



# Youth Justice Plan 2025-2026

*Building bridges and changing the course for  
young people*

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## FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR OF THE YJS BOARD

I am delighted to present the South Tees Youth Justice Plan for 2025-26. Reflecting upon the past months, the service has had some real challenges and successes. The Custody Navigator project continues to receive positive feedback from children, parents/carers and partners based in Police custody. Positively, funding has been secured for a further 12 months through to March 2026 with options currently being explored to ensure the longevity of this important work.

Serious violence has been a challenge across South Tees for several years and sadly this continues to be the case. Increasing numbers of children are assessed as having complex needs and requiring access for specialist support. In August 2024 Middlesbrough experienced violent disorder in the town centre with significant damage caused and many young people being identified as being involved. The service was proactive in working with Cleveland Police in response to the incident however, ensuring children were dealt with in a fair and proportionate way.

Workload within the service has increased significantly this year and re-offending levels remain a challenge. An exciting development during 2024-25 was the service partnership with SHiFT, an agency supporting young people at risk of exploitation and offending. The service is working in partnership with SHiFT with the aim of achieving positive change for a number of children open to both services.

During the last year investment was made into the Restorative Justice section of the service and the reparation offer made to victims and communities. In the next 12 months, this additional investment should provide the opportunity to align to the new HMIP framework and further improve the restorative justice offer and increase the support to work with victims.

During 2024-2025 the service also invested in Child First practice across all areas of the service, and this is one of the 4 key priority areas this coming year. Staff have received Child First training during 2025 to assist their understanding of how their practice is key to supporting the Child First principle in their work. This will be developed further and embedded in practice during 2025-26.

The views of children are important to assist in understanding the impact of our work. Responses to surveys show a high level of satisfaction in the work of the service and experience they had with staff. A new user experience survey has been developed and this year focus groups are being established for young people and their parents/carers to provide the opportunity to have their say and influence service improvement. Furthermore, volunteers continue to provide invaluable support to the service and in 2025-6 the service plans to engage parents/carers and others with lived experience as this will be invaluable to shaping the service delivered going forwards.

Staffing levels remain stable with a dedicated and passionate workforce, and the priorities identified in this plan aim to provide positive steps forwards for children and victims in 2025-26 and beyond.

Joe Tynan

Executive Director of Children's Services

Chair of the South Tees Youth Justice Board

## INTRODUCTION, VISION AND STRATEGY

Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires each local authority, after consultation with the relevant persons and bodies, to formulate and implement a Youth Justice Plan setting out:

- How Youth Justice Services in their area are to be provided and funded
- How the Youth Justice Service (YJS) will be composed and funded
- How it will operate and what functions it will carry out
- The priorities for the YJS

In addition to the production of a Youth Justice Plan, the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a range of other statutory duties on YJS, these include:

- Complying with National Standards for Youth Justice
- Compliance with requirements of Sections 38-40 of the Act

**South Tees Youth Justice Service (STYJS) is a statutory multi-agency partnership including:**

- Middlesbrough Council
- Redcar and Cleveland Council
- Cleveland Police
- Probation Service
- North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board

**The strategic purpose of STYJS is:**

- To reduce first time entrants to the youth justice system
- To prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people
- Reduce the use of custody for young people (both sentenced and remanded)

**This Youth Justice Plan 2025-2026 will provide:**

- An overview of STYJS performance and achievements during 2024-2025
- An overview of service developments during 2024-2025
- Details of STYJS structure and governance arrangements
- An overview of the principal partnerships STYJS engages in to support the delivery of services
- Assurance to the YJB in relation to STYJS plans for the use of our YJB Grant Funding
- Details of the principal areas for service improvement and development during 2025-2026
- Identification of any potential risks and challenges to the future delivery of Youth Justice Services
- STYJS strategies to mitigate against these risks

### **The Principles and Values that underpin our work**

STYJS embraces the YJB child first, ethos and this approach has been used to inform the values and principles which underpin our work with young people and their families. STYJS aims to work in partnership with young people, their families and all other services who are engaged with the young person to achieve effective and lasting outcomes through engagement, challenge and support.

STYJS seeks to ensure that the needs and wishes of victims and communities unpin the work we deliver with young people. The wishes of victims and restorative practice form a 'golden thread' which

informs our work ensuring that victims are engaged, they are listened to and we provide them with regular updates on the work with young people and the outcomes achieved.

To achieve positive interaction the following values will inform and direct our work:

- Promoting engagement with the young person and their family to ensure their voice is heard in YJS processes
- All young people will be engaged as individuals with all interventions designed to meet their needs
- Young people will be challenged to take responsibility for their behaviours to protect the public and the communities we serve
- Intervening early to divert a young person away from crime and anti-social behaviour and prevent offending
- Ensuring a focus on the whole family in particular in the work of Turnaround and Prevention activities
- Working in partnership with other agencies to maximise opportunity and ensure access to services for all young people
- Identify and overcome any barriers to accessing information that can inform and guide our work
- Promote the rights of victims and ensure they have a voice in our work
- Engage with victims to ensure that they are satisfied with the services provided to them
- Provide high quality services that are effective, efficient and provide value for money

## Our Vision

In line with the principles detailed above STYJS has established the following vision for the service, and this is shared by all staff, partners and stakeholders.

*“Building bridges and changing the course for young people”*

In addition, our mission statement has been designed to reflect the approaches taken by the YJS in our work with young people:

*“Working together to create a safe, positive community to allow children and young people opportunities to achieve their full potential whilst reducing offending behaviour”*

Discussions with young people and staff places significant emphasis on the word ‘opportunity’ and young people in particular are passionate about how their work with the YJS has created new opportunities for them.



## Consultation with Staff and Partners in the Preparation of the 2025-2026 Youth Justice Plan

In preparing this Youth Justice Plan a comprehensive consultation process was entered into, and this included consultation with staff and partners and young people. The purpose of the consultation was to share the plans and service priorities, as proposed by the STYJS management team and also to secure the views of staff and partners on these proposals. This consultation has ensured that all key stakeholders have had a voice in the plan and the actions detailed in this plan are owned by all.

YJS staff supported the service priorities and agreed that these reflect the issues and factors which impact on their work with young people. Staff felt that there had been some significant successes achieved by the service during 2024-2025 including:

- Having a good and strong group of support workers to work with and support young people
- The range of Reparation Projects available to young people
- Tuff Tees group work with boys and young men
- Work with Schools
- Multi agency working with CSC, ASPIRE SHiFT, MFC etc
- Child First Training Opportunities
- Opportunities for Career Development and Progression
- School Holiday Activities
- Support from the Speech and Language Therapist
- The introduction of the PAD
- Embedding of the Custody Navigators and securing funding for another year
- Case Management approaches to working with the most complex and challenging young people, including responses to Serious Violence
- A motivated and resilient workforce with high levels of staff morale
- Training Opportunities including the PAD rollout, AIM, SAVRY, Child First
- New approaches to meet the ETE needs of young people

Looking forwards to 2025-2026, YJS staff identified the following areas of development which would further enhance our work with young people:

- Education- Further improve our communication with schools to allow direct contact with key links in ETE providers
- Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation- continue to raise awareness, adopting child first approaches and working to support families, ensuring staff safety when working in the most challenging environments and with the most complex and challenging young people.
- Prevention and Diversion- ensure we target those young people with identified needs and at risk of becoming involved in the youth justice system. Expanding the offer to schools with a focus on Year 6-7 transition.
- Child First- develop the identity of the service around a child first model, implementing this in practice involving children and young people in service development and the design of interventions
- Work with Victims- further develop the collaborative approach with case managers, ensuring the victims voice is heard and extending the scope of restorative working
- Working with Parents-building on whole family working arrangements and ensuring the voice of the parents is heard in our work with young people
- Establishing community reporting bases to create environments where we can work positively with young people
- Transitions- introduce additional capacity to support young people in transition and through resettlement, re-introduce the Probation Officer
- Extend the SALT Provision
- Engagement and Participation- extend the voice of young people in the service, with focus groups, young people evaluation and feedback, young people on Interview Panels, peer mentoring

- Intervention-maximising the use of resources available, using technology smartly and more effectively, extending the reach of intervention including Tuff Tees and holiday activities.

STYJS partners were consulted during the STYJS Executive Board Meeting in April 2025, and the service priorities detailed below were presented to board members for their consideration. Board members supported the service priorities presented by the YJS Management Team. Board members stressed the importance of the voice of the child and the engagement and participation of all service users in the design and future direction of the service. Board members also highlighted the importance of prevention work and Education, Training and Employment as important themes which must underpin the work we deliver against our key priorities.

### **2025-2026 STYJS Service Priorities:**

The priorities identified by STYJS to support the development of the service during 2025-2026 have been designed to reflect issues which affect the service at a local, regional and national level. Consideration has also been given to factors impacting on the young people, families, victims and the communities we serve to ensure that we can affect positive change in these areas. STYJS has sought to focus on four key areas for service development to reflect those key issues we believe impact on the work of the service. It is also intended that key themes such as prevention and the voice of the child will underpin the approaches we take to meet these priorities.

The priorities to support ongoing service development will include:

- Priority 1: Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation
- Priority 2: Work with Victims
- Priority 3: Child First
- Priority 4: Engagement and Participation

## **THE LOCAL CONTEXT**

South Tees Youth Justice Service (STYJS) delivers Youth Justice Services within the local authority areas of Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland. Communities in both local authorities are impacted upon by a range of social, economic and environmental factors. Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland have been identified as two of the most deprived local authorities, as detailed in the English Indices of Deprivation 2019 with communities being affected by high levels of unemployment, poor health outcomes, crime and anti-social behaviour, domestic violence, as well as challenges around educational access, inclusion and attainment. The 2019 Indices of Deprivation identified that Middlesbrough had the highest proportion of children effected by income deprivation, with Redcar and Cleveland rated at number nineteen.

Both local authorities also experience higher than average numbers of children in the care of the Local Authority and significant pressure and demands placed on Children's Services and Early Help provision to support families in need. These communities have also been identified as experiencing higher than average issues of violent offending and offending where weapons have been used.

The geography and cultural make-up of the area presents further challenges. Redcar and Cleveland has large rural communities spanning across 96 square miles of rural land which can be isolated and transport links can be challenging. Middlesbrough is a compact urban community with a diverse ethnic and cultural make up, with large Asian and Eastern European communities. Young people face significant challenges in each local authority area and these impact on their behaviours and influence outcomes.

The behaviours of young people continue to be highlighted by negative factors including violent offending and the use of weapons. In addition, there are hot spot areas with high levels of anti-social behaviour by large groups of young people across both local authority areas, some of which receives national media attention.





In August 2024 Middlesbrough experienced a significant incident of violent disorder across communities in the town centre with significant damage caused and a large number of young people being identified as being involved in these behaviours. STYJS has sought to work with Cleveland Police and the communities affected to ensure that those young people involved in the disorder are identified, engaged and encouraged to repair the harm they have caused. STYJS supported young people to engage with the research commissioned by the Children Commissioner to understand young people's involvement in the disorder which resulted in the report 'Children's involvement in the 2024 'riots''. This research found that many young people became involved by chance and out of curiosity, rather than any political motivations and for many this involvement was the result of a distrust of the Police and offered an opportunity to retaliate against the Police. Such responses reflect the issues raised by young people who have engaged with STYJS as a result of their involvement in this disorder. STYJS continues to receive referral for young people identified as being involved in the incident and we ensure that the responses offered reflect the individual situations of the young people.

The Cleveland Police area is also a designated Violence Reduction Unit area and the three Youth Justice Services in the Cleveland area have played a significant role with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to ensure that young people and early intervention and prevention are priorities for the Cleveland Unit for the Reduction of Violence (CURV). Examples of such work include the development of a trauma informed, youth custody suite in Middlesbrough Police HQ supported by the introduction of Custody Navigators into the Middlesbrough Police Custody Suite, a high-profile project for CURV. The role of the Custody Navigators is to promote engagement and support young people during the 'reachable and teachable' moment offered by their presence in police custody. The funding for the custody Navigators was extended into 2025-2026 to support the further delivery of this successful project. During 2024-2025 there has been a great deal of interest in the Custody Navigator Project with visits by other YJS and Police Services and visits from the Home Office, the Policing Minister and the YJB.

STYJS has evolved in recent years to respond to changing local circumstances, social and economic factors affecting young people. The current service model is a traditional YJS model with operational teams delivering case management in each local authority. The operational teams are supported by a Resource Team which includes Restorative Practice, Education, Training and Employment Support, SALT, Preventions, performance management, service planning, policy and procedures and back-office support in the form of admin and information management services. The rationale behind this is to ensure that the service can meet the challenges placed by users and changes to legislation with a 'fit for purpose' structure which supports high quality service delivery but flexible enough to adapt to changing priorities. Central to this is the recognition that our staff will need to be well equipped with the knowledge and skills to support a wide variety of service user needs and the risks posed by an increasingly complex and challenging cohort of young people.



During 2025-26 STYJS is investing in additional resource to support our work with victims with the introduction of an additional Restorative Justice Worker to support this area of work.

### **The profile of young people who engaged with STYJS in 2024-2025**

During 2024-2025 STYJS worked with 536 individual young people.

By local authority area the figures show that there were 320 (59.7% of the cohort) young people from Middlesbrough and 216 (40.3% of the cohort) from Redcar and Cleveland.

The gender profile was:

- 436 male
- 99 female
- 1 other

These figures show that STYJS worked with a higher proportion of girls and young women during 2024-2025 with this figure increasing to 18.4% of the cohort compared to 13.5% of the cohort the previous year. During 2024-2025 STYJS has continued to develop interventions to support the needs of girls and young women, and during the coming year we will be looking to re-introduce the 'Ladybugs' programme a group work intervention providing a safe space for girls and young women. It is also important for the YJS to understand the impact our work has had on the girls and young women who have engaged with the service and to this end we will be undertaking an audit of this work as part of our audit programme

The age profile was:

- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| • 7 (1.3%)    | aged 10 years |
| • 18 (3.4%)   | aged 11 years |
| • 61 (11.4%)  | aged 12 years |
| • 61 (11.4%)  | aged 13 years |
| • 78 (14.5%)  | aged 14 years |
| • 83 (15.5%)  | aged 15 years |
| • 113 (21.1%) | aged 16 years |
| • 115 (21.5%) | aged 17 years |
| • 1 (0.2%)    | aged 18 years |

These figures show that the proportion of the cohort aged 10-14 years during 2023-2024 increased significantly with 41.9% of the cohort compared to 33.9% for the previous year. The figures also show that the peak age of offending continues to be the 16-17 age group.

The ethnic minority profile was:

- |               |                                     |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| • 470 (87.7%) | White European                      |
| • 7 (1.3%)    | Black or Black British              |
| • 10 (1.9%)   | Asian or Asian British              |
| • 27 (5%)     | Mixed Heritage                      |
| • 12 (2.3%)   | Chinese or other Asian ethnic group |
| • 10 (1.8%)   | Not Known or not recorded           |

These figures are consistent with the figures shown by the ethnic minority breakdown in 2024-2025, with the cohort being overwhelmingly White European. The figures for other ethnic groups are consistent with previous years with only slight increases compared to 2024-2025 and these figures show that there is no over representation from any ethnic groups. The figures also reflect the wider populations in the communities we service.

Overall, the STYJS cohort continues to be white, male and this is consistent with the profile for the cohort in recent years. Overall girls and young women are not overrepresented in this cohort.

## Profile of Interventions

Data shows that during 2024-2025 STYJS worked on 833 interventions with young people.

By area this included:

- 514 intervention in Middlesbrough
- 320 interventions in Redcar and Cleveland

By programme this includes:

- 276 Turnaround Programme
- 274 OOC (including Community Resolution, Outcome 22, YCC, YC and Restorative Disposals)
- 142 Court Ordered Programmes (Referral Order, YRO and Custodial Outcomes)
- 52 Civil Programmes (ASBI, CBOs and Making Good)
- 61 Custody Navigator Interventions
- 17 Remand Programmes (Including RYDA and RLAA)
- 6 Bail Programmes (including Bail Support and Bail ISS)
- 5 Sexual Risk Orders

These figures show that there has been a significant increase, 188 additional interventions delivered by STYJS compared to 2023-2024, an increase in workloads of 22.5% compared to the previous year. The YJS has been able to absorb this additional work by building extra capacity into key service areas, including an additional case manager in Turnaround and the re-profiling of resources to create a new case manager in the operations teams. One of the challenges we face will be if workloads continue to rise during 2025-2026 and this would mean we would have to undertake discussions with partners regarding the level of resourcing of the service. OOCs continue to represent the highest proportion of criminal justice/diversionary interventions delivered with young people and their families. Turnaround now represents the primary prevention activity offered by the STYJS. Court based programmes continue to represent approximately a fifth of the total interventions delivered with an increase in the number of custodial outcomes compared to previous years. There has also been a significant increase in Civil Programmes delivered by the YJS with the delivery of the Making Good/Immediate Justice Programme.

## Profile of the factors influencing the behaviours of young people:

An examination of 523 YJS assessments, undertaken with 120 young people using the AssetPlus tool during 2024-2025 provides an illustration of the principal factors affecting young people and their behaviours.

The key factors that support the young person to desist from further offending behaviours, which provide positive influences over their behaviours include:

- Engagement and participation
- Learning, education, training and employment
- Family and wider networks
- Parenting, care and supervision
- Living arrangements, housing and financial considerations
- Resilience and goals
- Care history
- Emotional development and mental health
- Features of lifestyle
- Attitudes to offending/behaviours
- Substance misuse
- How the young person relates to others

The information drawn from desistance factors in assessments shows that during 2024-2025 engagement and participation, learning, education, training and employment continue to be the most

prevalent protective factors identified with young people. The influence of family, parenting care and supervision, wider networks and living arrangements, continue to be key factors in preventing further offending. This information suggests that where young people have a level of security and support from families, carers and a pro-social peer group and engage in ETE or with other services they have a more positive outlook, and this promotes positive outcomes as well as preventing further offending..

The key factors that increase the risk of the young person re-offending:

- Thinking and behaviour
- Features of lifestyle
- Social community and neighbourhood
- Emotional development and mental health
- Attitudes to offending and behaviours
- Substance misuse
- Learning, education, training and employment
- Family and wider networks
- Parenting care and supervision
- Care history

The risk factors detailed above are broadly in line with those identified in the previous year and reflect the complex nature of the cohort of young people who are referred to the STYJS and the challenges they bring. The above information continues to suggest that the risk factors influencing young people to re-offend are strongest around individual factors including self-identity, Attitudes to Offending and Thinking and Behaviour. The Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health of young people is also a significant factor and reflects the influence of ACES and Trauma upon the young people we work with. The influence of a young person's legal status and care history have become areas of concern, and this reflects the increasing risks of exploitation for this vulnerable group. In addition, where a young person lives and the communities and Neighbourhoods they meet in are also becoming significant factors in influencing a young person's behaviour.

STYJS will continue to monitor the nature of those desistance factors that impact on the young people we work with and seek to shape service delivery to respond and address these specific needs.

## **Response to HMI Thematic Inspections**

During 2024-2025 there were no HMI Thematic Inspection reports which STYJS could respond to.

STYJS continues to review the inspection reports from other YJS areas to identify any learning we can respond to with a view to improving practice and prepare for future inspections.

## **CHILD FIRST**

Embedding Child First practice is one of our 4 key priorities for this year and with the related priority of engagement and participation of young people these will form the basis for developments in the YJS during 2025-2026.

During 2024-2025 we have invested a time and resources into building the foundations for Child First practice across all areas of the service. This has included training and development sessions with staff. The approach has also included an awareness raising session for our Executive Board members to increase their understanding of the Child First principle and to secure their commitments to achieving this. Board members identified 4 key conditions which they agreed needed to be in place to support this area of development:

- Board members accepting and prioritising Child First Model
- The wider partnership adopting the Child First Approach
- Leaders giving wider organisations permission to practice Child First
- The governance and accountability of Child First Approach



During 2025-2026 we will be building on the commitments made by the Executive Board to support the Child First approach to identify how they have taken this principle back to their home organisations and promoted Child First practice.

The YJS Management Team has also been involved in a Child First development programme to create a framework for the operational developments needed to support our Child First practice. This has resulted in the development of a framework which will support training for staff in Child First approaches to assessment, planning and delivering interventions, how we create environments that keep service users safe and an approach to how we can work with victims of the behaviours of young people, keeping them safe and responding to victims needs and wishes.

The wider staff team have received Child First training during 2025 to assist their understanding of how their practice is key to supporting the Child First principle in our work. Staff members recognised the need for a more collaborative approach with young people and their families, 'doing with rather than doing to'. By listening and acting on what young people are telling us we believe that we can make significant progress in this area of our work during 2025-2026.

## VOICE OF THE CHILD

The voice of the child is an important factor which influences all of our work with young people and their families. During 2025-2026 STYJS we will be seeking to further develop our mechanisms which support feedback from services users and review and evaluate the information offered to identify areas for development within the service.

A new feedback questionnaire is to be developed and co-produced with young people and this will offer young people feedback on their progress from their case manager as well as offering young people and their parents and carers the opportunity to report on their experiences with the YJS. In addition to this we will be seeking other opportunities to promote the users voice, including taking feedback on the young person's and their parents experience of Referral Order Panels, introducing focus groups and developing a new feedback process for victims.

STYJS has further extended the provision offered by the Speech and Language Service with funding assured to December 2027. This will allow us to build further on the highly effective work undertaken with our SLT Specialist and ensure we can develop fuller understanding of the individual circumstances of the young people we work with. The SLT role will continue to support STYJS staff, promotes engagement and support with young people and support the training and development of STYJS staff.

## What young people said about their YJS experience:

STYJS provides all young people who have received an intervention with the service the opportunity to comment on their experience with the service through an online feedback survey. During 2025-2026, 294 young people responded and provided feedback through the survey:

- 95.95% said my YJS workers did enough to help me take part in the YJS work.
- 81.42% said the YJS helped me to feel safer.
- 90.54% said someone at the YJS asked me what I thought would help me stop offending.
- 86.15% said I had enough to say in what went into my YJS Contract/Intervention Plan.
- 93.92% said my work with the YJS has helped me realise I can change.
- 97.30% said the YJS took my views seriously.
- 99.66% said I have been treated fairly by the people who worked with me.
- 87.16% said I think the service given to me by the YJS was good with 0.68% expressing dissatisfaction at the service they have received.

These responses are consistent with responses provided by young people over previous years and show a high level of satisfaction in the work of the YJS and experience young people had with staff in the service.

The outcomes from the survey have been used to target improvements in service delivery and how we engage with young people. Comments received from young people were positive and include young people telling us:

*‘They were great’,*

*‘They helped me get a chance of a job’,*

*‘They did everything I needed’*

*‘They did all sorts with me’*

## GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP & PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

### Partnership arrangements

STYJS provides youth justice services on behalf of the local authorities of Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland. The oversight and governance arrangements for STYJS are provided by Middlesbrough Council and STYJS sits within Middlesbrough Council Children’s Services, in the directorate of Education and Partnerships.

This offers the YJS a broad remit, working across all children service areas ensuring links with those services that can maximise outcomes for young people, including early help and safeguarding services. The Head of Partnerships (the STYJS Manager) is line managed by the Interim Middlesbrough Council Director of Education and Partnerships is also a member of Middlesbrough’s Children’s Services Senior Management Team. The Head of Partnerships contributes and consults with Redcar and Cleveland’s Children’s Services Management Team on a quarterly basis, providing updates on service developments and performance.

Operationally the YJS has a designated Operations Manager who provides the link to partners in each local authority areas and the Partnerships Manager provides the operational links to the Police and the OPCC.

In addition to our links with Children’s Services, STYJS has strong links across other services and partner agencies in both local authorities, including Education Services, Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Teams and Early Help and Prevention Services. These links ensure that processes are in place that can promote joined up working to support young people into services as well as placing STYJS in a position to influence decision making around issues such as anti-social behaviour and how these impact on young people. Relationships with partners are very mature and create an

environment of mutual respect and trust which allows STYJS to promote our child first approach and secure buy in from partners.

STYJS is also a key partner in the SHiFT programmes in Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland, with the Head of Service acting as line manager for the SHiFT lead in Middlesbrough. SHiFT is an initiative that has been introduced in both authorities to support young people at risk of exploitation and involvement in offending behaviours. SHiFT exists to break the destructive cycle of children involved in, or at risk of crime. The service works with children and young people up to the age of 25 for whom things are getting worse and who would benefit most from an intensive and therapeutic relationship. SHiFT aims to safely return children to Middlesbrough or Redcar and Cleveland who are currently cared for and placed outside of the local authority area, to return to live with their families or to live in a suitable setting closer to their family and community. In addition, SHiFT builds trusting professional relationships to support children with whom services have previously struggled to engage, but for whom risks are escalating, placing them at a heightened risk of becoming entrenched in criminal activity and/or exploitation.

STYJS also supports a range of partnerships which are essential to supporting and informing the work we do. These include:

- Work with Community Safety Partnerships in both local authorities with a focus on anti-social behaviour and problem solving with representation at the Community Safety Partnership meetings and AIM in Middlesbrough
- Working with the Safeguarding Children's Services in both local authorities to support service development, inspection readiness and service improvement.
- Supporting Safeguarding Arrangements for children and young people, attending strategies, child protection and planning meetings for children and young people
- Ensuring representation at the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnerships (STSCP), to monitor performance, support quality improvement and staff training and development activity. The Head of Service also has oversight of work of the STSCP Business Manager.
- The Head of Service is the lead manager for the Middlesbrough Children's Trust and is a representative at the Redcar and Cleveland Young People's Partnership Board
- Harm Outside of the Home (HOtH) arrangements for young people identified as at risk forms of exploitation and vulnerable to negative influences which means they may not be safe, in both local authorities, supporting both strategic and operational forums.
- The Head of Service is the lead officer with oversight of SHiFT and attends the partnerships boards in each local authority.
- The Head of Service currently chairs the Children in Custody group which reviews young people held in police custody and PACE decisions.
- Engaging in multi-agency forums for education, training and employment which focus on attendance, inclusion and behaviours in schools and to address issues impacting on NEETs.
- Attendance at the Prevent Bronze group to fulfil statutory duties relating to extremism and community tensions.
- Representation at the OPCC led CURV meetings to ensure involvement in the oversight of the work of the Violence Reduction Unit
- Representation at the Cleveland Local Criminal Justice Board
- Representation at the Strategic MAPPA Board

Within both local authorities STYJS have strong partnership arrangements with children's safeguarding services at strategic and operational levels. The STYJS Service Manager attends the South Tees Safeguarding Children's Partnership meetings, Corporate Parenting Board Strategic MACH groups and Strategic VEMT arrangements. This is supported operationally by attendance at a range of subgroups, learning and development forums and task and finish processes by other members of the management team.

In addition to the above, at an operational level STYJS is represented at a managerial level at a number of multi-agency forums designed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people. These include:



- STSCP thematic groups
- HOtH Multi Agency and strategy meetings
- Safeguarding Risk Management Groups
- Vulnerable Young People's Groups
- Domestic Violence Partnerships
- Problem Solving Groups
- Education, Attendance and Behaviour meetings
- Early Help Huddles

STYJS also ensures attendance at any planning or strategy meetings for young people who are subject to Children's Services intervention.

Strong co-working arrangements are established at an operational level with both Children's Services Teams with clear systems in place for communication within the two Local Authorities. The joint working agreements with both local authorities are subject to ongoing review and updated to reflect current practices. The STYJS safeguarding case managers provide another 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.

Arrangements are also in place for YJS single points of contact for the two Multi Agency Children's Hubs and Early Help Hubs and this offers key points of contact for MACH/Early Help staff to contact for information and advice on young people known to STYJS. The MACH case admin has access to STYJS case management system 'Childview' this allows for checks to be made as a referral is received to the MACH to ascertain if the case is open to STYJS and ensure that joint working commences at the earliest opportunity.

Reciprocal arrangements are in place to offer access to case management systems, and this allows YJS Service Support staff to access these systems to identify if new referrals are known to children's services and to access information. STYJS staff log new referrals into individual children's files where they are open to safeguarding teams and this ensures effective communication and joint working.

The culture of working together among the youth justice services in the Tees Valley is well established and such collaboration supported the establishment and embedding of the Custody Navigators project in the Police Custody area. There continues to be a strong collaborative approach to work with the OPCC and Cleveland Police to support the continued delivery of the Custody Navigators Project and to look at future funding a delivery of the project.

As a group of YJS's in the Cleveland area we will continue to work together to respond to challenges placed before us and continue to look for opportunities to develop services and improve practice. As a group we engage positively with the Cleveland Police and Police and Crime Commissioner, through a programme of monthly meetings. This has benefitted the youth justice services and we have achieved greater security in our funding from the OPCC.

A collaborative approach has been established with the Children & Young People's Speech & Language Therapy Service to ensure that the children and young people who work with STYJS have access to a Highly Specialist Speech & Language Therapist to meet their language and communication needs. This project has been established over the past three years and the STYJS Board has recently agreed to support this with funding to December 2027.

The accommodation arrangements of STYJS continue to offer co-location and co-working arrangements with the Middlesbrough Case Management and Resource Teams sharing an office space with Children's Social Care, Early Help and Education Teams. The Redcar Case Management Team will continue to be co-located within the Redcar Police HQ with links into Cleveland Police and Redcar Anti-Social Behaviour Teams. The YJS also has a full-time presence in the Youth Court and continues to provide a commissioned Court Service on behalf of Hartlepool YJS. One of the challenges facing STYJS is access to local reporting bases to support our work with young people. To mitigate against this, we have been able to secure access into the local community hubs and the Live Well Centre in Middlesbrough.

## STYJS Management Board

STYJS is accountable to a multi-agency Management Board, currently chaired by the Middlesbrough Executive Director of Children's Services. The membership and terms of reference of the Management Board are reviewed annually and membership is at an appropriate Senior Officer level to contribute to and support decision making in Management Board meetings. The Management Board is reflective of our statutory partners and other essential partners and consists of representatives from:

- Middlesbrough Council, Children's Social Care
- Middlesbrough Council Education Services
- Middlesbrough Council, Elected Member
- South Tees Public Health
- Redcar and Cleveland Council, Children's Services
- Redcar and Cleveland Council, Elected member
- Cleveland Police
- Probation Service
- North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
- HM Courts and Tribunals Service
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner( Including CURV-Violence Reduction Unit)

The role of the Management Board is to:

- Provide strategic direction and challenge to the YJS management team on service delivery and development.
- Provide accountability for the performance of the service.
- Provide financial accountability to the service.
- Challenge partners with regards to their commitments to STYJS, including financial and resource commitments

The Management Board continues to ensure the multi-agency co-operation that enables STYJS to deliver effective youth justice services and improve outcomes for young people. Through a programme of quarterly meetings, the Management Board provides the strategic overview and direction and a framework for oversight, support and assurance for the work of STYJS.

The Management Board members provide links into other partnerships, and this offers the opportunity to promote the work of STYJS to a wider audience. This also offers the reciprocal arrangement where board members feed information from their partnerships to other board members and the management team to disseminate as appropriate to YJS staff.

During 2024-2025 we have delivered development sessions with board members. The aim of these sessions will be to support board members to understand their role and responsibilities to the partnership, how they support the Head of Service, Service staff and seconded officers. In addition, there has been a focus on the new inspection standards to ensure that board members understand the expectations placed them by the inspection process and their responsibilities for providing the strategic oversight of the service. This process will continue during 2025-2026 as we build towards a potential inspection and will ensure all partners are prepared for this.

In addition, during 2024-2025 board members have received an introduction to the Child First principle to assist them to understand their responsibilities to support the embedding this principle across the work of STYJS. Also, it offers the opportunity for board members to share the child first principle within their own organisations.

## Links to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)

STYJS continues to have strong working relationships with the OPCC. The OPCC financially support the work of STYJS, providing funding to STYJS to support the delivery of Out of Court Disposals, with specific reference to the delivery of the Community Resolution as the principal diversion option to prevent young people entering the youth justice system, this has contributed significantly to reducing

FTEs. STYJS will continue to offer a full range of OOCs to support the diversion of young people, including through the use of Outcome 22 to offer education-based alternatives to engage and support the young person.

During 2025-2026 STYJS will be working closely with the OPCC to support the introduction of Young Futures Prevention Partnership Panels during 2026. These will offer the opportunity to introduce multi agency responses to young people to draw them away from crime and anti-social behaviour by offering appropriate support and intervention within their own communities.



Cleveland Police area is designated as a Violence Reduction Unit area and the OPCC has developed the Cleveland Unit for the Reduction of Violence (CURV) to co-ordinate the delivery of the Violence Reduction Strategy locally.

During 2024-2025 this partnership working with the OPCC and CURV has been further enhanced with the embedding of the Custody Navigators project with additional funding from CURV to extend the programme for an additional year. STYJS and CURV are also currently taking a collaborative approach to design an application to the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) to secure additional funding to support and enhance the Navigator programme for a further 2 years.

The Navigators continue to provide additional support and engagement to young people in the custody area with the priority being those who have been arrested for serious violence offences. The project builds on the 'reachable and teachable' moments where a young person may be more receptive to intervention. Since the introduction of the Navigators over 200 young people from the South Tees area have been supported in police custody. The Custody Navigators project is a central theme of the CURV model enabling services to engage with young people in police custody.

The model has proven to be a significant success and has attracted interest from other Violence Reduction Unit partnerships who are seeking to introduce similar custody-based programmes.

## Staffing

STYJS is a multi-agency team with staff drawn from a range of professional backgrounds including Social Work, Probation, Police, Education, Youth Work and Substance Misuse Services. This allows for a complex mix of knowledge and experience which ensures that the service can respond to the needs of young people based on the knowledge and expertise provided by our staff team.

In 2025-2026 the service will have 47 individual members of staff with no vacancies currently. During 2024-2025 we have reprofiled some roles to support the service in how responds to changing priorities and support growth in key areas. A new Restorative Justice Worker has been added to the team and this will enhance the service we can offer to victims and support a broader range of restorative interventions. One of the key risks and challenges for STYJS during 2025-2026 will be to secure the additional funding needed to secure the future of roles funded by short term funding, including the Custody Navigators and we will continue to work with the OPCC/CURV to identify opportunities to secure the future of these roles.

Increases in the workload in case management of young people has meant that we have also invested in an additional case manager and support workers to ensure that workloads are effectively managed, and we can offer appropriate responses to young people.

The service structure, detailed at appendix 3, shows how these staff are deployed. The service currently has 32 female members of staff and 11 males, with currently 4 vacancies which are currently being recruited to. In terms of ethnicity, 1 member of staff is of Pakistani origin, with the remaining staff being white British.

The majority of staff are employed by Middlesbrough Council on behalf of the partnership, with additional staff seconded from partners including Cleveland Police and the South Tees Speech and Language Service. The YJS continues to be without a seconded Probation Officer, despite this being part of the statutory requirements placed on our partners. Arrangements are in place with key points of contact to ensure that a pathway is in place to support transition. Discussions are ongoing regarding how the role can be filled and there is currently an arrangement in place for the service to claim back the financial costs of this role and this funding is used to support a Case Manager role in the service.

STYJS has 3 core teams, these include a case management teams for each local authority area and a resource team which works across the service area and supports the delivery of case management and service development activity.

The Case Management Teams are comprised of:

- An Operations Manager
- Assistant Operations Manager
- Youth Justice Case Managers
- Turnaround Case Managers
- Probation Officer
- Support Workers

The Resource Team is comprised of:

- Partnerships Manager
- 2 Assistant Operations Managers
- Education Training and Employment Specialist
- Restorative Justice Specialist
- Specialist Court Officer
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Police Officers
- 2 Restorative Justice Workers
- 4 Custody Navigators
- Support Workers
- Business Support Officer
- Business Support Workers

The YJS also has access to a Business Analytics Partner who is based within the Information and Governance Team in Middlesbrough Council. Finance support is provided by a Finance Business Partner from Middlesbrough Council's Finance Section and the YJS receives Human Resources support and guidance by the Middlesbrough Council HR section.

The provision of a dedicated Court Specialist ensures that STYJS provides appropriate and timely responses to young people in the Court arena. The Court Specialist also advises and informs Court users and supports decision making. This Court Specialist is supported by other YJS staff during busy Court periods. STYJS also supports colleagues in other YJS areas delivering a Court service on behalf of Hartlepool YJS and supporting other services from the region when young people appear at Teesside Courts. The quality and the effectiveness of YJS staff in Court is recognised and valued by other Court users, including the judiciary.

STYJS structure ensures that the service is adaptable and responsive to changing needs and priorities, whilst ensuring both local authority areas are effectively served. The service model supports effective responses to the challenges posed by the changing nature of the types of offending we encounter with increases in serious and violent crime and the impact of forms of exploitation. The structure has also allowed us to develop opportunities to intervene earlier, expanding the opportunities at OOC, the delivery of Turnaround and group-based activity in the community and with schools. STYJS will continue to promote a learning and development culture in the service, which supports practice improvement and provides opportunity for staff development.

### **Involvement of Community Volunteers**

The work of STYJS is supported by a small group of volunteers recruited from our local community, who offer the service invaluable life skills, life experiences and local knowledge which can be used to great effect to engage and support young people. During 2025-2026 we will be looking to broaden the remit of our volunteer offer. In addition to our volunteers who satisfy a statutory requirement by facilitating Referral Order panels, we are recruiting and training volunteers to fulfil other functions e.g. reparation, assisting with young people's groups and acting as appropriate adult. We are particularly interested in engaging parents of our young people and others with lived experience of the issues faced by young people in the hope of developing their skills and confidence, whilst making a valuable contribution to the team.

### **Staff Development and Training**

An important element in delivering high quality services is to develop the staff team to build an extensive skills, knowledge and experience base to fulfil the duties and requirements of their role. STYJS will continue to follow the Middlesbrough Council People Strategy as we look to invest in our staff team to ensure that we have the right people with the right behaviours and skills to deliver the outcomes as detailed in this plan.

STYJS continues to invest in our staff team using the following processes:

- Using the Middlesbrough Council Corporate Induction Programme for all new staff to ensure that they receive a co-ordinated introduction to the YJS, with all the necessary corporate training to meet statutory duties.
- Provide regular monthly supervision as a tool to support professional judgement, including regular performance related issues and staff development.
- Provide a process of annual appraisal and ongoing appraisal reviews to ensure performance is effectively managed and staff development opportunities can be realised.
- Provide opportunities for staff to access training and development opportunities to support their professional and personal growth, including.
  - Access to Middlesbrough Council Corporate Training
  - Access to the Youth Justice Application Framework
  - Accessing STSCP Training
  - Attending conferences and development sessions relevant to role

During 2024-2025 STYJS has invested in a training and development programme to impart the Child First Principle across all areas of the service. This has included development sessions for staff to assist them with their understanding of how Child First should guide how we assess, plan, deliver and



review the work we do with young people. An awareness session has also been delivered to Management Board members to assist their understanding and how their role can support Child First delivery and present the Child First message to their own service areas. During 2025-2026 we will continue to build on this Child First foundation to ensure staff are equipped with the assessment and planning skills and experience and are able to include young people on this journey.

STYJS has also invested in training for case management staff to increase knowledge and understanding of risk management processes and how this applies to violence with a programme of SAVRY training delivered and MAPPA training for all staff. In addition, we have continued to deliver our programme of Restorative Practice training to staff to ensure that restorative working is a key thread across practice.

STYJS delivers a programme of monthly team meetings with the full staff team. These meetings provide opportunities for professional collaboration among staff, with a focus on emerging issues input from partners and updates on service developments. The team meetings also offer an invaluable social function providing opportunities for the full team to come together and catch up with colleagues and friends.

## **RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

### **Budget 2025-2026**

The final grant figure from the YJB for 2025-2026 has been announced with a figure of £1,054,844 and the settlement figure represents a 1.5% uplift on the figure for 2024-2025. STYJS welcomes this further investment in our work by the YJB. The final budget figure for 2025 -2026 will also include contributions from partners as well as the YJB grant, plus the continued in-kind support of a seconded Probation Officer or a financial settlement if this post cannot be filled, 2 seconded Police Officers and the accommodation provided by Cleveland Police at the Redcar Police HQ. This figure will also include a £6998.25.00 payment from Hartlepool YJS for the provision of Court services.

Staffing costs represent the largest expenditure item for STYJS and as detailed above during 2024-2025 STYJS has continued to invest in our staffing resources with the support of additional funding streams, securing new posts in the Restorative Justice/Victim area of the service which will improve service delivery and promote positive outcomes victims and for young people.

### **YJB Grant Funding 2025-2026:**

The YJB grant allowance for 2025-2026 is £1,054,844 has been agreed. This funding will continue to be the most significant element of the budget and continues to support the work we are looking to undertake in response to our priority areas and statutory duties.

STYJS has been able to maintain service levels, sustain continuous improvements in our performance, achieving positive outcomes for the young people we work with. This has been achieved despite serving communities who experience significant levels of deprivation and with young people who demonstrate increasingly complex needs.

The YJB Grant will continue to be used efficiently and to maximum effect to improve the range of services we have with young people.

### **Turnaround Funding 2025-2026:**

STYJS is to receive a grant of £166,788.40 from the Ministry of Justice to support the delivery of the Turnaround Programme during 2025-2026. This funding will be used to assist STYJS to meet the reduced target to successfully engage 48 young people into the Turnaround programme during 2025-2026. This represents an individual 'base unit' of approximately £3043 per child.

This funding will be used to support the programme and enhance activities with young people through the delivery of bespoke programmes of intervention and support for those young people accessing the programme.



## Remand Framework for Children 2025-2026

We are currently awaiting our settlement figure to support Remand costs for 2025-2026.

During 2024-2025 the total remand costs accrued by the YJS for young people RYDA from the STYJS area was £147,928 which represents a 40% increase in the remand costs to the service compared to the previous year.

It is anticipated that the costs for RYDA will continue to represent a significant risk to the service during 2025-2026. There are currently 2 young people whose remand episodes have rolled over from the previous year, who have been charged with murder and their trials are not due to commence until November 2025. A further 2 young people who have been charged with attempted murder are RYDA and no date has yet been set for trial.

The young people we work are increasing complex in their needs and behaviours and can present with significant risks linked to forms of exploitation which can draw them into more serious types of offending. STYJS will continue to mitigate against remands to youth detention through the effective use of our court services and to offer bespoke bail packages which offer opportunities to case manage young people in the community.

The remand grant is complimented by additional funding from the 2 local authorities, £30,400 from Middlesbrough and £35,120 from Redcar and Cleveland, and this additional funding will be used to mitigate against any additional costs over the allocated remand grant from the YJB.



## Funding from the PCC:

STYJS will continue to receive funding from the OPCC to support our early intervention and prevention and diversion work through the enhanced OOC model. STYJS has extended the OOC offer for young people with the increasing use of Outcome 22 as an educational intervention with young people, in many cases also supported by Turnaround. The extension of the provision offered as part of our OOC programme has led to a marked increase in work in this area and we continue to have low levels of re-offending by young people subject to OOCs.

During 2025-2026 STYJS will receive additional funding through CURV, of £189,688.00 to support the delivery of a Cleveland wide Custody Navigator project. This funding will continue to be used to

support the staffing costs relating to the project with a small additional fund to support interventions and activities with young people. One of the priorities for the service during 2025-2026 will be to work with the OPCC to identify future funding opportunities to support the work of the Custody Navigators. To this end an application to the Youth Endowment Fund has been made and we are working with the YEF to progress this.

## PROGRESS AGAINST THE 2024-2025 YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

During 2024-2025 the priorities for STYJS were to focus on further developing the prevention and diversion offer to ensure that we continue to reduce the numbers of young people entering the criminal justice system. In addition, there was also focus on challenging serious youth violence the most significant challenge we currently face in our work with young people, especially those most vulnerable and difficult to engage. Underpinning all our work has been the child first principle, responding to the needs of the individual child and ensuring they have a voice and are listened to.

The 2024-2025 the priorities to support ongoing service development were:

Priority 1: Prevention and Diversion- To further develop opportunities for prevention and early intervention with young people and their families.

Priority 2: Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation- To further develop practice to ensure that STYJS can respond appropriately and effectively to the needs of young people involved in or at risk of serious violence and/or exploitation.

Priority 3: Preparation for Inspection- To ensure that STYJS are fully prepared for the challenge of a potential HMIP Inspection during 2024-25.

Priority 4: Education, Training and Employment- To ensure that all young people supervised by STYJS have access to opportunities for Education, Training and Employment.

Priority 5: Resettlement- To ensure that young people are effectively supported upon resettlement to the community.

Priority 6: Restorative Practice- To establish a Restorative Culture in STYJS which supports effective work with the young people and communities we serve.

The priorities in the Youth Justice Plan are supported by a service development plan which details the actions to be achieved in relation to each of the service priorities. The service development plan for 2024-2025 outlined a total of 31 individual actions across the 6 priority areas. The service development plan provides the framework for the YJS management team to monitor progress against the key actions related to each priority area, to identify where progress is being made and to mitigate against those areas where further development is required or provide explanations where this will not be met. This development plan is monitored monthly by the YJS management team at the monthly management meetings.

Progress detailed in the service development plan shows that 29 of the actions were achieved with a further 6 making significant progress. The remaining 2 actions were not achieved over the course of the year, and these will roll over into 2025-2026 development plan. The first such action related to a proposed mapping of services for young people at risk of exploitation, this action was overtaken by wider strategic developments with the change of VEMT processes towards a Harm Outside of the Home model which is currently being embedded. The second outstanding action relates to the renewal of the Restorative Justice Organisation accreditation achieved by STYJS in 2023. It was agreed that the service needed to make further developments to establish restorative practice as a 'golden thread' across all practice and therefore it was decided that this application would be deferred to 2025-2026.

Achievements made against each priority include:

Priority 1: Prevention and Diversion- To further develop opportunities for prevention and early intervention with young people and their families.

- 2024-2025 has been a year of transition with uncertainty over the future of Turnaround. As a result, a scoping exercise was undertaken to assist the YJS to understand what the priorities were to be for prevention and diversion during 2025-2026.
- STYJS has continued to deliver its successful Tuff Tees programme for boys and young men.

- The future of the Custody Navigators programme was secured for a further year with additional funding from the OPCC.
- A programme of group-based work was delivered in schools with an increase in work with primary schools

Priority 2: Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation- To further develop practice to ensure that STYJS can respond appropriately and effectively to the needs of young people involved in or at risk of serious violence and/or exploitation.

- STYJS has been an active participant in the evolution to a Harm Outside of the Harm (HOtH) arrangement to address exploitation of young people.
- Partnership working with SHiFT has been introduced to support young people at risk of becoming involved in exploitation and offending behaviours.
- All case holding staff have been training using SAVRY to enhance the levels of understand of risk around violence.

Priority 3: Preparation for Inspection- To ensure that STYJS are fully prepared for the challenge of a potential HMIP Inspection during 2024-25.

- YJS managers attended the HMIP consultation seminars on the new Inspection criteria.
- STYJS has undertaken a bench marking exercise to self-assess our preparation for inspection.
- The YJS Management Board have been briefed and understand their responsibilities to the inspection process.
- A programme of training and support has been introduced to prepare STYJS staff for a future inspection.

Priority 4: Education, Training and Employment- To ensure that all young people supervised by STYJS have access to opportunities for Education, Training and Employment.

- STYJS has employed a new ETE Specialist to lead in this area of work.
- A review and audit of practice was delivered, and this identified areas for development.
- The Inclusion Pathway has now been embedded as the primary pathway to support young people at risk of exclusion or poor attendance.
- The new ETE Specialist has re-established key links to education support services.

Priority 5: Resettlement- To ensure that young people are effectively supported upon resettlement to the community.

- A new Remand Strategy was prepared and agreed with partners.
- Resettlement planning was introduced as part of the wider risk management meeting to ensure a co-ordinated approach to resettlement.
- STYJS has continued to support the attendance of parents/carers in the resettlement process including support and transport to establishments to attend meetings.

Priority 6: Restorative Practice- To establish a Restorative Culture in STYJS which supports effective work with the young people and communities we serve.

- All staff have received Restorative Practice training.
- The Restorative Practice Guidance has been reviewed and update to reflect the changing priorities and requirements of the inspection criteria.
- A new Restorative Justice Worker has been employed.
- An audit of victim focussed work was undertaken to identify areas for service development and areas of good practice.
- A non-managerial, reflective supervision and support service was introduced for staff working with victims.

## PERFORMANCE AND PRIORITIES

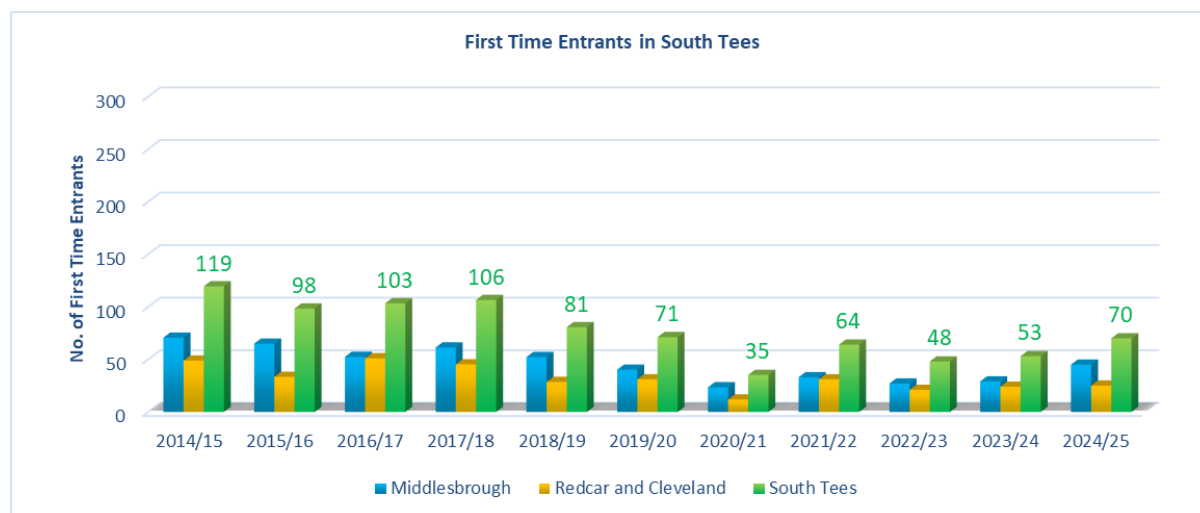
### National Outcome Measures

#### First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System:

During 2024-2025 there were 70 First Time Entrants (FTEs) into the Youth Justice system. This represents an increase of 17 FTEs, 32%, from 53 the previous year, this included 45 from Middlesbrough and 25 from Redcar and Cleveland.

This is continuing a recent trend with increases in FTEs experienced by STYJS over the past 3 years after we had experienced a long period of sustained reduction in FTEs. This also reflects the experiences of YJS locally, regionally and nationally where information shows an upward trend.

STYJS continues to benefit from the enhanced OOCDS model currently being delivered in partnership with Cleveland Police and the OPCC and during 2024-2025 we have continued to promote OOCDS as appropriate responses to young people's behaviours with the use of Community Resolution, Restorative Interventions and Outcome 22 as important options to divert young people away from the youth justice system.



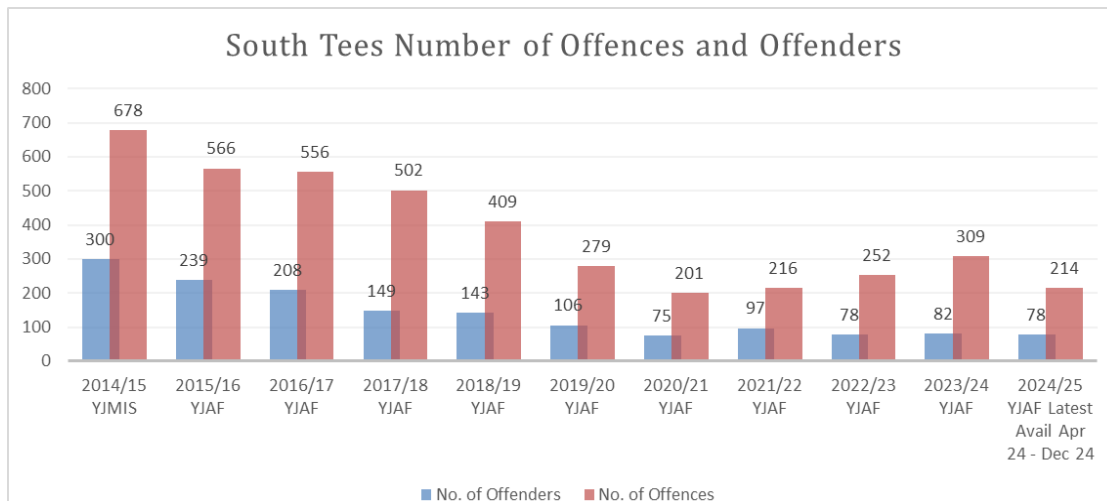
#### Re-offending:

The re-offending cohort for 2024-2025 consists of 73 and this is an increase of 27 young people based on the cohort for 2023-2024. Broken down further to local authority area this cohort consists of 50 young people from Middlesbrough and 23 from Redcar and Cleveland. The increase in the cohort shows that there is now a trend for the re-offending cohort to be increasing in recent years.

Based on the available data on this cohort a total of 19 young people re-offended or 26% of the cohort, with a total of 106 offences committed by the cohort. This figure compares to a level of re-offending of 26.1% during the same period in 2023-24, where there were 46 young people in the cohort and 13 young people re-offended.

By area 14 young people from Middlesbrough re-offended, 28% of the cohort with these young people committing a total of 63 further offences during this period. For Redcar and Cleveland 5 young people re-offended or 17.2% of the cohort, with these young people committing 43 further offences.

STYJS uses the re-offending tracking tool to monitor a number of cohorts to assess re-offending levels for live caseloads. These are monitored by the YJS management team on a monthly basis and enable us to identify and track those young people involved in offending and further amend our plans to challenge this behaviour.



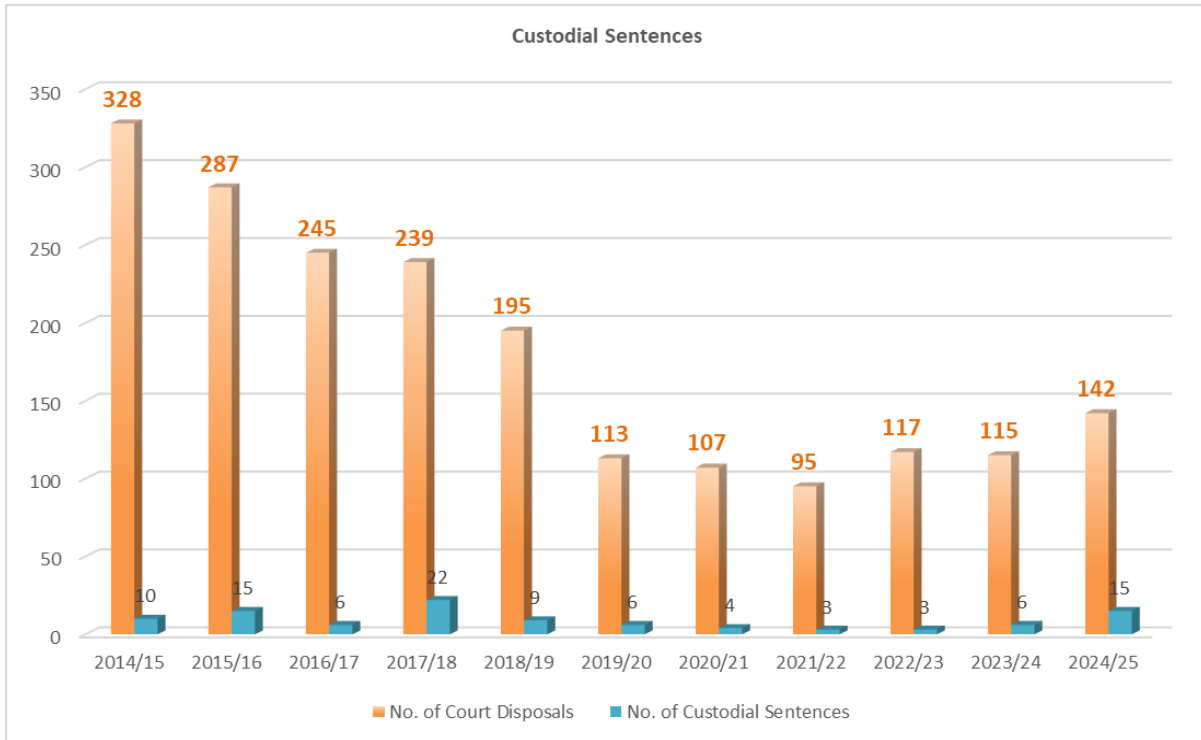
### Use of custody - Custodial Sentences

During 2024-2025 there were a total of 15 custodial outcomes out of a total of 142 court outcomes. This represents a significant increase to the previous year's total of 6 custodial outcomes. 8 of the young people were from Middlesbrough with 7 from Redcar and Cleveland.

The overall custody rate for STYJS in 2023-2024 was 10.6% (15 out 142 court outcomes) and means that the custody rate was above the indicative target of 5%.

The increase in the use of custodial outcomes reflects the challenge presented to STYJS with increasing numbers of young people becoming involved in serious and violent offending and more young people becoming involved in forms of exploitation which can draw them into serious offending behaviours.

All custodial outcomes are subject to scrutiny by STYJS Management Team to ensure that these are appropriate. The reviews of custodial outcomes indicate that the young people we are working continue to be very complex and challenging with regards to the risks they pose to themselves and others, their engagement and compliance and levels of re-offending. This is reflected in the higher incidences of violent offending and use of weapons.



### Use of Custody- Remands to Youth Justice Accommodation

There were 15 remand episodes for 13 young people in 2024-2025 accounting for 451 remand bed nights. This is a significant increase from the total young number people remanded from 6 in 2024-2025, and a significant increase in the number of remand bed nights from 272.

All young people were aged between 15-17 years at the time of their remands and were all accommodated in a YOI. Overall, the number of remand episodes reflect the serious nature of the offences committed by young people including 2 young people subject to a charge of murder, 1 young person subject to charge of attempted murder, and 3 young people charged with Robbery.

A review of the outcomes for the young people remanded shows that 5 young people subsequently received community sentences despite spending between 22 to 69 nights on remand.

Young people were made subject to a custodial remand because bail was refused in all cases due to the nature of the risks to the public and the seriousness of the offences. STYJS will offer bail packages where it is assessed that the nature of the young person's behaviour and the risk they pose can be managed effectively in the community.

Remands to Youth Detention Accommodation continue to be a significant financial challenge for STYJS with total remands costs of £147,928 for 2024-2025. This figure is significantly higher than the remand provided by the YJB and our partners.

All remand outcomes are subject to scrutiny by the STYJS Management Team to ensure that they are appropriate and in line with the alleged offending by the young person and meet the criteria for remands.

## NATIONAL PRIORITY AREAS

### Children from Groups Which are Overrepresented

As detailed previously the demographic profile for the STYJS shows that the make of the young people we work with is White European and this is representative of the local population. Young



people from Black, Chinese or Asian backgrounds are not overrepresented and children from mixed heritage families represent 5% of the population the highest ethnic grouping other than White European.

STYJS will continue to respond to the individual needs of young people and will adapt practice to meet these needs including introducing interpreters and being sensitive to individual cultural issues.

In regard to other factors impacting on the cohort, for SEND there were 155 young people assessed with special educational needs on the caseload during 2024-2025, approximately 18.5% of the caseload. The YJS Education Specialist has established effective information sharing strategies with the SEND teams in both areas and these allow for case manager to secure information on EHCPs and SEN support to include in assessments and plans for young people.

With regards to the Speech and Language Needs of young people 97 young people were assessed as having speech, language and communication needs using AssetPlus, representing 11.6% of the cohort. The Specialist Speech Therapist role is now established in the service and this worker ensure that information can be shared, referrals can be acted upon, and young people receive the services they need in a timely manner. STYJS has extended this provision to December 2027.

44 young people who were in local authority care were on the YJS caseload in 2024-2025 representing 5.3% of the cohort. This figure is above than the national average of 3% for England. This is an area of significant concern for the YJS and our partners in Children Services and we continue to work together to understand the needs of this group and work together to safeguard these young people. STYJS ensures that we have representations at the child in care planning processes and arrangements to ensure a joined-up approach. In response to this the YJS is:

- 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 has access to STYJS case management system 'Childview' which allows for checks to be made as a referral is received to ascertain if the case is open to STYJS and ensure that joint working commences at the earliest opportunity.
- When any Looked After Child is placed out of area (who is subject to a Criminal Court Order) STYJS retain responsibility for the Order. Care taking arrangements will be put in place for the child with the local YJS in line with the national protocol, however STYJS will remain in contact with the child on at least a monthly basis to maintain the relationship with the child.
- The Turnaround criteria now allows the YJS to work with young people in the care of the local authority.

STYJS is mindful of the recent Casey Report on the impact of grooming gangs and their involvement with looked after children. STYJS will continue to recognise young people impacted by such behaviours as victims and seek to safeguard them against further harm.

## Policing

STYJS continues to have a strong and positive relationship with Cleveland Police and the strength of this partnership is evidenced by the presence of 2 highly experienced and knowledgeable Police Officers.

The YJS seconded Police Officers provide a key link into operational police activity, sharing intelligence and information from YJS staff and in the opposite direction from Police systems. The YJS Police Officers have access to all required Police systems, and this supports the referral process for OOCd and the identification process for young people who could be referred to Turnaround. YJS staff use the Police Intelligence form to share any necessary intelligence and concerns with the Police Officers to feed back to Policing teams. The YJS Police Officers are also available as sources of information to Police colleagues and offer advice and guidance on the options available to engage a young person. In addition, they also engage in work with young people, including offence specific work including such things as driving interventions and working with young people from a restorative perspective.

The Children in Police Custody Group provides a forum for positive discussion and learning regarding young people's experience in custody, timeliness of the availability of appropriate adults and other factors such as searches.

Also, the Custody Navigators Programme has now been firmly embedded as a key service for young people in custody and is highly valued by the Police Staff in Custody. The Navigators provide a key support function in custody and can intervene pro-actively with young people in custody and this frees Police Officers and Detention staff to undertake other duties. The STYJS also contributes to the Police Custody Partnership forum for discussing issues arising from custody, sharing information and sharing good practice.

## Detention in Police Custody

STYJS takes the lead for a Cleveland area wide Children in Police Custody Group which monitors the experience of young people in Police Custody under PACE. The group meets monthly with a strong involvement from most key partners, including Cleveland Police, Youth Justice Services and agencies working within the Police Custody area.

The purpose of this Children in Police Custody steering group is to scrutinise instances where young people have been held overnight or longer than 12 hours in Police Custody. This group offers the opportunity for professional challenge and multi-agency learning when PACE transfers have been unsuccessful. In addition, the group has evolved to include the review other issues including the timeliness of appropriate adult provision stop and search data and searches of young people in custody. This scrutiny activity offers all stakeholders the assurance that children and young people have been held in Police custody appropriately, and the Custody Concordat has been adhered to.

This group reports on a quarterly basis to the YJS Management Board which provides scrutiny and a performance framework for reporting into other strategic forums. Data from January and February 2024 shows that 39 young people from the South Tees area were discussed, with 6 PACE beds being requested. The outcomes from such requests showed that no children were transferred due to the lack of availability of beds, with 2 young people deemed unpracticable to transfer due to the time of night and requirement to be at Court the next morning. The availability of PACE beds continues to be a challenge, and this is an area for ongoing discussion locally. The group are satisfied all children are safeguarded appropriately during their custodial episode, and most safeguarding referrals were made appropriately and in a timely manner.

STYJS provides an Appropriate Adult service to support young people in custody within the Police Juvenile Custody area in Middlesbrough. The service is available for all instances where parents or other trusted adults and social are unavailable or unable to attend to support the young person in Police Custody. As well as meeting the needs of young people in the South Tees area the service also supports young people from other YJS areas who have been arrested locally. This service is also provided out of office hours by the Emergency Duty Team.

STYJS continue to promote the ongoing development of the Trauma Informed Young People's Custody Area to ensure young people have a less traumatic experience in Police Custody. A key part of this project is the support offered by the Custody Navigators who are available to engage with young people in custody and also offer diversionary tools and other activities including books to support young people in custody.

## Prevention

Turnaround continues to be the primary preventions programme available to the YJS. During 2024-2025 198 young people were referred for Turnaround with 90 young people agreeing to engage with the programme and 67 young people successfully completing the programme.

STYJS welcomes the decision to extend the Turnaround Programme for a further year and the revision of the eligibility criteria which now allows young people open to Children's Service under Child Protection or as Children in Care. This allows STYJS to offer the provision to more young people who come into contact with the Police to prevent any further escalation of their offending.

During 2025-2026 we will be working with our partners, including the OPCC to lay the foundations of the Young Future Prevention Partnerships as a basis for promoting collaboration across services to identify opportunities to develop responses to young people who become involved in crime, serious violent behaviours and other issues, including anti-social behaviour.

As detailed below STYJS continues to deliver school-based group programmes and the Tuff Tees and Ladybugs programmes, and this group work provision will be extended to include a group for NEET young people and young people identified as victims of crime.

## Diversion

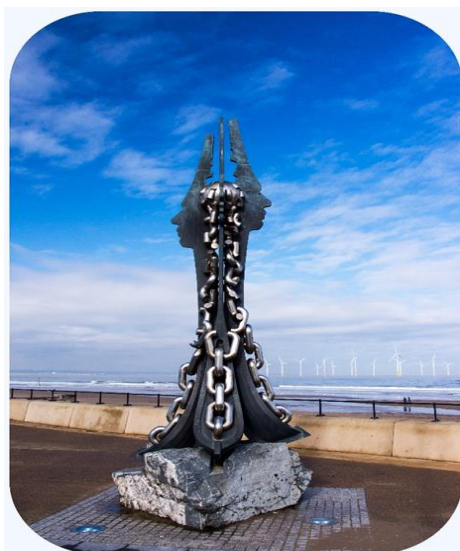
STYJS offers the enhanced OOC as the primary set of diversion activities we provide for young people, and we deliver this in partnership with Cleveland Police. This scheme is based on referrals from Cleveland Police which are screened by the YJS Police Officers and duty manager to ensure they are suitable for an OOC as opposed to being returned to the Police for prosecution. This decision is based on any known previous history of the young person, levels of engagement with previous programmes and the nature and seriousness of the offence. The referral is subsequently reviewed at the OOC Panel, following assessment of the young person before a final decision can be made on the most appropriate option to be offered to meet the needs of the young person and respond to the needs of victims and communities.

The OOC offer includes a range of interventions including Outcome 22, Restorative Intervention, Community Resolution, Youth Caution and Youth Conditional Caution, with Outcome 22 also supported by Turnaround where appropriate. Young people can receive an appropriate OOC at any time, there is no escalator process, and the aim is to address the young person's behaviour without recourse to further involvement in the criminal justice system, through Court for example. The OOC offer is a key tool for reducing FTEs.

All young people who receive an OOC are assessed using the Prevention and Diversion (PaD) assessment tool and this ensures that they have a robust assessment which supports our understanding of the young person's needs and can support the tailoring of interventions to meet this need.

During 2023-2024 there were 274 OOC outcomes and increase from the previous year with 9.9% going on to re-offend and be re-referred to the YJS.

Reporting on performance for diversionary activities is to the YJS Management Board and the OPCC who provide funding to support this area of work.



## Remands

STYJS recognises the importance of supporting and engaging young people in community settings and seeks to minimise the use of RYDA where this is possible. However, during 2024-2025 there have been significant challenges presented by the complex nature of the young people we work with, the challenge placed by forms of exploitation and young people's willingness to engage in serious and violent behaviours. And these have contributed to higher levels of RYDA. During 2025-26 there were 21 remand outcomes including 1 RYDA for young people, 3 Remands to Local Authority Accommodation, 2 ISS Bail and 1 Court Bail Support Programme.

When considering options for young people at risk of Remand to YDA, STYJS Court staff will engage in discussion with other relevant court users (CPS and defence for example) to discuss what we feel is an appropriate option based on the nature of offending and the risks presented by the young person. All options will be considered including bail support and remands to local authority care where this is a suitable alternative to a remand to YDA.

The 2023 Standards for Children in the Justice System audit identified that the STYJS Remand Strategy was out of date. A new Remand Strategy has now been implemented and this is used to guide practice in this area of our work. STYJS is also compliant with the requirements of the Remand Concordat.

## Restorative Approaches and victims

The revised HMIP inspection criteria has given rise to increased expectation and new challenges in terms of how we evidence our work with victims. There is a shift in emphasis towards ensuring work is "high quality, individualised and responsive", and this has resulted in significant change in how we document our assessment of need, record contacts and monitor performance.

Whilst the revised standard does not represent a significant change in how we currently work with victims, it is acknowledged that child victims in particular are at risk of becoming involved in criminal activity as a result of their experience. We will offer an enhanced service to vulnerable victims, recognising that child victims are considered as such, and will ensure they are able to access a range of services currently enjoyed by other children who are open to our service. This will include the development of a support group to focus on confidence building and increasing self-esteem.

The service has recently invested significantly in this area of work, we have employed an additional RJ/victim worker and purchased increased functionality for our case management system to assist with recording ensure that we can capture victim information which we can use to develop victim profiles and provide analysis to support future service delivery.

To ensure that staff in this area of work receive the support they need we have also introduced reflective supervision and support services through an independent external provider. This service provides staff with the opportunity to talk through their experiences and ensure that they are effectively supported.

The increased capacity in the team will enable the RJ Specialist to focus on quality assurance and performance monitoring and the development of systems and processes to meet the standard required.

We will continue to strive to be a restorative organisation and offer restorative justice as a means of repairing harm. We will also develop our restorative parenting programme and continue to develop meaningful reparation projects, to meet the aims of adopting a child first approach whilst ensuring this is balanced with meeting the needs of victims.

## **Serious Violence, Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding**

During 2024-2025 STYJS has experienced a higher-than-average level of referrals for young people who have engaged in serious and violent offending. Currently we have 2 young people RYDA for murder and 1 young person RYDA for attempted murder. Such offences reflect the propensity of a small minority of young people to engage in violent offending, much of this driven by their experience of exploitation and involvement in organised crime.

STYJS has an established relationship with CURV, the Cleveland Unit for the Reduction of Violence with representation at both strategic and operational level enabling the YJS to have a voice in key decision making. The Custody Navigators have developed into a highly regarded flagship project for the CURV. The Navigators are based in the police custody suite in Middlesbrough, and this provides the opportunity to engage with young people involved in serious and violent offending and offer them support and access to services. The Navigators work pro-actively with other services in custody to ensure a joined-up approach to meeting the needs of the young person and provide ongoing support in the community where this is needed and the young person agrees to engage, including those young people released on bail or released under investigation.

Multi Agency arrangements to support and guide practice in the area of serious violence and exploitation have evolved with a Cleveland wide Harm Outside of the Home (HOTH) model now being implemented and this has representation from all key partners. STYJS is also represented by the Head of Service in the Tees Strategic Group and representation is also in place at HOTH subgroups and vulnerable children/risk management groups in both local authorities. These offer a co-ordinated case level approach to supporting the young person with each agency accountable for their role in the young person's plan.

SHiFT is now established across the South Tees area and STYJS works closely with colleagues in the SHiFT teams to ensure a joined-up approach with young people on the edge of care and at risk of becoming involved in exploitation and serious violence. The Head of the YJS Service also has the strategic oversight of the SHiFT service in Middlesbrough and this includes the line management and support for the SHiFT Lead Guide.

## **Working with Families**

STYJS recognises the importance of working with the whole family as well as with the individual child. We seek to engage with parents and carers to ensure that they can be supported and to assist our work with their child. STYJS engages with Early Help services to offer pathways for those families which need more support, and we work closely with the Supporting Families Service to ensure that families can be identified for additional support where required.

The prevention group programmes Tuff Tees and Ladybugs also offer support to siblings of young people engaged with this service. In this way we hope to maximise engagement and meet the needs of all family members where appropriate. Turnaround also offers a whole family approach to those families who need it.

## Use of Custody and Constructive Resettlement

STYJS has experienced a significant rise in the use of custody during 2024-2025, with 15 young people receiving custodial outcomes at court, compared to the figure of 6 custodial outcomes for 2024-2025. This increase reflects some of the challenges the YJS faces with regards to increases in serious and violent offending and the impact of exploitation on an already vulnerable group. During 2024-2025 we have experienced high levels of violent offending with 1 young person sentenced to custody for attempted murder and current 2 young people RYDA for murder and 1 for attempted murder.

STYJS recognises the importance of a co-ordinated and positive resettlement approach, and we seek to ensure that all sentence planning is robust with discussion taking place from the point of sentence on the most appropriate licence conditions to help support the resettlement of the young person back into the community.

STYJS also recognises the importance of resettlement planning, and we seek to ensure that this starts at the earliest stages. We undertake a multi-agency approach to build on the strengths identified with the young person and address any challenges to effective resettlement with discussions undertaken through the ETE Specialist who will act as a broker to ensure education, training or employment needs are a focus in the resettlement plan. Ongoing liaison takes place with children's services and the allocated social worker, to ensure their duties to the young person are fulfilled and appropriate plans for release are in place within a timely manner. All young people are visited in line with the required standards, a minimum of once per month and families are actively encouraged and supported to attend visits and review meetings. This process is supported by our practice standards framework which underpins joint working with children's services and details the commitments and responsibilities of both service areas to support young people through the resettlement process.

## Education Training and Employment

The new ETE Specialist joined the YJS in August 2024. During 2025-2026 the ETE Specialist will be further establishing effective information sharing arrangements with schools and other ETE providers, embedding the Inclusion Pathway and ensuring joined up approaches to meet the ETE needs of young people in partnership with education support services and the NEET teams.

The YJS has not specifically identified Education, Training and Employment as one of our key priorities for 2025-2026. However, we feel that this is key theme which will cut across all the four priorities and engaging young people in ETE will be a key outcome if we are to make progress across the priority areas.

The ETE Specialist role has re-established links with all education, training, employment and support providers in the South Tees area, supporting this work with guidance documents and protocols to ensure joint approaches and the sharing of information. Links have been established with SEN, Inclusion, Schools, PRUs and other providers to ensure that where required additional support can be offered to assist young people to engage or re-engage with education. The ETE specialist attends education panels, forums, networking meetings and multiagency partnership meetings with regards to ETE, to build strong working relationships, have a greater knowledge of provisions available to the young people with the local area, share best practice and offer advice and guidance. STYJS has joint working protocols in place that allows the service to share information and data on a monthly cycle on school age young people. This information goes to the virtual school, SEN and Inclusion team.

A key part of the work of the ETE specialist has been to challenge issues with education providers where young people's educational needs are not being met, requesting further assessments of potential undiagnosed SEN needs, and being an advocate for young people that may be at risk of suspensions or permanent exclusions. The ETE specialist has worked alongside Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland Inclusion teams whose role it is to support young people, to improve access to education, Improve attendance, and behaviours in schools. The ETE specialist has liaised with Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland's SEN teams, attending EHCP reviews and PEPS for all young people who are working with STYJS.



STYJS have a high percentage of young people on caseload with a SEN need, 95 young people have an EHCP and 53 have a SEN support plan.

	Active YP	155
	EHCP	95
	SEN support plan	53
	SEN need on annual caseload	18.5%

STYJS also have an ETE support worker that has been in role for 19 years, she has a vast amount of expertise and knowledge regarding ETE and is qualified to be able to offer the young people careers advice and guidance. The support workers main role is to support young people that are NEET to get them into some form of training or employment depending on the need of the young person. There have been positive improvements in the NEET data, as shown in the table below:

	<b>Months</b>
<b>Term 1</b>	<b>July-October</b>
<b>Term 2</b>	<b>November- February</b>

Year	Active Cases	In ETE	Not in ETE	NEET %
<b>M'brough Term 1 (2024)</b>	88	68	20	<b>23%</b>
<b>Redcar Term 1 (2024)</b>	46	36	10	<b>22%</b>
<b>M'Brough Term 2 (2024-25)</b>	93	71	22	<b>24%</b>
<b>Redcar Term 2 (2024-25)</b>	52	46	6	<b>12%</b>

From May 2025 we have introduced NEET group for any young person involved with STYJS that is not in any form of Education, training or employment. The group is delivered fortnightly for 2 hours giving the young people an opportunity to discuss careers aspirations, receive advice and guidance on ETE, be supported with practical aspects such as opening a bank account, developing a CV, setting up an online job searching profile etc but in an informal way. There are also aspects of the group which includes building positive relationships and taking part in positive activities.

We have a small cohort of young people that are NEET and due to their offences or risk, education providers will not accept them into their provision. The ETE specialist has liaised with the local authority and discussed the potential of developing a High-Risk NEET panel. The panel would include the local authority, colleges, learning providers and employment agencies where they will be all sat around a table and the YJS ETE specialist will present the case of the young person who they are struggling to get an ETE placement for and Risk assessments will be available. This will allow for a transparent, robust and stronger partnership working which will hopefully encourage partnership agencies give the young person an opportunity to attend the provision.

## STANDARDS FOR CHILDREN IN THE YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM

In 2024-2025 there were no requirements for STYJS to engage in any mandatory self-assessments against the Standards for Children in the Youth Justice System. The monitoring we undertake for the National Performance Framework and KPIs means that we continue to monitor areas of the standards in particular those which monitor engagement and compliance by young people. These indicate that STYJS would be compliant against any self-assessments or reviews in this area.

STYJS has a programme of audits every year to assist us to monitor practice, highlight areas of good practice and areas for further development, training and learning. During 2025-2026 the theme of such audits will focus on all areas of case management as we seek to prepare ourselves against a potential HMIP inspection, including generic case file audits and audits of our practice with victims.



Mural by young people in partnership with the YJS, other partner agencies and local residents

## PRIORITIES FOR STYJS IN 2025-2026

Following consultation with all stakeholders the following priorities have been identified by STYJS during 2025-2026. These priorities were presented to the YJS Management Board in May 2025 and received the Management Board's agreement.

### Priority 1: Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation-

Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation continue to represent the most significant challenge to the YJS in our work with young people. During 2025-26 we have experienced a significant increase in the willingness of young people to use weapons and to engage in serious types of offending including incidences of young people becoming involved in alleged murders and attempted murders. The challenge for the YJS is to ensure that services do not work in isolation to address such issues but engage in co-ordinated strategies to support those young people at risk.

The Home Office Serious Violence Duty requires organisations to work together to challenge, prevent and reduce incidents of serious violence to make communities safer. STYJS adheres to this approach. Serious violence and exploitation are significant factors in the lives of the young people we work with and the YJS seeks to work with our colleagues in the Police, children's services and other public and voluntary sector services to co-ordinate our response to these issues.

The introduction of SHiFT and the evolution to the Harm Outside the Home (HoTH) models of working have created additional frameworks for STYJS to engage with partners, identifying those young people at risk of exploitation or involvement in serious violence and co-ordinating and targeting resource to meet their needs.

### Priority 2: Work with Victims

During 2024-2025 STYJS made further investment into the Restorative Justice section of the service, with the introduction of a new Restorative Justice Worker, bringing the establishment up to 3 full time workers. In addition, further investment was made in the reparation offer we make to victims and communities we service, with the development of the allotment in Redcar, new projects to work with charities and additional community-based schemes. The

YJS has now also secured an additional non-managerial support service for our staff working with victims of crime.

This additional investment in our work with victims and restorative justice provides the opportunity to further develop the restorative justice offer. We will seek to re-profile the role of the Restorative Justice Specialist to provide co-ordination and development of our Restorative practice, extending the offer made to volunteers and focus on performance and quality of practice.

The new HMIP Inspection Framework has placed a new challenge to YJS with regards to the services we offer to victims of crime. The investment made in this area will ensure that the YJS is well placed to respond to this challenge.

### **Priority 3: Child First Approaches**

During 2024-2025 the YJS invested significantly in building our approach using a Child First Principle. A significant part of this was to roll out initial training to staff to assist them to understand the child first approach and how to develop their work with young people under the child first approach. This included giving them insight into how a child first approach should be used to inform assessment, planning and the delivery of work with young people and the importance of the young person's voice in this.

Placing the needs of young people at the heart of everything we do has been the one of the guiding principles of STYJS for many years. The challenge now is to further develop a Child First culture across all levels of the service including with the management board and how we work with partners.

To this end we will be delivering work with the management board and with the senior management team to create the foundation for a child first culture and approach.

### **Priority 4: Engagement and Participation**

In tandem with the Child First approach STYJS will be seeking to develop how we engage with the young people, parents and carers we work with, to listen, hear and respond to what they are telling us about their experiences and use this to further improve service delivery.

To this end we will be investing in a new user experience/feedback survey, establishing focus groups for young people their parents and carers providing the opportunity for them to meet with the service, have their say and influence the direction of the service.

Broadening the experiences of young people has been a key part of our work in 2024-2025, including the introduction of diversion programmes during school holiday times. We will be seeking to build on the success of this designing an annual programme of intervention offering regular weekly opportunities for young people, further developing the allotment as a means for young people to give back to the community providing produce for food banks for example and build on the success of Tuff Tees to extend this provision and develop a group to engage with young women and girls and a new group to work with young people who are NEET.

We also need to ensure that we make the service we deliver more meaningful to young people, giving consideration to the use of social media and how we communicate with the outside world.



## CHALLENGES AND RISKS

The environment in which we work continues to be very difficult and challenging. The financial situation continues to present significant risks to the YJS budget with the potential pressures of higher case numbers, increases in remands and the challenging nature of our young people. Some highly successful projects face uncertain future, and this will impact on service delivery as we move forward.

Risks and challenges include:

### 1. Increasing Workloads

As detailed previously STYJS has experienced a 22.5% increase in the number of programmes we have delivered with children and young people during 2024-2025. This additional work has not been accompanied by a similar increase in our budget and resources. Workloads are continuously monitored by the management team to identify any risks to service delivery, and these are reported to the board.

### 2. Access to Specialist Services: Mental Health

Young people's access to Mental Health Services continues to present a challenge for the YJS, with the young people we work with often experiencing delays in accessing the services they need.

This has been mitigated by the introduction of the review Trauma Informed Care Pathway. Which gives young people access to specialist clinical support and intervention. In addition CAMHS staff are also available to offer guidance and consultancy to YJS staff to guide them in methods for intervening with young people.

### 3. Access to Specialist Services: Health Practitioner

STYJS does not have a designated Health Practitioner who can support case managers with health concerns and access health information to inform assessment and planning. This issue has been raised at board level with the representative of the ICB to highlight this gap in provision and the potential impact this could have on the young people we are working with.

### 4. Re-offending

Re-offending by young people continues to present significant challenges for the YJS. We are now experiencing a trend of increasing numbers of young people identified in the January to March cohort, the young people tracked for the re-offending KPI. This situation is also impacted upon by the challenges presented by the current YJS cohort many of whom present with significant complex needs and behaviours and are at risk of forms of exploitation. This also has the potential for young people to be drawn into serious and organised crime.



STYJS will continue to track and monitor our quarterly cohorts to identify those young people who are re-offending and in particular those young people whose behaviours present the most significant concerns.

## **5. Use of Custody**

During 2024-2025 STYJS experienced significant increases in the use of custody, both for young people subject the RYDA and young people receiving custodial outcomes at court. This places a financial burden on the service in the case of remands and also adds to additional workload pressures as young people need more intensive supervision upon their release from custody.

With young people becoming drawn into more serious offending the challenge for STYJS is to gain the confidence and trust of Police and Courts to offer opportunities for the risks posed by such young people to be managed within the community. The role of the Custody Navigators offers the opportunity to intervene early, offer intervention with young people and promote their engagement in community level support. STYJS are also currently reviewing our arrangements for assessing young people for potential bail packages when remand to YDA is a risk to ensure that all young people are assessed with the view to offering a community-based bail package.

## **6. Provision of a Seconded Probation Officer**

STYJS has had no seconded Probation Officer. STYJS has sought to work with the Probation Service to provide a solution to this issue. The Chair of the Board has escalated this matter, and the Head of Service developed a 'bridging plan' with the Head of the local PDU to ensure there was a pathway in place with single points of contact to support the transition of young people into adult provision. In addition, STYJS has been able to draw down a financial alternative to the seconded worker and this has allowed the service to appoint additional officers on short term contracts to fill this gap.

## **7. First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice System**

During 2024-2025 STYJS has experienced an increase in the numbers of First Time Entrants into the criminal justice system with a 32% increase in the numbers of FTES to 70 from 53 the previous year. This represents a worrying trend for the service and during 2025-2026 we will continue to monitor FTES to identify if there are any specific drivers for this increase and seek to mitigate against this.

STYJS will continue to offer a range of diversionary OOC interventions to engage with young people and divert them away from offending and the introduction of a more wide-ranging preventions offer will also make a positive contribution to reducing offending and diverting young people away from the criminal justice system.

## **8. Serious and Violent Offending**

STYJS is now working with groups of young people who present significant challenges by their involvement in a willingness to commit serious and violent offending. During 2024-2025 the YJS has experience 1 young person sentenced to a long custodial sentence for attempted murder and we currently have 2 young people RYDA for murder and 1 for attempted murder.

Such offending represents a worrying trend for STYJS and our partners and we continue to work together to design a develop new programmes to engage with our most challenging and difficult to reach young people.

# **EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE AND INNOVATION**

STYJS has continued develop and improve our practice to ensure the best possible services available to the young people we work with and the communities we serve. As a service we believe that we are

innovative in our approach, welcome new opportunities and seek to invest in activity which is proven in practice and promotes the best possible outcomes for young people. During 2024-2025 this has included:

### Turnaround

The Turnaround Programme has developed is the primary offer for prevention work with young people and their families. We have now embedded this programme as part of our core practice and seek to offer this to all young people who are eligible for support from the Turnaround Team.

### Group Based Intervention

STYJS continues to offer the gender-based Tuff Tees delivered in partnership with the South Tees Public Health Service to provide a safe space for boys and young men who have been open to STYJS or who are on the periphery of involvement in crime or anti-social behaviour. Support offered includes interventions such as life skills and access to other support services where these have been identified. In addition, young people have access to other activities and a gym and benefit from a cooked meal during sessions. The food element offers the opportunity for young people to engage with staff and discuss issues which are important to them.

The service has also re-introduced the 'Ladybugs' programme designed for girls and young women with the aim to provide a safe and nurturing environment so that the girls feel valued, we support the girls by building their self-esteem, confidence and encouraging the right mindset in a setting with positive influences which is judgement free.

### Interventions in Education Settings

STYJS works collaboratively with local schools and Pupil Referral Units following requests for support and intervention. This includes delivering intervention to primary and secondary provision as well as alternative education providers. Such interventions have focussed on issues which are impacting on the school and include such issues as anti-social behaviour, exploitation, violent crime, vaping and knife/weapon-based crime. Such programmes are tailored to the issues impacting on individual schools. We have received feedback from such sessions including:

*We could tell/deliver the talks you do, but they listen because you are not us*

*You make it real for the children*

*You coming into school has taught us so much about what goes on in the community and the criminal justice system as a whole*

*You coming into school has taught us so much about what goes on in the community and the criminal justice system as a whole*

### Holiday Intervention Programmes

Over the course of the past year, we have laced a renewed focus and effort into offering opportunities for our young people to engage in positive and constructive activities during school holiday periods. These include group activities selected and designed with young people to provide a positive experience, away from their home environment. For many young people these can be completely new experiences, including such everyday activities as a visit to the beach or a country walk, activities they may never have had the opportunity to engage with.

The sessions aim to offer entertainment, a change of scenery, exercise, education and the development of life-skills. They provide an opportunity for the children to experience new things. Such activities also run in conjunction with other planned operations delivered by the Police and ASB Teams, such as 'Operation Autumnus' which seeks to offer diversion during the Hallowe'en and Bonfire Night periods.



We have received very positive feedback in respect of the Constructive Activities from the young people we work with. Those who have attended have enjoyed and have stated:

*'having somewhere to go' away from their local area*  
*'trying different activities' and finding out 'I was good at that'*  
*'trying different foods'*  
*'not being bored' in the holidays*

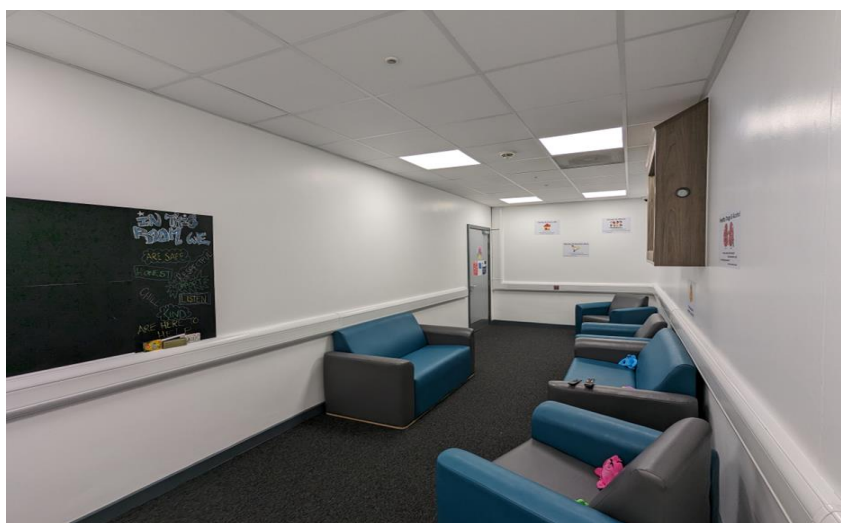
For staff, these sessions allow us to see the children we work with in a different way outside of the supervision approach taken. They offer an opportunity to engage differently and see more of the character and personality of the young people.

### **Custody Navigators**

The Custody Navigator Project was introduced into the Police Custody Suite in Middlesbrough in July 2023 and since that time the Navigators have engaged with 750+ young people from the Cleveland Police area offered support to over 400 in the community. The Custody Navigators Project is funded by CURV and is viewed as a flagship project by the Violence Reduction Unit. The Project was the first to be establish as a bespoke project for young people in England and has received national recognition, with other violence reduction unit area looking to learn from this project and model similar arrangements in their areas.

The aim of the Custody Navigators is to engage and provide immediate support with young people at that 'reachable and teachable moment' as the young person enters police custody and may be more receptive to the support offered. The project aims to work with those young people arrested for serious and violent offences, offering support in custody and in the community where the young person agrees to engage.

One of the successes of the Custody Navigator project has been the value placed on the Navigators by other services in police custody, including detention officers, Police, the Mitie Nurses and Liaison and Diversion. The Custody Navigators have successfully developed effective working relationships and developed pathways with partners to maximise the support for young people. The project is particularly valued by the Police who recognise the value the Navigators can bring in their approach to young people. The Navigators provide additional support to crisis situations and are skilled in de-escalating such situations and this gives the Police and Custody staff to be able to focus on other tasks.



**Breakout room in the youth custody suite**

During 2024-2025 we have developed a relationship with the National Literacy Trust and Middlesbrough Libraries, and this allows us to access books and other materials, puzzles etc, which young people can also take with them when they leave custody. A recent HMICFRS report for

Cleveland Police highlighted the need to provide distraction materials for young people in police custody, the Custody Navigators have responded to this with the provision of books and other distraction toys. Young people also have access to a breakout room to reduce time spent in cells and are offered diversionary toys and activities to assist them during their period in custody.

More importantly the Custody Navigators are highly valued by young people who recognise the support now available in police custody. The Navigators have received a range of comments and compliments from young people, their families and other professionals.

*'I was more worried about him kicking off because of struggling in the cell than the actual offence, thank you so much for looking after him' Grandma of YP*

*'It's definitely way better having you in here, I keep asking for things, but it feels like you're the only one listening to me and getting things done. I wish you could just sit outside my cell and talk to me, it helps knowing someone is trying to sort things out for me' Male, 17*

*"Appreciate what you guys are doing" Sgt.*

*"Don't know how I would have dealt with this without you in here now, it's a really bizarre one but one I think we can really work well on this together and make sure the young person gets the best wrap around support" Clinical Lead*

In terms of impact, a research study undertaken by Crest Consulting on behalf of CURV found that young people who received Custody Navigator support beyond their initial attendance at custody have a significantly reduced likelihood of being arrested again (0.49 times as likely) or having a proven re-offence (0.37 times as likely) compared to young people who did not receive any Navigator intervention. In terms of cost benefit the research found that the work of the Custody Navigators, generated a return on investment of £2.61 for every £1 spent.

One of the challenges this project faces is the insecurity of the long-term funding for the project. The Navigators are currently funded by CURV to March 2026, and this creates insecurity and uncertainty for the project. STYJS in partnership with the OPCC are currently submitting a funding bid to the Youth Endowment Fund, which we hope will offer a level of security for the future of the project.

### Youth Custody Suite

The Trauma Informed Youth Custody Suite in Middlesbrough Police HQ is a unique facility designed to ease the young person's experience of their time in Police Custody. Designed with young people there 4 cells in the Middlesbrough Custody area designated to young people which have also been painted with a design depicting the young persons' journey through custody, to show them taking a new direction. The Youth Custody area also has its own access and reception desk, and this means that young people do not come into contact with adult offenders during their time in custody.

Supported by the Custody Navigators the Custody area also has a breakout room where the young person can be taken to minimise the time they spend in isolation in a police cell. There are also distraction activities and books to distract the young person from their time in custody.

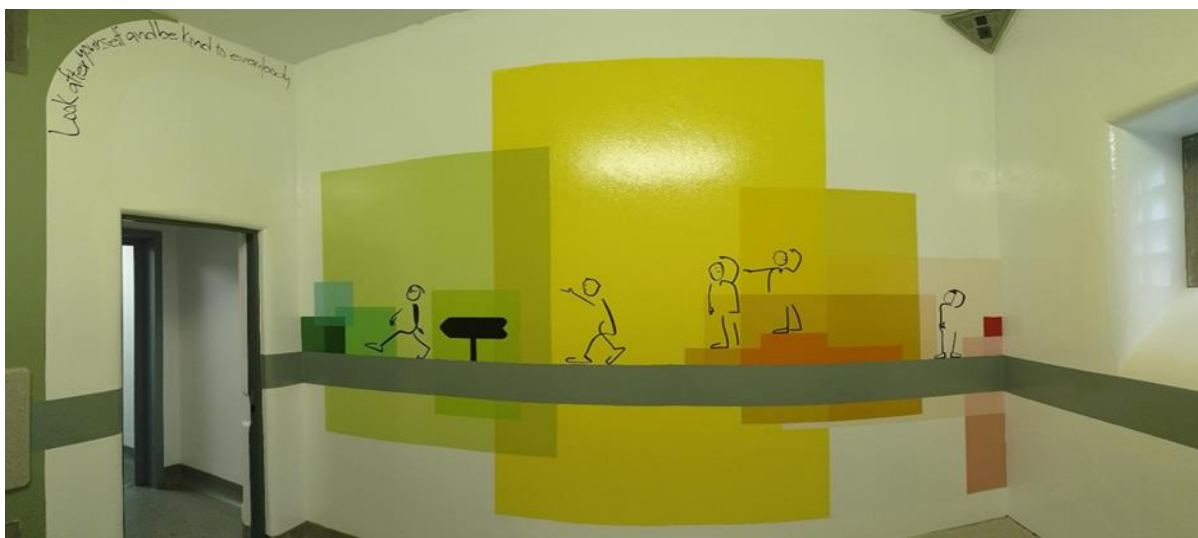


Image from the Youth Custody Suite at Middlesbrough Police HQ

### Speech, Language and Communication

Since January 2023 South Tees Youth Justice Service has commissioned a highly specialist speech and language therapist (SALT) for 0.6WTE to meet the needs of young people engaged with the YJS. This provision will be commissioned for a further 2 years, meaning that we retain access to this key service until December 2027.

During 2024-2025, 74 young people were referred for intervention and support from the SALT worker. Of this cohort over a quarter 27.4% had received previous SALT intervention at some time during their childhood. In addition, 30% of the young people referred to SALT were also NEET and therefore in need of additional support. The ETE Specialist is monitoring such individual cases and where necessary co-working these with the SALT worker and the YJS has also recently introduced a NEET support group to support the engagement of young people into provision.

With regards to needs identified, over 50% of the young people presented developmental speech difficulties and 30% were identified as having a potential neurodevelopmental need requiring multi-disciplinary assessment and support.

The work of the SALT worker is highly valued by staff, young people and their parents, with parents recognising that this service has been able to overcome previous barriers they had encountered to access the services their child needs.

Future plans for further developing this service include developing a SALT screening tool for the Custody Navigators to use in Custody. This will ensure that services have a better understanding of a young person's needs and assist such processes as Police interviews, work in court and providing essential information to inform assessments.

### Case Study J

*J was referred to YJS SALT by his Turnaround Case Manager following their initial assessment of skills and needs at the age of 13 years.*

*J had experienced a number of adverse childhood experiences which included the breakdown of his parents' relationship, witnessing domestic abuse, bereavement and significant bullying when in primary school*

*At that time of SALT involvement J was attending a mainstream secondary school. However, he was experiencing significant struggles conforming to behavioural expectations. J had many internal exclusions from the main class and experience of temporary exclusions from school. J was at risk of imminent permanent exclusion.*

*J was seen over a series of contacts by SALT. During this time it was possible to meet with his Mother, liaise with school professionals and complete direct work with J to determine his profile of speech, language and communication skills and needs.*

*Assessment considered J's views around how adults support him to communicate. Dynamic assessment also captured J's*

- *Understanding of time*
- *Working memory skills*
- *Understanding of language and his ability to make inferences*
- *His word knowledge*
- *His understanding of the language and context of emotion*
- *His understanding of consequence*
- *His oral narrative skills*
- *Overall profile of speech, language and communication including his attention and listening, his understanding of language in conversation, his spoken language skills, his speech clarity and his situational and social communication skills.*

*J's performance on assessment revealed significant differences his profile of listening and attention. J was noted to exhibit inattention, increased physical activity and significant impulsivity. He was also noted to have differences in how he communicates socially with those around him, with evidence noted in how he modulates the style and content of his language dependent upon his audience. J was noted to share homophobic, racist, misogynistic and inflammatory comments in order to elicit responses from those around him.*

*Following SALT assessment, a thorough and detailed report was shared with J's family and professionals who work with J. This report described J's performance during assessment, explored the impacts of this on his day-to-day presentation and shared strategies to support J both at home, in education and modifications to the delivery of any interventions with J. A direct letter was also sent to J summarising SALT findings. A recommendation was also made to the educational setting that they may wish to contact the Neurodevelopmental Hotline and discuss their observations and share SALT findings.*

*Following my involvement, SALT was contacted by J's Mother who shared that J had been permanently excluded from his school and that she was grateful for the SALT advice and report as this had been used to secure him a place in a more specialist educational setting. J is reported to continue to present with behaviours that challenge within the home. However, his mother shared that she feels more able to understand his needs and can make communication adjustments to support him.*

*To date J has not been referred again into the STYJS team*

## **LOOKING FORWARDS**

### **1. Celebrating Our Success**

STYJS has always sought to promote innovation and good practice, however one of our challenges has been how we celebrate our success with the young people and the communities we serve and raise awareness of good practice including, to our communities and the wider partnership. During 2024-2025 we have had the opportunity to celebrate the success of the Custody Navigators and the redesign of the Youth Custody Suite, and these have achieved national recognition as models of effective practice. During 2025-2026 we will seek to build on such success to raise awareness of the work that young people undertake in our communities and celebrate their achievements and highlight the change such achievements bring.

### **2. Young People's Prevention Partnerships**

STYJS welcomes the future development of Young Peoples Prevention Partnerships. Young Peoples Prevention Partnerships are collaborative approaches focused on preventing young people from becoming involved in crime and violence. These partnerships bring together various agencies and organisations to identify and support young people at risk, offering them positive alternatives and addressing the root causes of involvement in harmful activity. STYJS will be working in partnership

with CURV to support the introduction of a pilot programme in the Cleveland Police area and to build on the success of this to roll such partnerships across the whole Cleveland area.

### **3. Service User Voice and Influence**

The voice of the child is an important factor for STYJS to influence how we shape the future delivery of the service. We have recognised that this is a development area of the service and during 2025-2026 we will be seeking to engage more proactively with service users and provide them with the opportunity to have their say on the work we do. STYJS has invested the time of an Assistant Operations Manager to lead on this work and developments will include a new user survey for young people and their parents/carers and seeking feedback from victims on their experience of the service. Reports will be prepared to advise the management board and leadership team, and this feedback will be a key consideration as we plan for the future.

## **SIGN OFF AND APPROVAL OF THE YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Tynan', is written over a horizontal line.

Joe Tynan

Chair of the South Tees Youth Justice Service Management Board

## APPENDIX 1: STYJS Executive Management Board Membership

Name	Organisation
Executive Director of Children's Services	Middlesbrough Council
Director of Education & Partnerships	Middlesbrough Council
Head of Partnerships	Head of STYJS
Cleveland Police	Head of Prevention, Intervention & Offender Management
Asst. Director of Partnerships, Quality & Performance	Redcar & Cleveland Council (Vice Chair)
Councillor	Redcar & Cleveland Council
Youth Justice Board for England & Wales	Head of Innovation & Engagement (Northeast)
Councillor	Middlesbrough Council
Acting Legal Team Manager	His Majesty's Courts & Tribunal Service (HMCTS)
Head of Commissioning & Strategy	Integrated Care Board (ICB)
Interim Public Health Principal	South Tees Public Health
Head of Policy, Partnerships and Delivery	Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC)
Head of Area (South Tees)	Probation Service
Head of Education and Alternative Provision	Middlesbrough Council



## APPENDIX 2: Attendance at the YJS Management Board

Meeting attendance	09.07.24	15.10.24	18.02.25	06.05.25
Education & Partnerships MBC	✓	✓	✓	✓
STYJS (Head of Service)	✓	✓	✓	✓
YJB	✓	✓	Apologies	✓
R & C Children's Services	✓	✓	Apologies	✓
NPS	✓	✓	Apologies	✓
Police	✓	✓	✓	✓
Commissioning - ICB	✓	✓	Apologies	✓
Legal - Courts	Apologies	✓	Apologies	Apologies
Public Health M'bro/R&C	✓	✓	✓	✓
Councillor MBC	✓	Apologies	✓	✓
Councillor RC	✓	✓	✓	✓
PCC	✓	Apologies	Apologies	✓
Education MBC	✓	✓	✓	✓
CURV	Apologies	✓	✓	✓

## APPENDIX 3– STYJS Statutory Functions

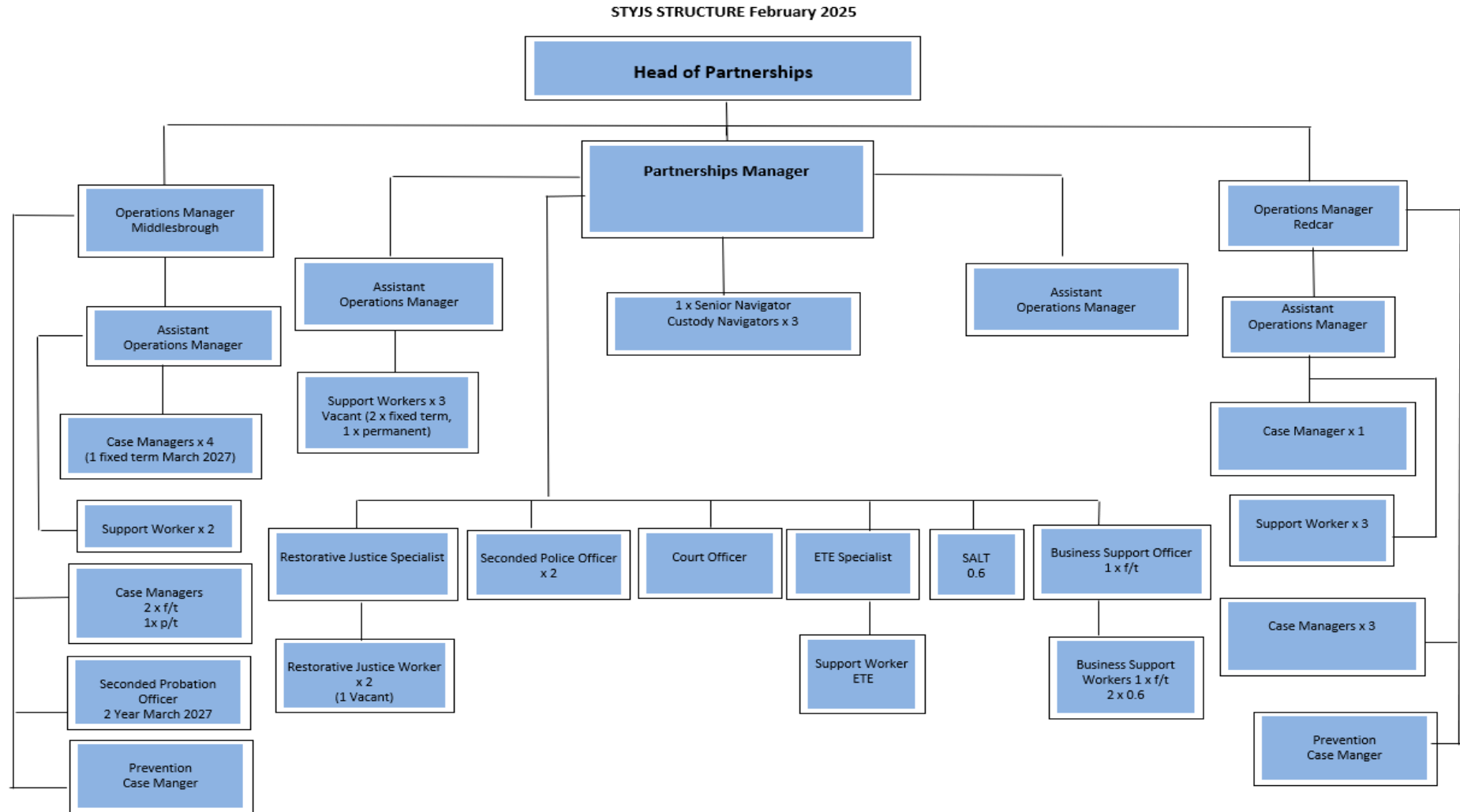
### Statutory functions include:

- Statutory Responsibility for Court Orders (Community and Custody) as they relate to young people, including all Requirements and Licences
- Compliance with National Standards for Youth Justice 2013 (accountable to Ministers)
- Enforcement of Court Orders and Licences
- Provision of Out of Court Disposals (Youth Cautions and Youth Conditional Cautions)
- Prevention of offending and re-offending by young people
- Provision of Court staffing (Youth, Crown, Remand Courts, including Saturdays and Bank holidays)
- Provision of Bail supervision functions
- Provision of Appropriate Adults for Police interviews
- Provision of Pre-Sentence Reports
- Provision of community volunteers for Referral Order panels
- Recruit, train, manage, supervise and deploy volunteers to carry out statutory functions
- Provision of Referral Order Panel reports
- Provision of YJMIS data/management information to YJB/MoJ regarding youth justice cases
- Delivery of Court ordered reparation to community and victims
- Provision of a service to victims of youth crime
- Comply with arrangements for multi-agency public protection (MAPPA)
- Duty to cooperate with MAPPA, LSCB, VEMT, CSPs etc.
- Duty to cooperate regarding safeguarding and public protection incidents in the community (YJB)
- Statutory duty to provide and support a Management Board for the YJS
- Management and development of the Junior Attendance Centre
- Statutory duty to produce and deliver an annual Youth Justice Plan
- Management of children Remanded to Youth Detention Accommodation (RYDA)
- Statutory duty to cooperate with Children's Services to improve wellbeing of children
- Management of sex offenders (AIM) – young people under 18 years of age
- Provision of Parenting Orders imposed in the Youth Court (criminal matters)
- Provision of ASB escalation supervision (Criminal Behaviour Orders and Injunctions to prevent nuisance and annoyance)

### Additional functions include:

- Provision of integrated Out of Court delivery including Restorative Interventions, Community Resolution and Outcome 22
- Manage safeguarding and risk management inherent in all the above tasks
- Provision of prevention and diversion activities with young people and families, including Turnaround

## APPENDIX 4 – STRUCTURE CHART



## APPENDIX 55 South Tees Youth Offending Service: Service Development Plan

## South Tees Youth Justice Service: Service Development Plan 2024-2025

Priority 1: Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation			
Key Actions	Who will do it	Timescales	Review/Update on Actions/RAG Rating
Secure additional funding to support the long term deliver of the Custody Navigators	Partnerships Manager/OPCC	March 2026	A bid has been submitted to the Youth Endowment Fund and this is progressing through the application filtering process
Ensure YJS involvement in the development and delivery of Young People's Prevention Partnerships	Head of Service	March 2026	A pilot is proposed for the Hartlepool area, and this will inform the rollout across the Cleveland area
Ensure that the YJS is aligned with HOtH developments including representation in HOtH Strategic and Operational processes	Head of Service/Operations Managers	September 2025	
Ensure YJS representation in the HOtH Triage mechanisms at a local level	Operations Managers	September 2025	
Support the delivery of the OPCC led Knife Crime Action Plan, including the co-ordination of education activity in schools and colleges	Partnerships Manager	September 2025	
Undertake an audit/review of Serious Incidents Reports from 2024/2025 to identify any learning needs for the service	Partnerships Manager	October 2025	
Priority 2: Work with Victims			
Key Actions	Who will do it	Timescales	Review/Update on Actions/RAG Rating
Further develop the role of the Restorative Justice Specialist as the strategic and operational lead for STYJS.	Partnerships Manager	September 2025	The new RJ worker has joined the service from start June 2025, once this role is established the RJ Specialist role will be further developed.
Undertake a review of the Restorative Justice and work with victims' guidance.	RJ Specialist	July 2025	
Establish a protocol to support joint working with Probation and VCAS to support work with victims.	RJ Specialist	October 2025	
Establish a user satisfaction framework, including using technology to support user feedback.	RJ Specialist	September 2025	
Develop a new victim assessment form.	RJ Specialist	July 2025	
Achieve individual staff accreditation with the RJC and consider making an application for wider service accreditation	RJ Worker RJ Specialist	March 2026	

Priority 3: Child First			
Key Actions	Who will do it	Timescales	Review/Update on Actions/RAG Rating
Provide training across the YJS partnership regarding Child first practice to support partners to understand the Child First Approach	Michael O'Connor	June 2025	Initial session delivered to the YJS Executive Board in May 2025
Deliver Child First Training to YJS staff to assist them with a child first approach to assessment and planning.	Operations Manager	September 2025	
Revise QA processes to ensure that all assessments and plans are underpinned by child first principles	Operations Manager	September 2025	
Promote the involvement of children and young people across all areas of YJS practice	All Staff	Ongoing	
Priority 4: Engagement and Participation			
Key Actions	Who will do it	Timescales	Review/Update on Actions/RAG Rating
Establish a new service user feedback survey, for young people and their parents/carers	Asst Operations Manager	July 2025	
Introduce opportunities for parents/carers to feedback on their experience a Referral Order Panels	Asst Operations Manager	June 2025	
Further develop the YJS group work offer, including the development of a girl's group and NEET support group	Asst Operations Manager	September 2025	
Further develop themed work with schools with a priority offer to primary schools	Asst Operations Manager	Ongoing	
Work with partner agencies, including Police and MFC to ensure a co-ordinated approach to working in schools	Asst Operations Manager	October 2025	
Establish a framework for the reporting of engagement activity to the YJS leadership team and management board	Asst Operations Manager	October 2025	

**APPENDIX 6: Common Youth Justice Terms**

<b>ACE</b>	Adverse Childhood Experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long-lasting impact on the child's health, and life choices
<b>AIM 2 and 3</b>	Assessment, intervention and moving on, an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour
<b>ASB</b>	Anti-social behaviour
<b>AssetPlus</b>	Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour
<b>CAMHS</b>	Child and adolescent mental health services
<b>CCE</b>	Child Criminal Exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity
<b>Children</b>	We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.
<b>Child First</b>	A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenants to this approach, it should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion
<b>Child looked-after</b>	Child Looked After, where a child is looked after by the local authority
<b>CME</b>	Child Missing Education
<b>Constructive resettlement</b>	The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social
<b>Contextual safeguarding</b>	An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety
<b>Community resolution</b>	Community resolution, an informal disposal, administered by the police, for low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt
<b>CURV</b>	Cleveland Unit for the Reduction of Violence- a joined-up, preventative approach to tackling serious violence, with the Commissioner's office taking a leading role in bringing together local



	organisations such as the police, YJS, local authorities, public health teams and local hospital trusts.
<b>Custody Navigator</b>	A new role in the YJS designed to act as a key support to young people in the Police Custody area, to engage young people to divert them away from offending
<b>EHCP</b>	Education and Health Care Plan, a plan outlining the education, health, and social care needs of a child with additional needs
<b>ETE</b>	Education, Training or Employment
<b>EHE</b>	Electively home educated, children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school
<b>EOTAS</b>	Education other than at school, children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting
<b>FTE</b>	First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal)
<b>HMIP</b>	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect Youth Justice services and probation services
<b>HOtH</b>	Relates to Harm Outside the Home, young people who are at risk from forms of exploitation
<b>HSB</b>	Harmful sexual behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves
<b>Immediate Justice-Making Good</b>	Part of the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan, to engage young people involved in anti-social behaviour and crime into swift and visible interventions to challenge behaviours and reduce harm
<b>ISS</b>	Intensive Supervision and Surveillance-a high intensity programme used as part of the Youth Rehabilitation Order as an alternative to custody
<b>MAPPA</b>	Multi agency public protection arrangements
<b>MFH</b>	Missing from Home
<b>NRM</b>	National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery in order to gain help to support and protect them

<b>OOCD</b>	Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not sent to court
<b>Outcome 22/21</b>	An informal disposal, available where the child does not admit the offence, but they undertake intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending
<b>Over-represented children</b>	Number of children and young people appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average
<b>RHI</b>	Return home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing
<b>ROTL</b>	Release on Temporary Licence
<b>SLCN</b>	Speech, Language and Communication needs
<b>STC</b>	Secure Training Centre
<b>SCH</b>	Secure Children's Home
<b>Turnaround</b>	This is an early intervention, diversion and prevention programme designed to divert young people away from involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour
<b>Young adult</b>	We define a young adult as someone who is 18 or over. For example, when a young adult is transferring to the adult probation service.
<b>YJS</b>	Youth Justice Service. This is now the preferred title for services working with children in the youth justice system. This reflects the move to a child first approach
<b>Youth Justice KPIS</b>	This refers to the key performance indicators for Youth Justice with an additional 10 introduced from April 2023
<b>YOI</b>	Young Offender Institution