



CYP Select Committee

Findings from the Youth Justice Service HMIP inspection

Date: 06 November 2024

Key decision: No.

Class: Either Part 1 or Part 2.

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Maleeka Dachi, Head of Integrated Adolescent Service

Outline and recommendations.

The purpose of this paper is to provide the CYP Service Select Committee with an overview of the findings from HMIP inspection of the Youth Justice published in September 2024.

The overall judgment from the inspection was rated as being 'Good' with 6 key recommendations as follows:

1. The statutory youth justice partners within Lewisham should: Ensure that there are consistent and committed representatives of the appropriate seniority on the integrated adolescent and youth justice partnership board, so that it can fulfil its aims and purpose, and improves outcomes for youth justice children, families, and victims.

2. The Integrated Adolescent and Youth Justice Partnership Board should: Enhance its use and analysis of YJS and partnership performance data to evaluate the impact and outcomes of interventions and services to children, families, and victims, to ensure that they are effective.

3. Ensure work with the partnership is prioritised to improve education experiences and outcomes for school-aged children.

4. The Youth Justice Service should: Improve the quality of operational risk and safety practice within court disposals and resettlement, particularly in relation to assessment and reviewing activity. This includes ensuring effective management oversight and quality assurance processes.

5. Improve practice across court and out-of-court disposals to ensure effective victim safety work is undertaken.

6. The Metropolitan Police should: Review the use of Outcome 22 or other deferred prosecution options in Lewisham as a priority, and work with the YJS to ensure that all children are offered and supported to access appropriate diversionary interventions at the earliest opportunity.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

April 2024	Inspection announced.
June 2024	Inspection commenced.
September 2024	Inspection report published.

1. Summary

HMIP are required to inspect and report on the effectiveness of work with children and young people who have offended.

The inspection is announced in advance of visits made to the service, this is known as the pre-field work period. During this time the inspection team liaise with the service and timetable the inspection activity.

During the fieldwork phase, the inspectors meet with managers, practitioners and YJS stakeholders. Case files are also reviewed.

Prior to the recent full inspection, the Lewisham Youth Justice Service were last inspected in 2016, with a recommendation of Requires Improvement. This is a substantive period of 8 years.

The outcome of the recent inspection highlights significant improvements since 2016. Of particular note was the positive feedback about the implementation of the 'TIARRA' Model that is embedded in practice across the service.

The development of the Adolescent & Youth Justice Board (and subgroup) will ensure strategic oversight of key performance indicators and broader priorities for the service and adolescents who reside in the borough. While inspectors endorsed this approach they noted that it was a relatively recent development.

From January 2025, HMIP will inspect Youth Justice Services under a revised inspectorate framework. Managers and practitioners in the service will attend briefings throughout November 2024 to hear more about the new framework.

In July 2024 Maleeka Dachi who was appointed earlier in the year, took up the position of the Head of Service for the Integrated Adolescent Service (*Adolescent Safeguarding & Youth Justice*). Maleeka will take forward and drive the recommendations from the HMIP inspection, with the service and key stakeholders, she is also leading on the development of the newly formed Integrated Adolescent Service.

2. Recommendations

The inspection action plan has been submitted and approved by HMIP. This paper has been written by way of update to the CYP Select Committee and does not seek any recommendations to be ratified.

Please see below for action plan detail.

No.	Area for Improvement	Key actions	When	Off-track	On-track	Completed	Lead
Recommendations							
1	The statutory youth justice partners within Lewisham should: Ensure that there are consistent and committed representatives of the appropriate seniority on the integrated adolescent and youth justice partnership board, so that it can fulfil its aims and purpose, and improves outcomes for youth justice children, families, and victims.	The Board Chair has reviewed the membership to ensure representation is appropriate across the partnership. A board attendance register is used at every meeting to monitor attendance. 1) The board will review the quoracy requirements detailed in the Board's Terms of Reference.	Mar-25				Pinaki Ghoshal
2	The Integrated Adolescent and Youth Justice Partnership Board should: Enhance its use and analysis of YJS and partnership performance data to evaluate the impact and outcomes of interventions and services to children, families, and victims, to ensure that they are effective	The AYJB sub-board has been created to look at the performance information in more detail with escalation and reporting up to the main board. 1) Responsibility for the collection, management and distribution of performance data to be moved to the central business intelligence team. 2) KPIs to be reviewed to ensure we are capturing and evaluating data to drive improvements.	Mar-25				Maleeka Dachi / Donna Simeon
3	Ensure work with the partnership is prioritised to improve education experiences and outcomes for school-aged children.	1) Performance sub board to review outcomes of ETE panels to monitor and escalate any barriers to school aged children receiving education to the Board. 2) Review representation of Education across all YJS activities. 3) Chair of ETE panel to join Performance sub group. Review role of virtual school with consideration of additional support which could be provided to YJS children	Mar-25				Maleeka Dachi / Angela Scattergood
4	The Youth Justice Service should: Improve the quality of operational risk and safety practice within court disposals and resettlement, particularly in relation to assessment and reviewing activity. This includes ensuring effective management oversight and quality assurance processes	Management support and oversight to be strengthened in relation to assessment and reviewing activity to improve practice. 1) Review/add relevant KPIs in this area and review in 1:1s with individual practitioners and team meetings. 2) Provide refresher training for staff and managers on safety and risk management approaches - as detailed in the service action plan. 3) Extend our QA areas for dip sampling and auditing to improve practice. Regular reporting to the Performance sub board and Annual QA reports to be presented to the Board.	Ongoing				Maleeka Dachi / Vicky Rogers
5	Improve practice across court and out-of-court disposals to ensure effective victim safety work is undertaken	1) Quality Assurance activity will be undertaken to identify areas of development and learning. 2) Operational Managers will dip sample case work to ensure that the victim perspective is included and considered in all assessments and plans.	Ongoing				Maleeka Dachi
6	The Metropolitan Police should: Review the use of Outcome 222 or other deferred prosecution options in Lewisham as a priority, and work with the YJS to ensure that all children are offered and supported to access appropriate diversionary interventions at the earliest opportunity.	The deferred prosecution element of Outcome 22 is likely to be adopted in a couple of areas of the MPS to test in the near future with the intention and hope of rolling out to all in 2025. Currently it is still not to be used.	TBC				Met Police

3. Policy Context

This report aligns with Lewisham's Corporate Priorities, as set out in the Council's [Corporate Strategy \(2022-2026\)](#) of particular relevance building Safer Communities – *'We will reduce the number of young people who enter the criminal justice system, focusing on prevention and expanding our trauma-informed approach, championed by our Youth Offending Service. We will continue to focus and develop our successful public health approach to youth violence, aiming to tackle knife crime and reduce sexual exploitation across the borough'*.

The delivery of Youth Justice Services is influenced and governed by the following:

Youth Justice Board for England & Wales
Lewisham Youth Justice Plan 2024
Lewisham Education Strategy
Lewisham Prevention & Early Help Strategy 2024
Lewisham Participation Strategy 2024
Serious Violence Duty
Crime & Disorder Act 1998
Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022
The Children Act 1989 as amended 2004

4. Background

Local authorities are required to establish multi-disciplinary Youth Justice Services (YJS) in order to fulfil their statutory duty under the Criminal Justice Act 1998. The five statutory partners as defined by the Act are health; education; probation; police and the local authority. They supervise children and young people on Out of Court disposals (diverted and referred by police for less serious offences) and Court sentences including remand and custody.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to submit an annual youth justice plan relating to their provision of youth justice services. Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 sets out the youth justice partnership's responsibilities in producing a plan. It states that it is the duty of each local authority, after consultation with the partner agencies, to formulate and implement an annual Youth Justice plan, setting out how youth justice services in their area are to be provided and funded, how they will operate, and what functions will be carried out. The annual plan is signed off by Mayor and Cabinet and then submitted to the National Youth Justice Board for approval.

Since 2017 the Service and wider partnership has transformed the way it operates by applying the unique Lewisham Youth Justice Service 'TIARRA' model (Trauma-informed, Anti-Racist and Restorative approaches) to achieve better outcomes for children and families and staff wellbeing. There has been a substantial decrease in the number of children and young people entering the criminal justice system in Lewisham, as well as in re-offending and the number of custodial sentences imposed.

5. Summary of Inspection Outcomes

The full inspection report is attached as an appendix to this report. Positive areas identified were as follows:

- The board has inspirational and innovative leaders who are aspirational for children
- There is an embedded culture of openness, constructive challenge and innovation within the leadership team
- The YJS is well respected by the wider partnership and its practice is seen as innovative and influential
- The therapy hub is impressive
- There is a focus on improving education outcomes for children within the YJS
- Staff leading on work with victims are tenacious, motivated, and enthusiastic, placing victims at the centre of their work
- There is a passionate commitment to ant-racist practice and addressing disproportionality, which honours the Lewisham community
- Staff, managers, and volunteers are passionate and authentic about improving outcomes for children, families, and victims
- Staff and managers reported feeling valued and recognised for their achievements
- The reception staff at Holbeach Road are exceptional in their warmth, kindness and friendly approach to anyone visiting
- There has been a consistent reduction in first-time entrants, the use of custody, and serious youth violence, over the last two years

As noted above there were six recommendations made, informed by the following observations

- There needs to be improvements in how the board analyses, evaluates, and uses performance data
- The YJS needs to ensure quality assurance processes are consistently applied
- Risk and safety practice in court disposals, primarily in relation to assessing and review, needs to be strengthened

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 The General Fund budget for the Lewisham Youth Justice Service is £1.7m in 2024/24. The budget for the service also includes a further £1.7m in grants and contributions from several funding bodies, including the Youth Justice Board, the Integrated Care Board, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).
- 6.2 This report provides members with an update on the outcomes of the Youth Justice Service HMIP inspection and, as such, there are no direct financial implications from agreeing the recommendation in section 2.
- 6.3 Any costs incurred in implementing the action plan arising from the inspection will need to be contained within the resources available.

7. Legal implications

The Council's statutory obligations are set out in the Background section of this report. This is a report for noting and as such there are no legal implications arising.

8. Risk Implications

The risk implications have been assessed as low currently, given that there is a clear plan in place to address the recommendations from the inspection and improve practice standards. This plan will benefit from robust oversight from the Head of Service with additional scrutiny and challenge from the Adolescent & Youth Justice Partnership Board.

9. Equalities implications

There are no specific implications on our approach to ensuring equality for all children and families in the borough. Neither are there any specific actions which impact equality across the workforce. All activities undertaken will continue to ensure that they fall inline with the Race & Equalities Act.

10. Crime and disorder implications

The above mentioned actions will fall inline with our legal obligations to adhere to section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998.

[Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)

11. Health and wellbeing implications

The overall purpose of the Public Health approach is to improve the overall health and wellbeing of all residents in the borough. Crime and serious violence have wider implications for the borough such as resident safety, desirability to live in Lewisham, mental health, education, and employment outcomes and so on. Taking a public health approach allows the partnership to take a place-based approach to tackling these issues.

12. Background papers

13. Glossary

Term	Definition
TIARRA	Trauma Informed, Anti-racist, Restorative Approaches.

14. Report author(s) and contact

Maleeka Dachi – Head of Service - Integrated Adolescent Service
Maleeka.dachi@lewisham.gov.uk

15. Appendices

Appendix A – [An inspection of youth justice services in Lewisham](#)