Bristol Youth Justice Partnership

Strategic Plan 2026-29



NHS
Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire
Integrated Care Board

Youth Justice Board
Bwrdd Cyfiawnder ieuenctid



Probation Service

ABYJSA
Bristol Youth Justice Service



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Forward

Bristol can be the best city to grow up in. It's a young vibrant city where 22% of the population is made up of children and young people. For many, growing up is a positive experience, it provides many opportunities and sets them up for a happy adulthood. For others however their experience of growing up is too often determined by poverty, inequality or discrimination.

We are ambitious for our city, committed to working together as one city, a safeguarding partnership and a team to deliver our ambitions in reality. We are determined to be a whole city which protects young people from exploitation and risk from harm outside the home.

The Youth Justice Management Board is a really critical partnership board for our city and we have worked this year to build ownership through a clear programme led by lead directors as well as build staff input and community perspectives into our Board.

We have seen progress in our strategic focus on child first practice, governance and responding to exploitation as a partnership. We are pleased to see reducing rates of first time entrants, reoffending and custody rates in Bristol. However we need to make further progress in engagement of young people at risk in positive activities, particularly in education, in recognising the voice of victims, in our oversight of quality practice and in responding to disproportionality in young people in scope of the youth justice board.

Looking ahead delivering impact against our priorities whilst responding to significant national reforms must be our focus. Importantly we want to take the opportunity of a financial review of contributions to the service against our priorities and ambitions in this plan.

We look forward to continuing to work together so that all children and young people in Bristol feel they belong, can achieve and thrive, and where they are supported to be ambitious, safe and joyful.



Hannah Woodhouse
Chair of the Youth Justice Partnership Board
Executive Director Children and Families,
Bristol City Council

1 Introduction, vision, and strategy

Introduction

Our 3-year Youth Justice Partnership Plan sets out our vision and strategy for achieving our key partnership aims of keeping children and others safe in Bristol, and increasing positive outcomes for the children we work with.

It describes our governance and partnerships arrangements including our service structure. It highlights key areas of progress over the last year, our performance against key indicators, and our plans and priorities for the coming year, charting the course for our collective efforts to support children, young people and their families, ensuring they have every opportunity to realise their full potential. As a committed and experienced partnership, we have a proven history of working collectively to tackle the root causes of offending, addressing systemic inequalities and creating positive, sustainable opportunities for children to thrive in our community. This includes our local strategic priorities agreed within the Youth Justice Partnership Board and our wider work linked to national priority areas.

Our vision

A key Bristol partnership ambition is for children to have healthy and fulfilling lives, be safe, and have access to an education that develops their potential. We want children to have the opportunity to influence decisions in the city, and grow up with a sense of belonging and pride.

Our vision is that these ambitions are realised for all children including those who touch the youth justice system, as these ambitions are fundamental to preventing youth crime and youth violence and protecting children from wider harm outside the home.

We are committed to working together across our agencies to address the root causes of youth crime such as poverty, social, health and education inequalities, and the impact of childhood trauma.

To achieve our vision we focus on:

- early identification of need and early intervention
- prevention and diversion of children away from the criminal justice system
- intervention and protection to reduce reoffending and safeguard children and communities
- addressing inequality and disproportionality in the youth justice system

Our Youth Justice Partnership Plan reflects our vision and ambitions, and this is mirrored across the city's partnership strategic plans.

"(The worker) was very helpful and kept me up to date with the progress of the apology letter". Victim feedback

Links across local and regional strategies

Our YJSP plan aligns closely with three of the five key priorities in Bristol City Council's Corporate (BCC) Strategy 2025-2030:

- improving equity of outcomes in education and employment
- supporting children's families and adults' health and well-being
- creating safe and healthy neighbourhoods

The corporate plan clearly outlines the commitment to work together with partners and communities to achieve key goals of prevention and early help.

Bristol's Belonging and Thriving Strategy 2025-30 for children and young people in Bristol was developed through our multi-agency children's safeguarding board. It echoes the city's priorities for children and young people alongside an alignment of children and young people's voice, a focus on cultural humility and effective use of partnership data.

Bristol's Health and Well-Being Strategy identifies the importance of tackling health inequalities and the Integrated Care System's strategy to embed trauma informed practice as key to achieving its vision for children to grow up free of adversity and trauma. It includes the reduction of first-time entrants to the youth justice system as a priority indicator for a Healthy Childhood.

The Avon and Somerset Police and Crime plan (2024-2029) five priorities are to strengthen neighbourhood policing; reduce violent crime; prevent crime; support victims; and improve standards of policing. This includes a specific focus on addressing serious youth violence including through:

- working together across partners and with communities, children and young people to address the root causes of knife crime.
- improving how agencies identify children at risk of being harmed or causing harm and working with partners to keep them safe and divert them from criminal activity and harm.
- working with partners to address barriers to keeping young people at risk of violence and exploitation in education.

Preventing and responding to harm outside the home, including criminal and sexual exploitation and youth violence continue to be a priority for the **Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership (KBSP)** (Strategic Plan 2023-26).

Bristol's Harm Outside the Home Strategy 2025-2030 sets out the collaborative response to the complex risks facing children, young people and young adults in spaces beyond their families and homes. The strategy sets out a multi-agency approach to identifying, preventing and tackling harm experienced in community, peer and online contexts.

The Bristol Preventing Serious Violence Partnership Board, reporting to the Keeping Children Safe Board into the KBSP, provides strategic leadership and accountability and ensures effective delivery of work to reduce and prevent serious violence with a particular focus on violence impacting children and young people.

Working together across the partnership to achieve these cross-cutting strategic priorities is pivotal for enabling children to be free from crime, anti-social behaviour and child exploitation; keeping them and our communities safe and enabling them to thrive.



Our strategic priorities

Our local key strategic priorities for 2026-29 are informed by our performance data and local and national priorities:

- Prevent children from offending and diverting children from the youth justice system wherever possible.
- Reduce serious violence and harm outside the home, and strengthening contextual safeguarding
- Focus on equity, diversity and addressing disproportionality for children from groups which are overrepresented in the youth justice system
- Improve inclusion and children's participation in education, employment and training
- Further develop restorative approaches and services to victims

Our delivery approach

Our practice model continues to embed Child First, restorative, systemic and trauma informed approaches, informed by evidenced based practice. This reflects the practice approach across Bristol's children and families services and the wider partnership commitment to trauma informed practice. Our priorities and plans for continuous embedding of our practice model is detailed in our plan below.

Practice Example - Multi-Agency Working: "I have just finished working with a child, as part of a professional network including the Social Worker, Safer Connections keyworker, Police Early Intervention Team worker, CAMHS worker and SEN officer. Clear and consistent information sharing between us and the family allowed us to successfully navigate trauma-informed relationship building, M's complex mental health needs, family conflict, contextual safeguarding risks, and education challenges.

Everyone remained entirely clear on their respective roles within the plan, which was regularly and effectively reviewed in Child Protection Conferences and Core Group meetings. Because of this, I felt fully supported to empower M to complete their Order, and elements of their contract were addressed consistently by each agency." YJS Practitioner

Addressing disproportionality within the youth justice systems requires both awareness of the problem, and a strategic and systemic approach to addressing this. As part of that system, we offer early intervention through the Turnaround Programme for children who come to the attention to the police for the first time. This gives an opportunity to provide holistic support for children and their family, to address underlying factors which may be impacting the child's involvement in criminal activity. This may include addressing barriers to accessing education, training or employment, providing targeted direct work with children, and working within the multi-agency team around the child to address structural inequality or barriers.

The Youth Justice Partnership Board has oversight of educational attendance and attainment levels for all children in the city, recognising the direct correlation between poorer school attendance and over-representation of some global majority and minority groups, within the Youth Justice System. The Board also has oversight of policing practice and policy, ensuring that approaches are fair, equitable and proportionate. The Youth Justice Service, and Youth Justice Board is committed to an anti-racist approach, actively identifying and reviewing practices to ensure systems do not inadvertently support disproportionate outcomes for any group.

Bristol Context

There are approximately 92,700 children aged 0-18 in Bristol, equating to 19% of the city's population. (Bristol Key Facts November 2025).

The following tables articulate what the health and social outcomes for the city's children and young people would be like if they were just 100 people.

Colour code:

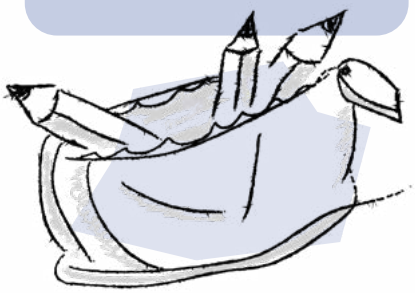
- ▼ Worse than England average
- ▲ Better than England average
- ⋈ Similar or same as England average
- N/A N/A to the England average/data unavailable

29 Would be eligible for Free School Meals ▼



16 Would be receiving Special Educational Needs (SEN) support

5 Would have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan ▼



22 Would live in a relative low-income household ⋈



73 Would be 'White'

9 Would be 'Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh'

8 Would be 'Mixed or Multiple Ethnic group'

8 Would be 'Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African'

2 Would be from another ethnic group

N/A

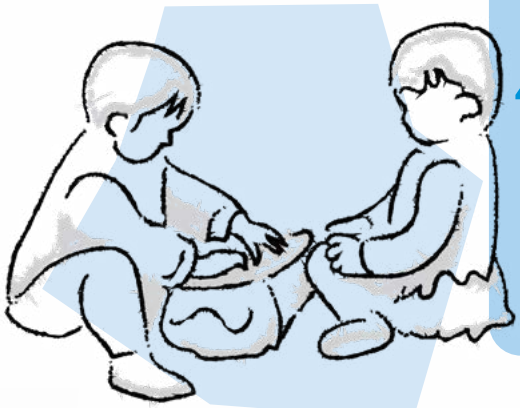
22 Would have a first language other than English

N/A



8 Households would be experiencing moderate food insecurity

4 Households would be experiencing severe food insecurity



9 Who live in the most deprived and

4 Who live in the least deprived areas of Bristol would have had a low weight at birth

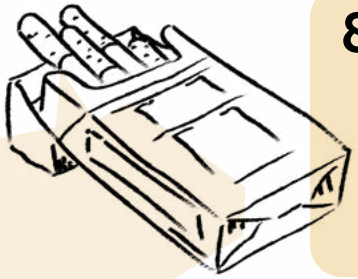
N/A



1 Would be in care



20 would be estimated to live in households experiencing drug or alcohol abuse, domestic abuse, or mental health problems



8 Would have mothers who smoked during pregnancy

2 Governance, leadership, and partnership arrangements

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the minimum statutory requirements for youth justice services. This places a duty upon the statutory partners to co-operate in securing appropriate youth justice services, and it also creates a power to enable partners to fund youth justice services[1]. These statutory partners are:

- the local authority (this should include children's social care and education)
- the police
- the probation service.
- health

The Bristol Youth Justice Service (YJS) is governed by the local Bristol Youth Justice Partnership Board (BYJP) and is monitored nationally by the Youth Justice Board (YJB). The BJYP Board's remit is to:

- be responsible for all aspects of local youth justice service governance;
- lead strategically across relevant partners;
- ensure a high-quality service is provided to prevent children from offending and enable them to achieve positive outcomes.

The BYJP is accountable for ensuring the sufficiency and quality of services and resources that agencies provide to meet local need and statutory requirements.

Bristol Youth Justice Partnership Board Membership

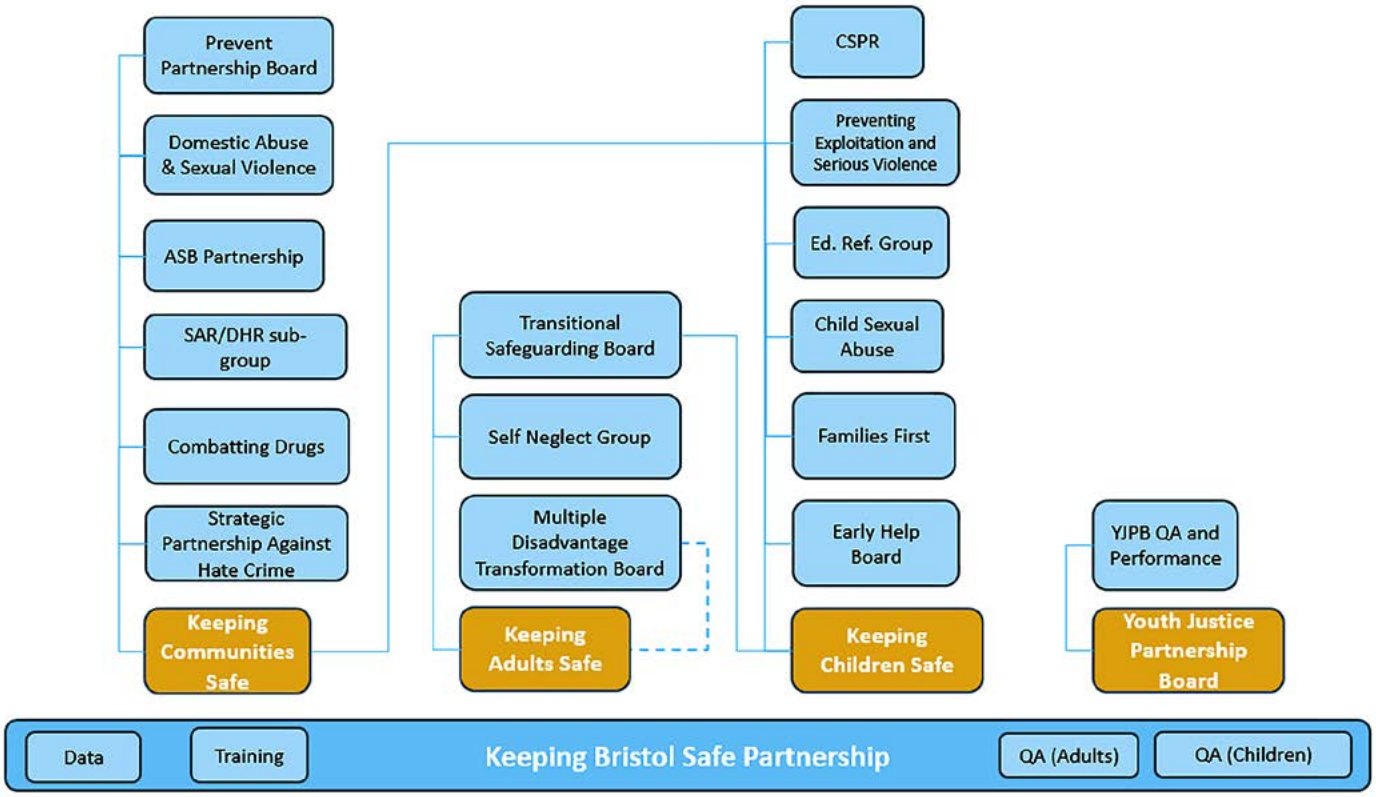
Stakeholder	Role
Chair of Bristol Youth Justice Partnership Board	Executive Director Children and Education
Vice Chair/Avon and Somerset Police	Superintendent
Office of Police and Crime Commission	Violence Reduction Partnership Director
Bristol City Council (BCC)	Councillor Representative
Children's Services BCC	Director Children and Families
Children's Services BCC	Head of Service: First Assessment, Youth Justice Service, and Harm Outside the Home[DH1.1]
Probation	Head of Bristol and South Glos PDU
Education BCC	Director Education and Skills
Education BCC	Head of Service: Employment, Skills & Lifelong Learning
Education BCC	Virtual Headteacher of The HOPE
Cabot Learning Foundation/Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership	Education Director
Public Health BCC	Consultant in Public Health
Bristol Safer Communities BCC	Safer Communities Manager
Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	Clinical Lead (CAMHS)
Public Health	Senior Public Health Specialist
Magistrates for Avon & Somerset	Chair of Youth Panel
Voluntary and Community Sector	CEO, Growing Futures UK
Voluntary and Community Sector	CEO, Bristol City Robins Foundation
In Attendance: Youth Justice Board	YJB Oversight Manager

[1] Section 38 (3)(a) and (b)). Section 39 (1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the co-operation of the named statutory partners to form a YJS. Section 38 (1, 2) identifies the statutory partners and places a duty on them to co-operate to secure youth justice services appropriate to their area.

Links with other strategic or stakeholder groups

The YJPB sits alongside and is aligned with the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership Board.

It ensures appropriate representation and reporting to and from the following groups to align plans and priorities:



The Youth Justice Partnership Board ensures it's plans and priorities are aligned with:

- Bristol Health and Wellbeing Board
- Bristol Keeping Children Safe Board
- Bristol Keeping Communities Safe/ Community Safety Partnership
- Avon & Somerset Reducing Reoffending Board
- Avon & Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership
- Avon & Somerset Tackling Disproportionality Programme – Youth Justice Pillar
- Avon & Somerset Reducing Reoffending Board
- Local Criminal Justice Board
- Out of Court Disposal Scrutiny Panel
- Bristol Serious Violence Prevention Board
- Bristol Prevent Board

A Quality Assurance and Performance sub group reports directly into the YJPB.

Youth Justice Service Structure and Partnerships

Structure

The Youth Justice Service (YJS) sits within Bristol City Council's Education and Children's services. In 2025, a new Head of Service (HoS) post was established to align children's services front door and multi-agency safeguarding (MASH) arrangements, the YJS, and harm outside the home services. The YJS Service Manager reports directly to the Head of Service, and the HoS reports to the Director of Children and Families.

In 2025, the structure of the YJS was reviewed to strengthen management oversight and practice development through the creation of three new Senior Practitioner posts which are now appointed to.

This structure is enabling further development of integrated working arrangements, planning and practice for children at risk of crime, youth violence and wider Harm Outside the Home.

Specialist posts and partnerships

There are a good range of specialist and mainstream services and interventions to support and meet the needs of children and families provided by seconded and specialist staff within the YJS. This includes practitioners from the police, health, education and mental health services.

Through our work with partners in the Communities and Public Health team, we successfully secured funding for a specialist drugs worker as part of the wider young people's substance use partnership. This has enabled children working with the Youth Justice Service to have timely assessment or any substance misuse issues, and direct access to targeted support and intervention.

Bristol YJS is commissioned to deliver the Youth Appropriate Adult Service on behalf of Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) and South Gloucestershire Youth Justice Services. Bristol City Council's centralised resources provide data monitoring and analysis and business support.

The YJS currently has 36.5 full time-equivalent posts, including seconded staff from statutory partners – Health, Probation, and Police. (Appendix 1 Organisation Charts).

Youth Justice Service Staff Resource	
Head of Service: First Assessment, Youth Justice Service, Edge of Care and Harm Outside the Home	
YJS Service Manager (1 fte)	Team Managers (4.7 fte)
Senior Practitioners (2.5 fte)	YJ Practitioners (8 fte)
YJ Support Workers (5 fte)	Prevention & Diversion Coordinator (1 fte)
Appropriate Adult coordinator (0.6 fte)	Restorative Justice Workers (1.2 fte)
Reparation and Referral Order Coordinator (1 Fte)	Reparation Practitioners (2 fte)
Young People Engagement Worker (1 fte)	Police Officer/s (seconded) (3 fte)
Specialist Public Health Nurse (seconded) (0.6 fte)	Primary Mental Health Specialist (seconded) (1 fte)
Education Specialist (1 fte)	Speech & Language Therapist (seconded) (0.6 fte)
Probation Officers (seconded) (1.3fte)	Receptionist (1 fte)
Drugs Worker (seconded) (1 Fte)	Business Support & others (5 fte)

Additional partners

The location of YJS within the Children and Education directorate enables swift access for children to services such as SEND advisors, Family Help (Safeguarding and Targeted Support) and Safer Connections (Exploitation Services). We work in partnership with a range of agencies including within the voluntary and community sector to enable children to access specialist and community-based support to meet their needs. These include:

- Be Safe – Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Trust – the YJS works closely alongside Be Safe where children exhibit harmful sexual behaviour.
- Early Intervention Police Team
- Horn Youth Concern - support to young people from the Somali community 11-19 in East/Central Bristol
- Empire Fighting Chance
- Robins Foundation - Bristol City FC
- Horizons Youth – Bristol Drugs Project
- Blunt Truth – Knife Crime Awareness
- CAMHS Substance Misuse and Treatment service

"We enter a child/family's life at a crucial time to carry out work and look for what other support we can offer, usually there is something the child and family isn't being supported with and we can help (e.g ADHD/ASD referrals, SALT which go a very long way for the child, EHCP etc). It feels good to know you can end your involvement having put something in place that will continue to support the child in future." YJS worker

3 Progress on priorities in previous plan 25/26

Progress has been made against the 5 key service priorities in our Strategic Plan for 2025/26. The Youth Justice Board has made a commitment to delivering further progress against these priorities in 2026/29.

Prevent children from offending and diverting children from the youth justice system wherever possible

- Bristol YJS is a core contributor to the Daily Incident Briefings established last year and co-ordinated by the Safer Connections team, ensuring that children arrested, reported as missing, or linked to incidents of concern are discussed and appropriate safeguarding plans swiftly implemented. This forum has enhanced timeliness of information sharing between the police and the YJS, and is now supporting effective information sharing processes in line with the revised Knife Possession Guidance.
- The renewal of the Turnaround grant has enabled us to continue delivering targeted support and interventions to children at risk of entry into the criminal justice system. We have taken a flexible and child-focussed approach to referrals, seeking to support children wherever possible, and ensuring sufficient staff capacity and resource to deliver the interventions needed. In 2025/26 we exceeded targets set by the Ministry of Justice and we are on track to achieve this again in 2026/27.
- Bristol YJS continues to participate in regional Out of Court Resolution (OOCR) scrutiny processes supporting the quality of assessments and decisions for children.
- Our First Time Entrant rates (the number of children entering the Youth Justice Service for the first time) remain lower than our statistical neighbours (Youth Justice Family). We do know that first time offending rates for children supported via our Turnaround programme are low (lower than national rates).

Reduce serious violence and harm outside the home, and strengthening contextual safeguarding

- Bristol YJS is a core participant in the revised Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) structure in Bristol, both at a neighbourhood and city-wide level, ensuring children supported by YJS are discussed, information shared and effective plans to reduce harm outside of the home are implemented, in conjunction with the wider partnership.
- Bristol's Safer Connections Team is now fully operational, consulting with relevant professionals, and facilitating partnership approaches to safeguard children from exploitation and harm. Bristol's Harm Outside The Harm strategy was published in 2025, outlining a clear commitment to identifying, preventing, and addressing harm.
- We continue to ensure a clear focus on harm outside the harm for all children we work with, through consistent screening and assessments, trauma-informed reports and sentencing recommendations, and robust risk management processes.

Focus on equity, diversity and addressing disproportionality for children from groups which are overrepresented in the youth justice system

- Bristol YJS co-funded a programme of training with Children's Services delivered by Stand Against Racism & Inequality allowing staff to complete training on a range of themes linked to diversity and identity.
- The YJ Partnership Board has maintained a clear focus on disproportionality, exploring caseload data to understand issues specific to children in Bristol, and undertaking targeted reviews into children from communities disproportionately represented within the YJS cohort.
- We have developed a relationship with a community organisation that supports children and families from the Somali communities, working in partnership, to engage with families and ensure culturally appropriate support and interventions. We continue to explore opportunities to expand this model to include other communities disproportionately reflected in our case data.
- We have targeted our service-learning review planning to monitor and support implementation of practice that reflects an understanding of diversity, discrimination, race, culture, and identity in assessment, reports, planning and delivery.
- A staff-led Tackling Disproportionality Working Group now meets monthly to maintain a clear focus on practice, policy, and data.
- We remain active members of the Avon & Somerset Tackling Disproportionality Youth Justice Pillar, sharing good practice regionally, and working with colleagues in Education to deliver on the identified actions and priorities.
- We recognise that addressing disproportionality within the youth justice system requires a system wide approach, with a focus on early support and intervention. Addressing outcomes for groups overly represented within the youth justice system is therefore a key strategic priority reflected throughout the wider strategic policies referenced above.

Improve inclusion and children's participation in education, employment and training (ETE)

- The Director of Education, as a member of the YJ Partnership Board, holds a governance lead on improving inclusion and participation in education, training and employment for children in contact with the YJS.
- Strategic oversight of the barriers to engagement have been strengthened through a revised monitoring and oversight process, ensuring actions can be swiftly taken.
- Progress against Education Training and Employment for pre- and post-16 remains a focus at the BYJP Board, including a specific focus on identifying and responding to disproportionality.
- Bristol's Children and Education Plan 2025-2030 set out our commitment to eliminating inequality so that every child in Bristol – regardless of who they are or where they are born – is given the best chance of having a safe and healthy childhood, where they feel included and are supported to reach their full potential. The number one priority within this plan is achieving better educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. This strategic approach recognises that addressing disparity within the YJS requires a strategic whole system approach.
- Bristol's Belonging and Thriving strategy provides further details on how we aim to improve inclusion, participation and outcome for all children.

Further develop restorative approaches and services to victims

- The Safer Communities Manager, as a member of the YJ Partnership Board, holds a governance lead on our work with victims and provides regular updates to the board.
- We have increased capacity both at operational and management level in the team that supports victims of youth crime in Bristol, ensuring we can offer a tailored and flexible approach.
- The YJS continues to offer support around education, speech and language needs, and access to positive activities to victims, as well as ensuring their experiences and views are reflected in our assessments, reports, and work with children.
- Working closely with colleagues across the Avon and Somerset area, we are developing a joint working protocol with Avon and Somerset Police to ensure clear guidance and dedicated pathways, to support operational practice with victims.
- A new information leaflet has been developed and produced to ensure victims of youth crime understand the options available to them, and their options for Restorative Justice.
- A Restorative Justice (RJ) newsletter is produced monthly by the RJ team to update practitioners on practice issues, signpost to training opportunities and maintain a clear focus on RJ across the service.
- We have developed, trialled and implemented a Victims Service Learning Review (audit) to assess our victim work and how this links into the plans and delivery of interventions with children. This sits alongside the case management Service Learning Reviews.
- We have improved victim worker involvement in risk management and safety planning. Victim workers now attend Risk Management Meetings for relevant children and QA panels. Risk Management Meeting paperwork has been revised to include a section on victim safety.
- A new live data-analysis report has been developed that allows us to monitor our victim caseload – both in terms of characteristics, offence type and delivery of support and interventions. This analysis is reported to the YJ Partnership Board on a quarterly basis.
- We have reviewed our Referral Order paperwork to include specific Victim sections, and implemented a new victim feedback form for completion by Panel Members to provide feedback to victims on how their feedback and requests were incorporated into the discussions in the panel.

"I have achieved most goals for me and made positive changes for myself." Child feedback

Other Service Developments

- We have strengthened our relationship with Empire Fighting Chance Boxing gym, creating opportunities for children to attend weekly boxing training sessions, alongside the Attendance Centre sessions that take place there.
- We have joined with colleagues across the region to develop and roll out a Custody Passport scheme, ensuring Police colleagues within custody suites have ready access to information about children, to support them in responding to identified needs in a trauma-informed manner.
- We have continued to deliver regular cooking workshops, creating positive spaces for children from across the city and their workers to cook together, learning life skills, alongside problem solving and communication skills.
- We have strengthened our staffing structure through the recruitment of Senior Practitioners.
- We have collaborated with partners in Public Health to secure funding for a specialist drugs worker to be seconded to the YJS, and securing increased resource form the Schools Nursing team to provide physical health services to our children.
- One of our Seconded Police Officers working with colleagues in Police and the NHS, to develop a 'Blunt truth' workshop built around a short film created locally, to highlight the steps children can take to report concerns around knife possession, and to keep themselves and their friends safe. BYJS staff have supported those workshops in schools across the city.
- We have focussed attention and resource on improving our participation strategy, strengthening our feedback processes, and the development of the 'Boardroom' child engagement forum.
- We have worked across the region to review our Referral Order processes and paperwork, ensuring they fully align with Child First principles.
- We have increased capacity within our services to victims, at both operational and management level, building on our aspirational approach to ensuring the highest quality offer is available to all victims of children in Bristol.
- The YJ Partnership Board has continued to build on steps taken to develop its governance role, including reviewing its membership, structures and priorities.



4 Performance over the last year

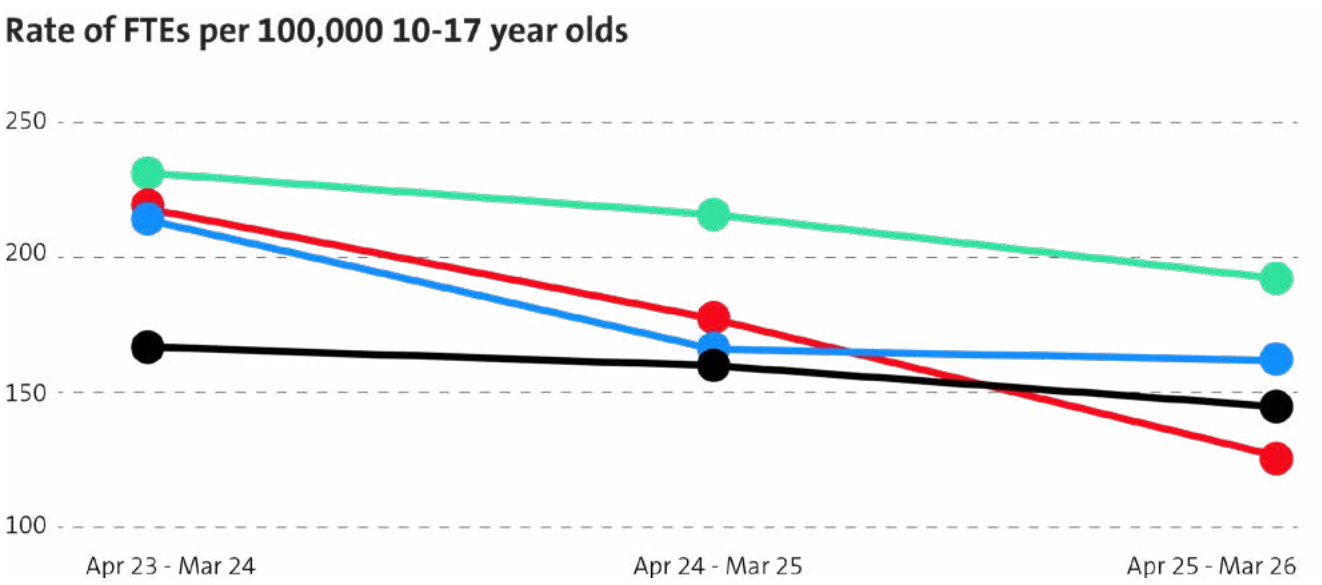
National Indicators

The Bristol Youth Justice Service continues to perform positively against national performance measures. Performance against our First Time Entrant, Custody and Re-Offending rates compares positively against both national and YJS family rates. Our custody rate increased in early 2024 but have since returned to previous levels and in line with national and YJS family rates.

The services has strengthened its focus on quality assurance, and an established Service Learning Review process is in place, aligned with HMIP Inspection methodology. Those reviews identify areas of good practice, and where improvement may be needed, and a closely monitored improvement plan is in place, with good progress made against this over the past year.

First time entrants (FTE)

Reduced rate of First Time Entrants. There has been a 30% reduction in the rate of children entering the youth justice service for the first time compared to this time last year. This is a positive direction of travel. First Time Entrant rates per 100,000 young people – Bristol: 126, England and Wales: 145, YJS family: 160.4.



Number of FTEs

Category	Apr 23 - Mar 24	Apr 24 - Mar 25	Apr 25 - Mar 26
Bristol	89	74	53

FTE Rate

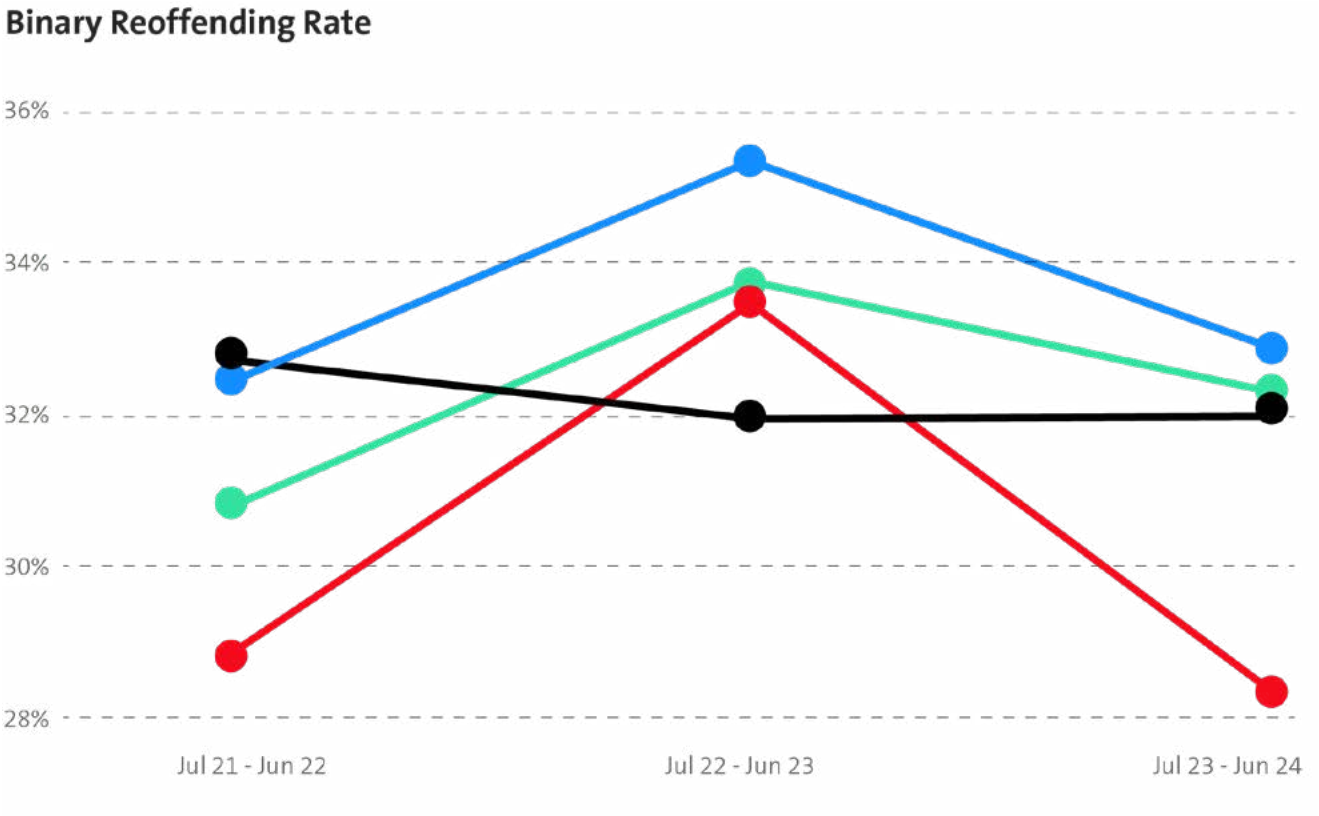
Category	Apr 23 - Mar 24	Apr 24 - Mar 25	Apr 25 - Mar 26
Bristol	217	176	126
Core City	228.8	214.6	192.9
National	166	159	145
YOT Family	213.7	165.4	160.4

1 First Time Entrant Rates

Reoffending rates

Reduced reoffending rates. There has been a reduction in the rate of children who committed a further criminal offence. Bristol's figures are lower than the average for England and Wales and YJS family. Bristol: 28.4%, England and Wales: 32.1%, YJS family: 32.9%.

The below data relates to children who were convicted of offences during the below dates, who went on to commit further offences.



Binary Reoffending Rate

Category	Jul 21 - Jun 22	Jul 22 - Jun 23	Jul 23 - Jun 24
Bristol	28.8%	33.6%	28.4%
Core City	30.9%	33.7%	32.3%
National	32.8%	32.0%	32.1%
YOT Family	32.4%	35.3%	32.9%

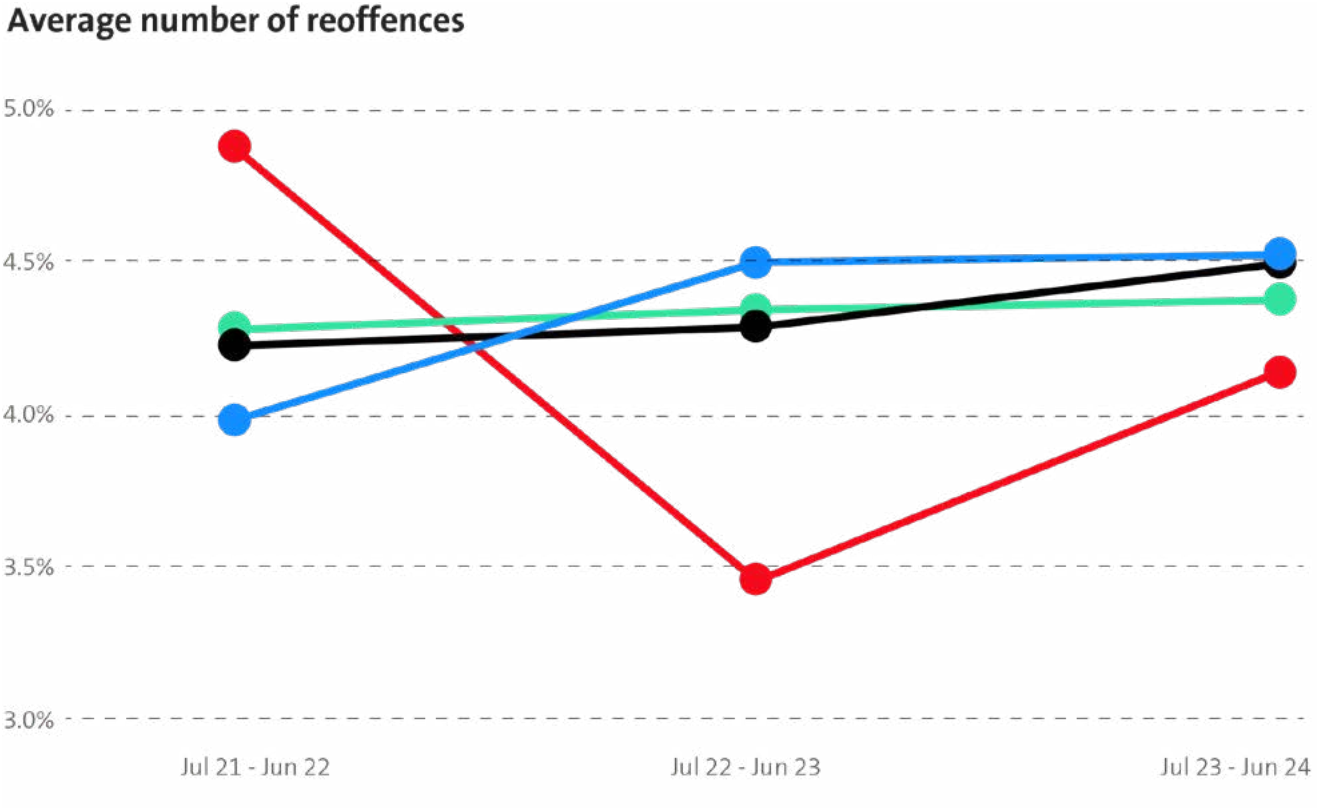
Binary Reoffending Rate

Category	Jul 21 - Jun 22	Jul 22 - Jun 23	Jul 23 - Jun 24
Bristol	47	46	46

Average number of reoffences

Frequency reoffending rates have increased, but remain lower than national and YJS family rates.

The below data relates to children who were convicted of offences during the below dates, who went on to commit further offences.



Frequency Reoffending Rate

Category	Jul 21 - Jun 22	Jul 22 - Jun 23	Jul 23 - Jun 24
Bristol	4.9	3.5	4.1
Core City	4.3	4.3	4.4
National	4.2	4.3	4.5
YOT Family	4.0	4.5	4.5

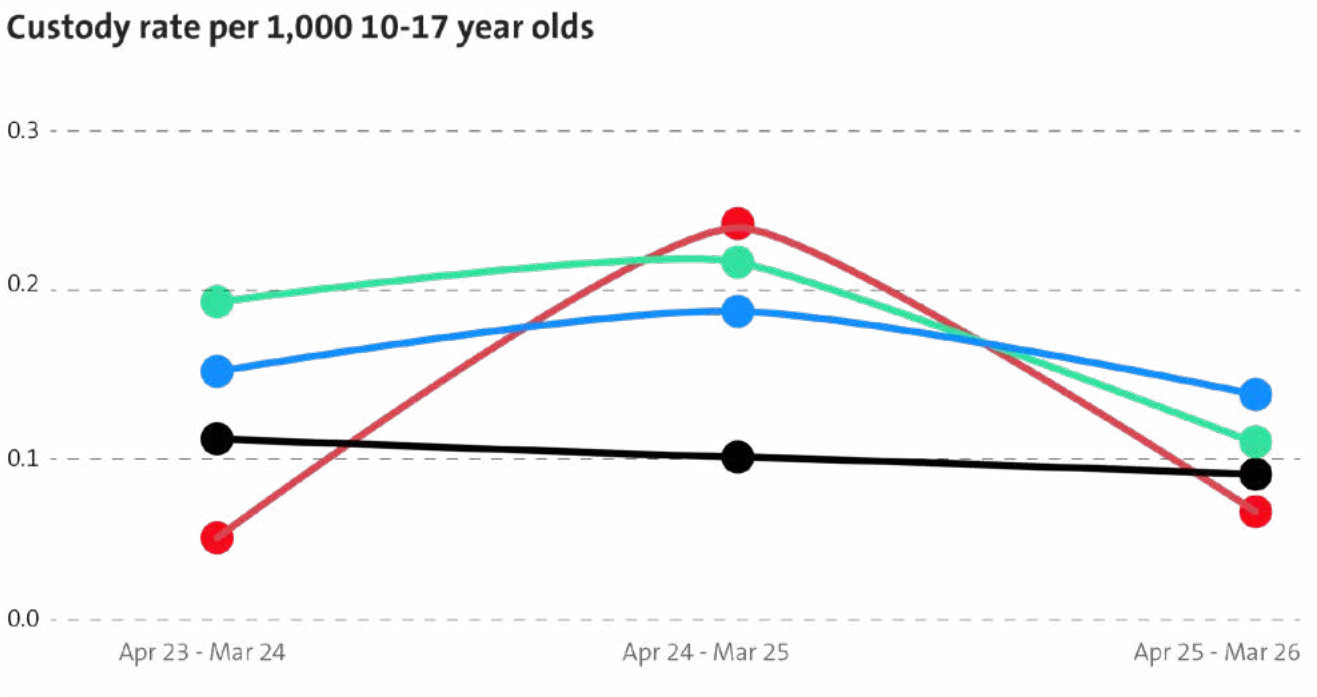
Number of Reoffences

Category	Jul 21 - Jun 22	Jul 22 - Jun 23	Jul 23 - Jun 24
Bristol	229	159	190

3 Frequency Reoffending Rates

Custody rate

Reduction in custody rate. Our custody rate has returned to previous levels and is now in line with England and Wales average and lower than YJS family. Bristol: 0.07, England and Wales: 0.09, YJS family: 0.14 (per 1,000). This reflects the continued efforts across the service to provide robust and proportionate community sentences including intensive supervision and surveillance and work with the partnership to adopt child first and trauma informed sentencing.



Custody Rate

Category	Apr 23 - Mar 24	Apr 24 - Mar 25	Apr 25 - Mar 26
Bristol	0.05	0.24	0.07
Core City	0.20	0.22	0.11
National	0.11	0.10	0.09
YOT Family	0.15	0.19	0.14

Number of Young people in custody

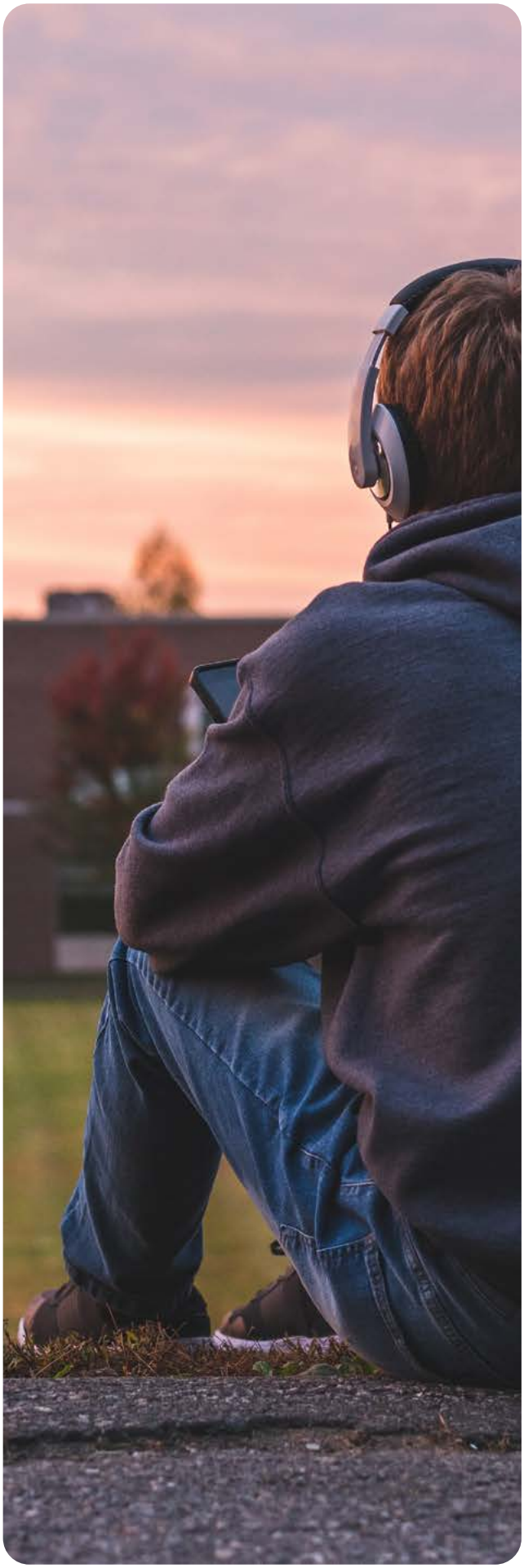
Category	Apr 23 - Mar 24	Apr 24 - Mar 25	Apr 25 - Mar 26
Bristol	2	10	3

Education, Training and Employment

Education, Training and Employment (ETE). The proportion of children working with the Youth Justice Service that were in suitable education, training or employment at the end of their order was 61% in the 12 month period to March 2026. This is an improvement from previous years, but does not yet match our ambitions for children in Bristol.

We recognise that engagement in education, training and employment is one of the most significant protective factors for children in keeping them safe from being drawn into criminal activity, youth violence and criminal exploitation. Strategically identifying and addressing the barriers to education, training and employment, as well as having robust operational processes in place to support individual children, remains an ongoing key priority for the Youth Justice Partnership in the coming year.

The Director for Education and Skills and Head of Service for Skills and Lifelong Learning both sit on the YJ Partnership Board, and offer governance oversight of this area of our work. We are currently reviewing our referral pathways to ensure children who do not have appropriate ETE provision receive the support they require



5 Risks and issues

Our most significant risk and issues are as follows:

- **Funding:** Funding from the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner has reduced significantly this year, representing a significant reduction to the YJS budget. This reduction was mitigated though Bristol City Council pressures for 2026/27 however remains a pressure beyond this financial year.
- **Building:** The Service is currently based in City Hall, which presents challenges in creating a responsive environment in which to meet with children and families.
- **Provision of victim information:** Whilst the gathering and recording of the protected characteristics and diversity needs of victims for Out of Court Resolutions (OOCR)has been significantly improved by the introduction of the child element of the My OOCR app, information for children processed through the Court is still not being provided consistently. This impacts our ability to be responsive to the individual and diverse needs of victims we need to work with.
- **Youth Justice changes outlined in the Government's White Paper:** We recognise significant changes in national governance and oversight, along with legislative and structural changes that may impact on the focus and capacity of the service.

Action to mitigate risks:

The Youth Justice Partnership Board (YJPB) is engaging with relevant partners to mitigate these risks. The Board is overseeing planning to develop a sustainable funding model, and options around development of a site suitable for delivery of effective youth justice services.

The YJPB is monitoring rates and levels of victim information provided, with Police Board members seeking resolution across the force area.

"We are very grateful for all the support, care, and understanding you have shown us over the past year. It has not been an easy time for our family, but having someone like you by our side made a real difference. Your kindness, patience, and professionalism will always be remembered". Parent feedback

6 Plan for the forthcoming year

Priorities

We will publish a progress report against our priorities annually. This will include any relevant updates to policy or practice in line with published reform proposals.

Preventing children from offending and diverting children from the youth justice system wherever possible.

Our plan:

- We will work with partners developing the Young Futures Hubs programme in Bristol to support early intervention approaches in the city.
- We will continue to offer Turnaround interventions to as wide a group of children as we are able to within the eligibility criteria. We will work with colleagues in Children's Services, police, Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), and the wider Local Authority to ensure support is offered wherever appropriate.
- We will support the piloting of Prevention Panels/Pathways, playing a role within that multi-agency approach to ensure the right support is provided to children in the right context.
- We will work with our colleagues in Safer Connections within the MACE structures to identify and address harm outside the harm at the earliest opportunity.
- We will identify and divert children appearing at court back to the Out of Court Resolution panel wherever possible.
- We will support programmes delivering education and interventions to children in schools, such as the Blunt Truth programme.

Reducing serious violence and harm outside the home, strengthening contextual safeguarding

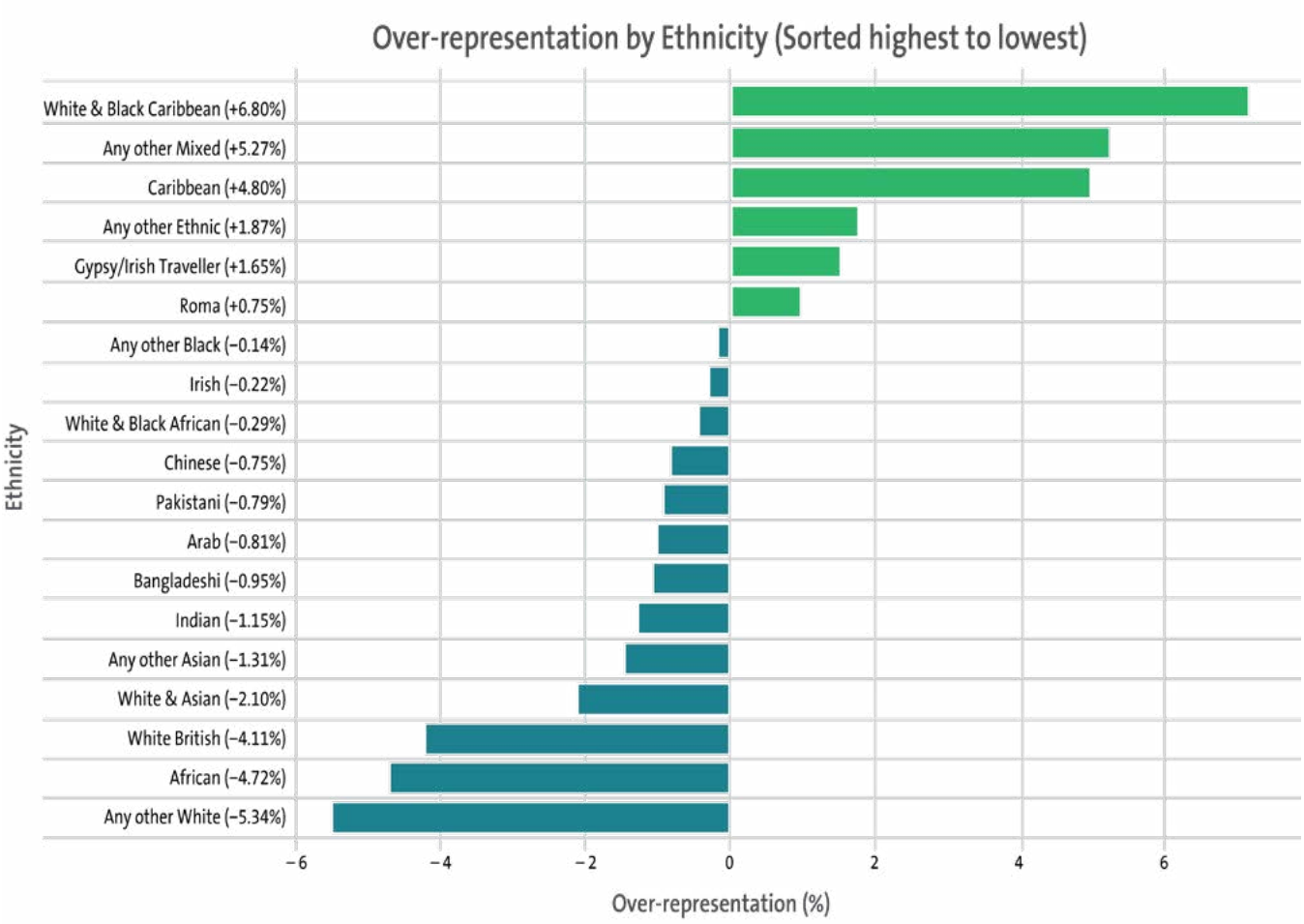
Our plan

- We will strengthen our practice in identifying and reducing harm outside of the home for children open to the YJS. We will work collaboratively with colleagues in the Safer Connections team and within the Multi Agency Child Exploitation structure to ensure children have appropriate safeguarding and risk management plans in place.
- We will ensure our assessments, plans, reports and interventions maintain a clear focus on safety for the child and for others, with Quality Assurance processes and SLRs ensuring appropriate steps are taken.
- We will chair multi-agency Risk Management Meetings for all children assessed as posing a high risk of serious harm or where there are high safety and wellbeing concerns.
- We will strengthen the voice of children and families in our Risk Management Meetings, recognising their role in reducing harm and increasing safety.
- We will monitor those children assessed as posing the highest levels of risk through weekly Risk Register meetings, ensuring senior management oversight of plans and actions.
- We will review our guidance on collaborative working with colleagues in other areas of Children's Services to ensure we are delivering a joined up and fully cohesive service to children.

Focussing on equity, diversity and addressing disproportionality for children from groups which are overrepresented in the youth justice system

We acknowledge the deep and complex history of racism within our city, which includes a legacy of economic prosperity built in part on the transatlantic slave trade and other forms of systemic injustice. We understand that this history has had lasting impacts on the social and racial dynamics within our city, contributing to persistent inequalities and disproportionality in many areas of public life, including within the youth justice system.

The legacy of these historical injustices has manifested in levels of overrepresentation, particularly of children with Caribbean heritage, in our youth justice system.



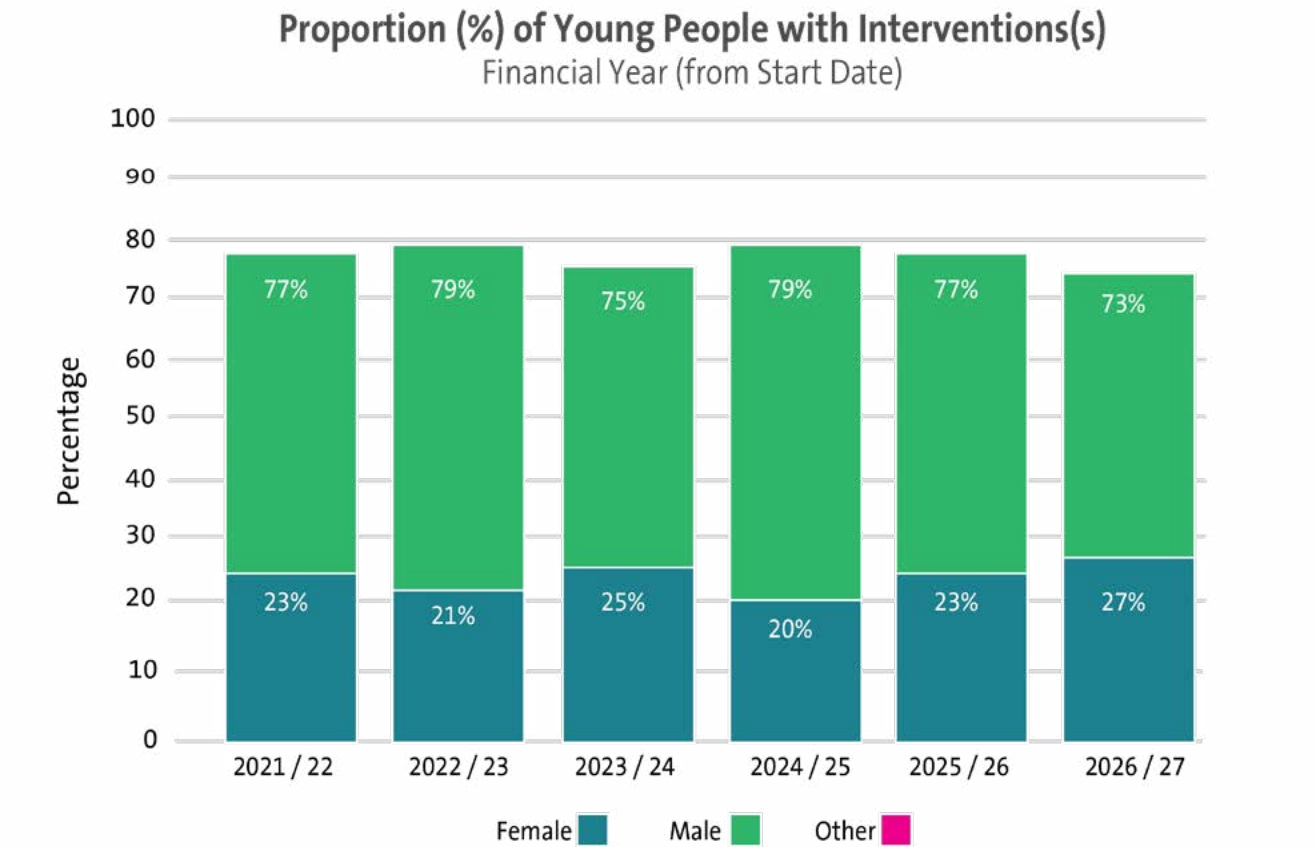
Thank you especially for believing in our son and seeing the good in him. Your encouragement and faith give us hope and strength for his future. We will never forget the positive impact you have had on his life and on us as a family." Parent feedback

Our plan:

- We will maintain a clear focus on addressing disproportionality for children from over-represented groups. We will ensure the YJBP has accurate data at each meeting to review progress and any actions.
- The YJPB will review data from statutory partners in Police, Education and Health to challenge any disproportionality within wider services accessed by children in Bristol.
- We will maintain our role within the Avon and Somerset Tackling Disproportionality Youth Justice Pillar, ensuring learning from that programme drives change within the service.
- We will ensure our staff group engages in regular training and development to maintain their understanding of research and practice.
- We will hear the voices of children and families from communities over-represented within the wider youth justice system. We will proactively seek to engage those children and families, allowing their lived experience to shape our service development.
- We will actively challenge disproportionality in all its forms within our assessments and reports, with robust Quality Assurance procedures to ensure assessments and reports reflect the experiences of the children, families and victims.
- We will prioritise the development of interventions and resources that meet the cultural needs of the children we are working with.
- We will ensure all recruitment activity is communicated into all communities in Bristol, engaging with the Workforce Eace Equalities Standards alongside Children's Social Care to achieve a diverse and skilled workforce that reflects the communities we serve.
- We will continue to advocate for children appearing at Court to be referred back to the Out of Court Resolution panel wherever appropriate, seeking to reduce the impact of no-comment interviews on formal outcomes for children.
- We will support the staff-led Tackling Disproportionality Working Group to develop our practice and approach.

'My son is doing really well at the moment, and I am so proud of him. I also understand how he feels. I think the approach of giving him space and letting him say what he needs to say will be helpful. I agree with the idea of Trauma Recovery Model, that we can acknowledge that things have happened without talking about them, as well as finding ways to build routine, responsibility and relationships.'
Parent feedback

We have seen an increase in girls open to the YJS.



We recognise varying gender ratios across different outcomes, for example 89% of children on Youth Rehabilitations Orders are male and 11% female, whereas 76% of children on Out Of Court Resolutions interventions are male, with 24% female. Interventions through the Out Of Court Resolution process are generally shorter than those made by Courts, and we recognise the need to ensure we have appropriate interventions and services that meet the needs of girls in that space, and processes to ensure we can link them in with appropriate ongoing support where necessary.

Our plan:

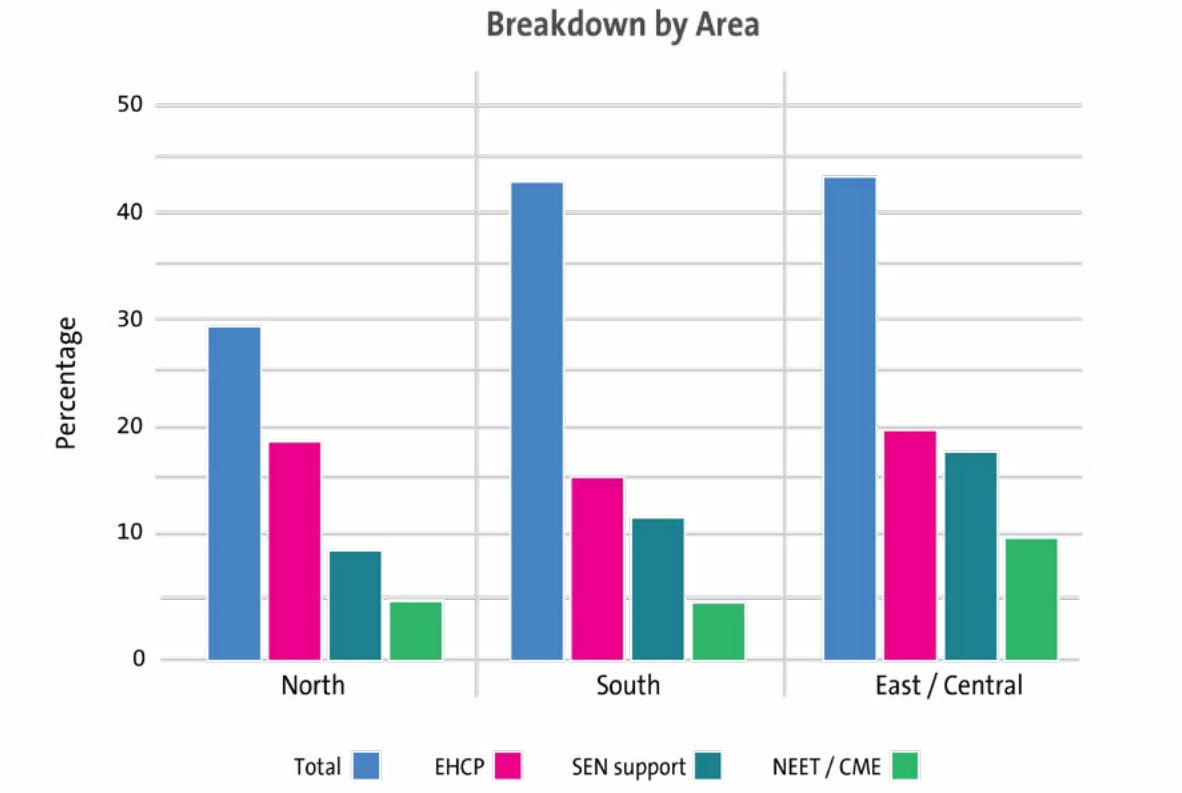
- We will establish a group programme for girls in the Youth Justice Service, focussing on health, identity and wellbeing
- We will undertake targeted Service Learning Reviews on our work with girls, to ensure their needs are met within our service.

Improving inclusion and children's participation in education, employment and training (ETE)

The YJS Resources Team Manager and YJS Education Specialist meet monthly with the HOPE Virtual School Headteacher, Post-14 SEND Manager, Post 16 Service Manager, Alternative Learning Provision Service Manager and Attendance Team Service Manager to review children coming into the YJS. Information from that meeting is shared with the allocated YJS worker, and allows a service-level overview of ETE provision.

The table below sets out the distribution of EHCP, SEN Support and NEET/CME across each of the three geographical area in the city for children currently open to the YJS:

Area	EHCP	SEN Support	NEET CME	Total
North	18	9	5	29
South	17	12	5	43
East/Central	20	19	9	43



Our plan:

- We will hold high aspirations for the children in Bristol, working towards all children open to YJS being in appropriate ETE provision.
- We will strengthen our identification and escalation processes to ensure that where a child is not in suitable ETE provision, relevant pathways are utilised to support progress.
- The YJPB will monitor ETE rates on a regular basis, holding partners to account for actions.
- We will explore opportunities within new buildings for increased education provision.

Delivering high quality responsive services to victims and restorative approaches with children

Our plan:

- We will maintain a focus on the quality of our work with victims through regular Service Learning Reviews.
- We will develop an interactive workshop for children who have been convicted of assaults on emergency workers, with the aim of building understanding between those involved.
- We will continue to build capacity and resilience in the victims team by ensuring victim workers are trained in both pre and post court work, allowing them to provide cover if required.
- We will continue to explore the range of support we can offer to young victims, utilising the range of support and services available within the Youth Justice Partnership.
- We will develop written guidance on Restorative Letter writing.
- We will continue to engage in work to develop a joint working protocol between Avon and Somerset Police and the YJS to ensure clear guidance and dedicated pathways to support, and operational practice regarding the work with victims.

Case Study – work with victims

"D came into contact with the YJS after he was assaulted by a group of boys, and his case was referred to the OOCR panel. I met D at home with his mum, to get his feedback for the out of court resolution panel and to inform the family of the process and the next steps. D and his mother described the incident and ongoing impacts – D was still having nightmares, and felt as though nobody had helped him. As refugees, the family have experienced a lot of trauma and know what it feels like to feel unsafe. D has a strong sense of justice, and was finding it very hard to accept the decision for the case to be progressed out of court. He disclosed a desire for retribution. Over a few conversations, it became clear that this was also tied into complicated feelings around his identity: what it means to be a man, to be strong, and what is right and what is wrong. D had a strong need to be heard, to feel validated, and to for him and his family to be safe. These needs were not all going to be met through the criminal justice system, or through restorative justice, which wasn't available. However, through our work together I identified that there were small steps I could take to help those needs to be met in other ways. D has many strengths! He is independent, has a fierce sense of right or wrong, which whilst causing him challenges at times, means he thinks deeply about his actions. D told me about a desire to be a lawyer. Identifying this as a protective factor, I got in touch with the Bristol law team, and set him up a visit to the University of Law. We visited together, and had a one-to-one meeting with a Senior Lecturer. D got the opportunity to ask questions, and left with a reminder of why he is trying so hard to stay motivated and engaged. D also met with Jason, our engagement worker. Jason, D and I met for a coffee and spoke about how D could contribute to The Boardroom, an initiative which includes young people in improving the YJS. Since then, D has talked about having a group of pro social friends who help him to manage his feelings. He is doing well, and still aiming towards University." YJS Victim Worker

Standards for children

This Bristol Youth Justice Partnership has responsibility for ensuring delivery that meets the standards for children in the youth justice system set by the Secretary of State for Justice on the advice of the Youth Justice Board.

These standards provide guidance for what is expected from strategic and operational delivery at each stage of a child's journey through the youth justice system.

The Standard for Children at Court Self-Assessment was completed in 2023. The findings from the self-assessment were largely positive. Bristol has a clear strategy in place for diverting children from Court wherever possible as described in the section above.

There is an established and trusting relationship between the court and the YJS. Feeback from Magistrates indicates that the YJS presents robust and detailed bail packages and that these are felt to be appropriate to manage risk in most cases.

Feedback from the courts on the quality of our reports remains strong and the Youth Panel Chair sits as part of the YJ Partnership Board.

Our Plan:

- We will review the findings of the Children at Court self-assessment, ensuring positive practice is maintained, and areas for development continue to be progressed.
- We will complete a self-assessment of our work around Custody and Resettlement. This will include leading on the recommendations and monitoring of the subsequent action plan.

Service development

Child First and Child Voice

Our Child First, restorative, systemic, and trauma informed practice model continues to underpin our delivery. Child First principles are embedded in all aspects of our work with children, who are at the heart of everything we do. Seeing the child as a child and building on their strengths, and the strengths of their family and network is fundamental to our practice.

Bristol YJS' implementation of the Enhanced Case Management (ECM) model over the last 6 years has embedded trauma-informed understanding across our practice and service culture. We successfully secured funding via the Police and Crime Grant to strengthen our capacity to ensure that the learning from that programme remains at the forefront of our approaches, enabling us to have an in-depth understanding of the child; avoiding adultification; drawing on an understanding of development psychology and ensuring that interventions are appropriate to a child's developmental profile and responsive to the impact of trauma.

Implementation of the Social Graces model helps us to identify structural barriers and related trauma. The Fresh AIR model supports children in building pro-social identity.

Staff have accessed training in adultification, trauma informed practice, and systemic practice over the last year and this will continue in the next 12 months. Our assessments, plans, Child First Pre-sentence reports and interventions evidence the development of skills in practice.

We will continue to incorporate the children's and parents' voice into all aspects of YJS practice. The recently developed children's consultation group, named 'The Boardroom' by the children, has already provided feedback on service plans around groupwork programmes and plans for a new building

for the YJS, and we will continue to prioritise that forum. Our re-established feedback processes, strengthened to ensure we capture the experiences of children and families in contact with the YJS in meaningful ways, will continue to ensure we reflect on the impact of practice and policy. Children will continue to participate in and guide the recruitment and selection of staff.

The Partnership Board has committed to championing Child First principles, both within the practice of the Youth Justice Service, but also in their own respective home services. The Board consider these principles to be both foundational to our practice, and overarching of all our strategic priorities for the coming year.

Our Plan:

- We will continue to develop our youth engagement and participation programme, responding to feedback received from children and families.
- We will continue to challenge themes of adultification within our own practice and across the partnership
- We will provide a quarterly report on child and parent feedback on the service shared with YJPB to inform service development
- We will continue to provide regular opportunities for child and parent/ carer voice to inform strategic planning, with a focus on children from groups who are overrepresented.
- We will continue to prioritise and strengthen partnership work to achieve positive outcomes for children.

Child-Centred Policing

Avon and Somerset police are committed to embedding Child Centred Policing into the Force, including:

- The promotion of Child Centred Approach at Chief Officer level, including a blog and briefings
- Training in Child Centred Policing is being delivered to a range of Police teams, including Response, Prisoner Handling, Neighbourhood Tasking, CID, Custody Unit Staff and in Staff Induction
- A Trauma Informed Lead bringing a trauma informed lens to policing through embedding trauma informed approaches to training new recruits and existing officer and policies.
- Work with Op Hampshire (Officer Safety Governance Group) to explore joint working to reduce assaults by children on police officers.
- Developments to scrutinise children's experiences in Police custody, including timeliness of detention and detention as a last resort.
- Custody SPOC for children, leading on a child centred custody experience
- Induction of Custody passports to aid communication
- The development of a Child Out of Court Resolution App launched in late 2025 to embed the Child Gravity Matrix into frontline officers' decision making to aide child centred policing decisions and prioritise diversion where possible. Updating the YJS Referral Form (known as Form 143) to capture more protected characteristics data relating to Victims.
- Launch of the Child Knife Possession Government Guidance and Deferred Prosecution scheme for knife possession.
- Scrutiny through Local Criminal Justice Board and Investigative Standards Committee on performance in respect of diversions and out of court resolutions.

Resources and Services

Premises

We continue to work with Local Authority colleagues to explore plans and potential funding for a bespoke centre for the service to work from. Plans for the development of a service hub remain on track, to ensure the access requirements of staff, children and families can be met. In the meantime, the YJS remains in Bristol City Hall, providing a central office facility for staff pending the long-term move, with the added benefit of close proximity to colleagues in the Safer Connections team and Education teams. We continue to see children both at City Hall, and also across wide range of Local Authority and community venues across the city.

A dedicated site presents the YJS with an exciting opportunity to create a Child First environment and collaborative partnerships with other services and community-based organisations. Opportunities for creative pro-social identity and independent living skill development activities are significant with space to deliver group work, arts, cookery, and gardening on site.

Finance, resource and services

The Youth Justice Board grant contributes to the costs of the Youth Justice Service. Financial contributions and seconded staff are supplied by Bristol City Council, health, probation, children's services, Office of Police Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and police partners as set out below:

Agency	Operational Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Youth Justice Board	781,690			781,690
Local Authority	694,118		373,989	1,068,107
Police	15,000	156,998		171,998
Police and Crime Commissioner			35,000	28,000
Probation	10,000	93,039		103,039
Health	116,000	24,000		140,000
Total	1,616,808	274,037	401,989	2,292,834

Bristol YJS also receives a grant from the Ministry of Justice to support delivery of the Turnaround programme. For 2026/27 this grant is £123,591.

We use our grant, partner contributions and available resources to deliver youth justice services, and we believe they produce the following benefits and outcomes:

- Reductions in youth crime and reoffending
- Prevention and diversion from the youth justice system
- Increased participation in education, training and employment
- Reduction in disproportionality in interventions and outcomes for children including those from global majority and minority communities and children who are in care; and a more informed service that seeks to identify and address all areas of inequity
- Reduced use of custody
- Child first, restorative, trauma-informed approaches embedded in all areas of YJS service delivery
- Improved health outcomes for children

The services provided by Bristol YJS include:

- Prevention and diversion management, coordination and delivery (in part MoJ Turnaround funded).
- Assessments, planning, supervision (including Intensive Surveillance and Supervision) and intervention for children with statutory court outcomes and out of court resolutions and management oversight.
- Reports to Court and Court Officer service.
- Delivery of restorative justice, victim support and reparation services.
- Coordination and oversight of referral orders and panels.
- Youth Appropriate Adult service, delivered on behalf of Bristol, Bath and South Gloucestershire.
- Performance and data analysis.
- Health and well-being services including physical and mental health and speech and language therapy. This includes consultations, training, assessments and access to specialist support for children.
- Support into education inclusion, training and employment.
- Transition support to adult services.
- Provision of police intelligence and support in management of children at high risk of harm through police secondments.
- Management oversight at YJS Service Manager level and Head of Service to provide leadership and effective partnership working at a strategic and operational level.

Youth Justice Partnership Board Development

The Board has strengthened its capacity to strategically steer the Youth Justice Service and the reducing youth crime agenda by reviewing its membership and ensuring that the appropriate agencies and services are represented at a senior level.

The Youth Justice Partnership Board has a clear forward plan that enables members to be informed of service developments, progress and performance and to provide clear direction, support, challenge and scrutiny. Performance reports are provided at each Board meeting to enable continued oversight and swift response to emerging risks and concerns.

A bi-monthly Quality and Performance Subgroup led by the Director of Children and Families scrutinises the quality of service delivery and monitors the actions within the service delivery plan. Progress against the plan is reported by exception to the Board.

Our Plan:

- Continue the clearly identified forward plan enabling members to be informed of service developments and performance to provide clear direction, support, challenge and scrutiny
- actively identify and address obstacles and risks to achieving our strategy
- seek opportunities to listen and learn from the voices and experiences of children, young people and parents/ carers; victims; staff and wider partners to develop our understanding and inform planning and priorities.
- bring external support and ideas from other local authorities
- work with our Partner in Practice on quality assurance and policy development.
- Individual Board members will hold governance responsibility for the different strategic priorities of the service, reporting back to the Board on a regular basis.

Workforce Development

We will continue to ensure sufficient leadership, management and practice capacity for our Youth Justice Service. We are committed to having a skilled and confident workforce through providing the training and support needed to provide outstanding practice.

Staff currently access a range of training to support their skill development and knowledge. Monthly service wide meetings include a training/ development focus.

Training in the last 12 months has included:

- Enhanced Case Management training (7 sessions) for all YJS case workers.
- Trauma Informed Practice and Vicarious Trauma for all staff.
- 2-day Prevention and Diversion Assessment (PAD) training for all YJS case workers.
- Level 1 Restorative Justice training delivered to all YJS staff.

We have supported 5 of our Youth Justice Support Workers to begin the Level 5 Youth Justice Practitioner Apprenticeship programme with UNITAS, and are committed to providing them practice opportunities and appropriate support to complete the course.

We have appointed 3 Senior Practitioners to our area teams. These new roles provide support to the Team Managers, additional quality assurance capacity, targeted support to practitioners where needed, and lead on monthly practice development workshops and keeping practice up-to-date.

The YJS Service Manager has completed a Systemic Leadership programme, and Team managers are completing Systemic Management and Supervision Training, both delivered by the Centre for Systemic Social Work

We will continue to strengthen our learning and practice development culture with a strong focus on peer skill sharing and learning to help embed training into practice across the service.

Our Plan:

- Deliver a workforce development plan informed by a training needs analysis
- Continue to deliver training and practice development in the following areas:
  - case formulation, assessment and planning;
  - Asset+ best practice
  - Child First, trauma informed practice; systemic approaches; adolescent development
  - identity development practice
  - social GRACES, cultural sensitivity and disproportionality
- Continue regular practice development and peer skill sharing sessions to help embed learning into practice.

"I needed reassurance and hoped for a good outcome - the person who supported me helped that happen.... thank you so much for supporting me!" Victim feedback

Evidence-based practice and innovation

Enhanced Case Management (ECM) project

Between November 2022 and October 2025 ECM was delivered as one of the 7 Vanguard pathways of the regional Integrated Care Framework Vanguard. The pathway was a collaboration between the NHS (Forensic CAMHS Clinical Psychologists) and the 4 participating Youth Justice Services (S Glos, Bristol, BANES and N Somerset). Over the period of Vanguard funding ECM was able to widen out their service with additional offers to children on out of court resolutions or short orders. In October 2025, ICB funding came to an end, and a further 6 months extension to the project was supported by the 4 Youth Justice teams with a view to exploring options for continued funding to embed ECM as practice as usual for the Youth Justice Services across the region. Unfortunately, that funding has not been secured and ECM came to an end in March 2026.

Between April 2025 and March 2026 ECM supported 13 children open to Bristol Youth Justice Service and undertook 6 consultations. 11 of those children were male, 2 female. We supported 2 children through transitions to adult services (Probation) and moving to other local authorities. 2 children have spent time in custody and ECM continued to hold regular reviews with the multi-agency teams during those periods to strengthen release planning.

Alongside the case formulation and consultation for individual children, ECM also provided ongoing wider practice development and training and skills opportunities for staff, covering topics such as the Trauma Recovery Model, Developmental mapping and Trauma informed assessments, planning and transitions.

The ECM service has provided several support options for staff including the offer of 1:1 clinical supervision to caseworkers by the ECM Psychologist and face to face reflective staff support sessions. ECM also has also provided Post Incident Psychological Support (PIPs) sessions to YJS staff following serious incidents that may have a significant psychological impact.

Despite ending, the ECM programme leaves behind a strong and lasting legacy across Bristol and the wider region. The implementation of ECM has brought about a tangible shift in both work, culture and ethos in Youth Justice Service practice which has been embraced with significant enthusiasm. ECM has embedded trauma informed thinking within Youth Justice practice, strengthened multi agency understanding of children's needs, and promoted psychologically informed approaches to assessment, planning, and intervention. The approach has provided a clear evidence-based way of successfully engaging some of our most complex and hard to reach young people and we have seen benefits across many aspects of their lives. We have witnessed young people moving up the Trauma Recovery model triangle over time as a result of the multi-agency teams working together more effectively, focussing on building trusting relationships and sequencing the work according to the child's developmental needs. As well as the impacts for the children, ECM has also brought about significant benefits for YJS practitioners who are able to understand the impact of ACEs and trauma on children and to use that knowledge to develop their practice; as a result they have reported increased skills, confidence and effectiveness in their work.

The training programme, reflective practice spaces, clinical supervision offer, and Post Incident Psychological Support (PIPs) sessions have provided staff with skills, language, and frameworks that will continue to shape their work long after the project closes. The development of the Custody Passport framework, trauma informed Referral Order paperwork, and contributions to regional practice development have created tangible tools that will continue

improving outcomes for children. ECM's role in supporting transitions, reducing risk, and promoting stability for highly vulnerable young people has demonstrated the value of psychologically informed, formulation led practice within Youth Justice. These contributions form a meaningful and enduring legacy, ensuring that the principles of trauma informed, child first practice remain embedded within local systems even as the service concludes.

Blunt Truth

One of our Seconded Police Officers has developed, alongside colleagues in Avon and Somerset Police's Early Intervention Team and the NHS, a workshop delivered in schools centred around a locally created film. The project was funded through the OPCC, and the workshops provide opportunities for students to have facilitated and supported conversations around some of the issues around knife possession, particularly encouraging open conversations with peers and appropriate action. Our Youth Justice Support Workers have supported the workshops in schools, which also include emergency first aid input from serving A&E doctors. The programme avoids explicit references to injuries or violence, instead focussing on some of the triggers to harmful incidents and encouraging meaningful conversations to reduce harm.

This work is complemented by sessions delivered by another of our Seconded Police Officers around first aid and the use of Bleed Kits in the community.

Empire Fighting Chance

We have strengthened our relationship with Empire Fighting Chance, and now co-facilitate weekly boxing training sessions alongside their trainers. Case Managers are encouraged to attend the sessions alongside the children they are working with, building positive relationships and taking a 'side-by-side' intervention approach. The sessions are non-contact, and focus on emotional awareness and regulation, physical activity and controlled activity. As the session are co-ordinated by our Engagement Worker, we have been able to manage potential conflicts appropriately, facilitate girls-only sessions, and also include young victims in the sessions. Empire Fighting Chance also host our Attendance Centre providing an additional sentencing option for Courts, and our developing relationship has enabled ongoing referrals to their Box Therapy pathways and open access boxing club sessions.

Custody Passports

Bristol YJS staff have been working with Avon and Somerset police to develop a force-wide Custody Passport framework for children subject to arrest, with the aim of improving understanding of children's needs in custody, supporting safer and more effective interactions, and reducing the risk of escalation, including incidents that may result in additional charges for children. The Custody Passport document is intended to provide Police Custody Officers and other professionals with immediate access to key information about a child's identified needs, to support a trauma-informed and child-first response. This process has now been taken up by all 5 YJS teams in the force area and was formally rolled out in March 2026.

Victim information leaflets

We have worked alongside A&S Police and other YJS teams to develop two OoCR leaflets (for child and adult victims) to explain youth justice processes for victims, inform them of their rights and expectations and also detail the process by which they give consent for YJS teams to contact them.

Turnaround Programme

Bristol YJS continues to deliver the Turnaround programme, providing an effective early intervention offer to children who meet the referral criteria such as having been released under investigation

or receiving a Community Resolutions. We have maintained a needs-orientated approach to referrals, seeking to support children wherever they agree to work with us, meaning we are exceeding the programme targets set for us by the Ministry of Justice.

The programme is closely evaluated, with excellent impact rates. In Bristol, only 8.3% of children have gone on to receive a Court sentence or Caution for an offence committed within 12 months of their Turnaround intervention ending.

In 25/26, we completed Turnaround interventions with 48 children, and are currently working with 16 children at the time of writing.

Quality Assurance

We continue to strengthen our Service-Learning Review processes, carried out by YJS Team Managers and Senior Practitioners, alongside members of the Partnership board Quality Assurance and Performance sub-group. YJPB member involvement in the SLRs encourages a detailed understanding of practice-level issues and supports governance of our Quality Assurance processes by Board members. Quarterly SLR reports are presented at the YJPB. SLRs alternate between general case samples and targeted thematic reviews.

In 2026/27, the themes will include children with knife possession offences and children with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

We continue to ensure our work with victims is evaluated with the same rigour, and our Victim Service Learning Review tool now enables consistent review of that work. Our work with victims now sits alongside our work with children in our SLR cycle.

Our Plan:

- We will collaborate with Quality Assurance colleagues across Bristol Children's Services to align our SLR processes.
- We will continue to develop our reviewing of our work with victims to ensure it is responsive, trauma informed and meeting the needs of victims
- We will continue engaging with local authority partners to independently moderate our quality assurance processes

"She listened to me and made me feel heard. She also contacted people on my behalf."
Victim feedback

Detention in police custody

Our Practice

Bristol YJS provides a Youth Appropriate Adult Service (YAAS) for children who are being interviewed in Patchway and Keynsham custody suites, regardless of where the child/ young person lives. A protocol is in place which clearly outlines the interaction with the Emergency Duty Team (EDT).

The YAAS Operational Group, meets quarterly, and includes Police Custody staff, YJS, EDT and representative of the AA volunteers. Its focus is on the Custody Concordat and the National Appropriate Adult Network's guidance.

The YAAS coordinator in Bristol YJS recruits, coordinates and provides training for volunteers, including in trauma informed practice. Debrief support is provided to volunteers until 9pm by the YJS in the evenings and a WhatsApp network has enabled volunteers to connect with each other, strengthening the service and encouraging retention.

The Youth Police Custody Review Panel meets quarterly and has a broader focus of the child's experience in custody. There is an ongoing focus on ensuring that children have access to appropriate PACE beds, with individual cases being scrutinised in the panel to identify trends and areas for development.

Our plan:

- We will further consider how Child First and trauma informed practice principles can be applied in police custody settings.
- We will continue to work towards minimising the time children are detained in custody.
- We will carry out regular multi-agency reviews of children who have spent the night in police custody.
- We will maintain a trained and supported panel of volunteers to act as Appropriate Adults as needed.

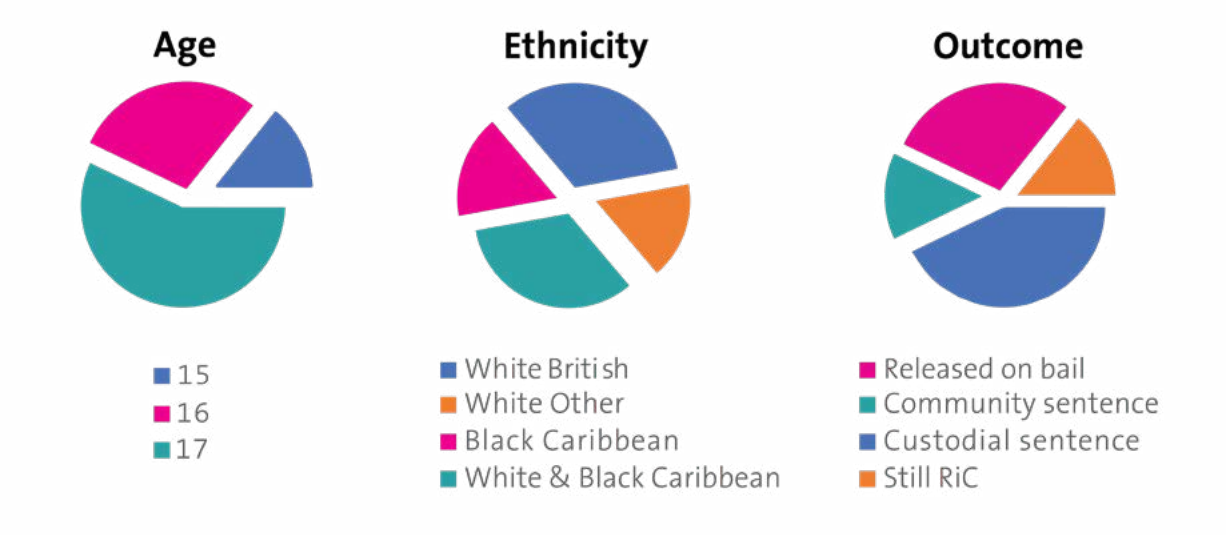
"The lady was very helpful with supporting me on any decisions I make and made sure I was comfortable throughout the process" Victim feedback

Remands

The YJS offers bail and remand services which are bespoke to the child's individual circumstances and objections to bail. BYJS uses every opportunity to establish relationships with children who may later receive a court order.

The joint protocol with Children's and Families Services encourages early discussion and planning for any child at risk of detention and affirms the use of Remand to Local Authority Accommodation as a viable alternative to Remand to Youth Detention Accommodation.

We have had 7 children remanded to Youth Detention Accommodation in 25/26 whose details are:



Use of custody and resettlement

In Bristol, Custody Review Panels are held within 48 hours of any custodial remand or sentence with a further review within 2 weeks. The purposes of this panel is to provide a full and active review of instances where custodial outcomes have been imposed, with a focus on ensuring that:

- Any bail proposals met the concerns raised by the courts
- the pre-sentance report (PSR) was robust and of a high quality
- unnecessarily negative outcomes for children are avoided
- local community-based alternatives have been fully explored
- there is no discrimination in the presentation of bail packages and sentencing proposals
- there is a focus on successful resettlement from the very outset, and consistently throughout the entirety of the child's sentence
- any learning is identified and shared with the service and the BYJP Board

7 Responding to Youth Justice reforms

We have spent some time reflecting on the proposals and reviews set out in the 'Cutting Youth Crime Changing Young Lives' Youth Justice White Paper.

Knife Possession guidance

Bristol YJS has fully implemented the revised Knife Possession guidance. We have worked with Avon and Somerset Police to establish automated notifications of all children arrested for knife possession offences, and these incidents are discussed in the Daily Incident Briefings convened by the Safer Connections team, to ensure appropriate safeguarding referrals have been received, and relevant safeguarding processes are underway. This partnership approach ensures we are in line with the new elements of the guidance, but also ensures children involved in possession of knives are supported effectively.

Bristol YJS has an agreed Weapons in School Pathway, developed over recent years alongside colleagues in Safer Connections and education, providing prioritised support to children found with a knife on school premises, enabling schools to manage safeguarding concerns on their premises without needing to exclude the child.

We have worked with colleagues to review that pathway in line with the new Knife Possession Guidance, and are confident we can continue to support children and schools, while remaining in line with the guidance.

The YJ Partnership Board will retain governance oversight of practice, with reports to each Board meeting outlining all children managed under the revised processes.

"Helping victims heal after harm, and supporting children away from future offending is really complex. Restorative Justice (RJ) offers an opportunity to think about a conflict differently. RJ hands the conflict back to those it belongs to – the people involved in the conflict and the wider communities impacted. It asks them truly and meaningfully what they need to move on. Many people have a deeper desire to be heard, for their community to be involved in the solution, or to be able to express what they want to say to the person who harmed them. It has been great to be a part of that this year, and part of a team that really understands how healing restorative practices can be." RJ worker

Sign off, submission and approval

Chair of Youth Justice Partnership Board	**Hannah Woodhouse** Executive Director Children and Families, Bristol City Council
Signature	
Date:	30 June 2026

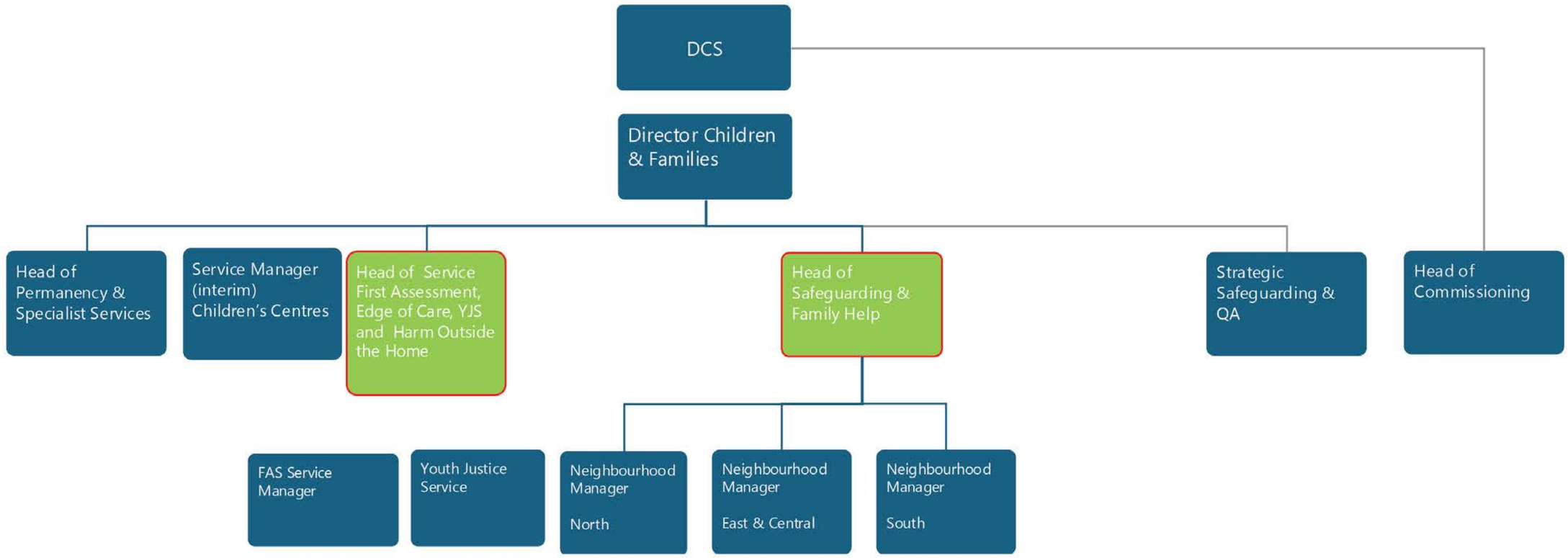
Glossary

Term / Acronym	Definition
BCC	Bristol City Council
BYJP	Bristol Youth Justice Partnership
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
Core City	Core cities include: average or aggregates for: Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Nottingham, Sheffield
HYC	Horn Youth Concern
DTO	Detention and Training Order (custodial court order)
ECM	Enhanced Case Management
EHCP	Education Health and Care Plan
ETE	Education Training and Employment
FTE	First Time Entrant
fte	Full time equivalent – related to staffing.
HSB	Harmful sexual behaviour
HOTH	Harm outside the home – including child criminal and child sexual exploitation, children going missing
HMIP	Her Majesty's Inspectorate Probation
ICB	Integrated Care Board
ISS	Intensive Supervision and Surveillance
MACE	Multi-Agency Child Exploitation meeting
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
NEET	Young person not engaged in education, employment or training
OOCD or OOCR	Out of Court Disposal or Out of Court Resolution
PSR	Pre-sentence Report

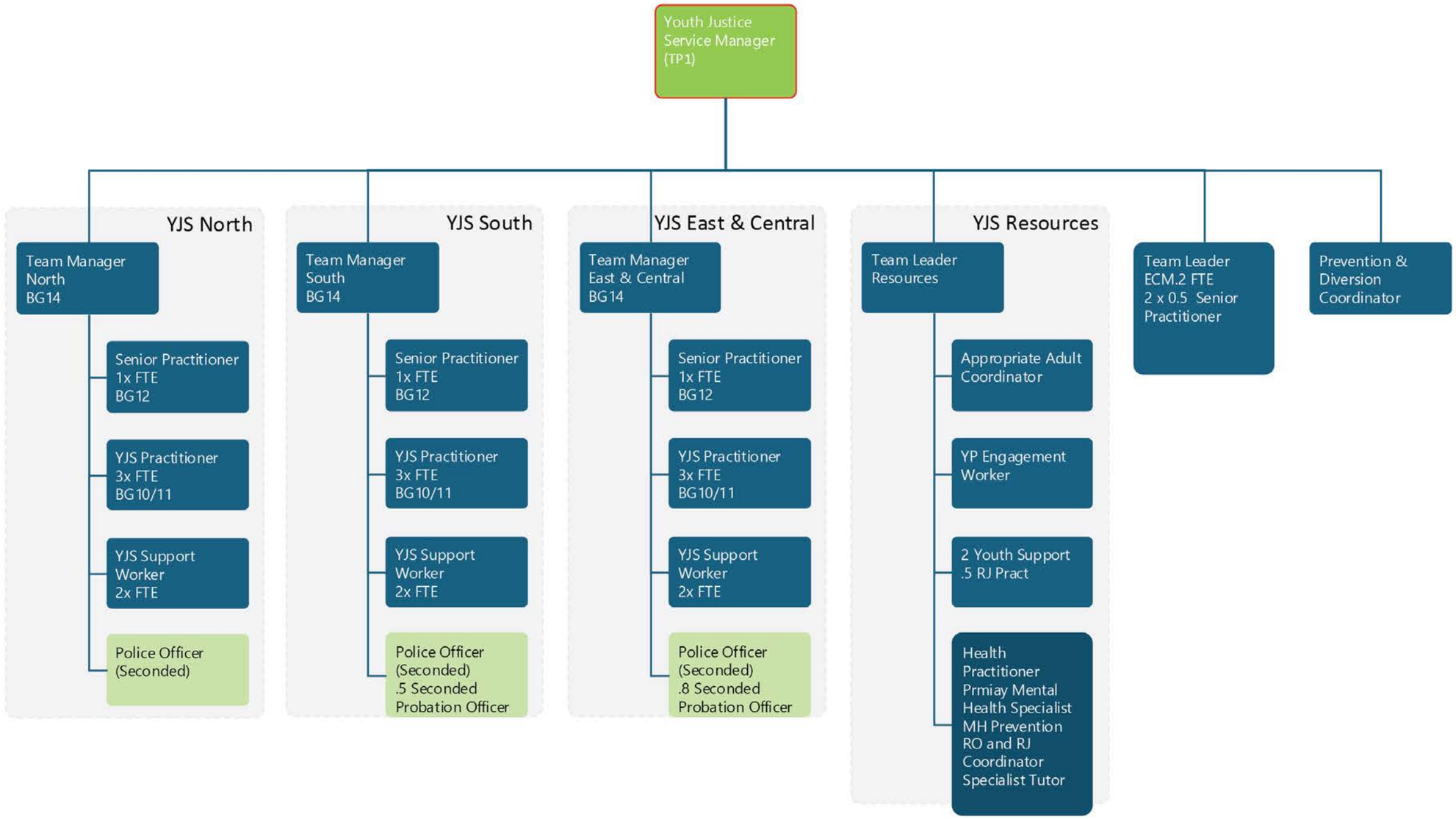
Term / Acronym	Definition
RJ	Restorative Justice
RO	Referral Order - community-based order lasts between 3-12 months, child attends the referral panel for a restorative process.
Sec 91	Allows the Crown Court to sentence children (under18 year olds) charged with grave crimes to custody. It is used to pass a sentence longer than the maximum two years available under a Detention and Training Order (DTO).
SEN and SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
SCH	Secure Children's Home
STC	Secure Training Centre
YOI	Young Offenders Institution
YC	Youth Caution
YCC	Youth Conditional Caution
YOT	Youth Offending Team
YOT family	Average or aggregates for the 10 statistical neighbours: Brighton and Hove, Cardiff, Leeds, Derby, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Salford, Southend-on-Sea, Reading, Sheffield and Southampton.
YJS	Youth Justice Service- now more commonly used than the name Youth Offending Team.
YRD	Youth Restorative Disposal -informal response given for low level criminal offence.
YRO	Youth Rehabilitation Order - community based sentence for up to 3 years.
YJB	Youth Justice Board

Appendix 1: Structure Charts

Education and Children's Services



Youth Justice Service



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