

Response to the consultation on standards and ratings for inspecting youth offending services

14 February 2018

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1. Introduction

In spring 2018 we will move to a new programme of youth offending work inspections. Our inspections will be underpinned by standards and we will rate organisations using a four point scale.

We started our work on standards with a set of principles that good standards should meet (see Annex A). We reviewed international and national standards, rules etc. and our own standards and benchmarks, looking for approaches that best capture the essence of quality. In developing draft organisational delivery standards, we studied a range of models and frameworks (e.g. EFQM, Galbraith Star, McKinsey 7S).

As we began to consider how best to structure standards, we spoke with academics in the field, and with other regulators and inspectorates that use standards and/or rating systems. We then ran a national programme of workshops with people from youth offending teams, the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and the voluntary sector.

These workshops helped us to fine tune the draft standards which we set out in our published consultation document (see Annex B), alongside proposed ratings. The consultation was published online on 8 November 2017 with a deadline for responses of 8 December 2017.

The consultation set out the following nine questions:

Question 1	Does the standards framework cover the key areas that contribute to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If not, what is missing?
Question 2	Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If so, which ones?
Question 3	Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently precise? If so, which ones?
Question 4	Are any of the proposed prompts unrealistic? If so, which ones?
Question 5	Are any of the proposed prompts difficult to address at the individual YOT level? If so, which ones?
Question 6	Does the example of rating characteristics include the right amount of detail and appropriately describe 'outstanding' and 'inadequate'? Why/why not?
Question 7	Should any parts of the standards framework be weighted more heavily within the ratings system? If so, which parts?
Question 8	Is there anything in our proposed standards or the way we suggest we will rate youth offending services that you think could lead to undesirable behaviours, outputs or outcomes? If so,

Question 9

please tell us.

Please do provide any further comments on the standards and ratings proposed.

This document summarises the responses received and clarifies the decisions subsequently made by HMI Probation.

2. Summary of HMI Probation decisions

	Question	Post-consultation decision
1	Does the standards framework cover the key areas that contribute to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If not, what is missing?	<p>We will review the suggestions for areas that could be strengthened, amended or added alongside the findings from our transitional inspections, tests and simulations, including how best to capture the voice of the child/young person. Some suggestions linked to prompts in our proposed standards for probation services, and we will look again at potential alignment.</p> <p>At the same time, we will keep in mind the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restrict the framework to those areas that are most essential, focusing providers' attention upon these areas • ensure our inspections are cost-effective and not unduly burdensome. • ensure the number of prompts underpinning a key question is not so great as to undermine the ability to balance them into a single judgement. <p>Some suggestions (e.g. those relating to specific types of intervention) are likely to be addressed through the supporting inspection guidance materials rather than through the framework itself.</p>
2	Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If so, which ones?	The consultation feedback endorsed the areas covered by the framework. We will keep both the framework and the underlying evidence-base under continual review, overseen by our newly appointed Head of Standards, working alongside our Head of Research. We will review the evidence-base objectively, prioritising the most robust, relevant and timely findings and covering all theories and methodologies. We will consult and work with external academics where required.
3	Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently precise? If so, which ones?	<p>We will develop and publish inspection guidance materials which help to clarify our expectations regarding levels of quality, e.g. what is meant by terms such as 'promptly' and 'effectively'. These materials will also define key terms, e.g. 'leadership team'.</p> <p>We will check that our use of terminology is sufficiently consistent, e.g. 'partner agencies' and 'other agencies'.</p>

	Question	Post-consultation decision
4	Are any of the proposed prompts unrealistic? If so, which ones?	We will recognise and reflect upon the engagement and role of partner agencies in the delivery of services, setting out the reasons for any shortfalls in our inspection reports. We will pay attention to other contextual or systemic issues, and target and tailor recommendations to help providers make the necessary improvements. But our judgements and ratings must always reflect the quality of delivery, irrespective of the underlying reasons and rationale.
5	Are any of the proposed prompts difficult to address at the individual YOT level? If so, which ones?	We will target our recommendations at the appropriate organisational level, including recommendations to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) or YJB when action is required at a national policy or commissioning level.
6	Does the example of rating characteristics include the right amount of detail and appropriately describe 'outstanding' and 'inadequate'? Why/why not?	We will progress with our development of rating characteristics to show what will guide a lead inspector to recommend specific ratings across the four Domain One standards. As we develop the characteristics, we will review their content and the level at which they are pitched.
7	Should any parts of the standards framework be weighted more heavily within the ratings system? If so, which parts?	<p>The consultation feedback provided no clear support for weighting any parts of the standards framework. The ratings system will thus include no weightings, ensuring that providers maintain focus across all the standards, all of which are strongly linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes.</p> <p>We will complete some further work modelling potential ratings, taking on board the feedback to avoid a complex scoring system which is difficult to understand or explain. We are mindful of the need to develop ratings with a clear rationale, which are relatively straightforward and which challenge providers, helping to drive improvement, but which are attainable.</p> <p>We will keep our approach under review and consider the need for any weightings in future years, reflecting upon our inspection findings.</p>
8	Is there anything in our proposed standards or the way we suggest we will rate youth offending services that you think could lead to undesirable behaviours, outputs or	As we review the content of the standards framework (see Question 1 above), we will maintain our focus upon those 'inputs' and 'activities' which are most strongly linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes, focusing providers' attention upon these areas, and

Question	Post-consultation decision
<p>outcomes? If so, please tell us.</p>	<p>helping to drive improvement where it is required. Based on our independence and the expertise and experience of our inspectors, we can uniquely focus on the effectiveness of work with children and young people.</p>
<p>9 Please do provide any further comments on the standards and ratings proposed.</p>	<p>We will adopt the rating labels of outstanding; good; requires improvement; and inadequate. These labels are now the 'market leader' and are well known. Within individual inspection reports, these ratings will be accompanied by explanatory narratives. We will also explore how best to present and feedback the consolidated inspection data and findings at a national level.</p> <p>We will continue to be transparent about the way we work. As well as publishing the 2018/19 standards framework, we will publish documentation covering the inspection process, targeting criteria, methodology and ratings. At present we are testing sources of evidence, seeking to establish effective and efficient ways of obtaining information routinely, pre-fieldwork and during fieldwork.</p> <p>The selection of YOTs for inspection will be based on a set of published risk-based criteria, including performance data and work volumes. This targeted, intelligence-led approach will lead to some YOTs being inspected more frequently than others, but we believe that this will be justified and will maximise the use of resources and our impact.</p>

3. Summary of responses

We received 42 responses to the consultation. Some were from organisations, and others from individuals in their personal capacity. As set out below, we received views from government and those who commission youth offending services, as well as from Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) and from academia and others interested in our proposals:

- Sam Gyimah MP (then prisons and probation Minister)
- The YJB
- Michael Spurr, CEO of HM Prison & Probation Service (HMPPS)
- 27 YOTs
- Five professional bodies involved with the delivery of youth justice services
- The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)
- Two Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs)
- Estyn
- Two academics or academic research groups
- One private individual

A substantial majority of respondents supported the proposals set out in the consultation. The main comments received are summarised below, taking each consultation question in turn.

1. Does the standards framework cover the key areas that contribute to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If not, what is missing?

Various suggestions were provided for areas that could be included, amended or strengthened within the standards framework. Such suggestions were as follows:

- YOT culture, including the promotion of openness, constructive challenge and new ideas
- The voice and input of the child/young person, including responding to their views at a strategic decision-making level
- The progression of identified lessons as part of a learning culture
- Engagement at the regional level, and with other YOTs across county borders
- Professional identity of staff, qualification frameworks and strategic workforce development
- Reviewing of staffing levels
- Workload management for managers and administrative staff as well as case managers
- The use of volunteers
- Court reports and the provision of information to sentencers
- Working with young people in custody, including resettlement planning
- YOT to probation transitional work
- Parenting interventions and support

- Mental health support to deal with grief and bereavement
- Key structural barriers
- Victim work and restorative justice
- Welsh language expectations
- Positive outcomes such as citizenship, participation and engagement

2. Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes? If so, which ones?

Respondents did not identify any specific prompts that were felt to be insufficiently linked to effective service delivery. Whilst there were suggestions for potential additions (see Question 1 above), the overall view was that the framework covered the right areas and was pitched at the right level. One respondent stated as follows:

"The standards framework does cover the key areas that contribute to effective delivery and positive outcomes. They provide a framework that not only enables scrutiny of the key areas but one that recognises the individual approaches that staff employ - they are less quantitative and more qualitative. Practitioners have said that the framework is more realistic and congruent to their work and less prescriptive."

3. Are any of the proposed prompts insufficiently precise? If so, which ones?

A few respondents noted that the use of terms such as 'promptly', 'timely', 'effectively', 'appropriate', 'reasonable', 'meaningfully' and 'sufficiently' meant that expectations regarding levels of quality were not always clear. For example, what equates to a reasonable workload or when will staff be judged to be "appropriately qualified and/or experienced". One respondent requested examples.

Clarity was also requested as to what was meant by the 'leadership team' and what was expected in terms of (i) the YOT analysis of offending related factors and (ii) the YOT contribution to determining out of court disposals. One respondent queried whether greater consistency was required in the use of the terms 'partner agencies' and 'other agencies'.

4. Are any of the proposed prompts unrealistic? If so, which ones?

Some YOTs highlighted the need to recognise the engagement and role of partner agencies in ensuring that a high-quality service is delivered, particularly when funding was tight and partner agencies had other priorities. The concern expressed by these YOTs was that they would be penalised for issues outside of their control. Similar concerns were expressed in terms of (i) poor sharing of information due to ICT limitations; (ii) poor engagement from families; and (iii)

limited resourcing for out of court disposal work. With regard to the latter, it was noted that the role of partner agencies was particularly important in this area and that funding across the full range of these disposals could differ. It was also requested that consideration be given to geographical issues, notably the difficulties of delivering across large rural areas.

5. Are any of the proposed prompts difficult to address at the individual YOT level? If so, which ones?

One YOT highlighted the limitations across the public sector for rewarding exceptional work.

6. Does the example of rating characteristics include the right amount of detail and appropriately describe 'outstanding' and 'inadequate'? Why/why not?

There was strong support for the inclusion of rating characteristics. With regard to the example given in the consultation document (see Annex C), it was suggested that points could be added in relation to governance and strategic partnership working.

7. Should any parts of the standards framework be weighted more heavily within the ratings system? If so, which parts?

Little support was provided for introducing any weightings. It was felt that a system without weightings would ensure that there was a balanced focus across all areas of work. Furthermore, there was a desire to avoid a scoring system that was overly complex and difficult to understand and explain.

Amongst those respondents who favoured weighting or who expressed a view in case such weighting was employed, there was no consensus. Suggested weightings for governance and leadership (on the basis that this heavily influenced all other work) were counterbalanced by suggested weightings for case work (on the basis that this was the clearest indicator of the quality of the YOT's work).

8. Is there anything in our proposed standards or the way we suggest we will rate youth offending services that you think could lead to undesirable behaviours, outputs or outcomes? If so, please tell us.

Some of those respondents whom had suggested areas that could be included or strengthened within the standards, then noted the potential for YOTs to pay

insufficient attention to these areas without their appropriate inclusion. For example, without more consistent mention of victim work, restorative justice, parenting help and the voice of users, it was felt that these could be pushed to the side to make way for the work that is being inspected.

One respondent expressed a concern that there was too much emphasis on the process of casework rather than outcomes.

9. Please do provide any further comments on the standards and ratings proposed.

The inclusion of out of court disposals within the standards framework was widely supported. Some respondents requested further clarity about the types of disposal which would be covered, particularly in terms of prevention work.

Some YOTs requested flexibility within the framework in terms of language and terminology, recognising that some favour the term 'Youth Justice Service' and some no longer have a 'YOT management board'.

Support was given for the rating labels of outstanding; good; requires improvement; and inadequate. It was noted that these labels had established currency within the sector and that their adoption would be particularly helpful for partners in children's services and education who were familiar with the Ofsted system. One YOT responded that the alignment of the rating systems would be useful when explaining it to staff.

Alongside the ratings, requests were made for accompanying narratives in individual reports and for annual feedback in terms of lessons learnt.

Some YOT respondents commented upon the proposed inspection cycle – aiming to inspect YOTs about every four years, with some inspected every two years. One YOT wanted clarification on what would trigger a YOT to be inspected every two years, and another was concerned that such regularity would place an undue burden upon them. Conversely, another YOT asked if an overall three-year inspection cycle might be more useful than a four-year cycle, particularly when assessing work with partner agencies.

Finally, our transparent, consultative and consensual approach to the development of the standards was seen as a clear strength. Transparency in terms of the process of inspection, sources of evidence and the moderation of ratings was also requested.

4. Changes to standards and ratings frameworks

Following a review of the proposals and consultation responses, HM Chief Inspector of Probation and the Senior Management Team have made the decisions set out below.

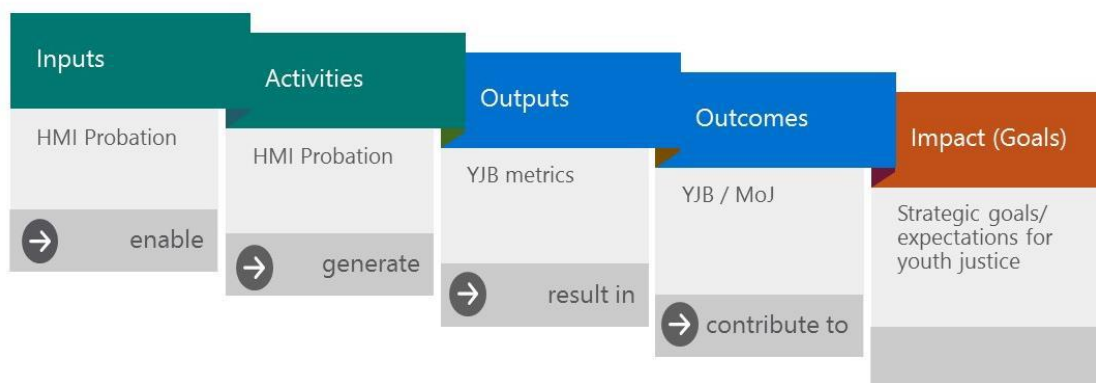
The standards framework

Within the consultation document, we proposed a standards framework with three domains. Domain One covers how well the organisation is led, managed and set up. Domains Two and Three cover the quality of work in individual cases, with Domain Two focusing upon court disposals and Domain Three focusing upon out of court disposals.



We intend to adhere to this structure, focusing upon the key 'inputs' and 'activities' which are the drivers of positive outcomes. Getting to the heart of current delivery through on-site inspection is where we believe we can add most value. Based on our independence and the expertise and experience of our inspectors, we can uniquely focus on the effectiveness of work with children and young people.

Various outputs and outcomes will continue to be measured by the YJB and MoJ, and we see our work as complementary. Without good quality inputs (such as professional staff and comprehensive services) and activities (such as case assessment and the use of effective interventions) providers are less likely to meet the enduring aims of youth offending services.



The consultation feedback endorsed the areas covered by the three domains, and we will review the suggestions for areas that could be strengthened, amended or added alongside the findings from our transitional inspections, tests and simulations. Some suggestions linked to prompts in our proposed standards for probation services, and we will look again at potential alignment.

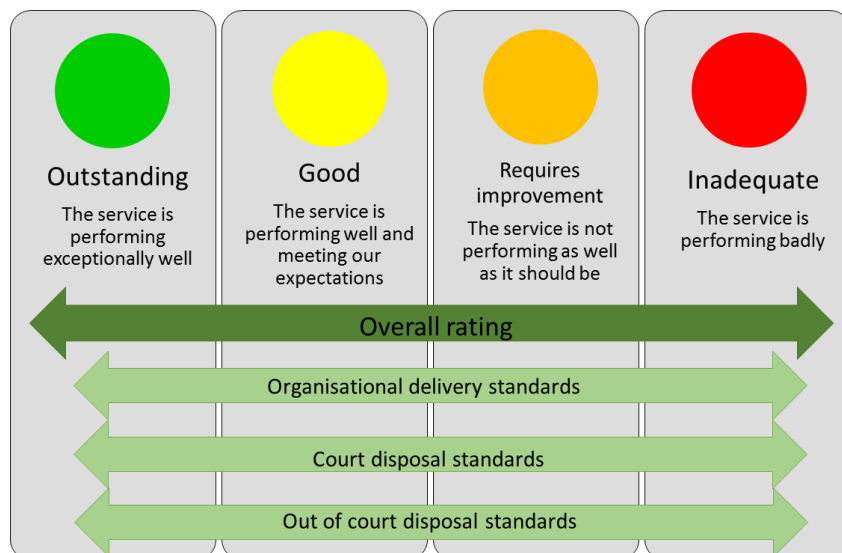
As part of the review of the standards, we will check that our use of terminology is sufficiently consistent, e.g. 'partner agencies' and 'other agencies'. The terms YOT and YOT Management Board are used with the standards for consistency and because this is how the provision of services are described in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. We recognise, however, that the terminology adopted by local authorities does differ. The standards assess the inputs and activities provided regardless of what the local delivery arrangements are called and YOTs will not be disadvantaged because of different terminology.

When reviewing the content of the framework, we will keep in mind the need to restrict it to those areas that are most strongly linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes, focusing YOTs' attention upon these areas and helping to drive improvement where it is needed. We are also mindful of the need to support cost-effective inspections which are not unduly burdensome for YOTs or ourselves. Finally, we need to recognise that the greater the number of prompts underpinning a key question, the more difficult it becomes to balance them into a single judgement. Our view is that no key question should have more than ten prompts.

We stated in the consultation document that the standards framework will be supported by inspection guidance materials. These materials are being developed and will help to clarify our expectations regarding levels of quality, e.g. what is meant by terms such as 'promptly' and 'effectively'. These materials will also define key terms, e.g. 'leadership team'. Some suggestions for areas to be covered by the standards framework (e.g. those relating to specific interventions) are likely to be addressed through these guidance materials rather than through the framework itself.

Rating youth offending services

As proposed in the consultation document, we will adopt the rating labels of outstanding; good; requires improvement; and inadequate. These ratings are now the 'market leader' and are well known, being used by CQC, Ofsted and HMICFRS. There will be an overall (composite) provider rating, and ratings at the standard level.



The consultation feedback provided no clear support for weighting any parts of the standards framework. We will thus proceed with a ratings system without weightings, helping to ensure that providers of youth offending services maintain focus across all the standards, all of which are linked to effective service delivery and positive outcomes.

We will complete some further work modelling potential ratings, taking on board the feedback to avoid a complex scoring system which is difficult to understand or explain. We are mindful of the need to develop ratings with a clear rationale, which are relatively straightforward and which challenge YOTs, helping to drive improvement, but which are attainable. We also believe there is value in keeping the case assessment performance bandings matched to those used in previous inspection programmes (e.g. those used in our IYOW inspections from 2012 to 2017). In this way, we are not increasing or decreasing our expectations of the quality of youth offending services, but maintaining our long-established view.

In terms of attainability, we had some feedback highlighting (i) the role of partner agencies in ensuring that a high-quality service is delivered and (ii) the impact of various other contextual issues (e.g. geography, poor engagement from families). We are clear that our judgements and ratings must always reflect the quality of delivery, irrespective of the underlying reasons and rationale. But we will target and tailor recommendations to help providers make the necessary improvements. For example, we will reflect upon the role of others in the delivery of services, setting out the reasons for any shortfalls. And we will target our recommendations at the appropriate organisational level,

including recommendations to the MoJ or YJB when action is required at a national policy or commissioning level.

There was strong support amongst respondents for publishing rating characteristics, and we will progress with their development, helping to show what will guide a lead inspector to recommend specific ratings across the four Domain One standards. As we develop the characteristics, we will review their content and the level at which they are pitched.

Transparency and continuing review

We will continue to be transparent about the way we work. As well as publishing the final version of the 2018/19 standards framework, we will publish documentation covering the inspection process, targeting criteria, methodology and ratings. At present we are testing sources of evidence, seeking to establish effective and efficient ways of obtaining information routinely, pre-fieldwork and during fieldwork.

We will monitor any changes to the youth justice system both nationally and locally, and keep the standards framework and the underlying evidence-base under continual review, working with providers and others. This work will be overseen by our newly appointed Head of Standards, working alongside our Head of Research. We will review the evidence-base objectively, prioritising the most robust, relevant and timely findings and covering all theories and methodologies. We will consult and work with external academics where required.

We will also keep our approach to ratings under review, reflecting upon our inspection findings. As part of this work, we will consider the need for any weightings in future years. We will work with the MoJ and the YJB to make sure our inspection ratings sit sensibly alongside other measures so that YOTs are held to account in balanced and proportionate arrangements, with measures aligned well. For example, we will continue to engage with the YJB on any revisions to the National Standards for Youth Justice.

If we propose to make any significant changes to the standards or ratings, we will consult before doing so. We will be fully transparent and publish all changes on our website

Annex A: Guiding principles

The principles set out below have guided the structure, format and content of the standards, highlighting our desire to drive improvements, whilst at the same time meeting requirements of relevance, robustness and timeliness.

<i>Driving improvement</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. drive the right behaviours and improvements in outcomes, enabling providers to focus their attention.2. capture those key research findings and evidence based principles on what contributes to effective service delivery and positive outcomes, exemplifying what good youth offending work looks like.3. be achievable, but challenging where necessary.
<i>Relevance</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. be clear, unambiguous, easily understood by providers and seen as relevant to current delivery models and practice.5. be restricted to those standards that are most essential, ensuring that they are not unduly restrictive and leave scope for innovation.6. be sufficiently broad, covering organisational, workforce, inter-agency and practice elements.7. make use of existing national and international standards (including previous inspection criteria) where possible and desirable.8. be provider-neutral and likely to endure over time (while also being easily adjustable).
<i>Robustness</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">9. be balanced across domains which are sufficiently discrete and coherent.10. be concise and sufficiently precise for their intended purpose, supporting evaluation and legitimate claims of compliance and conformity.11. support objective, consistent judgments by inspectors and between inspections.
<i>Timeliness</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">12. support regular, cost-effective inspections.

Annex B: Proposed standards framework

1. Organisational delivery

1.1 Governance and leadership

The governance and leadership of the YOT supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.

- 1.1.1 Is there a clear local vision and strategy for the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?
- a) Does the YOT Management Board set the direction and strategy for the YOT?
 - b) Does the YOT Management Board include all statutory partners and non-statutory partners where these would add value?
 - c) Are YOT Management Board members active in their attendance and participation, recognising the contribution their own agency makes to the YOT?
 - d) Is the Chair of the YOT Management Board well engaged with a sufficient understanding of the YOT's work?
- 1.1.2 Do the partnership arrangements actively support effective service delivery?
- a) Do YOT Management Board members advocate the work of the YOT in their own broader roles?
 - b) Do the YOT's partnerships arrangements facilitate the delivery of effective operational work, in relation to both court disposals and out of court disposals?
 - c) Do staff understand their roles and responsibilities within the partnership arrangements, and what they are accountable for?
 - d) Do other relevant local strategic partnerships give priority to work to support desistance and prevent harm, supporting integration with wider services for children and young people?
- 1.1.3 Does the leadership of the YOT support effective service delivery?
- a) Does the YOT leadership team provide an effective link to the Management Board?
 - b) Does the YOT leadership team effectively communicate the vision and strategy of the YOT to staff and stakeholders?
 - c) Does the YOT leadership team successfully deliver the vision and strategy of the YOT?
 - d) Are risks to the service sufficiently understood, with appropriate mitigations and controls in place?

1.2 Staff

Staff within the YOT are empowered to deliver a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.

- 1.2.1 Do staffing and workload levels support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?
 - a) Are practitioners and managers' workloads reasonable, given the profile of the cases and the range of work undertaken?
 - b) Are workloads actively managed?
 - c) Is there an effective strategy to maintain the quality of delivery during periods of planned and unplanned staff absences?

- 1.2.2 Do the skills of YOT staff support the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people?
 - a) Do the skills and diversity of the workforce meet the needs of the children and young people?
 - b) Are medium, high and very high risk of harm cases and cases with safety and wellbeing concerns allocated to staff who are appropriately qualified and/or experienced?
 - c) Are staff motivated to contribute to the delivery of a quality service?

- 1.2.3 Does oversight by managers support high-quality work and professional development?
 - a) Do managers provide effective supervision of staff to enhance the quality of work with children and young people?
 - b) Is the appraisal process used effectively to ensure that staff are competent to deliver a quality service?
 - c) Is sufficient attention paid to identifying and addressing poor performance?
 - d) Do managers recognise and reward exceptional work to encourage improvement and development and retention of staff?

- 1.2.4 Are arrangements for learning and development comprehensive and responsive?
 - a) Does the YOT identify and address the learning needs of all staff?
 - b) Does the YOT provide sufficient access to in-service training to support the delivery of a quality service?
 - c) Does the YOT promote and value a culture of learning and continuous improvement?

1.3 Partnerships and services

A comprehensive range of high-quality services is in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision for all children and young people.

- 1.3.1 Is there a sufficiently comprehensive and up to date analysis of the profile of children and young people, to ensure that the YOT can deliver well targeted services?
 - a) Is there an up to date strategic and operational analysis of the offending related factors presented by the children and young people?
 - b) Does the analysis pay sufficient attention to factors for desistance, safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm?
 - c) Does the analysis pay sufficient attention to diversity factors and to issues of disproportionality?
 - d) Is the analysis used effectively to influence service delivery?

- 1.3.2 Does the YOT partnership have access to the volume, range and quality of services and interventions to meet the needs of all children and young people?
 - a) Is there access to the right specialist and mainstream services and interventions to meet the desistance needs of children and young people?
 - b) Is sufficient attention paid to building on strengths and enhancing protective factors?
 - c) Are diversity factors and issues of disproportionality considered in the range of services provided?
 - d) Is the quality of services monitored and remedial action taken where required?

- 1.3.3 Are arrangements with statutory partners, providers and other agencies established, maintained and used effectively to deliver high-quality services?
 - a) Are there effective arrangements and communication in place with partners and providers to support desistance through access to specialist and mainstream services?
 - b) Are there effective arrangements and communication in place with partners and providers to support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people?
 - c) Are there effective arrangements and communication in place with partners and providers to manage the risk of harm to others?
 - d) Are courts made sufficiently aware of the services available to support sentencing options?

1.4 Information and facilities

Timely and relevant information is available and appropriate facilities are in place to support a high-quality, personalised and responsive approach for all children and young people.

- 1.4.1 Are the right policies and guidance in place to enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all children and young people?
 - a) Are the right policies in place that describe and guide effective service delivery?
 - b) Are policies and guidance communicated effectively?
 - c) Do staff understand how to access the right services from partners and providers?

- 1.4.2 Does the YOT's delivery environment(s) meet the needs of all children and young people and enable staff to deliver a quality service?
 - a) Does the YOT deliver its work to children and young people in safe and accessible places?
 - b) Does the YOT delivery environment enable staff to undertake appropriate personalised work and engage effectively with children and young people?
 - c) Is the YOT delivery environment a safe place for staff working with children and young people?

- 1.4.3 Do the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) systems enable staff to deliver a quality service, meeting the needs of all children and young people?
 - a) Do the ICT systems enable staff to plan, deliver and record their work in a timely way, and to access information as required?
 - b) Do the ICT arrangements allow access to and exchange of the right information to and from partners and providers?
 - c) Do the ICT systems support the production of the necessary management information?

- 1.4.4 Is analysis, evidence and learning used effectively to drive improvement?
 - a) Are service improvement plans supported by relevant up to date information and through monitoring and development of the underlying evidence base?
 - b) Do performance and quality assurance systems drive improvement?
 - c) Are processes in place to ensure that the YOT learns from things that go wrong?
 - d) Are the views of service users (including children and young people, parents/carers, victims and sentencers) sought, analysed and used to review and improve the effectiveness of services?
 - e) Where necessary, is action taken promptly and appropriately in response to audit or inspection?

2. Court disposals

2.1 Assessment

Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others.

- 2.1.1 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child or young person's attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?
 - b) Does assessment consider the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person, utilising information held by other agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does assessment focus on the child or young person's strengths and protective factors?
 - d) Is sufficient attention given to understanding the child or young person's levels of maturity, ability and motivation, and their likelihood of engaging with the court disposal?
 - e) Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child or young person?
 - f) Is the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?
- 2.1.2 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?
- a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve partner agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
- 2.1.3 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?
- a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child or young person, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?
 - b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including past behaviour and convictions, and involve partner agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does assessment analyse controls and interventions to manage and minimise the risk of harm presented by the child or young person?

2.2 Planning

Planning is driven by the assessment, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others.

- 2.2.1 Does planning focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Does planning set out the services, activities and interventions most likely to reduce reoffending and support desistance?
 - b) Does planning take sufficient account of the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person?
 - c) Does planning take sufficient account of the child or young person's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?
 - d) Does planning take sufficient account of the child or young person's levels of maturity, ability and motivation, and seek to develop these as necessary?
 - e) Does planning address the key structural barriers facing the child or young person, and seek to overcome these as necessary?
 - f) Is the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?
- 2.2.2 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?
- a) Does planning address the factors identified in assessment and promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Does planning involve partner agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child or young person?
 - c) Does planning set out the necessary controls, interventions and contingency plans to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
- 2.2.3 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
- a) Does planning address the risk of harm factors identified in assessment and promote the safety of other people?
 - b) Does planning involve partner agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to identifiable actual and potential victims?
 - d) Does planning set out the necessary controls, interventions and contingency plans to manage those risks that have been identified?

2.3 Implementation and delivery

High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.

- 2.3.1 Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Are the services, activities and interventions that are delivered those most likely to reduce reoffending and support desistance?
 - b) Does service delivery reflect the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person, involving parents/carers or significant others where appropriate?
 - c) Does service delivery build upon the child or young person's strengths and enhance protective factors?
 - d) Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child or young person and where appropriate their parents/carers or significant others, and to ensuring that services respond to their concerns?
 - e) Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration including access to services post-supervision?
 - f) Is sufficient attention given to engagement with the child or young person and their compliance with the work of the YOT?
 - g) Are enforcement actions taken when appropriate?
- 2.3.2 Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of the child or young person?
- a) Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Is the involvement of other organisations in keeping the child or young person safe sufficiently well coordinated?
- 2.3.3 Does the implementation and delivery of services effectively support the safety of other people?
- a) Are the services, activities and interventions that are delivered sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?
 - b) Is sufficient attention given to the protection of victims and potential victims?
 - c) Is the involvement of other agencies in managing the risk of harm sufficiently well coordinated?

2.4 Reviewing

Reviewing of progress is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others.

- 2.4.1 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on supporting the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors linked to offending behaviour or desistance?
 - b) Does reviewing focus sufficiently on building upon the child or young person's strengths and enhancing protective factors?
 - c) Does reviewing consider motivation and engagement levels and any relevant barriers?
 - d) Is the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others encouraged to contribute to reviewing their progress and engagement?
 - e) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to support desistance?
- 2.4.2 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?
- a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to safety and wellbeing?
 - b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from partner agencies involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - c) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
- 2.4.3 Does reviewing focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
- a) Does reviewing identify and respond to changes in factors related to risk of harm?
 - b) Is reviewing informed by the necessary input from partner agencies involved in managing the risk of harm?
 - c) Is the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others encouraged to contribute to reviewing their risk of harm?
 - d) Does reviewing lead to the necessary adjustments in the ongoing plan of work to manage and minimise the risk of harm?

3. Out of court disposals

3.1 Assessment

Assessment is well-informed, analytical and personalised, actively involving the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others.

- 3.1.1 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to support the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Is there sufficient analysis of offending behaviour, including the child or young person's acknowledgement of responsibility, attitudes towards and motivations for their offending?
 - b) Does assessment consider the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person, utilising information held by other agencies where appropriate?
 - c) Does assessment focus on the child or young person's strengths and protective factors?
 - d) Does assessment analyse the key structural barriers facing the child or young person?
 - e) Does assessment give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of victims, and opportunities for restorative justice?
 - f) Is sufficient attention given to understanding the child or young person's levels of maturity, ability and motivation, and their likelihood of engaging with the out of court disposal?
 - g) Is the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others meaningfully involved in their assessment, and are their views taken into account?
 - h) Is assessment timely, proportionate and appropriate to the type of disposal received?
- 3.1.2 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep the child or young person safe?
- a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risks to the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including other assessments, and involve partner agencies where appropriate?
- 3.1.3 Does assessment sufficiently analyse how to keep other people safe?
- a) Does assessment clearly identify and analyse any risk of harm to others posed by the child or young person, including identifying who is at risk and the nature of that risk?
 - b) Does assessment draw sufficiently on available sources of information, including any other assessments that have been completed, and other evidence of behaviour by the child or young person?

3.2 Planning

Planning is driven by assessment, holistic and personalised, actively involving the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others.

- 3.2.1 Does planning focus on supporting the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Does planning set out the services, activities and interventions most likely to support desistance and minimise future involvement in the criminal justice system?
 - b) Does planning take sufficient account of the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person?
 - c) Does planning take sufficient account of the child or young person's strengths and protective factors, and seek to reinforce or develop these as necessary?
 - d) Does planning take sufficient account of the child or young person's levels of maturity, ability and motivation, and seek to develop these as necessary?
 - e) Does planning take sufficient account of opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services following completion of out of court disposal work?
 - f) Does planning give sufficient attention to the needs and wishes of the victim?
 - g) Is the child or young person, their parents/carers and significant others meaningfully involved in planning, and are their views taken into account?
 - h) Is planning proportionate to the disposal type, with interventions capable of being completed within appropriate timescales?
- 3.2.2 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping the child or young person safe?
- a) Does planning address the factors identified in assessment and promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Does planning involve other agencies where appropriate, and is there sufficient alignment with other plans (e.g. child protection or care plans) concerning the child or young person?
 - c) Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?
- 3.2.3 Does planning focus sufficiently on keeping other people safe?
- a) Does planning address the factors identified in assessment and promote the safety of other people?
 - b) Does planning address any specific concerns and risks related to identifiable actual and potential victims?
 - c) Does planning include necessary contingency arrangements for those risks that have been identified?

3.3 Implementation and delivery

High-quality, well-focused, personalised and coordinated services are delivered, engaging and assisting the child or young person.

- 3.3.1 Does service delivery support the child or young person's desistance?
- a) Are the services, activities and interventions that are delivered those most likely to support desistance and minimise future involvement in the criminal justice system?
 - b) Does service delivery reflect the diversity and wider familial and social context of the child or young person, involving parents/carers or significant others where appropriate?
 - c) Is sufficient focus given to developing and maintaining an effective working relationship with the child or young person and where appropriate their parents/carers or significant others, and to ensuring that services respond to their concerns?
 - d) Is sufficient attention given to engagement with the child or young person and, where necessary, their compliance with the work of the YOT?
 - e) Does service delivery promote opportunities for community integration, including access to mainstream services?
 - f) Is the delivery of services proportionate to the disposal type and completed within the required timescales?
- 3.3.2 Does service delivery effectively support the safety of the child or young person?
- a) Does service delivery promote the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person?
 - b) Is the involvement of other agencies in keeping the child or young person safe sufficiently well utilised and coordinated?
- 3.3.3 Does service delivery effectively support the safety of other people?
- a) Is sufficient attention given to the protection of victims and potential victims?
 - b) Are the services, activities and interventions that are delivered sufficient to manage and minimise the risk of harm?

3.4 Joint working

Joint working with the police supports the delivery of high-quality, personalised and coordinated services.

- 3.4.1 Are the YOT's recommendations sufficiently well-informed, analytical and personalised to the child or young person, supporting joint decision making?
- a) Are the recommendations by the YOT for out of court disposal outcomes, conditions and interventions appropriate and proportionate?
 - b) Do the recommendations consider the degree of the child or young person's understanding of the offence and their acknowledgement of responsibility?
 - c) Is a positive contribution made by the YOT to determining the disposal?
 - d) Is sufficient attention given to the child or young person's understanding, and their parents/carers' understanding, of the implications of receiving an out of court disposal?
 - e) Is the information provided to inform decision making timely to meet the needs of the case, legislation and guidance?
 - f) Is the rationale for joint disposal decisions appropriate and clearly recorded?
- 3.4.2 Does the YOT work effectively with the police in implementing the out of court disposal?
- a) Does the YOT inform the police of progress and outcomes in a timely manner?
 - b) Is attention given, in Youth Conditional Caution cases, to compliance with and enforcement of the conditions?
 - c) Are Youth Conditional Caution conditions consistent with YOT planning, and focussed on supporting desistance from offending and the needs of the victim?

Annex C: Example of rating characteristics

1.1 Governance and leadership

The governance and leadership of the YOT supports and promotes the delivery of a high-quality, personalised and responsive service for all children and young people.

Outstanding

- Leaders set and communicate a clear direction and strategic focus, inspiring staff and uniting them to deliver the organisation's goals. The vision and strategy is stretching, challenging and innovative, focused upon the quality of delivery for children and young people, while remaining achievable.
- Leaders create a culture of involvement, ownership, empowerment and improvement. Safe innovation is celebrated, with staff feeling empowered to identify ways to improve how they do their job, and leaders consistently listening and explaining their decisions. A diverse range of views are encouraged.
- A collaborative and outward-looking approach is taken to working with statutory partners and non-statutory partners, maximising the benefits for children and young people through the appropriate sharing of expertise, resources and knowledge. The YOT is represented on all relevant strategic groups, representation is consistent and those attending demonstrate appropriate decision-making authority.
- It is clear how staff are to work together within the partnership arrangements, with strong collaboration and support, clear lines of accountability and the avoidance of duplication. There is a common focus on improving the quality of delivery for children and young people.
- Where changes are required, they are communicated in a timely and transparent way across the organisation, with a clear proactive approach to embedding and monitoring new ways of working.

Inadequate

- The vision and strategy is unclear, out-of-date or insufficiently focused on quality. Staff are not aware of or do not understand the vision and strategy.
- The culture is top-down and directive. It is not one of fairness, openness, transparency, honesty and challenge. Staff do not feel valued, supported and appreciated. Their views are not sought and decisions are not explained, resulting in a lack of alignment between the issues described by staff and those understood by leaders. When staff do raise concerns, they are not treated with respect. The culture is defensive.
- There are no detailed or realistic plans to deliver the vision and strategy, progress is not being reviewed and leaders are out of touch with what is happening during day-to-day services. There is minimal evidence of learning, reflective practice or innovation. Where changes are made, the impact on staff and the quality of delivery for children and young people is not recognised.

- The YOT is represented on few strategic groups, and/or representation is sporadic or at an inappropriate decision-making level, impeding collaborative working. There is evidence of blaming others.
- There is no effective system for identifying, capturing and managing issues and risks. Any mitigating actions or improvements that leaders have sought to make have been inadequate. Consequently, leaders are not doing enough to tackle poor delivery, significantly impairing the progress of children and young people.
- There is poor collaboration or cooperation between teams and high levels of division and conflict. Staff do not understand the fit between their roles and the partnership arrangements, and there is a lack of clarity about the authority to make decisions.

Contacts

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