Nottingham City Youth Justice Plan

2023-24



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Contents

[Introduction, vision, and strategy 3](#_Toc156206872)

[Local Context 3](#_Toc156206873)

[Child First & Voice of the child 4](#_Toc156206874)

[Governance, leadership, and partnership arrangements 7](#_Toc156206875)

[Board development 8](#_Toc156206876)

[Progress on previous plan 8](#_Toc156206877)

[Resources and services 9](#_Toc156206878)

[Performance 10](#_Toc156206879)

[National key performance indicators 13](#_Toc156206880)

[Priorities 16](#_Toc156206881)

[Standards for children in the justice system 29](#_Toc156206882)

[Workforce Development 30](#_Toc156206883)

[Evidence-based practice and innovation 30](#_Toc156206884)

[Evaluation 31](#_Toc156206885)

[Service development 32](#_Toc156206886)

[Challenges, risks, and issues 32](#_Toc156206887)

[Sign off, submission and approval 33](#_Toc156206888)

# Introduction, vision, and strategy

1.1 In Nottingham City we want all our children to be safe, healthy, happy and to be provided with a good quality education and opportunities that enable them to flourish. This means that children who offend or are at risk of offending must be seen as children first, who require our care, support, protection, and challenge so that they can achieve alongside their peers. We know that the children in our youth justice system have, typically, not had the best start in life. It is our duty as youth justice partners to address the many challenges they and their families experience in order to promote their development into constructive members of our community, improving their life chances and thereby reducing crime and victimisation in our borough.

1.2 Nottingham City Youth Justice Service presented a three-year Youth Justice plan to the Management Board and the YJB in June 2021. This is the third review of that plan and demonstrates the ongoing progress, the targets yet to be met and what will be delivered during the final year of this plan to meet our responsibilities and the needs of Nottingham’s children. This reflects a review of progress in the last year and our ambitions for the year ahead. In this year we have introduced a new case management system that provides us with greater insight and analysis capability than before, a new management structure providing greater capacity and sustainability and have undergone a Peer Review providing us with a time to reflect and refocus.

1.3 As Chair of the Nottingham City Youth Justice Partnership Board, I am proud of the progress our partnership has made to prevent offending and support young people’s desistance. At the heart of our partnership is a strong Youth Justice Service (YJS), which has a well-led, highly skilled multi-agency staff team, integrated within our innovative Early Help Service. Our partnership can point to the strength of our high level of integration around the children and families we support and to whole system responses across health, safeguarding and justice. Anchoring our vision for youth justice in Nottingham City is an assurance that standards of service to young people, families and courts are consistently met, meaning we can confidently look to take on the big challenges, which will enable us to realise our ambition for the children in our youth justice system and for the community in Nottingham City . While we will continue to be assiduous in ensuring the quality of youth justice practice, we are ambitious to change the lived experience of the children in our youth justice system and commit ourselves to the priorities set out by the new YJB Key Performance Indicators.

1.4 This plan seeks to review our impact and outcomes for children in Nottingham City and look forward to the ongoing challenges and developing creative solutions for these.

# Local Context

1.5 The 2021 Census results show that Nottingham City has 65,972 children and young people under the age of 18. The latest population of children aged between 10-17 years old is 28,894.

1.6 Deprivation affects a significant number of families in Nottingham. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) only supply partial information on deprivation which, in 2019, ranks the city as the 12th most deprived, with 27% of those aged 16 and over and 39% of 0-15-year olds living in neighbourhoods that fall into the 10% most deprived neighbours in the country.

1.7 In the 12 months to April 2023, Nottingham City Youth Justice Service worked with 485 unique children. Of these 216 were White British, 27 Black/Black British, 18 Asian/Asian British, 98 Mixed Heritage, 19 Any Other White Background, including 5 East Europeans. The remaining do not have the ethnicity information known. Some of the missing data may be as a result of the data migration and recording principles under the previous case management system, this is now a mandated recorded data set and subject to regular quality assurance and error reporting.

1.8 There were 109 children aged under 14 at the time of their YJS intervention and they can have more than one outcome/intervention during this time. 37 children had prevention cases (including 19 Turnaround programme), 135 received Out of Court Disposals (Out of court assessments, Community resolutions, Outcome 22 and YC/YCC), three received Divert Plus interventions, three Referral Orders, one Custody and one YRO.

1.9 Reference is made later in this report to regional comparators. For clarity, these are as follows:

* **Core Cities**: Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cardiff.
* **YJS Family:** Manchester, Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Southampton, Bristol, Coventry, Birmingham, Salford, Kingston-Upon-Hull, Portsmouth.

Child First & Voice of the child

2.1 Nottingham City YJS follows the four tenets of the Child First principles: to see children as children, develop pro-social identity for positive child outcomes, collaboration with children and to promote diversion. Staff recognise that to be best placed to model pro-social norms and behaviours, a relationship of trust and respect must first be established. All staff develop functional relationships with the children, taking account of their need be that neurodiversity, age, trauma, and identity.

2.2 **See children as children:** Prioritise the best interests of children, recognising their particular needs, capacities, rights, and potential. All work is child-focused and developmentally informed: Understanding the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and Trauma is high on our agenda as we continue to aim to fully embed the ‘Child First’ principle into our service. Most practitioners have undertaken ACE and trauma training in the last three years when the Service received additional funding for this programme, however it is noted that the Service would benefit from a refresher as new research and practice is developed.

2.3 **Develop pro-social identity for positive child outcomes:** Promote children’s individual strengths and capacities as a means of developing 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. All assessments are completed jointly with the child and their family and support and intervention plans are subsequently tailored to needs.

2.4 **Collaboration with children and their carers:** Encourage children’s active participation, engagement, and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.

2.5 Over the last 12 months we have continued to develop our participation work with children. We hold quarterly Participation meetings with a small staff group to develop new approaches and review process. These are chaired by an YJS Operations manager and championed by the Service Manager.

2.6 We have created questionnaires designed to help children explore their views and experiences of working with YJS, and the service they have received from us. This information is anonymised, compiled, and shared across the organisation to enable us to improve the process of incorporating children’s views into our practice improvement. Feedback from the cohort provided the below examples:

* What do you think about the work you’ve been doing with your YJS workers?
* *‘explained that I’d struggle in a group and so some work was done 1:1......some at the office...some at home. Felt that the work has helped me to stay out of trouble.... learned new skills to keep out of trouble...work on knife crime was the most useful...’*
* *‘reparation sessions were most helpful in helping me stay out of trouble’*
* *‘occupied my time, so that could not spend this time getting into trouble’*
* *‘the work I’ve been doing with the YJS is helpful, and I can talk with my worker... work on helping with his family relationships was the most helpful’*
* *‘Times and dates for appointments suited me well. Most of the time, I meet with worker at NGY, but that there are also home visits… feel that the balance between the two works.’*

2.7 Other questionnaires have been designed to help explore children’s views on local issues that affect them and their lives, such as knife crime and use of social media. This is a new approach and each quarter the questions will be reviewed and updated. It is intended that children will contribute to future questions for their peers and that this themed information will be shared across the partnership to enable children’s voices being heard by decision-makers. Feedback from the previous participation exercises has been shared at the board and the current feedback received recently will be shared at the Board and Service Meetings.

* Do you think knife crime is a problem in Nottingham?
* What should YJS be doing to make things safer?
* *‘Yes, a big one because everyone wants to be a gangster. Supporting more young people’*
* *‘More Youth Clubs and more sessions on them’*
* *‘Knife crime – yes – big one.*
* *‘Yes. It’s easy to get a weapon’*
* *‘Not really because I don’t see it’*
* *‘100% yes. 14-17-year olds are carrying knives – see this in my area. YJS could exchange knives for JD vouchers. Try and block the websites that sell the weapons. Educate young people on the laws and consequences’*
* *‘Knife crime is a problem in Nottingham because people are going around stabbing people.... could be reduced by having cameras in public places’*
* *‘Yes, you see it on the news people getting stabbed. YJS can do what we’re already doing, I don’t think nothing will change with knives and knife crime’*
* *‘Average. Less in other areas such as the countryside but it is worse in London. There is nothing you can do’*

2.8 Children have contributed to our recruitment processes, most recently for Targeted Youth Support posts within the new Turnaround Project. Here they conducted separate interviews with the candidates, supported by a staff member.

2.9 We continue to be linked with NCC’s Research, Engagement and Consultation (REC) team, the purpose of which is to enable the council to ensure children’s’ voices are heard at every point of their journey with us and set the standard for all our work. YJS staff are also contributing to the city’s goals of being a UN Child Friendly City.

2.10 We hold participation group sessions at our Saturday Attendance Centre which will again follow a thematic approach. Future plans involve the development of additional approaches to enable children to have access to decision-makers, such as drop-in sessions with the Service Manager, and work with the YJS board members to create representation at board meetings. We also plan to embed participation further by involving parents and carers, so they are able to contribute to future YJS developments. As a minimum, we plan for parents and carers to be contacted by a YJS manager towards the end of every intervention to gather experiences and views with a view to service improvement.

2.11 Following a participation exercise reflecting upon children’s experiences with their case manager, the below word art was created demonstrating the positive regard case managers are held in by their children.



2.12 **Promote diversion:** Working with the Police and the Courts, we seek to identify opportunities to divert children from the Youth Justice System whilst ensuring unmet needs are addressed by the appropriate partner agencies. This is exemplified by the membership and work of the Out of Court Panel and the excellent work completed by the Targeted Youth Support.

2.13 Nottingham City continue to have one of the highest First Time Entrant (FTE) rates in the country and as such reducing FTEs into the CJS and promoting diversion has been and continues to be one of our strategic priorities. We have undertaken an extensive set of actions to support this priority, including working with partners to review the Inclusive Schools policy, continuing to support the AP strategy, and working with the Police and County YJS to review the knife crime process as part of the Joint Out of Court policy. We anticipate these programmes and change processes to have significant impact upon our First Time Entrant cohort as we see decision-making for assessment and risk management placed in the hands of the YJS Case Managers.

2.14 Whilst one of our key strategic priorities is to continue to embed a child first youth justice service, the board are equally aware that we remain a Criminal Justice Agency and as such need to ensure that our child first principles does not detract from our ability to manage children’s presenting risk and vulnerabilities equally. Nottingham City YJS is committed to ensure that we protect victims and ensure that the voice of the victim continues to be heard across our system. The recruitment of a new Victim and Restorative practitioner and the recording and monitoring of this data as part of the new Key Performance Indicators will allow us to better collate, analyse and share this information.

Governance, leadership, and partnership arrangements

3.1 The YJS sits within the Early Help service area as an integral part of Children’s Integrated Services (CIS), under the People’s directorate.

3.2 At the same time, the YJS retains its identity, management, and governance in accordance with YJB guidance. The location of the YJS within CIS ensures that children who offend or are at risk of offending are recognised as children and children in need, whose vulnerability is often expressed through offending behaviour. It also means the level of support needed for children can be escalated and de-escalated in accordance with need and risk. Through Early Help, the YJS has access to a range of universal, targeted and specialist services, including Youth Service; Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS), Education, Supporting Families and Children’s Centres.

3.3 Operational partnership support includes two police officers, police administrative support, one PCSO, a part-time Probation, and Probation Service, Officer. With regards to Health we had a Learning Disability specialist nurse, two specialist YJS nurses and a Futures employment specialist seconded to the Nottingham Works for You project. We also have commissioned services provided by Change, Grow, Live substance use provision and CAMHS support.

3.4 The YJS’ head of service role is Head of Service of Early Help at Assistant Director level. The roles other responsibilities include CAMHS, Early Help and Behaviour and Emotional Health, Supported Families and Family Intervention, and the Youth Service.

3.5 Strategic direction, clear oversight and integrated strategic partnership working is critical to the success and effective delivery of youth justice services. The YJS Management Board is chaired by the Corporate Director for People and has representatives at an appropriate level of seniority from by all key statutory partners. The quarterly Board meetings provide robust challenge and oversight of performance and quality assurance against national and local performance indicators.

3.6 The Board also ensures scrutiny of progress against the YJS plan, inspection reports, learning from key developments or serious incidents. The Board are also active in supporting partnership approaches, removing barriers, and ensuring effective communication between relevant services.

3.7 In this period, the Service has restructured the management team to better provide oversight, accountability, and quality assurance to the service. Following significant review, the change was implemented on the 1st January 2023. The management team will shortly be undertaking further training and reflective workshops to further embed the changes.

Board development

4.1 In this year the Board has undertaken a reflective workshop on board governance, purpose, and direction. Exercises were completed addressing understanding the location of the YJS within the wider systems. Board members recognised that the issues faced by children who are at risk of offending are not solely the responsibility of the YJS but require a wider system response.

4.2 We have retained the leadership and extended the membership to include greater representation from across Children’s Social Care with both the Director of Children’s Services and the Head of Service of First Response in attendance.

4.3 The impact of the above workshop has seen now greater focus on the role of board members within their own organisations and the representation and impact they can bring to bear upon the YJS cohort within the broader systems. This Board is seeking to bring together greater alignment across the range of boards that members represent, again ensuring the voice of the child is central to partnership agendas. The induction for Board members, information sharing, and observations included during this process have provided greater understanding and engagement for both Board members and those staff who have met with them during this process.

4.4 In order to further develop the Board and its engagement with the strategic direction setting of the service, in this period we have designed three sub-committees. These will provide greater operational oversight and providing a link between strategy, the board, and front-line staff. They are action and task focussed and cover Disproportionality, Data, and Inspection Readiness, three long-term key areas for the service.

Progress on previous plan

5.1 As stated above, this is second final review of a three-year plan set out in 2021. The strategic targets of which came from the HMIP inspection report of 2019. The plan has 13 key priorities including addressing Disproportionality, Child Criminal Exploitation, Out of Court Disposals, Serious Youth Violence, Participation, Education, Quality Assurance and Victims.

5.2 On a quarterly basis the Board approves progress against the Operational Delivery Plan and notes ongoing priorities and targets for completion. Some of the key activities this year include the introduction of a new Case Management system and the training that has gone alongside this, the commissioning of a Peer Review, the introduction of new prevention and early intervention work, including the Turnaround and YEF funded, Another Way, programme, the ongoing delivery of the AP Taskforce and Divert Plus and the ongoing participation activities and review of interventions used by staff in the service. Most of the planned targets for this three-year plan have now been achieved, with a number of activities now being business as usual and embedded within service delivery.

5.3 The Operational Delivery plan monitors progress on the plan and highlights areas of ongoing development and need, attached as Appendix Four.

Resources and services

6.1 Nottingham City YJS is compliant with the YJB requirement to meet their grant conditions. To enable the YJS to balance its budget, the financial contributions to the service comprise of local authority core funding and the Ministry of Justice (MoJ)/YJB Grant. This is supplemented by partner contributions in kind or cash in accordance with their statutory responsibility. The contributions reflect the continuing commitment from funding partners to the YJS. The YJS also seeks additional grant funding opportunities through collaborative working with appropriate partners. In 2023/24 the YJB’s contribution is expected to include an uplift as in the previous years, but this has not yet been confirmed. The YJS spends its budget as follows, 72% on staffing, 4% on IT and infrastructure, 1% on Buildings and 23% on intervention delivery and support to children.

6.2 Other partner agencies’ contributions from the Police and Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have been maintained at the same level since 2018/19. The exception to this is the National Probation Service (NPS) whose financial contribution reduced by 25% in 2020/21. The reduced contribution from the NPS is reflected in the national agreement for contributions to all YJSs. Staff secondments from NPS and Nottingham & Nottinghamshire CCG also demonstrate an important commitment from partners and provides the YJS with critical expertise, resources and diverse staff knowledge and experience.

**Table 1: Financial contributions of YJS partners as of 1st April 2023 (£)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Partner** | **19/20** | **20/21** | **21/22** | **22/23** | **23/24** |
| **Notts Police** | 53,180 | 53,180 | 53,180 | 53,180 | 53,180 |
| **Notts CCG** | 32,225 | 32,225 | 32,225 | 32,225 | 32,225 |
| **National Probation**  | 10,000 | 7,500 | 7,500 | 7,500 | 7,500 |
| **Youth Justice Board** | 746,607.00 | 843,122\* | 917,447 | 1,016,783 | 1,016,783\* |
| **Nottm. City Council** | 837,957 | 961,841 | 956,958 | 1,178,000 | 1,043,024 |
| **Recoup from Notts CC** | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| **Junior Attendance Centre** | 79,983 | Now within YJB Grant | - | - | - |
| **TOTAL** | **1,764,952** | **1,902,788** | **1,972,230** | **2,119,027** |  |

**\*To be confirmed**

Performance

7.1 This section provides an overview of key performance data with descriptions of current performance against nationally measured targets. Comparative and local performance data is also presented where relevant in relation to Nottingham City YJS’s aim to reduce the number of first-time entrants (FTEs), reoffending, and in the use of custody (in both remand and sentencing).

**Table 2: Re-offending after 12 months (MoJ data from PNC)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Area** | **Original Caution / Conviction****Dates** | **Average number of re-offences** | **Average number of re-offences per reoffender** | **Percentage of cohort reoffending** |
| **Nottingham (reported last year)** | **Jan 20-Mar 20** | 1.17 | 4.36 | 26.9 |
| **Nottingham** **(latest data)** | **Jan 21-Mar 21** | 0.65 | 2.17 | 30 |
| **Nottingham (local YJS data – comparable)**  | **Jan 21-Mar 21** | 0.25 | 2.00 | 12.5 |
| **Nottingham (local YJS data – latest)** | **Jan 22-Mar 22** | 0.62 | 2.46 | 25.4 |
| **Latest YJS family Average**  | **Jan 21-Mar 21** | 1.28 | 3.10 | 32.3 |
| **Latest Core City Average** | **Jan 21-Mar 21** | 1.19 | 3.94 | 32.7 |
| **Latest national average**  | **Jan 21-Mar 21** | 1.18 | 3.75 | 31.0 |

7.2 Table 2 provides a summary of the Reoffending Frequency Rate and Binary Rate. The Frequency rate (the number of re-offences per re-offender) is the mean average of re-offences committed per person in the original cohort. The Binary Rate (the percentage of cohort re-offending) is the percentage of the original cohort who receive a substantive outcome for an offence committed in the period after the original outcome (or release date for those subjects to custodial outcomes).

7.3 This KPI provides data from the Police National Computer (PNC) but this information is also recorded locally within the existing case management system, ChildView.

7.4 For the latest period available from the YJB, (January 2021 – March 2021) the offending cohort consists 60 children out of which 18 went to re-offend and committed 39 re-offences, hence the 30% Reoffending rate. For the same period last year, the Reoffending rate was lower, (26.9%) the offending cohort was 52, out of which 14 re-offended and committed 61 re-offences. This means a higher rate for re-offences per re-offender (4.36) and shows a reduction of 50% to 2.17.

**Table 3: Reoffender by disposal type (YJS)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome type** | **Cohort Dates** | **Outcomes To** | **No. In Cohort** | **3 Months** | **6 Months** | **9 Months** | **12 Months** |
| Pre-court | Feb 2022 to Apr 2022 | 30/04/2023 | 24 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| First tier | Feb 2022 to Apr 2022 | 30/04/2023 | 19 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Community | Feb 2022 to Apr 2022 | 30/04/2023 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Custodial | Feb 2022 to Apr 2022 | 30/04/2023 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

7.5 Table 3a contains local data on the number of re-offenders from each disposal type. The Pre-court outcomes consist of Youth cautions and Youth conditional cautions, which are the only substantive outcomes for this type. For YC/YCC outcomes there is limited intervention offered by the YJS, which shows that when more meaningful interventions are offered (like Referral Orders, YRO), a child is less likely to go on to re-offend.

**Table 4: Reoffender for Pre-Court non-substantive outcomes**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome type** | **Cohort Dates** | **Outcomes To** | **No. In Cohort** | **3 Months** | **6 Months** | **9 Months** | **12 Months** |
| Pre-court | Feb 2022 to Apr 2022 | 30/04/2023 | 114 | 12 | 3 | 1 | 2 |

7.8 Table 4 shows the local Reoffending data for the Pre-court outcomes that are non-substantive such as Community Resolutions, Outcome 22, Informal Action and Deferred Decision Informal Intervention. Similar to the YC/YCC, these types of outcomes have limited intervention offered by the YJS, which shows that the children are more likely to re-offend after receiving such outcomes.

**Young people receiving a conviction in court who are sentenced to custody**

**Table 5: Quarterly data 2019/20 to 2022/23 (YJS)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Use of Custody** | **Q1 19/20** | **Q2 19/20** | **Q3 19/20** | **Q4 19/20** | **Q1 20/21** | **Q2 20/21** | **Q3 20/21** | **Q4 20/21** | **Q1 21/22** | **Q2 21/22** | **Q3 21/22** | **Q4 21/22** | **Q1 22/23** | **Q2 22/23** | **Q3 22/23** | **Q4 22/23** |
| **Quarter** | 3 | 12 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| **Year** | 22 | 16 | 12 | 8 |

7.9 Over the last 12 months (Apr 22 – Mar 23), eight children received custodial outcomes. The current figures show a reduction in the number of custodial outcomes. One young person received a DTO but were re-sentenced to a community disposal (YRO) following appeal.

**Sentence length**

**Table 6: Average custodial sentence length: 2017-18 to 2021-22 (YJS)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **2017-18** | **2018-19** | **2019-20** | **2020-21** | **2021-22** | **2022-23** |
| **Average sentence length (months)** | 15.1 | 38.6 | 32.2 | 17.2 | 20.1 | 17.9 |

7.10 The table above shows how sentence length for custodial outcomes has changed over the past five financial years. Exploring the data further shows that the jump between 2017-18 and 2018-19 was significant. The length has now gradually come down but is still above the 2017-18 figure. Over these five years, the length of sentence given to White British young people has been on average 7 months shorter than the sentences for those from other ethnic backgrounds. Each outcome is individually reviewed and audited by YJS management and information is shared with the Board and partners where relevant. This process is completed to ensure issues of disproportionality, if present, are addressed.

7.11 The current Average sentence length for custodial outcomes is 17.9 months. The average sentence given to White British young people was 7.7 and 24 for young people from other ethnic groups.

**Table 7: Comparative data 2017/18 to 2022/23 (PNC)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rate per 1000 of 10-17 population** | **2017 - 18** | **2018 - 19** | **2019 - 20** | **2020 - 21** | **2021 - 22** | **2022-23** |
| Nottingham | 1.19 | 0.82 | 0.78 | 0.57 | 0.48 | 0.24 |
| Family/Stat Neigh. | 0.82 | 0.74 | 0.55 | 0.33 | 0.19 | 0.19 |
| Core Cities | 0.67 | 0.69 | 0.37 | 0.25 | 0.14 | 0.19 |
| National | 0.37 | 0.30 | 0.22 | 0.13 | 0.11 | 0.11 |

7.12 The table above is a statutory measure. To give us a real picture of what this means for Nottingham City YJS, we multiply the .48 by 29 (there are 29,002 10-17-year olds in Nottingham City) to give us a total of 12 custodial outcomes. However, we would need the 10-17-year-old populations of each of the given comparators to make clear comparisons.

7.13 The latest data published by the YJB is for Apr 22 – Mar 23 and shows a clear reduction in Custodial sentences hence in the Custody rates. Nottingham City had 7 custodial sentences during the above period.

National key performance indicators

**First-time entrants to the youth justice system aged 10-17**

8.1 First-time entrants are young people who enter the Criminal Justice System (CJS) for the first time. To enter the CJS, someone must receive a “substantive outcome”, defined as a court order or a caution, for a criminal offence. Therefore, those who are subject to community resolutions, Outcomes 20-22s or any of the outcomes related to civil offences, by definition, do not enter the CJS. FTE data is usually only available for those below the age of 18 (estimated to be roughly 40% of the people entering the CJS for the first time) and the official KPI is the proportion of young people aged 10 to 17 years old who live in the area who become a FTE.

8.2 This KPI is sourced from the Police National Computer (PNC) but is also recorded and reported locally using the current case management system.

8.9 Nottingham City YJS remains well above family, core city and national figures for First Time Entrants. This plan demonstrates a range of interventions being implemented, piloted, and being sought through external commissioning to address these figures. For example, we have a well-established Targeted Youth Support team who work with children who have been identified as at risk of involvement in Child Criminal Exploitation and Serious Youth Violence; The Alternative Provision taskforce is working with children in schools on the cusp of exclusion and criminality and the Divert Plus scheme is working with children at point of arrest. We are also delivering the Turnaround programme and have made recent bids for funding from the Immediate Justice programme to broaden further our early intervention and prevention work.

**Table 8: First-time Entrant’s performance by quarters: 2017/18 to 2021/22**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Q1** | **Q2** | **Q3** | **Q4** | **Total** |
| **2017-18** | 51 | 34 | 49 | 43 | **177** |
| **2018-19** | 41 | 44 | 31 | 44 | **160** |
| **2019-20** | 35 | 40 | 30 | 48 | **153** |
| **2020-21** | 8 | 36 | 36 | 33 | **113** |
| **2021-22** | 29 | 27 | 36 | 31 | **123** |
| **2022-23** | 41 | 46 | 30 | 29 | **146** |

8.10 Table 8 shows the number of First Time Entrants locally reported extracted from the service’s case management system. Table 9 provides the FTE rates from the PNC. The latest available period is Jan 22 – Dec 22.

**Table 9: First time entrants per 100,000 of 10-17 population (PNC data)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2017-18** | **2018-19** | **2019-20** | **2020-21** | **2021\*** | **2021-22** | **2021-22** |
| **Nottingham** | 547 | 568 | 394 | 358 | 440 | 486 | 455 |
| **Family / SNs** | 419 | 346 | 303 | 223 | 207 | 162 | 163 |
| **Core Cities** | 389 | 323 | 287 | 217 | 191 | 172 | 178 |
| **National** | 280 | 226 | 207 | 157 | 154 | 146 | 148 |

8.11 Between 1st June 22 and 31st May 23, there were 148 First Time Entrantsthat received the following interventions.It should be noted that Table 10provides the outcome for First Time Entrants, the offences committed is recorded in Appendix Six

**Table 10 Breakdown by outcome received:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Outcome** | **FTE** |
| Youth Caution | 50 |
| Referral Order | 47 |
| Youth Conditional Caution | 35 |
| Youth Rehabilitation Order | 6 |
| Conditional Discharge | 5 |
| Youth Caution + Conditions | 2 |
| Fine | 1 |
| Section 250 (was Section 91 Order) | 1 |
| Youth Rehabilitation Order ISS Requirement Band 2 | 1 |

8.12 At this time, we are uncertain as to whether the Youth Cautions are Police issued or following the multi-agency Out of Court Panel, and this is a data set that is being analysed for future reporting. We anticipate that with the increased use of Outcome 22 and the changes to the Knife Crime process, this will see a significant impact on our First Time Entrant cohort. Of greatest significance is that of these 148 only 21 reoffended equating to a reoffending rate of just 14%.

**Table 11 Breakdown of Re-offenders by initial outcome received:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **FTE Outcome** | **Re-offenders** |
| Referral Order | 14 |
| Youth Caution | 5 |
| Conditional Discharge | 1 |
| Youth Rehabilitation Order | 1 |

8.13 Further analysis is needed on the escalation of offending when reoffending and this will be provided for future reporting. All children who receive an Out of Court Disposal do receive YJS intervention and support. Of those that went on to reoffend, the breakdown of outcomes received after FTE outcome is as follows:

**Table 12 Outcomes received after FTE outcome**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Next Outcome** | **Re-offenders** |
| No outcome decided yet | 5 |
| Community Resolution Police Facilitated | 3 |
| Detention + Training Order (Custody) | 2 |
| Order Varied | 2 |
| Youth Rehabilitation Order | 2 |
| Community Resolution (Non-substantive/Voluntary) | 1 |
| Deferred Prosecution Outcome 22 | 1 |
| Outcome 22 | 1 |
| Referral Order | 1 |
| Referral Order + Additions | 1 |
| Remand to LAA Status/Programme no outcome yet | 1 |

**New Key Performance Indicators**

8.14 The introduction of the new KPI measures has coincided with our adoption of a new case management system.  As such, the opportunity has been used to change and improve recording practices within Nottingham YJS and with our partners; we are now able to both record, and report from, information held about children in relation to mental health, substance use, and education in a way that was not previously possible.   Work is ongoing with YJS staff to embed these recording principles into routine practice so data can be readily investigated and analysed.  This is a change from the previous situation where data were previously held across a range of alternative formats, and often recorded in a qualitative fashion in assessments such as Asset+.

8.15 This has also required the YJS to reconfigure and update many information sharing mechanisms with education, health, Police and other partners to ensure that the YJS is in receipt of accurate and timely data about children known to the YJS, and especially for those first time entrants to YJS previously known to other services.   There remain some challenges in these areas, as the commissioning arrangements with many of these partners was not undertaken with knowledge of these new KPIs, and some partners do not record, or are unable to easily extract, the datasets required to inform some of the KPI measures.

8.16 This means that obtaining the relevant data is both resource intensive, and problematic.  For example, the mental health and emotional wellbeing KPI asks if the child has received treatment for mental health or emotional wellbeing prior to becoming known to YJS.  What is meant by treatment is not clearly defined, but it is clear the support delivered in line with the NHS THRIVE framework could be recorded across at least 4 independent case record systems, not all of which are accessible to health staff seconded to YJS.   In relation to ETE, the proliferation of multi-academy trusts means that there is no requirement for a central recording mechanism for school attendance data beyond the school census returns.  This dataset is only available in retrospect and as such it requires individual contact to be made with each education provider to obtain the necessary data, rather than it being possible to obtain this from a centralised system.

8.17 Other barriers relate to decisions and processes that take place outside of the direct scope of influence of the YJS.  In relation to victims, much of the KPI measure is predicated on victims giving consent to be contacted by the YJS.  If this consent is not obtained by the Police Officer in the Case, this presents an immediate barrier to the YJS making an offer of Restorative Justice opportunities or obtaining victim views.

Priorities

**Children from groups which are over-represented**

9.1 The Service is aware that there is an over-representation of children from Black and Mixed ethnicity heritage. As stated above, we are working with partners to analyse the impact of over-representation and where this is having a negative impact upon the lives of those children.

9.2 The latest analysis for over-represented ethnic group for the 2022 Offending population shows that children from Mixed Heritage are over-represented.

**Table 13: Over-represented ethnic groups in local YJS offending population, year ending March 2021 (YJAF)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Ethnic group** | **2022 Offending Population** | **Share of total (1)** | **2011 mid-year 10-17 population by ethnic group** | **Share of total % (2)** | **% Point Difference** | **Over-represented and Significant cohort size** |
| Asian | 12 | 7% | 5,240 | 18% | -11% | No |
| Black | 28 | 17% | 4,007 | 14% | 3% | No |
| Mixed | 39 | 23% | 3,600 | 12% | 11% | Yes |
| Other | 0 | 0% | 1,252 | 4% | -4% | No |
| Ethnic minority groups\* | 79 | 48% | 14,099 | 49% | -1% | No |
| White | 87 | 53% | 14,805 | 51% | 1% | No |

\* Due to small numbers it has been decided to aggregate data for children from the Asian, Black, Mixed and Other ethnic groups into the ethnic minority group

9.3 In this period the Service has implemented and moved forward with a Disproportionality Strategy and Action Plan with the mission statement “**To value the diversity and identity of children and help them to achieve their desired goals”.** Within this plan we have set out four key priorities to meet this mission statement and demonstrate a greater depth of understanding and improved practice in this area. The four priorities are:

* We understand that disproportionality and intersectionality affects children throughout their journey within the Youth Justice System. We recognise that often children have experienced issues of disproportionality, racism, and other bigotry before their entrance to the YJS and that work to address this must be done systemically, in collaboration, across the partnership. This document seeks to address what the YJS can do to support those children we work with.
* In partnership we will support children to develop goals; look at what they need to achieve their goals, what we can do to support, identify disproportionality, and support them to overcome this.
* We will listen to children and families’ life experiences and understand the impact of these and support them with their individual, diverse needs.
* We have a trained and knowledgeable staff team that is attuned to the experiences and needs of children and families and communities. The staff have a commitment to addressing the issues of disproportionality that have negatively affected their children’s lives. By ensuring continuous professional development and sharing learning both with the service and partners we will seek to reduce the impact of disproportionality upon the children we work with.

9.4 During the last year, staff have undertaken Cultural Competency and Unconsious Bias training. One small step following the training and in line with the action plan above are the changes to our Quality Assurance process. All reports, both Court and Out of Court now have to demonstrate how diversity, identity and any issues of disproportionality have been identifed, addresses and plans articulate how these, if any, issues will be addressed through the intervention delivery process

 **“It’s not violence, but…” Research project into girl’s lived experiences of violence**

9.5 Nottingham YJS were involved in the recent “It’s not violence but…” research commissioned by NNVRP and led by Equation. This exploration followed an SNA which highlighted the need for a better understanding of the lived experiences of girls and young women in Nottinghamshire impacted by violence. Overall, 305 young women and girls between the age of 16 and 25 were involved in the exploration, of these 15 were interviewed either remotely or face to face and 290 completed an online survey.

9.6 Initially the research team hoped to obtain two homogenous groups of young women, specifically a group that had experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) and a group that had experienced community-based violence. However, there was only one referral from a statutory organisation, all the other girls interviewed responded directly to the online/social media advertisements resulting in all girls interviewed being over 16, and primarily discussing experiences of Intimate Partner Violence. The research also aimed to capture the voices of parents and carers and also professionals working to support these girls which resulted in 24 survey responses from parents and carers and 21 survey responses from professionals.

9.7 The findings of the research and the resulting recommendations were presented to the NNVRP Board in December 2022 by Nottingham YJS and Dr Michele Carr. They will **guide NNVRP response, action planning and commissioning of services.**

9.8 Recommendations based on the findings are grouped into three key areas, Training and Research, Awareness and Education, and Resources and Tools. All three are broken down into further detail in the report, attached in Appendix Five.

**Prevention and Diversion**

9.9 **Prevention** is support and intervention with children (and their parents/carers) who may be displaying behaviours which may indicate underlying needs or vulnerability. In practice this involves a tiered approach of early and targeted prevention. The aim being to address unmet needs, safeguard, promote positive outcomes and stop children entering the formal youth justice system.

9.10 **Diversion** is where children with a linked offence receive an alternative outcome that does not result in a criminal record, avoids escalation into the formal youth justice system and associated stigmatisation. This may involve the YJS delivering support / intervention that may or may not be voluntary and/or signposting children (and parent/carers) into relevant services. All support should be proportionate, aimed at addressing unmet needs and supporting prosocial life choices.

9.11 The OoCD panel is well established, and a pre-assessment is completed for all children prior to the panel. This provides panel members with a holistic view of the child which assists in making decisions that are based on the needs of the child and their family. The panel also adds additional scrutiny to the decision-making process.

9.12 The Targeted Youth Support (TYS) Team has continued to offer bespoke prevention work across the city. The development of whole family working model and child first approach is becoming embedded across our service delivery. This allows us to address the child’s unmet needs but also to meet the needs of the family which are barriers to change and desistance. Since March 2023 the Prevention Team has recruited an additional four staff and one Senior TYS worker. The challenge remains to recruit a further two staff to support the work identified below alongside a maternity cover for the existing senior TYS worker.

9.13 The Team are delivering on three funded projects alongside the core offer of prevention, all underpinned by trauma informed practice.

**The Turnaround programme:** To divert those children at the very earlier opportunity who have come to the attention of the police. There is a robust referral route from both MASH, Childrens Duty Team, and the Police, allowing a swift response for children to receive a service from the team

**Another Way Programme – Urban Gangs programme.** We are working in partnership with the Violence Reduction Unit, identifying children from police intelligence that are associated with urban gangs. The project has three staff and is in the early stages of delivery.

**Girls and Gangs:** The Youth Justice Service has an embedded practice model for working with girls who are subject to statutory orders, however this has not been embedded in our Prevention Service. The governments’ strategy underpins the aim of the programme and we are working in partnership with the Violence Reduction Partnership and Community Groups alongside our Youth and Play colleagues delivering a six-week programme, with additional 1:1 support work depending on need. The exploitation and missing pathway is already embedded and will provide referrals alongside the existing pathway for another project and MASH.

9.14 The Prevention Team already work in partnership with Youth and Play service in the co-delivery of young men’s programmes. We aim to utilise the existing pathways for referrals to the urban gang programme, existing Exploitation and Missing Pathway and further strengthen our referral pathway with our colleagues in the MASH.

9.15 **Education delivery.** The Targeted Youth Support (TYS) have a core offer to all secondary schools which includes three types of Interventions Programmes.

1. Whole year group assembly presentation – this is using current topics both in local news and the national news including knife crime, exploitation, anti-social behaviour, and healthy relationships.
2. Small group work programme – working with schools who have identified children who are at risk of exclusion due to their behaviour over a six-week period.
3. Individual work for children identified that require a bespoke package support that cannot be delivered via group-work and includes addressing unmet needs with a whole family approach.

9.16 The Team continues to deliver Choices and Consequences, the knife crime programme within the Galleries of Justice in line with our current Nottingham City Knives and Weapons guidance for schools and education provisions. This policy is being updated with the partnership and will reduce the number of children the Prevention Team deliver this programme to school will be encouraged to access this free resource from the Galleries of Justice.

**Table 14 Caseload of Targeted Youth Support Team 2022/23**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Intervention types** | **Children** | **Intervention** |
| Community Resolution with YOT Intervention | 12 | 12 |
| Out of Court Assessment | 26 | 28 |
| Outcome 22 (Diversionary, Educational or Intervention Activity) | 18 | 19 |
| Turnaround | 19 | 19 |
| TYS Prevention Programme | 27 | 27 |
| Under Age Prevention Programme | 17 | 17 |
| **Grand Total** | **78** | **122** |

**Education**

9.17 An Inclusion Service Level Agreement (SLA) is in place across all 19 Secondary Academy Schools in Nottingham City ensuring a consistent approach to school inclusions, commitment to reducing exclusion and provision of resources to meet the educational needs of children at risk of exclusion from mainstream locally. As well as access to Alternative Provision funding the inclusion SLA also provides additional Educational support service packages to schools through the Behaviour Support Team.

9.18 A framework of approved alternative provision is in place across Nottingham providing a directory of both registered and unregistered offsite educational provision outside of mainstream to meet the needs of children and young people. All providers included within the directory are subject to LA compliance, safeguarding and quality assurance processes and checks. This directory is made available to all schools and academies along with access to a range of reports pertaining to the quality or provision and outcomes. Network and development meetings take place termly and include strong representation from wider partners including mental health services and drug and alcohol services.

9.19 The Fair Access Protocol includes the movement of children on managed moves and any such moves are monitored by the Fair Access Panel who meet fortnightly. A representative of the Youth Justice Service is a member of the panel to contribute to the decision-making process around children’s education placements.

9.20 Improved data sharing between Education and the Youth Justice Service is being developed. The full YJS cohort will be cross referenced with Education data relating to permanent exclusions, elective home education and those on a part time table who are the responsibility of the local authority. The YJS is represented on the monthly Children at Risk of permanent exclusion panel meetings where young people who are at risk of exclusion are discussed by multi agency teams.

9.21 The Alternative Provision Specialist Taskforce (APST) attached to Denewood and Unity Academies has been delivering intervention to pupils since January 2022 and we received an update from the DfE and the Academies that the APST pilot has been extended until March 25. The Academies currently have on roll a combined total of 264 pupils (135 Denewood and 129 Unity). At the time of writing, the Taskforce team have worked with over 120 pupils since project delivery started, with staff from the YJS service working with 35-40% of these young people.

9.22 The majority of the young people the Taskforce have supported are vulnerable children with a range of complex difficulties. This academic year the Taskforce has strengthened their working ways and practices with each other, and many of these very challenging young people are now being supported by more than one member of the Taskforce.

923 The YJS team in the Taskforce have supported young people on their statutory orders and by forging a closer working relationship with school, have more oversight and knowledge to inform their work and assessments needed. They have also delivered preventative interventions to young people covering knife crime, anti-social behaviour, peer group, choices and consequences and have continued to help co-ordinate and attend group workshops at the Ben Kinsella exhibit.

9.24 Their networking has strengthened this year, with our case manager being invited to take part in a ministry of justice webinar where she spoke about the Taskforce and the partnership work with the YJS.

9.25 The Academy have reported the following information re outcomes for children who have been supported by the AP Taskforce:

* + - Attendance rates improved for 31% of pupils receiving APST intervention
		- The number of suspensions decreased for 64% of pupils receiving APST intervention
		- 86% achieved at least one qualification (higher % when compared to the cohort without APTF intervention)
		- 79% of children who were open to the APST intervention who left school at the end of last year secured a positive destination (higher compared to the whole school cohort)

9.26 The Academy report a reduction in the number of external referrals they have needed to make (MARF/EVR/CAMHS) as the Academy is able to directly put the intervention needed in place with the Taskforce instead of referring to an external agency.

**Restorative approaches and victims**

9.27 The Victim Care contract is currently being re-tendered. The YJS is working closely with the office of the PCC to ensure that victim services are delivered effectively across the city. Further to this the service is recruiting to a Victim and Restorative Justice Practitioner and a Referral Order and Reparation Co-ordinator to provide additional services to victims and child on YJS interventions.

**Serious violence and exploitation**

9.28 The Youth Justice Board determines Serious Youth Violence as any drug, robbery or violence against the person offence that has a gravity score of five or more. The significant increase in both number of children and volume of offences is down in part to easing of lockdown restrictions and the re-opening of Courts clearing the backlog during this time. There were 56 Serious Youth Violence offences in 2021, an increase from 38 in 2020, but more significantly, a decrease of five from 2019, pre-pandemic. Of all offences committed in Nottingham City by children, Serious Youth Violence comprises 16% compared to 11% for 2020 and 10% for 2019. This demonstrates that the offending profile of a Nottingham City child is of higher gravity than in previous years. The graph also represents a spike in Q2 21-22 which is mostly comprised of robbery offences (26 of the 32), a significant increase from previous quarters both in terms of number and proportion. It is of note that one child received a custodial term for 19 offences, of which 16 were SYV offences, accounting for half of the total.

9.29 35 Serious Youth Violence Offences were reported for the latest data in 22-23 out of which 27 were Robbery Offences, six Drug offences and two Violence against the person. This shows a 34% decrease from the previous 53 offences reported for 21-22 as depicted in Graph 1. Graph 2 Q3 22-23 shows a spike in Drug offences as this is comprised of five out of the total six. Q1 22-23 reported only one Drug offence whereas Q2 had 0. Graph 3 shows that the Violence Against the person offences dropped from four offences reported in Q1 21-22 to one reported in Q1 22-23. Graph 4 focuses on the Robbery offences and shows a 58% decrease from 26 reported in Q2 21-22 to 11 reported in Q2 22-23.

**Graph 1: Number of serious youth violence offences and the number of individual children committing these offences (YJAF) Lighter shades indicate provisional data**

****

**Graph 2: Number of Drug offences (YJAF)**

 ****

**Graph 3: Number of Violence Against the person offences (YJAF)**

 

**Graph 4: Number of Robbery offences (YJAF)**

 

**Graph 5: Children in care receiving a substantive outcome while in care by year**



9.30 The above graph represents the number of children who were in care when receiving a substantive outcome. In 2022 there were 306 children in care out of which 17 received a substantive outcome. This is 5.5 %. This is a decrease from the previous year. There was a spike in 2019 however; the figures are continuing to decrease starting with 2020. The data for 2023 is up until the end of March 2023 and so far, only 5 children out of the 518 in care, received a substantive outcome.

9.31 Looking at the children receiving a substantive outcome by month in the below graph, we can see the spike in 2019 occurred between August and October (warmer months). There is a significantly decrease starting with December 2019 until in August 2020 when the figures show an increase again.

**Graph 6: Children in care receiving a substantive outcome while in care by month**



**Divert Plus**

9.32 The Divert Plus custody intervention project commenced in October 2021, initially funded by the Home Office with Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) provision from April 2022 to date. YEF have appointed independent evaluators. In May 2022 the pilot phase commenced.

9.33 The objective of Divert Plus is to use seconded YJS Case Managers to engage and assess children in a ‘reachable/teachable moment’ whilst in police custody or within 24 hours of release from police custody. The child will be offered tailored interventions aimed at supporting positive changes such as:

* Ongoing mentoring by a trusted provider and the opportunity for a Personal Change Plan.
* Restorative justice, if appropriate.
* Information about the Out of Court Process
* Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) assessment and support as required.

9.34 In May 2023, YEF sent formal notification that they would not be taking the project forward to an efficacy study. During the pilot stage of Divert Plus, the number of referrals has been significantly lower than the target sample size needed for an efficacy study. The randomised control trial exclusions included group offences but also, despite the national push from HMIC, APP and PACE, voluntary attendance. These numbers were significant and this and the lengthy consent process posed a risk.

9.35 YEF are committed to ensuring that those already involved in Divert Plus get the support they need and to this end we have negotiated a further 6 months of funding to safely exit the children and young people on the programme. Divert Plus staff will no longer attend police custody to recruit children and young people to the project, their focus will be providing the continued six months support for all children and young people committed to the programme. Funding will end 31st October 2023.

9.36 There have been some valuable outputs from Divert Plus. The programme consistently identified a high number of participants with additional speech and language needs and the Speech and Language Therapists have reviewed information and bail notices to introduce more accessible versions. Opportunities to provide future funding for some aspects will be explored across the partnership.

**Serious Violence and Exploitation**

9.37 Since the development of the VRP in 2019, the YJS has been an integral partner. It has engaged with the development of the programme to inform service delivery and connectivity around key areas, including serious youth violence, knife crime, trauma informed practice and understanding the impact of SEND on the YJS cohort.

9.38 Operationally there is a clear link with a member of the YJS seconded into the VRP core team on a part time basis, this enables identification of opportunities and risk at a tactical level. From a strategic perspective the Head of VRP is a member of the City YJS Board, and the Chair of the YJS Board attends the VRP’s Strategic Violence Reduction Board.

9.39 In addition to the aforementioned Divert Plus custody intervention, the VRP have led the wider partnership with a successful Focussed Deterrence bid to the Youth Endowment Fund agency collaboration grant round, securing circa £1m for the period up to August 2025. This model is known locally as Another Way and YJS will be leading the services for the younger cohort. Young people aged 14-24 identified as being at risk of involvement in/on the periphery of urban street groups are offered enhanced support from statutory and voluntary community sector partners to turn their lives around with holistic pathways to prevent future involvement in violence.

9.40 The results of this pilot will help us better understand how to help this key at risk group. A multi-institute evaluation team headed by Professor Iain Brennan of University of Hull has been commissioned to undertake the evaluation using a multi-centre, two-arm, stratified randomised controlled trial with random allocation of individuals. The primary outcome being considered will be violence against the person with time to offence and co-offending as secondary outcomes. These interventions are among the first randomised controlled trials of a focused deterrence intervention in the world.

9.41 Funding from the OPCC has also enabled the YJS to commission a range of specialist services for this funding year. The services will enable the YJS to engage with some of its most difficult and hard to reach children. They also enable the YJS to provide interventions for those deemed at risk of CCE or SYV.

**Violence Reduction Partnership**

9.42 The VRP continue to deliver their 2022-25 Response Strategy which outlines how the VRP will work with partners, including the Youth Justice Service to prevent and reduce the impact of serious violence locally, with a particular focus on children and young people under the age of 25 years. The Strategy draws on findings and recommendations from the recently published Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA), which provides a comprehensive analysis of serious violence, and the context and complexity in which violence arises across the Nottingham.

9.43 Most significantly, on 31st January 2023, the Serious Violence Duty came into effect and the VRP are leading the implementation of the Duty on behalf of the specified authorities; local authorities, Police, Fire and Rescue, the Probation Service, Youth Justice Services, and Integrated Care Boards, to collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence. This provides opportunities in terms of data and information and the YJS are fully engaged to achieve compliance in January 2024.

9.44 The VRP are focussed on delivering two key strategies. The Trauma Informed Strategy will ensure that trauma informed approaches are embedded across partnership services, including YJS, health, education, police and probation and prisons. This will include assessing the readiness of partner organisations and assisting them to develop and implement internal plans, which will extend to workforce development and review of policy and practice.

9.45 The Youth Work Strategy includes three key components, a Youth Charter, setting out expected standards of youth provision, a Tailored Quality Mark, and a Training Pathways Framework. The aim of the strategy is to increase access to accredited training pathways for voluntary and community sector practitioners working in the targeted youth diversion space to ensure provision is delivered to a high quality and that young people are properly safeguarded and additional needs are met. This will help disseminate best practise throughout the sector and provide assurance for interventions accessed by the YJS cohort.

9.46 During 2022/23 the VRP have secured match funded and also co-laboratory partnership funded PhD researchers. The PhD projects include:

* Ethnic and Racial Disproportionality and Serious Violence. This will explore how individual risk factors are experienced within a wider social context of disadvantage and structural racism, including an understanding of the ‘transmission’ of discrimination. It will also seek to identify barriers in addressing disproportionality in the criminal justice system and apply learning from other disciplines on cultural and transformational change that could be applied to support progress locally.
* Understanding and responding to youth violence – blending data science with lived experience. The aims are to ensure lived experience is reflected in local decision making and deployed data analytics to reduce serious violence and to enable best practice data analytics to be included in evidence informed approaches to reducing serious violence and improve the accessibility of the targeted professionals and community.

9.47 During 2023/24, as agreed with the partnership, a proportion of the SVD funding will be leveraged to commission a further piece of research in respect of the high rate of first-time entrants (aged 10-17) into the criminal justice system.

9.48 These research pieces directly align with the strategic needs assessment and response strategy and will broaden our understanding and strengthen sustainable approaches to violence reduction across the partnership.

**Detention in police custody, Remands, Use of custody and Constructive resettlement**

9.50 The harmful effects of custody are well documented; the default position taken by Nottingham YJS is that every effort should be made to try to maintain children in the community and custody should be limited to where it is considered the only appropriate option.  Even in these instances, when a custodial outcome has been imposed, a full multi-agency case review is undertaken with a focus on ensuring that:

* unnecessarily negative outcomes for children are avoided
* local community-based alternatives have been fully explored
* that there is no discrimination in the presentation of bail packages and sentencing proposals
* that there is a focus on successful resettlement from the very outset, and consistently throughout the entirety of the child’s sentence.

9.51 The YJS Operations Manager for Performance and Development and the Children’s Integrated Services Quality Assurance Manager co-chair a quarterly multi-agency Custodial Outcomes Evaluation panel where a reflective audit is undertaken on each child.  Opportunities for learning, development and practice improvement are captured and used by core members of the panel to create learning briefing notes or short form training to be disseminated to the wider service and partnership (including the Police, education, Social Care, health, and mental health partners).

9.52 In addition, a review of all remand and custodial outcomes is undertaken by the YJS Operations Manager for Performance and Development with a view to identifying and analysing any patterns, identification of need, or disproportionality.  This is a regular feature of the performance reporting to the Youth Justice Service Management Board but has also been featured within Thematic case audits completed by the YJS Management Team.

9.53 In addition to the Custodial Outcomes Evaluation Panel, Nottingham YJS works collaboratively with Children’s Integrated Services to ensure that the accommodation (and any other identified) needs of children in custody are addressed proactively prior to release.  This includes the early identification of any child who may be in need of accommodation support on release and collaborative work with social care to identify and secure an appropriate resettlement pathway in advance of their custodial release, taking account of the range of needs that may need to be considered such as mental health, emotional well-being, and education, as well as accommodation itself.

9.54 In the last 12 months, 11 children have been subject to custodial terms.  Of these, six are currently still in custody, and most serving long-term sentences.  Regarding those who are eligible for release in the forthcoming months, multi-agency partnership work (with health, education, and social care amongst others) is underway to support their resettlement back into the community.  For one of these children, this includes active collaboration and planning with children’s social care who will be providing accommodation suitable to the child’s risk and safety and wellbeing needs.

9.55 Of the five children who have been released in the last 12 months, two were released to their family home address, with planned resettlement packages of support that involved health, mental health, ETE, mentoring and constructive leisure, as well as appropriate licence conditions and targeted intervention support to be delivered by YJS.  Three children were resettled to Children’s Social Care placements, assessed as suitable to their risks, and needs and identified in advance of their release via a collaborative placement search process undertaken by their social workers in full collaboration with both Nottingham YJS and secure estate staff.

9.56 As introduced in last year’s plan, the Service has been delivering a custody-based intervention programme, Divert Plus. This programme received funding from the Youth Endowment Fund from May 2022. It was a partnership approach supported by Nottingham City YJS, Nottinghamshire YJS, Nottinghamshire Police, Nottinghamshire Health Care NHS Foundation Trust and Nottinghamshire VRP. It enabled the YJS to have a staff presence in police custody, supported by a team of speech and language therapists. It also provide an additional offer of mentoring support from a range of voluntary sector providers.

9.57 The project objectives were to test what is described as a ‘Reachable/ Teachable’ moment. Its aims were:

* Preventing children entering the criminal justice system
* Swift intervention and diversion
* Provide speech and language screening with access to Speech and Language therapists
* Raise awareness and understanding of the out of court process for communities, families/carers, and children.

9.58 Having Youth Justice staff in custody supports access to swift intervention and division ensuring that early intervention can be offered to those pre-charged and or no further actioned, this also support consideration of the use of more outcome 20’s, 21’s and 22’s. Due to the staff having specialist knowledge of the criminal justice process for children, they were able to inform them of intended outcomes and explain the criminal justice pathways to them whilst providing re-assurance and a check in on well-being. Learning from the project showed that there is limited knowledge of the out of court process across partners. This information needs to be shared more broadly across partners and communities.

9.59 All Youth Justice Services have access to Speech and Language Screening. Often when children scored low on the screening tool and after an additional assessment from the speech and language therapists took place, speech and language needs were still being identified. This demonstrate the ongoing need for this work to be re-visited during intervention with the YJS.

9.60 The Speech and Language Team (SLT) utilised the triangle of care model for engaging with the child, their care/support network and professional network. Ensuring assertive in-reach into mainstream education, alternative provision and any agencies wrapping around the child i.e. Social care, YOT, CAMHS etc. Assertive in-reach involves the SLT Team proactively engaging with services that are wrapped around the child in order to share information about them and their needs. The aim is to share a positive and balanced views of the Childs’ strengths and needs, supporting services to understand the how and why of making reasonable adjustments. This in reach can be via training/workforce development opportunities, bespoke handover sessions, co-ordination of MDT meetings and collaboration across services. This offer is made equitable to all agencies supporting the child (within the realms of what is required and appropriate).

9.61 100% of cases in the trial group received a baseline Therapy Outcome Measure score, those already discharged will have had the repeat score completed with the remaining cases outstanding until the point of discharge. TOMS is an outcome measure used to report on measurable change brought about by an SLT episode of care. It collates data on a range of domains aligned with International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health - WHO. These domains are Impairment, Activity, Participation and Wellbeing. From preliminary data analysis, we know that 100% of referred cases have seen a significant change in at least 1 of the 4 domains following the completion of an episode of care.

9.62 Unfortunately, the project will not progress to efficacy stage. YEF provided formal notification of this on the 3rd May 2023 and provided a six-month shut down period. Which means the project will end at the end of October 2023. This was due to the number of referrals being lower than target sample size needed and this not considered achievable without an increase in capacity, an extension to duration, additional funding, or expansion to existing eligibility criteria.

9.63 The Service provided feedback on the issues we felt the project would face before launch and throughout the delivery. This stemmed from the requirement to utilise Randomised Controlled Trials. This restricted the project to working with lone children that offended and were brought into police custody, a large number of Nottingham City children offend with peers and this makes them ineligible. The project was not able to work with children voluntary interviewed by the police, again, Nottinghamshire Police complete a large number of VAs and these children too were ineligible for the programme. A pilot evaluation of the project, which involves twenty-nine children, is in the process of being completed by the YEF.

9.64 Although numbers to the project remained low due to the RCT 100% of those assessed by the speech and language team had identified speech and language needs.

9.65 There is an appetite from both Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Youth Justice Services to continue to have Youth Justice staff present in police custody with access to specialist speech and language intervention as it supports early intervention and diversion.

**Case Study from Divert Plus**

9.61 Child X is a 16-year-old male, his parents informed me that they had been struggling with his behaviour in the family home since he was around 11 years old, highlighting damage within the house. His mother informed me that she had lost her job because of taking time off work to deal with his behaviours. His father also indicated he also lost time from work to attend professional appointments with professional agencies. His father stipulated his belief his son’s poor behaviour in the home has not improved despite the previous involvement from agencies.

9.62 Prior to his arrest which led to the OoCD and involvement with Divert Plus intervention in August 2022, his parents indicated there had been numerous concerns and referrals to Social services and contact with the Police as a result of their feeling unable to manage and deal with the escalation in aggression within the family home. It was reported they had made over 40 telephone calls to the Police in relation to these. The Police attended the family home on 14 separate occasions between February 2020 and January 2022, resulting in no further action. There had also been numerous safeguarding and social services referrals over a three-year period again due to the presenting behaviour.

9.63 Child X received support from Divert Plus targeted intervention. As part of the targeted intervention child X was assessed for speech and language assessment and a diagnostic report highlighting what communication support child X requires especially from his education provider. He did not have any identified neurological needs, however, there have been previous concerns raised via professionals. As a result of the finding of the SaLT report, the school have now been able to offer the appropriate support to enable him in sitting his GCSE exams. In addition to this service child X was also referred to the mentoring service Stronger People who have also delivered mentoring support to him whereby physical activities and a provision where he is able to articulate his feelings, worries and wishes. I also have had regular contact delivering targeted interventions to address the behaviours which lead to the OoCD. I have also maintained strong links with both parents, and they have also expressed their own feelings from this experience.

9.64 Positive Outcomes:

Since the involvement with Divert Plus intervention and the third-party services which have also worked closely with Child X and family.

* Since the initial date of August 2022, child X has been assessed by Speech and Language Therapist and a formal report has been formulated and shared with professional agencies. Meeting with school SENCO to formulate a support package around arrangements so he can sit his GCSE exams which are due to be completed. Child X has sat all exams.
* Positive mentoring session attends by the GYM with Joe Stronger people.
* Although on occasions child X and his parents can be strained mum informed me since the involvement with YJS and Divert plus there have not been any occasions whereby they felt the need to contact the Police for his presenting behaviour. Both parents especially his father have formed a better positive relationship and he has a much better understanding of child X’s communication difficulties and is able to place a better understanding and acceptance without being confrontational which in turn has reduced the number of incidents in the family home.

Standards for children in the justice system

10.1 In line with recent national guidance we will be reviewing standards this coming year focussing on Court work. With regards to gaps highlighted in service audits and benchmarking exercises the Service has now introduced a new Case Management system which has given us the additional capacity and given us scope to reflect upon and review existing operational processes.

Workforce Development

11.1 This year’s training focus has been on the new case management system that was introduced in January. Training was delivered over a number of months addressing the use of the system, the breadth of new features it provides case managers, the new functionality for managers to produce and analyse information prior to supervisions and to produce greater depth of information to share with partners.

11.2 At the beginning of the year all staff undertook Unconscious Bias and Cultural Competency training. This training challenged staff to reflect on their engagement with children, the content of their reports and has been continued through the Disproportionality Working Group and monitored through ongoing line management supervision and quality assurance processes.

11.3 We’re working with the council’s workforce development team to develop and deliver training on assessment and report writing skills, management and leadership and developing the Council’s Learning Academy, a toolkit and guidance library for all staff across Children’s Integrated Services.

11.4 A number of staff have started the Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate and we have more staff attending future cohorts, providing training and development in issues of youth development and justice. We also have staff attending AIM3 assessment and intervention training, and as part of the Turnaround and Another Way programmes will shortly have training on gang and serious youth violence delivered.

Evidence-based practice and innovation

12.1 In this year we have been working with the VRP to recruit a PHD researcher into First Time Entrants and with Nottingham University on a research project on knife crime, FTEs, and reoffending. Data sharing has begun with the university and the commissioning specification has been finalised with the VRP. The aim of this project is to firm up the hypotheses that staff and partners have surrounding the issues of high FTE rates in the City so that an evidence-based programme can be developed to address the specific needs of this cohort.

12.2 The Service continues to be open to exploring working with statutory partners and across the third sector to deliver a broad range of community provision, mentoring agencies, and opportunities for new funding streams.

12.3 Internally, the Intervention resource working group is continuing to review the interventions being delivered to children and is part of a broader national working group sharing this learning to drive service improvements.

12.4 As part of the Local Authority, management are working with the Learning Academy. Working across the council to develop the skillset and knowledge base of all staff, making sure that effective interventions are being used and shared across the wider partnership.

12.5 The Service continues to access the Galleries of Justice and receive support from this organisation in delivering knife crime interventions. On a weekly basis, the Targeted Youth Support team take children from across the service through the exhibition. With staff from the Gallery, children take part in mock court hearings, walk through the life cycle of Ben Kinsella and now with the updated exhibition, children from across Nottingham who have been victims of knife crime and serious youth violence.

12.6 Our work in Schools on reviewing the education knife crime guidance continues. Following the work with VRP, we have updated the existing guidance, taking a partnership approach, and seeking to move to an individual assessment focus providing universal and targeted additional support model, away from the previous zero tolerance approach to this issue. By addressing the issue and skilling up teachers to provide the information as part of the curriculum we are seeking to achieve a reduction in unnecessarily excluding and criminalising children as a response to the behaviour. This work links to the broader piece with Education colleagues addressed above.

12.7 We are in the final stages for bidding for the Immediate Justice programme, aimed at working with children who have committed ASB in the local community providing them reparative programmes.

Evaluation

13.1 The biggest evaluation programme we have undergone this year was the Peer Review. The outcome of which was broadly positive highlighting the real strengths of the staff, their engagement with the children and families, their perseverance and deep knowledge and understanding of the children on their case load. Areas for improvement have now been set out in the Peer Review plan, attached as Appendix Four. The key areas for the coming year are to better use of data across the partnership to inform service delivery, an area that will be further supported by the new KPIs; To review the appropriateness of the Knife Crime policy, again an action that is already in progress and likely to see a reviewed policy presented by the Autumn of this year; strengthening the understanding of the journey of the child prior to their entry in the YJS, something that we have taken up immediately with the development of the Custodial Outcomes Evaluation Panel to share the learning across the partnership; a final key recommendation is to review the use of the NRM, this will be broad piece of work impacting as it does upon partners from the judiciary, police and Children’s Integrated Services.

13.2 On an ongoing basis we have case file audits completed by the management team, in addition to the standard, individualised quality assurance processes of Assetplus, Out of Court, and Pre-Sentence Reports. The current audit focus is on those cases who are six-weeks into their Out of Court intervention.

13.3 Currently we have an operational working group internally evaluating the effectiveness of resources and interventions used by the YJS. This group is providing consistency of delivery, ensuring learning outcomes and objectives are clearly understood and thereby enabling the service to have a mechanism to provide greater review and evaluation.

13.4 As discussed above, with regards to innovation and evaluation, following the problem identification within the Service and the key focus of the last few years on the high rates of FTE, we are working with the VRP and Nottingham University to an identify evidence-base for this issue. This will then allow us to better evaluate provision, not just within the service, but across the partnership.

Service development

14.1 As discussed above, this is the final year of a three-year review plan. As such there are a number of targets and actions to be completed by the Board, and the Service by the end of March 2024. The priorities remain the focus on reducing first time entrants, the use of custody and the issues of disproportionality but now include the ten new Key Performance Indicators as set out by the Youth Justice Board.

14.2 Further to these, following the Peer Review that took place in November 22, the Service has new goals to achieve that arose from the review. Both plans are attached in Appendix Four.

14.3 The service maintains its ongoing focus on early intervention and prevention, the high rates of First Time Entrants, the use of custody and the development of the victim offer.

14.4 In the coming year Turnaround and other YEF funded programmes will be embedded into service delivery. These programmes will support us to appropriately identify children at the earliest opportunity to divert them from the Youth Justice System.

14.5 The coming months will see a review of the Joint Out of Court protocol shared with Nottinghamshire County YJS and Nottinghamshire Police Service. This seeks to review and amend the Knife Crime process, placing responsibility for assessment and risk management into the hands of the YJS and also the growing use of Outcome 22 which seeks to provide greater support and intervention at an earlier stage. It should be noted that all children entering the YJS in Nottingham City will be receiving a comprehensive risk and needs based assessment to ensure appropriately targeted and designed interventions and support.

14.6 With regards to the use of custody, the service has introduced a system wide review process of all custodial cases. This has built upon the internal review mechanisms that were in place for any child that received a custodial case and now involves other agencies from across the system who have had an input into the child’s life before they enter the YJS.

14.7 With regards to the Victim offer, the Service has identified the need and are imminently recruiting for the positions of Victim and Restorative Justice Practitioner and Referral Order and Reparation Co-ordinator. These posts will grow the Service’s capabilities and capacity to offer a high standard of support and intervention to victims and the local community that we previously haven’t had.

Challenges, risks, and issues

15.1 This, and previous year’s annual plans, combined with the ongoing performance data measures and Peer Review outcomes continue to highlight that which is known and recognised by the Board and the Service.

15.2 We continue to have one of the highest rates of First Time Entrants to the youth justice system and high rates of custodial sentences. While reoffending rates for the service are just lower than the national average, reoffending for the First Time Entrant cohort is significantly lower at 14%. This raises a significant challenge regarding the suitability of these children receiving a criminal justice disposal. As a partnership we are starting to look more closely at the journey of the child prior to entering the Youth Justice System, but this is currently focussed upon those children who have committed a Serious Incident, have been remanded or received a custodial sentence. We do not currently carry out this partnership wide audit and reflection with all children at FTE level and this may be the next step, resource depending.

15.3 The ongoing status of the service being the ongoing subject of a priority notice from the YJB demonstrates the significance of the concern.

15.4 A challenge is to extend the opportunities and impact of early action within the partnership system rather than a Youth Justice response that may enable them to not become first time entrants.

15.5 A further risk for the service has been evidenced by the recent withdrawal of funds from the YEF for the Divert Plus service. This programme has been delivering police custody-based interventions for the last 18-months with a number of notable successes. The early end of the contract highlights the potentially precarious nature of having a number of relatively short-term funded programmes. This has a negative impact upon forward planning, particularly with regards to staff recruitment and retention, and more importantly the children we work with.

Sign off, submission and approval

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| --- | --- |
| Chair of YJS Board - name  | Catherine UnderwoodCorporate Director of People,Nottingham City Council |
| Signature | C:\Users\sgodda\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.Outlook\5V00FTYE\Signature - Catherine Underwood.png |
| Date | 30 June 2023 |

Appendix 1: Staffing Structure

Appendix 2: Budget Costs and Contributions 2023/24

Appendix 3: Summary outline of grant compliances

Appendix 4: Operational Delivery and Peer Review plan

Appendix 5: A report exploring the lived experiences of young women and girls who have experienced violence in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Appendix 6: First Time Entrant reoffending data