Youth Justice Board
Bwrdd Cyfiawnder Ieuenctid

Education, Training and Employment

Source document

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Glossary

Asset
A structured assessment tool used by youth offending teams (YOTs) in England and Wales on all young offenders who come into contact with the criminal justice system. It aims to look at the young person's offence(s) and identify a multitude of factors or circumstances – ranging from lack of educational attainment to mental health problems – which may contribute to such behaviour. It also measures changes in needs and risk of reoffending over time.

Common assessment framework (CAF)
This is a standardised approach, applicable in England only, to assessing the needs of children and young people who may need additional help in order to meet the five priority outcomes set out in *Every Child Matters*. It has been designed for practitioners in all agencies to help them communicate and work effectively and plays an important role in providing early intervention. Young people coming into contact with YOTs are likely to have already had a CAF assessment.

Detention and Training Order (DTO)
A DTO sentences to custody a young person (who is aged between 12 and 17) who represents a high level of risk, has a significant offending history or is a persistent offender. The sentence can be between four months and two years. The first half of the sentence is spent in custody and the second half is spent in the community, under the supervision of the YOT.

Education, training and employment (ETE)
Education, training and employment provided to young people within the youth justice system.

Education manager
The manager will oversee delivery of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) contract and in general report to an off-site provider's contract manager. The manager will work with the prison/young offender institution (generally with the Head of Learning and Skills) to deliver the LSC-contracted provision as part of the wider regime delivery of programmes to young people in the establishment.

Individual Learning Plan (ILP)
An individual learning plan charts the learning journey by setting out the learning goals for a specified period of time for an individual learner; the smaller targets by which these goals will be achieved and the outcomes of regular reviews at which progress is discussed and recorded with the learner. The ILP should be linked to the young person's sentence plan.

Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP)
ISSP is the most rigorous non-custodial intervention available for young offenders. It combines unprecedented levels of community-based surveillance with a comprehensive and sustained focus on tackling the factors that contribute to the young person's offending behaviour. ISSP targets the most active repeat young offenders, and those who commit the most serious crimes.

Intervention
An intervention in the context of this document is a structured service or series of

actions that aims to achieve change over time. It is focused upon a single issue or set of closely related issues, for example, providing skills for work.

Learning difficulties/disabilities (LDD)
Refers to a range of learning difficulties and disabilities. Children and young people with LDD may have a statement of special educational needs (SEN).

Learning and Skills Council for England (LSC)
The LSC is responsible for planning and funding education and training for everyone over statutory school age in England other than those in universities.

National Offender Management Service (NOMS)
Commissions and provides correctional services and interventions in order to protect the public and reduce reoffending.

Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS)
Managed by the LSC, OLASS is the name of the education and training service targeted specifically at offenders over the age of 16 in custody or the community.

Positive Activities for Young People (England only) (PAYP)
PAYP is a programme launched to help steer energy and talent of at risk 8 to 19-year-olds into a positive direction and fulfil their potential. PAYP provides a range of activities for school holidays, which encourage personal development and divert young people from being involved in crime.

Personal education plan (PEP)
A PEP is a record of what needs to happen for looked-after children to enable them to fulfil their potential and reflects any existing education plans, such as a statement of special educational needs and an individual education plan.

Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)
Pupil referral units are specialist education units, set up and run by local authorities, to provide education for children who cannot attend school, including those excluded from school.

Special Education Needs (SEN)
Children who have special educational needs have been diagnosed with learning difficulties or disabilities which require specialist input. Local Education Authorities have a statutory duty to identify, assess and make provision for children's special educational needs.

SPLASH Cymru (Wales only)
Splash Cymru is a programme of positive and constructive activities for 13 to 17-year-olds that runs in the school holidays in Wales. Funded and managed by the YJB, the programme consists of locally-run schemes based in areas experiencing high levels of crime and deprivation. Young people at high risk in Splash neighbourhoods are engaged in a range of appropriate activities and interventions aimed at preventing their involvement in anti-social behaviour and offending.

Secure training centre (STC)
STCs are purpose built centres for young people who offend up to the age of 17. They are run by private operators under contracts that detail the operational requirements.

Secure children's home
Secure children's homes are used to accommodate young people who offend who are

assessed as vulnerable between the ages of 12 to 14; girls up to the age of 16, and 15 to 16-year-old boys. They are usually run by local authorities. They focus on attending to the physical, emotional and behavioural needs of the young people they accommodate.

Young offender institution (YOI)

Young offender institutions (YOIs) are facilities run by both the Prison Service and the private sector and can accommodate 15 to 21-year-olds. The YJB commissions and purchases places for under-18s (i.e. 15 to 17-year-olds), who are held in units that are completely separate from those for 18 to 21-year-olds. YOIs generally have lower ratios of staff to young people than STCs and secure children's homes and accommodate larger numbers of young people. Consequently, they are less able to address the individual needs of young people and are generally considered to be inappropriate accommodation for vulnerable young people with high risk factors, such as mental health or substance misuse needs.

Background

This review was commissioned to serve as a background source document to accompany guidance produced by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB), identifying key elements of effective practice in interventions in the youth justice context. It has not been written primarily for an academic or research audience, but for managers and practitioners working in the youth justice field who are directly involved in providing, or brokering access to, services for young people who offend and their families. The review offers an accessible guide to the current state of the evidence base on effective interventions and services, helping youth justice practitioners and managers to be aware of and deliver more rigorously evidence-based services.

The review document is divided into sections structured around a number of key themes or headings relevant to practice in youth justice services. The source document is structured to mirror the *Key Elements of Effective Practice* to facilitate cross-referencing between the two documents, and to ensure it is a useful document for the intended audience who may wish to explore the areas covered in the *Key Elements of Effective Practice* summary in more depth. These nine common sections therefore reflect what are considered to be core areas of consideration for practice and management within youth justice, and as such this structure is largely consistent across all 10 documents in this series of publications. The following *Key Elements of Effective Practice* titles and corresponding source documents are available from the YJB website (www.yjb.gov.uk):

- *Accommodation*
- *Assessment, Planning Interventions and Supervision*
- *Education, Training and Employment*
- *Engaging Young People who Offend*
- *Mental Health*
- *Offending Behaviour Programmes*
- *Parenting*
- *Restorative Justice*
- *Substance Misuse*
- *Young People who Sexually Abuse.*

Introduction

Through the Every Child Matters agenda, the Government aims to ensure that every child between the ages of 0 and 19 has the support they need to be healthy, safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being (Chief Secretary to the Treasury, 2003). Thus, organisations involved with providing any services to children and young people will be working together to fulfil these aims.

The Welsh Assembly Government has an extended commitment to the well-being of children and young people aged between 0 and 25 years of age, as expressed in the Seven Core Aims for Children in Wales. As well as promoting the aspirations set out above, the Seven Core Aims for Children in Wales also set out entitlements to pre- and post-natal care, freedom from abuse, victimisation and exploitation, access to leisure and cultural activities and the right to be listenened to, treated with respect, and to have their race and cultural identity recognised (Welsh Assesmbly Government, 2004).

As a part of these agendas, the aim of the youth justice system is to prevent offending and reoffending by children and young people. The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB) works with partners to provide access to education, training and employment (ETE) in the community, as well as for those making the transition from custody to the community.

The primary role of youth offending teams (YOTs) is to advocate and broker access to education, training and employment both strategically and on behalf of individual young people. The importance of this intervention cannot be overestimated – participation in school and college with attainment of work-related skills are major protective factors in offending and reoffending. Good practice at this point will benefit the whole youth justice system.

The *Key Elements of Eff*ective *Practice* describe the features of effective youth justice services. The approach suggested in the *Key Elements of Eff*ective *Practice* has been developed using experience gained from programmes that have been running in the youth justice system since April 2000 as well as research gathered over time.

The purpose of this review is to set out the evidence around the factors associated with offending and reoffending amongst young people and their relationship with education, employment and training.

This source document presents the evidence that informs effective or promising practice in relation to the education, training and employment of young people who offend. It follows an extensive literature review, which is described in Appendix A. In order to identify what works in the research, it was important to differentiate between those studies that scored highly against the research standards and other studies. Therefore, studies referred to as ‘promising’ have been identified as those studies in which the evidence is less robust against the research standards outlined in Appendix A.

Risk and protective factors for offending

Research into offending by young people has identified certain ‘risk factors’ that increase the likelihood of a young person being involved in offending (Farrington et al, 1996; Utting and Vennard, 2000; Hawkins et al, 2005). Rather than seeing these risk

factors in isolation, they are often closely related and cluster together, presenting a network of disadvantage that can be associated with an increased propensity towards criminal activity (Communities that Care, 2005).

The range of risk factors can be typically classified in the following way (Communities that Care, 2005):

- *Family* – such as poor parental supervision and discipline, family conflict or a history of criminal activity
- *School* – such as low achievement or lack of commitment to school (including truancy)
- *Community* – such as living in a disadvantaged neighbourhood
- *Individual* – such as hyperactivity and impulsivity or low intelligence and cognitive impairment.

Conversely, 'protective factors' are factors that can help to oppose or moderate the risks that young people are exposed to, and thus work to safeguard against the likelihood of being involved in criminal activity. As with risk factors, protective factors are often interrelated and overlap. The Communities that Care (2005) review classified protective factors as:

- social bonding
- healthy beliefs and clear standards
- opportunities, skills and recognition.

Education and risk of offending

A number of important points emerge from understanding the risk and protective framework. First, as primary providers of education to young people, schools have a key protective role in preventing offending through the learning process (i.e. skills and qualifications) and establishing behaviour norms (i.e. acceptable standards of behaviour in class) (Home Office, 2004). Next, it is also clear that there are a number of potential drivers for crime (such as individual or family factors). Therefore, interventions to prevent reoffending are more likely to be effective if they tackle these factors associated with the offending behaviour (McGuire, 1995a).

It has been noted that there are often multiple, interrelated factors associated with offending. YOT practitioners rated thinking and behaviour, and lifestyle and education as being most closely linked to the risk of reoffending (Communities that Care, 2005). The Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development, a longitudinal survey of the development of offending and anti-social behaviour since 1961, noted low school attainment was amongst the most important childhood risk factors (Farrington et al, 2006). Similarly, young people who offend themselves cited lack of training or qualifications as the most important factor (Communities that Care, 2005).

Hence, although not the single cause, education and training represents an important factor in reducing risk associated with a young person's inclination towards offending and reoffending.

Statistics on the educational background of young people who offend show that there is a strong correlation between offending and school experience. In 2003 an analysis of

data from *Asset*, the assessment tool used within the youth justice system, found the following:

- 42% of young people were rated as under-achieving at school
- 41% of young people were regularly truanting
- 25% of young people in the youth justice system had identified special needs (just over 60% of those had a statement of special educational needs [SEN])
- 27% of young people had previous permanent exclusions (YJB, 2003a).

There has been considerable research into the extent to which a young person's educational experience can be associated with an increased likelihood of criminality. For example, some indicators may include:

- **Low attainment, beginning in primary school**
  This has been identified the second most important predictive risk factor (Communities that Care, 2005). At least half of the young people who have come to the attention of YOTs have been deemed to be under-achieving (Oxford University, 2002, cited in YJB, 2006a).
- **Poor literacy and numeracy**
  The average reading age of young people starting Intensive Supervision and Surveillence Programs (ISSPs) is five years below their actual age (YJB, 2002). Furthermore, of young people who enter custody, 31% have literacy levels at or below that of a 7-year-old, and 40% have numeracy skill levels at or below that of a 7-year-old (Ecotec Research and Consulting, 2001).
- **Poor relationships with teachers**
  These are expressed through 'troublesome behaviour' (Spielhofer et al, 2003; Golden et al, 2002). For example, in the Cambridge Study, the 'troublesome' behaviour (as rated by teachers and classmates) of 8–10-year-olds', was the strongest individual 'predictor' of later delinquency – although it still identified rather less than half the teenagers who committed offences (West, 1982).
- **Truancy**
  According to research by the Social Exclusion Unit (2002), prisoners are 10 times as likely to have been a regular truant compared with the general population. Further evidence of the link between absence and offending is found in Berridge et al (2001), Graham (1998) and the Audit Commission (1999).
- **Exclusion**
  The Youth Survey (MORI, 2004) explored young people's experience of crime and found a higher rate of offending amongst excluded young people (60%) in comparison to those in mainstream education (26%). Similarly, a study by the Audit Commission (1996) found that 42% of young people who offend sentenced in youth court had been excluded from school.

Engagement with education

A young person's perception of school can also be related to the risk of offending. The *Youth Lifestyles Survey* in 2000 found that boys aged 12–16 years who did not like school were three times as likely to be an offender (31%) than those who liked school (9%). Similarly, girls of this age who did not like school were four times as likely to offend (20% compared to 5%) (Flood-Page et al, 2000).

The curriculum has a considerable influence on how young people experience school. Research with young people found that young people may be disengaged if they constantly find themselves failing within a curriculum they have difficulty accessing (YJB, 2006b). This may not necessarily be linked to low academic ability.

In particular, research with young people finds that some young people (possibly, but not necessarily, of low academic ability) constantly find themselves failing with a curriculum that they cannot access (Spielhofer, 2003; Farrington, 1996; Golden et al, 2002). This may be worsened by teaching methodologies that fail to maintain their interest or connect with their learning styles (Spielhofer, 2003; Farrington, 1996; Golden et al, 2002). Those who have literacy problems that are not properly dealt with will also find the curriculum inaccessible and become disengaged (Parsons et al, 2002).

The ability of pupils to access the curriculum and/or the way it is taught, as well as their increasingly hostile attitudes towards learning in the school, inevitably leads to poor attainment at the age of 16 (Payne, 2001). The Youth Cohort Study shows that there is a strong correlation between attainment at 16 and staying on at 16 (Payne, 2001), and it is not surprising that young people who say that they had a bad experience at school are also less likely to stay on in education or training after the age of 16 (Rennison, 2005; Legard, 2001). Learning styles and overcoming problems with literacy are dealt with further in the 'Communication' chapter.

Educational experience as a risk factor

A controversial area of research is the potential that school may have a direct or indirect effect on increasing the risk factors or strengthening the resilience of young people to offend. These are related to factors such as school ethos, leadership, curriculum or disciplinary policy, which may increase the risk of young people being involved in crime (YJB, 2006b).

The prevalence of offending by pupils varies widely between secondary schools, but it is not clear how far schools themselves have an effect on delinquency or whether it is simply that troublesome children tend to go to high delinquency-rate schools (Farrington, 1996; Graham, 1998). For example, the Cambridge study in Delinquency (Farringdon, 2006) found that the boys rated most troublesome between the ages of 8 and 10 tended to go on to secondary schools with dramatically higher rates of offending than the least troublesome boys. However, if a young person at risk of offending attends a school that has poor behaviour management, poor relationships between teachers and pupils and a weak strategy to tackle bullying, then there is some evidence that the risk of offending can increase (Communities that Care, 2005).

Schools with higher delinquency rates have been characterised by high levels of distrust between pupils and teachers, low commitment to school by pupils and unclear or inconsistent rules (Home Office, 2004). Some research studies have explored the extent to which pupil delinquency rates reflect school influences, although it is difficult to separate differences in pupil intake, which themselves may be linked to increased risk of offending (such as family background), from pupil outcome (Home Office, 2004). This link between school experience and offending is an area requiring further research. It is known, however, that schools can do a lot to increase the protective factors through dealing with the associated causes, such as truancy, giving young people a sense of achievement or creating an environment that promotes pro-social skills (Home Office, 2004).

This was explored in the classic work on the effect of secondary schools on children (Rutter et al, 1979). The authors had noted substantial differences between London secondary schools in pupil outcomes or performance, namely attendance, pupil behaviour, examination success and delinquency. These differences appeared only after transfer to secondary school. In other words, these differences were not a continuation of existing patterns in primary school. This implied that the pupils' experience of secondary school in particular had played a part in shaping their development. They explored the extent to which schools' process variables, such as physical features (e.g. size of the building or gender intake of pupils); social organisation (e.g. academic emphasis or rewards and punishments) or ecological variables (e.g. resource allocation or educational ideologies) had an impact on pupil outcome. The research found that differences in pupil outcome could be linked to factors such as academic emphasis, teachers' actions in lessons, availability of incentives and rewards, good conditions for pupils and the extent to which pupils could take responsibility. All these factors were said to be open to modification rather than being fixed by external constraints. Although it was acknowledged that school was one of several factors associated with pupil outcome, such as family background or personal characteristics, school variables were still found to be important, even when these other factors were controlled.

In a review of research about the causes of delinquency and the role of the school in its prevention, Gottfredson (2001) also found evidence supporting an association between delinquent involvement, exclusion, truancy, satisfaction with school and cognitive skills with the school experience. The impact of school was said to persist when other factors (such as individual demographics) were similar. In summarising the schools' effect research, Gottfredson noted the following factors and their link to educational achievement and engagement:

- demographics and ability composition
- community context
- parental involvement
- school admin management
- communal social organisation
- organisation of work
- problem behaviours.

These were said to be interrelated and to have an effect on the engagement with school and educational achievement.

Experience of custody and the link with education

Stephenson (2007) shows that those young people on Dentention and Training Orders (DTOs) tend to be more detached from education than those on community-based orders – the higher up the offending tariff, the more detached. Custody appears to have three innate weaknesses that diminish protective factors and increase risks (Stephenson, 2007).

- It curtails decision-making and planning skills in those who require them the most.
- Learning is provided in such an abnormal environment that the subsequent application of this learning in the community is extremely limited.

- The removal of young people who have only a tenuous attachment to formal education (even if only a pupil referral unit with part-time provision) causes further dislocation for a young person, their parents/carer and the relevant professionals, as returning to provision is not guaranteed. The Education (Pupil Registration – Amendment) Regulations (1997) enable head teachers to remove young people from the school roll on receiving a custodial sentence. Despite subsequent amendments to the regulations (2006), there remains wide variation in interpretation locally.

Assessment

The purpose of assessment

A structured and consistent assessment process is linked to the YJB's objective to prevent offending by young people and children. Thus, the purpose of the assessment is to ensure that accurate decisions have been made regarding the young person's needs, and also to inform the planning of interventions and supervision to address these needs (Roberts cited in McGuire, 1995a). A thorough assessment is also important in identifying the degree to which the young person poses a risk to the community (Baker, 2003).

Asset, the main assessment tool used within the youth justice system, begins a cycle of assessment, planning and review, leading to an individual learning plan (ILP). The next stages are completed by other practitioners. These might include the following assessments:

- **The initial assessment**
  This identifies the learner's level and placement in the right learning programme. For literacy and numeracy, this means identifying levels against the National Curriculum for English and Maths for those of statutory school age, or the Adult Literacy and Numeracy Core Curriculum for those over 16. In custodial settings, young people are expected to undertake initial assessment on entry to custody (although the Learning Skills Council have only specified that the screening and diagnostic assessments are appropriate to meet individual learner needs, the PLUS assessment tool is typically used).
- **diagnostic assessment:** helps to pinpoint the young person's strengths and weaknesses in a particular area (e.g. literacy) and helps to set targets. It leads to a detailed personal profile and provides the basis for the ILP.
- **formative assessment ('assessment for learning'):** takes place regularly to review progress against the learning plan. Learners need to know where they are in their learning, where they are going and how to get there.
- **summative assessment ('assessment of learning'):** takes place at the end of learning and gives feedback on achievements.

Where a level of need is identified through the assessment process, but there is no evidence of full diagnostic assessment to support the identification, referral for specialist assessment should be considered. There should be a clear, consistently applied framework for referral for further assessment.

Requirements

The Green Paper *Every Child Matters* (DfES 2003) and its subsequent debates prompted a revision of assessment practices to ensure that relevant agencies have built up a full picture of concerns or risks of young people. As part of this, it was emphasised how important it was that young people received a standardised and co-ordinated assessment that can be used across different agencies to identify risk factors.

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) was introduced as part of the *Every Child Matters* agenda with the aim of ensuring that information follows the young person through their interactions with different services. It represents a standardised approach to the assessment of a young person's needs, and how these needs should be met, which can be used by practitioners across children's services (YJB, 2006d). The introduction of CAF has had an impact on youth justice practice in assessment and planning interventions. CAF provides a holistic assessment of a young person's needs and strengths, but does not focus on offending behaviour, and therefore does not provide a detailed analysis for planning interventions or writing pre-sentence or referral reports. *Asset* and *Onset* are still used in these instances (YJB, 2006d).

As the main assessment tool used for all young people who offend, *Asset* provides a structured framework for assessment. Its main function is to assess the elements of criminogenic risk and protective factors to ensure that they are taken into account when planning the intervention (YJB, 2003b). *Asset* explores the factors linked to the offending behaviour and key influences to the offences. It includes both static factors (such as criminal history) and dynamic factors (such as family circumstances, lifestyle or drug and alcohol related concerns). At the end of the assessment, practitioners are asked to rate the extent to which these sections are associated with the likelihood of further offending (YJB, 2003b).

Onset is used within YJB's prevention programmes for those young people who are at risk of offending, such as Youth Inclusion Programmes (YIPs) or Youth Inclusion Support Panels (YISPs). It is a referral and assessment tool that identifies risk factors and considers whether a young person would benefit from early intervention.

By the end of 2008, a national information sharing index will be in operation, containing basic details of all children in England up to the age of 18. This will enable earlier identification of needs and earlier, more effective action to address these needs by providing a tool for practitioners to identify who else is involved with, or has a concern about, each young person. It will be an important tool to encourage better communication and closer working between practitioners in different agencies (YJB, 2006c).

Assessment of young people on Detention and Training Orders

Performance data for March to December 2005 indicated that *Asset* was completed in 96% of cases where a young person was sentenced to be supervised in the community and in 97% of DTO cases (YJB, 2006a).

For identification of educational needs, The Offender's Learning Journey for Young People recommends that young people on DTOs should be assessed at the beginning of their sentence, on transition to the community and at the end of their sentence (DfES, 2004).

Assessment of young people on secure remand

For children sentenced to or remanded in custody, *Asset* is completed to identify concerns such as a young person's risk of self-harm, substance misuse and generally assess their ability to cope in a YOI or other custodial establishment. They are then placed in an establishment that best suits their needs, whether it is a young offender institution (YOI), secure training centre (STC) or secure children's home[1].

[1] See http://www.yjb.gov.uk/en-gb/yjs/Custody/PlacingChildrenandYoungPeopleinCustody.

The review process

For both custodial and community settings, practitioners need to regularly review the assessment of the young person to ensure that the assessment is responsive to changing individual needs and risks. A young person's life can be particularly chaotic and changeable. Factors relating to family or community may suddenly change their needs, either creating or eliminating barriers to their educational achievement (Golden, 2002). Therefore the assessment should be an ongoing process that involves the young person and, where appropriate, the young person's parents/carer.

Another key part of the review progress is monitoring the young person's progress. It is also recommended that young people's progress is accredited in small steps. This also means that young people need to be re-set new targets as they achieve.

It is also of paramount importance that individual ILPs are fully integrated with the sentence planning process.

Quality of assessment

The assessment in YOTs

Since the assessment informs the intervention programme for the young person, the reliability of the information provided in the assessment is important.

Asset is the product of the assessment of the young person and information provided from other agencies. In terms of the reliability of *Asset* as an assessment tool, practitioners have raised concerns regarding the subjective nature of *Asset* and the potential for difference in *Asset* ratings across teams or professional background, and also the risk of not always identifying the criminogenic concerns (Baker, 2003). For example, poor literacy and numeracy is not always identified by practitioners (Baker, 2003). For those entering custody, comparisons between the *Asset* rating on numeracy and literacy and data from the initial assessment on literacy and numeracy undertaken in custody shows that those completing *Asset* are often unaware of the difficulties with literacy and numeracy (YJB, 2006b). This is also reflected in the disparity with the views of the young people themselves in the 'What Do YOU Think?' sections (Baker, 2003).

A key component of ensuring that *Asset* is reliable as an assessment tool is the level of completion. *Asset* is not always thoroughly completed. In the evaluation of *Asset* commissioned by the YJB, it was found that key elements of the assessment, such as criminal history, statutory education or physical health, were not fully completed (Baker, 2003). The evidence boxes were also completed less frequently and this was identified as a concern since *Asset* should be used as an evidence-based assessment tool (Baker, 2003).

However, the evaluation did find consistency in the assessments. Of the nine comparison YOTs in the study, *Asset* was completed consistently, although two YOTs had different scores at Final Warning stage and two at post-sentence stage. YOTs in the study showed a greater consistency between the different professional groups and between teams within the same YOT and amongst individual practitioners (Baker, 2003).

The assessment in the secure estate

An audit of ETE provided in secure facilities by Ecotec in 2001 and an inspection by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons in 2000/01 found that assessment was one of the many

elements that were unsatisfactory. Overall, the review found that although the assessment processes should form the basis of all interventions with young people, the exercise was disjointed and limited, as education and training were not integral parts of the process (Ecotec, 2001, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 2000/01). It was said that the majority of education departments in YOIs have little input into the sentence planning process carried about by casework or sentence planning teams, and therefore, the work they complete with young people is not always included in the planning or review processes. Additionally, it was found that the education departments do not always receive up-to-date information about the young people they are working with. For example, although the education and training information on *Asset* is relevant to education and training departments, in nearly all YOIs the assessment is held by the casework team and not passed to the relevant departments (Ecotec, 2001). Similarly, individual education plans and SEN statements were found to be absent; the authors estimated that half of the custodial population have special educational needs and less than 1% had received their statement (Ecotec, 2001). It is important that this issue is addressed to ensure education and training is incorporated fully into the assessment and planning processes. Currently, the inclusion of an ILP into eAsset is being developed and rolled-out in 2008 and 2009, and this should work to address this issue.

Collecting information for the education, training and employment sections of *Asset*

As outlined in the Introduction, young people within the youth justice system are more likely than the rest of the population to have multiple characteristics that place them at risk of offending. This therefore means that they are likely to have been assessed a number of times and have different plans by other agencies. If up to date, these will therefore have a considerable amount of useful information that should be taken into account when completing *Asset*. For example, the young person may:

- have special educational needs, leading to an ILP (see the 'Communication' chapter)
- be at risk of leaving education and training at 16–18, and therefore have an Individual Careers Plan[2]
- be 'looked-after', and have a Personal Education Plan
- have been excluded from school, and therefore have an Individual Reintegration Plan
- already have been identified as at risk of offending, and therefore have an intervention plan.

As detailed, despite there being a need to present full and accurate information as part of the assessment, *Asset* is not always thoroughly completed. The assessment process is only effective if practitioners in other agencies and educational institutions provide YOTs with accurate and up-to-date information. However, YOTs often report that they receive poor information about the educational situation of young people, hampering the effective assessment of need, planning and review (YJB 2006b). In interviewing YOT staff as part of an evaluation of the validity of *Asset*, sharing information across different agencies was said to hinder the comprehensiveness of the assessment, where

[2] This will change if reforms of the DfES Green Paper *Raising Expectations: Staying in Education and Training Post-16* (DfES, 2007) are implemented and young people will be obliged to continue in full-time education or employment with formal training until the age of 18.

certain sections were less detailed than others (Baker, 2003). For example, another analysis of *Asset* for the YJB found that there were a significant proportion of young people on the database whose SEN status was not known (YJB, 2006b). It is therefore acknowledged that there is variation in the quality and quantity of information about a young person across different agencies.

Moreover, a recent report has also suggested that although YOIs are most likely to keep statistics on prisoners with learning disabilities and/or disabilities, the number doing so was only 41% (Talbot, 2007). This would suggest further gaps in information.

Individual needs

Once a young person's needs have been identified in the assessment, an ILP should be drawn up. An ILP sets out the young person's existing skills and knowledge and establishes goals or milestones that can relate to the educational issues identified in the assessment. The ILP therefore monitors a young person's progress in literacy, numeracy and language. The young person is involved in developing the ILP, and therefore has a sense of ownership over the plan. Effective plans are based on principles that can be found in the ETE tutor pack and should be fully integrated into the planning process, particularly the sentence plan. The ILP is common practice in the secure estate and also considered good practice elsewhere in the youth justice system.

Multiple needs

As described in the previous chapters, young people who offend are more likely than the general youth population to have multiple and associated needs. For example, a number of evaluations of ETE programmes (Golden, 2002; Spielhofer, 2003) show that these young people often have:

- low self-esteem
- behavioural or emotional difficulties – some of the young people could be violent, angry and antagonistic
- mental health difficulties, for example engaging in 'self-harm' and talking about suicide
- poor social skills – some young people were said to have poor social skills and some were 'shy' or 'withdrawn'.

This demonstrates that education, training and employment cannot be viewed in isolation from other matters in a young person's life, such as neighbourhood and family issues, lifestyle, attitudes to offending, and motivation to change (Cooper et al, 2005). It is therefore important that interventions are designed to target the multiple needs of a young person to have an impact on their risk of reoffending. Morris et al (1999) argued that projects need to prioritise major life issues (such as housing, health and welfare) and focus on building self-esteem, confidence and motivation before addressing education and employment issues. Indeed, the YOT supervising officer will work with the secure establishment to draw up a training plan, which, like other interventions, should focus on the factors that contributed to the young person's offending and seek to address the young person's education, health and accommodation needs (Connexions and YJB, 2001). An evaluation of Entry to Employment by the Youth Justice Trust argued that many young people who offend are unable to manage themselves, budget, communicate and behave appropriately (Foster, 2006).

Literacy, language and numeracy

The extent of poor literacy and numeracy

An analysis of the literacy and numeracy levels of young people in custody with an average age of 17 showed that half had standards below those of an 11-year-old and

over a quarter had numeracy levels equivalent to that of an average 7-year-old (YJB, 2003a). Similarly, 6% of children in England and nearly 1 in 10 boys go into secondary school with levels of literacy below Level 3 (DCSF, 2007). Most are from socially-disadvantaged environments (KPMG Foundation, 2006). As noted earlier, young people who offend have far worse literacy and numeracy than young people in general. The statistics below outline the link between numeracy and literacy levels, and offending.

- An analysis of the literacy and numeracy levels of juveniles in custody with an average age of 17 showed half had standards below those of an 11-year-old and over a quarter had numeracy levels equivalent to that of an average 7-year-old (YJB, 2003a).
- The average reading age of young people starting ISSPs is five years below their actual age and over half of the young people entering custody (average age 17) have a reading age below the level of an average 11-year-old (YJB, 2006b).
- An assessment of young people who enter custody of compulsory school age showed that about half had literacy and numeracy levels expected of an 11-year-old, while 31% had literacy levels at or below that of a 7-year-old, and 40% had numeracy skill levels at or below that of a 7-year-old (Ecotec Research and Consulting, 2001).
- A study by Rutter (1979) found that between one-quarter and one-third of 10-year-olds with anti-social behaviour had a specific reading difficulty (a reading age two or more years below their chronological age).

Studies show that anywhere between 20% and 50% of young people who offend could be dyslexic, compared to 10% in the wider population (British Dyslexia Association, 2004, The Dyslexia Institute, 2005). Further, the more serious the offence or the greater the number of offences, the more likely it was that the young person would have been diagnosed with dyslexia (British Dyslexia Association, 2004; The Dyslexia Institute, 2005). However, other work has questioned the link between offending and dyslexia. Rice's (1999) Prison Reading Survey found no supporting evidence for the belief that dyslexia is more common in prisons than the general population, or that dyslexia adds to the risk of being sent to prison.

A recent survey of YOT managers argued that a lack of access to suitable education, training and employment hinders young people's participation in ETE (YJB, 2006b). A range of solutions to this problem has been offered, but it was argued that any such solutions would need to be supported by better and more systematic diagnosis of young people's learning needs, including screening for dyslexia (YJB, 2006b).

The relationship between literacy, disaffection and offending

It has long been established that reading ability is a key indicator of overall achievement and future life chances. Studies have shown that poor reading ability quickly increases the divisions between children who achieve at school and those who fail. For example, children who can read well are in a far stronger position to tackle the whole curriculum with confidence, while those who struggle with reading and writing fall further behind their more literate peers (Crime Concern, 1998). Consequently these young people are far more likely to have low attainment at schools, which, as described earlier, is associated with an increased propensity to offend. Low reading and writing ability is also linked to the level of attachment to school, which is also linked to an increased likelihood of offending. It is little surprise that disaffected young people say they dislike reading and writing activities (Spielhofer, 2006; Golden, 2002). A number of studies

have shown that young people who are disaffected with school have poor literacy. For example, Mils (2006) demonstrated the increased incidence of literacy difficulties in children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, even when factors such as home background and cognitive ability are controlled. Similarly, Gross and McChrystal (2001, cited in KPMG Foundation, 2006) found that more than half of permanently excluded pupils in their survey were in the lowest 2% of the population for literacy and/or numeracy attainment. Likewise, Galloway (1985, cited in KPMG Foundation, 2006) found that 76% of the permanently excluded pupils in his study were two or more years behind their peers in reading.

Poor literacy and numeracy also reduces their chances of employment, which is linked to an increased likelihood of reoffending. For example, the Basic Skills pathfinder for adults in the probation service found that a third of their sample of 10,000 offenders had basic skills level below Level 1, while in the population as a whole, 20% have serious literacy difficulties and 30–50% have serious numeracy difficulties (McMahon et al, 2004). Those screened as having basic skills needs were more likely to be unemployed (51%) and without qualifications than those in the sample that did not have basic skills needs. They were also more likely to have alcohol or drug abuse problems (McMahon et al, 2004).

Learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Children and young people entering the youth justice system may have a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These include autism, Aspergers Syndrome, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), young people with learning difficulties as well as others. These may or may not have been identified properly, as discussed below.

Special educational needs

As noted earlier an analysis of data from *Asset* in 2003 found that 25% of young people on the database had special needs identified, and just over 60% of those had a statement of special educational needs (SEN) (YJB, 2003a). This may be an underestimate. A more recent analysis of *Asset* has shown that the SEN status of a significant proportion of young people going through the youth justice system is unknown (YJB, 2006b). Potentially, this means that a large number of young people are passing through the youth justice system with SEN that have not been identified through the assessment. The research suggests three possible reasons for this.

- A lack of expertise among YOT staff in understanding SEN and what should be recorded. An audit of secure establishments in 2001 found that out of 525 *Asset* forms collected and analysed, one quarter of the assessments recorded that they did not know whether SEN had been identified, let alone what level (Ecotec Research and Consulting, 2001).
- Detachment of young people from mainstream education, thereby preventing the statementing process being commenced or continued (Ecotec Research and Consulting, 2001).
- Once young people are over school-leaving age, YOT staff do not record SEN, as special provision for those over school-leaving age is unlikely to be made (Ecotec Research and Consulting, 2001).

Barriers to finding suitable provision

Many young people who offend have become disengaged with employment and education, as referenced in previous parts of this document. Thus, these young people may find it hard to engage consistently with ETE, making access to mainstream provision somewhat difficult. For example, *Barriers to Engagement* (YJB 2006b) noted that YOTs have to overcome particular challenges in re-engaging young people in ETE. Key barriers were identified as follows:

- a lack of support and specialist help for young people with identified SEN
- a lack of willingness by educationalists to tackle the causes of behaviour problems
- young people with SEN present further difficulties in terms of accessing to ETE; mainstream provision may not provide the necessary provision for them
- a lack of psychiatric support for young people
- behaviour support is used as a 'dumping ground' for problem pupils
- a lack of willingness in both education and training organisations to deal with challenging issues, such as homelessness, mental health or parenting, which may undermine young people's capacity to engage with education.

Other educational considerations

Education for looked-after children

There are a disproportionate number of looked-after children within the criminal justice system. They are three times more likely to be involved in offending than the general population, and are also more likely to receive a custodial sentence (Nacro, 2003).

Young people in care are likely to have experienced a range of disadvantages before entering the system (YJB, 2006b). In particular, looked-after children are more likely to leave school with no qualifications and become unemployed. They are also much more likely to be detached from education (Haywood, 2004). This is reflected in their educational attainment. In 2005, only 11% of children in care attained five GCSEs grade A*–C compared with 56% of all children (DfES, 2006b). The low educational attachment and attainment can be linked to other social factors, such as their often high mobility, frequent change of carer or lack of constancy of social worker, notwithstanding the reasons they are under local authority care (YJB, 2006b). All these factors combined disrupt the education of looked-after young people and increase the likelihood of their offending.

The majority of young people come into the care system as a consequence of abuse, neglect or family breakdown. Some young people come into care because they have already been involved in offending behaviour. They might be remanded by a youth court, or they might enter care because their parent acknowledges that the child is beyond their control and requires the support of social services (Nacro, 2003).

The impact of experiences of both custody and care may include consequent difficulties in gaining access to education and training. High mobility, frequent change of carer and lack of constant nominated social worker not only increases their exposure to crime risk-factors (lack of parental care/social bonding), but also disrupts their education (YJB, 2006b).

Looked-after children are also more likely to have other needs. For example, 27% of children in care have a statement of SEN, which is known to be correlated with lower educational attainment, compared to just 3% of all children (DfES, 2006a).

Looking at the secure estate more generally, the Annual Report of Education in Secure Setting conducted by Ofsted (2006) has shown that arrangements for the care and progress of young people about to leave custody are not good enough. It is argued that careers education and guidance are poor. There also seems to be a lack of appropriate training and education for these young people once they have left the secure establishment.

However, the report does conclude that in most secure settings inspected, leadership and management have steadily improved. It is said that senior managers are more focused on improving the quality of provision. It will be important that links between custody and the community are developed and improved to make sure opportunities for looked-after young people are maximised.

As 'corporate parent', the local authority should place children in care in the most suitable school in the area. The October 2006 Green Paper on children in care, *Care Matters: Transforming the Lives of Children and Young People in Care*, argues that many children in care currently have a poor experience of school:

> *…they tend to be in lower performing schools, be moved round between schools too often, and receive insufficient support within school to flourish.*
>
> (DfES, 2006a:7)

Many of the factors that lead to a looked-after child moving from educational provider to provider are beyond the control of a YOT and local authority, particularly if the child is a young person who offends. However, the local authority can play a role in reducing movement by planning and offering suitable provision for such young people.

Finding the most appropriate educational setting for a looked-after child during the school year has been challenging in the past, and many end up in under subscribed schools, which are not necessarily best able to meet their needs. The Green Paper proposes providing local authorities with the power to direct schools to admit children in care, even where the school is fully subscribed. Local authorities were also encouraged to place children in care in the top performing schools in their area whenever they need to move school.

The Green Paper also proposes a number of other changes to help meet the educational needs of children in care and reduce the amount of times they change educational provider and improve educational provision for this group:

- Create a presumption that children in care should not move schools in years 10–11, unless it is clearly in their best interests.
- Enhance the entitlement to free school transport to ensure that where children do move placement, they do not necessarily also need to change school.
- Provide better support in school to prevent exclusions of children in care.
- Appoint a 'virtual head teacher' in every local area responsible for driving up the performance of schools in relation to children in care. He/she would work directly with schools and alongside School Improvement Partners to drive up standards of education for children in care as though they attended a single 'virtual school'.

- Ensure a dedicated budget for each social worker to spend on improving the educational experience of every child in care.
- In schools, place the Designated Teacher for Children in Care on a statutory footing, setting out clearly what their role and functions must be.

Statutory arrangements for looked-after children

Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of the children they look after, wherever they are placed. The strategic and day-to-day actions which local authorities should take are described in *Statutory Guidance on the Duty on Local Authorities to Promote the Educational Achievement of Looked-after Children.*

For school governors and senior managers, *Supporting Looked After Learners – A Practical Guide for School Governors* (DfES, 2006b) provides specific guidance for different aspects of support for looked-after children, such as record keeping, raising achievement and pastoral care.

Ethnicity, education and crime

Black and Black British young people are over represented in the youth justice system, while Asian/Asian British young people are under-represented. According to recent data, just over 85% of people entering the youth justice system in 2005/6 were White, with just over 3% Asian and just under 6% Black (YJB, 2006b and 2006c). Census data for 2001 show the UK population as a whole comprised 92% White, 4% Asian and 2% Black.

While the risk and protective factors described are consistent across different ethnicities, there is evidence that there are differences in their prevalence (YJB, 2006c). In education in particular, research suggests that young people from ethnic minority backgrounds have a lower educational attainment, are more likely to be categorised as being emotionally or behaviourally disturbed and more likely to be excluded than their White peers. Attainment is a particularly important issue, where research has found that Indian, Chinese, White/Asian and Irish pupils are more likely to gain five or more A*–C GCSEs compared to other ethnic groups (DfES, 2005b). Gypsy/Roma pupils, Travellers of Irish Heritage, Black Caribbean and White/Black Caribbean pupils are amongst the lower achieving pupils at Key Stage 4 (DfES, 2005b).

The reason behind the variation between ethnic groups is unclear, however there are a number of factors that are likely to interact and influence this disparity. Factors such as deprivation, local education authority variation, cultural differences or teacher perceptions were said to have an influence (DfES, 2005b).

Addressing the multiple needs of these groups is important in engaging them in education. Another DfES publication (2006c) made some recommendations in relation to addressing the underachievement of different ethnic groups. For example, it was recommended the cognitive and learning needs of travellers in particular are addressed through developing positive curricular and teaching approaches that enhance their learning and reduce disaffection (DfES, 2006c). Similarly, the report recommended consideration to planning of resources, at a national or regional level to meet the needs of those groups characterised by an over-representation of SEN (DfES, 2006c).

Communication

Communication with the young person

Building relationships that support change

It is often challenging to initially engage with a young person who offends or young person at risk. Young people are often 'wary' and 'suspicious' of adults in positions of authority, as well as adults on programmes they have been placed in. This is sometimes because of 'the experience they have had at school or they've had with adults in their lives' or because 'they've been let down so many times in the past' (Golden, 2002).

The interpersonal skills of any practitioner who works with young people who offend are therefore essential in order to build trust and confidence (Communities that Care, 2005). It is important that practitioners convey empathy, respect, and warmth to the young people they work with. At appropriate times, they should be prepared to sit and listen in a non-judgemental way (Golden, 2002; Sarno, 2000; Whyte, 2004). At other times, they need to encourage young people to take responsibility for their own actions (Dearling, 2002). They should also be careful to use their authority appropriately and model the sort of 'pro-social' behaviour expected from young people (McNeill, 2005; Dearling, 2002).

Engaging young people in planning

Young people are more engaged when they are involved in the planning, target setting, and assessment. This gives them a sense of ownership and can help build trust (Golden, 2002; Marken, 2001; Dearling, 2002). It is also easier to identify provision that will motivate a young person to participate in education or training if they are asked what would be of most interest (Foster, 2006).

When provision is being planned or arranged for them, young people are keen to know what sort of people the provision is for, and what they can expect to gain from it. They can also be anxious about mixing with young people from different areas, mixing with people who are more 'streetwise' or 'harder or tougher' than they are. Accompanying young people to their initial visit to a new provider can therefore be very effective in ensuring that they participate (Morgan Harris Burrows, 2003).

Communication during assessments

As described in previous sections, the assessment stage is crucial in planning an effective intervention programme. The assessment is an ongoing process and many young people who offend have already been assessed a number of times throughout their order. This is something that they may become weary of (Spielhofer, 2003; Halsey, 2006), and may result in them being disengaged through the interview. It is important to keep this in mind throughout the assessment process and consider ways to effectively engage the young person.

Similarly, when learning plans have been set, it is equally important to review the plan with the learners themselves to develop a sense of ownership and ensure it remains relevant and realistic (Fletcher, 1998).

Evidence of poor communication and collaboration

As part of the Every Child Matters agenda, developing a co-ordinated and coherent response to working with young people at risk has been established as a fundamental part of services for children. Communication between agencies is an important driver to achieve this. The evaluation of the Entry to Employment pilot found that poor communication and information flows between the YOI and YOT were a common theme that hampered the effectiveness of the programme (Foster, 2006). Likewise, *Barriers to Engagement* (YJB, 2006b) found that one of the single most important reasons for young people 'dropping out of the system' was because of poor communication and co-ordination of response between relevant agencies. This was particularly true for communications between secure establishments and YOTs. Custody staff reported that they would benefit from receiving more information on young people from YOTs when they arrived at the establishment. Many YOIs and LASCHs reported having to 'start from scratch' with their work with young people, and it was felt that YOTs could assist in providing more information and backup in the form of background information on young people (YJB, 2006b).

However, YOTs reported that they too have difficulty in accessing background information, and both agencies have difficulty accessing information from schools. There is recognition that data-sharing is a continuing issue for all agencies. A review for the Connexions service in England found it often took months for data-sharing protocols to be agreed, and attributed this to cultural differences and conflict over confidentiality issues (Connexions and YJB, 2001).

Further, the CAF developed out of the Every Child Matters agenda is key in delivering frontline services that are focused on the needs of young people. As has been described in earlier sections, this is a standardised approach to conducting assessments that can be used across children's services.

Electronic files

However, the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS)[3] in England will in future be introducing electronic systems that contain a record of the individual's existing skills, learning plan and achievements. This will accompany him/her throughout the length of the sentence and, so far as possible, provide smooth transition into mainstream programmes in the community. Some progress on this front has already been achieved, and a long-term solution is now in development. Action research indicates the introduction of OLASS in the three development regions is already reducing the incidence of repeat assessments (Halsey, 2006). Further, eAsset is the sentence management system for the secure estate for children and young people. This system uses the Asset assessment, as completed by YOTs for initial sentence planning. It allows information to be constantly updated and amended throughout a young person's stay in custody. eAsset has been developed and piloted and is in the process of being rolled-out across both HMPS and non-HMPS establishments. The process began in August 2007 and will conclude in March 2009. An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) module is being developed as part of the eAsset rollout.

[3] From 31 July 2006, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) assumed responsibility for offender learning and skills in England, including in YOIs through the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS).

Data-sharing protocols

Extent of protocols

An important component of effective communication between agencies is the development of data sharing protocols. In a survey of YOT managers in England and Wales, 87% had a protocol with Connexions or equivalent, 72% of whom said that the protocol was effective and 28% reported that it was partially effective (YJB, 2006b).

The extent and effectiveness of data sharing protocols seems to be weakest with local Learning and Skills Councils in England. When asked about the effectiveness of the YOT protocol or agreement with the local LSC, 36% reported having a protocol in place, while 54% had no protocol in place. Of the YOTs with a protocol in place, 39% of the managers reported that the protocol was effective, 54% reported that it was partially effective and 7% reported the protocol was ineffective (YJB, 2006b).

A much larger number of YOTs had a protocol with the local Connexions service or equivalent, with almost 90% of respondents reporting that a protocol was in place. Views on protocols with Connexions were most positive, with almost three-quarters of this group reporting that the protocol was effective (YJB, 2006b).

Data protection

Information sharing should be carried out in accordance with an information sharing protocols and should comply with the various legal rules governing this area. Information sharing must be proportionate to the legitimate objective pursued, and those requested to share personal information need to be confident that the highest standards, agreed in advance, will apply, and that the information will only be used for agreed and legitimate purposes.

Personal and Sensitive Personal Information-sharing on Children and Young People at Risk of Offending (YJB, 2005) is the primary source of information sharing guidance for youth justice practitioners, and encourages the development of multi-agency protocols on the exchange of personal data.

Looked-after children – communications with social services

Co-operation between YOTs and social services is particularly important when a child who is a YOT client enters the looked-after system or when a looked-after child becomes a YOT client. Nacro (2003) has highlighted areas of particular importance in relation to the use of information. These areas include making sure that case files are kept up to date and are properly documented. Sharing basic or more detailed information will help partner agencies to tailor services effectively to particular needs. Where a child is placed out of borough, the placing social services department should communicate with the host social services department[4] (Nacro, 2003).

The Home Office's study of looked-after children provided an example of formalised multi-agency work that led to a series of wider developments. In one area, a formal protocol had been developed to report offending in local authority care homes, involving police, social service and YOT inputs (Home Office, 2004). As well as

[4] Where children are placed outside their own local authority areas there is a legal requirement that the authority responsible for their care must inform the authority and other agencies in the areas where they are living (Arrangements for the *Placement of Children (General) Regulations 1991–5(1) (2) and (3)* and *Children Act (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2002*).

establishing an effective protocol, its development led to the establishment of shared understandings between the parties, the extension of the protocol to include restorative next steps, and the strengthening of links between each agency and with individual care homes (Home Office, 2004).

Brokering appropriate provision

The brokerage process consists of the following steps:

- assessing the needs of the young person
- planning with the young person how his/her needs can be met
- liaison with the relevant agencies/providers
- asking for the provision/service that is required
- advocating on behalf of the young person
- negotiating with the relevant provider/agency to provide the service/provision
- informing the young person and his/her parents/carer about the service/provision (YJB, 2004b).

McGuire's (1995b) principles highlight the types of provision that are more likely to meet the young person's individual needs. The following elements of provision have also been shown to be effective in keeping young people engaged in education and training and should be considered when brokering provision.

- **Induction/taster**
  A number of surveys have shown that taster days or induction can be effective in improving longer term attendance on any form of ETE programme (Spielhofer, 2003).
- **Speedy referral and entry to programmes**
  A high speed of referral and entry onto programmes can minimise the drop-out between raising the interest of a young person who offends and capitalising on that interest through participation (Taylor, 1999).
- **Duration**
  McGuire (1995b) argues that providing a programme of sufficient duration is important. Lipsey (1998b) also noted that longer treatment was positively associated with effectiveness for both non-institutionalised and institutionalised young people who offend.
- **Accreditation**
  The review of the literature indicates the importance of recognising the achievements of young people via nationally recognised or less formal certificates or qualifications (Spielhofer, 2006; Golden, 2002; Taylor, 1999; Communities that Care, 2005). However, it is important to respond to the participants' needs, and assessment is frequently used for other purposes than recognising achievement (Merton, 1999).
- **Providers**
  Programmes are best delivered by organisations with a good understanding and experience of dealing with the particular client group and a clear mission to support young people (Communities that Care, 2005).

- **The provision of a learning mentor**
  This has been shown to be one tool that helps to maintain engagement in education and training (Communities that Care, 2005, Hallam, 2005).

Potential barriers

There are a number of factors that act as potential barriers to this brokerage. First, young people on remand cannot be compelled to undertake education unless they are of statutory school age, but should be encouraged to do so. In custody, attendance can be linked to payment, thus facilitating greater engagement. Furthermore, both those under and over the statutory school age may thwart a placement by simply failing to attend.

The ideal placement may not always be available, or there may be a time delay. This could even mean that young people find themselves stuck in provision that is actually increasing the risk factors for offending (e.g. in schools that cannot cope with their behaviour or offer an appropriate curriculum).

YOTs need to broker provision that recognises not only the range of educational needs that a young person has (e.g. literacy, SEN) and preferred learning contexts (e.g. small group, adult relationships), but also other behavioural issues. An educational provider that offers an excellent vocational course to young people in an 'adult environment' might be of no benefit if it requires literacy levels that are too high for that young person and is unable cope with their challenging behaviour.

Forming strategic links and protocols

Managers should form strategic links with education providers and with local business and employers. This can be achieved through the 14–19 partnerships, making sure that all parties are aware of needs. Protocols/service level agreements with local education authorities, the Learning and Skills Council, secure learning centres, schools, further education colleges and training providers should be put in place.

Contacting these different institutions and agencies on a case-by-case basis in a reactive way can mean that appropriate provision is more difficult to arrange, particularly with schools (YJB, 2006b).

In Wales, managers should be actively involved in the local young people's plan to ensure that young people's needs are properly identified and addressed, and that mechanisms exist for their voices to be heard.

Determining the level and type of provision

YOTs can only broker provision from the available local providers. Local authorities must put in place an annual plan, which describes the nature and scale of offending by young people in their area and the programmes available to tackle it. Clearly ETE is part of this plan. Furthermore, for young people of statutory school age, there is also a legal obligation to ensure that these young people are placed in schools or other full-time provision. The local Learning and Skills Councils largely fund the education and training of those over statutory schools age.

Providing adequate and appropriate ETE provision for young people who offend therefore relies on joint planning between a number of organisations.

However, it is also clear that YOTs managers currently face a number of barriers that can only be resolved through multi-agency planning:

- there is not enough physical capacity[5]
  - lack of vocational courses, such as e2e (YJB, 2006b and 2006e; Cooper, 2005)
  - lack of suitable provision for the least able (YJB, 2006b)
  - Pupil referral units (PRUs) – only offer part-time placements or have inappropriate age groups (YJB, 2006b; Stephenson, 2007)
  - home tuition – insufficient tutors (YJB 2006b)
- a lack of placements with employers for those who are in a position to hold down a job (YJB, 2006b)
- capacity is sometimes of low quality or inappropriate (Cooper, 2005) – in particular, research has shown that it is particularly important that providers have the kind of staff who can cope with the particular needs and behaviour of young people who offend (Spielhofer, 2006, Kendall, 2005)
- some providers are resistant to taking or even keeping young people who offend (YJB, 2006b and 2006e; Foster, 2006).

In March 2005 the YJB and LSC committed to supporting young people who offend in learning and skills provision in line with provision for all young people aged 16–17. In general, this means there is clearly a need in many areas for local authorities and local Learning and Skills Councils/Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) to fund more vocational provision, more entry level and level 1 provision for young people, and more specialist provision (such as PRUs or home tuition).

The development of the cross-government Children's Trusts in England (through the Every Child Matters agenda) and Young People's Partnerships in Wales (Extending Entitlement agenda) should focus activity on improving outcomes for children, young people and their families. This should include improved access to mainstream services for young people who offend. Co-ordination of provision for 14–19-year-olds across all types of provider should also be improved by 14–19 Partnerships in England and Community Consortia for Education and Training in Wales. However, it is important that they receive accurate information on high-risk groups from YOTs, local Connexions services or equivalent and Careers Wales centres to enable them to plan for such provision.

Local area agreements for reducing truancy, increasing attendance and reducing exclusions should also help to ensure that there is a focus on engaging all young people in full-time education. The local focus on YOTs working more closely with improving behaviour and attendance initiatives should also support better access.

Certain administrative changes should also address some of the practices that have happened in the past. For example, from September 2006, a change in school registration meant that young people in the youth justice system might not necessarily lose their school place. From September 2007, local authorities must ensure suitable full-time education (whether at another school or elsewhere) from the sixth day of a permanent exclusion (HM Government, 2006).

[5] OLASS is responsible for commissioning appropriate services on a regional basis.

The DfES has also repeated guidance on appropriate use of 'study leave' for Year 11s and the legal position on 'informal' exclusions.

Joint working

Evidence from research on effective interventions shows that a diversity of practice is required to achieve the most successful outcomes. No professional group can claim a monopoly on effective outcomes. Recognition of respective skills and competencies, and the consequent better matching of different skills and experience is needed, as is co-operative working, in order to deliver the most appropriate programmes available (Roberts, 1995).

In the evaluation of the multi-agency Behaviour and Education Support Teams (BESTs), Halsey (2005) notes that the benefit of joint working is the ability to provide a holistic approach to the educational, health or social needs, and the sharing of skills and expertise to casework and interventions.

What makes an effective intervention?

There is ongoing debate as to what makes an effective intervention to prevent reoffending. The Audit Commission's report *Misspent Youth* (1996) recommended more investment in prevention of youth crime, and that prevention work should be targeted to areas with high levels of youth crime and also to those young people who are most at risk. This has also been echoed in research literature. For example, in McGuire and Priestley's (1995b) review of research into 'what works', risk classification was a key component in the design and delivery of preventative work, where more effective interventions were those that matched the young person's risk level with the intensity of the programme. In other words, those identified as high risk receive more intensive and directed intervention.

Where the purpose is to reduce reoffending, it is also important that the intervention targets the criminogenic needs of the young person. In other words, the needs associated with their offending behaviour rather than other needs that may not be related (McGuire and Priestley, 1995b).

These principles have been incorporated into intervention projects within youth justice. For example, the YIP is a prevention programme for 8–17-year-olds in England and Wales identified as being at high risk of offending or anti-social behaviour. As part of the programme, youth inclusion projects were set up in deprived neighbourhoods and targeted young people most at risk of offending (the 'top 50'). Being locally based was important for the YIP, both in terms of targeting the most deprived neighbourhoods and encouraging engagement by young people in the area (Morgan Harris Burrows, 2003). The young people were identified through a multi-agency approach (Morgan Harris Burrows, 2003).

Overall, the YIP aimed to tailor a programme of activities to the individual young person's particular risk factors. The dynamic programmes created through the YIP provided a mixture of one-to-one work and group activities to target individual needs. The findings from the first three years of the programme were positive. The *Evaluation of the Youth Inclusion Programme* (Morgan Harris Burrows, 2003) found that arrest rates for the 50 young people most at risk had been reduced by 65%. Within the top 50, 75% of those who had been arrested before joining the programme were arrested for fewer offences and 73% of those who had not been arrested before the programme were not arrested after their engagement with the YIP (Morgan Harris Burrows, 2003). In

terms of education specifically, of the 50 young people most at risk, the evaluation found that following engagement in a YIP, the rate of permanent exclusions from school was reduced by 27% and temporary exclusions by 12% (Morgan Harris Burrows, 2003).

Effective interventions, such as those used in the YIP, should also incorporate a range of approaches to meet the different learning styles of young people. The learning styles of young people who offend vary between requiring a didactic or instructive approach to a loose and unstructured mode (McGuire, 1995b). Therefore, a mixture of activities and approaches is likely to appeal to a young person at risk. This is discussed in more detail in the following section.

The importance of targeting the areas where youth crime is a concern, and the young people most at risk, is therefore key to interventions that successfully prevent reoffending. It is also vital that interventions target the criminogenic factors, and provide an integrated programme in doing so. This can also be applied to education programmes, in terms of targeting those most at risk and the particular factors associated with their lack of educational engagement, with the aim of increasing the protective features of education and helping to reduce the likelihood of further offending. This means that ETE placements are more successful when the provider is either able to cope with the behaviour of young people who have multiple needs that stretch beyond education and training (YJB, 2006b) or, as in the case of secure facilities, directly deal with their needs holistically.

Preventing at risk young people from offending

The evidence of the effectiveness of employment and vocational training programmes for young people at risk of offending all comes from the USA through evaluations of a variety of programmes with unfamiliar names in the United Kingdom (UK) – Job Corps, Jobstart, JTPA, Supported Work. We are restricted to these studies, as UK studies either do not track reoffending or are not experimental. The only UK-based programme that was shown to definitely have a positive impact on offending was an intensive residential training programme – Job Corps. Job Corps is an education and vocational training programme in which students learn a trade, earn a high school diploma and get help finding a job. The scheme also provides students with career counselling and transition support for up to 12 months after they finish the programme.

However, there was no evidence that short-term non-residential training programmes for at risk youth are effective (e.g. JobStart, evaluated by Cave (1993) or the JTPA, evaluated by Bloom et al, 1997). Likewise, there was no evidence that summer job or subsidised work programmes for at risk youth were effective at preventing offending (e.g. Supported Work evaluated by Piliavin, 1982, or Kansas City work evaluated by Ahlstrom and Havighurst, 1982).

Vocational programmes in colleges in the UK can also be popular with young people who are disaffected with learning, though it has been suggested that it is not necessarily the vocational element that proved popular, but rather the alternative teaching methods, the ‘adult environment’ and the small group sizes (Steedman 2004).

School climate/teaching styles/behaviour management

There is a considerable literature, largely stemming from quasi-experimental studies, on the effectiveness of putting in place strong behaviour management policies (Gottfredson, 1986; Bry, 1982 and Mayer, 1983). There is also evidence to show that training teachers in good classroom management can also be effective (Battistich,

1996), though this has only been classified as a 'promising' approach in preventing offending by some reviewers (Sherman, 1998).

There is also strong evidence on the effectiveness of teaching young people social/behavioural/reasoning skills in secondary school, in particular:

- social competency skills curricula (Weissberg, 1998)
- training or coaching in thinking skills for high risk youth, using behaviour modification techniques or rewards and punishments to reduce substance abuse (Bry, 1982; Lipsey, 1992; Lochman, 1984)
- training or coaching in thinking skills for high-risk youth using behaviour modification techniques (Lipsey, 1992)

However, UK schemes related to this, such as Safer School Partnerships (Bowles, 2005; Bhabra, 2004) or the Behaviour Improvement Programme (Hallam, 2005) have not been able to demonstrate a definite an impact on offending, largely because of methodological issues with the evaluations.

There is also a very considerable and positive literature demonstrating the effectiveness of programmes in primary schools that combine social/behavioural and reasoning training with improved home-school links (e.g. LIFT evaluated by Reid (2000), Good Behaviour Programme evaluated by Kellam et al (1994), PATHS evaluated by Kam et al (2004). In fact, the strongest evidence on preventing offending comes from programme run in pre-schools (e.g. High/Scope evaluated by Schweinhart et al, in 1993 and HeadStart, evaluated by Oden in 2000).

In a wide ranging review of 'what works', Sherman (1998) also considers the following to be promising:

- community-based after-school recreation programmes – this is largely based on evaluations of the Boys and Girls Clubs programmes in the USA in the early 1990s (Schinke et al, 1995)
- community-based mentoring (Tierney, 1995).

Sherman (1998) also found that there is no evidence that the following can reduce reoffending:

- individual counselling and peer counselling of students (Lipsey 1992; Gottfredson, 1987 and 1986)
- didactic drugs education delivered by the police, such as the DARE curriculum in the US (Ennett et al, 1994; Rosenbaum et al, 1994)
- didactic drug education programmes that focus on providing information which attempts to shock or use moral appeals (Botvin, 1990)
- school-based leisure-time enrichment programmes to prevent drug or alcohol misuse.

McGuire (1995a) has developed some key effective practice principles for interventions with young people. McGuire argues that interventions will work better in some contexts than in others. Research had shown that the impact of certain offender programmes was slightly greater for the more serious offenders than for the less serious (Lipsey, 1998a). This implies that intervention work should target the greatest number of young people who would benefit the most, such as those most at risk. Secondly, in delivering a

programme with the aim of reducing reoffending, activities should also focus on criminogenic factors that directly contribute to offending, rather than distant causes (Gendreau, 1991).

Programmes should be carefully structured with an explicit focus on enabling young people to acquire effective learning strategies. Any learning that takes place should do so in a context that is meaningful to the young person. A consequence of this is that learning programmes in the community fare better than those in custody.

Effective programmes should recognise the variety of offenders' problems and ensure that the methods employed are skills-orientated. Stated programme aims should be linked to the methods being used (Hollin, 1995), while programmes must be of sufficient intensity and duration to achieve their aims.

One element that McNeill et al (2005) feel has been left out of this framework is the quality of relationships between practitioners and young people who offend, and the importance of practitioners showing the behaviour that they expect from offenders (pro-social modelling).

Curriculum and the learning environment

Researchers have found that many disengaged young people are not necessarily disaffected with learning itself (though some clearly are) but with learning as it is provided and structured in school (Merton, 1999; Golden, 2002; Kendall et al, 2001). It has already been highlighted that some young people become disaffected because of the inaccessibility of the curriculum and the teaching styles used. This leads to poor relationships with teachers and a dislike of school. It is therefore interesting that the research shows that these groups can be switched back onto learning by techniques described in more detail in the 'Communications' chapter, which are seen by the young people as more relevant, meaningful and in more suitable learning environments.

There is also considerable literature largely led by Gottfredson in the USA, which shows that delinquency rates can be reduced if schools make the following changes, all of which relate strongly to the causes of disaffection discussed so far (Gottfredson, 1998):

- promote good behaviour management
    - persuade teachers to use rewards and sanctions to promote positive behaviour, rather than rely solely on punishment.
    - establish a clear and fair discipline policy that is adhered to by all staff.
- alter teaching methods so that they engage young people and encourage learning.
- provide pastoral care and improve pupil welfare.
- create home-school links.

An environment promoting pro-social behaviour

In the Young People's Social Attitudes survey, 87% of 12 to 15-year-olds reported bullying at their school, as did 68% of 16 to 19-year-olds. Those from disadvantaged backgrounds were more likely to report bullying at their schools (Park, 2004).

Many young people who offend either have histories of being bullied or have been bullied (YJB, 2006b; Flood-Page et al, 2000).There is considerable evidence that the

following can help to reduce offending (Gottfredson, 1998; Olweus, 2000; Olweus, 1993):

- whole-school anti-bullying policies
- playground design that minimises violence/bullying
- a clear school ethos that promotes good behaviour.

This is thought to be effective because it makes standards of behaviour clear (one of the key protective factors cited in the 'Assessment' chapter).

Mentoring

Mentoring is a relatively recent development in the UK and is a creative response to youth crime, largely based on the idea of youth development through establishing a one-to-one relationship. The Dalston Youth Programme was one of the first mentoring programmes set up in the UK, and has become highly influential in terms of the development of other mentoring schemes.

A review of mentoring noted that it is valuable in encouraging disaffected young people to embrace positive life goals (Newburn and Shiner, 2005). In terms of the effectiveness of mentoring in reducing reoffending, there has been little systematic evaluation in the UK. Newburn and Shiner (2005) found substantial changes relating to social inclusion in their evaluation of the Mentoring Plus programme. This study analysed research data collected from 10 Mentoring Plus programmes and 75 members. The programme was directed in particular at Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities and the staff profile reflected this with those of Black African/Caribbean origins well-represented. As well as higher levls of social inclusion, the evaluation also found some indication of the long-term benefits linked to social inclusion, such as a reduction in offendin. However, the authors noted that there was no evidence of this during the course of the study (Newburn and Shiner, 2005).

Mentoring schemes have also used been used with specific groups, such as ethnic minorities or disaffected young people. Many mentoring programmes that were set up for ethnic minority offenders between 2001 and 2004 were shown to be of limited success (St James-Roberts et al, 2005). Mentoring was seen to succeed in some respects, such as in reintegrating young people into education, training and the community (St James-Roberts et al, 2005). However, it is argued that mentoring is substantially more expensive than alternatives that produce similar benefits, such as education, training and employment schemes (St James-Roberts et al, 2005). The Keeping Young People Engaged (KYPE) partnership initiative funded mentors for young people who offend. Primarily, these personal advisors' main focus was working towards formal provision of job and course information, and assistance with education, training and employment applications (YJB, 2007). An evaluation of the initiative found that young people who received KYPE funded mentors had improved confidence and attitudes to education, training and employment knowledge (YJB, 2007). However, a notable difference between the education, training or employment engagement of young people with KYPE funded mentors, and young people without the mentors, was not found (YJB, 2007). Although the effectiveness of mentoring is yet to be clearly established, its potential is still acknowledged and mentoring programmes continue to be funded, despite largely being based on an 'act of faith' (Newburn, 2005).

The changing local landscape of provision in the community

The type of ETE provision available in local communities has changed considerably in the past five years, and will change even further with the ongoing 14–19 reforms in both England and Wales (DfES, 2005a). However, there is no single national model. The 14–19 reforms leave local authorities and local Learning and Skills Councils/Education ans Learning Wales (ELWa) to determine the most appropriate model of provision is for their local area. Hopefully, the reforms will lead to a more diverse range of ETE provision for young people aged 14 years and older, which will enable YOTs to broker more appropriate provision. In particular, the 14–19 reforms will increase the proportion of vocational courses, as well as courses for less able young people aged 14 years and older (e.g. entry level and level 1 courses).

Provision for 14–16-year-olds

At the current time, most 14–16-year-olds receive all their education in schools. While some schools so offer vocational options such as vocational GCSEs, once implemented, the 14–19 reforms will make a range of other vocational schemes available nationally. Such schemes include:

- young apprenticeships
- specialist diplomas
- general diplomas
- foundation level tier courses
- re-engagement programmes.

Alternatives to mainstream provision are likely to continue throughout the reforms, consisting of options such as pupil referral units, home tuition, alternative education initiatives and special schools for young people with severe SEN.

Provision for young people aged 16+ in England

Currently, the standard menu of programmes for young people aged 16 or older includes:

- Entry 2 Employment
- apprenticeships
- entry level or level 1 courses
- level 2 or 3 courses
- ‘A’ levels.

Some Learning and Skills Councils are also offering pre-Entry to Employment programmes. From 2007, 14–19 reform pilot areas will also offer diplomas at levels 1 to 3, foundation level tier courses and the International Baccalaureate. First teaching of the diploma was scheduled to commence in 2008, and become a national entitlement by 2013. The LSC also plans to pilot the diplomas in YOIs from 2008.

Currently young people can leave education and training at age 16. From 2013, all young people will have to be in some form of education and training (and this includes employment with training) up to the age of 18.

14–19 reforms in Wales

The 14–19 reforms in Wales are known under the title of Learning Pathways. This has very similar aims to the reforms in England and will likewise lead to a wider range of options for young people to take at ages 14–16 and 16–19, particularly work-based or vocational courses. The key difference is that Wales is not creating 14 diplomas linked to different industry sectors.

On the other hand, Wales has developed the Welsh Baccalaureate. This is an over-arching qualification for those aged 16 and older at level 2 and 3, which includes a set of compulsory 'core' units (including Key Skills; Wales, Europe and the World; Work-related Education; and Personal and Social Education) and a specific number of units from optional courses (taken from the usual menu of qualifications, such as BTECs or 'A' levels).

Enrichment and extra curricular activities

The Offender's Learning Journey for Juvenile Offenders (Learning and Skills Council et al, 2004) defines enrichment activities as 'structured activities that provide opportunities for young people to engage in active learning outside of the formal learning day in contexts they will find stimulating and motivating'. Enrichment activities are a fundamental part of the PLUS Strategy.

The key community programme for at risk young people or offenders in the community in the UK up to 2006 was Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP). The Green Paper *Youth Matters* (DfES, 2005c) requires local authorities to co-ordinate an equivalent local programme. The national evaluation of Positive Activities for Young People did demonstrate considerable improvements in young people's confidence, self-esteem and pro-social behaviour. However, enrichment activities on their own cannot be expected to prevent reoffending.

Employment as a protective factor

Promising research by Hurry and Moriarty (2004) found that even for young people under the age of 18, employment could be added to the list of protective factors. In *The Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development*, Farrington (1996) found that official crime rates were lower for young men (aged 14 to 18-and-a-half) during periods when they were employed than when they were unemployed. Interestingly, this difference was only observed for offences involving material gain (e.g. theft, burglary, robbery, fraud), while there was no effect of unemployment on other offences, such as violence, vandalism or drug use. It should be noted that those with a criminal record might have more difficulty finding employment.

On the other hand, Sampson et al (1993) argue that employment by itself does not reduce crime or increase social control – it is only stability, commitment and responsibility that may be associated with getting a job that has crime-reducing consequences. Gottfredson et al (1990) argue that the relationship is essentially spurious, a reflection of a common third factor, which they call the level of individual social control.

Roles and responsibilities of the YOT education specialist and the case worker

With such a large and important agenda it is vital that education specialists are used effectively. It is also crucial that education specialists do not act as generic case workers. The YJB has made extra provision for YOTs for ETE support[6].

Teaching and learning styles and contexts

There was considerable literature in the 1990s based on educational psychology and neuro-linguistic programming. This argued that a number of different 'learning styles' exist, and that different people learn more effectively when taught using some teaching techniques rather than others. Two models became particularly popular – the VAK model and the Howard Gardiner Model (Dunn and Dunn, 1993; Smith, 1996).

VAK and Howard Gardiner

The VAK model groups learning styles into three types: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. Put simply, this says that some people learn well when they are presented with images and diagrams (visual), some learn better through listening and reading (auditory) and others learn best through activities that include movement (kinaesthetic). Any particular learners might be particularly strong in one or two learning styles. Howard Gardiner simply broke these three learning styles down into eight types as follows:

1. visual
2. kinaesthetic
3. logical-mathematical
4. linguistic – learns well through reading and writing
5. interpersonal – learns through discussing with others
6. intropersonal – learns through introspection and reflection
7. musical – for example, learns through singing mnemonics
8. natural – learns through outdoor learning.

The 'learning styles' literature thus suggests that teachers should draw on teaching techniques that draw on a range of learning styles (Smith, 1996). However, in smaller group teaching or even coaching, one or two learning styles may predominate. It would then theoretically make sense to teach using methods that draw primarily on those learning styles.

The interest aroused by the learning styles literature led to an examination to see if young people who offend were more likely to have one particular learning style. It was hypothesised that they would be more likely to have a kinaesthetic learning style, and therefore prefer 'hands-on' vocational learning programmes. The subsequent research showed that the majority were in fact auditory learners (YJB, 2004a). This finding reflects the limited evidence available on young people in mainstream education.

Qualitative research also shows that although some offenders do prefer 'hands-on' (i.e. kinaesthetic) vocational programmes, this is not universal, and they are also often drawn

[6] More detail about the provision for YOTs for ETE support can be found on the YJB website at www.yjb.gov.uk/en-gb/practitioners/EducationTrainingAndEmployment/Practitioners.

to other elements of these programmes such as the small group sizes and adult environment (Golden et al, 2002; Steedman et al, 2004).

There is also an absence of evidence that the 'learning style' pedagogy does actually have an impact on attainment. In fact analysis shows that other simple best practice teaching techniques (such as using assessment to guide subsequent teaching) is far more effective (Coffield, 2004).

The importance of how learning is delivered

As discussed earlier, an important component of an effective intervention is being responsive to the different learning styles of young people (McGuire, 1995b). This is also outlined in the YJB's guidance on effective practice for in-service training, which explains that programmes work best when they are carefully structured and focused on equipping young people with effective learning strategies (YJB, 2004b). According to the guidance, it is important that staff ensure their teaching approach reflects the different learning strategies (YJB, 2004b).

Research into the preferred and most effective learning environments of young people who offend specifically has not been systematically undertaken. Research has tended to focus on disengaged young people and, as noted earlier, young people who offend are very likely to be disaffected from school. It is known that the teaching contexts listed below help to motivate disaffected young people to learn, many of whom will be at risk of offending or offenders. However, it is important to note that these recommendations are based on evidence from the general population of young people and not specifically young people who offend.

- Activities that are meaningful and relevant to them, and dovetail with their interests (Spielhofer et al, 2006). For many (but not all), this may include learning that is more 'hands-on' and practical (Spielhofer et al, 2006; Golden, 2002).
- Activities in which they can participate on a voluntary basis (Spielhofer et al, 2006; Marken, 2001; Golden, 2002).
- Fewer writing activities, though clearly this is in conflict with improving literacy (Spielhofer et al, 2006; Marken, 2001; Golden et al, 2002).
- A teaching environment with more adult-like relationships (Golden et al, 2002; Hurry et al, 2005).
- Courses that are pitched at their ability level and enable (or even accredit) success (Golden et al, 2002; Kendall, 2001).
- Smaller teaching groups (Golden, 2002; Spielhofer et al, 2003; Marken, 2001) and individually-tailored support (Spielhofer et al, 2006; Marken and Taylor, 2001).
- Creating ownership by involving young people in the choice, planning and improvement of activities. In this context, involving them in target setting is important (Golden, 2002).
- Programmes that are local – young people can be very territorial and refuse to go to a programme if it is in a different area, or involves mixing with young people from different areas (Golden et al, 2002).

Young people who offend are also very concerned about their status. The Evaluation of Entry to Employment Programme for Offenders therefore found that it is also important

not to create situations in a classroom or workplace that leave them open to ridicule or 'looking stupid' (Foster, 2006).

What matters, therefore, is the way in which the curriculum is delivered, rather than what is being delivered. A study by Kendall (2001) that focused on the delivery of the curriculum to disengaged young people in Scotland found, for example, that changing the context of learning was key to ensuring engagement. Merton and Parrot (1999) also found that the context, rather than the content, of learning that makes programmes feel different to mainstream schooling. Likewise, a review by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) argues that it is important to choose a learning programme that incorporates a balance of programme elements to engage and motivate young people (Morris et al, 1999).

Interventions to address low literacy levels

Mainstream community interventions

Children who are falling behind in their literacy and numeracy should be identified by their teachers in schools. Once identified, they may receive any combination of reading recovery schemes, including 'Reading Recovery', 'Catch-up literacy and numeracy' and Family Literacy Programmes.

The PLUS Strategy

The PLUS strategy aims to improve the literacy and numeracy levels of children or young people who have offended, or are at risk of offending, in order to prevent youth crime overall. It was part of the Department for Education and Skills' (now the Department for Children, Schools and Families) Skills for Life strategy, which was launched in 2001 and is now jointly funded by the YJB and the Arts Council England.

Since 2003, the PLUS strategy has developed a wide range of high quality arts enrichment activities and these, together with the provision of training, have enabled practitioners to work on a range of project 'models', which contribute to reducing offending and improving literacy and numeracy.

As is widely known, being disengaged from education, training and employment is one of the most significant risk factors for offending. This is particularly so for young people who are involved in serious/persistent offending, and their attainment levels – especially in literacy and numeracy – are several years behind their peers. In addition, there is often a major gap in education and training provision during the summer months.

The most significant of the project models, therefore, is the Summer Colleges. This is an intensive six-week programme targeting young people on ISSPs and those recently released from custody on Detention and Training Orders (DTOs). The 25-hour week has an arts-based curriculum in which literacy and numeracy skills are embedded. All young people work towards the Arts Award and explore career opportunities in the creative sector. Each college is a partnership between YOTs, arts organisations and literacy and numeracy tutors.

Because of the success of the Summer Colleges, the PLUS Strategy has recently entered a new phase, which makes the course materials available to anyone who wants them through the Basic Skills Agency. This allows all providers to help embed literacy and numeracy across the whole curriculum (a requirement emphasised in the Offender's Learning Journey for Juvenile Offenders [Learning and Skills Council, 2004]), but sees the YJB and Arts Council England focus upon an expansion of the Summer Colleges

and a new working relationship which builds upon and strengthens the strategic partnership already in place.

Young people in custody

Requirements for young people in custody

As stated in the OLASS Offender's Learning Journey (DfES, 2004a), all young people held in secure establishments should participate in education and training and have an Individual Learning Plan, although this is not a requirement.

Young people completing ETE programmes successfully should be given certificates and accreditation as appropriate[7]. Those serving six months or more must have their educational attainment continually reassessed, including on departure. An individual record of achievement must be provided for each young person. The ILP would provide a summary for transfer together with any certificates if achieved in custody.

Quality of education in custody

Before 2001, education and training for young people in custody was, on the whole, delivered badly (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons for England and Wales, 2001). However, more recent audits have shown marked improvement (Ecotec Research and Consulting, 2002). However, evidence from the Ofsted Annual Report (2006) shows that education delivery for young people in secure settings still remains too variable in quality and the curriculum offered too narrow. This narrow range of vocational courses available in secure settings limits the opportunities for young people to acquire the skills they need to enter employment (Ofsted, 2006). Likewise, careers education was identified as poor, with not enough attention focused on the transition between the establishment and the community (Ofsted, 2006).

The report does comment that in the secure settings that provide a high standard of education, the teaching is lively and engaging. In these settings, young people are given interesting and challenging tasks that they enjoy. (Ofsted, 2006). This requires the prison establishment to replicate this teaching approach and draw on a range of resources and external partners to develop a more engaging educational experience.

In the UK and USA there is limited evidence on the effectiveness of education and training in custody on reducing reoffending in the juvenile population (i.e. between the ages of 15–17 years). It is worth noting that this does not mean that education and training while in custody does not have a positive impact on juveniles, more simply, that there is no evidence to substantiate either way.

However, there is considerable evidence from robust experimental studies with adults and young adults who offend (aged between 18–21 years of age), which shows that good education/vocational training in custody can reduce reoffending, though much of this evidence comes from the USA or Canada (Knepper et al, 1989; Hull, 2000; Saylor, 1996; Porporino and Robinson, 1992; Gillis et al, 1998; Gerber, 1995; Steurer et al, 2001). In particular, the study by Gillis (1998) of offenders who had participated in an employment programme prior to their release was promising. The research shows that good training and education while in custody has an impact on reducing the likelihood of offending and therefore may be of value to juveniles who offend as well.

[7] Accreditation should only be given if it is an appropriate outcome for the young person. Compulsory accreditation could lead to 'target hitting' and associated inappropriate outcomes.

Vocational/employment programmes in the community that take place outside of school/college/pupil referral units

Surveys of juveniles only

There is very little experimental research on the effectiveness of vocational training, employment or basic skills programmes for juveniles who offend. The most positive evidence comes from a process known as 'meta-analysis[8]', which combines the data from a number of different (usually small) studies to test for the effectiveness of different types of intervention. Most famously, Lipsey (1995) found 'employment' programmes to be effective in reducing reoffending by juveniles.

Looking at specific intervention programmes, there is less positive evidence. One promising study of a vocational training programme in Scotland found that it had no effect on reoffending (Lobley and Smith, 1999). Likewise, a study by Johnson and Goldberg (1983) in the USA found no effect on reoffending. Another promising evaluation of vocational programmes largely run by the charity INCLUDE (now part of CfBT Education Trust) also found that the programme's effects on reoffending were unclear (Hurry and Moriarty, 2004).

Surveys of juveniles and young adult offenders

Likewise, the evidence for the effectiveness of programmes for juvenile and young adult offenders (i.e. aged 18–21) shows a mixed record of success, both in the UK and USA. The effectiveness of some programmes is unclear, largely because of methodological problems in the evaluation, such as the *Asset* and Springboard programmes (Sarno, 2000) or the Entry to Employment programme (Foster, 2006), all in the UK.

Surveys of young adult offenders and adults

There is a much greater volume of literature on the effectiveness of vocational training/employment programmes in preventing reoffending for young adult offenders and adults. Nonetheless, there is again a very mixed message:

- a small number of studies show a positive impact (Finn et al, 1996)
- a number of studies show they had no effect (Bloom et al, 1997; Visher et al, 2003)
- there are some studies where the effect is unclear (Pearson et al, 1999)
- some studies did not measure recidivism (McMahon et al, 2004: Bridges, 1998).

Other programmes for offenders that do not work

Other programmes for young people who offend that have not seemed to work include:

- correctional boot camps using traditional military basic training where no cognitive behavioural therapy is included in the programme (Farrington et al, 2002)
- 'scared straight' programmes, which bring minor juveniles who offend to visit maximum security prisons (Finckenauer, 1982; Deschenes, 1996)
- rehabilitation programmes using counselling that does not specifically focus on each of the identified risk factors (Lipsey, 1992)

[8] Meta-analysis is an attempt to combine the data of multiple studies, often to improve the overall sample size in order to isolate an intervention effect.

- wilderness challenges or outward bound programmes that do not have a therapeutic element (Lipsey and Wilson, 1998b).

Financial support

The complex rules on benefits and allowance can sometimes act as a perceived or real disincentive for young people who offend to participate in education, training or employment (Youth Justice Trust, 2005; YJB, 2006b). Other research also shows that young people themselves cite the lack of financial incentives as a barrier to engagement (YJB, 2006b; Marken, 2001).

However, considering the discussion in earlier sections on the importance of targeting criminogenic needs, it is not surprising that there is no clear-cut evidence that financial incentives directly relate to the level of engagement in education and training, and thus, can contribute to reduce the inclination towards crime (Feinstein, 2005).

Indeed, a number of financial incentives have now been introduced to engage young people in education and training after the age of 16. Examples of financial incentives available are outlined below.

- **Direct incentives for education and training:** the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for young people on approved programmes, apprenticeships and entry to employment.[9] Welsh young people are also able to access EMA. However, in the Welsh context, the provision has to be in an accredited school or college (and not necessarily connected to work-based learning, for which there are other funding streams).
- **Transport – Learner Support Fund:** for young people aged 16–19 and attending a further education college.
- **Childcare – care to learn**: for young people under 20.
- **'Extra help':** help with the cost of books and equipment, extras like visits and field trips, and emergencies affecting a student's living, learning or personal circumstances.
- **Activity Agreements**: aim to re-engage 16 and 17-year-olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). These young people will sign personal contracts with their personal adviser, where, in return for financial support, they will agree to return to education or receive skills and vocational training.
- **Learning Agreements**: these are for 16–17-year-olds in jobs with no accredited training, and who have less than level 2 qualifications. This group have a statutory right to paid time off work to study or for training, but in practice few exercise this right. By providing a subsidy to the employer and a systematic programme to the learner that they know is backed by their own employer, they hope to encourage this group to take up their statutory right. In many ways it is a 'Train to Gain' for 16–17-year-olds.
- **Passport to Study Grant (Wales only):** this grant is available to 16-19-year-olds who want to continue further education while receiving income support. It is

[9] From September 2007, young people in custody can claim EMA without parental engagement and means testing prior to release.

primarily intended to help purchase books or other equipment or help towards the costs of transport.

- **Individual Learning Account (Wales only):** people qualifying for this receive up to £200 towards the cost of learning. To qualify, the highest qualification held should be no higher that a GSCE or equivalent.

Transition

From community to custody

Young people's motivation to continue to engage can be sustained by offering 'short' accreditation courses on first arrival in the secure estate. This will be all the more relevant if such accreditation is useful for seeking training or employment outside (YJB, 2006b).

From custody to the community

The challenge

A significant challenge remains to re-engage increasing numbers of young people who offend in the community. Currently 75% of young people who offend are in full-time education, training or employment by the end of their sentences. However, this drops below 57% for those leaving custody. Ways to increase the engagement of reluctant offender learners are, therefore, particularly important.[10]

The Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams' first annual report found that access to education, employment and training could be improved (HM Inspectorate of Probation, 2004). Successful reintegration back into education was said to be largely dependent on the availability of education provision and the quality of the relationships with the providing agencies (HM Inspectorate of Probation, 2004).

Continuity and progression

Young people in custody are now placed on an individual programme based on screening, a needs assessment and periodic reviews. This means that the learning programme that they follow should be well matched to their needs. Maintaining continuity and progression in that programme once they re-enter the community will therefore ensure that their educational needs continue to be met.

In fact, the *National Specification for Learning and Skills* (YJB, 2002) stated that if suitable education training or employment placements were not secured on release from custody, then the likelihood of reoffending increased significantly (Learning and Skills Council, 2004).

Barriers to engagement noted that young people in custody become highly motivated to engage in education, training and employment, and then find it hard to sustain these levels of motivation in the community, particularly in the absence of matched provision. Likewise, young people themselves identify the lack of continuity for learning between custody and the community as a barrier to engaging in ETE (YJB, 2006b). Identifying a provider that can provide that continuity and progression, and continue to meet the young person's specific needs, is therefore fundamental.

Moving from custody to school or college

Moving from a highly structured custodial setting to the relatively less structured environment of mainstream education settings presents problems both for youth and the

[10] YOT Performance Management Information – January to March 2005, YJB.

practitioners/teachers involved in the process. Young people making the transition from custody back to school are often still affected by the social and personal influences that contributed to their offending in the first place. A young person may also return to school with a variety of special needs (such as drug rehabilitation) that are outside the scope of the mainstream education system (Stephens and Lane Arnette, 2000).

Pre-employment programmes for over-16s

For young people aged over 16 who are leaving custody, the YJB's evaluation of Entry to Employment and an evaluation of the *Asset* and Springboard programmes found that pre-entry to employment type of provision is very necessary for the majority of young people in or leaving custody. Most of these young people not only lack basic educational skills, but also have multiple deficits in other areas, the importance of which should not be underestimated. Managing themselves and their responsibilities through planning, budgeting, communication and appropriate behaviour, and underpinning this with learned coping skills, can facilitate the chances of progressing further (Sarno et al, 2000).

Provision and procedures for re-integrating offenders from custody into the community need to be jointly planned by all the key agencies and authorities. Preparation for release and resettlement requires collaborative working with other departments in the establishment and external statutory and voluntary organisations, including Connexions (or equivalent), Job Centre plus, schools and local Learning and Skills Councils.

The establishment of local resettlement steering groups can also help to ensure that the measures agreed in protocols are delivered (Foster, 2006). It is helpful if all relevant parties (e.g. key worker/guidance worker/education worker in custody and YOT workers) attend all stages of the DTO review process with a view to planning the transition process and future placements promptly. When leaving custody, young people who have offended will also need a named Connexions[11] personal adviser or Careers Wales careers adviser. Having YOI-based Connexions/Careers Wales staff can also assist in this process (Cooper et al, 2005). In Wales, Careers Wales has an e-portfolio which informs the 'Moving Forward Plan'. Information, advice and guidance workers providing custodial in-reach services have proved effective in delivering better resettlement outcomes.

Schools and local authorities

One of the most acute problems is integrating young people into schools (YJB, 2006b). This is important as they are less likely to offend where interventions take place in mainstream settings (McGuire, 1995a). If the school is able to meet the young person's needs (as opposed to, say, a PRU, college or home tuition), then it is clearly an appropriate mainstream setting. A change in school registration since September 2006 means that young people in the youth justice system may not necessarily lose their school place. However, difficulties still arise because of the reallocation of school places when young people go into the secure estate, and renegotiating provision for these young people following release.

[11] From March 2008, Connexions will be replaced with an Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) service. Local authorities will have a duty ensure the provision of services by inviting tenders to provide the service.

Training

Baseline training in education, training and employment

Research suggests that those working with young people who offend should understand the basic theoretical underpinnings for the effectiveness of ETE interventions, based on the criminogenic needs of young people who offend (Roberts, 1995).

An evaluation of new strategies to address youth offending in YOTs made a case for regular in-house skills audits (Holdaway et al, 2001). It also argued that the recognition and development of professional skills should be related to a staff development plan for the whole YOT and to the positive appraisal of staff (Holdaway et al, 2001).

One tool recommended for organisations dealing with offenders and disaffected young people is the Training Needs Analysis. It has a four-stage process for identifying and prioritising the continuing professional development of staff in the organisation as a whole (Dearling, 2002).

1. Identify training needs at an organisational level
    - For example, if you are going to move to doing more work-based interventions, do your staff understand these interventions? Are there legislative changes, new directives or new partnerships that your staff need to understand?
    - Do staff have all the skills they need to do the tasks in their job descriptions?
    - Do staff have further individual training needs identified in (annual) reviews?
2. Decide which needs have priority
    - How much training is available for each member of staff, and how many days per year does that represent?
    - What is the balance is between individual and agency needs?
    - Where should the professional development sessions happen?
    - How many sessions should occur as individual/team/whole agency/inter-agency?
3. Provide the appropriate training
4. Evaluate the success of the training

At an individual level, a performance management process is important in reviewing recent performance and identifying individual training needs in order to drive up quality.

Pastoral support for staff

Challenging situations and high rates of reoffending can affect even the most resilient YOT worker. Staff can suffer from ‘early burnout’ due to the pressures of working in this environment (Roberts, 1995). Therefore, YOT workers need appropriate, consistent and reliable forms of support to ensure they are able to effectively manage the demands of their role (Roberts, 1995). This can be provided through mentoring arrangements for staff, staff development and training for handling such situations, debriefing meetings

for staff following particularly difficult sessions with clients and providing a ‘what to do’ pack for staff. (Marken, 2001).

Relevant accredited training

Through its human resources and learning strategy, the YJB provides a structure of accredited training, relevant to practitioners from a variety of different backgrounds working in YOTs and in the secure estate.

Short effective practice in-service training courses have also been developed in each effective practice area, including education, training and employment.

Staff in secure facilities

There is a Learning and Development Framework for the full range of practitioners within the juvenile secure estate. Teachers must hold Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), and it is also essential that appropriate training is provided to volunteers and to those who provide leadership, vocational training, security and care duties. Prison officers/personal officers also need to have opportunities to train as learning mentors and personal learning advisers. Prison officers should also be able to undertake training so that they can act as personal advisers within the secure setting and should have the opportunity for this training to be accredited and recognised financially. Prison officers should have their skills developed so that they are able to provide an enrichment programme at weekends.

The staff of organisations providing education, training and employment

As noted earlier in this source document, the quality of staff in ETE settings is fundamental to the effectiveness of ETE programmes, as well as those already mentioned (see also Sarno et al, 2000; Vennard et al, 1997; Underdown, 1998).They need to be able to motivate, empathise with, and tackle the behaviour of troubled and disaffected young people (Foster, 2006). Selecting providers with staff with the right skills is key. Local authorities and local Learning and Skills Councils can also assist by providing bespoke training to schools, colleges and other providers.

For example, they may need training in:

- creating a ‘learner-centred’ ethos and positive approaches towards combating disaffection
- building positive relationships between practitioner and client (‘respect’)
- undertaking group work with young people who have very substantial support needs and whose behaviour may be very challenging
- designing alternative curricula that re-engage and challenge young people, while not replicating the school curriculum
- challenging stereotypes (e.g. traditional male and female roles), which may act as barriers to young people’s progress and limit their life chances and choices
- having effective collaboration between professionals in different sectors, e.g. schools, careers, youth work, work-based training, social services, probation – this implies not only skills but also knowledge and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of other agencies and professionals.

Joint training

It is important for youth justice professionals, as well as managers and practitioners in the education system who deal with young people who offend, to understand (YJB, 2006b, Nacro, 2003):

- each others' systems
- how they can achieve improvements in the learning of offenders
- how to potentially reduce offending

A logical step is therefore joint training and staff development.

Nacro have likewise found that the authorities that provided the opportunity for YOT and looked-after children's services staff to train alongside each other were successful in achieving lower rates of offending by looked-after children. They found that joint training encouraged joint ownership of a commitment to prevent offending by looked-after children. Also, in order to properly cater for looked-after children, staff will need to understand the impact on children of abuse, neglect and loss and of growing up without the unconditional care and support of a parent or guardian. (Nacro, 2003) Furthermore, to encourage the attendance of head teachers and deputies from schools with involvement with looked-after children in particular, it is important that this training does not take up more than a day (Bhabra, 2004).

Management

Within ETE programmes, managers should ensure that there is strong managerial and organisational infrastructure and that it is sufficiently flexible to enable cross-organisation working. The Delivery Framework for Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (DfES, 2004b) identifies the following key elements of responsibilities in planning and implementing a learning service for young people who offend:

- protocols with all relevant agencies, authorities and education/training institutions for sharing information
- provision provided at a local level
- access to sufficient resources to ensure that ETE programmes comprise a coherent and comprehensive set of learning activities
- staff with appropriate qualifications, knowledge and skill to work with offenders
- systems for performance management and continuous professional development, as well as appropriate supervision and pastoral support.

In the secure estate, Self-Assessment Report Action Plans linked to the Prison Business Development Plan should be in place, learning should be promoted across the whole of the regime and the standard of education provided should reach that of mainstream schools and colleges (DfES, 2004a). Managers should use the YJB approved monthly and annual monitoring tools to measure progress against YJB/Service Level Agreement (SLA) targets and to ensure the full implementation of the Offender's Learning Journey (DfES, 2004a).

ETE programmes for young people on DTOs should also comply with the Offender's Learning Journey (DfES, 2004a). This should be implemented across the entire length of the DTO, with transitions being properly supported and full-time, suitable ETE programmes being provided in each half of the sentence. An ETE programme should be available on the first day after transition to the community.

Service development

It is considered good practice that local authorities, local Learning and Skills Councils, YOTs and Connexions (or equivalent) regularly review how well the current map of provision for young people who offend matches their needs. This includes provision that meet specific individual needs, such as those outlined in the 'Individual needs' chapter, namely:

- literacy and numeracy
- special educational needs
- suitable and stable placements for looked-after children.

It also includes an appropriate range of courses that are at the right level of challenge for young people who offend and an appropriate balance of different courses (e.g. enough entry to employment courses for those in need of personal development, as well as enough apprenticeship courses for those ready for and interested in work-based learning).

With the gradual implementation of the 14–19 reforms (and 'Learning Pathways' in Wales), it is also important that these bodies examine the appropriateness for young people who offend of the new types of provision that these reforms will enable. Anecdotal evidence suggests that YOTs and those working in the secure estate are not adequately involved in local authority planning to deliver 14–19 programmes. Delivering some aspects of the 14–19 reform in the secure estate might require additional capital funding in order to upgrade buildings, for example to provide the realistic working environments that some programmes require (DfES, 2005a).

Changes to the system for catering for vulnerable children as laid out in the recent White Paper 'Care Matters: Time for a Change' provide the opportunity for secure establishments to work with partner agencies to help provide a more comprehensive set of services to help re-engage young people in education and employment. For example, the transition to normal life can be eased by ensuring that young people serving custodial sentences can retain positive links with family and community under controlled conditions (DfES, 2007).

Monitoring and evaluation

Local monitoring and record keeping

Once a young person's needs have been assessed and appropriate provision put in place, it is important that their attendance, behaviour and attainment on ETE programmes is monitored by the YOT. Programmes in the community for young people who offend have notoriously high drop-out rates (Kendall, 2005). Where there are problems with attendance, behaviour and attainment, YOTs should quickly review this with practitioners and, if appropriate, with the young person, to identify and address the barriers to engagement.

Poor attendance or behaviour could be a sign that the programme is inappropriate for that young person's needs, or it may be that other circumstances outside of ETE (e.g. housing, parental relationships) are disrupting their learning (Communities that Care, 2005; Lipsey, 1995).

It is important that youth employment programmes undertake regular assessments so that a young person's progress is monitored (Communities that Care, 2005). Accurate and up-to-date records are essential to this process and will help the transition through the justice system. This could be particularly important when the young person who offends reaches the age of 18 and thus becomes the responsibility of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS).

NOMS works regionally, with regional managers responsible for:

- commissioning services for their region
- developing a regional reducing reoffending delivery plan
- co-ordinating regional and local partnerships.[12]

This model of local delivery, with closer working with individuals at a local level, should aid monitoring and evaluation of provision in the justice system.

It is important that progress is monitored and success celebrated through formal accreditation or rewards/praise. Where young people do make progress, it is equally important to check that they are given opportunities to move onto the next appropriate stage, and that they are involved in these decisions (Spielhofer et al, 2003). This may involve Connexions.

Management information systems

For young people in custody, the *National Specification for Learning and Skills* (YJB, 2002) suggested that YOIs and YOTs have management information systems that contain the following:[13]

- basic information on the young person

[12] See http://noms.homeoffice.gov.uk/about-us/how-noms-works/?view=Standard for more details.

[13] The Offender's Learning Journey has replaced the National Specifications. Although this list is not replicated in the Offender's Learning Journey, it is nonetheless good practice.

- previous and current educational information (e.g. placements, status, SEN, educational programmes, completed qualifications and attainment)
- young people's ILPs and reviews
- details of the educational programmes (e.g. attendance, punctuality, successful teaching and learning methods)
- records of young people's movements within educational provision between YOIs and YOIs and community organisations/professionals
- information on continuity of full-time provision post-custody and of curriculum, course materials and qualifications
- a consistent behaviour monitoring and recording system for all learning and skills activities; this should be encouraged through the use of eAsset, as described in the 'Service delivery' chapter.

Evaluating programmes

Unless the effectiveness of a programme has been evaluated, future practitioners and managers cannot know whether it is beneficial to place other young people on the same type of programme. Evaluations of new types of programmes are therefore fundamental, and they should be conducted in line with YJB/RDS NOMs research standards.[14]

An effective programme should have clear objectives relating to the criminogenic needs of its target audience. These objectives should be both achievable and measurable (Morgan Harris Burrows, 2003). Evaluation is therefore important in terms of measuring the outcomes of a programme against the intended objectives, such as reducing offending, or reducing risk factors and strengthening protective factors associated with offending (McGuire, 1995a). For this purpose, it is often helpful to have an effective management information system is in place in order to track a young person's process through the programme (Morgan Harris Burrows, 2003).

For a truly rigorous measure of the success of an ETE programme, it is necessary to follow the young person's ETE and offending history after they have left the ETE programme (Sarno et al, 2000). It is also methodologically important to follow the destinations of young people who dropped out of a scheme, although it is notoriously difficult to track young people's destinations after they have left a programme without devoting considerable resource and time (Sarno, 2000).

The exception to this is the evaluation of custodial programmes because the progression of young people leaving custody for the community should already be tracked. YOTs should therefore ensure that information on the progression of young people who have left custody is passed back to secure facilities when requested by them (YJB, 2006b).

It is also important to evaluate new programmes some time after set-up. Any new programme needs time for new processes to bed in, and time for it to have an impact on the behaviour of the first cohort of young people (Sarno et al, 2000).

[14] see Methodolody section in Appendix for specific details on research standards.

Community representation

ETE services should be reviewed for the under/over-representation of particular groups, for example, BME groups to ensure the services are meeting the needs of young people and their communities.

Using the annual census for strategic decisions

Strategic Partnerhsips are advised by the YJB to conduct annual censuses of young people who have not been in full-time ETE in the last three months. The census should consider strategic plans that address the issue of educational inclusion for young people, in particular, the Education Development Plan and Behaviour Support Plan. In Wales, the census should have regard to the planning processes and related framework for young people's plan as set out in Annex 1 of the Direction and Guidance on Extending Entitlement.

This annual census should establish key baseline data, including information on the following:

- the scale and nature of the out-of-school population
- authorised and unauthorised absence
- non-attendance
- fixed term exclusions
- permanent exclusions
- numbers of young people in alternative provision where that is part-time (e.g. home tuition, segregated unit, PRU).

Appendix: Methodology

A comprehensive review of the literature was carried out according to strict criteria, both for the search and for decisions about including or excluding each of the studies found.

The literature review was undertaken from October 2006 and the source document developed between January and March 2007.

Search strategy

The literature search included published and unpublished research, focusing on that conducted since 2001 for UK and international studies (although only English language reports were considered), and drew on the source/research contained/referenced in the original source document. The search strategy involved

- searches of journal articles, books and conference proceedings using online databases (including libraries)
- searches and enquiries with relevant non-government organisations and governmental organisations (mostly grey literature)
- snowballing through contact with researchers who have undertaken work in this area to identify additional sources of unpublished research that may be of relevance to the review – this includes following references within reports identified by the abovementioned searches.

These three routes are described in more detail below.

Searches of journal articles, books and conference proceedings using online databases (including libraries)

A large number of general and specialist electronic databases, listed at the end of this Appendix, were searched using combinations of search terms. The search included general databases that cover a whole range of peer-reviewed academic journals through to specialist criminology databases and library search engines. Where available, abstracts were used to undertake an initial assessment of their relevance.

An initial search of relevant literature identified the key themes and issues in ETE for young people who offend in the UK to help develop an effective list of search terms, identified in the table below.

Table 1: Effective list of search terms

Terms to ensure studies refer to young people aged under 21	Terms to pick up studies that encompass relevant interventions	Terms to ensure studies refer to offenders

Youth	Employment	Crime
Young	Education	Justice
Juvenile	Training	Offending
Children		Offender
Delinquent	Interventions	Custody
Young adults	Multi-agency working	Re-offend
Excluded pupils	Effective practice	Anti-social behaviour
Children in care		Recidivism
NEET	Resistance skills	Risk-taking
Truancy	Resilience	
Truant		
Care leavers	Self-efficacy	
Disaffected	Personal development	
	Anger management	
	Social skills	
	Reasoning skills	
	Mentoring	
	Guidance	
	Learning styles	
	Vocational	
	Literacy	
	Peer-led programmes	
	Behaviour management	
	After-school clubs	
	Parenting	
	Family classes	
	Parenting	
	Alcohol harm reduction	
	Summer schemes	
	Adventure training	

In any particular search, one term from each of the columns above would be used. To make searches efficient, we would use AND/OR operators, although not all search engines are sophisticated enough to allow this.

Relevant articles were then downloaded from online databases or from other websites, obtained electronically from the journal publisher or organisations such as Infotrieve or Ingenta, or ordered from the British Library.

Searches and enquiries with relevant non-government organisations and governmental organisations

It is important to consider sources that do not use formal academic journals to publish their research (grey literature). A number of non-governmental organisations (e.g. Barnardo's, Nacro) and governmental departments and agencies (e.g. the Home Office, the YJB) all have an interest in reducing offending by young people and have conducted research to high standards. This research was identified either on their websites, through publication catalogues, or by contacting the organisations directly.

The UK organisations that we explored in this respect are listed in the table below.

Table 2: UK organisations

UK governmental	UK voluntary/NGO
Youth Justice Board for England and Wales	Barnardo's
Department for Education and Skills (Research and Statistics Gateway)	National Children's Homes
Home Office	Prince's Trust
Department for Culture, Media, and Sport	Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Learning and Skills Network	Crime Concern
Learning Skills Council	Nacro
Connexions	Alcohol Concern
Social Exclusion Unit	Youth Justice Trust
Audit Commission	Howard League
Ofsted/Adult Learning Inspectorate	
Basic Skills Agency	
Youth Justice and Children's Hearings Division (Scottish Executive)	
The Criminal Justice Social Work Development Centre for Scotland	
Youth Justice Agency (Northern Ireland)	
National Offender Management Service	
National Probation Service	

Grey literature was also sought from:

- PolicyHub: A website provided by the Government Social Research Unit, which aims to improve the way public policy is shaped and delivered and includes links to a wide range of research resources and tools
- Social Programs That Work: Database from the Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy of findings from well-designed Randomized Controlled Trials. Topics include:
  - early childhood
  - education
  - substance abuse prevention and treatment
  - crime/violence prevention
  - welfare and employment
  - international development.

We also investigated research held by organisations outside the UK. For example:

- Australia
  - Attorney General's Department – National Crime Prevention Programme (NCPP)
  - Crime and Violence Prevention research centre (Australian Institute of Criminology)
  - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

- Canada
  - Department of Justice (especially the Youth Justice Renewal Initiative)
  - National Crime Prevention Centre
  - Public Legal Education Network of Alberta–Plena.
- France
  - Centre international pour la prévention de la criminalité
  - Association Française de Criminologie
  - Ministère de la Justice
  - Ministère de l'Intérieur
  - Ministère de l'emploi et de la Solidarité.
- Germany
  - Deutsches Jugend Institut (German Youth Institute) – www.dji.de
  - Deutsches Forum für Kriminalprävention (German Forum for Crime Prevention).
- New Zealand
  - Ministry of Social Development
  - Ministry of Justice – Crime Prevention Unit
  - Ministry of Youth Development.
- Republic of Ireland
  - National Crime Council.
- USA
  - National Crime Prevention Centre
  - Department of Justice, especially the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
  - Youth Crime Watch of America.

Snowballing

Other references were highlighted when documents were obtained, for example by often contacting frequently cited individuals and organisations to ask them to identify any literature that they felt was relevant and to ask them to suggest any further researchers and organisations that we could follow up. We also used the references at the back of relevant publications to identify any further studies that might be useful.

Criteria for inclusion and exclusion

The next stage in the systematic review of literature was to identify that which was most pertinent to the study. This was achieved by identifying three levels of relevance for inclusion into the study.

- **High relevance:** a study may be relevant for a number of distinct reasons, each relating to the objectives in the chapter 'Individual needs'. For instance:
  - research assessing the effectiveness of ETE interventions in reducing offending by people under the age of 21
  - research detailing evidence for good practice in engaging young people who offend into ETE, or
  - policy and implementation documents detailing recent and future education reforms that match with ETE practices that reduce offending.
- **Medium relevance:** research assessing the effectiveness of ETE interventions in preventing at-risk groups from offending.
- **Low relevance:** research assessing the effectiveness of ETE interventions in preventing adults from reoffending.

These are described in more detail below.

Decisions on the relevance of any particular study were based upon examination of the titles, key words, abstracts, and, where necessary, the complete text to ensure that all relevant studies are included. The decision for inclusion and exclusion was made by the lead reviewer and, independently, a second reviewer to confirm or question the lead reviewer's decision. Where the views of the lead reviewer and second opinion differed, a discussion, including the YJB where appropriate, would take place to establish the final decisions.

Further points to note on relevance include the following factors:

- Many evaluations of ETE interventions did not measure reoffending itself, so these were not considered relevant.
- Some research studies examined a range of factors or interventions that reduce reoffending, with ETE being just one. Only where the effect of the ETE could be measured independently of other interventions were these studies included.

High relevance

Research assessing the effectiveness of ETE interventions in reducing offending by people under the age of 21

This review started from the hypothesis that keeping or re-engaging young people who offend in ETE is effective at reducing offending. However, we have already noted that it is still unclear whether the ETE itself prevents reoffending, or whether other factors (e.g. personal traits, family) mean that young people who offend who join and stay in ETE are also less likely to re-offend (i.e. a selection effect).

This was therefore the first and key hypothesis to test, and involved a review of robust, mostly experimental quantitative studies that have tested the impact of different ETE interventions on reoffending behaviour.

Research detailing evidence for good practice in engaging young people who offend into ETE

It is important for practitioners, managers and planners using the *Key Elements of Effective Practice* guidance to understand what constitutes good practice in engaging young people who offend in effective ETE programmes, and what barriers they are likely to need to overcome. Assigning a lead professional to a young offender leaving a secure establishment would be an example of a good practice principle.

This includes reports that identify barriers to engaging offenders in ETE, case study evidence of good practice and quantitative and qualitative surveys of young people who offend's attitudes to ETE services, rather than experimental quantitative studies.

There have been considerable changes in the educational landscape since 2002, and a wide range of changes are planned in the future, for example, the 14–19 reforms will expand the provision and variety of vocational training for young people in this age group.

Policy or implementation documents that detail changes to the education environment that are likely to reduce (or exacerbate) offending, as well as those that match with ETE practices, will therefore be highly relevant.

Medium relevance

Prevention

The focus for this review is on preventing reoffending through ETE. A secondary, but related, objective is to identify interventions that can prevent at risk groups (e.g. care-leavers, males with a record of exclusion and low attainment) from offending in the first place, such as improving literacy and numeracy at an early stage in secondary schooling. Evaluations which examine the impact of ETE-based interventions with outcomes (such as reduced school exclusion, truancy, or violent behaviour) that are correlated with lower rates of offending would therefore be considered relevant.

Low relevance

Some research for the effectiveness of particular ETE interventions may have only been conducted with offenders aged 21 or over. This evidence was included in the review, with an explicit note to show that there is no evidence either way for its effectiveness with under 21-year-olds.

Assessing quality

Experimental evaluations

To assess the effectiveness of ETE intervention in preventing offending and reoffending, Randomised Control Trials (RCTs) are clearly the ideal. However, there are a limited number of such evaluations because of the ethics of deliberately withholding interventions from young people, the difficulty of measuring behavioural or attitudinal change and the difficulty of recruiting, retaining and tracking young people on ETE programmes.

Quantitative evaluations and meta-analysis of quantitative studies were assessed according to the hierarchy of standards in reconviction research developed by Harper and Friendship based on those devised by Farrington et al (2002) to assess the methodological standards in crime prevention programme evaluation.

Table 3: Hierarchy of Research Standards for Reconviction Studies

Standard	Description
Level 5	Random assignment of offenders to the intervention and control conditions (Random Control Trial)
Level 4	Comparison group matched to intervention group on theoretically relevant factors, e.g. risk of reconviction (well-matched comparison group)
Level 3	Comparison group present without demonstrated comparability to intervention

	group (unmatched comparison group)
Level 2	Expected reconviction rates compared to actual reconviction rates for intervention group (risk predictor with no comparison group)
Level 1	A relationship between intervention and reconviction outcome (intervention group with no comparison group)

Deciding 'what works'

In order to differentiate between those studies that scored highly against the Research Standards and other studies, studies referred to as 'promising' in the report have been identified as less robust (identified as below Level 3 on the Research Standards).

Sample size and confidence intervals

Sample size matters because smaller sample sizes are less likely to detect small effects. In addition, small samples are rarely representative of larger populations and this greatly limits the extent to which the findings and conclusions can have any wider application to other samples or populations. The reliability of quantitative studies was therefore also judged on the minimum sample sizes below cited in 'What Works' briefing from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS 2005).

Table 4: Minimum sample size required by expected reduction in reconviction[15]

Expected percentage point reduction in reconviction	Minimum sample size in each group
10.0%	325
7.5%	572
5.0%	1,273
2.5%	5,024

Completers and non-completers

As noted by the 'What Works' briefing from the National Offender Management Service, a common pattern with outcome research shows that those who complete an intervention have better outcomes than those from other groups (other groups include research subjects from comparison groups, those who are referred but fail to start, and those who start and drop out). While the results for completers can be read as evidence of effectiveness, they can also be read as a selection effect. This means that those who stayed the course would have done better regardless of the intervention because they were more motivated, had fewer needs, lower risk, etc., while those who did not complete would have done worse anyway. Thus effectiveness is not best determined by examining results for completers alone. We therefore identify whether or not both completers and non-completers have been included within the intervention group in any particular study.

Criteria for determination of independent findings

Reoffending by young people is correlated with a number of other behaviours that are often measures (such as school attendance) in evaluation of interventions targeted at this group. Where sample sizes are large enough, quantitative analysis can isolate the impact of an ETE intervention on offending behaviour independent of other factors such as

[15] It was assumed the average general reconviction rate for offenders was 50% within two years from the start of a community sentence or release from prison.

school attendance. The ideal research design is therefore one in which researchers anticipate those factors that are highly correlated with reoffending behaviour and adjust the sample size and composition accordingly so that the effect of the ETE intervention can be quantified independently of other correlated factors. Evaluations that use this ideal design will be considered more robust when assessing the quality of one evaluation over another.

Details of study coding categories

The guidelines for Campbell Systematic Reviews contains a heading for 'Details of study coding categories.'

As we understand it, this is only relevant to meta-analyses that attempt to combine the data of multiple studies, often in order to improve the overall sample size to isolate an intervention effect. This review was not a meta-analysis as the range of ETE interventions, research designs and settings makes this inappropriate. However, we do review the findings of meta-analyses that do compare similar ETE interventions.

Statistical procedures and conventions

Where evaluations with control groups are identified (Level 3 or above), we would anticipate that the researcher has used statistical tests such as a T-test to see if differences between the actual and control samples are distinct. If this has not been done, we will conduct the relevant test. With statistical hypothesis tests, we will require a maximum significance level of 5% (i.e. α=5% and α=1% would be acceptable, but α=10% would not).

Where relevant, we would also examine the tests of correlation between two factors (for instance, reoffending and access to ETE) such as Pearson's product-moment coefficient or Spearman's rank correlation coefficient.

Databases used in the literature search

From the Campbell Collaboration (Crime and Justice Co-ordinating Group):

- C2-SPECTR*[16]: C2 Social, Psychological, Education, and Criminological Trials Registry. A registry of over 10,000 randomised and possibly randomised trials in education, social work and welfare, and criminal justice.
- C2-PROT: Contains newly launched, randomised clinical trials published in American and international media.
- C2-RIPE (C2 Register of Interventions and Policy Evaluation): Contains titles, protocols, reviews and abstracts that have been approved within the four Campbell Collaboration Co-ordinating Groups. In addition, it contains refereed comments and critiques if they were submitted. These documents are approved within the four C2 Co-ordinating Groups.

US private providers

[16] Databases marked with an asterisk are accessed with an Athens password.

- CSA*: CSA is a US-based company that specialises in publishing and distributing in print and electronically 100 bibliographic and full-text databases and journals in four primary editorial areas: natural sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities, and technology. They can provide access to ASSIA, PAIS and CJA (below).
- ASSIA* (Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts): This is an indexing and abstracting tool covering health, social services, psychology, sociology, economics, politics, race relations and education. Updated monthly, it currently contains over 375,000 records from over 500 journals published in 16 different countries, including the UK and the USA.
- PAIS* (Public Affairs Information Service): Contains references to more than 553,300 journal articles, books, government documents, statistical directories, grey literature, research reports, conference reports, publications of international agencies, microfiche and internet material. It is now owned by CSA (above).
- CJA (Criminal Justice Abstracts): This is the criminal database from SAGE Publications and draws on the M. Gottfredson Library of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University Law Library. It contains indexes and summaries of international journal articles, books, and governmental and non-governmental reports on a wide range of topics in criminal justice.
- Swetswise*: A database of 250,000 journals.
- Infotrieve: The ArticleFinder service within Infotrieve enables us to search across 54,000 journals and access articles online. Infotrieve also includes access to MedLine – the US National Library of Medicine's database of articles from journals covering psychological and medical topics. Unlike many other electronic article finders, Infotrieve also allows you to receive articles from journals that have not yet been made available by their publishers in electronic form. Infotrieve can scan in photocopies of the article and send it as a pdf.[17] EdComs has a subscription with Infotrieve.
- Ingenta Connect: This is another provider of articles online from learned journals. Their service tends to be faster, but they cover fewer journals than Infotrieve.[18]

US public/academic

- NCJRS* (National Criminal Justice Reference Service): Contains a database with summaries of more than 185,000 criminal justice publications. This is a service provided by the Office of Justice Programs, which in turn is part of the US Department of Justice.
- PsycINFO*: An abstract (not full-text) database of psychological literature from the 1800s to the present covering 2,129 journals. It is provided by the American Psychological Association.
- ERIC: ERIC provides free access to more than 1.2 million bibliographic records of journal articles and other education-related materials and, if available, includes links to the full text. ERIC is sponsored by the US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (IES).

[17] http://www.infotrieve.com

[18] http://www.ingentaconnect.com

UK academic

- ESRC – Regard: The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is the UK's research funding and training agency addressing economic and social concerns. Abstracts of research funded by the ESRC area available on their website.
- IBSS* (International Bibliography of the Social Sciences): Held by the London School of Economics and Political Science, IBSS focuses on the four core social science subjects of anthropology, economics, politics and sociology and provides comprehensive coverage of these. This includes 860 sociology journals.
- Intute: Social Sciences. A combination of SOSIG (Social Science Information Gateway) and Altis. It acts both a portal (providing links to relevant organisations) and as a database of research.

UK Libraries

- British Library: The British Library Catalogue can be searched through their Integrated Catalogue.
- British Library of Political and Economic Science. Based at the London School of Economics, this includes 13,000 electronic journals.

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