JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2015/16

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (STARTING WELL AND DEVELOPING WELL)

CHAPTER: Key Groups

TOPIC: Young Offenders (Including Young People in Custody)

Why is this important?

This topic focuses on offending behaviour by children and young people, aged 10 – 17 (10 years being the age of criminal responsibility).

Everyone wants to feel safe in their homes and communities and it is important that children and young people who offend must face up to the consequences of their actions. Reducing re-offending is also a priority for Government. The Youth Justice Board (YJB) is currently in the third year of a reducing re-offending programme and has published a report with an update on progress and summaries of the learning from national and local data, practice and research.¹

Which children are affected?²

Children in the youth justice system are predominantly drawn from the poorest and most disadvantaged families and communities and have multiple problems:

- 60% have significant speech, language or communication difficulties
- around a quarter have a learning disability
- one third of young people in custody have a mental health disorder (3 times higher than the general population)
- many have a history of abuse or bereavement
- around a half of young people in custody have been in local authority care at some point in their lives and a fifth are still subject to care orders
- children placed in custody face separation (sometimes by long distances) from family and friends, isolation from the community, and interruption to education, employment or training
- Children do not always receive the support they need to cope and to turn their lives around. In particular, those leaving custody often have inadequate accommodation and are not supported in getting back into education or training
- Custody is expensive and often ineffective. Despite improvements in recent years, 72% of children released from custody go on to re-offend within one year.

¹ Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (2015) Reducing reoffending: furthering our understanding.

² Barnardos (2015) Children in trouble with the law [online] Available at: http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what we do/our work/youth justice.htm
[Accessed 11 December 2015]

National data

National-level analysis of statistics on proven reoffending over the past ten years from 2002 up to the year ending March 2013 (2012/13) has been published by the Ministry of Justice and the YJB as an official statistics report National Analysis of Re-offending Data, for those aged 10-17 (2015). https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-analysis-of-re-offending-data-for-those-aged-10-17

In summary:

- In the year April 2012 to March 2013, around 52,600 young offenders aged 10-17 were cautioned, convicted or released from custody. There were around 19,000 reoffenders and 56,800 reoffences in the same period.
- The number of young offenders (in the reoffending cohort), reoffenders and reoffences reached a peak in the 12 months ending March 2007, but has since reduced year on year. Both the binary (the proportion of offenders who reoffend) and frequency reoffending rates have increased slightly over the same period.
- The cohort of young offenders (as well as the make-up of reoffenders) has changed considerably since 2002 and is comprised of young offenders whose characteristics mean they are more likely to reoffend than those in the 2002 cohort. Principally, that there are proportionately more young offenders with more entrenched offending behaviour.

The report also presents trends in reoffending by age, gender, ethnicity, number of previous offences and the time from release to first offence. The type of offence that led to the young offender being included in the reoffending cohort and the type of sentence the young offender received for this offence are also included.

The Manchester Picture

The youth justice system was established nationally under section 37 of the Crime and Disorder Act with the principal aim of preventing offending by children and young people aged 10 – 18 years. The duty of Manchester Youth Justice (MYJ) is to co-ordinate the provision of youth justice services to facilitate the sentences and orders of the courts on all children and young people. The focus of Manchester Youth Justice work is to challenge offending behaviour and address the risk factors associated with it. These can include:

- Mental health problems
- Poor parental supervision
- Domestic violence
- Truancy
- School exclusion

- Substance misuse
- Abuse
- Peer group pressure
- Gang activity

Success in responding to the risks and vulnerabilities of young people requires a joint approach from a range of local agencies. The legislative framework underpinning the establishment of a youth justice team brings together the staff and wider resources of these agencies including **police**, **probation**, **health**, **education and children's services**. Manchester Youth Justice also commissions provision from a range of services in public, private and voluntary sector.

Manchester Youth Justice sits within the **Children and Families Directorate** in the City Council which provides a range of services for children and adults in Manchester, ranging from traditional social care, to homelessness prevention and helping people into employment.

Manchester Youth Justice will ensure that the services provided meet the needs of the courts, stakeholders and young people, provide good value for money and increase the impact and effectiveness to deliver better outcomes.

Vision Statement:

In Manchester, we will develop an effective youth justice system where:

- Children and young people receive the support they need to lead crime free lives
- More offenders are held to account for their actions and helped to reduce offending
- Victims are better supported and young people learn about the impact of their behaviour on victims
- Children and families are supported and encouraged to become less dependant and more economically active within local communities

What would we like to achieve?

Strategic Aims:

Manchester Youth Justice identifies in its Business Plan that it will work in partnership and commission providers to achieve three strategic priorities for 2015/16:

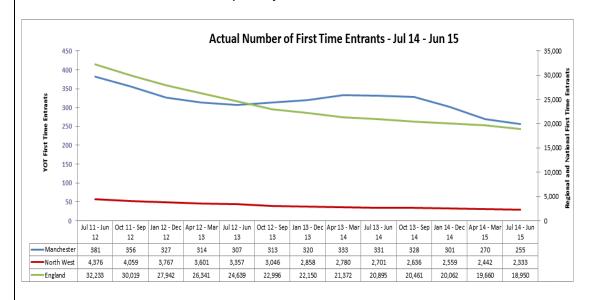
These are:

1. Reducing the number of children and young people entering the Criminal Justice System

Prevention is increasingly recognised by all partner agencies as being fundamental to effective and positive outcomes for children and young people. In 2015/16 Manchester Youth Justice will engage with a range of partners and providers to improve access to universal and targeted youth provision and other effective interventions for children and young people who are identified as being at risk of entering the Criminal Justice System. We will also work with Police and victims to divert selected young people away from statutory services and instead, opportunities will be sought to provide appropriate early intervention and support to prevent future offending behaviour.

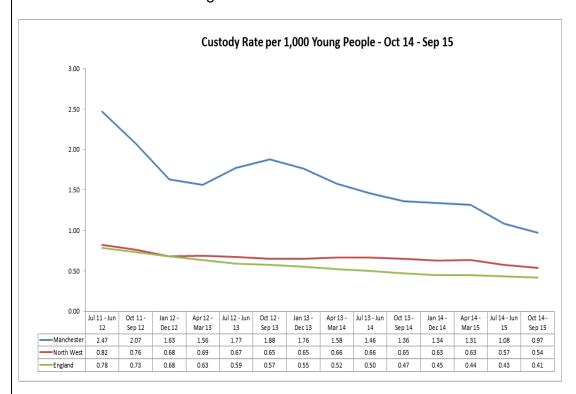
Out of Court disposals allow the police to deal quickly and proportionately with less serious, often first time offending which could more appropriately be resolved without a prosecution at court. Out of Court disposals available to children and young people are Community Resolutions, Youth Cautions and Youth Conditional Cautions.

Under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012, the further development of the approach to Out Of Court Disposals which is facilitated by a Triage model, working closely with partners in Greater Manchester Police remains a priority.



2. Reducing the use of custody for children and young people

In Manchester, the number of children and young people receiving custodial sentences has continued to be low over the past year (between July 2014 and March 2015 35 young people received custodial sentences). We will work with stakeholders and partners to continue to reduce the demand for custody and learn from other services who have been successful in achieving this. We will continue to ensure the numbers of breaches in community sentences are low by continuing the model of Compliance Panels to support young people and their families in better compliance rates. We have developed a better understanding of when and why young people are remanded in custody in order to achieve more reductions in these figures and costs.



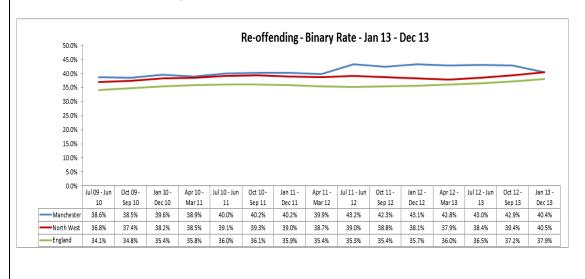
3. Reducing re-offending committed by children and young people

Manchester Youth Justice is committed to reducing crime within our local communities and in particular, the number of victims. Manchester Youth Justice is a key contributor to the Manchester Crime Strategy and keeping Manchester residents safe is a priority for us. When a young person offends, we will work together with our partners to address the risks and needs that increase the likelihood of reoffending. We will work with providers and key partners to get those children or young people known to Manchester Youth Justice into a full-time school, college, training or employment placement as evidence shows this is one of the key factors in building resilience and reducing reoffending amongst this age group.

Manchester Youth Justice has participated in the national Youth Justice Board pilot using the Reducing Re-offending Toolkit and has developed a clearer understanding of reoffending data in order to develop practical steps to addressing this more effectively. Manchester Youth Justice will focus on providing more evidence based interventions which are proven to be effective

with young people. Rigorous enforcement of community sentences or prison licences will be carried out by case-managers when young people fail to comply or breach the terms of their order or licence agreement.

The graph, below, indicates the latest binary re-offending rate (the proportion of offenders who reoffend):



What do we need to do to achieve this?

It is best if services respond to children in trouble as troubled children, so that those at risk of or engaged in offending can be challenged but also improve their life chances – this is the best way to make our communities safer for everybody. Over the past year Manchester Youth Justice has been developing links with the Troubled Families team to work in partnership to identify a small cohort of cases where the YJ Case Manager would be best placed to become the lead professional for the family of the child or young person known to MYJ. The aim is provide a consistent approach to working with the whole family to improve matters.

Manchester Youth Justice also has strong partnership work with an extensive range of partners at both strategic and operational level. Partners include:

- Criminal Justice (Police, Probation, Courts)
- Community Safety Partnership
- Children and Families
- Manchester Safeguarding Children's Board (MSCB)
- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
- Health
- Education/Schools
- Transforming Rehabilitation (TR) partners (National Probation Service (NPS), Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC).
- Troubled Families

What are we currently doing?

The previous Youth Offending Service (YOS) management board has this year developed into a Youth Justice Management Board. The emphasis of Manchester Youth Justice's work has over the last year shifted to a whole family approach and as such has begun to work in partnership with the Troubled Families team. We will operate as lead professionals for families in a number of cases and will continue to work to ensure there is a consistent approach to working with the whole family.

Over the past year Manchester Youth Justice has responded to a reduction in funding by undertaking a management re-structure and also closed a locality office and merged our Central and South teams into one. MYJ faces the challenge of managing budget pressures very closely over the next year and the impact of reduced central government funding may lead to a remodelling of services. Manchester Youth Justice has also forecast savings against an anticipated reduction in local authority funding for next year.

Whilst the strategic aims of Manchester Youth Justice remain focussed on preventing and reducing re-offending by children and young people, the aim is to develop a prevention strategy, in conjunction with key partners, and a revised approach to out of court disposals, making referrals to the new Early Help hubs where appropriate. Manchester Youth Justice also supports and contributes to Manchester Children's Services priority strategic objective to reduce the number of children who are looked after.

Manchester Youth Justice voluntarily allowed Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) to test out their new inspection methodology in March 2015. HMIP inspected a small case sample and provided some helpful feedback and gave re-assurance that our compliance measures are effective, we make good vulnerability assessments and highlighted that our local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) is integrated and working well.

Community and Stakeholder Views

Manchester Youth Justice actively consults with children and young people during supervision by using a web based electronic survey called VIEWPOINT.

NACRO (National Association of Care and Resettlement of Offenders) have undertaken a national survey called 'Beyond Youth Custody'.³ Key messages from the survey are:

- 1. Services need to be co-ordinated, and individually tailored to meet the multiple and complex needs of vulnerable young people;
- 2. It is important to engage young people to achieve positive change;
- 3. There needs to be good planning with a continuous service between custody and the community, focussed on resettlement.

References and Links

Manchester's State of the City Report 2015

http://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/100004/the_council_and_democracy/6469/s tate_of_the_city_report

Manchester Youth Justice Business Plan (2015-16)

Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (2015) 'Reducing re-offending: furthering our understanding'.

Youth Justice Board/Ministry of Justice (2015) National Analysis of Reoffending data, for those aged 10-17.

Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, 2015 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/4 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/4 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/4 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/4 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/4 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/4 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/syst

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012

Barnardos (2015) Children in trouble with the law [online] Available at: http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_work/youth_justice.htm [Accessed 11 December 2015]

NACRO (2015) Beyond Youth Custody [online] Available at: http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/wp-content/uploads/Effective-resettlement-of-young-people-lessons-from-Beyond-Youth-Custody.pdf [Accessed 17 December 2015]

³ NACRO (2015) Beyond Youth Custody [online] Available at: http://www.beyondyouthcustody.net/wp-content/uploads/Effective-resettlement-of-young-people-lessons-from-Beyond-Youth-Custody.pdf [Accessed 17 December 2015]

Other JSNA Topics that this links to

- 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training
- Smoking, alcohol and drug use
- Young People's Sexual Health
- Safeguarding
- Looked After Children and Young People
- Care Leavers
- Children with special educational needs and disabilities
- Children of prisoners
- Young LGBT people
- Young Carers
- Families at risk (Confident and Achieving Work) inc EH
- Teenage Parents
- Mental health
- Domestic violence

Date first version completed: 19 January 2016

Date of latest version: