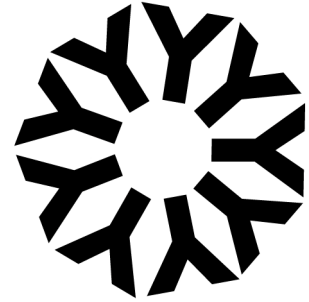


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HM Inspectorate of Probation
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Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Report on:
Enfield
Youth Offending Service

2004

Foreword

This report is one of the final inspections conducted during the first stage of this new inspection programme and I would like, once again, to thank all the Youth Offending Teams who have taken part.

The Enfield Youth Offending Service has developed significantly since its formation in 1999 and we found a highly motivated service committed equally to its work with children and young people and those affected by crime.

We were pleased to report that the service was well resourced by partner organisations, although some were not always represented at Steering Group level. Work in relation to the preventative agenda and victims was particularly strong and the practice being developed at the Young People Affected by Crime Centre was impressive.

However, some areas of service delivery with children and young people who offend required attention. These included supervision planning and levels of enforcement. Work with parents, although developing, lacked coordination. The service had recently undergone a restructuring and care should be taken to ensure that all aspects of its work continue at an even pace so that no area is left behind.

We were pleased to note that our findings had already been recognised by the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Management Team and are confident that they will take them forward. We are therefore satisfied to find the Enfield Youth Offending Service to be operating satisfactorily with good basis for development.

Andrew Bridges
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

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We would particularly like to express our gratitude to Keith Naphthine YOS Manager, and Emily Kean for their commitment to the inspection.

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Glossary

ABC	Agreed Behaviour Contract
ACPC	Area Child Protection Committee
ASSET	Assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CSCI	Commission for Social Care Inspection
DAT	Drug Action Team
DTO	Detention training order
EPQA	Effective Practice Quality Assurance
Estyn	HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
ETE	Employment, training and education
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
HMIC	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMI Prisons	HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
IPO	Interventions Programme Officer
ISSP	Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme
MAPPP	Multi-Agency Public Protection Panels
National Standards	National Standards for Youth Justice Services
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PSA	Public Service Agreement
SAFE	Service for Adolescents and Families in Enfield
SASSI	Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Tool
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bounded
SSIW	Social Services Inspectorate for Wales
Step AHEADS	Haringay and Enfield Alcohol and Drugs Service
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOI	Young Offenders Institution
YOIS	Young Offender Information System
YOS	Youth Offending Service
YOT	Youth Offending Team
YPAC	Young People Affected by Crime

Introduction

The past four years, from the implementation of the national youth justice reforms in April 2000, have seen significant change. YOTs have been established across England and Wales. New orders and interventions have been introduced, a common assessment system developed and greater emphasis given to a range of approaches, including prevention work, restorative justice and the needs of victims. Much has been achieved.

This is the first full inspection programme to examine this new area of work. It is accepted that YOTs will have evolved at varying rates, reflecting local circumstances and need. As far as possible, the inspection methodology and scoring have been designed to take account of their different stages of development.

Emphasis has been placed on two core areas:

- ◆ the management and partnership arrangements, including the role and functioning of the local board
- ◆ work with children and young people who offend.

These sections are essential to satisfactory and sustainable performance. Other areas covered by the inspection are the prevention of offending, work with parents/carers and work with victims.

At this stage we expect only few YOTs to be performing satisfactorily across each of the five sections covered by the inspection, but that most will have sound management arrangements and established good working practices with children and young people who offend.

Key findings

Management and partnership arrangements

- ◆ The CEO had a clear vision for the YOS and work was ongoing to strengthen the role of the Steering Group.
- ◆ The YOS Manager was involved at a strategic level and had made good use of funding opportunities for the benefit of both children and young people at risk of offending and those who had offended.
- ◆ Attendance at Steering Group level by the probation area required immediate attention.
- ◆ The Steering Group met regularly and provided strategic direction to the YOS. However, levels of knowledge and leadership in relation to YOS activity by some members lacked depth.
- ◆ The use of data across the service was not assisted by the lack of a performance management culture.
- ◆ Although levels of supervision and appraisal were satisfactory, overall they were not always consistent across the service.

Children and young people at risk of offending

- ◆ The preventative agenda was strong at both strategic and operational levels.
- ◆ There was a collaborative, inclusive and restorative approach to prevention work, with good communication between relevant teams.
- ◆ There were strong links between the YOS and the Metropolitan Police Service in relation to intelligence and tasking.
- ◆ Interventions provided by the Young Runaways Team, Early Intervention Teams and Looked after Children Programmes Officer contributed effectively to the preventative agenda.

Children and young people who offend

- ◆ The workforce reflected the diversity of the local population.
- ◆ Final warnings were delivered with appropriate interventions.
- ◆ Initial assessments were carried out in a timely way and interventions were provided via specialist workers who had good links with their parent organisations. However, supervision plans did not always meet the required standards.
- ◆ Although cases identified as posing a risk of harm were supervised well, greater attention needed to be given to the assessment process.
- ◆ Greater consistency was required in the enforcement of orders and home visits were not always conducted to a satisfactory level.
- ◆ Referral order panels were not consistently held within the national standard timescale.

Work with parents/carers

- ◆ Some effective work was being undertaken with the parents/carers of children and young people who had offended.
- ◆ Assessments and interventions for parents/carers now needed to be developed in a structured way across the service as part of a coherent strategy.
- ◆ A significant number of staff had received some training in work with parents/carers but this development training was ongoing.

Work with victims

- ◆ The level of work with victims was high and the team worked closely with colleagues and partners to ensure a high quality service to victims, particularly children and young people.
- ◆ The work viewed at the YPAC Centre was considered to be exemplary.
- ◆ Attendance of parents/carers at referral order panels was limited.

Overall assessment

The overall performance of the YOS was assessed as **satisfactory with a good basis for development**.

The service had grown significantly in a short time and had made good use of funding opportunities to increase resources and, as a result, significantly improved its contribution to work with children and young people at risk of offending and victims. It took a proactive approach to both criminal justice and youth justice issues and had a lively, committed and enthusiastic workforce.

Members of staff were engaging with parents/carers, including those in residential establishments. However, the YOS did not have a coherent strategy in relation to work with parents/carers. Dedicated parenting interventions were limited and assessment and evaluation required development.

Although we found that the Steering Group and relevant links within the partnerships were able to collectively provide strategic direction, the probation area was not represented and levels of knowledge of YOS business of some members was lacking in depth. This had been recognised by the CEO and there were plans to develop representation.

Structural changes had taken place within the service and these changes were not yet fully embedded. The Senior Management Team provided good levels of leadership to take the service forward but should ensure that the range of services provided are prioritised on an equal basis so that all staff are supported and developed in relevant areas of service delivery.

Recommendations

The Chair of the Steering Group should ensure that:

- ◆ an action plan is devised to address the following recommendations and forwarded to the lead inspector within three months of the publication of this report
- ◆ representation of all statutory partners at Steering Group level is consistent and that all members are sufficiently and equally aware of performance issues affecting the YOS
- ◆ a review of the Steering Group be undertaken to ensure its role and functions are developed in a way to assist the group in meeting its duties and statutory role.

The YOS Manager should ensure that:

- ◆ the quality of supervision plans is improved to include sufficient detail and enable easy management of progress
- ◆ a strategy for work with parents/carers is developed so that their needs are addressed through a range of interventions which are appropriately monitored and evaluated
- ◆ national standards in relation to enforcement are consistently applied across the service
- ◆ there is a consistent approach to risk of harm assessments
- ◆ opportunities provided by the ISSP are fully explored with service providers
- ◆ referral order panel meetings are held in accordance with the national standard guidelines.

Partner organisations should ensure that:

- ◆ members attend Steering Group meetings as required.

Overview

- ◆ The Borough of Enfield is located in London, 12 miles north of the City. The total population measured in the Census 2001 was 273,559 and, of this, 23.7% were aged between 0-17. This figure was slightly higher than the average for England and Wales of 22.7%.
- ◆ The area had a predominantly white population (77.1%). This figure was lower than the average for England, which was 90.9%. There was a higher percentage of Asian or Asian British residents (7.8%) than the average for England (4.6%). The same was true of the percentage of the Black or Black British residents (10.4%), which was much higher than the national average (2.1%).
- ◆ The level of employment in Enfield was lower than the average for England and Wales (58.9% and 60.6% respectively), and the level of unemployment (4.1%) was higher (3.4%). There were fewer retired residents in Enfield (11.2%) than the average for England and Wales (13.6%) and more students (9.4%) than nationally (7.3%).
- ◆ The YJB summary of YOT performance against the key performance indicators for April to June 2004 ranked Enfield in first position.
- ◆ YJB figures for youth offending between April 2002 and March 2003 (shown below) indicate that youth offending in Enfield was lower than the average per YOT for England and Wales. Motoring offences were the most common crimes, but there were no instances of death or injury by reckless driving. Information from the Youth Justice Plan suggested that up to 30% of children and young people dealt with by the YOS were resident outside the Borough of Enfield.

	No. offences in Enfield	Average per YOT for England and Wales
Violence against person	135	222
Racially aggravated offences	2	9
Sexual offences	4	11
Death or injury by reckless driving	0	0.8
Motoring offences	303	394
Robbery	32	30
Domestic burglary	24	50
Non-domestic burglary	17	36
Vehicle theft	78	97
Theft and handling	194	305
Fraud and forgery	44	19
Arson	1	9
Criminal damage	72	175
Drugs offences	116	85
Public order	29	113
Other	26	61
Breach of conditional discharge	7	9
Breach of statutory order	13	52
Breach of bail	15	31
TOTAL	1,112	1,708.8

1. MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

1.1 Leadership

Inspection criteria

The Management Board:

- ◇ *provides strategic oversight and direction and coordinates the provision of youth justice services by the YOT and partner organisations*
- ◇ *is made up of appropriate representatives who attend and participate actively in meetings*
- ◇ *ensures the provision of accurate and timely data returns, both for its own use and that of the YJB*
- ◇ *gives support and guidance to the YOT Manager, ensuring that they engage with local and national priorities*
- ◇ *ensures that the Youth Justice Plan is implemented.*

The YOS Steering Group was chaired by the Assistant Director of Children and Family Services on behalf of the CEO. He also line managed the YOS Manager and was Chair of the ACPC. There was clearly a good working relationship between the two groups. There were also strong links with the Enfield CDRP, chaired by the Police Borough Commander. The YOS Manager sat on a number of strategic groups, including the CDRP and subgroups of the DAT. He was a member of the Children's Fund Management Group and the Children and Families Senior Management Team. This facilitated good linkages between YOS business and other strategic plans and contributed to the overall strategic direction.

The Steering Group sat regularly and, from the meeting observed, provided some level of leadership to the YOS. Overall, the group was well attended by statutory and voluntary partners, with the exception of the probation area. The YOS Manager set the agenda and YOS staff were integral to the business of the group, frequently giving presentations on topical issues.

However, some members were either new to the group or of an insufficiently senior level to enable full contribution to its governance. This had been recognised by the Chair and the CEO. He gave support to the YOS whom he considered to be providing a strong service to children and young people and signed off the Youth Justice Plan, which contained some challenging local targets. It was encouraging to hear that he had a clear vision for the YOS and was anxious to ensure that representation was at an appropriate and consistent level, able to provide clearer strategic direction.

Data were analysed by the Steering Group, which discussed general performance measures. However, these data did not always inform policy.

The group was currently considering budgetary issues and was seeking to address representation from black and minority ethnic groups. An 'away day' had been planned to take place shortly after the inspection to enable the group to focus on strategic development.

Strengths:

- ◆ The CEO had a clear vision for the YOS and gave a strategic lead.
- ◆ Work was ongoing to strengthen the role of the Steering Group in providing direction to the YOS.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Attendance at Steering Group meetings by the probation area required attention.
- ◆ Greater use could be made of performance data to inform policy and develop service delivery.

1.2 Partnership and resources

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *A range of interventions and services are provided to meet the needs of children and young people who offend and those at risk of offending.*
- ◆ *YOTs are appropriately staffed by partners according to legislation and Home Office guidance.*
- ◆ *The Youth Justice Plan reflects partner strategies.*
- ◆ *Protocols have been agreed between the YOT, its statutory partners and other organisations, outlining the level of service, human resources issues and funding arrangements.*
- ◆ *Contracts are in place with other agencies to ensure the coordination of work and the appropriate delivery of services to meet the needs of children and young people.*

We found that the levels of partnership working between the YOS and other organisations were strong and together they provided a wide range of services.

The YOS was fully staffed. Most were directly employed by the YOS rather than seconded by the partner organisations, who provided resources to purchase the services required. IPOs had formed strong links with relevant partners. Whilst these arrangements were generally satisfactory, we were concerned that the directly employed staff were not able to represent either current practice or the perspective of the parent organisation in the same way as seconded staff. Protocols were in place for work with partner agencies that addressed the relevant secondment arrangements, including supervision as necessary.

The inspection identified a number of strengths in local partnerships and collaborative working. For example, the Connexions Service provided a key worker to the YOS who had formed exceptionally good links with the EWO. Police and Social Services had contributed additional members of staff to undertake work with children and young people reported missing from home.

The YOS was proud of, and made good use of the IPOs who were able to work closely with partners and colleagues. The IPOs, with responsibility for looked after children, and the Early Intervention Teams worked closely with residential units and local schools and were tackling anti-social behaviour through the use of ABCs. This work assisted local PSA targets in relation to crime reduction and the prevention of offending by children and young people.

The YOS Manager, who was adept at exploring opportunities for YOS funding, was involved with the crime reduction agenda and other initiatives at a national and local level. He advised the CDRP on crime relating to children and young people and held the Enfield Crime Reduction Implementation Team portfolio. We were impressed to find that an Operations Manager regularly attended the Police Tasking Group and reported issues to the YOS, and that other members of staff were involved on inter-agency strategic groups.

There were strong links between the YOS and providers of drug treatment, and relationships with Social Services colleagues were good.

Good practice

The YOS employed an IPO who was specifically tasked to work with looked after children and young people in order to reduce the likelihood of offending. The officer's role was to liaise with residential units and ensure that relevant preventative work was conducted.

Strengths:

- ◆ Partner organisations worked well with the YOS to provide a wide range of services and interventions to children and young people and address local concerns.
- ◆ The YOS Manager was involved in a number of strategic groups to support the development of services to children and young people at risk of offending and who had offended.
- ◆ Relevant disciplines were represented within the YOS.

Area for improvement:

- ◆ Although all the statutory partners contributed funding, not all directly seconded staff to the YOS.

1.3

Staff supervision, development and training

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *Staff are regularly supervised in accordance with their developmental needs and assessed level of competence.*
- ◇ *Annual appraisals contain objectives which are linked to local and national targets.*
- ◇ *All staff are provided with appropriate training opportunities to equip them to meet the requirements of the Youth Justice Plan.*
- ◇ *Staff are appropriately qualified and have had a criminal record check.*
- ◇ *Volunteers are appropriately trained, available for YOT activities and have had a criminal record check.*
- ◇ *Joint agreements are in place for the management of disciplinary, capability and grievance procedures.*
- ◇ *Complaints are properly managed.*

The level of support and supervision offered to staff was acceptable overall. The structure of the YOS had been revised in January 2004 and, as a result, the YOS Manager and the two Operational Managers were now accountable for specific lines of supervision to staff with responsibility for general administrative functions, pre-court and post-court matters respectively. In general, managers were said to be accessible, although some staff told us that, because of the location of managers within the office layout, the lines of decision making were sometimes blurred. As a consequence, the management of the service was not always consistent.

The YOS Manager received frequent supervision and annual appraisal from his line manager. The Operational Managers were supervised on a regular basis and the Senior Management Team met weekly to discuss relevant issues. We were impressed to see that Operational Managers attended strategic forums on behalf of the YOS Manager.

The members of staff to whom we spoke received good levels of supervision, although the frequency could be increased. All had links back to their parent organisations in relation to supervision and professional training and new staff received induction in varying degrees. Although the majority of staff received timely appraisals, there were occasions where significant periods of time had elapsed without one being completed.

Referral order panel members were receiving monthly supervision, together with personal development sessions where they received training in respect of a number of issues, including victim awareness. A monthly newsletter was published in relation to referral order work.

A number of staff were taking the YJB Professional Certificate in Effective Practice and several were attending professional development courses with the support of the service. All staff had undertaken ASSET training but, although some staff had been provided with briefings, training in relation to

effective practice had not been provided. We found limited evidence that staff were working towards effective practice guidelines.

Although risk of harm was generally well managed, staff had not received specific training in the issue and we found that the approach to risk across the service to be inconsistent. In addition, all staff had received training in restorative justice and those likely to have contact with children and young people had undertaken child protection training with the Children and Families Department.

Staff were sufficiently diverse and appeared to have appropriate awareness of diversity issues in relation to children and young people. However, not all had received diversity training. All had been CRB checked prior to commencement of work with children and young people.

Staff meetings were held regularly and ran to a set agenda. The second part of the meeting focused upon practice issues and, in alternate weeks, was divided into three different strands, covering the work of each team in separate meetings. Greater attention needed, however, to be given to the dissemination of information across the different staff groups as, despite this coherent structure, some members appeared unclear about how or why certain decisions had been made.

We found that, although performance issues were occasionally discussed in meetings, the YOS had not identified a manager responsible for such matters and performance measures were not always linked to staff supervision and development. This made it difficult for Operational Managers and staff to embrace a performance culture fully.

Strengths:

- ◆ The YOS was staffed with committed and enthusiastic management and workers.
- ◆ Seconded staff received supervision and professional development from their parent organisation.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ There were inconsistencies in the frequency of supervision and appraisals were not always completed to an agreed timetable.
- ◆ Performance data were not always used effectively across the service.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

This section is judged as satisfactorily met.

2. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF OFFENDING

2.1 Assessment of those at risk of offending

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *There is a mechanism to identify those children and young people within the area who are at risk of offending.*
- ◆ *There are arrangements to assess the needs of those individuals identified as being at risk of offending.*

The YOS provided a wide range of assessment and services to children and young people at risk of offending, based upon its strategy to reduce and prevent offending. The strategy was linked to the Enfield CDRP Board's Reduction Strategy.

Work in relation to the assessment of children and young people at risk of offending was overseen by an Operational Manager and we were impressed by the way in which the various strands of early intervention worked together in a collaborative way.

The Young Runaways Team received referrals from the Police, Social Services and parents/carers about children and young people reported as missing from home. The team debriefed individuals on their return and, by using ASSET, worked closely with partners to identify risk and provide relevant interventions. The collaboration between the Police and Social Services, who had seconded staff to deal with this work, was good. The team worked closely with the IPO who had responsibility for looked after children. The IPO was engaged with a number of residential units to identify and work with children and young people at risk of offending. Although we considered that assessment, tracking and monitoring could be further developed, we were impressed by the interventions the IPO was able to provide.

The IPO worked closely with an Early Intervention Team delivering a Citizenship Project to a large number of children and young people in local schools and residential units, whose needs were identified and focused on issues around bullying and citizenship. The team adopted a restorative approach to its work.

All caseworkers were able to refer siblings of children and young people who had offended to the victim services team, whose work was strongly linked to the preventative agenda. Following assessment of their needs, this team worked with children and young people in the YPAC Centre.

An Operational Manager was part of the Borough Police Tasking Group and Police staff and other colleagues in the team were submitting a large amount of intelligence to the Metropolitan Police Intelligence System. This

action contributed to a local target within the Youth Justice Plan and was handled in a sensitive and professional manner.

Good practice

The Young Runaways Team was an excellent example of partnership working. The team, which consisted of Police and Social Services staff, worked closely with other partners to provide early assessment and interventions to children and young people at risk of offending.

Strengths:

- ◆ The strategy for dealing with children and young people at risk of offending was strong and links across the team were well established.
- ◆ An Operational Manager worked closely with the Police in relation to intelligence and tasking.

2.2 Interventions for those at risk of offending

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *There are arrangements to provide interventions for those children and young people within the area who are assessed at risk of offending.*
- ◆ *The YOT has a methodology for measuring the effectiveness of preventative intervention programmes.*
- ◆ *Interventions are appropriate to the diverse needs of children and young people in the YOT area and take account of the need to safeguard children and young people.*
- ◆ *Interventions target the criminogenic needs of those at risk of offending.*

The YOS provided a number of interventions based upon the criminogenic needs of the child or young person assessed.

The Young Runaways Team offered a wide range of interventions including anger management, drugs referral and educational opportunities to children and young people, parents/carers, particularly in relation to looked after children.

The team received referrals from the Police, Social Services and parents/carers and we were impressed by the options available, based upon ASSET, for children and young people at risk of offending. The work was conducted in a restorative style and, where appropriate, there was significant liaison with the Social Services Children and Families Department.

One of the Early Intervention Teams worked with children and young people referred to them from several sources, and were represented at the Enfield Council Multi-Agency Panels, which considered issues of anti-social behaviour. In cases involving children and young people up to the age of 13 years, they were able to assess the needs of the child or young person and prepare relevant ABCs to set boundaries around behaviour and school attendance and provided support in relation to drug misuse. Contracts lasted for up to six months and provided a structure on which to develop young people's skills. The YOS made good use of a comprehensive referral form and the resulting voluntary agreements included contracts towards which caseworkers and families were able to work.

A second Early Intervention Team, together with the EWO, were involved with a number of local schools and facilitated citizenship programmes for groups of children and young people. The group work included issues around anti-bullying and drug misuse and children and young people were awarded with certificates on completion of the course. A member of the team was able to offer advice in relation to restorative conferencing in schools.

A seconded Police Sergeant collaborated with the ABC coordinator across the preventative agenda to ensure a consistent approach to Police and YOS preventative work. YOS Police Officers were also involved in the prevention of retail crime committed by children and young people and the team had worked closely together on a system to identify and track activity amongst individual and groups of children and young people and, where appropriate, prevent offending.

The Connexions keyworker coordinated the work in relation to Positive Activities for Young People to ensure that children and young people were able to participate in a range of events.

Good practice

We were impressed by the work undertaken by the Early Intervention Teams, in particular the citizenship programme and the identification and tracking of children and young people at risk of offending. This tracking system enabled staff to see more clearly activity involving a group of children and young people and, where appropriate, take relevant preventative or referral action.

Strengths:

- ◆ A range of interventions was available to children and young people at risk of offending, based on a restorative justice approach.
- ◆ Individual teams worked in a collaborative way for the benefit of children and young people.

2.3

Outcomes for those at risk of offending

Inspection criterion

- ◆ *Those assessed as being at risk of offending and undertaking interventions are engaged in activity to reduce their risk of offending.*

During the inspection, we saw a number of examples where children and young people at risk of offending were engaged by the YOS.

In many cases the Young Runaways Team had conducted considerable work and was able to track individuals by maintaining diversion files. There had been a significant reduction in the number of children and young people reported to the Police as missing from home, with the consequent outcome of a reduction in risk factors.

Planned interventions were strong and we spoke to several children and young people and parents/carers who had been involved with a member of the team. The response was extremely positive.

In one case we saw positive outcomes for a child aged seven years and his family where school behaviour and literacy skills had improved. This was an excellent piece of early intervention work conducted by the YOS.

The work in relation to young victims at the YPAC Centre supported the preventative agenda by ensuring that offending risks associated with becoming a victim were reduced. We saw a number of positive pieces of written feedback in relation to the citizenship programme, from which children and young people had clearly benefited.

Strengths:

- ◆ The Young Runaways Team played a significant role in reducing risk factors associated with children and young people reported as being missing from home.
- ◆ The citizenship programme demonstrated collaborative working with partners in order to reduce risks associated with offending.

**Good
practice**

D was a young person who had not committed any offences but had gone missing from his home on a number of occasions. His activity was having a negative effect upon his family and in particular siblings. Frustrated by the inability of the agencies to provide support to her son, D's mother sought help from the Young Runaways Team and spoke highly of both individual and team work. D was able to talk to the team at any time, he had developed communication skills and his family felt that had it not been for the work of the YOS his behaviour would have deteriorated.

A parent with whom the YOS had contact via its diversion programme said, *"the best thing about working with the YOS was getting a better understanding of my son. The worst thing was having to look at myself and how I have contributed to his behaviour"*.

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG
PEOPLE AT RISK OF OFFENDING**

This section is judged as fully met.

3.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO OFFEND

3.1

Assessment of children and young people who offend

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *Comprehensive assessments of the needs of children and young people who have offended, are made at the intervals required by national standards and effective practice guidelines.*
- ◇ *Risk of harm to others is fully assessed.*
- ◇ *Risk of harm, either to self or from others, is fully assessed.*
- ◇ *Supervision plans are written in accordance with national standards, emanate from ASSET and contain SMART objectives.*
- ◇ *Assessments to address criminogenic needs, such as health and ETE, and take account of cultural difference, diversity and safeguarding children and young people.*
- ◇ *ASSET is updated in accordance with national standards and effective practice guidelines at relevant times during contact with the child or young person.*
- ◇ *Specialist assessments are undertaken on those with specific needs or who are assessed as a risk of harm to others.*
- ◇ *Resources have been identified and capacity exists to meet assessed need.*

Initial assessments of children and young people were satisfactorily completed in accordance with the national standard in 82% of cases examined. Children and young people were involved in the assessment in 56% of cases and parents/carers in 72%.

The YOS dealt with a large number of complex cases and we were encouraged by good levels of management oversight in relevant cases involving risk. 64% of these cases were referred to a manager and most were robustly supervised. All final warning cases attracted a risk assessment regardless of ASSET scores and one of the Operational Managers attended MAPPP where appropriate. Although cases involving risk were discussed in supervision sessions, practice varied in different parts of the service, resulting in some inconsistencies. There were a small number of cases involving serious offences where risks, apparent to inspectors, had not been addressed. We were told that random checks had been conducted of cases involving risk of harm in the past and feel that this practice, which was said to have now ceased, should be reinstated to improve consistency.

The Drugs Interventions Officer made good use of the SASSI and the YOS, whilst dealing with tier two drugs issues themselves, worked closely with the Step AHEADS Tier Three Drugs Treatment Centre to whom they made

regular referrals. YOS staff attended the first session together with the child or young person.

In general, staff took relevant factors into account when assessing children and young people and held regular meetings with Step AHEADS practitioners. There were strong links between ASSET and referrals to various specialist workers and the fact that the service had a full range of relevant specialists was enormously helpful and made intervention meaningful.

We found that YOS staff met with children and young people and their parents/carers following an appearance at court. This provided opportunities for assessments of the child's or young person's needs in relation to health and substance misuse. The information obtained during this contact was passed to a case manager and helped to facilitate arrangements for future meetings with the child or young person and parents/carers.

Supervision planning required further attention. Our file review showed that only 60% of cases were completed within the national standard timescale and just under half met with the national standard requirement. Furthermore, few were considered to have SMART objectives and several did not specifically identify critical dates for completion of interventions. Not all plans were sufficiently well recorded and able to provide sufficient detail to track progress and change.

The level and approach to interventions largely demonstrated value for money, with our file reading showing that 69% of cases had resources allocated to meet the specific needs of individual children and young people. 67% of the interventions were appropriate to the assessed level of risk of harm.

Strengths:

- ◆ Initial assessments were completed satisfactorily in a large number of cases.
- ◆ Overall risk of harm assessments were generally conducted to a good standard.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Greater consistency was required across the YOS in relation to risk of harm assessments to ensure that all practitioners were approaching risk assessments consistently and with due regard to the nature of offending.
- ◆ A number of supervision plans did not meet the required standard and lacked sufficient detail to enable easy management of progress.

3.2

Interventions for children and young people who offend

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *Interventions are:*
- ◇ *Targeted in areas of assessed need such as education, health and parental relationships, etc*
- ◇ *Provided that are specific to the needs and offending behaviour of girls and young women, children and young people from minority ethnic groups, those with disabilities and take account of safeguarding children and young people*
- ◇ *Consistent with the principles of effective practice.*
- ◇ *Frequency of appointments is consistent with national standards and Home Office/YJB guidance for final warnings, referral orders, community penalties, DTOs (custody and post-custody) and ISSPs (where they exist).*
- ◇ *Enforcement follows non-compliance.*

We found that YOS staff showed particular sensitivity to the range of children and young people from minority ethnic groups. There were examples where the heritage of the child or young person had contributed to intervention planning, particularly in relation to religious issues. However, not all staff spoken to could demonstrate a clear understanding of the principles of effective practice, although some were receiving relevant training through the Professional Certificate in Effective Practice.

The skills and contacts of the EWO were used effectively. We found that this member of staff, together with the Connexions keyworker and others, took a proactive approach to working on educational needs to monitor and develop the educational needs of children and young people. There was a strong support strategy for those children and young people not in full-time education. Individual learning plans were drawn up and access to pupil referral units, the Secondary Pastoral Support Centre and vocational courses were widely available.

In relation to health needs, 20% of cases examined had physical health needs and 32% showed signs of emotional or mental health issues. We were pleased to note that in 71% of these cases appropriate treatment had been sought. In relation to sexual health, practitioners were able to make referrals to the Drugs Intervention Officer/Healthcare specialist who provided some support and advice to children and young people. Good use was made of SAFE, who offered a child guidance referral option in relation to sexual health. The Chair of the Steering Group was seeking to develop this area of work.

There were strong links with the PCT and mental health treatment for children and young people was easily accessible. The YOS had a CAMHS specialist on site, who offered in-house assessments and consultation, including anger management. His position was funded by the PCT who provided supervision and appraisal, as well as cover during absence.

Although the worker was using a generic mental health assessment instrument, as opposed to the YJB assessment tool, staff liaised closely and were able to make written or oral referrals.

The YOS was dealing with a large number of referral orders. We saw good examples of contracts which included both victim and education interventions. Certificated First Aid Sessions were also available. The team consisted of two highly motivated members of staff who had to deal with all processes from the setting up of the referral order panel through to managing relevant contracts, and administrative functions. Although the panels were receiving timely information from the team, they did not meet within the required number of days in 69% of cases. In 63% of cases examined there were more than 30 days between the court decision and the panel meeting.

The frequency of appointments arranged conformed to national standards in 78% of cases reviewed. Interviews conducted with children and young people indicated an awareness of the consequences of non-attendance but we found that 53% of appointments made were kept. There were some inconsistencies in the approach to enforcement, with breach action being taken in accordance with the requirements in 58% of cases. Judgements about the acceptability of absences were appropriately made in 51% of cases.

In general, there were inconsistencies in relation to home visits. The YOS had taken the view that visits should not be made in relation to referral orders and overall, apart from exceptional cases, we found that home visits were infrequently made.

The voluntary sector assisted the YOS in the provision of anger management and counselling interventions and we found this contribution to be significant to the development of children and young people. They were referred to anger management sessions and an assessment of need was carried out. Upon completion of the programme, feedback was provided to caseworkers but was not always consistently recorded on YOIS. However, good levels of liaison existed between the caseworker and interventions providers in 72% of cases. There was a close fit between interventions planned and assessed risk of harm to others in 65% of cases examined and this was followed up with appropriate interventions in 67% of cases.

We found that the use of effective practice guidelines could have been stronger. Many members of staff were unaware of the guidance and those who were did not always use it. Training had not been provided, although some staff were participating in the YJB Professional Certificate in Effective Practice.

There were high levels of engagement with children and young people on final warnings. Interventions were delivered in 81% of cases and victims consulted in all cases. All were checked against Social Services records. Although we found that the YOS received notification of final warnings within national timescales in 75% of cases, this was largely due to the Police Officer collecting information daily from the Police custody suite. This developed mutual understanding of roles but did not oblige the Police to

establish systems to ensure that information could be transferred in a timely manner.

We were unclear as to the decision making process for final warnings, as no independent decision maker was evident. However, we were told that this issue would be addressed by the recently established Police Emerald Team, who were seeking to develop information flow and decision making processes.

All DTO cases were allocated to one case manager who worked closely with the YOI and provided worksheets on offending behaviour to be undertaken during the custodial period. Reviews of relevant training plans were undertaken on a monthly basis and the quality of pre-release work was high. However, there were occasions where post-release work was not successfully conducted and this area of work was not always covered during the absence of the caseworker.

The Haringay and Enfield ISSP offered a limited number of places to children and young people from Enfield. Not all of these places were taken and the YOS, whom we were told did not have appropriate confidence in the programme, did not embrace opportunities provided by the ISSP.

Strengths:

- ◆ The majority of final warnings included an intervention.
- ◆ The EWO, together with colleagues, made good use of educational opportunities for children and young people.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ The YOS policy in relation to home visits was inconsistent.
- ◆ There was no independent decision maker in relation to final warnings and the systems in place to transfer final warning information from the Police to the YOS was inconsistent with the national standard.
- ◆ Referral order panels were not convened in a timely manner in accordance with the national standard.
- ◆ Enforcement of orders was inconsistent.
- ◆ The opportunities provided by the ISSP were not fully explored.

3.3

Outcomes for work with children and young people who offend

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *The area demonstrates a reduction in reoffending for all bands of penalties (pre-court, first tier, community penalties and custody).*
- ◇ *End ASSETs show a reduction in risk factors.*
- ◇ *Indicative accounts of outcomes from children and young people, parents/carers and other relevant persons show positive outcomes.*
- ◇ *Supervision plan objectives are met in areas of assessed need.*

Our file reading showed that 19% of children and young people subject to an intervention by the YOS had reoffended during the course of the order. The overall ASSET scores had improved in 54% of cases and positive changes in behaviour following interventions were observed in 50%. The YOS dealt with a number of complex cases and this analysis should be seen as a positive outcome.

The Youth Justice Plan recognised that the Enfield area was subject to a significant number of offences committed by children and young people not resident in the area. The YOS took a proactive and inclusive approach to this and were prepared to work with children and young people regardless.

The Youth Justice Plan Update 2004/2005 stated that of the 2002 cohort, 28% pre-court, 29% first tier, 50% community penalties and 33.3% custody had reoffended. In custody cases, this was a significant improvement against previous figures, although other categories demonstrated a rise.

We spoke to one young person on a referral order who was fully aware of the consequences of failure to attend appointments. Practitioners had dealt with this young person in a manner sensitive to their needs, which had been challenging.

We spoke to the parent of one young person who had received a referral order. With the encouragement of the YOS the parent supported the young person through the contract and eventually became a panel member, a position he still holds.

Referral order panel members were positive in relation to training and support, but were uncertain as to how to make the best use of victim attendance at panels.

Strength:

- ◇ Work with children and young people showed some reductions in offending rates.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO OFFEND

This section is judged as satisfactorily met.

4.

WORK WITH PARENTS/CARERS

4.1

Assessment of the needs of parents/carers of children and young people who offend or are at risk of offending

Inspection criterion

- ◆ *An assessment of the parenting skills of the parents/carers of children and young people who offend or are at risk of offending has been undertaken and is used to inform any intervention.*

The parenting worker was available five hours per week to the YOS, during which time he was able to engage with parents/carers, and provide feedback and evaluation to caseworkers. He used a self-generated assessment tool to identify protective issues and ascertain a suitable starting point for family support.

A significant proportion of practitioners had received training in parenting and future training was planned. They were able to make referrals to the parenting worker as appropriate for assessment and also worked with parents/carers on an individual basis. However, as this work was not routinely recorded in YOIS, it was difficult to determine its extent or quality or, indeed, how it contributed to the work undertaken with the child or young person.

Our file review showed that 72% of parents/carers were involved in the initial assessment of children and young people.

The YOS was currently considering the appointment of a Parenting Coordinator.

Strength:

- ◆ An assessment tool was used by the parenting worker.

Area for improvement:

- ◆ It was not possible to determine whether parents'/carers' needs were being consistently assessed.

4.2

Interventions with the parents/carers of children and young people who offend or are at risk of offending

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *Interventions are provided for and taken up by the parents/carers of children and young people who either offend or are at risk of offending in accordance with assessed need.*
- ◇ *Parenting interventions are provided that are appropriate to the background, culture, ethnicity, language needs, literacy levels and gender of parents/carers.*

Due to the limited number of hours available, work with parents/carers had to be managed appropriately and we were told parenting orders were prioritised ahead of voluntary orders. The YOS had yet to develop a strategy to inform this process.

The interventions provided were of good quality and took the form of a number of one-to-one sessions, conducted by the parenting worker, which were individually tailored to suit identified needs, for example cultural or linguistic. All parents/carers assessed as requiring such intervention were said to be offered the opportunity of involvement. At the time of the inspection, the parenting worker was involved in 11 cases, four of which were parenting orders.

The YOS had experienced difficulties in establishing a Parenting Group, mainly, we were told, due to the diverse nature of need. The lack of a suitable venue to conduct work with parents/carers was also cited as a barrier to effective contact.

As a result of YJB funding, a weekly Parenting Clinic was being facilitated by the parenting worker. Other forms of intervention available to the YOS included FRIENDS, a voluntary service for the parents/carers of drug misusers. The victim services team had recently commenced a support programme for the parents/carers of victims, held at the YPAC Centre, and two sessions had been conducted at the time of the inspection. In addition, the YOS contributed to the training for the carers of children and young people in local authority care.

The YOS used interpreters, where necessary, and we observed an interview with the parenting worker and a family subject to a parenting order, which was conducted through an interpreter. It was a challenging piece of work and we were impressed by the way the worker was able to conduct the interview, skilfully exploring offending behaviour, asylum issues and accommodation. It was clear that a number of sessions with the family would be required in order to produce meaningful outcomes but that strong foundations for future work had been laid during the session observed.

The EPQA action plan was designed to target at least 10% of parents/carers with children and young people on orders or warnings.

Strengths:

- ◆ The YOS parenting worker was able to engage with a limited number of parents/carers through the use of individual programmes.
- ◆ The EPQA action plan should assist in the development of work with parents/carers.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Not all members of staff had received training in relation to work with parents/carers.
- ◆ Interventions provided for parents/carers should be developed in a structured way across the service as part of a coherent strategy.

4.3

Outcomes for parents/carers of children and young people who offend or are at risk of offending

Inspection criterion

- ◆ *Interventions for parents/carers have the desired outcomes.*

The Youth Justice Plan Update 2004/2005 identified the need to conduct more parenting programmes and showed that 75% of parents/carers completed parenting programmes and that 90% of those attending were satisfied with the work conducted. These figures needed to be considered in the context of the numbers involved.

Due to the limited number of hours available, we found a low level of impact in relation to work with parents/carers of children and young people. Based on the known extent of the assessment of parents/carers, we could not be sure that they were receiving the intervention they needed.

It was good to see that an action plan in relation to work with parents/carers was being developed to further the YJB EPQA. Fifteen practitioners had received parenting training of at least a one-day programme and some had received accredited training.

Strengths:

- ◆ The parenting worker provided valuable support to parents/carers, although programmes were restricted due to a limited number of hours.
- ◆ The Victim Parents Support Programme was beginning to provide additional support for parents/carers.

Area for improvement:

- ◆ Further development and coordination across the staff teams on work with parents/carers was now required.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK WITH PARENTS/CARERS

This section is judged as partly met.

5.

WORK WITH VICTIMS

5.1 Assessment of the needs of victims of children and young people who offend

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *An assessment of victims' needs should be made and used to inform planned interventions.*
- ◇ *All victims are given the opportunity to make informed decisions about their involvement in cases of children and young people who offend and are supported in doing so.*

We considered the work undertaken with victims to be exemplary, as a result of views received from partners and our own observations of activity at the YPAC Centre. The YOS had clearly invested in victims and prioritised this area of work. Enfield YOS was the first in the country to set up a unit exclusively for young victims and their families, and the YPAC Centre was opened by the Deputy Assistant Commissioner in December 2003.

A Victim Services Team, which comprised of a project co-ordinator, a victim liaison interventions post, a Children's Fund post and a counsellor, carried out work with victims. The team was located close to the Police and the Young Runaways Teams to maximise contact, and took referrals from all case managers, schools, Social Services and the public in general.

The YOS had produced comprehensive information leaflets for people affected by crime, translated into a number of languages.

The victim response form provided a comprehensive history of the views of the victim. The policy of the YOS was to engage with, and assess all victims regardless of age within seven days. A number of services were available based upon the victim initial assessment statement, ranging from counselling to referrals to other agencies.

Emphasis was placed upon the needs of young victims. Significant numbers of children and young people had been interviewed and had either attended the YPAC Centre or received some other form of intervention. Although not all staff were fully aware of the work going on in relation to victims, it was clear that the strategy was a strong one able to deal with a large number of children and young people.

The YOS had adopted the Police National Intelligence Model by gathering relevant information in relation to young victims via the Young Runaways Team. Each team involved with potential young victims worked closely together to assess young victims and develop practice.

Good practice

It had been established that a number of groups were under-represented in relation to victim contact and missing from home status. As a result, the YOS was working together with Victim Support to obtain funding for an additional member of staff to work with children and young people not represented in these areas.

Strength:

- ◆ A comprehensive assessment was conducted by the victim services team who provided a first class service to people affected by crime, particularly children and young people.

5.2

Interventions with the victims of children and young people who offend

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *Victims either have access to support provided directly by the YOT or are informed of relevant service providers.*
- ◆ *Victims are offered the opportunity to specify any restorative element of the child's or young person's supervision plan and to be informed of their progress.*
- ◆ *Interventions with victims are provided that are appropriate to their age, vulnerability, culture, ethnicity, language needs, literacy levels and gender.*

We found the YOS to be working effectively together with the Police and Children's Fund to support a large number of victims under 13 years. People affected by crime were offered an information service and there were a number of models of intervention available.

All YOS practitioners had received training in restorative justice and the Victim Coordinator linked victims to this process. When appropriate, victim work was conducted by caseworkers.

A dedicated counsellor was available at the YPAC Centre to provide services to children and young people affected by crime. This person also had strong links into local schools. Two young victims, who were interviewed during the inspection, had attended counselling sessions. It was clear that they found the service to be invaluable; one victim had attended up to 13 sessions and stated she was now a different person, able to go out a lot more, her schoolwork had improved and she had been given the opportunity to attend self-defence classes. As a result, her confidence had grown tremendously. This victim was also supporting younger victims at the unit.

Support was also being provided to parents/carers and siblings by the YOS Victim Services Team. The unit was accessible to different age groups and had extensive opening times. It had recently set up victim parents support

meetings. The work with victims at the unit was being developed in an innovative way, which we found to be commendable. There was access by children and young people affected by crime to various rooms, giving opportunities, for example, to cook and develop computer skills. There was a separate counselling room.

The YOS also had links with the Child Victims of Crime Charity who were able to provide additional forms of funding. The Victim Services Team worked closely with colleague IPOs to deliver restorative justice work into schools and residential units.

Good use was made of YOIS to record victim work. Although we found entries to be of an acceptable standard, we were told that a number of options were being explored to develop recording.

In relation to referral order panels, a limited number of victims were found to be attending meetings. Victim initial assessment statements were frequently used and the YOS made good use of local representatives to represent the commercial sector where corporate victims were involved.

Good practice

The YOS had worked together with partners for the benefit of victims. In particular the YPAC Centre was an illustration of collaborative working and an innovative way of providing support to a range of children and young people.

Strengths:

- ◆ A counselling service was available to children and young people affected by crime.
- ◆ High quality offender/victim services were offered, together with appropriate interventions and support.

Area for improvement:

- ◆ Links between the victim and the Referral Order Team could be developed to improve the levels of attendance of victims at panels.

5.3

Outcomes for victims of children and young people who offend

Inspection criterion

- ◆ *Victims are satisfied with the work undertaken by the YOT.*

The YOS ensured that each person affected by crime was contacted personally by the Victim Services Team. Results were recorded on the YOIS database. This ensured that all victims were interviewed in relation to their experiences. The Youth Justice Plan Update 2004/2005 showed that 97% of people affected by crime were satisfied with work carried out by the YOS, who were able to contact a large number of victims.

A 16-year-old, who had been physically assaulted, was interviewed with her mother. They had received support from the YOS since June 2003 and described the staff as 'brilliant'. Although this person did not find the attendance at the referral order panel positive, due to a perception that she was unable to put across her own views, she did however feel that it had helped her get closure and move on.

Both of the young people interviewed, who had been victims of crime, gave the YOS an overall scoring of ten, stating that they were totally satisfied with the service and support that they had received.

Strength:

- ◆ The YPAC Centre provided innovative opportunities for a range of children and young people, their parents/carers.

Good practice

During the inspection we met with two young victims and their parents. They were very positive about the YOS, finding staff to be helpful and fully supportive. One of the young victims (aged 14) described their attendance at the referral order panel and how they felt about the process afterwards:

"It was quite scary attending the panel, I did have a real choice about it, but at times, I had doubts. My mum was very keen for me to attend, and the YOS staff made several home visits and lots of telephone calls to help me be ready for the panel. I was listened to at the panel and the best thing was that I changed the community reparation project the offender was to attend. This was really important and the best thing was that I really got to have my say."

I now feel a lot better about things, I have a mentor who is brilliant, I can talk to him about things that I can not talk to anyone else about."

The parents of the victim stated that they found the panel members to be very engaging and their views were also listened to. They stated that the YOS and the Victims Unit had, and was continuing to support them and they described the service as a 'godsend'.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK WITH VICTIMS

This section is judged as fully met.

The joint inspection of YOTs

The Government announced the establishment of an independent inspection of YOTs in December 2002. The inspection programme is to be conducted jointly by the Audit Commission, CSCI, Estyn, Healthcare Commission, HMIC, HMI Prisons, HMI Probation, Ofsted, and SSIW. The joint inspection team is located within HMI Probation and is funded by the Home Office.

Home Office aims

The joint inspection contributes primarily to the achievement of Home Office Aims 3 and 4 to:

- ◆ 'ensure the effective delivery of justice, avoiding unnecessary delay, through efficient investigation, detection, prosecution and court procedures. To minimise the threat to and intimidation of witnesses and to engage with and support victims'
- ◆ 'deliver effective custodial and community sentences to reduce reoffending and protect the public, through the prison and probation services, in partnership with the Youth Justice Board'.

The purpose of the joint inspection is to report to the Secretary of State and, through him, Parliament and the public, on the effectiveness of the YOTs in fulfilling their statutory duties to prevent offending by children and young people, and thereby protect the public, whilst still safeguarding their rights and promoting their welfare.

The **aims** of the programme are to:

- ◆ assess the impact made by YOTs and partner organisations on the prevention of offending by children and young people through effective supervision
- ◆ appraise the work undertaken by YOTs and partner organisations to meet the needs of children and young people at risk of offending and enable them to lead law-abiding and constructive lives
- ◆ evaluate the role of the YOTs in safeguarding the rights and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- ◆ assess the extent to which the YOTs are meeting the required standards and targets set by the YJB
- ◆ promote good practice in the management arrangements of YOTs and service delivery to the courts and community
- ◆ identify underperformance and make recommendations to promote improvements
- ◆ evaluate the effective use of resources

- ◆ actively promote race equality and diversity as an integral part of the inspection process
- ◆ produce timely reports which contribute to improved performance by informing policy and practice.

Code of practice

Each inspection will:

- ◆ be undertaken with integrity in a professional, impartial and courteous manner
- ◆ enable the development of independent judgements, based on evidence
- ◆ seek to energise and engage with staff
- ◆ promote race equality and diversity throughout its processes
- ◆ be concluded with the timely publication of a report containing findings and recommendations for improvement.

Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within the remit of this inspection programme should write to:

*HM Chief Inspector of Probation
2nd Floor, Ashley House
2 Monck Street
London SW1P 2BQ*

Inspection arrangements

- ◆ The joint inspection programme started in September 2003, following two pilot inspections. All 155 YOTs in England and Wales are to be inspected over a five to six year cycle. As this is a long inspection programme, we decided to break it down into three phases in order to retain its relevance and ensure that it continues to consider local and national concerns. The three phases are:
 - **from September 2003 to July 2004**, when the inspection will concentrate on key issues, with emphasis placed on establishing benchmarks and the dissemination of good practice. YOTs are being asked to volunteer for this stage of the process
 - **up to September 2006**, during which time the inspections will be individually tailored to each YOT, based on an examination of the data available and the findings from other inspection programmes
 - **from September 2006 onwards**, where the inspection will focus on achievement against targets met, particularly on increasing overall performance and ensuring consistency of practice.
- ◆ The inspection will be carried out in line with the Government's commitment to proportionate and coordinated inspection in local government, informed by the Comprehensive Performance Assessment results and the Wales Programme for Improvement. We have therefore developed a programme that:
 - is proportionate to risk and only inspects those areas of work where a team is performing well in order to disseminate good practice
 - complements, and is coordinated with, other inspection programmes, including those currently being developed following the publication of the Green Paper, *Every Child Matters* (2003)
 - takes account of YOTs' recent development as organisations.
- ◆ Comprehensive standards and criteria have been developed to cover the first phase of the inspection, focusing on:
 - **management and partnership arrangements**
 - **children and young people considered at risk of offending**
 - **children and young people who offend**
 - **parents/carers of children and young people who are at risk of offending or who offend**
 - **victims.**
- ◆ Each site visit during the first phase will take place over two weeks, about two to three weeks apart. The YOT will be asked to identify a random, but statistically representative sample of between 50 and 120 children and young people (dependent on the workload) who have been subject to some form of intervention in

the previous months. The cases will cover most orders, including licences.

- ◆ During the first week of the site visit, we will examine all these case files in detail. We will also, in half the cases selected, undertake in-depth interviews with the case manager, any other person significantly involved in delivering the intervention and, where possible, the child or young person themselves and their parents/carers. Where appropriate, we also hope to meet and hear from victims of crimes by children and young people supervised by the YOT.
- ◆ In order to encourage self-assessment and increase ownership of the inspection findings, we are inviting YOTs to second a member of their staff, usually an experienced practitioner, to the inspection team for the duration of the file reading week. We believe that this can be a positive way of developing mutual understanding and helps to strengthen the links between inspection and practice.
- ◆ The second week of the inspection will involve meetings with the CEO, Management Board members, YOT Manager and staff. It will cover the management of the YOT, its performance and the contribution made by its partner organisations. Discussions will be informed by the findings of the examination of case files conducted in the first week of inspection.
- ◆ The inspection findings will be compiled in a report which will include recommendations for improvement. These recommendations will be designed to encourage the YOT in its work, to support good practice and to promote improvements.
- ◆ The report will be submitted to the Home Secretary, as the Secretary of State responsible for youth justice, with simultaneous copies to the Education and Health Secretaries and where relevant, the Ministers for Education & Lifelong Learning, Finance, Local Government & Communities, and Health & Social Services in Wales. A copy will be sent to the YJB. Copies will also be made available to the press and placed on the website of HMI Probation at:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/justice/probation/inspprob>

Fieldwork for this inspection was undertaken in 2004.

- ◆ The file reading took place week commencing 14 June.
- ◆ The second week commenced on 19 July.

Scoring approach

The five sections of the inspection are individually assessed against the relevant standards, using the supporting criteria. Judgements are based on:

- ◆ information supplied by the YOT
- ◆ interviews with chief officers, managers and staff both from the YOT and other partner organisations
- ◆ reading case files
- ◆ discussions with case managers and other people significantly involved in the supervisory process
- ◆ the perspectives of the children and young people, their parents/carers and, where possible, their victims.

The judgements are defined as:

- ◆ **Fully met** – denoting exceptional performance beyond the requirements of national standards and other relevant guidelines
- ◆ **Satisfactorily met** – strong performance on the majority of items and at least satisfactory on the remainder, meeting the requirements of national standards and other relevant guidelines
- ◆ **Partly met** – less than satisfactory performance on the majority of items
- ◆ **Not met** – inadequate performance on most items.

Some discretion is allowed to lead inspectors for scores to be adjusted if this seems appropriate due to other findings or contextual evidence.

The overall assessment will be determined by the judgements of the individual sections. No score or grading will be given during this first phase of the inspection process, but instead a general categorisation highlighting particular achievements as well as areas for improvement. This approach has been adopted as it was felt that a more rigid scoring mechanism would be inappropriate given the developmental nature of much of the work of the YOTs and their relatively recent inauguration as organisations.

The performance of the YOT will be assessed as:

- ◆ **Commendable** – there is strong management performance and exemplary work with children and young people who offend, supported by satisfactory or better performance in other areas of work
- ◆ **Good** – there is satisfactory performance across all five sections
- ◆ **Satisfactory with good basis for development** – where, at least, both sections relating to management arrangements and work with children and young people who offend, are assessed as satisfactorily met, although others may be considered to only have been partly or not met
- ◆ **Unsatisfactory requiring improvement** – although some sections may be satisfactorily met, either the section on management arrangements or work with children and young people who offend, is assessed as partly or not met
- ◆ **Poor requiring significant improvement** – where neither the section on management arrangements or work with children and young people who offend is considered to have been satisfactorily met.

Next steps

- ◆ The YOT will be asked to send a response to the recommendations, to the lead inspector, together with an action plan within three months of the publication of the report. It is anticipated that the recommendations are normally addressed within 12 months of publication to allow sufficient time for integration within existing developments.
- ◆ Implementation of the recommendations is to be monitored by the YJB. The joint inspection programme does not normally include any follow-up action unless issues were to emerge during the course of the programme that were of such serious concern to require immediate attention. The inspection of the Enfield YOS has not revealed any such concerns.
- ◆ In addition to the reports on individual YOTs, the joint inspection team will also publish periodic reports on findings across a number of teams. Such reports will include comments on race equality and diversity issues and other trend information. These reports will also include comparisons between the performance of YOTs with similar characteristics.