Key performance indicators for youth justice services - frequently asked questions

Version 1.3

Contents

Introduction

This document contains frequently asked questions and answers around the new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). It is a live document and will be updated on an as-needed basis.

Youth Justice Services (YJSs) should check this document and the KPI recording guidance document as a first port of call before contacting the YJB.

If you have a question that is not answered within this document, please contact statistics@yjb.gov.uk or your case management system (CMS) supplier for any system specific queries.

New KPIs development

Why the KPIs have been changed?

The four original KPIs include: binary reoffending rate, frequency of reoffending, first time entrants, and use of custody. These measures provide a helpful overview of how the system is performing and will continue to be reported as part of the YJS Data Summary. However, fluctuations in these measures do not always reflect what makes a successful YJS partnership.

YJSs do not operate in isolation from other local services. 'YJS partnership' refers to the multi-agency group of organisations which contribute to the work of the YJS. This includes:

- Local authorities, including education and social care.

- Statutory partners in health, police, and probation.

- Non-statutory partners:

    o Housing.

    o Voluntary sector.

    o Elected members who contribute to the delivery and oversight of youth justice services, and who may be part of the YJS management board.

Successful partnership working is central to enabling children to succeed. The most effective YJS partnerships are those where there is strong multi-agency collaboration. To deliver the best outcomes for children, all services must work towards reducing the barriers to desistance.

The new KPIs will enable Management Boards, the YJB, and MoJ to identify strengths and challenges in the YJS partnership. These measures will provide intelligence across key areas to address the needs of children and tackle reoffending.

The new KPIs are not a set of targets: these are to be used as a source of intelligence to facilitate the better partnership working and service improvements. The new KPIs will be kept under review to ensure they provide the insight and evidence needed to drive performance. Continuing to collect data will facilitate the understanding of best practice and to target support where needed.

Why change the measures now?

The youth justice system has developed significantly, with the multi-agency model now much more firmly embedded. Whilst the number of children entering the system with a statutory disposal has fallen significantly, it is clear YJSs are working with increasingly complex caseloads. The new KPIs will allow for better understanding of the most effective interventions YJS partnerships are undertaking.

This is also important in enabling to make the case to HM Treasury around YJS funding: at the 2021 Spending Review, we successfully negotiated an uplift in the YJS core grant based on the complexity of need and challenges which YJSs face. Given the current

economic climate, it has never been more important to be able to a) deliver value for every taxpayer pound; and b) be able to evidence that value, and the impact that YJSs have. Key to this is having a strong performance oversight function, which in turn relies on having strong data intelligence.

How were the new KPIs developed?

MoJ and YJB worked together to develop an initial range of metrics based predominantly on the intelligence received from YJSs about their challenges and priorities, in addition to research around the common features of high performing YJSs.

We then carried out extensive engagement with academics, other government departments, policy officials, and the frontline. We engaged with the Association of 'Youth Offending Team' Managers (AYM), YOT Managers Cymru (YMC), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation, analysts, and information managers to further develop the metrics. Information was gathered through surveys, webinars and via email.

In addition, feedback from the YJSs has collected and taken into consideration. This process resulted in the development of 10 new KPIs, each one with a headline measure and a set of sub-measures.

Are the new KPIs aligned with other work across government?

Work has been undertaken to ensure these new KPIs are closely aligned with the work of other government departments and agencies. For instance:

- KPI 6 Out of court disposals aligns with the HMI Probation's definition.

- KPI 9 Serious Violence KPI aligns with the Home Office's multi-agency approach to reducing serious violence.

- KPI 10 Victims aligns with the Victims' Code.

However, this has not been possible to align definitions in some instances, e.g., the definition of 'suitable' for ETE and accommodation may not completely align. YJSs are encouraged to record any challenges they may face in line with the definitions provided in the KPI Recording guidance.

What are the new KPIs headline measures?

1. **Accommodation:** The proportion of children in suitable accommodation at the end of their order.

2. **Education, training and employment (ETE):** The proportion of children in suitable ETE at the end of their order.

3. **Special educational needs (SEND) / Additional learning needs (ALN):** The number of children with a formal plan in place as a proportion of children with identified SEND/ALN.

4. **Mental health (MH) and emotional wellbeing (EW):** The number of children with a screened or identified need for a mental health or emotional wellbeing at the end of their order as a proportion of children with an order ending in the period.

5. **Substance misuse:** The number of children with a screened or identified need for intervention or treatment to address substance misuse at the end of their order as a proportion of the number of children with an order ending in the period.

6. **Out of court disposals (OOCD)**: The number of children who completed OOCD intervention programmes in the period as a proportion of the number of children with an OOCD intervention programme ending in the period.

7. **Wider services:** The proportion of children connected to or supported by wider care and support services at the end of their order.

8. **Management board attendance (MB)**: The number of senior partners attending management boards out of five.

9. **Serious violence**: The number of proven serious violence offences as a rate per 100,000 of the 10-17 population.

10. **Victims**: The number of victims engaged in restorative justice opportunities as a proportion of the total number of victims who consent to be contacted.

Data recording, submission, and reporting

When will YJSs be expected to start recording the new KPIs?

YJSs will be required to record data on the new KPIs from 1 April 2023. Q1 deadline has been extended to 31 October 2023 following feedback from the sector. There is no expectation to retrospectively record data, please only record data on new KPIs from 1 April 2023.

From April 2023, the KPIs will form part of the YJB's Data Reporting Requirements. YJB will work closely with case management system (CMS) providers to embed these changes and minimise any operational burden that may occur because of these.

A KPI recording guidance has been published alongside this FAQ document. YJB regional leads will work with YJSs to ensure that appropriate support is provided where necessary.

Do YJSs need to provide historic data around the KPIs?

No, only for orders ending on or after 1 April 2023.

Can data be submitted through different sources?

The preferred submission method is case level data. Data cannot be submitted through both case level and template for the same KPI. However, data can be submitted through different sources for different KPIs, e.g., KPI10 Victims submitted by template and remaining KPIs by case level. KPI8 Management Board can only be submitted by template.

Will there be an opportunity to resubmit data?

Yes, YJSs will have the opportunity to resubmit data. We anticipate data quality issues in the first quarters. The data and feedback we receive from YJSs will help in refining our guidance, counting rules and methodology. While we expect to derive some useful insights from initial returns, any output will be carefully caveated.

Will there be transparency around how data is counted?

Yes, YJB created a set of documents to ensure transparency:

- Key performance indicator guidance for youth justice services.

- KPI Technical guide: Outlines how output from the new KPIs has been derived, including which variables and filters have been used (available on the Document Library of YJAF).

- The KPI data dictionary: Contains a description of all case level variables used to filter and calculate the data (available on YJAF).

How will the new KPI data be made available to YJSs?

The YJB developed a dashboard using Tableau, an interactive data visualisation platform. This dashboard is available to YJSs through the Youth Justice Application Framework (YJAF).

The current dashboard includes headline measures for all 10 KPIs and will successively include additional sub-measures and quarters.

The YJB aim to publicly release national level findings in a future publication.

Applications

How will the KPI data be used?

The new KPIs are just one tool used to understand a complex environment. Therefore, KPIs should be interpreted alongside additional data and soft intelligence.

This data will be used by:

- Management Boards / YJSs:
    - To understand your own performance: what is working well and what requires improvement.
    - To engage with and hold partners to account where the data reveal challenges or issues.
- HMIP: To inform their pre-fieldwork stage at inspection.
- MoJ:
    - To demonstrate the efficacy of YJSs when making the case for funding.
    - To evidence widespread or systemic issues in order to escalate with relevant sponsoring other Government Departments or national leadership.
    - To identify where there are structural barriers in the system.
- YJB:
    - To carry out its oversight function.
    - To understand barriers to desistance in order to bolster partnerships where needed.
    - To determine where challenges may require a more coordinated or central response.
    - To assess regional trends and patterns.

YJB's quarterly Performance Oversight Board responds to concerns about service delivery and identifies and disseminates good practice across the system. The existing Board is under review to ensure that YJSs are assessed effectively to inform decisions on when to intervene to support underperforming services. YJB will use the new KPIs as a key element of intelligence, alongside other data such as the information provided by YJB regional leads. Recognising the importance of gaining a holistic view, assessments will use a combination of evidence and data to act on emerging need. YJB will send out further information before April 2023 about its new performance oversight function and plans. Therefore, the new KPIs will form part of the YJB's assessment of 'priority' YJSs for intervention.

How will these KPIs be used to address racial and ethnic disparities?

Ethnicity data is not available for those YJSs that submit data by template. Once all YJSs are submitting KPI data via case level data returns, ethnicity data can be included as an additional breakdown in the KPI dashboard.

Reducing racial and ethnic disparities is a priority. In line with HMIP's thematic inspection of the experiences of black and mixed heritage boys in the youth justice system, racial and ethnic disparities will be addressed within the Management Board KPI. The aim is to examine the work conducted by both YJSs and their partner agencies in reducing disparities.

General FAQs

Do the new KPIs only apply to children under 18 years of age?

The new KPIs only count those aged under 18 at the start of the order, but they can be aged 18 or over at the end of the order.

Do we count children who transferred to probation or another YJS before their order ended?

Where a programme ends early for any reason including transfer of the child to the Probation Service or another YJS, the end date must be the date of transfer or other relevant date from which termination applies. Therefore, if a child has been transferred during the reporting period, we count them as intervention closing in the order.

Do we count children that are missing at the end of their order?

Generally, if the child is missing, they will not be in ETE and should be counted as such. However, if the child is in ETE, record the information that was available at your last contact with them. For accommodation, please count the most recent information that was available up until the point they were missing.

Do we count diversionary activity facilitated by Early Help or other agencies?

In the case of diversionary outcomes with interventions facilitated by Early Help or another agency other than the YJS, every effort should be made to capture the data in your CMS.

Is there a severity ranking for diversionary outcomes?

Unlike substantive outcomes (cautions and sentences), there is no severity ranking for diversionary outcomes, therefore if a child had more than one diversionary outcome in the period, only the most recent one should be counted.

KPI 1: Accommodation

How are custodial remands of four weeks or more going to be calculated?

For the case level data, we are going to calculate this based on unbroken periods of custodial remand of 28 days or more not resulting in a custodial sentence using hearing dates and remand decision and then last hearing date which will be their outcome date and the type of outcome received to calculate this.

How do we record accommodation type for a child who is either remanded or sentenced in custody at the time of the order ending?

This should be recorded as 'Other' or 'Custody'.

What are the definitions for suitable and unsuitable accommodation?

In determining whether accommodation is "suitable" practitioners must consider:

- The need for arrangements to be sustainable over time. Temporary and short-term accommodation arrangements should be avoided.

- The child's specific circumstances and needs, including health, relationships, SEND/ALN status, race, ethnicity, and culture.

- The child's voice and preferences.

- Providing the child with a nurturing and emotionally supportive environment, one that supports them in their journey towards desistance.

- Relevant safeguarding concerns and the character and suitability of the landlord or other provider.

- For a child being released from custody, the importance of arrangements that are made, agreed, and communicated well in advance of the child's release date.

Practitioners should make a professional judgement on suitability based on the individual needs and circumstances of each child. As stated in the counting rules in the KPI Recording guidance, in the case of a child being placed in a 'Bed & Breakfast' or categorised as having 'No Fixed Abode' or unknown accommodation arrangements, this will be categorised as unsuitable. For all other placements, assumptions should not be made based on the type of accommodation that has been arranged. For example, returning to one's family home may be suitable for some children and unsuitable for others.

KPI 2: Education, Training and Employment (ETE)

How do we record children in year 12 or 13?

If a child is in year 12 or 13 (even if this in the same establishment as the school), please record as college.

How do we record school refusers?

When recording school refusers on the template, please leave the 'hours attended per week' section blank and count these as 'number of children not in ETE'. When recording on the CMS, please enter zero under 'hours attended per week'.

Do we record children in more than one category?

Children can be recorded in more than one category. For instance, if they are in college and working in the evenings, they would be counted under both 'college' and 'part-time employment'.

Does the full-time ETE classification account both for the hours offered and attended?

A school aged child is in full-time ETE if they complete 25 hours or more of ETE per week, an above school aged child is in full-time ETE if they complete 16 hours or more of ETE per week. In both cases, this is regardless of the number of hours offered.

If a child finishes an order in August, they are not technically in school due to holidays, how should this be recorded?

YJS should report the attendance on the last day of the order regardless of whether it is in the school holidays or not. ETE attendance may fluctuate depending on school terms and this should be taken into consideration when interpreting the data.

What if the child does not think the provision is suitable but the practitioner does?

The child's voice should be taken into consideration alongside other factors, however, ultimately it is down to the practitioner's professional judgement around whether overall provision is suitable or not.

KPI 4: Mental health (MH) and Emotional Wellbeing (EW), and KPI5: Substance misuse (SM)

Children with a screened or identified need for MH, EW, or SM support, what qualifies as 'at the start' and 'at the end' of the order?

Start of the order:

- The screening date for MH, EW or SM needs took place <u>before</u> the intervention programme <u>start date</u>.

End of the order:

- The screening date for MH, EW or SM needs took place <u>before</u> the intervention programme <u>end date</u>.

The screening date should be recorded where there has been an identified need through screening.

Children who received MH, EW, or SM support prior to screening by YJS, what qualifies as 'prior'?

We are seeking to understand how many children had pre-identified needs at the point at which the YJS became involved on the current disposal.

Prior to screening by YJS:

- The MH, EW or SM treatment attendance <u>start date</u> took place <u>before</u> the intervention programme <u>start date</u>.

- We only expect you to record prior interventions if you already know about it or if the attendance took place during an earlier disposal with your or another YJS.

- We do not expect you to consult NHS records.

- Where a prior treatment is not recorded in the CMS but you know one took place (without having to do a consultation of medical records):

  - If the exact dates are unknown, an attendance start date before the intervention programme start date should be used.

- In cases of children with multiple prior MH, EW or SM interventions, report on the most recent one.

  - If the child has subsequent orders that are recorded in the KPI project, the same applies, the most recent is recorded. This will build a record in our database of any MH/EW/SM interventions for the child that the YJS is aware of going forward.

Recording of children offered and attending MH/EW interventions

If the MH, EW, or SM treatment was offered or attended before the intervention programme start date but is associated with the current disposal, then both the offered date and the attendance start date should be recorded as equal to the intervention programme start date. This is to avoid exclusion of MH, EW, or SM treatment that started earlier.

KPI 6: Out of court disposals (OOCD)

How do we record triage and diversion programme outcomes?

Diversion programme outcomes can be recorded as either one of the options below:

- Community Resolution with YJS Involvement.

- No Further Action Outcome 20/21 with YJS Involvement.

- No Further Action Outcome 22 with YJS Involvement.

- Outcome 22 Deferred Prosecution with YJS Involvement.

- Youth Caution.

- Youth Conditional Caution.

Triage should be recorded as 'Community Resolution with YJS Involvement'.

KPI 8: Management board (MB)

How do we record attendance?

This is a binary count (0-1). Please record '1' if at least one individual representing the partner agency attended the most recent quarterly meeting, otherwise record '0'.

We have had two MB meetings this quarter. Can I submit the data for either board or merge the data across the two?

Please report on the most recent MB meeting.

We had to postpone the MB and it will now take place later, how do we record this?

The MB meeting attendance should reflect any meeting that took place during the quarter and not necessarily about the quarter. For example, if a MB meeting took place between Jan-March 2024 (Q42024), then please record the attendance for this. If the meeting has been postponed (i.e. there was no meeting between Jan-Mar), then please record 'zero (0)' for Q42024.

KPI 10: Victims

Will the victim data be summarised across the perpetrator or do we need to ensure that processes are only recorded against one perpetrator, which is quite open to error?

Following the counting rules published in the KPI guidance, point 10.1.3 'The total number of unique victims should be counted. If the offence or offences involved multiple victims, all victims should be counted. If there was a victim of an offence that involved multiple perpetrators, they [the victim] should only be counted once'.

As long as the victim is counted, it doesn't matter if perpetrators have interventions ending in different quarters. What matters is that the victim is counted.

For the number of victims who requested information about the progress of the child's case, what is the definition of 'progress' and what is the definition of 'contacted'?

'Progress' refers to how well the child is engaging with the intervention programme/court order. There is deliberately no specific definition of 'contacted' in the context of this KPI because it should be driven by what the victim wants. For example, if a victim prefers to be contacted by phone, that should be the form of contact used.

For the number of victims who requested information about the child's case and the number provided with information, what is the definition of 'information'?

There is no specific definition as the information provided should be driven by the victim and what they want. To record data for this metric you need to know whether the victim has requested information, and whether it has been provided.

For the number of victims who asked for additional support and the number of victims provided with information on appropriate services that support victims, what is the definition of 'additional support' and what is the definition of 'appropriate services'?

'Additional support' refers to any support beyond that which is standard. 'Appropriate services' reflects that there are a range of services which may meet the needs of individual victims. Victims are more than just victims and may require services beyond specific victims' services.