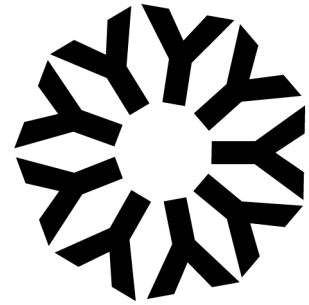


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Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Report on:
Hammersmith and Fulham
Youth Offending Service

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Foreword

The inspection of the Hammersmith and Fulham YOS was carried out in the fourth phase of the inspection programme of youth offending teams in England and Wales. It was conducted at the same time as the Joint Area Review of Children's Services.

The YOS contributes to a range of key local initiatives and has a pivotal role in integrating the criminal justice and social care agendas. An overarching governance framework ensures clear direction for the YOS and maps it into purposeful multi-agency networks. However, the gap between the Management Board and YOS is large, and the Board does not have sufficient oversight of the full range of its services. The YOS has an underdeveloped approach to capturing and using information on the impact of its work with service users, to inform future developments in the organisation.

Some aspects of practice need improvement. This includes the quality of pre-sentence reports, the quality of initial and review supervision plans and elements of enforcement practice. The profile of victims' issues in work with children and young people and parents/carers needs a renewed focus.

We found a YOS culture that focuses on effective engagement with children and young people. The Board, managers and staff are open to the issues raised during this inspection and are keen to further develop their services by addressing the recommendations contained in this report. The Hammersmith and Fulham YOS has a strong platform of service delivery and we are confident it will continue to build upon this into the future.

Andrew Bridges
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

September 2007

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We would particularly like to express our gratitude to Martine Rooney and her team for their commitment to the inspection.

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Glossary

Asset	Assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CRP	Court Review Panel
DAT	Drug Action Team
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DTO	Detention and training order
EIP	Early Intervention Panel
Estyn	HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
ETE	Employment, training and education
HM	Her Majesty's
HMIC	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMI Prisons	HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
HMYOI	HM Young Offenders Institution
ISSP	Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme
JAR	Joint Area Review
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PAYP	Positive Activities for Young People
PPO	Prolific and other priority offender
PSR	Pre-sentence report
RoH	Risk of Harm
RoSH	Risk of serious harm
SLA	Service level agreement
SQ	Scoring question
YIP	Youth Inclusion Programme
YISP	Youth Inclusion Support Panel
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOT	Youth Offending Team
YOS	Youth Offending Service

Summary

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Judgement	Descriptor
4	Excellent – performs strongly, well above minimum requirements with outstanding features
3	Good – performs well, consistently above minimum requirements with no important shortcomings
2	Adequate – only meets minimum requirements
1	Inadequate – does not deliver minimum requirements, with many important shortcomings

Work in the courts

- ◇ A strong partnership framework underpinned the services provided by the YOS to the court. The YOS offered a dedicated court team and had built effective joint-working processes with court staff. Arrangements were in place to ensure the YOS knew in advance about the range of cases appearing before the court.
- ◇ The YOS held pre- and post-court meetings. This helped the YOS court staff to go to court fully briefed about cases and to be able to speak in detail about the plans for individual cases.
- ◇ Sentencers and senior court staff highlighted the positive working relationship they had with the YOS. However, they would have welcomed more feedback on the outcomes of the sentences they had passed.
- ◇ The inspection found that improvements were needed in addressing the offence analysis and victim aspects of pre-sentence reports.

Work with children and young people in the community

- ◇ Prevention services had expanded considerably in the year preceding the inspection and there was evident commitment to this area of activity. The Youth Inclusion Programme had been re-organised to ensure that the 50 targeted children and young people were from within the local area. However, few preventative cases had a clear exit strategy.
- ◇ The court review panel looked at the previous day's youth court decisions and planned the following week's work. The meeting was attended by the core YOS staff, and guaranteed consultation with partner agency staff.
- ◇ The YOS risk policy required a higher frequency of contact with children and young people who posed a high Risk of Harm.
- ◇ There were concerns about the sharing of health-related information between YOS staff and specialist health staff for children and young people who were vulnerable or at risk of harming others.
- ◇ The parenting service was not fully embedded in the YOS at the time of the inspection, although an agreed model had been adopted and training places for the YOS had been allocated. Few cases had had a home visit.

Work with children and young people subject to custodial sentences

- ◇ The YOS had a generic service-delivery model for children and young people in secure establishments. This facilitated continuity from custody to the community and we found good attendance by YOS staff at training meetings as well as active work on engaging parents/carers in the process.
- ◇ An in-reach service was provided by YOS Connexions personal advisors, who attended planning and review meetings for sentenced children and young people.
- ◇ All children and young people in secure establishments were referred to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services nurse for assessment and a clinical decision, as were children and young people at risk of such a sentence.

- ◆ The YOS had a process to ensure that all children and young people sent to secure establishments were referred to the Children's Services Department and information was recorded on the departmental service-delivery database.

Victims and restorative justice

- ◆ The inspection found evidence of some targeted reparation programmes, both in terms of community payback and towards specific victims.
- ◆ The YOS had dedicated victim liaison and reparation workers who specialised in the restorative elements of orders and licences. Victim contact details were held confidentially in a separate secure computer folder to which only selected staff had access. Victims were contacted by the victim liaison officer for feedback on their involvement with the service.
- ◆ Insufficient priority had been given to victims' issues in a range of YOS service-delivery processes, for example pre-sentence reports, youth offender panels and intervention records.

Management and leadership

- ◆ The YOS governance arrangements were the subject of a demonstration project for the Youth Justice Board and the Department for Education and Skills, examining the effectiveness of governing YOTs within Children's Trust arrangements. The evident and effective elected-member engagement and coordination of portfolio responsibilities showed a clear commitment to the YOS and a will to support improvement.
- ◆ There was a lack of rigour in the Management Board's scrutiny of the YOS and some aspects of YOS activity had not been effectively considered over time; victims, quality assurance processes, reparation and restorative justice were acknowledged as needing attention.
- ◆ Since its inception, the YOS had developed with partnerships at the core of its ability to operate effectively. Good networks had been created and maintained. Effective information-sharing arrangements were in place with all the key statutory partners and most were working well in practice.
- ◆ The YOS team was characterised by committed, enthusiastic and positive staff. Staff valued managerial supervision, support, role modelling and attention to health and safety issues.
- ◆ Despite the quality assurance system in place in the YOS, the inspection found that a number of cases that had been reviewed by managers had not met basic quality requirements.
- ◆ The YOS core staff group were augmented by temporary and agency staff to meet shortfalls in staffing capacity. This caused some difficulties for the YOS in relation to ensuring new staff were quickly able to operate to the quality standards required within the organisation.
- ◆ The YOS had an underdeveloped approach to evaluating the impact of its work with children and young people.

Recommendations

Changes are necessary to ensure that (primary responsibility is indicated in brackets):

- (1) the quality assurance and other YOS processes deliver an appropriate level of consistency in service delivery (YOS manager)
- (2) the Management Board offers scrutiny and ownership of the broad range of operational responsibilities held by the YOS (Chair of the YOS Management Board)
- (3) all relevant pre-sentence reports adequately address offence analysis and victims' issues (YOS manager)
- (4) all relevant intervention plans and their reviews meet national standards requirements (YOS manager)
- (5) enforcement action meets national standard requirements in all relevant cases (YOS manager)
- (6) all known victims receive appropriate encouragement to participate in, and contribute to, restorative justice processes (YOS manager)
- (7) services for parents/carers are further developed and integrated into the work with children and young people in all relevant cases (YOS manager)
- (8) the YOS routinely analyses and reports on the impact of its work with children and young people, and uses this information to inform service development and improvement (Chair of the YOS Management Board).

Next steps

An improvement plan addressing the recommendations should be submitted to HM Inspectorate of Probation for approval four weeks after the publication of this inspection report. Once agreed, the plan will be forwarded to the Youth Justice Board to monitor its implementation.

Service users' perspective

Children and young people

Twenty six children and young people completed a questionnaire for the inspection, of which 22 questionnaires were interactive on computer software. The remainder were completed on paper, either independently or during an interview with an inspector.

- ◇ The responses were generally positive in respect of the overall experience of the children and young people.
- ◇ All the respondents reported that YOS staff had helped them with issues relating to their court appearances.
- ◇ Almost all of the children and young people felt they were clear about why they were involved with the YOS and the consequences of not keeping appointments.
- ◇ Most of the children and young people felt that the YOS staff communicated well and all of the children and young people reported that they felt the YOS staff were really interested in helping them.
- ◇ Almost two thirds said things had improved for them as a consequence of the work they had done with the YOS. One of the respondents said: *"The YOS has been very helpful towards me. They have helped me with housing, getting a bus pass, food and much more. Also, with getting to appointments on time. We have group work and one-to-one sessions which I find helpful because I can talk about how I feel and what is going on around me. They get to know me better so they can help me"*.
- ◇ Almost all said they felt they had been treated fairly.
- ◇ Two of the respondents said they had things in their lives that had made them feel afraid for their safety and both said that the YOS had helped them to address those issues.
- ◇ Less than half felt they could influence how the YOS was run.
- ◇ Almost two thirds of the children and young people said they were less likely to offend as a result of the work they had done with the YOS. One young person said: *"I just want to say thanks to all for helping me with all my problems and helping me to get that step forwards in my life"*.

Six interviews were conducted with children and young people in custody.

- ◇ The children and young people interviewed from HM Young Offenders Institution Huntercombe were located some distance from the YOS. Their feedback reflected the reduced contact levels offered to that institution. Whilst there were no adverse comments made about the YOS by the respondents, it was clear that they had not had the intensity of contact and

assistance routinely offered to children and young people who were placed closer to the YOS.

- ◇ Most felt that they had been treated fairly and with respect.

Parents/carers

Eight questionnaires were completed by parents/carers, either independently or during an interview with an inspector.

- ◇ Most parents/carers were happy with the service they had received. They reported that they had been kept informed by the YOS of the work that was being done with the children and young people. However, few parents/carers reported having been offered a service to assist them with the parenting of their children.

Victims

Four questionnaires were completed by victims of offending by children and young people, either independently or during an interview with an inspector.

- ◇ In general, the victims that provided feedback to the inspection were very happy with the service they had received from the YOS. All valued their contact with the YOS staff. Two reported that the work that had been done was important in helping them come to terms with the impact of the offences to which they had been subjected.

Sharing good practice

Below are examples of good practice we found in the YOS.

Work in the courts

General criterion: 1.2

The YOS had a single borough youth court, sitting each Wednesday. On Thursday mornings, staff from across the YOS met to review the previous day's court decisions and plan for the sentencing events the following week. Managers led the meeting through the different types of cases, conditional bail, secure remands, results and pre-sentence reports. Crown Court decisions and cases for the following week were also reviewed. The meeting was the formal forum for consulting colleagues on pre-sentence report assessments and proposals. By having all partner agency staff at the meeting this ensured consultation with specialist staff.

Work with children and young people who have offended

General criterion: 2.6

Andrea was 16 years of age. She had been attending the YOS on a referral order for theft and had been referred to the health worker for issues with self-image. With support, she was able to identify her own goal – she wanted to walk down the street and be confident enough to show her face, rather than hiding under her hood. Following sessions with the health worker, which included getting out of the YOS environment into everyday settings, she was gradually able to go out confidently on her own. In time she gradually reduced depressive symptoms. The work continued with Andrea and she has developed the skills to problem solve some of these issues for herself.

Work with children and young people who have offended

General criterion: 2.7

Carl was a 17 year old young man and was known to the health worker. He had a number of behavioural problems. When he was in a secure establishment the YOS health worker gathered information on his mental state. Discussion with the custodial mental health practitioner indicated concerns about his deteriorating mental health. The YOS health worker was able to share a mental health assessment taken while Carl was in the community. This included helpful contextual and personal information. Carl was referred to the youth offending institution psychiatrist. His care by the custodial healthcare team led to an improvement in his condition.

Work with children and young people who have offended

**General criterion:
2.8**

The YOS helped a group of children and young people apply for a grant. The funds were achieved to design a programme to look at citizenship in the context of the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the European Union. Thus, the Rolling Europe Group ran for six months. Among their activities, the group visited the European Parliament and met a Member of the European Parliament, who described them as more prepared and knowledgeable than the usual groups from schools. Feedback from some group members showed their experience of the programme was a profound and positive learning opportunity.

Outcomes of work with children and young people in the community

**General criterion:
2.10**

The Prevention Summit was a series of meetings consulting with service users and partners on key issues relating to youth crime. It aimed to change the way service users and partners influenced the planning of services. The meetings were hosted by different agencies and addressed issues including, keeping children and young people safe, bullying and gangs. The YOS learned many things from the children and young people, one of which was that some children and young people doubt the abilities of adults to keep them safe, so they adopt behaviours that address their own fears and this might present as challenging behaviour.

Management and leadership

**General criterion:
5.2**

Following the death of young person a Gold Group was convened by the borough police commander. The YOS was among the relevant local authority partners invited to participate. Active information exchange between agencies assisted the investigation and the management of safety issues in the community. The YOS played a full part in this process and contributed to the activities geared at preventing additional attacks in the community and supporting the wider youth population to come to terms with the murder.

1. WORK IN THE COURTS

1.1 General criterion:

Children and young people are safeguarded and the likelihood of their further offending reduced by the provision of an appropriate pre-sentence service, including bail supervision and support programmes.

The West London Youth Court was served by the Hammersmith and Fulham YOS in conjunction with two others: Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea. The three boroughs had worked in partnership with court staff to produce a common set of protocols to promote consistency in the services provided to the court.

The Hammersmith and Fulham YOS court team consisted of a manager and senior worker, a remand support worker and a YOS worker. Specialist health staff undertook substance misuse and CAMHS assessments when required. In addition, a dedicated court administrator supported the work. A YOS representative was present at each Crown Court plea, and directions and sentencing hearing.

Strengths:

- (1) The YOS had access to services related to children and young people remanded to local authority accommodation. Remand support was provided through a dedicated remand worker and additional capacity came from a remand support project worker.
- (2) YOS and court staff communication arrangements were in place that ensured the YOS was alerted to the possibility of children and young people being at risk of a secure or custodial remand.
- (3) Systems were in place to ensure YOS court services included weekend and bank holiday coverage.
- (4) YOS staff had remote access to the local authority information system called Frameworki. This enabled them to access relevant local authority safeguarding information on children and young people appearing before the court.
- (5) The service had access to two remand fostering placements. The foster carers had received additional training and were supported by the family placements unit. One placement was in the adjacent borough and the second was in south London. This provided an 'out of the neighbourhood' package where it was a necessary feature of a credible remand proposal.
- (6) A range of support and supervision packages were readily available to the

court to address objections to bail. This included access to accommodation and bespoke bail supervision arrangements. YOS staff followed up those cases where subsequent bail applications were necessary.

- (7) YOS staff had effective links with the local authority Looked After Children team who had responsibility for reducing the likelihood of children and young people entering, or remaining in, the Looked After Children system.
- (8) The YOS demonstrated a year-on-year reduction in the number of secure and custodial remands. YOS records showed that the total secure and custodial remands for 2005 consisted of 69 episodes, compared with only 38 for 2006.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Whilst systems were in place for the YOS to be notified of secure or custodial remands, responsibilities for the implementation of statutory functions were described as 'negotiable, with the child at the centre of the arrangements'. These arrangements led to some uncertainty for staff, and the inspection found at least one example where safeguarding and statutory requirements had not been adequately addressed.
- (2) The YOS was not always fully engaged in, nor had copies of, care plans for children and young people who were Looked After Children and involved in offending.

1.2 General criterion:

Courts are assisted in making informed, timely and effective decisions by the provision of good quality reports and appropriate information from the YOT.

The services provided by the YOS had been incorporated into the planning of the court layout and the YOS benefited from dedicated resources within the court building.

Strengths:

- (1) The YOS had a clear and solid staff structure for court work. This included a core group of 'lead' staff who covered court administration and professional services. Other staff backed up these workers on a rota basis. The YOS ensured the court was staffed by experienced staff with whom the court staff were familiar. Opportunities existed for other YOS staff to gain experience of court work.
- (2) The YOS trained all staff in court work.
- (3) Clear arrangements were in place to ensure courts were staffed on weekends and bank holidays.

- (4) Sentencers and senior court staff highlighted the positive working relationship with the Hammersmith and Fulham YOS and saw the team as being fully integrated into relevant court operations, management and developmental processes.
- (5) YOS staff regularly attended relevant court user meetings and there was participation in magistrates' training and information-giving events.
- (6) The YOS had a system to obtain feedback from sentencers on the quality of the reports they had received. Sentencers indicated they were generally content with the various reports provided by the YOS.
- (7) The YOS policy was to provide proposals for community penalties in PSRs that were credible and had the confidence of the court. A procedure was in place to control cases where a secure establishment was assessed as a necessary proposal. A senior manager reviewed those assessments and, if in agreement, endorsed the proposal.
- (8) Post-secure establishment conferences were held to examine the issues identified in cases where custodial sentences had been made and the YOS had made proposals for community penalties.
- (9) Children and young people at risk of secure establishment disposals were identified at the court team preparation meeting. This meeting reviewed the court list, gathered information on previous convictions and responses to supervision. PPO cases were identified for fast tracking. The 'at risk of secure establishment' cases were referred for assessment by ISSP. When a support package was identified as necessary the ISSP caseworker compiled a proposed package and attended court to present it there.
- (10) A pre-court panel was convened for children and young people who were appearing before the court for the first time. Where a secure establishment sentence had been indicated by the sentencer when the PSR was requested, a contract was agreed between the child or young person, their parents/carers and panel members. These outline contracts were incorporated into the PSRs as part of the sentence proposals and could be included as a sample contract should a referral order be imposed.
- (11) YOS staff felt there was some evidence that black and minority ethnic children and young people experienced different sentencing patterns from other groups. As part of the strategy for addressing this issue, these cases were allocated to more experienced workers.
- (12) The inspection found that, in general, PSRs were completed using the required format, on time and based on interviews with the children and young people and their parents/carers.
- (13) Almost two thirds of PSRs had clear differentiation of RoH and likelihood of reoffending.
- (14) All the PSRs prepared on PPOs adequately addressed RoH and likelihood of reoffending issues.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Sentencers would have welcomed more feedback on the outcomes of sentences passed, with particular emphasis on progress in respect of cases on the cusp of custodial and community-based sentences. They also commented on the need for more emphasis on offence analysis and victims' issues in reports.
- (2) Almost two thirds of PSRs did not adequately include an analysis of the offence, as opposed to a description. In preparation for the inspection the YOS had identified the need to improve its work in relation to the offence analysis section in PSRs and to ensure this was used to engage children and young people and their families in understanding the significance of their offence.
- (3) Few of the relevant PSRs contained sufficient victim information.
- (4) Only a quarter of the relevant PSRs had an assessment of the child or young person's vulnerability included in the report.
- (5) The health and substance misuse component of PSRs was inconsistent and did not always reflect the range of issues identified in either the Asset or in the separate health file. This had, on occasions, left children and young people vulnerable to safeguarding issues, as well as the potential of causing harm to others where violence had been a feature of the offending behaviour.
- (6) For those children and young people already known to CAMHS there was a clear process for obtaining forensic psychiatric reports where these were needed prior to sentencing. For other children and young people it was left to the court to order such assessments, which could lead to difficulties between health and the Children's Services Department in respect of funding.
- (7) Diversity issues were not satisfactorily addressed in more than two thirds of PSRs.

Conclusion: These criteria are assessed as **good**.

2. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY

Work with children and young people at risk of offending

2.1 General criterion:

The YOT (or others on its behalf) undertake appropriate activities to prevent children and young people from offending.

Prevention services had expanded considerably in the year preceding the inspection as the local authority had placed significant emphasis on the prevention agenda. There was evident commitment to this area of activity. There were five elements of prevention activity: YIP, YISP (called the EIP), mentoring, PAYP and diversion. At the time of the inspection approximately one third of the YOS staff team focused on this work. The YIP had been re-organised in the year preceding the inspection to ensure that the 50 targeted children and young people were from within the local area. A restorative justice scorecard system was being used by the antisocial behaviour teams in their efforts to reduce antisocial behaviour and first-time entries into the criminal justice system.

Strengths:

- (1) In almost all of the prevention cases inspected, Onset had been completed within the national standard timescale.
- (2) Onset assessments were generally of good quality and involved appropriate involvement with parents/carers and relevant agencies.
- (3) In almost all of the cases we reviewed there was evidence of a clear referral that was linked to the criteria of the scheme.
- (4) In most cases, the child or young person had completed an *Over to You* self-assessment.
- (5) All cases had clearly recorded race and ethnicity information.
- (6) Most cases had plans in place to address issues of potential discrimination/disadvantage.
- (7) Preventative interventions consistently focused on offending behaviour, staying safe and community reintegration issues.
- (8) RoH screening had been carried out in almost all cases.
- (9) Only one case featured RoH issues and these had been addressed

adequately.

- (10) The Diversion Project used restorative justice as part of a pre-arrest scheme with Police safer neighbourhood teams. These teams had been trained in communication with children and young people and in identifying cases that could achieve effective outcomes without arrest.
- (11) PAYP was directly linked to the PPO strategy, providing key workers for Prevent and Deter targeted children and young people.
- (12) A family group conferencing approach to preventative work was both well used and well understood by the staff involved. The EIP's model of family group conferencing promoted the responsibility for behaviour being taken by the family and the child or young person together. EIP used this model to maximise family involvement in integrated support plans. One of the EIP coordinator's roles was to improve provision for black and minority ethnic families.
- (13) Restorative justice workshops had been delivered to junior schools through the EIP. The Diversion Project was in the process of training the borough's adolescent residential unit staff in restorative justice problem solving. This was intended to reduce the frequency of staff calling the police to resolve internal behaviour problems.
- (14) Mentoring had been expanded to provide opportunities for volunteers in reparation and RAP.
- (15) Two staff had recently received training in domestic violence, which was a significant issue in a number of prevention cases.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Home visits were undertaken in less than half of the prevention cases.
- (2) Almost three quarters of the cases had either no intervention plan, or had a plan of insufficient quality.
- (3) The quality of intervention plan reviews were insufficient in more than a half of the cases.
- (4) Clarification was needed in respect of the exit arrangements for prevention work. Few prevention cases had a clear exit strategy.

2.2 General criterion:

The health of children and young people who are at risk of offending is promoted by the work of the YOT and its partners.

There was a full-time nurse seconded from CAMHS who worked within the YOS, and CAMHS were available to children and young people up to the age of 18

years. There was a full-time lead substance misuse worker funded by the DAT and there had been an increase to 2.5 substance misuse workers employed by the YOS. A seconded part-time worker from Druglink and a sexual health worker were employed by the YOS.

Strengths:

- (1) Assessments of physical and emotional health needs were undertaken in well over three quarters of the preventative cases we inspected.
- (2) In the health files, there was evidence of good individual work being carried out by the health worker with some children and young people. However, not all of this was evidenced on the case file.
- (3) Children and young people and their parents/carers were consistently involved in their assessments.
- (4) Following a concerted effort by the health and substance misuse workers and YOS team members, there had been improvements in communication and service provision in the past year. In the autumn of 2006 a new referral process and assessment tool was implemented to help caseworkers make referrals to the substance misuse workers.
- (5) There was a range of interventions available from health and substance misuse workers, including cognitive behaviour therapy, family therapy, an anger management group, counselling, eating/life skills and art therapy, risk and harm minimisation, as well as information giving.
- (6) The YOS offered health-focused groups for prevention cases, for example a sexual health group for girls and young women.
- (7) There was evidence of the child or young person being helped to access appropriate health services in two thirds of the relevant cases.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Some health information was kept separately by specialist workers and key staff may not have been aware of crucial safeguarding or risk issues. The operation of separate files by health and substance misuse workers limited communication.
- (2) There was no needle exchange service specifically for children and young people, and access to prescribing and detox services for children and young people were unclear.
- (3) There was no black or minority ethnic group provision by either CAMHS or the DAT. There was little recording of issues relating to specific diversity needs or the best methods of engagement to be used with individual children and young people.

2.3 General criterion:

Children and young people who are at risk of offending are safeguarded through the work of the YOT and its partners, to contribute to the promotion of their welfare and, where applicable, their protection.

Strengths:

- (1) YOS staff routinely checked the status of children and young people with the Children's Services Department, and social care status was generally recorded clearly.
- (2) As a result of the twice-yearly Prevention Summit the YOS had implemented random searching of visitors for weapons in order to promote safety on the streets and a joint project with the police in three schools using a Theatre in Education Company.
- (3) Two of the three relevant cases had a vulnerability action plan.
- (4) Action to address safeguarding needs was seen in two thirds of the relevant cases.

Area for improvement:

- (1) In two of the five relevant cases, there was no evidence of liaison between the YOS staff and social care services.

2.4 General criterion:

Children and young people who are at risk of offending are enabled and encouraged to achieve their potential.

Strengths:

- (1) YOS staff routinely assessed the ETE needs of children and young people.
- (2) The YOS had developed links and established a positive working relationship with staff at Bridge Academy (a pupil referral unit). Education was provided on site at the YOS for pupils who were unable to work in large group settings. Restorative justice approaches had been used with children and young people who had been temporarily excluded.
- (3) All relevant cases had evidence of work directed at supporting the child or young person in accessing relevant local services.
- (4) In two of three cases the YOS had taken action to reintegrate the child or young person back into full-time education.

Conclusion: These criteria are assessed as **adequate**.

Work with children and young people who have offended

2.5 General criterion:

The YOT (or others on its behalf) undertake appropriate activities to prevent children and young people from reoffending.

The YOS had adopted a generic approach to work with children and young people who had offended. The team focused on continuity of contact with the child or young person. Team management and communication arrangements promoted multi-disciplinary working.

Strengths:

- (1) Asset completion was generally informed by a specific meeting with the child or young person and appropriate contact with parents/carers, other agencies and other relevant assessments.
- (2) More than three quarters of initial Assets were of sufficient quality.
- (3) Most children and young people completed a *What do you think?* form.
- (4) Race and ethnicity was clearly recorded in almost all cases and discriminatory/disadvantage issues were routinely assessed at an early stage.
- (5) Most cases had an appropriate classification of RoSH. Four of the six completed RoSH assessments were of a satisfactory standard.
- (6) Youth offender panels routinely had a written assessment for the proceedings and, in general, parents/carers attended the meetings.
- (7) Initial intervention plans addressed community integration, offending behaviour and safeguarding issues.
- (8) Constructive interventions challenged the child or young person to take responsibility for their offending in more than two thirds of cases.
- (9) Most cases had evidence that the child or young person had been informed about the requirements of their orders and the consequences for non-compliance.
- (10) Youth offender panel arrangements had a good range of practices in relation to the range of recruitment methods used for panel members, the training provided, and the support and supervision for panel members. These measures drew in a broad range of people who reflected the diverse make up of the local population.
- (11) Final warnings were organised as a surgery to which children and young people were bailed for assessment and programme delivery. This helped to maximise participation in programmes. A multi-disciplinary team delivered the programme. A service manager oversaw this staff group. They met in advance of the final warning surgery and considered the needs of the

individuals referred that week. Children and young people were assessed and a core or specific programme provided. This could be delivered to a small group or to individuals depending on identified risk and diversity factors.

- (12) A range of reparation activities were used to provide opportunities for children and young people to make a positive contribution, including environmental projects and work with local football teams.
- (13) The ISSP had a dedicated room promoting basic skills and an intergenerational project run in the last year engaged elders in direct work with children and young people.
- (14) The YOS risk policy targeted resources on high RoH cases and required a higher frequency of contact with these children and young people.
- (15) The YOS had a breach process for all children and young people on community orders where two appointments had been missed, with the exception of those children and young people subject to ISSP. A panel was convened chaired by a senior staff member, a breach report was prepared by the supervising officer and a decision made with the emphasis on gaining compliance.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Asset was completed outside the national standards timescale in a half of the cases we inspected.
- (2) In only three of the six RoSH assessments were victims' issues addressed satisfactorily.
- (3) Few cases had had a home visit.
- (4) Less than a half of initial intervention plans had evidence of being completed on time, or having been agreed by children and young people or their parents/carers. Few contained outcome-oriented objectives.
- (5) Significant numbers of intervention plan reviews did not include a review of RoH issues and were not based on a review of Asset.
- (6) Two thirds of youth offender panel meetings took place outside the 20 day national standards requirements, and over half of referral order contracts commenced after the five day requirement.
- (7) In almost two thirds of cases, insufficient attention had been given to ensuring the compliance of the child or young person with the requirements of their order. Timely breach action had not been carried out in most of the relevant cases.
- (8) Recording in many case files did not capture the work that was being done with the children and young people, for example breach panel discussions on relevant cases were not recorded.

2.6 General criterion:

The health of children and young people who have offended is promoted by the work of the YOT.

Strengths:

- (1) Most cases with an identified substance/alcohol misuse or mental health need had been referred for specialist help.
- (2) In all the cases where an intervention had been offered it was seen to promote positive mental health and discourage alcohol and substance misuse.
- (3) The nurse undertook quarterly training in mental health assessments with all case managers. There was also a Tier 1 drug awareness group that met monthly.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) There was not a clearly identifiable physical health screening or referral process.
- (2) Whilst there was evidence of good work by both health and substance misuse workers within the YOS, the integration of these services into the overall work of the YOS was not always evidenced in the intervention plans.
- (3) There were concerns in relation to the sharing of health-related information between YOS staff and specialist health staff in respect of children and young people who were vulnerable or at risk of harming others.
- (4) Transition protocols for children and young people moving into adult health and substance misuse services were yet to be developed.

2.7 General criterion:

Children and young people who have offended are safeguarded through the work of the YOT to contribute to the promotion of their welfare and, where applicable, their protection.

Strengths:

- (1) In most relevant cases there had been liaison between YOS staff and social care staff.
- (2) Following a recent high profile murder of a young person in the area, the YOS had responded by briefing staff in relation to how to work with the children and young people on their caseloads in the aftermath of this offence, particularly in relation to safeguarding issues. A group work programme was provided to look specifically at street crime and how children and young people could keep themselves safe.

- (3) YOS staff routinely accessed Frameworki, the Children's Services Department database, to identify cases where there were safeguarding issues and to integrate YOS practice into existing professional networks.
- (4) In three quarters of the relevant cases, interventions and joint work helped children and young people to stay safe.
- (5) Both the completed vulnerability action plans seen as part of the inspection were appropriate to the needs of the two cases.
- (6) Effective joint work between the Looked After Children team and the YOS contributed to the relatively low levels of children and young people who were Looked After that received final warnings, reprimands and convictions, compared to the national picture.
- (7) The YOS was represented on MAPPA and LSCB.
- (8) The YOS had contributed to the revised all-London Child Protection Policy for youth justice provisions.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) In three of the four relevant cases, a referral had not been made to Children's Social Care Services.
- (2) Only two of the seven relevant cases had a vulnerability action plan.

2.8 General criterion:

Children and young people who have offended are enabled and encouraged to achieve their potential.

Strengths:

- (1) The assessment of ETE needs was routinely assessed.
- (2) In most cases with an identified ETE need, an intervention to address the issues was offered.
- (3) Interventions routinely promoted learning opportunities and the attainment of ETE objectives.
- (4) Almost all the cases had interventions geared towards promoting learning opportunities and attainment by children and young people.
- (5) The YOS was able to access relevant local authority ETE resources in most cases.

Area for improvement:

- (1) Action to ensure the reintegration of children and young people who had been excluded from education was seen in less than half of the cases.

Conclusion: These criteria are assessed as **adequate**.

Work with parents/carers

2.9 General criterion:

Parents/carers are supported in addressing their children's antisocial and offending behaviour.

Strengths:

- (1) Almost three quarters of parents/carers had been informed of the requirements of the interventions undertaken by their children and young people.
- (2) Two thirds of parents/carers were kept informed about the work being undertaken with their children and young people.
- (3) The use of a single cross-agency model of parenting work was being adopted by the YOS.
- (4) When parents/carers were involved in assessments, the assessments generally reflected the specific needs of the parent/carer.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Almost two thirds of cases did not contain an assessment of parenting skills.
- (2) There was insufficient focus within youth offender panels on work with parents/carers.
- (3) Less than half of interventions with parents/carers promoted their ability to care, control, safeguard and promote the welfare of the children or young people.
- (4) The parenting service had not become fully embedded in the YOS at the time of the inspection, although an agreed model had been adopted and training places for the YOS had been allocated.
- (5) A parenting worker led work with parents/carers, however, this post had not been filled consistently.

Conclusion: This criterion is assessed as **adequate**.

Outcomes of work with children and young people in the community

2.10 General criterion:

The YOT promotes consultation with service users about the services they receive, and this information is used to improve outcomes.

Strengths:

- (1) The inspection found evidence that the YOS attempted to engage children and young people in consultation about the services on offer, for example a letter written to the YOS manager about the development of the Turnaround project by members of the group. The response from YOS management team showed its willingness to respond to the suggestions made by the participants.
- (2) Consultation processes with children and young people were being improved through the installation of computers in service user work rooms with web access, and the commissioning of a set of questionnaires to improve feedback, beyond the *What do you think?* form.
- (3) Feedback from service users was used to adapt some specific aspects of service delivery in the YOS, for example feedback from service users was used to adapt the processes for involving families in preventative work.
- (4) The YOS had a written complaints procedure. Feedback from children and young people suggested that they were routinely advised about the availability of this process. The inspection did not find any examples of the procedure being used.

2.11 General criterion:

The YOT demonstrates positive outcomes in its work with children and young people in the community.

Strengths:

- (1) Most prevention cases had not seen an increase in restrictive interventions and the risk profile had not increased for any of the children or young people. Safeguarding issues had been effectively managed in five of the eight relevant cases.
- (2) In very few of the prevention cases inspected had the child or young person been cautioned or convicted of an offence.
- (3) Most children and young people complied with the requirements of the preventative programme.
- (4) In three of the four cases where Onset had been rescored, an improvement

over the initial score was noted.

- (5) Progress against the first priority criminogenic factor was noted in 29% of preventative cases; 71% showed no change and none showed deterioration.
- (6) Greater impact was noted in the second and third priority criminogenic factors. The second priority factors showed 43% improvement, 43% no change and 14% deterioration, with similar figures for the third priority.
- (7) In preventative work, three of the eight relevant cases showed that learning outcomes achieved by the children and young people had been applied in their daily lives.
- (8) Resources were used efficiently in almost all preventative cases. There was evidence that most children and young people showed improvements in their attitudes and behaviour.
- (9) Most cases of children and young people who had offended had not seen an increase in restrictive interventions and the risk profile had not increased for any of the children or young people. Safeguarding issues had been effectively managed in over two thirds of the relevant cases.
- (10) Asset was rescored in over two thirds of the cases we reviewed. In almost half of these cases an improvement over the initial score was noted.
- (11) Progress against the first priority criminogenic factor was noted in 17% of cases involving children and young people who had offended; 79% showed no change and 3% showed deterioration. Similar results were noted for progress against the second and third priority factors.
- (12) In cases involving children and young people who had offended, over a third showed that the learning outcomes achieved by the children and young people had been applied in their daily lives.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) A lack of sustained focus on the evaluation of outcome issues in relation to the *Every Child Matters* agenda was noted. Analysis of outcomes was primarily focused on the prevention of offending or reoffending by children and young people.
- (2) The YOS had an underdeveloped approach to evaluating the impact of its preventative work and work with children and young people who had offended.
- (3) Onset was rescored on only half of the cases reviewed, thus it was difficult to measure progress in those cases.
- (4) Over a third of children and young people who had offended had not complied with the requirements of their orders.

Conclusion: These criteria are assessed as **good**.

3. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUBJECT TO CUSTODIAL SENTENCES

3.1 General criterion:

The YOT (or others on its behalf), undertake appropriate activities during the custodial phase of the sentence to prevent children and young people from reoffending.

The YOS had a generic service delivery model for DTO case allocation, facilitating continuity for children and young people from secure establishment to community. Specific support came from a dedicated remand support worker and the involvement of other specialist staff in DTO cases as required. The majority of the children and young people associated with the YOS and subject to custodial sentences were located in HMYOI Feltham. The close proximity of the YOS to this institution underpinned good joint working on DTO cases.

Strengths:

- (1) Asset completion was generally informed by a specific meeting with the child or young person and appropriate contact with parents/carers, other agencies and other relevant assessments.
- (2) Two thirds of initial Assets were of sufficient quality.
- (3) Race and ethnicity was clearly recorded in all cases.
- (4) Plans had been put in place to minimise the effects of disadvantage in all the relevant cases.
- (5) Initial training plans routinely addressed community integration, offending behaviour and RoH issues.
- (6) Three quarters of training plans were sensitive to diversity issues.
- (7) All the cases that required an intervention in respect of housing issues had seen this matter addressed.
- (8) The inspection found good attendance at planning meetings, especially initial and final meetings, as well as active work on engaging parents/carers in the process.
- (9) There was consistent evidence that all relevant documentation was sent to the custodial establishment at the point of sentence.
- (10) In two of the three relevant cases, the child or young person had completed a

What do you think? form.

- (11) Caseworkers attended most training plan review meetings at custodial institutions and review meetings were mostly held within national standards requirements.
- (12) The inspection found good liaison between the YOS and the YJB on the appropriate transfer of children and young people between custodial institutions.
- (13) An in-reach service was provided by YOS Connexions personal advisors, who attended planning and review meetings for sentenced children and young people. This helped to improve engagement with ETE on release.
- (14) More than three quarters of cases showed good communication between the YOS and the secure establishment staff.
- (15) The inspection found evidence that the YOS routinely encouraged and assisted parents/carers to maintain contact with their children and young people during the custodial phase.

Area for improvement:

- (1) One of the four RoSH assessments was not done to a satisfactory standard.

3.2 General criterion:

Children and young people are safeguarded through the work of the YOT during the custodial phase of the sentence to contribute to the promotion of their welfare and, where applicable, their protection.

Strengths:

- (1) All three vulnerability action plans met the assessed need in each case.
- (2) The social care status of the children and young people was clearly recorded in all of the cases.
- (3) In almost all of the cases, appropriate action was taken to address safeguarding issues.
- (4) All children and young people in secure establishments were referred to the CAMHS nurse for an assessment and a clinical decision. The CAMHS nurse assessed children and young people at risk of a secure establishment sentence at court. There was evidence of contact by the CAMHS nurse and the substance misuse workers with custodial establishments during the course of the children and young peoples' sentences.
- (5) The YOS had a process to ensure that all children and young people sent to secure establishments were referred to the Children's Services Department

and information recorded on the Frameworki database. A draft safeguarding policy and set of procedures had been devised. This addressed the identification of children and young people who should be referred to the Children's Services Department, interagency working, exchanges of information, and safeguarding responsibilities for YOS staff.

- (6) A YOS senior social worker took the service lead for Looked After Children, including those in secure establishments.

3.3 General criterion:

The YOT (or others on its behalf), undertake appropriate activities during the community phase of the sentence, to prevent children and young people from reoffending.

Strengths:

- (1) In most cases the child or young person had had a timely and comprehensive induction to the YOS following release from the secure establishment.
- (2) Constructive interventions challenged the child or young person to take responsibility for their offending in four of the five relevant cases.
- (3) Most cases had evidence that the child or young person had been informed about the requirements of their licences and the consequences for non-compliance.
- (4) Where required, access to specialist services in respect of health and accommodation needs, were followed through from the secure establishment into the community.
- (5) In most of the relevant cases, an assessment of literacy issues had been carried out within ten days of the child or young person's return to the community.
- (6) Most cases had seen the continuation of the child or young person's learning plan into the work undertaken with them in the community.
- (7) Effective action to address non-compliance had taken place in all three of the relevant cases.
- (8) RAP had capacity to deliver practical assistance to children and young people leaving a secure establishment. The RAP worker addressed substance misuse and accommodation issues. The resettlement officer had access to an £11,000 flexible fund to promote stable community re-integration. The work was underpinned by good links with caseworkers. The RAP targeted those at risk of a secure establishment disposal and those returning to the community after such a sentence, where substance misuse was a risk factor; eligible children and young people were identified at the CRP.

- (9) Hammersmith and Fulham YOS was the lead agency for the West London ISSP, which was used to help manage high risk children and young people on early release in the community. The RAP was used in the ISSP timetable to encourage children and young people on ISSP to participate in that work.
- (10) The CAMHS nurse working within the YOS carried out interviews with all children and young people at the point of discharge for assessment and follow up.
- (11) The induction in the community included an Asset review, which informed subsequent case planning. In general, work in the community built upon previous work in respect of community integration, offending behaviour, RoH issues and safeguarding.
- (12) The RAP workers attend pre-release planning meetings and were actively involved with children and young people on release.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Only half of the six DTO cases inspected had had a timely and purposeful home visit.
- (2) Only half of intervention plans were reviewed in accordance with national standards.

3.4 General criterion:

The YOT demonstrates positive outcomes in its work with children and young people subject to custodial sentences.

Strengths:

- (1) Evidence of responding to the dynamic nature of risk was found as one third of children and young people who had been subject to a custodial sentence had seen an increase in restrictive interventions. One of the nine cases had seen a decrease in restrictive interventions.
- (2) None of the nine cases in the sample had seen the child or young person convicted of a fresh offence.
- (3) The children and young people complied with the requirements of their supervision in more than three quarters of the cases.
- (4) Asset was rescored in more than two thirds of the cases reviewed and 40% of those showed an improvement over the initial score.
- (5) Progress against the first priority criminogenic factor was noted in 44% of preventative cases; 56% showed no change and none showed deterioration.
- (6) Greater impact was noted in the second priority criminogenic factors; they

showed 55% improvement, 45% no change and 0% deterioration.

- (7) The third priority criminogenic factors showed 33% improvement, 67% no change and 0% deterioration.
- (8) For those children and young people who had offended, progress against the first priority criminogenic factors was noted in just under half of cases involving children and young people who had been subject to a custodial sentence. Just over half showed no change and none showed deterioration.
- (9) For second priority criminogenic factors, over half showed improvement. Just under half showed no change and none deteriorated.
- (10) For third priority criminogenic factors one third showed improvement, two thirds showed no change and none showed deterioration.
- (11) For children and young people who had been in a secure establishment, one third showed that learning outcomes had been applied in their daily lives.
- (12) Resources were used to achieve required objectives in almost all cases.
- (13) Evaluation of RAP work involved a basket of factors including: feedback from both children and young people and their parents/carers; analysis of the seriousness and frequency of reoffending; engagement with ETE and mid-point progress reviews.
- (14) The YOS had recognised that black and minority ethnic children and young people continued to be over-represented in secure establishments and since 2005 the YOS had had a Race Action Plan that included this issue.

Area for improvement:

- (1) The YOS had an underdeveloped approach to evaluating the impact of its work with children and young people who had been in secure establishments.

Conclusion: These criteria are assessed as **good**.

4. VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

4.1 General criterion:

Victims of children and young people who have offended feel that they have been assisted by the intervention of the YOT in feeling safer and achieving closure.

The YOS managed the process for identifying victims of offences internally through the YOS police staff. Victims' details went to the victim liaison officer who made contact with victims to offer opportunities to participate in YOS processes.

Strengths:

- (1) Victim contact details were held confidentially in a separate secure computer folder to which only selected staff had access.
- (2) Victims were contacted by the victim liaison officer for feedback on their involvement in the service. A small sample showed that all those contacted were satisfied with their involvement in the criminal justice process.
- (3) Feedback received by the inspectors from victims suggested they felt they had received a helpful service from the YOS and had been treated with respect.
- (4) Most community reparation projects were started within the first three months of the order.
- (5) The inspection found evidence of some good and targeted reparation programmes, both in terms of community payback and towards specific victims. Reparation work included educative workshops, for example participation in a motor offence workshop led by a visiting police officer, and contributions to the Prevention Summit focus groups. The YOS had established placements with local community organisations, including Groundwork (an environmental charity), Age Concern and Fulham Football Club.
- (6) The YOS had developed two of the national trainers in restorative justice techniques, having been a pilot area for the YJB's Restorative Justice in Schools project. The whole service was trained in restorative justice methods in 2006, aiming to increase the use of restorative justice methods of addressing offending by children and young people.
- (7) The YOS had dedicated victim liaison and reparation workers who specialised

in the restorative elements of orders and licences. These staff took part in the CRP and were part of the final warning surgery.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) Only half of the cases showed that appropriate priority had been given to the victims' safety issues.
- (2) Insufficient priority had been given to the inclusion of victims' issues in a range of service delivery processes, for example PSRs, youth offender panels and intervention records. Some development of letters of apology was noted, though these were not consistently evident.
- (3) Only a quarter of victims had been offered an opportunity to participate in a restorative justice process. None had taken up the offer.
- (4) Only a quarter of children and young people had been involved in a reparation activity.

Conclusion: This criterion is assessed as **adequate**.

5. MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Leadership and planning

5.1 General criterion:

The Management Board works actively with others, including the YOT manager, in an integrated way to maximise the likelihood of improving outcomes for children and young people.

Despite its relatively small size, the Hammersmith and Fulham YOS had developed a full range of services. The YOS addressed a broad span of responsibilities and this was a challenge for the organisation. The governing body for the YOS was the Children and Young People's Partnership Board. These governance arrangements were the subject of a demonstration project for the YJB and DfES, examining the effectiveness of governing YOTs within Children's Trust arrangements. The YOS had parallel reporting to the CDRP. The YOS papers for the two bodies were identical, covering specific themes and YOS performance.

Strengths:

- (1) The Management Board oversaw the development of the Youth Justice Plan and its integration into a range of other relevant planning arrangements in the locality.
- (2) A YOS Action Plan was reviewed by the YOS management team quarterly, identifying steps to address unmet targets. YOS performance was strong in relation to YJB targets and evidence was found of steps taken to address past areas of performance that needed attention.
- (3) There were benefits gained by the overlapping reporting arrangements for the YOS. It helped to ensure the coordinated integration of YOS activities into the key work-streams of both its governing bodies.
- (4) A YOS manager attended the MAPPA and the LSCB.
- (5) Recent arrangements to extend and re-balance the Children and Young People's Partnership Board by the addition of representatives from schools and CAMHS were positive. Further discussions had taken place to consider a parent/carer representative, as well as links to the borough youth forum.
- (6) There were a number of local activities that focused on services to children and young people and the community – notably the Prevention Summit and the Youth Commission. These evidenced a considerable political and community drive towards revitalising strategic directions and partnerships.

The YOS played a full and important part in these developments.

- (7) The YOS manager had responsibility for overseeing the borough's RESPECT Agenda mandatory theme on Intensive Family Support, reflecting the integration of both the YOS' governing bodies' interests.
- (8) The YOS contributed to devising the Children and Young People's Plan. The Youth Justice Plan continued to be written as a distinct plan defining partnership activity to reduce offending by children and young people.
- (9) The evident and effective elected-member engagement and coordination of portfolio responsibilities showed a clear commitment to the YOS and a will to support improvement.
- (10) YOS matters featured in the agendas being pursued by both the Children and Young People's Partnership Board and the CDRP.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) There was a limited rigour in the Management Board's scrutiny of the YOS, with an imbalance in the attention given to the broad range of elements of the service. This had meant that some aspects of YOS activity had not been effectively considered over time such as: victims, quality assurance processes, reparation and restorative justice were acknowledged as needing attention.
- (2) The challenging budgetary and financial landscape where efficiency, rather than effectiveness, was the driver left a number of service delivery elements without assured sustained commitments. Many of the prevention services were neither ring-fenced nor fully embedded in the work of the local area. This led to potential insecurity in the planning environment.

Partnership and resources

5.2 General criterion:

Partner organisations and the YOT work together effectively to protect the public, reduce antisocial and offending behaviour and deliver positive outcomes for children and young people.

Since its inception in 1998 the YOS had developed with partnerships at the core of its ability to operate effectively. Partnership networks had been created and maintained. The YOS was an active partner with a broad range of organisations and groups in the locality.

Strengths:

- (1) The YOS was appropriately staffed by partner agencies. An issue in relation to

the long-term sickness of the probation secondee was under consideration at the time of the inspection.

- (2) Additional resources had been gained from a range of sources. The inspection found 18 different funding streams coming into the YOS. Examples included Arts Council, YJB and European Social Fund grants.
- (3) There was a Corporate Information Sharing Protocol to which the West London Mental Health Trust was a signatory.
- (4) There was a good and recent SLA and specification between the borough and the YOS, addressing the provision of substance misuse services. Information sharing arrangements were effectively in place with all the key statutory partners, and most were working well in practice; of particular note was the close working relationship the YOS had with the police administration. The YOS worked within corporate protocols governing information exchange, with specific examples of special arrangements for some parts of the service, for example the EIP.
- (5) Ambitious plans were in the early stages of being drawn up to further the prevention agenda and the development of the CAF through extended schools. The YOS was well placed operationally and strategically to influence and participate in this agenda.
- (6) A 'move on' project enabled the YOS, in partnership with the local authority, to assess the support needs of children and young people aged 16-17 years old.
- (7) The YOS had sole nomination rights to a six bed bedsit scheme.
- (8) The YOS was an active member of the Antisocial Behaviour Panel and Antisocial Behaviour and Hate Crime Strategic Groups.
- (9) Managers from HMYOI Feltham attended the YJB sub-regional cluster meeting providing opportunity for discussion on areas of common concern.
- (10) YOS staff rated highly the partnership services used in respect of health, education, employment, alcohol and substance misuse issues.
- (11) The YOS contributed to a partnership crime and safety initiative in secondary schools led by the London Fire Service, addressing crime and antisocial behaviour themes. The YOS health service and substance misuse service was consistently staffed and staffing levels had recently been increased.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) The YOS managers had shown an 'entrepreneurial' approach to gathering a range of short-term 'pots' of funding. However there was limited confidence that all were sustainable beyond the short to medium term, and managing these income issues consumed a significant proportion of the management capacity of the YOS.

- (2) The local authority ensured a broad access to a range of housing providers and had 45 nominations per year to the housing authority, but unfortunately bed and breakfast provision remained a reality for some children and young people. There was evidence that some children and young people transferring to the community had been assessed as being intentionally homeless on the basis of their offending. This left them without access to a range of appropriate safe accommodation.
- (3) The specialist function of protecting children and young people was properly located within the complex needs strand of the local authority. However, Looked After Children responsibilities were seen as being able to be undertaken anywhere in the local authority. Protocols to ensure that all children remanded into the care of the local authority were allocated to a social worker, within an appropriate social work team, were unclear. This was further compounded by the new structure not being embedded in the minds of staff, and the capacity to 'negotiate' around which area of service accepted responsibility for individual Looked After child or young person.
- (4) There was no forum for operational managers from CAMHS or the DAT to make an input into the overall management of the YOS at an operational level; therefore oversight of the performance of the health service within the YOS rested with commissioning staff.
- (5) There was a recent SLA and specification for the provision of substance misuse services with the borough. However, no evidence was found of an SLA for the CAMHS worker. There was no outcome measurement in respect of CAMHS meeting the primary objective of improving the health of children and young people, who had become known to the YOS.

Staff supervision, development and training

5.3 General criterion:

Positive outcomes for children and young people are enhanced by effective staff.

The YOS had two sections: the core YOS and preventive services. The total staff group was 53 full-time equivalent posts, with over two thirds being in the core YOS.

Strengths:

- (1) The YOS team was characterised by committed, enthusiastic and positive staff. Staff valued managerial supervision, support, role modelling and attention to health and safety issues. A universal view was of a management team that was accessible, with a professional orientation and a passion for the service being delivered.

- (2) Policies and procedures were in place and used as the basis of staff induction. The policies were implemented via the working groups used to control working practice, for example the CRP. Staff reported feeling well informed about the policies and procedures in operation within the YOS.
- (3) Staff showed a positive understanding of their responsibilities in relation to the breadth of safeguarding responsibilities. Training for staff was planned through personal supervision and service development planning. In house seminars supported practice development, alongside access to corporate training and external courses.
- (4) The YOS sought to maximise the contributions from all the professional disciplines to the assessment and planning of casework through a number of processes, for example CRPs and themed fora, such as ETE and accommodation.
- (5) Staff supervision and appraisal were delivered within the requirements of the local authority framework.
- (6) All YOS staff had had CRB checks.
- (7) Volunteers were recruited and trained through a selection and assessment process, including CRB checks. Monthly volunteer support nights were held and the focus was on both skills development and performance management. The YOS had been able to retain volunteers and there were several long serving members of the group. Some volunteers had broadened their contribution to the YOS and taken on other tasks, for example mentoring roles.
- (8) All health and substance misuse workers had both clinical and YOS supervision on a regular basis, and had access to training as required.
- (9) YOS staff benefited from a range of team and corporate communication and planning arrangements.
- (10) Many staff multi-tasked with both multiple employment roles and robust covering arrangements. These significantly contributed to the resilience of the YOS.
- (11) The make up of the staff group reflected the service user group and services were organised to target diversity needs when possible. Examples of practice which sought to understand and address the diverse needs of service users were noted by the inspection.
- (12) The YOS operated within the local authority personnel and complaints procedures, and those of the partner agencies when necessary.

Areas for improvement:

- (1) The YOS core staff group were augmented by temporary and agency staff to meet shortfalls in staffing capacity. This caused some difficulties for the YOS

in relation to ensuring new staff were quickly able to operate to the quality standards required within the organisation.

- (2) Quality assurance systems were in place to ensure managers had oversight of the interventions being delivered to service users. Despite this, the inspection found evidence of a number of cases that had been reviewed by managers, not meeting basic quality requirements.
- (3) The focus on continuity of workers with individual children and young people contributed to effective working relationship between staff and service users. However, the inspection found a wide variety in the quality and range of services being offered by different members of staff.

Conclusion: These criteria are assessed as **good**.

Appendix 1: Contextual information

Area

Hammersmith and Fulham YOS was located in a borough of West London and, as a single YOS, covered the Hammersmith and Fulham local authority.

The area had a population of 165,242 measured in the Census 2001, 7.1% of which were aged 10-17 years. This was lower than the average for England, which was 10.4%.

The population of Hammersmith and Fulham was predominantly white (77.8%), the population with a black and minority ethnic heritage (22.2%) was significantly above the average for England of 8.7%.

Reported crime levels for children and young people aged 10-17 years across the area were, at 56.8 per 1,000, above the average for England of 53.

The proportion of Looked After Children aged ten and above, sanctioned for an offence committed whilst Looked After was six in Hammersmith and Fulham and this was below the average for England of nine.

YOS

The work of the YOS was based in one operational office which was centrally located within the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. This maximised service user access to the organisation. The YOS was co-terminus with the borough policing structure and interfaced with the local youth and Crown Court arrangements.

The Youth Justice Plan 2007/2008 showed the YOS had 87 staff, of which 34 were volunteers. Sixty two of the staff group were female and 39 had a black and minority ethnic heritage.

The YOS managed the West London ISSP, delivering services to the highest risk children and young people who had offended and were at risk of a secure establishment sentence in Hammersmith and Fulham, Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, and City of Westminster.

YJB performance data

The YJB summary of overall performance for the period April 2006 to March 2007 gave Hammersmith and Fulham YOS an overall performance score of 3 on a level where 5 is the maximum. This was slightly above the performance levels of national, regional and most comparable YOTs.

Performance on reducing reoffending received a score of 3, which was significantly above that of all comparators. Over the same period the YOS had seen an increase of 50% in the number of first-time entrants into the criminal justice system.

Appendix 2: Inspection data

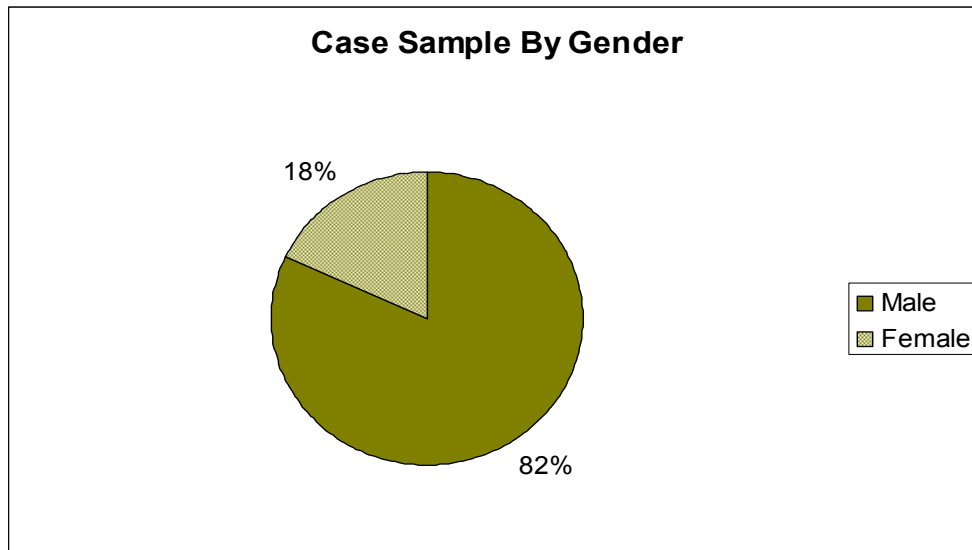
Fieldwork for this inspection was undertaken in April 2007 and during a contribution to the Hammersmith and Fulham JAR in May 2007.

The inspection consisted of:

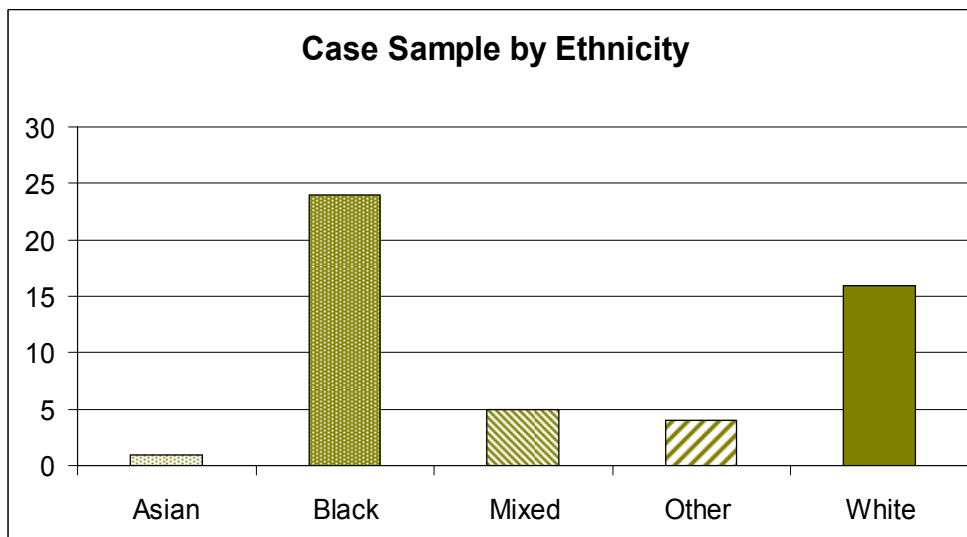
- ◇ provision of evidence in advance
- ◇ examination of YJB performance data and assessments
- ◇ examination of practice in a sample of cases, normally in conjunction with the case manager or other representative, as follows:
 - ten prevention files
 - ten final warnings
 - nine first tier penalties (referral orders, reparation orders)
 - eleven community sentences
 - ten custodial cases
- ◇ interviews and questionnaire responses from children and young people, parents/carers, and victims
- ◇ interviews with children and young people in custody
- ◇ meetings with staff, managers and partners.

Data charts

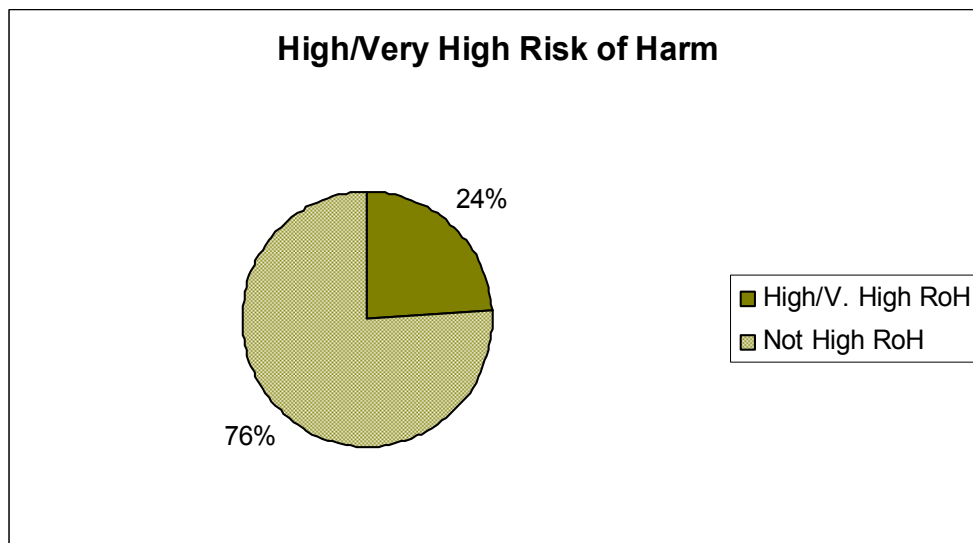
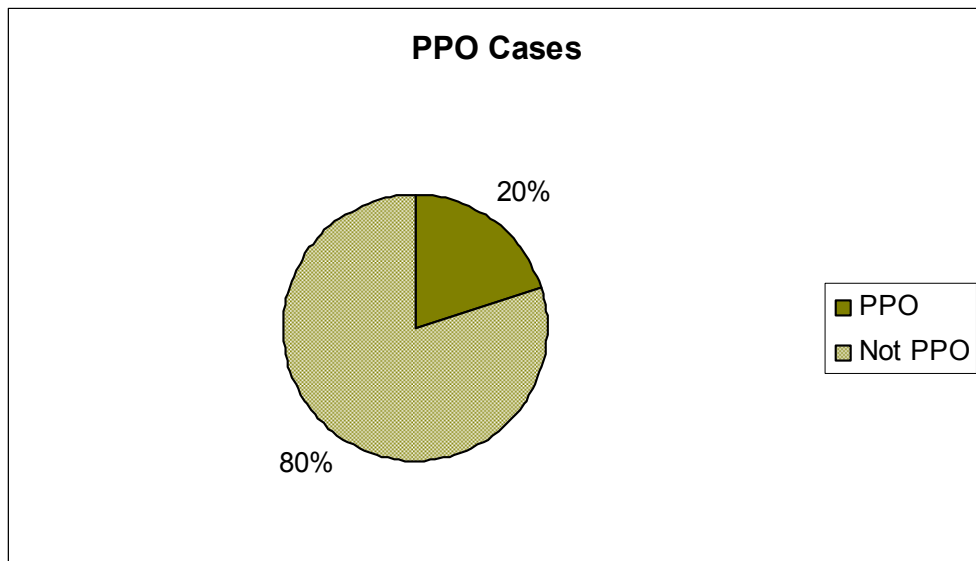
The chosen sample takes into consideration the percentage of girls or young women in contact with the YOT. A representative number is then included in the sample of cases.



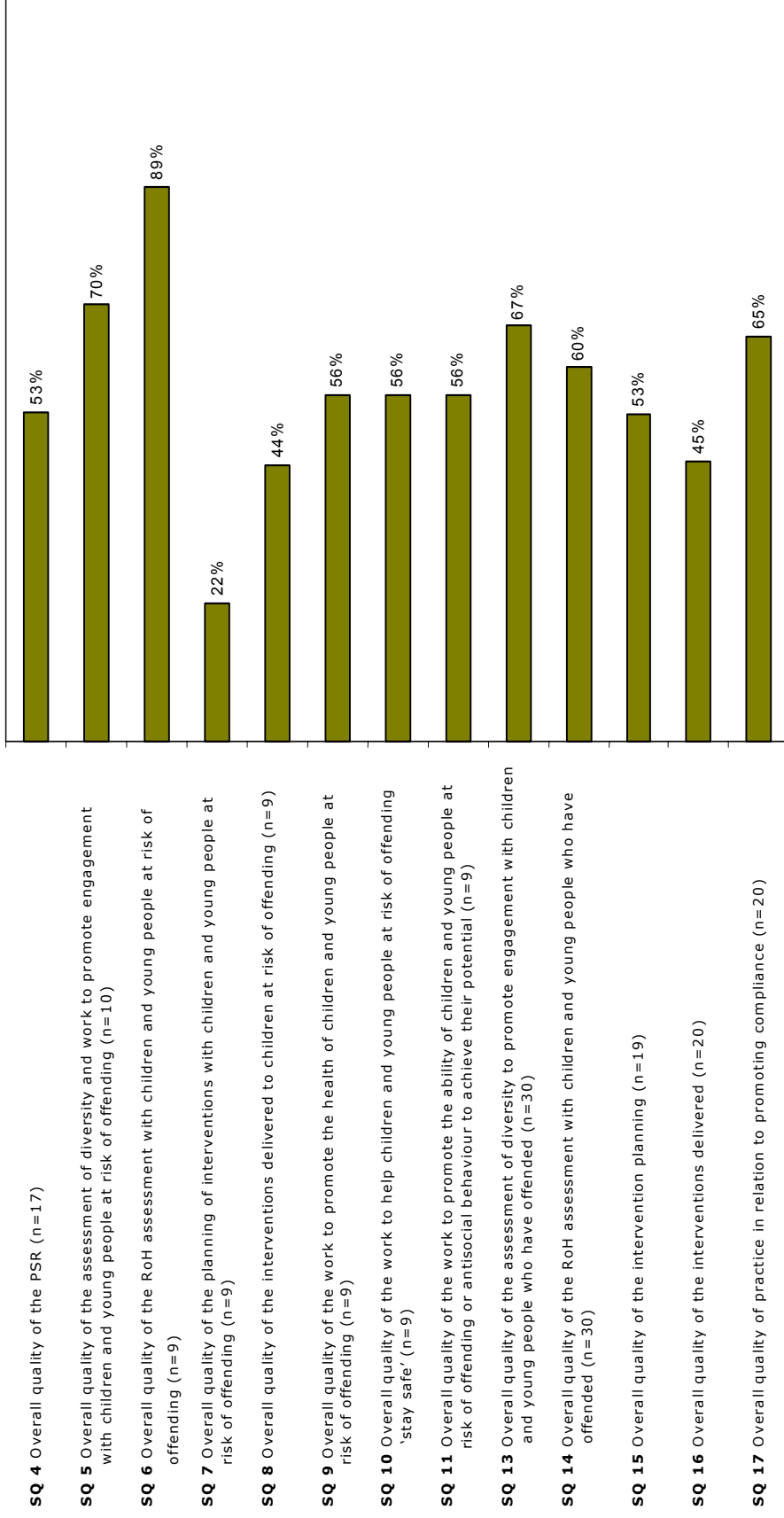
The chosen sample takes into consideration the percentage of black and minority ethnic children or young people in contact with the YOT. A representative number is then included in the sample of cases.

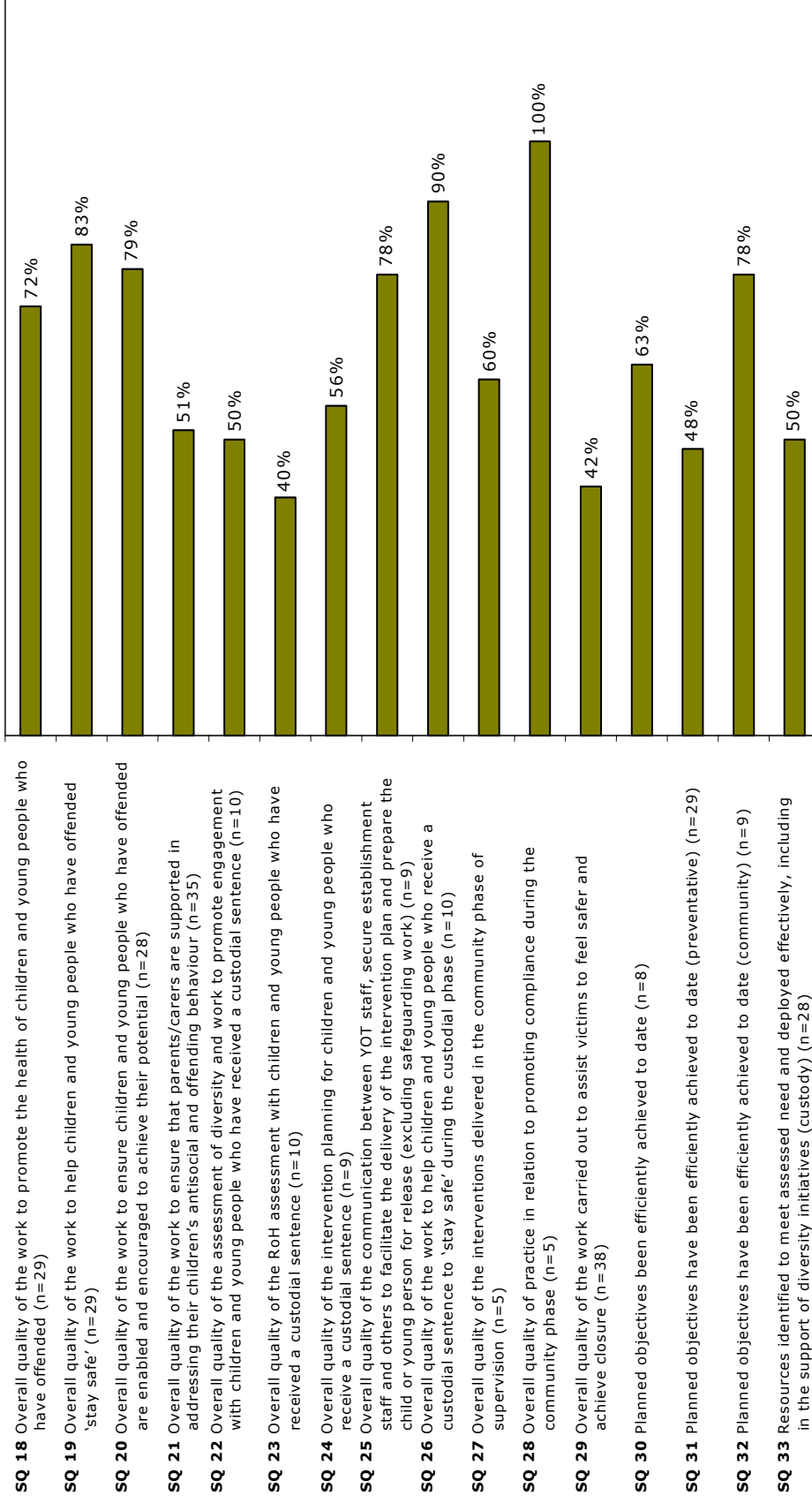


The chosen sample includes a number of high risk of harm cases and ISSP/PPO cases. The numbers included depend on the size of the YOT/YOS involved, and range from 6-12 cases per sample.



Appendix 3: Scoring for summary questions





Appendix 4: Joint inspection arrangements

The joint YOT inspection programme began in September 2003 and is the first full inspection programme to examine the work of the YOTs. It has been implemented over four phases, covering all YOTs in England and Wales over a five year period. From September 2005, the findings in England have contributed to the JARs of children's services (led by Ofsted) and the Corporate Assessment of local authority services (led by the Audit Commission).

Appendix 5: Role of HMI Probation and code of practice

HMI Probation is an independent Inspectorate, funded by the Ministry of Justice and reporting directly to the Secretary of State. Our purpose is to:

- report to the Secretary of State on the effectiveness of work with individual offenders, children and young people aimed at reducing reoffending and protecting the public, whoever undertakes this work under the auspices of the National Offender Management Service or the Youth Justice Board
- report on the effectiveness of the arrangements for this work, working with other Inspectorates as necessary
- contribute to improved performance by the organisations we inspect
- contribute to sound policy and effective service delivery, especially in public protection, by providing advice and disseminating good practice, based on inspection findings, to Ministers, officials, managers and practitioners
- promote actively race equality and wider diversity issues, especially in the organisations we inspect
- contribute to the overall effectiveness of the Criminal justice System, particularly through joint work with other inspectorates.

HMI Probation aims to achieve its purpose and to meet the Government's principles for inspection in the public sector by:

- working in an honest, professional, fair and polite way
- reporting and publishing inspection findings and recommendations for improvement in good time and to a good standard
- promoting race equality and wider attention to diversity in all aspects of its work, including within its own employment practices and organisational processes
- minimising the amount of extra work arising for probation areas or youth offending teams [those inspected] as a result of the inspection process.

The Inspectorate is a public body. Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within its remit should write to:

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