

Bath and North East Somerset Youth Justice Plan 2023-24



Working in Partnership for Child First Justice

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1. Introduction, Vision, and Strategy

In recent years, there has been considerable success both locally and nationally in reducing the number of children entering the youth justice system.¹ However, those who still come to attention experience considerable challenges and need support to overcome the barriers they face in order to build more positive futures. Whether harmed by others and/or as a consequence of their own behaviour, they are amongst the most vulnerable children in Bath and North East Somerset. Some are already known to wider children's preventative and statutory services because of the difficulties they face; they may find it hard to access education and health services and so miss out on the full universal support intended to give all children a good start in life. There is also increasing recognition of the complex nature and hold of sexual and criminal exploitation on children, including into drug dealing with its associated violence. Their experience is made even harder by the lasting legacy of the national pandemic, affecting physical and emotional and mental health and family poverty.

This Plan sets out how services to meet the needs of children at risk of offending will be provided and resourced through Bath and North East Somerset's Youth Justice Service in 2023-2024. It draws on learning from children, their parents/carers and those harmed by their offending and has been developed with the Partnership Board and staff in the Youth Justice Service. It is written in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and national guidance from the Youth Justice Board and has been approved by the Local Authority and its statutory partners. The Plan will be submitted and published in accordance with the directions of the Secretary of State. Thereafter, delivery of the commitments within the Plan will be monitored by the Youth Justice Partnership Board and overseen by the Youth Justice Board.

The Council is lead partner in the multi-agency response to children at risk of offending. Its Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 sets out an overarching purpose to 'improve people's lives.' Within this, the two core policies are to tackle the climate emergency and give people a bigger say. The vision for all children and young people is that they live in safe, happy and healthy families and communities. Important components of this are:

- Improving children's lives through strong relationships and positive connections at the earliest opportunity
- Building strong foundations for children's futures
- The right help at the right time by the right service
- Leaders and managers inspire and support staff to do their best for our children.

The local Children and Young People's Plan sets out an ambition for all children to enjoy their childhood and be well prepared for adult life including by keeping safe, keeping healthy, having fair life chances and by being engaged citizens within their own community. This is underpinned by a commitment to support carers to take responsibility for understanding and meeting their children's needs, enjoying their childhood with them and preparing them for adult life. The local Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership also upholds the importance of 'think family, think community.'

The multi-agency Youth Justice Service works as part of this safeguarding partnership to fulfil its statutory responsibility to prevent children from offending. Its vision is to work in partnership to achieve Child First Justice. It does this in an age-appropriate way that takes account of children's individual experiences and holistic needs. Services are individually planned with children to help them and their families build on their strengths and make positive changes for their futures. At the same time, the impact of children's offending on

¹ Principally, Police, Courts and Youth Justice Services but extending to include the Crown Prosecution Service, defence solicitors and services that support those harmed by offending.

individuals and communities is recognised and those harmed – often children themselves - are offered a voice and opportunity to become involved in restorative work.

The youth justice priorities for the year ahead have been agreed with the Partnership Board and build on work undertaken last year. They are to strengthen participation, address disproportionality, embed Child First principles and tackle serious violence. These will all support the statutory responsibility to prevent children's offending and contribute towards building safer communities for all.

Local ambitions are consistent with the YJB outcomes:

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

B&NES' Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023 - 2030 sets out an ambition to reduce inequalities and improve health and wellbeing outcomes for all living in Bath and North East Somerset. Although the health of people locally is generally better than the England average, there are increasing needs that impact on health and wellbeing and affect children and families. These include demand for social housing outstripping supply, low wages, increasing numbers of children receiving support or social, emotional and mental health needs and pressures on health and social care systems. Children eligible for free school meals and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are doing less well in school. This disadvantage starts at the early years phase and remains across all educational stages. The Youth justice Service also contributes to its four priorities:

- Ensure that children and young people are healthy and ready for learning and education.
- Improve skills, good work and employment.
- Strengthen compassionate and healthy communities.
- Create health promoting places.

2. Child First Justice

The guiding principle for the youth justice system, including the Youth Justice Service and its Partnership Board, and increasingly for relevant partner agencies, is 'Child First.' This approach has been promoted by the national Youth Justice Board and means keeping children at the heart of all work undertaken and privileging their needs according to their age and particular circumstances ahead of treating them as 'offenders.' Supporting children to overcome structural barriers including prejudice and discrimination and focusing on better outcomes for them will in turn help to reduce the number of people they harm and contribute to a safer society for everyone.

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

This is not a new way of working locally but at its recent away-day, the Partnership Board refreshed its vision of working in partnership for Child First Justice and each member made a brief statement in support of this. The vision includes:

- Promoting Child First principles.
- Ensuring the Youth Justice Service and its Partnership Board work in accordance with known best practice.
- Supporting the Youth Justice Service to report on the Key Performance Indicators and work with partners to demonstrate improvement.
- Ensuring children are supported and treated fairly.
- Enabling a learning culture.
- Resourcing the Youth Justice Service to achieve the vision.
- Supporting children and their carers to recognise and build on their strengths and fulfil their potential.
- Encouraging children to repair the harm to victims and restore relationships within their communities to increase public confidence and safety.

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

1. Seeing children as children
<p>Prioritise the best interests of children and recognise their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential. All work is child-focused, developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children.</p> <p>B&NES is shifting its terminology and making greater use of the term 'children' in order to highlight their legal status and rights and the responsibilities of the adults in their lives to support and safeguard them. Following consultation with children and staff, the Service and its Board have been re-named as Youth Justice Service and Youth Justice Partnership Board respectively.</p> <p>The Service still addresses children's presenting behaviour but is increasingly working on wider unmet need in the interests of meeting its statutory responsibility to prevent youth offending.</p>
2. Helping children build a pro-social identity
<p>Promoting children's individual strengths and capacities to develop their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.</p> <p>In B&NES, continued participation with neighbouring Authorities in the trauma informed Enhanced Case Management initiative has focused attention on the importance of assessment, planning and delivery taking full account of the developmental needs of each individual child. Reducing caseloads have enabled practitioners to develop strong professional relationships and create individual support programmes.</p>
3. Collaborating with children
<p>Encourage children's active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.</p>

Children's involvement in innovative reparation projects enables them to contribute to the wider community. Locally, children have chosen to write leaflets for their peers, for example, explaining what reparation is and addressing the issue of carrying knives, using language and an approach that is more likely to be effective.

4. Diverting children from the justice system

Promote a childhood outside the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system. B&NES' Compass prevention work is now extended with Turnaround funding to support children on the very cusp of the youth justice system. 'Outcome 22' to defer prosecution has been extended locally to allow more children to engage with planned support for low gravity offences, as recommended in the Lammy Report, 2017. Most of the Service's work now takes place at a pre-Court stage.

3. Voice of the Child

The Partnership Board is interested in hearing children's voices and each business meeting now begins with a case study or a child attending to tell their story or raise an issue. This has increased awareness of the nature and effectiveness of work undertaken and has sometimes led to Board members taking up matters on their behalf.

Since 2000, B&NES has been a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 12 states that 'children and young people have a right to be involved in all decisions that affect their lives.' In compliance with the Children Acts 2004 and 1989 and the Human Rights Act 1998, B&NES' Participation Strategy commits staff to 'ensure all children, young people and their families have opportunity to participate in decisions which affect their lives and to help shape some of those decisions.' The Youth Justice Service has adopted the five Standards:

Standard 1: Service users are given a range of opportunities to give feedback on the service they receive and are clear about how that feedback will be used

Child's example: Eddie joined the Youth Justice Partnership Board meeting in September 2022 to speak about his experiences of arriving in new residential placements. He spoke powerfully about more needing to be done to ensure children are made to feel welcome and are given a positive start. His recommendations were for:

- A more rounded introduction where the child's interests and achievements are shared with all placement staff rather than just the "risks and negative things."
- Welcoming meetings with all staff so that children don't arrive back home to find a member of staff they don't know.
- A welcoming pack with some nice toiletries and also things to personalise their bedrooms such as photo pegs, fairy lights or posters or paint.

The commissioner member of the Board shared a summary of what he had said to providers nine of whom committed to share it with their staff. The Director of Children and Education shared the information with the Children Looked After Team. This was all fed back to Eddie.

Parents/carers' example: Parents/carers have highlighted the distress caused by delay between the offence(s) being committed and their child's contact with the Youth Justice Service, as they have been unclear what is happening during this time. The Youth Justice Service has escalated the issue of delays to the Local Criminal Justice Board which is now monitoring data on this and looking at ways the system can address the issue. At a local

level, the new Turnaround funding now enables the Youth Justice Service to offer voluntary support to some children who have been released under investigation.

Standard 2: Service users are encouraged and supported to participate and contribute to service delivery and development.

Child's example: Billy said there was no information on knife crime that did not focus on reporting someone who carries a knife. He felt this was a strategy that does not work and that it alienates the community. The Reparation Worker supported him to create a knife crime leaflet that he was proud of; he felt that talking about trauma and the needs of people in his community was really important. The leaflet is now being made available to others.

Child's example: Danielle said she thought there should be more education about the pressures on boys and girls around "being sexual." She thought there was not enough mutual education i.e. learning from others' perspectives. She made a poster highlighting sexual pressures and misinformation, which is now displayed in the Youth Justice office.

Standard 3: We actively ensure those service users in minority groups have equal capacity to participate within our organisation

Child's example: Connor said that all the ADHD resources he had seen were negative and he felt that impacts on bullying and misunderstanding of those with ADHD. He said that he got diagnosed late in school and had not had the support or understanding he needed and that this contributed to his offending behaviour. Connor made a leaflet about the positive traits of children with ADHD and sent it to his school. It is also available for staff and children in the Youth Justice Service. He was proud of his work.

Standard 4: We have a clear commitment to participation within our organisation, which all staff are aware of

Child's example: Adrian said that at first, there were not any staff he could relate to in the Youth Justice Service. He said he wanted to talk to people who had more of a similar life experience and who could "understand where he was coming from." Staff supported him to explore the values and beliefs he held around this and role models in his current community. They then explored how this could be translated into a job advert which could be used in advertising for jobs and into interview questions. These have started to be used in recruitment and they will also be used to update practitioner Person Specifications.

Whenever a practitioner is appointed, children are asked to convene a children's panel to meet with candidates and test out their skills; and sometimes, a child will join the main recruiting panel instead. This means that children have a say in appointments and that staff's first encounter with the Service demonstrates the commitment to participation and sets an expectation. At the end of contact, some parents/carers have said the Youth Justice Service is the best service they have experienced due to its good communication with them. They have valued its non-judgmental and compassionate approach and consistently have good relationships with staff. This may be a result of children's involvement in selecting staff with the right attributes.

Standard 5: Sufficient budget and finance is made available to support participation.

Staff are encouraged to incorporate participation into all the work they are doing with children and the Reparation Worker in particular, has been able to mainstream this into her

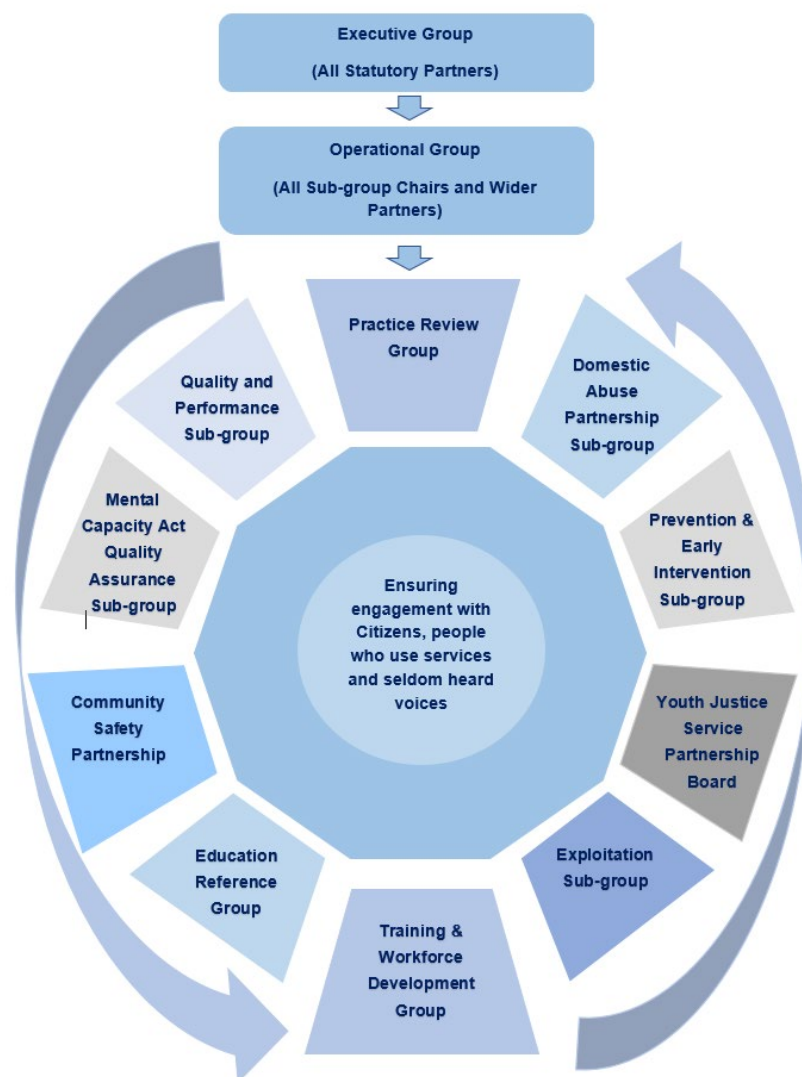
work. To help take this further, the new Senior Practitioner appointed will take a lead and have dedicated capacity to strengthen children's and parents' participation.

4. Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements

4.1 Overarching Governance Arrangements

The Youth Justice Service is based within the Local Authority, with the Chief Executive holding lead responsibility and management resting within Children's Services as part of the wider People and Communities Department. The Head of Service reports to the Director of Children and Education and is a member of the Children and Young People's Service Management Group. She also holds responsibility for the Violence Reduction Partnership and for some aspects of the Local Authority's early help agenda and delivery, including use of Early Help Assessments. An annual report is made to the Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel and the Youth Justice Plan is presented to Cabinet and Council for authorisation. The Youth Justice Partnership Board also reports annually to the Health and Wellbeing Board through its Chair, contributing to the outcome 'children and young people are safe from crime.'

Multi-agency strategic oversight of Youth Justice Services is provided at a number of levels. Its dedicated Partnership Board operates as a sub-group of the B&NES Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP). This partnership embraces the functions of the previous Local Children's Safeguarding Board, Adult Safeguarding Board and Community Safety Partnership, recognising their shared responsibilities and interfaces. It operates across all ages, being well placed to address the challenges of transition, and encourages a focus on families and communities. Its structure is currently being reviewed but it is expected that the Partnership board will remain as a dedicated Sub Group.



Relationships between Youth Justice and the BCSSP are supported in the following ways:

- The Chair of the Youth Justice Partnership Board provides the Operational Group with quarterly updates of key achievements, outcomes, challenges and priorities and links the work of the Youth Justice Service with other developments.
- The Youth Justice Service reports any high-risk incidents through the BCSSP in addition to following national reporting requirements.
- The Head of Service sits on the Prevention and Early Intervention Sub Group, the Domestic Abuse Partnership and the Exploitation Sub Group and helps to integrate their work with the work of the Youth Justice Service and its Partnership Board.
- She also chairs the Serious Violence Steering Group (the local Violence Reduction Partnership) which formally reports to the Exploitation Sub Group and Community Safety Partnership and directly to the BCSSP Operational Group and makes regular briefings to the other groups she attends.

4.2 The Youth Justice Partnership Board and its Sub Groups

The Partnership Board includes all required statutory members from the Local Authority (Social Care and Education), Health (through the Integrated Care arrangements), Probation and Police. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services also attends, together with the Chair of the Avon and Somerset Youth Bench, the local Further Education College, the local Health provider and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Additionally, a volunteer

representative from the Referral Order Panel has recently joined the Board, together with a representative from the Youth Justice Board. Meetings are currently chaired by the Director of Children and Education and serviced by the Youth Justice administrative team. Attendance at quarterly business meetings and the annual development event is monitored and is generally very good from all agencies, sometimes including named substitutes. All new members are offered induction into the work of the Youth Justice Service and their responsibilities as members of the Board, and feedback from this continues to be positive.

The Board receives regular activity and outcome reports on key areas of service delivery including Speech and Language Therapy, Nursing, Education, the Compass prevention service, Referral Order Panels, Harmful Sexual Behaviour and the Enhanced Case Management initiative. It also receives reports from its three sub groups. These are the multi-agency Youth Crime Prevention Board and the Custody Review Panel, both chaired by the Head of Service and each working to the relevant performance indicator, and the Out of Court Disposal Panel, chaired by the Operational Manager. The Board maintains and reviews Challenge and Risk Registers.

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

4.3 Partnership Arrangements

In accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, professionals from Police, Health, Social Care, Education and Probation make up the multi-agency Youth Justice Service and work in an integrated way alongside a dedicated Reparation Worker who facilitates opportunities for children to make amends for their offending and two Assessment and Information Officers. One of these supports the volunteer Referral Order Panel Members and the other co-ordinates return home interviews with children who have returned from a missing episode; they both support use of Early Help Assessments across the Authority, including within Compass and Turnaround. An organisational chart in the appendices summarises the posts, a number of which are part-time. The lowest number of hours in a post is the Probation Service Officer and it is a challenge to make full use of this small resource. There are continuing conversations with the Probation Service about this.

Case manager staff including qualified Probation Officers and Registered Social Workers have key statutory functions, including the assessment and supervision of young people aged 10-17 who are subject to voluntary and conditional Out-of-Court Disposals and community and custodial Court Orders, and supporting parents/carers to strengthen their parenting skills. The Police Constables (one full-time equivalent) undertake a range of tasks including facilitating information sharing but also giving those harmed a voice and an opportunity to become involved in restorative work with children if they wish to do so. This work is supplemented locally by a prevention service, Compass, which works with children aged 8-17 years who are assessed as being at high risk of offending, and with their families.

The new Turnaround initiative for children on the very cusp of the youth justice system, is being rolled out alongside Compass, using a broadly similar framework.

The Youth Justice Service benefits from close working with a range of partners. Those most often providing services to children at risk of offending include:

- DHI Project 28, which receives a small annual grant from the Police and Crime Commissioner as part of their core Council commission. With this, they provide substance misuse services for children subject to Youth Alcohol and Drugs Diversion (Outcome 22) interventions and programmes for those subject to voluntary and statutory supervision.
- Youth Connect South West, commissioned by the Council, provides targeted support and access to universal youth services, together with programmes to support access to education, training and employment opportunities.
- Social Care's Adolescent and Criminal Exploitation Team works with children who have been exploited, some of whom are also known to the Youth Justice Service. Managers in the two services endeavour to co-ordinate their work in the best interests of the children concerned, and usually identify a 'lead' worker with whom the child engages best.
- The Early Intervention Team, part of the Police contribution to the Violence Reduction Partnership, and including a Sergeant, two Constables and two Police and Community Support Officers, undertake early intervention work with children on the fringes of involvement in serious violence. They have joined the Youth Crime Prevention Board to help 'join up' preventative approaches.
- The Violence Reduction Partnership, managed by the same Head of Service as the Youth Justice Service, including a Co-ordinator and Development Officer for the Council. The Violence Reduction Partnership hosts a multi-agency information sharing meeting – the Partnership for Preventing Exploitation and Serious Violence. Individuals at risk of serious violence, networks and places of concern are all identified, the nature and level of risk is discussed and actions are agreed to strengthen risk management. The Youth Justice Service plays an active role in this.
- Southside, a community-led project for supporting those affected by domestic abuse and also commissioned by the Violence Reduction Partnership to offer lived-experience mentoring to those involved in serious violence.

5. Youth Justice Partnership Board Development

The Board has welcomed new members during the last year, including the incoming Chair of the Avon and Somerset Youth Bench, an additional Police representative to provide better links with thematic Police work across Avon and Somerset and a representative from the Youth Justice Board. A Referral Order Panel member has also joined, to strengthen links with the community and the work of Referral Order Panels.

The Board is continuing to meet remotely on a quarterly basis although a blended meeting, with some attending in person and some online, was trialled in January. Limitations with the technology made this a challenging meeting but it did usefully lead to a consultation with the Board about how to make meetings more productive. This led to changes to reduce the length of agendas, including by moving some annual reports to 18-monthly reports, and a decision to circulate papers 2 weeks in advance rather than one week, to allow members time to properly review them. It has also updated its Terms of Reference and Partnership Agreement.

The Board continues to hold face-to-face annual development events, the most recent in May 2023 having focused on the principles of Child First Justice and the Anti-Racism Plan. The October Partnership Board meeting will follow up on how Child First Justice is put into practice, including an item on the Youth Court.

Practitioners are keen to further strengthen links with the Board and are continuing to offer opportunity for them to participate in audit activity and observe work.

6. Progress on Previous Plan

The priorities agreed for last year were to increase participation, address discrimination, extend effective practice models, tackle exploitation and support and equip staff.

The associated actions have all been reviewed by the Partnership Board and progressed and many have been completed. It proved to be an ambitious programme of work for a small Service. A number of actions are in relation to longer-term pieces of work that will continue into this year and beyond. The recent appointment of a (two-year fixed-term) Senior Practitioner enables some welcome additional capacity for development of participation work as well as supporting the Turnaround programme.

An end of year position on all actions is included in appendix 3.

7. Resources and Services

All statutory partners contribute in-kind staffing resources and make a contribution toward the pooled budget to meet the costs of employing the Business and Performance Manager and IT costs. Contributions have not changed for a number of years.

The Youth Justice core grant is used entirely to support the work of the Youth Justice Service. Expenditure is agreed annually, monitored at monthly finance meetings and overseen quarterly by the Partnership Board. It is used in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of Grant, specifically, towards the costs of employing two administrative staff, a Deputy Team Manager, a qualified Youth Justice Officer and a Reparation Worker. The Grant also covers professional subscriptions, travel costs, room hire, equipment and other running costs. Performance in 2023 - 2024 will be improved through the appointment of the fixed-term Senior Practitioner post, as outlined above, through the pooled budget, with a contribution from the Turnaround budget. In addition to supervising some specialist staff and undertaking direct work with more complex children in Turnaround, she will be leading on participation.

8. Performance

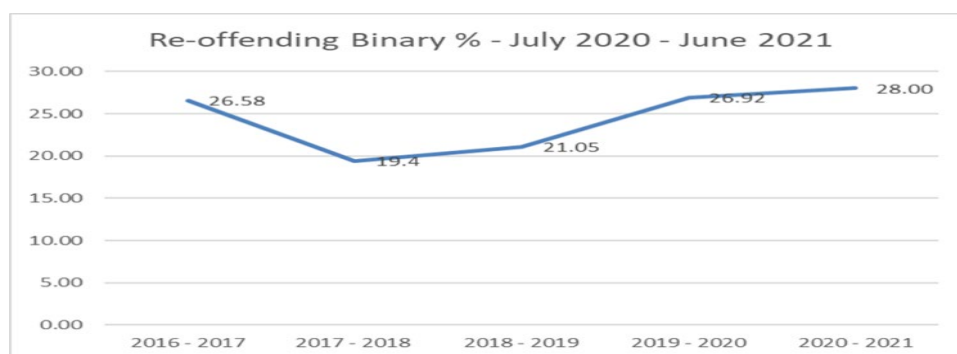
8.1 Re-Offending

One of the YJB's key measures of effectiveness in the youth justice system is the known re-offending of children who have previously been supported by the Youth Justice Service. The indicator is the rate of re-offending after 12 months by a cohort of children who received substantive outcomes (Cautions, Conditional Cautions or Convictions). This does not include children who received other types of Out-of-Court Disposals. It is shown as a binary rate (the overall percentage of children who re-offended) and as the average rate of new offences committed by each child who re-offended. Local cohorts include very low numbers of children.

For the period July 2020 - June 2021, the YJB reports on a cohort of 18 children, 6 of whom re-offended, committing 28 new offences between them. This gives a re-offending rate of 33.3%, an increase of 1.33% on the previous year. YJB data shows local re-offending as higher than in most comparator groups, with 32.7% re-offending across the South West, 31.1% re-offending in England and Wales and 31% re-offending in England; only in the Police and Crime Commissioner area do they show re-offending as higher, at 35.5%

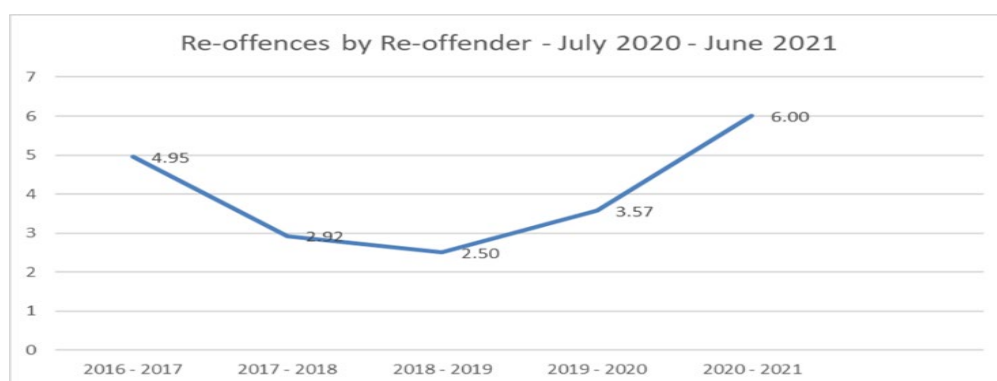
There continue to be discrepancies between YJB data and local data. The reasons for this are in part because the YJB data is taken from the Police National Computer which does not include motoring offences. B&NES' own data is for a cohort of 25 children, 7 of whom re-offended, committing 42 known new offences between them, compared with 9 children from the previous cohort of 30. This gives a binary re-offending rate of 28.0% (an increase by +1.08 on local data from the previous year). There is no comparative local data available from other areas.

An analysis of the local data highlighted that 72% of children did *not* re-offend. Of those who did re-offend, all did so within 3 months and 57% committed a more serious offence. All those who re-offended were of White British heritage, 43% were Children Looked After and 86% were male. It is not possible to recount the individual circumstances of these children in a public document but it is fair to say they were a particularly troubled group of children. Most had experience of adverse childhood experiences and there is evidence that the majority had been exploited into drug dealing. There is also a view that not all these children should have entered the youth justice system due to their individual medical circumstances.



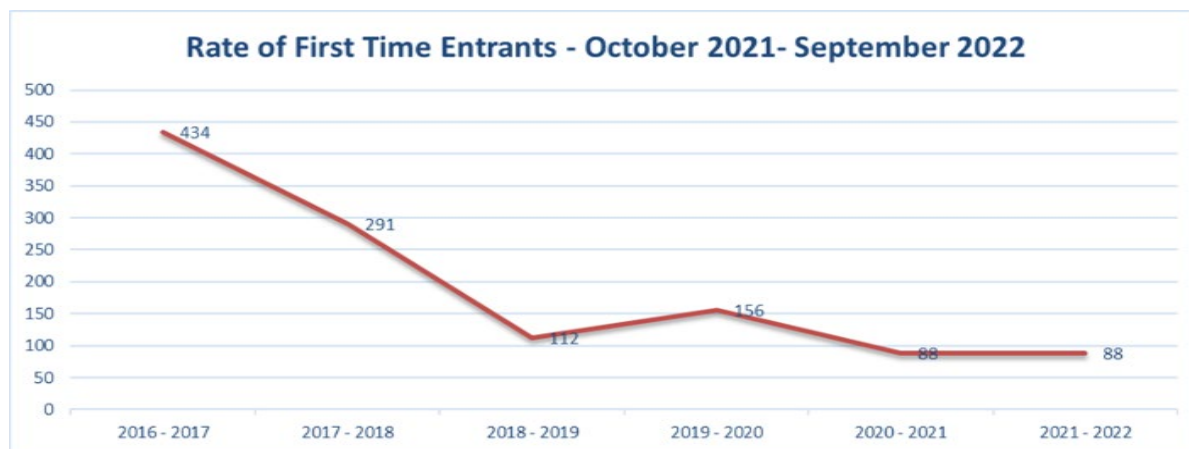
Frequency of Reoffending

National data reports just 6 children re-offending and committing 28 new offences between them, giving a rate of 4.67. This is higher than all comparator rates - South West (3.30), Police and Crime Commissioner area (3.51), England and Wales (3.63) and England (3.65). Local data shows a rate increase from 3.57 to 6.00 based on 7 children re-offending, committing 42 new offences between them, compared with 9 children committing 53 new offences between them in the previous period.



8.2 First Time Entrants

The rate has remained the same at 88 (14 individual children) per 100,000 in the population as the previous reporting period. The MOJ published data shows no data for B&NES due to there being less than 10 children - this again highlights the discrepancies between our data and the data provided by PNC as local data shows more than 10 children in the cohort. Local performance is better than all comparators: South West (rate 125), Police and Crime Commissioner area (rate 115), England and Wales (rate 148) and England (rate 149).

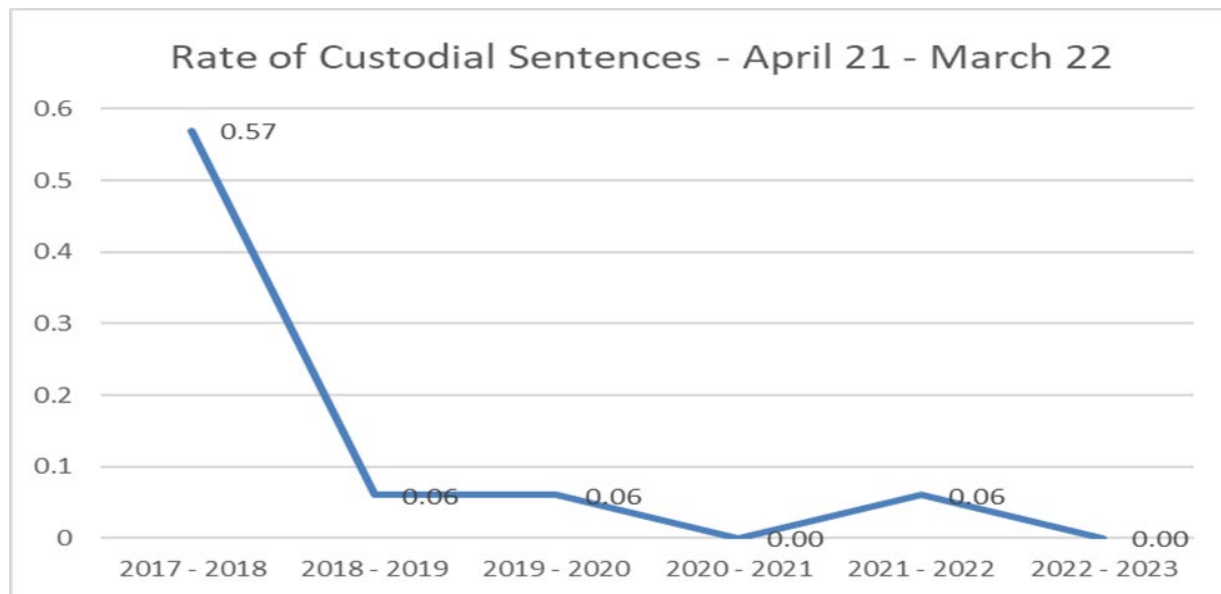


For the period January to December 2022, 73% of First Time Entrants were White British and 27% were from Black and Ethnic Minority Backgrounds an increase in disproportionality from the previous reporting period of 18%. There were 25 children in this cohort, 76% were White British and 24% were from Black and Ethnic Minority Backgrounds. 80% of children from

Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority Backgrounds received an outcome at Court in this cohort compared to 31% of White British Children. This inequity needs to be closely monitored and it is expected that an increased use of Outcome 22 will help redress the balance.

8.3 Custody

There were no custodial sentences in this reporting period. The local rate has remained at 0.00 per 1,000 in the population, better than all comparator groups: South West (rate 0.05), Police and Crime Commissioner area (rate 0.04), England and Wales (rate 0.11) and England alone (rate 0.11).



8.4. Additional Key Performance Indicators

The YJB will be introducing ten additional key performance indicators during 2023-24. This data will first be reported to the Youth Justice Board at the end of August. Some of this data is already reported to the Partnership Board.

8.4.1 Suitable Accommodation

The key performance indicator will be the percentage of children in the community and released from custody who have suitable accommodation arrangements on their last day of contact with the Youth Justice Service.

There were 34 case closures in the 12 months ending March 2023 and 33 (97%) were assessed by youth justice practitioners to be living in suitable accommodation at the end of their intervention. The data masks some unsettledness in children's accommodation whilst working with the Youth Justice Service, as it only measures their status on the last day of contact. The particular challenge identified is provision of suitable accommodation during the transition to adult services. Imminent changes to the regulation of post-16 provision may influence this going forward.

8.4.2 Education, Training and Employment

The key performance indicator will be the percentage of children in the community and custody attending a suitable Education, Training and Employment arrangement. This data is not currently reported.

8.4.3 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The key performance indicator will be the percentage of children who have an identified special educational need and/or disability who are in suitable Education, Training and Employment and have a formal learning plan. This data is not currently reported.

8.4.4 Mental Health Care and Emotional Wellbeing

The key performance indicator will be the percentage of children in the community and custody with a screened or identified need for an intervention to improve their wellbeing; and of that, the percentage of planned or offered interventions; of that, the percentage of children accessing interventions. This data is not currently reported but recording changes have been agreed to enable reporting going forward.

The Specialist Community Public Health Nurse offers a holistic health screening to all children who come into the service in order to identify any mental health or emotional well-being needs and provide direct support or refer to specialist services including CAMHS. Her last annual report to the Partnership Board identified emotional health as the second most prevalent need (with physical health needs most prevalent). Support provided includes direct intervention using Brief Solution Focused approaches and supporting practitioners and the wider team around the child.

8.4.5 Substance Misuse

The key performance indicator will be the percentage of children with a screened or identified need for specialist intervention to address substance misuse; and of that, the percentage of children with an offer of intervention/treatment; and of that, the percentage of children who attended intervention/treatment.

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

8.4.6 Out-of-Court Disposals

The key performance indicator will be the percentage of Out of Court Disposals that are completed and not completed. Local data already reported shows 41 Out of Court Disposal Panel cases closed between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023 and of these, 87% successfully completed, 2% refused, 7% no programme was offered, 2% completed other and 2% did not complete. New national guidance including a standard assessment tool will be published in the autumn of 2023 and a Police-led tactical group is supporting greater consistency of practice across Avon and Somerset.

8.4.7 Management (Partnership) Board Attendance

The key performance indicator monitors senior (statutory) partner attendance at Board meetings and whether they contribute data from their individual services that identify areas of racial and ethnic disproportionality. Police currently report data on stop and search and strip search by ethnicity. Attendance has been monitored for many years as part of local assurance reporting. In 2022–23, statutory partners' attendance was 95%.

8.4.8 Wider Services

The key performance indicator will be the percentage of children who are currently on either an Early Help plan or Child Protection Plan or are classified as a Child in Need or a Child Looked After. This data is not currently reported on the statutory caseload but the Youth Crime Prevention Board has been receiving this data on first time entrants for many years.

8.4.9 Serious Violence

The key performance indicator is the rate of children convicted for a serious violent offence on the Youth Justice Service caseload. The YJB definition for serious violence is harm caused that has a gravity score 5+. This data is reported but despite an apparent rise in serious violence in the area, in the last year, numbers fitting the criteria for reporting have been very low.

8.4.10 Victims

The key performance indicator is the percentage of victims who consent to be contacted by the Youth Justice Service, and of those, the percentage of who are engaged with restorative justice opportunities, asked their views prior to Out of Court Disposal decision-making and planning for statutory Court Orders, provided with information about the progress of a child's case (when requested) and provided with information on appropriate services that support victims (when requested). This data is not currently reported.

9. National Priorities

9.1 Children from groups which are over-represented

Children from a range of backgrounds are over-represented in the youth justice system. In Bath and North East Somerset, the most over-represented groups are children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and children from certain ethnicities, particularly those with a mixed heritage.

A significant percentage of children in the Compass prevention team have identified Special Educational Need. As an illustration of the level of need, in 2021-22, 25% of children were in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan and a similar percentage were supported by a special Educational Need Plan. 46% of the children had an identified Speech, Language or Communication need. This increasing evidence of additional needs means the Service is supporting children who are also at risk of education exclusion.

Ethnic group proportions, ethnic minority groups vs White, Bath and North East Somerset YJS

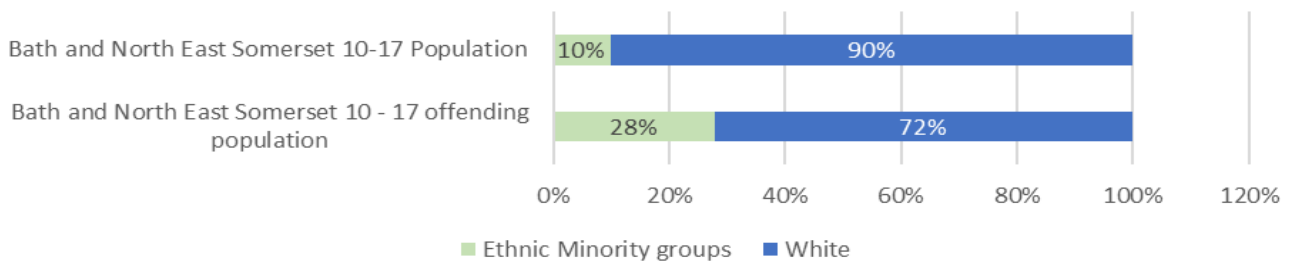
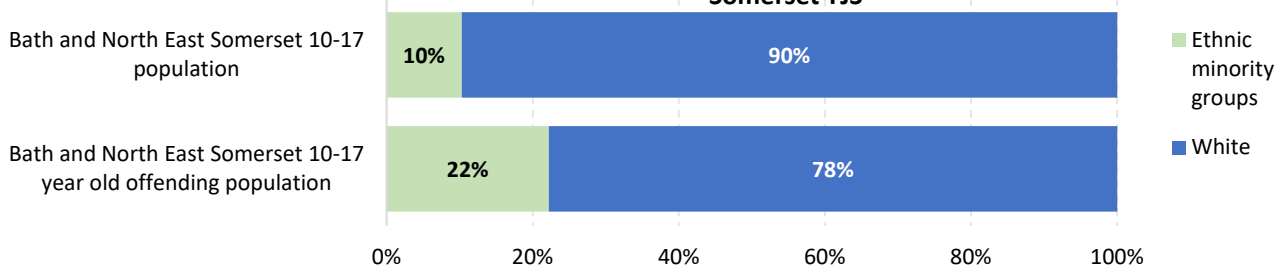
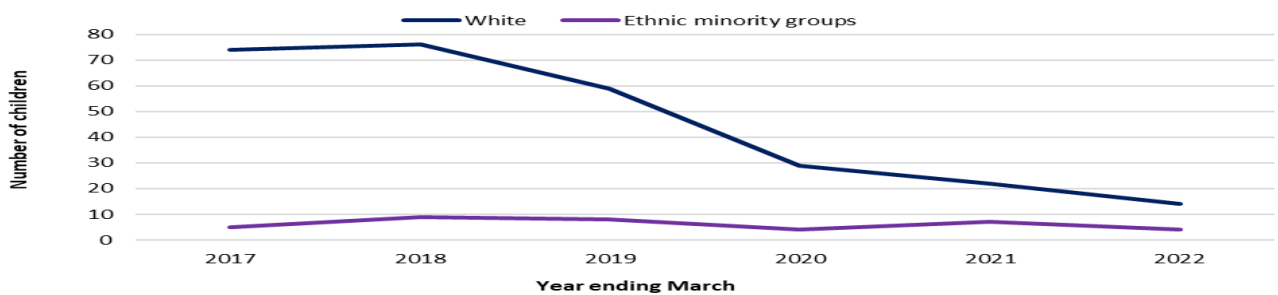


Chart 1 Ethnic group proportions, ethnic minority groups vs White, Bath and North East Somerset YJS



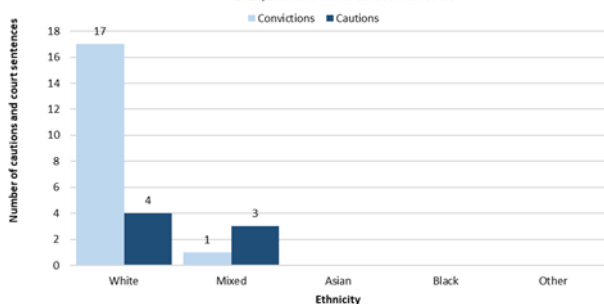
YJB and local data concerning the ethnicity of children does not match. Local data shows 72% of those cautioned or sentenced are from a White heritage whereas the YJB shows 78%.

Chart 4 Number of children given a caution or sentence by ethnicity, England and Wales, years ending March 2017 to 2022

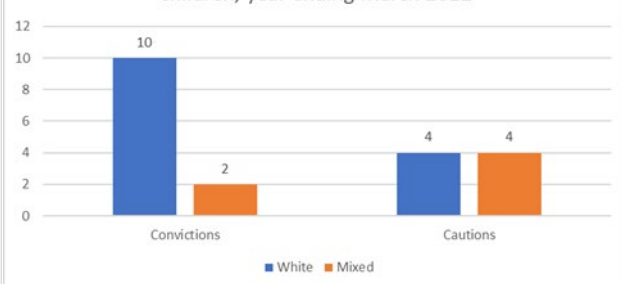


Overall, White Children received the most convictions and were more likely to receive a Court sentence and mixed ethnicity children were more likely to receive a Caution.

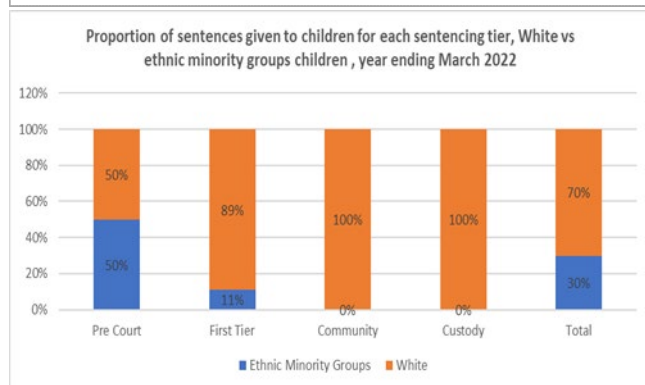
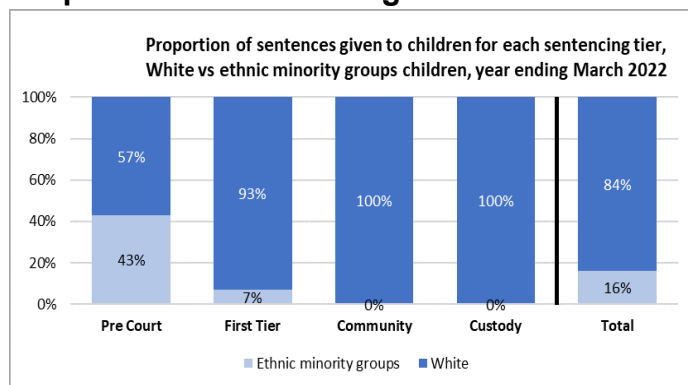
Chart 8 Number of cautions and court sentences given to children, year ending March 2022, Bath and North East Somerset YJS



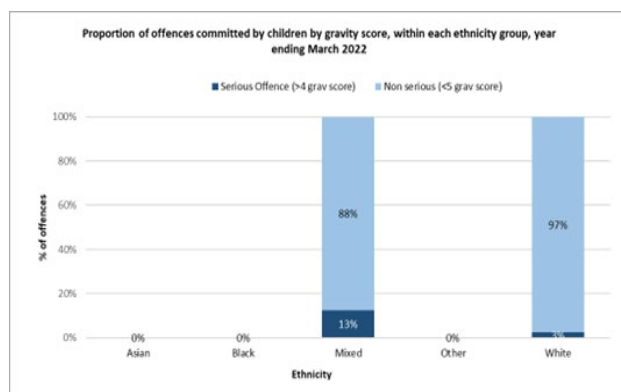
Number of Cautions and Court sentences given to children, year ending March 2022



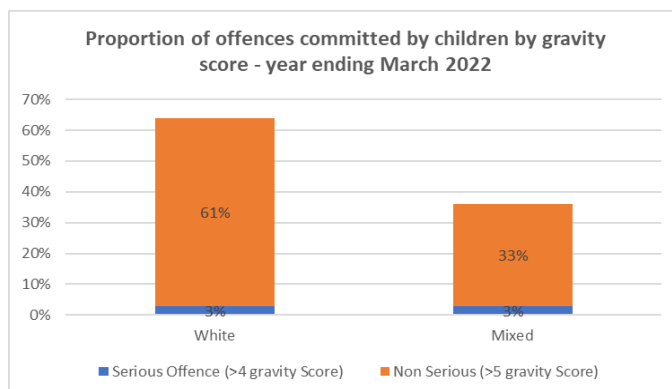
Proportion of outcomes given to children



White children were more likely to receive a Community or Custodial sentence whereas mixed ethnicity children were more likely to receive a pre-Court outcome or a first tier penalty.



Proportion of offences committed



9.2 Prevention

Prevention is defined by the YJB and the Association of Youth Justice Heads of Service as “support and intervention with children (and their parents/carers) who may be displaying behaviours which may indicate underlying needs or vulnerability.” The overall aims of both levels of support are the same, to address unmet needs, safeguard children, promote positive outcomes through positive interaction and stop them entering the formal youth justice system.” Early Prevention support is generally offered by universal and voluntary sector services to children with no linked offence to address unmet need and any welfare concerns. Targeted Prevention is more specialist support for children who have had some contact with the youth justice system but are not currently being supported by the Youth Justice Service.

The Youth Justice Service is an active partner in the Prevention and Early Intervention Sub Group of the local safeguarding arrangements and contributes to delivery of its Strategy. With the introduction of Turnaround, it now offers two prevention interventions under the umbrella Compass team. Compass is a well-established prevention initiative funded by the Local Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner. It works with children aged 8-17 years old who are assessed as being at risk of offending, sometimes at early prevention level but mostly at a targeted prevention level. The Compass model has adapted to the changing landscape of risk for adolescents and an increasing understanding of trauma informed practice and systemic practice. It follows a key-worker framework of working with children and parents/carers to complete an Early Help Assessment to identify need, agreement of a plan and use of Team around the Family meetings to review plans. The Service monitors individual improvement in the areas of social well-being, emotional well-being, engagement in education, training and employment and child-parent relationships.

In 2022, the Compass Decision-Making Panel was introduced to:

- Review completed Early Help Assessments, taking account of risk and protective factors, and agree a level of service to be offered to the child and their family. The options are Full Compass (up to 12-months), Medium (up to 6-months), Short (up to 3-months) and Parenting Support only. The proposed plan will also be reviewed with suggestions offered.
- Improve throughput in supporting children when needed but also review cases that are due to close but where additional needs / change in circumstances suggest an extended period of support could be beneficial.
- Utilise current thinking around the onset and desistance from criminal behaviour. This includes Desistance Theory that children move on from law-breaking behaviour through the process of being supported to develop social capital (social networks), cultural capital (education, training and employment attachment) and human capital (capacities). Work is predicated on the belief that children’s unmet needs can contribute to behavioural concerns (Good Lives Model).

Compass also supports parents/carers who have struggled with a combination of life challenges such as managing separated parenting, difficulties in the school-parent relationship and conflict in child-parent relationship.

Case example

A child was supported for 12 months and their mother's feedback was:

"The child always knew he could talk to the Compass key worker about anything and she would listen and support him. I always found that whatever the situation, or however low I felt with the issues I was facing, a chat through with the Compass key worker always helped. She would listen, show such empathy and understanding, would never judge and always find the positives. I think my child and I will always have our 'bumps in the road' but the help and support that we have received from Compass will always stay with us".

Between 2022 – 23, 24 children were supported by Compass (21 male, 3 females with an average age range of 11-15 years; 22 were White British). It is recognised that in order to address over-representation in the youth justice system, more children with Black, Asian and Ethnic minority heritages need to be offered support through Compass and other preventative services.

Since December 2022, under a new Ministry of Justice initiative, Compass has also been offering targeted support to children who have had an encounter with the youth justice system but have not had an offer of support. For example, children can be released under investigation by Police and wait for long periods of time to learn whether they are to be charged. Turnaround can offer them tailored support in the interim, following an Early Help Assessment to identify needs. The aims of Turnaround are to:

- Achieve positive outcomes for children with the ultimate aim of preventing them going on to offend.
- Build on work already done to ensure all children on the cusp of the youth justice system are consistently offered a needs assessment and the opportunity for support.
- Improve the socio-emotional, mental health and wellbeing of children.
- Improve the integration and partnership working between Youth Justice Services and other statutory services to support children.

Ministry of Justice funding will support this work until March 2025, by which time the target is for 44 local children to have received this support.

9.3 Diversion⁵

Diversion is offering children with a linked offence an alternative outcome to entry into the formal youth justice system, thus avoiding the stigma of a criminal record. It can take a number of forms and may involve the Youth Justice Service providing voluntary or conditional support and/or signposting children (and their parent/carers) into relevant services. All support should be proportionate, aimed at addressing unmet needs and supporting pro-social choices. When dealing with offences committed by children, the Police have a range of outcomes available under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012. These include:

- Community Resolution (Out of Court Disposal): used when children have accepted responsibility for an offence. It is an outcome commonly delivered through, but not limited to, restorative approaches.
- No Further Action: used when Police decide not to pursue an offence because there is not enough evidence, or it is not in the public interest. Voluntary support can be offered to children to address identified needs.
- Outcome 22 deferred prosecution: used when diversionary, educational or intervention activity has taken place or been offered, and it is not in the public interest to take any further action. An admission of guilt or acceptance of responsibility is not required for this outcome to be used.
- No Further Action – Outcome 21: used when further investigation is not in the public interest. This includes dealing with sexting offences without criminalising children.

Between April 2022 – March 2023, 71 children received diversionary activity directly from Police (24 Outcome 22s and 47 Community Resolutions). In the same period, 36 children received support from the Youth Justice Service (10 Outcome 22s and 26 Community Resolutions). The use of Outcome 22 has increased in last 12 months and the trend is for these to increase and for more of this work to arise from assessment by the Youth Justice Service. A national assessment tool and guidance is to be issued in the autumn of 2023 and there is a Police-led piece of work to standardise processes across Avon and Somerset.

9.4 Education

Attendance and engagement in education, training and employment is a significant protective factor in helping children not to offend and the Youth Justice Service ensures there is a focus on supporting all children who come to its attention to make improvements in these areas. The Service has a very proactive Education Officer who acts in a consultative capacity with colleagues and also takes on direct work with children. She links closely with colleagues in the Education Inclusion Service and its Director, the Education representative on the Partnership Board. There is an annual Education report to the Management Board to keep members abreast of activity, outcomes and continuing needs and issues. The Education, Training and Employment support in the Youth Justice Service has been formalised and the Education Officer and case managers have a monthly review for each child to set, record and review related goals.

School Age Children

In the last year, more school aged children than post 16 young people have been supported. Most have had provision in place but in the last year, one child had no provision. The majority of children coming into the Service have low attendance and are finding education challenging in some way. More than 60% have been in some kind of Alternative Provision. Several children have spent long periods in Alternative Provision due to a lack of places in Special Schools. Over 50% have had an Education, Health and Care Plan and a further 20-25% have a Special Educational Need Support Plan. A number of children have been Permanently Excluded and this is now being monitored more closely in response to the Identifying Disproportionality report, with its recommendations for addressing ethnic disproportionality in the criminal justice system in Avon and Somerset. Many have a history of multiple suspensions. The number of Permanent Exclusions would undoubtedly be higher if not so many children had an Education, Health and Care Plan; those children who are also at risk of exclusion are generally moved to an assessment or preventative Alternative Provision placement to avoid exclusion. Following a pilot with the Violence Reduction Unit, the Local Authority has now created a permanent post in the Inclusion Service to work at a strategic level with schools to reduce the risk of exclusion.

Poor attendance, challenging behaviour, unmet Special Educational Needs and risk of exclusion are all barriers to learning. Disruption of learning due to the Covid pandemic continues have an impact on many children.

Examples of how the Youth Justice Service has helped to improve education outcomes include:

- Working with schools and Special Educational Need and Disability team to improve the education programme or support for children struggling in education.
- Supporting schools in developing and delivering Alternative Provision packages, and supporting students to engage with these programmes notably for students with Special Educational Needs.
- Supporting children and parents navigate their way through Education, Health and Care Plan processes and following up on delays.
- Contributing to child in need and child protection core meetings and, and bringing a greater focus on education and support to improve attendance and engagement.
- Setting up and convening 'Team around the Child' meetings and developing plans which focus on engagement, attendance and increased support
- Supporting Special Educational Needs assessment processes
- Supporting Year 11 students in making Post-16 choices and supporting them in making applications and plans for the future and providing transition support over the summer.
- High levels of face-to-face and practical support, for example, taking children to their provision, visiting new provision, and helping children and parents/carers understand their education rights and entitlement.

Post 16 children

Over the past year, there has been a steady decrease in the number of Post 16 children working with the Youth Justice Service. Recently, over 80% have been engaged in Education, Training and Employment. Caution needs to be exercised in commenting on trends with such low numbers but generally, the Post-16 children are being more successful in education and employment. In B&NES, a Further Education programme called Learning4Work is provided by Bath College and Youth Connect South West. This is a bespoke and flexible programme designed for young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan who have had problems in education. Students attend a community learning centre and have one-to-one key worker engagement support and a bespoke time table designed around their needs and situation. The Youth Justice Service has strong links with this programme and 6 children have had a place

this year. The strong employment market has also meant some children have found it easier to secure employment.

9.5 Restorative approaches and victims

As part of the statutory duty to comply with the Code of Practice for Victims 2015, the Youth Justice Service has a dedicated Victim Worker (Police Officer) who is responsible for contacting victims of crime at both Out of Court Disposal stage and for matters disposed through the Court process. Victims are offered opportunity to request participation in a restorative justice process, either directly (face-to-face meetings) or indirectly (through 'shuttle mediation' where the Youth Justice Service acts as a go-between). In addition, they are consulted on their views of reparation for the harm caused and this may include community reparation or a letter of explanation or responsibility to the person harmed. The Service is not undertaking as much direct reparation as it would like and this will be a focus for development in 2023-24.

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

Case example of indirect reparation

"At first M said there was nothing she wanted to do for reparation and she did not want to meet the Reparation Worker. When we did meet, we talked about her strengths and what she felt she liked doing at home. She said she liked cooking but didn't want to be around people. We arranged to cook and make hot meals for the local food bank. M then took the food there and started to do reparation in the café there. It was a huge success and she has been asked if she would like to stay on volunteering in the café. She will also have a good reference. M has now completed 30 hours of reparation and has painted the chairs in the café, making a real impact in the local community. Working in this way, step by step, has meant that M has been able to achieve a lot and has informed my working practice for reparation. I now offer reparation step by step, working in a trauma informed way, making sure that a child does not feel too overwhelmed."

9.6 Serious Violence and Exploitation

Bath and North East Somerset is an area of comparatively low reported crime, including serious violent crime, and even saw a reduction in knife-related offences in 2022. However, there have been three fatal stabbings of teenagers in little under a year and the community has a heightened awareness of the dangers of carrying knives; parents and carers in particular are understandably very concerned about this. These incidents have raised questions about how children travel and mix across a wider footprint than just their local areas. Also, although not necessarily a direct causal factor in these critical incidents, experience of exploitation may have normalised carrying knives for some children. Addressing knife crime is a local priority for the Council and partner agencies.

Since late 2019, this area has participated in an Avon and Somerset 'hub and spoke' Violence Reduction Unit, utilising Home Office funding to undertake strategic needs assessments and agree partnership plans for addressing the issues identified and procuring some direct services. The ambition of B&NES' Violence Reduction Unit is that all children and adults lead lives free of serious violence at home and in their communities. B&NES has also participated in a central strategic group convened by the Police and Crime commissioner. Locally, this cross-cutting agenda has been overseen by the multi-agency Serious Violence Steering Group which reports to the Exploitation Sub Group and a number of other Sub Groups of the Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership, including the Youth Justice Partnership Board. The work adopts a public health approach to addressing serious violence, prioritising under-25s involved in public space violence with a particular focus on sharing information at a multi-agency level about individuals, networks and places of concern in order that issues can be addressed collaboratively. The Youth Justice Service has been closely involved in this work from the outset as both areas of work are led locally by the same Head of Service.

From 31 January 2023, under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, specified authorities including Youth Justice Services, have been required to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence. Specified authorities are required to:

- Engage fully with the relevant local partnership to prevent and tackle serious violence.
- Share relevant aggregated and anonymised data, where practicable, to support the development of the evidence-based problem profile/strategic assessment (for example; information on local serious violence hotspots, information on county lines drug dealing networks and wider child criminal exploitation etc.).
- Support publication and implementation of the strategy to address the risks identified, ensuring that children and their interests are fairly represented in such discussions.
- Identify and act to ensure children's best interests, including safeguarding requirements and reducing vulnerability to criminal exploitation, are kept at the forefront of any strategic planning.
- Advise on appropriate responses to increase levels of safety within the local partnership area and enable children to be able to move beyond their offending behaviour and status.
- Assist in the delivery of prevention and early intervention initiatives where possible, and explain to partners how their input can help enhance this work.
- Work across local authority areas and organisational boundaries where children are not located in the partnership area (for example, when leaving custody, transitioning from youth to adult custody or in county lines drug dealing cases where children may be far from their home area).

9.7 Detention in Police Custody

The youth justice partnership works to prevent children from being remanded or sentenced to custody or held overnight in Police custody wherever possible, and to challenge, understand, address and/or learn from the instances when children are detained. The long established, multi-agency Custody Review Panel meets quarterly and reviews instances of B&NES children being detained. It undertakes multi-agency self audits against national and local standards and guidance² to ensure that legal and other agreed processes have been followed and that no opportunities to influence a different outcome have been missed. The Panel also promotes excellent standards of information sharing, assessment and planning by the Youth Justice Service and Children's Social Care so that Courts receive high quality information on which to base their remand and sentencing decisions. Membership is drawn from:

² B&NES Safeguarding Children in Police Custody, March 2020

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

The Custody Review Panel reviews all episodes where a B&NES child was held overnight in Police custody in Avon and Somerset, whether charged or not. For the purposes of the review, a child is considered to have been held overnight if they were arrested before midnight and stayed in Police custody until at least 8:00 am. Police review their Custody Records to ensure that local guidance was followed³ and where a child was charged, they review practice against the national Concordat.⁴ The Emergency Duty Team audit against their own guidance⁵ to ensure they were proactive in seeking placements where asked and Children's Social Care audit to ensure a detained child received a welfare visit.⁶ Identified learning is recorded and actions agreed, often including sharing the learning with colleagues to influence future practice. In recent months, there has been a marked increase in the number of episodes of children detained in police custody, often related to violent incidents.

9.8 Remands

The Custody Review Panel reviews secure remands to ensure opportunities to influence a community remand were not missed and to understand whether there are grounds for supporting a Bail application. There were no secure remands in the area during 2023-2024

9.9 Use of Custody

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

- to keep them safe, and particularly to screen them to understand and help address any exploitation.
- to address their likelihood of offending and manage any risk they present to others.
- to retain or access suitable accommodation.
- to retain or access education, employment or training.
- where relevant, to support compliance with Court expectations.

There were no secure sentences in 2023-24.

9.10 Constructive Resettlement

Children sentenced to custody are amongst those with greatest needs but they can also present the highest risk of re-offending and risk to the public. Therefore, resettlement of these children from custody back into the community is a statutory responsibility and a priority for all youth justice partners and the Youth Custody Service.

³ Avon and Somerset Constabulary Detention of Children and Young People in Police Custody Procedural Guidance, July 2021

⁴ Concordat on Children in Custody: Preventing the detention of children in police stations following charge (Home Office ISBN: 978-1-78655-576-2)

⁵ EDT Guidance: Young People in Custody

⁶ B&NES Social Care Guidance: Children in Custody Policy and Procedure for Professional Contact

Constructive resettlement begins when a child is convicted through assessment of the likely impact on them of a custodial sentence. Key elements include a continued focus on resettlement throughout the sentence, early preparation for release including, where applicable, release on temporary license to support access to accommodation or employment, effective communication between the secure establishment and community agencies and a co-ordinated holistic response involving multi-agency partnerships. After transfer into the community, support, supervision and risk management should always take a Child First approach. Effective sharing of information, collaborative planning, and provision of services by all relevant agencies are fundamental to constructive resettlement. As in all work in the youth justice system, ensuring the child and their parents/carers play a full part in the planning and support provided and that their voice is heard throughout the process, is a priority. Children with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic heritages are significantly over-represented and may experience particular difficulties within custodial institutions and staff are ready to acknowledge and address this.

B&NES Youth Justice Service has a Custody and Resettlement Policy dated June 2022 and due for review in 2025, although it will be updated shortly with changes due to be made to release on temporary license arrangements. As so few children from this area are sentenced to custody, staff will not always be experienced in the processes needed when it does happen and so it is particularly important that this policy is accessible.

10. Standards for Children in the Justice System

The Youth Justice Service follows National Standards, last updated in 2019, in its work to support Out of Court Disposals, at Court, in the community, in secure settings and on transition and resettlement. There has been no national requirement to undertake self assessments against these Standards in the last year. An annual assessment of Out of Court Disposals is undertaken in B&NES each year and reported to the Partnership Board; staffing shortages mean this has been postponed from spring until the autumn 2023. An agreement and methodology has also been reached with North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Youth Justice Services, to undertake peer audits against some elements of National Standards for work undertaken in the community, based on supervision of Court Orders.

The next formal self assessment will be against the National Standards that apply to work in Court. These ask the Partnership Board to be assured of the quality of assessments and Court reports, processes to ensure Court is reserved for children who cannot be dealt with by less formal means, that children are supervised in the community rather than on Bail wherever possible, that Courts have confidence in the effectiveness of recommended supervision of children who have offended, that children's voices are heard and that there is clear communication with the secure estate.

11. Workforce Development

The last year has seen a turn-over of experienced Youth Justice staff and some challenges in recruitment. This means the Service has carried some vacancies for longer than expected and although it has now made strong appointments, a significant proportion of the team is new to this area of work. The workforce development priority is to complete thorough inductions and ensure new staff undertake required training as soon as possible although it is recognised they need time to consolidate their learning.

There is significant support for staff through monthly Supervision, team reflective practice, CAMHS' consultations, harmful sexual behaviour consultations and clinical supervision for trauma recovery cases. Mentoring is also available within the Council. The Head of Service sits on the national Youth Justice Sector Improvement Panel and the national YJB Workforce Development Council and the management team is considering accessing training from the sector.

B&NES Youth Justice Service produces an annual training and development plan for all staff, including administrators, practitioners, volunteers and managers. Training needs are identified through discussions with individual staff in Supervision and through Wellness Action Plans and Performance Development Conversations and are also informed by:

- Strategic priorities and developments set out in the Youth Justice Plan
- Children and Young People's Plan 2018-2021, now extended to 2023
- B&NES Children's and Adults' Workforce Training Strategy 2021-2024
- B&NES Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership Strategy and learning from its Sub Groups
- Feedback from children and families. For example, Jack said he didn't like the way that the panel "talked to him in an old fashioned way" and didn't feel that they understood him at all. The Speech and Language Therapists will offer training to Panel Members.
- Feedback from other agencies working with children known to the Youth Justice Service.
- Recognition of the changing nature of youth justice work and the tensions sometimes caused by introducing a Child First approach into a traditional youth justice system.
- Learning from case audits and self assessments undertaken.
- Essential training required by the parent agency for any seconded staff.
- Learning from inspection reports and serious case reviews.
- Continuing learning about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the needs of children and families and the longer-term issues and new insights arising.
- Team development needs arising from feedback in meetings, the wider annual staff survey and other sources.

Training is delivered in accordance with principles set out in the Service's Training Policy. The commitment to at least 5 days' training per member of staff per annum remains and the impact of training is reviewed with individuals and collated across the Service where possible. This may include individual training, commissioned training procured specifically for the Youth Justice Service or the wider Children's Service, required safeguarding training, local conferences, stakeholder events and coaching.

The following core requirements remain:

- a. individually designed induction programmes according to role, skills and experience.
- b. Staff registration on the Youth Justice Resource Hub and support from supervisors to undertake individual modules.
- c. All social workers are supported to maintain the required level of professional development to enable continuing professional registration.
- d. Other staff will be supported to maintain required training directed by their parent organisation.
- e. Supervisors are required to complete required management training modules and may have opportunity to access sector-led training or study for a management qualification.

Training intentions for the team for 2023-2024 include:

Training need	Who	Delivered by
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Trauma Recovery model	New practitioners who have not previously had this training	Enhanced Case Management Senior Practitioners
Trauma informed workshops	All practitioners needing refresher training	In-house by B&NES Children's Service
Exploitation	Staff who have not had this training before	Police
Understanding new Key Performance Indicators	All staff	Business and Performance Manager
Introduction to systemic practice and key techniques	New practitioners who have not previously had this training and those who would like a refresher	Deputy Team Manager and colleagues
Special Educational Needs	All practitioners	Education Officer
Harmful sexual behaviour assessment and intervention	Practitioners who have not been trained before, number to be confirmed	AIM3
How to help keep children safe on social media	All practitioners	To be confirmed
Age-appropriate communication and confidence with terminology	All practitioners and volunteer Panel Members	Speech, Language and Communication therapist
Changes in reparation practice	All practitioners and volunteers	Reparation Worker
Talking Teens parenting course	Some preventative practitioners including from Turnaround.	Family Links
Restorative Justice training/refresher training	Police Constables, Reparation Worker and Assessment and Information Officer	Restorative Solutions
New KPI reporting on the ChildView database	Information and Business Manager	CACI
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Fire Safety for Evacuation Assistants Display Screen Equipment Personal Safety and Lone Working Accident and Incident reporting	All staff – and to be added in to induction programme for new staff	B&NES Council – mostly online

12. Evidence-based practice and innovation

12.1 Systemic Practice Model

As part of Children's Transformation Programme and supported by DfE funding, the Local Authority has adopted a systemic practice model for Children's Services. This is integrated within a trauma informed, relationship aware approach and is attachment focused. The adoption of a systemic practice model has seen a significant proportion of the Children's Service workforce (from practitioners, supervisors to senior leaders) being trained by the Centre for Systemic Social Work. It is based on the view that human challenges are always embedded within the context of human relationships across family, community and wider society systems. The model provides theory, models and techniques to support practitioners in their support for families to seek a broader and deeper understanding of what could be creating challenges and ideas to change.

The Youth Justice Service has benefited from this training and as part of the wider Children's Service's Workforce will be accessing further training and development. Incremental changes are being made through the influence of the systemic model including acknowledgement and consideration of people's personal and social identity in assessments, planning and support plans, to adoption of a systemic reflective supervision framework in the longstanding monthly reflective practice meetings. Systemic tools including Burnham's Social GRACES⁷, developed to address inequality, have been used in training and Supervision to encourage reflection on individual characteristics that inform how the world is seen and experienced. The Service will seek to utilise specific models that will be beneficial for Youth Justice in 2023-24 and will deliver short workshops to staff in addition to the wider workforce training.

12.2 Harmful Sexual Behaviour 'AIM3' Model

Although not many children in the local area are identified with a risk of harmful sexual behaviour, the Service has staff trained in the Assessment of Adolescents and Harmful Sexual Behaviour model developed by Marcella Leonard and Simon Hackett, otherwise known as 'AIM3.' This is a suite of evidence-based frameworks and guidance to support practitioners to assess risk and develop interventions for use with children, including how to work with their parents/carers as well. Although the core approach is to be used with adolescents, tools have also been developed to assess and support children aged under 12 years. The resources are trauma-informed and holistic and are a good fit with other intervention approaches used within the Service. The tools are used alongside standard youth justice assessment tools and plans to support a focus on particular presenting needs. Assessments are generally undertaken in partnership with a Social Worker and interventions are likely to then be co-delivered. The service has two staff who work with the CAMHS Harmful Sexual Behaviour Co-ordinator to deliver awareness raising training to colleagues in preventative services and universal settings such as schools, in support of early identification.

12.3 Mentoring

The Service has started to offer mentoring to children who complete their work with the Youth Justice Service and would like some continued support on a voluntary basis. This is generally provided by staff but in the last year, 2 volunteer Panel Members have been trained to offer mentoring and the first child to enrol is just coming to the end of a year's mentoring.

12.4 Enhanced Case Management

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

⁷ Burnham J (2012) Developments in the Social GRRRAACCEEESSS in Krause I (ed) *Culture and Reflexivity in systemic Psychotherapy: Mutual Perspectives*. London: Karnac

previously undertaken in Wales. An external evaluation of the work undertaken between September 2019 and March 2022 has recently been published. The evaluation report confirms that the model has been implemented consistently in line with guidance although it notes a gap in case formulations when the original Psychologist changed roles. The flexibility of the Psychologists' approach has been identified as central to the success of the pilot. The work is perceived to have contributed to improvements in a range of psychosocial outcomes and linked with placement in more appropriate accommodation and re-building of family relationships. There has also been an improvement in children's mental health, coping skills and understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others. Improved relationships with staff in Youth Justice Services have also been noted and overall, no negative impacts have been identified for children. The evaluation has also noted the embedding of trauma informed practice in staff throughout the participating Youth Justice Services and beginning within some partner agencies. Staff have an improved knowledge and understanding of recognising and working with children who have experienced trauma and are developing more flexible practices which are very child-focused and individually tailored.

It is not yet possible to draw firm conclusions of the impact of this work. A second phase of evaluation, which will compare re-offending data with a national cohort of children who did not benefit from this approach, will be published later in 2023. Bath and North East Somerset is keen to remain a partner in this work which is currently funded until October 2024. It will work with partner Youth Justice areas to review and address the recommendations in the evaluation report including reviewing eligibility criteria, development of a quality assurance framework, using case reviews to plan closure and transition with input from relevant adult services and continuing to monitor effectiveness and value for money. There are also a number of recommendations about continuing to embed the model and engage partner agencies.

13. Service Development Plan 2023-24

This year's plan incorporates a number of work streams commenced last year and includes work that will continue beyond March 2024. Supporting and equipping staff is an ongoing priority, as this work is demanding and can take its toll on individuals. Detail is included in the Training Plan, summarised above.

The Development Plan is shorter this year, to enable sufficient attention to be given to each action and because it is accompanied by an Anti-Racism Plan. It is set out according to the strategic priorities that have been agreed with the Partnership Board and the Youth Justice Service:

1. Strengthen participation – a continuing priority as youth justice work is most effective – perhaps only effective – when it accurately addresses the needs and views of children, carers and those harmed by children's offending.
2. Address disproportionality – a continuing priority as children from some ethnic backgrounds and with Special Educational Needs are still over-represented in the youth justice system (locally and nationally).
3. Embed Child First principles – a new priority, but not new work. This reflects the YJB's strategic approach and central guiding principle.
4. Address serious violence – a new priority, but not new work. This also marks the introduction of the Serious Violence Duty.

Much of this work can only be undertaken in partnership with other organisations and with the active support of the Partnership Board. This plan will be reviewed regularly by the Partnership Board at its business meetings and it will report on successes and escalate issues to the Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership.

Youth Justice Development Plan 2023-2024

Strategic Priority 1: Strengthen participation

Themes	Actions	Intended Impact	Owner	By
Victims' participation	Ensure victims' views about how they can participate more fully are incorporated into the updated Youth Justice Victim Policy and practice.	The youth justice offer to those harmed will reflect their views, take full account of their needs and meet new legislative requirements. Our ambition is to see more direct involvement of victims in our work with children.	Deputy Team Manager	Dec 2023
Parents' and carers' participation	Complete a Practice Guide for work with parents/carers across the whole Service and communicate a clear local offer to them, including the Family Links parenting course.	Parents/carers will understand the support available to help them develop and uphold their parenting skills. Our ambition is greater take up of this support, including the courses.	Senior Practitioner	Dec 2023
Children's Participation	Ensure the whole Service seeks out the voices of children, including those from minority groups, and can demonstrate how it learns from them.	Services to children will be more effective because they will reflect what they have told us they want and need and they will be fully involved (B&NES Participation Standards).	Senior Practitioner	March 2024
Community participation	Recruit and train a new cohort of volunteer Referral Order Panel Members.	Sustaining our Panel and ensuring a representative group of volunteers.	Operational Manager	March 2024

Strategic Priority 2: Address disproportionality

Themes	Actions	Intended Impact	Owner	By
Children with Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic heritages	Progress actions in the Youth Justice Anti-Racism Plan 2023-24 (see below).	Fewer mixed heritage children in the justice system and the response to children's offending to be proportionate to their offence seriousness and meet their individual needs.	Head of Service	March 2024
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	Work with Inclusion managers and the SEND Strategy Group to address disproportionality issues for children with SEND in the justice system as per the ETE Thematic HMIP report.	More of these children to be appropriately diverted from the justice system including by partnership response to meeting their needs and offering support to their parents/carers.	Heads of Youth Justice and Inclusion.	March 2024
Re-Offending	Review level of support to children at the highest risk of offending in the first 3 months of their Court Order and hold quarterly reviews when a high risk of re-offending or a medium to high risk of seriousness is assessed.	Reduced re-offending rates, in response to review of re-offending data showing children who re-offend tend to do so very soon after sentence.	Operational Manager	Dec 2023

Strategic Priority 3: Embed Child First principles

Themes	Actions	Intended Impact	Owner	By
Early Help	Ensure the Child First principles are reflected in the values and practice of the whole Service including Compass and Turnaround.	The Youth Justice Service can evidence the progress it is making to embed Child First as a core value.	Operational Manager	Dec 2023

Youth Justice System	Work with the Partnership Board to promote a Child First approach throughout children's experience of the youth justice system.	All partners can evidence this approach in the work they undertake to benefit children in the justice system. (October Partnership Board).	Head of Service	Dec 2023
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Strategic Priority 4: Tackle serious violence

Themes	Actions	Intended Impact	Owner	By
Serious Violence Duty	Work with the Violence Reduction Partnership to develop a strategic needs assessment and Strategy.	Compliance with the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022	Head of Service	Dec 2023
Knife crime	Ensure all children in the justice system and their parents/carers have an appropriate intervention in relation to knife crime.	Bespoke work with this cohort of children who may be at the highest risk, and a reduction in knife crime.	Operational Manager	March 2024
Safeguarding reviews	Address actions identified through the (not yet published) safeguarding review following a fatal stabbing and participate in further reviews.	Children who need it the most benefit from early help support and fewer children are involved in serious violence.	Operational Manager	March 2024

Youth Justice Anti-Racism Plan 2023-2024

Key: HMIP = thematic Inspection of the experiences of black and mixed heritage boys in the youth justice system, October 2021

ID = Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset criminal justice system, July 2022

1. Vision

Recommendations and themes:

- Vision and strategy for improving outcomes for black and mixed heritage boys (HMIP 11)
- Action plan to deliver objectives set out in YJB Business Plan (ID 21)

Actions	Intended Impact	Owner	By
Agree a vision statement and strapline.	Clear leadership aspirations and well understood purpose.	Chair and Board	Sept 2023
Add these to all relevant documents and webpage.	Ambition shared with children, families, communities and partners.	Business Manager	Sept 2023
Consult with children and staff and write an Anti-Racism Strategy.	Shared commitments, cross-referenced with national objectives	Senior Practitioner	March 2024

2. Understanding

Recommendations and themes:

- Ensure all YJS data collected, analysed and reported uses '18+1' ethnicity categories
- Analyse offence outcomes data by offence type and ethnicity groups (ID 20) and diversion schemes by ethnicity (ID 25)

Actions	Intended Impact	Owner	By
Support staff to listen to children to understand how they identify and ensure records are accurate.	Children are supported to reflect on their identity and records are as accurate as possible.	Operational Manager	June 2023+
Include 18+1 data in all reports to the Partnership Board.	Quantify disproportionality and make direct comparisons.	Business Manager	Sept 2023+

3. Workforce

Recommendations and themes:

- Make sure staff understand what is expected of them in their work with black and mixed heritage boys and that they are inducted, trained and supported to work effectively with this group of children (HMIP 15)
- Work with B&NES and statutory partners to baseline the 'HR life-cycle' across ethnicity groups (ID 79)

Actions	Intended Impact	Owner	By
Create an induction guide to ensure staff understand our vision, the Council Anti-Racism Charter, Schools' Equality Charter and HMIP Practice Guide.	Supplement training and help staff understand, recognise and challenge racism and discuss its impact with children, using systemic tools such as Social GRACEs.	Senior Practitioner	Dec. 2023
Work with members of Partnership Board to apply learning from staff experience.	Ensure Youth Justice Service treats and develops staff fairly.	Head of Service	March 2024+
Continue to explore ways of attracting a more representative workforce, including volunteers.	A workforce that better represents children and reflects the community in which they live.	Operational Manager	March 2024+
Support staff participation in Council Equalities Groups.	Staff feel connected and know how to contribute to wider change.	Operational Manager	March 2024+

4. Representation

Recommendations and themes:

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

Actions	Intended Impact	Owner	By
Review our office environment and resources to ensure inclusive imagery.	Children see themselves represented and included.	Operational Manager	Sept 2023 / March 2024

5. Participation

Recommendations and themes:

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

Actions	Intended Impact	Owner	By
Ensure we hear the voices of all children with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic heritages and respond positively.	We understand and affirm lived experience and address specific needs and all children get the services they need to support positive outcomes.	Senior Practitioner	Dec 2023

6. Criminal Justice Process

Recommendations and themes:

- Collaborate with all relevant partners to identify and tackle any disproportionality through each stage of the youth justice process (ID 24)
- Agree with A&S Youth Justice Services and Education Inclusion colleagues about how best to scrutinise and tackle links between exclusion and entry into the youth justice system (ID 19)
- Collect and scrutinise school exclusion data and develop a strategy and action plan to tackle any disproportionality. Include a focus on any links with entry into the youth justice system (ID 16, 17, 18 and 19)

Actions	Intended Impact	Owner	By
Actively support work led by Chief Constable and participate in specific work group(s) as advised.	Identify and address disproportionality.	Head of Service	Dec 23+
Work with peers in the Avon and Somerset Youth Group and the Education Inclusion Co-ordinator to agree approach and methodology	Understand best times and ways to intervene, in keeping with B&NES Early Help Strategy.	Operational Manager	June 2023
Support Education Inclusion colleagues in undertaking this work	Address concern about links between exclusion and routes into offending, including through exploitation.	Business Manager & Education Worker	

7. Service Delivery

Recommendations and themes:

- Prevention and Diversion
- Management Oversight - improve the quality of management oversight to make sure it is sufficiently focused on diversity and what this means in practice and that there are clear escalation routes to address any barriers to black and mixed heritage boys accessing the services they need (HMIP 16)
- Targets - Partnership Board to have a joint set of partnership targets, for example with schools and children's services, for improving service delivery to black and mixed heritage boys, and make sure mechanisms are in place to track, monitor and evaluate outcomes (HMIP 13)
- Gaps in Provision - address gaps in specialist provision for black and mixed heritage boys, either by delivering it in-house or by commissioning it from appropriate local community organisations and evaluate referral and uptake rates for the services provided (HMIP 17)
- Parents and Carers - offer suitable and appropriate support and intervention to the parents and/or carers of black and mixed heritage boys and regularly review the uptake and suitability of this provision (HMIP 18)
- Accommodation - Provide suitable and timely accommodation placements and support packages for black and mixed heritage boys who are facing remand or being released from custody (HMIP 8) and
- Make sure that, where children and families are moved to a new location as a result of concerns about their safety, the accommodation and placements provided are suitable and sustainable to meet their needs (HMIP 9)

Actions	Intended Impact	Owner	By
Actively promote referral of ethnic minority heritage children into Compass and Turnaround.	Keep children with ethnic minority heritages out of the formal youth justice system wherever possible.	Deputy Team Manager	June 2023+
a. Add a section in the local Out of Court Disposal assessment tool on personal and social identity. b. Update the Pre Sentence Report Quality Assurance checklist to ensure a focus on individual characteristics and re-order this and the template itself to be Child First.	A Child First focus on individual children.	Operational Manager	June 2023

c. Include a focus on race in pan-Authority audits.			
d. Use revised Council Equalities Impact Assessment template for impact assessing significant reports and policies. e. Revisit how we use diversity and equalities agenda items in staff Supervision. f. In accordance with B&NES Equality Improvement Plan, agree how escalations are recorded.	Ensure that the management oversight is focused on diversity.	Youth Justice Manager Group	Sept 2023+
Consult with Partnership Board and ask for a member to lead this piece of work.	Strategic ownership of this issue; all children's education needs are met.	Chair of Board	Dec 2023
Consult with staff, children and families to identify gaps and bring to attention of commissioners; Agree how the effectiveness of provision will be evaluated.	All children's needs are met, not necessarily by the Youth Justice Service, but we ensure there is provision in place.	Senior Practitioner	March 2024
a. Ensure children and parents/carers receive written information about the justice system and resources available to support them at the outset of their contact. b. Review the support offered to parents and carers of black and mixed heritage boys and take a paper to the Partnership Board for review of provision.	Parents/carers are empowered with information and skills to support their children through complex systems.	Operational Manager	March 2024
Work with the Placements Team and Housing Team to promote the needs of individual children and use our learning about how to make children more at home when they first arrive.	Placements provided are suitable and sustainable to meet their needs, when they need them.	Operational Manager	March 2024

14. Challenges, Risks and Issues

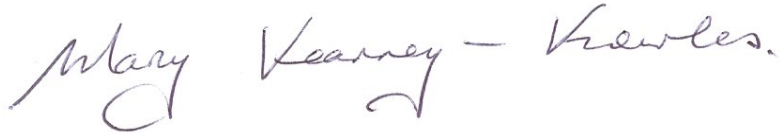
The Partnership Board actively encourages professional challenge between members, enabling each agency to be held to account for the part it plays in supporting the Youth Justice Service and preventing children's offending. It has been recording these challenges for 8 years in a well-established register that is reviewed and updated at each meeting, noting when challenges have been answered or resolved and whether this has had a positive impact. There are a number of examples of positive change that has resulted from these challenges, but some matters have remained unresolved. It also keeps a risk register that is similarly updated. Risks that remain very high despite action to mitigate their potential impact are also recorded on the wider Children's Services risk register and may be escalated within the Council.

As a Sub Group, the Board reports quarterly on achievements, outcomes, challenges and priorities to the B&NES Community Safety and Safety Partnership Operational Group. This enables matters that cannot be resolved at Board level, to be escalated.

15. Approval and sign off

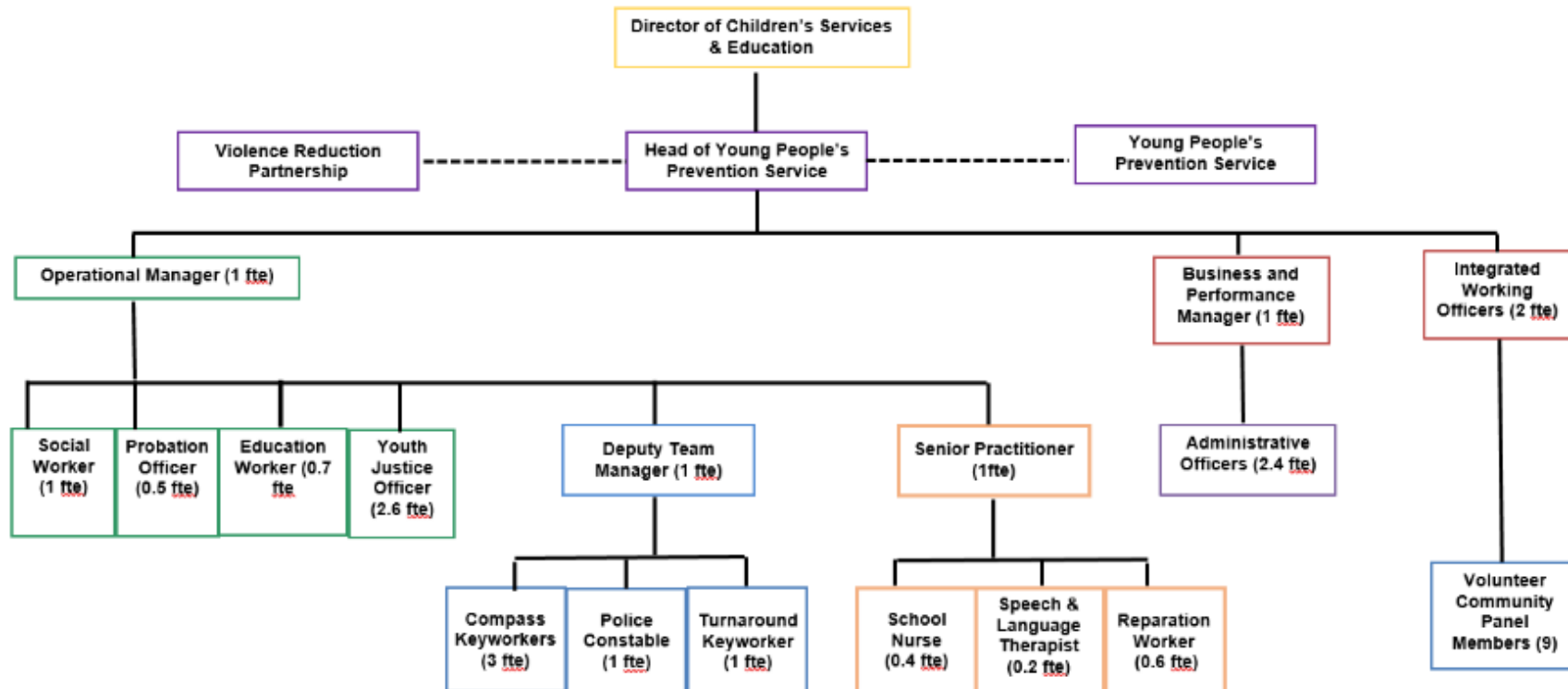
The Chair has approved this Plan on behalf of the Partnership Board and confirms it covers all sections required by the Youth Justice Board.

Final sign-off will be sought from the Council's Cabinet (on 7 September) and Council (on 21 September), in accordance with local democratic processes and the final version will then be submitted to the Youth Justice Board.

Chair of Board	Mary Kearney-Knowles, Director of Children and Education
Signature	
Date	27 July 2023

Appendix 1: Youth Justice Service Organisational Structure

Youth Justice Service Organisational Chart



	Strategic Manager		Team Manager		Practitioner		Administrator		Sessional		Student		Volunteers		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi																
Asian or Asian British – Indian													1			1
Asian or Asian British - Other Asian																
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani																
Black or Black British - African					1										1	
Black or Black British – Caribbean												1			1	
Black or Black British - Other Black																
Chinese																
Mixed - Other Mixed																
Mixed - White and Asian																
Mixed - White and Black African																
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean																
Not stated																
Other Ethnic Group - Any Other																
Other Ethnic Group - Arab																
White – British		1	1	1		14		3					2	5	3	24
White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller																
White - Irish																
White - Other White						1										1
Total		1	1	1	1	15		3					3	6	5	26

This shows staffing by gender and ethnicity as on 1 April 2023. Staff disability is not published as numbers are low and any shown could be identifiable.

Appendix 2: Budget Costs and Contributions 2023-2024

There has been no change in any partner contributions into the pooled budget for this year. There may be subsequent cost of living increases for staffing.

The Turnaround budget has reduced as it does not contain any set-up costs

The Youth Justice Board grant has increased but no secure remand grant has been allocated.

Agency	Staffing costs	Payments in kind	Pooled budget	Total
Police	61,053	Access to PNC and Niche	5,000	66,053
Police and Crime Commissioner	10,217	—	—	10,217
Probation	27,016	—	5,000	32,016
B&NES Clinical Commissioning Group (Health)	47,826	—	14,885	62,711
B&NES Council (Education and Social Care)	408,977	Keynsham office, HR and finance support	18,685	427,662
Youth Justice Board	194,554	36,350	0	230,904
Ministry of Justice (Turnaround)	54,011	1,703	0	55,714
Total	803,654	38,053	43,579	885,277

Appendix 3: Outturn of last year's Youth Justice Work Plan 2022-2023

Actions	Progress and impact
Set up a SurveyMonkey to consult with local children on new name for the YOS	Completed - following consultation, re-named Youth Justice Service, with a re-named Youth Justice Partnership Board. Administrators have notified partners and updated documentation.
Establish an internal task and finish group to refresh the YOS's participation policy and practice	Completed - a small practitioner group has refreshed the feedback processes including creating a new semi-structured interview for children and parents. The reparation worker is developing reparation activities to have a focus on participation and utilising children's knowledge and experiences to improve services and upskill professionals.
Develop a Practice Guide / Framework for work with parents/carers, setting out the local offer	In progress - information has been gathered from practitioners to create a practice guide that covers the breadth of work that the YJS does with parents
Refresh the YOS policy and practice with victims	In progress – the review was undertaken by the new YJS Police Officer in February and it is hoped that this can draw on the work of the A&S wide RJ working group when it is re-convened and the updated Victims Code of Practice
Address recommendations in Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice Board 'Identifying Disproportionality'	Completed in-year but continuing work - the Head of Service has kept this on the agenda in B&NES, keeping partners abreast and promoting ways to incorporate the actions into relevant work plans. Following work with an external consultant, which B&NES Youth Justice Service played an active role in, an Avon and Somerset-level SteerCo has now been established with senior representation from across Avon and Somerset. B&NES' Head of Service will be joining a delivery group to be established shortly. B&NES representatives have been nominated for the community Scrutiny Panel. A number of the recommendations are being taken forward by the Avon and Somerset Out of Court Tactical Group and work to explore links between exclusion and offending continues.
Compile and deliver a local Action Plan	Completed in-year and continuing work – an anti-Racist Action Plan has been agreed, in discussion with the Partnership Board. Actions for next year will be incorporated in the Youth Justice Plan 2023-24
Work with the Violence Reduction Unit to increase our understanding and response to girls' involvement in serious violence	Completed in-year and continuing work – through the SurveyMonkey, practitioners raised concern that girls' involvement in serious violence was increasing, despite lack of evidence through the youth justice system. Youth Connect South West has now convened a girls' group to focus on this issue and will be consulting with children and young people to understand this issue better.

Convene a working group with key local authority managers to consider and investigate disproportionality issues for children with SEND in the youth justice system and formulate a response and action plan in light of the Thematic HMIP report on Education, Training and Employment.	In progress - at a YJS team level, we have agreed some developments in response to the HMIP Thematic report on ETE. These include ensuring that each individual child has a stated and agreed EET goal and that this is regularly reviewed with their case manager and Education Worker. The disproportionality has been flagged with the local SEND Strategy Group and work is continuing into the new planning year.
Work with all key partners to participate in a 'trauma-informed Avon and Somerset'	In progress - YJS staff training attended to (original ECM and TIP Award) and will be a priority for new members joining in January. Work has lost momentum at an Avon and Somerset level and it is unclear whether this will be a priority for the BSW ICB.
Work with partner Local Authorities to review and sustain a model for the Enhanced Case Management initiative	Completed in-year and continuing work - the ECM project has been fully functioning again since Clinical Psychologists were appointed to FCAMHS in October 2022. B&NES YJS has referred two children for the full ECM formulation with positive developments. The local Partnership Board has received presentations about the initiative and B&NES has contributed to another year of participation, now continuing until at least March 2024. Local Health funding is sought. The external evaluation report has now been published.
Apply learning from other areas and take next steps towards implementing systemic practice in the Youth Offending Service	Completed in-year and continuing work – the DTM has now completed training and has been supporting use of systemic terminology and practice, aligned with wider Children's Services development.
Support wider development of model within B&NES Children's Service	In progress - systemic Workshops and Systemic Skills Groups are in progress of being planned by Principal Social Worker. YJS DTM will contribute when timetable is in place.
Review and develop the Compass decision-making panel for stated aims of targeting areas of need; increasing multiple perspectives to reduce individual bias and improving throughput.	Completed – the decision-making panel meets to review assessments and agree an appropriate plan and length of involvement. The arrangements will be further developed and consolidated during 2023-24.
Work with partners to strengthen support to children who may be at risk of offending	Completed – national funding has enabled the introduction of Turnaround, focused support for children and families where the children have had a direct encounter with the youth justice system.

Contextual safeguarding Conduct an audit of YOS contextual safeguarding knowledge and practice and identify development action	Continuing into new year - the YJS is participating in use of one of the Contextual Safeguarding Scale-Up Toolkit tools to carry out a contextual assessment of place. The will introduce a local methodology
Serious violence statutory duty Consult on and develop YOS role in collaborating to address children's serious violence	Completed – details of the Serious Violence Duty were published in December and have been discussed with the Partnership Board. Youth Justice data was contributed to the latest Avon and Somerset-wide strategic needs assessment and will be made available for the next B&NES' assessment. Partnership protocols on Missing Children and Harmful Sexual Behaviour have been updated.
Support staff to return to Keynsham Civic Centre, addressing individual needs, promoting flexible working and strengthening team identity	Completed - YJS staff still work from home but also work flexibly across a number of locations and generally, office attendance is increasing, which is good for morale and team identity. Staff supervision and team meetings are held face-to-face wherever possible and staff have been trained to use the new technology for hybrid meetings.
Work with Human Resources Department to recruit a workforce that better reflects the gender and ethnicity of the children worked with	In progress - the recommendation has been brought to the attention to the Director of B&NES Council HR Department and the YJS has undertaken some work with HR to attract a more representative pool of applicants, with marginal success to date. Updates needed from Police, Probation and Health.
Revise reporting dashboard to incorporate new Key Performance Indicators when agreed, and use this to develop YOS and Management Board understanding of local data	Completed and ongoing – agreed the layout of the new dashboard pending finalisation of YJB data publication in October 2023. As the new KPIs are on cases closed in a quarter and so we will explore production of an annual assurance report, summarising this data on all cases closed in each year.
Compile and deliver training plan to support effective practice models and maintain safeguarding and other skills	Completed - Training Plan agreed by managers' group and training needs are regularly discussed and updated.
Strengthen staff skills when exploring identity and potential discrimination	Completed - three Reflective Practice workshops have been held this year to look at the HIMP Thematic Inspection Report on working with Black and Mixed Heritage Boys. This has been followed up with two full-day whole Service training sessions with Stand against Racism and Inequality, focusing on cultural competence and unconscious bias and helping staff have more reflective discussions with children about their identity.
Develop and deliver local responses to recommendations in HMI Probation's thematic Inspections	Completed - various Reflective Practice workshops have been held with practitioners to review the findings of the HMIP Thematic Inspections. These have helped colleagues to become more aware of the pertinent issues and develop our practice locally, specifically in ensuring we prioritise conversation with children about the discrimination they may

	have faced and that we work with children to develop specific EET goals to support them to reach their potential.
Advocate re support for children leaving Care and understand the difference in support available for them, in particular with regard to accessing suitable accommodation	In progress - work is continuing to support transition to Probation Service in a very small number of cases. The Chair of the Board and the Health representative have shared feedback from a young person who attended the Board to describe his placement experiences.
Represent the YOS's views over possible changes in Police youth justice department, and the furtherance of child-first policing	Completed - Head of Service and Operational Manager are involved in a new Avon and Somerset Police-led tactical meeting seeking to standardise processes across Avon and Somerset and in light of national (YJB) changes due to be introduced in the autumn of 2023
Understand the impact of delays in prosecutions on both children and victims and seek to influence this.	Completed and ongoing - Head of Service has requested the Local Criminal Justice Board produce under 18-level data and this is now regularly reported. It shows Avon and Somerset to be an outlier and there is ongoing work to understand and address this. The Police Area Commander is now reviewing the Release Under Investigation names and is reviewing practice
Discuss with Court staff and Magistrates the importance of child-first arrangements within the Court setting	Completed and ongoing. - Head of Service has initiated email correspondence with the Court about this. No specific guidance found. Have previously raised concerns about use of Court space. Agreement with neighbouring YJSs to update the Partnership Agreement.

Appendix 4: Serious Violence Duty

Under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (Chapter 1 of Part 2) which commenced on 31st January 2023, the Youth Justice Service is required to work alongside other specified authorities to prevent and reduce serious violence. Additionally, relevant authorities are asked to co-operate with local arrangements.

The specified authorities are:

- ❖ Chief Officers of Police
- ❖ Integrated Care Boards or local Health Boards
- ❖ Local Authorities
- ❖ Probation Service providers
- ❖ Youth Offending Teams
- ❖ Fire and Rescue Services

The relevant authorities are:

- ❖ Education
- ❖ Prison
- ❖ Youth Custody authorities

The statutory guidance requires nomination of a representative to

- ❖ Engage fully with the relevant local partnership to prevent and tackle serious violence, and where applicable, as a core member of the local Violence Reduction Unit.
- ❖ Share relevant aggregated and anonymised data, where practicable, to support the development of the evidence-based problem profile/strategic assessment (for example; information on local serious violence hotspots, information on county lines drug dealing networks and wider child criminal exploitation etc.).
- ❖ Support publication and implementation of the strategy to address the risks identified, ensuring that children and their interests are fairly represented in such discussions.
- ❖ Identify and act to ensure children's best interests, including safeguarding requirements and reducing vulnerability to criminal exploitation, are kept at the forefront of any strategic planning Serious Violence Duty Statutory Guidance 83.
- ❖ Advise on appropriate responses to increase levels of safety within the local partnership area and enable children to be able to move beyond their offending behaviour and status.

- ❖ Assist in the delivery of prevention and early intervention initiatives where possible, and explain to partners how their input can help enhance this work.
- ❖ Work across local authority areas and organisational boundaries where children are not located in the partnership area (for example, when leaving custody, transitioning from youth to adult custody or in county lines drug dealing cases where children may be far from their home area).

The Head of Service for Youth Justice is the nominated representative to lead on this work. As they also lead on the Violence Reduction Partnership and chair the local Serious Violence Steering Group, the Service is well placed to participate going forward. This work is well supported by the Council's Public Health and Community Safety staff.

Appendix 5: Glossary of Terms

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or ADHD	A neurodivergent condition that affects people's behaviour - they may appear restless, have difficulty in concentrating or act on impulse. By no means all people with ADHD offend but a high proportion of children in the justice system have this condition, and 45% of those in Young Offender Institutions.
Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic or BAME	A term used by some in the criminal justice system and elsewhere to describe those who have diverse racial and ethnic heritages. This term is not universally accepted and will be replaced.
B&NES Community Safety & Safeguarding Partnership or BCSSP	A merger of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, Local Safeguarding Adults Board and the Community Safety Partnership. The Youth Justice Partnership Board is one of its Sub Groups.
Child or children	Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. We are respectful of some older children preferring to be known as 'young people' but are still mindful of their rights as children in all our work.
Child First	A system wide approach to children in the justice system, seeing the child before the offender. Work with them is developmentally informed, strength-based, participative and encourages diversion
Child Looked After or CLA	Child Looked After, where a child is looked after by the local authority.
Compass	A local preventative service for 8-17-year-olds assessed as at high risk of offending, and for their parents/carers.
Contextual safeguarding	An approach to safeguarding children outside the family home, taking account of the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety.
Core 20PLUS5	An NHS England approach to reducing health inequalities for children and young people.
Evidence based practice	The YJB definition is 'integration of the best available and accessible evidence with professional expertise, in the context of working with children in contact with the youth justice system.'
Education, Health and Care Plan or EHCP	An assessment and plan specifying additional support for children with significant and complex special educational need or disability when needs cannot be met through mainstream school settings.
First Time Entrant or FTE	A child who receives a first statutory criminal justice outcome (Youth Caution, Youth Conditional Caution, or Court disposal).
His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation or HMIP	An independent arms-length body who inspect individual Youth Justice Services and Probation Services and also undertake thematic Inspections.
Key Performance Indicators or KPIs	Youth Justice Services are required to report on 10 new quantifiable indicators, bringing the total to 13. These are set out on pages 14-16 of this Plan.
Ministry of Justice or MoJ	A major government department that works to "protect and advance the principles of justice."
National Referral Mechanism or NRM	The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery in order to gain help to support and protect them. Courts may take account of this exploitation in sentencing.

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner or OPCC	Team supporting an elected representative who is responsible for cutting crime and delivering an effective Police Force.
Return Home Interviews or RHI	These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing. In B&NES, these are undertaken by the YJS, usually through its preventative Compass team.
Referral Order Panel	A decision-making restorative meeting led by trained volunteers who agree a written contract with a child to work with the Youth Justice Service to address identified needs and make amends.
Thematic HMIP report on ETE	HMIP Thematic Inspection of Education, Training and Employment - Services in Youth Offending Teams in England and Wales.
Turnaround	A new Ministry of Justice-led project across England and Wales, offering preventative support to children on the cusp of the youth justice system.
Youth Justice Partnership Board or YJPB	Senior staff from the five statutory partners (Police, Probation, Social Care, Education and Health) and others who oversee the Youth Justice Service's work in accordance with national guidance.
Youth Justice Board or YJB	Now part of the Ministry of Justice, created under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to oversee youth justice provision across England and Wales.
Youth Justice Service or YJS	A multi-agency team established by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to prevent youth offending. This replaces the original name (Youth Offending Service), reflecting a more Child First approach.