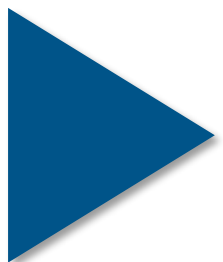




# North Yorkshire Youth Justice Plan 2024 – 2027

**Children and Young People's Service**

<b>Service</b>	North Yorkshire Youth Justice Service [YJS]
<b>Service Manager/ Lead</b>	Barbara Merrygold [Head of Early Help]
<b>Chair of YJS Board</b>	Stuart Carlton [Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Service]



# Contents

Introduction, Vision and Strategy	4
Local Context	6
Population Diversity	8
Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements	9
Update on the Previous Year	11
Risks and issues	20
Plan for the forthcoming year	22
Engagement and participation	23
Resources and services	24
Board development	24
Workforce Development	24
Evidence-based practice and innovation	26
Priorities for the coming year	30
Standards for children	30
Work with Courts	31
Service development	33
Prevention	35
Diversion	40
Serious violence, exploitation and contextual safeguarding	42
Education	48
Restorative approaches and victims	52
Detention in police custody	53
Work with Families	54
Supporting documents	55
Appendix 1: Staffing Structure	55
Appendix 2 Workforce Diversity YJS	55
Appendix 3 MAP Evaluation	55
Addendum update 2025	55

# Summary of the Youth Justice Plan

## Introduction, Vision, and Strategy

- Collaborative Approach: North Yorkshire agencies work together to address crime's root causes, focusing on mental health and early support for vulnerable children.
- Unitary Council Structure: Since April 2023, services have been more coordinated, aiming for early, sustainable positive change.

## Key Objectives

- Reduce Youth Offending: Emphasis on early intervention and diversion to positive support.
- Support for Persistent Offenders: Collaborate with children, families, schools, and communities to promote positive change.

## Achievements

- Outstanding Children's Services: Ofsted rated North Yorkshire's Children's Services as 'outstanding' in all categories.
- Reduction in First-Time Entrants: A 10% reduction in first-time entrants to the youth justice system from April 2023 to June 2024.
- Decrease in Custodial Sentences: Significant reduction in custodial sentences over recent years.

## Challenges

- Rural Nature: Issues with digital and transport connectivity, sustainability of rural services, and housing affordability.
- Demographic Changes: Decline in teenage population and an increase in elderly residents.

## Strategic Priorities

1. Prevention and Diversion: Early support to prevent criminalisation.
2. Integrated Practice: Aligning youth justice with other local services.
3. Education, Training, and Employment: Ensuring full-time education or constructive opportunities for all children.
4. Tailored Support: Focus on high-need groups, including children in care and those at risk of exploitation.

## Governance and Leadership

- Strong Governance: The Youth Justice Service is well-managed with strong leadership and governance, praised by HMIP and Ofsted.
- Partnerships: Collaborative work with statutory partners, voluntary sector, and community organisations.

## Service Improvement

- New Case Management System: Implementation of a new system to improve data reporting and alignment with practice models.
- Training and Development: Ongoing training for staff in trauma-informed and strength-based practices.

## Future Plans

- Child First Approach: Prioritising the best interests of children, focusing on rehabilitation and positive social identity.
- Engagement and Participation: Involving children and young people in decision-making processes.
- Continued Improvement: Focus on reducing reoffending, improving victim services, and enhancing support for children transitioning to adult services.

This plan outlines a comprehensive approach to youth justice, emphasizing early intervention, collaboration, and continuous improvement to support vulnerable children and reduce youth offending.

# Introduction, Vision and Strategy

North Yorkshire agencies work closely together to support our many diverse communities. We have a strong and effective Criminal Justice Partnership led by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner, applying a holistic, public health approach to identify and address underlying individual and societal causes, and cross-sector issues such as mental health.

***“Investing in a policing model that will reduce the likelihood of individuals becoming victims or perpetrators of crime in the future,” (Police & Crime Plan 2022-25)***

We also have a very committed, ambitious Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP), driving a complementary strategy of early, effective support for all vulnerable children.

***“We work collaboratively to ensure children and young people are protected from harm whilst growing up in an environment in which they are happy and that encourages them to have aspirations for their future.” (SCP Plan 2021-24)***

North Yorkshire services work closely together across a breadth of key partnerships to develop and deliver this coordinated approach. This has been further advanced by a unitary council structure that began in April 2023.

Our single, overarching vision for all our services is to focus our work within communities, schools, and families to support early, creative and sustainable positive change. The more effectively we do this, the fewer people will develop complex, costly, or risky needs later. This is especially important for our children, who are prioritised in our multi agency strategies.

Every child in North Yorkshire deserves a loving, supportive home, stimulating and nurturing education, safety and opportunity in their community, and the chance to achieve their unique potential. Every service in North Yorkshire is committed to supporting this and we recognise that intervention at the earliest opportunity is our most preventative solution.

***“There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they’re falling in”. (Desmond Tutu)***

Our partnership within our Youth Justice Service reflects these values and is illustrated in our key objective to reduce the number of children who get into trouble, and wherever possible to divert them to positive support. For the small cohort of children who present persistent or serious offending - and invariably have substantial, complex unmet needs - we want our Youth Justice to work alongside our children, their families, schools and communities to promote positive change.

Despite the severe challenges of austerity and other socio-economic factors, substantial progress has been achieved. This was clearly evident in the recent Ofsted inspection of North Yorkshire local authority children’s services (July 2023), where our Children’s Services gained an ‘outstanding’ grade in each of the five inspection categories.

***“Children and their families in North Yorkshire benefit from an outstanding children’s service. Leaders have built on their well-established culture and service initiatives to further develop and improve services for children since the outstanding judgement at the last inspection in 2018.” (Inspection of North Yorkshire Children’s Services 2023)***

Our Youth Justice Service is now located within Children and Families Service as part of the broader Early Help offer, as a specialist element of our support for all children and families. This supports a single, coordinated pathway for children presenting risky or challenging behaviour.

***“Children in North Yorkshire benefit from an effective early help service that quickly responds to the needs of children and families. There is a range of services and targeted interventions to help families at the earliest opportunity.” (Inspection of North Yorkshire Children’s Services 2023)***

Key principles of the National Youth Justice practice model have been blended with our advanced, child-centred, strength-based and trauma informed practice model used by Children's Services, achieving consistency and transferability of our assessments, plans & interventions.

***“The whole-service strength based model is used effectively to identify what is working well and what needs to change, including recommendations for next steps”.***  
***(Inspection of North Yorkshire Children's Services 2023)***

We have secured a leading role in the national development of National Health Service Framework for Integrated Care and continue to develop and deliver trauma informed targeted preventative support.

We have a highly skilled, hardworking, well trained operational workforce. We regularly receive feedback from the service's quality assurance processes, and independent analytical reports provided by the Children and Young People's Service Strategy and Performance Team. We confidently know that our frontline teams are providing a high standard of assessment, planning and support for the children. A cycle of routine thematic audits and learning conversations have continued to inform us that we are continually striving for excellence for the children and families we serve.

It is also important to highlight the significant and valuable improvements that have been achieved against two of the three National Youth Justice indicators.

- The First Time Entrant rate has continued to decrease with a further 10% reduction seen in the April 2023 - June 2024 cohort compared with the cohort 12 months previously. The rate in North Yorkshire remains lower than the regional and national rates.
- The number of custodial sentences has reduced significantly in recent years. Only 2 custodial sentences were given in 2022/23 followed by only 4 in 2023/24. Both years were a significant improvement on the 12 received in 2019/20 and the 9 in 2020/21. The current rate in North Yorkshire remains lower than the regional and national rates.

We recognise that our Youth Justice Service has responsibilities for risk management and public protection, which must be diligently met, but we continue to align and integrate this activity with our children's services, resisting segregation and promoting consistency of practice and planning through cohesive coordinated working.

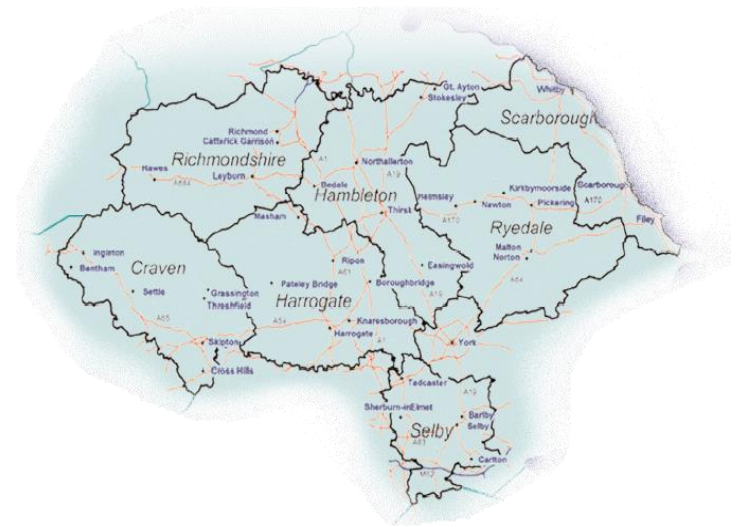
We appreciate the trust and responsibility granted to North Yorkshire for continued use of “My Assessment Plan(MAPS)”. We are eager to further develop this tool using learning from our recently commissioned independent evaluation to ensure that our North Yorkshire practice model, which is fully aligned with the Child First Approach, is fully embedded within our assessment tool. From that evidence base, our next step is to further develop this assessment and design a reportable form within our new Youth Justice Case Management System.



**Stuart Carlton | Director of Children's Services and Chair of Youth Justice Management Board**

## Local Context

North Yorkshire is the largest county in England - 8,654 km<sup>2</sup> with a diverse and dispersed population of an estimated 615,400 people. Large parts of the county sit within two beautiful National Parks and three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. 98% of the county is either sparsely (13%) or super-sparsely (85%) populated, with just over a third of the population living in these areas. This results in a population density of just 77 people per square kilometre, compared with an England average of 432.



### The age profile of North Yorkshire is

- 24.5% aged 0-24 (England average = 29.2%)
- 50.5% aged 25-64 (England average = 52.4%)
- 25% aged 65+ (England average = 18.4%)

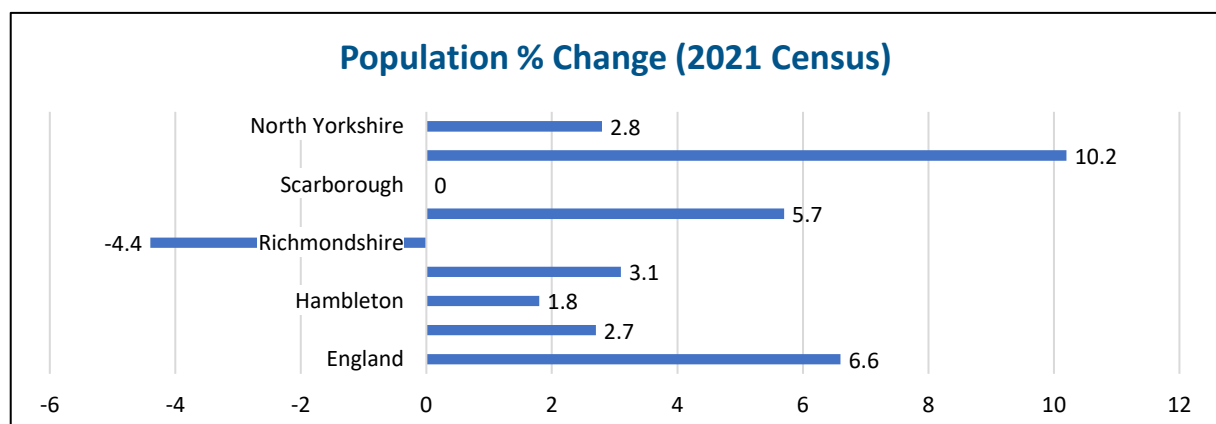
The rural nature of the county presents a great challenge for digital and transport connectivity, as well as the sustainability of rural services. 94% of premises in North Yorkshire has access to superfast broadband, compared to 97.7% of premises nationally. Local bus services provide the primary mode of public transport, offering access to essential facilities; however, with low population density, commercial services in rural areas are not sustainable.

Commercial public transport operators cater for 90% of all passenger journeys but less than 40% of parishes have a bus service operating more than three days per week. Their networks are concentrated in urban areas where services are more sustainable, leaving access for people in rural areas a challenge for the council.

### Challenges faced within North Yorkshire include:

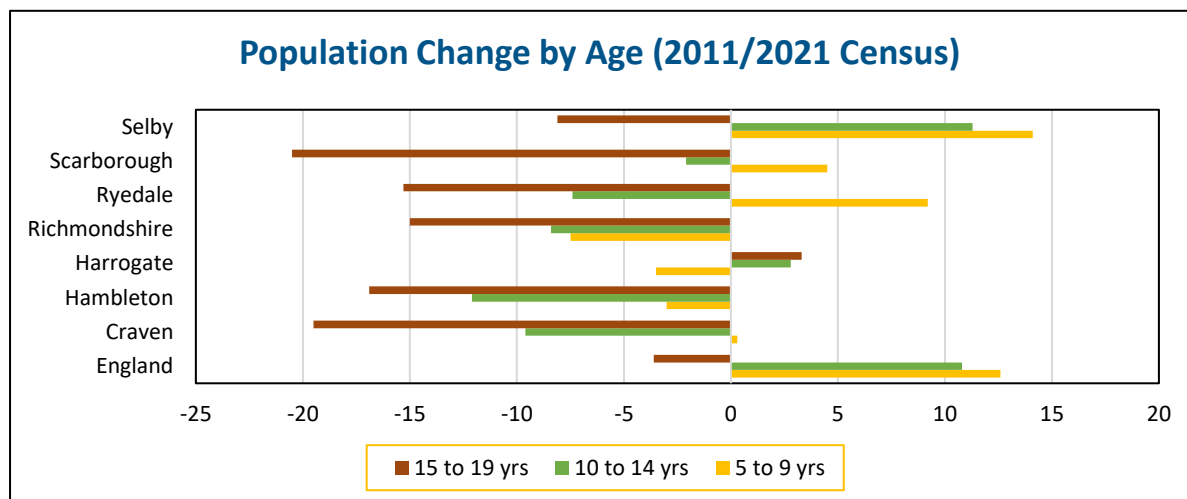
- Tackling inequality and deprivation
- Changing demographics and support needs, including the needs of an ageing population
- Digital infrastructure and connectivity
- Rural nature of the county and sustainability of rural services
- Transport connectivity and traffic congestion (including air quality)
- Tackling climate change and environmental issues
- An appropriately qualified and skilled workforce
- Housing affordability
- Cost of living

The 2021 Census data indicated significant demographic changes across our diverse local authority area. With the exception of Selby, the North Yorkshire population growth is lower than the national trend, static in Scarborough and falling in Richmondshire.

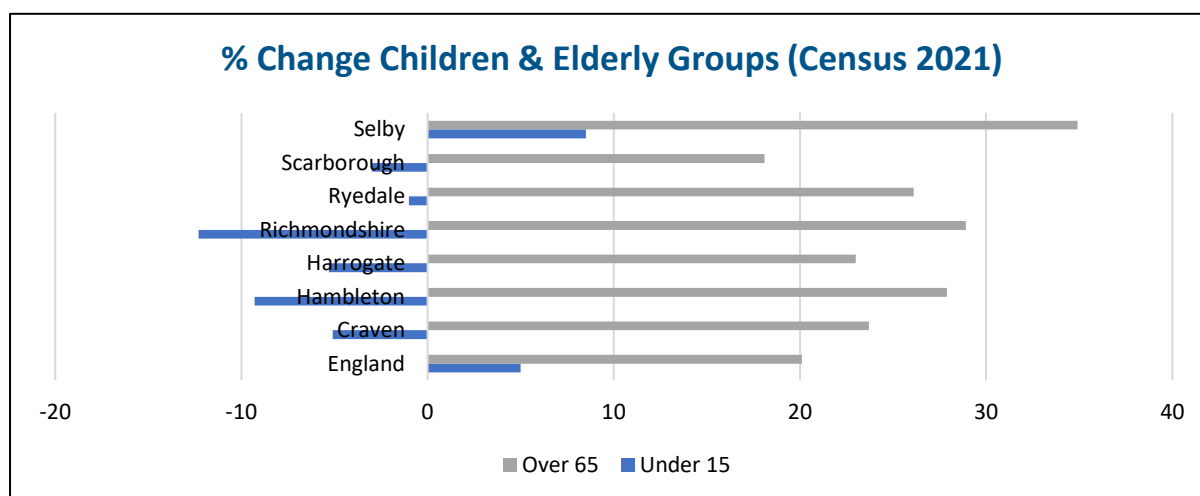


When analysed by age category, these changes broadly follow the national trend but with significant divergences in the detail. It is notable for example that young people are leaving Scarborough (21% fewer 15 - 19yr olds) and Richmondshire (38% fewer 20 - 24yr olds), which probably relates to pursuit of employment and study opportunities. Scarcity of affordable starter housing is likely to be another key factor in rural areas. Meanwhile the rate of elderly residents is growing above the national trend e.g., a 67% increase of 70-74yr olds in Selby.

Examining the trends for children more closely, we see a striking divergence from national change, with most of our Districts reporting a marked reduction in teenage population.



These high-level demographic trends are significant across the span of all public service planning, which must increasingly adapt to the needs of a growing older population. This change is especially pronounced in North Yorkshire.



In the context of services for higher-need children, including those supported by our YJS, we must also be mindful of social mobility. It is unfortunate that so many young people need to leave our rural and coastal areas to obtain study or career opportunities, for example, but this may leave behind many other young people who did not have that option.

Importantly, this includes many young people who grew up in our exceptional countryside, but now find they have no affordable means to secure local housing for their adult lives. High housing costs are compounded by second home and holiday rental demand, while average wages in the local agriculture and tourism sectors are low. Poor access to public transport and relatively limited availability of high-speed broadband provides further barriers for low-income families.

Within this demographic trend of fewer teenagers, alongside a greater emphasis on diversionary activities, volume demand has shifted more towards out of court disposals; as such we are seeing an uptake in this area. For example, First-Time Entrants in North Yorkshire have reduced by 56% since the commencement of the Youth Outcomes Panel in May 2017.



# Population Diversity

In broader terms, North Yorkshire has a surprisingly diverse population. A study commissioned by the North Yorkshire Equality and Diversity Strategic Partnership identified a wide range of Black and Minority Ethnic representation across the County, resulting from several demographic factors.

For example, Skipton has many settled Kashmiri families who historically migrated to work in the textile industry, and the Catterick Garrison is a hub for serving and retired military families including many with Black and Nepali ethnicity. Prior to Brexit, large numbers of Eastern Europeans worked in our seasonal agriculture and tourism sectors, and many settled here. There is a long-established community of Gypsies, Roma, Travellers, and Showmen in North Yorkshire, and sufficient Muslim representation to support mosques in Skipton, Harrogate, Scarborough and York.

10-17 Population by Ethnicity: Census 2021	North Yorkshire	%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Bangladeshi	37	0.07%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Chinese	274	0.50%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Indian	272	0.50%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani	170	0.31%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Other Asian	351	0.64%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African	239	0.44%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Caribbean	47	0.09%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Other Black	77	0.14%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	620	1.13%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	261	0.48%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	303	0.55%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	379	0.69%
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	49787	90.85%
White: Irish	116	0.21%
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	81	0.15%
White: Roma	26	0.05%
White: Other White	1435	2.62%
Other ethnic group: Arab	94	0.17%
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	232	0.42%
<b>Total</b>	<b>54801</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The Management Board receives an annual report on offending by ethnicity and we are confident that Black and Minority Ethnic groups are not disadvantaged either by frequency or outcome.

Ethnicity	Pre Court	%	First Tier	%	Community	%	Custody	%
White	40	93.0	97	93.3	15	93.8	3	100
Mixed	3	7.0	6	5.8	1	6.3	0	0.0
Asian or Asian British	0	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0
Black or Black British	0	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0
Chinese/ Other Ethnic Group	0	0	1	1.0	0	0	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>

## Outcomes by Ethnicity 2023/24

Source: Youth Justice Application Framework (YJAF) Ethnic Disparity Tool.



# Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements

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Strategic leadership and governance of our Youth Justice Service is provided by the Partnership Management Board with membership from all statutory partners alongside County Councillors, the SCP and the Community and Voluntary Sector. Board meetings take place on a regular quarterly schedule and are well-attended by appropriate senior partnership leaders.

Our His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) Inspection in 2020 resulted in an 'Outstanding' rating for the Management Board's leadership and governance work, commending the strong ownership and commitment of all Board Members. The report noted "a culture of high support and high challenge", and praised the leadership of the Chair, our Director of Children's Services.

***"North Yorkshire YJS is very well managed, with strong governance arrangements. There are high levels of advocacy for YJS children across the partnership, with a culture of consistently striving for positive outcomes and supporting staff to be innovative.... Business risks are understood and mitigated, with feedback gathered from stakeholders and children."***

***Partnership arrangements are mature and collaborative, with excellent use of data to inform strategic decisions and to demonstrate impact on YJS children. There are high levels of staff satisfaction and motivation, evidenced by the stable workforce within the YJS". (HMIP, 2020)***

This is further reinforced by evidence from our most recent Ofsted inspection of Children's Services in 2023.

***"The director of children's services (DCS) is forward-thinking, planning for and pre-empting reforms in the sector."***

***"Leaders are outward-looking and have a deep understanding of local communities and what good and outstanding services for children look like. Children are placed first and foremost in the 'Being Young in North Yorkshire' vision for the safeguarding partnership."***

***"Senior leaders in the service, the safeguarding partnership and political leaders have shown a resolute focus and ambition to improve the lives of children and their families."***

**(Inspection of North Yorkshire Children's Services, 2023)**

Board meetings are attended by a range of professional officers, who provide detailed reports on performance, finance, and service activity. As previously noted, the Management Board is not a passive recipient of information and recommendations and will often instigate further research or development work to identify and drive key themes. Emerging partnership themes that thread across several services are picked up by the Safeguarding Children's Partnership who take a strategic lead on this development work.

Frontline Youth Justice practitioners regularly attend Board meetings, to participate in all discussion and decision-making. They can present their work, advocate development opportunities, or share a child's story if they wish to do so. This maintains a vital, direct continuity between our strategic aspirations and the reality of daily practice.

The operational management is integrated within the Council's Children & Family Services, providing a further tier of senior leadership and challenge. Research and evidence show that the children who are presenting challenging behaviour are often the same children who are vulnerable to many other poor outcomes.

Youth Justice is managed as a specialist element within the Early Help Service, reflecting our partnership view that risk-taking and offending behaviour should not be separated or stigmatised.

The Head of Early Help is a senior strategic manager, reporting directly to the Assistant Director for Children & Family Services. This places Youth Justice within a network of consistent, collaborative practice which strives to offer one, seamless model of support to families.

The operational service has an appropriate staffing establishment, including managers, caseworkers and specialists (e.g., substance misuse and victim liaison workers). Seconded representation from police, health, education, social work, and probation exceeds the statutory requirements, and vacant posts are recruited without delay.

Service provision is delivered from 4 locality bases in the North, South, East and West quadrants of the County. The North (Hambleton) and South (Selby) teams provide the full range of youth justice services in those communities. For the larger centres of population in East (Scarborough) and West (Harrogate), where demand is greater, we operate a tiered approach. In each of those areas a Tier 1 team works very closely with Early Help to prevent, divert, and reduce youth offending up to the level of Referral Orders, and a Tier 2 team supports children at the higher level of Youth Rehabilitation Orders and custodial outcomes. This more commonly involves collaboration and joint working with social work teams and Probation.

# **Update on the Previous Year**

## **Progress on priorities in previous plan and performance of the year**

Our strategy for reducing reoffending is woven through this plan, but can be summarised in four key priorities:

### **1) Prevention and Diversion**

The best youth justice engagement for any child is to avoid that necessity. Criminalisation is stigmatising and leads to adverse self-identification and outcomes. Children who are drifting into anti-social and offending behaviours need positive, early support from their families, schools, and communities. Youth Justice now forms part of the broad Early Help offer, with the primary goal of meeting need before criminalisation occurs.

Our broader partnership provision includes a range of youth and sport opportunities, and targeted positive support from voluntary and community organisations. This is funded by statutory services, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, and grant opportunities (including the recent Humber, coast and Vale Youth and Justice development). We continue to strive to build and extend positive prevention and diversion, strategies, especially targeting the higher-need groups. These are covered in more detail in the Prevention section below.

### **2) Integrated, Systemic and Relational Practice**

Consistent with the 'Child First model', all work must commence from authentic, sustained relationships with the children and families we support. We will use simple and clear practice methods which empower children and families and foster honest, warm conversations about positive change. We will work within family and community networks to find strengths and opportunities to build that change.

We recognise that our Youth Justice Service has a particular responsibility for risk management and public protection, which must be diligently met, but we will strive to align and integrate our work with other local services, resisting segregation and promoting consistency of practice and planning.

### **3) Education, Training and Employment**

We are determined that every school-aged child who is supported by our service will be engaged in a full-time education plan. The protective effect of a stimulating, supportive full-time education cannot be overstated. In addition to formal learning goals, a good school offers a complete personal development environment with positive role modelling, pro-social cooperation and play, safe access to challenging sport and achievement, etc.

Approximately half of the young people we support are school-leavers, and it is no less important that they have rewarding and constructive opportunities for further education, training or work. Any young person who is excluded from productive activity or identity in their community is plainly at risk of adverse outcomes. We know from our small Skills4Work project that the impact of honest, fulfilling work is transformative.

Further educational development includes provision of an electronic guidance Personal Education Plan and inclusion in the monitoring of attendance product. This system enables the Youth Justice Education Liaison Advisers to monitor attendance and to have clear education targets for children open to YJS.

### **4) Tailored Support for Higher Need Groups**

It is pleasing that many fewer children are now formally entering the youth justice system, but also very clear that the needs of those few are significantly more complex and challenging. This goes far beyond the generic practice methods which were developed in the past for higher-volume, lower-risk casework, and demands a rigorous focus upon individual needs, barriers, or inequalities.

We will drive forward with targeted research and service development to improve outcomes for children in our most-deprived communities, most of which are located in coastal areas. We will work with partners to improve the safeguarding and support of children who are being criminally exploited. We will continue to prioritise our children in care, and we will further explore the growing disproportionality of female representation.

Our 2022 - 2024 plan set out 10 key objectives with 4 being completed in 2023 and 6 carried over to 2024. Progress on these 6 objectives are highlighted below.

## 1. Prevention and Diversion

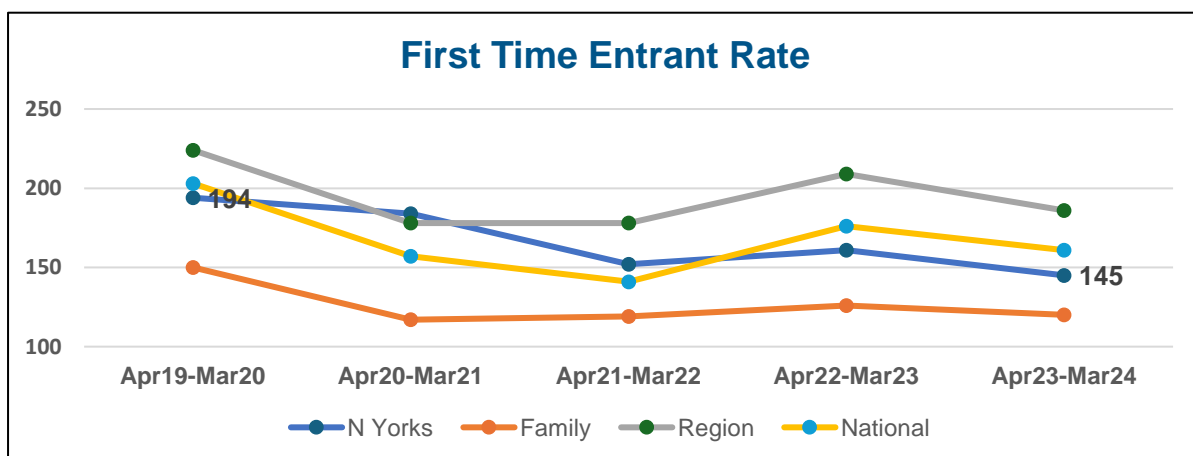
North Yorkshire has invested significantly in ensuring a strong Early Help offer with delivery from both from the Local Authority and statutory partners, but also through the community and voluntary sector. Our partnership provision includes a range of youth and sport opportunities, and targeted positive support from voluntary and community organisations. This is funded by North Yorkshire Council, the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner, community fund and other grant opportunities - including the Integrated Care Board Children & Young Peoples Trauma Informed Programme (See Service Improvement Plan, section 7) and the Ministry of Justice (Turnaround Programme). More details of all these programmes are covered in the Prevention and Diversion sections of this plan.

We are currently working with North Yorkshire Police and City of York Council to refresh our Prevention and Diversion policy. The document will demonstrate how the Youth Justice Partnership prevention, diversion and out of court model is aligned to the overarching Early Help offer in North Yorkshire and York, clearly setting out our partnership arrangements.

Our Youth Justice Service is firmly embedded within our children and Families Service forming part of the broad Early Help offer, with the primary goal of meeting need before criminalisation occurs. Our Early Help Strategy identifies “Early Help is everyone’s responsibility” and we ensure, young people and their families get “the right support at the right time by the right people”, we have made early intervention and prevention a strategic focus to ensure more resource and attention is provided early to reduce the number of children entering the criminal justice system. We know that it is important to divert children away from the formal youth justice system, where appropriate, as this reduces crime, keeps communities safer, reduces costs and creates better outcomes for children, young people, and their families. We recognise that involvement in the criminal justice system can impact adversely on a child’s life chances and that intervening at the earliest point provides the opportunity to deliver a partnership model of preventative work.

## 2. Further reductions in first-time entry, re-offending and custodial sentencing, benchmarking ourselves against high-performing family group peers.

We are pleased that our First Time Entrant (FTE) rate continues to improve, with the latest rate of 145 (relates to 80 young people) being below that of both the national and regional rate. Whilst we still have work to do to match our Family Group rate, we are confident of progress to date.



It should be noted that the data in the above chart relating to the last 2 cohorts has been taken from quarterly case level submissions by Youth Offending Teams (YOT's) rather than the official method of a data extract from the Police National Computer (PNC). The change has taken place as the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is no longer publishing quarterly FTE data. The main difference between the two sets of data is that generally only 'recordable' offences, are input onto PNC whereas YOT case management systems make no differential between recordable and non-recordable offences and so should always provide higher FTE rates than the official data from the PNC extract.

We have continued to work hard to improve the quality and impact of our diversionary Youth Outcomes Panel (YOP), with an annual report providing a detailed analysis of YOP throughput, outcomes, and re-offending. We know that the rate of diversion from recorded criminal outcomes in the 2023 cohort was 71.5%. Significantly, the use of Outcome Code 22 increased from 28.5% of YOP Outcomes in 2022 to 59.7% in 2023 with decreases seen in the use of Community Restorative Disposals and Youth Cautions.

Calendar Year	Throughput	Diverted	Rate
2022	179	130	72.6%
2023	221	158	71.5%

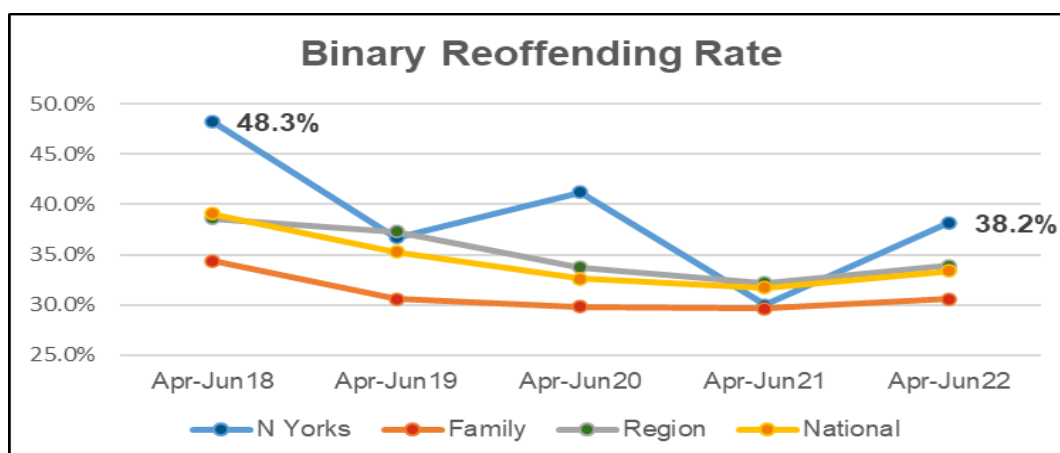
One of the aims of the Youth Outcome panel is to ensure appropriate outcomes for disadvantaged children and young people, such as Children in Care (CiC). The table below lists the recommended outcomes for CiC referred to the Panel. The percentage of recommended outcomes that would keep the child or young person from formally entering the youth justice system decreased slightly from 76.9% in 2022 to 69.0% in 2023. The 2023 figure for CiC was similar to the overall cohort of 71.5%.

CiC Outcomes	2022	2023
NFA	1	2
Outcome 22	5	18
CRD	4	0
YC	1	1
YCC	0	7
Charge	2	1
Total	13	29

In 5 of the 7 cases where a Youth Conditional Caution (YCC) was the recommendation, the offence included Possession of an Offensive Weapon/Bladed Article. A YCC is generally considered to be the minimum outcome recommended by North Yorkshire Police for this type of offence.

## Reoffending

Our reoffending rates, both binary and frequency, are consistently poorer than the national, regional, and family comparator groups. One significant difficulty is the time-lag for this data, which reduces actionable learning. We are confident that the new case management system will enable a greater level of rich analysis than available previously through the built-in reporting functionality.



The size of the annual offending cohort continues to decrease – having reduced by 61%, from 366 in 2016/17 to 144 in 2021/22.

Until 2023, we received case level data from an extract of PNC which enabled us to match and analyse the official data with that held on our case management system. This analysis highlighted discrepancies between the two sets of data. One key difference is that PNC generally allocates offenders by residential addresses and whilst this produces accurate data in the majority of cases, it also incorrectly allocates some cases. For example, we were able to identify cases relating to children in care placed in North Yorkshire by other Local Authorities which were incorrectly counting against North Yorkshire. This is likely to impact disproportionately on North Yorkshire figures as it places very few young people out of the county and hosts a number of private residential children's homes.

However, we absolutely recognise that both binary and frequency reoffending rates remain too high in North Yorkshire and will continue to work with partners to gain a greater understanding of this cohort of young people and the consider alternative strategies and interventions to reduce these rates. We will be working with the University of York from August 2024 to undertake a deep dive analysis of current cases where there is consistent reoffending.

Data tells us that the town and Eastfield areas of Scarborough are particularly significant, both in the extent of social exclusion and the impact of this upon anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime trends. Some of those wards are ranked in the lowest of the national Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), and local children have grown-up in systemic, multi-generational social disadvantage and exclusion. This is reflected throughout our performance monitoring systems. Reducing reoffending will remain a priority for the 2024 plan going forward.

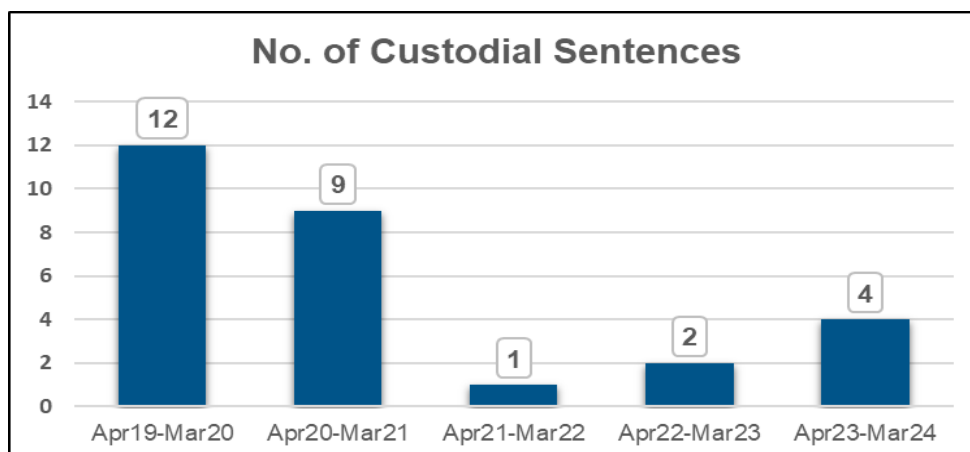
### Custodial Sentences

Reduction of custodial sentencing has been a key North Yorkshire priority for several years, and we are delighted by the sustained progress our partnership has achieved.

The number of custodial sentences received by young people in the 12 months ending March 2024 remained relatively low, at 4.

The chart below shows the significant decrease in the actual number of custodial sentences in North Yorkshire in recent years. The 12 custodial sentences received in the 12 months ending March 2020 equated to a rate per 1,000 of the 10-17 population in North Yorkshire of 0.22 - equal to the national rate at that time.

Whilst the rate of custodial sentences has also decreased nationally in recent years, the current rate in North Yorkshire is now lower than the national and regional rates.



### Remands to Youth Justice

In 2023 we completed a single agency internal review of all remands over the last 3 years with a more in-depth review taken of the 4 cases in 2022/23.

Following on from the single agency review of Remands to Youth Detention, a multi-agency review was convened, and the findings reported to both the Local Criminal Justice Partnership and our Management Board.



All those remanded were white, British, males so no issues of gender or ethnic disproportionality were identified.

The historical remands (2) in 2020/21 were for serious stabbings which resulted in long-term sentences. In 2021/22 there was only one remand, however the young person subsequently did not receive a custodial outcome, due to interfamilial exploitation for which a conclusive grounds National Referral Mechanism was in place. The Judge sentenced the exploiter to 3 years and exceptionally imposed an intensive community order on the young person.

There was an increase in remands in 2022/23, with one resulting in a short 7-day remand; it was the only short remand episode in the cohort; subsequently those matters were dropped by Crown Prosecution Service.

Two other remands that year were linked to a serious aggravated burglary matter for which both young people received 18-month custodial sentences. There were some issues regarding the initial charges made, which did not appear to meet the serious offence criteria and whether the remand was initially legal. A review was being undertaken with regard to this when the charges were amended to aggravated burglary 4 days after the initial decision, which did meet the correct remand offence criteria.

The final case was a murder matter for which a young person has been subsequently convicted and sentenced to detention at His Majesty's pleasure.

The key factors identified in the majority of the remands were:

- Previous histories of the children being exploited and the need for this to be identified earlier by partners, with an increased range of support and disruption needed. The local SCP Board are currently reviewing the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation structures, in this regard.
- The need to develop accommodation options, away from the area of the offence and where the victims live. The Service will await the national remand review before progressing with an action in respect of this.

In 2023/24 there was a single Remand to Youth Detention which is awaiting a multi-agency review. However, from an internal review, this was an appropriate remand for a child who had a long history of offending and committed occupied dwelling burglary offences and was sentenced to detention subsequently.

### **3. Further develop our practice model – All youth Justice practitioners to be trained in our Strengths in Relationship Practice Model. Our Children & Families Service Quality Assurance and Practice Learning Framework to be embedded**

The majority of this work was completed in 2023, with all case holding practitioners having completed advanced training in 'Signs of Safety' and 'Family Finding'. This has further embedded our understanding of a child first, child-centred, strengths-based approach within our assessment, enabling closer collaboration and interoperability with other practitioners across our Children and Families Service.

This however remained a priority in this year's plan to ensure the effective procurement of a new case management system that greater aligned with our practice model. The procurement of a new product is at the later stages of implementation and will be completed by end of August 2024.

### **4. Maintain and improve My Assessment Plan and agree arrangements for a full independent evaluation to be completed**

The evaluation of the MAPs was completed in August 2023 with the report and recommendations being presented to the local YJ Management Board in September 2023. Agreement was given to take the recommendations forward, ensuring much greater alignment with the Children and Families practice model and the implementation of the new case management system. Further details are covered in the Evidence Based Practice and Innovation Section of this plan.

## **5. Establish operational delivery of the National Protocol for reducing Criminalisation of Children in Care and Care Leavers**

A working group has been established to review our current policy and identify ongoing actions following the publication of the review of "The supervision of care-experienced children within the youth justice system" - this is a development priority for 2025.

## **6. Review and develop our service for Harmful Sexual Behaviour, establishing best practice provision in collaboration with City of York**

In North Yorkshire we identified that we need to have a better understanding of Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB) displayed by children and young people. To support a system-wide review, we secured funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner to conduct a multi-agency HSB Framework Audit undertaken by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).

The aim of the Audit was to understand our awareness of HSB and the current pathways of support for children and young people displaying these behaviours. The Audit was to gain a 'whole system' view of HSB – how the current system works and is experienced by professionals, children, and families and to help us have a clear and honest picture of our current position in North Yorkshire.

The findings were used to highlight actions that are required from all partners to improve the response and provision of services for children and young people. Agencies were asked to rate their organisations against a series of statements, and to provide evidence for the rating.

A multi-agency working group was established and the NSPCC were commissioned to deliver an awareness raising event in January 2024, sharing the HSB framework, highlighting the 5 domains and introducing the self-assessment audit process. Responses to the self-assessment (49 partner agencies responded) contributed to the development of an action plan. Actions included.

- Clarity HSB definition and use of tool.
- Data gathering
- Define clear thresholds and levels of intervention.
- Developing a comprehensive training programme for all partners
- Provide links to key resources through the SCP website and North Yorkshire Education Service website with a HSB landing page.
- Review specialist support and liaise with funders/commissioners.

In addition to the overarching service priorities set out above, the following actions were outlined in the 2023/24 plan as areas of service improvement.

The service improvement work is coordinated and prioritised by the senior management team, using a single, integrated Development Plan. This incorporates objectives from a range of improvement themes which is updated from the 2023/24 Youth Justice Plan.

## **Service Improvement Plan**

### **1. Implement and report on the new Youth Justice Board (YJB) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

As our current case management system lacks the capability to report on the 10 new KPI's introduced by the YJB with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, we have been manually recording and submitting the required data. This is a very time-consuming process that we anticipate will end in the quarter following going live with a new case management system in August 2024.

We have made use of the new YJB KPI dashboard to compare our performance against other youth offending teams, although it is acknowledged by the YJB that there are some outstanding issues and limitations with the data currently being provided.

### **2. Implement a bi-annual review of all Remands to Youth Detention in conjunction with local Criminal Justice Partnership and the Youth Justice Management Board**

The remand reviews are now in place and outcomes were reported to the local Criminal Justice Partnership and the Youth Justice Management Board - see section on Remands to Youth Detention (page 15 – 16).

### **3. Review on a quarterly basis all Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) transfer request and make improvements as necessary**

PACE transfers, both secure and non-secure, are analysed shortly after they occur and the findings agreed at the quarterly PACE group which involves senior representation from the Police, Children and Families Childrens Social Care and Youth Justice Service, Emergency Duty Team and Health.

In the past year there were 6 PACE transfer requests in respect of children resident in North Yorkshire, two of which were made from custody suites outside of North Yorkshire. Three were successful and three were not, one of which was the responsibility of an out-of-area police force. The two failed transfers in North Yorkshire involved a complex legal argument where the children were in breach of court bail but were also charged with new offences. They were detained in police cells for the breach of bail, which would normally be legal but when a child is also charged with new offences, then legally a PACE transfer request should be made. National legal advice was taken, and the law clarified and circulated to both YJS Managers and Police custody staff.

### **4. Implement and train on the new out-of-court national assessment framework, as required**

Implement and train on the new out-of-court national assessment framework, as required.

No action has been taken in respect of this as North Yorkshire has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to continue to use the MAP for all out-of-court disposals and will not use the new Prevention and Diversion tool.

### **5. Secure an alternative case management system and ensure training is delivered to users across the C&FS**

A new case management system in later stages of implementation, with a go live day of 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024. Training is ongoing but will be fully rolled out by end September 2024. Further details are covered in the 'Risk' section of this report.

### **6. Review and improve provision of safeguarding and 'Appropriate Adult' support for children detained in Police custody**

An Appropriate Adult service is now commissioned to provide out of hours support.

## 7. Work with the NHS Youth & Justice pathfinder programme to develop regional leadership in trauma-informed practice

### **Humber & North Yorkshire Integrated Health & Care Partnership: Children & Young People's Trauma Informed Care Programme.**

In addition to core funding for the statutory service, our Youth Justice Service is involved in several additional projects and developments which secure additional resources or services for North Yorkshire's communities. We are now delivering for the third year our Trauma Informed Test & Learn Pilot Programme on behalf of our Regional Health & Care Partnership.

Our Xchange communication 'add-on' (developed internally in conjunction with Mind of My Own), continues to be used by young people open to our YJS, ensuring their voice is incorporated in their self-assessment and to further gather their wishes and feelings.

Significantly, this Xchange product has now been taken up more widely by several other Youth Justice Services, with further interest also from National Health Service England (NHSE).

We continue to focus on work that seeks to bring about a reduction in the number of first-time entrants into the Youth justice Service as well as positively influencing the trajectory of those young people at risk of re-entering the system. Through our Psychologically Informed Partnership Approach (PIPA) Clinicians, we continue to work with young people across services, where multiple complex and complicating risk factors are negatively affecting these young people's lives and decreasing their opportunities.

Our Test and Learn Programme has recently been informed by the National Lead for the Programme, that funding is to be extended through to March 2028, securing the continuation of this important preventative work for a further 4 years. This demonstrates a real commitment from NHSE to trauma informed practice with young people who are at risk and vulnerable to exploitation and crime.

All three delivery elements (Change Direction, Trusted Relationships, and PIPA), remain fully staffed and operational. The monthly Highlight Reports submitted to the regional leadership team provide a running commentary on progress and future planned activity. Our Quarterly data and KPI submissions to NHSE, along with our written Case Studies, adds further richness to the story of this work in North Yorkshire.

### **Recent activity has included:**

Presenting for the second time to the National Lead Team at the Annual Review.

Participating in the first Annual Conference which had an attendance of over 250 people from across a range of sectors. Change Direction delivered a workshop on their experience of using the Self and Peer Evaluation Toolkit. This is part of the Trauma Informed Development Framework and helps organisations, teams or individuals assess where they 'are at' on their journey to becoming fully trauma informed. North Yorkshire also had a 'Stall' where we displayed a range of 'resources' which we use with children and young people in our day-to-day practice.

We contributed at a recent event in York celebrating neurodiversity and capturing the views and experiences of young people in relation to trauma.

We are linking up with trauma informed developments in Health and Adult Services as part of the 'Trauma Informed and Responsive North Yorkshire' and in recognition of the important transitions young people make into adult services.

We continue to promote The Attachment, Regulation, and competency Framework (Arc), trauma Informed Training opportunities. A range of staff and senior leaders have continued to take advantage of the training, in order to grow our understanding and application of trauma informed practice in our work.

We received an additional £6,000 of resources so that all case holding practitioners have materials with which to engage young people directly and effectively through conversation in a trauma sensitive/responsive way.

This trauma informed model of practice aligns well with our overall Strength in Relationships approach to working with young people and their family networks. All YJS staff have received training in the ARC model and have ongoing access to all the training opportunities in line with the practice model. This includes Systemic Practice, Strength in Relationships, Signs of Safety, Family Seeing and Voice of the Child.

Our programme of activity is currently being externally evaluated by Child Outcomes Research Consortium (CORC) of the Anna Freud Foundation. The final report will be available in the summer of 2025.

The quarterly data submission reports have been submitted on schedule and provide an important record of the numbers of young people worked with, along with more descriptive narrative case studies that help us to understand the impact of the work in a meaningful way in the lives of those young people we are supporting. For year one of the programme (including the mobilisation period), 158 young people accessed this support offer for the first time.

In year 2 a further 114 young people have been supported through the programme.

The year 2 Annual Report will be published in July and will feature the work of our North Yorkshire partnership.

The regional Vanguard and the National Lead Team continue to be impressed with our programme, and we now look forward to continuing to deliver for the benefit of children, young people, families, and communities until the end of March 2028.

## **8. Develop further integration and collaboration, within Early Help and more widely, to further improve our prevention and diversion of offending behaviour**

Our Youth Justice team is now fully embedded within our Children & Families Service. The procurement of the new case management system will further align the service with the practice model, allowing the creation of replicate forms within the system to ensure greater consistency of practice across the whole service.

## **9. Evaluate and extend our Skills4Work project**

Ongoing – development work has been undertaken over this last year to review the process for referrals and effective delivery of the current service in the east of the county. A review of this project is currently being undertaken to consider if this can be expanded extending to other localities.

## **10. Develop a new, consistent, and collaborative approach with our local Community Safety Hubs, to further improve our prevention and diversion of offending behaviour**

In place - as part of the Unitary Council, the Community Safety Hubs have recently been through a significant re-structure to enable greater consistency of working practice. The steering group has been re-established and development work will be led within this group.

## **11. Review and improve our victim services offer to align with the change in the national KPIs**

There has been a delay in progress in this area due to staffing. Two strands of work are planned this year:

- 1) a review of wider restorative services across C&FS and the voluntary sector, including 'York and North Yorkshire Office for Policing, Fire, Crime and Commissioning (OPFCC)' funded restorative services and
- 2) an internal review of victim services to prepare for HMIP Inspection.

## **12. Review the Op Divan pathway with police to ensure greater integration with C&FS**

Information on Operation Divan is covered in the Prevention Section of this plan



**13. Maintain investment in high quality training & development for our workforce, consistent with the Practice model. Ensuring evidence of whole family working and family seeing within all children's records. This will mean we continue to embed the use of Mind of my Own across the whole workforce**

See Workforce development section

#### **14. Deliver on Turnaround measures**

The programme is now fully implemented details are highlighted in the Diversion section of this plan.

#### **15. Review YJS Management Board TOR in accordance to new governance framework**

A review took place in October 2023 the terms of reference and was adopted

#### **16. Implementation with partners of the Serious Violence Duty**

A working group was formed across North Yorkshire and the city of York to ensure successful implementation of this duty. Details are highlighted in the serious violence, exploitation and contextual safeguarding section of this plan.

## **Risks and issues**

Over this last year we have been undertaking a procurement process to procure and implement a new case management system. This was following the notification that our current provider was no longer providing system that would be compliant with the YJB.

A project board was established, and significant work has been undertaken over the last months to move forwards towards procurement of an alternative case management product. A number of focus groups have been held involving practitioners from YJS, business support services, business intelligence, performance and technology and change, to refine each element and function to ensure the case management system is fully aligned with our strengths in relationship practice model.

We have now successfully procured a YJB approved Case Management system - Provider CACI Product Name - ChildView. Due to the timescales imposed by the withdrawal of Careworks there has been a significant focus on the implementation of a new system, however we have purchased a one-year unsupported licence extension of the current product Careworks allowing time for successful data migration, the building and implementation of forms within the new system and to allow us to continue to submit the required data to the YJB during the implementation period. It is hoped we will go live with the new system at the end of July 2024.

This does still present a level of risk as the current system is no longer supported by the product owner, therefore an error within the system may result difficulties in the submission of data returns, however the YJB have been very supportive of this.

As part of the implementation training has been provided at appropriate levels to all practitioners and support services who will require access to this new system. This includes appropriate training access by Practitioners across the C&FS. The full training programme should be completed by October 2024.

This has provided the services with the opportunity to develop a more child-centred, interoperative system, which is fully aligned with our practice model and our child first approach. A benefits realisation exercise was undertaken as part of the procurement process, identifying a significant number of benefits in acquiring a new system, including:

- Opportunity for greater alignment of practice across Children and Families Service
- Reportable built-in functions for statutory reporting to Youth Justice Board
- Creation of reportable forms including Maps enabling greater future reporting of data.
- Reduction in time spent inputting data from word documents increasing capacity for direct work.



As City of York YJS has recently migrated to the same system, we have shared learning from their recent migration and will look at greater consolidation of documents to ensure there is greater consistency in documents produced and shared with our North Yorkshire Police colleagues.

### **Speech and Language Therapeutic Service**

In September 23, our commissioned provider HDFT (Harrogate District Foundation Trust) gave North Yorkshire notice to end contract of Speech and Language Therapy services to No Wrong Door (NWD) and Youth Justice, with services ending in March 2024. We continue to recognise the Speech Language and Communication needs (SLCN) is a significant area of need for most young people open to Youth Justice in North Yorkshire and that the service has been invaluable to establish improved understanding, assessment, and intervention with young people.

We have used this opportunity to consider an alternative method of delivery. Following discussion with the Inclusion Team within Children and Young People Service within North Yorkshire, we have agreed to use the funding to increase the capacity within the Inclusion Service to develop an in-house offer to meet this need. A small working group has been established to take this forward with a view of implementing a programme of support from September 2024.

Whilst developing this provision, refresher training has been delivered using funding from the OPFCC across YJS and NWD. YJS practitioners from City of York Council were also invited to attend. Two workshops have now been successfully delivered by North Yorkshire Inclusion Service ensuring practitioners have a good awareness of SLCN and the earliest identification of the needs to ensure appropriate referrals to NHS services.

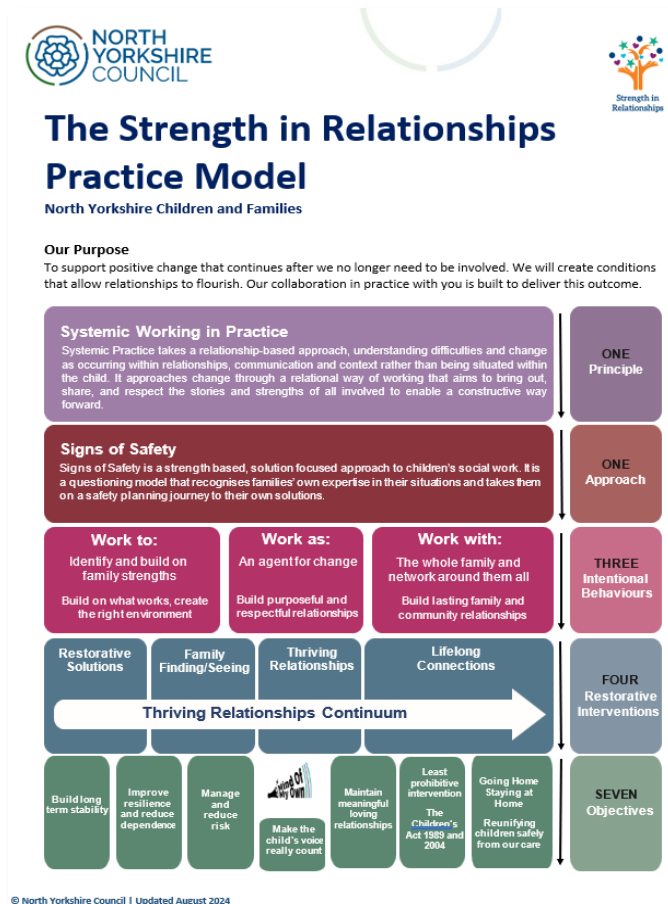
### **Turnaround Funding**

The Turnaround programme has been successfully implemented and is now an established part of our prevention and diversionary activities. North Yorkshire Youth, our voluntary provider, was commissioned to deliver the programme running alongside the Change Direction Programme funded by the Integrated Care Board and York and North Yorkshire Office Police Fire Crime Commissioner. Children have engaged positively with the programme, and we believe this is due to it sitting with a well-established Youth provider within North Yorkshire and York. As this funding is coming to an end, there is a significant risk that the delivery of this programme will end in March 2025, which will be a significant loss to our Preventative and Diversionary offer.

# Plan for the forthcoming year

## Child First

Our North Yorkshire practice model is fully aligned with the 'Child First' values. Our [Strength in Relationships practice model](#) underpins these values and principles and illustrates how we collectively respond to the needs of children, young people, and their families.



We recognise that children open to our Youth justice Service often have multiple and complex needs, therefore by providing support early, we seek to divert children from the justice system entirely and address their needs by promoting social identity, and supporting young people to find new, constructive purpose in their families and communities.

Our practice model builds and extends this approach in three key aspects:

- Using systemic, family-centred practice to support positive change within the child's parent/family/carer network. Without minimising the importance of child-centrism, we do not think it can have sustainable meaning unless developed in the child's wider environment and built from the strengths and resources within it.
- Working in a simple, transparent, and collaborative style. We say what we mean, and we mean what we say. With the support of the Department for Education and YJB, we have developed a radically simplified and accessible model of assessment and planning which offers meaningful access and participation for children and young people.
- Applying these values and working methods across all our Children & Families Service.

The principle of 'Child First' guides the work of our service and underpins our work, values, and principles in North Yorkshire. For those children who do offend, our core focus continues to be rehabilitation, tackling underlying causes of youth offending. We hope by delivering a system that gives children the support they need to break the cycle of offending and builds productivity and fulfilling lives supported by positive relationships. 'Child First' is an evidenced based approach to delivering youth justice in North Yorkshire by:

- Prioritising the best interests of children and young people
- Building on children and young people individual strengths
- Encouraging active participation, engagement, and wider social inclusion
- Managing public protection and risk

It is important to ensure that children and young people are not unnecessarily criminalised and individual circumstance are fully considered. This is the focus of the evidence-based 'Child First' approach where diversion will:

- Help children avoid getting involved in the formal YJS and the damaging consequences.
- Avoid the cost of formal processing through the justice systems.
- Save on further costs by addressing children's unmet needs at an early stage before they escalate and become more difficult and costly to manage; and
- Focus on children's needs, identify and build on their strengths and create opportunities to realise their potential through education, employment, and other activities.

## Engagement and participation

North Yorkshire has a comprehensive engagement and participation approach. Within Children's Services this is led by our Youth Voice and Creative Engagement Service, comprising of a Strategic Manager and 4 specialist participation workers who support and facilitate the voice of young service users. This includes a locality based consultative 'voice groups', a team of Young Inspectors, a Special Education Needs Voice group and a Child in Care Council.



As described in this plan, our partnership approach to Youth Justice does not distinguish or stigmatise children who commit offences. Some of the children supported by youth justice are involved in Youth Voice projects, but we do not have (or want) a separate strand which primarily labels them as criminals.

The York and North Yorkshire Office Police Fire and Crime also funds a very active Youth Commission project facilitated by Leaders Unlocked, which gathers a wide range of views from all young people aged 10-25 across York and North Yorkshire through the delivery of peer-to-peer workshops and consultation events.

Mind of My Own Xchange is now embedded within the YJS in North Yorkshire and works by supporting the connection between the child and their worker by helping them to communicate their lived experience. Xchange enables children to discuss things that can be difficult to say face to face and hard to put into words, providing a richer picture of the child. Since its launch in July 2022, 488 statements have been received, with 82 received since April 2024, which include topics such as "Youth Justice and Me," and "This Is Me."

Recently, the Youth Voice has been involved in the refreshing of the MAP document and have been engaging with young people who have experience of working with Youth Justice, to see what they think about the document and what they would like to see discussions look like in the future. This has been an important piece of work, ensuring the people who benefit most from this assessment tool have been able to contribute to discussions around what the document looks like and how their voices are heard throughout the document. One-to-one and focus groups were held, and the information gathered from these sessions will be fed back to the working group in July 2024.

Building on the success of previous years, the Youth Voice team has continued to offer one-to-one sessions with young people using rap as a way of exploring their emotions. One young person attending these sessions got so much from them he asked if he could bring along a friend, who would also benefit from joining.

## Resources and services

Our North Yorkshire partnership operates a pooled budget approach for core service provision, supplemented by the secondment of staff and provision of in-kind services (e.g. premises and ICT systems). We are unable to provide a finalised budget overview within the plan until the funding is confirmed by the Youth Justice Board. At this point the plan can be taken to our executive board for approval and publication.

Partner Agency Contributions	Staff (£)	In Kind (£)	Pooled Budget (£)	2023/24 Total (£)
	£	£	£	£
North Yorkshire Council	0	715,989	631,300	1,347,289
Police	134,793	0	0	134,793
Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner	0	0	292,703	292,703
Probation	53,339	0	5,000	58,339
Health (North Yorks)	75,426	0	60,632	136,058
Youth Justice Board	0	0	947,460	947,460
	263,558	715,989	1,937,095	2,916,642

### Key

2024/25 figures confirmed  
 2024/25 figures assumed to be correct  
 2024/25 figures estimated only (Grant notification not yet received, NYC pay inflation yet to be awarded & NHS figure awaited)

Until our funding was confirmed we were unable to confidently state that the operational service will be sufficiently resourced to provide all necessary services in North Yorkshire to meet our duties under section 38 Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and fully compliant with the YJB's Conditions of Grant. Therefore, this plan reflects our proposed service delivery based on the previous funding (2023/2024) from the YJB.

## Board development

North Yorkshire Youth Justice Management Board have identified the following priorities for the period of this plan.

- An annual planner to be created to enable all members of the board to schedule visits with frontline practitioners to observe and understand current practice and activities.
- An annual development session to be scheduled every March to bring together members of the Board with Managers across Early Help and Youth Justice to review and update progress against the plan, showcase good practice and explore prioritisation of emerging issues.
- YJS practitioners to continue to attend the quarterly board meetings to share current practice and showcase activities.

## Workforce Development

North Yorkshire Council remains committed to attracting and retaining the highest calibre practitioners and we will continue to strive to ensure that career opportunities are available to all. We encourage learning and development within each role and in preparation for potential future career progression. Our Strength in Relationship practice model that is embedded across the whole Children & Families Service being recognised as outstanding.

We work in a culture in which all practitioners are able to develop their expertise and excellent practice. With supervisors, managers and leaders that are proactive, eager to create opportunities, innovative and constantly striving for improvement. They are skilled at leading our practitioners at a time of constant 'change'. Within the service there are clear career pathways (whilst working with children, young people, families, and carers); whether workers wish to remain in the same job role or choose to work in another 'area', they are still provided with support and guidance.

We ensure that workers are motivated and inspired to continue to grow and develop within whatever job role/career they choose. We consider that the experience/learning workers gain is a valuable resource and that their knowledge, skills, and practice is shared across the service.

We provide reflective supervision, training, research, family finding surgeries, practice lead workshops, shadowing opportunities, appreciative inquiries, coaching, mentoring, learning spaces, and opportunities to shadow and observe best practice. All practitioners working with children, young people, families, and carers are encouraged to develop their skills, learning and careers. We:

- Provide regular reflective supervision.
- Support workers to evolve within their chosen career, ensuring they have the up-to-date knowledge and skills to fulfil their role daily.
- Continually embed new skills, knowledge, values, and ways of working that benefit the children and families' that our practitioners work with (including our practice model ('Strength in Relationships').
- Drive culture change and develop a shared language and value base for working with children, young people, and families across all agencies.
- Strive to strengthen partnership working relationships with agencies to develop effective ways of working together.
- Keep up to date with new practice, research and evidence-based working whilst utilising the resources and platforms available to all (including Research in Practice, Children's Social Work Matters, Partners in Practice, and the Teaching Partnership).
- Maintain our relationships with regional, national, and international experts to bring their expertise into our Children and Families arena (including systemic practice, family finding/seeing, signs of safety and restorative practice). By sharing knowledge and experience across the service (and with partner agencies) we can collaborate and drive our standards of care even higher and ensure children, young people, families, and carers receive the best possible services.
- We are proud of our practitioners, and we are committed to attracting and retaining the highest calibre of practitioners. We will strive to ensure that opportunities are available to all.

Over this next year we will continue to rollout the trauma informed training across the whole Children and Families service and partner agencies, with a strong focus on aligning this with the work in schools.

## Evidence-based practice and innovation

### North Yorkshire alternative Prevention and Diversion Assessment – My Assessment Plan (MAPs):

The YJB have agreed continued use of our alternative assessment – My Assessment Plan by North Yorkshire YJS. A Memorandum of Understanding has recently been agreed which will be reviewed on an annual basis.

It is now our intention to further enhance our assessment tool following the recommendations identified from the evaluation undertaken in 2023 (attached as an appendix). The assessment will then be built within our new Case Management System enabling reportable data functions.

A project development plan has been agreed with Dr Rachel Vipond (Evaluator), who has offered her time to work alongside our Principal Social Worker and YJ practitioners to support this development work. This work commenced in April 2024 with the delivery of a workshop to set the scene. We were delighted to welcome our regional representative from the YJB to attend the event and lead a discussion on the 'Child First' approach. This provided reassurance to our YJS practitioners of the agreement we have reached with the YJB.

Following the event Neil Bower regional Rep Youth Justice Board provided us with the following feedback.

***“I just wanted to thank you and your colleagues for the invite to join you last week for your MAPs review. It was great to see such a ‘bottom-up’ review and development of your tool and process, and I believe you should be proud of your staff for their integrity and collaboration. I thoroughly enjoyed the day and wish you luck in the next steps.”***

Once the development work has been completed, which will include consultation with young people open to our service and their families, it is our intention to share the finalised form with our key partners, including HMIP inspectors, to ensure there is stakeholder confidence in this work going forward. This is considered vital in our preparation for the next inspection.

Once finalised the assessment will then be built within our new Case Management System. Forms development is part of the training package purchased from CACI the system supplier which will enable the MAPs form to be built and include the functionality to be reported from.

***“Good practice example: The MAP assessment tool has been used in this case; this uses a Signs of Safety methodology to identify strengths and what things need to change for the child. In relation to desistance, the sections in the MAP include family and social relationships, self-identity and health. There is clear information recorded on all these sections. A key strength is the voice of the child, which is very clear in the assessment, both in use of the self-assessment and the scaling. The child’s voice is integral to the overall assessment.”***

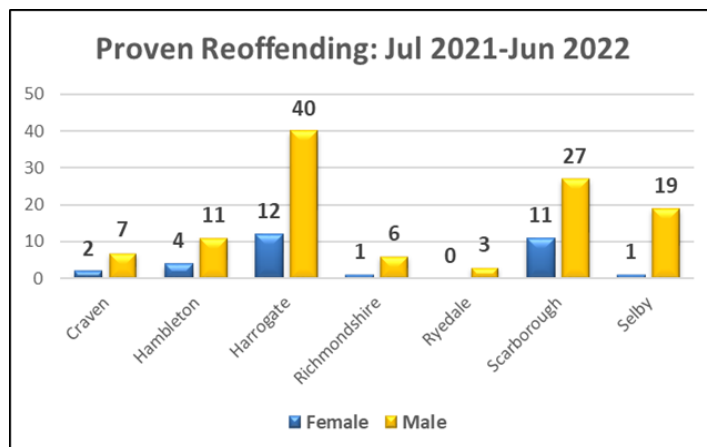
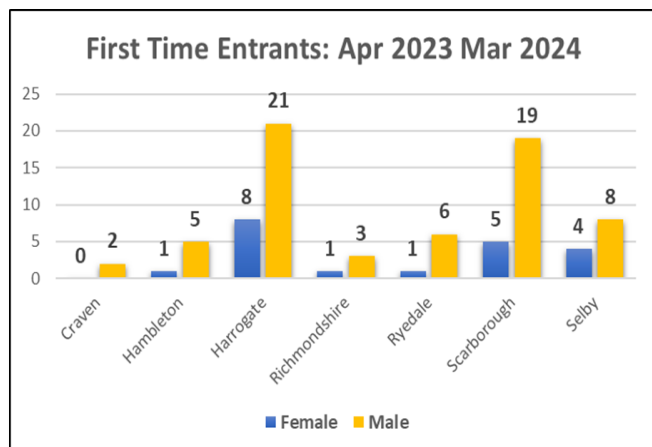
HM Inspectorate of Probation 2020



## Work with Girls

We are concerned by the unusually high representation of girls in both our FTE (24%) and offending cohorts (22%), which significantly exceeding national trends.

A key differentiation is that girls tend to enter the youth justice system a year earlier in developmental terms, and also to 'peak' and desist sooner. This is consistent with national evidence, and we do not perceive any discriminatory or disproportionality concerns.



We are at the early stages of developing specific work around our female cohort. North Yorkshire has taken the lead alongside Leicester YJS to develop a national focus group exploring work with girls coming to the attention of YJS. As part of this development, we are aiming to explore examples of good practice, examine what is already working and enable the opportunity for sharing resources and evidence-based practice. North Yorkshire held its second girl's forum alongside the YJB in February 2024 with Wolverhampton leading on the session with a focus on the work they are undertaking and research regarding girls in custody.

As part of our Trauma Informed programme and linked to the work undertaken in the previous year around coastal areas, work is ongoing to undertake a participatory appraisal with an identified group of girls in our coastal town of Scarborough. We are working alongside with St Giles Trust who offer unbiased and confidential support to help address any underlying issues which are holding the females back from progressing their lives and explore a trauma informed approach to guiding them forward. Typically, these involve crime, poverty, substance misuse, domestic abuse, and physical and/or mental health issues.

St Giles help with both practical and emotional needs - assisting the females to increase confidence and to access specialist support with issues around addiction, abuse, and health. They also encourage females to take steps towards improving their wellbeing with help around healthier eating, exercise and reducing social isolation.

The aim is to support females to improve their confidence and skills, enabling them to become independent and thriving young people. We are hoping to link up with them to provide some collaborative and forward-thinking gender specific interventions in their outreach bus, targeting hotspot areas where we know young girls are and offering tailored and trauma informed approaches to support them.

As part of the Serious Violence Duty, funding was secured from the Police and Crime Commissioner to enable 'Square Up to Violence Against Women and Girls' to deliver training to staff in North Yorkshire and York. The Aggressive Behaviour Control Train the Trainer Programme is a 3-hour programme that was delivered in June to practitioners who work with and support young males. The programme encourages opportunities to consider the impact of violence against women and girls and the reasoning behind their behaviours. As part of the training, participants from across Early Help/YJS received sessions, plans and resources to enable them to deliver sessions and interventions to young people.

## Skills 4 Work (S4W)

Skills 4 Work, funded through Anglo American, continues to offer our post-16 young people an opportunity to deliver projects within the local community of Scarborough & Whitby, on the East coast. A maximum of 4 young people can attend the programme at the same time to ensure that the project supervisor can provide sufficient health and safety oversight to the tasks being undertaken, whilst providing a mentoring role to the young people.

We offer all young people and their workers the opportunity to attend a panel discussion when they apply to attend the programme -this allows the panel to meet the young person and provides opportunity for the young person to meet the supervisor and ask questions. This ensures that the trajectory of young people is identified prior to commencement of the programme, enabling panel members to ascertain the direction of travel and any support required from the educational advisor. It also provides clear management oversight of the decision-making process.

The project undertakes community-based tasks, that people living in the community are unable to do for themselves or do not have the resources to complete the tasks thereby developing community-cohesion. The work over this last year has been around the Whitby area and close to the Woodsmith Mine. The work is very varied such as repairing / replacing a broken fence for a nursery in the small village of Egton, painting the floor in the sports pavilion in Sleights, assembling playhouses for an infant school in Ruswaarp as well as grass cutting and hedge trimming in several villages.

Tasks have also included planting trees within the participating young people's own community that will be there for many years, giving the trainees pride in the place they live, a sense of belonging and perhaps an opportunity reflect on their time on Skills4Work in years to come with their own family.

As part of the 'growing our own' approach, the Skills4Work team have been undertaking tasks to support our Supported Accommodation team. This work has involved furnishing accommodation for our Asylum-Seeking young people, constructing flatpack furniture and undertaking general maintenance duties.

Funding from Anglo American was previously secured until December 2024. The funding currently covers the cost of a project supervisor for three days a week, alongside an incentive allowance and materials and equipment required for the community work. Anglo have confirmed that the current funding will continue until December 2024 and discussions are taking place regarding a further extension of their funding for the Skills4Work project until December 2025.

We have recently been approached by Scarborough Cricket Club, as they are also keen to support the development of the project in the Scarborough area following positive feedback from the young people who have attended the programme.

The work was recognised in the Ugthorpe and Hutton Mulgrave Parish Council October 2023 newsletter.

**Skills 4 Work Team** (Sponsored by Anglo American) have been busy in the parish undertaking various maintenance jobs. As well as installing the new Community Noticeboard, they have:

- repaired/painted the seat at the top of Mill Lane
- cleared graffiti from the bus shelter on the A171 and periodically remove litter that has gathered
- Cleared moss from the log seat at the Pinfold and installed a new oak latted top, purchased by the parish council with funding from SBC Model Agreement monies guaranteed for 23/24 financial year and honoured by NYC

Many thanks go to the team and Anglo American for their help.



Anglo American recently agreed to fund, a CBT (Compulsory Basic Training) bike test for one of our recruits which he passed with flying colours; the impact this will have on this young person's life is immeasurable. The young person had eluded that if this was not funded, to enable him to get about, he would have considered driving his bike illegally as he would never have the funds to pay for the test.

The impact of funding the test means that he did not need to make that choice and therefore commit a crime, keeping him out of the criminal justice system. Anglo American and Skills4Work are extremely proud, and we hope this will open up a world of opportunity. The young person has since secured work with a builder as he is able to travel to various work sites. Without the bike or licence, he would not have been able to secure this position.

Over this last year, 8 young people have engaged in the programme. As part of the programme all young people have attended additional training:

- 4 young people gaining Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card, and a further 1 awaiting the results.
- 2 young people completing their Maths Level One.
- 2 young people completing CBT training with one accessing a moped via the Wheels to Work Programme.
- 1 young person completing Emergency First Aid course and Event Marshalling.

In recent months one trainee has left the project after securing a full-time job with a Scarborough Road working company.

One trainee has undertaken his CSCS card and passed successfully.

Another trainee has completed a course at 'Go4it' and is now qualified to work on football and event sites as security.

NYC are enormously proud of the trainee's commitment to change their life directions and aspirations.

We are currently exploring how outcomes can be improved for the young people engaged in the programme and any additional support that is required to ensure there are greater opportunities for the young person to engage in further education employment or training at the end of the programme.

## Evaluation

North Yorkshire Childrens and Families Service have a Quality of Practice Framework which is embedded across all children's services. The framework is designed to embed a culture of continual improvement across the service to achieve improved outcomes for children and young people.

By always striving to improve practice and recognising that it will be achieved through open dialogue and effective challenge between staff, the children and families service and our partner agencies will achieve the best possible outcome for the child.

The framework centres on three elements:

- Voice – The voice of the child and family is evident and has informed plans and outcomes.
- Quality – Quality of practice is high and facilitating the achievement of the best outcomes for children.
- Practice Outcomes – Data will demonstrate the outcomes delivered by the team and identify areas of strength and risk.

A monthly learning space seeks evidence of strong practice around capturing the voice of the child and family to further enhance our understanding and provide constructive challenge.

A quarterly report is produced for Children Young People Leadership Team which collates all of the Quality of Practice activity and creates a learning feedback loop for the service and further fosters a culture of continual improvement.

On a quarterly basis progress against recommendations are tracked at the Quality Assurance Board and Quality Assurance Delivery Group meetings.

As part of our monthly learning space process, we capture feedback from partner agencies. The key messages from the feedback are reported in the quarterly Quality Assurance Summary Report, with progress on identified learning and improvement actions tracked.

Voice of children, young people, and families - we have a range of mechanisms across services for capturing the voice of children, young people and families including the Mind of My Own apps (One App, Express and Exchange), 1:1 interview, young people's groups, young inspectors, feedback surveys and user forums.

## Priorities for the coming year

The Management Board and Youth Justice Service have agreed the following priorities for the period of the plan:

- Implementation and embedding of the new Case Management system – to be completed by March 2025
- Implementation of the revised MAPs into the new case management system as a reportable form.
- Reducing the criminalisation of children in care and children with Special Educational Needs
- Reduction in number of children re-offending
- A focus on working with girls to reduce the number of girls committing criminal offences
- Review and improve our victim services offer.
- Enhance the offer for children transitioning between children and adults' services.
- Ensuring the service and board members have a good understanding of the new inspection framework and that the service is fully able to meet all elements of the new framework.
- Continue to actively engage with the Serious violence duty.

A service development day is planned for September 2025 to identify the key actions to successfully deliver to the priorities.

## Standards for children

### Out of Court Disposals - Youth Outcome Panel (YOP)

The Youth Outcomes Panel has been operating since 10th May 2017, involving North Yorkshire Police, North Yorkshire Youth Justice and City of York Youth Justice Service. The purpose of the Panel is to consider the most appropriate disposal for children and young people who have committed a criminal offence. It is the decision-making forum to ensure Police Disposals are:

- Proportionate to the crime committed.
- Effective in reducing first time entrants to the criminal justice system.
- Reducing the risk of further offending.

The aims/responsibilities of the Panel are:

- To encourage joint decision making between the police and both youth Justice Services to promote positive outcomes for children, young people and victims.
- To provide safeguards against inappropriate disposals, including inappropriate repeat cautioning and unnecessary entry into the Criminal Justice System.
- To enable restorative approaches with victims.
- To divert young people into services that seek to address the causes of their offending behaviour.
- To reduce First Time Entrants to the Criminal Justice System.
- To ensure appropriate outcomes for disadvantaged young people e.g., Children in Care, Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) etc.

An annual report is submitted to our local Management Board comparing the operation of the Panel between calendar years and to identify any change in trends between the periods. As the panel is run jointly with City of York, the report looks at referrals from both York and North Yorkshire.

Outcome code 22 was introduced in response to recommendations in the Lammy Report. It is a Police outcome code that can be used when the police decide to defer prosecution until a child or young person has been given the opportunity to engage with an intervention activity, which is aimed at keeping them out of the Criminal Justice System.

One change seen in 2023, has been the introduction of Outcome 22 Reviews. When the Panel has a long and/or complex discussion and it is concerned that the young person may not engage with the Outcome 22 programme, it asks for a review so that the Panel can monitor engagement and take the appropriate action quickly if engagement is not sufficient.

## Work with Courts

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The Service, HM Courts and Tribunals Service and Magistrates work closely together, without compromising judicial independence.

The YJS Management Board includes a Magistrate representative, which means that performance and service developments are circulated widely, but also that challenge is made on policy direction, where appropriate to do so and within the role of the representative.

There are biannual Magistrate meetings, one held in West Yorkshire and one in North Yorkshire (the two areas have a combined Bench) where either training or specific service updates/developments are presented.

In May 2024, we presented to Family and Youth Court Magistrates and local Crown Court Judges; this included a summary of the Service, roles, and responsibilities, how we incorporate the voice of the child into our work, and the integration of trauma informed practice into work with children. Feedback was extremely positive with 90% of respondents saying the event had been 'Very Useful'. Further in-depth training on trauma has been offered by our psychologists.

We have continued to work closely with Magistrates arranging visits to our local Children's Centres to understand the lives of children in care. Magistrates have also requested to view Referral Order Panels, and this is currently being arranged.

Work in the Youth Court is very strong and communication between Magistrates and the Service representatives in Court are positive. In terms of individual feedback on Pre-Sentence Reports, completed feedback forms are sent by the service to the sentencing court and they are regularly completed by Magistrates and returned. They are positively received by North Yorkshire Youth Justice Service, both as a celebration of good practice and in terms of constructive feedback.

In terms of congruency rates, the most recent audit showed 91% (20 of a total 22) where the recommendation corresponds with sentence. The two that were not were both custodial outcomes where the recommendation of Intensive supervision and surveillance (ISS) was rejected due to the seriousness of the offences. The congruency shows the trust that has developed between magistrates and the service.

### **Court Work – National Standard Self-Assessment**

In 2023-24, the Partnership was asked to complete a national standard self-assessment audit in relation to court work, which incorporated our practice in the court setting in relation to how we engage with children and parent(s)/carer(s), the quality of reports presented to court and also in relation to the quality of Referral Order reports that were heard at our Referral Order Panels.

The outcome was exceptionally strong with excellent work noted in court preparation, effective communication with young people and parents at court (and subsequent to court) and really high quality, Pre-Sentence Reports and Referral Order reports. It was noted that there was highly effective liaison with the Youth Custody Service when children were either remanded to youth detention or were sentenced to a custodial term.

In the 13 areas assessed, 12 were rated as Outstanding and one as Good.

The second element of the self-assessment was our strategic work which also scored well with 5 of the 9 areas assessed as Outstanding and 4 as Good.



There were some key areas of development which are summarised in the table below:

Area to Develop	Issue	Outcome
Divert children from court	Children appearing in court who have no commented or denied the offence in police interview, can only receive a formal out of court disposal if referred to the Youth Outcome Panel.  Police, Community Resolution and Outcome 22 data is required to fully understand overall outcomes for children.	This has been raised with the YJB, CPS locally and with the Local Criminal Justice Partnership for resolution.  This has been raised with the Police lead on the YJS Management Board and a response is awaited.
Remand to Local Authority Accommodation	Need to develop a wider range of community accommodation alternatives, to avoid Remands to Youth Detention	Raised with the YJS Management Board. Service awaiting result of national remand review and pilot concerning regional accommodation.
Remand to Youth Detention	Need for same day written reports for Remands to youth Detention to help to reduce remands and improve pre-planning.	Implemented within the Service
Voice of the Child	Children not consistently asked about their experience of appearing at court.	This is an area we have identified for future improvement and actions will be identified to take this forward.
Victim view on Restorative Justice in Pre-Sentence Reports	Number of Pre Sentence Reports audited did not seek the victim's view on restorative Justice prior to court.	In all Pre-Sentence reports presented to court contact will be made with the victim prior to court unless the victim has specifically stated that they do not want to be contacted and their views on Restorative Justice incorporated into the report.

## Service development

The plan has already identified several service developments within the sections above. Included in the section are elements not already recorded in the other sections of the plan.

### Knife Crime

Nationally YOTs are seen as vital to reducing knife crime and protecting young people from violence. Their strategic position as a partner with schools and community groups can help spread awareness of, and resilience to, carrying weapons.

The national data is heavily distorted by London and other major cities. Offences involving young people with knives in North Yorkshire is decreasing with none of the 19 knife offences in 2022/23 resulting in serious physical harm.

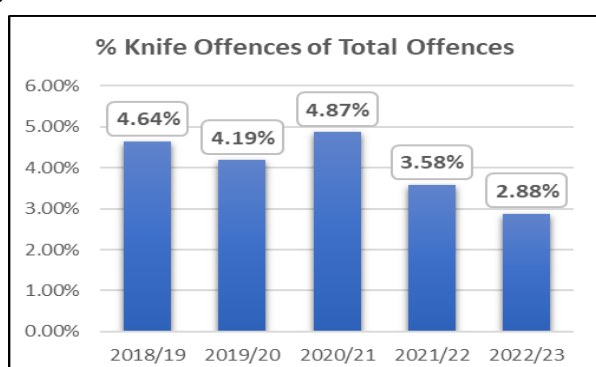


Chart A

As indicated in Chart A, the percentage of total offences that relate to knife offences has decreased in each of the last 2 years, to 2.88% in 2022/23.

**Chart B**

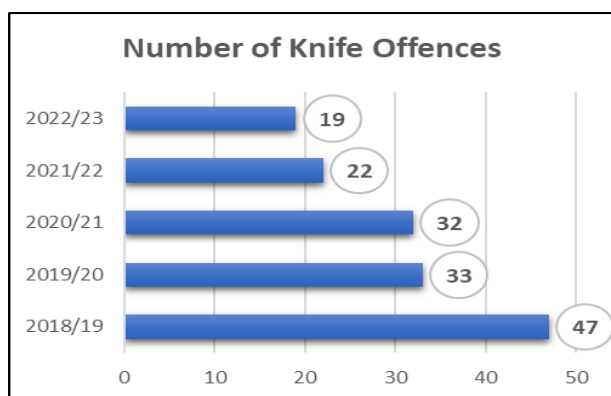


Chart B illustrates the year-on-year reduction in the number of proven knife offences committed by young people since 2018/29 – a 60% reduction from 2018/19 to 2022/23.

In 2022/23 in North Yorkshire, the overwhelming majority (%=95) of knife crime offences related to the possession of a knife/bladed article and not that of causing serious injury or death.

As noted above the overwhelming majority of knife offences by children in North Yorkshire in 2022/23 related to the possession of a knife or bladed article, with knife offences reducing to 2.88% of total offences committed by children. This suggests that North Yorkshire remains a very safe area, especially when compared to national trends.

We are not complacent however, and the key focus of partnership work is to discourage children from carrying knives in their communities and schools. It seems likely that this is most often because of a perceived need for self-protection.

It is therefore important to hear the voices and concerns of those children, to understand their perceived threat landscape and to support them in developing safer methods of managing this. While doing this work, we must be careful not to magnify a misconception that knives are abundant on our streets, or that the authorities are unable to keep young people safe.

Significantly, the great majority of young people who commit knife offences are not previously known to the YJS. This positive prevention work therefore needs to be focused into the school environment, and through delivery of the Early Help Partnership Strategy. Substantial progress has been made under the broad 'Operation Divan' project to increase the delivery of group or classroom-based safety briefings.

It is imperative that we maximise the impact of early identification and diversion for children at risk of being drawn into organised criminal networks.

We pursue this through the partnership Level 1 MACE [Multi-Agency Child Exploitation \(MACE\) and Contextual Safeguarding Level 1](#) reviews in Multi Agency Screening Team and the Level 2 MACE [Multi-Agency Child Exploitation \(MACE\) and Contextual Safeguarding Level 2](#) group meetings, involving wider partners and the partnership work being undertaken as part of the Serious Violence duty.

A structured Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Tool (CERAT) pathway, led by Children and Families, ensures that young people at risk of exploitation receive enhanced services to mitigate and prevent that exposure to serious harm. The service works closely with other C&FS staff to complete the CERAT.

[Serious Violence Duty – Projects - York & North Yorkshire Office for Policing, Fire, Crime and Commissioning \(northyorkshire-pfcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.northyorkshire-pfcc.gov.uk)

# Prevention

As highlighted above in the plan, preventative interventions continue to be prioritised within North Yorkshire both through universal open access community activities and more targeted interventions. Delivery of these interventions is through both commissioned services and partnership delivery. This section covers a range of preventative activities which support the reduction of First Time Entrants into the Criminal Justice System within North Yorkshire.

## North Yorkshire Youth (NYY)

Voluntary youth clubs continue to rise within North Yorkshire with a total of 40 clubs being supported by North Yorkshire Youth. North Yorkshire Youth & Community Development Team (YCDWs) work within their districts and the communities, supporting clubs and other agencies within them. The YCDWs are also increasing the sharing of good practice within the team and can offer this support to their voluntary youth clubs. Because it is a relatively new YCDW team, they are having a renewed impact on the tangible outcomes for the volunteers and clubs they support.

## Change Direction Mentoring Scheme

There are over 250 young people open to this scheme. During 2023/2024 North Yorkshire Council and the Ministry of Justice supported this project further by the Turnaround project. This allowed NYY to increase the youth mentoring capacity across North Yorkshire and more young people are supported by the scheme.

## LGBT Champions

NYY LGBT Champions are meeting regularly, and every district is represented. Trips to Pride events are planned and **include one to be based at Carlton Lodge in partnership with The Youth Work Unit.**

## Wake Up Call

This is a pre-prevent course aimed at year 9s upwards in schools. Since the start of the project, 29 courses have been run. NYY were successful in securing funding from the 'York and North Yorkshire Office for Policing, Fire, Crime and Commissioning' to run more courses in North Yorkshire and York Schools in the academic year for **2023/2024**.

## Youth Directories

All Youth Directories continue to be updated and put on the NYY website.

## NYY Training

NYY continue to offer a menu of training courses to staff, volunteers and adults working with young people. These courses are carried out virtually by Zoom and face-to-face training. The programme of training includes Drugs and alcohol awareness, healthy relationships, peer pressure & risky behaviour, County Lines, Hate Crime, Misogyny.

## Police

About the Youth Commission - York & North Yorkshire Office for Policing, Fire, Crime and Commissioning ([northyorkshire-pfcc.gov.uk](http://northyorkshire-pfcc.gov.uk))

## Operation Divan – Knives and Weapons Early Intervention and Prevention for Children and Young People in North Yorkshire.

Aimed at young people who have been or are thinking of using or carrying knives and other weapons associated with 'county lines' including drugs, child exploitation and bullying.

NY Police work in partnership with education, social care and youth justice to support children up to 18 years where it has been identified as being at risk of weapon carrying to prevent future escalation. This process covers all incidents involving knives or weapons in the home, education venues and public places.

Operation Divan:

- offers support, intervention and diversion
- deals with incidents of concern reported but also by proactively searching for single strand intelligence
- intelligence is mainly generated through a process which allows partners to submit their concerns directly to NYPs Intelligence Department.
- The aim is to effectively deal with an identified young person within 72 hours of the concern being raised.

Any young person identified under the process is asked to voluntarily take part in an intervention led in the main by North Yorkshire Police School Liaison Team. Resources used follow Department for Education guidelines and sessions are tailored to the individuals' learning needs and ability. The resources have been adapted to suit primary aged children as well as those in secondary and further education, including SEN.

Operation Divan has been established across North Yorkshire for a number of years and there has been a range of resources created to raise awareness of the initiative with our partner agencies through our One Minute Guides for partners and schools. From an operational perspective, the School Liaison Officers have developed strong relationships with the Early Help Consultants who have good relationships with our schools. North Yorkshire Police are consistent in informing C&FS when they have undertaken an Operation Divan intervention, and we would like to develop this further to strengthen the earlier communication between the Police and YJSs. This has enabled opportunities to facilitate joint visit opportunities to understand the wider context of the needs of the young people we have concerns may be at risk of carrying knives in the community.

Representation from North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership MACE attend the North Yorkshire Police Organised Crime Group Disruption Panel meetings, so where there may be a concern that a young person is consistently carrying knives, the wider context around potential exploitation and vulnerability can be joined up with wider multi-agency plans for that young person and their family.

**Case Study 1:** 17-year-old autistic female with a history of anxiety and depression manifesting itself in suicidal ideations, calls 999 stating that she has been assaulted and has left the house in possession of a kitchen knife, which she is carrying for her protection. Female gives her location as a busy beauty spot. Officer locates the female in a distressed state at the given location and seizes the knife from her. In this case the female's needs could be met by offering her the opportunity to engage in the Operation Divan process, which she agreed to and positively engaged with. Negating the need for arrest, interview, and charge in this case, which would have potentially affected her mental health further. Outcome 21 applied.

**Case Study 2:** 13-year-old male found in possession of 7-inch bladed knife in school. Search of school bag prompted by fellow students alerting teaching staff that he had been in possession of it in school for two days. School decision made to deal with offence as part of Operation Divan process, which mother of the boy consented to. Mother further discloses that that boy's risk-taking and defiant behaviour had escalated since he started associating with one particular fellow student. This is supported by the suspect, who discloses he was placed under pressure to carry the knife. As a consequence, both boys become part of the Operation Divan process, which they engage well with. Suspect in this case also offered and accepts referral to York Youth Justice Triage & Diversion referral. Outcome 22 applied.

### **"No More Lives and County Lines"**

As part of Operation Sceptre (2 campaign weeks every year), North Yorkshire Police collaborated with award winning author Christina Gabbittas to deliver a series of hard-hitting, powerful, and impactful messages to primary school children.

Year 6 primary school children across the county benefit from a one-hour session which covers topics such as grooming, county lines and the consequences of carrying knives been discussed openly.

The schools were selected through evaluating Operation Divan data as well as localities in North Yorkshire and York where county lines influences are of concern.

Christina's story produced in animation format, shows a group of young people who get drawn into the dangerous world of drug dealing resulting in one of them being stabbed.

### **Resources | No More Knife Crime**

The children are then asked to recap the key messages, which Christina then helps them to put into a poem. Two of these poems can be heard recited in this short clip: [No More Knives or County Lines - YouTube](#)  
The sessions are supported by the School Liaison Team as well as local colleagues.

**Operation Choice – Drugs Early Intervention and Prevention for Children and Young People in North Yorkshire** - The emphasis being on education and harm reduction.

Operation Choice is a more recent initiative which is promoted across our partnership [NYSCP \(safeguardingchildren.co.uk\)](https://www.nyscp.org.uk) and is embedded into the training that is delivered to schools jointly by Police and the Early Help Consultants. It facilitates the non-criminalisation of young people and enables children who have been found with substances, to be offered the opportunity to access support and opportunities to divert them away from criminal activity. This aligns with our North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership [Being Young in North Yorkshire Strategy](#) to enable young people to be safe, happy, healthy and achieving in life. Operationally we have strong relationships with our voluntary sector through North Yorkshire Youth who will support children referred into our Change Direction programme. This enables young people to be empowered to see their own wider future potential and divert them away from criminal activity and the Criminal Justice System. We also have good strong relationships between the Police Schools Liaison Team who link into our [MACE Level 2 meetings](#). They provide a vital link that includes the sharing of intelligence and supporting the multi-agency action plans to disrupt of exploitation in localities.

A pathway designed for referring children who are found in possession of drugs, into a course of police led educational sessions. As part of the referral consideration is giving as to the need to refer into drug service providers and other commissioned diversion services.

Open to anyone under 18 years who is not within the Youth Justice Service or wider criminal justice arena, the eligibility criteria extend to the possession of any drug identified under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

- The course does [not](#) extend to Children who are arrested and under investigation for drugs supply offences.

Youth Justice Service have the discretion to refer children to operation choice who may not have any prior outcomes for drug related matters, which means they will not be pushed down a criminal route for possession, when Operation Choice may be more suitable. If a child is eligible for a referral and accepts this outcome, the suspect drugs will be seized but not tested and the person referred and not interviewed, and no acceptance of guilt required. The drugs will be retained for a period until the child / young person has begun to positively engage with the process. This will allow the police to carry out a full investigation should the child / young person refuse the referral after initial contact or fail to engage. Where there is non-engagement or refusal of consent then there is the opportunity to refer back to other means of disposal.

Disposal methods pre-August 2021 were:

- Community Resolution Disposal (CRD) – to attend [one](#) Drug and Alcohol Referral (DAR)
- Youth Caution / Conditional Caution - referral to Youth Outcome Panel

The old process offered a limited opportunity for trauma-informed intervention, precluding a child entering a positive learning environment which would encourage a psychosocial change. This prevented opportunities to address stimulant use, denying those affected an opportunity for sustained specialist youth support at the earliest opportunity.

The North Yorkshire Police School Liaison Team deliver Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) Association resources:

- Drugs and The Law
- Exploring Attitudes Towards Drugs
- Peer Pressure and Consequences of Drug Use
- County Lines – Coercive Relationships & Gangs

The North Yorkshire Police School Liaison Team also assess the need for further intervention and diversion, with commissioned substance misuse and youth services:

- Changing Lives and NY Rise.
- North Yorkshire Sport – Stepping Up Project and North Yorkshire Youth – Change Direction Turnaround programme.

45% Reduction in under 18 offenders being brought into custody under arrest or Victim rights act (VRA)

**NY Drug Strategy** - gap analysis to inform provision of youth specific provision

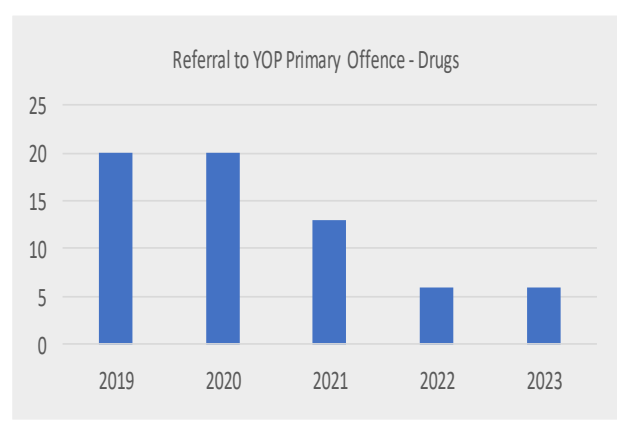
**Monthly Emerging Drugs Trend meeting** - to inform preventative work in schools:

- NOS Assemblies
- Vaping (Crucial Crew)
- Drink Drug Hub – professionals, family & friends Providing Information & Support for Drink & Drugs

#### **Development of resources**

- Drug Science Secondary School Educational Resources - [drugscience.org.uk](https://drugscience.org.uk)

Where it is deemed that the needs of the child cannot be met by the community sector agencies, then a referral to Early Help or Social Care will take precedent.



**Operation Choice Case Studies: 15-year-old from Northallerton:** subject to Stop Search and two small clip bags of cannabis found on his person. Gained parental consent for Op Choice and M completed successful sessions with SLO in school. Positive relationship established with M who discloses that his use of cannabis stems from low level mental health concerns, anxiety and stress following lockdown. Referral to NY Rise in October 21 and was discharged from service end of January 22, drug free. Continued support through College ensured, to provide mental health support long term.

**17-year-old from Richmond:** possession of cannabis in Richmond. Throughout the Op Choice session, he engaged really well and was keen to be involved. He admitted struggling with his mental health and this added to why he used cannabis. NY Rise referral discussed and submitted. He has started an apprenticeship at Darlington College and is also seeking assistance for his mental health. Whilst working with this male he disclosed concerns for his sister who is currently a year 11 pupil at School. Meeting held with her due to concerns about her relationship with her stepmother and how this was affecting her own mental health. Joint concerns raised from school and PPN completed for further support.

**14-year-old from Harrogate:** cannabis possession. Male moved up from Kent due to his drug use and his association with gangs down there. SLO met L on 3 occasions with his Early Help worker. His love of football soon became evident and his wish to get back into the game which is something the SLO offered to help him with. The SLO had also organised a careers fair in conjunction with the Fire Service, L attended with his Mum to seek information about becoming a Fire fighter. His Mum stated that he would never have done something like this previously had it not been for the Op Choice intervention work.



## Stepping Up Project

North Yorkshire Police Schools Liaison Officers work alongside North Yorkshire Sport who deliver an early intervention and prevention project funded by 'York and North Yorkshire Office for Policing, Fire, Crime and Commissioning. The purpose of the project is to divert and support children and young people who have not yet entered the Criminal Justice System but are potentially at risk of doing so.

### Number of young people engaged to date through Stepping Up.

At this time 153 young people are actively engaging with Stepping Up in both mentoring or intervention sessions. 375 since April 2021.

Athlete mentors are used to support young people in:

- building resilience,
- social, emotional, mental and physical wellbeing,
- developing confidence and self-esteem,
- raising aspirations and motivation.

All of which are essential in promoting positive behaviour change and supporting engagement in positive community activity

All children between the age of 8-16 years are eligible to access the programme, although the main focus being on primary school children who are transitioning into secondary education where there is:

- Risk of exclusion
- Anti-social behaviour in the community
- Risk taking and criminal behaviour.

Referrals also drawn from children, siblings or associates of county lines victims or perpetrators.

North Yorkshire Police School Liaison Officers have also delivered workshops both within schools and community settings:

Four Hate Crime workshops have been delivered at Forest Moor Special Education Needs School.

A wellbeing event was delivered in Dalby Forest, aimed at girls and LGBTQ+ groups with a focus on poor self-esteem, anxiety and low aspirations. The day consisted of sports themed activities, colour run, segway, mountain biking and badminton. Youth groups leaders and sexual health providers supported the event.

# Diversion

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## Elevate

In North Yorkshire, the Early Help Intervention workers deliver a Junior Attendance Centre programme. This is delivered as a 5-week group-based programme aimed at reducing offending behaviour, reducing risk factors of offending, and maximising protective factors, thus improving outcomes for young people aged 10 – 17 by diverting them away from criminal activities. Those recruited onto the programme may have been charged with offending behaviour, be on the periphery of offending, or may be coming to the attention of the emergency services, community groups, schools or other professional agencies due to their risk-taking behaviour.

As well as tackling targeted offending interventions, such as knife crime and anti-social behaviour, the programme also includes subjects to promote life skills and safety, aiming to improve the life chances of vulnerable young people. The sessions give young people the opportunity to explore how the place they live, their culture, age, demographic, relationships, and their own unique lived experience influences all that they are or believe themselves to be and the impact of their behaviour on others. The sessions help young people explore themselves to identify healthy and unhealthy relationships, set boundaries to keep themselves and others safe.

Elevate also provides an opportunity to allow the young people to make informed choices for their actions and the consequences, on themselves, their families, and the communities they live in. The programme promotes peer-to-peer mentoring, problem solving and positive group communication and interaction.

## Turnaround/Change Direction

In North Yorkshire we commissioned the Turnaround programme to be delivered through one of our voluntary sector organisations, North Yorkshire Youth. This programme closely aligns with the “Change Direction” programme, which is funded through the Office of Police Fire Crime Commissioner and the Integrated Care Board Trauma Informed programme vanguard funding.

We have been able to build on the shared learning from Change Direction and continue to work with North Yorkshire Youth to refine and improve the programme as we move forward. We have now embedded:

- A Turnaround pathway agreed with our local policing teams to ensure the right referrals are submitted at the right time.
- Close links to ensure the right ethos and embedding of the eligibility is in place with North Yorkshire Youth.
- Creativity with the work North Yorkshire Youth will carry out upon receiving a referral around diversion and prevention sessions.
- Regular meet ups with the Ministry of Justice programme team to update them on North Yorkshire's plans to deliver our local Turnaround programme and express and highlight gaps and areas to improve as well as share good practice.

In August 2023 we were contacted by Alison Smith from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) requesting a joint visit with our regional Ministry of Justice (MoJ) representative from Turnaround Programme to gain a greater understanding of the project and its alignment with our Supporting Families programme. It was a successful visit that generated some good discussion and allowed opportunity to explore strategic overview, current context, and structures.

The MoJ have shared an Intervention and Implementation Survey; the responses directly informing the design of the evaluation. Although North Yorkshire expressed interest in being involved in the pilot, we did not meet the criteria for taking part. This would have been rare opportunity for us to take part in an exciting study that provides evidence of the impact of early support. The evaluators did express an interest in liaising with North Yorkshire moving forward to gather information around our Turnaround model.

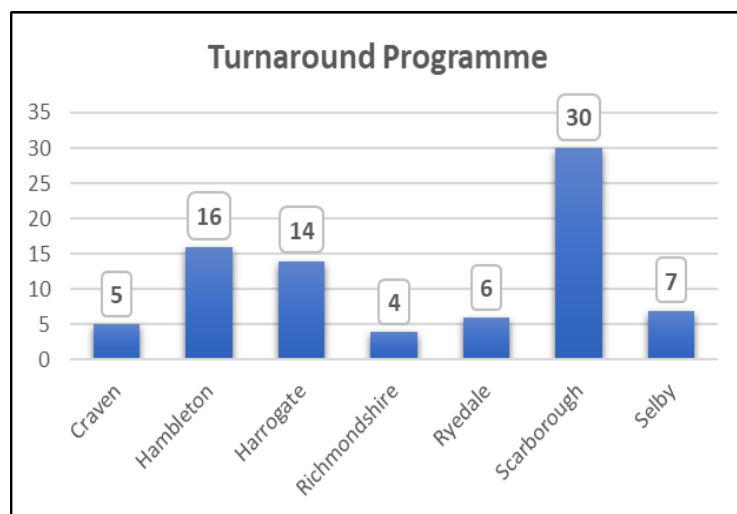
## Referrals to Turnaround programme

It is clear that Early Intervention remains a priority in the MoJ, however disappointingly we recently received confirmation that the MoJ grant funding for this programme ends on 31 March 2025. We are currently in discussions with North Yorkshire Youth to consider any future sustainability of this programme and exploring alternative funding options.

The trajectory for North Yorkshire is to work with 177 children over the three years. To date 92 children have engaged within the programme

Up to the end of Q4 2024 - 82 young people have engaged in the programme of these 70 (85.5%) have maintained successful outcomes, with only 12 (14.5%) becoming involved in criminal activity post referral to Turnaround.

Although it is early days, this demonstrates a higher number of positive outcomes when compared to the National data.



### Selby Fishing Taster Day Case Study YP

#### Brief background/context

This Young Person (YP) was referred to Turnaround as they had begun committing Anti-Social Behaviour and risk-taking behaviour in the community. They had started to get arrested, missing from home and were generally making poor choices, including drug use. One of the main factors within this appears to be negative peer influences, in terms of hanging out with young people involved with problematic behaviour.

The YP has recently received an ADHD diagnosis. This came at a difficult time as they only have 6 months before they finish school which will make it harder for them to benefit from the support available for this. Added to this, the YP's ADHD impacts them in terms of a higher propensity for them to become easily led and getting involved with criminal activity. The YP struggles with thinking about the consequences of their actions. The positives are that the YP does feel guilty and upset following engaging in ASB and other problematic behaviour and they do have goals and ambitions they want to achieve. They also have a very supportive parent.

More recently, the YP has continued to get arrested several times and is well known with the police. He has also recently become suspended from school and is continuing to generally make poor decisions. The Youth Mentor has been trying to work with him on staying in school. The YP is very intelligent, and the Youth Mentor is encouraging them to get the grades they need for future training.

The YP has a range of hobbies including boxing, music and physical activities like the gym, but they are still spending lots of time hanging around with negative peer influences.

It was clear that the YP did not have one particular focus that pulled them away from negative factors. The Youth Mentor knew that the YP had previously done some sea fishing with his Grandad in Ireland which had ignited his interest in this. He had found this calming and relaxing.

Given the opportunity of the fishing taster days, the Youth Mentor discussed this with him to see whether he would be interested to join. The Youth Mentor was able to mention this a few times at 1-1 appointments which enabled them to encourage the YP to attend. This was more challenging because the event was held in the holidays when the YP could have chosen to hang out with friends, but they decided that they wanted to come along to the event.

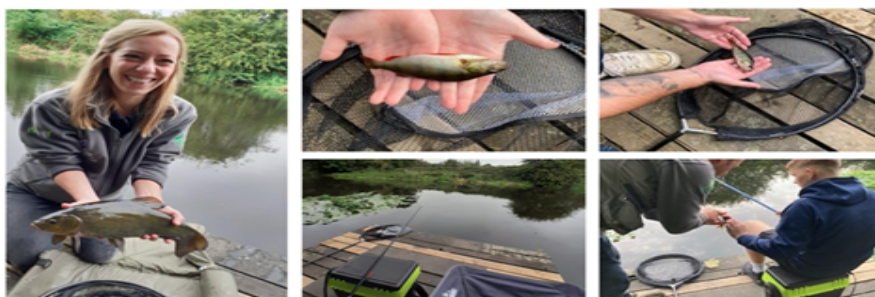
#### At the session

The YP arrived on the canal for the fishing event. Initially they were quiet and mentioned they were tired as they had been out the night before. They did quickly open up and talked about the fact that they had fished with family before in Ireland.

As the session progressed the YP engaged well with the Angling Coach, listening to what he was been taught to enable him to catch fish. Sat side-by-side to each other helped to lower the barriers and the coach was able to start to have a conversations around interests and he was engaged and focused on the fishing with the aim of catching fish. He was taught about basic equipment, what sort of bait he needed and how to use this to attract the fish, how to attach bait to the whip, how to cast out, where best to leave his rod in the water, what to do when they catch a fish etc. The YP asked lots of questions and was really interested in what they were been taught.

We experienced some rain, however it was noticeable that because the YP was so engaged in the activity, they hardly noticed this and continued to sit out and enjoy fishing.

At the end of the session, the YP was given a fishing whip and rig to enable them to go fishing again either on their own or bring along to future taster sessions. The YP's Mum was present, and she asked about how to obtain a fishing licence from the Environment Agency and signed him up straight away.



# Serious violence, exploitation and contextual safeguarding

YJB Plan 24 – 27 The Serious Violence Duty requires youth justice services to collaborate and plan with other local services to prevent and reduce serious violence.

## Serious Violence Duty

As part of Serious Youth Violence duty, a multi-agency working group across North Yorkshire and City of York has been established.

*“Serious violence has a devastating impact on victims, families, and communities across the country and whilst we know that overall North Yorkshire is one of the safest places to live, we can’t be naïve in thinking serious violence doesn’t happen here – we know it does – and people across our county need to feel safe and be kept safe. As a partnership of committed public sector agencies, North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership and Safer York Partnership are proud to publish the North Yorkshire and York Response Strategy in line with the Government’s Serious Violence Duty. The Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) has effectively identified the areas in North Yorkshire and York where Serious Violence is the most prominent and where we most need to focus efforts to tackle it. This has informed our Response Strategy which will be implemented together over the next two years to tackle Serious Violence across our county and help keep our communities safe and feeling safe.” (Serious Violence in North Yorkshire & York SNA 2023/24)*

The aims of the North Yorkshire and York response to Serious Violence are:

- To understand the extent of violence throughout North Yorkshire and York, through the analysis of characteristics, patterns of behaviour and the impact on the wider community.
- To establish the risk factors that increase the likelihood of violence, and how these factors can be reduced through prevention, diversion, and early intervention.
- To establish effective interventions in a variety of settings and monitor the impact on reducing serious violence these interventions produce.

The Serious Violence Duty does not provide a set definition of serious violence, and each local area is encouraged to set their own definition.

The definition of serious violence for North Yorkshire and York reflects issues found within the local area, and the impact and prevalence of different types of serious violence. Within North Yorkshire and York, the following crimes are included in our definition of serious violence and were used during the SNA:

- Homicide
- Violence with Injury (Attempted Murder, Endangering Life, Grievous Bodily Harm, Actual Bodily Harm, Administering Poison with Intent to Injure, Non-Fatal Strangulation and Suffocation)
- Domestic Abuse
- Rape and Sexual Offences
- Weapon Related Violence; including Weapon Possession
- Arson Endangering Life
- Stalking and Harassment; non-domestic

In addition, the following areas of thematic interest are considered within the wider profile:

- Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Young People
- Alcohol and Substance Misuse
- Mental Health
- Deprivation and Employment
- Education

<https://www.northyorkshire-pfcc.gov.uk/how-can-we-help/community-projects/svd/>

## Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding

The Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) and Contextual Safeguarding Strategy sits within our wider Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements.

Our North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (NYSCP) vision is:

*"All children in North Yorkshire who are being exploited and are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse are effectively identified and protected by services which are delivered in a coordinated and informed way that consistently responds to the harm and risks and improves the outcomes for our children, their families and the wider community".*

The strategic arrangements are overseen by our MACE Strategic Group that reports into the NYSCP Executive. The operational group oversees the operational implementation of the strategy and report to the Strategic group. MACE Level 2 meetings operate across the seven locality areas of North Yorkshire: Scarborough, Ryedale & Whitby, Harrogate, Craven, Hambleton, Richmondshire and Selby.

Further details can be found in the link below [MACE and Contextual Safeguarding Strategy for 2024 – 2027](#)

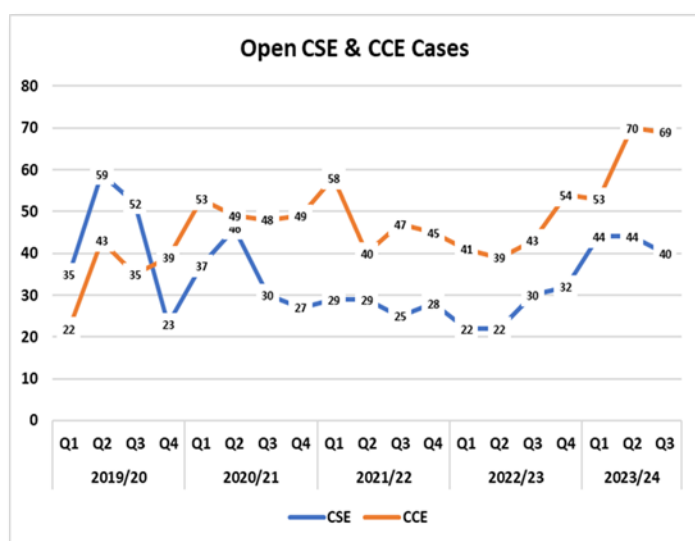
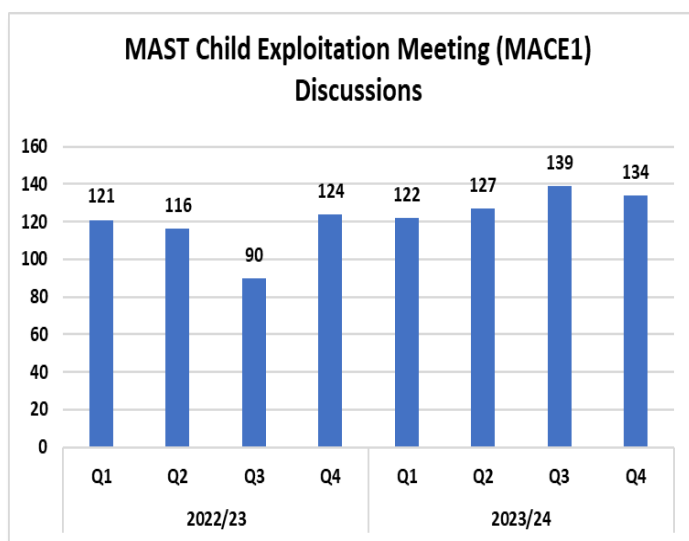
It was noted in the most recent Childrens Service inspection 2023;

*"Children and young people who are at risk from exploitation, including children in care and care leavers, receive a coordinated multi-agency response that quickly addresses concerns. Social workers place an emphasis in their safety planning on building relationships and developing family networks to allow children to safely share their concerns. Exploitation risk assessments are comprehensive and effective in developing multi-agency plans to reduce risks." (Inspection of North Yorkshire Children's Services 2023)*

*"Specialist exploitation workers based in the MAST cover each locality of the county. They offer additional strength to the 'front door' through their specialist knowledge and advice. Multi-agency child exploitation (MACE) meetings are held in the MAST in response to heightened concerns of exploitation. This leads to a joint understanding of the level of risks and known associates and an identification of steps to reduce the risk for children". (Inspection of North Yorkshire Children's Services 2023)*

Multi-Agency Screening Team Child Exploitation Meetings (Level 1 MACE) are held to ensure consistent multi-agency decision-making and robust planning in respect of cases open to North Yorkshire C&FS where there are concerns in respect of child exploitation.

In 2023/2024 there were a total of 522 meetings held, which is an increase of 16% (n=71) compared with 2022/23.





Over the last year there has been significant amounts of work completed alongside Education partners to try and have them attend MACE, from both Primary and Secondary schools - there has been an increase in attendance from both, however this continues to be pushed.

There has been a lot of work throughout the year from MACE looking at the online harms, with various presentations being produced to upskill partners around online harms and emerging themes/trends-again this work continued including the emergence of Artificial Intelligence.

The Intelligence portal from North Yorkshire Police has been well received and has streamlined the sharing of intelligence and information. Partners have welcomed this and often complete information sharing "live" within the meetings utilising this portal. Upskilling partners around intelligence continues and support in this area is always offered.

### **MACE Review**

There is currently a review of the MACE process in line multi agency priorities, the review aims to:

- 1) Safeguard vulnerable children at risk of exploitation.
- 2) Target exploitation offenders.
- 3) Strengthen our multi-agency work in response to children and young people identified as at risk and the targeting and disruption of those who pose a risk of harm and locations of concern (NYSCP MACE Strategy Priority 3)
- 4) Consider whether the current Child Protection processes in North Yorkshire and the City of York, align effectively with the management of Risk Outside The Home (ROTH) or whether best practice from pilots being undertaken funded by the Department for Education could be incorporated into practice.

The next phase of the MACE review will incorporate a multi-agency deep dive audit of 12 cases where children have been identified as being at risk of exploitation. The first six cases explored through the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) Serious Violence deep dive audit dry run-on 11th June 2024 and will focus on children at risk of child criminal exploitation and the second six cases will focus on children identified as at risk of or experiencing child sexual exploitation and will be audited on 16th July 2024. The review will also incorporate a series of focus groups with frontline practitioners to seek assurance across our MACE arrangements. They will offer opportunities to identify best practice and areas for development in terms of understanding the impact of the multi-agency work on outcomes for children and young people.

### **Prevention activity**

NYSCP conducted a week of training and social media awareness raising activity to mark Child Exploitation Awareness Day on 18th March 2024. This included ten training events facilitated by our partners and included:

- Child Criminal Exploitation and Girls – St Giles Trust
- County Lines – Early Intervention and Prevention in Schools - North Yorkshire Police
- Partnership Disruption in North Yorkshire – North Yorkshire Police
- Missing and Exploitation Team and NYSCP MACE - Contextual Safeguarding Officer
- Relational Safeguarding model in working with parents whose children are at risk of exploitation – Ivison Trust (formally PACE)
- MACE and Contextual Safeguarding Strategy (2024 – 2027) Launch – NYSCP Business Unit
- The Long Game – Leaders Unlocked
- Hand in Hand Service – The Children Society
- Sexual health Support for children at risk of exploitation – YorSexual Health
- Financial Exploitation – The Children Society –
- Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship Service – Barnardo's

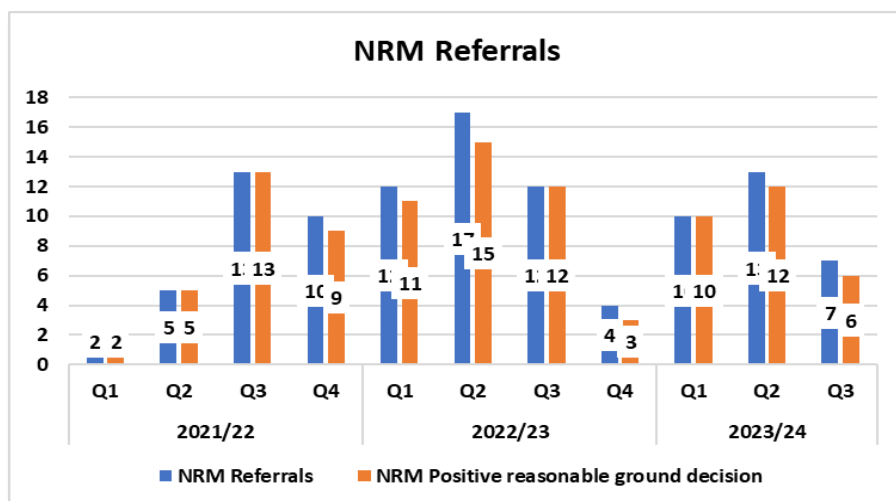
The events were attended by over 280 professionals and were recorded and added to the NYSCP YouTube channel which has received more than 100 further views of the training. Colleagues attended from across the partnership.



## National Referral Mechanism (NRM)

Children who appear to have been trafficked or criminally exploited are referred to the NRM. York & North Yorkshire is one of the ten pilot areas for delegated NRM assessment and decision-making, under delegated Home Office authority. Our local multi-agency panel comprises of senior representatives from all key services, including Youth Justice, supported by expert Independent Child Trafficking Guardians and Home Office advisors.

This transformative approach has improved the quality, timeliness, and impact of NRM decision-making. Instead of sending separate, piecemeal evidence and advice to a Home Office decision-maker and waiting 6 months or more for an outcome, local agencies can bring all key evidence into one comprehensive and decisive process. A further key benefit is that local NRM panel members are senior, expert, and qualified professionals, so their collective decisions withstand the 2021 Brecani judgement and carry more weight in criminal proceedings.



The Office of Police Fire Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) have funded a number of services to provide Support for children and young adults who are victims of exploitation or affected by exploitation.

## Trusted Relationships

The North Yorkshire Trusted Relationships Service has been operational since 2019 and offers support for children and young people who are identified as being at risk of or subject to Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) (which may also include elements of other forms of exploitation such as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Online Child Exploitation (OCE), County Lines, and Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking MSHT)). In terms of eligibility to be considered for a referral for Trusted Relationships support, a young person must be aged 17 or below, have an exploitation risk status assigned and be open to a Children & Families (C&F) Service.

## [One Minute Guide on the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website](#)

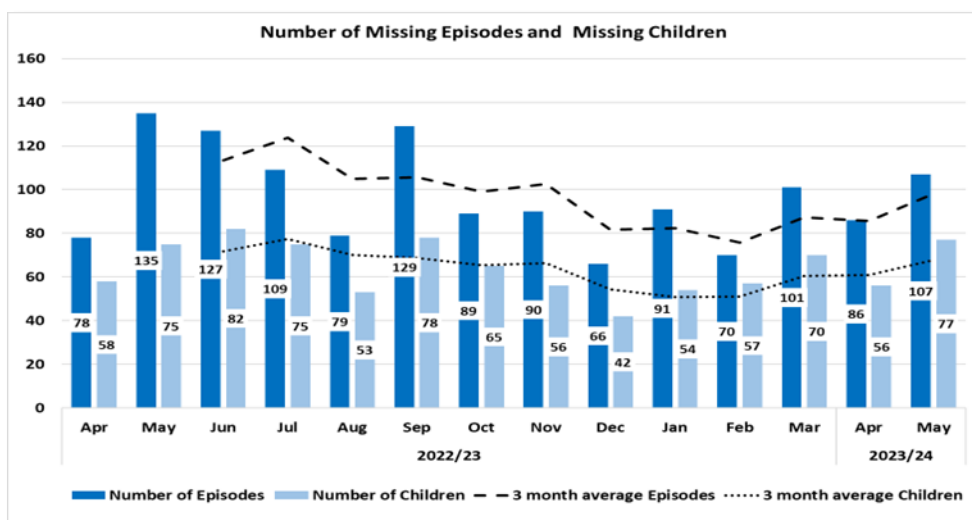
### St Giles SOS+ service

The SOS+ Service delivers **preventative and early intervention work to children and young people**; as well as training for parents and professionals. [SOS+ - St Giles](#)

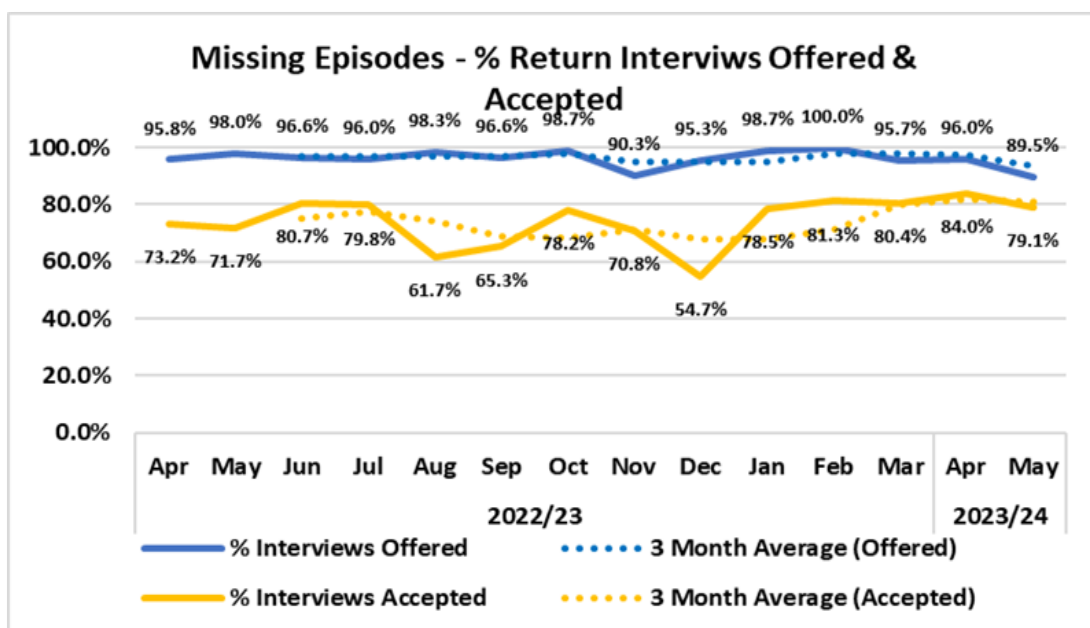


## Children & Young People Who Go Missing

As a local Authority we continue to develop our MACE and Missing service to ensure that we are actively disrupting Child Criminal Exploitation and Missing from Home. In doing so, we plan to develop the identification of the perpetrator with partners. We ensure greater clarity and shared ownership of MACE processes across Child Protection procedures and MACE Level 1 & 2 meetings strengthening the oversight and scrutiny of children at high risk.

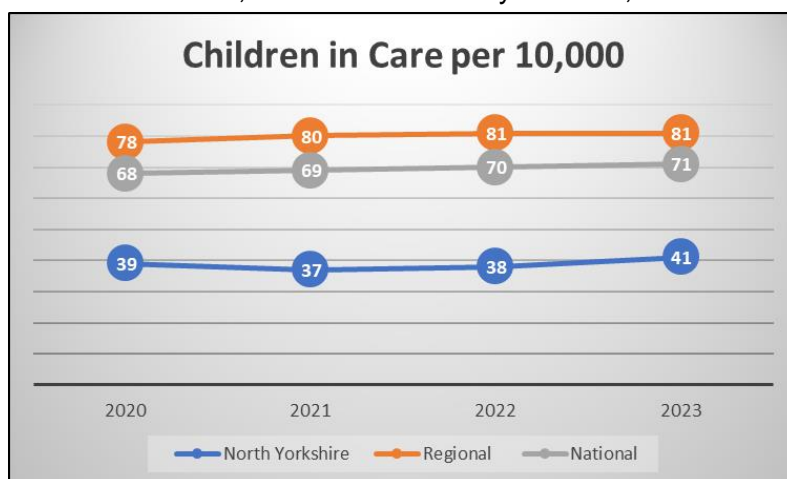


*“Children who go missing are identified and supported well to enable risks to reduce. Weekly missing-from-home-or-care meetings are chaired by specialist coordinators who are experienced and skilled in analysing and sharing information with partners. Robust monitoring of children who repeatedly go missing and hit identified trigger points ensures that they are assessed as high priority, with risks being discussed at MACE meetings. This ensures that the risks and wider concerns for children are fully understood by all professionals and used in mapping across to children who may be at risk of exploitation. Inspection of North Yorkshire local authority children’s services 3 to 7 July 2023 5 Return home interviews are thorough and child-focused, providing rich information to inform future work with children and understand wider risk management.” (Inspection of North Yorkshire Children’s Services 2023)*



## Children in our Care

North Yorkshire has relatively low rates of children in care because we have invested substantial work and resources into the development of an overarching 'Strength in Relationships' Practice Model which strives to support children to live with their families, or within their family network, wherever it is safe to do so.



The outcome of this success is that there are fewer children whom we must unavoidably bring into public care, and these tend to have the most complex and challenging needs.

The Council took a major corporate parenting decision some years ago, committing to providing high-quality local placements for our children in care, so that they can grow up in familiar surroundings and with continuity of access to their schools, families and community. This includes development of advanced 'Mockingbird' fostering groups and also our national exemplar [No Wrong Door](#) provision for higher-need teenagers.

With rare exceptions for very specialised need, we do not place our children out of area into the private care market.

This approach has a significant impact upon Youth Justice performance, where Children in Care can be reported by their current place of residence rather than by their home area.

We continue to feel proud of the work we undertake with children in our care; we are providing bespoke placements based on the needs of the child and their family. These are always focused on being child-led and not service-led, with a coordinated bespoke package developed and delivered by key workers across the C&FS.

We closely monitor outcomes for children in care, using a real-time reporting dashboard to track both representation and outcomes. We particularly strive to reduce differential outcomes for re-offending and entry to custody, to minimise as far as possible the great disadvantages that children in care face. Our data suggests that we are making progress towards this, particularly since the introduction of advanced, integrated, child-centred practice and our 'Local Protocol on Reducing Unnecessary Criminalisation of Looked After Children and Care Leavers'.

The nationally reported figure for offending by children in care relates to those continuously in care for the 12 months ending 31st March who received a Caution or Conviction.

At 1.0% (2/208) the 2023 rate for North Yorkshire was lower than that seen by statistical neighbours as well as regionally and nationally.

In North Yorkshire, the No Wrong Door model supports diverting children in care from formal criminalisation. Wherever possible, restorative approaches are taken to minimise involvement in the criminal justice system. Where the Police are involved, a 10-point checklist is completed.

# Education

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In North Yorkshire we understand that the education of children in the YJS is hugely important. Education is one of the most significant factors in preventing and reducing further offending. It promotes positive self-identity and feelings of self-worth. When children are out of education, their safety and well-being is compromised, the wider community is affected and there is a resulting impact and cost for the service partnerships.

***“ETE is consistently among the top three factors our inspectors find need to be addressed to prevent reoffending”. (HMIP Annual Report of Youth Justice Inspections 2022)***

The Virtual School Head holds strategic responsibility for the education of children supported by our Youth Justice Service. We have intentionally combined the strategic leads for children and young people in care under criminal supervision because we recognise these to be high need children, regardless of which label is attached to them first. Alongside our “outstanding” in all areas, it was pleasing to receive the following in our most recent Inspection of Local authority Childrens Services (ILACS).

***“There are robust and effective systems to monitor children who are missing education and those who are home educated. When children are missing from school, they are quickly located and given the support that they need to return to education. Staff liaise well with social workers to ensure that all knowledge is shared, and they contribute to an effective decision or plan. Parents wishing to electively home educate their child are well informed by staff about what this entails. If the offer of education is not suitable, staff ensure that this is resolved or that children are returned to school.” (Inspection of North Yorkshire Children’s Services 2023)***

The Virtual School Head will ensure that schools recognise children open to Youth Justice as vulnerable children. The Virtual School Head is a past chair of the Association of Virtual School Head Teachers (NAVSH), and now chairs the Working Together Task and Finish group for Education with the DfE. We are continuing to lobby for children open to YJS to be recognised nationally as vulnerable learners.

In North Yorkshire we strive to:

- Increase support for children in need to access education.
- Develop the use of Pupil Premium Plus post-16 now available to YJS pupils in care.
- Ensure that the education that children receive is high quality and safe.
- Support children with vulnerabilities to thrive in school.
- Ensure children attend well.
- Increase accountability and collaboration across the system so vulnerable children are safe and supported.

We know that justice-involved children are more likely to be detached from education, training, and employment (ETE), have poor educational attainment levels, and greater educational needs when compared to children in the general population.

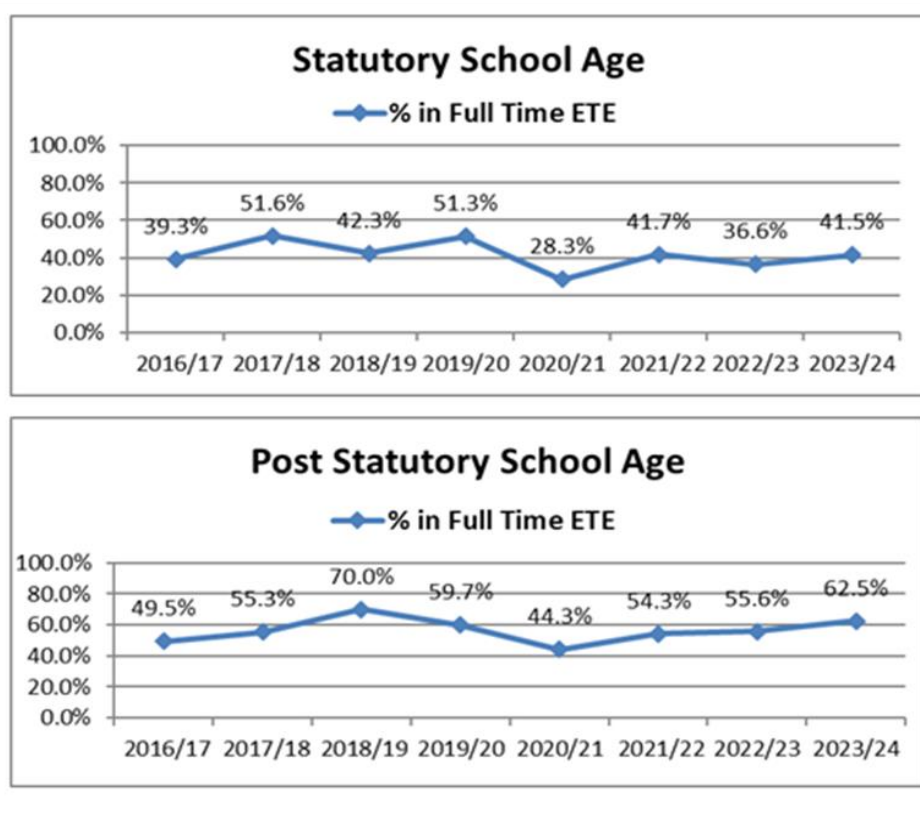
We know that our Children in Care often have special educational needs or speech and communication needs. They are one of the lowest achieving groups of vulnerable children, and the gap between them and their peers often remains throughout their lifetime. The NYC Virtual School works across social care and beyond to track, monitor and implement a range of strategies to reduce the rate of children not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) for these children. We are ambitious to achieve the very best for them, and our Virtual School was described as “highly effective”, in our recent ILACS inspection.

The YJS has two full-time specialist Education Liaison Advisers, under joint line management with the Virtual School Head and managers within YJS. Their key mission is to increase attendance and attainment in ETE (Education, Training and Employment). We do all we can to ensure that education is seen as a place of safety, and we have high aspirations for all.

Our Education Liaison Advisers continue to support in post-16 and encourage engagement in the same way as for statutory school age. One of the Education Liaison Advisers has undertaken Level 6 Careers Development Diploma/Specialist Career Adviser training and is also a Licensed Thrive Practitioner. The other YJS Education Liaison Adviser has extensive qualifications in Special Education Needs including Certificate of Higher Education in Autistic Spectrum Disorders, a first-class honours degree in Education Studies with Early Childhood Studies, Independent Provider of special Education Advisor (IPSEA) Special Education Needs Legal Advisor levels 1, 2 and 3, ACE SEND Education Trainer status, Training and Presenting advanced certificate and Independent Advocacy Level 3 training.

Recent data indicates that 62.5% of post-16 YJS learners and 41.5% of school aged children attend full time education in the last week of their statutory order. Some learners are offered a part-time package as part of a planned reintegration and generally over 75% of YJS learners attend their offers. The Virtual School Head sits on the YJS partnership Management Board and presents a detailed quarterly and annual report, including narrative background for individual children not accessing their full educational entitlement.

### Children open to Youth Justice Service



Statutory School Age	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
No. of Closed Orders (SSA)	56	64	52	78	60	48	41	65
% Receiving less than 25 hrs Education	60.7%	48.4%	57.7%	48.7%	71.7%	58.3%	63.4%	58.5%
% in Full Time ETE	39.3%	51.6%	42.3%	51.3%	28.3%	41.7%	36.6%	41.5%
Post Statutory School Age	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
No. of Closed Orders (Post SSA)	103	85	80	72	70	81	54	56
% Receiving less than 16 hrs ETE	50.5%	44.7%	30.0%	40.3%	55.7%	45.7%	44.4%	37.5%
% in Full Time ETE	49.5%	55.3%	70.0%	59.7%	44.3%	54.3%	55.6%	62.5%



## Reducing Exclusion

The Virtual School Head is a member of the Children and Young People's Service Attendance Alliance, Part Time Timetable and Exclusions Group, with other key senior leaders (Head of Special Education Needs, Inclusion lead for Social emotional Mental Health, Elective Home Education Lead and Early Help, Education and Skills Lead). This group monitors and challenges high exclusion or low attendance rates across the county and is preparing for the new Attendance Duties.

The Inclusion Team and Virtual School are working to improve the use of Relational Behaviour policies. The NYC guidance for Emotionally Based School Avoidance is currently under review in co-production with parents and carers. This work feeds up to the Social Emotional Mental Health Strategic group.

The Virtual School is an active member of the Attachment and Research Community, "Call to Action", with the hope that all schools will become Attachment and Trauma Aware by 2025. The Virtual School NYC Attachment and Trauma Aware School Project, the Trauma Informed Interest group and Emotion coaching schools are all improving the educational landscape around relational approaches to behaviour management. This is alongside the trauma training being delivered to the Youth Justice team.

The Virtual School continues to provide a strategic role for all children identified as Child in Need and Child Protection with an allocated a social worker enabling a positive impact upon educational outcomes for children within Youth Justice. From September 2024 the Virtual School will also provide advice and information to children in Kinship Care arrangements as well as those in adoption, Special Guardianship and Child Arrangement Orders. This may cover more children in YJS as the remit extends.

The Virtual School hold advice and guidance sessions within each locality area for schools and social care professionals. Virtual School Education Advisers attend team meetings with the children's services Family Assessment and Support team regularly where they offer consultations with social workers to discuss specific children or young people or discuss more widely around their cohorts. Likewise, the Virtual School offer a similar service to schools and other education providers, however with a focus on the wider cohort discussion. Children open to Youth Justice are a focus and any children with attendance issues are brought to these sessions to discuss how we can increase their engagement with education.

Further areas of educational development include the recommendation of provision of an electronic guidance Personal Education Plan and inclusion in the Virtual School monitoring educational outcomes.

## Reducing Elective Home Education

We believe that Elective Home Education is a poor option for most children. Engagement at an onsite provision with peers offers a richer span of educational opportunity, social development, and pastoral care. Young people who attend and enjoy school are much less likely to reoffend or become vulnerable to safeguarding risks (including criminal or sexual exploitation).

Our Education Liaison Advisers work proactively with parents and carers to minimise Elective Home Education, while also recognising its validity in exceptional circumstances. In 2022/23 only three children supported by Youth Justice had been withdrawn from school to be educated at home.

## Improving Special Education Need Provision and Education Health and Care Plans

In 2023/2024 27% of learners supported by youth justice had Education & Health Care Plans (EHCPs). Our Education Liaison Advisers play a key role in this, working with schools to identify need and ensure that graduated response principles have been adhered to, as well as offering support to the child and family/carers.

Where a graduated response is still not meeting the needs of the child, a referral to the SEND hub is made (this is termed an 'Education, Health and Care Plan Assessment Request' or EHCAR). The Youth Justice Education Liaison Advisers play a key role in facilitating timely and thorough evidence-gathering. They coordinate reports from our youth justice caseworkers and Speech and Language Therapists and provide "Thrive" assessments and recommendations to include in SEN assessments.



It is vital that the child and family feel engaged and heard in this complex, prolonged process, understand the statutory timeframes and have access to independent and confidential advice. Our Education Liaison Advisers (ELAs) arrange this via the North Yorkshire Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Independent Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS), so that families have access to independent robust advocacy. One of our YJS ELAs has recently undertaken legal SEND training which will prove most useful.

In addition to oversight from the Virtual Head, the NYC Head of Inclusion also sits on the Youth Justice Management Board and ensures that children supported by the service are fast-tracked in specialist teacher assessment.

## Restorative approaches and victims

Improving youth justice services' support to victims of crime. We continue to work with victim support organisations to identify and share positive practice; monitor annual youth justice plans to ensure all youth justice services provide for young victims, including the use of restorative justice where it is an appropriate response; and promote engagement with local communities and victims on development of local youth justice services.

As previously noted there has been some delay in reviewing and improving victim services and ensuring a more co-ordinated approach with the voluntary sector. However, there is a strong victim focus within our out-of-court processes and particularly through our Youth Outcome Panel, which has Victim Liaison Officer presence to represent the views of victims. Similarly, victim views are well represented within Referral Orders and PSRs as noted within our national standards audits, but we need to strengthen the victims' views in PSRs on willingness to involve themselves in RJ post sentence.

Both area teams have strong reparation projects, with the east linking into the highly successful Pop-Up Workshop model, a one-to-one individual approach using woodwork. Multiple bird boxes and other outputs have gone to local projects and individuals. The project also teaches effective work-related skills and is highly thought of. Feedback is strong:

***With grateful thanks for this. It is wonderful to have our very own bug hotel! It's so kind of the young person to make it for us, please could you pass on our most heartfelt thanks. We will certainly place it somewhere suitable."*** Vicar, Goathland.

***"We will put it (the bug hotel) somewhere appropriate in our lovely churchyard, and we will love to look after and see who lives there. Thank you very much indeed (to the young person) for their generosity and kindness."*** Church Warden, Goathland.

***"I discovered two lovely bird boxes in the porch at the church a couple of weeks ago. (I Would like to) write (to the young person) and thank them for their very kind gift, which is much appreciated."*** Church Warden, Amotherby.

The West team has linked children into the John Muir award, a conservation and outdoor project group, which has been a focus of work for young people. They have also recently obtained their own allotment, garden project in Harrogate and work is underway to improve that area.

Work in both areas is strong with the Fire Service to ensure effective prevention messages.

Individual one-to-one mediation is completed between victims and children who offend on an individual basis, as required.

## Detention in police custody

The service provides an excellent response for children arrested and detained in police custody. Aside from both a volunteer and paid staff response up until 11pm 7 days per week, if our Emergency Duty Team cannot respond out of working hours to an Appropriate Adult Request, then a commissioned service is available to the Police. The Service however does not just provide a traditional Appropriate Adult response but carries out significant custody safeguarding assessments for children arrested for serious offences or those linked to significant safeguarding risk leader to an overall multi agency safeguarding response. In addition, a review of all children arrested takes place the following day through the Youth Justice duty management system and appropriate referrals made.

A monthly meeting is held with partners to review timelines of Appropriate Adult responses and to identify any issues that have occurred whilst children are detained. This meeting links into the wider quarterly Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) meeting to ensure an appropriate strategic oversight.

### Remands

See previous section Remands to Youth Detention (P15).

As noted in that section there has only been one remand to Youth Detention Accommodation during 2023/24, which is a positive indication of the work completed to ensure children remain safely in the community, where they complete bail supervision and support programmes. Where bail is refused and the child is remanded to local authority accommodation, the Service works closely with other practitioners within Childrens Services and Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements partners to ensure a coordinated response to the level of risk and vulnerability posed. Additional external controls used for children remanded to local authority accommodation, mirror those that are available for conditional bail. As noted above within the National Standards audit, a wider range of alternative accommodation is required to ensure remands to youth detention are avoided and this action is linked into the national review of remands.

YJS and Children Social Care responses to children remanded to local authority or to detention are assessed as being strong.

### Use of custody and constructive resettlement

See sections Remands to Youth Detention and Custodial Sentences.

As noted, in these sections, use of custody is relatively low with one remand to youth detention and 4 custodial outcomes in 2023/24, which related to 3 children. One of those was for murder, where on finding of guilt, a custodial sentence was inevitable. The other two outcomes were in relation to children who had significant offending histories and, despite appropriate recommendations for intensive community alternatives, custody was the most likely outcome.

Resettlement planning starts from the moment a child enters the secure estate and is overseen through three forums: reviews within the secure estates, Information Sharing or Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) meetings for children assessed as posing a high risk of harm and the overarching multi-agency resettlement panel. Our ambition is for appropriate accommodation to be in place well before a child leaves custody, with a local barrier being any conviction for arson, which makes placement difficult. The area for development is ensuring there is appropriate Education, training or employment secured prior to release. For some children released there is ambition has not been achieved despite effective planning processes. There is strong evidence of our partnership working with the Probation Service to plan transitions both in custody and on release.

## Work with Families

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North Yorkshire Children & Families Service have retained a strong Early Help Service. Early Help Children and Families Workers provide targeted direct one-to-one support and interventions to children 0 - 19 and their families where needs cannot be met by universal services within the community. All referrals for support come through our single point of contact; the Multi Agency Screening & Assessment team who screen the referrals and determine the threshold of service required. Retaining a strong Early Help team in which YJS sits ensures a strong preventative approach within North Yorkshire. Our model on Practice includes whole family working and family seeing is a significant feature within our model to ensure we identify at the earliest opportunity a strong sustainable family network (including friends and the community). Building on the strengths within the network creates a sustainable support network for the child and ensuring the child and family retains a sense of belonging within their own community.

Where the decision is made that support can be met by our Early Help team, then the child is allocated a Children and Families worker who undertakes an Early Help Assessment with the child and their family to identify the needs and develop a plan. The Early Help assessment is a holistic assessment that considers the needs of all the children within the household and works with the family to identify agreed actions to meet the needs. The assessment is fully aligned with our practice model, looking first at the strengths within the family and bringing together a family network to support the needs alongside the family and the worker. Where it is felt that the needs cannot be met within the family network, a Team Around the Family meeting helps to support the coordination of an effective plan. All children open to the Early Help Team are considered as part of the government's Supporting Families Programme, with progress being monitored against the Supporting Families Framework.

As part of the Strength in Relationships Practice Model, when a child steps across to our Children's Social Care Team and/or a YJS, the worker can continue to work with the family providing direct interventions. By maintaining this strong relationship there are opportunities to step the case back across to Early Help at the point when concerns deescalate. Alongside these workers we have a team of Children and Families Intervention Workers who provide bespoke targeted interventions to our more complex young people, including Intensive Support and Surveillance (ISS) within YJS. This team delivers our junior Attendance Programme – Elevate. Over this last year we refreshed this programme to ensure it meets the needs of the children open to YJS.

The Supporting Families programme is threaded throughout Early Help – all children and their families open to Early Help are considered part of this programme ensuring a holistic assessment considers the needs of the whole family.

## **Supporting documents**

### **Appendix 1: Staffing Structure**

The full staffing structure showing details of the staff roles in the YJS and the reporting arrangements.  
[Structure.pdf](#)

### **Appendix 2 Workforce Diversity YJS**

[Appendix C – Workforce Diversity Data.pdf](#)

### **Appendix 3 MAP Evaluation**

[My Assessment Plan \(MAP\) Evaluation.pdf](#)

## **Addendum update 2025**

[Addendum June 2025.docx](#)