

Meeting Title	Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee
Report Title	Nottingham City Youth Justice Service Inspection activity
Meeting Date	

Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People Ailsa Barr, Director for Children’s Integrated Services
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Report author and contact details:	Simon Newling-Ward

<p>Summary of issues:</p> <p>Nottingham Youth Justice Service (YJS) received a full three-week joint inspection in November 2019 at which it was graded Requires Improvement. HM Inspectorate of Probation complete independent inspections and report to the Ministry of Justice on four domains.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational Delivery including workloads and staffing levels, • Court Disposals, • Out of Court Disposals and • Resettlement. <p>In November 2022, the Service invited a Peer Review team, made up of YJS Managers from across the country, to come and review the service with a focus on four key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the effectiveness of the Governance arrangements, • are operational arrangements for First-Time Entrants robust and working effectively, • are partnership arrangements working effectively in supporting the work around First-Time Entrants and • are local arrangements to reduce Serious Youth Violence and to support the management of high-risk children in the community working. <p>Further to the four key lines of enquiry, reviewers were looking at two golden threads of the Child’s Voice and Disproportionality and Anti-Racist practice.</p> <p>This report details the outcome of the above Inspection and Peer Review and the progress made since then.</p>
<p>Recommendation(s):</p> <p>1. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee consider the findings of HMIP Inspection report March 2020.</p> <p>2. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee confirm its commitment to improving Youth Justice Services and its ambition for Nottingham Children’s Services to be delivering consistently good social Youth Justice services to children and victims.</p> <p>3. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee note the progress made since the full joint inspection and peer review and the next steps.</p>

1. Background

Youth Offending Teams, or Youth Justice Services, have been in place since 2000. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 identifies the Local Authority as the body with responsibility for providing Youth Offending Provision. The Service is governed by the Youth Justice Board and a local Youth Justice Service Management Board, chaired in Nottingham by the Corporate Director, with membership from senior strategic partners including Police Superintendents, YJB, Health Commissioning Managers, Director of Children's Services and Head of Service. Nottingham Youth Justice Service sits within Early Help.

The Service is staffed by Local Authority and partnership staff including seconded Probation staff, Police Officers, Nurses and Substance use practitioners. We report back on 12 new KPIs addressing performance from reducing reoffending to the number of children with a Special Educational Need.

The Service is currently working with 293 children and over the period 2022/23 worked with 588 unique children. These children are supported on a range of prevention, pre-Court, and post-Court, including custodial sentence, interventions. The breakdown is as follows: 113 children on prevention programmes including Turnaround, Another Way, Divert Plus and the AP Taskforce, 135 children on Out of Court Disposals and 107 children on post-Court Disposals.

Our most recent reoffending rates, shared with the Board in August 2023, is 30%, the national figure is 31.1%.

2. Nottingham City YJS HMIP Inspection and peer review

Nottingham Youth Justice Service (YJS) received a full three-week joint inspection in November 2019. This inspection was part of an ongoing programme with ratings across three broad areas:

- the arrangements for organisational delivery of the service
- the quality of work done with children and young people sentenced by the courts; and
- the quality of out-of-court disposal work.

Overall, Nottingham City YJS was rated as 'Requires improvement' as reported 19 Mar 2020. The recommendations to the YJS Management Board and Service Management included:

- the review of the Out of Court Process,
- addressing the numbers of young children entering the YJS for the first time,
- developing the Victim and Restorative Justice process.
- improving staff access to clinical supervision,
- better gain the views of children and their parents and carers and
- to review the quality assurance processes.

In November 2022, the Service invited a Peer Review team, made up of YJS Managers from across the country, to come and review the service with a focus on four key areas:

- the effectiveness of the Governance arrangements,
- are operational arrangements for First-Time Entrants robust and working effectively,
- are partnership arrangements working effectively in supporting the work around First-Time Entrants and
- are local arrangements to reduce Serious Youth Violence and to support the management of high-risk children in the community working.

Further to the four key lines of enquiry, reviewers were looking at two golden threads of the Child's Voice and Disproportionality and Anti-Racist practice.

The team produced a report detailing strengths, areas for consideration and recommendations.

The YJS has addressed the recommendations from both the HMIP Inspection and the Peer Review within the Operational Delivery Plan that is reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Youth Justice Management Board. The

timescale for completion of this plan follows the three-year YJS plan that is due for review at the end of March 2024.

Key assurance activity has been completed including:

- the development of a Diversity and Identity Strategy and Action Plan,
- ongoing participation and engagement exercises,
- the review and development in partnership of the Child Criminal Exploitation management process that has led to a new way of working with Police, Social Care, and other partnership colleagues,
- the ongoing development of a prevention and early intervention offer including the growth of the Targeted Youth Support Team to deliver the Turnaround and Another Way projects
- the review and development of risk management and quality assurance processes.

It should be noted that at the time of the HMIP Inspection, there was no national guidance about the Out of Court process and immediately following the inspection the Service put in place remedial actions for the recommendations. We now have a robustly quality assured, multi-agency Out of Court Disposal panel and are working in partnership to address the ongoing issues of high first-time entrants to the Youth Justice System. This process was recognised by the Peer Reviewers as being of a high standard compared to other YJS they had observed.

Within the Service staffing establishment is the Targeted Youth Support team, offering a range of prevention and early intervention support. This includes the government's recently introduced Turnaround programme engaging with children at the earlier possibility to stop any potential further offending and a Youth Endowment Funded project, Another Way, supporting those children identified as at risk of group offending and serious youth violence. The Service has developed a number of participation and engagement activities where beyond the regular feedback received by children as part of their intervention, specific thematic questions are asked of children about their experiences of growing up in Nottingham and being involved with offending, the results of which have been shared with the Service and the Board.

Key recommendations were made including:

- Board to consider representation from schools and the voluntary sector,
- consider how they can incorporate data to ensure the voice of the child is heard,
- to review the knife crime policy and performance data for Out of Court disposals,
- strengthen and evaluate the partnerships approach to reducing first time entrants,
- to expand the internal learning review process and review the use of remand to Local Authority Accommodation.

In the last 12 months, the Service has:

- Further developed the risk management processes and updated the risk management meetings to now include a more holistic, multi-agency approach inviting professionals to contribute to the risk management of children.
- The review process that was held by the Service following a child entering custody has been expanded and now any child entering custody or committing a serious further offence as identified by the Youth Justice Board is now reviewed by a multi-agency panel including colleagues from across Social Care, Health, Education and the Police to identify key learning for the partnership.
- Worked with the Violence Reduction Partnership and county YJS colleagues to commission an exploratory research study to understand the high numbers of First Time Entrants into the youth justice system in Nottingham(shire)
- Discussing with the Police and County YJS colleagues the need to review the use of outcome 22 and other Out of Court Disposals. The knife crime policy has been reviewed and amended leading to children being referred automatically to, and assessed by, the YJS.
- Introduced and embedded a new Case Management system that has given the Service greater insight and analytical capability.
- Following YJB changes to the Key Performance Indicators, the Service has implemented new recording procedures and data capture for these. The Service has implemented data solutions to

address the operational need for better information sharing across the partnership in education, Police, health, and substance use.

3. Next steps

The Service continues to carry out audits into service delivery at the same time as the YJS Management Board has carried out an evaluation exercise to address HMIP inspection criteria to ensure progress against outcomes. The Board is in the process of updating the Terms of Reference and Action Plan following this activity. It is anticipated that the Service will receive an inspection in the forthcoming 12-month period.

The Service continues to work with external commissioners to expand the service offer, particularly with Health, Substance Use, CAMHs and victim services as the cohort has changed to a more prevention and pre-court demographic.