

# **Bath and North East Somerset**

## **YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN**

### **2024 - 2026**



**Working in Partnership to achieve Child First Justice**

# Contents

	<b>Page No</b>
<b>1. <u>Introduction, Vision, Strategy and Local Context</u></b>	3 - 5
<b>2. <u>Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements</u></b>	6 - 9
<b>3. Update on the Previous Year</b>	
3.1 <u>Progress on priorities in previous plan</u>	10
3.2 <u>Performance over the previous year</u>	11 - 17
3.3 <u>Risks and Issues</u>	17 - 19
<b>4. Plan for the Forthcoming Year</b>	
4.1 <u>Child First</u>	20 - 22
4.2 <u>Resources and Services</u>	22
4.3 <u>Board Development</u>	23
4.4 <u>Workforce Development</u>	23 - 24
4.5 <u>Evidence-based Practice, Innovation and Evaluation</u>	24 - 25
4.6 <u>Priorities for the coming year: Standards for Children in the YJS</u>	26
4.7 <u>Priorities for the coming year: Service Development</u>	27 - 28
<b>5. National Priority Areas</b>	
5.1 <u>Children from groups which are over-represented</u>	29 - 30
5.2 <u>Policing</u>	31
5.3 <u>Prevention</u>	31 - 33
5.4 <u>Diversion</u>	33 - 35
5.5 <u>Education</u>	35 - 37
5.6 <u>Restorative Approaches and Victims</u>	37 - 38
5.7 <u>Serious Violence, Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding</u>	39
5.8 <u>Detention in Police Custody</u>	39
5.9 <u>Remands</u>	40
5.10 <u>Use of Custody and Constructive Re-settlement</u>	40
5.11 <u>Working with Families</u>	41
<b>6. Sign off Submission and Approval</b>	
<b>Appendix 1 <u>Budget Costs and Contributions</u></b>	43
<b>Appendix 2 <u>Staffing Structure</u></b>	44
<b>Appendix 3 <u>Progress on Priorities in Previous Plan</u></b>	46 - 47

# 1. Introduction, Vision, Strategy and Local Context

## Introduction

Welcome to the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for Bath and North East Somerset Youth Justice Service for 2024 - 2026.

This plan sets out the direction of travel and key priorities for the service and partnership over the next 2 years, as required by the Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

This Plan adheres to the Youth Justice Board's 'document 'Youth Justice Plans: Guidance for Youth Justice Services'. The plan will be reviewed annually, as required by the Youth Justice Board.

The Plan has been developed under the guidance of the Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) Youth Justice Service (YJS) Partnership Board, in consultation with YJS team members, and considering feedback from B&NES YJS service users. The progress of the plan will be monitored by the YJS Partnership Board throughout the year ahead.

The Youth Justice Plan:

- summarises the YJS structure, governance, and partnership arrangements.
- outlines the resources available to the YJS.
- reviews achievements and developments during 2023 - 2024.
- identifies emerging issues and describes the partnership's priorities.
- sets out our priorities and actions for improving youth justice outcomes in the next two years.

## Vision and Strategy

The Vision for B&NES Youth Justice Service is:

**“Working in Partnership to achieve Child First Justice”**

This means that we are working together to create a youth justice system that sees children as children. We prioritise the best interests and well-being of children. We recognise their individual needs, vulnerabilities, abilities, rights, and potential. Our work is informed by a Child First, Trauma Informed and Strengths Based approach.

We work together to build on children's individual strengths and capabilities as a way of helping them develop an identity away from offending, to lead to safer communities with fewer victims. We work together, as partners, to identify and reduce harm for communities, children and victims.

All our efforts are aimed at constructive and forward-looking approaches, based on nurturing relationships that empower children to reach their full potential and make positive contributions to society. This includes supporting children to have successful transitions to adult services.

We promote the active participation, engagement, and inclusion of children in society and our work seeks to collaborate with them and their parents and carers to hear and learn from their views.

We recognise that some children are over-represented in the justice system, in particular children from minority ethnic backgrounds and children with special educational needs (SEN).

We work in partnership to reduce this disproportionality, keeping the needs of the most vulnerable children we work with at the centre.

We advocate for a childhood that is separate from the justice system. We do this by implementing preventive measures, diversion programmes, and proportionate, timely intervention, thereby minimising any potential negative impact or stigma associated with being in the youth justice system.

B&NES YJS vision also includes a commitment to being an anti-racist service. The vision is:

### **B&NES Youth Justice Service Anti-Racism Vision**

- To commit to being an anti-racist service.
- To uphold social justice and challenge inequality and racism in the actions of individuals, in services and in society.
- To value and celebrate diversity and promote equality of opportunity.

B&NES Council is the lead partner in the multi-agency response to children and risk of offending. Its Corporate Strategy<sup>1</sup> sets out an overarching purpose to **'IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES'**. The vision for all children and young people is that they live in safe, happy and healthy families and communities, which is detailed in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for BANES<sup>2</sup>.

The Youth Justice Board's key objectives are in line with local ambitions and they are to:

- Reduce the number of children in the youth justice system.
- Reduce reoffending by children in the youth justice system.
- Improve the safety and wellbeing of children in the youth justice system.
- Improve outcomes for children in the youth justice system.

## **Local Context**

B&NES YJS is a statutory partnership between B&NES Council, Avon and Somerset Police, the Probation Service and NHS Bath, Swindon, and Wiltshire (BSW) Integrated Care Board (ICB).

The YJS works in partnership to prevent children entering the youth justice system, through the Compass Service. The YJS also works with children who have come to the attention of the police and are being dealt with for committing criminal offences. We work with children and their parents and carers, to understand their needs and risks, and to help them make positive changes in their lives.

We contact all victims of crimes committed by the children we work with to offer them the chance to take part in restorative justice, so we can help repair the harm they have experienced.

B&NES local authority covers the city of Bath and the more rural communities in North East Somerset, including Radstock, Midsomer Norton, Chew Valley and Keynsham. In 2022, the population of B&NES is estimated at 195,618<sup>3</sup> The 10-17 resident population estimate for mid-2022 is 17,033 (8.7%)

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/corporate-strategy-2023-2027>

<sup>2</sup> <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/joint-health-and-wellbeing-strategy>

<sup>3</sup> Strategic Evidence Base for Bath and North East Somerset

[https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/jsna/Strategic%20Evidence%20Base%20Main%20Doc%20Publis hed%2020220630\\_0.pdf](https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/jsna/Strategic%20Evidence%20Base%20Main%20Doc%20Publis hed%2020220630_0.pdf)

The following information provides demographic information about children aged 10 – 17 years living in B&NES:

## Gender

- Males – 8,742                      Females – 8,291 <sup>3</sup>

## Ethnicity

- White population is c.14,960 for the 10-17 age group as at the time of the 2021 Census (March 2021). This represents 90.7% of the entire 10-17 year old population (c.16,495). Therefore, the **non-White population percentage is 9.3%**. This includes:  
Asian – c.465, Black – c.90, Mixed – c.920, Other – \*\* <sup>3</sup>

\* all ethnicity figures rounded to 5

\*\* suppression applied to age 15 figure

## Poverty

After Housing Costs, relative poverty for B&NES is **19.0% 2021/22**. In England it is 31.0%<sup>4</sup>.

## Free School Meals

The number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) has increased in B&NES and nationally. In all state funded schools in B&NES, the number of pupils eligible for FSMs has more than doubled from 2,199 (8%) in 2015/16 to 4,361 (17%) in 2022/23. Nationally the percentage was 14.3% in 2015/16 and is 24% in 2022/23. <sup>3</sup>

The Strategic Evidence Base data shows an increasing attainment gap between pupils eligible for FSM and those who are not.

## Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Since the SEND reforms started to be implemented in 2014/15, there has been a year-on-year increase in the number of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) The annual growth rate has been noticeably higher in B&NES between 2022 and 2023 (15%) compared to national and regional (9% and 8% respectively). In January 2023, there were 1,967 children and young people with an EHCP maintained by B&NES Council.

## Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

The participation rate in April 2024 in B&NES for young people aged 16 and 17 years is 93.%.

The NEET rate in in B&NES in April 2024 is 3%, compared with a South West rate of 3.7% and a rate in England of 3.5%. <sup>5</sup>

## Social Care

There were 214 Children Looked After by B&NES LA as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. This is at a rate of 58.35 per 10,000 children aged under 18 years.<sup>6</sup> There were 141 children on a Child Protection Plan and 439 children on a Child in Need Plan as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/child-poverty-2024/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/participation-in-education-and-training-and-employment>

<sup>6</sup> Children Social Care Performance Dashboard April 2024

## 2. Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements

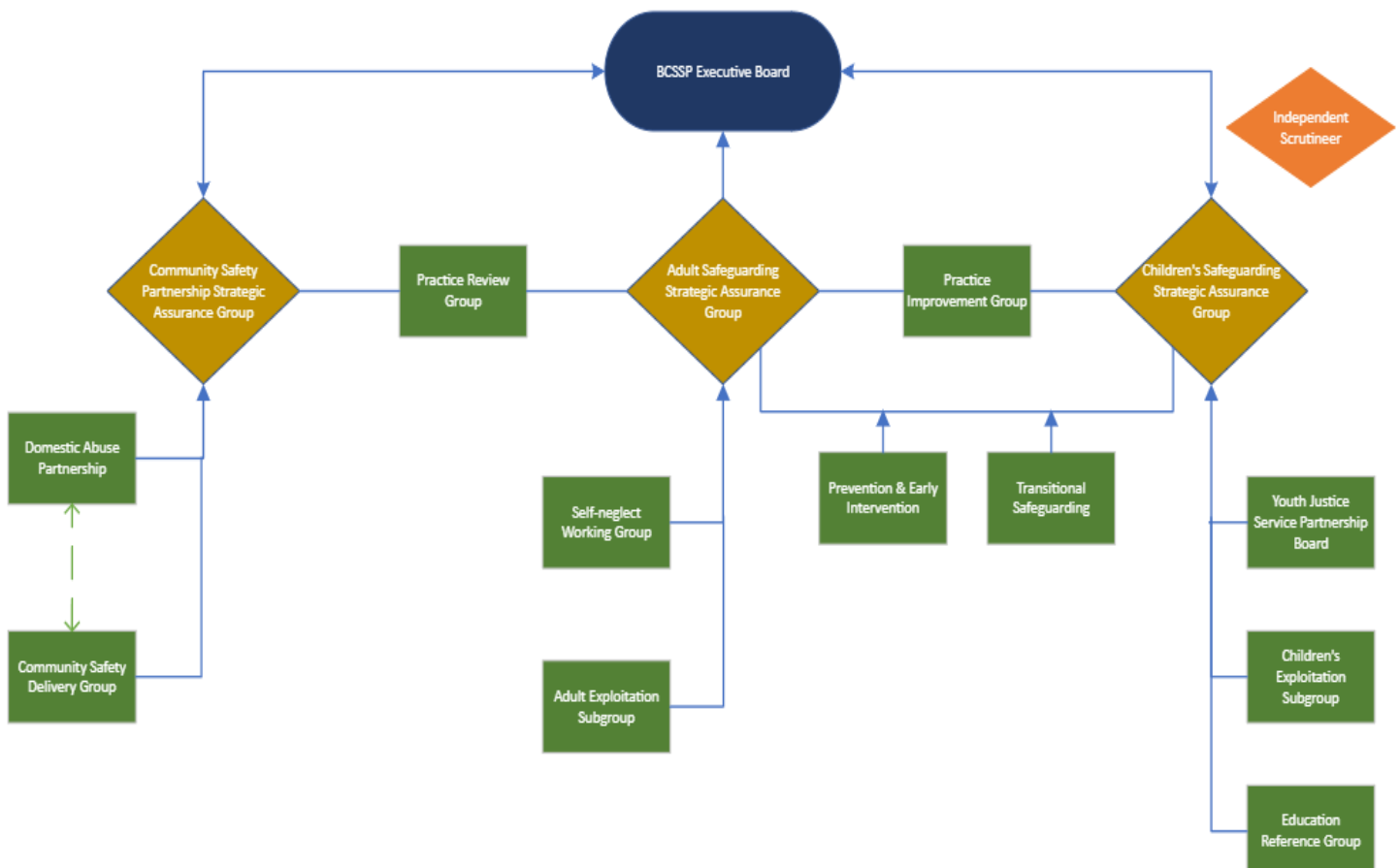
### Governance

The Youth Justice Service is based within the Local Authority, with the Chief Executive holding lead responsibility and management resting within Children’s Services as part of the wider People and Communities Department.

The Head of Service reports to the Director of Children and Education and is a member of the Children and Young People’s Service Management Group. The Head of Service also holds responsibility for the Violence Reduction Partnership and for some aspects of the Local Authority’s early help agenda and delivery, including use of Early Help Assessments.

The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services presents the Plan to the Cabinet and Full Council for their authorisation. The Plan is also presented to the Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel. The Youth Justice Partnership Board also reports annually to the Health and Wellbeing Board through its Chair, who is a member of the Health and Wellbeing Board, contributing to the outcome ‘children and young people are safe from crime.’

Multi-agency strategic oversight of Youth Justice Services is provided at a number of levels. Its dedicated Partnership Board operates as a sub-group of the B&NES Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP)<sup>7</sup>. This partnership embraces the functions of the previous Local Children’s Safeguarding Board, Adult Safeguarding Board and Community Safety Partnership, recognising their shared responsibilities and interfaces. It operates across all ages, being well placed to address the challenges of transition, and encourages a focus on families and communities. The diagram below represents the BCSSP structure:



<sup>7</sup> B&NES Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership <https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/>

## Leadership

The work of the B&NES YJS is managed strategically by a Partnership Board.

The Partnership Board consists of senior representatives of the statutory partner organisations, together with other relevant local partners.

Membership:

- » Chair: Director of Children' Services and Education, B&NES Council
- » Deputy Chair: Director of Education and Safeguarding, B&NES Council
- » Health: Senior Commissioning Manager, BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire ICB
- » Health: Regional Director, HCRG Care Group
- » Police: Chief Inspector, Avon and Somerset Police
- » Probation: Head of Bath and North Somerset PDU
- » Council: Lead Member for Children and Young People
- » Youth Bench: Chair of Avon and Somerset Youth Panel
- » College: Principal and CEO of Bath College
- » Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service: Service Manager
- » Community Panel Member
- » Youth Justice Board for England and Wales: South West Oversight Manager
- » Finance; Group Accountant
- » YJS: Operational Manager and Business and Performance Manager
- » Police: Force Tactical Lead for Out of Court Resolutions
- » Housing: Director of Tenancy Management and Compliance

All new members of the Board attend an induction session to introduce them into the work of the Youth Justice Service and their responsibilities as members of the Board.

The Board receives regular activity and outcome reports on key areas of service delivery including Out of Court Resolutions, Policing, Speech and Language Therapy, Nursing, Education, the Compass prevention service, Harmful Sexual Behaviour and the Enhanced Case Management initiative. The Board maintains and reviews Challenge and Risk Registers.

The Board has four Board Meetings per year and an annual development day. The development day is designed to assess the work of the Board, review progress and impact and set priorities for the year ahead.

There are two, multi-agency subgroups to the Youth Justice Partnership Board, which are the Custody Review Panel and the Youth Crime Prevention Board. This Custody Review panel is chaired by the Head of Service and reviews children held overnight in police custody, those sentenced or remanded to custody and children at risk of being sentenced to custody. The Youth Crime Prevention Board works in partnership to reduce first time entrants and address any emerging issues in relation to children offending.

All Partnership Board meetings begin with a practitioner's case study, illustrating an aspect of work undertaken, or from time to time, through a practitioner supporting a child working with the Service to attend and tell their story or present an issue. These presentations highlight challenges in the work undertaken and sometimes seek support in raising issues at a strategic level. Practitioners also compile and present reports about aspects of the work they are involved in. This gives opportunity to raise awareness and allows for some scrutiny of work undertaken. In turn, Board members are encouraged to participate in case audits and to meet with individual practitioners to observe or discuss their work, to deepen their understanding.

## Partnership Arrangements

In accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, we are a multi-disciplinary team which includes Social Workers, a Probation Officer, an Education Worker, a Police Officer, a Nurse, a Speech and Language Therapist, a Reparation and Participation Worker, Prevention Key Workers, Assessment and Information Officers, Administrators, and Managers. We also have a team of Volunteer Panel Members and in 2024, we are looking to recruit and train a small number of Volunteer Mentors. There is a staffing structure located at [Appendix 2](#) of this document.

Case manager staff including qualified Probation Officers and Registered Social Workers have key statutory functions, including the assessment and supervision of children aged 10-17 who are subject to voluntary and conditional Out-of-Court Resolutions and community and custodial Court Orders, and supporting parents/carers to strengthen their parenting skills. The Police Constable (one full-time equivalent) undertakes a range of tasks including facilitating information sharing but also giving those harmed a voice and an opportunity to become involved in restorative work with children if they wish to do so. This work is supplemented locally by a prevention service, Compass, which works with children aged 8-17 years who are assessed as being at risk of offending, and with their families. The Turnaround initiative for children on the cusp of the youth justice system, has been rolled out alongside Compass, to work with them to prevent them entering the formal justice system and addressing their needs as soon as possible.

The Youth Justice Service has close working relationships with a range of partners in the voluntary and community sector.

- **DHI Project 28**, which receives a small annual grant from the Police and Crime Commissioner as part of their core Council commission. With this, they provide substance misuse services for children subject to Youth Alcohol and Drugs Diversion (Outcome 22) interventions and programmes for those subject to voluntary and statutory supervision.
- **The Violence Reduction Partnership**, managed by the same Head of Service as the Youth Justice Service, including a Co-ordinator and Development Officer for the Council. The Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) hosts a multi-agency information sharing meeting – the Partnership for Preventing Exploitation and Serious Violence (PREV). Individuals at risk of serious violence, networks and places of concern are all identified, the nature and level of risk is discussed, and actions are agreed to strengthen risk management. The Youth Justice Service plays an active role in this. The VRP commissions lived experience mentoring, detached youth work, Street Doctors training and staff training on serious violence and knife crime. The VRP also runs frequent knife awareness events for parents and carers.



- **Youth Connect South West**, commissioned by the Council, provides targeted support and access to universal youth services, together with programmes to support access to education, training and employment (ETE) opportunities.
- Social Care's **Adolescent and Child Exploitation Team** works with children who have been exploited, some of whom are also known to the Youth Justice Service. Managers in the two services endeavour to co-ordinate their work in the best interests of the children concerned, and usually identify a 'lead' worker with whom the child engages best.
- The **Early Intervention Team**, part of the Police contribution to the Violence Reduction Partnership, and including an Inspector, a Sergeant, and two Constables, undertake early intervention work with children on the fringes of involvement in serious violence. They are part of the Youth Crime Prevention Board to help 'join up' preventative approaches.
- **Southside**, a community-led project for supporting those affected by domestic abuse and also commissioned by the Violence Reduction Partnership to offer lived-experience mentoring to those at risk of being involved in serious violence.

## 3. Update on the Previous Year

### 3.1 Progress on Priorities in previous Plan

The priorities agreed for 2023 - 2024 were to strengthen participation, address disproportionality, embed child first principles, and tackle serious violence.

The associated actions have all been reviewed by the Partnership Board and progressed and many have been completed. A number of actions are in relation to longer-term pieces of work that will continue into this year and beyond.

An end of year position on all actions is included in [Appendix 3](#).

Our key achievements have been to continue to embed child first principles. The Partnership Board have transformed the way they work to hear voices of the child and hold each other to account to ensure their agencies are taking a child first approach. The Service has also contributed to the development of a local strategic needs assessment and reviewed interventions offered in relation to knife crime.

In 2023 - 2024, we made some significant strides in our work towards the anti-racism action plan, including:

- The YJS Partnership Board and YJS Team agreed a vision statement, and this has been added to relevant documents and our Webpage.
- We have made sure that YJS staff are familiar with the HMIP Effective Practice Guide, and this will be ongoing for all new staff.
- We procured and delivered two days Cultural Competency and Unconscious Bias Training for all staff.
- We included positive, representative images of children and adults on noticeboards and in leaflets in our Broad Street Office where children have some appointments with the YJS.
- The YJS Head of Service and the B&NES Virtual School Headteacher have joined the Youth Pillar of the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner led Tackling Disproportionality group. This group is working to meet the recommendations in the Identifying Disproportionality report.<sup>8</sup> B&NES also have representation at the Data and Insights Pillar and the HR and Workforce Pillar.
- We updated our templates such as the Out of Court Disposal Assessment and PSR Quality Assurance to ensure that diversity and identity were included in all assessments and reports.
- We include discussion on the Social GRACES<sup>9</sup> in case work supervision.

There are areas in last year's plan that are aligned with and part of Avon and Somerset wide work to tackle disproportionality. These work streams will continue into this year's plan. As a service, we have made progress with participation work, but there is more to do and this will feature in the plan for the coming year.

---

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Identifying-Disproportionality-Report.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms/media/7086/social-graces.pdf>

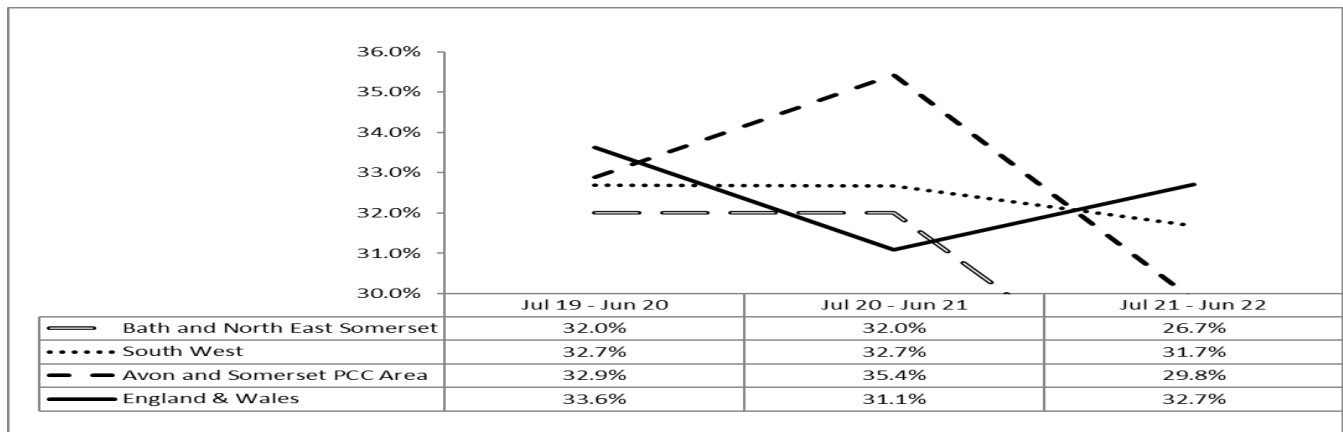
## 3.2 Performance over the previous year

### Re-Offending

One of the YJB's key measures of effectiveness of the youth justice system is re-offending. The indicator is the rate of re-offending after 12 months by a cohort of children who received substantive outcomes (Cautions, Conditional Cautions or Convictions). It is shown as a binary rate (the overall percentage of children who re-offended) and as the average rate of new offences committed by each child who re-offended. Local cohorts include very low numbers of children.

Our Binary percentage of re-offending has reduced in this reporting period by 5.33% for the period July 2021 - June 2022. There were 25 children in the previous cohort and 8 re-offended, compared with 15 in the current cohort of which 4 have re-offended. There continues to be a discrepancy between local and national data due to PNC data not including children for motoring offences. Our binary percentage of re-offending is showing as 26.7%, which is lower than all our Comparators.

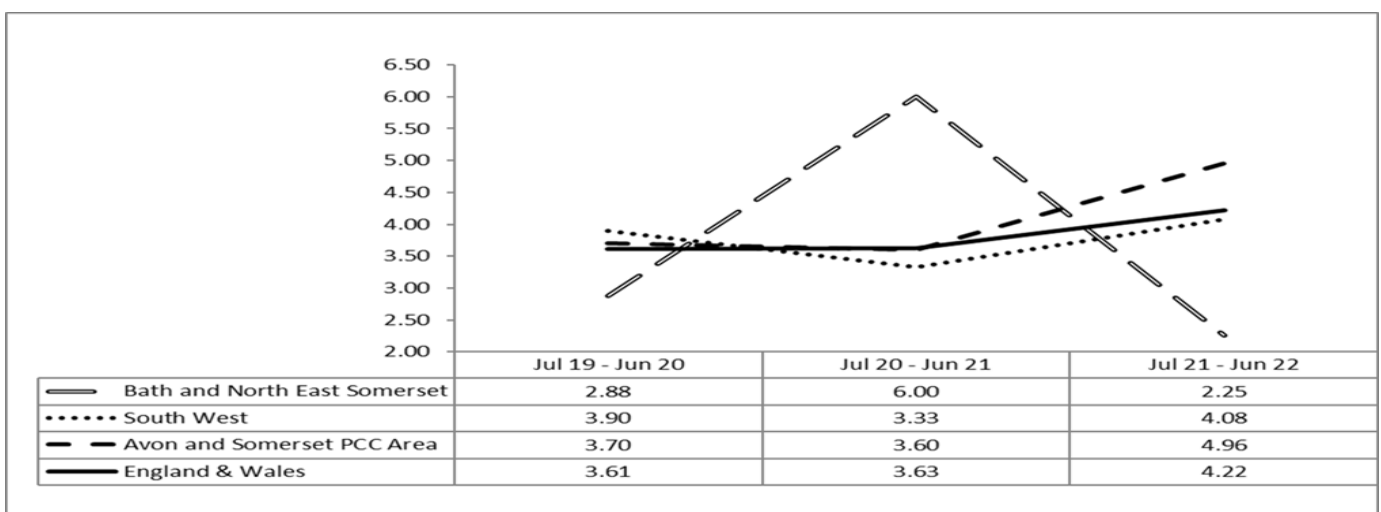
#### Reoffending rate (Reoffenders / Number in cohort) - Jul 21 - Jun 22



### Frequency of Reoffending

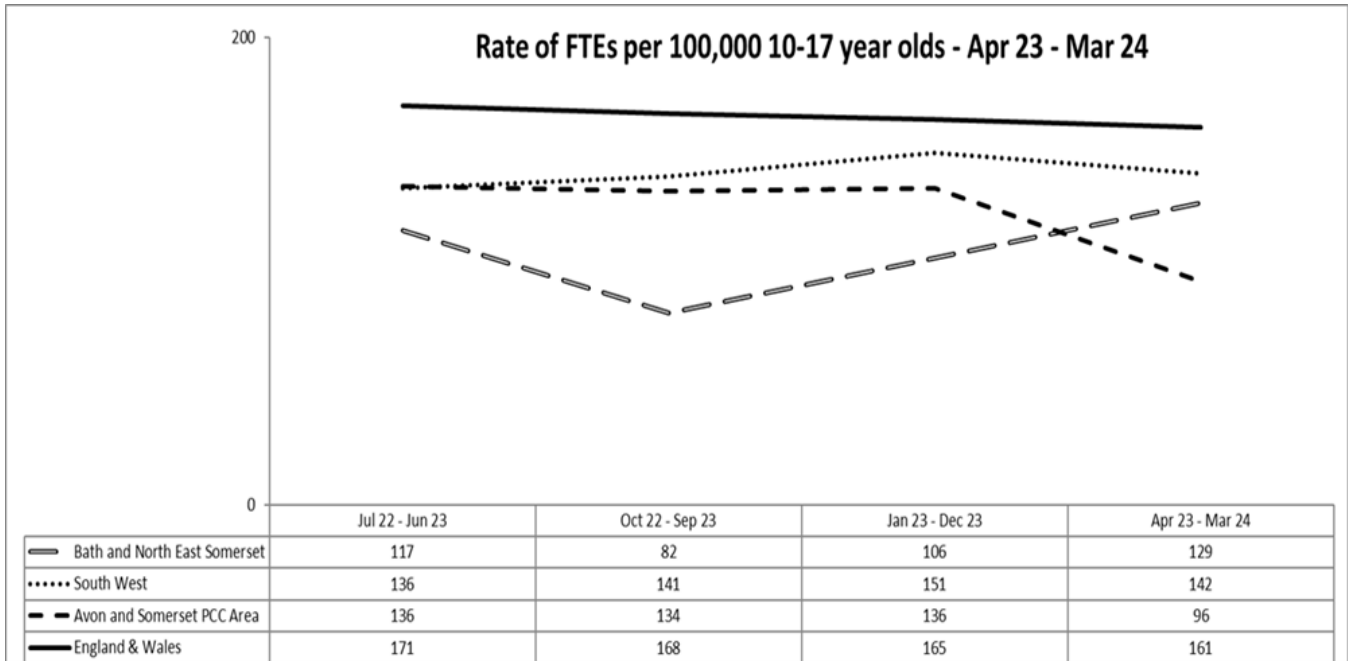
Our rate of re-offending for the period July 2021 - June 2022 is 2.25. This is a reduction from 6.00 (-62.5%). This is due to there being fewer children in the cohort and fewer children re-offending. There were 8 re-offenders in the previous reporting period committing 48 further offences and 4 re-offenders in the current period committing 9 further offences. Our rate is lower than all of our Comparators.

#### Reoffences / Reoffenders - Jul 21 - Jun 22



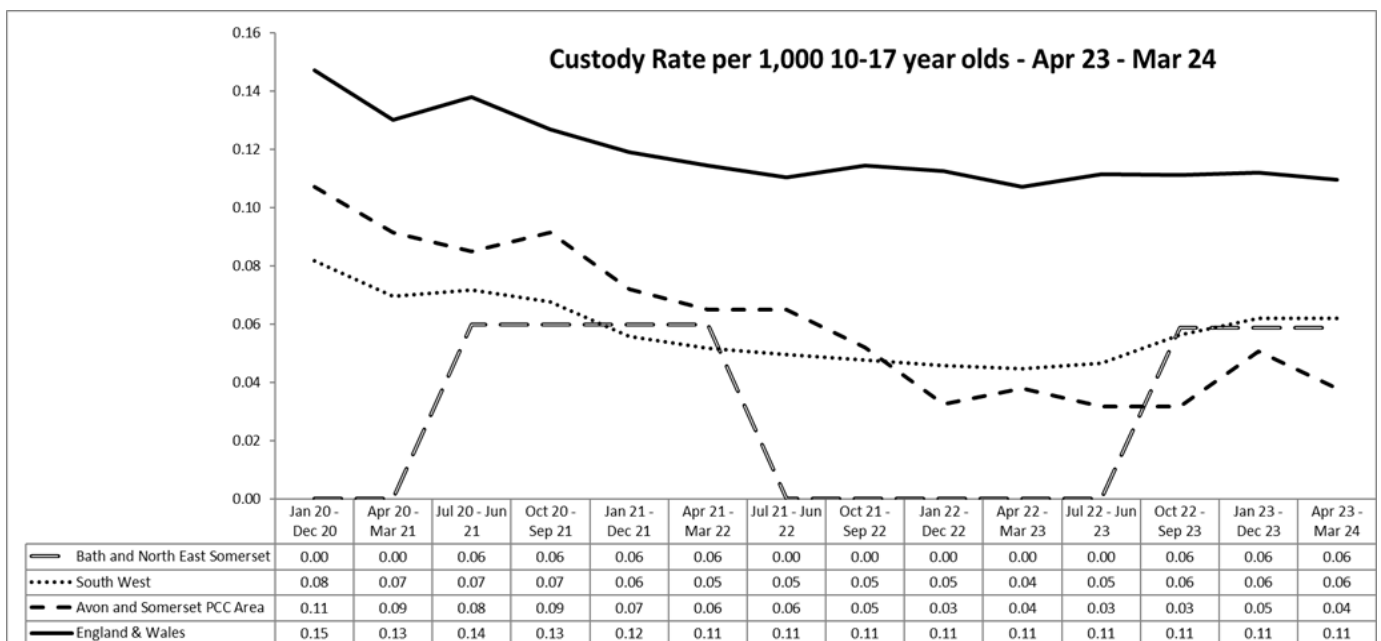
## First Time Entrants

First Time Entrants are those children who receive a substantive outcome for the first time. The rate of First Time Entrants has increased in this reporting period from 106 to 129 per 100,000 in the population. This represents 22 individual children compared with 14 in the previous reporting period. The YJB Published data now uses YJS data, so the local and national figures match. The rate in B&NES is lower than most of our comparators. The rates for our comparators are: South West (142), PCC Area, (96) and England and Wales (161).



## Custody

There was one custodial sentence in this reporting period and our rate remains the same at 0.06 per 1,000 in the population. The YJB published data matches our local data. The rates for our Comparators are:- South West Region (0.06), PCC Area (0.04) and England and Wales (0.11)

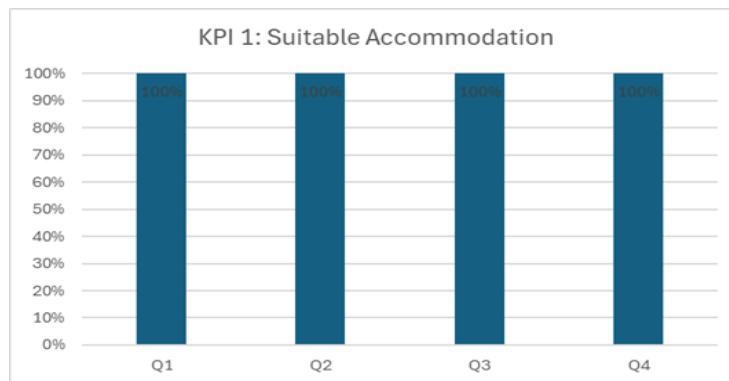


## New Key Performance Indicators

The Ministry of Justice introduced ten additional Key Performance Indicators from April 2024. This data was first reported to the Youth Justice Board in the autumn of 2023. Since then, there have been multiple issues with the production of this data including technical issues at a national level. There has been a huge contribution from the YJS staff to ensure these new data fields are input onto the case management system. Much development is still needed here, and we look forward to the problems with the national data being resolved and us being able to report fully on the KPI's. We are in a position to report the following information:

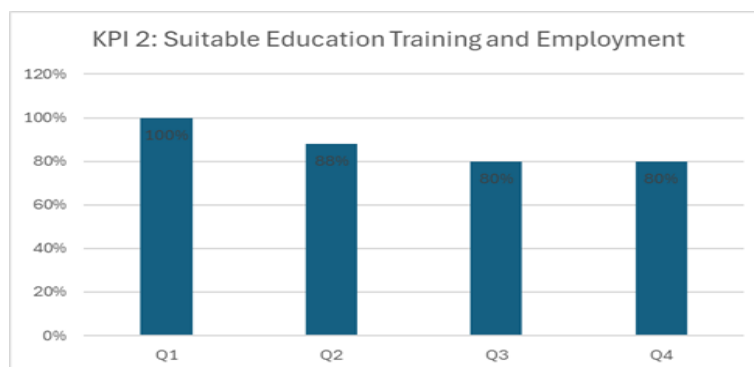
### 1. Suitable Accommodation

This key performance indicator is the proportion of children in the community and released from custody who have suitable accommodation arrangements at the end of their intervention. 100% of all children with relevant interventions closing in all 4 quarters for 2023 - 2024 were assessed as being in suitable accommodation at the end of their intervention with the Youth Justice Service.



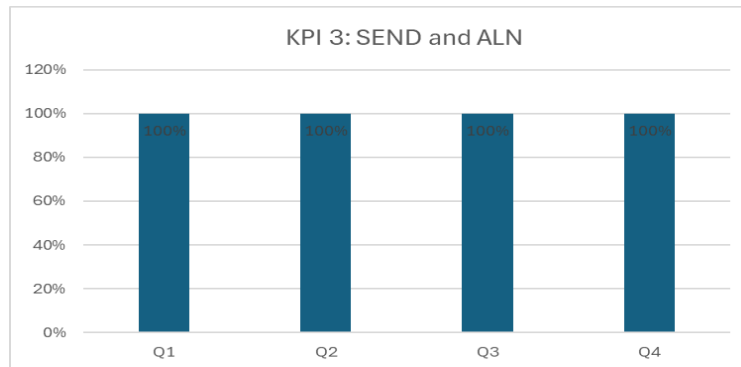
### 2. Education, Training and Employment

This key performance indicator is the proportion of children in the community and being released from custody in a suitable Education, Training and Employment arrangement at the end of their intervention. Between 80% and 100% of children with interventions closing in the 4 quarters in 2023 - 2024 were in suitable Education, Training and Employment at the end of their intervention with the Youth Justice Service.



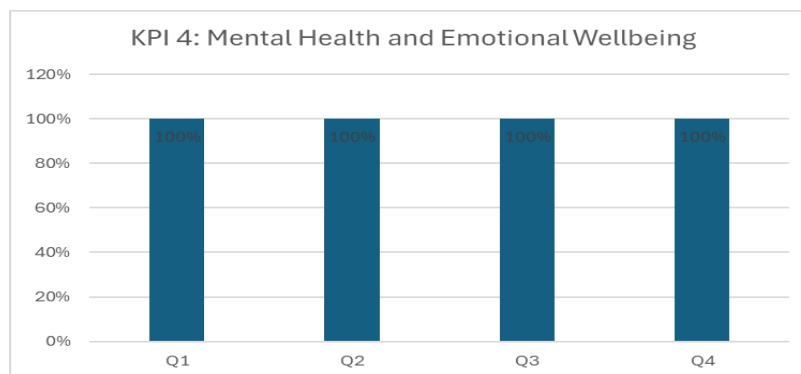
### 3. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Alternative Learning Provision (ALN)

This key performance indicator is the number of children with SEND and ALN with a formal plan in place as a proportion of children with identified SEND/ALN. All children with relevant interventions closing in all 4 quarters for 2023 - 2024 who had an identified SEND/ALN need, had a formal plan in place.



### 4. Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

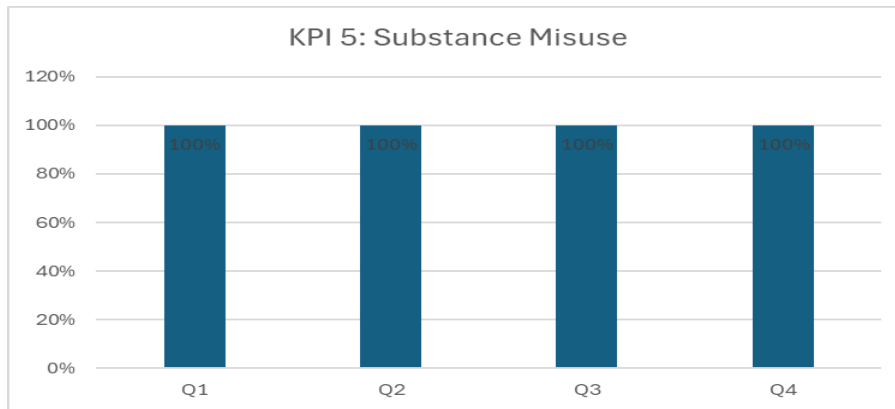
This key performance indicator is the number of children who have been screened for a mental health or emotional wellbeing need at the end of their intervention as a proportion of the number of children with interventions closing in the period. 100% of children with a relevant intervention closing in all 4 quarters for 2023 - 2024 were screened for Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing as part of their assessment.



The Specialist Community Public Health Nurse offers a holistic health screening to all children who come into the service in order to identify any mental health or emotional well-being needs and provide direct support or refer to specialist services including CAMHS. For children who decline the health assessment from the Nurse, their emotional and mental health needs are screened using the relevant assessment tool, either Asset Plus or Prevention and Diversion by their case manager. The last annual health report to the Partnership Board identified emotional health as the second most prevalent need (with physical health needs being most prevalent). Support provided includes direct intervention using Brief Solution Focused approaches and supporting practitioners and the wider team around the child.

## 5. Substance Misuse

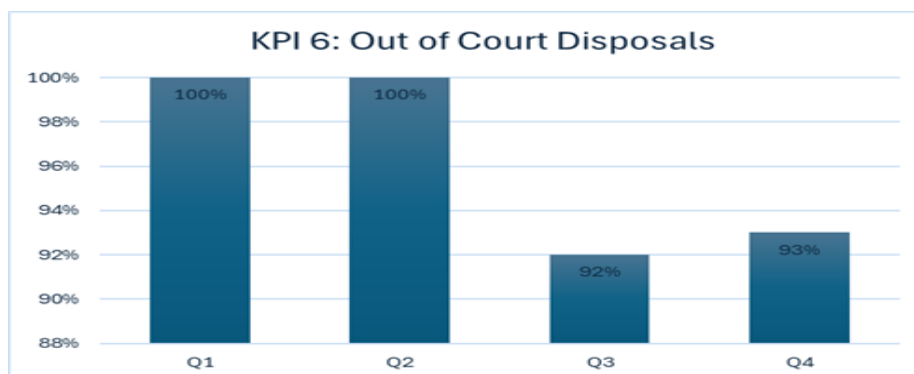
This key performance indicator is the number of children who have been screened for a need for specialist intervention or treatment to address substance misuse at the end of their intervention as a proportion of the number of children with an intervention closing in the period. 100% of children with a relevant intervention closing in all 4 quarters for 2023 - 2024 were screened for substance misuse as part of their assessment.



The Specialist Community Public Health Nurse also provides a holistic health screen for all children who come into the service and seeks to identify any substance misuse needs. In addition to this, the allocated case manager will also screen for any substance misuse needs as part of their assessment. The local substance misuse partner, DHI Project 28, provides specialist intervention for children in the area. In preparation for the introduction of the new measure, the Youth Justice Service has been working with DHI Project 28 to record the data of those who have been accessing support prior to their involvement and those that were screened and offered support via referral to them, including commencement of intervention.

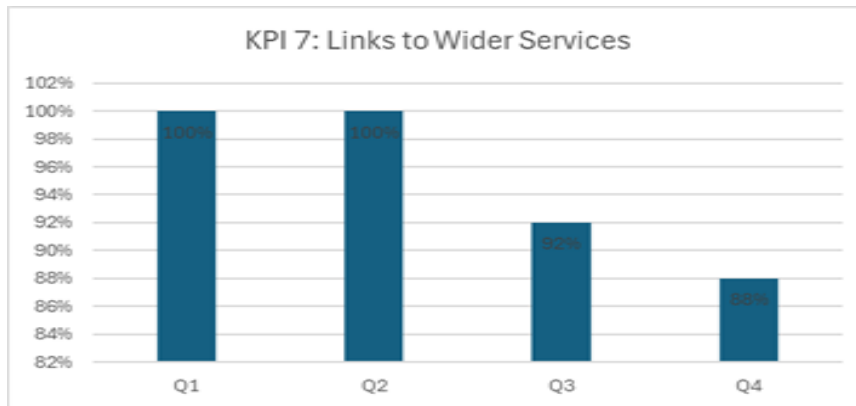
## 6. Out-of-Court Disposals

This key performance indicator is the number of children who completed an Out of Court Disposal programme as a proportion of the number of children with an Out of Court Disposal intervention ending in the period. Most children in all 4 quarters who had a relevant intervention close, successfully completed their programme. The reduction in quarters 3 and 4 were down to one case in each quarter.



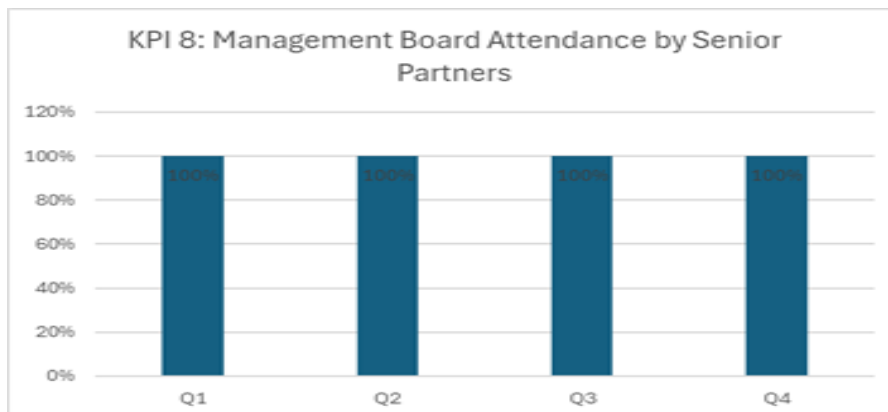
## 7. Wider Services

This key performance indicator is the proportion of children connected to or supported by wider services at the end of their intervention with the Youth Justice Service. Wider Services are either an Early Help Plan, Child Protection Plan, are classified as a Child in Need or a Child Looked After. In Quarters 1 and 2, 100% of the children with a relevant intervention closing in the period were working with wider services. In quarters 3 and 4 there were fewer children involved with wider services at the end of their intervention with the Youth Justice Service.



## 8. Management (Partnership) Board Attendance

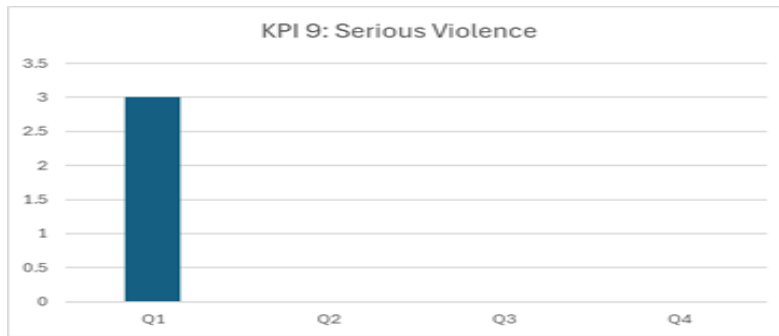
This key performance indicator monitors senior (statutory) partner attendance at Partnership Board meetings and whether they contribute data from their individual services that identify areas of racial and ethnic disproportionality. Attendance has been monitored for many years as part of local assurance reporting. All of our Statutory Partners have attended all of the Partnership Board meetings for the period April 2023 - March 2024.



## 9. Serious Violence

This key performance indicator is the number of proven serious violence offences as a rate per 100,000 of the 10-17 population. The YJB definition for serious violence offences are Robbery offences, Drug offences and Violent offences with a gravity score of 5 or more. This data is reported but despite an apparent rise in serious violence in the area, in the last year, numbers fitting the criteria for reporting have been very low. There were no children convicted of serious violence offences in Quarters 2, 3 and 4. The offences relating to Quarter 1 were for Wounding without Intent and Attempt to Choke/Suffocate.





### 10. Victims

This key performance indicator is the number of victims who engaged in restorative justice opportunities as a proportion of the total number of victims who consent to be contacted by the Youth Justice Service. Victims are asked for their views prior to Out of Court Resolution decision-making and planning for statutory Court Orders, provided with information about the progress of a child’s case (when requested) and provided with information on appropriate services that support victims (when requested). The majority of victims have taken part in the restorative justice process for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. Examples of the definition of what constitutes taking part in a restorative process include: Victim being consulted, Victim offered Direct or Indirect Reparation, Victim agreeing to attend a face-to-face meeting, Victim accepts and receives Letter of Apology.



### 3.3. Risks and Issues

A risk in this context is defined as a potential or emerging factor which may impede the delivery of positive outcomes for children in B&NES. An issue is something that has already occurred or is currently happening which is affecting outcomes. B&NES YJS has a full Risk Register that is reviewed annually with the Partnership Board.

Risks	Potential Impact	Actions and Proposed Actions
<p><b>Funding and Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Turnaround Funding to cease in March 2025</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Reduction in the number of children the service can offer prevention and diversion services to.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Contribute to evaluation of Turnaround to evidence effectiveness.</li> <li>➤ Consider alternative funding streams and how cases are allocated to Compass Service.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Funding and Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Partner contributions to pooled budget not being increased in line with inflation in the coming year.</li> <li>➤ YJB Grant for 24/25 not confirmed ahead of plan submission date.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Budget will become overspent in the future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Present the risks to the Partnership Board and request for a raise in pooled budget contribution.</li> <li>➤ Plan with the finance team how to mitigate for this risk, in consideration of other YJS budgets.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prevention and Diversion Assessment Tool</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The YJB launched a new Prevention and Diversion Assessment Tool for out of Court work in April 2024. It is mandatory to use from April 2024. The training to use the tool is booked after this date in August 2024.</li> <li>➤ The new tool is written from a child first perspective, but offer less guidance for analysis of risk than our previous locally designed tool.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Without sufficient training prior to rolling out the tool, practitioners may be inadvertently making mistakes in its use and application.</li> <li>➤ In reducing the prompts in the tool around assessment of risk of harm, serious harm and likelihood of re-offending, risk judgements may not be sufficiently evidenced or explained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Operational Manager to deliver workshops to practitioners on risk assessments to ensure continued good practice in this area.</li> <li>➤ Operational Manager and Senior Practitioner to attend the YJS training in August and roll out to the team at the earliest opportunity after that.</li> <li>➤ Create local guidance for practitioners to ensure risk assessments evidence nature, likelihood and potential impact of future offending.</li> </ul>

<b>Issue / Challenge</b>	<b>Potential Impact</b>	<b>Actions and Proposed Actions</b>
<p><b>Timeliness of offences being dealt with by Police and CPS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Delays continue to exist in investigations, in particular more complex investigations and through the Police / CPS interface.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Impact on mental health and wellbeing of children and victims.</li> <li>➤ Children sometimes being sentenced when they are adults for offences they committed as children.</li> <li>➤ Risks issues not being adequately addressed in the time between offence and charge.</li> <li>➤ Reduction in effectiveness of delayed interventions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ YJS Partnership Board to request the issue is addressed by the Local Criminal Justice Board</li> </ul>

<p><b>Meeting children's complex needs, including children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Many children in the YJS have SEND and meeting their complex needs is a challenge when availability of suitable provision is limited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Children in the YJS with SEND may not achieve their full potential and be offered appropriate opportunities to meet their needs.</li> <li>➤ Children in the YJS with SEND remain vulnerable to exploitation and further offending.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ B&amp;NES has a strategy in place to increase SEND provision in the coming year, including a new special school in the area.</li> <li>➤ YJS Partnership Board to work together to consider if children in the YJS can be offered an enhanced SEND service.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Disproportionality in particular children with SEND and children from minority ethnic groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The children in the formal youth justice system continue to be over-represented by children from the most vulnerable groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Children from these vulnerable groups are at risk of receiving the worst outcomes in terms of education engagement, and achievement.</li> <li>➤ Children from these groups may receive the most significant criminal justice outcomes which means they may spend period of time in custody which will have adverse impact on their short and longer term future.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ YJS to work with A&amp;S colleagues in Youth Justice, Police and Education to continue to implement the recommendations in the Tackling Disproportionality Report.</li> <li>➤ YJS Partnership Board to work together to consider if children in the YJS can be offered an enhanced SEND service.</li> </ul>

## 4. Plan for the Forthcoming Year

### 4.1 Child First

The guiding principle for the youth justice system, including the B&NES Youth Justice Service and its Partnership Board, is 'Child First.' This approach has been promoted by the national Youth Justice Board and means keeping children at the heart of all work undertaken and privileging their needs according to their age and particular circumstances.

There is evidence that a Child First approach is effective in addressing the offending behaviour of the small number of children within the youth justice system today, and in preventing offending by those children who are more likely to enter the system. However, the Youth Justice Service is aware that some of those worked with wish to be regarded individually as young people or young adults rather than as children.

The Youth Justice Board's Child First principles have been adopted in B&NES and some examples are given below:

<b>1. Seeing children as children</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Principle</b></p> <p>Prioritise the best interests of children and recognise their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential. All work is child-focused, developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Examples</b></p> <p>All children working with B&amp;NES YJS participate in an individually tailored assessment, plan and intervention in their work with us. B&amp;NES YJS has prioritised trauma informed training for practitioners to ensure that our work is developmentally informed and based on building positive, attuned relationships with children. We continue to fund the trauma informed Enhanced Case Management project which supports us to prioritise the best interests of children and recognise their particular needs.</p>
<b>2. Helping children build a pro-social identity</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Principle</b></p> <p>Promoting children's individual strengths and capacities to develop their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Examples</b></p> <p>We achieve this by ensuring that our plans and interventions focus on building strengths and a pro-social identity. We offer support to children to take part in positive activities and use participation work in reparation to utilise their skills and build confidence. Our education and training offer is designed to ensure we raise aspirations for children and have an individually tailored Education Training and Employment (ETE) goal for every child we work with.</p>

### 3. Collaborating with children

#### Principle

Encourage children's active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.

#### Examples

Children's involvement in innovative reparation projects enables them to contribute to the wider community. Locally, children have chosen to write leaflets for their peers, for example, explaining what reparation is and addressing the issue of carrying knives, using language and an approach that is more likely to be effective. Children have also helped us to make our office environment a young person friendly space, and their suggestions have been taken on board by getting bean bags and a pool table for the space where we have their appointments. We gain feedback from children and their parents / carers to ensure their views on our service delivery are heard and responded to. One of the ways we have responded to this is to vary the offer of reparation placements available.

### 4. Diverting children from the justice system

#### Principle

Promote a childhood outside the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system.

#### Examples

The Compass service supports children who are at risk of offending with the aim of preventing them entering the justice system in the future. The Turnaround Service supports children on the cusp of the youth justice system. 'Outcome 22 / Deferred Caution' is being readily used in our Out of Court Resolution Panel for children who have committed low level offences. This offers them the opportunity of diversion from a formal outcome, while still offering the appropriate support to meet their needs. Most of the Service's work now takes place at a Pre-Court stage.

Our child first approach is evidenced by the voices of children and their parents and carers. Here is a small selection from the feedback gathered in the last year:

#### Voices of Children

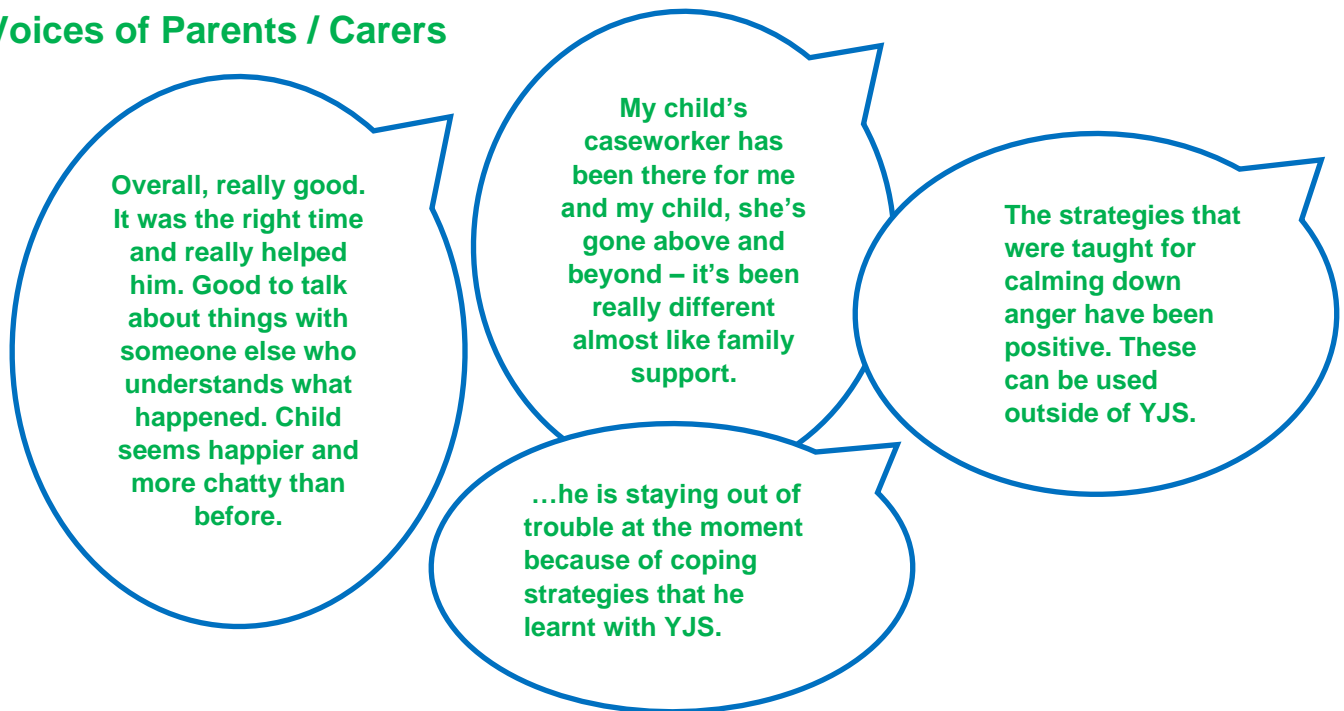
I messaged my caseworker and reparation worker when I needed to. They talked to me in a way I understand. There isn't anything I would want to change.

It has helped me. I would have had at least five more fights if I hadn't been with YJS. My caseworker helped me to focus on school better and to take it more seriously and it has helped me to see the good in myself.

I think if it wasn't for the worker I could have gone to jail – building a good relationship with her where I could trust her meant I could talk to her.

Support to get out of trouble, especially in the summer holidays – I didn't mind it though. Worker did loads, she understood where I was coming from, she was really on the ball. If I wanted to know something she would find it out.

## Voices of Parents / Carers



## 4.2 Resources and Services

All statutory partners contribute staffing resources and a financial contribution.

The Youth Justice core grant is used entirely to support the work of the Youth Justice Service. Expenditure is agreed annually, monitored at monthly finance meetings and overseen quarterly by the Partnership Board. It is used in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of Grant, specifically, towards the costs of employing two administrative staff, a Deputy Team Manager, a qualified Youth Justice Officer, a Reparation Worker and a contribution to the salary of the Senior Practitioner. The Grant also covers professional subscriptions, travel costs, room hire, equipment and other running costs.

The financial contributions from partners go into the pooled budget to meet the costs of employing the Business and Performance Manager and IT costs. Contributions have not increased for a number of years.

In terms of staffing, Avon and Somerset Police contribute one FTE Police Officer. The Probation Service contributes 0.5 FTE Probation Officer and 0.16 FTE Probation Service Officer, although this post has not been filled for over 3 years. The Health Contribution is 0.4 FTE School Nurse and 0.2 FTE Speech and Language Therapist.

B&NES Local Authority is the largest contributor covering costs for the Head of Service, Operational Manager, practitioners in the statutory and prevention service and an administrator.

The full budget costs and contributions can be found at [Appendix 1](#). The Staffing Structure can be found at [Appendix 2](#).

### 4.3 Board Development

The YJS Partnership Board is continually assessing its own performance and considering ways to improve. The Board met for a development day in May 2024.

The purpose of this day was:

- To re-affirm our Vision: Working in Partnership to Achieve Child First Justice
- To assess our own performance against agreed standards and include any areas for development to Youth Justice Plan for 2024 - 2026.
- To agree the Youth Justice Service and Partnership Board priorities for the year ahead.
- To be well prepared for the upcoming Inspection.

The outcomes of the day included:

- The Vision of Working in Partnership to achieve Child First Justice was re-affirmed. The detail of this was reviewed and updated and is written into the first section of this plan.
- Each member who attended completed the self-assessment, highlighting areas of strength and for development.
- The areas for Board development were agreed to be in strengthening links with the practitioners in the service, participating in more case audits and observing some areas of practice.
- The Board also agreed to work on some joint actions in this year's plan around reducing time scales for children being investigated by police and CPS, finding a way of offering an enhanced service for children in the YJS with SEND and for some training of YJS staff from CAMHS on neuro-diversity.
- The strategic priorities were discussed. It was agreed that progress had been made in every area of the priorities for 2023 - 2024, but as these are such important areas of our work, and are broad in range, we will continue with the same priorities for 2024 - 2026. The priorities are confirmed as:

- **Reduce Disproportionality**
- **Strengthen Participation**
- **Embed Child First Principles**
- **Reduce Serious Violence**

### 4.4 Workforce Development

Activity to develop the workforce is essential to meeting the needs of the children, parents / carers and victims and the wider community we serve. This includes a comprehensive induction, regular supervision, informal support, annual performance development conversations and appropriate training to all staff.

The team are supported by the offer of:

- Monthly reflective and case management supervision
- Monthly group reflective practice meeting – this group can focus on interventions or reflections on specific children and situations.
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour consultations from CAMHS
- Monthly case discussions / consultations with specialist workers such as School Nurse, Speech and Language Therapist and Education Officer
- Clinical Supervision for trauma recovery cases through the Enhanced Case Management service

The annual Training and Development Plan for 2024 to 2025 has been created in consultation with Board Members, Team Members, through discussion and a staff survey, and taking into account what we know about the issues facing the children that we work with.

Key training that has taken place in 2023 - 2024 has included trauma informed workshops for practitioners to ensure this approach remains embedded in our work, restorative justice facilitator training for our Police Officer and Referral Order Co-ordinator to ensure we have the capability to offer this intervention, and cultural competence and unconscious bias training for all staff to support work towards our anti-racism action plan.

The identified training and development priorities are agreed as:

- Strengthening our approach to Performance Development Conversations, ensuring they take place in a timely way and staff understand the process.
- Ongoing training offer for staff in cultural competence and unconscious bias to support our ongoing work to reduce disproportionality.
- Increasing staff confidence in working with children with SEND and neuro-diversity.
- Ensuring new staff are offered Trauma Informed Practice Training
- Training practitioners in the Prevention and Diversion Assessment Tool
- Offering training on specific areas of practice, as required, such as Restorative Justice, Harmful Sexual Behaviour and Child to Parent Violence.

## **4.5 Evidence-based Practice, Innovation and Evaluation**

### **Systemic Practice Model**

As part of Children's Transformation Programme and supported by DfE funding, the Local Authority has adopted a systemic practice model for Children's Services. This is integrated within a trauma informed, relationship aware approach and is attachment focused.

The adoption of a systemic practice model has seen a significant proportion of the Children's Service workforce (from practitioners, supervisors to senior leaders) being trained by the Centre for Systemic Social Work. It is based on the view that human challenges are always embedded within the context of human relationships across family, community and wider society systems. The model provides theory, models and techniques to support practitioners in their support for families to seek a broader and deeper understanding of what could be creating challenges and ideas to change.



The Youth Justice Service has benefited from this training and as part of the wider Children's Service's Workforce will be accessing further training and development. Changes have been made through the influence of the systemic model including acknowledgement and consideration of people's personal and social identity in assessments, planning and support plans. Systemic tools including Burnham's Social GRACES<sup>10</sup>, developed to address inequality, have been used in training and Supervision to encourage reflection on individual characteristics that inform how the world is seen and experienced. The use of the Systemic model has enabled practitioners to consider wider perspectives when working with children and families and encourage others in the system to do the same.

### **Harmful Sexual Behaviour 'AIM3' Model**

Although not many children in the local area are identified with a risk of harmful sexual behaviour, the Service has staff trained in the Assessment of Adolescents and Harmful Sexual Behaviour model developed by Marcella Leonard and Simon Hackett, otherwise known as 'AIM3.' This is a suite of evidence-based frameworks and guidance to support practitioners to assess risk and develop interventions for use with children, including how to work with their parents/carers as well. The resources are trauma-informed and holistic and are a good fit with other intervention approaches used within the Service. The tools are used alongside standard youth justice assessment tools and plans to support a focus on particular presenting needs. Assessments are generally undertaken in partnership with a Social Worker and interventions are likely to then be co-delivered. The service has two staff who work with the CAMHS Harmful Sexual Behaviour Co-ordinator to deliver awareness raising training to colleagues in preventative services and universal settings such as schools, in support of early identification.

The use of this model has enabled evidenced based assessments and interventions to be undertaken to reduce the risk of harmful sexual behaviour and contribute to better outcomes for these children.

### **Enhanced Case Management**

The Service is now in its sixth year of working in partnership with three other Youth Justice Services to deliver trauma recovery, Psychology-led support to children in the youth justice system. The model has been developed by Johnny Matthews and Tricia Scuse, based on Maslow's hierarchy of need and a seven-stage trauma recovery model, and builds on work previously undertaken in Wales.

Evaluations have commented on how the model has been implemented consistently in line with guidance. The flexibility of the Psychologists' approach has been identified as central to the success of the work. The approach is perceived to have contributed to improvements in a range of psychosocial outcomes and linked with placement in more appropriate accommodation and re-building of family relationships. There has also been an improvement in children's mental health, coping skills and understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others. Improved relationships with staff in Youth Justice Services have also been noted and overall, no negative impacts have been identified for children.

The evaluation has also noted the embedding of trauma informed practice in staff throughout the participating Youth Justice Services and beginning within some partner agencies. Staff have an improved knowledge and understanding of recognising and working with children who have experienced trauma and are developing more flexible practices which are very child-focused and individually tailored. These positive outcomes outlined in the evaluation have been seen within B&NES YJS.

---

<sup>10</sup> Burnham J (2012) Developments in the Social GRRAACCEEESSS in Krause I (ed) *Culture and Reflexivity in systemic Psychotherapy: Mutual Perspectives*. London: Karnac

## 4.6 Priorities for the coming year: Standards for Children in the Youth Justice Service

The latest edition of National Standards were published in 2019, entitled 'Standards for Children in Youth Justice Services'<sup>11</sup>

The standards support our work in Out of Court Resolutions, at Court, in the Community, in secure settings and on transition and resettlement.

The most recent national standards self-assessment was completed in October 2023 and covered our work in Court. The audits were completed by Team Managers in the YJS and a Partnership Board Member.

B&NES YJS demonstrated adherence to the standards with a few areas requiring further activity in order to strengthen compliance.

Areas of strength identified were:

- Positive steps taken to promote fair treatment in court such as using communication profiles and advocating for children's needs being well evidenced.
- Reports written for court and Referral Order Panels were of a high standard, were child focussed and supported desistance.
- Reports took into account the view from victims and evidenced the impact of the offence on them.
- Good evidence of supporting children to participate effectively in court supporting children to view the court room in advance of the hearing, contacting all children and parents / carers before the day of court to help them prepare and ask any questions and explaining the outcome thoroughly to the child afterwards.

The following areas of activity were identified for further development:

- To collaborate with Avon and Somerset YJS's and CPS to ensure we are all working to the same guidance for diversion.

**PROGRESS MADE:** The new, national Police Child Gravity Score Matrix<sup>12</sup> has ensured greater consistency here. The A&S Out of Court Tactical group is auditing cases to check for consistency.

- To ensure greater consistency in diversion outcome in relation to driving matter.

**PROGRESS MADE:** Again, the Police Child Gravity Matrix has assisted with this and this is being used and referenced in Out of Court Decision Making.

- To consider ways to engage with fathers more effectively in the assessment writing process.

**PROGRESS MADE:** The issue has been discussed in reflective practice meetings and a renewed focus on ensuring both parents are involved if possible and appropriate.

---

<sup>11</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6363d2328fa8f50570e54222/Standards\\_for\\_children\\_in\\_youth\\_justice\\_services\\_2019.doc.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6363d2328fa8f50570e54222/Standards_for_children_in_youth_justice_services_2019.doc.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.npcc.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/publications/publications-log/criminal-justice/2023/child-gravity-matrix-v2.2---september-2023.pdf>

## 4.7 Priorities for the coming year: Service Development

A detailed Service Development Action Plan for 2024 to 2026 has been written and will be monitored through the Youth Justice Partnership Board. The below information is a summary of the main actions and objectives.

### Reduce Disproportionality

This service development priority recognises the issue of over-represented groups in B&NES who are in the Youth Justice System. These groups are children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and children from minority ethnic backgrounds. The data evidencing these areas of over-representation can be found in section 5.1 of this Plan.

#### Ethnicity

With regard to the issues of disproportionality of children from minority ethnic backgrounds, the service has a detailed anti-racism action plan which sets out operational and strategic actions to address these issues. This plan has been reviewed for the period 2024 to 2026.

The key objective of the plan is to reduce this disproportionality and make progress towards aligning with local demographic and population rates. The plan sets out partnership work with colleagues in education to scrutinise school suspensions and exclusions and proactively offer early help services to children who are represented in this group.

The plan outlines work with the Police to scrutinise out of court data to ensure there is no disproportionality in the offer of diversionary activity for children from minority ethnic groups. The PCC Out of Court Scrutiny Panel are focusing on youth and disproportionality issues at their meeting in the summer 2024.

Operational actions include a focus on ethnicity in audits and creating a good practice guide for staff in this area of work to be used in induction.

#### SEN

Regarding children with SEN being overrepresented in the youth justice system, the plan for the coming year includes YJS working with the Director for Education, the Director for Children's Services, the Head of Inclusion, and the Head of Service for the Virtual School to consider how children in the justice system can be offered an enhanced service to better meet their needs. There is also a joint action with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service to offer bespoke training to the YJS staff to support them with working most effectively with children with diagnosed needs such as ADHD and Autism.

The objective of this aspect of the plan is to ensure this most vulnerable group of children are offered sufficient support to access high quality education and training to meet their needs and to reduce the risks to them around exploitation and offending.

### Strengthen Participation

This service development area recognises the importance of participation in the work completed by the Youth Justice Service. Some developments have already been achieved in previous years, but this priority acknowledges there is more that can be done.

In 2023 - 2024, there has been a focus on developing participation for children and families within the service. We have used focus groups to generate ideas and projects we can action, which has helped with a more collaborative approach. From this we have reviewed the way we gather feedback from children and parents and carers. The team now has a QR code that can be used by service users to access an online form. These questionnaires will be offered at the end of an order or intervention and for longer interventions there will be a mid-point review questionnaire. The questionnaires have been developed in consultation with the Speech and Language Therapist to ensure they are accessible for everyone that accesses our service. By having the feedback in this format, the intention is to better analyse the data and to support service development.

Over the coming year, the participation action plan includes:

- To recruit and train a small group of community panel members and mentors.
- To develop our offer in relation to summer activities for children.
- To begin a drop-in support group for parents.
- To consult with children around our good practice guide for working with children from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- To improve the information about the YJS on our website.

## **Embed Child First Principles**

B&NES YJS continues to prioritise embedding Child First Principles in our work. This principle is the corner stone of our approach moving forward, so appropriately it remains as a strategic priority the plan for 2024 to 2026.

The actions for this period aim to ensure that every area of the YJS work is child focussed.

One of the key areas to be targeted this year includes working with the Police and CPS at a strategic level to reduce the timeliness of investigations so that criminal justice outcomes that children receive can then be more meaningful and responsive to their needs at the time the issues have arisen.

The YJS will also work with partners in the Police and Social Care to implement the recommendations in the HMIP Thematic Inspection of Work with Children Subject to Remand in Youth Detention.<sup>13</sup> The purpose of this is to ensure that children are only detained when absolutely necessary and when this does happen, that the services recognise them as children and prioritise their needs accordingly.

This area of the plan will also ensure that there are stronger links created between the YJS and the Anti-Social Behaviour team in the police so that children who are showing signs of being on the periphery of offending or anti-social behaviour will be offered prevention support as appropriate.

At an Operational level, the YJS will create an up-to-date Service wide Practice Guide that ensures child first practice is at the heart of everything we do. The role out of the new Prevention and Diversion Assessment tool, which has child first principles at its heart, also forms part of our action plan for the coming year.

---

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2023/11/A-joint-thematic-inspection-of-work-with-children-subject-to-remand-in-youth-detention-v1.02.pdf>

## Reduce Serious Violence

From our participation work and all communication with children, parents and carers throughout the course of the year, it is clear that this is a key issue for them and so it remains a strategic priority for B&NES YJS into 2024 to 2026. Children have shared with their YJS workers that knife crime and the threat of serious violence are utmost in their minds.

The Violence Reduction Partnership is leading on this area of work across B&NES and the YJS is involved in this work at every level from operational to strategic.

In terms of specific YJS activity, we will continue to build on the progress we made last year in delivering high quality weapons awareness work with children and the Street Doctors sessions to support them with first aid and safety.

At an operational level, the YJS will build on its training offer to staff on risk assessment and risk management and ensure that we work closely with partners in Social Care to jointly assess and manage risk. This updated approach will be included in a refreshed Risk and Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Practice Guide.

There will also be additional local guidance created for use with the Prevention and Diversion Assessment Tool to ensure that while this tool focuses on a child first approach, practitioners retain their assessment skills in relation to risk and adequately evidence their risk-based judgements.

## 5. National Priority Areas

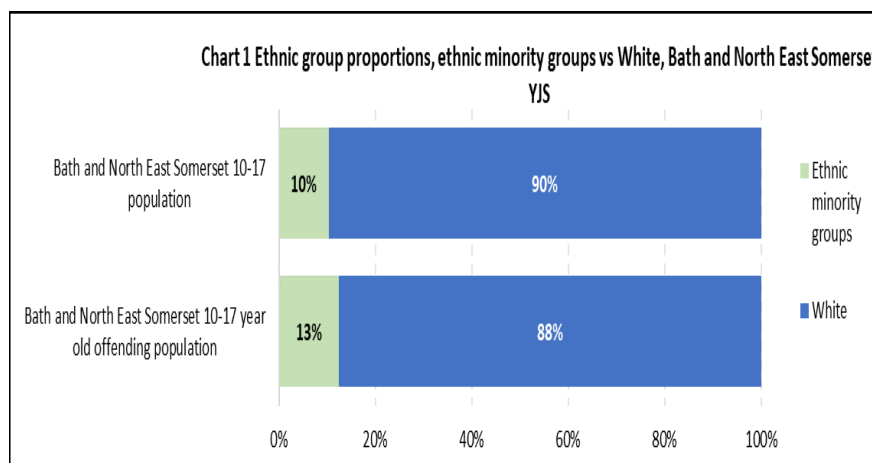
### 5.1 Children from groups which are over-represented

Children from a range of backgrounds are over-represented in the youth justice system. In B&NES, the most over-represented groups are children with Special Educational Needs and children from certain ethnicities, particularly those with a mixed heritage.

As stated above, reducing this disproportionality is a strategic priority for the service and there are actions in our annual development plan and anti-racism action plan to work towards this aim.

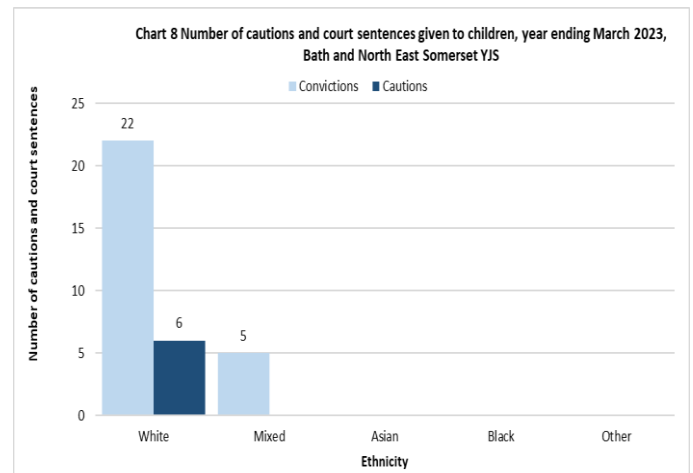
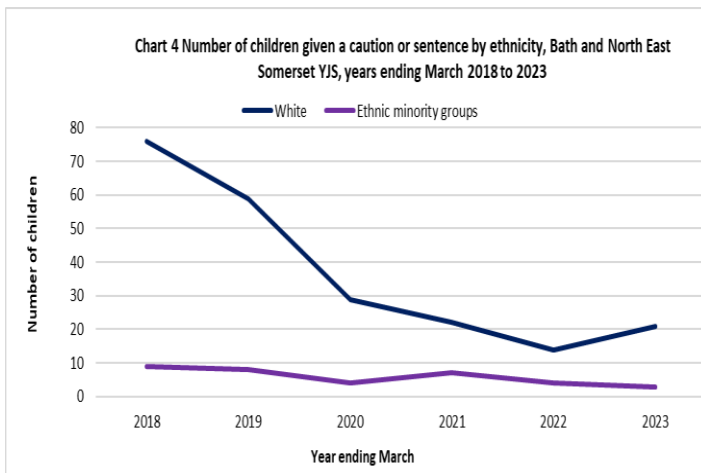
#### Ethnicity

The following charts are taken directly from the Youth Justice Board's Ethnic Disparity Tool for the year ending 2022 – 2023 and is the latest data available.



Of all the children Cautioned or Sentenced, White children accounted for 88% of these children and 12% were from minority ethnic backgrounds. In B&NES, YJS White children are under-represented and Ethnic Minority groups children are over-represented when comparing the offending population with the 10-17 population. White children make up 88% of the offending population and 90% of the 10-17 population.

Ethnic Minority groups children make up 13% of the offending population and 10% of the 10-17 population. The most over-represented ethnic group were Mixed children. They make up 13% of the offending population and 6% of the 10-17 population.



White children have shown an increase in the proportion of all children Cautioned or Sentenced over the last year, they accounted for 88% in 2022/23 and for 78% in the previous year. However, this still shows an over-representation for minority ethnic children. White children received 22 convictions in the period. Children from mixed ethnicities received 5 convictions. This equates to 18%, which is an over-representation of this group.

### Special Educational Needs

- 61 individual children had an intervention with B&NES YJS in the 12 month period April 2023 to March 2024. This figure includes both pre 16 and post 16 children.
- A total of 42 (**69%**) had an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a SEN support plan (i.e. formal plan in place)
- Of these 42 children with SEN, 32 (**52%**) had an EHCP (either draft or final) and 10 (**16%**) had an SEN support plan.
- These figures are very similar to those reported for the 2022 - 2023 academic year cohort.

### Gender

Of the 61 children that had a statutory YJS intervention in the 12 month period April 2023 to March 2024, there were 10 (16%) females. All but one received an out of court resolution and all but one was White British. These figures do not indicate an over-representation of girls in the YJS in B&NES at this time.

## 5.2 Policing

The Partnership between the YJS and Avon and Somerset (A&S) Constabulary is strong.

The Police Partnership Board member is an active and engaged member. They provide quarterly data for the Board to scrutinise a number of areas such as stop and search, strip search, time between arrest and disposal and overnight detention.

The YJS and Police work together to improve outcomes for children in various ways, including:

➤ **Monthly A&S Tactical Out of Court Resolution Group and Panels**

- This Tactical group has worked to increase consistency in approach throughout A&S, including creating guidance documents and auditing work to ensure compliance with national and local guidance.
- The Out of Court Panels are jointly chaired by a Sgt from Police Early Intervention Team (EIT) and a Manager from YJS. We have worked together closely to complete a Practice Guide for staff regarding out of court work.

➤ **Quarterly Custody Review Panel**

- Children's Services, Police and YJS review cases where children have been held overnight in police detention, sentenced or remanded to custody. The purpose is to ensure ongoing compliance with the Concordat on Children In Custody<sup>14</sup> and to scrutinise occasions when this has not happened and identify learning opportunities for the partnership.

➤ **Out of Court Disposal Scrutiny Panel**

- The YJS participates in the PCC led quarterly Scrutiny Panel for Out of Court Disposals to ensure youth matters are a key focus and that decision making is examined and any lessons learned.

➤ **Violence Reduction Partnership**

- The Police EIT and YJS are key members of the Violence Reduction Partnership and work together at a strategic and operational level to reduce violence. This includes delivering Parental Knife Crime Awareness sessions, training and an annual conference for staff, and Street Doctors sessions with children.
- All key partners, including Police and YJS, attend a monthly operational meeting 'Partnership to Reduce Exploitation and Violence' (PREV) where children who are at risk are discussed, information shared and assurances sought about the multi-agency approach to addressing these issues.
- The Police EIT provide line management to the YJS Police Officer and this helps with information sharing, co-ordination of services and risk management.

## 5.3 Prevention

The rate of children entering the justice system is influenced by the effectiveness of local prevention and diversion activities. 'Prevention' work involves supporting children to address unmet needs, safeguard, promote positive outcomes and stop children entering the formal youth justice system.

---

14

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a82211140f0b6230269afee/Concordat\\_on\\_Children\\_in\\_Custody\\_ISBN\\_Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a82211140f0b6230269afee/Concordat_on_Children_in_Custody_ISBN_Accessible.pdf)

B&NES YJS delivers two targeted prevention services:

## Compass

- Compass works with 8 to 17 year-olds who are assessed as being at risk of offending. The model includes using a Key Worker model, an Early Help Assessment to identify need, agreement of a plan, and the use of Team Around the Family or Child Meetings to review plans. The Service monitors individual improvement in the areas of social well-being, emotional well-being, engagement in education, training and employment and child-parent relationships.
- Compass supports parents and carers in areas such as mediation, parenting skills, managing conflict and support in navigating any challenges within education.
- Compass is jointly funded by the Local Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

## Turnaround

- Turnaround works with children aged 10 to 17 years who are on the cusp of the youth justice system. To be eligible for Turnaround a child would need to have received a level 3 anti-social behaviour warning, No Further Action, a Police Facilitated Community Resolution, a first time Youth Caution, interviewed under caution or be released under investigation or pre-charge bail for an offence.
- Turnaround uses the new Prevention and Diversion Assessment Tool to assess need and develop a support plan. Like the Compass Service, it operates using a key worker model and uses Team Around the Child or Family Meetings to review progress.

## Case Example

The case example is a 14 year-old girl who was supported by the Compass Service in 2023 - 2024.

Identified Needs	Work Completed	Outcomes
<p>A breakdown in family relationships                      Involvement in assaults with female peers                      Involvement in some thefts                      The child's needs were not fully understood                      Vulnerable to exploitation and episodes of going missing                      Not attending education</p>	<p>Parenting support                      Involvement in a family group conference                      Emotional regulation and healthy relationship sessions                      Education around exploitation                      Support and advice given for Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)                      Support with starting new school – providing some transport.</p>	<p>Child received a diagnosis of Autism and an EHCP and was placed in a school that could meet her needs.                      Since starting at a new school that has been able to meet her needs, she is thriving there.                      Family are now spending quality time with together.                      Child has not been in trouble with the Police or been involved with disputes with her peers.                      Child has not been missing.</p>
<p><b>Feedback</b>                      Parent reported that she was appreciative of the support from Compass and how much better things have got for them. The feedback from a direct observation was that the Compass Keyworker was welcoming and flexible.</p>		



The Compass Keyworker “has built a relationship of trust, care and support with my child. She has had many professionals in her life and none of them have reached out to her like the Compass Keyworker. My child is sometimes more open with her than she is with me and you can see she is relaxed in her company. She listens with compassion and empathy and gives fantastic advice that she takes on board. The Compass Keyworker always comes with tools and resources to support my child if she is fidgety and she always follows up concerns and comes back to me if I need her to. She gives me valuable advice and guidance. If she doesn’t know or thinks another agency may have the answers, then she finds this out”

## Data

Compass - Between April 2023 and March 2024, 25 children were supported by Compass (21 male, 4 female with an average age range of 11-17 years; all 25 were White children. It is recognised that in order to address over-representation in the youth justice system, more children with Black, Asian and Ethnic minority heritages need to be offered support through Compass and other preventative services.

Turnaround - Between April 2023 and March 2024, 18 children started and were supported with an intervention on the Turnaround programme. All 18 children were male and 15 (83%) were White and 3 (17%) were from Black and Ethnic Minority backgrounds. All were aged between 11 and 16 years of age.

## 5.4 Diversion

Diversion is where children with a linked offence receive an alternative outcome that does not result in a criminal record, avoids escalation into the formal youth justice system and associated stigmatisation.

The types of diversion that are on offer in B&NES follow national guidance and includes:

- **Community Resolution (CR):** This is used when children have accepted responsibility for an offence. It is an outcome commonly delivered through, but not limited to, restorative approaches. The programme of support attached to a CR is voluntary.
- **No Further Action:** Used when Police decide not to pursue an offence because there is not enough evidence, or it is not in the public interest. Voluntary support can be offered to children to address identified needs.
- **Outcome 22 Deferred Caution:** Used when diversionary, educational or intervention activity has taken place or been offered, and it is not in the public interest to take any further action. An admission of guilt or acceptance of responsibility is not required for this outcome to be used.
- **Youth Alcohol and Drug Diversion (YADD):** This is also an Outcome 22, which can be issued specifically for offences of possession of a small quantity of drugs or drunk and disorderly. The diversion offered is a short assessment and tailored workshop intervention that focusses on drug and alcohol education and exploitation where appropriate. The Diversionary activity is delivered in partnership with DHI Project 28, and children accessing this service can be offered ongoing intervention and support after their initial session.

Children are identified for diversion when they have accepted an offence. The Police can make a single agency decision to issue a CR to children who have not had any previous outcomes.

For all other children, the Police refer children to the joint YJS and Police Out of Court Resolution Decision Making Panel. When a child is referred to this panel, they are allocated to a Youth Justice Officer and a Prevention and Diversion Assessment will be completed to inform the decision. The decision will make reference to the Child Gravity Matrix referenced above.

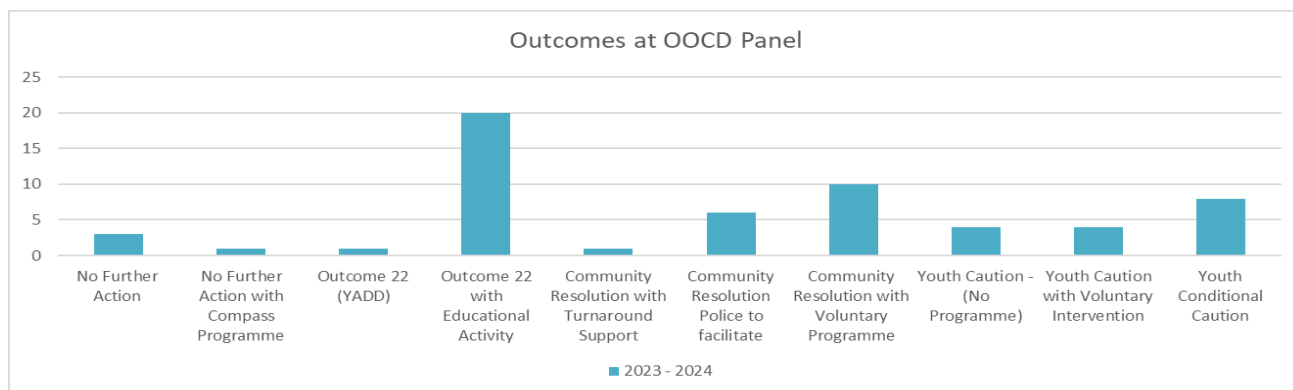
At the YJS, we see the importance of diverting children from the formal justice system where possible. This work has been prioritised in previous years, and continues to be so, and this is evident through the YJS caseloads being predominately made up of out of court work.

The Out of Court work is scrutinised by the YJS Partnership Board through an annual report. This report looks at a range of data including number and type of diversion, successful completions, gender and ethnicity and re-offending rates. OOCR work is also scrutinised through the Police and Crime Commissioner’s OOCR Scrutiny Panel and through the A&S Tactical OOCR group, mentioned above.

## Data

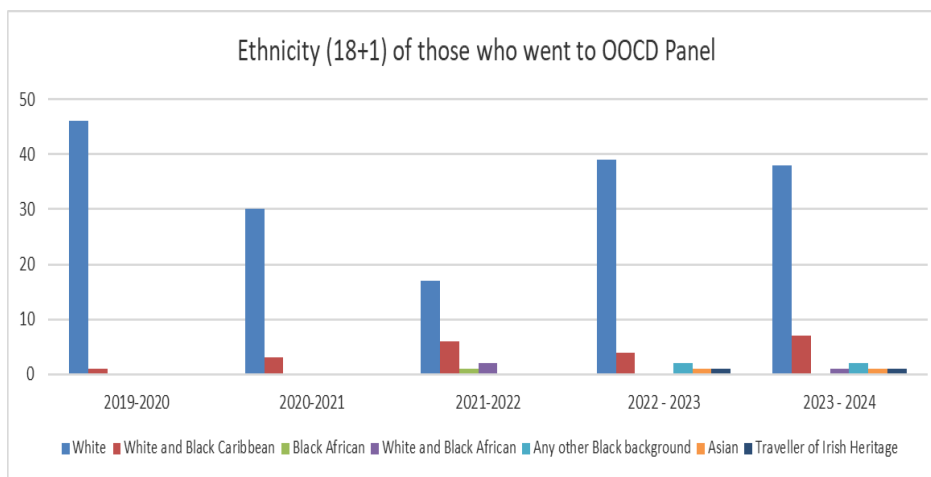
Between April 2023 and March 2024, 60 children received diversionary activity directly from the police. For this reporting period, there has been an increase in the number of children diverted to the Out of Court Resolution Panel. There were 58 outcomes from Panel in this reporting period, and a total of 50 individual children. In the previous reporting year, there were 47 outcomes.

The most common outcome in 2023 to 2024 was for Outcome 22 - Deferred Caution with 20 in total (34% of outcomes). In the previous year, the most common outcome was a Community Resolution. In 2023 to 2024, 14% of children received a Youth Conditional Caution (YCC). This is an increase from the previous year where only 4% of children received a YCC. This increase is most likely explained by the implementation of the National Child Gravity Matrix, referred to earlier in the plan.



Of the 50 individual children, 66% were White and 34% were from Minority Ethnic backgrounds. Compared to the previous reporting period, the overall number of children referred to Out of Court Resolution Panel has increased and there has been an increase of 17% of children from Black and Ethnic Minority backgrounds referred to Out of Court Disposal Panel.

For the majority of these cases, children from Minority Ethnic backgrounds received the same outcome as children who are White where they had committed similar offences. Where this was not their first outcome at panel, they have received a Caution. Most received non-substantive outcomes and some had no programmes offered.



## 5.5 Education

Attendance and engagement with education, training and employment (ETE) is one of the most significant protective factors for all children in supporting them to live positive lives. B&NES YJS prioritises work with children to support them into suitable ETE. Many of the children that we work have difficulties with education that include Special Education Needs, lack of suitable provision to meet these needs, and suspension and exclusion from school.

The YJS employs an Education Officer who works closely with colleagues in the Education Inclusion Service, SEND team, Schools, Colleges, the Virtual School and the YJS. The Education Officer works directly with children and parents / carers to help them to consider their career goals, to navigate the complex world of education and advocate on their behalf in a range of forums. Each child who works with the YJS has a monthly ETE review with the Education Officer and their case manager to set, record and review related goals.

The Director for Education in B&NES sits on the YJS Partnership Board, and this year has presented reports to the Board on the work taking place to increase SEND provision in B&NES and the School's Race Equality Charter work. Both pieces of work link closely with the issues identified with this plan and are examples of activity to reduce disproportionality in B&NES.

The Education Officer prepares an annual report to the Partnership Board to ensure that Board members are aware of the issues relating to education inclusion for the children in the YJS. This year, the report is also being presented to the Schools Standards Board to ensure they are well-informed of the poor outcomes for some children in the YJS who experience school exclusion and late identification of SEN.

### School age children – information from 2022/23 academic year

- **More school age children.** In the 2022 - 2023 academic year, the YJS worked with **42** school age children. This is **twice as many** as the last academic year. As well as working with a much larger number and percentage of school age children, there have also been significant numbers of younger children (under 13 years of age) coming on to a YJS programme.
- **More children with SEN.** The majority of children that the YJS worked with in the past year have Special Educational Needs with 50% having an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and 29% having an SEN support plan so **79%** in total. This is an increase from last year. We have also noticed many of the children we work with have had an EHCP issued very late in their secondary school careers, with increasing difficulties and delays in finding a special school placement in cases where a specialist placement has been agreed.

- **Low attendance is an ongoing issue.** The majority (**76%**) of school age children starting a YJS programme have low attendance in education – this is a similar figure to last academic year.
- **Marked increase in Permanent exclusions.** Over **70%** of students we have supported have had numerous suspensions and were at a high level on the school's behaviour policy and at risk of suspension or exclusion. This is a similar figure to last academic year. However, in contrast to last academic year when **3** of the children we supported had had a Permanent Exclusion, this year **12** had a Permanent Exclusion, with 3 having had two Permanent Exclusions.
- **High numbers in Alternative Learning Provision/Special schools.** High numbers of students we have supported in this period have attended special schools (**14%**) or been educated in an Alternative Learning Provision (ALP) setting (**67%**). This is a total of **81%** of the children we have supported. So only 8 (**19%**) of the children on YJS programmes were learning in a mainstream school. The quality of Alternative Education Provision is variable and some children are on very part time programmes for a long time due challenges and delays identifying a suitable special school place or a mainstream place that can meet need.

#### Post 16 young people (16 - 18 year-olds) – information from 2022/23 academic year

- **Fewer post 16s.** Although the total number of children doing a YJS programme has increased by a third in the academic year 2022 - 2023 there has been a decrease in those who are post 16. We have worked with **22** post 16 young people this academic year compared to **29** in the 2021 - 2022 academic year.
- **More children with SEN.** The trend of increasing numbers of children with an EHC Plan is also evident in our post 16 cohort, where **59%** had an EHC Plan (or a ceased EHC Plan) compared to **45%** last academic year.
- **Further Education.** **12** of our post 16 children were on a further education programme and **11** were still on their course by the end of their YJS programme. Over half (7) of the children were on the Learning4Work (L4W) programme provided by Bath College in partnership with Youth Connect South West. This programme is available for children with an EHCP and who are not ready for a mainstream course or setting. L4W is a bespoke and flexible programme with one to one key worker engagement support and a tailored part-time timetable designed around the young person's needs and situation. All the children on the programme would have been at high risk of being NEET (Not in Education Training or Employment) and 2 were able to start the programme mid-year after a period of not being in any education or training.

#### Examples of work in the YJS to improve ETE outcomes:

- Working in partnership with education providers and other support agencies to improve engagement and attendance – either via CIN or CORE groups or by convening a TAC group where no other multi-agency group is in place.

- Contributing to EHCP processes – supporting parents apply for a needs assessment, providing needs assessment reports, regular liaison and follow ups with SEND colleagues.
- Supporting children to understand their strengths and interests and make plans for the future.
- Supporting Year 11 students in making Post-16 choices and supporting them in making applications and plans for the future and providing transition support over the summer.
- High levels of face-to-face and practical support, for example, taking children to their provision, visiting new provision, supporting children apply for and enrol for post 16 courses.
- Supporting children in compiling CVs and applying for apprenticeships/jobs.
- Transitions support for young people changing schools or starting Post 16 programmes.
- Advocacy and support for children and parents in behaviour and re-integration meetings in schools.
- Improving education and training provision for young people through support and joint working with schools and SEND Team.
- Contributing to the development and extension of ALP programmes, ensuring the child and parents voice is heard.
- Supporting children and parent with understanding and navigating EHCP processes

## 5.6 Restorative Approaches and Victims

As part of the statutory duty to comply with the Code of Practice for Victims <sup>15</sup>, the Youth Justice Service has a dedicated Victim Worker (Police Officer) who is responsible for contacting victims of crime at both Out of Court Resolution stage and through the Court process. Victims are offered the opportunity to take part in a restorative justice process, either directly (face-to-face meetings) or indirectly (through 'shuttle mediation' where the Youth Justice Service acts as a go-between). In addition, they are consulted on their views of reparation for the harm caused and this may include community reparation or a letter of explanation or responsibility to the person harmed.

Indirect reparation, where children are able to give something back to the community, participate in development of services or design ways of sharing information with others, continues to be a strength in the Service. Children are not always clear what is being asked of them and a significant part of the work involves building confidence. One child helped develop a leaflet explaining reparation to others and this is now used in introductory work, and another developed a leaflet to help explain the Referral Order process. Children can build on strengths and develop new skills through undertaking reparation and that they are often proud of and affirmed by their work.

Below are some case examples of work completed in the past year for reparation and restorative approaches. All names have been altered for confidentiality.

---

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime/code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime-in-england-and-wales-victims-code>

### Case Example from Reparation Work

- I worked with Jon for 7 months. He wasn't sure what he wanted to do at first so we agreed an appointment to paint a fence at a community centre. This activity was a great way to get to know each other and Jon talked throughout. He talked a lot about anger and how being angry gets people into trouble. We planned to make punch bags and make a leaflet to go with them about anger management. Jon made punch bags and created an information sheet about anger management to go with it and he gave these both to Youth Connect service based at Southside. Jon reflected on how managing anger in a focused positive way could have changed things for himself, it made a big difference that the leaflet he made was written from his own perspective.
- Jon talked a lot about the importance of cooking and how in his family cooking was really valued. We cooked hot food together for the food bank at Rose Cottage and Jon came to deliver the food which was received well, he had a lot of positive feedback about how much people valued having tasty hot food.
- Jon also made a power point about the process of going to court and his experience of the panel process. He presented that in his final panel, the panel members were really impressed and gave him good feedback.
- Part of Jon's feedback was that he felt really good about being able to do different things for reparation, things that meant something to him as well as others, and a chance to learn new things.

### Case Example from Restorative Justice Work

- Jake is on a Referral Order for an assault against a peer, Danny. Danny has told the YJS victim worker that the behaviour from Jake is continuing. The YJS worked with the Police, and they proposed issuing an Anti-Social Behaviour letter.
- Initially, Danny did not want to take part in any restorative justice due to the ongoing impact of the behaviour. The victim worker continued to communicate with both Danny and Jake's parent, and Jake's YJS worker and social worker to help reduce any ongoing risk. Some shuttle mediation took place between the two parents, and they have now agreed to meet up face to face.
- The benefits of this work have been there has been an olive branch extended and both parents are willing to meet face to face, to help reduce conflict between the boys.
- The shuttle mediation has so far helped both parties to think differently about each other.

## 5.7 Serious Violence, Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding

Tackling child exploitation and reducing serious violence are priorities for strategic partnerships in B&NES.

Most of the violent offences committed by children do not reach the 'serious violence' threshold. However, there were three fatal stabbings of teenagers in 2022 and 2023 and the community have a heightened awareness of the dangers of carrying knives.

Since late 2019, B&NES has participated in the Avon and Somerset 'hub and spoke' Violence Reduction Partnership, utilising Home Office funding to undertake strategic needs assessments and agree partnership plans for addressing the issues identified and procuring some direct services.

From 31 January 2023, under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, specified authorities including Youth Justice Services, have been required to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence. The duties include fully engaging with the relevant local partnership, sharing data, supporting the publication of a strategic needs assessment, advising in appropriate responses and assisting in the delivery of prevention and early intervention initiatives.

Locally, there is a Children's Exploitation Subgroup which reports into the Children's Safeguarding Strategic Assurance Group. There is also a Serious Violence Steering Group, chaired by the YJS Head of Service, which reports into the wider Avon and Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership and the Community Safety Delivery Group and the Exploitation Sub Group. The work adopts a public health approach to addressing serious violence, prioritising under-25s involved in public space violence with a particular focus on sharing information at a multi-agency level about individuals, networks and places of concern in order that issues can be addressed collaboratively. The Youth Justice Service has been closely involved in this work from the outset as both areas of work are led locally by the same Head of Service. The B&NES Partnership have published a strategic needs assessment<sup>16</sup>. The activity to reduce serious violence that the partnership has commissioned and co-ordinated has included detached youth work, lived experience mentors, Street Doctors Training, Night Time Economy Joint Briefings, Surrender Bins, Bleed Control Kits, Parent Knife Crime Awareness Sessions and staff training.

## 5.8 Detention in Police Custody

The youth justice partnership works to prevent children from being remanded or sentenced to custody or held overnight in Police custody wherever possible, and to challenge, understand, address and/or learn from the instances when children are detained.

The long established, multi-agency Custody Review Panel meets quarterly and reviews instances of B&NES children being detained. It undertakes multi-agency self-audits against national and local standards and guidance to ensure that legal and other agreed processes have been followed and that no opportunities to influence a different outcome have been missed. The Panel also promotes excellent standards of information sharing, assessment and planning by the Youth Justice Service and Children's Social Care so that Courts receive high quality information on which to base their remand and sentencing decisions.

---

<sup>16</sup> <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/s80394/Serious%20Violence%20Plan%20v3.pdf>

Membership is drawn from:

- Youth Justice Service
- Police
- Children's Social Care
- Strategy and Commissioning
- Deputy Head of Safeguarding
- Emergency Duty Team

The Custody Review Panel reviews all episodes where a B&NES child was held overnight in Police custody in Avon and Somerset, whether charged or not. Police review their Custody Records to ensure that local guidance was followed and where a child was charged, they review practice against the national Concordat.<sup>17</sup> The Emergency Duty Team audit against their own guidance to ensure they were proactive in seeking placements where asked and Children's Social Care audit to ensure a detained child received a welfare visit. Identified learning is recorded and actions agreed, often including sharing the learning with colleagues to influence future practice.

## 5.9 Remands

The Custody Review Panel reviews secure remands to ensure opportunities to influence a community remand were not missed and to understand whether there are grounds for supporting a Bail application. There was one secure remands in the area during 2023-2024. The Custody Review Panel agreed that all other options for bail had been considered and extensively used prior to the court using the secure remand option.

In the coming year, the YJS Partnership and Custody Review Panel will review the HMIP Thematic Inspection with children subject to remand in youth detention<sup>18</sup> to ensure our local practices are meeting the recommendations.

## 5.10 Use of Custody and Constructive Re-settlement

Historically, and recently, B&NES has had a very small number of children who are sentenced to custody. It is positive that the custody rate is low, however, those children who are sentenced are among the most vulnerable in society and B&NES YJS and strategic partners work to avoid this as an outcome where possible.

The Custody Review Panel also reviews instances of children sentenced to custody and at high risk of a custodial sentence. Pro-active cross-agency identification of children considered to be at risk of custody in the foreseeable future leads to seeking assurance that they have a positive relationship with a professional who is supporting them:

- to keep them safe, and particularly to screen them to understand and help address any exploitation.
- to address their likelihood of offending and manage any risk they present to others.

---

<sup>17</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a82211140f0b6230269afee/Concordat\\_on\\_Children\\_in\\_Custody\\_ISBN\\_Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a82211140f0b6230269afee/Concordat_on_Children_in_Custody_ISBN_Accessible.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2023/11/A-joint-thematic-inspection-of-work-with-children-subject-to-remand-in-youth-detention-v1.02.pdf>



- to retain or access suitable accommodation.
- to retain or access education, employment or training.
- where relevant, to support compliance with Court expectations.

There was one Detention and Training Order given in 2023 - 2024.

The service approach to resettlement is adapted to each child's unique situation, led by the allocated YJS Case Manager who prioritises maintaining positive relationships with the child in custody. Planning for resettlement starts at the very beginning of the sentence to ensure that any children leaving custody have access to suitable accommodation and ETE options.

B&NES YJS has an up-to-date Resettlement Policy which references YJB Case Management Guidance<sup>19</sup> and the YJB document 'How to Make Resettlement Constructive'<sup>20</sup>. It is essential that resettlement is planned at the outset of the sentence and adheres to the child first principles.

## 5.11 Working with Families

Youth Justice Service practitioners are experienced and practiced in working with the parents, carers and families of children open to the service and will provide levels of support and communication with care givers so that the child has the most chance of successfully completing their order or programme.

Support is offered through both individual work directly with parents and carers in their homes and through group work parenting programmes that are delivered by the Connecting Families team in the Local Authority.

There are 5 practitioners in Compass and the statutory YJS who are trained to deliver the accredited Family Links Parenting Programme and this knowledge is incorporated into the support we provide, as a service, to parents and carers. YJS support to parents can include mediation work, work to strengthen the relationship between care giver and child and education to parents and carers about exploitation and knife crime.

All aspects of the YJS have close links with Early Help as well as services for children open on Child in Need or Child Protection Plans and children who are Looked After. Practitioners work to ensure plans and interventions are coordinated to avoid duplication as well as not overwhelming parents and children with multiple professionals entering their lives at stressful and difficult times.

The YJS also provides a wealth of support to parents and carers in relation to education, including advocating to providers to identify and assess for educational needs, and supporting them to navigate the often-complex world of education. Please see the education section for more information on this area of work.

---

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/custody-and-resettlement/custody-and-resettlement-section-7-case-management-guidance>


<sup>20</sup> <https://yjresourcehub.uk/custody-and-resettlement/item/610-how-to-make-resettlement-constructive-yjb-document.html>

## 6. Sign off Submission and Approval

This Youth Justice Plan has been shared with the Youth Justice Partnership Board for review and endorsement. The Plan has been signed by the YJS Partnership Board Chair on their behalf and confirms that it covers all sections required by the Youth Justice Board.

In accordance with 'Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Functions and responsibilities) England Regulations 2000', Youth Justice Plans must be approved by the full council of the local authority. This Youth Justice Plan is subject to the scrutiny and approval processes of B&NES local authority.

It will be considered for approval by the Council's Cabinet on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024 and full Council on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

<b>Chair of Board</b>	Mary Kearney-Knowles, Director of Children and Education
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2024

## Appendix 1: Budget Costs and Contributions for 2024 to 2025

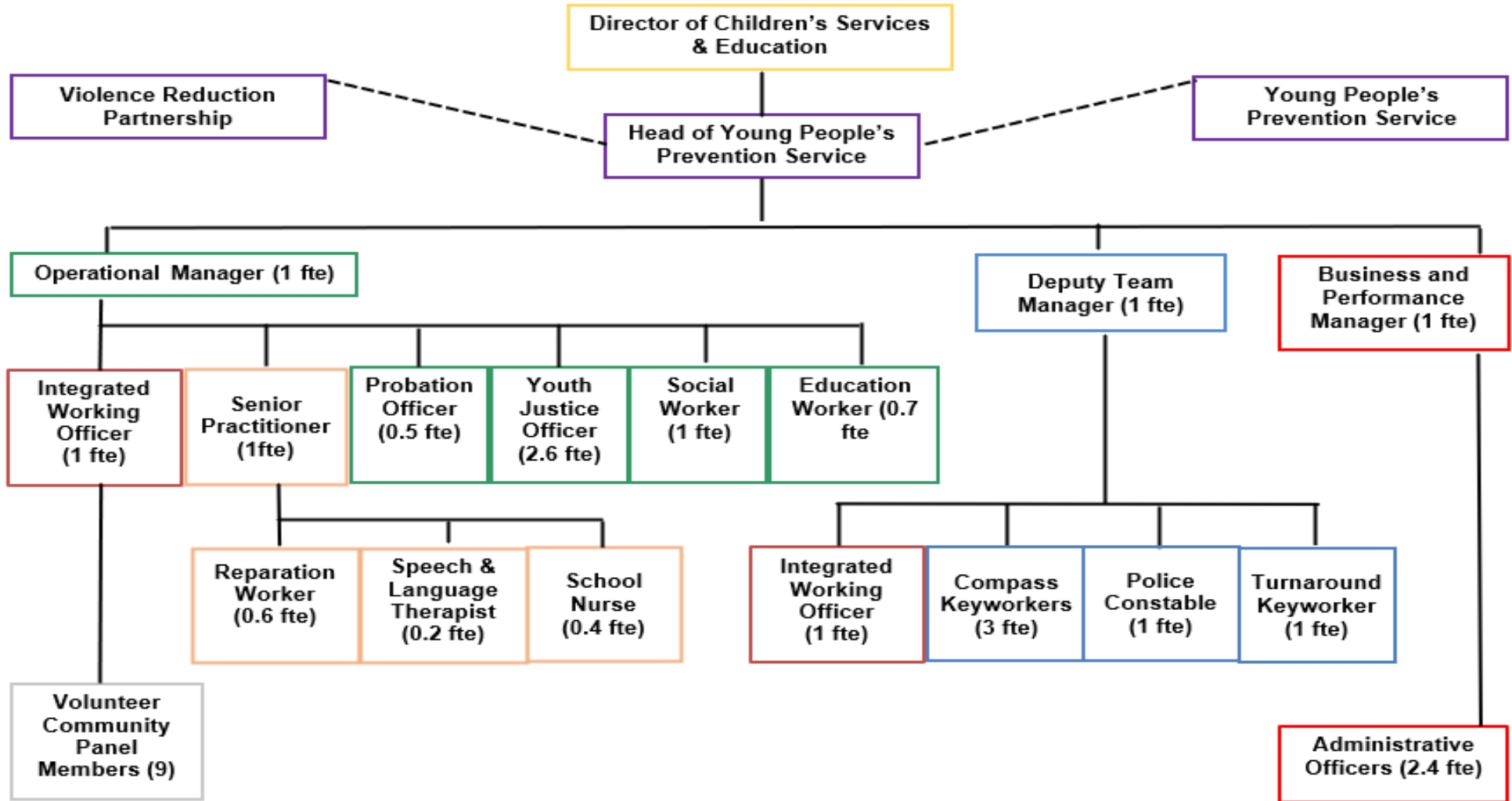
Agency	Staffing costs	Payments in kind	Pooled budget	Total
Police	65,416	1 FTE Police Constable. Access to Police National Computer and Niche	5,000	<b>70,416</b>
Police and Crime Commissioner	10,217	Contributes to Compass preventative service. Another £7,902 goes towards commissioning substance misuse services (DHI Project 28)	N/A	<b>10,217</b>
Probation	27,016	0.5 FTE Probation Officer and 0.16 FTE Probation Service Officer	5,000	<b>32,016</b>
B&NES ICB (Health)	42,245	0.4 FTE Nurse and 0.2 FTE Speech and Language Therapist	14,885	<b>57,130</b>
B&NES Council (Education and Social Care) includes Compass	441,317	Keynsham office, HR and finance support	18,685	<b>460,002</b>
Youth Justice Board	230,904	Confirmation of 2024/25 grant not yet received, so this figure is based on 2023/24.	N/A	<b>230,904</b>
Ministry of Justice (Turnaround)	55,684	Based on 50% income (27,841) already received for 24/25	N/A	<b>55,684</b>
<b>Total</b>				<b>916,369</b>

## Appendix 2: Staffing Structure

	Strategic Manager		Team Manager		Practitioner		Administrator		Sessional		Student		Volunteers		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi																
Asian or Asian British – Indian													1			1
Asian or Asian British - Other Asian																
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani																
Black or Black British – African					1										1	
Black or Black British – Caribbean													1		1	
Black or Black British - Other Black																
Chinese																
Mixed - Other Mixed																
Mixed - White and Asian																
Mixed - White and Black African																
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean																
Not stated																
Other Ethnic Group - Any Other																
Other Ethnic Group - Arab																
White – British		1	1	2		14		3					2	5	3	25
White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller																
White - Irish																
White - Other White						2										2
<b>Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>3</b>					<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>28</b>

Appendix 2 cont.

### Youth Justice Service Organisational Chart



## Appendix 3: Progress on Priorities in Previous Plan

### Code:

Blue	Work ongoing. Some aspects are becoming business as usual and some will be carried forward into next year's work plan
Red	Needs partnership help to progress
Amber	On course for completion by 31 March or soon afterwards
Green	Completed

Strategic Priority 1: Strengthen participation			
Theme	Actions	Owner	Progress and impact
Victims' participation	Ensure victims' views about how they can participate more fully are incorporated into the updated Youth Justice Victim Policy and practice.	Deputy Team Manager	The Victim Policy has been reviewed and updated. The YJS Police Officer is offering a feedback survey to all victims who have had contact with our service. The surveys will be collated and reviewed in order to implement any initiatives as a result of the feedback received.
Parents' and carers' participation	Complete a Practice Guide for work with parents/carers across the whole Service and communicate a clear local offer to them, including the Family Links parenting course.	Senior Practitioner	Three YJS Practitioners have attended the Family Links Training course in January and February 2024. The Practice Guide for Work With Parents is to be included in a service wide Practice Guide that will be part of the Action Plan for 2024 / 26.
Children's participation	Ensure the whole Service seeks out the voices of children, including those from minority groups, and can demonstrate how it learns from them.	Senior Practitioner	The YJS routinely seeks feedback from service users, including children and parents. This feedback is collated into an annual report. The report was shared at the Partnership Board in January 2024. The next steps for this area of work are to review the questions we ask in the Feedback process to ensure they cover diversity issues and to consider setting up a particular focus group with children from minority

			<p>groups to hear their voices and support them to contribute to service improvement.</p> <p>Feedback from children and parents / carers about court is being considered by an Avon and Somerset wide group.</p>
Community participation	Recruit and train a new cohort of volunteer Referral Order Panel Members.	Operational Manager	We currently have a cohort of 9 Volunteer Panel Members, and this is sufficient for the current demand of Referral Orders. We have a new Referral Order Co-Ordinator in post who will be looking to plan a recruitment drive Summer 2024.
<b>Strategic Priority 2: Address disproportionality</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Key Links</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Children with Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic heritages	Progress actions in the Youth Justice Anti-Racism Plan 2023-24 (see below).	Head of Service	These actions are being progressed within the YJS, across the Local Authority and across the Avon and Somerset area and will be reported to the YJP separately.
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	Work with Inclusion managers and the SEND Strategy Group to address disproportionality issues for children with SEND in the justice system as per the ETE Thematic HMIP report.	Heads of Youth Justice and SEN	Head of Service for Youth Justice is attending the Inclusion Board and the Suspensions and Exclusions Steering Group to address this area of disproportionality. As per the recommendations, work ongoing will include monitoring of suspensions and exclusions, attendance and levels of SEN in the YJS cohort alongside evaluating levels of engagement and attainment.

Re-Offending	Review level of support to children at the highest risk of offending in the first 3 months of their Court Order and hold quarterly reviews when a high risk of re-offending or a medium to high risk of seriousness is assessed.	Operational Manager	This work is being progressed through reviews in supervision, reviews of all cases and frequency of contact and level of support, including possible referrals to other services, are considered.
--------------	--	---------------------	---

**Strategic Priority 3: Embed Child first principles**

Action	Key Links	Owner	Progress
Early Help	Ensure the Child First principles are reflected in the values and practice of the whole Service including Compass and Turnaround.	Operational Manager	The overarching principle of B&NES YJS is Child First and this is underpinned by the YJS Values of Empower, Understand, Build Relationships and Collaborate. The values are reflected in all recruitment documents and are referenced at various points of service delivery including at Reflective Practice Meetings and through the Case Audits, ensuring that the Child First principle can be seen in all our work.
Youth Justice System	Work with the Partnership Board to promote a Child First approach throughout children's experience of the youth justice system.	Head of Service	This work is completed and becoming business as usual and includes ensuring there is a case study and Child First Theme at the start of each Board meeting. The Chair of the Youth Bench has also completed some work and a presentation to the Board demonstrating the Court's approach to Child First principle. An area to be improved is the timeliness with which children are processed through the justice system, including through Police and CPS systems, however, this work is being progressed at the Local Criminal Justice Board and is being prioritised by Police and CPS.



<b>Strategic Priority 4: Tackle Serious Violence</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Key Links</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Serious Violence Duty	Work with the Violence Reduction Partnership to develop a strategic needs assessment and Strategy.	Head of Service	Avon and Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership have published the Strategic Needs Assessment for 2024. B&NES VRP has also published a local Plan and Strategy to Prevent and reduce Serious Violence.
Knife crime	Ensure all children in the justice system and their parents/carers have an appropriate intervention in relation to knife crime.	Operational Manager	Some practitioners in the team have been trained by the Street Doctors to deliver interventions on knife crime, first aid and safety. The YJS has held two small group workshops for children with the Street Doctors, funded by the VRP. We have 20 app licences from Street Doctors, to use one to one with children. A practitioner has completed a review of current interventions so these can be delivered to all children where appropriate. The VRP have also been delivering Knife Crime Awareness events for parents and carers across the authority.
Safeguarding reviews	Address actions identified through the (not yet published) safeguarding review following a fatal stabbing and participate in further reviews.	Operational Manager	The Review has not been published yet and is being progressed by the BCSSP.

## Anti Racism Plan Actions

<b>VISION</b>			
<b>Vision and strategy for improving outcomes for black and mixed heritage boys (HMIP 11)</b>			
<b>Action plan to deliver objectives set out in YJB Business Plan (ID 21)</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Intended Impact</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Agree a vision statement and strapline.	Clear leadership aspirations and well understood purpose	Chair and Board	4 Board members met and created a vision statement and strapline. This was sent out to the YJS and Partnership Board for consultation and was signed off at the Board meeting on 24 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2024. B&NES Youth Justice Service Anti-Racism Vision is: To commit to being an anti-racist service. To uphold social justice and challenge inequality and racism in the actions of individuals, in services and in society. To value and celebrate diversity and promote equality of opportunity.
Add these to all relevant documents and webpage.	Ambition shared with children, families, communities and partners.	Business Manager	The vision has been added to the webpage.
Consult with children and staff and write an Anti-Racism Strategy.	Shared commitments, cross-referenced with national objectives.	Head of Service	The Plan and strategy has been completed and signed off through the Youth Justice Plan

<b>Understanding</b>			
<b>Ensure all YJS data collected, analysed and reported uses '18+1' ethnicity categories</b>			
<b>Analyse offence outcomes data by offence type and ethnicity groups (ID 20) and diversion schemes by ethnicity (ID 25)</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Intended Impact</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Support staff to listen to children to understand how they identify and ensure records are accurate.	Children are supported to reflect on their identity and records are as accurate as possible.	Operational Manager	All children are asked how they identify, and this is recorded on the case management system.
Include 18+1 data in all reports to the Partnership Board.	Quantify disproportionality and make direct comparisons.	Business and Performance Manager	All YJS performance reports include the 18+1 categories.
<b>Workforce</b>			
<b>Make sure staff understand what is expected of them in their work with black and mixed heritage boys and that they are inducted, trained and supported to work effectively with this group of children (HMIP 15)</b>			
<b>Work with B&amp;NES and statutory partners to baseline the 'HR life-cycle' across ethnicity groups (ID 79)</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Intended Impact</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Work with members of Partnership Board to apply learning from staff experience.	Ensure Youth Justice Service treats and develops staff fairly.	Head of Service	The Human Resources and Workforce Development Pillar of the Identifying Disproportionality Report are progressing these actions and work will continue into the coming year.
Continue to explore ways of attracting a more representative workforce, including volunteers.	A workforce that better represents children and reflects the community in which they live.	Operational Manager	The Human Resources and Workforce Development Pillar of the Identifying Disproportionality Report are progressing these actions. The wider local authority Equalities Strategy is also considering ways to attract a more representative workforce. Work will continue into the coming year.

Support staff participation in Council Equalities Groups.	Staff feel connected and know how to contribute to wider change.	Operational Manager	The Human Resources and Workforce Development Pillar of the Identifying Disproportionality Report are progressing these actions. All staff are undertaking equalities training as part of their induction and are made aware of equalities groups.
Procure and ensure delivery of cultural competency and unconscious bias training, ensuring this is relevant to all staff.	Staff understand and recognise disproportionality and have skills to discuss race and racism with children.  They acknowledge positions of power and privilege and utilise systemic tools such as social GRACES (link)	Operational Manager	2 day Cultural Competence Training commissioned and delivered in summer 2023 to all YJS staff from SARI.

### Representation

**Ensure we work in buildings and with services where there are positive, representative images of children and adults on noticeboards and in any materials used, including videos and games.**

Action	Intended Impact	Owner	Progress
Review our office environment and resources to ensure inclusive imagery.	Children see themselves represented and included.	Operational Manager	Much work has been done this year to improve the environment of our Broad Street office to include positive imagery and create a child friendly environment. This has included posters from Black History month and posters created by young people themselves. This work is ongoing and the Reparation and Participation worker will continue to lead in this area.

**Participation**

**Establish effective processes for gaining feedback from black and mixed heritage boys on the services they receive and use this feedback to assess, review and improve the quality and suitability of service provision (HMI 14)**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Intended Impact</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Ensure we hear the voices of all children with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic heritages and respond positively.	We understand and affirm lived experience and address specific needs and all children get the services they need to support positive outcomes.	Senior Practitioner	The YJS routinely seeks feedback from service users, including children and parents. This feedback is collated into an annual report. The report was shared at the Partnership Board in January 2024. The next steps for this area of work are to review the questions we ask in the Feedback process to ensure they cover diversity issues and to consider setting up a particular focus group with children from minority groups to hear their voices and support them to contribute to service improvement.

**Criminal Justice Process**

**Collaborate with all relevant partners to identify and tackle any disproportionality through each stage of the youth justice process (ID 24)**

**Agree with A&S Youth Justice Services and Education Inclusion colleagues about how best to scrutinise and tackle links between exclusion and entry into the youth justice system (ID 19)**

**Collect and scrutinise school exclusion data and develop a strategy and action plan to tackle any disproportionality. Include a focus on any links with entry into the youth justice system (ID 16, 17, 18 and 19)**

Action	Intended Impact	Owner	Progress
Actively support work led by Chief Constable and participate in specific work group(s) as advised.	Identify and address disproportionality.	Head of Service	The YJS is participating in the Avon and Somerset wide Youth Pillar and contributing to some aspects of the Policing Pillar. Other LA departments are participating in the Workforce Development and Data Insights Pillars.
Work with peers in the Avon and Somerset Youth Group and the Education Inclusion Co-ordinator to agree approach and methodology.	Understand best times and ways to intervene, in keeping with B&NES Early Help Strategy.	Operational Manager	The Head of the Virtual School has joined the Youth Pillar work to ensure the education related recommendations are progressed in BaNES. This work will continue in the coming year.
Support Education Inclusion colleagues in undertaking this work.	Address concern about links between exclusion and routes into offending, including through exploitation.	Business and Performance Manager & Education Worker	As above
<b>Service Delivery</b>			
Action	Intended Impact	Owner	Progress
<b>Management Oversight - improve the quality of management oversight to make sure it is sufficiently focused on diversity and what this means in practice and that there are clear escalation routes to address any barriers to black and mixed heritage boys accessing the services they need (HMIP 16)</b>			
a. Add a section in the local Out of Court Resolution assessment tool on personal and social identity.	A Child First focus on individual children.	Operational Manager	This is complete and is being well used. Diversity issues are now considered in every OOCR report.

b. Update the Pre Sentence Report Quality Assurance checklist to ensure a focus on individual characteristics and re-order this and the template itself to be Child First.	A Child First focus on individual children.	Operational Manager	The template and QA form have been updated accordingly.
c. Include a focus on race in pan-Authority audits.	A Child First focus on individual children.	Operational Manager	The pan authority audits did not take place as planned in 2023, and this will be carried forward into the next year plan.
d. Use revised Council Equalities Impact Assessment template for impact assessing significant reports and policies.	Ensure that the management oversight is focused on diversity.	Youth Justice Manager Group	The Equalities Impact Assessment will be used for any significant future policies and reports.
e. Revisit how we use diversity and equalities agenda items in staff Supervision.	Ensure that the management oversight is focused on diversity.	Youth Justice Manager Group	Social GRACES are included in supervision conversations relating to children and families and evidenced in supervision notes and on the child's case record. Equalities is also an agenda item on the Manager's meetings.

**Targets - Partnership Board to have a joint set of partnership targets, for example with schools and children's services, for improving service delivery to black and mixed heritage boys, and make sure mechanisms are in place to track, monitor and evaluate outcomes (HMIP 13)**

Action	Intended Impact	Owner	Progress
Consult with Partnership Board and ask for a member to lead this piece of work.	Strategic ownership of this issue; all children's education needs are met.	Chair of Board	BaNES has a School's Race Equalities Charter and many schools have signed up. There is a multi-agency group, chaired by the Education Representative of the Partnership Board that is set up to monitor and tackle Disproportionality and a Race Equality Task force that is designed to improve service delivery for minority ethnic groups. The YJS is represented at both groups.

**Gaps in Provision - address gaps in specialist provision for black and mixed heritage boys, either by delivering it in-house or by commissioning it from appropriate local community organisations and evaluate referral and uptake rates for the services provided (HMIP 17)**

Action	Intended Impact	Owner	Progress
Consult with staff, children and families to identify gaps and bring to attention of commissioners; Agree how the effectiveness of provision will be evaluated.	All children's needs are met, not necessarily by the Youth Justice Service, but we ensure there is provision in place.	Senior Practitioner	There are plans to set up a particular focus group with children from minority groups to hear their voices and support them to contribute to service improvement. This work will continue into the coming year and will also include Black Families Education Service.

**Parents and Carers - offer suitable and appropriate support and intervention to the parents and/or carers of black and mixed heritage boys and regularly review the uptake and suitability of this provision (HMIP 18)**

Action	Intended Impact	Owner	Progress
a. Ensure children and parents/carers receive written information about the justice system and resources available to support them at the outset of their contact.	Parents/carers are empowered with information and skills to support their children through complex systems.	Operational Manager	This action is being completed jointly with other Avon and Somerset YJS's as part of the OOCR Tactical group to ensure consistency across the area and aims to be completed later in the Spring 2024. The leaflet has been drafted and children and young people are being consulted on its contents.
b. Support access to Talking Teens parenting programmes.	Parents/carers are empowered with information and skills to support their children through complex systems.	Operational Manager	Three YJS Practitioners have attended the Family Links Training course in January and February 2024. These practitioners will contribute to the delivery of the programme across BaNES and support parents with access.



**Accommodation - Provide suitable and timely accommodation placements and support packages for black and mixed heritage boys who are facing remand or being released from custody (HMIP 8) and make sure that, where children and families are moved to a new location as a result of concerns about their safety, the accommodation and placements provided are suitable and sustainable to meet their needs (HMIP 9)**

Action	Intended Impact	Owner	Progress
<p>Work with the Placements Team and Housing Team to promote the needs of individual children and use our learning about how to make children more at home when they first arrive.</p>	<p>Placements provided are suitable and sustainable to meet their needs, when they need them.</p>	<p>Operational Manager</p>	<p>The Placements Team continue to participate in the Custody Review Panel. If a placement has been required to prevent a remand to custody, the placements team have been able to find a suitable alternative and are incredibly responsive in doing so. The YJS has supported Social Care to promote the individual needs of children where care placements have been sought.</p>