that will continue in 2023/24. We will continue to regularly review our Board representation to ensure that it remains appropriate and is well placed to oversee the delivery of this plan.

6.2 Board Development

We are committed to developing our governance arrangements and our Board members.

Practice and Development Meetings are facilitated to provide opportunity for more in depth discussion and deep dives into key areas of practice as identified and agreed by Board members. These sessions involve our staff, managers and members of the senior leadership team who can discuss and explore key areas of practice in depth with our board members. These will continue into 2023-24, starting in July 2023 with an overview of our Serious Incident and Safeguarding Procedures.

Each area of focus within this plan has a strategic lead within our Service, together with at least one Board member as sponsor. Working together, and in between meetings, their role is to drive forward the development activity required. Specifically, our sponsor Board members:

- Provide a key point of contact at board level for discussion and consultation for lead officers.
- Champion at board level developments linked to the area.
- Co-deliver updates at board meetings where possible.
- Take an active interest and shared ownership of practice and developments in the area.

Development conversations continue to take place between the Board Chair and Board Members on a one-to-one basis, twice yearly. These provide opportunities for individual discussion, reflection, and the identification of development opportunities.

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-justice-service-governance-and-leadership/youth-justice-service-governance-and-leadership#statutory-requirements-arrangements-and-structures>

In 2023-24: We will develop governance, communication, accountability, and professional responsibility across our Service.

Approve our Communications Strategy including a full review of existing meetings and communications channels.

Board members will commit to contribute to one 'Meet the YOS Board' meeting per year.

Establish a Staff Engagement and Consultation Group

Establish a Partnership board Newsletter.

Develop a document that assists our staff in understanding governance and leadership roles and responsibilities. From Partnership Board level through to operational management.

Provide and promote opportunities for Operational Managers to attend the Partnership Board and to present on key areas of practice.

Review and share widely the Partnership Board Terms of Reference.

Continue to deliver the Welcome to the YOS sessions, hosted by the Head of Service and Board Chair.

Ensure that our staff have access to relevant Board reports and performance information.

6.3 Partnership Arrangements

In addition to the partnership arrangements that support frontline practice, we are represented as a Service within a wide range of local and regional partnerships. These provide opportunities for helpful conversations and planning at operational and strategic partnership level in support of achieving improved outcomes for children. Our attendance or representation within these forums, supports the delivery of this plan and our strategic priorities. These include:

Birmingham Childrens Trust Equalities and Diversity Group*	West Midlands Local Criminal Justice Board*
Birmingham Community Safety Partnership*	West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership Strategic Board*
Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Partnership*	West Midlands Youth Improvement Board*
Birmingham Children and Young People's Mental Health Transformation Board*	West Midlands Trauma Informed Coalition: Strategic Governance Group*
Birmingham Prevent Strategic Board*	West Midlands Strategic Criminal Exploitation and Missing Board
Birmingham Channel Panel	West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership Commissioning Subgroup
Birmingham Violence Reduction Board*	West Midlands Violence Reduction Sports Partnership Board
Birmingham Serious Youth Violence Steering Group*	West Midlands Head of Youth Offending Strategic Leads Group*
Birmingham Contextual Safeguarding Board*	Youth Justice Board Midlands Developing Practice Forum
Birmingham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub Partnership Forum*	
Birmingham's Fair Access Governance Board*	
Birmingham Tackling School Exclusions Partnership*	
Birmingham S.A.F.E. Taskforce Steering Group*	

*Includes representation from the BYOS (Birmingham Youth Offending Service) Partnership Board

7. Our Resources and Services

In 2023-24, the YOS Partnership total budget is £9,946,575. The table below shows the breakdown from the

statutory partnership.

Funding Source	Staffing Budget 2022-23	Payments in Kind 2022-23	Other Delegated Funds 2022-23	Total
Birmingham Children’s Trust	£3,557,641	£0	£665,685	£4,223,326
Police	£598,616	£0	£0	£598,616
Police & Crime Commissioner	£117,843	£0	£157,157	£275,000
*Probation	£153,417	£0	£15,000	£168,417
*Health	£253,327	£0	£0	£253,327
Youth Justice Board	£2,439,382	£0	£0	£2,439,382
MOJ (Ministry of Justice) (Turnaround Programme)	£316,051	£0	£345,135	£661,186
Other sources of funding	£1,229,321	£0	£98,000	£1,327,321
Total	£8,665,598	£0	£1,280,977	£9,946,575

*2023/24 Funding level is still to be confirmed

Whilst we await confirmation of a number of funding streams, there is no indication at this stage that these will be reduced. Should funding levels change, planning and delivery will be reviewed to consider any resulting impact, ensuring we are delivering services within the confines of the overall budget.

- The remand budget is held external to the YOS.
- The West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner grant is underpinned by a detailed spending plan that is reported on quarterly.
- The MOJ Turnaround Programme, has a detailed delivery plan and is being overseen operationally by a dedicated newly appointed programme coordinator.
- The partnership continues to receive a local financial contribution under the Supporting Families programme. This allows us to take a systemic approach to working with children. It provides opportunity for continued engagement and support at the end of statutory involvement.

We use our combined budget, as set out, to fully fund the delivery of local youth justice services, including all commissioned services. Our spending plans and commissioning arrangements are informed by what we know about and hear from our children, strategic needs assessments and local and regional priorities. Our intention is that all spend, delivery and development plans, as detailed within this strategy, will have a positive impact on our children, victims, and caregivers and on their ability to achieve positive outcomes.

Any changes to budget will result in review of operational models of delivery and revised spending plans.

8. What Did We Do in 2022-23?

In 2021-22, we set out the beginnings of an ambitious plan to begin to develop and modernise the delivery of youth justice services in Birmingham. This work was underpinned by a detailed development plan, which had been informed by the findings on the 2020 HMIP Inspection and subsequently internal assessments of the quality of practice.

This developmental work continued into 2022-23 and in December 2022, we were again inspected by HMIP. Our 23-28 strategy and programmes of work set out within this document, have responded to the findings and recommendations of the HMIP 2022 inspection alongside our own continued programme of internal

assessments of practice.

8.1 We started our work to improve how we hear the voices of those we work alongside.

What did we do?	What did this achieve?	How have our children benefitted from this?
<p>Included voice of the child and caregiver as part of the learning exercises and audits carried out.</p> <p>Continued as a member of the Trust wide Participation and Engagement working Group working on a Trust Participation and Engagement Strategy.</p> <p>Developed and implemented new case planning processes to ensure there are effective co-produced My Plans.</p> <p>Consulted with children on the development of the My Plan, they told us which picture best represented Birmingham and gave positive feedback on the format of the document.</p> <p>Trained several children and young people to support recruitment and selection processes.</p>	<p>Allows children and caregivers to provide the auditor with their feedback to enable a comparison with evidence/information in the child's record.</p> <p>We are aligned and included in wider Trust work and including the Trust Participation Strategy.</p> <p>Our managers are clear about the expectations of supporting staff with case planning to ensure relevant services and referral are in hand and My Plan being completed. Our staff are clear about expectation around planning and the need for a co-creation plan with the child.</p> <p>Eleven staff were recruited by panels that included a young person as part of the interview panel.</p>	<p>It is another method of getting valuable feedback to inform change.</p> <p>Their voices and feedback will be systemically incorporated in all appropriate aspects of our work.</p> <p>Appropriate referrals and services for children, caregivers and victims are identified and progressed.</p> <p>My Plans are more meaningful for children, easier for them to understand and co-create.</p> <p>Children, victims, and caregivers feel heard and valued which in turn strengthens restorative and relationship-based practice.</p>

8.2 We started to develop our understanding and plans to help us tackle disproportionality within our Service.

What did we do?	What did this achieve?	How have our children benefitted from this?
<p>Delivered training to YOS staff around equality, diversity, unconscious racism.</p> <p>Developed a daily triage system for the monitoring of children charged to court.</p> <p>Seconded two of our staff to the EmpowerU hub to strengthen collaboration and planning around children who are being exploited.</p> <p>Updated quality assurance tools, assessment tools, PSR (Pre Sentence Report) templates to ensure that adultification and ethnic disparity are considered and ensure a child first approach.</p> <p>Included ethnicity in our Virtual School Register to improve our ability to monitor school exclusions by ethnicity.</p> <p>Reviewed Our Over-Represented Children Working Group</p> <p>Ensured team briefing and meeting agendas include sections on Equality and Diversity to ensure this is kept “alive” with all staff throughout their daily work.</p> <p>We strengthened our work with the Trust Equality and Diversity Manager</p> <p>Developed and launched a PSR feedback form for magistrates and Judges that captures the child’s ethnicity and concordance with recommendations.</p> <p>Our children and staff participated in two research studies: Traverse via YJB (Youth Justice Board) (Understanding ethnic disproportionality in reoffending rates in the youth justice system) and the Centre for Justice Innovation (youth diversion and disparity)</p> <p>Updated Prevention and OOC assessments to incorporate questions on discrimination</p>	<p>Staff are more culturally aware and responsive. They are better placed to diversify practice to engage our children, victims, and caregivers.</p> <p>There is a stronger focus on diversity, in planning, reviewing and practice.</p> <p>We have been proactive in conversations with CPS (Crown Prosecution Service), Judiciary, and legal representatives. This has led to Increased numbers of children diverted from Court. Thirty-six diversions in 2022-23 from Court received OOC (Out of Court Disposals).</p> <p>Our Head of Service was instrumental in securing regional buy in for the development of an OOC Protocol, to improve practice and consistency across the region.</p> <p>Our staff now attend Equalities Forum, Culture Change, Equalities and Diversity Service Group, and Workforce Delivery Group for Managers.</p> <p>Over-representation of children in care was agreed as a priority for the regional YIB in 2023-24.</p> <p>We have a better understanding of our disproportionality data overall, which is shaping service development across all priorities.</p>	<p>Children and caregivers have felt better understood and supported by us acting as advocates.</p> <p>This has helped ensure proportionate, fair sentences are given by the Court based on accurate, meaningful assessments.</p> <p>This has helped ensure the quality of the Reports being submitted to Court and enables us to monitor sentencing patterns from magistrates and Judges.</p>

8.3 We developed and launched our prevention offer.

What did we do?	What did this achieve?	How have our children benefitted from this?
<p>Developed and established the Prevention Team.</p> <p>Appointed to all positions and developed criteria, pathways, and assessment tools.</p> <p>Established links with third sector organisations who are delivering diversionary interventions and activities.</p> <p>Birmingham Alternative Provision (AP) Taskforce is based and managed in the City of Birmingham (COB) Pupil Referral Units. We seconded 3 Prevention Officers into this taskforce.</p> <p>We developed our AA (Appropriate Adult) service and co-located our staff with WMP (West Midlands Police) at Perry Barr custody suite,</p> <p>Accepted the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Turnaround grant and mobilised in preparation for the project. Successfully appointed a Turnaround Coordinator and three Turnaround Prevention Officers.</p> <p>Developed an Operational Model for the delivery of Turnaround locally, underpinned by a robust spending plan, presenting this to the MOJ.</p>	<p>The partnership teams based at the custody suite have met regularly to ensure effective joint working and the development of a clear custody triage checklist to ensure children are seen by the right professional at the right time.</p> <p>Earlier conversations are taking place around children in custody, this means prevention and diversion opportunities can be explored.</p> <p>We received a West Midlands Police Commander's Award for the collaborative work at Perry Barr custody suite.</p> <p>Since 5th December 2023 76 children have been 'connected' to our prevention team, with thirty-seven children meeting the criteria and receiving an offer of support.</p>	<p>the thirty-seven children and their caregivers we are now working with would previously not have received any support/guidance. They are prevented from entering the formal system.</p> <p>Improved links with community services mean children can be linked into support services as part of their Moving on Plan. There are now more options for all children arrested for the first time as opposed to simply through Police or Court route, our children will receive support and guidance earlier.</p> <p>Improved links and relationships with neighbourhood police and housing in terms of tackling ASB (Anti Social Behaviour). Prevention staff involved with this means the offer of support from this team is reaching more families and community organisations, we know that early intervention at the right time can reduce offending and reoffending.</p>

8.4 We improved our out of court work.

What did we do?	What did this achieve?	How have our children benefitted from this?
<p>Delivered a full review of the local OOC processes.</p> <p>Refreshed the local policy.</p> <p>Developed practice expectations for staff and a specific, child first trauma informed assessment with West Midlands Police.</p> <p>Our Head of Service led on the development of a Regional OOC Protocol to promote consistency within the force area.</p>	<p>Our staff had an opportunity to get involved in the development of new assessment tools and other relevant documents.</p> <p>The revised and bespoke assessment tool begins with the child first, incorporates their voice, includes the risk and desistance matrix from AssetPlus and includes a co-produced plan. The result is a high-quality system, which is professional, child first, trauma informed, and victim focused.</p> <p>The revised Panel processes leads to timely joint decision making and seeks to achieve the right outcome for the child, which aims to prevent re-offending.</p> <p>There is greater clarity and scrutiny around prevention and diversionary outcomes for children.</p> <p>More children are receiving diversionary outcomes as a result of the developmental work.</p> <p>Fewer children are becoming first time entrants to the Youth Justice System in Birmingham.</p> <p>The revised panels have increased the use of Outcome 22 and CR's where appropriate as opposed to issuing formal YC/YCC, resulting in a fall in FTE's.</p> <p>Evidence of distance travelled in Domain 3 (OOC) from 2020 HMIP Inspection to 2023: Overall increase in four points within this domain alone, and improved ratings across the board.</p>	<p>Swifter, more proportionate and fairer outcomes for our children.</p> <p>Trauma of attending Court and entering the formal criminal justice system reduced for many children due to these diversionary outcomes.</p>

8.5 We worked to ensure that all of our children had access to education, training or employment that was appropriate and responsive to their needs.

What did we do?	What did this achieve?	How did our children benefit?
<p>Recommissioned school age Education Engagement Support mentors.</p> <p>We have expanded the ETE Re-engagement programme to also include extended work experience placements.</p> <p>Continued to deliver Skill Mill employment scheme, investing in additional supervisor resource to provide the best opportunities, and learning for our children.</p> <p>Invested in our Music Studio Project with the appointment of a full time Lyric writer and MC this year.</p> <p>We create opportunities for our children to perform at music showcase events, often their first time performing in front of an audience.</p>	<p>Our staff have access to full time, dedicated mentors embedded full time within our frontline teams.</p> <p>Of the sixteen children who started Skill Mill 15 have not re-offended (in the 12-month tracking period from starting on Skill Mill). We remain one of the best performing Skill Mill initiatives in the country based on completion rates and with a 94% non-reoffending rate.</p> <p>The Skill Mill have delivered re-generation projects, worked with Park Rangers, and support a local environmental recycling company one day a week. This company has since offered employment opportunities to our children as a progression pathway.</p> <p>Children working with our Music Studio Project have been recognised by the Koestler Awards for the quality of the music being produced. In addition, we hold two music performance events every year to highlight their work and talent.</p>	<p>Our children have additional opportunities through the ETE re-engagement programme to develop employability skills.</p> <p>Since the commencement of Skill Mill, thirteen of the sixteen children successfully completed their period of employment, and all have achieved their AQA qualification.</p> <p>So far six of the sixteen children have successfully progressed on to further ETE at the end of their employment. The remainder, who are still open to YOS, are being supported to secure their next opportunity.</p> <p>Eight children participating in the Studio Project received Koestler awards for their work.</p> <p>Fourteen children have performed at our Music showcase events.</p> <p>One ex-participant of the Studio Project is about to secure a full-time apprenticeship, to work as part of the Music Project team through the Birmingham Children’s Trust Care Leaver Apprenticeship scheme.</p>

8.6 We worked to better understand and respond to the health needs of our children.

What did we do	What difference has it made?	How did our children benefit?
<p>Established a Health Subgroup with Terms of Reference and 'gold standards' agreed as deliverables.</p> <p>Participated within wider partnership Boards and groups to align Health subgroup activity with cross-cutting partnership activities.</p> <p>Appointed an Operational Health Lead.</p> <p>SaLT (Speech and Language Therapists) Service Specification was revised so that it aligns with our service vision and priorities.</p> <p>Decided that we would directly recruit Speech and Language Therapists (SaLTs).</p> <p>Forensic psychologist was appointed on secondment arrangement supported by Forward Thinking Birmingham.</p> <p>Revised FTB (Forward Thinking Birmingham) offer and delivery model to improve clarity and access for children.</p> <p>Introduced a performance management framework to provide effective management oversight.</p> <p>Developed a pilot project with Birmingham's Rape & Sexual Violence Project (RSVP) to deliver counselling services to children who have been sexually harmed and who have also caused sexual harm.</p> <p>Worked with Aquarius⁹ to shape enhanced offer to children, victims and care givers affected by substance misuse, including exploration of co-located models of delivery.</p> <p>Revised the referral pathways and delivery offer within HSB (Healthy, Safe, Behaviours) Team to provide a graduated Service, responsive to need, and aligned with existing Right Help, Right Time framework.</p> <p>Developed new role of Partnership Link Worker within the HSB team</p>	<p>Clear processes and provision offer now developed for Aquarius; Forward Thinking Birmingham; School Nurse partnerships; MST (Multi Systemic Therapy).</p> <p>We have more robust performance management that has led to improvements in referrals for our children.</p> <p>Increased the percentage of children who have received a speech and language screening from 38.5% in 21-22 to 75.8% in 2022-23.</p> <p>Increased the percentage of children being referred to substance misuse services from 28.1% in 21-22 to 55.3% in 2022-23.</p> <p>Increased the percentage of children connected to mental health services from 28.1% in 21-22 to 48.2% in 2022-23</p> <p>Better identification of health needs through increased percentage of children having SALT (Speech and Language Therapists) checklist completed and introduction of specialist consultations with health service providers to enable better understanding of any health concerns presented.</p> <p>developed opportunities for CASS (Children's Advice and Support Service) and Children's Social Care to consult with HSB Partnership Link Worker re key decisions including thresholding.</p> <p>Increased the number of children, referred appropriately across the partnership into the HSB Team.</p>	<p>Children's needs are being better assessed and understood which in turn improves engagement with children and enables us to support them more robustly.</p> <p>More children are now being supported into accessing relevant services to address their health needs</p>

⁹ <https://aquarius.org.uk/our-services/young-peoples-services/birmingham-yp/>

8.7 We worked to ensure that services to victims, including child victims, were considered in all cases, and delivered well.

What did we do	What difference has it made?	How did our children and victims benefit?
<p>Delivered Best Practice RJ (Restorative Justice) training day alongside Oxford YJS</p> <p>Delivered three rounds of Volunteer recruitment and Panel Matters training.</p> <p>Ensured that the new Out of Court (OOC) Processes included the attendance of Restorative Practice Workers (RPWs) at OOC panels.</p> <p>Established new processes around victim contact by West Midlands Police Officers.</p> <p>established new victim feedback process. This includes an online option to provide feedback.</p> <p>Strengthened our regional links with West Midlands Police Restorative Justice Hub; Witness Care; PCC (Police and Crime Commissioner) Victims and Witness Delivery Group; West Midlands Fire Service; BCT Family Group Conference team; Road Peace</p> <p>Attended and hosted the Victims APPG (All Party Parliamentary Group) in May 2022</p> <p>established 2x ROVOL posts to provide dedicated focus on Panel coordination and Volunteer recruitment and supervision.</p> <p>Established Quarterly Newsletters with updates are sent out to all staff.</p>	<p>Increased the number of trained volunteer panel members.</p> <p>Road Peace mosaic created and donated to Road Peace and is in St Martins in the Bullring</p> <p>Road Peace mosaic has been entered into the Koestler Awards in London</p>	<p>Children supported in more restorative way to help them feel heard and empowered to engage with activities to repair harm.</p> <p>Children able to attend panels in as timely a way as possible.</p> <p>Victims supported in more restorative way to help them feel heard and empowered; to have their views represented in panels and in the planning of activities to repair harm.</p> <p>Victims becoming better informed of the services provided by us and more able to consider uptake of these services.</p>

8.8 We developed our approaches to the multi-agency management of risk and safety and well-being.

What did we do	What difference has it made?	How did our children benefit?
<p>Invited HMYOI Werrington to be a core member of our YOS Partnership Board</p> <p>Developed a quarterly report on Serious and notifiable Incidents to our Strategic Partnership Board</p> <p>Developed, consulted on, and launched a new risk reduction policy.</p> <p>Actively sought an AYM (Association of YOT Managers) Peer Review following the implementation of the Risk Reduction policy.</p> <p>Established a risk register, accessible to all managers.</p> <p>Developed a revised Serious Safeguarding and Public Protection Incidents procedure.</p> <p>Continued as an active member of the Birmingham Violence Reduction Board</p> <p>Established regional curfew management meetings.</p> <p>Updated the MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) information available to all staff via our Intranet.</p> <p>Reviewed our Pre-Sentence Report protocol. Strengthened risk mapping of children with EmpowerU and HMYOI Werrington</p> <p>Seconded two Officers into EmpowerU Exploitation Hub</p> <p>Regional TACT meetings established.</p>	<p>5 Internal Learning Reviews completed that have helped improve practice both on an individual and service wide basis. Example: we developed new curfew management guidance and establishment of the regional curfew meeting with the Police, EMS (Electronic Monitoring Service) and all local YOS's</p> <p>Partnership Board are now updated and aware of all serious incidents in Birmingham that have been notified to the YJB on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Our staff have a clear framework around the expectations where there is elevated risk.</p> <p>There is appropriate senior leadership oversight and attendance in Local Risk and MAPPA panels.</p> <p>Our staff in EmpowerU, has strengthened intelligence sharing, processes, information exchange and mapping work. It has also reduced the burden on our practitioners attending a daily multi agency meeting.</p> <p>Through the regional TACT meetings, we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • created new practice expectations to improve our Appropriate Adult delivery and the quality of the arrest and interview preparation. • strengthened the information exchange and working relationships with the Police and National Security Division and work has begun to make the custody suite even more child friendly. 	<p>This has helped build an effective working relationship with HMYOI Werrington, so any issues experienced by our children there are addressed in a timelier manner.</p> <p>This has helped identify any patterns resulting in serious incidents that the partnership can address to reduce future children being involved or harmed in serious incidents.</p> <p>This will help ensure that every child subject to our risk reduction policy has accurate, timely and robust risk assessments that help reduce the risks posed to and from our children.</p> <p>This will help ensure that the partnership is best placed to understand and reduce violence committed to and by our children.</p> <p>By working with our various partners across Birmingham, we have developed and strengthened how we work with our children, how we receive information about our children and how we move them towards a safe, crime free future.</p>

8.9 We worked to better understand current resettlement practice and develop our approaches to constructive resettlement for our children.

What did we do	What difference has it made?	How did our children benefit?
<p>Invited HMYOI Werrington to be a core member of our Partnership Board</p> <p>Improved the quality of pre-sentence reports and management oversight.</p> <p>Developed a Resettlement practice overview as an interim position for all staff.</p> <p>Established quarterly Resettlement meetings with the VRP (Violence Reduction Partnership) and Choices Resettlement Project.</p> <p>Carried out an audit of resettlement practices.</p> <p>Developed Local ISS (Intensive Supervision & Surveillance) standards to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children subject to ISS (including post release from custody) and their caregivers are clear about the expectations on them including triggers for warnings/breach and the support available/in place. • Our staff and managers know and understand the importance of supporting engagement and being clear and transparent with children and caregivers around the requirements and expectations of ISS. 	<p>We are available to attend Review of Restraint Meetings, where Birmingham children are being discussed.</p> <p>We have learned from the resettlement audit about What is working well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assessments on the child’s safety and well-being were appropriate for most children. • The assessments on the level of risk of serious harm that the child presents to others was appropriate on most children. <p>We have also learned what needs to be developed/improved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development work on resettlement plans required to ensure they include the seven pathways to resettlement. • Improvement in management oversight in relation to resettlement standards. • Improvement in review assessments whilst children are in custody. <p>All children being released have the option of a mentor to support their transition making into the community.</p> <p>There is now more robust oversight of the support offered to children being released from custody.</p> <p>Our new PSR feedback process from the Courts provided helpful insights to help improve practice. In 2022-23 a total of 23 Feedback forms were completed. Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fourteen recommendations were followed in full. • Six recommendations were followed in part. • Seventeen reports were rated good or excellent. <p>As a result of this feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Quality Assurance tool was streamlined. • The PSR (Pre-Sentence Report) template was amended to strengthen the advice and guidance it contains around writing proposals. • A new flowchart for PSR authors was created to flag key tasks and considerations 	<p>This has helped ensure our children do not feel alone when they are released.</p> <p>This has helped ensure the support being offered is fit for purpose and is offering the children when they need to successfully resettle back into the community.</p>

8.10 We professionalised our approaches to learning and development, establishing and delivering an audit programme and workforce development plan.

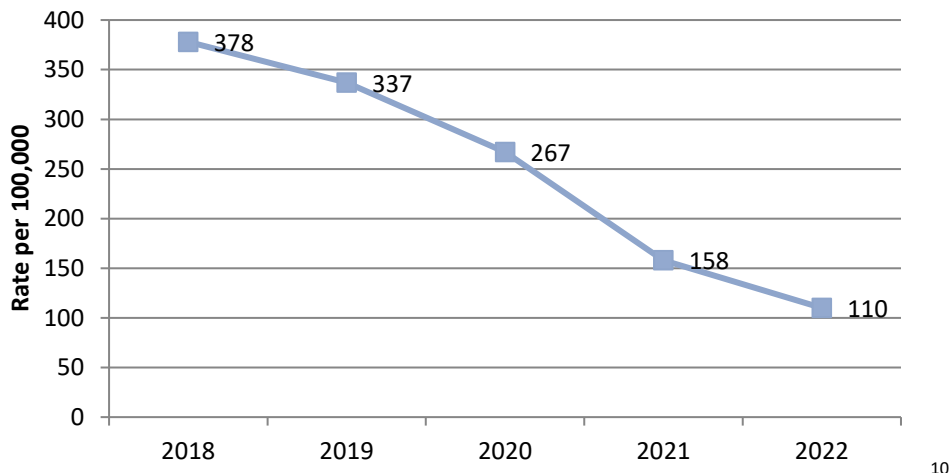
In 2022-23 we	What difference did this make?	How did our children benefit?
<p>Invested additional resource with the appointment of an additional Practice Development Manager</p> <p>Commissioned and delivered a range of workforce development opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate Adult training • Serious Youth Violence training for all staff • Practice Supervisor Development Programme for managers • Childhood Adversity and Trauma informed Practice • Restorative Practice • Grief, Loss, and Traumatic Stress for frontline staff. • Panel Matters for new volunteer panel members. <p>Established a programme of Practitioner and Manager forums.</p> <p>Improved the internal Induction programme for all new staff.</p> <p>Delivered a programme of audit activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision Audit • Resettlement Audit • 2 Local Learning Reviews • Several individual review exercises to support staff development and practice improvement. <p>Developed Practice Guidance and expectations documents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of AssetPlus Quality Assurance Tool • Creation of new planning expectations and new My Plan • Creation of new process to ensure that children can maintain appropriate and safe contact with family and community when in custody 	<p>A workforce who are developing their understanding of the root of SYV (Serious Youth Violence) in Birmingham, the experiences of children, caregivers and communities impact and more effective ways to provide support and illicit change.</p> <p>Managers are aware of the vital role of supervision of in staff development and have started to develop more effective supervisory practice.</p> <p>A workforce who are becoming trauma aware and informed and able to understand and start to demonstrate restorative practice in all their interactions with children, caregivers, colleagues, and partners.</p> <p>A workforce who are continuing to develop their understanding of the impact of grief and loss on children and caregivers and they can better support them.</p> <p>Staff feedback from the recent training on Grief and Loss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Made us realise that bereavement and loss can be talked about in same way as other difficulties.</i> • <i>Reinforced I was doing well in my job.</i> • <i>Relevant to current trends and our work</i> • <i>Like the formulation</i> <p>Staff and managers have a safe space to discuss practice issues and increase their understanding of policy, procedures and local. expectations in areas where developments are identified and requested by them.</p> <p>Audits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the need to evidence staff performance and sickness and improve adhered to BCT process. • Identify the need for managers to have more effective reflective conversations. • The need to use supervision data more effectively to improve practice. <p>Informed areas of improvement needed around resettlement work.</p> <p>Identified the need for several staff to receive practice improvement/performance support.</p>	<p>Our children benefit from a quicker response to AA requests and are supported by experience and trained staff when in police custody.</p> <p>Our children are helped to understand the legal processes and their care needs are monitored and supported by AA in custody suites</p>

9. Our National Indicator Performance

9.1 Reducing the Number of First-Time Entrants

First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the criminal justice system are those children (aged 10 - 17), who received their first caution or conviction within a given period.

FTE per 100,000 (Jan - Dec)



We have continued, year on year, to reduce the number of children becoming a first-time entrant. We are performing better than the England and Wales average (148 per 100,000) and our Youth Justice Service Family (205 per 100,000).

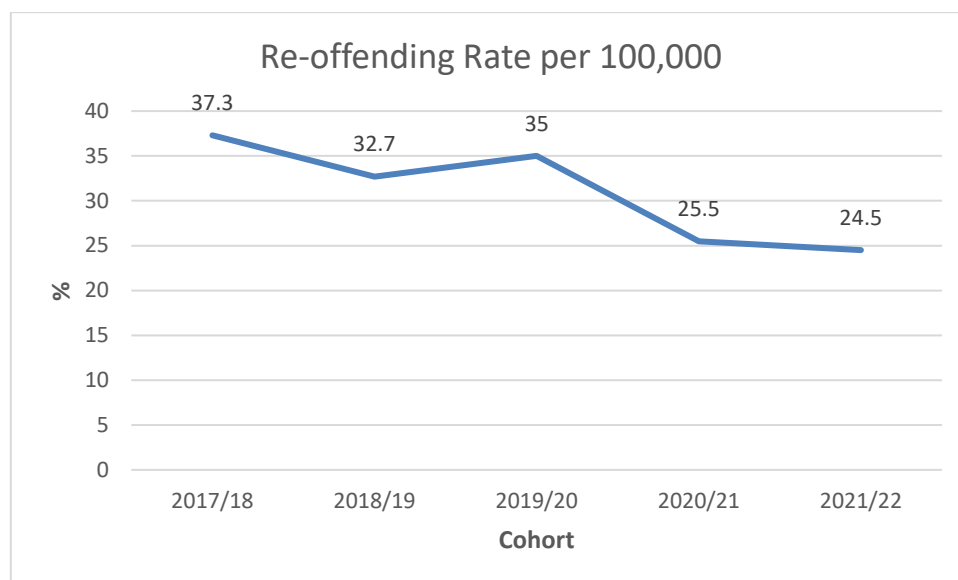
Analysis of our children entering the Youth Justice system in 2022-23 tells us:

- Most first-time entrants were aged 15-17, with 49.7% aged 16 or older.
- 11.1% of first-time entrants were girls.
- Violence Against the Person was the most prevalent offence category accounting for 93 offences, 61.6% of all proven offences for first time entrants. Compared with January to December 2022, this offence category shows a decrease of 20.5% in the number of offences.
- 48.5% of children becoming a first-time entrant had an identified special educational need.
- Black and Black British children are over-represented appearing at approximately twice the rate of their incidence in the general 10-17 population.
- Black, Asian, and mixed heritage children accounted for 63.2% of all First Time Entrants compared with 55.0% in the general 10 -17 population.
- Of the children becoming a first-time entrant, 53.8% received Youth Cautions, 38.0% first-tier outcomes, 6.4% community penalties, and 1.8% were sentenced to custody.

¹⁰ The latest national data for first time entrants (January - December 2022) identifies that Birmingham's performance against this national priority continues to improve year on year. The total number of FTEs between January and December 2022 was 145 children, an improvement of 26.0% from 196 in January – December 2021. Over the same period the first-time entrant rate fell from 158 children per 100,000 to 110 children per 100,000, an improvement of 30.3%.

9.2 Reducing Re-offending

The latest national figures (July 2020 – June 2021 cohort) show we are performing better than the England and Wales national average and is in the top quartile of all Youth Justice Services across the country. We also continue to perform well in comparison with others in its statistical family.



Despite Birmingham having the largest group of children monitored in the period (486), the re-offending rate, 24.5%, was one of the lowest within its statistical family and lower than the England and Wales average.

An analysis of AssetPlus data for Birmingham children shows that those who re-offended were more likely to:

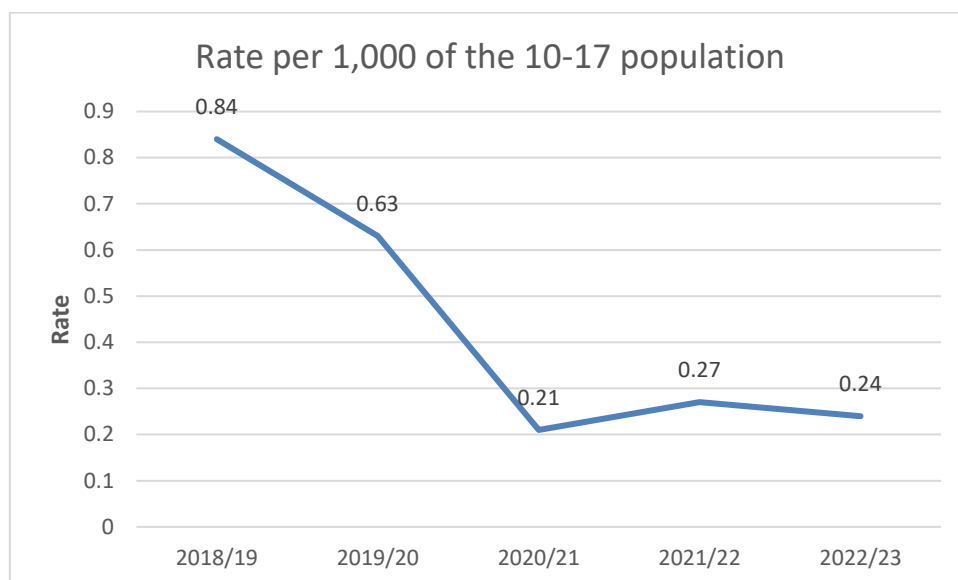
- Have Special Educational Needs.
- Be experiencing issues around school attendance/exclusion.
- Be living in families where there is evidence of intergenerational offending, parental substance misuse and/or mental health.
- Be children in care.
- Have a high number of previous offences and outcomes.
- Be at risk of gang affiliation and exploitation.

Whilst performance in this area compares favourably, we remain committed to doing more. At the heart of the work to improve re-offending in children is the move towards truly becoming child first, trauma informed and responsive and relationship based in our approaches. Our commitment to better understanding, analysing, and tackling the root causes of children offending is part of our core values.

We will also seek to develop our understanding of re-offending by outcome type and interventions delivered with the aim of developing our understanding of what works.

9.3 Reducing the Use of Custody

This indicator compares the number of custodial sentences against the 10 –17-year-old population of a local area.



In 2022/23, 23 Birmingham children were made subject to a custodial sentence. In comparison with 2021/22, this represented an increase of 21.1% from 19.

Birmingham has a higher rate of custodial sentences than the national average, although we are within the range of other Core Cities. The number of children sentenced to custody in Birmingham has increased from 19 in 2021/22 to 23 in 2022/23 and remains an area of focus for the YOS Partnership.

Analysis of local data for 2022/23 tells us:

- the majority (78%) of children sentenced to custody were 16–17-year-old boys.
- Boys who are Black, Black British or of mixed heritage backgrounds remain over- represented, appearing at approximately three times the rate in comparison with the general population.
- Black, Asian, and mixed heritage children accounted for 65.2% of all children receiving a custodial disposal compared with 55.0% in the general 10 -17 population.
- Very few girls receiving custody, only one girl received a custodial sentence.
- Violence Against the Person is most prevalent offence category accounting for 51.8% of custodial sentences.

9.4 Number of Nights in Custody Spent on Remand

A remand to youth detention accommodation is currently to either: a Secure Children’s Home (SCH); a Secure Training Centre (STC); or a Young Offender Institution (YOI).

In 2022/23 a total of 32 Birmingham children were remanded to the secure estate, representing a 28.9% decrease from 45 in the previous year. Those 32 children spent a total of 3061 nights held on remand (average of 90 nights per child). This compares favourably to 2021/22, when 45 children, spent 4710 nights in custody (an average of 104 nights per child).

Of the 32 children remanded during the period:

- 20 (62.5%) were Children in Care at the time of the remand.
- 2 were previously a Child in Care.
- 11 children (34.4%) gained Child in Care status because of their remand.

10 Our Priorities

Nationally from April 2023, the YJB introduced ten new Key Performance Indicators to monitor the activity of Youth Justice Services. These were designed by the MOJ in consultation with the YJB, front line services, inspectorates, and other government departments.

These ten indicators align with the local priorities that we set as a partnership in 2022/23 and will further reinforce our commitment to driving improvement and development with robust governance and accountability.

10.1 Health

Priorities

- % of children assessed with AssetPlus with an identified health need referred to a specialist service where necessary

In 2022/23 we improved our response to identified substance misuse needs from 28.1% at the end of 2021/22 to 55.3% at the end of 2022/23 and mental health needs from 28.0% to 48.2% over the same period.

- % of children receiving a speech and language screening.

In 2022/23, we increased our response to screening all children for speech and language issues from 38.8% at the end of 2021/22 to 75.8% at the end of 2022/23.

New supporting YJB KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)

KPI 4 – Mental healthcare and emotional wellbeing

“% of children in the community and being released from custody with a screened OR identified need for an intervention to improve mental health or emotional wellbeing; and of that the % of planned/offered interventions; of that % of children attending interventions”.

KPI 5 – Substance misuse

“% of children with a screened OR identified need for specialist treatment intervention to address substance misuse; and of that the % of children with planned or offered intervention/treatment; and of that the % number of children attending intervention/treatment”.

10.2 Restorative Approaches and Victims

Priorities

- % of identifiable victims contacted.

In 2022/23, we increased the percentage of victims who we contacted (where they consented) to 73% from 69% in 2021/22.

- % of victims engaged who respond to follow up that are satisfied with the services they received.

In 2022/23, of the victims who engaged and who commented on the service received, 100% said they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” which was the same as 2021/22.

New supporting YJB KPI

KPI 10 – Victims

“Number of victims who consent to be contact by the YOT, and of those, the number of victims: engaged with about Restorative Justice opportunities; asked their view prior to OOC decision-making and planning for statutory court orders; provided information about the progress of the child’s case (when requested) and provided with information on appropriate services that support victims (when requested).”

10.3 Education Training and Employment

Priorities

- % of children ending their engagement with our Service, where they have maintained or improved their education or employment engagement.

In 2022/23, 92.0% of children with programmes ending in the period had maintained or improved their education or employment engagement compared with 83.2% in 2021/22.

- % of school age children with no school place

In 2022/23, 2.23% of children with programmes ending in the period were engaged no education activity compared 5.92% in 2021/22.

New supporting YJB KPIs

KPI 2 – Education, Training & Employment

“% of children in the community and being released from custody attending a suitable ETE arrangement”.

KPI 3 – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities /Additional Learning Needs

“% of children who have an identified SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) need (or Additional Learning Need in Wales), are in suitable ETE and have a formal learning plan in place for the current academic year”.

10.4 Serious Youth Violence

Priorities

- Track a cohort of children convicted of SYV (Serious Youth Violence offences) for 12 months, report at 3,6,9 and 12 months to identify: re-offending patterns, seriousness, changes in risk, safety and well-being and formulate responses.

In 2022/23, we have tracked those children receiving a court outcome for serious youth violence offences in 2020/21. This identified that at the time of receiving the outcome:

- Children with serious youth violence offences were more likely to re-offend within 12 months (25.0%) than those without (21.9%).
- 15.3% were currently or had previously been a Looked After Child.
- 40.1% were currently or had previously been subject to a Child in Need Plan.
- 16.4% were currently or had previously been subject to a Child Protection Plan.

Our analysis of local data is supported by research conducted by User Voice¹¹, on behalf of HMICFRS, which concluded:

'Most of the young people we interviewed had fractured family relationships and the majority had been in the social care system. They described many negative interactions with care homes and care workers and felt completely uncared for. While their families and the social care system had let them down, their friends had their back and offered a level of security and a means to earn money. Some described their group as 'like a family' or noted how their friends had been there for them when their parents hadn't. But this often meant that they were involved in serious violent incidents on behalf of their friends or the group. Some noted that a disrespectful act directly preceded a serious violent incident and many of the young people described how much they had lost while earning respect.'

In 2022/23 210 serious youth violence offences were recorded against 137 children. This resulted in 143 outcomes. In comparison with 2021/22, this represents a 13.5% increase in the number of serious youth violence offences from 185, a 24.5% increase in the number of children (from 110) and a 23.3% increase in the number of outcomes (from 116).

- Robbery accounted for 71% of the offences, with violence against the person the remaining 29%.
- Black and mixed ethnicity children are over-represented, representing 23.4% and 14.6% respectively, versus 10.7 and 8.4% of the general 10-17 population.
- 43.8% of the children receiving an outcome for serious youth violence were assessed as having some form of educational need.

New supporting YJB KPI

KPI 9 – Serious youth violence

"Proportion of children convicted for SYV on the YOT caseload."

10.5 Additional KPIs.

In addition, the YJB has identified other areas of interest and formulated the following KPIs. We are well placed to report on all of these performance measures.

KPI 1 – Accommodation

"% of children in the community and being released from custody with suitable accommodation arrangements."

KPI 6 – Out of Court Disposals (OOCs)

"% of OOC disposal interventions that are completed/not completed."

KPI 7 – Management board attendance

"Monitoring senior partner representation at management boards and monitoring if partners contribute data from their individual services that identify areas of racial and ethnic disproportionality."

¹¹ <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/young-peoples-experiences-serious-youth-violence.pdf>

KPI 8 – Wider services

“% children who are currently on either an Early Help (EH) plan; on a child protection (CP) plan or classified as Child in need (CiN) or a looked after child (LAC). For Wales only, children who are classified as Children in Need of Care and Support.”

11. Our Priorities for 2023-28

Building on the successes of recent years and what we know about our areas for continued development, we have agreed as a partnership a number of strategic priorities for 2023-28.

1. Governance, communication, accountability, and professional responsibility are developed across our Service.
2. Build a culturally responsive Service which promotes equality, reduces discrimination, and enables our children, victims, caregivers, and staff to thrive.
3. Our staff are skilled, equipped, and capable of delivering quality services to children, victims, and caregivers.
4. Participation and co-creation opportunities with all the people we provide services to are maximised across our services.
5. Children, victims, and caregivers have access to services, support and interventions that are relevant to them.
6. Children on the cusp of offending or entering the YJS are supported.
7. Communities and individuals are protected from harm.
8. Children leaving the secure estate have access to the right support at the right time.

Annually we will assess the ongoing validity of our priorities and revise our delivery plans.

11.1 Over-Represented Children

Children from a range of backgrounds and experiences are over-represented in the Youth Justice System. Local data and research indicate an over-representation of:

- Children in Care or children who have experienced social care processes.
- Children who have experienced trauma, adversity including exploitation.
- Children who have experienced exclusion from school, including permanent exclusion.

However, ethnic disparity in the Youth Justice System continues to be one of our greatest challenges and is an area we remain committed to tackling. We continue to place a high priority to identifying and addressing issues of disproportionality, including ethnic disparity at all points within the system.

We have an established Over-Represented Childrens Working Group. More recently, this work has been restructured and now benefits from a series of multi-agency practical workshops, drawing upon the YJB ethnic disparity toolkit and our local data. As a working group we continue to deliver against a dynamic plan, overseen by our Partnership Board, that seeks to develop our:

- Organisational culture.
- Our direct work with children, victims, and caregivers.

- Our work in court and;
- Our Partnerships.

In 2022/23 analysis of local data indicated in comparison to white children, all other ethnic groups combined accounted for:

- 65.1% of all First Time Entrants compared with 55.0% in the general 10 -17 population.
- 63.9% of all children receiving out of court disposals compared with 55.0% in the general 10 -17 population.
- 65.2% of all children receiving a custodial sentence compared with 55.0% in the general 10 -17 population.
- 65.8% of all children receiving a disposal for knife enabled offences compared with 55.0% in the general 10 -17 population.
- 50.4% of all children with a proven re-offence compared with 55.0% in the local YOT area 10 -17 population.

We will continue to develop culturally responsive services which promote equality, reduce discrimination, and enable our children, caregivers, victims, and staff to thrive
Retain training around equality, diversity, unconscious racism as part of our workforce development plan.
Use data to ensure that all commissioning activity will be cognisant of the needs of our children and responsive to need at a local level.
Feed data and staff and user voice into the development of the interventions hub to ensure that interventions and group work delivered and commissioned is responsive to the needs of our children.
Retain the girl's empowerment team (G.E.T) to ensure that the specific needs of our girls can and are being met.
Ensure that the needs of girls in the Youth Justice System are represented within the Regional Women and Girls subgroup.
Strengthen relationships with community and faith-based organisations and the third sector, improving our ability to support children and caregivers to build systemic resilience through better access to local opportunity.
YOS Partnership Board members will share data that identifies areas of disproportionality and the action being taken to address this.
Review and refresh of our Over-represented children working group and action plan. Ensuring all learning from Inspection and research is captured and thematic practice-based workshops are driving change.
Support the development of a regional protocol to reduce the criminalisation of children in care.
YOS Prevention Team will deliver training to local care providers to ensure a good understanding of the 10-point checklist.
Proactively monitor and challenge any remand/sentencing patterns identified via our Remand reviews and PSR feedback forms via the Court User forums and Strategic Board.
We will consider and offer opportunities for joint training with those responsible for sentencing our children.

11.2 Prevention

“Prevention is support and intervention with children (and their care givers) who may be displaying behaviours which may indicate underlying needs or vulnerability. In practice this involves a tiered approach

of early and targeted prevention. The aim being to address unmet needs, safeguard, promote positive outcomes and stop children entering the formal youth justice system.”¹²

Prior to the announcements of the MOJ Turnaround funding, we had already set out our commitment and intention to strengthen the early/targeted preventative work with children and their caregivers, extending beyond those children involved in Anti-Social Behaviour. The YOS partnership invested heavily in these developments in 2022-23.

Collaboration with colleagues within Early Help has supported the development of referral pathways into our prevention offer. The delivery of Turnaround will further strengthen and extend our ability to work with children, who ordinarily would not have been able to access support and intervention from a Youth Offending Service. The delivery of these services, in part, from Perry Barr Custody Suite, will ensure clarity for key stakeholders and ease of access for our children and their caregivers.

Collaboration on the delivery of Birmingham Inclusion Strategy will strengthen our understanding of the needs and contextual factors of children at risk of entering the youth justice system. A multi-agency action plan will focus on inclusion pathways in response to insight on key risk factors, including poverty, school absence and exclusion.

11.3 Diversion

“Diversion is where children with a linked offence receive an alternative outcome that does not result in a criminal record, avoids escalation into the formal youth justice system and associated stigmatisation. This may involve the YJS delivering support / intervention that may or may not be voluntary and/or signposting children (and parent/carers) into relevant services. All support should be proportionate, aimed at addressing unmet needs and supporting prosocial life choices.”⁷

This plan provides clear evidence to show that Birmingham children are increasingly being diverted from the formal Youth Justice System and we are pleased with the early signs of success following a detailed review of our practices in this area. This has been reinforced by the findings of the HMIP Inspection, published 2023 ¹³

Our commitment to the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities and Communities initiative will focus on strengthening our voice and participation work with children at risk of entering the formal youth justice system. As part of our journey toward recognition as Child Friendly Birmingham we will seek to learn from the lived experience of our children engaged through diversion. This will aim to contribute to the development of better support and intervention that reduces offending.

The introduction of Turnaround, development and launch of the West Midlands OOC Protocol and revised CPS Guidance¹⁴ will provide increased opportunities for services to work with children at the earliest possible opportunity and wherever possible outside of the formal system.

The development of local partnerships and work with the OPCC (Office of the Police and Crime

¹² Youth Justice Board Definitions for Prevention and Diversion (2021)

¹³ [An inspection of youth offending services in Birmingham \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)

¹⁴ [Children as suspects and defendants | The Crown Prosecution Service \(cps.gov.uk\)](https://www.cps.gov.uk)

Commissioner), will enable us to engage with community organisations who will provide opportunities for support and intervention, where criteria for other interventions is not met.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Jonah's Project Interception Hub: our three Turnaround Prevention Officers will be partly co-located at Perry Barr custody suite and therefore well placed to work with partners to identify children eligible for Turnaround.

Where children do not meet our locally defined criteria for Turnaround, we have established a pathway with Jonah's Project; a local community-based project which aims to support children and young people convicted, involved or at risk of criminal activity. This means all children will have an opportunity, if they wish, for support and intervention.

In addition, all children coming to the end of their prevention, Out of Court or statutory intervention are eligible to be referred to Jonah's Project as part of their Moving On plan, via the "Standby" referral route.

For example, a child finishes their intervention with our service, but would benefit from continued support with regards to being involved in more positive activities in their local community such as sports-based activities or mentoring. The child consents to a referral to Jonah's Project Interception Hub by their YOS practitioner and is matched to and assigned a mentor. The YOS practitioner will facilitate a 3-way meeting with the Jonah's Project mentor, involving the child and their care giver, to ensure a smooth transition.

Our recently forged partnership with Street Games will enable us to expand access to a range of Sports provision and diversionary activities for our children. Street Games will take an active role in developing the expertise, and workforce within local voluntary and community-based Sports providers. This will be in keeping with our values and ethos and will enable providers to effectively support our children with an evidence-based provision offer.

We will ensure that Children on the cusp of offending or entering the YJS are supported through our *Prevention, Turnaround, and diversionary offers*

We will deliver Turnaround, expanding opportunities for children to be supported earlier and prevent offending.

Our Prevention offer will be evaluated by BCT Practice Hub (internal evaluation) over 12mths from June 23 to June 24.

From Summer 2023, our Prevention Team, including Turnaround officers will be co-located alongside the AA at Perry Barr Custody Suite. This will further expand opportunities for earlier prevention and diversion opportunities.

Engage with an external evaluation of our OOC provision via University of Birmingham – planned to commence autumn 23. This will include exploring the impact of disposals and monitoring of the decision-making and reoffending patterns.

Development of OOC assessment QA (Quality Assurance) tool to strengthen management oversight and to promote consistency.

Launch and embed the West Midlands regional OOC policy to ensure consistent application of OOCs.

Ensure that the revised CPS guidance (May 23) with its Child First approach aligns with our practices. This will be underpinned by work with criminal justice services overseen by the Youth Improvement Board.

11.4 Health

We remain fully committed to ensuring that our children have access to the health services and support that they need, including for our children in custody and transitioning back to the community. Whilst we have made good progress and have invested additional resource in this area in 2022-23, we know that there is more work for us to do and we have clear plans in place, both for the work we need to do internally, but also the work with the wider partnership as part of our Health Subgroup.

We will work to ensure children, caregivers, and victims have access to services, support and interventions that are relevant to them

Our Health Subgroup will continue: Schedule of eight health-themed multi-agency workshops to take place in 23/24 to review health needs and inequalities; current arrangements and provisions; strengths; barriers and gaps.

Quarterly sub-group meetings will continue to oversee workshop activity and to review progress against action plan.

Invest additional resource and progress the recruitment of 2x FTE (Full Time Equivalent) SALT therapists.

Launch of Aquarius' enhanced criminal justice offer which includes co-location of Aquarius Substance Misuse workers within area teams.

Implement revised HSB offer and partnership arrangements to strengthen safeguarding practice.

Specialist workforce development programme to strengthen quality of work undertaken within HSB team.

Continue the work to monitor practice and performance around appropriate access to health services.

11.5 Education

The engagement of children in positive education, training, and employment (ETE) is a strong protective factor that contributes significantly to the prevention and reduction of offending.

We continually strive to ensure all our children have a school place or Post 16 offer and that they are engaging positively with this.

For children at risk of permanent exclusion, we proactively work with schools to explore alternative solutions and provide practical support. This includes exploring restorative practice opportunities, managed move options, or packages of support that we can provide. This support will range from our wrap around mentoring options, access to our enhanced curriculum provision, anger management initiatives (such as Art Therapy, Martial Arts etc) and the sourcing of extended work experience placements to run alongside their curriculum offer - to raise aspiration and secure their continued motivation and engagement.

We have demonstrated a long and well-established commitment to our children's education, evidenced by the strategic and operational partnerships, commissioning arrangements and financial investment in a varied range of interventions for children.

- ETE Re-engagement Programme - provides part time vocational training and accredited outcomes, delivered one to one or in small nurture groups, to act as a catalyst for re-engagement to mainstream ETE.
- Functional Skills provision – provides one to one education in Numeracy and Literacy where this is a barrier to re-engagement with ETE.
- Entrepreneurial courses – a credible provision for those who are motivated to learn how to make money legally.
- Boxing mentoring anti knife crime programme – boxing sessions, used to engage children in positive activities whilst having conversations around the dangers of knives.
- Music Studio Project - delivers high quality music making activities in a fully equipped professional recording studio. Children work alongside Producers, Lyric Writers and Musicians developing skills in the creative music industry and given a platform for expression and performance.
- Skill Mill Employment Scheme – provides 6-month employment opportunities for children, with a highly skilled and supportive Skill Mill supervisor to support them in their employment journey.

What do we know about the impact of the work our CGL (Change Grow Live) Mentors are doing?

“He has successfully started on the ETE Re-engagement programme and is now attending ‘Right Trax.’ I have also arranged an interview through Work n Learn at a Jewellers which is planned for next month”.

“After three months of not wanting our support, a child I work with, has now agreed that we can make a referral to an education placement”.

“I have managed to arrange transport to and from school as this was preventing attendance and punctuality. Her attendance is improving, and she is due to be having an ADHD assessment via Forward Thinking Birmingham. School is pleased with her progress and report she is doing well.”

“.....has completed their BKS Numeracy and Literacy assessments and has been referred to Right Trax. He is currently home schooled and not on a school roll, so a fair access referral is being processed. He has had his first visit to Right Trax, and he is enjoying the course.”

“Last month I successfully negotiated at three children's permanent exclusion meetings. This has resulted in alternatives to exclusion being found for all three”.

Our plans confirm our continued commitment to ensuring that our children have the absolute best support

and advocacy. In 2023-24 we will strengthen this with the appointment to an Operational Youth Justice Education Lead officer.

The launch of our virtual school register, a concept we proudly presented to the DfE (Department for Education) in 2022-23, will provide accurate and timely information on our children’s school attendance, any suspension history, and will highlight those who are not receiving their educational entitlement. This will support effective collaborative work to enhance school engagement and will help us to better understand any evidence of disproportionality.

<p>We will work to ensure children, caregivers, and victims have access to services, support and interventions that are relevant to them</p>
<p>We will provide additional gap investment to support the continued delivery of the Post 16 Mentors to support children who are NEET ahead of the launch of the 2024 the Shared Prosperity Funding.</p>
<p>Explore opportunities for our children to undertake the D of E Award accreditation to accredit the work they do, enhance their C.V., and develop their employability.</p>
<p>Explore sustainability plans for the Skill Mill employment scheme to continue beyond its current funded period of 31 March 2024.</p>
<p>Explore the expansion of the number of recording studios we can access. This will enable us to deliver our music intervention in a more accessible way to our children across the city.</p>
<p>Develop a range of vocational accredited courses delivered from our premises. In 23/24 a Hair and Beauty salon at our Washwood Heath site will be established, allowing us to offer courses in Barbering, Hair, and Nails. Subsequent development in 23/24 include the introduction of Construction Trade courses.</p>
<p>Formally launch our Virtual School register making it accessible to all of our staff. This will detail all children open to our service, with up-to-date school attendance and exclusion data.</p>
<p>Analyse school attendance and exclusions by protected characteristics and need.</p>
<p>Support the wider work happening across the City Council to improve SEND support for children</p>

11.6 Victims and Restorative Approaches

In recent years we have increased investment and reshaped service delivery to better meet the needs of our victims. We have:

- Invested in and retained a Restorative Practice and Victim Manager
- Developed two Referral Order and Volunteer Coordinator roles
- Sustained dedicated Victim Support Officers

These initiatives are supporting our work to continue to develop our offer to victims. Alongside our internal developments, we have developed more robust systems with WMP. This has led to an evidenced increase in the number of victims consenting to our support and we now have increased opportunities to work directly with those affected and harmed by offences committed by our children.

This is an area we remain committed to improving. The plans within this strategy around volunteer recruitment, developing of our Panel processes and robust performance monitoring and reporting, under

the leadership of a dedicated Manager, will allow us to retain focus, and drive improvements.

We will work to ensure Children, caregivers, and victims have access to services, support and interventions that are relevant to them

Continue the work with West Midlands Police to improve victim consent and uptake of victims offer.

We will strengthen our understanding of repeat victimisation and their common characteristics.

Develop Restorative Justice and Victim policy.

Continue to embed, in line with the trust Practice Model, restorative practice and victims' voice within our services and wider partnership.

Our restorative justice team will attend Train the Trainers sessions and to deliver development sessions for our wider staff group and partners.

Commission and deliver REMEDI training.

Revise Referral Order processes and introduce Making It Right panels.

Continue with a rolling programme of volunteer recruitment, developing training and development pathways for volunteers.

As part of the ISS pilot ensure that the mandatory Trail Monitoring is used effectively where appropriate as a victim safety measure when there are concerns about re-victimisation are flagged.

11.7 Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation

Understanding and responding to serious youth violence, gangs and the exploitation of our children remains a priority for the Birmingham Partnership and features within our strategic priorities.

- We are a core member of the Birmingham Violence Reduction Board
- We have contributed to the development of a Serious Violence Strategy and strategic needs assessment of serious violence.
- We co-chair with WMP of Serious Youth Violence Steering Group (sub-group of the local Violence Reduction Board)
- We remain focussed and committed to tackling the root causes of offending in children, i.e., exploitation, health, and education.
- We are a key partner of the EmpowerU Contextual Safeguarding Hub, seconding in staff and contributing to daily discussions and planning around children identified as at risk of exploitation and/or gang affiliated.
- We are determining best use of Turnaround delivery, to support work in this area.

We will work to ensure that communities and individuals are protected from harm

Continue to develop the Serious Youth Violence Steering Group to ensure we are effective in reducing knife crime and serious youth violence in partnership across Birmingham.

Focus on improving the quality of risk assessments completed by our staff.

Engage with AYM Peer Review responding to any findings and implementing the learning.

Review and strengthen risk mapping exercises with EmpowerU and HMYOI Werrington, ensuring that risks are responded to, and the public are protected.

Establish a regional TACT meeting and develop protocol.

Engage with the MAPPA support unit to secure training for our staff.

Implement new ISS Local Standard to ensure that children subject to ISS are receiving an effective range of interventions, support and contact levels appropriate to need and risk.

As part of the ISS pilot, ensure that the mandatory Trail Monitoring is used effectively where appropriate as a victim safety measure when concerns about re-victimisation are flagged.

Contribute to the review of the Birmingham Right Help Right Time document.

Launch and brief our staff on our joint protocol with Social Care

11.8 Detention in police custody

The regional Youth Improvement Board, a subgroup of the local criminal justice board has developed a data set to inform our priority setting and workplans. From 2023-24 onwards, all members have agreed that this will include data, provided by WMP, about children who are arrested and detained overnight in police custody within the West Midlands.

It will provide detail around requests for accommodation and will help us to better understand and respond to some of the long-standing challenges around the transfer of children, from police custody to local authority accommodation, in accordance with the Home Office Concordat on Children in Custody¹⁵

It is clear, as data has become more readily available in 2023-24, that there remains work for us to do in this area, alongside our colleagues within WMP and Birmingham Childrens Trust, with very few children being transferred. This work will be led regionally to ensure that we are exercising our duties under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) and addressing any local issues of compliance or challenge appropriately.

11.9 Remands and Use of Custody

We remain committed towards ensuring that children should only be remanded or sentenced to custody as a last resort. Custody can have long lasting and traumatic impacts on children and their caregivers and can adversely affect their life chances. Where our assessments tell us that the risks presented by children can be managed in the community, we will advocate and support applications for bail or provide the courts with credible and robust alternatives to custody.

Whilst the number of our children remanded has reduced, we have seen a slight increase in the number of custodial sentences our children have received in 2022-23. We have a detailed understanding of our performance in this area with our data broken down by age, gender, ethnicity, offence category, ward, children in care status and special educational need.

¹⁵ [Concordat on Children in Custody \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Our ability to achieve a positive impact in this area is intrinsically linked to our wider strategic priorities that will enable us to be as effective as we can be in understanding through a trauma lens and effectively addressing the root causes of our children’s offending, including exploitation.

11.10 Constructive resettlement

Where children are remanded or serving a custodial sentence, we are committed to ensuring that our children receive the best, personal support, at the right time, that will meet the needs of the child. Working beyond the structural support of education and accommodation children will have the best chance of success in avoiding further offending. We are also committed to ensuring that remands are regularly reviewed to ensure any opportunities to look at a bail packages are not missed and are communicated to solicitors in a timely manner.

Our values in holding the child at the heart of what we do when it comes to resettlement is important. Helping them to set a vision for their future, remaining strengths based and helping them to build a positive identity, alongside evidence and research¹⁶ will shape the way we deliver our resettlement work and develop our strategies and practices.

We will ensure that children leaving the secure estate have access to the right support at the right time
Review and strengthen practice around bail support proposals, including, where appropriate, the use of the ISS Pilot and enhanced monitoring.
Strengthen the quality assurance and management oversight activity for every child entering the secure estate.
Consider opportunities to second one of our staff into HMYOI Werrington
Develop and Launch a Resettlement Policy. Improving the voice of the child and their caregivers in resettlement planning. Establish a Resettlement Consortium to provide appropriate management oversight for all release planning and preparation.
Finalise and launch the YOS/Social Care protocol to ensure that children are appropriately supported by Childrens services during their time in custody and on release.
We will work with the Youth Custody Service and across the wider partnership to ensure every child has a clear plan ahead of their release and can access the right education, healthcare, and accommodation support on release.
Work with HMYOI Werrington and the WMVRP (West Midlands Violence Reduction Partnership) to explore opportunities for commissioned activity to support children’s development of pro-social identities.
Review enforcement practices for children released from the secure estate to ensure that it is child first, trauma informed and protects communities.
Ensuring that services within the Vulnerable Young Peoples Directorate, including Family Group Conferencing, Lifelong Links and Preparation for Adulthood are considered for children at points of transition.

12 Standards for children in the justice system

YJB Oversight Framework launched in 23/24 will outline the approach to overseeing performance of YJSs (Youth Justice Services). This framework formalizes:

- the mechanisms used for oversight of and assurance against performance outcomes.

¹⁶ [Academic Insights 2023/01 - Effective practice in Resettlement \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/academic-insights/2023/01-effective-practice-in-resettlement/)

- how compliance against the terms and conditions of the youth justice core grant is confirmed
- how effective practice across the system will be identified.
- when and how support is provided to drive up standards in delivery.

We continue to work closely with the YJB, who remain a member of our strategic partnership Board. As part of this collaboration, there is regular conversation to identify opportunities for us to draw upon any help and support that we or the YJB identify as adding value to our continued development.

In 2023-24, self-assessments are being re-instated by the YJB, and each Youth Justice Service will be required complete a self-assessment against one selected standard. In 2023-24, this standard is work at Court.

In 2022-23, we have continued with our programme of self-assessment work to better understand local practice. We have conducted:

- Two internal audits of Supervision quality and Resettlement practices
- A benchmarking exercise with Managers, jointly facilitated by the YJB, examining quality assurance of assessments.
- Three internal learning reviews following serious incidents.
- An internal review of the safety and wellbeing of children placed at Werrington, commissioned by the Head of Service at the time when concerns were raised about safeguarding practices within the establishment.

We have established management practice forums, which allow us to provide feedback on findings of internal assessments and reviews for Managers to disseminate further within their teams.

We are committed to continued learning and development. Planned audit activity for 2023-24 includes:

- Management oversight Audit
- Children on community orders
- Victim Work
- Bail and Remand Practices
- Re-Engagement and enforcement

13 Our Workforce

We have continued to invest in and develop our staff. We want our staff to have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources, and support to enable them to be effective and competent practitioners and managers. We want our teams to have access to high quality, helpful supervision, annual development conversations and a range of relevant development opportunities, including opportunities to support their personal growth and professional development.

Our annual staff survey is essential in helping us to understand the feelings amongst our staff and in helping us to support, develop and realise the potential of our workforce.

Results of our surveys in 2022-23 and the HMIP Inspection report 2023, told us clearly that we have more work to do to ensure that our staff:

- Feel heard and valued.
- Feel connected to the Service and understand our direction of travel.
- Are equipped and capable of undertaking their roles.
- Are clear on expectations and standards.
- Receive good inductions and supervision from their managers.
- Are supported effectively where there are concerns regarding under performance.

We are determined to improve this position and in 2022-23 a staff engagement and consultation group was established. This group is well attended by members of our service at all levels and benefits from a Board champion and attendance by our Head of Service. One of the initial tasks of this group was to develop a survey for staff, developed by staff. In 2023, we revamped our Survey for staff, which was shared with all with this message:

Welcome to the Birmingham YOS 2023 Survey. We knew that the way we have approached surveys needed to improve. In March 2023, the YOS staff Engagement and Consultation Group was established. Together we have worked on this survey and developed the questions as staff, for staff.

As a group we would really encourage you to take part in this. We need your help to make YOS a place that belongs to everyone. Share your views, have your say, we want to listen because it matters!

We have talked about how people don't feel listened to; this is your opportunity to have your voices heard.

So, what is the purpose of the survey and what will we do with the results?

Firstly, it is completely anonymous. There is no way of us knowing which responses come from any individual.

The purpose of the survey is to inform the service vision, to give you a voice in shaping our direction of travel and to inform change. We will identify quick wins and set medium to longer term actions in response to what you say, in a you said, we did way. We may not be able to respond to everything, but we will tell you where this is the case. We will work as a group to be transparent with you.

Please be solution focussed and give us as much feedback as possible so that we can do our best to respond in the right way.

We know we have more work to do, and this survey will help us to make the right changes.

The staff engagement and consultation group will lead on the review, analysis, and communication around findings.

We will work to ensure that our staff are skilled, equipped, and capable of delivering effective, high-quality services to children, caregivers, and victims

Finalise our Workforce Development Strategy

Update our Practice and Performance Framework

Strengthen the partnership with the Trust Practice Hub maximising opportunities for joint work.

Develop and deliver a 23/24 Training Plan which responds to HMIP recommendations and other key areas of learning including: Bail and Remand Practices; PSR writing; MAPPA; 'Making it Right' Panels; AssetPlus Train the Trainer; YJ Apprentice Offer; Commission of coaching for managers programme.

Progress the recruitment and selection to a dedicated Training Officer to support continued workforce development.

Proactively recruit to critical frontline practitioner vacancies as they arise, working towards recruitment that is creative and different and encourages applicants from diverse backgrounds.

Better analyse and understand the findings from exit interviews, so we hear and learn from our colleagues who are leaving our Service.

Align the 2022-23 Audit Plan with HMIP recommendations and other key areas of learning. The plan will include Management oversight; Children on community orders; Victim Work; Children on Bail Programmes and on Remand; Re-engagement and enforcement activity.

Commission and roll out a new Case Management System.

Review and Develop policy, procedures, and practice expectations, including:

- A new Bail and Remand Strategy
- Resettlement policy
- new Re-engagement and Enforcement procedures
- A set of Local Practice Standard documents
- Review of Allocation Policy

Strengthen our induction for new staff.

Implement the findings of the supervision audit, ensuring staff have access to supervision that is high quality and effective.

Work with colleagues within the Trust to review our buildings and spaces to see those we work alongside.

Better integration with the wider Trust services, which will include colocation of staff at One Avenue Road and Lifford House.

Pursue opportunities to modernise the space used for direct work with children, victims, and caregivers across the city. Continue with the YOS specific Health and Safety meetings to ensure measures are in place to ensure staff feel and remain safe in their working environment.

Continue to support and de-brief staff where there are serious incidents.

Establish a Partnership board Newsletter.

Develop a document that assists our staff in understanding governance and leadership roles and responsibilities. From Partnership Board level through to operational management.

Provide and promote opportunities for Operational Managers to attend the Partnership Board and to present on key areas of practice.

Review and share widely the Partnership Board Terms of Reference.

Continue to deliver the Welcome to the YOS sessions, hosted by the Head of Service and Board Chair.

Ensure that our staff have access to relevant Board reports and performance information that supports understanding around the difference we are making.

14. Evidence-based practice, innovation, and evaluation

As we develop new and review existing practices, we will ensure that this is driven by available evidence, local data, including what our children tell us and strategic needs assessments. Our strategy has set out an intention to:

- engage with an AYM Peer Review/Evaluation of our revised approaches to managing risk and

safety and well-being, including staff support.

- Commission an evaluation of the impact of the work of our Prevention Team.
- Work with Birmingham university to support two research projects.
- Use available evidence and research as we develop our constructive resettlement practices.
- Develop our referral order practices, through the delivery of innovative commissioned training.
- Scope out an Interventions Hub, providing a single point of access for all interventions for children, streamlining processes for practitioners and developing a system and offer that works for all.

We have responded creatively and pro-actively to what we know of our children by:

- Developing and investing, prior to Turnaround, in a dedicated YOS Prevention Team.
- retaining our Girls Empowerment Team, to provide evidence-led, bespoke intervention to girls involved with our services.
- Continuing and enhancing investment in a range of ETE interventions and offers of support for our children, establishing in 2023-24 a dedicated operational lead to drive this forward.
- Developing a custody based Appropriate Adult provision, to be expanded in 2023-24 with Prevention and Turnaround officers also co-located at the Custody Suite.
- Securing partnership commitment to a set of gold standards around the health of our children.
- Developing a virtual school register concept, which has been shared with the DfE and colleagues within Birmingham.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE

You have been recognised for your professionalism and commitment in setting up the project at Perry Barr Custody Suite. You were instrumental and showed tenacity and enthusiasm and helped drive through the project from an idea into something that is now working for the benefit of the children in Birmingham. This is an excellent example of exemplary partnership working. Chief Inspector, West Midlands Police

15. Service Development and Plan

We continue our journey to outstanding. Whilst our latest HMIP report acknowledges our improvements, it tells us also that we have more work to do.

In support of this strategy, we have a single, detailed development plan. This plan responds to the findings from HMIP, but also captures:

- All development work being delivered under the strategic oversight of individual members of the leadership team.
- The recommendations from internal learning reviews and audits.
- Recommendations from safeguarding practice reviews and other relevant inspections.

This plan is overseen by the Head of Service and progress, and challenges where they arise, is reported to the YOS Partnership Board, the YJB (through additional monitoring arrangements) and where required the Trust Executive.

16. Challenges, risks, and issues

This is undoubtedly an exciting time for us and the Birmingham Partnership, and this plan has set out our

priorities for 2023-28 and delivery plans, in a way that support the wider ambition within the city for our children. We know that the scale of change within our Service is unprecedented, and whilst this brings with it opportunities, it also presents a few challenges, particularly given we are the largest youth justice service in England and Wales.

There were a number of areas highlighted as needing improvement in the latest HMIP Inspection. This was both in terms of our organisational delivery and in relation to the quality of some of the services we are providing. This strategy and our development plan respond in full to all of these.

We also continue to build our spending plans and establishment in way that supports our modernisation programme, driven by what we know of our workloads and children's needs. However, we continue to operate in a challenging financial climate, a climate which may in time have an impact on our ability to realise some of our plans.

Recruitment and selection, has and continues to be one of our greatest challenges. We are committed to ensuring that we have sufficient capacity at a frontline practitioner, manager and specialist services level and will continue to work creatively to support our ambition.

The commissioning of a new Case Management system for our service will be finalised in 2023-24. This is a necessary activity on a number of levels and will support our transformation journey. An established project group will be assessing risks and working with the appointed supplier in the lead up to migration and go live, and beyond. This project will require substantial resources, both in terms of financial investment and staff time.

Estates is also a key area of focus for us, and we have heard that our staff do not feel that our spaces provide an appropriate or accessible place for our children. We will work with the BCT Property Group to develop plans around this, with staff within our Service.

Serious Youth Violence within Birmingham remains a huge challenge for the partnership. Not only does it leave many of our children, victims, and communities at risk of being seriously harmed it also has an impact on our staff. This challenges around serious youth violence cross cuts with concerns regarding exploitation and gang affiliation, which often has its root causes in exclusion, poverty, abuse, and neglect amongst other things. This plan has clearly set out that we cannot tackle offending in isolation and has articulated our intention to work differently, creatively and with relationships at the heart of what we do. However, managing and containing risk through external controls is also a critical element to our ability to safeguard victims and protect the public and one that as a partnership we remain committed to.

Sign off, Submission and Approval

Chair of YJS Board <i>Approved on behalf of the Birmingham YOS Partnership Board</i>	John Drew
Date	

Appendix 1: Board Membership

Appendix 2: Common youth justice terms

AIM 2 and 3	Assessment, intervention and moving on, an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour
ASB	Anti-social behaviour
AssetPlus	Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour
CCE	Child Criminal exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity
Children	We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.
Child First	A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenants to this approach, it should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion
Child looked-after	Child Looked After, where the local authority after looks a child
CME	Child Missing Education
Constructive resettlement	The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social
Contextual safeguarding	An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety
Community resolution	An informal disposal, administered by the police, for low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt
EHCP	Education and health care plan, a plan outlining the education, health and social care needs of a child with additional needs
ETE	Education, training, or employment
EHE	Electively home educated, children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school
FTE	First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (Youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal)
HMIP	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect Youth Justice services and probation services
HMYOI	His Majesty's Young Offenders Institution
JAC	Junior Attendance Centre, the provision of evening/weekend activities to support

	children's desistance from offending.
MAPPA	Multi agency public protection arrangements
MFH	Missing from Home
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
NRM	National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery in order to gain help to support and protect them
OOCD	Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not sent to court.
Outcome 22/21	An informal disposal, available where the child does not admit the offence, but they undertake intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending
Over-represented children	Appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average
RHI	Return home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing.
SLCN	Speech, Language, and communication needs
STC	Secure training centre
SCH	Secure children's home
YJS	Youth Justice Service. This is now the preferred title for services working with children in the youth justice system. This reflects the move to a child first approach
YOI	Young offender institution