

Standards for children in the youth justice system: self-assessment

Frequently asked questions

1. Must a case be open and closed during the assessment period (1 September 2019 to 31 March 2020)?

To be included in the assessment, cases that form part of the audited caseload of 20% should start during 2019/20 i.e. from April 2019 onwards, but they do not have to fall precisely within this timescale for the self-assessment period.

2. What should a youth offending team (YOT) do if it does not have 20 cases for a standard?

In circumstances where there are fewer than 20 cases, the YOT should assess the entire available caseload for that period.

3. Can the same case be used more than once?

Yes, where a case comes under more than one standard it can be used to measure all the standards it is included in.

4. Is the self-assessment template provided by the YJB compulsory?

No, it is not mandatory to use the YJB's self-assessment template and the YOT may use its own audit tool.

5. How can a YOT be expected to assess and change issues such as the transportation of children from court to custody?

Whilst issues of transportation, for example, are not in the direct control of community youth justice services; community services are well placed to make judgements as to whether the standard is being met. Where there are gaps or concerns about the standard these should be addressed within the improvement plan, particularly how the issues are monitored and escalated for assurances with the other agencies involved.

6. The current condition of the secure estate is impacting on our scores for Standard 4, in secure settings. How do we explain to our Management Board that we are scoring ourselves 'Inadequate' because of poor custody provision?

As at question 5, whilst issues within Standard 4 are not within the direct control of community youth justice services; community services are well placed to make judgements as to whether the standard is being met.

Where there are gaps or concerns about the standard these should be addressed within the improvement plan, particularly how the issues are monitored and escalated for assurances with the other agencies involved. The

narrative in the improvement plan should set out how the Management Board should be seeking assurances and escalating concerns regarding children in secure settings who remain the responsibility of that local authority.

7. Can the whole region send a shared response on Standard 4, in secure settings?

No, the self-assessment is identifying the areas of improvement for individual YOTs. Whilst the same secure provisions may be used, the caseloads will be unique and the YOT processes for assurances may or may not be through regional arrangements.

8. Which transitions does Standard 5 refer to?

National Standard 5 is referring to transitions that will impact significantly on how a child is worked with within the youth justice system. The supervising YOT will be in the best position to judge the impact of a transition on a child, and therefore the planning that this should involve.

These transitions may include, but are not limited to when a child:

- is transferred to another YOT
- moves from the community to a secure setting and vice versa
- turns 18 years old and is transferred to adult provision.