



**effective practice**

Where we see our standards  
delivered well, in practice.



Her Majesty's  
Inspectorate of  
Probation



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# Effective practice guide

## **Education, training and employment**

Based on: A joint inspection of education, training and employment and training services in youth offending teams in England and Wales.

An inspection by HM Inspectorate of Probation, Estyn and Ofsted

**June 2022**

# Acknowledgements

This effective practice guide is based on information sourced while undertaking the education, training and employment thematic inspection and work arising from key lines of enquiry. The inspection was led by HM inspector Mike Ryan, supported by a team of inspectors and operations, research, communications and corporate staff. User Voice (a national charity that seeks to give a voice to people in the criminal justice system) undertook interviews with service users. The manager responsible for this inspection programme is Helen Mercer.

In collaboration with Tammie Burroughs, effective practice lead, Mike Ryan has drawn out examples of effective practice (where we see our standards delivered well in practice) across organisational delivery and case supervision. These are presented in this guide, to support the continuous development of practitioners and managers.

We would like to thank all those who participated in any way in this inspection, and especially those who have contributed to this guide. Without their help and cooperation, the inspection and effective practice guide would not have been possible.

Please note that, throughout the report, the names of children in the practice examples have been changed, to protect the individual's identity.

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# Introduction

## About this guide

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation has a duty to identify and disseminate effective practice.<sup>1</sup>

We assure the quality of youth offending and probation provision and test its effectiveness. Critically, we make recommendations designed to highlight and disseminate best practice, challenge poor performance and encourage providers to improve.

This guide highlights where we have seen our standards delivered well for education, training and employment in the youth justice system. It is designed to help commissioners and providers improve this area of their work with children.

I am grateful to all the areas that participated in this review, and for their additional help in producing this guide. We publish these guides to complement our reports and the standards against which we inspect youth offending and probation.

I hope this guide will be of interest to everyone working in youth offending services and seeking to improve their practice. We welcome feedback on this and our other guides, to ensure that they are as useful as possible to future readers.



**Justin Russell**

HM Chief Inspector of Probation



## Finding your way



Tools for practitioners



Useful links

## Contact us



We would love to hear what you think of this guide. Please find current contact details via the [HM Inspectorate of Probation Effective Practice page](#).

<sup>1</sup> **For adult services** – Section 7 of the *Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000*, as amended by the *Offender Management Act 2007*, section 12(3)(a).

**For youth services** – inspection and reporting on youth offending teams is established under section 39 of the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*.

# Background

Education, training and employment (ETE) is important for all children. It helps in a range of ways, including:

**Job readiness**

**Self-discipline**

**Development of soft skills**

**Better career prospects**

**Improved health**

**Emotional, mental and physical development**

**Socialisation**

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**Development of self-esteem and confidence**

**Development of goals and aspirations**

Children who are supervised by youth offending teams (YOTs) are more likely to have, or have experienced, problems with school attendance, educational engagement and attainment. Problems with schooling can have a lasting negative effect on an individual's further education, training or employment, thus affecting their life chances.

The common characteristics of many of the children supervised by YOTs include low levels of numeracy and literacy; speech, language and communication needs; and cognitive disabilities, all of which exacerbate ETE needs. Children in conflict with the law are also more likely to have suffered trauma and adverse childhood experiences that impact on their ability to engage with ETE. Such children are more likely to live in deprived neighbourhoods where crime and disorder are prevalent and good ETE opportunities are fewer.

Tackling the impact of these complex issues on ETE is a tall order for YOTs. Strategic partnerships with statutory agencies, the business community, education providers and the voluntary sector are vital to success. Adding considerably to the huge ETE task for YOTs, the Covid-19 pandemic shut down the sectors, such as hospitality and retail, that employ many young people (IFS, 2020). The economic prospects for precariously employed young people



with low qualifications, which so often characterise those supervised by YOTs, are concerning.

In addition, although the pandemic has disrupted education for all children, those from poorer households have fared worse, as a result of digital exclusion and having less engaged parents. This will have a potentially long-term negative impact on their wellbeing and life chances (Department for Education, 2021).

## Current policy context

Education has been part of the statutory YOT partnership since YOTs were first formed. Relevant aims and expectations are set out in the *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*:



### Section 37 – Aim of youth justice system

- (1) It shall be the principal aim of the youth justice system to prevent offending by children and young persons.
- (2) In addition to any other duty to which they are subject, it shall be the duty of all persons and bodies carrying out functions in relation to the youth justice system to have regard to that aim.



### Section 39 (5) – Youth offending teams

A youth offending team shall include at least one of each of the following, namely:

- where the local authority is in England, a person with experience in education nominated by the director of children's services appointed by the local authority under section 18 of the *Children Act 2004*;
- the local authority is in Wales, a person nominated by the Chief Education Officer appointed by the local authority under section 532 of the *Education Act 1996*.

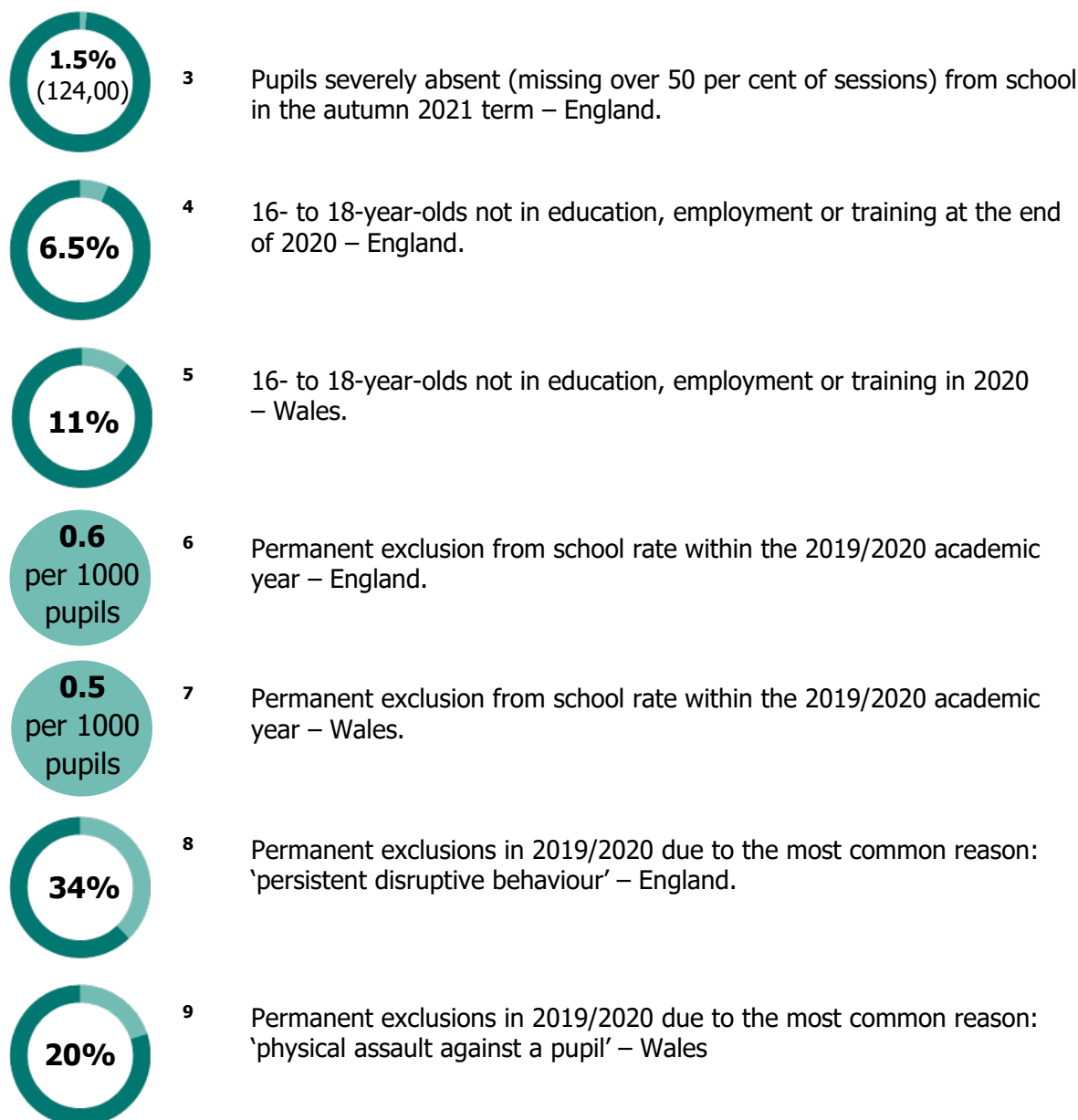
The Ministry of Justice (2014) emphasised ETE in the resettlement context in its aims for young offender institutions and YOTs:

*"Preparing a young person to continue in education, training or employment in advance of a child's release from custody, it is vital that a place in education, training or employment is secured and begins on their first day back in the community ... We will also work closely with YOTs to form the partnerships with education providers, local authorities and employers in the community to facilitate appropriate post-release placements and support. This latter role is especially important in relation to children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)."*

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) promotes a constructive, strengths-led, child-first approach in its standards for children in the youth justice system, which were first published in 2019. Promoting ETE opportunities to children supervised by YOTs is consistent with this child-first approach.

The national statistics, information from HM Inspectorate of Probation's National YOT Survey (2021)<sup>2</sup> – England and Wales, and data from the thematic inspection illustrate the importance of prioritising ETE, as highlighted in figure 1 below.

### National statistics:



<sup>2</sup> Figures based on 104 responses received from 154 YOTs in England and Wales (68 per cent response rate).

<sup>3</sup> Children's Commissioner (March 2022). *Where are England's children?*

<sup>4</sup> [Participation in education and training and employment, Calendar Year 2020 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

<sup>5</sup> Provisional estimate. [Participation of young people in education and the labour market | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales/participation-of-young-people-in-education-and-the-labour-market)

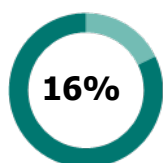
<sup>6</sup> [Statistics: exclusions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://gov.uk/statistics/exclusions)

<sup>7</sup> [Permanent and fixed-term exclusions from schools | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales/permanent-and-fixed-term-exclusions-from-schools)

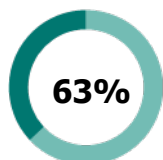
<sup>8</sup> [Statistics: exclusions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://gov.uk/statistics/exclusions)

<sup>9</sup> [Permanent and fixed-term exclusions from schools: September 2019 to August 2020 | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales/permanent-and-fixed-term-exclusions-from-schools)

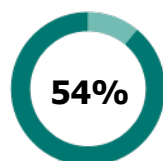
## In HM Inspectorate of Probation's National YOT Survey (2021)<sup>10</sup> – England and Wales:



Of YOTs reported that over 20 per cent of children of school age on the caseload were not in school/pupil referral unit/alternative provision.



Of YOTs reported that over 20 per cent of children over school age on the caseload were not in education, employment or training (NEET).



Of YOTs reported over 20 per cent of children on the caseload had an education, health and care (EHC) plan or individual learning plan (ILP)



Of YOTs reported over 20 per cent of children on the caseload had special educational needs (SEN) or additional learning needs (ALN).

### Of the cases we inspected:



Of our selected case sample had been permanently excluded from school – England and Wales.



Of our selected case sample who were over school age were NEET.

### Figure 1: Statistics on education, training and employment in the youth justice system

It is important for YOT staff to be aware of the statutory guidance on ETE, with specific attention to education, health and care plans (EHC plans – England), additional learning needs/ individual development plans (ALN/ IDP) – Wales, and part-time tables. Consequently, as part of the background to this guide, the main points of these are summarised below:

**Education, health and care plans (EHC plans – England)** – describe a child or young person's special educational needs, the support they need and the outcomes they would like to achieve. It follows an education, health and care needs assessment. It should provide details of



<sup>10</sup> Figures based on 104 responses received from 154 YOTs in England and Wales (68 per cent response rate).



the additional support to be given to the child and lasts until the child leaves education or until the age of 25 (it does not cover universities).



[Education, health and care plans | \(IPSEA\) Independent Provider of Special Education Advice website](#) provides useful guidance on the assessment process, understanding rights and the plans.

An EHCP review takes place once a year as a minimum and, based on this review, the local authority may take one of three actions:

- Leave the EHCP unchanged and continue as before
- End the EHCP
- Make alterations to the plan.



[Find out more in the EHCP annual review guide.](#)

The review involves all three parties: the parents, the school/college, and the local authority.

### **Additional learning needs/Individual development plan (ALN/ IDP –**

**Wales)** – The term ‘additional learning needs’ has a legal definition and refers to children and young people with learning, physical or sensory needs that make it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age.



The local education authority will usually carry out an assessment to determine what, if any, additional learning needs a child has and how he/she can be supported throughout their compulsory education.



The [Dewis Cymru Learning – compulsory education](#) provides a useful overview of the compulsory education requirements in Wales. For example, *in Wales a young person can legally leave school on the last Friday in June, providing they will be 16 by the end of that school year's summer holidays.*

This individual development plan (IDP) sets out:

- specific academic, behavioural and physical targets for your child to work towards
- what extra support your child will receive in practice
- what progress is being made, i.e., how your child is responding to the additional support
- whether the targets have been met.

IDPs are kept under review and are considered at least twice a year.




[The additional learning needs \(ALN\) transformation programme: frequently asked questions \(2019\)](#) provides answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about the *Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018* and the wider additional learning needs transformation programme.

**Part-time timetables** – All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In exceptional circumstances, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs.



For example, if a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education, a part-time timetable may be considered as part of a reintegration package. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point

the pupil is expected to attend full-time education or be provided with alternative provision. The guidance for England and Wales is the same and can be accessed via the links below:



[School attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities \(2020\) England.](#)

[Guidance on school attendance codes \(2010\) Wales.](#)

This guide shares examples of effective practice, which we define as: *where we see our standards delivered well in practice*, with our standards being based on established models and frameworks, and grounded in evidence, learning and experience, aligned with the statutory guidance outlined above.

The examples are drawn from evidence of effective practice identified while undertaking fieldwork for the thematic inspection in Newcastle (pilot), Conwy and Denbighshire, Camden, Doncaster, Leicester, Bristol and Salford.

The guide is aimed at a range of audiences; it is intended to support practitioners, middle managers and strategic leaders to reflect on their own experiences and consider how they may apply the salient learning points in their own contexts. Please use the contents page to navigate directly to the sections pertinent to you.

# Our themes: what we looked for and our expectations

For our thematic inspection, we inspected against the following:

## Organisational delivery

### In relation to governance and leadership, we explored whether:

*The governance and leadership of the YOT supports and promotes the delivery of high-quality, personalised and responsive ETE services for children working with the youth offending team.*

#### We asked if:

- There is an effective local vision and strategy for the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive ETE service for all children.
- The partnership arrangements actively support effective ETE service delivery.
- The leadership of the YOT supports effective service delivery for ETE.

### In relation to staff, we explored whether:

*Staff within the YOT are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive ETE service that meets the needs of all children.*

#### We asked if:

- Staffing and workload levels support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive ETE service for all children.
- The skills of YOT staff support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive ETE service for all children.
- The oversight of the work of ETE staff supports high-quality delivery and professional development.
- Arrangements for learning and development comprehensive and responsive.
- Managers pay sufficient attention to ETE staff engagement.

### In relation to partnership and services, we explored whether:

*A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive ETE provision to meet the needs of children.*

#### We asked if:

- There is a sufficiently comprehensive and up-to-date analysis of the profile of children, which is used by the YOT to deliver well-targeted ETE services.
- The YOT partnership provides the volume, range and quality of ETE services and interventions required to meet the needs of all children.

- Arrangements with ETE-related statutory partners, providers and other agencies are established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality services.

### **In relation to information and facilities, we explored whether:**

*Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive ETE approach for all children working with the youth offending team.*

#### **We asked if:**

- The policies and guidance in place enable staff to deliver a high-quality ETE service that meets the needs of all children.
- The YOT's delivery environment(s) meets the needs of all children and enables staff to deliver a high-quality ETE service.
- The information and communications technology (ICT) systems enable staff to deliver a high-quality ETE service that meets the needs of all children.
- Analysis, evidence and learning are used effectively to drive improvement in ETE services.

## **Case supervision**

### **Court and out-of-court disposals**

#### **In relation to assessment, we explored whether:**

*Assessments for ETE are well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents/carers.*

#### **We asked if:**

- Case assessments demonstrate that the caseworker understands the ETE needs of the child.
- The child is meaningfully involved in the assessment of ETE.
- The child's parents or carers are meaningfully involved in the assessment of ETE.
- The assessment of ETE sufficiently analyses how to support the child's desistance.

#### **In relation to planning, we explored whether:**

*Planning for ETE is well-informed, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents or carers.*

#### **We asked if:**

- Planning demonstrates that the caseworker has planned for the ETE needs of the child.
- The child is meaningfully involved in the planning of ETE.
- The child's parents or carers are meaningfully involved in the planning of ETE.
- Planning of ETE focuses sufficiently on supporting the child's desistance.

### **In relation to implementation and delivery, we explored whether:**

*High-quality well-focused, personalised and coordinated ETE services are delivered.*

#### **We asked if:**

- The delivery of services meets the ETE needs of the child.
- Education provision is in place.
- The education provision is of sufficient quality to effectively support the ETE needs of the child.

### **In relation to reviewing, we explored whether:**

*Reviewing of progress for ETE is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child and their parents/carers.*

#### **We asked if:**

- Reviewing demonstrates that the caseworker fully considers the ETE needs of the child.
- The child is meaningfully involved in reviewing their ETE.
- The child's parents or carers are meaningfully involved in reviewing ETE.
- In reviewing, there is sufficient focus on supporting the child's ETE needs.

### **In relation to post-pandemic work, we explored whether:**

*The impact of the pandemic in relation to ETE is managed by the YOT.*

#### **We asked if:**

- Where the pandemic has disrupted the child's access to or ability to participate in ETE, this is addressed.
- The YOT has taken sufficient action to enable the delivery of ETE to the child.
- There is an appropriate ETE recovery plan in place for the child.

### **In relation to outcomes, we explored whether:**

*The evaluation of ETE outcomes demonstrates progress in relation to engagement, desistance and wellbeing, with a clear strategy for sustaining and building on these outcomes.*

#### **This includes the following expectations:**

- attainment of qualifications/credits
- achievement of soft skills
- positive progression to ETE options
- effective career plan
- improvement of literacy and numeracy
- satisfactory attendance
- satisfactory behaviour.



## Reflection questions

Thinking about your practice as a leader and/or practitioner working with children to support their ETE:

1. How far does your work align with the standards outlined above?
2. If there are any areas where these are not aligned, what actions could you take to address this?
3. Where they are aligned, and how can you ensure you sustain this practice?
4. How do you consider the range of outcomes for a child and their parents or carers and not just focus on a qualification/employment?



# Organisational delivery

## Key take-aways

Organisational delivery to deliver effective ETE requires:



A management board with **strong** and **active representation** from all **key partners**



Leadership that provides **clarity** and **strong communication loops**, with two-way communication and the oversight, monitoring and review of activities to **hold people to account**



YOT leaders and staff with **ambitious aims** for ETE, including that every child will achieve at least Level two English and maths



**Highly motivated** and **tenacious** staff across the YOT and partnerships



A **broad range** of support and access to a range of facilities to support delivery of ETE



**Well-coordinated** work across the partnerships, with effective **information-sharing** to **evaluate provision** and drive ETE work



YOT teams to have close links with speech and language therapists, who are ideally seconded to the YOT, to address barriers to ETE



**Strong** and **accessible profile information** on demographics, levels of educational engagement and attainment, and needs, which can be analysed on a number of intersections, such as race, gender, age, exclusions and children with an EHCP or individual learning plan, SEN or additional learning needs.

During the thematic inspection we found examples of these key take-aways in action. We explore the specific examples of effectiveness below.

## Example of effectiveness: Governance and leadership – Salford

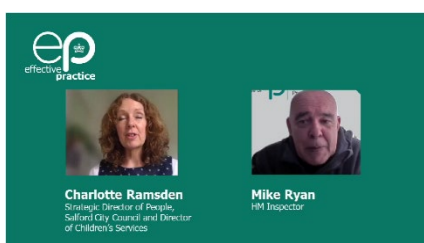
We found that YOT management boards had a good understanding of disproportionality. Boards consistently prioritised ETE work and there was conviction that child-first and trauma-informed approaches to work with children who offend would effectively support engagement in ETE processes.

Not all board chairs saw themselves as able to positively influence or direct the work of the YOT, and the strength of partnership representation on boards varied. Where partners were strongly represented, particularly in relation to education and health, there was evidence of YOT children being integrated into the wider local authority and health services. This yielded well-resourced, specialist provision in those YOTs. Consequently, more was known about the range of ETE needs the children were presenting, which meant that appropriate support could be provided.

The Salford YOT board was a good example of this. Charlotte Ramsden, Strategic Director of People, Salford City Council and Director of Children's Services, explained:

*"We wanted a shared ambition, which was about enabling every child and young person to achieve their potential.*

*"So, we then explored what that meant in terms of supporting them to stay healthy and safe, but, crucially, to get the best education possible – whatever that meant for them. To have a voice in the system and to develop that opportunity around hope and an opportunity to achieve things, wherever they were, and whatever their needs were; and translated into a whole purpose and plan."*



[Video \(YouTube, 4:59\): Learning from stakeholders: Charlotte Ramsden \(Salford City Council\).](#)

*Mike Ryan, HM Inspector, interviews Charlotte Ramsden, Strategic Director of People, Salford City Council and Director of Children's Services, about the strategic plan for children and young people in Salford.*

## Example of effectiveness: Staff

We found many cases where the intervention of the YOT case manager or a specialist worker had a marked effect in improving the child's access to ETE.

For many children, the YOT's involvement followed substantial periods of absence or disengagement from educational services.

This is illustrated by the following comments from an inspector:

*"It wasn't until the YOT became involved that the child was then supported to obtain a place in the pupil referral unit (PRU) as of January 2022. Staff worked hard to engage the child and parents. Covid played a massive part – his mum didn't have internet and the child was not interested in home learning. Without YOT involvement it might have been another 6 to 12 months before he got into education."*

In Salford, we found that the case manager group was an experienced and committed body of staff. They possessed tenacity in advocating for the children they worked with, alongside a knowledge of the pathways needed to access specialist interventions to address the assessed needs of the YOT children. This tenacity was a consistent finding across the YOT staff members to whom we talked.

YOT staff are skilled relationship-builders, and this translates into positive working relationships. Case managers were well thought of by parents; they offered an ear to listen, especially in the most challenging times. Parents had confidence that these staff were eager to do the best for their children to prevent them from committing further crime.

There was a strong focus on the child's needs and a preparedness to engage with education providers to achieve the best-possible outcome for them, as illustrated in the quote below from a practitioner interviewed:

*"We are like Rottweilers! We battle and advocate and are tenacious in following this up on behalf of YOT children."*

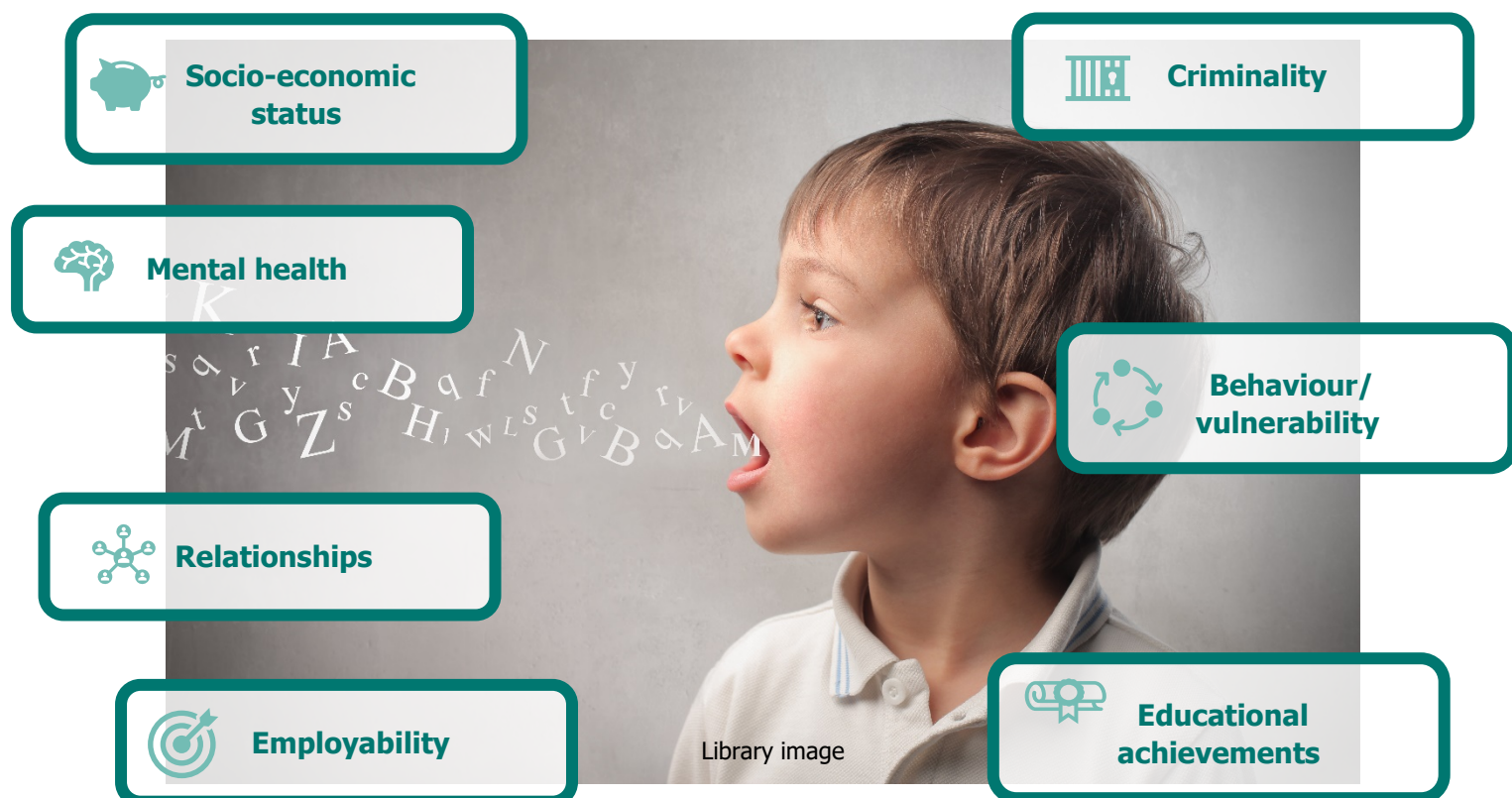
*"We can identify when children are coming through with potential unidentified needs and then we can advocate. We have an educational psychologist, speech and language therapist, community adolescent mental health (CAHMS) worker and they are easily accessible."*

Inspectors note that the tenacity and determination of staff to advocate for children is a significant key take-away.

## **Example of effectiveness:** Partnerships and services, speech and language therapists – Doncaster and Bristol

We found active and vibrant partnership working that had a clear impact on the quality of work being delivered. Of note was the contribution of speech and language therapists (SLTs). In the most effective YOTs there was access to a speech and language assessment for every child working with the YOT.

Effective communication is an essential life skill; poor communication impacts on:



Nearly 20 per cent of the population may experience communication difficulties at some point in their lives.<sup>11</sup> The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) suggests that over 60 per cent of young people in justice settings have speech, language

<sup>11</sup> Scottish Executive Social Research (2007). Communication support needs, a review of the literature. [http://www.qmu.ac.uk/casl/pubs/communication\\_support\\_needs\\_lit\\_review\\_2007.pdf](http://www.qmu.ac.uk/casl/pubs/communication_support_needs_lit_review_2007.pdf)

and communication needs (SLCN). Although this research dates back to 2007,<sup>12</sup> during the thematic inspection, Emma Baldwin, an SLT with Bristol Youth Offending Team, commented:

*"I did an audit of the children and young people in our youth offending team and found 70 per cent of them had significant speech and language and communication needs.*

*"And, when I looked at the previous involvement that they'd had with speech and language therapy, I found that over 70 per cent of those had never had an assessment of their language needs."*

The RCSLT provides some examples of the SLCN experienced by young people, including difficulties with:

- understanding spoken words and using language to communicate
- remembering and recalling information accurately
- understanding commonly used legal vocabulary, such as liable, remorse, reparation, threatening and victim; these difficulties have prevented effective access to the legal and court system
- listening and understanding
- sequencing information to tell a story
- using abstract language (for example idioms and metaphors)
- staying on topic
- understanding non-verbal communication and relating to others in socially acceptable ways
- expressing feelings and emotions in an appropriate way; for example, they may use aggressive behaviour, instead of words, to express themselves.

Inspectors found evidence of some YOTs tackling some of the barriers at source, including improving engagement through addressing speech, language and communication needs, projects designed to prevent exclusion, and services to reduce exploitation. Many of these activities were driven by the SLTs.

General roles of SLTs include:



Assessing children, including outlining their strengths and needs, and differential diagnosis, for example autism spectrum disorder and developmental language disorder.



Providing advice and strategies to enhance communication.



Modifying written materials.



Signposting.

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<sup>12</sup> Bryan K, Freer J, Furlong C. (2007). Language and communication difficulties in juvenile offenders. *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders*. 42, 505-520.



Contributing to EHCPs/individual learning plans/education meetings



Liaising with other professionals, including completing referrals to other health services.



Providing a link between health, youth justice and education (for example completing EHCPs/individual learning plans).



Training other professionals – increasing awareness of SLCN and what strategies enhance communication.

Within youth offending services, SLTs have additional responsibilities to those outlined above; for example, they adapt specific programmes to increase accessibility, contribute to risk assessments and safety plans, and contribute to enhanced case management meetings, community panels and courts.



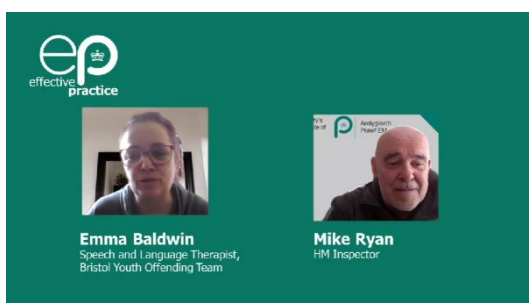
Emma Baldwin provided the attached [PowerPoint presentation, entitled 'Support that makes an impact,'](#) which provides a comprehensive overview of her role.

When asked directly about the impact of the SLT role, Emma was clear that, for practitioners, it:

*"Increases awareness of speech, language and communication needs and what people can do to adapt resources and materials; and their own communication so they can engage the young person."*

And, for the children, it involves:

*"Facilitating a young person to communicate with the school so they can feel part of the school and form relationships, as well as accessing the learning, to make sure they are getting the right support."*



[Video \(YouTube, 4:11\): Learning from stakeholders: Emma Baldwin \(Bristol Youth Justice Service\).](#)

*In this video, Mike Ryan, HM Inspector, interviews Emma Baldwin, who shares further insight into the importance of specialist SLTs working within Bristol Youth Justice Service and the benefits for education.*

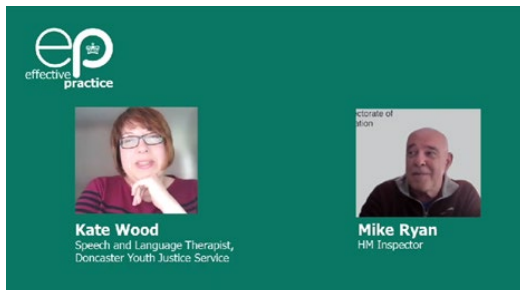
The thematic inspection found that SLT workers could be pivotal in increasing recognition of a child's needs within education provision. This ensures that the right support is mobilised to maximise the likelihood of the child engaging successfully in education.

Kate Wood, SLT, Doncaster Youth Justice Service, explained how important her work is:

*"Primarily for the young people, it's identifying previously unrecognised, unmet needs that the young person might have with their speech, language and communication so*

*that they have a better understanding of themselves and can get access to the support that they need.*

*"I find that often my assessment either completely answers by itself, or contributes to the answer, of the question of why young people have found it so difficult to engage successfully in education over the years."*



Video (YouTube, 8:16): Learning from stakeholders: Kate Wood (Doncaster Youth Justice Service).

*In this video, Mike Ryan, HM Inspector, interviews Kate Wood further about her insights into the benefits of this work within the Youth Justice Service.*

## **Example of effectiveness: Partnerships and services** – information, advice and guidance in Camden

In Camden we learned about the partnership between Camden's Youth Offending Service and King's Cross Recruit (KXR) to pilot a flexible paid work experience programme for 16- to 18-year-olds who are within the youth justice system.

The aim of this programme is to find flexible work experience that will motivate, inspire and provide valuable experience of the world of work. Michelle Homer, Careers and Connexions Adviser indicated:

*"Our hope is that the young people that take part in this programme will move onto sustainable employment, education or training with focus and enthusiasm and leave the world of offending behind them."*

This initial pilot programme has been in partnership with the King's Cross Estate Services team, who manage the public areas and many of the buildings in the King's Cross estate.

Inspectors noted that this service was:

*"... responsive, there were comprehensive and well-rounded assessments to refer children in, using a range of sources of information.*

*"There were clearly defined responsibilities and clarity of roles with partners, who were all working collaboratively to break down barriers, build trust, and promote positive engagement and build confidence for those involved in the project."*

When asked how she supports case managers to refer young people into the project, Michelle Homer, stated:

*"I actually ask the case managers to support me; I speak to them about the opportunities that are available, and I speak to them about their young people, who might be suitable, who may not be suitable. We discuss pros and cons around that young person's safety, their own complexity, any additional needs they may have and*

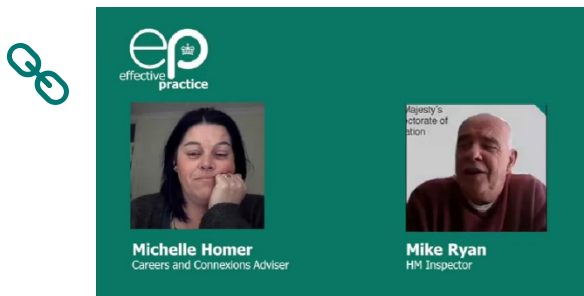


*that is all fed back to employers as well, so there is a very holistic approach to supporting each young person.*

*"I encourage the case manager to support that young person through that journey as well. So, even down to starting on their first day, if a young person is starting at eight o'clock in the morning, it has been known that I will meet the young person at quarter to eight in the morning, with their case manager, at the place of work so that the young person knows they are being supported. You know what it's like sometimes, you get to a place and you don't know where you have got to go, and you don't know who to call.*

*"But that allows the young person to see that not only am I supporting them, but the case manager is as well. And its invaluable, quite honestly, because the young person can see that there is trust, and there is that support there to continue.*

*"So, it's more about working together with the case manager, rather than me telling them what's available. It's about bringing them in as well and they feel part of it."*



[Video \(YouTube, 8:11\) Learning from stakeholders: Michelle Homer \(Camden Youth Offending Service\).](#)

*In this video, Mike Ryan, HM Inspector, interviews Michelle Homer about the project.*

You can read about the impact this project has had on a specific child in the 'case supervision – implementation and delivery' section for post-16 children, below.

## **Example of effectiveness: Partnerships and services** **– Bristol Safer Options hub**

Not engaging with the education system or being excluded from it are strong indicators which place children at risk of involvement in youth violence. In addition, school exclusions are a risk factor for child criminal exploitation (CCE) (National Crime Agency, 2018). Therefore, it is important that YOTs contribute to preventative work that minimises the potential for later involvement in criminal justice processes.

The Bristol Safer Options hub is an example of effective practice in strategic planning and high-quality outcomes. The hub is contained within the local authority safeguarding policies and arrangements, and it requires schools, colleges and other education settings to develop a response to violence and exploitation.

In response to rising serious violence and child criminal exploitation in Bristol, in 2018, the local authority launched a specialist team, known as the Safer Options hub, whose job it is to support change across the whole partnership system. This was extended in 2019, with funding from the Home Office and the introduction of an Avon and Somerset-wide Violence Reduction Unit in the police. In 2020 it was integrated with Bristol's child sexual exploitation (CSE) and missing response.

The team, managed by a Safer Options manager, involves staff from a range of disciplines, including a CSE social worker; contextual safeguarding social worker; reducing offending of children in care practitioner; missing engagement practitioner; and police intelligence investigator.

In addition, there are options for specialist funding, depending on need, for education inclusion managers, youth justice prevention practitioners and senior youth and community practitioners.

While team members do not carry caseloads, they offer training, consultations, advice and some interventions to support case managers in working effectively with those on their caseload.

The key deliverables of the Safer Options team are to:

- ✓ Coordinate the multi-agency partnership's response to ensure it delivers the strategic plan.
- ✓ Work with localities and grassroots organisations to build community solutions and safe community guardianship.
- ✓ Provide peer network mapping and intelligence products to identify and respond to organised and complex abuse.
- ✓ Support organisations to bid for funding to bring new resources into the city.
- ✓ Undertake contextual safeguarding neighbourhood and peer assessments and specialist interventions in partnership with the locality teams.
- ✓ Develop the workforce.
- ✓ Act as brokerage lead for voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) trusted relationships, CSE/CCE, missing and preventative services.
- ✓ Support placement stability: consultation, support and innovation relating to foster carers, children's homes and supported accommodation.
- ✓ Provide interventions to prevent children in care from going missing, and have oversight of all missing children.
- ✓ Develop creative and innovative solutions to prevent exploitation and serious violence.
- ✓ Identify cross-border/cross-locality groups and ensure clarity of accountability and response.
- ✓ Work with the intel team, Violence Reduction Unit officers and Operation Topaz<sup>13</sup> to identify children at risk of CSE, CCE and peer-on-peer abuse and emerging concerns, through intelligence, disclosures and data trends.



[This Safer Options approach: a whole-system response to reducing exploitation and serious violence \(2020\) PowerPoint explains more about the approach.](#)

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<sup>13</sup> Operation Topaz is the Bristol Police force response to child exploitation. The objective is to arrest at the earliest opportunity someone who is flagged up as being a possible perpetrator of child exploitation.

The team takes a [whole-system approach](#), as shown in figure two, based on:

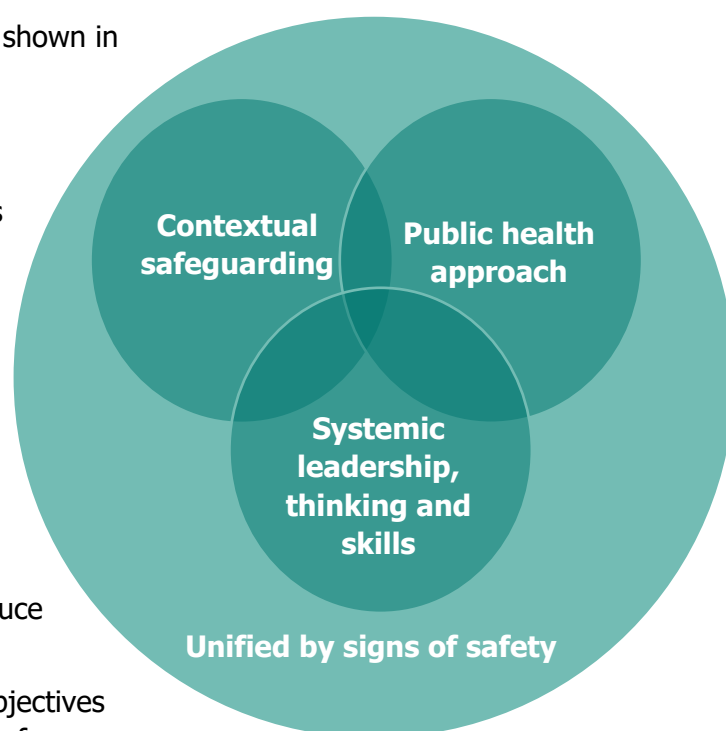
- public health
- contextual safeguarding
- systemic leadership, thinking and skills

These are all unified by the Signs of Safety model

Consequently, the approach seeks to increase the impact of interventions delivered by creating changes in local neighbourhoods, peers and the overall community.


The team holds Safer Options multi-agency team meetings to coordinate resources to reduce exploitation and serious violence.

The terms of reference, which illustrate the objectives of the meetings and roles and responsibilities of the partnerships in attendance, can be accessed below.



**Figure 2: whole system approach**

 [Safer Options meeting terms of reference PDF.](#)

 Bristol YOT has also provided an example of a [Safer Options Meeting Agenda](#), which illustrates how the meetings focus on places, peer groups and prevention in local neighbourhoods, based on the neighbourhood assessment triangle (illustrated in the agenda).

### **One example of the work arising from this is the 'weapons in school pathway'**

If a child is found to be in possession of a weapon in school, the education inclusion managers make an assessment, advocate for the child and allocate support to the child.

Data provided in December 2020 (operational from February to March and September to December 2020) noted:

- 23 weapons in school assessments were sent to YOT disposal panel
- 87 per cent of children were able to remain in their original school place
- 100 per cent received support or intervention
- 0 repeat offences
- 0 permanent exclusions.

## Example of effectiveness: Enhanced case management

The enhanced case management (ECM) approach is based on the trauma recovery model.



[You can download a copy of the trauma recovery model PDF here.](#)

Inspectors felt that this was important in relation to ETE, as children who are involved with youth justice services are more likely to have suffered trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Furthermore, children who have experienced trauma are at risk of a number of developmental delays and disorders, and the most likely and long-lasting is communication.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, children who have experienced five or more ACEs within the first three years of their life have a 76 per cent<sup>15</sup> chance of having one or more delays in their language, emotional or brain development, potentially causing difficulties for them in expressing themselves, listening and understanding. They are also more likely to live in deprived neighbourhoods where crime and disorder are more common, and good ETE opportunities are fewer, resulting in more competition for the opportunities that are available. Consequently, YOT staff must develop an understanding of the child and their circumstances in order to support increased access to and engagement with ETE provisions.



This 17:15 min [Enhanced Case Management \(ECM\) – Bing video](#) by the YJB explains the approach.



[An evaluation of the implementation of the enhanced case management \(ECM\) project: The views and experiences of children and youth justice workers. Bangor University, 2021.](#)

You can read about the impact of this approach on a specific child in the 'case supervision – assessment' section for school-age children, below.

### Partnership initiatives

We found numerous other partnership initiatives seeking to develop the range and quality of ETE work. Some examples that readers may wish to research include:

#### CRiB – The Camden Reintegration Base

This offers a seven-week programme for secondary students in years seven to nine of any Camden school who are at risk of permanent exclusion.

#### EPIC – Encouraging Potential, Inspiring Change, Doncaster

This is an alternative learning provision, known as EPIC learning. It was originally created for children who were at risk of exclusion because of knife-related incidents on school sites. It is not exclusively for children in the criminal justice system, and places are allocated through the council's inclusion panel.

<sup>14</sup> Coster, W., and Cicchetti, D. (1993). Research on the communicative development of maltreated children: Clinical implications. *Topics in Language Disorders*, 13(4), 25–38. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00011363-199308000-00007>

<sup>15</sup> Westby, C. (2018). Adverse Childhood Experiences: What Speech-Language Pathologists Need to Know. *Word of Mouth*, 30(1), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1048395018796520>.

The inspector noted of this alternative provision that:

*"... here children's perceptions of crime are challenged whilst they are supported, and confidence built. The short-term nature of this provision is effective in providing a long-term benefit."*

### **Dyslexia screening, Doncaster**

Every child working with the YOT can access a dyslexia screening from a trained assessor (education coordinator working in the team).

### **The Reach programme, Leicester City**

This project is funded by the Violence Reduction Network. Its aim is to identify and work to support children who are at risk of suspension from school due to violent behaviour. It aims to reduce behaviours associated with serious violence, reduce exclusion from school, reduce knife crime, reduce serious violence and increase positive school outcomes (attendance and attainment).

### **Case management and diversity panel, Leicester City**

All children subject to custodial sentences are reviewed by a multi-agency panel (the case management and diversity panel), which is chaired by the service manager. Agencies represented include information, advice and guidance, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), substance misuse and parenting workers. The purpose is to ensure that children's safeguarding, risk of harm, welfare and mental health needs are assessed appropriately. This specifically links to improved ETE outcomes.

### **Reboot West**

Reboot West supports care leavers between the ages of 16 and 25 into ETE in four local authorities: Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. The project provides support for up to three years, with coaches trained in using acceptance and commitment therapy, a psychological approach that helps children to build commitment and make positive choices.

### **AQA awards, Salford**

These qualifications are mapped across all areas of intervention work undertaken by the YOT. This supports the aim that no child will leave the YOT without some form of accreditation, and this is formally celebrated at an awards ceremony.

You can read about the impact that this project has had on a specific child in the 'case supervision – assessment' section for post-16 children, below.

### **Summer Arts programme, Salford**

The Summer Arts programme is designed and funded by UNITAS, and is well attended. The Arts College provides a three-week course for up to 10 young people, held during the holiday period for five hours a day. The young people who take part are aged 12 to 17, at high risk of reoffending, and disengaged, or at risk of disengagement, from ETE.

Incentives to participate include vouchers, fun and engaging activities, food, transport arrangements and the prospect of gaining two nationally recognised Arts Award qualifications. The awarding body responsible for the Arts Award is Trinity College London. Arts Awards can be achieved at five levels: four qualifications and an introductory award – Discover, Explore, Bronze, Silver and Gold.

Bronze – Level 1 Award in the Arts	GCSE grades 3-1 (was D-G)**	-
Silver – Level 2 Award in the Arts	GCSE grades 9-4 (was A*-C)**	-
Gold – Level 3 Certificate in the Arts	A Level standard/ AS Grade B	Carries 16 UCAS points

You can read about the impact that this project has had on a specific child in the 'case supervision – implementation and delivery' section for post-16 children, below.

## Example of effectiveness: Information and facilities – the use of analytical software, Newcastle

YOTs rely on good information exchange between the relevant partners. During the inspection, we were alerted to the data management arrangements when undertaking pilot work for the inspection in the Newcastle YOT. The use of analytical software is based on clear information exchange agreements and processes between the YOT, social care and education services.

Drawing on multiple data sources, the YOT is able to present data visually. It is possible to drill down to an individual level and to develop summary dashboards for key areas, including developing a desistance dashboard.

The use of the analytical software is still being developed, but examples of the application are contained on the next two pages.



## Current open to YJS:

**6** Students are not on a school roll  
of which:

**4** Awaiting Placement

**0** CME

**1** No current registered base

**1** Home Educated

**98** Students are on a school roll  
of which:

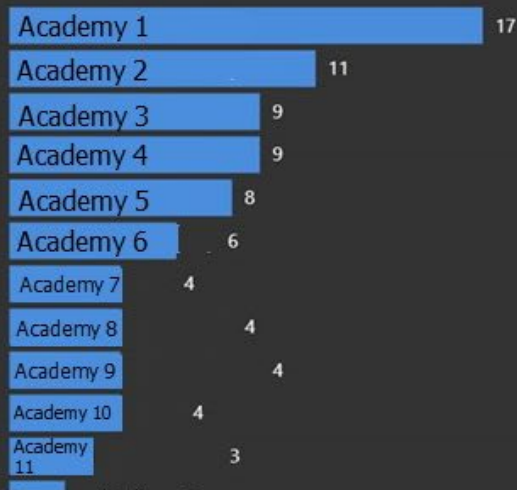
**74** Persistent absent (Where attendance data available)

**19** Partial timetable

**0** Currently Excluded

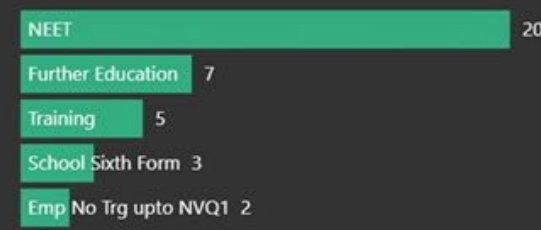
## Pre 16

**104** young people

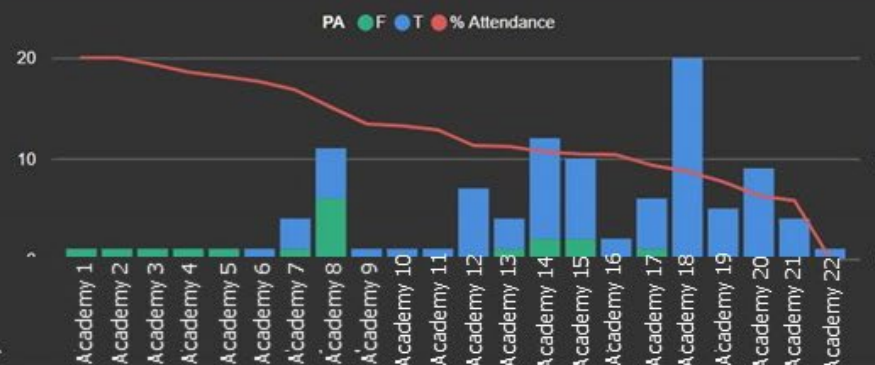


## Post 16

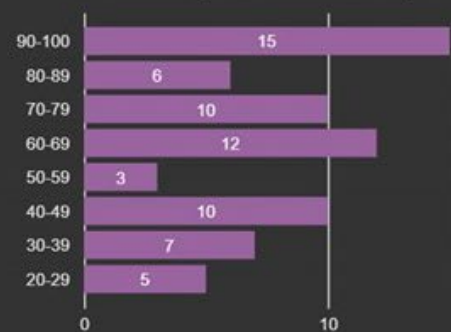
**38** young people, of which **20** are NEET( 52.6% )



NEET



## % Attendance range for current academic year

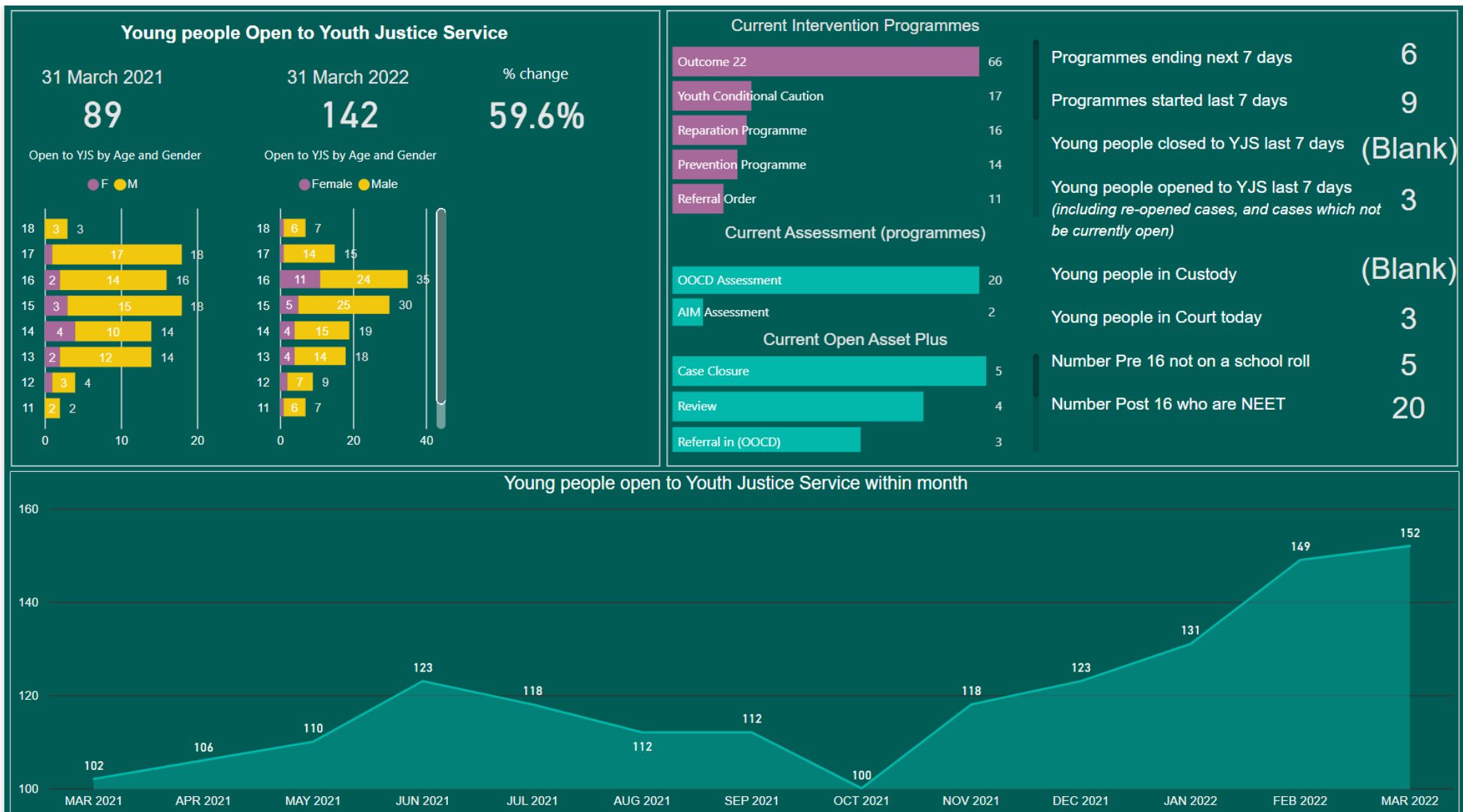


## Current Academic Year

% attendance for Year 11 and below for 89 Young People who have attended Newcastle Schools in 21-22.



*This data is included for training/learning purposes only and we have therefore removed the names of schools to protect the children's identities.*



### Young people open to Youth Justice Service within month

Month	Young people open to YJS within month
MAR 2021	102
APR 2021	106
MAY 2021	110
JUN 2021	123
JUL 2021	118
AUG 2021	112
SEP 2021	112
OCT 2021	100
NOV 2021	118
DEC 2021	123
JAN 2022	131
FEB 2022	149
MAR 2022	152

All open to YJS between

01 April 2020

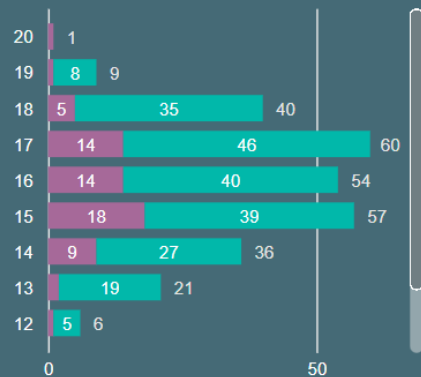
31 March 2021

Number of Young people

288

Open to YJS by Age and Gender

Female Male



Ethnicity

WBRI - White British

231

WROM - Gypsy/Roma

14

BAFR - Black African

7

MOTH - Any Oth Mixed b'grou...

5

Religion

Non Conformist  
Christian  
Unknown  
Roman Catholic  
Agnostic  
Atheist  
Muslim  
Other  
Church of En...  
No Religion



Nationality

United Kingdom

199

Unknown

65

Czech Republic

9

Latvia

2

Libva

All open to YJS between

01 April 2021

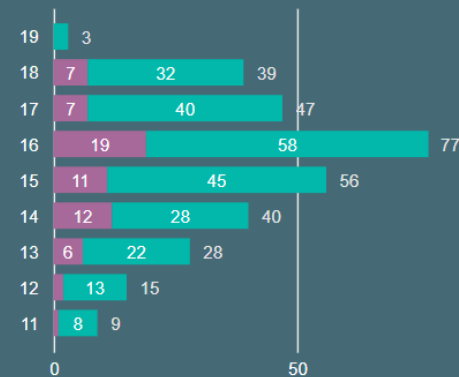
31 March 2022

Number of Young people

317

Open to YJS by Age and Gender

Female Male



Ethnicity

WBRI - White British

243

WROM - Gypsy/Roma

13

APKN - Pakistani

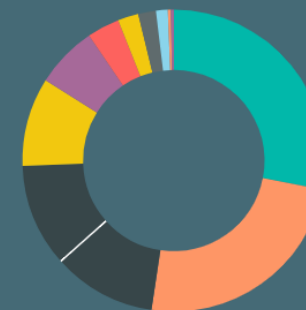
10

WOTH - Any Oth White b'ground

7

Religion

Christian  
Non Conformist  
Agnostic  
Unknown  
Atheist  
Muslim  
No Religion  
Roman Catholic  
Other  
Church of En...



Nationality

United Kingdom

242

Unknown

37

Romania

12

Czech Republic

3

Pakistan



## Reflection questions

Thinking about your practice as a leader and/or practitioner working with children to support their ETE:

1. How do you ensure a strong representation of partners on the board?
2. How is your service supporting ETE as a whole, and how is your work effectively contributing to this?
3. How do you consider a child's speech, language and communication needs in your work?
4. What are you achieving with your ETE provision?
5. How do you use data to support your work with children?

# Delivering effective case supervision: both out-of-court and court disposals

## Key take-aways

Case supervision to support effective ETE requires:



Meaningful involvement of the child and parent/carer so their voice is evident within the work to promote self-agency.



Case managers to be responsive – practitioners should demonstrate professional curiosity and actively gather and use information to engage the child and progress ETE work.



Cultural competence – understanding the impact of the child's culture on all aspects of case management, specifically in relation to ETE; for example, its impact on the child's goals and aspirations as well as in practical matters such as attendance at a specific provision and engagement.



Practitioners to identify barriers to ETE and work collaboratively to plan for and mitigate these.



A tenacious approach, to consistently keep the child's ETE goals in mind, pursue actions to help the child achieve them, and challenge appropriately when any barriers arise



The case manager to coordinate services appropriately, offering to be a central point of contact within the multi-agency partnership, to help partners work as collective alliance to support the child in achieving their ETE goals.

In the next part of this guide, we explore specific examples of effectiveness that illustrate these themes. These examples were identified in the thematic inspection and relate to assessment, planning, implementation and delivery, and review. They are separated into examples relating to school-age children and to children aged over 16. Clear outcomes are recorded for each case presented.

# School-age children

## Examples of effectiveness: Assessment

The impact of enhanced case management (ECM) can be seen in the case illustration below:

*"The approach has provided the professional network with a shared understanding of Oscar and his story, grounded in psychological theory and, in particular, a trauma-informed approach through the case formulation."*

*"This has enabled each professional to tailor their approaches, as they have applied the learning from the holistic assessment, which, in this case, has had a positive impact on his education, accommodation and substance misuse."*



### Case illustration

Oscar is a 12-year-old child, sentenced to a nine-month youth rehabilitation order resulting from a previous order being revoked and him being resentenced for further matters.

A number of factors led to the positive impact of ECM in this case. As part of the ECM project, the network working with Oscar is supported by a clinical psychologist. She has produced a case formulation to increase the network's understanding of Oscar's behaviour, the underlying causes and best way to support him. There are regular ECM reviews of Oscar and, as a result, the ECM the case manager and psychologist have regular supervision sessions to discuss the case.

The strategies used by the case manager are shared across the network and therefore are also used to inform other reviews and assessments, such as child protection and the EHCP.

The case manager has regular contact with Oscar and uses this time to undertake interventions and to introduce and support other work. The other professionals involved in his case include a social worker, drug worker, SLT worker, educational psychologist and school staff.

**Outcomes:** Oscar has moved to his aunt and uncle's house, supported by the whole professional network. This has had a positive impact on his education, as he has returned to school and stopped using cannabis.

Inspectors indicated that the following case:

*"... shows a timely assessment of the young person's SEN needs, with meaningful engagement with the child and his mother. Appropriate communication with the school, regarding effective engagement strategies, assists with putting the plans in place."*

*"Overall, the school is responsive to this, and when challenge is needed or prompts required to ensure progress is sustained, the workers are comfortable advocating on the"*



*child's behalf in a professional and supportive manner. This is particularly important given the timing of the intervention – in the summer between years six and seven."*



### Case illustration

Danny, an 11-year-old child, received a three-month community resolution for possession of an offensive weapon. This case example shows the importance of the YOT's assessment as a starting point for accessing the right services, including specialist assessment.

The initial assessment demonstrates a clear understanding of Danny's ETE needs and draws on a range of sources, allowing the practitioner to consider his previous engagement with ETE and barriers to previous and future ETE. Danny is meaningfully involved, as is his mother, through conversation and a parental assessment.

The assessment led to work being done to identify Danny's learning needs and support his transition to secondary school. The case manager accurately assessed Danny's needs and made appropriate referrals to the education officer and speech and language therapist (SLT). As a result, they were able to complete a dyslexia screening and communication profile, and start working towards an ADHD assessment.

**Outcomes:** The team was instrumental in advocating with the school regarding the need for a SEN assessment and subsequent plan to support Danny's learning. This ensured all of the workers engaged with the family and the school to support effective transition.

## Examples of effectiveness: Planning

When reviewing this case, the inspector stated:

*"The clarity and focus of the plan for this child to re-enter mainstream education was exemplary. We found that there is a personalised and relevant ETE offer aligned to the child's future career aspirations."*

*"There also appears to be effective and proactive relationships between the school, TRAC worker (an ETE provider who supports children to re-engage with education) and youth justice service, which has enabled effective identification of strengths and barriers in relation to ETE. Joint professional working continues to be strong in supporting this child to have the best chances of success in his current ETE offer, despite his familial and home barriers, ensuring the placement was maintained."*



### Case illustration

Oliver is subject to a two-month community resolution following possession of a controlled drug (cannabis).

Oliver had a TRAC worker (an ETE provider who supports children to re-engage with education) before the order, who was co-located in the school. The case records illustrated that the practitioner was able to gather information from this worker to inform

case management. As a result, they had a good understanding of Oliver's ETE needs and clearly identified how his previous and current familial context impacts on his ETE.

During the intervention Oliver was subject to a fixed-term exclusion, as a result of fighting. However, the school worked with the TRAC worker to manage this. Consequently, there was a plan for Oliver to learn at an on-site centre to support disengaged learners, and a clear timed plan to return to mainstream education. This plan helped Oliver to understand what he needed to do and was followed by all.

There is evidence of clear information-sharing between professionals, and the information is analysed in the context of ETE. The TRAC worker sees Oliver on site and has a positive working relationship with him; the practitioner is clear that this has been instrumental in supporting Oliver's engagement with mainstream education. This has been achieved through structured weekly sessions to work on his emotional management; advocacy in the school to support Oliver in challenging situations; and ad hoc meetings, as requested by Oliver if he needs time out. The relationship has clearly acted as a protective factor and helped him manage his behaviour and the effective planning process was very much the basis for this providing clarity and purpose and promoting ownership both from professionals and the child.

**Outcomes:** While there are some ongoing concerns around behavior and attendance, professionals have linked this to Oliver's familial and living circumstances, as opposed to his attitude. Oliver is in full-time education, receiving a bespoke timetable; he is at the school for three days per week, working towards GCSE qualifications. He receives alternative provision for two days of the week to support his own needs and aspirations: one day a week he is working towards vocational experience placements, and one day a week he attends a college course placement, studying level one in mechanics. Thus, there is a strong focus on employability; he now has the opportunity to gain qualifications and work experience supporting a longer-term career plan.

In this case, inspectors found:

*"... a bespoke plan, which was highly personalised for the child's ETE provision and this was followed through.*

*"All professionals responded and exercised flexibility and discretion in relation to individual needs, including the child's emotional needs, which meant there was a consistent focus on desistance."*



### Case illustration

Craig is a 16-year-old male, subject to a nine-month referral order for possession of a weapon, criminal damage and public order. He has a history of aggressive behavior and damage to school property. The assessment reflects multiple areas of need, including cannabis use, poor self-esteem and emotional wellbeing, parental neglect, easily influenced by negative peers, ADHD and a disrupted education.

Education was identified as a key area to support desistance, and case records evidence how the practitioner discussed ETE options with Craig, to ensure that planning and intervention were responsive to his needs.

There was a multi-agency approach to provision, with the YOT worker, social worker and education staff working together with Craig to identify the best option for him to succeed.

All parties recognised that Craig would not cope in a mainstream environment and wanted a package that would engage him and allow him to make progress and achieve some soft skills. As a result, Craig had a bespoke package of education provided through education other than at school (EOTAS) under a project called Educate. He was learning bicycle maintenance, overseen by the pupil referral unit (PRU).

The case and provision were regularly reviewed, evidenced through case records, including notes from care and support plan (CASP) meetings with the social worker and education provider. In addition, Craig's progress was discussed at the referral order review panels, which included completion of a questionnaire from Bangor University to measure increases in Craig's resilience.

**Outcomes:** The provision was initially for three days per week, but on review, given the positive response and engagement from Craig, this was increased to four days.

There were also self and professional reports of achievement in soft skills and, consequently, all of the professionals involved were able to comment on Craig's progress, reinforcing his behaviour and encouraging his future aspirations. This was further reinforced through the exit planning underway to link in with Careers Wales.

## Examples of effectiveness: Implementation and delivery

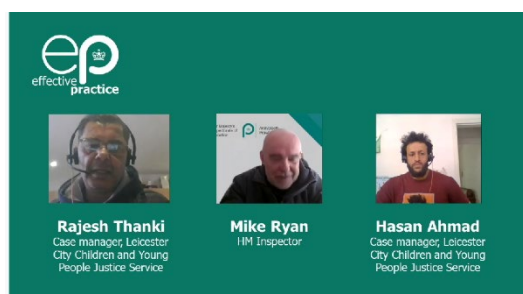
During the inspection fieldwork in Leicester, we heard how staff took an individualised, culturally aware approach with children and their parents or carers.

Hasan Ahmad, case manager with Leicester City Children and Young People Justice Service, shared how he achieves this approach:

*"In terms of the young person's diversity needs and how this is portrayed, at the point of referral in, I try to do a lot of background research on the young person, just to get a feel of exactly what would need to be identified straight away, what would need to be assessed using a variety of databases and information we hold, including education and social care; just to give me a pen picture and that allowed me to figure out the key points of how to engage – icebreaking methods, bringing the family on board.*

*"What I have found is that afforded me a greater level of respect when it came to engaging, because the young person feels like you've actually taken some time to get to know them."*

He goes on to advise practitioners to *"know your case well – every first impression counts."*



[Video \(YouTube, 10:17\) Learning from stakeholders: Rajesh Thanki and Hasan Ahmad \(Leicester Young People's Justice Service\).](#)

*In this video, Mike Ryan, HM Inspector, interviews Rajesh Thanki and Hasan Ahmad, case managers at Leicester City Children and Young People's Justice Service for further insights into their approach to the children and parents/carers they work with.*

This approach can be seen in the following two examples from the inspection.

In relation to the first case, the inspector stated:

*"The case manager fully understood the need to get good, accurate information relating to ETE and this was a clear thread throughout the case. A pivotal moment within the child's history was the move to the current placement, after two unsuccessful educational placements, which broke down due to them being unable to manage his behaviour.*

*"Without the communication between partners, the implementation of recommendations from key assessments and the persistence of the partnership, the child is unlikely to have been in a position where he was as stable, achieving some qualifications and acquiring a new college placement.*

*"The approach and style of professionals involved, alongside available services and facilities, have greatly contributed to the successful outcomes in this."*



### Case illustration

Jamal is a 16-year-old boy, subject to a six-month referral order for the theft of a motor vehicle.

Jamal had previously had ADHD assessments, but this did not result in a diagnosis. He has special educational needs in the area of social, emotional and mental health difficulties. A mental health assessment did not identify any formal diagnosis, but stated that his behaviour was a result of poor and inconsistent parenting. The assessment also raises concerns that he may be easily led and associate with peers who may get him into trouble, and this may feature in elements around his offending and factors against desistance moving forward.

Jamal's mother passed away in recent months and he has no contact with his father. He is currently a child in care, his sibling being his main carer since 2015.

The YOT worker made referrals to the SEND panel to undertake a multi-agency discussion to inform his education placement, made an application to a youth project and education provision to begin in the new academic year, supported by the school and a careers worker. He was also referred for bereavement support and reparation was co-ordinated via the school.

Jamal was supported under an EHCP and, following exclusions and two school placement breakdowns, he was moved to an alternative provision, where the staff and service delivered met his needs and followed the recommendations in his EHCP plan.

There was evidence of strong partnership working. For example, there was effective information-sharing at the initial assessment, which included information from the EHCP, feedback from the school, Jamal's educational history and information on exclusions.

ETE was made a priority on the YOT plan, and this was supported by the educational psychologist and SEND forum. Jamal's voice and that of his sibling were clear within the plan. Delivery was flexible and responsive.

Interventions were delivered at school and at home by the case manager, and professionals regularly communicated on progress. The interventions also complemented and aimed to promote stability in school; for example, reparation hours were delivered at school, through activities that Jamal enjoyed, such as supporting the delivery of PE with other pupils. Other interventions included identity work and exploring personal

relationships, and signposting and onward referral to support from a careers adviser to identify an onward placement.

**Outcomes:** Jamal excelled at the provision. He achieved a GCSE in art and Level four sports studies. He is now in a college placement learning to become a mechanic.

In the next case, inspectors stated:

*"There was a strong focus on ETE throughout the work with this complex case.*

*"The case manager ensured engagement from all professionals and in strategy meetings, which resulted in a cohesive and consistent approach to managing the child's ETE needs. She was placed in provision which catered for her individual needs, and her improved engagement and behaviour evidences that this provision is better than mainstream education.*

*"Management oversight was significant."*



### Case illustration

Imogen is a 17-year-old child, sentenced to two concurrent referral orders following convictions for a number of violent offences.

Imogen has complex needs: she has been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result of witnessing/receiving physical abuse from her family, and also of being a victim of assaults by her own peers. The EHCP describes how she is cognitively functioning at six to seven years below her chronological age. In addition, Imogen has an obsessive form of autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and a severe type of ADHD, which presents with hyperactivity, impulsivity, distractibility, and emotional deregulation.

Imogen's mother is a positive factor in her life; case records indicate she understands her emotional and behavioural responses well. However, Imogen's behaviour has left her immediate family isolated from her extended family, who blame her for difficulties and tensions. As a result, the situation at home deteriorated and she was subject to section 20 arrangements. She was then remanded into the care of the local authority after her last court appearance.

Her violent behaviour is directed mainly towards the police and other professionals, such as care staff; however, there is also a pattern of aggressive and violent behaviour towards members of her family in the home environment.

There was an appropriate focus on risk and safety factors and, alongside this, ETE remained a key feature in the management of Imogen's case. The YOT recognised the importance of ETE in, at the very least, providing Imogen with constructive activities and less opportunity to engage in risky and reckless behaviour. They ensured that the school participated in all professional and strategy meetings, which resulted in a cohesive and consistent approach to managing Imogen's ETE needs.

There were ongoing difficulties and disagreements among medical professionals with regard to the extent to which Imogen's mental health and cognitive functioning impacted on her problematic behaviour. While this did not act as a direct barrier to ETE engagement, it did result in a lack of clarity for a time about how to best to manage the

case and work with Imogen to achieve positive outcomes. The case manager, supported by effective management oversight, has managed this well and the educational psychologist was engaged to provide direction and specialist input to ensure the most effective strategies and interventions were used when working with Imogen.

Once some stability had been achieved for Imogen, the focus on ETE increased and the career adviser made contact with her school. An EHCP review meeting was held, attended by the educational psychologist, and appropriate actions were set to maintain Imogen's current living and educational support for the next year, including preparation for college and achieving qualifications.

**Outcomes:** Despite the significant number of changes in Imogen's life over a short period of time, and the instability in her lifestyle, she has continued to engage with education. She is currently attending an independent school that specialises in working with children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Positively, there has been an improvement in Imogen's behaviour and overall engagement recently, with a noticeable reduction in her levels of aggression and offending behaviour. Given her recent positive progress, there is also a plan in place to gradually extend the time she is in school, working towards achieving full-time equivalent.

## Examples of effectiveness: Review

In the following example, the inspector was impressed by the:

*"... persistence by the YOT, flexibility in approach, the holistic assessment of ETE, relating delivery of wide-ranging services to support re-engagement with school.*

*"These were regularly reviewed and adjusted to ensure maximum impact."*



### Case illustration

Rayan is a 15-year-old boy subject to a community resolution as a result of an offence of assault on school premises, for which he also received a fixed five-day exclusion.

The assessment indicates some level of concern around speech and language, a lack of parental oversight of his relationships with his peers and general lifestyle, and peers asking him to steal things, evidenced on his phone messages. The YOT states that there is no evidence of criminal exploitation at present.

The YOT worker took a pragmatic approach when Rayan disengaged from school. An emotionally based school avoidance<sup>16</sup> (ESBA) approach was taken, but the YOT officer took ownership of some of these actions, as she was aware that he was more likely to engage with her than the school.

This approach is described as follows:

*"As part of Thrive in Education and the Inclusion Strategy there will be a new way to coordinate multiagency support around children and young people who are anxious about returning to school in September 2020, either as a result of pre-existing concerns*

<sup>16</sup> [Emotionally Based School Avoidance \(ESBA\) | Partners in Salford](#)



*about attending school (EBSA) or more specific Covid-19 related anxieties. This will include a single referral point via the Education Welfare Service and a graduated response to meeting need using the Thrive Framework which conceptualises need in five categories; thriving, getting advice and signposting, getting help, getting more help and getting risk support, and fundamental to the approach is shared decision making with young people and their families."*

The team actively reviewed the plans and made adjustments in response to specific circumstances; for example, Rayan's refusal to engage with CAMHS led to the YOT officer undertaking specialist health consultations, which included SLT and CAMHS. The YOT attempted to undertake anxiety screenings instead, but Rayan again refused to engage. After this, the YOT persuaded Rayan to engage with a SLT assessment, which was shared with the school.

'Pre-education on track' meetings at the school included Rayan and his mother at which point they clarified they wanted alternative provision and apprenticeships to be explored. In the interim, Rayan was given a laptop to work from home.

The YOT's challenge to the school was collaborative, rather than a cause of conflict. As a result, the school's actions were to notify the local authority that Rayan would have a reduced timetable, and to provide more clarity about the school's own timescales and plan to progress, and to share this with Rayan and his mother.

A careers adviser is working with Rayan's mother, and provides insight for her to understand the apprenticeship options for him.

Furthermore, to support the ongoing plan, referrals were made to:

- Early Help and Humankind, to provide more intensive family support services under any plan. Gaining Rayan's mum's consent for this was impressive, given her negative experiences of social care and early help services in the past.
- JEP Youth Engagement, to identify alternative provision (Salford Foundation).
- mentor services.

**Outcomes:** Those working with Rayan now have a better understanding of the barriers to his education, and a comprehensive plan in place to overcome these. Rayan is now working with a mentor to support re-engagement with education.



# Post-school-age children

## Examples of effectiveness: Assessment

In the following case, the inspector commented:

*"Despite the background of complexity arising from contextual and familial safeguarding issues, the case manager has been consistent in their approach and supported the child to achieve qualifications."*

*"The case manager also built on the confidence the child had gained from his previous involvement in the Summer Arts programme work and used this to advocate for further involvement."*

Mike Ryan, HM Inspector, conducted a separate interview with Anisa Gilani, a case manager based at Salford Youth Justice Service, who indicated:

*"The success in this case was the joint working. It couldn't be done in isolation and we all needed a consistent approach."*

*"It was key that everyone read his EHCP and used the information; for example, it was really important to give him time out to help regulate his emotions. He would always come back."*



[You can read the interview with Anisa Gilani here.](#)



### Case illustration

Leo is a 17-year-old boy sentenced to a 12-month youth rehabilitation order with Intensive Surveillance and Support (ISS); he has a lengthy history with the youth offending service. Consequently, he is well known by the case manager, who is able to use their established relationship to inform a comprehensive assessment and plan (using information from a range of sources, including social care, education) to support engagement.

Leo was diagnosed with ADHD while in a secure establishment. He was medicated for this but stopped taking his medication because of the side effects. An SLT assessment has identified that Leo has particular difficulties in speech, language and communication. He is a heavy cannabis user. Leo has expressed an interest in boxing and the gym but is not interested in attending these activities outside of school hours. He is on roll at a school, and was educated at home by a tutor funded by the school, because of the risks he presented on site.

Leo has a substantial history of adverse childhood experiences and early childhood trauma. He is subject to an interim care order due to a complex family background, which he has reported that he dislikes intensely. He frequently goes missing, resulting in placement moves, ongoing concerns about his safety, needs and risks linked to exploitation, gang activity, drug dealing exclusions and domestic abuse with his girlfriend. All of these have impacted on his engagement and general attitude towards the order.

Through the comprehensive assessment, the case manager was able to empower Leo to reflect on what he would like to achieve. This was linked to factors that will improve the stability of his ETE, such as engaging with a substance misuse intervention, working with

CAMHS, complying with his electronic curfew, completing at least three sessions of anger management, undertaking emotional health sessions and reviewing his ADHD medication, reparation, appointments with his social worker, attending a looked-after child review, attending school and exploring other activities.

As part of the latter objective, the case manager supported Leo to engage with the Summer Arts programme. After achieving a silver award, Leo asked if he could pursue the gold award the following year, which was described as a *"huge gesture of growth and maturity"*. Salford Justice funded Leo's placement and he worked alongside others and Odd Arts (a theatre-based alternative education provision) to direct and produce a film about the Youth Justice Service. This will be used to show to first-time entrants to the service to support their induction. They also created some issue-based art and chose the subject of drugs and poverty in Salford. They were given an audience with the CEO of Salford Council to raise their concerns about knife crime in the community and the detrimental impact it is having on young people. They also highlighted the limited opportunities they have in the city and suggested how improvements could be made.

It was noted that all of those involved, including Leo, have worked *"so hard and have shown a great level of determination and dedication to complete the qualifications"*.

**Outcomes:** Leo obtained AQAs in substance misuse, peer influences, diversity, and health and safety. He also gained gold and silver awards in the Summer Arts programme (only two young people in Salford have achieved gold); this included undertaking peer support work and recording YouTube videos about knife crime.

He was able to return to his education placement in order to take his qualifications and achieved entry level one English, maths and science. Leo is now working with a careers adviser, searching for training placements, and has started his Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card training.

In the following example, an inspector found that:

*"The use of reparation provided a route to develop an ETE plan which was central to the development of a pathway to enable the child to commence work on his 18th birthday. The intervention was based on a responsive approach to the child's needs, wishes and motivation."*

*"Furthermore, there is evidence of clear planning and coordination between multiple agencies, including the YOT, Catch 22 and Reform Trust."*



### Case illustration

Sam was 17 years old when he began a nine-month referral order for violent offending.

The case manager took a child-centred approach in his assessment work with Sam. He listened to Sam's wishes and feelings when developing the plan, so that he could source ETE provision that met Sam's specific needs. The case manager assessed ETE as a protective factor, and saw training and employment as a means of supporting Sam to build confidence and self-esteem. Through the assessment, Sam informed his case manager that he did not wish to take part in any ETE that was classroom-based because of his experiences in school. He felt that nothing had been put in place to support him with his dyslexia, which eventually led to him receiving his education in a PRU to support

his learning needs. The case manager assessed that Sam is a kinaesthetic<sup>17</sup> and visual learner. He shared this with the reparation officer, who used this information to ensure that the reparation sourced would also meet Sam's learning needs.

Sam was referred to Catch 22 for reparation (reparation in this YOT is outsourced to Catch 22). As part of his reparation work, Sam built a shed, and was able to do this efficiently. Drawing on his enjoyment of maths and engineering, he was able to visualise how the shed should look rather than reading instructions, which he would have found difficult. This was in line with the assessment.

The case manager used the assessment to build a long-term ETE plan. He knew that Sam had been working with a friend on a building site. However, because Sam was 17 at the time, there were implications for insurance. The case manager made a referral to the Reform Trust, with a plan for Sam to undertake training for his CSCS card. This culminated in Sam taking the test in time for his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, so that he could legitimately work in construction and be safe on a building site, with the relevant qualifications to support this.

**Outcomes:** Sam was supported to gain his CSCS card, and at the end of the order he was gainfully employed on a full-time basis.

## Examples of effectiveness: Planning

Inspectors commented that:

*"This is an excellent example of effective planning. The case manager has coordinated a multi-agency approach, providing clarity about the supporting roles between YOT, social services and the education provider, with a strong focus on how ETE needs are to be met."*

*"It was also clear that the voice of the child was central in decisions."*



### Case illustration

Chantal is a 16-year-old female sentenced to a six-month referral order for robbery.

She lives with her mother, siblings and niece. The family are said to support her and are a protective factor. Chantal is an extremely vulnerable individual, who has been both criminally and sexually exploited throughout her teenage years.

Chantal has been subject to school exclusions because of her aggressive behaviour and, until the summer 2021, she was educated at an alternative provision. Chantal was pregnant and several professionals' meetings focused on how her ETE needs would be met, after the imminent arrival of her child at the alternative learning provision. She was involved in each step of her assessment and collaborative planning, which resulted in Chantal returning to school after a period of maternity leave. Effective planning supported Chantal and was the basis of an effective relationship with her. The plan used the 'triangle of 3' to ensure that there was always a trusted member of staff available to support her. She was also provided with a laptop to keep her engaged in education during her maternity leave. It was clear that all agencies were working together effectively to reach

<sup>17</sup> A kinaesthetic or tactile learning style requires that you manipulate or touch material to learn.

the same goal of helping Chantal to realise her potential and become a parent for the first time.

The case manager had a clear understanding of how best to engage Chantal, consistently using visual tools to ensure that she could grasp what could be abstract concepts, for example using a model of the brain. There was a strong focus on developing Chantal's self-esteem and belief that she could achieve her goals.

The case manager noted times when Chantal had styled her hair differently and used different techniques in her make-up. They highlighted how skilled she was in this area, and made links between this and her goal of studying health and beauty at college from the following September. Discussions were clearly focused on the future, and taking Chantal to the college helped her to visualise herself attending, as well as reduce any anxieties she may have had.

Chantal was given the opportunity to chair parts of the review meetings, which all professionals involved attended. She was given the space to ask professionals questions about previously planned actions and future steps. As well as ensuring she was meaningfully engaged in the reviewing activity, this also enabled her to put the skills she'd been developing into practice, as well as building her confidence and self-belief.

**Outcomes:** Chantal has since left education to focus on the arrival of her child and has a clear plan to return to college.

In relation to the case below, the inspector noted:

*"This case illustrates the support offered through the Safer Options hub and ECM model and significantly illustrates the power of a well-coordinated partnership, centrally coordinated by the YOT worker to ensure the plan is adhered to at pace.*

*"Impressively, despite numerous issues, the YOT officer did not lose her focus on the need for ETE and the role this would play in the child's desistance."*



## Case illustration

Matthew is a 17-year-old child who received a 12-month youth rehabilitation order with supervision and 40 hours' unpaid work for a dangerous driving offence. He was previously known to the YOT. Matthew has experienced significant childhood trauma and his upbringing was described as 'chaotic'. His father spent time in prison, and his mother experiences ongoing mental health problems. Matthew's parents removed him from the school roll after they started to receive attendance warning letters from the local authority. He was placed in care under section 20 of the *Children Act* 1989 and accommodated in a residential unit, putting him at higher risk of criminality and exploitation.

Matthew is diagnosed with ADHD, has speech, language and communication issues, has an EHCP and SEN, and is a child in care. The case manager was quick to identify his EHCP had drifted for a number of years. She noted that, when Matthew was taken into care, momentum started to build in relation to progressing his education, which she was able to harness.

The case manager was able to build on her prior knowledge of Matthew. She had worked with him for three years previously and, consequently, was acutely aware of his circumstances, personal history and challenges around education. These challenges dated

back to primary school, and had resulted in a period of two years when he was not in ETE. The case manager used this information to inform a comprehensive assessment.

Multiple agencies were involved with Matthew's case, including his case manager, a social worker, independent reviewing officer, virtual school, children's unit placement, SLT, mentor, college and psychologists. He was eligible for ECM and, as a result, the partnerships working with Matthew engaged with the psychologist to produce a case formulation. In broad terms, a case formulation uses information available about a child to build a hypothesis about the causes of the child's psychological, interpersonal and behavioural problems, exploring potential triggers and maintenance factors. The YOT worker and partners are then able to integrate the learning and understanding from this into their own assessments, plans and interventions.

All plans relevant to Matthew were cross-referenced, sensitive and responsive to the assessed needs within his SLT assessment, EHCP and the child in need plan; plans did not duplicate each other, and each agency clearly had its own role. All partners engaged in each other's plans; for example, the YOT worker was able to attend the EHCP assessment with Matthew and the educational psychologist to pursue the momentum referenced above.

There was evidence of a wide overarching strategy for Matthew; this was clear around ETE, and safety and well-being, showing a real congruence between the two. For example, practical support, such as the college changing timetable formats to a digital clock, complemented the transport arrangements made by social care; the placement provided morning alarm calls; the YOT added value to the ECM, by providing input about his problematic relationships; and a number of professionals were considered trusted adults.

There continued to be underlying issues around risk, likelihood of reoffending and safety and wellbeing (accommodation, relationships and contextual safeguarding). The YOT worker engaged fully with these at complex strategy meetings in the Safer Options hub. They made referrals to other local authority social care services due to concerns about Matthew's girlfriend, and attempted to engage her in joint intervention.

**Outcomes:** Matthew was placed at a local college to study mechanics, maths and English; he was offered 20 hours a week and, although he only attends around 40 per cent of this currently, his progress is recognised following two years of being NEET.

Matthew also engaged well with his accommodation placement and is being supported to move into semi-independent accommodation soon.

## Examples of effectiveness: Implementation and delivery

Inspectors stated:

*"This case is an excellent example of the importance of the key principles for supporting desistance. Those involved in his case have been realistic about the challenges of the structure of a routine and work environment and provided additional support and flexibility. They have instilled a sense of hope regarding the probability of him reaching his future career aspirations, and supported him take steps towards his end goal."*

*"All of those involved in the placement have recognised and reflected back his progress and strengths. Furthermore, he has been able to develop social capital, developing his identity as someone who is in employment, encouraging him to increase this and think about long-term prospects."*



## Case illustration

Altin, a 17-year-old, left mainstream education in year 10 and was then placed in alternative provision but did not consistently engage. His offending behaviour escalated, and he became involved with the youth justice system as a result. Altin engaged well with his YOT worker, describing her support and guidance as invaluable.

As part of his sentence plan, Altin was referred to the YOT information, advice and guidance worker, as he was not in education or employment and she supported his career planning and job hunting. He advised that the YOT support came at just the right time. He described it as follows:

*"When you get into a pattern of getting in trouble, you dig yourself into a hole. The hole I had dug myself at that point, I could just about reach to get out of it. Julie and Michelle [YOT worker and careers adviser] helped me with that."*

After two months of job searching, he explored the option of a work experience programme to get some on-the-job experience. Altin was invited to an introduction session led by King's Cross Recruit, where three teams from King's Cross Environmental Services delivered a presentation about their areas of business and the work experience placements on offer. The group was given a tour of the estate and were taken out for lunch to help explore the area where they could be working.

Altin signed up. There was an additional one-to-one meeting to ensure that the fit was right and that he displayed the right attitude to join the workplace. Then he was placed as an estate porter with responsibilities for moving equipment, barriers and event props around the estate.

The advocacy and support provided by the YOT enabled Altin to attend interviews. The YOT also provided practical support, such as obtaining the relevant uniform and documentation. In addition, he was accompanied to the placement by his YOT worker and careers adviser on his first day to provide support through the first hour of his day. This consisted of him getting his uniform, being shown where equipment was kept and completing new starter forms.

A week into the placement, the senior operations manager of JPC by Samsic contacted the careers adviser and advised that Altin didn't want to do the job anymore, so she went to the placement and spoke about how he was feeling. Altin initially stated that he was struggling to fit in with his colleagues, as they were much older than him. The senior operations manager was concerned that Altin might not get another opportunity, so offered him as much time as he needed to think about it. As Altin and the careers adviser were leaving, the estate contract manager approached them and said:

*"even if you wanted to work just one day a week – we know how difficult making new steps can be – we can then see how you go."*

Altin indicated he was not aware that this was possible, and the estate contract manager explained they could make it work – they agreed that he could work one full day a week for a couple of weeks, and they amended his hours so he would start and finish with his colleagues, allowing more time to connect with them.

Sam Fletcher, senior operations manager, reflects on this:

*"He impressed us straight away with his positive attitude and willingness to make a fresh start and fitted well into a large on-site team that works at a fast pace."*



The tenacity and flexibility of the team around Altin were crucial to the success of this placement. Altin described his new team as *"really supportive and helpful"* and explained how the placement has given him good experience and confidence, as well as helping him get into a good daily routine that he was not in beforehand. The adjustment to a new routine was the most challenging part of the process for Altin, but he is now used to it. He said the best thing about the job is that *"it's a really nice community here"* and mentioned that he likes walking around the area because it's very different to where he is from.

The placement is paid work experience, at the London living wage. Altin said:

*"It's always a good feeling getting paid – it's what motivates me and makes you feel like you're working for something."*

He explained that he probably wouldn't have stuck to the placement longer term without the pay, which demonstrates just how much of a key motivator it is for him. Furthermore, we asked if the team could have done anything differently to make the experience better and he responded *"nothing"*.

We then asked what advice Altin would give to others in a similar position to where he was a few years ago. He said:

*"The most important thing would be to stay in school – that's your step to success. If school isn't an option then do something to earn money, learn and keep yourself busy."*

Altin's positive mindset and motivation are clear. He told us that *"part of my life is my past, now I just want to focus on myself,"* and continued, *"If I put my mind to something, I will do it."* He told us that his Mum is very proud of him.

**Outcomes:** He is now with the team three days a week and all the feedback from the management team and his colleagues is fantastic.

*"Altin has done the hard work and is now reaping the rewards. He should be proud of what he has accomplished."*

Longer term, he hopes to work as a firefighter and intends to learn to drive to support this career. He indicated that he values the opportunities he has had, as he is learning important skills such as teamwork, working outdoors, communication and structure, which he now knows will stand him in good stead whichever path he chooses.

He has recently increased his work to three days and is on track to be offered full-time employment, while applying for the fire service, with the ongoing support of the YOT.

A further case, which illustrates a dramatic turnaround in the child's engagement in ETE, is cited below. Inspectors commented:

*"It was good to see the case manager focus on the child's strengths and how he can develop them in an attempt to increase his confidence."*



### Case illustration

Paul is a 17-year-old male sentenced to a nine-month referral order following his conviction for a dwelling burglary. This was his first offence.

Paul had been NEET for almost two years. His father was keen to engage him in some form of ETE, although he highlighted that Paul lacked motivation. The case manager and careers



worker undertook an in-depth exploration with Paul about where his limited motivation to engage in ETE stemmed from. They identified a lack of self-belief linked to his lower-than-expected GCSE results.

They worked with the information, advice and guidance worker to develop Paul's CV, and supported him to register with employment agencies and apply for apprenticeships. Reparation was linked to his preference for being active/working with his hands and he undertook some gardening activity, which increased his confidence and provided him with visible evidence of his achievements.

Paul refused a horticulture traineeship, and both the case manager and the careers worker continued to offer encouragement and focus on his strengths in an attempt to increase his confidence as well as explore other options. Recent access to employment opportunities has not been significantly impacted by the pandemic, although Paul did struggle somewhat with undertaking job interviews remotely. The YOT worked with him on interview techniques, in particular remote interviews and how to communicate efficiently. This resulted in increased confidence and a more effective interview performance. The personalised, flexible approach taken by the YOT was critical in enabling Paul to make tangible progress towards employment.

**Outcomes:** Less than six months into the order, and after almost two years NEET, Paul successfully obtained employment; his case manager has continued to offer praise and positive reinforcement of his progress, in particular when he successfully obtained a permanent contract. There has been an evident improvement in his overall level of confidence.

Paul has since withdrawn from offending peers and engaged in a stable and pro-social lifestyle, with no evidence of further offending to date.

An inspector noted:

*"In the following example, it is clear from the case records that the child had confidence in the practitioner, as they had taken time to collate information to understand the child's individual needs. The shared cultural background of the worker and child aided engagement, especially with the child's mother.*

*"The right professionals have been engaged to support the child and secure appropriate assessments of his underpinning neurological conditions and the child has been empowered to make incremental steps towards his goals, which have been reinforced through positive affirmation and confidence building, and supported with regular reviewing, until he has reached his ETE goal of full-time employment."*



### Case illustration

Faizan is a 17-year-old child. The case manager was aware that Faizan may have had some undiagnosed additional needs through communication with a colleague while Faizan was in custody.

The case manager used his awareness of this to support Faizan. For example, he set 'tasks' at the end of each session, such as going to local shops to ask if they had vacancies and then report back to the case manager. This supported Faizan's confidence and was a means of him trying to secure employment, which in turn could help to build his self-esteem.

The case manager's approach has been to try to encourage and provide positive affirmations, to encourage Faizan to want to refrain from negative behaviour. For example, the manager speaks to Faizan about opportunities and not offending and keeps his progress under regular review.

He advised that he showed Faizan a short film (YouTube video) called Deep It, which charts the journey of an offender. He used the video to support Faizan to think about his actions, behaviour and consequences. This video, according to the case manager, provoked discussion and enabled Faizan to better understand his harmful actions towards the victim.

The case manager engaged with CAMHS, a careers adviser and the YJS participation officer, along with mum, to support Faizan's ETE needs.

**Outcomes:** Faizan has not reoffended. The case manager advised that, at the beginning of an order, he always speaks to the children he supervises about possibilities of early revocation for good progress, as he believes that this incentivises the children to not reoffend.

Faizan secured work in a warehouse, packing equipment, and this fits with his learning style – he is a kinaesthetic learner and likes to use his hands.

## Examples of effectiveness: Review

With reference to this case, inspectors noted:

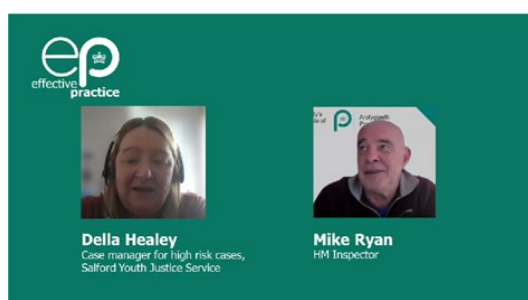
*"The work was based on wide-ranging assessments that the YOT worker appears to have accessed easily. These have not been repeated in the YOT assessment, but used and referred to when understanding behaviour, ETE progress and desistance. This was dynamic in nature, being reviewed consistently as work progressed.*

*"Professionals have maintained contact, and worked efficiently together. ETE and the placement have shared information that assists their management of the child at school and at home.*

*"The partnership was committed to securing the best outcomes for the child, including senior managers making funding decisions to ensure that she has the right level of support."*

Della Healey, case manager for high-risk cases, Salford Youth Justice Service, noted the importance of:

*"...gathering a lot of information from the professionals around me."*



[Video \(YouTube, 5:20\): Learning from stakeholders: Della Healey \(Salford Youth Justice Service\).](#)

*In this video interview with Mike Ryan, HM Inspector, Della Healey, Salford Youth Justice Service stressed the importance of a multi-agency approach and notably strong management oversight to supervise a child with multiple needs.*



## Case illustration

Mia is a 17-year-old female, subject to a 12-month youth rehabilitation order. She is described as a kind and caring girl, who helps other young people where she can. Mia's parents were substance users and she experienced a number of ACEs, including being physically abused. She was placed in local authority care when she was 12; however, her placement with her foster carer broke down, as she was unable to meet Mia's needs. This led to social care obtaining a full care order and placing her in a specialist unit.

Mia has had nine different changes of placement before being sectioned under the *Mental Health Act* after attempts of suicide.

Before Mia was sectioned under the Mental Health Act, she had been engaging with a specialist unit. They kept the placement open until she was discharged, and she successfully re-engaged. Social care obtained funding for a specialist placement for Mia and she is currently in a 12-week residential placement prior to a more permanent supported onward move.

The YOT assessment contains an extensive history of complex multi-agency concerns across all areas of Mia's life.

Mia's ETE and residential placements were regularly involved in professionals' meetings, led by social care, where there were excellent examples of joint planning. The plan was for strong communication between the professionals to provide details of behaviour or changes in risk that might impact on Mia's management. This was supported by a number of safety planning agreements that catered for situations where there was an increased level of risk or safety concerns related to Mia attempting suicide, going missing, and exploitation.

Mia is seen by the YOT worker on a weekly basis due to the levels of supervision and intervention delivered across the partnership. She supported Mia's engagement in effective ways; for example, knowing that Mia liked animals, she shared information about her dog, showing pictures, and arranged one of the sessions to take place during a dog walk. Another example included making up songs during the sessions to deliver key messages about good behaviour and hygiene, such as brushing her teeth. Key trusted individuals engage with Mia, including a mentor from the Community Safety Team 'Connect', and City Wall mentoring, which involved decorating Christmas baubles while discussing choices, relationships and her family. Sessions take place with the social care internet safeguarding team worker, who appears to have developed a good relationship with Mia.

Emotional regulation work, as planned by the YOT, was delivered by Mia's social worker and a key worker at the placement, and feedback was provided to the YOT. All of the work sought to maintain stability and promote good engagement with ETE.

There was effective management oversight throughout, including regular reviewing of the case. A manager provided input into the initial assessment, formulation of the plan in accordance with national standards, and scaled approach – but with a view to reducing the risk of duplication and engagement.

**Outcomes:** While Mia's accommodation placement, and safety and wellbeing concerns, including exploitation and risk of self-harm, do appear fragile, they are tightly managed. This has enabled professionals to focus on Mia's positive engagement with college.

Given the challenges from a range of services to engage Mia according to her needs, her progress at the college is remarkable. This includes:

- sustained attendance
- sustained positive behaviour
- development of soft skills, including engaging with a range of professionals
- career aspirations to work with animals in the future.

## Examples of effectiveness: Engagement

Each YOT is expected to manage each case by engaging the child, parents and carers, taking account of each child's diverse needs. It is vital they establish meaningful, trusting relationships to help promote engagement. As was evident in the thematic inspection, and referenced in this guide, children involved in the justice system are some of the most vulnerable in our society. Furthermore, we know that they are disproportionately represented in exclusion data and data on those not in employment or education.

Consequently, it is important that case managers can bend and flex with the needs of the children. They should be tenacious in consistently keeping the child's ETE goals in mind and pursuing actions to help them achieve those goals.

On occasions, this will mean advocating on behalf of the child and parent/carer; this will potentially involve the case manager having the courage of their convictions to challenge professional colleagues in a manner that allows the issues to be resolved, using appropriate evidence and rationale. Furthermore, where a resolution is not possible, case managers should be clear about escalation routes and pursue them accordingly.

The following examples clearly demonstrate this determination from case managers.

In the next example, inspectors report:

*"The practitioner drew on her knowledge and experience, and a range of sources of information to inform the assessment, seeking additional specialist assessments as appropriate."*

*"She demonstrated good engagement skills and built up significant trust and rapport in a short period of time. The fact that the child continues to engage with these professionals, despite the referral order having ended, is testament to the work of the practitioner in developing an effective relationship."*



### Case illustration

Ada, a 14-year-old female, was sentenced to a six-month referral order following her conviction for assault against a peer. While this is her first conviction, there is an emerging pattern of aggressive and violent behaviour when in conflict with others.

Ada resides with her father and siblings in the family home. She is said to have a good relationship with her father and clearly feels well supported by him. However, she does struggle to cope with his attempts to implement appropriate boundaries and can become aggressive as a result. Children's services' main involvement in the case is to provide

Ada's father with the necessary support to manage this, although he refuses to complete any parenting courses.

Ada is on roll at a mainstream secondary school. The practitioner engaged Ada and her father in the initial assessment (through face-to-face meetings, telephone discussions and involvement in panels) and made good use of the information from Ada's school about her attendance. The practitioner provided some analysis on the likely underlying factors for Ada's poor attendance, including low self-esteem, low confidence and social interaction difficulties, particularly within the educational setting. Ada's school attendance continues to deteriorate, despite a reduced timetable.

While there is no evidence on record of difficulties, during the assessment period the practitioner identified some indicators of potential speech and language difficulties, such as difficulty in making eye contact. As a result, an SLT assessment was quickly arranged. In addition, Ada's poor attendance was explored with both her and the school and an educational psychology referral was made quickly after sentence.

There were some initial communication difficulties with Ada's social worker and some differences of opinion about the level of children's services involvement required to address the issues. As a result, a professionals meeting was held and attended by CAMHS, the SLT, the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENco) and the educational psychologist, following which appropriate actions were set. This included the school offering a reduced timetable and children's services exploring home tuition.

Ada struggles to engage with new people, professionals in particular, so during the initial period after sentence, the practitioner took the time to explore Ada's interests and strengths, showing interest in who she is as a person, in an attempt to break down some of those barriers. As a result, rapport and trust were quickly established, which then enabled the practitioner to undertake more specifically focused interventions.

Interventions undertaken included emotional management work as well as work aimed at increasing self-esteem and confidence and promoting engagement with other professionals. Ada is now engaging with other professionals, including the SLT, CAMHS and the educational psychologist.

The practitioner arranged a professionals meeting to ensure understanding and consistency between the different services involved, following which appropriate actions were set. This included the school offering a reduced timetable.

Ada did not have a particular career path in mind; however, she did express an interest in caring for animals and, consequently, the practitioner arranged for her to complete her reparation hours on a city farm.

There were ongoing reviews of Ada's engagement with the school throughout the order and the practitioner offered praise for Ada's achievements throughout the order, as well as at the final panel meeting.

**Outcomes:** During lockdown, Ada was provided with a laptop; however, as she did not engage with online learning, a place was rightly made available for her in school. Her attendance remained poor and the school undertook two home visits in an attempt to encourage attendance. They also attended the professionals meeting at the YOT to review progress and next steps. They reduced Ada's timetable, through an appropriate short-term reduction, in an attempt to increase engagement.

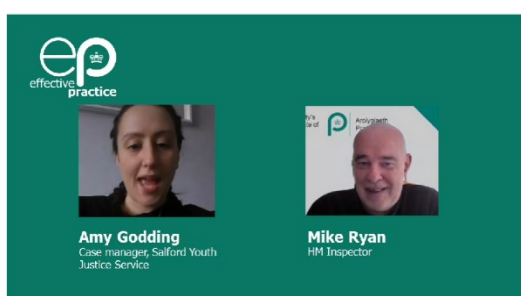
As part of the exit planning, the practitioner ensured that Ada was engaged with both CAMHS and the educational psychologist beyond the end of the referral order and this remains ongoing.

In the following case, the inspector stated:

*"The case manager shows great tenacity and consistently advocates for the child, holding others to account in an appropriate manner to ensure ETE needs are met."*

Amy Godding, case manager, Salford Youth Justice Service, illustrates how her professional curiosity led her to secure a specialist assessment, noting:

*"From one of the initial meetings I had with her it became pretty clear there were some communication difficulties there, and we got SLT Amy Burton, who is linked to our team, who is brilliant. So, I referred in straight away and Amy agreed, and said, yeah there is some undiagnosed needs here."*



[Video \(YouTube, 4:10\): Learning from stakeholders: Amy Godding \(Salford Youth Justice Service\).](#)

*In this video, Mike Ryan, HM Inspector, interviews Amy Godding about how she responded to a child's individual needs to maximise their engagement in a specific case we inspected, through ensuring speech and language needs were met.*



## Case illustration

Emma is a 13-year-old female subject to a community resolution (CR) following offences of actual bodily harm and harassment. She currently resides with her mum and siblings; Emma does not have any contact with her father and there is a history of domestic abuse between her mum and previous partners.

Emma attends a mainstream secondary school; however, there are significant issues with her attendance and behaviour. Within the last year, Emma has been subject to 11 fixed-term exclusions, totalling more than 14 days. These have been a result of verbal abuse and threatening behaviour towards staff and other pupils, along with what the school described as persistent disruption.

At the assessment stage, the case manager identified some potential unmet learning needs and made links between this and her difficulties in engaging appropriately in lessons. Following on from assessments and planning activity, a SLT assessment was arranged, and some significant speech and language difficulties were identified.

The case manager identified some concerns about the school's approach to considering and implementing reasonable adjustments and strategies for addressing the issues. These were discussed at the YOT's education meeting and appropriate actions were set. The actions were followed up appropriately by the case manager and a professionals meeting subsequently took place. Attendees included the school, the educational psychologist and the SLT.

Emma's continued exclusions, and some reluctance to engage with the YOT's SLT and educational psychologist, do suggest some ongoing issues with the school's commitment to understanding and meeting Emma's needs.



The case manager believed a referral to the 'Education on Track' provision would result in actions to re-engage Emma in education; therefore, when a satisfactory response was not forthcoming from the school, the case manager challenged this and completed an Education on Track referral themselves. Unfortunately, the school failed to attend the meeting; however, the case manager clearly articulated her concerns to the inclusions worker, who agreed, and a further review meeting was scheduled. The case manager is confident that this will help to re-engage Emma, and she confirmed that the case will not be closed until a satisfactory outcome is achieved.

**Outcomes:** A speech and language assessment was undertaken, indicating previously unidentified difficulties. As a result, the SLT and educational psychologist are now involved. There is now involvement from Education on Track (complex case officer from the education inclusion programme) to establish a clear way of moving forward to re-engage Emma and ensure her ETE needs are met.

In this case, inspectors noted:

*"... a positive working relationship built with child and mother, so their voice was peppered throughout the assessment.*

*"The case manager displayed a willingness to challenge the assessments and decisions made by other agencies regarding the support for the child when she felt that these were inaccurate, unfair and unsafe.*

*"She maintained faith in the child, despite a lack of motivation to address drug misuse and frustrations around how this is impacting on the child's short term and long-term ETE choices and illustrated a willingness to offer 'prevention' intervention on a voluntary basis to support the child."*

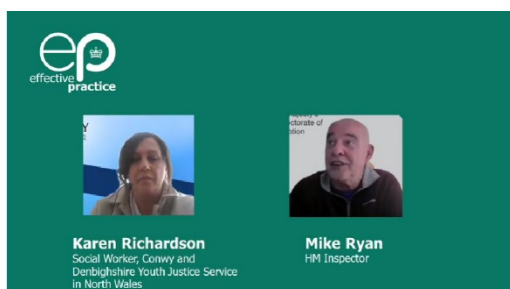
Karen Richardson, Social Worker, Conwy and Denbighshire Youth Justice Service in North Wales, illustrated how she took an individualised approach with the child in order to promote engagement, stating:

*"I was very aware of his speech and communication difficulties, so I did a lot of practical activities, a lot of our work was outdoors.*

*"A particular area he enjoyed was fishing, so I found this was the best way to engage him. The conversation was absolutely brilliant when he was out and about and the focus wasn't on him, and not in a classroom environment, which he found quite intimidating – so this was where we made our plans and looked at what was important to him."*

[Video \(YouTube, 3:32\): Learning from stakeholders: Karen Richardson \(Conwy and Denbighshire Youth Justice Service\).](#)

*In this video, Mike Ryan, HM Inspector, interviews Karen Richardson, Social Worker from Conwy and Denbighshire Youth Justice Service in North Wales, about her personalised approach to meaningfully engaging a child with his planned interventions.*







## Case illustration

Michael is a 16-year-old male who received a seven-month referral order for taking a vehicle without the owner's consent.

He was diagnosed with ADHD, although he disagrees with this assessment and refuses to engage with medication. He is currently on a lengthy waiting list for a further neurodiversity assessment.

The case manager assessed Michael's support needs and reviewed these regularly as the order progressed. The case manager has adopted an approach whereby she is willing to persist and challenge the assessments and support from other agencies when she feels that these are inaccurate or insufficient. Furthermore, she demonstrated a willingness to escalate and raise such issues with YJS manager.

Michael lacks motivation to address his continual cannabis use, even though it has a significant impact on his ETE choices and prevents him from accessing training that he is specifically interested in. However, despite this, and the complexities of the case, the case manager has not lost faith that at some point he may wish to make positive changes to his lifestyle and think about the advice and support that she and other agencies have offered him. She has kept the case under regular review. The case manager continues to want to support Michael, as she recognises that he has the skills to turn his life around should he make the decision to lead a more stable drug-free and crime-free life.

**Outcomes:** The case is now closed but the case manager has followed up the child's progress and is aware that he remains in NW Training ETE provision. There is very recent information that the ETE placement may be at risk due to the child's continued behavioural problems and cannabis use. The case manager is intending to make a referral for 'prevention' work to be completed by the YJS on a voluntary basis. The case manager states that her emphasis will continue to be around ETE needs and encouraging the child to address his continual cannabis use.



## Reflection questions

Thinking about your practice working with children to support their education, training and employment:

1. How do you keep ETE at the heart of your interventions?
2. How do you promote self-agency within your assessments, plans and interventions?
3. What barriers are there for children involved with justice services to engage with ETE provision and how can/have you mitigated these?
4. How well do you coordinate the partners involved in your plans?

# The last word: what children said to us about ETE provision

We commissioned the services of User Voice, a national charity created and run by people who have been in prison and on probation, to give a voice to the children involved with justice services. They spoke with 29 children, to gather their perspectives on the ETE services that they had received.

We are grateful for the insights of the children, whose feedback has informed our findings.

The children identified a number of barriers to progression with ETE and, consequently, their desistance, as follows:

## Multiple needs

Children spoke of numerous areas of need, which impacted on their ability to focus on ETE. These included substance use, homelessness, bereavement, discrimination, living in care and managing the transition to adulthood, to name a few.

The importance of this is highlighted here:

***“ I just moved..., obviously I been with the YOT for like a few years, I been in and out of care, lived with my grandma, lost my grandad, lost my brother, lived with my other nan, my life has been hectic, my emotions all over the place. I’m never where someone wants me or not in the mood. But it doesn’t seem like they are doing anything for me, nobody is doing shit unless it’s in the background and I don’t know but as far as I’m aware nothing is happening. ”***

**Practitioners should** be aware of these needs when planning and implementing any ETE delivery, so interventions can be sequenced appropriately, and any specific needs can be accommodated.

Complex and often overlapping needs can often feel overwhelming, so it is important to instil a sense of hope for the child and their family or carers.

## Neurodiversity

A number of the children spoken to report they had a neurodiverse condition, which impacted on their engagement and experience with ETE. At least two had not been assessed for learning difficulties. Others had been assessed but still indicated their needs were not catered to in accordance with the outcomes of this.

The importance of this is signified in the quotes below:

***“ I just have to do what they want me to do. No assessment has been made about my ADHD or dyslexia. ”***

***“ I have dyslexia and it is hard to read some of the emails. ”***

**Practitioners should** look for signs of neurodiversity and follow up, undertake relevant screenings and refer for specialist assessments, where appropriate.

The outcomes of these assessments should be embedded in the child's assessment, plan and intervention delivery.

## Mental health

Anxiety was a key barrier preventing a number of the children from attending ETE, even when it was something that they genuinely wanted to do.

“*I wanted to go to college and do hairdressing – they set me up with the right people, but my anxiety got in the way.*”

**Practitioners should** openly discuss with the child, parents/carer any potential barriers to attending ETE provision, acknowledge these, explore the impact and develop collaborative strategies to overcome these.

*For example, would attending with the child on the first session help, would a visit to the college before the course commences help to alleviate some of the anxiety, or could a mentor help?*

## Covid-19

Covid-19 impacted on the way in which the children interacted with ETE **and** their YOS worker. Mask-wearing, telephone calls, online learning and quarantining have become the norm; however, the social aspect of group sessions has been lost and missed.

“*Covid has restricted the amount of face-to-face time I get to spend at YOT and it affects group sessions.*”

**Practitioners have** found creative ways to continue delivering YOS services during the pandemic; for example, they have maintained contact by meeting in parks and providing online support. It is important to consider innovative ways to deliver the full range of interventions for children.

## Lack of meaningful involvement

18 of the children didn't have an ETE plan or didn't know if they had one, but they believed a plan would be helpful to them. One child was very clear on the fact he had a plan but highlighted that he wasn't involved in developing it.

“*I think so as they assessed and decided what ETE would suit me and be of most use to me. The plan should be more clear and provided to you so you understand what it is and what it involves.*”

**Practitioners should** actively involve children and parents/carers in their assessments, plans and reviews. This co-creation will ensure the plan is individually tailored, allows the child to take ownership of achieving their goals and means they are more likely to engage with the plan.

## Lack of options – in terms of choices

The children spoke of a desire to move on; they wanted to get a job or a skill that they could use moving forward. School was a challenging environment for a number of the

children, and they felt that training would have been a better option for them. The children also raised some challenges regarding the timing of courses and their inability to get up in the morning, whether due to sleep issues or lifestyle factors.

“*They are fine if you are just wanting to do basic education courses such as maths and English, but if you want to do something you can use as a career you are limited.*”

**Practitioners should** explore a range of ETE options and not simply fit the child into a generic offer, linking to meaningfully involving the children and parents/carers,

It is important to have high expectations and aspirations for children in terms of their ETE achievements and future career, and practitioners should empower children and those around them to have these of themselves. Considering a range of options customised for the child will assist with this and may well instil a sense of hope.

## Relevance

The biggest issue for children was the lack of relevance of the options available or consideration of their skills, interests, abilities and circumstances. Volunteering isn't seen as a viable option to children who need to support themselves financially. Those with neurodiverse conditions were repeatedly offered options that weren't suitable for them, while others were doing courses that were too easy to keep them interested.

As the children were not meaningfully involved in assessments and plans and were not offered a choice, it is unsurprising that they feel the ETE they are doing is not relevant to them.

“*It literally took a day to complete online. Was so simple and I already knew how to wash my hands!*”

**Practitioners should** ensure ETE interventions are appropriate for the child's specific set of circumstances, including their protected characteristics, living circumstances, financial situation, strengths and areas of interest, to name but a few, so that they feel the intervention is relevant to them as an individual.

“*She supports with all different things, my recreation hours have a link with what I do at college, woodwork as well. So, I'm working with wood in my recreation. I told her that would help me out.*”

The children also spoke about how the YOS had enabled them to overcome barriers, including:

### Being meaningfully involved with their ETE plans

- “ I struggle to get up in the mornings because I don’t sleep very well at all. Thankfully she would come and see me in the afternoon though once she realised.”
- “ If they had understood my learning needs, then I could have used the months better my mum said. ”

### Support

93 per cent had regular check-in with their YOS worker. These check-ins were considered helpful and supportive by some. Many of the children did mention how ‘nice’ their YOS worker is and some reflected on the lengths they go to support them.

- “ I discuss my progress with my worker and what I am doing and how well I am doing, and is there anything that I could improve with the right support, this is also where they ask me if I need any ongoing support and what with if any. ”

### Achievements

Despite a lack of relevance for many, nearly all the children spoken with reported some benefit from engaging with ETE, and with the YOS more generally.

Most of these benefits were acquiring soft skills and better behaviour; however, six attained qualifications and two reported better attendance.

- “ Doing basic maths/English now will allow me to progress onto more difficult subjects. ”
- “ I can achieve things now I didn’t think I could. ”



### Reflection questions

1. On reviewing the barriers, are there any that surprise you? Why?
2. Consider each of the barriers identified and think about how you support the children you work with to overcome these?
3. What could you do differently to strengthen your approach in relation to each of these barriers?
4. How do you ensure that you do not lose the voice of the child and their parents/carers in your assessments, planning, interventions and reviews?

## Conclusions: ETE in the youth justice system

Overall, we identified that our expectations were met in relation to ETE when the following are in place:



**Coordinated leadership**, with representation from all relevant parties and a shared ambition around ETE for all children



**Robust information-exchange** between partners



**Multi-agency ownership** and **responsibility** in contributing to ETE provision



**A vigorous analysis** and **use of management information and data** to inform ETE service delivery



**Specialist assessments** of speech, language and communication needs, which support the child and mitigate barriers to ETE



**A skilled practitioner group** that can meaningfully support children with ETE

We encourage readers to reflect on these underlying approaches and consider how they may improve their practice as a result of reading this guide.

We would welcome feedback on this guide, including its impact and any suggested improvements.

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# Further reading and resources

## HM Inspectorate of Probation publications

**Thematic review:** [A joint inspection of education, training and employment services in youth offending teams in England and Wales.](#)

**Research and Analysis Bulletin:**

[Supporting the desistance of children subject to court orders](#) (2021) This bulletin focuses on the extent to which recent YOT delivery has met requirements for children receiving court disposals.

## Tools and resources

- [Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership website](#)
  - [Watch 'Excluded' – Our Young People-Led Film On School Exclusions | EachOther](#) 46:42mins
  - [Breaking the school-to-prison pipeline - BBC Bitesize](#) a 4:15minute video
-



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