

Report of:	<i>Kay Dargue, Head of South Tees Youth Justice Service</i>
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Submitted to:	Corporate Parenting Board- 29.11.22
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Subject:	<i>Annual update from South Tees Youth Justice Service</i>
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Contribution to the guiding principles of the Corporate Parenting Strategy
Your Home <p>The service work closely with Cleveland Police and residential homes to ensure children who are looked after are not unnecessarily criminalised in their homes.</p>
Your Family and Friends
Your Education
Your Adult Life
Your Health and wellbeing <p>The service has adopted a trauma informed approach to practice, and a pathway has been developed with FCAMHS for young people with complex needs.</p>
Your Voice and Influence <p>South Tees Youth Justice Service considers the voice of young people to be important in their work. Young people are listened to and their voice has influence as evidenced by the recent co-production approach to changing the service's name.</p>

Is the report confidential or does it contain exempt information?

No

What is the purpose of this report?

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with an annual update of the work of South Tees Youth Justice Service, with specific reference to children looked after.

Report Overview

2. This report outlines the 'offer' to children who are looked after and also open to South Tees Youth Justice Service. Some brief caseload demographic information is included within the main body of this report to provide some context to the Board.

This report will focus upon the key achievements in the last twelve months and planned development going forwards.

Report Background

3. The Youth Justice Board (YJB) are clear that the justice system must see “children as children first, and offenders second”. In line with the Child First vision, the YJB wants to make sure that children are not unnecessarily criminalised as a result of their vulnerabilities and the challenges they face. South Tees Youth Justice Service is aligned to the values of the YJB, and the ‘child first, offender second’ ethos has been used to inform the values and principles which underpin our work with young people and their families.
4. South Tees Youth Justice Service (STYJS) have strong partnership arrangements with children’s safeguarding services at strategic and operational levels and engage at a managerial level at a number of multi-agency forums designed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people. Reducing the number of Children who are Looked After in the criminal justice system is a key priority for STYJS. We seek to work proactively with those young people who experience significant vulnerabilities including children in local authority care. Our work with looked after children is in line with the National protocol on reducing unnecessary criminalisation of looked after children and care leavers 2018.
5. The Board may recall from previous reports and presentations that STYJS offer a range of additional activity for Children who are looked after including;
 - Work with Cleveland Police and Children’s Home staff to ensure those young people in Children’s Homes who offend have their offending behaviour addressed appropriately, including the use of restorative intervention as a solution to minimise prosecution
 - Ensure active STYJS attendance at all planning or strategy meetings for young people with CLA status
 - STYJS safeguarding case managers provide an essential link to Children’s Services teams in both Local Authorities as well as providing advice and guidance to colleagues on safeguarding issues and processes.
 - Ensure all Intervention Plans for CLA are shared with young people, their carers and colleagues from Children’s Services
 - Joint supervision arrangements between STYJS and Middlesbrough Children’s Services are in place offering the opportunity to share decision making and agree strategies to meet the needs of young people known to both services.
 - A working agreement between STYJS and Early Help is in place to ensure joint planning and supervision arrangements. The agreement aims to reduce escalation in the criminal justice and / or looked after system by working collaboratively.
 - A YJS ‘single point of contact’ has been provided to the Multi Agency Children’s Hub. This offers MACH staff the direct opportunity for information and advice on young people known to our service.
 - MACH case admin have access to STYJS case management system ‘Childview’ which allows for checks to be made as a referral is received by the MACH to ascertain if the case is open to STYJS and ensure that joint working commences at the earliest opportunity.

Caseload demographic

6. The vast majority of looked after children and care leavers do not get involved with the justice system, however they remain over-represented compared with others in the criminal justice system. We know that Looked after children (who have been looked after for at least 12 months) are five times more likely to offend than all children, and around half of young people in custody have been in care at some point.
7. Information contained within the Local Authority Interactive Tool, shows that in Middlesbrough in 2022, 2% of children who were looked after had been convicted or were subject to a Youth Caution. This in line with the North East (2%) and national (in England 2%) figures.
8. Between 1st April 2022 and 30th September 2022, the breakdown of cases open to STYJS was as follows;

		Percentage of Total		
		Female	Male	All
Gender	All cases	10.8%	89.2%	100.0%
	Population Estimate	48.5%	51.5%	100.0%
		Percentage of Gender		
	Asian	12.5%	4.5%	5.4%
	Black	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Chinese	0.0%	3.0%	2.7%
	Mixed	0.0%	9.1%	8.1%
	Not Known	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	White	87.5%	83.3%	83.8%
Ethnicity	All	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		Percentage of Gender		
	10-13	50.0%	24.2%	27.0%
	14	12.5%	10.6%	10.8%
	15	12.5%	21.2%	20.3%
	16	12.5%	13.6%	13.5%
	17+	12.5%	30.3%	28.4%
Age	All	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		Percentage of Gender		
	Yes	0.0%	21.2%	18.9%
LAC	No	100.0%	78.8%	81.1%

9. The table shows that the largest proportion of young people open to the service were white British boys aged 17 or over. 18.9% of cases open to the service in the last 6 months were children looked after, which is slightly higher than 15.5% in the same period last year. However, this figure can fluctuate and is not dissimilar to the other Cleveland Youth Justice Services.

Key developments in the last 12 months

10. In recent years Youth Offending Services across the country have sought new names and identities to shift the narrative from one which could have negative

connotations i.e. the word 'offending', to more positive and strengths based language. In November 2021, work began with two young people (both of whom had lived experience of working with the service and one of whom was also care experienced) to devise a new name, logo, vision statement and mission statement. This co-production approach offered an opportunity to include the voice of our young people in the 're-branding' exercise. The young people reflected upon their own experience, and how this had impacted upon them. The young people presented their work to STYJS Management Board, outlining the method and rationale for their decisions and later worked with a graphic designer to put their ideas into print. The new service name went 'live' on 1st July 2022, and all documentation has been amended accordingly. The new logo they designed has also replaced the old one on all documents.

11. There are well developed joint working arrangements in place between STYJS and Children's Social Care. This was highlighted in the last YJS inspection and continues to be a strength. The arrangement aims to ensure that the child's care plan and youth justice plan are aligned, that risks are managed together, and the child is receiving co-ordinated support from a variety of partners. Audit activity is planned in the future to monitor these working arrangements, and any actions arising from these audits will be reported to the STYJS Management Board.
12. The STYJS Management Board receives a performance report on a quarterly basis which outlines progress against our 3 key outcome measures. The 3 current outcome measures are:
 - To reduce first time entrants to the youth justice system
 - To prevent re-offending by children and young people
 - Reduce the use of custody for young people (both sentenced and remanded)
13. The STYJS Management Board recently requested further information on the number of children who are looked after who are first time entrants to be included in the report to ensure we appropriately monitor and track these children and identify any issues which may need responding to from a partnership perspective. This is a positive development as this data may identify trends and offer the opportunity to intervene at an earlier stage.
14. From April 2023 the YJB are bringing in ten new additional national key performance indicators to Youth Justice Services to ensure there is a clear understanding of how local multi-agency partnerships are operating, and provide transparency and accountability to help Youth Justice Management Boards, the YJB and Ministry of Justice to recognise progress and successes as well as to focus attention and support where there are challenges. One of the new KPI's is;
15. *% children who are currently on either an Early Help (EH) plan; on a child protection (CP) plan or classified as Child in Need (CIN) or a looked after child (LAC)*
16. Therefore, STYJS will be required to report this information to the YJB on a quarterly basis from the new financial year onwards.
17. STYJS have been working closely with Cleveland Police in relation to a project in the custody suite whereby young people will be provided with an opportunity to deliver an art project in the cells with the aim of improving the environment. Young people with care experience have already been involved in art project to date and will be consulted about a further project in relation to a potential new juvenile

custody suite. This project is in its infancy however if a decision is made to take this forwards, liaison has already taken place with Children's Services participation team to enable swift inclusion of young people with care experience to be consulted and have a voice in the development going forwards.

Issues and challenges

18. In order to gather information for the new KPI's, systems and processes will need to be developed at pace to ensure required information is identified and recorded correctly to enable the statutory returns to be submitted in a timely manner. Discussion will need to take place with our case management system provider to ensure this information can be captured correctly.

Next steps and actions

19. The service will continue to work in partnership with Cleveland Police on the 'custody project'. The project is in very early stages and provides an exciting opportunity for our young people to be consulted in the design of a bespoke custody suite.

20. The Ministry Of Justice has recently announced a 'Turnaround' programme which is being rolled out to Youth Justice Services nationally. The aim of the programme is to intervene earlier and improve outcomes for children on the cusp of entering the youth justice system. In practice this will enable STYJS will work with a wider cohort of children than previously and provide additional support at an earlier point to prevent escalation in to the youth justice system. Final guidance is due to be published imminently and the programme is currently expected to go live in April 2023.

21. STYJS plans to deliver targeted staff development sessions including 'Awareness Raising on Care Leavers in Custody' as part of the Principal Social Worker's 'Hot Topics' sessions. The first session is planned in December, following which wider staff training on young people in custody will be offered to the Children's Social Care workforce.

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.

Recommendations

The content of this report is for noting by the Board.

Background papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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