

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) Youth Offending Team (YOT) Inspection

Action Plan Progress Update Improving Lives Select Commission 3rd May 2022

HMIP Inspection of Rotherham YOT

- Received notification of HM Inspectorate of Probation inspection of youth justice services on **Friday 7th August 2020**. (First in 10 yrs.) – (Peer review in 2017)
- Inspected under the HMIP ‘Small YOT’ Inspection Framework (*3rd to be inspected under the new framework)
- Inspection was conducted remotely
- The Inspection was carried out across 3 ‘Domains’ and 12 standards
- Final ratings were based on an algorithm and the results from 10 individual cases
- Inspection report was published on 17th December 2020
- Overall judgement was Requires Improvement
- HMIP makes five recommendations
- Inspection Action Plan submitted to Youth Justice Board (YJB) on 11th January 2021

Agreed actions from ILSC 26th January 2021

- Grip and pace from partners re Action Plan ✓
- Restorative Justice training for all residential staff and foster carers ✓
- Revise RMBC Children in care and Youth Justice policy and protocol ✓
- Work with partners to reduce disproportionality ✓
- Complete Action plan (46 Actions) within agreed time frames ✓
- Commission a Youth Justice Peer Review ✓

✓ Denotes Action Complete

Youth Justice Peer Review

29th – 31st March 2022

Key Lines of Enquiry:

- Whether the partnership understands the needs of the YOT cohort and its role in setting the priorities for the YOT
- The role of the partnership in relation to risk management of justice involved children
- Looked after children (LAC) and the disproportionate numbers in the YOT cohort
- Early help partnership working and the impact this has locally on first time entrants (FTE).

Feedback

- It was impressive to hear about such a child centred YOT Board where children are at the centre of decision making
- We observed some very strong partnerships at both operational and strategic level which is a key strength for Rotherham
- There is a genuine commitment from partners to the 'child first' approach
- It is important to mention the positive culture we experienced in Rotherham.
- There is a real sense of drive from the workforce who are clearly very proud to work in Rotherham and want the best outcomes for the children. This was evident in all of the focus groups we attended and the staff we met.

Golden Threads ...

- The voice of the child and children at the centre of decision making
- Focus on participation at the board is clearly evident
- Common thread that decision making is being made with children at the centre.
- The CHANCE group provides genuine consideration of child involvement, providing opportunities for real child empowerment, challenge and system change (i.e. CHANCE young people Meeting with Lead Member, system leaders)

*CHANCE= Change How Adults Notice Children's Experience



The Review Found

- A **positive culture** with **clear commitment to Rotherham's children**
- **Highly impressed** with engagement and commitment of the workforce
- **Cohesive values** across organisational layers
- **Approachable management team** and **visible senior leaders**
- **Confidence in the staff team is evident** from management and partners
- **Genuine partner relations at operational and strategic levels** – clear shared language and mutual respect
- There is a **culture of ensuring that children are diverted away from Court** and a **strong focus on engaging at the earliest opportunity**
- We found there was a **clear system to support risk management**
- There was a **strong commitment** from all regarding achieving good outcomes for Rotherham children. **This was observed politically, strategically, and operationally**

Whether the partnership understands the needs of the YOT cohort and its role in setting the priorities for the YOT (KLOE 1)

Strengths:

- **Child centred** Board and children at the heart of decision making
- Staff have some awareness of and involvement in the Board and work of the partnership
- Staff have some understanding of the vision and priorities
- **Strong strategic and operational partnerships**
- Involvement of Board members in **development days** with staff
- Some YOT practitioners have attended the Board
- Children open to the YOT have attended the Board and challenged members

KLOE 1

Areas for consideration:

- Unclear priorities and lack of meaningful vision
- Some confusing data and it lacks depth / analysis. Some partners / staff not familiar with YOS cohort or profile of First Time Entrants (FTE)
- Performance information not sufficiently understood/adapted to promote Youth Justice improvements.
- Disconnect with managers / strategic and what children and practitioners are saying e.g. **knife crime**
- YOT-centric focus at Board level; need evidence of actions and plans **extending into other partnership areas**
- Improvement plan – is it properly embedded and how is this measured?

The role of the partnership in relation to risk management of justice involved children (KLOE 2)

Strengths:

- **Strong focus on early intervention/prevention in supporting the reduction of risk**
- Service committed to a **child centred family approach**
- **Positive and committed partnerships**
- Commitment to the development of staff and partners
- **Systems in place to support the management of risk i.e. YMARAC**
- Evidence of the **voice of the child** in shaping services

*YMARAC = Youth Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference

KLOE 2

Areas for consideration:

- YMARAC scrutiny of effectiveness in reducing and containing risk – Board confidence; suggest QA focus by management
- Development of the ETE offer and partnerships
- Victim risk management
- Resettlement and probation transitions
- Explore the disconnect between senior managers and staff/children regarding perceptions of knife crime within communities

*ETE= Education, Training, Employment

Looked after children and the disproportionate numbers in the YOT cohort (KLOE 3)

Strengths:

- Children Looked After data is **not** suggestive that there is an overrepresentation within the YOT.
- Reducing the Unnecessary Criminalisation of Looked After Children Policy is now developed.
- There is a partnership/Children Service's commitment to restorative justice and restorative captures;
i.e. Remedi offering training to children's home/placements & iteration of the 10 Point Checklist

KLOE 3

Areas for consideration:

- While the Protocol is in place, the process of embedding this/gaining sign off is in its infancy - the protocol has been developed based on current practice.
- Is the YOT Management Board the most effective governance arrangement for preventing the unnecessarily criminalisation of children.
- The story of how the positive reduction has been achieved is not consistently articulated at an operational and strategic level.

Early help partnership working and the impact this has locally on first time entrants (KLOE 4)

Strengths:

- **Strong integration** of YOS into other operational areas: inclusion panels; Evolve; practice leads; OOC decision making.
- **Strong partnerships** with a focus on achieving good outcomes for Rotherham children.
- **Efficiency of the triage and panel process** - multi-agency and well attended.
- **Information sharing with community-based partners**, such as housing dept translating to quick community response (Operation Keep Safe).
- **Joint supervision**, where Early Help & Social Care are involved with children and families.
- **Culture of early intervention** and **keeping children out of Court**

*OOOC= Out of Court

KLOE 4

Areas for consideration:

- Health pathways do not enable expedited intervention to CYP open to YJS. Delays in assessments and interventions for YJ children.
- Focusing on children who are ASB, NFA, RUI or arrested to identify the potential FTE's and triage/intervene. *(Opportunities to horizon scan to capture future cohorts of FTE's)
- Linking work around OOCd, screening and assessment to new HMIP standards issued in 2021.
- Early Help - do they need to be attending the Triage meeting?
- Understanding what are the common features of recent cohorts of FTE's through analysis and presenting at the Board to enable collaborative problem solving

ASB = Anti Social Behaviour

OOCd = Out Of Court Disposals

YJ = Youth Justice

NFA = No Further Action

RUI = Released Under Investigation

Other positives

- Rotherham's mechanisms for celebrating good practice across the whole of Children's Services (Monday Matters, Whole Service Events, Friday Reflections etc)
- Commitment in proactive approach by the whole system to early intervention.
- Devon (YOT Apprentice) and the Chance Group – Brilliant!

Recommendations

- Develop a **new vision and priorities** for the Board
- Mobilise the Board to help **problem solve** and provide specific YJ cohort data to support this
- **Broaden the agenda of the partnership board**
- Know the ongoing narrative around **how the YOT has achieved no YROs and no Custodial Sentences**
- **Senior leaders to make better use of data** to drive performance across the partnership
- Enhance **Board oversight of effectiveness of OOC decision making** across the partnership regularly.
- Needs to be **further mechanisms in place to hold partners to account** by agreeing actions and plans.
- **Widen the triage process** to include cohorts of children who are at risk of becoming FTE's
- While the **use of two systems** (CORE / EHM) appears well embedded, this may be impacting on consistent and up to date recording for the YOT
- Consider a **launch event for the Unnecessary Criminalisation Strategy**
- **Develop a clear training plan for staff and partners**
- **Update the Risk Management Policy**
- **Continue to Audit** (Thematic, across departments, crosscutting, multi-agency)

*CORE / EHM = Case Management Systems

*YROs = Youth Rehabilitation Orders

Next Steps

- Develop action plan to address the peer review recommendations
- New Name for the YOT (Rotherham Youth Justice Service)
- New name for the Board (Rotherham Youth Justice Partnership Board)
- Youth Justice Plan – Develop & Submit 30th June 2022