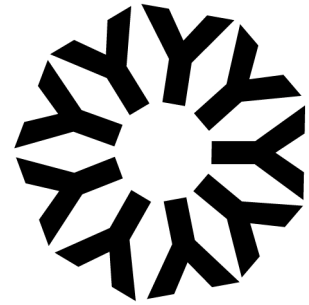


*Audit Commission
Commission for Social Care Inspection
Estyn
Healthcare Commission
HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HM Inspectorate of Probation
Office for Standards in Education
Social Services Inspectorate for Wales*



Joint Inspection of Youth Offending Teams of England and Wales

Report on:
Salford
Youth Offending Team

2005

Foreword

This is one of the first reports to be published in the second phase of the inspection of Youth Offending Teams across England and Wales. We found a Youth Offending Team that had a number of strengths, including a committed and enthusiastic team.

The Management Board provided a strong strategic lead and was chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of Salford City Council who was fully committed to the work of the team, as were the partner organisations.

Work to prevent offending was developing well and was being linked to other schemes across the authority. Interventions with children and young people who had offended were, in the main, good but should be evaluated to assess their effectiveness. Positive use was made of restorative justice conferencing and the victims to whom we spoke were complimentary of the work of the Youth Offending Team. We found practical examples of good practice across all aspects of work.

Some areas required improvement. Assessments were generally conducted well, but greater attention needed to be given to those considered to present a risk of harm. The enforcement of orders lacked consistency. The final warning scheme was not being conducted in accordance with the relevant guidance and required review. More should be done for those children and young people with mental health needs.

Our overall assessment of Salford Youth Offending Team's performance was that it had a good basis for development. The report contains a number of recommendations which we believe will assist the team to move forward and we are confident that it will make progress.

Andrew Bridges
HM Chief Inspector of Probation

February 2005

Fieldwork for this inspection was undertaken in 2004.

- ◆ The file reading took place week commencing 20 September.
- ◆ The second week commenced on 25 October.

Contents

	Page
Acknowledgements	3
Glossary	4
Introduction	5
Key findings	6
Overview	9
1. MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS	10
2. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR PARENTS/CARERS	18
3. VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE	31
The joint inspection of YOTs	35
Inspection arrangements	37
Scoring approach	39
Next steps	41

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the staff from the Youth Offending Team, members of the Management Board and partner organisations for their assistance in ensuring the smooth running of this inspection.

We would particularly like to express our gratitude to Tom Healey for his commitment to the inspection.

<i>Lead Inspector</i>	<i>Mike Mullis HM Inspectorate of Constabulary</i>
<i>Inspectors</i>	<i>Rhona Bradley Commission for Social Care Inspection, Rose Burgess HM Inspectorate of Probation, Kam Kaur HM Inspectorate of Probation, Justin Thacker Healthcare Commission, David White Office for Standards in Education</i>
<i>Practice Assessor</i>	<i>Stephanie Mason</i>
<i>Support Staff</i>	<i>Natalie Dewsnap, Grace Dickin, Rachel Dwyer</i>
<i>Programme Manager</i>	<i>Liz Calderbank HM Inspectorate of Probation</i>
<i>Area Assessor</i>	<i>Sally Dickin</i>

Glossary

ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour Order
Asset	Assessment tool developed by the Youth Justice Board
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CSCI	Commission for Social Care Inspection
DTO	Detention and Training Order
Estyn	HM Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales
ETE	Employment, Training and Education
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HMIC	HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMI Prisons	HM Inspectorate of Prisons
HMI Probation	HM Inspectorate of Probation
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
ISSP	Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme
LEA	Local Education Authority
National Standards	National Standards for Youth Justice Services
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PCT	Primary Care Trust
RGN	Registered General Nurse
SIFA	Screening Interview for Adolescents
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bounded
SSIW	Social Services Inspectorate for Wales
YIP	Youth Inclusion Programme
YISP	Youth Inclusion Support Panel
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOI	Young Offender Institution
YOT	Youth Offending Team

Introduction

The joint YOT inspection programme commenced in September 2003 and is the first full inspection to examine the work of YOTs, established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The programme is being implemented in three phases, the first of which was completed in July 2004 and focused on establishing benchmarks for the later phases of the inspection.

This, the second phase of the inspection, started in September 2004 and builds on the findings from the first. Few changes have been made. Emphasis has continued to be placed on two core areas:

- ◆ the management and partnership arrangements, including the role and functioning of the local Management Board
- ◆ work with children and young people, which now encompasses prevention of offending, work with children and young people who have offended and work with their parents/carers.

The third core area to be covered by the inspection is work with victims and restorative justice. Whilst these issues are seen as no less important, it is acknowledged that YOTs may be at different stages of development in this area of work. We do, however, expect a high level of engagement with victims to be demonstrated, with appropriate arrangements for restorative justice.

Key findings

Management and partnership arrangements

- ◆ All statutory partners were represented on the Management Board that provided a strong strategic lead to the YOT.
- ◆ The YOT's prevention work and the linkages to other partners' programmes required greater direction and coordination.
- ◆ Newer members of the Board appeared to have limited knowledge of the YOT's role and function.
- ◆ All partners seconded staff to the YOT or provided match funding.
- ◆ Many of the policies and protocols needed to be reviewed and updated.
- ◆ Not all staff had had a recent enhanced CRB check and responsibility for undertaking these checks was not explicitly addressed in all SLAs and protocols.
- ◆ Staff received regular supervision and an appraisal system had recently been introduced.
- ◆ Although generally there were good training opportunities for staff, the training needs of certain specialist members of staff appeared to have been overlooked.
- ◆ Some staff had still to receive training on diversity.

Work with children and young people and their parents/carers

- ◆ The YOT had a proactive prevention team who had developed a number of interventions and had received referrals from many partners.
- ◆ Although the prevention team was using the standard assessment tool, it had not been universally adopted.
- ◆ Overall Asset completion was found to be satisfactory and specialist assessments were available.
- ◆ In some cases a full risk of harm assessment was completed, but management oversight of these needed to be improved.
- ◆ In only a small number of cases contact was made with Social Services to check whether a child or young person was known to the department.
- ◆ There was a wide range of individual interventions, including some provided by specialist workers.
- ◆ There were concerns about the level of service supplied to meet mental health needs.
- ◆ The responsibilities placed on the Substance Misuse Worker needed to be kept under review until their training was complete.
- ◆ There was no evidence of any evaluation of the programmes and interventions utilised by the YOT.

- ❖ Final warnings were not being delivered in accordance with the Home Office/YJB guidance (2002) and a significant proportion were not referred to the YOT for intervention.
- ❖ The range of interventions available did not fully address the diverse needs of the community.
- ❖ Breach procedures were inconsistently enforced, except by the ISSP.
- ❖ Parents/carers were offered parenting programmes, and an assessment tool had been developed but was still to be implemented.
- ❖ Of the case files read, 70% showed no further reoffending during the order and there was a reduction of reoffending in three of the four bands of penalties.

Victims and restorative justice

- ❖ Although victim information was readily available to the YOT, via the police computer, not all victims were contacted.
- ❖ Good use was made of restorative justice conferencing and the reparative interventions offered by the YOT were generally well regarded.
- ❖ Individual victims spoke highly of the work of the YOT.

Overall assessment

The overall performance of the Salford YOT provided, in our view, a **good basis for development**. We were impressed by the commitment of the CEO of Salford City Council and the statutory partners, and the enthusiasm and dedication of the team.

The team was developing a prevention package, linked with other schemes across the authority. There were good individual interventions available for children and young people who had offended, that should be evolved further to take into account of the different needs of the caseload. Although we were impressed by the attention given to physical health issues, greater emphasis needed to be given to mental health. Some positive work was being undertaken in relation to education.

Effective mentoring and mediation interventions were available. The referral panels were professionally conducted, although the YOT needed to ensure that they took place within the national standard timescale. Greater attention was also required to consistency in enforcement practice. The final warning scheme should be developed to take into account the Home Office/YJB guidance (2002), as too many children and young people were being denied the opportunity of early intervention under the current system. Victims were dealt with in a supportive manner, and were complimentary of the service received by the YOT, although few participated actively in direct reparation.

Overall, we felt optimistic about the future of the YOT and were confident that it had the foundations to address the issues raised by this inspection.

Recommendations

The Chair of the Management Board should ensure that:

- ◆ an action plan is devised to address the following recommendations and forwarded to the lead inspector within three months of the publication of this report
- ◆ new Board members are properly inducted and prepared for their role
- ◆ the YOT's prevention work is coordinated within the Community Strategic Plan
- ◆ all staff and volunteers involved with the YOT receive enhanced CRB checks on commencement and every three years thereafter
- ◆ protocols are updated and regularly reviewed.

The YOT Manager should ensure that:

- ◆ a link is established with Social Services to determine their involvement in all cases referred to the YOT
- ◆ risk of harm assessments are completed on all relevant cases, regularly reviewed and endorsed by managers as appropriate
- ◆ a diversity policy is developed, complementary to that of Salford City Council, covering issues specifically relevant to the YOT including training and the provision of services, and that its implementation is monitored and reviewed
- ◆ breach procedures are urgently examined to ensure consistent practice across the YOT
- ◆ interventions are formally evaluated to assess their effectiveness.

The YOT Manager and Lifeline should ensure that:

- ◆ the responsibilities placed on the Substance Misuse Worker are kept under review until their training needs have been addressed.

Greater Manchester Police should ensure that:

- ◆ final warnings are delivered in accordance with the Home Office/YJB guidance (2002).

The PCT should ensure that:

- ◆ children and young people with mental health issues receive the appropriate level of attention and intervention.

Overview

- ◆ Salford is located in the north west of England in the county of Greater Manchester. It had a total population of 216,103 when measured in the Census 2001. Of this population 23% were aged 0-17 years at the time of the census. This figure was higher than the average for England and Wales of 22.7%.
- ◆ The local authority of Salford includes five districts, these being Salford, Eccles, Worsley, Irlam & Cadishead and Swinton & Pendlebury. The city of Salford and the city of Manchester are separated by the River Irwell and are the only two cities in England to touch.
- ◆ Salford had a predominantly white population, 96.1%, much higher than the average for England at 90.9%. The percentage of Asian or Asian British residents (1.4%) was lower than the average for England (4.6%). The percentage of Black or Black British residents at 0.6%, which was also much lower than the English average of 2.1%.
- ◆ The level of employment in Salford was lower than the average for England and Wales, 55.3% and 60.6% respectively. The level of unemployment was 3.8%, which was close to the average for England and Wales (3.4%). There was a higher number of people classified as permanently sick or disabled living in Salford (9.5%) than in England and Wales (5.5%). 15% of those people who were unemployed in Salford were aged over 50 years, 10% had never worked and 29% were long-term unemployed.
- ◆ Salford City Council was classified as weak in the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment 2004.
- ◆ The YJB summary of YOT performance against the key performance indicators for 2003/2004 ranked Salford YOT in 119th position.

1. MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

1.1 Leadership

Inspection criteria

The Management Board:

- ◇ *provides strategic oversight and direction and coordinates the provision of youth justice services by the YOT and partner organisations*
- ◇ *is made up of appropriate representatives who attend and participate actively in meetings*
- ◇ *ensures the provision of accurate and timely data returns, both for its own use and that of the YJB*
- ◇ *gives support and guidance to the YOT Manager, ensuring that they engage with local and national priorities*
- ◇ *ensures that the Youth Justice Plan is implemented.*

The YOT was located within the Salford Community Safety Strategy which was used as an overarching coordinating body. The CEO for Salford City Council chaired the YOT Management Board, which met on a quarterly basis. All the statutory partners were represented, although there had been some delay in replacing the previous health delegate on the Board, resulting in a break in continuity.

As well as the statutory partners, other key agencies such as Connexions and the Crown Prosecution Service, also sat on the Management Board. The Court representative did not attend, but met with the YOT Manager regularly at other criminal justice meetings. We did have concerns about the newer members' knowledge of the YOT, as none had actually visited the team to learn about its functions. An induction programme should be developed for new Management Board members, to help them understand their role and the work of the YOT.

Different staff members from the YOT also attended Management Board meetings as required and presented reports to the group about their particular specialisms. These inputs supported the quarterly presentation of the performance and financial figures by the YOT Manager. The Management Board challenged these performance figures and the reports presented, and provided support to the YOT to resolve any difficulties. We learnt of some instances where the Board had acted well in this regard. For example, the CEO constantly reviewed the short-term funding streams looking 18 months ahead to ensure that essential services would not be affected if a particular funding stream were to be terminated. In other cases, as with the provision of education for those children and young

people excluded from school, we felt that the Board could, and should, be more proactive. Our case file read showed a disproportionate number of children and young people experiencing difficulties with their education. Whilst a high percentage were allocated to appropriate provision, significant numbers (36%) did not sustain attendance and consequently 'self-excluded'. This situation required further investigation, with the Board challenging the education department on the progress of these children and young people and the quality of the provision.

The Management Board generally provided a strong strategic lead to the YOT Manager and had a robust problem solving approach. Board members were asked about the implementation of the Youth Justice Plan and were satisfied that it was implemented around the core functions of the YOT, although many said that there were difficulties in achieving all the targets due to the changes made during the year by the YJB. They were, however, confident that the 'spirit' of the plan had been maintained. All said that they would like to see a period without change to allow the YOT to concentrate on putting the planned actions into practice.

Different members of the Management Board stated that they were confident that figures supplied to the YJB were accurate and submitted on time. However, some expressed concern that they did not always fully understand the data provided and how it affected their agency or the YOT. The Management Board did not carry out any audit of the figures, but rather accepted their accuracy as a matter of fact. Members were aware of the YOT's position in the YJB performance tables, but did not place great reliance on the tables due to concerns about the variations in the quarterly performance.

Our only significant concern about the functioning of the Management Board related to the area of prevention, which was a new KPI for the YOT. The Community Strategic Plan had identified prevention as a theme and the YOT had developed a programme, as had other agencies. This work, although commendable, appeared to lack strategic coordination and to have consequently resulted in some duplication and confusion. One of the YOT operational managers had now taken on the task of coordinating the different approaches on behalf of the YOT. This work was additional to, and possibly at the expense of, their core role within the YOT and needed to be endorsed by both the Management Board and the Community Safety Strategy.

Strengths:

- ◆ The Management Board provided a strong strategic lead to the YOT Manager, and had a robust problem-solving approach.
- ◆ All the statutory partners were represented on the Management Board, together with other key agencies.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Newer members of the Management Board appeared to have little knowledge of the YOT's role or functions.
- ◆ The Board needed to address concerns about education provision for children and young people excluded from school.
- ◆ The involvement of different organisations in the prevention strategy had led to some confusion and duplication.

1.2

Partnership and resources

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *A range of interventions and services are provided to meet the needs of children and young people who have offended and those at risk of offending.*
- ◆ *YOTs are appropriately staffed by partners according to legislation and Home Office guidance.*
- ◆ *The Youth Justice Plan reflects partner strategies.*
- ◆ *Protocols have been agreed between the YOT, its statutory partners and other organisations, outlining the level of service, human resources issues and funding arrangements.*
- ◆ *Contracts are in place with other agencies to ensure the coordination of work and the appropriate delivery of services to meet the needs of children and young people.*

The YOT was able to provide a wide range of interventions and had access, through the specialist workers, to partner agencies like health and education. All partners were contributing staff and resources to meet the needs of the YOT as agreed by the Management Board.

Social Services did not second staff to the YOT, but instead provided the equivalent resources and felt that this approach gave the YOT greater flexibility to employ staff according to the particular skills required. Although this may have been the case, we were concerned about the poor links and low level of information exchange between the YOT and Social Services. For example, our case file read showed that initial contact was not made with Social Services to check whether they knew the child or young person. We felt that this sort of problem could have been addressed, at least in part, by the presence of seconded staff within the team with access to the Social Services database and knowledge of the systems.

The YOT Manager, with the approval of the Management Board had instigated an agreement, which allowed some limited salary progression for unqualified team members based on the YJB Professional Certificate in Effective Practice qualification. Although this initiative appeared to provide a reasonable incentive, we became aware during the course of the

inspection that its implementation had caused some disquiet amongst staff, which needed to be addressed.

Services for substance misuse were provided through a local voluntary organisation called Lifeline, who had experienced considerable difficulties in appointing a substance misuse worker. We were impressed by the dedication and commitment of the individual appointed who was still new in the role and currently undertaking training. Although they were receiving support, commensurate to their stage of development, we were concerned about the expectations placed on them before their training was complete, and felt that the responsibilities attached to the role should be reviewed to ensure that they were realistic.

Despite some individual examples of good practice we were concerned about the overall ability of the YOT to provide for a range of needs, reflecting the cultural diversity of the area and taking account of individual requirements and accessibility. Although the local authority had drawn up a diversity protocol, the YOT had not developed their own policy to meet the diverse needs of children and young people. The current YOT premises were not accessible to disabled people and we were aware that the team was actively searching for new accommodation. The local population consisted of a small, but significant number of people from minority ethnic groups. When staff and others were challenged about diversity, we were told that they supervised very few minority ethnic children and young people and were able to deal with them on an individual basis. This response would have carried more weight had all staff received sufficient training in engaging with minority ethnic children and young people so that we could be certain that the specific needs of these groups would be recognised and addressed. The local authority was, however, in the process of rolling out training to all its staff and the YOT staff would be included in that process.

The location of the Management Board within the Salford Community Safety Strategy meant that, although each of the partners had different targets, they were able to link into the Youth Justice Plan.

The YOT had agreed protocols and SLAs with departments within the LEA, local schools, training providers and other agencies. There was a named representative in place in each school, which assisted the effective flow of information.

**Good
practice**

The YOT had developed an education development group, chaired by an operational manager and including the Education Worker, Connexions personal advisors, the Mentor Support Worker and the Hindley YOI Learning Mentor. The group was responsible for bringing greater coherence to education provision and developing a more targeted strategy to promote better ETE within the YOT. It had made progress in reviewing, evaluating and developing systems and procedures.

We were informed that agreements were in place with service providers other than the statutory partners, such as Fairbridge who ran the YIP, and Lifeline who provided the Substance Misuse Worker. The SLAs examined during the course of the inspection were, in our opinion, somewhat limited and open to misinterpretation in certain areas, for example, about who was responsible for CRB checks. There was no evidence that these documents had been reviewed annually.

We saw a number of other policies and protocols, many of which again, had not been reviewed for over a year or were out of date. When challenged on this issue, a number of interviewees claimed that the policies were either widely understood or would be developed as part of the implementation of the *Every Child Matters* agenda from August 2005. Whilst recognising the need to prioritise limited resources on urgent issues, we did not accept that the policies were well known and remained concerned about the lack of knowledge amongst staff members of the existence of key documents, such as the good risk of harm policy.

Strengths:

- ◆ All partners contributed either staff or resources to meet the needs of the YOT as agreed by the Management Board.
- ◆ The YOT had access to specialist workers.
- ◆ The location of the YOT in the Salford Community Safety Strategy meant that partners were easily able to link into the Youth Justice Plan.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Communication between the YOT and Social Services needed to be improved.
- ◆ The role and responsibilities of the Substance Misuse Worker required clarification.
- ◆ The responsibility placed on the Substance Misuse Worker needed to be kept under review until they were fully trained.
- ◆ Many of the protocols and policies seen during the inspection needed to be reviewed and updated.
- ◆ Responsibility for undertaking CRB checks was not explicitly addressed in all SLAs and protocols.
- ◆ Staff had not, as yet, received diversity training, which raised concerns about the ability of the YOT to provide for the different needs of the caseload, taking account of the cultural diversity and individual needs and accessibility.

1.3

Staff supervision, development and training

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *Staff are regularly supervised in accordance with their developmental needs and assessed level of competence.*
- ◆ *Annual appraisals contain objectives which are linked to local and national targets.*
- ◆ *All staff are provided with appropriate training opportunities to equip them to meet the requirements of the Youth Justice Plan.*
- ◆ *Staff are appropriately qualified and have had a satisfactory enhanced criminal record check within the past three years.*
- ◆ *Volunteers are appropriately trained, available for YOT activities and have had a satisfactory enhanced criminal record check within the past three years.*
- ◆ *Joint agreements are in place for the management of disciplinary, capability and grievance procedures.*
- ◆ *Complaints are properly managed.*

Staff received supervision sessions with their line managers on a monthly basis. These meetings were properly documented and included some discussion about individual cases, although not in particular depth. As a result of feedback from the case file inspection, the YOT had taken to dip-sampling cases during supervision and these files were now reviewed in more detail. In addition to planned supervision sessions, the management team operated an open-door policy allowing staff to raise issues at any time. Unfortunately, this practice was somewhat constrained by the accommodation, which meant that all the management team sat in one office.

The YOT had an appraisal policy, which was in its first year of operation and appeared to be implemented successfully. With the exception of the Administrative Manager, whose was shortly to attend a course, the management team had received full training in the appraisal process. All staff had had an initial appraisal.

Four staff had been put forward for their YJB Professional Certificate in Effective Practice qualification, and to date two had been successful. This opportunity had been offered to the non-qualified staff first to allow them to gain a YOT specific qualification. Other staff had been encouraged by managers to attend external courses. We felt that it would be beneficial if, during team training days, those who had achieved the YJB Professional Certificate in Effective Practice were given the opportunity to cascade their knowledge to all team members regardless of their background, to ensure that standard practices were adopted across the YOT.

Further attention needed to be given to CRB checks. Although the majority of YOT staff had had enhanced CRB checks, the Police Officer was last checked in 1985 and should have been subject to the enhanced process on

joining the YOT (Part V Police Act 1997). Neither the education department nor the authority responsible for the ISSP were able to account fully for their workers. Similarly, none of the administrative staff had had CRB checks at the time of the inspection. All these people should be subject to an enhanced CRB check as soon as possible and all those who were checked more than three years ago should receive an immediate CRB renewal check.

Volunteers were accessed through the various coordinators. Although we did not see a list of volunteers with the date of their CRB checks, we were informed that all had undergone an enhanced check and this was confirmed during the individual interviews. The SLAs with different service providers did not clarify whose responsibility it was to undertake the checks.

The volunteers, to whom we spoke, received training to equip them for their role, such as mentor, referral panel member or mediator, with further refresher training available as appropriate.

The YOT utilised a comprehensive lone working policy, based on the Susie Lamplugh Trust pack *Sixth Sense*, that contained clear and explicit expectations as to how workers should operate when carrying out home visits or similar isolated visits. The policy was underpinned by an effective support package to ensure details of workers and their actions were recorded.

Good practice

When staff interviewed a potentially volatile child or young person in the YOT building, they wore a wristband connected to an alarm system in the main office that identified which room they were in. A member of staff would then enter the room, and via a code, ask if the staff member required help.

Although there were no joint grievance and complaint protocols to deal with complaints made against more than one partner, there were very clear individual agency complaint protocols and an understanding about what would happen with single partner staff and those employed directly by the YOT. There was also an understanding by staff and partners about the process that would be used to deal with capability proceedings, but there was no formal monitoring system.

All leaflets handed out to children and young people and parents/carers made clear reference to the complaints process and how to invoke this by contacting the YOT Manager. Although all the staff interviewed were aware of the complaint policy, some of the children and young people we spoke to were not and action needed to be taken to communicate the procedure to this group.

Strengths:

- ◆ Staff had monthly supervision sessions with their line managers.
- ◆ An appraisal policy had recently been introduced.
- ◆ Staff were supported in acquiring external qualifications.
- ◆ The comprehensive lone working policy was underpinned by an effective support package.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Not all staff had had a recent enhanced CRB check.
- ◆ The grievance and complaint protocols did not cover complaints made against members of staff from more than one partner organisation.
- ◆ There was no written complaint policy.

**OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP
ARRANGEMENTS**

This section is judged as satisfactorily met.

2. WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR PARENTS/CARERS

2.1 Assessment

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF OFFENDING

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *There is a mechanism to identify those children and young people within the area who are at risk of offending.*
- ◇ *There are arrangements to assess the needs of those individuals identified as being at risk of offending and these arrangements take account of cultural differences, diversity and safeguarding issues.*

The YOT had maintained a prevention team for the past 12 months that had received referrals from the eight multi-agency Neighbourhood Management teams across Salford. Initially, the majority of cases had related to anti-social behaviour, but now included referrals from education and Social Services. At the time of the inspection the prevention team planned to reposition itself to work more with schools and younger children using the police, fire and leisure services, as it was felt that many of the current referrals were already offending or had needs which should be addressed by direct intervention from Social Services.

The YOT had set up a YISP so that referrals were channelled through a multi-agency group to ensure the most appropriate intervention was provided. Some cases were still being sent directly to the prevention team who, if it considered the child or young person in need of urgent work, would start the assessment process to ensure that no time was lost, whilst still referring the case back to the YISP for allocation.

All assessments by the prevention team were conducted using the OnSet assessment tool and were based on a home visit and meeting with the child or young person and their parents/carers.

Good practice

The Neighbourhood Management teams also referred families involved in neighbourhood disputes to the YOT Victim Liaison Officer, who spoke with them and assessed their needs. If appropriate, they would be referred to two mediators from the YOT, who would work with the families to resolve the dispute.

The YOT also had access to a YIP, run by an outside organisation. The partners each submitted a core group of 50 children and young people requiring assistance and the YIP steering group then identified 50 that it

would work with. We did not have the opportunity during the inspection to view any YIP files so cannot comment on the assessment process, however, we were informed that each child or young person who was in the final core group had an individual personal development plan. The YIP also dealt with the peers and siblings of the identified core group.

Strengths:

- ◆ A prevention team had been established within the YOT to take forward work with children and young people vulnerable to offending.
- ◆ Referrals were received from the eight multi-agency Neighbourhood Management teams across Salford.
- ◆ The prevention team used a recognised tool, OnSet, to conduct assessments.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE OFFENDED

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *An Asset assessment is satisfactorily completed at the beginning and end of all interventions which takes account of cultural differences, diversity and safeguarding issues.*
- ◆ *Risk of harm to others is fully assessed.*
- ◆ *Risk of harm, either to self or from others, is fully assessed.*
- ◆ *Specialist assessments are undertaken on those with specific needs or who are assessed as a risk of harm to others.*
- ◆ *Resources have been identified and capacity exists to meet assessed need.*

Overall, assessment of children and young people who had offended was satisfactory. 93% of the Assets reviewed had been completed within the required national standards for timeliness, and 81% were of a satisfactory quality and supported by good evidence. An interim Asset was undertaken in 80% of relevant cases and a final Asset in 90%. The missing 10% were, in the main, accounted for by final warnings where the child or young person had failed to cooperate. It was apparent from the case file read that children and young people were involved in the process in 83% of cases, although discussion with the case managers suggested that the actual figure was probably higher but not recorded. We were, however, concerned that only 69% of parents/carers had been involved in the initial assessment. One reason for this appeared to be the low number of home visits undertaken by the YOT, which reduced the opportunity to speak to parents/carers.

**Good
practice**

The YOT had adopted a front sheet used with the referral case files, which gave the key facts of the case and the dates on which activities were completed. We would suggest that this scheme be adopted for all case files.

We were particularly pleased to note that the full risk of harm assessment had been completed in the majority of relevant cases. The YOT had developed a comprehensive risk of harm policy, which dictated that certain violent offences must generate a risk of harm assessment. However, in addition to those case files with completed assessments, we felt a further nine warranted assessment and were therefore concerned to discover that not all staff were aware of the policy. This indicated the need for further training to support the positive steps taken by the YOT management.

Similarly, the management oversight of cases identified as having a potential risk of harm needed to be strengthened. We could find evidence of case files being referred to the appropriate manager in only 65% of relevant cases, of which 24% were reviewed on a regular basis. Discussion with staff revealed that cases were considered during the regular supervision sessions but not in depth, and there was no written evidence of the review and advice given. We had been told that action had now been taken to address this issue.

Greater attention also needed to be given to safeguarding children and young people. The case file read revealed that contact was made with Social Services, to ascertain whether the child or young person was known, in only 24% of the files viewed. This action should be undertaken in all cases. We were informed that it had been done in the past, but had ceased due to problems with the different computer systems linking together. The current practice was to rely on the child or young person or their parent/carer to tell the worker if they had had previous contact with Social Services. This was not acceptable.

Any child or young person identified as at risk of self-harm was referred to the Health Worker for further assessment. This was a positive initiative which needed to be supported by systematic monitoring to ensure that referrals were always made where appropriate and follow-up action was taken as necessary. Our case file read showed that 18% of the caseload was considered at risk of harm from self and 12% from others. Of these, intervention was taken in 75% cases (12 out of 16).

The YOT had a strong link with education, and each school had a nominated member of staff who was the point of contact when the case worker required information for PSRs and Asset in relation to the child's or young person's educational status. The YOT sent a standard pro forma to the school which, when returned, was attached to the paper copy of the case file and became the basis for the Asset completion. Whilst the process was comprehensive, the information obtained could be many months out of date in cases involving long-term absence from the school. The YOT did not carry out their own screening of children and young people to assess levels of literacy and numeracy or other learning difficulties/disabilities, but

referrals were made by the team, if considered appropriate, to education psychology for literacy assessments. The one exception was the ISSP team, who carried out assessments of literacy and numeracy on all their children and young people. This process should be adopted across the YOT.

Although the Health Worker did not complete the health section of Asset, she did complete a SIFA when a child or young person had an Asset score of 2 or greater. The substance misuse section of the Asset was also completed by the case worker, but if the child or young person scored 3 or 4 they were referred to the Substance Misuse Worker, who then utilised an assessment tool developed by Lifeline. We were unable to establish if the tool had been validated and it did not cover mental health issues. The number of mental health and substance misuse referrals was monitored monthly by the Information Officer. They provided the results to the Operational Manager who checked that appropriate action had been taken.

At the time of the inspection, the YOT was fully staffed and had access to sufficient resources to meet the identified assessed needs of the children and young people with whom they were working.

Strengths:

- ◆ Initial assessments undertaken on children and young people who had offended were satisfactory.
- ◆ A full risk of harm assessment was completed in most relevant cases.
- ◆ Specialist assessments were available.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ Oversight of risk of harm cases by managers needed to be improved.
- ◆ Social Services involvement was checked in only a quarter of the cases examined.
- ◆ There was no universal literacy and numeracy screening tool used across the YOT.

PARENTS/CARERS

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *An assessment of the parenting skills and needs of the parents/carers of children and young people who have offended or are at risk of offending has been undertaken and is used to inform any intervention.*

In only 69% of cases, case workers carried out an assessment of parents'/carers' needs at the time of meeting the child or young person aged under 16 years. If staff felt that the parents/carers would benefit from a parenting programme they would refer them to the Parenting Worker, who then carried out a detailed assessment. We were informed that a more structured assessment tool had been developed which would address the

needs of parents/carers, and that staff were soon to receive training in its use.

The court had issued a few parenting orders, but the numbers were generally low as they supported the use of voluntary parenting programmes. The court was advised of the parents'/carers' possible involvement in a voluntary programme through the PSR.

The ISSP team also referred parents/carers to the Parenting Worker, if they identified any needs which could appropriately be dealt with through a parenting programme.

Strength:

- ◆ The Parenting Worker carried out a detailed assessment on cases referred to them.

Area for improvement:

- ◆ Not all parents/carers were being assessed.

2.2 Interventions

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF OFFENDING

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *There are arrangements in place to provide interventions for those children and young people who are assessed as at risk of offending.*
- ◆ *Interventions with children and young people who have offended are targeted in areas of assessed need, such as education, health and parental relationships, etc.*
- ◆ *Interventions with children and young people who have offended are specific to the needs of girls and young women, children and young people from minority ethnic groups, those with disabilities and take account of safeguarding issues.*

Although the prevention team had only been operating for the past 12 months, it had already developed individual interventions tailored to the assessed needs of a particular child or young person. The interventions were based around the same tools as those used for children and young people who had offended.

Our main concern about the YIP was that this service was only contracted from Monday to Friday, offering no interventions for the weekend, a period of high risk for those on the edge of offending. The YOT also had links with other organisations to work with children and young people who were at risk of offending.

Strength:

- ◆ The dedicated prevention team had developed a number of interventions.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE OFFENDED

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *Supervision plans are written in accordance with national standards, emanate from Asset and contain SMART objectives.*
- ◆ *Interventions are structured, evaluated and consistent with the principles of effective practice.*
- ◆ *Frequency of appointments for children and young people who have offended is consistent with national standards and Home Office/YJB guidance for final warnings, referral orders, community penalties, DTOs (custody and post-custody) and ISSPs (where they exist).*
- ◆ *For those children and young people who have offended, enforcement follows non-compliance.*

We were impressed with the work that staff put into preparing appropriate interventions, which were mainly delivered on a one-to-one basis. It was evident that case workers tended to work in isolation, and we felt that better use could be made of the skills and experience within the team by sharing different approaches and techniques. However, the YOT had recently purchased a group work programme and staff had all been trained in its use and were actively taking it up. We were also informed of various group work activities based around asylum seekers, girls and young women and motor offenders, as well as a carousel group for referral orders, although we were unable to view these. Case workers were also able to draw on outside groups such as the Fire Service and voluntary organisations. Mentors offered support to children and young people.

Good practice

The YOT had a very effective mentoring service run by the Mentoring Coordinator. They had trained up to 90 people during the past year and were able to offer mentors to suit the diverse needs of the children and young people. Particularly valuable was the support offered to those with specific educational needs. Mentors were available for use with children and young people by all team members and they would continue to work with the child or young person for up to a period of 12 months, even when the order had terminated.

There were a limited number of interventions for children and young people with specific requirements. The YOT had just developed a group for girls and young women as the need for one had been identified. It had access to interpreters and one worker was responsible for asylum seekers. As the office was not suitable for disabled admittance, contact with children and

young people or their parents/carers unable to access the building was through home visits. This meant that this group of people were denied access to resources available to others at the YOT premises. Although a small proportion of the children and young people on the YOT caseload were from minority ethnic groups, no specific interventions had been developed to address their needs on either a group or an individual basis.

It was noted that many case workers did not record their interventions in full, listing general themes, but maintaining the details in their heads. It was important that interventions were fully documented in the case file to enable other staff to know what work had been undertaken.

Our file read showed that children and young people were experiencing difficulty with their education in 80% of the cases examined. Of these, the action taken by the YOT was considered to have been effective in 63% of cases. These difficulties included bullying and truancy, as well as exclusion. Education provision of 25 hours a week was found for the majority of children and young people involved with the YOT. The YOT was also able to refer children and young people to Pupil Referral Units and specialist provision in local colleges of further education. Despite these efforts, self-exclusion by children and young people was a major concern which merited further investigation and which, we felt, needed to be worked at both with the children and young people concerned and at a strategic level by the Management Board.

Good practice

The YOT had piloted innovative activities to motivate children and young people and re-engage them with education, including work with a local theatre company, funded by the Children's Fund. This project utilised video, photograph and rap production with staff from the Royal Exchange Theatre and teaching assistants. It had resulted in 75% of the children and young people being reintegrated into full-time education.

There was a strong focus on physical health issues within the YOT, but not on mental health. This was regrettable as, according to our case file read, a significantly higher proportion of the children and young people seen were experiencing difficulties with their mental or emotional health as opposed to their physical health (45% compared to 22% respectively). The team had one health worker and an operational manager, both with RGN backgrounds, funded by National Regeneration Fund money via the PCT. All new cases were offered a consultation session with the health worker, as were children and young people on release from custody. They ran immunisation sessions, some minor injury work and provided a significant amount of sexual health advice. They also ran a drop-in session on Thursday evenings for children and young people supervised by the YOT. This work was commendable, but needed to be complemented by a similar focus on mental health issues.

Overall, the quality of the supervision plans examined was acceptable. We found that 87% were completed within national standards requirements, although a number did not contain SMART objectives. It was clear from

reading the plans that they had been based on the initial assessment in Asset and there was a close fit between intervention and risk of harm in 97% of cases. 77% of plans took into account the individual diversity issues of the child or young person.

The case file read showed that appointments were arranged within national standards timescales in 82% of cases. The recording of the appointments offered was not very good as most contact logs were used as historic documents. 66% of the appointments offered were kept.

Final warnings were not administered in accordance with Home Office/YJB guidance (2002), in that the police delivered the warning and then told the child or young person to attend the YOT office on the next Tuesday. The transfer of information about the child or young person from the police was also not reliable, only 53% of the files read showed they had informed the YOT within 24 hours. As a result, the YOT was unable to do any preparatory work before the child or young person arrived at the office, or undertake any home visits. Asset was completed at the initial interview, and 82% of assessments were undertaken within ten days of the final warning being given. Due to the positive approach of the YOT Police Officer, attendance for the initial appointment had risen from about half to about three-quarters of cases, but was still below the national target and meant that a significant proportion of children and young people were not benefiting from the interventions available. According to our file read, only 57% of final warning cases involved an intervention, which included referral to sports and leisure services as well as specialist members of the team.

Although only 58% of referral panels met within the national standard target of 20 working days, the meetings were otherwise conducted well. The panel members appeared professional in their manner and reports were received on time from the YOT and were of a good standard. An inspector attended a panel session and commented favourably on the consideration that the panel members gave to each case. These impressions were supported in the case file read where we found a close fit between interventions arranged and assessed risk of harm in all the cases seen.

A number of referral order cases were not previously known to the YOT prior to the court hearing. A dip-sample of cases, made by the Youth Justice Trust a voluntary organisation covering Greater Manchester, showed that eight out of ten referral order cases had been given a final warning, but had not been forwarded to the YOT. This was unacceptable, and the YOT and police needed to review their processes to ensure that children and young people were not being denied the opportunity of early intervention.

Good practice

The training and work undertaken by the referral panel members was accredited by the Open College Network and resulted in a qualification equivalent to a GCSE. Panel members received 42 hours training, significantly more than that recommended by the YJB, including specialist work on child protection and substance misuse. This was additional to 18 hours of practice (panel work), which was also assessed.

The breach procedures operated by the YOT were inconsistent and demonstrated the need for further training. 72% of failed appointments were treated appropriately, but only 44% of breaches were pursued. Members of the YOT seemed somewhat equivocal in their approach to breach, in some instances we were told, because they were unsure of the court's reaction. This response, if accurate, denoted the need for greater dialogue with the local court. The ISSP team had a very positive attitude to breach, which they saw as an important way of promoting compliance. This approach should be adopted across the YOT.

Strengths:

- ◆ Staff were enthusiastic, professional and hard working.
- ◆ Physical health issues were thoroughly addressed.
- ◆ The overall quality of supervision plans was acceptable.
- ◆ Referral panel meetings were well conducted.
- ◆ The mentoring programme supported children and young people who were at risk of offending and those who had offended.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ There was a limited number of interventions available for children and young people with specific needs.
- ◆ Greater attention needed to be given to mental health issues.
- ◆ A significant proportion of final warnings were not being referred to the YOT for intervention.
- ◆ Just over half the referral panel meetings sat within the 20 day timescale set by the national standard.
- ◆ Breach proceedings were not implemented consistently across the YOT.

PARENTS/CARERS

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *Parents/carers (where appropriate) are made aware of the requirements of the interventions and are kept informed about progress during the course of the intervention.*
- ◇ *Interventions which are appropriate to the diverse needs of parents/carers are provided for, and taken up by parents/carers of children and young people who either have offended or are at risk of offending in accordance with assessed need.*

The YOT had one parenting coordinator who also acted as the parenting worker. The amount of time this worker was able to devote to the delivery of interventions was thus limited. At the time of the inspection, two parenting groups were being run and included presentations from Social Services, education and input from the Substance Misuse Worker. We found the groups well organised, planned and evaluated, and they were seen as helpful to parents/carers. Parent/carers with specific needs were seen on a one-to-one basis, outside the formal parenting programme.

We were concerned that this positive intervention was not made available to a significant number of parents/carers as their needs were not always addressed by case workers. According to our case file read, only 69% of parents/carers were involved in the initial assessment. Furthermore, a home visit only occurred in 29% of the files read and there was little evidence in the files to suggest that contact was maintained with parents/carers by telephone or letter. Parents/carers seen during the course of the inspection told us that they were aware of the interventions that their child was involved in, but they were not kept up to date with their progress.

The position with regard to the ISSP was, however, very different in that the ISSP team carried out weekly home visits and often had daily contact with the parents/carers who were, as a result, kept fully informed about their child's progress. We were very impressed by this good practice.

Strengths:

- ◇ Two parenting groups were being run which included inputs from specialist workers.
- ◇ The ISSP maintained purposeful contact with parents/carers.

Area for improvement:

- ◇ Overall, the level of engagement with parents/carers was low.

Inspection criterion

- ◆ *Those assessed as being at risk of offending and undertaking interventions are engaged in activity to reduce their risk of offending and address their needs.*
- ◆ *For those children and young people who have offended examination of the case file provides evidence of progress and a reduction of risk factors.*
- ◆ *The YOT demonstrates a reduction in reoffending for all bands of penalties (pre-court, first tier, community penalties and custody).*
- ◆ *Indicative accounts of outcomes from children and young people, parents/carers and other relevant persons show positive outcomes.*
- ◆ *For those children and young people who have offended, supervision plan objectives are met in areas of assessed need.*
- ◆ *Interventions for parents/carers promote effective parenting.*

Offending behaviour

The current Youth Justice Plan indicated a reduction in offending in three of the four bands of penalties. There had been a slight rise in reoffending by children and young people given a final warning. This increase was surprising and against the national trend, reinforcing the need to re-examine the final warning process. These, overall, positive results needed to be seen in the context of an increasing number of arrests of children and young people over the past 12 months as a result of increased activity by the Police Basic Command Unit. Despite the resulting increase in case loads, staff had still been able to offer an effective intervention and care package to prevent many children and young people from further offending.

Our case file read revealed that 70% of children and young people did not reoffend during their order and 55% of their most recent Asset scores showed a reduction of score. Supervision plans were reviewed in 78% of the files read, and progress was recorded against the criminogenic factors identified in the plan. Children and young people were actively engaged in the interventions offered, tackling a wide range of criminogenic factors. Most improvement was seen in the area of 'thinking and behaviour' which was addressed in 42% of cases. However, few of the interventions were evaluated and continued to be used without any evidence of their effectiveness. Some case workers tried to assess the impact of their work through a questionnaire given to the children and young people who they supervised, but the return rate was too low to make it a valid exercise.

Comments received from children and young people during the course of the inspection were extremely positive. Many spoke about how the YOT had given them a purpose and structure in life. They had found the staff supportive, understanding and willing to do what they could to help.

Parents/carers also reflected these comments, saying the YOT had had a positive effect on their children and themselves, both through the individual engagement and the parenting programmes.

Parents/carers who had been on a parenting order were similarly complimentary about the support that they had received. Despite this positive testimony, again the programmes had not been evaluated to confirm their effectiveness. This was an important piece of work that needed to be taken forward.

Education

According to the most recent Youth Justice Plan, of the 203 children and young people sentenced between October 2003 and March 2004, 72% were reported to be in ETE at the conclusion of their community penalty order. The YOT made particular effort to return children and young people to full-or part-time education and ETE issues were addressed in 41% of the cases examined. Whilst this work was increasingly successful with pupils at Key Stage 3, schools, children and young people found reintegration more difficult to sustain at Key Stage 4. Research by the YOT and the LEA showed that self-exclusion accounted for 63% of those children and young people not receiving 25 hours a week education.

Good practice

Connexions had applied for YJB funding to develop a learning mentor scheme, which resulted in a mentor being allocated to a child or young person. This scheme was highly beneficial to children and young people, helping to reintegrate them into school, including in-class support. Importantly, the mentor could continue providing support beyond the end of the court orders.

Health issues

The Health Worker and Management Board representative from the PCT considered their role within the YOT to be primarily about providing the children and young people supervised by the YOT with an outreach health service, rather than focusing on criminogenic health needs. The health worker utilised a modified school health pro forma to monitor the health needs of children and young people and these were systematically audited every 12 months. A report on the health needs of the children and young people who attended the YOT, based on the information from the school health pro forma, was submitted to the Management Board annually and used to develop an action plan.

There was a lack of focus on mental health issues, as these needs were identified in nearly half the YOT caseload. Given the importance of mental health in offending, the YOT needed to consider how these issues could receive greater attention than at present. We were therefore pleased to hear that a bid had been submitted for two 0.5 CAMHS workers, as additional health workers.

Safeguarding

In our view, further attention needed to be given to the issue of safeguarding to ensure that both the YOT and Social Services were fulfilling their commitment to the children and young people in their charge. Contact with Social Services was not routinely made where the child or young person was known to be looked after, and as already demonstrated, insufficient action was taken to ensure that such cases were identified. These issues required immediate attention.

Strengths:

- ◆ The current Youth Justice Plan indicated a reduction in offending in three of the four penalty bands.
- ◆ According to our file read, nearly three-quarters of the children and young people had not reoffended during the course of their order.
- ◆ Intervention by the education workers was increasingly successful with Key Stage 3 pupils.

Areas for improvement:

- ◆ The Youth Justice Plan showed an increase in offending amongst children and young people subject to final warnings.
- ◆ Greater attention needed to be given to safeguarding and mental health issues.
- ◆ Few interventions were evaluated.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR PARENTS/CARERS

This section is judged as satisfactorily met.

3.

VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

3.1 Assessment of the needs of victims of children and young people who have offended

Inspection criteria

- ◇ *An assessment of victims' needs should be made and used to inform planned interventions.*
- ◇ *All victims are given the opportunity to make informed decisions about their involvement in cases of children and young people who have offended and are supported in doing so.*

As a result of a protocol between the police and Victim Support, an agreement had been reached for the YOT Victims' Service Coordinator to contact victims directly. Details on individual victims were available through the YOT Police Officer, via the police computer. Despite this, our case file read showed that victims were contacted in only half of the cases examined. We were informed that the police were to review their procedures for supplying victim information which may assist in ensuring greater coverage.

The needs of each victim were assessed using the restorative justice assessment tool. The whole process was then fully explained to the victim and they were consulted about possible further involvement and any reparation activity. As the police only took victim impact statements for serious cases, the Victims' Service Coordinator would record impact statements where one had not been undertaken, which would then be used to inform the PSR.

Despite the support offered, the majority of victims did not want to be involved in the process and did not respond to the initial contact. In these circumstances the victim was left with a contact number in case they changed their mind.

Strength:

- ◇ Victims' needs were assessed using a recognised tool.

Areas for improvement:

- ◇ Not all victims were contacted.
- ◇ The police did not take impact statements from all victims.

3.2

Restorative interventions with the victims of children and young people who have offended

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *Victims have access to a restorative intervention tailored to their needs.*
- ◆ *Victims are offered the opportunity to specify any reparative element of the child's or young person's supervision plan and to be informed of their progress.*
- ◆ *Restorative and reparative interventions are provided that are appropriate to the age, vulnerability, culture, ethnicity, language needs, literacy levels and gender of the victims and children and young people who have offended.*

Victims were fully consulted about the restorative interventions and, although many did not want to participate directly, our file read showed about a third suggested some form of indirect intervention. The YOT assisted most children and young people in writing a letter of apology to the victim, which would only be passed on where the victim had indicated consent. All case managers were trained to monitor and take responsibility for the quality of the victim apology letter in order to ensure a common standard across the team.

Members of the YOT mediation team attended referral panels after meeting the victim to represent their views and to feedback the panel's findings to the victim. We were impressed with the way the YOT ensured that the victim was kept up to date with the progress of the case they were associated with, including those attending the ISSP.

The referral panel members used their local knowledge of the community when setting reparation tasks. The schemes available to the referral panel and the courts via the YOT were extensive, and covered both group and individual work. We were aware of the initiative adopted to find appropriate work for all children and young people to meet their diverse needs and those of their victim. One example we witnessed was a young woman from an eastern European background who was required to undertake reparative work in her own community despite the victim being a British corporate company. This not only accommodated her limited use of English and different cultural needs, but meant that she could repay her own community.

Case study

In one case where the victim was the parent, the panel members explained to the mother the type of work the young person could be required to do as reparation. She was very happy with the suggestion of working in the garden. Prior to the panel member's comments, the mother had not wanted direct reparation.

We could find no evidence of formal evaluation of the reparation projects or the restorative elements the orders. The exception was the work done by the mentors, which was assessed by their coordinator on a quarterly basis with the mentor themselves, the child or young person, their parents/carers and the case worker.

Strengths:

- ◆ Case managers took responsibility for the quality of apology letters written by children and young people.
- ◆ An extensive range of reparation schemes were available.

Area for improvement:

- ◆ No formal evaluation had been undertaken of restorative interventions.

3.3 Restorative outcomes for victims of children and young people who have offended

Inspection criterion

- ◆ *Victims are satisfied with the work undertaken by the YOT.*

We interviewed a small number of victims who praised the overall work of the YOT. One very satisfied person said, *"They have been absolutely brilliant"*. Their experience of receiving a service from the YOT was positive in that the Victims' Service Coordinator supported them well and enabled them to make informed choices about being involved.

One victim, who had originally been told by a police officer that she could not attend court, stated that she had benefited most by actually going to court with the Victims' Service Coordinator, who she described as exceptional. She stated, *"Facing the offender really helped me to get through the burglary, I would not have come to terms with it if it was not for the YOT"*. She also explained how she had been kept informed of the young person's progress through meetings with their case manager.

We heard some criticisms, but not directed against the YOT. One victim had been subject to a substantive amount of anti-social behaviour on the estate where they lived and ran a business. They stated they were very happy with the service they received from the YOT, but felt that the ASBO was not actually being enforced and, as a result, they had no quality of life. Following the inspection this case was referred to the ASBO Unit within the Home Office to be followed up with local agencies.

Victims received a paper questionnaire about their satisfaction with the service received, which was followed up by a telephone call from one of the administrative team, who was also a Victim Support volunteer. There had, however, been no external/independent evaluation of the satisfaction with the service provided by the YOT Victims' Service Coordinator.

Strengths:

- ◆ Individual victims spoke positively of the work of the YOT.
- ◆ The questionnaire sent to victims was followed up by a staff member with experience of working with Victim Support.

3.4

Restorative and reparative outcomes for children and young people who have offended

Inspection criteria

- ◆ *Children and young people involved in restorative interventions make a positive contribution to the victim and community.*

We did not get the opportunity to view any restorative interventions. However, the feedback from numerous sources, including victims themselves, supported the conclusion that the interventions made a positive contribution to the community and individuals in Salford, and had an effect on the children and young people participating in them.

Restorative interventions were used at all levels of order, from final warning to DTO and ISSP. The YOT also made very good use of restorative justice conferences.

Case study

One young person who had taken part in a restorative justice conference commented to the inspector who interviewed him, "I was sat in a room with the victim and it made me feel bad. It made me think, as at the time you don't see the victim and how it affects them. At the time you laugh about it, but meeting them made me realise how much I hurt them".

Strengths:

- ◆ The restorative interventions offered by the YOT were generally well regarded.
- ◆ Good use was made of restorative justice conferencing.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR WORK WITH VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

This section is judged as satisfactorily met.

The joint inspection of YOTs

The Government announced the establishment of an independent inspection of YOTs in December 2002. The inspection programme is to be conducted jointly by CSCI, Estyn, the Healthcare Commission, HMIC, HMI Prisons, HMI Probation, Ofsted and SSIW. The joint inspection team is located within and led by HMI Probation, and is funded by the Home Office.

Home Office objectives

The joint inspection contributes primarily to the achievement of Home Office Objective II - 'more offenders are caught, punished and stop offending and victims are better supported', and to the requirement to ensure that custodial and community sentences are more effective at stopping offending.

It also contributes to the achievement of Objective III, through our scrutiny of work to address drug and other substance misuse, and to other relevant CJS and Children's Services' objectives.

The **aims** of the programme are to:

- ◆ assess the impact made by YOTs and partner organisations on the prevention of offending by children and young people through effective supervision
- ◆ appraise the work undertaken by YOTs and partner organisations to meet the needs of children and young people at risk of offending and enable them to lead law-abiding and constructive lives
- ◆ evaluate the role of the YOTs in safeguarding the rights and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- ◆ assess the extent to which the YOTs are meeting the required standards and targets set by the YJB
- ◆ promote good practice in the management arrangements of YOTs and service delivery to the courts and community
- ◆ identify underperformance and make recommendations to promote improvements
- ◆ evaluate the effective use of resources
- ◆ actively promote race equality and diversity as an integral part of the inspection process
- ◆ produce timely reports which contribute to improved performance by informing policy and practice.

Code of practice

Each inspection will:

- ◆ be undertaken with integrity in a professional, impartial and courteous manner
- ◆ enable the development of independent judgements, based on evidence
- ◆ seek to energise and engage with staff
- ◆ promote race equality and diversity throughout its processes
- ◆ be concluded with the timely publication of a report containing findings and recommendations for improvement.

Anyone wishing to comment on an inspection, a report or any other matter falling within the remit of this inspection programme should write to:

*HM Chief Inspector of Probation
2nd Floor, Ashley House
2 Monck Street
London SW1P 2BQ*

Inspection arrangements

- ◆ The joint inspection programme started in September 2003, following two pilot inspections. All 155 YOTs in England and Wales are to be inspected over a five to six year cycle. As this was a long programme, we decided from the outset to break it down into three phases in order to ensure that the inspection retained its relevance and continued to address local and national concerns.
- ◆ The three phases are:
 - **from September 2003 to July 2004**, when the inspection concentrated on key issues, with emphasis placed on establishing benchmarks and the dissemination of good practice. Fifteen YOTs were inspected during this phase of the programme, all of whom were volunteers.
 - **the current phase, up to September 2005**, when the inspection process will be based on the methodology established in the first phase. In so far as possible, fieldwork will be individually tailored to each YOT, informed by examination of the data available and the findings from other inspection programmes
 - **from September 2005 onwards**, when the YOT inspection methodology will be congruent with the five outcomes in the Children's Services inspection framework and complement that of the Joint Area Reviews in England. Although the YOT inspection will remain a separate process, inspections will run within a similar timeframe as the Joint Area Reviews where possible, so that areas of potential overlap and duplication can be reduced and rationalised. Findings from the YOT inspection will, therefore, inform not only the Joint Area Review but also the Annual Performance Assessment and the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. Work is currently being undertaken to ensure that this process is compatible with the different governance arrangements in Wales.
- ◆ The inspection will be carried out in line with the Government's commitment to proportionate and coordinated inspection in local government. It will:
 - be proportionate to risk, and fieldwork will only be undertaken where necessary to support findings or to disseminate good practice.
 - complement, and be coordinated with other inspection programmes, including the Joint Area Reviews and comparable inspection processes in Wales
 - take account of YOTs' recent development as organisations.
- ◆ The standards and criteria developed for the first phase of the inspection have been slightly modified and focus on:
 - management and partnership arrangements
 - work with children and young people and their parents/carers
 - victims and restorative justice.

- ◆ The fieldwork for each individual inspection will take place over two weeks, about two to three weeks apart. The first week will consist of a file reading exercise for which the YOT will be asked to identify a random sample of between 30 and 80 children and young people (dependent on the workload) who have been subject to some form of intervention in the previous months. The cases will cover most orders, including licences.
- ◆ These case files will be examined in detail. In half the cases selected, we will also undertake in-depth interviews with the case manager, any other person significantly involved in delivering the intervention and, where possible, the child or young person themselves and their parents/carers. Where appropriate, we also hope to meet and hear from victims of crimes by children and young people supervised by the YOT.
- ◆ In order to encourage self-assessment and increase ownership of the inspection findings, we are inviting YOTs to second a member of their staff, usually an experienced practitioner, to the inspection team for the duration of the file reading week. We have found this to be a positive way of developing mutual understanding and strengthening the links between inspection and practice.
- ◆ As before, the second week of the inspection will involve meetings with the CEO, Management Board members, YOT Manager and staff. It will cover the management of the YOT, its performance and the contribution made by its partner organisations. Discussions will be informed by the findings of the examination of case files conducted in the first week of inspection.
- ◆ The inspection findings will be compiled in a report which will include recommendations for improvement. These recommendations will be designed to encourage the YOT in its work, to support good practice and to promote improvements.
- ◆ The report will be submitted to the Home Secretary, as the Secretary of State responsible for youth justice, with simultaneous copies to the Education and Health Secretaries, and where relevant, the Ministers for Education & Lifelong Learning, Finance, Local Government & Communities, and Health & Social Services in Wales. A copy will be sent to the YJB. Copies will also be made available to the press and placed on the website of HMI Probation at:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/justice/probation/inspprob>

Scoring approach

We have decided to continue a similar approach to scoring in phase two as in phase one, in order to allow some broad comparisons of performance, but with certain provisos. First of all, it should be noted that this second phase of the inspection covers only three core areas, rather than five as in the first phase. In addition, as part of our aim of continually improving performance, two of the categorisations, 'good' and 'good basis for development' (formerly described as 'satisfactory with good basis for development'), have been amended, and whilst exacting a more rigorous standard of performance from the YOT also, we believe, allow for better representation of their actual achievements.

The three sections of the inspection will be individually assessed against the relevant standards, using the supporting criteria. Judgements will be based on:

- ◆ information supplied by the YOT
- ◆ interviews with chief officers, managers and staff both from the YOT and other partner organisations
- ◆ examination of case files
- ◆ discussions with case managers and other people significantly involved in the supervisory process
- ◆ the perspectives of the children and young people, their parents/carers and, where possible, their victims
- ◆ other relevant inspection findings.

The judgements are defined as:

- ◆ **Fully met** – exceptional performance beyond the requirements of national standards and other relevant guidelines
- ◆ **Satisfactorily met** – a sufficient level of performance to assure the joint inspection team that the YOT is progressing satisfactorily
- ◆ **Partly met** – less than sufficient performance on the majority of items
- ◆ **Not met** – inadequate performance on most items.

Some discretion is allowed to lead inspectors for scores to be adjusted if this seems appropriate due to other findings or contextual evidence.

The overall assessment will be determined by the judgements of the individual sections. As in the first phase of the inspection process, no score or grading will be given during this second phase, but instead a general categorisation highlighting particular achievements as well as areas for improvement. This approach was initially adopted as we felt that a more rigid scoring mechanism would be inappropriate given the developmental nature of much of the work of the YOTs and their relatively recent inauguration as organisations.

The overall performance of the YOT will be assessed as:

- ◆ **Commendable** – there is strong management performance and exemplary work with both children and young people and in relation to victims and restorative justice. These YOTs will be setting a standard of excellence which will act as an example to others.
- ◆ **Good** – either the section relating to management or work with children and young people is fully met and the other sections are at least satisfactorily met. YOTs within this category will have addressed most, if not all, key areas of work and be achieving a high standard of performance.
- ◆ **Good basis for development** – the sections relating to management arrangements and work with children and young people are both assessed as satisfactorily met and work with victims and restorative justice is being taken forward. Although some key areas will still require attention, these YOTs will have demonstrated good potential and their work will be sufficient to promote confidence in their future development.
- ◆ **Requiring improvement** – either the section on management arrangements or work with children and young people is assessed as partly or not met. In these instances, the inspection will have revealed concerns about key aspects of the YOT's performance which need to be addressed.
- ◆ **Requiring significant improvement** – neither the section on management arrangements or work with children and young people is considered to have been satisfactorily met. YOTs within this category will need to take immediate action to address major concerns about core areas of work.

Next steps

- ◆ The YOT will be asked to send a response to the recommendations, to the lead inspector, together with an action plan within three months of the publication of the report. It is anticipated that the recommendations will normally be addressed within 12 months of publication to allow sufficient time for integration within existing developments.
- ◆ Implementation of the recommendations will be monitored by the YJB. The joint inspection programme does not normally include any follow-up action unless issues were to emerge during the course of the programme that were of such serious concern to require immediate attention. The inspection of the Salford YOT has not revealed any such concerns.
- ◆ In addition to the reports on individual YOTs, the joint inspection team will also publish periodic reports on findings across a number of teams. Such reports will include comments on race equality and diversity issues and other trend information. These reports will also include comparisons between the performance of YOTs with similar characteristics.