

Youth Justice Plan

2026 – 2029

Service	Milton Keynes Youth Justice Team
Service Manager/ Lead	Martin Clement, Head of Children’s Quality Assurance, Performance and Youth Justice
Chair of YJS Board	Dr Mac Heath, Director of Children’s Services

Contents

1.	Introduction, vision and strategy	3
2.	Local context	4
3.	Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.	Progress on priorities in previous plan	9
5.	Performance over the previous year	15
6.	Risks and Issues	24
7.	Child First.....	27
8.	Resources and Services	30
9.	Financial Resources	34
10.	Board Development	35
11.	Workforce development.....	36
12.	Knife Possession Guidance.....	40

13.	Evidence-based practice and innovation.....	40
14.	Priorities for coming year.....	41
15.	Service development and National Priority areas.....	43
16.	Overrepresentation.....	50
17.	Policing.....	50
18.	Education, Training and Employment.....	49
19.	Restorative Approaches and victims.....	50
20.	Serious violence and Contextual Safeguarding.....	51
21.	Detention in police custody	53
22.	Remands and use of custody and constructive resettlement	53
23.	Work with families	55
24.	Sign off, submission and approval	56
25.	Appendices	56

1. Introduction, vision and strategy

In my capacity as the Director of Children's Services for Milton Keynes City Council and Chair of the multi-agency Youth Justice Partnership, I am pleased to present and formally endorse our Strategic Partnership Plan for 2026 – 2029.

1. Our Commitment and Achievements

Over the last year, we have strengthened our delivery across both statutory responsibilities and early, preventative interventions. Our approach remains firmly rooted in a child centred, trauma-informed ethos and is fully aligned with the Child First framework. We are committed to reducing unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system by enabling young people to engage positively in education, employment, and community-based opportunities that enhance life chances and long-term outcomes. Central to this work is a focus on supporting young people to develop a strong sense of self, positive identity, and ambition, empowering them to raise aspirations, pursue their goals, and realise their full potential.

2. Evidence of Success

This plan highlights the successes and core achievements of the past year. We have supported young people in contact with the criminal justice system, whether as First Time Entrants, repeat contacts with our Youth Justice Service, or through engagement with our statutory and community partners. Additionally, we have worked with young people involved in prevention and diversion services, as well as those affected by crime as victims.

3. Tackling Serious Youth Violence (SYV)

We recognise the previous increase in Serious Youth Violence (SYV) and have worked closely with partners to address this challenge. Through Operation Deter, alongside Thames Valley Police, we have seen successfully reduced knife crime in Milton Keynes, by 17% in the period May 2025 to May 2026. Our collaborative approach ensures that young people receive timely support and intervention and the success of this initiative has led to its expansion across Thames Valley, and an expansion to offences for which we in Milton Keynes respond to young people in custody, which now includes offences of violence against the person.

4. Our Vision for 2026/27

In 2026 the decision was made to move from an annual plan to a multi-year strategic plan to reflect the increasing complexity of the youth justice landscape and the need for a more sustainable, realistic approach to service development. A multi-year plan enables the Youth Justice Service to focus on longer-term outcomes, recognising that meaningful change for children, families and systems cannot be achieved within a single financial year. It supports stronger alignment with medium-term financial planning and budget cycles, allowing the service and its partners to respond more effectively to funding pressures while making best use of available resources. Importantly, a multi-year approach provides the stability needed to embed practice change, evaluate impact over time, and adapt to emerging needs, ensuring that

priorities remain achievable, evidence-led and focused on delivering lasting improvement rather than short-term activity.

This plan articulates the shared vision and strategic direction of the Milton Keynes multi-agency Youth Justice Partnership in delivering high-quality Youth Justice Services. It has been shaped through meaningful collaboration with our partners, including the Youth Justice Strategic Board (YJSB), colleagues from the Youth Justice and Support Service (YJSS) and, most importantly, the children and young people whose voices are central to our work. Together, we are committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for young people in Milton Keynes by ensuring they are supported, empowered, and given every opportunity to thrive.

2. Local Context

1. Milton Keynes achieved City status in 2022. There is a mix of urban and rural areas, with the urban element accounting for 20% by area, but 90% by population. The most recent figures identify the population of Milton Keynes as 287,100 (2021), and it has a proportionately young community, with 45.6% of residents under the age of 35 and 26.1% under the age of 19. Milton Keynes is one of the UK's fastest growing cities and is now the size of a large outer London borough. The population of Milton Keynes expanded by 18% between 2004 and 2014 and this increase has continued, with a 15.3% increase between 2011 and 2021 (the South East average was 7.5%), with a projection that between 2011 and 2026 the population will have increased by 24% (compared to 11% growth in England over the same period). The Office for National Statistics estimate that the population has already reached 300,000.
2. The change in demography amongst the young population is captured in both local and national data. Milton Keynes City Council's report in May 2024 on 'Equality and Diversity in Milton Keynes' highlights the changing demographics and growing diversity, outlining that "The proportion of the Global Majority school population has grown from 31% in 2010 to 45.51% in 2020 and to 51% in 2023, with proportionately higher growth of the Global Majority communities compared to White British". These demographic changes are also reflected in the 2021 National Census data which identified that for the youth population; White young people made up 60%; Asian young people 14%; Black young people 15%; Mixed (Dual heritage) young people 8% and 'Other' young people are 2% of the population. The census also identified ten specific communities numbering over a 1000 in MK with Romanians the largest European group (6189), Ghanaians the largest African group (2017) and Indian the largest South Asian group (3443).

A snapshot of the needs of our population:

a) Starting life:

- The most recent published Milton Keynes data (2022) shows around 7.4% of babies are born with **low birth weight**, which remains higher than the England average (6.8%). More recent national commentary confirms a slight upward national trend post-pandemic, with deprivation remaining a key driver.

- The latest validated data for Milton Keynes (2024/25) shows **breastfeeding prevalence** remains high at around 60%, continuing to compare favourably with the England average of 55.6%. Breastfeeding rates locally remain among the stronger performers nationally.
- Our **vaccination coverage for MMR** (23/24) in Milton Keynes is 87.3%. This is lower than the WHO target of 95% but above the national average of 83.9%.
- **Good Level of Development (GLD)** outcomes for 2023 in MK were 69.8% (national 65.2%). School readiness in November 2023 was 69.7% (national 67.2%)
- **Uptake of two-year-old education** is 81% against 74% nationally (40% most deprived)

b) School aged children:

- In 2025, local data for Milton Keynes indicated that around **one in five young people**, equating to **almost 13,000 people aged 8–25**, had a diagnosable mental health condition, highlighting the continued importance of accessible early emotional wellbeing and mental health support.
- There is an increasing trend around **obesity** in children (in Year 6) with 36% of children deemed to have an unhealthy weight (24/25).
- The number of families who are supported into accommodation as they are **homeless** (22/23) equates to 16 cases per 100 children in Milton Keynes. This is higher than the national average of 14.4 cases per 100 children across England.
- In 2022/23, there were 368 cases open to the council's Targeted Early Help team where the primary reason was recorded as **domestic abuse**.

c) Young people and transitions into adulthood:

- Our **teenage pregnancy** rate in Milton Keynes (2022) was 11 - 12 conceptions per 1000 young people. It has risen slightly compared to 11.2 conceptions in 2020. It remains lower than the England average.
- The rate of young people who are **first time entrants into the criminal justice system** in Milton Keynes has consistently declined and continues to compare well against the England average. This equates to 100 cases per 100,000 population in the city compared to 152 per 100,000 across England.
- There has been an 86.6% decrease in **Serious Violent Offences** per 100,000 population committed by young people between Jan 2025 and Jan 2026. This reduction is directly linked to good multi-agency link up and disruption activity, the ACT NOW programme and Promoting Reintegration and Reducing Exclusions (PRRE) work carried out by the Youth Justice Service (YJS).

- Recent local data indicates that approximately 3–3.5% of young people aged 16–17 in Milton Keynes are **not in education, employment or training (NEET)**. While directly comparable national data varies depending on the age range used, wider evidence indicates significantly higher NEET levels among 16–24-year-olds nationally (around 13–14%).
 - In the year ending 2023, the **unemployment** rate in Milton Keynes was approximately 3.6–3.7%. Nationally, the UK unemployment rate has since increased, reaching around 5% in early 2026.
3. Overall, there is positive school age education provision with outcomes for 96% of schools achieving Ofsted rating of ‘Good’ or better. Alongside the economic success of Milton Keynes, there are areas of deprivation and disadvantage, with Milton Keynes ranking alongside places such as the Isle of Wight and Medway for child deprivation. There is a strong focus on partnership approaches aimed at closing these inequalities regarding health and prosperity across the city. [Milton Keynes City Council Plan](#) gives a high priority to children and the [Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2028](#) sets the course for further improvement with strong multi-agency sign up.
 4. Further details on the population and needs of children and young people in Milton Keynes can be found by visiting our [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment website](#).

3. Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements

5. As a local authority, we ensure that the governance of youth justice arrangements is delivered through a multi-agency partnership. At a minimum, this partnership comprises senior representatives from the Police, Health (ICB), Probation, and key Local Authority services, including Children’s Services, Public Health, and Education. These agencies not only contribute to the financial resourcing of the Youth Justice Service but also provide staff to support its operations. In Milton Keynes, this governance group is known as the Youth Justice Strategic Board (YJSB), chaired by our Director of Children’s Services. The board meets every quarter and receives regular performance reports and budget updates, ensuring transparency and accountability. To strengthen community engagement, we have embedded a greater voice for the wider community by including Community Volunteer representative and included the Chair of the Youth Panel as a core member of the YJSB. This year we have also secured membership of a Victims Representative. (Appendix 1 outlines the board’s membership, while Appendix 2 details attendance rates.) As part of ongoing development, all board members are invited to collaborate with YJS staff to review cases and ensure they have a clear understanding of direct work and assessments undertaken with our young people. Board members and YJS staff will also be engaging with Development Days which will be held as a minimum annually.
6. We continue to maintain and expand strong representation at the YJSB, with committed

partners who share their knowledge, skills, time, and experience. Their contributions have been instrumental in enhancing the effectiveness of our service. We believe that the quality of leadership, management, and governance demonstrated by the YJSB fosters stronger scrutiny, improved innovation, and increased investment, ensuring the best possible service for young people. Our focus remains on delivering multi-agency, community-based prevention programmes, alongside targeted, highly specialist interventions, which have enabled us to achieve outcomes we are proud of.

7. Our service is structured under the Head of Service for Quality Assurance, Performance, and Youth Justice, a role that spans across Children's Services, ensuring effective integration of youth justice within broader support systems and quality assurance processes. The current Head of Service is employed by Milton Keynes City Council and operates within the Children's Services Directorate, reporting to the Assistant Director of Children's Social Care, who in turn reports to the Director of Children's Services. Additionally, the Head of Service holds responsibility for Safeguarding and Performance within Milton Keynes Children's Services.
8. The Youth Justice Service (YJS) consists of a Head of Service, Operational Manager, Deputy Manager, 1 Senior Officer, and 12 Youth Offending Team (YOT) Officers, one of whom leads on victims and family support, one who leads on Pre-16 Education and one who leads on Court. The team also includes a seconded Police Officer, a seconded Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) worker, two Speech and Language Therapists (SLT) providing five days of service, three Business Support Officers and volunteer members who fulfil appropriate adult and panel member roles. Appendix 3 provides an overview of our current structure, while Appendix 4 details the characteristics and diversity of our team.
9. Additionally, the YJS oversees the Milton Keynes Youth Drug and Alcohol Solutions Team.
10. Over the past two years, we have experienced greater staffing changes than in previous years, largely due to fixed-term contracts ending with delays in future funding being confirmed. Despite these changes, we have made significant progress in improving the demographic representation of our staffing to better reflect the cohort we serve. However, we recognise that our gender breakdown currently reflects a disproportionate number of female employees compared to male employees, and we remain committed to addressing this imbalance through ongoing recruitment efforts. Appendices 3 and 4 provide further details on our staffing structure and diversity breakdown.

Partnership Arrangements

11. The Youth Justice Service has an informal reporting line to the Community Safety Partnership – MK Together. The Chief Executive and Lead Cabinet Member also receive regular service updates as required, as does the Local Police Area Commander.

12. The MK Together Board, Health and Care Partnership and Community Safety Partnership form part of wider partnership arrangements designed to align governance, streamline decision-making and reduce duplication.
13. **The table below highlights meetings and Boards attended by the service reflecting the level of scope of the partnership work in place:**

Meetings attended by Head of Service (HoS)	Meetings attend by managers and other staff of YJS
Advisor on Safer MK (community safety) Partnership Board	Member of the Education Legacy Panel (to review and discuss pupils who have been on a part-time timetable for more than 12 weeks)
Member of the MK Together Delivery Board which identifies new and emerging areas of risk and exploitation and responses. The Board has oversight of case-based panels (Channel, CSB, Vulnerable Adults / Children, MARAC, etc.).	Core member of the regular Joint Decision-Making Panel considering Out of Court Disposals (OOCDD).
Attendance at the South-East Region and Thames Valley YJS Head of Meetings	Members of the Association of YOT Managers
Member of the Assurance Board	Attendance at Southeast Effective Practice Forums
Attendance at the School Attendance Working Group	Co-chairs Contextual Risk Panel which is a multi-agency panel to review all high-risk cases across Youth Justice Service and the Contextual Safeguarding Service.
Member of the Channel Panel, (deputy chair).	Member of the MKCC Looked After Child Panel
Co-chairs Serious Violence Operational Group.	Standing member of the Schools Behaviour Partnership alternative education panel and is able to influence discussions on appropriate education provision.

	Attendance at the multi-agency group scrutinizing Part Time Timetables that have been in place for longer than six weeks to ensure appropriate steps are taken to re-engage children in full-time education.
	Attendance at the Serious Violence Operational Group.
	Attendance at the Thames Valley Youth Justice Operational Managers group
	Attendance at Thames Valley Child in Custody Data Review Meeting

14. In addition to the statutory partners and linkages identified above, the Youth Justice Service has wider partnership arrangements with Primary, Secondary and Special Schools; HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS), Youth and Crown Court; Speech and Language Therapy (SLT); Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND); Education, Sufficiency, Access and Attendance; Youth Information Advice and Guidance; NHS England Health and Justice; Thames Valley Police Harm Reduction Unit, YMCA and South Oxfordshire Food & Education Academy (SOFEA), alongside a range of other partners.

3. Progress on Priorities in Previous Plan

15. The Youth Justice Service (YJS) in Milton Keynes continues to explore opportunities for service development to secure positive outcomes for young people. The service is subject to ongoing review to assess progress and evaluate outcomes through the Youth Justice Board (YJSB)

16. Over 2025-2026 significant progress has been made across several areas. This includes:

Disproportionality:

- The Youth Justice Strategic board shared data through the year and consideration was given to how partnerships could tackle disproportionality both in individual sectors and across multi agency partnerships. Working alongside Thames Valley Police, both the Op Deter (Act: Now) Programme and Youth Diversion Programmes will have positive impacts on ensuring those who are most likely to cite 'no comment' in interview are able to be offered support, intervention and diversion away from formal Youth Justice Services. The Youth Justice Service has undertaken training for staff around cultural competency and has updated its report and assessment templates to ensure that issues of disproportionality are addressed.
- The Speech, Language, and Communication Needs (SLCN) service has continued to be funded through partnership arrangements. We continue to offer SLCN assessments to all children in the service and through our PRRE programme. Our PRRE programme is currently being promoted across the South East through the South East Sector Led Improvement Programme (SESLIP) [Project 22: Youth Offending Teams and Speech & Language assessment – SESLIP](#)
- We have continued to recruit volunteers and have increased our capacity. In 2025 – 2026 we recruited an additional three volunteers. We continue to seek volunteers from communities reflective of our cohort of young people.
- Following restructures across Milton Keynes Children Social Care in readiness for the implementation of social care reforms, work with the family centres was paused, however more integrated working will mean that links for young people, and in particular females, will ensure greater support to this cohort. Milton Keynes Youth Justice Service have also been participating in consultations regarding the new Violence Against Women and Girls Duty and this will inform part of our work in 2026-2029.
- Our PRRE project continues to grow. We have worked with police and educational psychology to explore how its impact can be evaluated, and we have provided further training and support to schools following assessment. Going forward, parents will be invited to school feedback sessions, so they understand the recommendations and are supported to use them at home.
- We are currently undergoing a transition stage in therapists and there is a current recruitment process in place. Whilst we are able to maintain the offer of assessments and PRRE work, we have not yet been able to expand capacity to offer interventions directly through our SLT's. However, established pathways with Paediatrics and in house referrals to CAMHS ensures those young people identified as requiring further assessment for neurodiversity are referred in a timely way.

Participation

- We have continued to grow involvement of young people within the recruitment process and young people are now regularly actively involved in interviewing and onboarding of new staff.
- We continue to regularly review feedback from young people from our 'your views' surveys. We have a planned participation week alongside Children Services in September focused on the voice of the child and look to expand the involvement of young people in the full range of service including attendance at our Youth justice Strategic Board.
- Volunteers are utilised to support the completion of 'Your Views' surveys, strengthening the independence and integrity of feedback gathered. This approach ensures that children and young people are able to express their views in a safe, neutral environment, minimising any perceived influence from practitioners and promoting authentic participation in line with HMIP expectations regarding the meaningful inclusion of the child's voice in service development and evaluation.
- The service continues to address challenges in achieving full inclusion of our cohort within wider co-production and engagement opportunities across Local Authority youth services. Work is ongoing to strengthen pathways that ensure children and young people within the YJS have equitable access to participation opportunities, including Youth Council and other consultation forums. This is in line with HMIP expectations regarding inclusive participation and the promotion of the child's voice. Planned activity linked to our Child Participation Week in September is expected to support the development of stronger partnerships and enhance opportunities for meaningful engagement.

Prevention and Diversion

- The service continues to deliver a strong Prevention and Diversion offer, including the Op Deter (Act: Now) initiative, Youth Diversion Programme, and PRRE, with recruitment underway to further strengthen a targeted Focused Diversion offer. The Youth Diversion Programme is currently being piloted within Milton Keynes, following the conclusion of a 12-month Thames Valley trial period. External evaluation findings are awaited and will be used to inform future service delivery, ensuring that diversionary practice remains evidence-led, responsive to need, and aligned with HMIP expectations regarding early intervention and effective partnership working to reduce reoffending.

Physical Health

- While the service does not have a dedicated role focused specifically on physical health, effective pathways are in place through partnership working, including access to the School Nursing Team. Practitioners continue to ensure that identified health needs are systematically considered within assessments and intervention planning. Support is also provided to enable children and young people to access appropriate universal health

services, in line recognition of health needs and the delivery of co-ordinated, child-centred care.

Workforce Development

- Targeted training has been delivered to strengthen the quality and consistency of the Prevention and Diversion Tool, resulting in improved staff confidence and enhanced assessment practice. Additional workforce development activity has included training on cultural competency and adultification, with evidence of increased practitioner insight reflected within assessments, court reports, and reflective supervision. A comprehensive training programme is planned for 2026 – 29, focusing on values-based practice, the effective application of theory in practice, trauma-informed approaches, and improving outcomes when working with girls within the youth justice system, supporting our priority of ensuring skilled workforce, reflective practice, and the delivery of high-quality, individualised interventions.

In addition to the priorities identified in the previous year, the service has continued to strengthen practice and enhance delivery through a number of key developments:

Operation Deter (ACT: Now) Expansion

The service has secured additional funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to extend delivery under Operation Deter. This now includes the provision of intervention at the point of police custody for a broader range of offences, including:

- All knife, bladed or pointed article possession offences
- All other weapon-related offences
- Violence with injury offences (including assault by beating, assault occasioning actual bodily harm, and grievous bodily harm)
- Robbery (including personal and business robbery)

This approach ensures that children are engaged at the earliest opportunity. Evidence indicates that early intervention is effective in reducing reoffending and improving outcomes for children.

Education Officer Role

In January 2026, the service appointed a dedicated Education Officer to support children of statutory school age. The role focuses on improving school attendance, supporting reintegration, and promoting positive educational outcomes.

Early progress has included:

- Development of strong partnerships with key stakeholders, including SEND services, Access and Sufficiency, and local schools
- Implementation of a clear referral pathway and regular review of active caseloads to ensure accurate data and responsive interventions

- Engagement with Youth Justice partners to strengthen multi-agency working

The Education Officer is also progressing work to introduce AQA accreditation, enabling children to gain recognised qualifications linked to their engagement with the service, thereby supporting longer-term opportunities.

Educational Psychology Partnership

The service has strengthened pathways with the Local Authority Educational Psychology team. This has enhanced access to specialist consultation and improved collaborative working to better meet the needs of children open to the service.

Regional Practice Development

The service is working in partnership with the South East Sector Led Improvement Programme to roll out the PRRE project across the region. This reflects recognition of the positive outcomes achieved locally and supports the dissemination of evidence-based practice.

Volunteer Development

An active recruitment campaign has increased the number of volunteers supporting the service across a range of roles, including:

- Referral Order Panel Members
- Appropriate Adults
- Independent feedback and engagement roles

This has strengthened the service's capacity to deliver both statutory and preventative interventions. Further work is underway to improve the diversity of the volunteer cohort, ensuring it better reflects the population served.

Probation Transition Arrangements

In the absence of an embedded Probation Officer, the service has established robust partnership arrangements with Probation. This includes:

- Monthly transition meetings with a Senior Probation Officer
- Early identification and planning for children approaching 18
- Timely allocation to Probation where appropriate to support continuity of supervision
- Joint consideration of appropriate court outcomes for those nearing adulthood
- Access to Probation expertise in risk management, including MAPPA processes

These arrangements ensure a co-ordinated and supportive transition from Youth Justice to Adult Services.

Exploitation Awareness Activity

On 18 March 2026, the service worked in partnership with the Contextual Safeguarding Team, Thames Valley Police, the Youth Drug and Alcohol Service, Community Safety, and iCASH to mark Exploitation Awareness Day.



Engagement activities took place at both Milton Keynes College sites, where young people were invited to share their experiences, concerns, and priorities through structured discussions and questionnaires. This provided valuable insight into the issues affecting young people locally and will inform ongoing service development and safeguarding responses.

Raising the profile of Youth Justice

In March 2026, a member of the service volunteered to meet with pupils from Milton Keynes College Public Services course. We offered an opportunity for college students to hear about the work we do and pathways into the service. This was an excellent opportunity to engage young people and build relationships with the college. Feedback as seen below was positive.

The students were incredibly positive about it and we ALL learnt something. It is so wonderful to have someone who is so enthusiastic, confident and professional in the room and all of the students commented on what a great session it was.

4. Performance Over the Previous Year

KPIs:

Reoffending

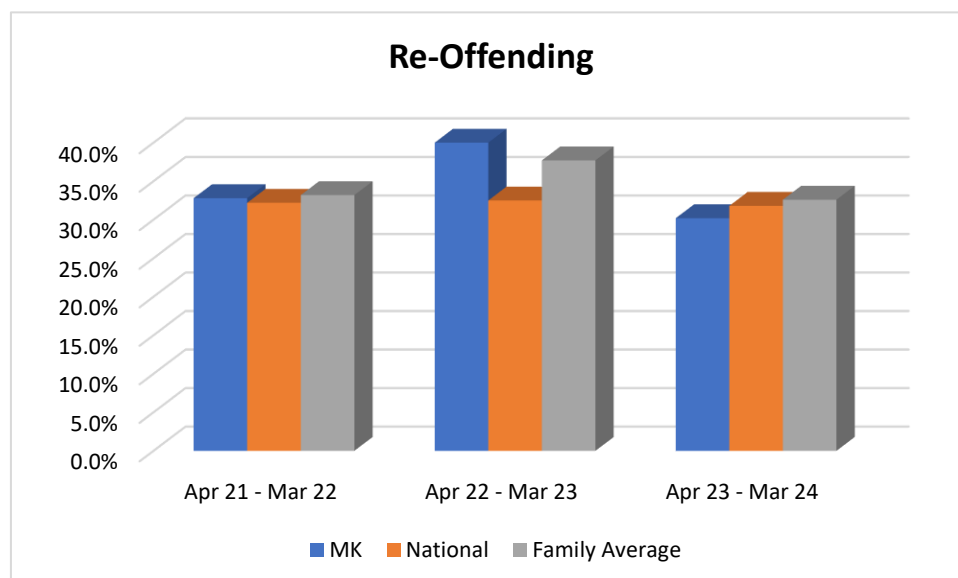
Target:

The target rate for Reoffending rate is <30%

Definition:

The measure looks at **all** young people receiving a substantive outcome in the relevant period and then tracks them for 18 months (plus allowing 6 months for sentence) to give:

- A **binary** measure (shown as 'By Offender') – which measures the number of young people in the cohort who have offended,
- A **frequency** measure (shown as 'By Offence') – which measures how many offences have been committed divided amongst all members of the cohort and
- A **re-offences by offender** rate – which measures how many offences have been committed by each person who reoffends.



Whilst our re-offending rates vary quarter to quarter; annualised data shows a continued reduction in re-offending rates. Our latest tracked data from April to March 22-23 to April to March 23-24 has reduced by 9.8%.

The below chart shows comparison with our local and family groups as well as the national picture:

The comparative performance for the latest available period (April 2023 – March 2024) is; (numbers in brackets are for April 2022 – March 2023)		
	Binary (Reoffenders / cohort size) Annual weighted average	Re-offences per Re-offender
Milton Keynes	30.2% (38.7%)	3.75 (4.02)
National	31.7% (32.2%)	4.47 (4.41)
SE region	28.4% (29.7%)	4.33 (4.29)
Thames Valley	24.5% (26.4%)	3.63 (3.53)
“Family”	32.6% (34.2%)	5.14 (5.20)

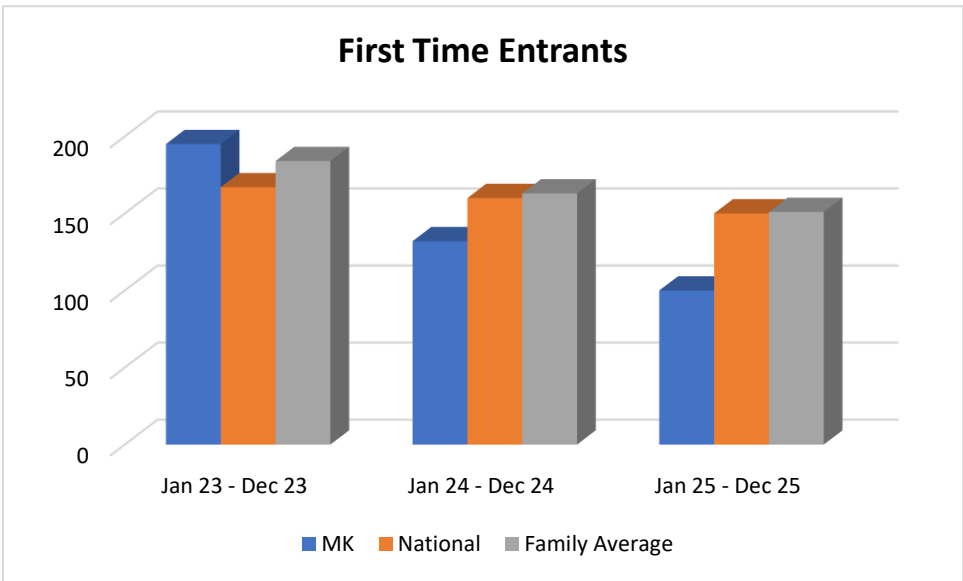
First Time Entrants (FTE)

Target:

The target for 2024-25 is less than 150 (per 100,000 of youth population).

Definition:

The number of young people who received their first substantive outcome (whether pre-court or at court) during the rolling 12-month period.



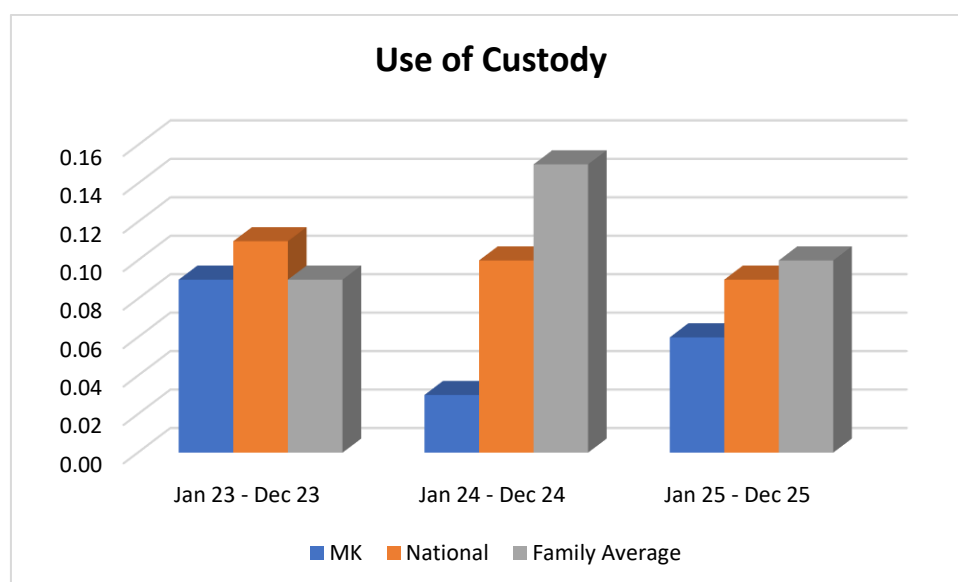
We continue to see a decline in our First Time Entrants numbers and is below National and Family comparators. The rate of First Time Entrants (FTEs) continues to show a positive downward trajectory. This reflects the increased use of Outcome 20 and 22 disposals, alongside a strengthened focus on diversion and prevention activity. The expansion of the ACT: Now intervention to cover the full offence criteria is anticipated to further contribute to this reduction. Ongoing analysis of Community Resolutions (CRs) will support more targeted allocation of resources upstream, with the aim of preventing escalation into the youth justice system. In addition, further investment has enabled the recruitment of a Focused Diversion

Worker, who will provide early intervention support to children identified as being at risk of becoming First Time Entrants

Comparator data: the latest information available is:		
FTE rate per 100,000	Jan 25 – Dec 25	Oct 24 – Sep 25
Milton Keynes	100	106
National	152	150
SE region	122	129
Thames Valley	94	100
“Family”	151	150

Custody

Our custody target continues to be <0.2. within Milton Keynes as we continue to be able to effectively manage young people on community-based interventions. We endeavour to ensure that young people are advocated for appropriately and good quality risk assessment ensures that, where necessary, appropriate bail packages are presented to the Courts as a direct alternative to remands. Our intervention is effective in both our low custody rates and high levels of engagement and successful completion of Orders and bail packages. Our custody rate is currently in line with the rest of Thames Valley but lower than both the national and family picture.



Accommodation

For the period 01/04/2025 – 31/03/2026.

Definition:

- The type of accommodation at the order start, end and (if applicable) release from custody.
- The suitability of the accommodation.

Target:

The target for 2024-25 is for 80% of young people to be in suitable accommodation at the order end.

Accommodation type:

Total interventions ending	Home		Placement or Supported accommodation		Other	
	At start	At end	At start	At end	At start	At end
99	85	81	13	16	1	2

Accommodation Suitability:

Total interventions ending	Suitable		Not suitable		Unknown	
	At start	At end	At start	At end	At start	At end
99	91	93	3	2	5	4
Percentage in suitable accommodation at intervention end					93%	

Education Training and Employment (ETE)**Definition**

The requirements for cases ending in the last quarter are;

- The number of cases in full-time ETE at order start, end and (if applicable) release from custody.
- The number of cases in part-time ETE at order start, end and (if applicable) release from custody.
- The number of cases not in ETE at order start, end and (if applicable) release from custody.
- The number of cases in suitable ETE at order start, end and (if applicable) release from custody.
- The type of ETE for the above.

Target:

The target for 2025-26 is for 60% of young people to be in suitable ETE at the intervention end.

The percentage of young people with an intervention that ended in the last quarter and in respect of whom the officer considered their ETE was **suitable** (even if it wasn't full-time) was:

For school-age young people it was **93%**

For over-school-age young people it was **35%**

Overall, it was **58%**

Period	Percentage on part-time timetables (monthly numbers)	Percentage not in full-time ETE (monthly numbers)
October – December 2024	38% (18, 25, 22 monthly)	45% (25, 34, 31 monthly)
January – March 2025	50% (24, 30, 32 monthly)	63% (32, 39, 41 monthly)
April – June 2025	46% (29, 29, 29 monthly)	62% (40, 38, 38 monthly)
July – September 2025	Unknown due to staff capacity	Unknown due to staff capacity
October – December 2025	37% (13, 0 – unknown due to staff capacity, 19 monthly)	56% (23, 0 – unknown due to staff capacity, 27 monthly)
January – March 2026	46% (24, 28, 23 monthly)	65% (32, 37, 33 monthly)

The positive increase in suitable ETE for school age young people can be attributed to the appointment of our Education Worker. With this latest period, we have seen a significant reduction in our over school age children in suitable ETE. This has been significantly impacted by young people placed in our area for short periods of time, each of these children had significant complex needs and the majority were deemed NEET not ready by their home authorities. Due to the limited time within the area, scope for support was minimal.

SEND

Definition

The number of cases identified as having SEND at order end.

- The number of these having a formal plan in place.
- The number of these having suitable ETE at order end.

YPs with identified SEND at interven- tion end	Nº with formal plan	Percent- age	Nº in suit- able ETE	Percent- age	Nº with for- mal plan & suitable ETE	Percent- age
19	13	68%	13	68%	10	53%

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Definition:

- The number of cases receiving treatment before coming on the YJS caseload.
- The number of cases screened as having a need.
- The number of cases offered an intervention (differentiated by level of support).
- The number of cases receiving an intervention (differentiated by level of support).

Target:

The target for 2025-26 is for 60% of young people with Orders ending who have an identified need for intervention to improve mental health or emotional well-being, who are offered and receive that support.

For interventions that ended in the last year the data is:

Interventions ending	Identified as having a need	Already receiving support	Referred during intervention	Accepted & received support	Percentage of identified need
45					
CRs & O22	3	2	1	2	67%
Cautions	3	2	1	2	67%
ROs	13	2	11	7	54%
YROs	2	1	1	1	50%
TOTAL	21	7	14	12	57%

Substance misuse**Definition:**

- The number of cases receiving treatment before coming on the YJS caseload.
- The number of cases screened as having a need.
- The number of cases offered an intervention (differentiated by level of support).
- The number of cases receiving an intervention (differentiated by level of support).

Target:

The target for 2025-26 is for 60% of young people with an identified need for specialist treatment intervention who attend offered support.

For interventions that ended in the last year the data is:

Interventions ending	Identified as having a need	Already receiving support	Referred during intervention	Accepted & received support	Percentage of identified need
45					
CRs & O22	7	0	7	7	100%
Cautions	1	0	1	1	100%
ROs	11	0	11	11	100%
YROs	7	0	7	7	100%
TOTAL	26	0	26	26	100%

The above table demonstrates the number of referrals being completed to services whilst young people are open to our service. In regard to both mental health and substance misuse the data shows that a very low number of interventions ending were already open to appropriate services when they become open to the YJS. Our direct links to inhouse provisions ensures that we are able to access services timely and efficiently and avoids where possible further delays for young people.

Out of Court Disposals

Definition:

The number of cases completing an intervention.

Most Out of Court disposals are delivered by the police outside of the joint decision-making process. A total of 424 disposals were delivered between April 2025 – March 2026. Due to capacity within the service, interventions are offered to all young people subject to a second Community Resolution (CR), Youth Diversion Programmes (YDP), Outcome 22, Youth Caution and Youth Conditional Cautions.

Of the young people offered intervention....

<i>Offered</i> OOCd interven- tions ended	<i>Accepted</i> OOCd interventions ended	Success- fully com- pleted	Percent- age	Percent- age of all
73	60	53	88%	73%

Wider services (01/04/2025 – 31/03/2026)

Definition:

- The number of cases at order end who are a currently care experienced child.
- The number of cases at order end who are on a Child Protection Plan.
- The number of cases at order end who are a current Child In Need.
- The number of cases at order end who are on an Early Intervention Plan.
- The number of cases who were open to Early Help before coming on the YJS caseload.
- The number of cases at order end who were referred to Early Help services.

Interventions ended	Legal status at intervention end			Early Help engagement		
	CIN	CPP	LAC	Open at end	Open before	Referred
99	5	6	15	0	17	1

The above KPI helps us to look at the histories of our cohort and working alongside Children's Social Care (CSC). We continually review this data and assess ways of ensuring that those open

to CSC are receiving appropriate levels of support before coming into the YJS.

Management Board attendance (see Appendix 2).

Definition:

Attendance by senior partner or delegated person for;

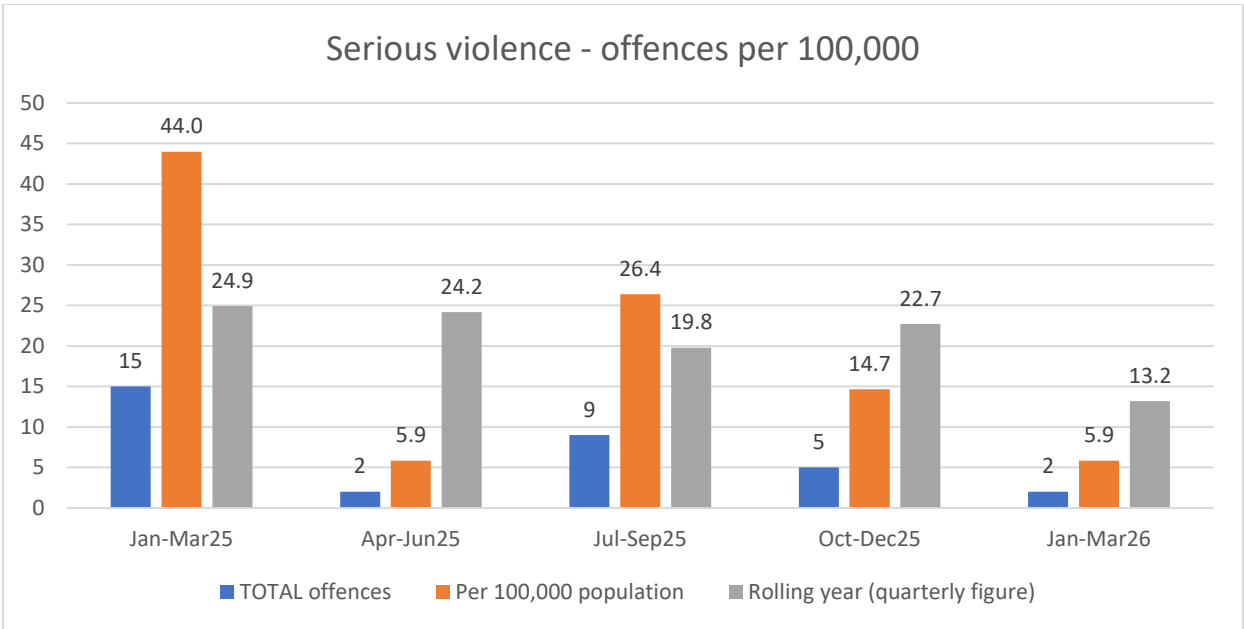
- a. LA children’s social care
- b. LA education
- c. Police
- d. Probation
- e. Health and
- f. Other.

Appendix 2 charts board attendance. The board is attended by multi agency partners. Attendance is kept under review and when core members are unable to attend the expectation is that someone with senior decision-making authority from the service will attend in their place to ensure good representation and support.

Serious violence

Definition:

This data is the provided by YJB from data submitted by Milton Keynes Youth Justice Service and looks at the number of serious violence offences per 1,000 of the youth population.



We continue to work to address Serious Youth Violence through our ACT: Now project, Early Support Programme and PRRE work alongside close overview and planning with key partners including Thames Valley Police, Health and Education and Children Social Care. We can see that the in-year comparator has shown a significant reduction in Serious Youth Violence.

Victims

- a. The number of victims who consent to be contacted.
- b. The number of victims who were engaged.
- c. The number of victims asked for their views prior to out-of-court-disposal decision making or planning for court-imposed orders.
- d. The number of victims who request information about the progress of the case.
- e. The number of these who are given the information.
- f. The number of victims who ask for additional support.
- g. The number of these given that support.

No data has been published by the YJB yet.

Victim engagement

The data for the interventions that ended in the last year was:

Interventions ending between 01/04/25 and 31/03/2026						
	No of offences with a victim	No of victims notified by police (percentage of cases)	No of victims offered reparation	No receiving direct reparation	No receiving indirect reparation	Percentage of victims receiving reparation
Pre-Court Outcomes	74	49 (66%)	35	1	1	6%
Court Outcomes	93	35 (38%)	29	0	0	0%
All Outcomes	167	84 (50%)	64	1	1	3%

During the past year, we have experienced significant staffing difficulties which has had an impact on our ability to deliver effective victim services. To address this, we have recruited additional staff who are due to join the service in July 2026. We have also secured representation on our Strategic Board for a member from Project Space.

Local performance data

17. There have been 40 Youth Diversion Programmes received since these started being issued in May 2025, and this involves 38 young people (2 young people have received 2 YDP's). Out of these, 6 involved a knife offence. Engagement has been positive with all young people completing required intervention and only 3 young people have re-offended. YDP are currently in trial phase, and a full external evaluation of the effectiveness is expected to be published shortly.

18. The Early Support Project forms part of the wider Youth Justice and Support Service and focuses on Diversion and Prevention work including work completed under Achieving Change Together – Now (ACT: Now), our knife crime pilot in Milton Keynes, and PRRE, our Speech and Language Therapy Project in primary and secondary schools.
19. Since the Act: Now initiative started there have been 389 instances of young people referred in connection with knife offences or offences of violence, involving 293 individuals. Of the 389 young people referred, 58 have offended (37 being given out of court disposals (OOCd) and 27 going to court) since first being seen under Act: Now. 6 young people received both an OOCd and a court outcome 22 have been convicted of a knife related offence. 8 received Referral Orders and 14 received Youth Rehabilitation Orders (YROs).
20. Our Early Support Work is imperative in diverting young people away from the YJS and reducing first time entrant numbers.

5. Risks and Issues

21. At Milton Keynes Youth Justice Service (YJS), we regularly review our service challenges and risks through our quarterly Youth Justice Strategic Board (YJSB) meetings. These reviews ensure that we remain responsive to emerging needs and continue to deliver effective interventions for young people. To ensure greater focus, a risk register will be created to actively chart and monitor identified areas and responses.
22. Milton Keynes is a fast-growing city, and population growth is a key factor in our future planning. As outlined in the local context section of this plan, Milton Keynes has a young population, with 45.6% of residents under the age of 35 and 26.1% under the age of 19. We carefully consider this demographic shift in our strategic planning to ensure that, as the city expands, we have the right resources in place to meet the needs of our young people.
23. The Milton Keynes Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) identifies several priority actions to improve outcomes for young people. These actions focus on reducing health inequalities, strengthening early intervention, and enhancing multi-agency collaboration. Key priorities include improving young people's mental health, reducing risk-taking behaviors, and increasing school attendance.

The table below shows areas of considered risk / Issues and responses to these risks by MKYJS:

Risk / Issue	Mitigation / Response
Financial sustainability and reliance on short-term funding	The service continues to gather and review evidence of impact across funded projects and uses this to support business cases, grant

The service remains reliant on a range of time-limited external funding streams to deliver core prevention, diversion and early intervention activity, including ESP, PRRE, ACT: Now, Turnaround and the Youth Resilience Project. Any reduction in national, local or OPCC funding would affect the service's capacity to maintain current levels of support, innovation and evidence-based intervention, with potential impact on first time entrants, reoffending and use of custody.	applications and discussions with partners regarding mainstreaming effective provision. Funding risks are routinely escalated through the Youth Justice Strategic Board and wider partnership forums to ensure financial pressures and service implications are understood and considered at a strategic level.
Staff absence and workforce resilience Periods of staff absence increase operational pressure across the service and can affect continuity, capacity and timeliness. As a trauma-exposed workforce, staff are at risk of secondary trauma and burnout, which may impact wellbeing and service delivery if not addressed proactively.	The service provides a range of support measures, including group clinical supervision, access to individual clinical supervision and the employee assistance programme. Absence is managed in line with Milton Keynes City Council policy, with regular supervision, one-to-ones and team meetings used to maintain oversight, support staff wellbeing and sustain practice quality.
Recruitment and retention of experienced youth justice staff There is a recognised national shortage of experienced and appropriately qualified youth justice practitioners. Difficulty recruiting and retaining skilled staff may reduce consistency of practice, weaken delivery of trauma-informed and evidence-based interventions, and impact confidence in the quality-of-service provision.	The service continues to invest in workforce development through internal and external training, access to the social work apprenticeship, and the Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate. Staff development is prioritised through supervision and appraisal, and the service uses a graded structure and competitive recruitment offer to attract and retain practitioners with appropriate experience and expertise.
Peer conflict, inter-group tensions and contextual risk Increased peer conflict and rapidly shifting group affiliations continue to present a dynamic safeguarding and operational challenge. These risks can affect children, staff and the wider public, including in court settings and across the community, and	The service works closely with Thames Valley Police and contextual safeguarding partners to identify and manage emerging risks. This includes court safety planning, use of non-association flags, real-time intelligence sharing, daily liaison with police colleagues and oversight through the multi-agency Contextual Risk Panel. These arrangements

require timely multi-agency information sharing and coordinated risk management.	support timely disruption activity and co-ordinated safeguarding responses.
Increase in first time entrants Any reduction in prevention and diversion capacity may lead to an increase in first time entrants to the youth justice system. This risk is particularly significant where children do not receive sufficiently early support or where escalation through formal outcomes is not appropriately challenged.	First time entrant performance and referral patterns are reviewed through the Joint Decision-Making Panel and the Youth Justice Strategic Board. The Youth Diversion Programme provides an additional route for voluntary intervention without a formal outcome and is expected to support early intervention, reduce unnecessary system escalation and address disproportionality in access to diversion.
Increase in reoffending Any increase in reoffending would impact outcomes for children, community safety and victimisation. The service recognises the importance of understanding the factors associated with repeat offending, including neurodiversity, adverse childhood experiences, education, age, gender and ethnicity.	The service undertakes detailed cohort analysis and deep-dive review of reoffending data to identify patterns, learning and emerging themes. This analysis informs service planning, targeted intervention and performance oversight, alongside use of projected data to monitor potential changes in demand and risk.
Timeliness across the youth justice system Delays in decision-making and case progression can have a significant impact on children, including prolonged uncertainty, reduced relevance of intervention and increased risk of disengagement or further offending. Delays may also result in children ageing out of youth-specific disposals and support options before matters are concluded.	Timeliness remains a priority and is monitored through the Local Criminal Justice Board and, where appropriate, the Youth Justice Board. Performance is reviewed regularly to support challenge, escalation and coordinated multi-agency action where delays affect outcomes for children.
Probation capacity and transition arrangements Ongoing difficulty in sustaining the seconded probation officer role may reduce specialist input into high-risk case management, MAPPA-related consultation and transitions to adult probation services. This creates risk at a critical stage for older adolescents approaching adulthood.	The service has agreed a designated probation lead and holds monthly transition meetings to review all relevant cases and plan arrangements in advance. In addition, the service's senior officer, who is probation qualified, provides internal expertise to support risk management and transition planning.

Education attendance and participation

A proportion of children open to the service remain out of full-time education due to poor attendance, reduced timetables or exclusion. This remains a significant concern, as disengagement from education is associated with increased vulnerability to exploitation, serious youth violence and further offending.

The service has secured funding towards a fixed-term education officer post to work with the pre-16 cohort, strengthen attendance, support reintegration and improve transition into post-16 pathways. This role forms part of the wider response to reducing risk and improving education, training and employment outcomes.

6. Child First

24. Child First principles are integrated across all elements of the Youth Justice Service, including statutory case work and within the Youth Diversion and Prevention Service. Child First and Strengths-Based training has been delivered to YJS staff to promote the four tenets associated with the approach and to develop staff knowledge, skills, and confidence within this area.

We have integrated the Child First Principles in the following ways:

- a) Prioritise the best interests of children and recognising their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential. All work is child-focused, developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children.
25. This is captured within AssetPlus and Prevention and Diversion assessments and plans across all statutory, diversion and prevention work. Assessments are used to ensure that all areas associated with strengths, needs and risks are holistically identified and understood so that interventions are child-focused and developmentally informed. All children and young people are offered a Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) assessment and this informs the developmental approach adopted by YJS staff to support the child's understanding. Interventions are delivered to children and young people alongside addressing structural barriers (e.g., housing / education / health needs) to ensure that a parallel approach is adopted to addressing the needs and risks of children.
26. Enhancing Mental Health and Education Support - Since December 2024, we have expanded the role of our CAMHS Senior Mental Health (SMH) Practitioner to include in-house ADHD assessments. This initiative has led to earlier access to assessments and support, resulting in positive outcomes for young people. A review of the service provision looking at referrals between October 2023 and December 2025 showed that 43 referrals were received for ADHD assessments. 10 referrals were not accepted, 2 were due to young people moving out of area before the referral could be processed and 8 were due to not meeting the criteria following completion of screening packs. Of the remaining referrals, 20 young people were taken off the main CAMHS waiting list and 14 were diagnosed. Those young people who did

not meet the criteria for ADHD were instead either accepted for treatment on an alternative CAMHS pathway, referred to assessment of Autism or provided relevant signposting information to community mental health support services as appropriate. The review demonstrated case studies where young people had been on the CAMHS waiting list for significant periods of time and once they came into youth justice settings they were able to access timely assessment and diagnosis which helped support professionals and families to understand behaviours and challenges and ensure appropriate strategies were explored to reduce not only the risk of reoffending, but also support inclusion in appropriate education/training settings and care placements. As of April 2025, the SMH practitioner is also able to receive referrals for young people who have been victims of crime.

b) Promote children's individual strengths and capacities to develop 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.

27. All work across the service has a focus on supporting children and young people to lead safe, healthy, and pro-social lives. Within this, supporting young people to become stakeholders in their local communities and increased social capital is key. Intervention plans are balanced to reflect the needs, safety concerns, and strengths of young people with a focus on moving young people towards a brighter future where they can get their needs met without involvement in offending or anti-social behaviour. As part of our ongoing commitment to Education Training and Employment we are currently exploring use of AQA's to accredit the work young people undertake within the service.

c) Encourage children's active participation, engagement, and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.

28. Young people and their parents are encouraged to actively contribute to the creation and review of their intervention plans and enabled to provide independent feedback at the end of their interventions so that this can be used to improve practice and delivery service. We use an independent worker to discuss the young person's feedback so that this is unbiased and not completed by a member of the Youth Justice and Service.

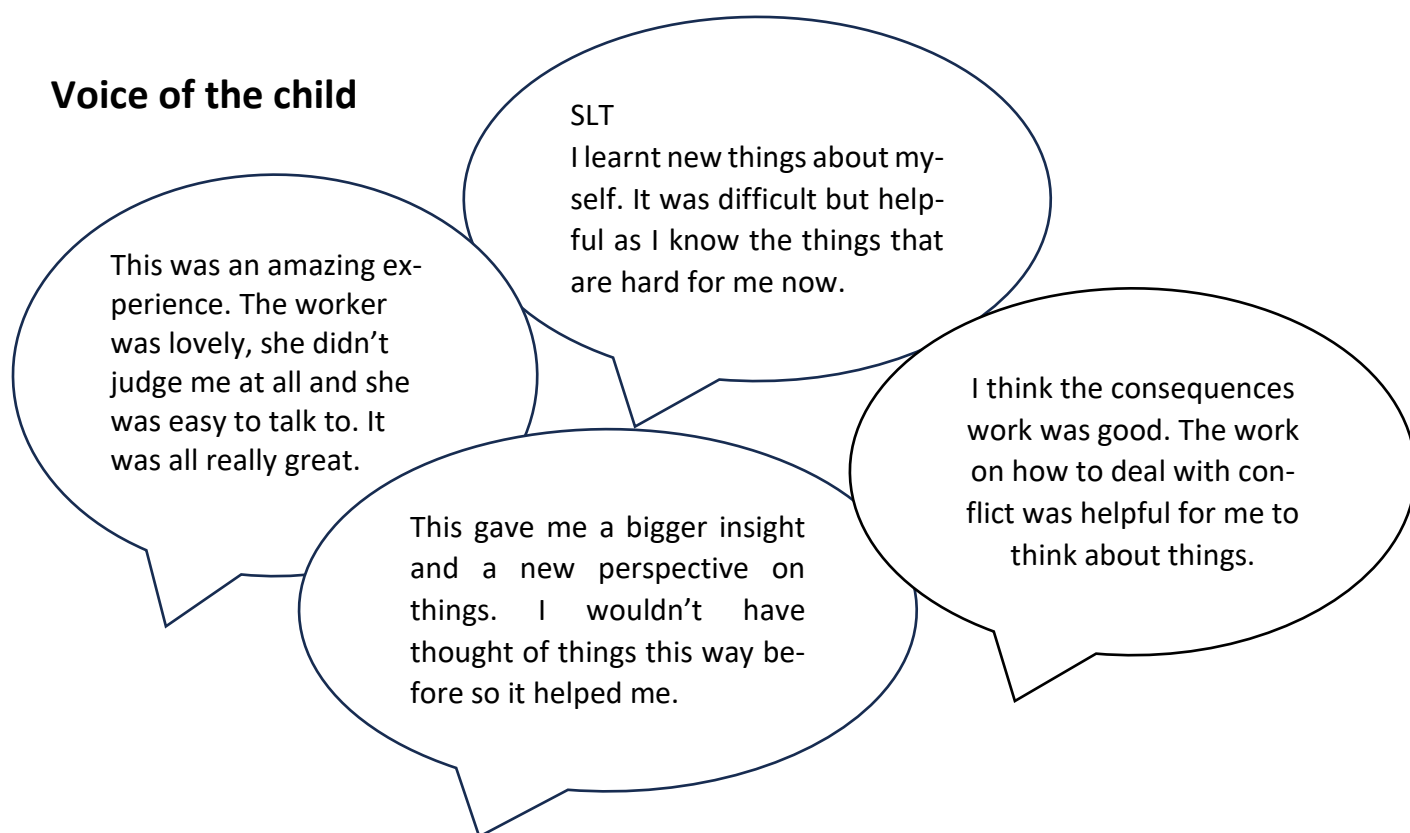
29. Within our Out of Court Disposals Policy, we obtain regular feedback from young people, parents, and stakeholders to inform our regular review of policy updates so that it improves the service as a whole and addresses any wider and systematic challenges that need to be addressed.

d) Promote childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion, and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system:

30. The Youth Diversion and Prevention Service actively promotes pre-emptive prevention and diversion and seeks to minimise criminogenic stigma from contact across the system. Children and young people can receive an early intervention via several pathways that have been created to ensure that we are working 'upstream' to identify young people at the

earliest point. Within our Prevention service offer, we have developed the Promoting Reintegration and Reducing Exclusions (PRRE) Speech and Language Therapy project with primary and secondary schools. This project enables participating settings to refer children and young people for a Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) assessment should the child be at greatest risk of school suspension or a move to alternative education. Offering a fast-tracked SLCN assessment with one of our two Speech and Language Therapists works towards identifying previously unidentified needs and supporting the setting to instigate alternative approaches to support the child further. The ACT: Now project offers young people contact within police custody following arrest for knife and weapons related offences and other offences involving violence. Youth Diversion Programme offers deferred prosecution to young people. All voluntary intervention services offered help young people identify risks and strengths and build upon these to reduce risks of further arrest or incidents which may lead to convictions.

Voice of the child



e) Encouraging Active Participation, engagement and wider social inclusion:

Children engaged with the YJS are encouraged to participate by:

- Being actively involved in the creation and reviewing of their intervention plans.
- Providing feedback following initiatives or activities, to inform and steer improvements to the service.
- Within our Speech and Language Therapy project in schools (PRRE), at the end of a completed intervention, our Speech and Language Therapists obtain feedback from children and young people (where they have wanted to contribute), parents / carers (where appropriate) and other stakeholders

including school staff. Comments are captured on a short feedback form that is attached to the child / young people's Child View record.

- Involvement with interviews for recruitment of new staff.
- Involvement within research projects.

31. In 2021 we introduced independent evaluation; at the end of every intervention, young people are given the opportunity to meet with a volunteer, independent from the Youth Justice Service, to complete a questionnaire on their experience during their time with YJS and their experience of partner agencies. Latest data shows that the overall feedback from those working with YJS is positive, with 95% of respondents reflecting that their experience was okay, good, or excellent, an improvement of 4% on the previous year, with 71% reporting the experience was excellent, which increased from 58% on the previous year. MKYJS continues to embed a Child First approach, ensuring that officers are responsive to young people and are actively invested in supporting young people. The service provides young people with consistent adults with whom they can build trusting relationships with and who provide open and transparent responses to. This approach is shown from feedback from young people to provide positive outcomes.
32. The OOC and Custody, Resettlement and Transitions policies also include evaluation feedback forms from both young people and their parent / carer as well as professionals involved.
33. The information from evaluations is presented to YJSB on a quarterly basis for review and feedback and this provides an opportunity for all members to analyse the data produced and look at good practice examples and areas for improvement. The information received from this feedback is used to inform individual staff / team and service development.
34. As well as the voice of young people, parents / carers views are sought through the use of self-assessments. An exit survey is currently under construction to gain independent feedback from parents / carers.

7. Resources and Services

35. Currently the YJSS management team directly responsible for the Youth Justice Service consists of the Head of Service, Operational Manager, YJS Deputy Manager and a Senior YOT Officer.
36. In total there are 24 Practitioner and administrative staff (19.43 FTE). A full breakdown of staffing can be found in Appendix 4.
37. Volunteer Youth Offender Panel members and Appropriate Adults are recruited, trained, and supported by the YJS; the Appropriate Adults also provide support to vulnerable adults for which we receive a nominal amount from Adult Social Care to provide this service.

38. The team is based within Civic in Central Milton Keynes, this enables co-location of multi-agency staff alongside Children's Social Care, SEND and Virtual School. Child-centered safe environments in which to work directly with children have been identified and a number of these are fully in place at key locations around the city.
39. The Youth Justice Grant, alongside partner contributions, both in staffing and financial contributions enable us to deliver the activities and services that contribute to the aims and outcomes of the plan. The benefits and impact of these services are evidenced by the KPI outcomes achieved and documented, alongside further commentary around these services and their direct and indirect benefits that are referenced and illustrated throughout this plan.

- **A summary of activities provided for and on behalf of the YJSS are documented below:**
- **Youth Diversion and Prevention** – Our “Early Support Project” ESP offers children and young people early support and intervention including prevention work to reduce the likelihood of the child or young person becoming known to the formal Youth Justice System, targeted prevention for children and young people that have accessed the formal Youth Justice System previously, yet require further support, and diversionary work for young people who had some low-level and informal Police contact. The ESP service offer includes the Promoting Reintegration and Reducing Exclusions (PRRE) Speech and Language Therapy project in primary and secondary schools. From March 2025 the CCMT (Chief Constables Management Team) agreed to the use of deferred Youth Cautions and Youth Conditional Cautions, as an available disposal option for a child who have offended. To avoid confusion with other outcomes or schemes, deferred cautions will be referred to as the Youth Diversion Programme (YDP). This is distinct from Outcome 22 (NFA) Not in the Public interest. The YDP can be used instead of a YC (Youth Caution) or YCC (Youth Conditional Caution). It allows the opportunity for diversion and intervention to be completed by the child without a formal outcome being recorded in local police systems or the Police National Computer (PNC). If the child successfully completes the programme, there will be no formal criminal record or outcome. However, if the programme is not completed, the child will be offered a standard outcome (YC/YCC). If the standard outcome is not accepted, the usual escalation routes will be followed.
- **Turnaround** - We have identified ‘Turnaround’ eligible young people that have been offered the Early Support Project (ESP) or Achieving Change Together-Now (Act: Now) since the launch of Turnaround at the beginning of December 2022. There are specific criteria that must be met for eligibility. We have submitted our data, and we have met our expected engagement target.
- **Achieving Change Together** – Now (Act: Now) - The youth element (Phase 3) of the multi-agency Operation Deter approach to tackle knife-related violence and homicides in Milton Keynes commenced on 3rd January 2023. Since that time, the commitment for us to respond to young people within Police custody within 90 minutes and to offer these young people the opportunity to engage with the Act: Now project, with a follow up appointment within 48 hours has been broadly met. Act: Now comes under the broader scope of our Early Support Project (ESP) and since its launch has now expanded

to include contact for young people brought into police custody for the following offences: all knife/bladed/pointed article possession offences; all other weapon offences; all violence with injury offences (Assault by beating, Assault occasioning actual bodily harm, Grievous bodily harm); Robbery of person and Business robbery. 425 young people have been referred to the project since its inception.

- **Appropriate Adult (AA)** services are provided to the Police Station: A volunteer scheme, maintained by the YJS, is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. This service is offered to vulnerable adults as well as children with a nominal contribution from Adult Social Care.
- **Out of Court Disposals:** Arrangements are in place with Thames Valley Police and Thames Valley Youth Justice Teams to provide the range of disposals (Youth Cautions and Youth Conditional Cautions). A Joint Decision-Making Panel is held which includes representatives from the Youth Justice Service, Police, Professional Lead for Missing and Exploitation, Liaison and Diversion Services and CAMHS.
- **Court Services:** YJS staff advise the Youth Court regarding available sentences. YJS staff prepare Pre-Sentence Reports and operate a duty system to address remand issues and ensure bail packages are available when necessary. Speech Language and Communication Needs assessment reports are also provided alongside pre-sentence reports to both Youth Court and Crown Court so that Courts are fully aware of children's additional needs given the disproportionality high prevalence of SLCN in the Youth Justice System (93% last data for Milton Keynes) compared to the general population (5-8%). A protocol exists with children's social care regarding management of remands to local authority accommodation and Youth Detention Accommodation. YJS staff also liaise with Thames Valley Police directly to ensure additional support is in place where significant risks are identified due to opposing Youths being present within the Court at the same time, Thames Valley Police have been responding providing additional officer support where needed.
- **Court Orders** including Intensive Supervision and Surveillance: The YJS provides YOT Officers for children subject to Court Orders and manages these in accordance with National Standards. This will include managing children subject to custodial sentences and planning and supervising for their resettlement.
- **Victims:** A member of the team contacts victims of children working with YJS offering support, including being kept informed of case progression, support to attend Youth Offender Panels and meeting the child face-to-face for a restorative conference. YJS staff are trained to YJB/Restorative Justice Council standards for the facilitation of restorative conversations. Victims who are under 18 are also able to access the same services of young people referred to the service and therefore have access to Speech and Language assessments and CAMHS assessments and interventions, as well as support to engage in ETE, positive activities and safety planning.
- **Volunteers:** There are currently two volunteer projects to support young people. As outlined above volunteers are recruited for appropriate adults. They are also recruited to be Youth Offender Panel members - people from the community who meet with the

child, parents, and victims, to agree a contract which will prevent further offending and repair harm. The YJS continue to encourage volunteers from diverse backgrounds to offer a diverse pool of volunteers to meet the needs of the young people.

- **Youth Workers and Youth Support Workers** provide support to children working with the YJS and are responsible for delivery of our Reparation / Community Enrichment Service. They meet with children and their YOT Officers as part of the induction process and seek to either develop new bespoke projects or appropriately match children's interests with the projects available.
- **Young People's Information Advice and Guidance (IAG)** Team provides a worker to assist children in finding Education, Training and Employment opportunities amongst our post-16 cohort, as part of their Information, Advice and Guidance Service. This service has established links with training and education providers within Milton Keynes and surrounding areas and services to monitor those post 16 out of ETE allowing for continued monitoring and support to be offered both during intervention with YJS and post intervention. In January 2023, we introduced a new element of support within this area, centred around voluntary Criminal Convictions Disclosure sessions to support young people in entering the workplace and transitioning into further Education, Training and Employment.
- **Education Officer:** An education officer works with school age children providing support to those who are not on full timetables or are school avoidant. The officer works alongside the IAG service, SEND and access and sufficiency as well as the school partnerships and families to promote full time education and support in transitions to post 16 offers.
- **Milton Keynes Young People's Drug and Alcohol Solutions (YPDAS)** work with anyone up to the age of 18 but will work with people up to the age of 25 if they have additional needs. YPDAS team offer advice and support for anyone who would like to learn more about drugs and alcohol, whether they use substances or not. The team also supports anyone who is or has been affected by someone else's drug or alcohol use, referred to as Hidden Harm. YPDAS team work closely with other professionals to ensure safeguarding, effective partnership working, and information sharing where appropriate. Additionally, the YPDAS team develops and delivers personalised drug and alcohol awareness training sessions for professionals, schools and young people throughout Milton Keynes. The YJS works closely with YPDAS team who provide specialist interventions, support and advice, for children in relation to substance use. The nature of the partnership work has been greatly strengthened by the incorporation of the YPDAS team as part of the wider YJS. The Thames Valley wide partnership approach to joint delivery of the Thames Valley Police Drugs Diversion Scheme (DDS) and Thames Valley YOTs is a key part of the Violence Reduction Strategy. Additionally, as part of YPDAS team focus on education / prevention and harm minimisation, we offer all young people open on ESP, drug / alcohol awareness sessions, whether substances are identified as risk or not. YPDAS team also work in collaboration with Thames Valley Police regarding Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) for under 18's relating to alcohol and antisocial behaviour.

- **Health** – YJS continue to have limited access to Physical Health provision, and it is recognised that this remains an area of challenge for the YJSB. The School Nursing Service previously reviewed health screenings and offered access to specific services within their remit.
- **CAMHS** – An improved relationship has been built with our local CAMHS team. This role is filled by a senior primary mental health practitioner who has significant experience of the complex needs of our children, and whose work has previously been recognised positively in the Joint Targeted Area Inspection of the provision for Mental Health. We have, in agreement with CAMHS colleagues, extended the provision by a day a week and now have 5 days a week service to enable our CAMHS worker to complete ADHD assessments in-house. This has resulted in young people having access to a much timelier ADHD assessment. We have access to regular (6 weekly) consultation appointments with a Consultant Clinical Psychologist for complex case discussion and support. Additional telephone consultations are also provided. The Senior Mental Health Practitioner offers assessments and interventions to children and their families and provides training for staff.
- **Speech and Language Therapy (SLT)** – we have two part-time Speech and Language Therapists which equates to 5 days of dedicated Speech and Language Therapy per week. All children are offered a Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) assessment at the point of entry into the service, including our Youth Diversion and Prevention work. This includes our PRRE (Promoting Reintegration Reducing Exclusions) programme where SLCN assessments are offered to referring schools for young people at risk of exclusion. SLCN assessments have also been useful in focusing in and identifying co-existing conditions and underlying life events and experiences that have an impact on the child.
- **Seconded Police Officer** – This role is used creatively across the service including direct involvement with delivering OOCs, undertaking interventions with children to strengthen relationships between children and Police, provide key information around risks using PNC and Police intel. The role of Thames Valley Police in the YJS is also enhanced by our close partnership working with TVP Harm Reduction Unit.

8. Financial Resources

40. The final budget for 2026/27 is currently £914, 427.
41. The Youth Justice Service is funded centrally and through the contributions of statutory partner agencies, in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, all funds are used to deliver Youth Justice Services.

42. The YJS has received £160,000 from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley to continue the funding of the Op Deter, ACT: Now Project. This implementation has expanded our pre-OOCD / Court work with children arrested for knife and weapons offences and those offences involving violence. Reports from Act: Now are available to the JDMP / Court to positively influence disposals and increase opportunities to divert more children towards deferred outcomes, YCC (rather than Court Disposal) and reduce the risk of custodial sentences / longer community-based sentences, recognising the positive benefits for longer term outcomes for children when contact with the formal Youth Justice System is minimised.
43. As in previous years, the resources will be prioritised on court ordered interventions, especially at the intensive level. Maintaining a low level of re-offending and custodial sentences as well as significant reductions in Youth Detention Accommodation would seem to suggest that the strategy is having a positive impact and represents a good rate of return on the investment made.
44. All grants from the YJB are controlled within the YJS budget arrangements and are used exclusively for the delivery of youth justice services. The only exception is the grant paid to support remands to Youth Detention Accommodation, which is held within the placement budgets of children's social care.
45. A full breakdown of the budget can be found in Appendix 5.

9. Board Development

46. We have made changes and improvements to ensure that the Youth Justice Strategic Board (YJSB) has a clearer focus on the key priorities as outlined in 'Youth Justice Service Governance and Leadership.' The main changes implemented have been around ensuring that the way meetings are conducted provide an opportunity to explore the range of development and delivery of youth justice services and approaches encompassing both the direct work of the Youth Justice and Support Service, and the key contributions of the wider partnership. This has helped to create an environment in which there is a positive degree of peer challenge, ensuring that the wider partnership has greater ownership of its contribution to involvement in and advocacy for the services provided.
47. Whilst we have seen more involvement of YJSB members engaging directly with front line staff and managers through their involvement in YJSB Meetings, there are still further benefits that can be realised. To support this development, we have begun to use peer review exercises between board members and officers, giving board members the opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge of the operational work completed to support young people. Consideration is also being given as to how children/young people who have had experience of youth justice provision, including diversion and prevention, can be more involved in board development and operations. Likewise, there are greater opportunities for YJSB Members to build upon their advocacy and championing role for YJ Services, utilising their position to strengthen two-way links by inviting in YJ Staff, Managers, and specialist

professionals more regularly into their parent organisation to help foster a culture of greater understanding. These areas will be further explored to build on and enhance the positive benefits of the Board members' role beyond the regular YJSB meetings.

48. A board development day is planned for October 2026 to support greater alignment between services.

10. Workforce development

49. Looking forward to 2026 - 2029, we have a comprehensive plan for further workforce development, covering the following areas;

- Milton Keynes Children's Social Care are implementing a ROTH (Risk Outside of The Home) pathway for children at significant risk of harm. MKYJS have been actively involved in the development and implementation of the pathway which will support young people open to the service who have met child protection thresholds.
- MKYJS has undertaken training for the new Prevention and Diversion assessments tool, continued workshops are planned to assist with fully embedding the tool within the service.
- Workshops on Inspection preparation are underway and will continue to support staff to recognise areas of effective practice and areas of development as well as greater understanding of the inspection framework and how this supports young people within the service to receive the best possible level of service.
- The MK Together Safeguarding Partnership is carrying out a Strategic Needs Assessment regarding Violence Against Women and Girls and will be reviewed by the Partnership Assurance Group.
- We will be involved in an exercise to look at the Southport Review focusing on how Thames Valley Partnerships can ensure better safeguarding and respond to recommendations from the report.
- We have recognised an increase in the number of girls entering the YJS and therefore are seeking training to upskill workers on understanding the needs of girls within the youth justice system and best practice in terms of engagement and interventions.
- All YJS staff will undertake regular Safeguarding Training in line with Milton Keynes City Council guidelines.
- We have continued to deliver further Diversion and Prevention training to Youth Justice Service staff to promote an assertive outreach methodology, which has enabled us to effectively work with voluntary service users and address the complexity of children and young people with emerging needs and risks. The

effectiveness of which is evidenced by our engagement rates and low level of re-offending for this cohort.

- Training will be delivered focused on theory-based practice, including Value Base, Social Graces, Child First, Good Lives Model, Trauma Informed Practice and Relational Based Practice.
- Staff have access to clinical supervision both on a 1-2-1 basis and the new expanded offer of group clinical supervision which is undertaken with the team on a quarterly basis. Staff also have access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) alongside regular one-to-one personal supervision and case supervision. We hold regular team meetings and team development days to ensure that staff feel supported, and we continue to promote their resilience and wellbeing within the workplace. As a management team, we have an 'open door' approach, and managers and seniors are available outside of core working hours for advice and support where required.
- YJS are supported by a team of trained and experienced volunteers acting as Youth Offender Panel Members and Appropriate Adults. These groups have ongoing access to statutory and non-statutory training as well as regular support and consultation meetings.
- All YJS Officers are trained in the full remit of the service from Diversion and Prevention, Out of Court Disposals (OOCd), Post-Court, Custody and Resettlement and transitions.
- Continued Professional Development is a key component of the Youth Justice Service's approach with staff. The YJS has an established practice learning curriculum for students, including more specifically, Student Social Workers who undertake both 70 days and 100-day placements. YJS staff also have access to undertake social work apprenticeships and we currently have two members of staff on this programme. We also offer staff the chance to undertake the Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate.
- We have a well-established internal progression model that has enabled practitioners to progress and take advantage of development opportunities. This is attractive to staff and is reflected in our excellent retention rates.
- The funding available for training is kept under scrutiny, in line with pressures on the overall budget.

11. Knife Possession Guidance

50. Milton Keynes Youth Justice Service, in line with the Knife Possession Guidance, is informed of all young people taken into police custody for knife possession offences. Where this is within the hours of our Op Deter: Act: Now programme we attend the police station to offer voluntary intervention within 90 minutes. Where young people are arrested but not brought

into custody we are currently working with police partners to ensure we are notified of these cases within 24 hours. For those young people brought into custody outside of our Act: Now hours we are informed within 24 hours.

51. Where charging decisions are made, the Joint Decision-Making Panel will review cases and the Youth Justice Service will undertake a full holistic assessment accessing partner information and parent and young person interview to complete a Prevention and Diversion assessment. This holistic assessment is then used to consider all of the aggravating and mitigating factors to reach a outcome decision. All outcomes are allocated to an officer within the Youth Justice Service to carry out delivery of evidence-based interventions.
52. Outcomes, including compliance and reoffending rates, are then reviewed as part of the Youth justice Strategic Board agenda. And further scrutiny is upheld through attendance at Out of Court Scrutiny Panels.

12. Evidence-based practice and innovation

53. Milton Keynes Youth Justice and Support Service are keen to use the latest research and development of effective practice guidance to continue to improve services for young people and their families. The areas below demonstrate some of the key areas of evidence-based practice and innovation currently in place.
54. Speech and Language Assessments are offered to all young people open to the service. These assessments inform our developmental approach to support young people's understanding of their interventions. This approach, which has been informed by, local, national and international research, and frequently evaluated since its introduction, has proved effective in identifying those with SLCN, (a hidden disability), whether present as a primary need, as a coexisting condition with other needs such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) ; Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) ; Dyslexia etc., or as a consequence of other factors such as Attachment Disorder; Adverse Childhood Experiences; Trauma and Loss ; Domestic Abuse ; Family Breakdown ; Sexual Abuse ; Criminal or Sexual Exploitation etc. Central to this approach is the recognition that most children in the Youth Justice System (60%-90% based on research; 65% - 93% based on local data; 71% YJB AssetPlus data) have SLCN but, as this is a hidden disability, for the majority of children this is not accurately recognised prior to them being assessed by the YJS.
55. The Early Support Project is a short-term intervention underpinned by a case management model, focused on strength based and future focused working. It is underpinned by a strong health and education focus given the emerging research around school exclusions, SLCN, home education, SEND and social inequalities. Within the ESP there is a systems theory /

contextual safeguarding approach to case management, highlighted by the Taylor Review in 2019 as an example of good practice.

56. The Achieving Change Together – Now (ACT: Now) continues to offer support to young people on a voluntary basis within 90 minutes of being informed that they are in police custody. This is seen as a ‘reachable, teachable’ moment and outcomes show positive low reoffending rates.

13. Priorities for coming year

Quality Assurance

57. In 2025-2026 we completed an audit round in addition to regular quality assurance of assessments and reports. The inspection framework was utilised as a guide. The sample included 17% of cases open to the Youth Justice Service in both statutory and voluntary capacity. This totaled 16 young people.

What’s working well?

- Pre-Sentence Reports are being completed within timescales.
- Referral Order initial panels are mostly being held within 20 working days of sentencing.
- All assessments used a wide range of sources with evidence of information being validated with multi agency professionals.
- In the majority of cases safety concerns for the young person and others is assessed well and at the correct level.
- Appropriate referrals were made to other agencies in order to complete relevant interventions.
- Assessments were responsive to changes in circumstances.
- There is clear evidence of management oversight on the majority of cases.
- Relationship based practice is strong, staff build positive, trusting, supportive relationships which is reflected in young person feedback.
- Consideration of contextual risk factors is good.
- There is clear evidence of participation in assessment and planning.

What are we worried about?

- It was found that there was a lack of consistency in ensuring both parents / carers are consulted and engaged throughout the young person’s journey with YJS. This has now been raised in team meetings and training, and further monitoring will take place as an area of focus during supervision to ensure where possible and appropriate all parents / carers are engaged.

- Parents are not always involved in safety planning. There has been a focus on the child and other agencies when safety planning and parents can be utilised better in understanding how they can play a role in safeguarding their child.
- Whilst there is good assessment of the diversity factors for the child, it is not always evident how this is accounted for in the delivery of interventions. Upon speaking with cases officers, it is clear this is considered and work is underway to look at how we better evidence this within our case records.
- Planning for the exit is not always evident. Supervisors and managers will ensure that initial case supervision explore the plan for exit, and this is reviewed throughout the intervention to plan for key transitions from the service.

58. During 2026-2029 we will ensure regular full case auditing. A clear auditing framework has been implemented with support of the Professional Development Leads within Children Social Care to ensure an element of independent peer led auditing.

59. The YJS participates in the Thames Valley scrutiny panels for OOC. Following on from the latest scrutiny panel work is currently being completed with Milton Keynes Police to ensure that our outcomes are proportionate to the rest of Thames Valley.

14. Service development and National Priority areas

Service Priority Plan.

60. The table below shows our priorities for 2026-2029.

No.	Deliverable / Action	Measure – How we will know this has been achieved
1. Maintain and strengthen local Youth Justice Management Board governance and leadership structures to ensure strategic alignment, effective management and evidence impact.		
1.1	Maintain Board's links to frontline service delivery through exposure to aspects of frontline practice and greater visibility of Milton Keynes Youth Justice Management Board amongst the youth justice workforce. On going board member and YJS staff reviews to take place to	• Board members self-report increased knowledge and understanding of frontline service delivery. • Record of attendance / activities undertaken. • Minutes of Board evidence reflection and taking action, as appropriate.

	build knowledge of frontline practice.	• Feedback from staff
1.2	On going board member and YJS staff reviews to take place to build knowledge of frontline practice.	• Attendance at review meetings • Board members self-report increased knowledge and understanding of frontline service delivery.
1.3	Board development day to provide training and reflective time to consider the role of board members and their responsibilities and agree direction of board and strategic plans.	• Attendance and engagement at development day • Improved contributions from all partners at board minutes reflected in minutes of meetings • Development of a strategic plan reviewed at board meetings and documented outcomes.
2. Continue to develop early intervention and diversion through a proactive, partnership-led model that enables timely identification and support for children at risk of offending, ensuring they receive the suitable interventions at the earliest opportunity. This will enable children to be diverted away from the formal justice system towards more positive, sustainable outcomes.		
2.1	Increase the use of Out of Court Resolutions, particularly Outcome 20, 22, 23 (diversionary outcomes which sees children voluntarily engage with an intervention designed to prevent offending and change behaviour, without formal police action being taken) to reduce First Time Entrants, disproportionality within the system and improve outcomes for children	• Continued reduction in First Time Entrants • Increased use of Outcome 20, 22, 23. • Compliance at scrutiny panel to ensure decision making is correct.
2.2	Improved multi agency attendance at Joint Decision-Making Panel to include education and victim representation.	• Document log of attendance at panel
2.3	Implementation of a Focused Diversion Scheme to focus on children who have been arrested on two occasions but had no formal outcome to support preventative work to reduce likelihood of entering the Criminal Justice System and reduce risk of involvement in violence	• Minutes from multi agency panel documenting rationale for cases chosen. • Data analysis of outcomes for children identified

3. Reduce disproportionality and inequality across the youth justice system by identifying and addressing disparities relating to race, ethnicity, gender, neurodiversity, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), care experience, socio-economic factors, and other vulnerabilities.		
3.1	Increase staff's competence in identifying and tackling areas of disproportionality.	• Attendance at planned training events • Greater evidence of reflection relating to racial disparity in assessments, plans and supervision as identified through Quality Assurance pathways and case Audits.
3.2	Ensuring that children from all backgrounds are considered for the PRRE project through analysis of PRRE data and exclusion data comparisons and training delivery to schools.	• Feedback from schools on referral rationales. • Increased referrals from groups from the global majority. • Clear alignment between referrals to PRRE and those who have been excluded.
3.3	Ensure girls are considered at all stages of the Criminal justice systems with tailored interventions delivered that match need.	• Completion of training to local magistrates' groups to upskill them on considerations for girls. • Attendance at Girls Forum and documented dissemination of learning within team meetings and trainings. • Feedback from girls in the service regarding their experiences.
3.4	Ensure that structural factors are clearly considered and interventions adapted to meet individual lived experiences and needs.	• Greater compliance within quality assurance and case audits. • Clear evidence found in case contacts. • Increased staff knowledge and understanding - feedback from staff on increased knowledge and practice.
4. Strengthen and develop the service's support to victims of crime, ensuring individualised support is delivered. Additionally, provide children who cause harm with the necessary understanding of the impact of their actions and opportunities to repair the harm caused.		
4.1	Update victim policies to ensure they align with HMIP framework, best practice and Victims Code.	• Policy in place and audits evidence policy being embedded and followed

4.2	Increase understanding of victim profile to better understand the needs of victims, trends and patterns.	• Develop a Victim profile analysis tool • Evidence of action taken as a result of profile data
4.3	Continue to develop victim processes to ensure all victims have the chance to have their voice heard and receive individualised support services.	• Increase feedback from victims • Feedback used to inform service development and evidenced through action plans and published 'You Said, We Did' type outputs
4.4	Build resilience of staffing group to ensure consistent victim responses	• Recruitment of additional staff • Training of staff to deliver victim services.
5. Drive practice and service improvement through workforce development, performance data and quality assurance activity.		
5.1	Increase audit activity to ensure robust quality assurance processes in place across work with children and victims which drives practice improvement and service development	• Increased numbers of audits completed (minimum 24 annually) • Plan of action from audits that is monitored by YJSB.
5.2	Commence a programme of staff observation activity to ensure the quality of direct work reflects standards held and development needs are identified and addressed.	• Observation log detailing number of observations completed and rating against proforma. • 1-2-1 supervision notes demonstrate reflection on observations and practice strengths and improvements.
5.3	In conjunction with staff, develop a clear training plan to upskill staff knowledge, in particular addressing theories and aligning these to practice.	• Training plan designed to highlight timely, proportionate and individualised assessments and plans • Feedback from staff on increased knowledge and skills. • QA and auditing demonstrates training aligned to practice.
6. Minimise the use of remand and custody through robust alternatives, and ensure high-quality, end-to-end, child-centred resettlement.		
6.1	Update policies to reflect update Release on Temporary License (ROTL) protocols, ensure staff are	• Evidence bank of ROTL activities • Updated policies and procedures.

	familiar with the policies and in conjunction with multi agency partnerships, actively explore local opportunities for ROTL.	• Capturing feedback from young people and families on ROTL opportunities and impact for them.
6.2	Explore with Children Social Care partners availability of overnight remand beds for young people held in police custody to prevent unnecessary holds in police station.	• Audit to take place to review Improved response to overnight requests from police.
7. Reduce and prevent serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour and wider contextual harm through a coordinated, multi-agency and child-first approach that identifies risk at the earliest opportunity and delivers timely, trauma-informed interventions.		
7.1	Ensure that outcomes from the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy are considered for YJS practice and update policies and procedures to reflect this. Ensure that staff are trained on the outcomes and understand their responsibilities.	• Policies reflect the strategy. • Staff training log • Feedback from staff demonstrating increased knowledge and professional curiosity and challenge in working with issues and risks surrounding VAWG.
7.2	Ensure contextual safeguarding bulletin is reflected in team meetings to ensure staff are aware of local patterns and concerns to inform their practice.	• Team meeting minutes • Staff feedback demonstrating greater understanding of local context and risks to young people and the intersectionality between gangs, serious youth violence and grooming / exploitation.
7.3	Complete analysis of Sexual Harmful Behaviour arrests and in conjunction with schools, police and other partners consider a strategy for early intervention	• Analysis considered at YJSB and actions set • Resource packs created to disseminate to schools and front-line services to be used for early identification and intervention.
7.4	Update policies and procedures and agree pathway with Thames Valley Police for all knife offences in line with Knife Crime Guidance	• Working agreement between YJS and TVP. • Update policies and procedures.

15. Over representation

61. Children and young people with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) are over-represented within Milton Keynes Youth Justice Service (MKYJS) and this fits in with the national picture in terms of SLCN and children and young people who offend.

62. In terms of prevalence, our local data collected between April 2025 – March 2026 identified:

Referral and assessment data April 2024 to March 2025.

	Stat	ESP	PRRE	Total	Percent-age
Referrals seen	30	32	49	111	
DNA /not engaging /not completed	6	4	7	17	
Total referrals	36	36	56	128	

No SLCN	6	2	8	16	14%	of cases seen
With SLCN	24	29	42	95	86%	of cases seen
% cases seen identified with SLCN	80%	91%	86%	111		

SLCN and severity rating*

Mild	8	4	13	25	26%	of cases with SLCN
Mild-Moderate	6	6	15	27	28%	of cases with SLCN
Moderate	6	13	7	26	27%	of cases with SLCN
Moderate-Severe	3	6	7	16	17%	of cases with SLCN
Severe	1	0	0	0		
Total SLCN	24	29	42	95		

63. Locally SLCN data is monitored and what can be deduced from our data since 2020 is that year on year, there is a percentage increase in terms of the prevalence of SLCN within Milton Keynes and young people and needs being identified in terms of those that access our service via Diversion, Prevention, Out of Court Disposals and Post-Court youth justice support. It can be concluded from our local data that children and young people with SLCN are significantly overrepresented within the Youth Justice System.

64. One of the factors explored through analysis of data and individual case studies is whether there is any evidence of 'Adultification' (Adultification bias within child protection and safeguarding) as a factor with any of the overrepresented groups of children, with needs not

being recognised because challenging behaviours are viewed as ‘deliberate’ or ‘expected’ rather than seen as potential indicators of an unidentified and unmet need. Such approaches can result in enforcement and suspension action being pursued by schools, rather than explorative supportive approaches to assess unmet needs and adjust provision accordingly. Our Speech and Language data shows that previously, only 16% of children referred were from global majority backgrounds however this has increased in 2025-2026 to 37%. Over the coming year we will explore this data further to look at comparisons with data for those excluded from education compared to those referred for assessment. This data will be used to further support partners to consider how groups which are disproportionality accounted for within the criminal justice system are supported. This approach reflects the expectations outlined in the HMIP Thematic Report on Understanding Racial Disparity to “ensure that black and mixed heritage boys are receiving their legal entitlement to education, including alternative provision when this is deemed necessary, and that the placements are suitable to meet their needs.”

65. As outlined in the commentary above, the YJSB regularly reviews the data on disproportionality at each meeting, and this is kept under constant review. Whilst there has been slight movement in boys from mixed backgrounds being overrepresented within formal outcomes there is still a clear disparity in the data. Further work is needed to look at the needs of these young people and consider what systematic barriers are impacting them and how we tackle structural barriers / which may result in these young people being more vulnerable to being drawn into the YJS. We will continue training around cultural awareness, and the introduction of the Youth Diversion Programme aims to improve outcomes for this group as we are aware that due to mistrust of authority, this group are more likely to say ‘no comment’ in police interviews. Milton Keynes Children Services are committed to addressing disparity for this group across all elements of social care and health and work is currently ongoing to support this change. Our recruitment has led to an increase in the workforce, which is more reflective of the diversity of the young people we work with; however, we need to continue to look at how our staff and volunteers continue to be reflective of our young people in terms of diversity of age and gender. We have changed our Court reports to ensure that the impact of a young person’s diversity and lived experience is at the forefront of the report and we will look at continued joint training for magistrates and judges to ensure they are fully informed and challenged in this area.
66. We recognise that girls within Youth Justice Services require a different approach to boys and often have backgrounds of trauma and emotional health difficulties. We are regular attendees at the Girls in Youth Justice Forum to gain and share evidence of good practice. Learning from this group is disseminated with the team and training is planned with our local magistrates to upskill them to consider the individual needs of this group and ensure sentencing reflects this. Staff will receive on-going training in this area. We need to update our resources to ensure that we have a wide range of evidence-based options to be used with this cohort.
67. Building on the work undertaken to capture and reflect the voice of children in shaping the services provided by both the Youth Justice Service and its partners, we will explore whether further changes are needed to ensure that processes for gaining feedback from over represented groups, such as black and mixed heritage boys, and girls about the services they receive are effective and inform our collective ability to assess, review and improve the

quality and suitability of those services. What we have continued to see through our feedback from young people is positive experiences of young people feeling supported and able to feel they are able to speak to their case officer due to the relationships which are developed.

68. The Youth Justice Service Management and Seniors will ensure thorough management oversight, induction programmes, training and supervision, that staff fully understand what is expected of them in exploring and adjusting their practice to reflect the individual needs and diversity of children and to enable them to work effectively with all children with particular consideration of additional barriers faced by overrepresented groups of children. Staff are made fully aware of how to escalate concerns both within the Youth Justice Service and with partner organisations seeking to address identified barriers that are preventing access to required services.
69. We have access to interpreting facilities for all aspects of work across the YJS and this is regularly used to ensure young people and their families / carers and victims can fully engage and participate with the services offered.

16. Policing

70. Thames Valley Police (TVP) are active partners with YJS and MKYJS foster positive relationships with the local police force. MKYJS has a seconded police officer in post. Our Police Officer is active in the delivery of Out of Court Disposals to young people and is a member of the contextual risk panel where all young people assessed as high safety concerns are discussed. Our police officer completes intelligence checks, shares relevant intelligence, acts as a conduit between YJS and TVP, completes 1-2-1 work with young people specifically around ensuring young people are aware of the laws regarding weapons and building relationships between police and communities. TVP Harm Reduction Unit works closely with the team engaging priority young people to reduce both concerns for future offending and concerns for safety to others as well as supporting young people through multi agency planning to ensure the safety of young people is paramount. MK YJS are active participants in the Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Group (TTCG) ensuring that we are aware and responsive to TVP priority areas within Milton Keynes. There is a shared Teams communication channel between TVP Harm Reduction Unit, Contextual Safeguarding Team and YJS, this method of open communication has ensured that all parties work closely together and are responsive and reactive on a daily basis with quick real time intelligence and information sharing taking place.

17. Prevention and Diversion

71. Milton Keynes Youth Justice Service has a well-established Youth Diversion and Prevention Service that is known locally as the Early Support Project (ESP). ESP offers support to children and young people who require early prevention, targeted prevention and diversion from the

formal youth justice system. Within the Prevention service offer, we have a Speech and Language Therapy project that works with primary and secondary schools, known locally as PRRE (Promoting Reintegration and Reducing Exclusions). The project enables primary and secondary schools and further education settings to refer children and young people to the project where it has been identified that they are at the greatest risk of school exclusions and / or a move to an alternative provision. The Prevention element of ESP works with children and young people who are displaying behaviours associated with offending behaviour and / or child exploitation in order to safeguard and reduce vulnerabilities that could be associated with them being at risk of entering the formal youth justice system.

72. There are several referral pathways for agencies to refer children and young people to the Prevention element of the service (including PRRE). These are:

- Child Missing and Exploitation Trafficked Panel (CMET)
- Primary and Secondary schools and Further Education settings
- Alternative Education Panel (a multi-agency panel where children and young people at risk of being moved to alternative education are discussed)
- PREVENT Channel Panel (a multi-agency panel where children at risk of radicalisation and / or extremism are discussed)
- Joint Decision-Making Panel (JDMP)

73. Within the Diversion aspect of the service, we have a local service level agreement with Thames Valley Police whereby we received all YOT1 notifications for young people who have received Community Resolutions (CR) in the Milton Keynes area. We then complete an initial screening assessment for the ESP and if the young person is considered suitable and eligible for the project, we make a service offer to all young people receiving their second CR and complete an assessment and plan to address young people's risks and needs and build on identified positive factors and strengths.

74. As part of our Out-of-Court-Disposal (OOC) service area, we have a Joint Decision-Making Panel (JDMP) that meets weekly to discuss young people referred to the panel by the Youth Justice Unit for an OOC to be assessed. The JDMP has representatives present from the Youth Justice Service, CS Team, Youth Justice Unit at Thames Valley Police, Liaison and Diversion colleagues and CAMHS. We have trained members of staff to complete the OOC Initial Screening Assessment (ISA) for young people being discussed at the panel, with a full Assessment being completed for serious violent or sexual offending, including those offences involving weapons and / or knives. Young people will now also be considered for deferred outcomes; in Thames Valley this is referred to as a Youth Diversion Programme. This outcome offers young people the opportunity to engage in voluntary intervention in place of a formal OOC. The programme is monitored by JDMP members and reviewed should a young person not engage they will then be offered the appropriate OOC.

75. In terms of processes, the ESP offers children and young people a 12 – 24-week period of intervention in order to address structural barriers that may have an impact on the individual being at risk of offending or further offending, as well as delivering interventions to address problematic behaviour. ESP is a strengths-based and future-focused service in that we support young people and their families to build on their strengths and move towards building a safe, healthy, and pro-social future. We offer an 'opt out' service. We contact all

young people considered appropriate for the service. We use a consistent screening, triage, and case management approach within the Early Support Project whereby we; screen, triage, assess, plan, review and signpost all young people.

76. Keeping others safe, keeping the young person safe and supporting young people to build on the factors that will support them to avoid crime is key within our work, to ultimately enable young people to have successful and positive futures. We use our understanding of trauma and adverse childhood experiences to explore behaviour and how it impacts on the young person, their desistance, risk to others and their own safety and wellbeing. Understanding attachment behaviour helps us explore how young people meet their needs (which may include offending to meet these needs). We also identify and explore the links between school absence, serious youth violence, exploitation, and the persistence of offending into later life. We have a strong emphasis on Speech and Language Therapy within the Prevention and Diversion Service, and more specifically, how unrecognised Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) can have a significant impact on a young person's education and future life opportunities if not recognised early. We understand that to safeguard children and young people, a contextual safeguarding approach with adolescents is often needed and we work alongside the Contextual Safeguarding Team (CS Team) and Children's Social Care in protecting and promoting the safety of children and young people in Milton Keynes.
77. We provide quarterly reports to the Police and Crime Commissioner and Turnaround, our funding partners, to identify our received referrals, working data surrounding the age, gender and ethnicity of the young people accessing the service, and providing case studies to demonstrate how the service promote better outcomes for children and young people.
78. Under the ACT: Now project Milton Keynes Youth Justice Service attend Milton Keynes Police station within 90 minutes of notification from Police to inform us that a young person has been arrested for a knife or weapons related crime, offences involving violence or Robbery. This allows us opportunities to engage young people before any informal and formal outcome is given and offers interventions at the earliest opportunity to reduce harm to communities and to improve the lives of young people. In order to build on our Child First approach, we have expanded our ACT: Now project to include referrals from school Officers for children who are arrested for knife and weapon-related offences but are not brought into police custody.

18. Education, Training and Employment

79. The Youth Justice Service recognises that Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in relation to Education, Training and Employment (ETE) have evolved and we have processes in place to ensure that we are able to monitor how many children are not receiving their education entitlement, how many children are excluded from school, how many children are educated on reduced school timetables, how many children / parents elect for home education and

the number of children on SEN Support or who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in place. The percentage of young people on part-time timetables or not in full-time ETE has been improving over the last year.

80. We have recruited a full time Education, Training and Employment (ETE) Co-Ordinator who is responsible for ensuring that children of school-age receive appropriate education, and our link Young People's Personal Advisor is responsible for offering support to young people over the age of 16 who are not in education, training, or employment (NEET).
81. The Education, Training and Employment Co-Ordinator is actively involved where children and young people are identified as being on a reduced school timetable, home educated, school refusing or having a complex relationship with school. We have introduced a process whereby the ETE Co-Ordinator has regular 1-2-1 meetings with YOT Officers to ensure that there is an ETE plan for every child working with the Youth Justice Service, and that complex circumstances have intervention from the Co-Ordinator to support the YOT Officer in addressing these difficulties successfully.
82. If a setting participates with our PRRE Speech and Language Therapy project, they are afforded free Speech and Language Training to develop the knowledge and skills of school staff and to upskill staff within the Speech and Language Therapy arena to feel confident in employing strategies within the classroom to specifically address identified SLCN.
83. We have strengthened our links with the Virtual School and Educational Psychology department to expand the opportunities for young people receiving Youth Justice intervention to be better supported by the local authority. The Virtual School and Educational Psychology services offer Youth Justice members of staff consultation sessions to discuss individual cases with a view to increasing the support afforded to them.
84. Simon Sims, Head of Access to Education, Employment, and Training, is a core member of the Youth Justice Strategic Board.

19. Restorative Approaches and Victims

85. Through strong case work and multi-agency work, we support and encourage children to build pro-social identities to support their desistance from crime and reduce victims of crime and we work hard to offer victims of crime a voice.
86. We have strengthened the YJS's work in Restorative Justice, through collaborative work with the Police to increase the level of victim information and engagement and to ensure direct and indirect restorative approaches are both available and meet the requirements of a service structured around Child First principles and approaches. This work was further developed to ensure that the needs of victims are paramount, and the effective approach

developed for post court disposals was fully replicated within all elements of the Diversion work of the Youth Justice Service and key partners in the YJS.

87. The Victim Liaison Officer contacts victims of children working with YJS offering support, including being kept informed of case progression, support to attend Youth Offender Panels and meeting the child face-to-face for a restorative conference. YJS staff are trained in YJB/Restorative Justice Council standards for the facilitation of restorative conversations.
88. We have focused on expanding the opportunities available for Reparation / Community Enrichment to enable young people not only to repair the harm they have caused but also to provide opportunities for community engagement, and development of key skills.
89. In reviewing our offer to victims, we have expanded links with community organisations such as Safe and we are also able to offer youth victims access to all services offered by YJS including Speech and language assessments and CAMHS support.
90. Victims' services are an area of development need for the service; we are currently working on building greater resilience within the service to ensure fewer delays to services provided to victims due to staffing gaps.

20. Serious violence and Contextual Safeguarding

91. In response to increasing concerns regarding serious youth violence and exploitation highlighted earlier in this Youth Justice Plan, Milton Keynes Youth Justice Service have taken the following steps:
 - As highlighted above the multi-agency / multi-disciplinary Contextual Safeguarding Team (CS Team), was launched in February 2023 to focus on extra familial harm in relation to the criminal exploitation of children, and the overlap with serious youth violence. The specialist team and improved partnership working, information sharing and forward planning has helped to embed partnership and individual service approaches to address child exploitation, knife crime, serious youth violence, county lines, gangs, trafficking and modern-day slavery as the CS Team have established very positive information sharing and multi-agency working with the wider partnership with particular focus on joint working with Thames Valley Police who have specialist police working alongside the Contextual Safeguarding Team and Youth Justice. This enables a proactive approach to managing contextual risks of children and young people open to both the CS Team and YJS and results in more robust coordinated partnership response to safeguarding concerns and targeting adult perpetrators who are exploiting children or engaging them in acts of serious youth violence.

- The multi-agency Contextual Risk Panel has been established and considers all high-risk cases across both the YJS and CS team. This ensures all plans have multi-agency oversight and planning to ensure risks are managed robustly.
- A joint National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Policy has been created to ensure consistency across all key services within Children and Families (Youth Justice and Support Service; Children's Social Care, etc.) and to assist with capturing accurate data and recording of NRM outcomes across the wider partnership.
- Given the significant increase in the young people in Milton Keynes being the victims of exploitation, specialist training has been developed for delivery across Milton Keynes Children and Families Services to upskill practitioners understanding of Exploitation including the frequent potential for overlap with other key elements including Serious Youth Violence / County Lines / Gangs / Knife Crime and Missing episodes.
- The Contextual Safeguarding team provides an Exploitation Bulletin sharing key information, updates, trends, and emerging themes around exploitation issues to support Contextual Safeguarding approaches within Milton Keynes to safeguard young people. The Exploitation Bulletin is circulated every 4-6 weeks to Children and Families Services (including the YJS).
- All young people working with the YJS on statutory interventions or referred to ESP must have an up-to-date Exploitation Screening Tool completed and referred to the Contextual Safeguarding Team for consideration, ensuring a more holistic multi-agency assessment, scrutiny and advice is available to address the needs and risks of that young person.
- As highlighted earlier we are funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to provide a joint response to knife or bladed article carrying / possession, weapons and other violent offences along with Thames Valley Police. The Act: Now (Achieving Change Together – Now) project. This enables YJS staff to reach out and offer timely intervention and support to young people, therefore capitalising on reachable and teachable moments within a child and young person's life. The success of this approach has resulted in the initiative being rolled out across Thames Valley.
- All staff have up to date Prevent training and are competent in completing referrals to Prevent. The Head of Service sits on Channel Panel and is an active member of the panel to review cases to ensure plans are robust and multiagency held.
- Milton Keynes Youth Justice Service will be a key partner reviewing the Southport enquiry recommendations and have been invited to take part in a multi-agency exercise to look at local responses and prevention.

21. Detention in police custody

92. Appropriate Adult services are provided by a team of volunteers who operate a '24/7' service and they attended custody to 858 instances an increase of 27% on the previous year (674 instances). In the last year (2025 – 2026) 57.9% (497) were for adults). The service is coordinated by our former Business Support & Information Manager who is a previous custody inspector and is now our volunteer coordinator. We participate in the 'Thames Valley Children in Custody' meetings where all overnight detentions and remands are reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate. During the year progress has been made in ensuring custody sergeants correctly apply the provisions of PACE and only request secure accommodation in relevant cases. The availability of such accommodation on the very rare occasion it is required remains a challenge. The meetings also monitor the actions of Children's Service to meet requests for both secure and non-secure accommodation. The issue of suitable accommodation for overnight remands is a national issue and will continue to be explored at YJSB to seek appropriate solutions.

22. Remands and use of custody and resettlement

93. Milton Keynes Youth Justice Strategic Board (YJSB) are responsible for ensuring that the approach to custody, resettlement and transitions is evidenced-based as well as ensuring that suitable and timely accommodation provision is available for all children leaving custody along with young people having equitable access to services. The YJSB are able to identify, challenge and address any structural barriers that exist with regards to the resettlement of young people into the community (e.g., poor access to education, training, and employment for NEET young people over 16, and a lack of suitable accommodation provision for young people in care/ care leavers).
94. Milton Keynes YJS 'Custody, Resettlement and Transitions Policy' provides the detailed framework for this area of work, outlining the service expectations in relation to children and young people serving custodial sentences, remanded to youth detention accommodation and for those leaving custody and resettling back into their communities, including clear guidance and expectations around:
- Evidence-based research underpinning the practice model.
 - Resettlement
 - Structural barriers to resettlement
 - Transitions
 - Role of Children's Social Care
 - Remand to Youth Detention Accommodation
 - Custodial sentences
 - SEND Code of Practice: Legal Duty (Chapter 10)
 - Transitions

- Extended Sentences
- Use of Youth Justice Assessment Framework (YJAF)
- Additional Contact with Young People in Custody
- Policy Evaluation

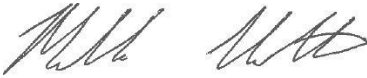
95. We recognise that the Resettlement of females requires a different approach to when addressing the needs of males (Beyond Youth Custody, 2014). An interpersonal approach to Resettlement with high levels of support is required for females. Developing a pro-social identity, forming positive supportive networks, and addressing relationships are key in terms of supporting an effective Resettlement (Beyond Youth Custody, 2014).
96. The approach adopted by Milton Keynes YJS wholly supports the perspective that young people serving custodial sentences must receive an effective, end-to-end service provision based on a thorough assessment of need and risk, in order to reintegrate them into the community. To achieve this, partnership working, alongside the participation and engagement of young people and their families, is essential for Resettlement (Beyond Youth Custody, 2014).
97. Milton Keynes YJS has an approach that reflects the findings of research that young people who offend (but especially young people serving custodial sentences) are likely to have considerable Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND), along with additional needs as a result of being in the care of the local authority, being a care leaver, having complex family backgrounds, problematic substance misuse, significant health needs, trauma and several adverse childhood experiences. This list of anticipated needs is not exhaustive; however, it outlines how resettlement has to be approached on an individual basis as it is different for every young person and how an accurate assessment of needs and risks is essential to ensuring that barriers are identified, addressed, and overcome.
98. It is a service expectation, and reflected in National Standards 2019, that allocated Social Workers are actively involved in all aspects of remand and sentence planning. Responsible YOT Officers ensure that Social Workers are invited to all planning meetings held within the secure estate and liaise regularly outside of these meetings to ensure effective and timely information sharing and joint planning.
99. We also recognise that structural barriers, such as a lack of suitable and timely accommodation for young people in care and care leavers need to be addressed at the earliest opportunity and at a national level within remand/ sentence planning. One of the most important Resettlement Pathways is 'Accommodation' as feeling safe and stable lends itself well to young people being able to effectively engage in other positive activities including education, training, and employment. We are realistic that finding suitable and appropriate accommodation for young people who offend can be challenging. To ensure that this is addressed in a timely way in line with the YJS and CSC Partnership Working Agreement (Jan 2020, reviewed Jan 2025), where a young person is identified during the custodial period as being likely to require accommodation on release the YJS will complete a referral to MASH at least 3 months prior to the release date.

100. To ensure that young people are sufficiently prepared to make the transition from custody to the community, CSC (where appropriate) ensure that accommodation for children is confirmed no later than one week prior to the Final Planning Meeting to enable the young person to have an opportunity to plan, prepare, share their views, and discuss any concerns at the Final Planning Meeting. YJS encourage identification of a placement at the earliest point within the custodial phase of a sentence, however, also recognising that this can be a significant challenge to achieve so far in advance.
101. We have developed evaluation tools to capture the views of young people, parents / carers, and key professionals in relation to their experiences in order to ensure these inform the development of the service and policy reviews.
102. Milton Keynes Youth Justice Service is currently ensuring that our policies reflect the new guidance regarding Release on Temporary License (ROTL) and are training staff members to ensure they are considering all options to promote use of early ROTL where appropriate.
103. Working in conjunction with Oakhill STC we also have the opportunity to prepare young people at risk of custody by way of a joint meeting with staff from Oakhill. Those young people identified at risk of custody are able to have some time before their court hearing to learn about what to expect within a custodial facility and this gives the young people and families an opportunity to have any questions answered that they may have to try and reduce anxieties and support those at risk of custody to have a more established and supportive transition.

23. Work with Families

104. MKYJS has a YOT Officer who specialises in family support and intervention. Families are offered support with relationships and resolving conflicts using a restorative approach as well as practical support for parents and carers such as support with financial difficulties, access to health services and housing and support with periods of transitions, including supporting parents of young people who are sentenced to custody. The family support worker can deliver the accredited programme 'Who's In Charge', supporting parents to instill appropriate boundaries and respond appropriately to areas of conflict with their young person. This work was led by YJS on a group work programme; this has now transferred to the Healthy Relationships Programme within the Local Authority; however, 1-2-1 programs will continue to be delivered by our family support worker where appropriate.

24. Sign off, submission and approval

Chair of YJS Board – name	Dr Mac Heath Director of Children’s Services Milton Keynes City Council
Signature	
Date	23 June 2026

25. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Board Membership

- Local Authority (Milton Keynes Council)
 - Director of Children’s Services
 - Assistant Director – Childrens Social Care
 - Head of Partnerships and Resilience
 - Head of Service – Access to Education, Employment & Training
- Central Bedfordshire Council Shared Services
 - Head of Public Health Programmes
- Probation

- Head of Probation Delivery Unit – Milton Keynes & Buckinghamshire
- Police
 - Deputy Local Police Area Commander
- CAMHS
 - Service Manager
- NHS CCG (Central and North-West London)
 - Associate Director, Children's and Maternity Commissioning
- Buckinghamshire Magistrates Court
 - Chair of Youth Magistrates Panel
- Youth Justice Service
 - Head of Children's Quality Assurance, Youth Justice and Performance
 - Youth Justice Team Operational Manager
 - Volunteers' representative

In addition to the core board members, we also have the following advisors / invitees;

- Youth Justice Board
- Police and Crime Commissioner representative
- Police – Strategic Lead for Youth Justice
- Court
 - Senior Legal Advisor
- YJS

Deputy Youth Justice Team Manager

Appendix 2 – Attendance at Board

Member's role	Meeting 24/04/25	Meeting 24/07/25	Meeting 23/10/25	Meeting 29/01/26
Director of Children's Services	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Assistant Director – Childrens Social Care	Attended	Attended		Attended
Head of Partnerships and Delivery	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Head of Service – Access to Education, Employment & Training	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Head of Public Health Programmes	Attended		Attended	Attended
Head of Probation Delivery Unit	Represented	Represented	Represented	Represented
Deputy Police Area Commander		Represented	Attended	Attended
CAMHS Service Manager				
Associate Director – Children's and Maternity Commissioning	Attended	Represented	Attended	Attended
Chair of Youth Magistrates panel				
Head of Children's Quality Assurance, Youth Justice and Performance	Represented	Represented	Attended	Attended
Youth Justice Team Operational Manager	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Volunteers' representative	Attended	Attended		Attended



Appendix 4 – Diversity and characteristics of staffing group

Ethnicity Group	Managers Strategic		Managers Operational		Practitioners		Administrative		Sessional		Student		Referral Order volunteers		Other volunteers		TOTAL	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Asian or Asian British						1												1
Black or Black British	1					3											1	3
Mixed																		
Chinese or Other																		0
White or White British				1	1	16		3				0	2	2	2	10	5	32
TOTAL	1			1	1	20		3				0	2	2	2	10	6	36

4 members of staff have reported a recognised disability.

Appendix 5

2026/27 Budget Forecast

YJB grant £355,332

Community Safety Funding £137,641

Probation Funding £47,257

Focused Diversion £58,000

Adults Services Contribution £7,500

ACT Now (OP Deter) £160,000

Youth Offending Teams and Speech and Language Assessment £47,439

Turnaround Funding £57,716

Health £43,542

MKCC Baseline Budget £442,923

Total Income £914,427

Glossary

ACE	Adverse childhood experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long lasting impact on the child's health, and life choices
AIM 2 and 3	Assessment, intervention and moving on, an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour
ASB	Antisocial behaviour
AssetPlus	Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour
CAMHS	Child and adolescent mental health services
CCE	Child Criminal exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity
Children	We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.

Child First	A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenants to this approach, it should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion
Child looked-after	Child looked-after, where a child is looked after by the local authority
CME	Child Missing Education
Constructive resettlement	The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social
Contextual safeguarding	An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety
Community resolution	Community resolution, an informal disposal, administered by the police, for low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt
EHCP	Education and health care plan, a plan outlining the education, health and social care needs of a child with additional needs
ETE	Education, training or employment
EHE	Electively home educated, children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school

EOTAS	Education other than at school, children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting
FTE	First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal)
HMIP	Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect Youth Justice services and probation services
HSB	Harmful sexual behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves
JAC	Junior Attendance Centre
MAPPa	Multi agency public protection arrangements
MFH	Missing from Home
NRM	National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery in order to gain help to support and protect them
OOCD	Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not sent to court

Outcome 22/21	An informal disposal, available where the child does not admit the offence, but they undertake intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending
Over-represented children	Appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average
RHI	Return home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing
ROTL	Release On Temporary License
SLCN	Speech, Language and communication needs
STC	Secure training centre
SCH	Secure children's home
Young adult	We define a young adult as someone who is 18 or over. For example, when a young adult is transferring to the adult probation service.
YJS	Youth justice service. This is now the preferred title for services working with children in the youth justice system. This reflects the move to a Child First approach
YOI	Young offender institution

