

Youth Justice Board for England and Wales

YJB business plan, 2018 to 2019

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Foreword

Our new three-year [strategic plan](#) sets out our role and focus following a number of youth justice reforms. It reaffirms the Youth Justice System Aims and the way we now work with our partners to achieve them.

Achieving these aims will transform the lives of some of our most vulnerable children and benefit our society as a whole. First and foremost, we must make sure that children in the youth justice system are treated as children who need our help. Not as offenders who are simply punished.

I'm pleased to be able to share with you our business plan for 2018/19 which outlines the work we are doing this year against our strategic plan.

We have decided to focus on a small set of priorities which we believe are important to the system and where we can use our position to make most impact. We have established an ambitious programme of work to deliver better outcomes in these areas. The work we will do this year under the Priorities Programme is outlined in this plan. Delivery of our statutory functions is not distinct from our work against our priorities. We will deliver progress against our priorities through these functions.

The success of this work relies on effective partnership working between us, youth justice services, local authorities, government and other key stakeholders. I'd like to thank those of you who have already been involved and look forward to working others in the future.

We have been through a significant period of change at the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB), with changes to our responsibilities and the introduction of new Board members. Our Board members have used their considerable expertise to take on leading roles in developing our Priorities Programme. We have recently completed an internal restructure to allow us to operate in a model which best delivers our Board's priorities and fulfils our statutory obligations.

Like many of our partners, we have to continue to manage financial pressures. We expect these challenges to continue but will ensure our decisions lead to achieving the best value for money and ultimately better outcomes for children.

Lastly, we will use evidence to identify and respond to future challenges. This means continuing to monitor the youth justice system, talking to and working with children, partners, and others so that we provide government ministers with the advice they need to make informed decisions.



Colin Allars

Chief Executive, Youth Justice Board for England and Wales

Our business activities for 2018 to 2019

Priorities Programme

The Priorities Programme addresses the priorities of our Board. The way we work to deliver better outcomes against these priorities, and fulfil our statutory functions, can be found on pages 11 and 12 of our Strategic Plan.

Currently, the topics contained within the Priorities Programme are:

- national standards for youth justice
- the disproportionate representation of children from some black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds in the youth justice system
- improving local practice
- resettlement and transitions between services
- safety in custody
- Secure Schools
- serious youth violence reduction.

The following pages provide a high-level description of the work we plan to do against each of the priorities. A strategy for each of the above has been completed which will lead to a full portfolio of activities and deliverables managed under the Priorities Programme.

We will regularly review our priorities and the way in which they are addressed.

Youth justice in Wales

In recognition of the complexity that devolution brings to the delivery landscape in Wales, the Welsh Government and justice Ministers have tasked officials with producing a blueprint to ensure devolved and non-devolved services work effectively to deliver justice in Wales.

We have produced a series of recommendations on youth justice in Wales and are actively supporting the further development of the blueprint in an advisory capacity. We reviewed the draft blueprint in September 2018 and have requested to see a more detailed delivery plan in December 2018.

National standards for youth justice

The YJB has a statutory function to advise the Secretary of State on national standards for youth justice services.

In reforming national standards, we aim to deliver a structure that gives local areas freedom, while ensuring they are required and supported to deliver their statutory responsibilities. In defining our advice on new national standards, we have relied on detailed engagement with regulatory bodies, inspectorates, government departments and the sector.

As the youth justice system has matured, we have taken a lighter touch approach to oversight and have reduced the number of prescriptive requirements. Standards for Children in Justice 2019 (the proposed name for the new national standards) will advance this through a focus on outcomes not process.

We will consult on the content of the future national standards in autumn 2018, in advance of making final recommendations to the Secretary of State. If approved, Standards for Children in the Justice System 2019 will replace the youth justice national standards in April 2019.

The disproportionate representation of children from some BAME backgrounds in the youth justice system

Throughout the youth justice system there are concerns about the overrepresentation and disproportionality of children from some BAME backgrounds. David Lammy's review into the treatment of, and outcomes for, BAME individuals in the criminal justice system highlights these issues and challenges government departments to 'explain or reform'. We have developed three strategic objectives to help address this important issue:

1. To improve trustworthiness in the youth justice system from BAME communities.
2. Develop prevention and diversion to prevent BAME children entering the criminal justice system.
3. Explore improved employment outcomes for BAME children.

We have developed and piloted a Case Level, Disproportionality Toolkit with 20 youth offending teams (YOTs). The toolkit enabled those YOTs to undertake analysis of disproportionality in their area. The Lammy review recommended that the YJB commission an evaluation of this pilot. We will publish the evaluation and launch the toolkit for use by all local authorities.

Improving local practice

We aim to create an environment that enables services to:

- prioritise children's best interests
- constructively promote children's potential
- support positive desistance factors and mitigate against the negative

- encourage children's active engagement
- minimise the damage to children that contact with the criminal justice system can cause.

This will be delivered through five workstreams aligned with the above objectives:

1. Out of court disposals

We will review current practice to gather exemplars, sharing the findings with YOTs and other key stakeholders. We will update existing guidance accordingly. We will critically review the current data set, data sources and any associated procedures. Following this gap analysis, we will evaluate the available options and draw up an action plan.

2. Trauma informed practice

Informed by the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study, we will promote the universal use of trauma informed practice within the youth justice system. We will develop an offer to YOTs to support them in implementing Enhanced Case Management where they look for such support.

3. YJB Grant review

We will consider how we can most effectively use our grant making functions. We will engage with the sector and key stakeholders on any proposals for significant change.

4. Sector-led improvement

We will develop the existing Youth Justice Sector Improvement Partnership (which has primarily focussed on peer review) towards a solution which is less dependent upon the YJB. This includes exploring options for additional, sector-led improvement initiatives. We will develop new ways to support the most effective local authorities to collaborate with partners and create solutions to some of the challenges in the youth justice system.

5. Assessment

We will support improvement in the efficiency with which AssetPlus is used. Secondly, we will begin developing an evidence base on whether AssetPlus creates the most effective way to work with children. This will be in collaboration with Partners in Practice local authorities who want to assess alternatives.

Resettlement and transitions between services

Resettlement in youth justice firstly relates to the help and support that children receive as they re-enter the community from custody.

Being released from custody, however, is not the only transition. Children might also need help to resettle when entering and leaving care, or when moving location, and when coming out of the criminal justice system. Constructive Resettlement supports the journey that children take in moving away from offending to becoming successful adults leading a crime free life.

We have published [How to Make Resettlement Constructive](#) which lays out the evidence base, YJB thinking and our current work plan to support a change in this area.

We will review the data and information we collect from the sector to ensure these provide us with an accurate picture of resettlement outcomes and a means of measuring progress.

Safety in custody

The Secretary of State moved accountability for custody from the YJB to the new Youth Custody Service (YCS) created in Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service.

We are supporting the YCS to make sustained improvement to the safety of children held in custody and to improve educational outcomes. To achieve this, we intend to make the skills and knowledge of the YJB available to the YCS by using our Board members who have relevant expertise.

We will assess the YCS's improvement plan and monitor delivery. We will provide regular monitoring and advice to Ministers on progress in the secure estate

We propose to support improvement in the specialist skills of education staff. We will do this by promoting the creation of partnerships between secure establishments and schools with expertise in working with children with special educational needs.

Secure Schools

The Taylor Review of the youth justice system championed placing education at the heart of youth custody through the creation of Secure Schools. Secure Schools will be smaller custodial establishments of up to 60-70 places and located in the regions that they serve. They will bring together essential services (education, health and desistance programmes) to support the rehabilitation of children in custody.

In responding to the Taylor Review, the Government endorsed the vision for Secure Schools and committed to piloting the approach through the development of two Secure Schools in strategic locations: one in the North West of England and one in the South East of England. Both will use existing free schools' legislation.

The application process is will open in October 2018 and the successful provider announced in March 2019.

We are monitoring the Ministry of Justice's delivery of Secure Schools and offering expert advice on the implementation.

Serious youth violence reduction

We are concerned about increases in serious youth violence and the carrying of knives.

We will work with a group of local authorities (those who have been in the top quartile of serious youth violence for at least three of the last four periods) to reduce serious youth violence.

We will progress this by improving our understanding through data as to what is happening at a local level and supporting the development of successful practice. We will collaborate with partners across government and locally to make sure that there is a clear and coordinated approach to this challenge.

Our resources

How we use our resources

Our business activities need to be delivered within our available financial and staffing resources. We receive the majority of our funding from the Ministry of Justice, which is responsible for setting our budget and formulating the overall youth justice policy framework within which we operate.

The main area of our spend is the YJB Grant to youth offending teams (YOTs). The remainder of our funding is used to deliver our functions and work to support the system to meet its aims.

YJB anticipated expenditure for 2018/19	
Anticipated expenditure	£ (millions)
YJB Grant to YOTs	71.5
Activities in Wales funded by the Welsh Government	0.1
Other programme expenditure	10.8
YJB administration	3.5
Total	85.8

What makes us an effective organisation

In order to continue to oversee and support the youth justice system effectively despite reductions in resources, we must be transparent, accountable and fulfil our obligations as a non-departmental public body. It is important to ensure that our governance structure, risk management approach, and business and ICT infrastructure are as efficient and effective as possible, and that we demonstrate value for money.

This includes ensuring that we continue to comply with existing public and parliamentary scrutiny requirements. We will ensure we have appropriate arrangements in place to comply with corporate governance obligations, as set out in the framework agreement between the YJB and our sponsor department. In addition, we will demonstrate efficiencies by sharing services with others. We will manage our information appropriately which extends to our work to ensure the youth justice system collects, uses and shares information appropriately and in a way which enables the best possible outcomes for children.

The YJB aspires to be a learning organisation, made up of people skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge. With these attributes we believe our people will help us to cultivate a culture of tolerance, foster open discussion, and think holistically and systemically. In this we strive to be a resilient and agile organisation, able to quickly adapt to change and the

unpredictable. Through the development of our people strategy, along with our diversity strategy, we intend to make sure that we have the right people in the right place at the right time and that we are an inclusive employer recruiting, supporting and continually developing a diverse workforce to achieve their and our full potential.

Finding out more information

There are lots of ways to find out more information about us or the youth justice system:

- [Our website](#) is the place for all the latest news and information relating to the youth justice system.
- The [Youth Justice Resource Hub](#) is an online resource containing examples of effective youth justice working, online training, volunteering opportunities, and youth justice research.
- [Youth justice statistics](#).