

North Somerset Council Children's Services

Youth Justice Plan

Developing a child-first and identity-focused
youth justice system

2025 to 2026



Contents

- 1.0 Foreword..... 5
- 1.1 Executive Summary..... 7
- 1.2 Youth Justice strategic priorities 2025 to 2026..... 9
- 1.3 Introduction, vision, strategy10
- 1.4 Local context 11
- 1.5 Youth Justice Vision.....14
- 1.6 How we work in North Somerset Youth Justice Service14
- 2. Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements..... 15
- 2.1 Youth Justice Service structure.....15
- 2.2 Governance..... 17
- 2.3 Links with other strategic or stakeholder groups.....19
- 2.4 Youth justice service management board membership.....20
- 2.5 Update on the previous year: Progress on priorities in previous plan..... 21
- 2.6 Performance over the previous year 22
- 3.0 National Indicators..... 23
- 3.1 First Time Entrants..... 23
- 3.2 Reducing Re-Offending 24
- 3.3 Live re-offending data.....26
- 4. Local Indicators..... 27
- 4.1 Suitable Accommodation..... 27
- 4.2 Education 28
- 4.3 Substance misuse..... 30
- 4.4 Health – Incorporating Mental Health 31
- 5. Risks and issues 32
- 6. Plan for the forthcoming year 34
- 6.1 Child First..... 34
- 6.2 Voice of the child 36
- 7. Resources and services 36
- 7.1 Board development 38
- 8. Workforce Development 38
- 8.1 Evidence-based practice and innovation 39

8.2 Evaluation	40
9. Priorities for the coming year	41
9.1 Outputs and intended outcomes for 2025/26	41
9.3 Reducing First Time Entrants.....	42
9.4 Reducing offending and reoffending, ensuring that custody rates remain low (including remand and police custody).....	43
9.5 Tackling disproportionality-including both race and gender, with a sharper focus in 2025/26 on girls.....	44
9.6 Supporting improved safeguarding services and outcomes for victims, with a sharper focus in 2025/26 on young victims who are also at risk of offending behaviour	45
10. Cross cutting themes and priorities	45
10.1 Reducing serious youth violence, child criminal exploitation and extremism. Leading on the embedding of Young Futures Prevention Partnerships.....	45
10.2 Collaboration with children, families and victims – focusing on identity development approaches to desistance.....	46
10.3 Improving Education, Training and Employment outcomes.....	47
11. Standards for children	47
11.1 Service development.....	48
12. National priority areas	49
12.1 Children from groups which are over-represented	49
12.2 Females in the Youth Justice System.....	50
13.0 Policing.....	51
14.0 Prevention	51
14.1 Diversion.....	53
15.0 Education	53
16.0 Restorative approaches and victims.....	54
16.1 Avon and Somerset Young Victims’ Service (YVS).....	56
17.0 Serious violence, exploitation and contextual safeguarding.....	57
17.1 Serious Violence	57
7.2 Exploitation.....	59
17.3 Community Safety and Violence Reduction Partnerships.....	60
17.4 Prevent	60
18.0 Detention in police custody	60

18.1 Remands61

18.2 Use of custody and constructive resettlement..... 61

19.0 Working with families..... 62

20.0 Sign off, submission and approval 62

Appendices 63

List of Tables 63

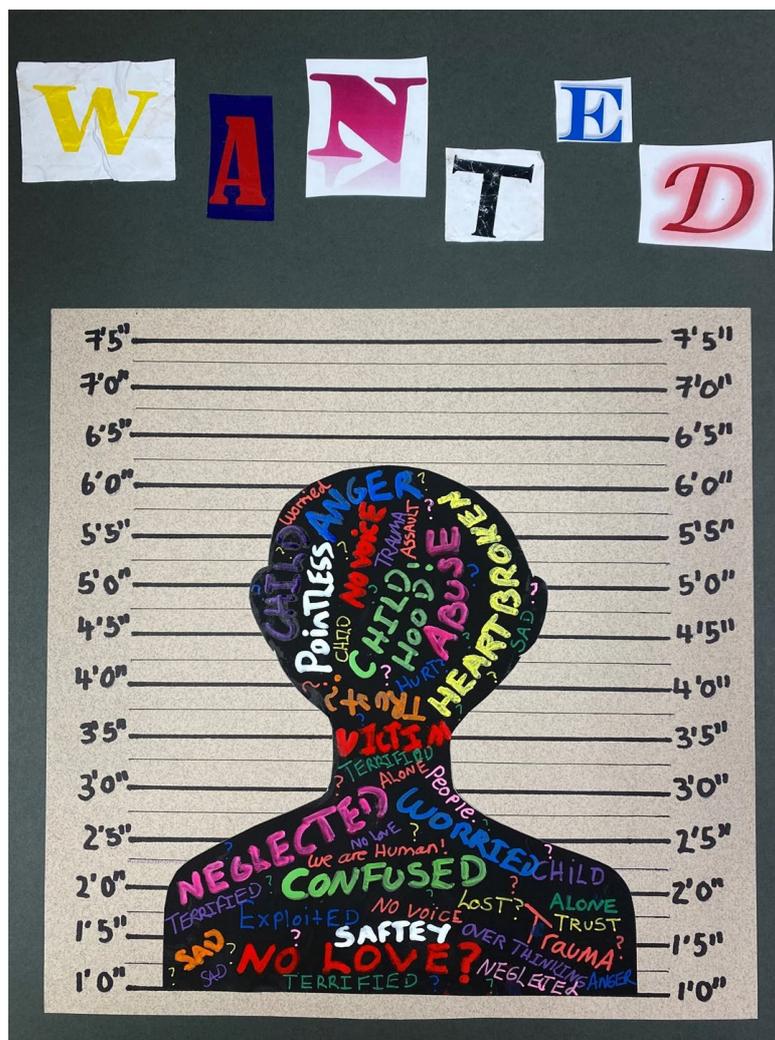
List of Figures 63

List of Maps 63

Artwork Error! Bookmark not defined.

Youth Justice & Prevention Service Intervention Programmes 64

Glossary of Terms..... 64



Artwork 1: Wanted by Kayci Aged 15

1.0 Foreword

As the new Chair of the Youth Justice Management Board, it is a privilege to introduce our North Somerset Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2025-26. I am both excited and proud to support the delivery of this plan, which reflects our collective ambition to put children first, prioritise identity-focused practice, and strengthen our commitment to improving outcomes for children, victims, and our communities. I am confident that this plan will support the strategic partnership to deliver the highest quality Youth Justice Services in North Somerset and sets clear strategic priorities for 2025-26 and beyond.

This plan builds on the innovative work of our Youth Justice and Prevention Service and the dedication of our partners across health, education, police, probation, community safety, and the voluntary sector. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all partners, practitioners, and, most importantly, the children and families who have shaped and contributed to this plan. Your resilience, commitment, and collaboration drive our work forward.

We achieved much together in 2024/25. It was a year of rapid growth, innovation, and development. We have seen reductions in the number of first-time entrants to the criminal justice system, re-offending rates, youth detention and remand. However, there is still more to do, particularly in addressing serious youth violence; disproportionality, children from global majority backgrounds and girls are over-represented in our system; and support for children who are victims.

At the heart of this plan is our shared vision to embed the Child-First framework and tenets of practice across the partnership, ensuring children are seen as children, not defined by their offences, and supported to build positive identities that enable them to thrive. We will continue to reduce first-time entrants, tackle disproportionality, and sustain low custody rates, recognising the impact these have on individual lives and community safety. The plan places the Child First Framework at the centre of everything we do for children, victims and communities. It challenges us to ensure the 'both/and' of Child First practice, supporting identity development for children and keeping others safe. The plan is aligned with the North Somerset Council Plan and priorities and those of our Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnerships, the Police and Crime Plan 2024-2029, our Adolescent Safety Strategy 2025, and the pan-Avon and Somerset Serious Violence Duty strategy, which was developed in early 2024 for our partnership to improve outcomes related to reductions in Serious Youth Violence.

We remain focused on addressing serious youth violence and exploitation, working collaboratively through the Young Futures Prevention Partnerships to intervene at 'teachable, reachable' moments and support children to make safe, constructive choices. We will prioritise education, training, and employment opportunities, ensuring that children in the justice system have the chance to achieve, belong, and contribute positively. We recognise the importance of amplifying the voice of children, victims, and families in

everything we do. Participation is not just an ambition; it is a fundamental element of how we will continue to deliver effective, meaningful youth justice services in North Somerset.

This year, our Board is committed to supporting the Youth Justice and Prevention Service to drive forward our refreshed Child First Action Plan, embedding trauma-informed, restorative, and identity-focused practice across the partnership, and ensuring that outcomes for children and victims are central to every decision we make so that we can deliver our refreshed vision:

'We aim improve outcomes and wellbeing for children and victims of crime in North Somerset by embedding a child first and identity focused approach to practice across the Partnership.'

'We see collaboration and participation with children, families and victims as central to our approach to achieving the overarching aim to improve the lives of children, victims and communities in North Somerset.'

– Our vision for North Somerset

Thank you once again to all those who work tirelessly to improve the lives of children and victims in our communities. On behalf of the Youth Justice Board, I look forward to working alongside you all as we deliver this ambitious plan and continue to make North Somerset a safer, fairer, and more hopeful place for every child.

The priorities for 2025/26 provide the partnership with a continued focus on activity required to support desistance and improve outcomes for children, families, and wider communities

On behalf of the YJS Management Board, I am pleased to present our Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2025-26.



Claire Shiels
Chair of North Somerset
YJPS Strategic Partnership Board

1.1 Executive Summary

Our shared partnership vision for youth justice services in North Somerset permeates across this strategic plan into everything we do.

The Youth Justice Service has a key role to play by:

- diverting children away from the youth justice system, where appropriate
- helping improve outcomes for children, families and victims of crime
- reducing the use of custody
- contributing to multi-agency public protection and safeguarding
- enhancing safety and reducing victimisation
- adopting evidence-based approaches such as Child First Practice, trauma informed, identity development and whole family approaches to youth justice

The overall effectiveness of the Youth Justice Service continues to be monitored by the Youth Justice Board (YJB), Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and a broad set of Key Performance Indicators that link directly to the service's core aims for children, families, and their communities. The new KPIs will drive improvement across the partnership and further improve the lives of children, families, and victims of crime in North Somerset.

In 2024/25, our local data shows there were a total of 23 children who became First Time Entrants to the criminal justice system, which is a 20.6% decrease compared to the previous year. This highlights the positive progress that is being made in the Out of Court space with the use of Deferred Caution diverting many children from the Criminal Justice System. This year this has been further strengthened by the success embedding Child-First frameworks into our practice and multi-agency approach.

The most recent PNC (Police National Computer) data for the period from April 2022-March 2023 indicates a decrease in re-offending from the previous year of 6.48%. This decrease in our re-offending rate means our rate is now lower than Avon and Somerset, South West, YJS Family, and National averages. However, we are ambitious to do more to target reoffending and intend to drive our practice model on Child-First principles forward in 2025/26. Work has begun in this space and our most recent live tracker data, which tracked all children who offended in 2024/25 shows a binary reoffending rate of 18.5%, further supporting our continued energy for child first and identity focused approaches.

There was a significant increase in the number of re-offences per re-offender to 7.82 in the period July 2022 to June 2023, an increase of 3.15pp / 4.67pp from the previous year aggregated annual figures). We are aware this relates to one very vulnerable child, and we are ambitious to improve outcomes for our most complex children in 2025/26.

Disappointingly, we have seen one child sentenced to a custodial sentence between April 2024 and March 2025. While our custody rate has remained low in 2024-25 (0.05), one child in custody is one too many. In 2024/25, we had 1 child Remanded to Youth Detention Accommodation, a decrease of 2 compared to the previous year (3). The number of nights on remand has also decreased significantly as a result with a total of 6 (183 nights in 23/24). While this is a positive improvement, it remains an area of specific focus and is directly related to our strategic priority to target serious youth violence and exploitation for 2025/26.

In 2024, we experienced 4 Serious Youth Violence related offences resulting in substantive outcomes. Our Serious youth violence data indicates the rates of serious youth violence incidents increased in 2024 by 0.9 in comparison to 2023, with 2 more serious violence related offences. We also know that a number of our children have been affected by increases in serious violence in the region and 11 of our children have been involved in violence or knife related offences that have resulted in diversionary disposals (O22 & CR).

The development of the Serious Violence Duty strategy supports a public health approach to proactively target violence. This year it will further this work with funding of additional evidence-based interventions, such as the Focused Deterrence and teachable, reachable moment approaches, and the Young Futures Prevention Partnerships in North Somerset.

Our local data shows that black and global majority children continue to be disproportionately overrepresented in North Somerset. More detailed analysis indicates that the most over-represented groups for the last three years are children with mixed ethnicity and represent 7.6% of all Court and Community Supervision referrals, and 15.2% of Out of Court Disposals and 4.6% of Prevention and Diversion referrals 2024/25, compared to North Somerset's combined school census [2] populations for these groups of 2.8%. It is disappointing that we have made limited progress in this space and as such, tackling disproportionality remains a key strategic priority for us over the next year. The Board have renewed their efforts in this space and in 2025/26, we intend to partner with Racial Equality North Somerset (RENS) to challenge the partnership further.

In relation to gender, our local data for 2024/25 also indicates a disproportionate number of females in the service, 32% of all Post Court, 28% of Out of Court Disposals and 39% Prevention and Diversion referrals. This is compared to national averages of around 15% and therefore we know that we need to do more to prevent female children coming to the notice of the police. This year we will build on the tailored interventions and group work interventions developed last year and track impact on outcomes.

We continue to have a significant number of children with complex and multiple needs due to having experienced abuse, trauma and neglect. Over the duration of this plan we intend to focus our approach on proactively addressing trauma and supporting children with identity development. As a result, we continue to prioritise our focus on ETE, emotional and mental health and the participation of children to support identity development.

1.2 Youth Justice strategic priorities 2025 to 2026

The 2024/25 performance data, live re-offending tracker and YJB Serious Youth Violence tool combined with local and national drivers for systems change in youth justice have informed the following changes in our strategic priorities until 2026:

Ensuring that the evidence base of the Child First Framework and a Focus on Identity Development and wellbeing within the YJPS is scaled and embedded across the partnership

Continue to reduce and sustain the low level of first-time entrants (and maximising use of diversion and pre-court outcomes)

Reducing offending and reoffending, ensuring that custody rates remain low (including remand and police custody)

Tackling disproportionality-including both race and gender, with a sharper focus in 2025/26 on girls

Supporting improved safeguarding, services and outcomes for victims, with a sharper focus in 2025/26 on young victims, who are also at risk of offending behaviour

Cross cutting themes and priorities

Cross cutting with Children's Social Care and Violence Reduction Partnership - Reducing serious youth violence, child criminal exploitation and extremism. Leading on the embedding of Young Futures Prevention Partnerships

Cross Cutting – Collaboration with children, families and victims – focusing on identity development approaches to desistance

Cross Cutting – Improving Education, Training and Employment outcomes

The priorities for 2025/26 provide the partnership with a continued focus on activity required to support desistance and improve outcomes for children, families and wider communities.

1.3 Introduction, vision, strategy

The principal aim of the youth justice system is to prevent offending by children (Crime and Disorder Act 1998). North Somerset’s Youth Justice Service coordinates the provision and delivery of these services relating to this aim. The service aligns itself with the Youth Justice Board Strategic Plan for 2024-2027 and the vision of developing:

‘A youth justice system that sees children as children first, treats them fairly and helps them to build on their strengths so they can make a constructive contribution to society. This will prevent offending and create safer communities with fewer victims’.

The service works in partnership to achieve the national youth justice strategic objectives, which are to:

1. Reduce the number of children in the youth justice system.
2. Reduce reoffending by children in the youth justice system.
3. Improve the safety and wellbeing of children in the youth justice system.
4. Improve outcomes for children in the youth justice system.
5. Create safer communities and fewer victims.



Artwork 2: Weston Wheel by Cameron Aged 16

The Youth Justice Service plays a vital role in both improving community safety and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, protecting them from significant harm. Many of the children involved with the Youth Justice Service are among the most vulnerable in society and are at greatest risk of social exclusion.

Our multi-agency approach ensures that we play a significant role in contributing to addressing the safeguarding needs of these children.

The Youth Justice Service is a multi-agency partnership between the council, education, the police, probation, and health services, each of which holds a statutory responsibility for resourcing and supporting the partnership.

Success is measured through the key outcome targets of:

- the number of children entering the youth justice system
- the number of children reoffending
- the number of children entering custody

From April 2023, a wider range of key performance indicators (KPIs), in addition to the existing KPIs, also monitor and support our performance. While there has been issues with

data integrity at the YJB for these KPIs, we continue to monitor them locally to challenge the service and the Board, aiming to improve outcomes for children and victims of crime.

The 10 impact indicators that the Youth Justice Service will be measured against are:

KPI 1 - Accommodation

KPI 2 - Education, training and employment (ETE)

KPI 3 - Special educational needs or disability (SEND)

KPI 4 - Mental healthcare and emotional wellbeing

KPI 5 - Substance misuse

KPI 6 - Out-of-court disposals

KPI 7 - Management Board attendance

KPI 8 - Wider services

KPI 9 - Serious violence

KPI 10 - Victims

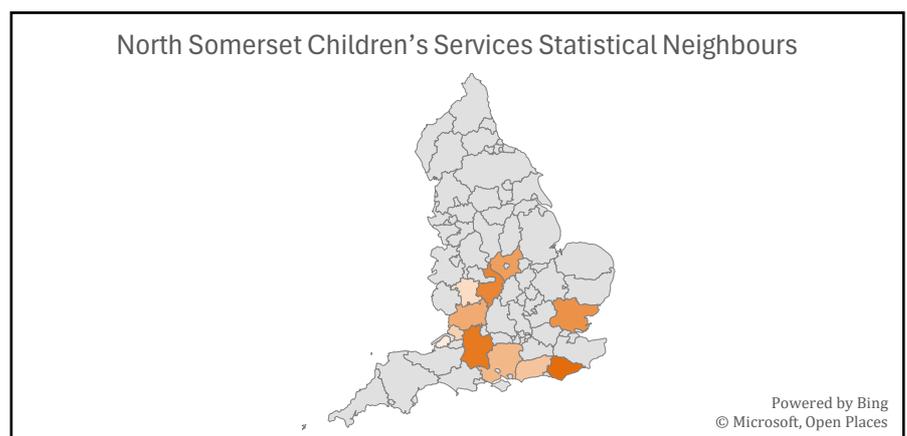
These KPIs are aligned to the Board’s strategic priorities as outlined in the foreword and will ensure that the Board holds itself and partners to account with regard to outcomes for children, families, and victims in the youth justice system.

We will review this plan and our current strategic priorities on a quarterly basis at an operational level, driving progress forward with our child first action plan and every six months at board level. It will be updated accordingly to reflect any changes to the national and local youth justice landscape that may impact on our priorities and ability to deliver a range of services designed to reduce youth offending within North Somerset. The plan will be fully reviewed by the Board annually.

This plan will be submitted to the Youth Justice Strategic Partnership Board and YJB in June 2025 according to guidance or as directed.

1.4 Local context

The below data shows four risk indicators for children and outcomes in North Somerset relating to income, education, employment/training and children in care, compared with England and areas that are statistically similar to North Somerset in terms of children’s services.



Map 1: North Somerset Children's Services Statistical Neighbours

These areas are known as Children’s Services Statistical Neighbour Benchmarking Tool (CSSNBT) neighbours.

In 2023/24, North Somerset had a smaller proportion of children under 16 in relative low-income families compared to England and the South West Region, but a higher proportion of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training. As can be seen in the figure, North Somerset sits favourably in comparison with its CSSNBT neighbours on three out of the four indicators.

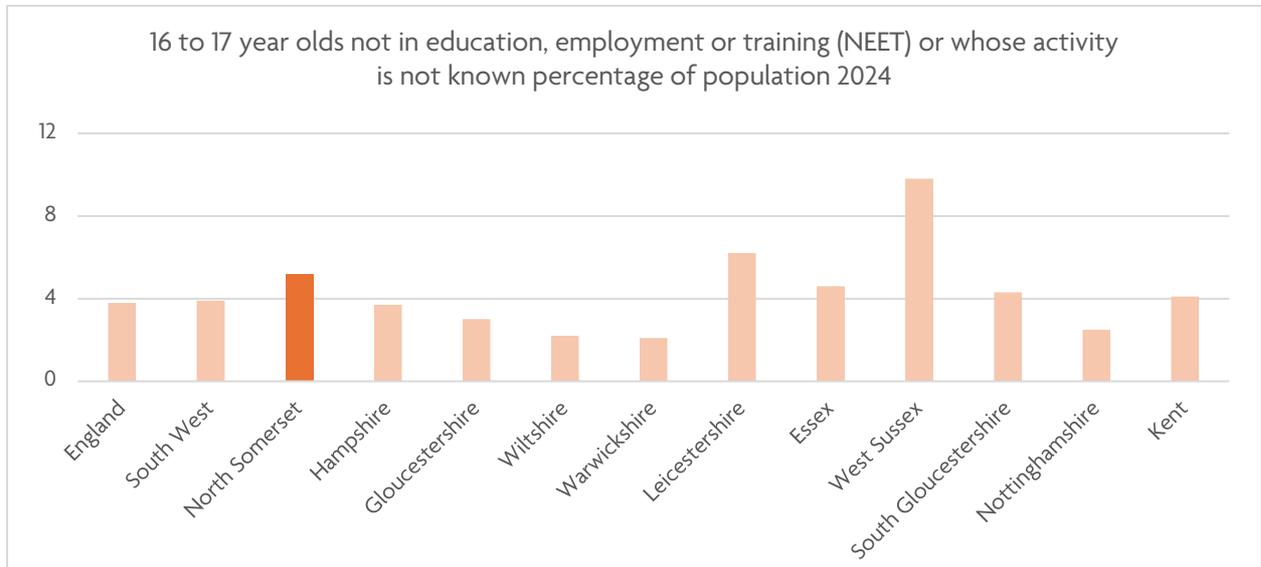


Fig. 1 (above): 16 to 17 year olds NEET 2024

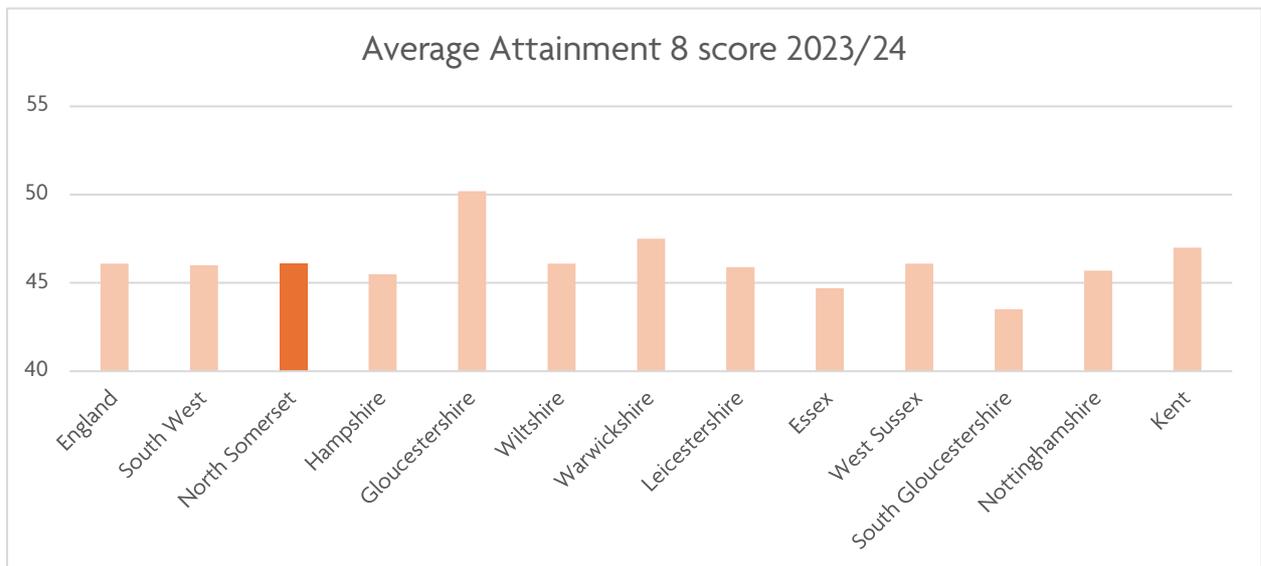


Fig. 2 (above): Average 8 Attainment score 2023/24

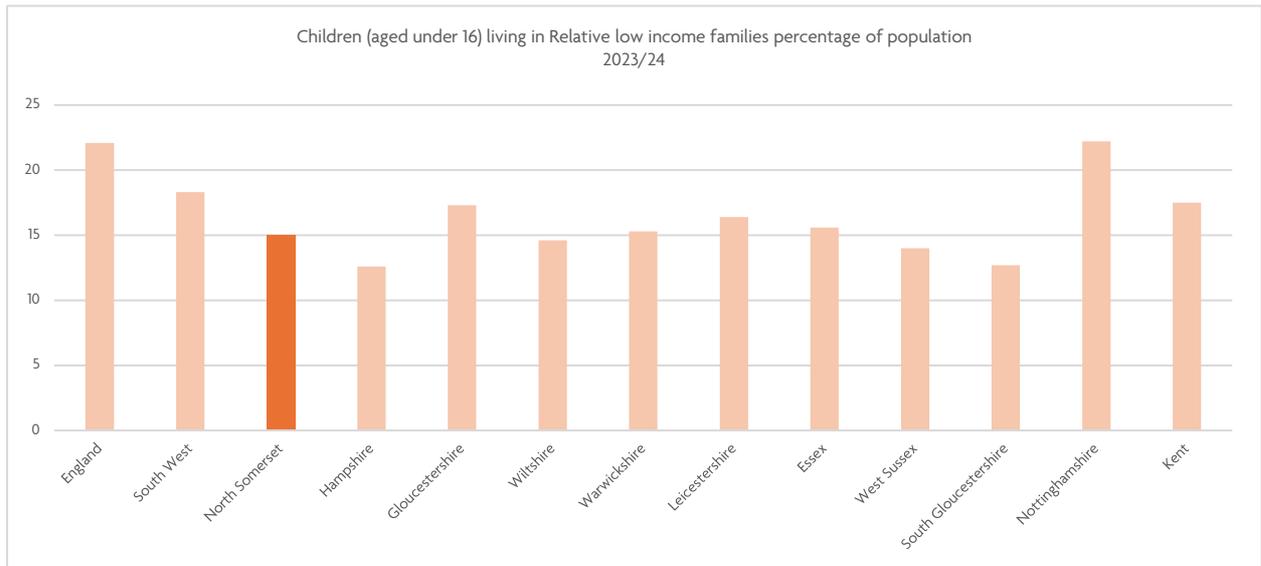


Figure 3 (above): Children u16 living in relative low income 2023/24

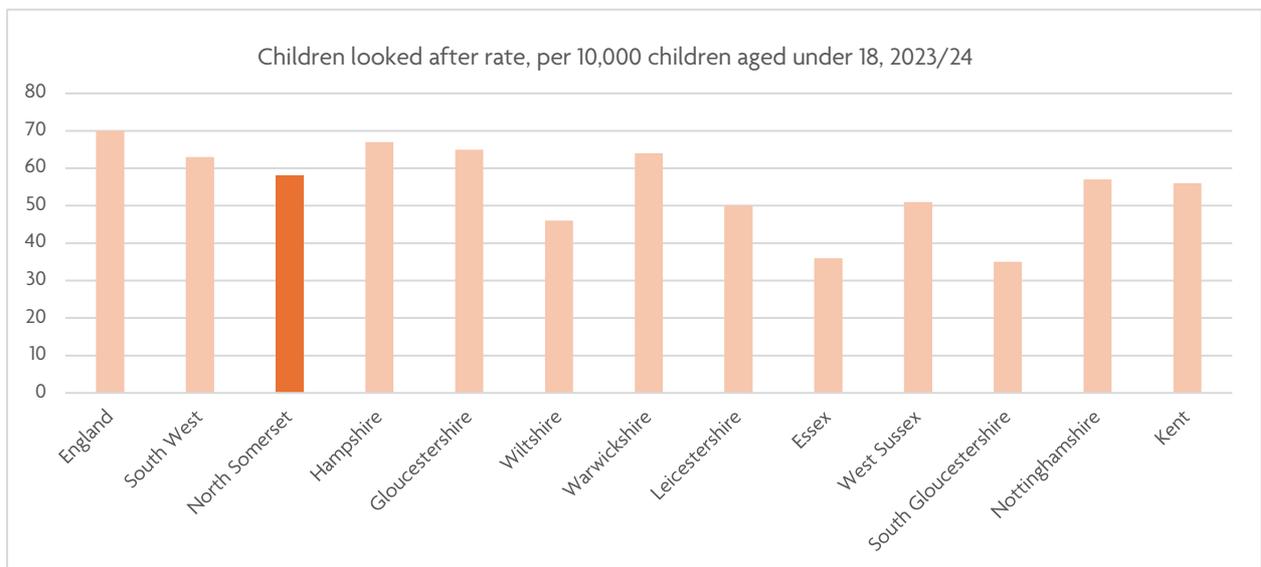


Figure 4: Children Looked after rate per 10,000 u18 2023/24

1.5 Youth Justice Vision

Within our Youth Justice Strategic Partnership and Service, we worked hard to develop a shared vision in 2024 that ensured a focus on evidence-based approaches to desistance and victim safety. At our Board away day in April 2025, we agreed we remain committed to this vision and remain ambitious to achieve more within it.

Shared vision for youth justice services across the strategic partnership in 2025/26:

‘We aim improve outcomes and wellbeing for children and victims of crime in North Somerset by embedding a child first and identity focused approach to practice across the Partnership.’

We see collaboration and participation with children, families and victims as central to our approach to achieving the overarching aim to improve the lives of children, victims and communities in North Somerset.’

1.6 How we work in North Somerset Youth Justice Service

We aim to reduce the number of victims and rates of youth crime in North Somerset, safeguard and protect children and the public, and increase public confidence in youth justice services by delivering high quality, fair and transparent services that embrace the diversity of children, the people of North Somerset and their communities.

The Youth Justice Service’s ambition is to holistically support all children that engage in offending behaviour. Our Youth Justice Strategic Plan supports the delivery of these services within an evidence-based practice framework aligned to the wider Children Services and Children Social Care Practice framework.

The framework supports the Youth Justice Strategic Plan ambition to support holistically all children that engage in offending behaviour by adopting the following practice principles unpinned by a child first approach:

- Providing a fair and equitable service to children, families, victims and the wider public
- Ensuring children can access high quality flexible support at the right time and right place

Artwork 3: Show Kindness by Mason, aged 12

support at the right time and right place

- Ensuring that interventions and services are provided at the earliest opportunity and that they are evidenced based and informed by our practice model, focused on strengths and identity shift
- Providing high quality Trauma informed, restorative and relationship-based practice
- Working in partnership with children and families to support participation and independence
- Working openly with children and their families to bring about change, in solution-focused ways, building on their strengths
- Building trusting relationships with children and families that encourages conversations about what matters to them
- Working with victims and whole families to support desistance.

Agencies delivering youth justice services will also ensure:

- A focus on developing skilled, empowered and confident practitioners
- The provision of a strong learning and supportive culture and to deliver good leadership management and supervision (high support and high challenge)
- Fit-for-purpose policies and procedures that support good practice
- They will support the voice and influence of children and children in service development
- The quality assurance of their practice and impact

2. Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements

The Youth Justice Service is structurally located within Children’s Services.

2.1 Youth Justice Service structure

The strategic leadership of the service is provided by the Head of Service supported by the Team Managers. At the time of writing this plan the Youth Justice and Prevention Service has 26.1 full-time equivalent (fte) posts. Appendix 1 - Organisation Chart.

- | | |
|---|--|
| • 1.0 fte Head of Youth Justice Service | • 3.6 fte Preventative Caseworker Substance Misuse |
| • 2.0 fte Operational Managers | • 0.6 fte Preventative Caseworker Mental Health |
| • 1.0 fte Senior Social Worker | • 1.0 fte Senior Practitioners ECM |
| • 2.5 fte Social Worker | • 0.4 fte Speech and Language Therapist |
| • 1 fte Student Social Worker | • 1.0 fte Mentoring & Advocacy Co-ordinator |
| • 0.6 fte Probation Officer | |
| • 1.0 fte Police Officers | |

- 1.0 fte YJS Intervention Officer
- 0.8 fte Restorative Justice and Victim Liaison Officer
- 1.0 fte Support Worker
- 1.0 fte Senior Practitioner Turnaround & Prevention
- 4.1 fte Preventative Caseworker Turnaround & Prevention
- 0.5 fte YJS Virtual School Teacher
- 0.6 fte Mentoring & Advocacy Officer
- 2.0 fte Business Support Officers

Volunteers:

- 10 Advocates
- 24 Mentors
- 7 Referral Panel Members

North Somerset Youth Justice and Prevention Service enjoys a strong and effective multi-agency partnership. Funding streams, staff deployment, and secondments/placements from our partners ensure there is an effective and meaningful relationship between all key stakeholders which provides challenge, oversight and support. These include the following staff:

- FCAMHS – Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service and the Enhanced Case Management Model (ECM) via the Integrated model of Care pathway
- Post 16 Team, focused on children who are Not in Education, Training or Employment
- Speech and Language Therapist
- School Nursing and Public Health teams-holistic health offer
- Probation Officer
- Police Officer

The YJPS has access to a range of Early Help and Specialist Services that include those provided by North Somerset Borough Council and commissioned services including those provided by the ICB (Integrated Care Board). Examples of services supporting the work of North Somerset YJPS include:

- Enhanced Case Management model (ECM)
- Adolescent Safety Team (ROTH).
- Family Support Services-Early Help
- Violence Reduction Partnership
- Edge of Care Team.
- Emergency Duty Service (out of hours support).

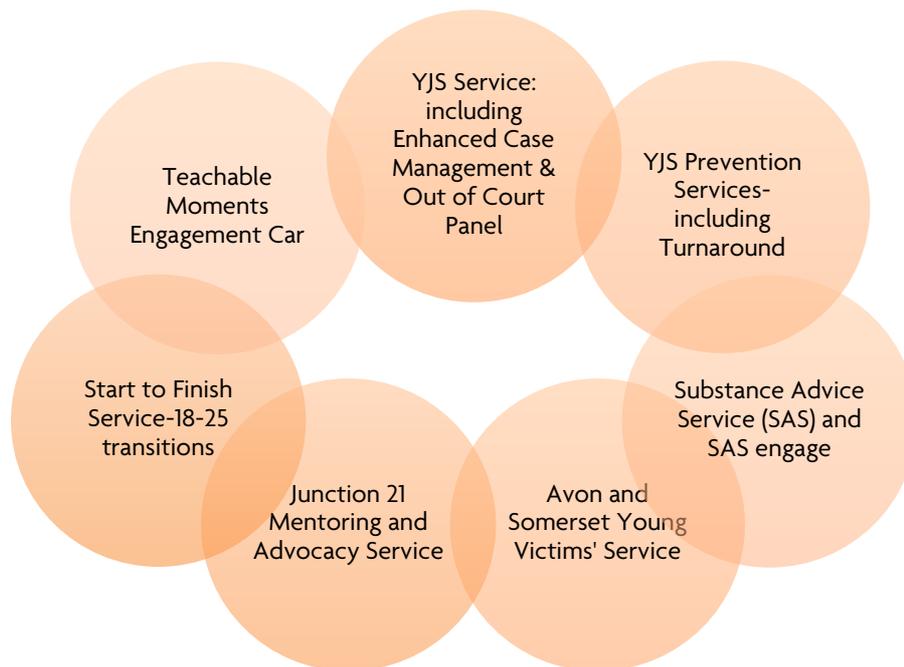


Figure 5: services supporting the work of North Somerset YJPS

2.2 Governance

The YJS Management Board was established to ensure that the Youth Justice Service has clear and coordinated strategic governance and support to continue delivering high quality youth justice services with a focus on:

- Making sure that children are safe and always seen as children first
- Reducing the likelihood of reoffending
- Minimising the risk of harm that children can cause to other people and themselves
- Create safer communities with fewer victims

The Youth Justice Strategic Partnership is operating under the 2021 Guidance-Youth justice service governance and leadership. This year sees the addition of a new Chair of the YJS Management Board, with the appointment of North Somerset’s Director of Children’s Services. The existing Chair will remain a member of the YJS Board, however this decision was made to strengthen the links between the Safeguarding Partnership Executive and the YJS Management Board.

The board meets six times a year. There is high-level, senior partnership representation on the board from across the strategic partnership, and there are good working relationships with all partners that ensures effective integrated strategic planning and delivery of good youth justice services. This was strengthened in 2024/25, with the addition of representation from the team and for victims. This has had a significant impact with improved links between the service and the Board and an improved strategic understanding of the Board’s role and responsibilities regarding victims.

The arrangement for chair and membership of the board ensures it is well placed to discharge its responsibilities, which include:

- Having a clear vision for the service and how it can deliver a high-quality, personalised, and responsive services to all children
- Ensuring the outcomes described in the standards for children in the youth justice system are being achieved
- Addressing any gaps in knowledge about the YJS, how it operates, and the needs of the children with whom it is working
- Ensuring the YJS partnership arrangements actively support effective service delivery and swiftly resolve any problems which need to be addressed
- Challenging and addressing any resource issues which may impact on service delivery
- Advocating for the YJS cohort within respective home organisations
- Being assured that the YJS can demonstrate that it works effectively to support desistance and positive outcomes for children
- Understanding the characteristics of children coming into the local justice system, and any disparity in groups from the local population
- Ensuring HMIP inspection findings, including thematic inspections, have been addressed
- Overseeing the services management and response to our local Community Safeguarding Public Protection Incidents.
- Providing financial governance for the partnership

The Board also seeks to understand the functions, outputs, and outcomes from the service in the following ways:

- Through management reports prepared for board meetings
- Inviting different representatives from the YJS to talk about their work e.g. restorative approaches, reparation, trauma-informed practice, resettlement and transitions, and other aspects of working with children
- Inviting board members to meet informally with staff to explain their work
- Board member involvement in audit, audit moderation and Multi-agency Case Discussions
- Case studies and presentations from children who have experienced the service
- Use of data to understand the local cohort
- Regular development days for board members
- Children and parents attending Board to talk about their experiences and challenge the Board

Overall, the board is responsible for ensuring that there are effective multi-agency working arrangements, and sufficient and proportional resources deployed to deliver high quality youth justice services that meet local needs and statutory requirements. The board is well established, operating with a clear forward plan and provides the service with 'critical friend', challenge, and scrutiny. The board receives progress reports in relation to financial expenditure and performance at each meeting and is presented with reports on significant national and local youth justice developments likely to affect Youth Justice Service performance and service delivery. Additionally, reports on all other aspects of Youth Justice

Service work are provided to the board under the structured cyclical arrangement to support oversight function.

We have strengthened the partnership arrangements and governance of the service in 2024/25 and this has demonstrated the following impact:

- A new centre and facility for the delivery of child first youth justice in 2025/26
- The development of our Youth Board-Reframe North Somerset
- The development of a local disproportionality action plan-showing impact regarding exclusion rates, include Racial Equality North Somerset as a lead partner in this work
- The development of a new Education offer, dedicated Education post in YJS and partnership with the virtual school for all YJS children
- The development of the Teachable Moments Engagement Car (TMEC)
- The development of a new Holistic Health offer for 2025/26-including Physical, oral, mental health and sexual health support
- A strategic understanding of the needs of victims and improved victim services and responses. Including a proactive and preventative approach for Assault Emergency Worker offences, young victims who have also committed offences, and targeted corporate victims planned for 2025/26
- Successful application to pilot the Young Futures Prevention Partnerships in 2025/26

This year will see the Board develop further regarding its participation in driving child first approaches to youth justice in North Somerset. Our development, ambitions for 2025/26, and key areas of focus will be outlined in our child first action plan, which will be refreshed during 2025/26.

2.3 Links with other strategic or stakeholder groups

The Youth Justice Service has the following strategic and operational links that enable us to deliver effective youth justice services which contribute to wider strategic priorities:

- North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSSCP) and associated subgroups
- North Somerset Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP)
- Children's Services Corporate Parenting Board
- North Somerset PREVENT Board
- Avon & Somerset Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements group (MAPP) and Multi-agency Risk Assessment
- North Somerset MARAC (MARAC) overseen by the North Somerset MARAC Steering Group
- North Somerset Health & Wellbeing Board
- Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board (BNSSG ICB)

- Avon & Somerset Criminal Justice Board (A&SCJB)
- Avon & Somerset Reducing Reoffending Board
- The Police and Crime Plan 2024-2029
- North Somerset Combating Drugs Partnership

Links with Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise sector (VCFSE)

In 2024/25, we developed relationships and partnerships across VCFSE. This has been led by our VCFSE Board Lead. This is beginning to show impact, with additional funding coming via the YJS Management Board, Policing and Public Health (£20,000), and a planned intervention in 2025/26 with Hangar gym CIC to support identity focused interventions, free gym memberships for all YJS children, and routes to employment. Further to this, we have developed relationships with Superculture, leading to the employment of one child and the development of our Jump LDN initiative and Weston Wallz Mural (planned for July 2025). Our VCFSE Board lead and partners are also exploring a number of wider opportunities, such as the coordination of youth provision, sporting opportunities, and wider partnerships. This is also beginning to ‘bear fruit’ taking children to the Williams Fl Head Quarters as one example.

In this context, the Youth Justice Service and partnership is strategically well placed to influence and deliver the local children’s and crime reduction priorities and work effectively with partners to meet the needs and gaps in services for children at risk of offending.

2.4 Youth justice service management board membership

Stakeholders	
Children's Services	Director Of Children’s Service (DCS), Chair Assistant Director, NS Children’s Services Head of Service, safeguarding and support, NS Children’s Services
Youth Justice Service	Head of Youth Justice, Youth Justice & Prevention Services, NSC
Councillors	Executive Member for Children’s Services & Lifelong Learning, NSC Executive Member for Safety in the Community
Youth Justice Board	Youth Justice Oversight Manager South West
Public Health	Director of Public Health, NSC Public Health Consultant
Education	Director of Education, NSC Head of Education Inclusion Service and Virtual School
Community Safety	Community Safety and Violence Reduction Partnership Manager, NSC

Police	Neighbourhood Chief Inspector for North Somerset, A&S Police Early Intervention Team Chief Inspector, A&S Police
Violence Reduction Partnership	Violence Reduction and Interventions Manager
National Probation Service	NPS, Head of Bath and North Somerset PDU,
Court/Magistrates	Avon & Somerset Youth Panel Chair
Health	Director of Commissioning, ICB BNSSG Senior Performance Improvement Manager
Voluntary Sector	CEO, Voluntary Action North Somerset (VANS) Equality Lead, Voluntary Action North Somerset (VANS) CEO, Racial Equality North Somerset (RENS)
Victims	Manager of the Avon and Somerset Young Victim Service (YVS)
YJPS Team Members	YJPS Team Managers and Team members
Children and young people	Reframe North Somerset

Table 1: Youth justice service management board membership

The existing board membership includes all key statutory partners (see table 1). Current board members participated in governance, strategic priority discussions and challenge session at our April 2025 away day, which was led by our Head of Service. The session focused on the following objectives:

- Enhancing understanding of the Youth Justice and Prevention Service Practice Model-Child First and Identity Development
- Understanding impact on outcomes from our practice in 2024/25
- Understanding our local data, performance and needs of the cohort
- Hearing the voice of children and parents
- Developing our vision and strategic priorities for the duration of this plan.

2.5 Update on the previous year: Progress on priorities in previous plan

Priority objectives from 24/25:

2024/25 has seen rapid progress and improvement relating to our evidence-based model of practice, child first and identity focused interventions. We are confident that we have embedded this model in practice and are beginning to see impact on outcomes. This will be further tested via the roll out of our Pro-Social Identity Development Scale, which we embedded in practice in late 2024.

2024/25 has seen the development of the following practice and improvements (highlights):

- Development of a shared practice model-5Ps case formulation and Collaborative approach to planning and enhancing safety of others
- Embedding the A.I.R. (Activities, Interactions and Roles) model to ensure a focus of interventions on identity development
- Development of a YJS breakfast club-‘the snack squad’ with the Greggs Foundation
- Challenge to our office/facilities for children and Office move (April 2025)
- Development of our Youth Board-Reframe North Somerset
- Development of the Teachable Moments Engagement Car (TMEC)
- Development of a qualified teaching post in YJS-YJS Virtual school approach- recruited in March 2025
- Development of an holistic health offer to be launched in 2025-including school nursing, oral health and sexual health
- Partnership with Thatcher’s Community Foundation to plant and grow a Community Orchard-Planted on 27th March 2025
- Young person led art exhibition-YOUth See [Public Safety Virtual Exhibition \(Main\)](#)
- Development of a short documentary exploring masculinity and vulnerability, involving three boys from the YJS cohort
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1c_YCCrhN2o

2.6 Performance over the previous year

In 2024/25, the YJS and Prevention Service has continued to perform well and has engaged with the following children:

- 491 children engaged (Youth Justice and wider prevention services)- 64% Male (305n) / 36% Female (186n)¹
- 91% White British
- 44% aged 15 to 17 (214), 35% aged 13 to 14 (172)
 - 28 Criminal Justice, 46 Out of Court, 417 Prevention in addition there were 21 Youth Alcohol and Drug Diversion Programmes-managed by the Substance Advice Service²

The YJS and Prevention Service monitors itself against both local and national indicators and has the following performance targets.

¹ 2023/24 – 456, (288n) male, (169n) female

² Criminal Justice - Bail, Remand & Community Supervision, Out of Court Disposals with Intervention

3.0 National Indicators

- First time entrants in the criminal justice system target: 130³ per 100,000 (family average)
- Reducing re-offending-reducing binary re-offending rates to below national and family average
- Use of custody target: 0.05 (family average)

Local targets are in place and include:

- 95% of children in suitable accommodation at programme end
- 75% of children in suitable education, training and employment
- 85% of children referred received a Mental Health Assessment & 85% access treatment where there is an identified need
- 85% of children exiting substance misuse treatment/harm reduction do so in a planned way

3.1 First Time Entrants

Reducing first time entrants⁴ into the criminal justice system continues to see a downward trend in 2024/25 with a rate of 114 (24n) representing a 17.2%pp reduction against 2023/24 138 (29n). This reflects the continued development of diversionary programmes, community resolutions and the continued YJS and other partner interventions with children on the edge of entering the criminal justice system.

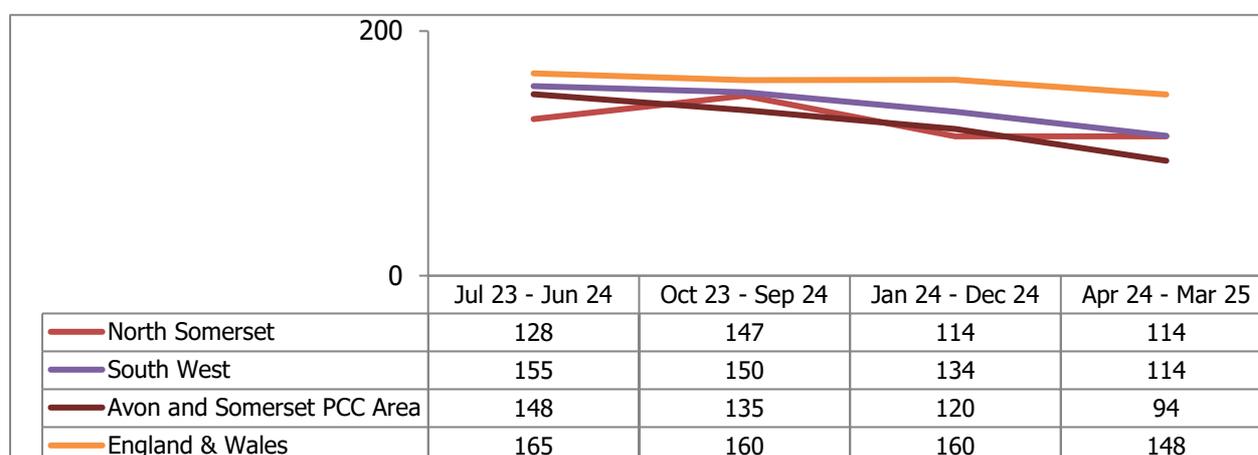


Figure 6: Rate of FTEs per 100,000 10-17 year olds - Apr 24 - Mar 25

Over time there has been a downward trend local comparators show North Somerset having a similar rate to the South West (114), and lower than England & Wales (148). However, but higher than Avon & Somerset (94). Therefore, this remains a priority for us in 2025/26. We intend to

³ Excludes Hampshire

⁴ FTE is taken from case level data

develop our out of court responses in line with the principles of child first practice and anticipate this will further support to reduce First Time Entrant rates.

For 2024/25, 43 Outcome 22s⁵ interventions were completed in the year. Those aged 10-17 caught for minor drug offences are referred to the Youth Alcohol and Drug Diversion Scheme (YADD) scheme managed by the Substance Advice Service which encourages understanding of the potential harms that may occur if the offending continues, 21 completed YADD programmes. YADDs are not delivered by the YJS, however police decision making and outcomes are monitored to ensure appropriate decision making and that the needs of children are being met. In addition to Outcome 22s, 3 Community Resolutions with YJS involvement were made.

3.2 Reducing Re-Offending

Re-offending data is collated from the Police National Computer (PNC) and is now presented as a three-month cohort rather than a 12-month cohort, with the cohort tracked over 12 months. Changing from 12-month cohorts to the three-month cohorts results in a greater proportion of children with repeat offences and hence higher reoffending rates, though both measures show similar trends over time.

Reoffending rates after 12 months - yearly cohorts (latest period)

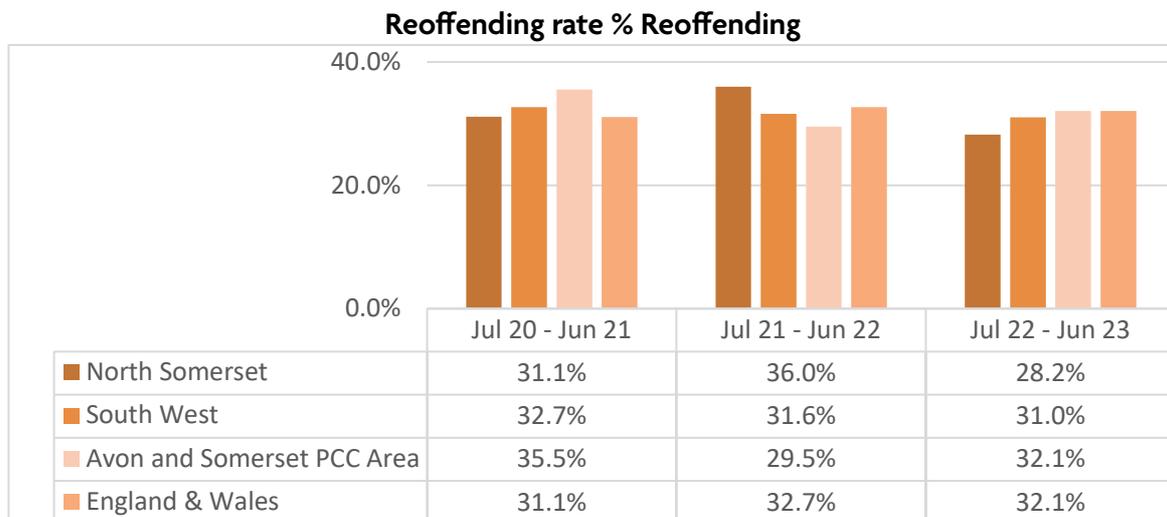


Figure 7: Reoffending rate % Reoffending (PNC yearly cohort)

Reoffences per reoffender

⁵ Outcome 22 is the Home Office outcome code, intended to reflect where a diversionary intervention has been used to result a case that does not meet the public interest test that results in no further action (NFA)

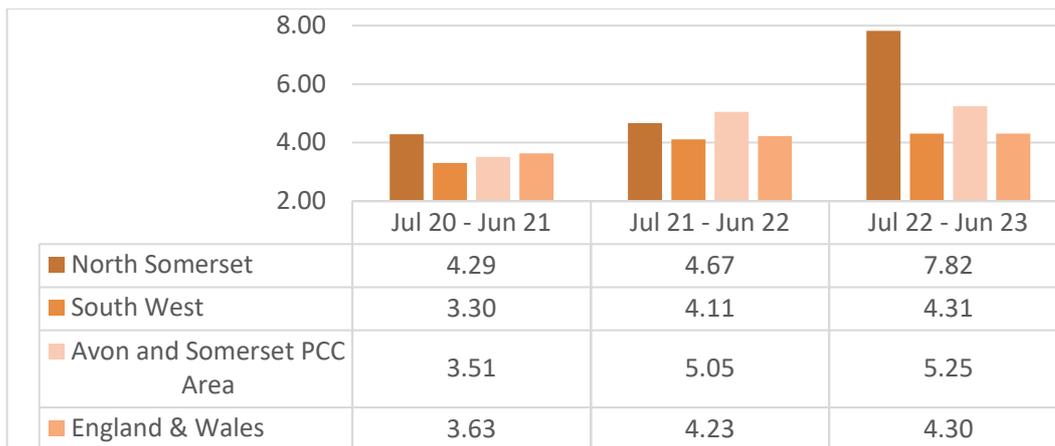


Figure 8: Reoffences per reoffender (PNC Yearly cohort)

Nationally there has been a 0.67pp decrease in the rate of re-offending when comparing July 22 – June 23 against the same period 21/22 - locally there is a decrease of 7.79pp. The rate for North Somerset is lower than all comparators with an overall re-offending rate of 28.2%. This year we intend to develop our practice model further and ensure child first approaches directly target children at risk of re-offending.

In 2022/23 the average number of reoffences per reoffender nationally was 4.30 an increase of 1.50% compared to the previous 12 months; locally the figure was 7.82 this being higher than area comparators with an increase of 67.5% compared to 21/22. Although the proportion of children reoffending is lower than that of Avon & Somerset, the South West, and England & Wales.

However, the 2022/23 cohort consisted of 39n children, of which 11n committed 86n further offences compared to the 2021/22 where 9n of the cohort of 25n children committed 42 further offences.

Reducing frequency of re-offending continues to be a challenging indicator. This reinforces the need for the service to focus on evidence-based models of practice and embed child first principles across everything we do. There is a small yet significant group of children evidencing complex and multiple needs and experiences of trauma: personal relationships, lifestyle, substance misuse, thinking and behaviour and education, training and employment.

Within the cohort, the following numbers have been or are currently known to Children’s social care as a result of the lived experiences.

Social Care Status / YP	Court and Community Supervision Criminal Justice (28n)	Out of Court (46n)	Prevention & Diversion (417n)
Child in Need	17	3	26
Child Protection Plan	7	4	18
Child Looked After	12	4	45

Table 2: YJS Services caseloads 2024/25 Social Care involvement

32% (9n) of the YJS statutory cohort (pre and post court) were children known to Children’s Services at the time of initial contact with YJ services. It should be noted that 75% (21n) of the YJS statutory cohort were known currently or previously to Children’s Services.

This complexity reinforces the approach to deliver targeted interventions across a range of risk areas. This is reflected in the YJPS commitment to trauma informed, strength based, and restorative justice approaches in working with children who have committed offences and or have been victims. This year will see this approach develop, with an explicit focus on child first and identity focused approaches to desistance and the continued development of the Adolescent Safety Framework for the partnership.

3.3 Live re-offending data

The local tracking tool gives a more recent picture of re-offending during 2024-25. Of the 32 children convicted during 2024-25, 6 re-offended giving an overall binary reoffending rate of 18.8%. The rate of re-offences (78n) per reoffender (6n) was 13.0 and across the cohort this figure is 2.44 (reoffences 78n per offender 32n). This provides promising data on outcomes because of our practice model and focus on identity development. Further to this, it is promising that children from black and global majority backgrounds have not re-offended during this period.

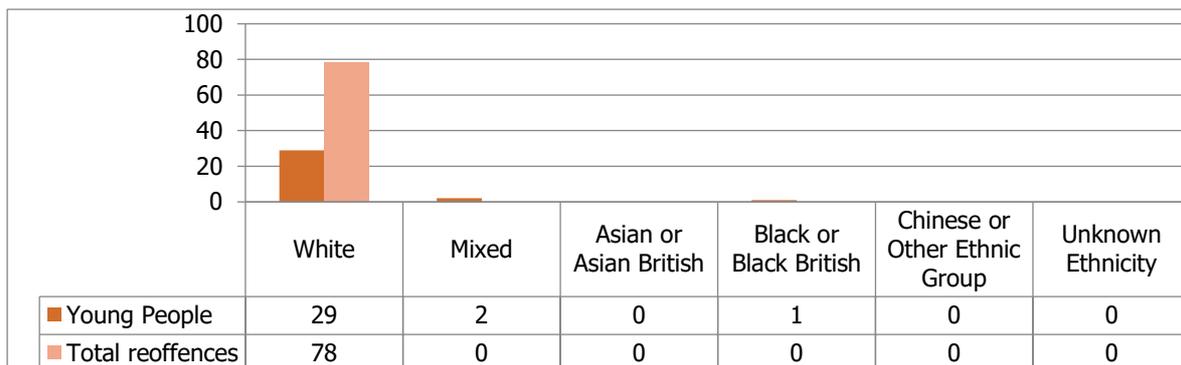


Figure 9: Reoffences per offender (Ethnicity) Local Tracking

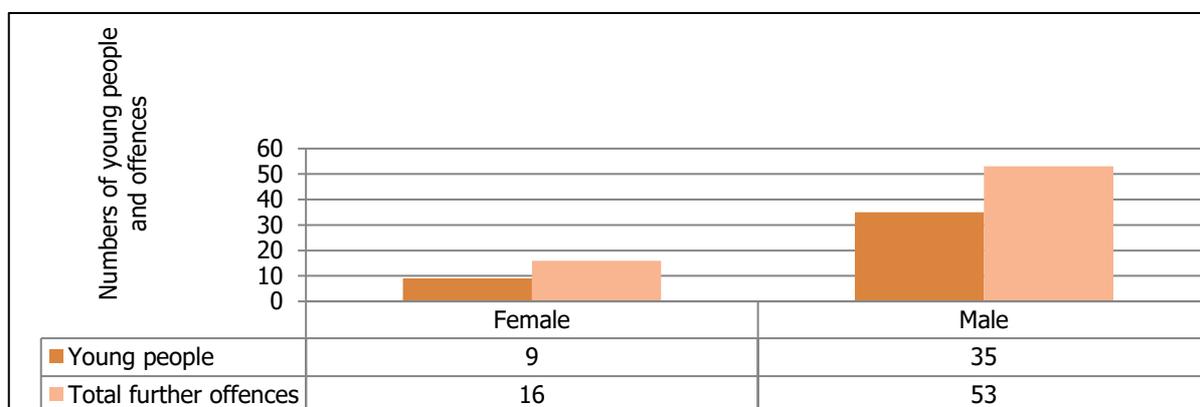


Figure 10: Reoffences by Sex Local Tracking

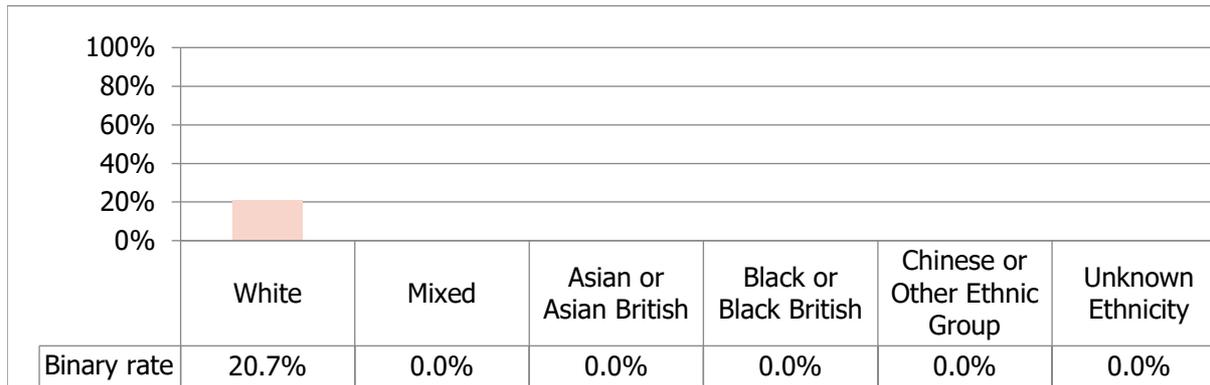


Figure 11: Reoffending Binary rate Local Tracking

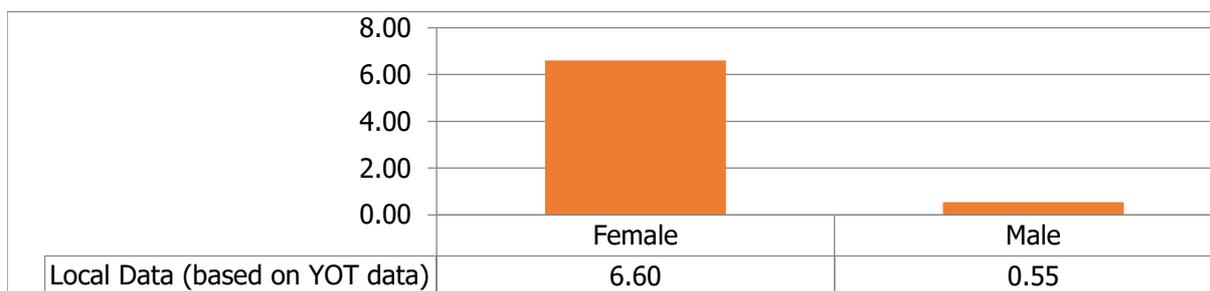


Figure 12: Reoffending frequency by sex Local Tracking

In relation to re-offences per re-offender, the gender challenge has been analysed in depth by the Board and has promoted a multi-agency case discussion learning event on one Looked After child (MACD) and a strategic response to vulnerable females in the care system and assault emergency worker offences. This remains an area of focus and priority for 2025/26 and we believe the development of child first practice and the adolescent safety framework will see this rate and disproportionality for females reduce further.

4. Local Indicators

4.1 Suitable Accommodation

Accommodation suitability is reviewed as part of all YJS interventions. One child was deemed not to be in suitable accommodation at the end of their programme in 2024/25 (92/93).

Accommodation at Programme End



Figure 13: Accommodation at Programme End

2024/25	Yes	No	Total	% Suitable
Q1	29	0	29	100%
Q2	30	0	30	100%
Q3	11	1	12	91.7%
Q4	22	0	22	100%
YTD	92	1	93	98.9%
2023/24 ⁶	109	0	109	100%

Table 3: Suitable Accommodation at Programme End 2024/25 by Qtr

The YJS is well integrated at a strategic and operational level on accommodation provision and problem-solving specific situations. This success is testament to the strong partnership approach taken in North Somerset and will continue to be developed and sustained into 2025/26. In 2025/25, we intend to enhance Board membership further with a Housing Representative. This follows learning from recent, Board led MACDs and support for wider family members to improve outcomes for children at risk of offending.

4.2 Education

Engagement with education, training, and employment outcomes and fixed term exclusions continue to present a challenge for the YJS and its partners. However, during 2024-25 we continued to see improvements against the local target. In Q1 and Q4 over 90% of all children completing statutory interventions being in suitable ETE at programme end. Overall, 2024-25 saw small decrease of 1.8% compared to 2023-24 with 83.5% in ETE.

A monthly reconciliation is undertaken to ensure that all children working with the YJS have suitable ETE provision and if above the school age of 16, that they are known to the local authority’s Post 16 service (Youth Employment Service) and a worker is allocated. Thus, there is a robust arrangement regarding continuing support provision if children are not engaged in ETE on their programme of supervision with the YJS ending.

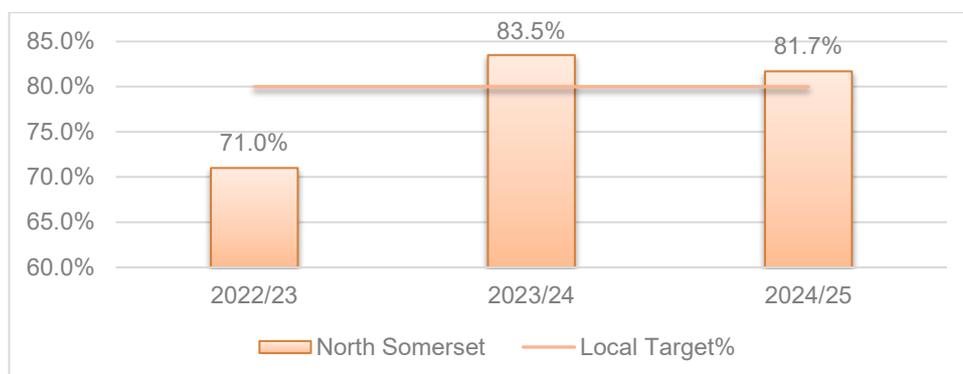


Figure 14: Suitable ETE at Programme End 2024/25

Suitable ETE at Programme End 2024/25

⁶ KPI revised 2023/24

2024/25	Yes	No	Total	% Suitable
Q1	27	2	29	93.1%
Q2	21	9	30	70.0%
Q3	8	4	12	66.7%
Q4	20	2	22	90.9%
YTD	78	17	93	81.7%
2023-24 ⁷	92	17	109	83.5%

Table 4: Suitable ETE at Programme End 2024/25

The YJS is also a member the Education Inclusion Panel to maximise with the practice focus to promote individually named children’s engagement in education and training.

Exclusions / YP	Court and Community Supervision Criminal Justice (28n)	Out of Court (46n)	Prevention & Diversion (417n)
Permanent	0	0	0
Fixed Term	6	20	136

Table 5: Exclusions 2024/25

While we are proud that no children received a permanent exclusion in 2024/25, 35% (26n) of the YJS statutory cohort (pre and post court) had one or more fixed term exclusions at the time of initial contact with YJ services. We intend to target this in 2025/26 and have been successful in challenging the Board to invest further funding into a dedicated virtual school education post for the YJS and a focus on developing personal education plans for all children and tracking attendance, attainment, and progress.

SEND and FSM / YP	Court and Community Supervision Criminal Justice (28n)	Out of Court (46n)	Prevention & Diversion (417n)
SEND	8	10	94
ECHP	11	15	109
FSM	9	15	125

Table 6: SEND, ECHP & FSM 2024/25

24% (18n) of the YJS statutory cohort (pre and post court) were children identified with SEND, 35% (26n) having an ECHP and 32% (26n) Free School meals at the time of initial contact with YJ services.

This data indicates a need to do more to support our most vulnerable children in the YJS and we are confident that our YJS virtual school approach will have a direct impact on improving educational outcomes for children in the YJS cohort in 2025/26.

⁷ KPI Revised 2023/24

4.3 Substance misuse

During 2024/25 the Children’s Substance Advice Service (SAS) received a total of 104 referrals. These came in from a range referral sources. Assessments were carried out in 92 of these cases, of which 57 (62%) were conducted within five working days of the referral being received. Following assessment, 100% of these children engaged in an intervention with SAS. It is expected that all children exit treatment/harm reduction interventions in a planned way. This requires a final meeting and agreement on the care plan ending. The service achieved this in 28/35 (80%) of programme completions.

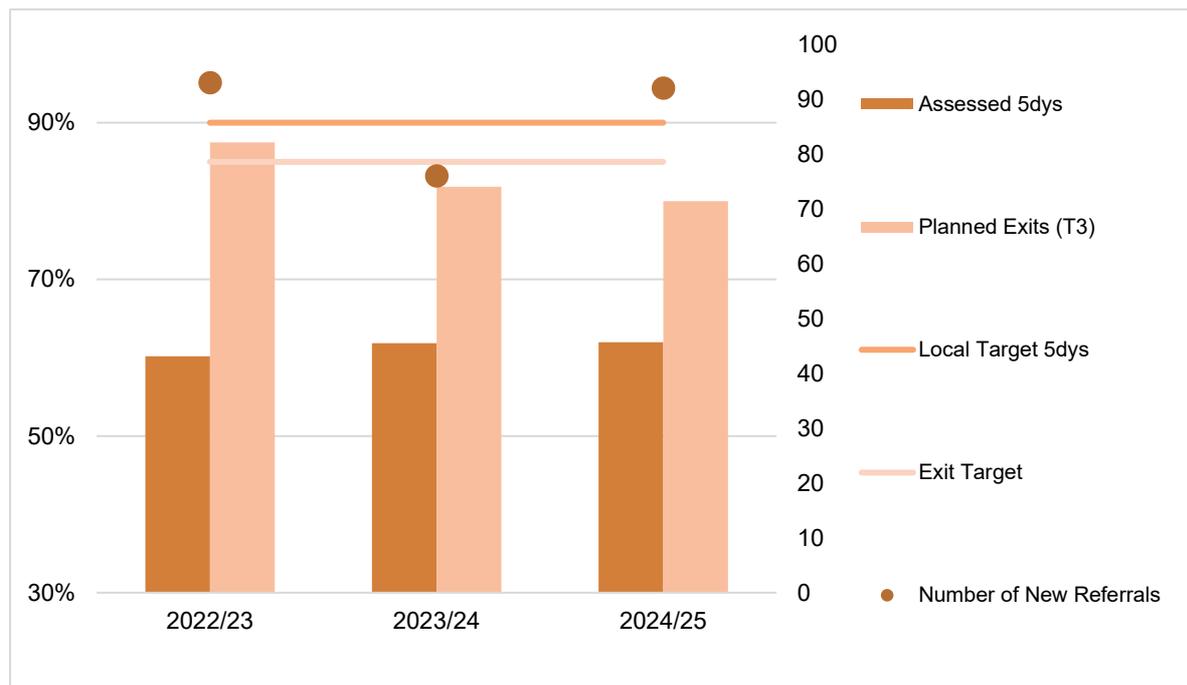


Figure 15: Substance Misuse Referrals & Treatment Exits

Cannabis is the most prevalent drug of choice amongst children nationally and locally. The majority of children referred to SAS are using cannabis. The younger age groups (12-14) may be using cannabis recreationally or on special occasions. The older age group (15-18 yrs) known to SAS are using cannabis daily.

2024-25 data shows that 68% (70n) of children in North Somerset presenting to the Substance Advice Service citing cannabis as their primary substance, with an average age of 15.2yr. Overall over 81% (83n) cite cannabis use.

Although difficult to ascertain actual quantity, the number of cannabis related offences during 2024-25 committed by children is 28, 87% of all drug related offences, although this is a reduction on the previous year of 36 offences, there is a 7% increase in the proportion from 80% of drug related offending.

Small numbers of children accessing SAS are using drugs other than cannabis on weekly basis. Reported use of Class A substances is low with very few citing the use of heroin, crack, or the use of new psychoactive substances.

Substance Misuse 2024/ 25	2024/ 25	2023/24
New referrals received (Tier 2&3)	104	84
SAS Assessments within 5 working days of referral (Tier 2&3)	85	47
Number Assessed Starting Programme	104	76
Tier 3 - Treatment discharges / exits	35	33
planned (successful) completions (Tier 3)	28	27
% planned (successful) completions (Tier 3)	80%	82%

4.4 Health – Incorporating Mental Health

In 2024/25, we completed a granular analysis of the health needs of the YJS cohort, this posed some significant challenge to Board members regarding the range of needs in the cohort and the provision available to children in YJPS.

In 2024/25, we have enhanced our ICB funded wellbeing offer, with targeted group work and one to one interventions. We have also challenged Public Health to ensure commissioned services have a dedicated and ringfenced focus on children in the criminal justice system. This has resulted in the development of an holistic health offer, which we launched in late 2024/25. This offer includes school nursing, oral health (we have provided training to all staff on how to support improved oral health for children), physical health including social prescribing, mental health including a developing partnership with Off the Record Counselling and Sexual Health including a developing partnership with Brook. In 2025/26, we intend to drive this forward and scale this work to support all children in the YJS.

In relation to mental health, North Somerset lead and coordinate the delivery of the Enhanced Case Management (ECM) Model for the region. This has been recognised by HMIP as the ‘gold standard’ for mental health provision, most recently in the BANES HMIP Inspection. ECM is based on the Trauma Recovery Model (Skuse and Matthew, 2018) and is for children on Court Orders of six months or more with a history of trauma. Multiagency meetings are convened, where timeline is completed, and formulation begins. The ECM Psychologist develops a formulation report with recommendations and the Report includes developmentally-sequenced interventions that are tailored to the child. Regular multiagency reviews are held and Clinical supervision is offered to YJS practitioners by ECM Psychologists. Progress is also measured using HoNOSCA scores at the point of entry and exit. In 2024/25, ECM developed an additional offer of Consultation for children subject to Out of Court disposals or Court Orders with less than six months remaining.

Referral numbers and HONOSCA outcomes below:

Number of referrals since November 2022:

Formulation: 6

Consultation: 12

Awaiting outcome: 1

TOTAL: 19

The Health of the Nation Outcome Scale for Children and Adolescents (HoNOSCA; Gowers et al., 1999) is completed following the first ECM meeting (consultation or formulation) and at the point of discharge to provide outcome data for the service. The HoNOSCA is a clinician-rated instrument comprising of 15 scales, focusing on general health and social functioning for those under 18 years of age. The severity of each item is rated from zero to four, with four being most severe.

Following the YJS safety audit all children in YJS are now undergoing a specialist drugs assessment by a SAS Worker. A high number of children in the YJS have underlying drug and alcohol needs or familial substance use. From assessment all children are offered ongoing support by a SAS Worker and where identified are offered a treatment service to support with reducing/stopping their substance use.

Data in the figure below relates to 9 children referred to ECM. These children have been referred to ECM and have been discharged (received both a pre and post ECM HoNOSCA). In 2025/26, we intend to drive this model forward and work towards sustainability once ICB funding ceases. Funding until the end of 2025/26 has been secured and impact of the model is being evaluated with regard to child level outcomes and impact on systems.

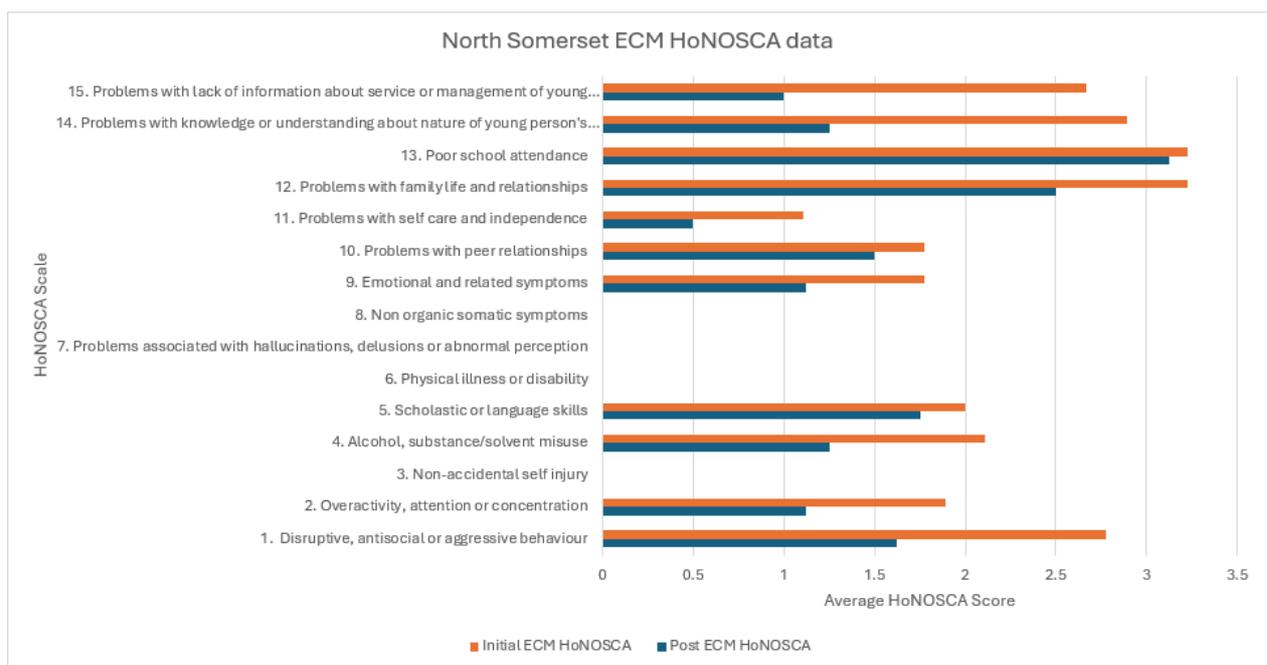


Figure 16: ECHM Referrals 2024/25

5. Risks and issues

Within the last 12 months, we have faced the challenges of a continued efficiency agenda at national and local levels, changes within the local partnership landscape (health, police and probation), as well as an ongoing improvement journey within Children’s Services following their Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACS) inspection in 2023. We have engaged in a focused visit from Ofsted in late 2024/25, with significant progress and partnership working noted. During this visit, three children open to YJPS were reviewed and inspectors noted strong practice regarding planning and delivery from the service relating to

outcomes for children and safety planning for others. The North Somerset Youth Justice Strategic Partnership receive regular updates regarding risk via a risk register which covers and reports on the following areas:

Operational

- Dangerous or serious incident committed by child known to YJS. Including violent extremism or other high interest offence causes media and political interest
- Loss of Data. Issues related to internet ChildView IT Case Management System causes data loss or interruption to services
- National offences such as riots/major custody incident involving multiple children in police custody and courts
- Replacement of or upgrade to Management data base

Performance and Standards

- Fail to achieve improved outcomes against national and local KPIs
- Increase in FTEs
- Increase in re-offending
- Increase in Custody-remand and/or sentenced
- Connectivity and 'Missing docs'. When children are remanded or sentenced to custody an assessment of their risk of harm to themselves or others is made at court and must immediately follow the child into the secure estate

Funding

- Funding uncertainty beyond next 12 months. The Service is currently funded via a complex set of short-term funding arrangements and grants meaning that there is uncertainty regarding the sustainability of current service provision
- Remand costs are met by the Local Authority
- Small numbers Remanded for a group offence or one child for a serious offence can have significant financial implication for the Local Authority

Partnerships

- Statutory partners unable to maintain support or resources as staff secondments or postings end or staff leave
- Partnership redesigns impact on YJS core service and early interventions

Reputation

- Serious Violence
- Data loss/ access

Buildings and Infrastructure

- Health & Safety issue adversely affecting staff

Overall, we have managed the associated risks effectively, remaining resilient, mitigating against any detrimental impact on the delivery and quality of the Youth Justice Service. This is a testament of our continued robust service offer and improved outcomes for children and families in 2024/25.

6. Plan for the forthcoming year

6.1 Child First

“Being there for me, challenging me to see my strengths, helping me create a future and supporting me to stay out of trouble for the past 12 months”

Context for child first and YJS age range

Age at time of sentence / disposal / programme start	North Somerset children with Criminal Justice outcomes in 2024/ 25 (28)	North Somerset children with Out of Court outcomes in 2024/ 25 (28)	North Somerset children Prevention 2024/ 25 (378)
10 years old	0%	0%	5%
11 years old	0%	0%	5%
12 years old	4%	4%	10%
13 years old	4%	13%	18%
14 years old	11%	13%	19%
15 years old	25%	24%	17%
16 years old	14%	22%	13%
17 years old	43%	24%	10%

Criminal Justice Outcomes – Court Outcomes, Out of Court Disposals YCC & YC, Outcome 22, CR's

Table 7: Age at time of sentence / disposal

The YJS cohort is mainly male children aged 15-17, which is a continuation of the trend from last year.

15-17 years old is the age group that receive the most substantive outcomes, with 82% of the cohort primarily being aged 15-17. This is similar to the OOC's area where 17 years old is the most common age for a non-substantive outcome. We know that children at risk of offending behaviour are disproportionately affected by themes of adultification, where they are seen for their offending behaviour as opposed to their vulnerability as a child. Our practice model and approach to youth justice for 2025/26 will continue to proactively challenge this and seek to support the partnership to 'separate the behaviour and the person', diverting from stigma whilst repairing harm caused in the community.

Making Child First and identity focused practice a priority for 2025/26

For 2025/26 North Somerset YJS and prevention service will consolidate its practice model to ensure the tenets of child first practice inform everything the service does to support children at risk of offending.

Our ambition is to scale and roll out our practice model underpinned by the evidence base of child first and expand this model across the partnership and adolescent safety framework. We intend to further innovate in our practice for 2025/26 and enhance approaches to desistance that have a relentless focus on identity development for children.

Child first practice and collaboration with children will remain a strategic priority for the partnership and service in 2025/26 and we aim to achieve the following high-level outputs and outcomes relating to child first practice.

Key outputs - In 2025/26, we will:

Develop and drive a refreshed action plan focused on embedding child first practice across the YJS Partnership and within the adolescent safety framework. Developing a practice model that can be adopted by all partners working with children at risk of offending behaviour.

As children

- We will continue to enhance the Service offer to ensure Child First approaches are embedded across the strategic and operational partnerships
- Continue to challenge themes of adultification across the partnership to ensure children are seen as 'at risk' as opposed to 'a risk'
- Ensure we keep children safe from behaviours that could result in poor long-term outcomes in their lives and the lives of others. Ensuring safety planning with children and families and external controls to manage presenting behaviours

Build Pro-social Identity

- Continue to develop the YJS offer to provide more opportunities for children to be employed across the partnership
- Enhance and develop the YJS and wider adolescent offer to support increased opportunities for children to engage with Activities, Interactions and Roles that support identity development

Collaborate with children

- Increase the number of children actively participating/collaborating with adults across the strategic and operational partnership
- Support and develop a wider participation strategy across children's services

Divert from Stigma

- Challenge ourselves to continue to review every aspect of our youth justice system and address practice that stigmatises children and their families

Key outcomes - In 2025/26, we want to see:

- Develop and sign off on the refreshed, dedicated child first action plan for the Board and YJS and Prevention Service (reviewed and agreed by Board in May 2025)
- Further embed Child First and identity focused practice across the practice of all partners and within the adolescent safety framework

- Increase the numbers of children from the YJS engaging in Activities, Interactions and Roles that support identity development, with the YJS aiming to evidence this with 100% of children open to the service
- Evidence impact of child first against our local and national performance indicators
- Evidence impact of child first in relation to identity development via the Pro-social Identity Development Scale (PIDS)

6.2 Voice of the child

'Helping me feel a sense of achievement and value has helped me to stay out of trouble'

'Being involved in making a difference for others, has made me feel positive about my future'

Participation and collaboration with children will remain at the heart of everything we do and remain a strategic priority for 2025/26. We see collaboration and participation as 'the intervention' for desistance.

The involvement of children and families will provide us with an opportunity to implement our practice model of using an identity lens to achieve desistance. We will give children and their parents/carers fresh 'AIR'-Activities, Interactions and Roles to support identity shift and will develop the following approaches to ensure the voice of the child is central:

- This year we will grow our Youth Board - 'Reframe' - and develop paid peer advocates within the service. They will lead to support challenge and innovate within the service
- Renew our energy to build on the Parent Village approach to develop a bespoke space for parents with children at risk from youth crime
- We also remain committed to ensuring parents and or children are in attendance at every YJS Management Board to ensure their voice is heard and valued
- Develop a victim advisory group, that will include the voice and participation of young victims

Our approach to participation will ensure that children and their family are heard at every point in the youth justice system and their views are analysed and used to inform service design and delivery, taking a 'you said, we did' approach.

7. Resources and services

North Somerset Youth Justice and Prevention Service has a complex budget structure comprising of partner agency funding, a number of short-term grants and in-kind contributions. The Youth Justice Board grant and the Council's financial contributions are managed within the council's financial regulations and are subject to stringent control and accountability mechanisms.

Alongside this, the YJS budget and spend is also regularly reported to the YJS Management Board. We use our grant, partner contributions, and available resources to deliver the best possible services for children at risk of offending and victims of youth crime.

Our budget predominately pays for staff to discharge the functions of the youth justice service to drive outcomes for children and young people. This year, we intend to review and transform service delivery to support a more sustainable model. However, we will continue to seek additional in-year grant funding to fund additional interventions and innovation that will drive our ambitions regarding child first and identity development.

Agency	Income (£)
Youth Justice Board	377,223
Local Authority*	486,834
Police & Crime Commissioner**	467,824
Probation	5,000
Health	198,952
Total	1,535,833
*Includes Turnaround Grant	
** Includes YFPP Grant	

Table 8 : Budget 2025/26

Income in-kind
0.8 fte Police Officer
1 fte Police funded -Youth Justice Worker
0.5 fte Probation Officer
1.0 fte Mental Health Practitioner
0.5 fte YJS Virtual School Teacher

Table 9: In Kind Income

In addition to the core budget, the YJS continues to receive in-kind contributions from partners towards the resourcing and delivery of youth justice services (table 10).

Remand Budget			
Financial Year	Remand Allocation £	Remand Outturn £	Budget Variance £
2019/20	104	-	-104
2020/21	-	-	-
2021/22	-	5,676	5,676
2022/23	234	-	-234
2023/24	5,507	124,442	121,935
2024/25	2,101	6,447	4,346
2025/ 26			

Table 10: Remand Budget

The previous year’s remand budget allocation was £2,101 and spend against it stood at £6,447, which has presented a small deficit for the Local Authority. The YJS works closely with partners to always present a robust credible community package to the court as an

alternative to remands to youth detention where the risk to the public and the child can be managed.

Since the introduction of the devolution of the remand budget to the local authorities, the table above illustrates the fluctuation of the remand budget since 2019. 2023/24 saw a significant pressure because of 3 children being remanded. This area of spend is monitored closely with robust operational management arrangements in place to mitigate unnecessary remands. The MOJ remand grant allocation for 2025/26 has not yet been confirmed.

The youth justice budget and resourcing will continue to be a high priority and monitored and scrutinised by the YJS Management Board to ensure that we provide an effective and efficient service.

7.1 Board development

The board in North Somerset has had a consistent membership over the past two years and has been strengthened further in 2024/25.

The board has a focused forward plan for partnership activity and a forward plan for audit activity; this includes board development and integration with the YJS Service. 2025/26 will see the Board drive our renewed vision further. We intend develop and enhance our strategic and operational approaches to children and victims at risk of offending behaviour.

Current board members participated in governance and strategic priority discussions and challenge session at our April 2025 away day led by our Head of Service that focused on the following objectives:

- Developing understanding of board members responsibilities and purpose of the board
- Enhancing understanding of the Youth Justice Service and the journey of the child through the youth justice including type of disposals and support on offer
- Developing our vision and strategic priorities for the duration of this plan

The YJS Board has worked hard to develop a shared vision for 2025/26. This year, the Board will continue to support the service to innovate and develop practice and ensure that it does everything it can to progress the ambition of child first practice.

8. Workforce Development

In 2024/25, the YJPS engaged in the following training:

- Developing analysis- 5P's case formulation & risk management
- Intervention planning with identity focused targets
- Promoting identity development interventions-giving children Activities, Interactions and Roles for Identity development

- Cultural competency training
- PREVENT training
- Oral Health awareness training
- Bespoke FCAMHS training-trauma informed training
- Restorative Practice Training

The above training links to the Assessing, Planning, and Delivery framework and will support front-line case managers to embed child first practice. In 2025/26 we intend to further embed our agreed practice model for the service, and this will inform subsequent training and development areas of focus for the remainder of the year and into 2025/26.

8.1 Evidence-based practice and innovation

The YJS and Prevention Service are committed to Strengths Based, Restorative, and Trauma Informed approaches to our practice and have led on the Enhanced Case Management (ECM) Offer in partnership with FCAMHS as part of the Vanguard project for the region. This programme will be extended into 2025/26 and is recognised nationally for its evidence-based approach and impact on outcomes.

This year we intend to develop an evidenced based practice model of Child First for the service further and support to continue to embed the Adolescent Safety Framework. We intend to develop the principles of child first practice and ensure identity development is the focus of our approach to desistance.

In relation to innovation, the YJS is ambitious to lead Youth Justice Practice for the region and nationally. The following areas have been targeted for Innovation in 2025/26:

- Continue to Embed the Child First Principles across the strategic and operational partnerships and develop a coherent structure and practice model for the service. This will be strengthened by Child First becoming a priority for the Police and Crime Plan and local criminal justice partnership Board
- Drive forward our refreshed and dedicated child first action plan for the partnership
- Enhance and develop the facilities that children are accessing, with a specific focus on identity development and diverting from stigma
- Develop interventions at 'teachable, reachable moments', including the development of a teachable, reachable moment response car in partnership with Avon and Somerset Police
- Lead on the development of the Young Futures Prevention Partnerships and evidence based model for this programme of work
- Further enhancing our ECM approach with FCAMHS and embed this across all assessment practice
- Enhance our Youth Board-Reframe, Peer Advocates and Parent Led participation approaches

- Develop innovative activities that support identity development
- Develop social enterprise approaches that support children with ETE pathways and pro-social identity development

8.2 Evaluation

In 2024/25, we have continued to enhance our approach to review and evaluation. We have led case and thematic audits, multi-agency case discussions, and have challenged ourselves/the partnership to improve as a result.

Within our new audit and assurance framework, we have completed case audits and the following thematic audits and granular analyses:

- Thematic audit into safety of children and safety of others-safety and contingency planning-IMPACT-resulting in enhanced safety planning approaches and the multi-agency Daily Safety Briefing
- Thematic Substance Misuse audit-IMPACT-resulting in a renewed focus on the statutory YJS cohort and increased referrals in this space
- Granular Health needs analysis-IMPACT-resulting in the holistic health offer and new YJS Virtual School Education Post
- Granular Parenting needs analysis-IMPACT-resulting in enhanced partnership working and further plans for 2025/26
- Strategic analysis of offending profile and victims-IMPACT-Resulting in a YEF bid to put dedicated victim workers in each YJS across the region, with a specific focus on children who have offended, who are also victims of crime. Led by the YJS Head of Service in North Somerset and the Young Victim Service; The development of relationships with NCP car parks as a frequent corporate victim and plans for 2025/26 to reduce revictimisation of NCP via innovative use of unused car park spaces-youth provision, skate parks etc; strategic response to assault emergency worker offences and planned action plan for 2025/26 to reduce this offence and victims in this space.
- MACDs-IMPACT- resulting in learning and recommendations for Board that will be adopted in 2025/26

Further to this activity, we have adopted the Pro-social identity development scale (PIDS) and have begun to see baseline data, which we will then track for impact following delivery of interventions.

9. Priorities for the coming year

Following the YJS Board challenge event in April 2025, the following decisions were made with regard to strategic priorities and planned outputs and outcomes for 2025/26 strategic plan.

Strategic priorities agreed at YJS Management Board away day April 2025

Ensuring that the evidence base of the Child First Framework and a Focus on Identity Development and wellbeing within the YJPS is scaled and embedded across the partnership

Continue to reduce and sustain the low level of first-time entrants (and maximising use of diversion and pre-court outcomes)

Reducing offending and reoffending, ensuring that custody rates remain low (including remand and police custody)

Tackling disproportionality-including both race and gender, with a sharper focus in 2025/26 on girls

Supporting improved safeguarding, services and outcomes for victims, with a sharper focus in 2025/26 on young victims, who are also at risk of offending behaviour

Cross cutting themes and priorities

Cross cutting with Children’s Social Care and Violence Reduction Partnership - Reducing serious youth violence, child criminal exploitation and extremism. Leading on the embedding of Young Futures Prevention Partnerships

Cross Cutting – Collaboration with children, families and victims – focusing on identity development approaches to desistance

Cross Cutting – Improving Education, Training and Employment outcomes

9.1 Outputs and intended outcomes for 2025/26

The below outputs and outcomes for 2025/26 will be driven by the YJS Child First Practice Action Plan. This will be monitored by the Board at 6 monthly intervals and driven by the YJS Management Team and Board subgroups.

9.2 Ensuring that the evidence base of the Child First Framework and Focus on Identity Development and wellbeing within the YJPS is scaled and embedded across the partnership

Key outputs - In 2025/26, we will:

- Develop and drive a refreshed and dedicated action plan for child first practice-This will be built on last year's work to embed a practice model focused on Child First and Identity Development
- Embed the Adolescent Safety Framework, including transformation of adolescent services for North Somerset. Including leading a pilot of the Young Futures Prevention Partnerships/Panels
- Enhance the Service offer to ensure Child First approaches are embedded across the operational partnership
- Enhance and develop the YJS and wider youth offer to support increased opportunities for children to engage with Activities, Interactions and Roles that support identity development
- Review outcome measures that help us understand the impact of interventions on pro-social identity development-PIDS scale

Key outcomes - In 2025/26, we want to see:

- Child First and identity focused practice will be fully embedded in the service and influencing practice of all partners
- The numbers of children from the YJS engaging in Activities, Interactions and Roles that support identity development will increased, with the YJS aiming to evidence this with 80% of children open to the service
- The numbers of children engaging with the wider youth offer from the YJS cohort will have increased
- First Time Entrant and re-offending rates will continue to reduce during 2025/26

9.3 Reducing First Time Entrants

Key outputs - In 2025/26, we will:

- Ensure pace and energy is maintained in the Out of Court Disposal tactical group to improve outcomes across the strategic partnership
- Continue to develop a clear exit plan from the Turnaround Project with the initiation of the Young Futures Prevention Partnerships pilot enhancing how YJS can support to engage children in diversion
- Run interventions at teachable, reachable moments-including enhancing the capacity and scope of the Teachable Moments Engagement Car (TMEC)
- Continue to enhance and develop the Out of Court Disposal scrutiny panel to challenge the partnership on decision making for children who become First Time Entrants, with a particular focus on Black, Asian or global majority ethnic children and other vulnerable groups, including children looked after and care leavers

- Consider how the child's voice can become part of the scrutiny process, with consideration for a local scrutiny panel
- Continue to enhance the out of court disposal Intervention offer to ensure it is evidence based and focused on identity development
- Complete further work with partners to support increased numbers of referrals back from court for out of court disposal consideration

Key outcomes - In 2025/26, we want to see:

- FTE rates to reduce further and be sustained
- Increased engagement at 'teachable, reachable moments' and point of arrest
- An increase in pre-diversion and diversionary outcomes and detached youth work interventions within the Young Futures Prevention Partnership pilot. Specifically focusing on bespoke prevention and diversion for places, spaces and targeted groups, for example, girls in the criminal justice system

9.4 Reducing offending and reoffending, ensuring that custody rates remain low (including remand and police custody)

Key outputs - In 2025/26, we will:

- Drive forward the child first action plan to reducing re-offending and re-offences per child rates
- Continue to challenge board members on the partnership contribution to addressing offending behaviour and desistance - proactively targeting issues of trauma, abuse, and neglect via the Enhanced Case Management Model approach
- Sustain and develop further evidence-based models of practice that build upon our restorative approaches, including child first, whole family approaches to desistance, trauma informed approaches to assessment, intervention and risk management, and interventions focused on identity development
- Continue to enhance our offer to prevent the unnecessary remand of children to youth detention where they can be managed safely in the community
- Support the ongoing work regarding improved placement sufficiency for Remands to the Care of the Local Authority

Key outcomes - In 2025/26, we want to see:

- A continued reduction of binary reoffending rates-across PNC and our live tracker cohort
- A reduction of re-offences per reoffender rates-specifically targeting girls with complex needs
- Increase in innovative approaches and developments to desistance via evidence-based models of practice-child first and identity focused

- Reductions in cohort size and a continued shift to more children in the pre-court cohort as opposed to the post court cohort
- Increased numbers of children and victims engaging in restorative interventions and approaches
- Improved outcomes relating to resettlement, transitions, and children kept overnight in local police custody. Including the development of a PACE bed for children remanded in police custody overnight

9.5 Tackling disproportionality-including both race and gender, with a sharper focus in 2025/26 on girls

Key outputs - In 2025/26, we will:

- Ensure that the Pan-Avon and Somerset Disproportionality action plan is taken forward to challenge and improve practice relating to disproportionality and Equality
- Continue to challenge board members on ensuring tackling disproportionality as a cross-cutting theme for the strategic partnership, including driving forward and monitoring our local disproportionality action plan
- Develop bespoke interventions for children from global majority backgrounds, with a focus on identity development (such as the Jump LDN partnership in June 2025)

Key outcomes - In 2025/26, we want to see:

- Disproportionality within the youth justice cohort to reduce and progress towards aligning with local demographic and population. With a particular focus on children from mixed ethnicity backgrounds
- Disproportionate rates of girls within the criminal justice system and girls with high frequency re-offending rates will reduce
- Disproportionality to remain a shared priority across the partnership and wider local authority response-including the Local Authority Anti-Racist Practice Action Plan
- Increased engagement and participation of Black, Asian and global majority ethnic children and families
- Continued increased engagement with voluntary and third sector organisations who specifically work with Black, Asian and global majority ethnic communities-Such as the developing partnership with Race Equality North Somerset (RENS)

9.6 Supporting improved safeguarding services and outcomes for victims, with a sharper focus in 2025/26 on young victims who are also at risk of offending behaviour

Key outputs - In 2025/26, we will:

- Enhance strategic grip and response to the needs of victims in North Somerset, including Emergency worker, corporate and young victims
- Ensure that the correlation between victim and offender continues to be understood across the partnership and that children are seen as being 'at risk', rather than 'a risk'. Driving forward the Youth Endowment Fund Bid to support Young Victims
- Ensure that there continues to be a consistent and robust offer for all victims of youth crime across North Somerset
- Drive and prioritise restorative approaches that support children's identity development and divert children from stigma
- Ensure victim safety is prioritised across risk and decision-making forums for children

Key outcomes - In 2025/26, we want to see:

- A reduction in victims of youth crime and victimisation
- A reduction in children becoming victims of crime
- Improved risk and safety planning for victims of youth crime
- Increased numbers of victims engaging in direct reparation and restorative interventions

10. Cross cutting themes and priorities

10.1 Reducing serious youth violence, child criminal exploitation and extremism. Leading on the embedding of Young Futures Prevention Partnerships

Driving the work of the pan-Avon and Somerset serious violence duty strategy and North Somerset Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP).

Key outputs - In 2025/26, we want to see:

- Ensure that the Avon and Somerset VRP Led Violence Reduction approach and the North Somerset steering group continue to drive forward activity to target and address the root causes of serious violence. This will be aligned to the Serious Violence Duty and Key Performance Indicators
- Enhance preventative and early interventions in respect of youth violence and exploitation. Developing the Young Futures Prevention Partnerships pilot

- Continue to utilise the YJB Serious Youth Violence tool to monitor performance data and challenge the partnership accordingly
- YJS to continue to enhance and develop contextual safeguarding responses in partnership with the North Somerset Community Safety Partnership, Safeguarding Partnership and Children’s Services. Including the transformation of the adolescent offer in North Somerset and supporting to embed the Adolescent Safety Framework
- Increase the engagement of non-traditional partners in relation to the child first and community led solutions to serious youth violence across North Somerset
- Safeguard children from radicalisation and extremist ideologies working under the North Somerset Partnership Prevent Delivery Plan and in partnership with the Community Safety Partnership

Key outcomes (aligned to the serious violence duty strategy) - In 2025/26, we want to see:

- Evidence based interventions will increase and become an operational reality such as teachable, reachable moment interventions. We will see a reduction in Serious Violence across North Somerset
- Increase the number of community and non-traditional partnerships addressing youth safety
- Increase the participation of children, young people and communities in developing the solutions to enhance youth safety
- Reduce the number of children and young adults who are victims of violence
- Increase the number of residents who report feeling safe in their communities
- Reduce the number of children entering or remaining in the criminal justice system by improving diversionary activity and activities focused on identity development
- Improve children’s physical and mental health and wellbeing through improved community cohesion and safety
- Tackle and disrupt the criminal gangs who make money from exploiting children

10.2 Collaboration with children, families and victims – focusing on identity development approaches to desistance

Key outputs - In 2025/26, we will:

- Drive forward our participation offer and the activity of the Reframe group in 2025/26
- Continue to challenge board members on ensuring participation is a priority for the partnership
- Further work to establish a deeper understanding of participation as an evidence-based intervention focused on identity development
- Development of parent’s participation with increased numbers of parents engaging in the Parenting villages

Key outcomes - In 2025/26, we want to see:

- A further increase in the number of children and families actively participating in youth justice service design, scrutiny and desistance focused interventions.
- Recruitment of three children/young people as YJS peer advocates from children and young people with lived experience of children's services
- Clear signs of the positive impact of participation on reoffending, youth detention and disproportionality rates

10.3 Improving Education, Training and Employment outcomes

Key outputs - In 2025/26, we will:

- Develop the YJS Virtual School offer and post to ensure children are making progress in Education, Training and Employment
- Develop bespoke pathways and services to support the Education, Training and Employment needs of children in the youth justice system in North Somerset including the potential development of a North Somerset Skills Mill Programme and wider social enterprise opportunities

Key outcomes - In 2025/26, we want to see:

- A reduction in the number of children ending criminal justice outcomes Not in Education, Training or Employment
- A reduction in Fixed Term exclusions
- Increase in children who are in ETE, having a direct impact on re-offending rates

11. Standards for children

In 2023/24, we completed the Standards for Children YJB self-assessment which focused on standard 2: work in court. This audit focused on our standards of work with children and families during the period of April 2022 – 2023. In this piece of work practice was reviewed at both a strategic and operational level

In 2024/25, we have not specifically reviewed our practice against one of the YJB standards, rather, we have focused on practice and outcomes aligned to the evidence base and the need of our cohort. Protocols such as our safety protocol and responses to victims have been reviewed in line with practice standards and we have worked with Children's Social Care colleagues to ensure YJPS practice standards are reflected in the wider children's services practice standards position document.

In 2025/26, we intend to review the application of child first against the YJB standards for children and ensure that our Child First action plan is driving further activity forward to improve evidence-based practice.

11.1 Service development

In 2024/25 we have driven our dedicated child first action plan forward, having a positive impact on outcomes for children and reflected in our KPI data

We are confident that our priorities and dedicated action plans will align to the YJB 2024-2027 strategy and main strategic objectives, focused on improving youth justice services in local communities; addressing persistent disparities across the youth justice system - including those that reflect children's racial heritage - and influencing policy and practice to increase the adoption of the Child First framework throughout the youth justice system.

In 2024/25 we wrote a dedicated workforce development strategy following a comprehensive training needs analysis of the whole YJPS, including Board members and volunteers. The review of workforce development included a demographic/needs analysis review of the YJS workforce. It identified individuals with specific learning needs such as neurodiversity, disability, and other protected characteristics. This has informed the strategy to ensure it is able to meet the needs of individual staff. The YJS have written individual learning and development plans for each member of staff, highlighting the compulsory as well as the individualised training schedules.

As a result, we will organise a range of learning opportunities and recognise that classroom type "training" is only one way of learning. The YJS will offer bitesize workshops delivered across the YJS partnership, peer support experiences, group supervision, desktop online learning, as well as formal accredited qualifications.

All learning experiences will be evaluated, and a culture of reflective practice will be encouraged with the expectation that it is the practitioner who needs to be able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge. There are regular one to one meetings, reviews, and supervision and it is anticipated that the practitioner's CPD:

- has contributed to the quality of practice and service delivery
- benefits the service user; and
- demonstrates that CPD activities are a mixture of learning activities relevant to current or future practice

High quality and consistent workforce development is a thread which runs through everything in the YJPS. Strategic objectives are identified and appropriate workforce development fundamentals are aligned to ensure that there is operational integrity.

12. National priority areas

12.1 Children from groups which are over-represented

The Youth Justice Service believes that a partnership approach is key to reducing disproportionality, ensuring partners understand the experiences of children from global majority backgrounds and victims in all areas of the criminal justice system. Whilst our numbers remain small, we still see disproportionality against the local demographic. We want to do more and have challenged ourselves by partnering with Racial Equality North Somerset (RENS) to help drive our disproportionality action plan forward in 2025/26

Current rates of disproportionality 2024/25 to date compared to 2023/24.

Annual school census population shows the following breakdown of ethnicity amongst the population aged 10-17 on 31st January each year. The below highlights the local demographic in 2024 and 2025.

School census population (Years 5 to 13 All type of Schools)	Jan-24		Jan-25	
	Total YP	% of Total YP	Total YP	% of Total YP
TOTAL Children	19348	100.0%	19371	100.0%
White – total	17593	90.9%	17449	90.1%
Mixed – total	789	4.1%	549	2.8%
Asian – total	513	2.7%	835	4.3%
Black – total	216	1.1%	287	1.5%
Other – total	80	0.4%	86	0.4%
Not recorded	157	0.8%	165	0.9%

Table 11: Annual school census population by ethnicity

Within the YJS and Prevention Service the following demographics can be seen:

Prevention and Diversion	2023-24		2024-25	
	Total YP	% of Total YP	Total YP	% of Total YP
TOTAL Children	334	100%	417	100%
White – total	313	93.7%	387	92.8%
Mixed – total	10	3.0%	19	4.6%
Asian – total	1	0.3%	4	1.0%
Black – total	3	0.9%	4	1.0%
Other – total	6	1.8%	3	0.6%
Not recorded	1	0.3%	0	0%

Table 12: YJS and Prevention Cohort by Ethnicity

Out of Court Disposals: Youth Caution, Youth Conditional Caution, Community Resolution programmes with YJS Supervision and Outcome 22 diversions.

Out of Court Disposals	2023-24		2024-25	
	Total YP	% of Total YP	Total YP	% of Total YP
TOTAL Children	50	100%	46	100%
White – total	45	90.0%	36	78.2%
Mixed – total	4	8.0%	7	15.2%
Asian – total	0	0.0%	1	2.2%
Black – total	0	0.0%	1	2.2%

Other – total	1	2.0%	1	2.2%
Not recorded	0	0.0%	0	0%

Table 13: Community Resolution & Diversion Cohort by Ethnicity

Court & Community Supervision: includes Court Bail Support, Referral Orders, Youth Rehabilitation Orders, and DTO Custody and Licence programmes.

	2023-24		2024-25	
	Total YP	% of Total YP	Total YP	% of Total YP
TOTAL Children	24	100%	28	100%
White – total	21	87.5%	24	85.8%
Mixed – total	2	8.3%	2	7.1%
Asian – total	0	0	0	0%
Black – total	0	0	0	0%
Other – total	1	4.2%	2	7.1%
Not recorded	0	0	0	0%

Table 14: Court & Community Supervision Justice Cohort by Ethnicity

There is a disproportionate rate of children from Black and Mixed ethnicity within our cohort. It is of note that children from mixed/dual heritage continue to be disproportionately represented in the overall YJS cohort as seen below:

Disproportionality 2024/25-whole cohort:

- 86% white, 7% (2n) mixed, 0% black (Court & Community Supervision)
- 78% white, 15% (7n) mixed, 2% (1n) black (Out of Court Disposals)
- 93% white, 5% (19n) mixed, 1% (4n) black (Prevention & Diversion)
 - 10-17 mid 2021 population by ethnicity

This tells us we need to do more to support children from global majority backgrounds in North Somerset and from the earliest opportunity. Addressing Disproportionality will continue to be a strategic priority for 2025/26 and we are confident that the addition challenge and support of Racial Equality North Somerset will help us improve these rates further.

12.2 Females in the Youth Justice System

Age at time of sentence / disposal / programme start	North Somerset children with Criminal Justice outcomes 2024/25 (28)	North Somerset children with Out of Court outcomes in 2024/25 (46)	North Somerset children Prevention & Diversion 2024/25 (417)
Male	68%	72%	61%
Female	32%	28%	39%

Table 15: Outcomes by Gender 2024/25

Criminal Justice Outcomes Include – Court Outcomes, Out of Court Outcomes include YCC & YC Outcome 22, CR's.

In comparison to national averages in the criminal justice system, females as proportion of the YJS cohort in North Somerset remains disproportionately high, with a specific challenge in the out of court disposal space girls represent 39% of this cohort.

In 2024/25, we delivered targeted, bespoke interventions for this group, such as our summer girls group, which was co-produced with children in relation to areas they wanted to explore. We also completed some granular analysis of the above cohorts and in 2025/26 intend to do further work regarding meeting the needs of complex girls and reducing the criminalisation of Looked After Children.

13.0 Policing

North Somerset YJS and Prevention Service benefits from a continued and strong partnership with Avon and Somerset Police colleagues, supporting both strategic and operational responses to issues of youth crime and serious violence. Avon and Somerset police are committed to adopting child first approaches to policing and in 2025/26 will be working in partnership with the OPCC to operationalise new and innovate approach to youth crime, including increased co-location, interventions at teachable, reachable moments, joint training, and workforce development events and opportunities to develop spaces for reflective practice. In 2025/26, we will pilot the Young Futures Prevention Partnerships (YFPP) and this will include enhanced information sharing and partnership responses with our Police colleagues.

North Somerset YJS and Prevention Service have a well-established out of court disposal partnership, where Outcome 22 is utilised to divert children from the criminal justice system where possible.

In 2024/25, we completed a detailed analysis of specific victims of crime, Emergency Workers being one such group. We have taken a proactive and strategic approach to this and in 2025/26, we intend to develop interventions to reduce this rate in partnership with the Police.

14.0 Prevention⁸

North Somerset have well-regarded prevention and diversion services, well-known across North Somerset youth provision, receiving high numbers of referrals. The team are highly skilled, coming from a range of backgrounds including youth work, teaching, careers guidance, social work, and SEND services. The basis of all their work is to develop productive, effective and professional relationships with children to create opportunities for successful

⁸ [Final Report: Prevention and Diversion Project – Youth Justice Board for England and Wales \(February 2023\) - Youth Justice Resource Hub \(yjresourcehub.uk\)](#)

outcomes and prevent involvement or continued involvement with additional services and the formal criminal justice system.

Our prevention programme aims to support children at risk of offending or prevent further offending/ASB. This may include, but is not limited to, support around managing feelings, self-esteem, school attendance, healthy relationships, and identity development.

In 2024/5 YISP received 158 referrals into the team, 55.0% identifying as male, and 45.0% identifying as female.

Following referral 102⁹ children were attached to the Turnaround programme with 89 successfully completing interventions with 93% (83n) diverted from offending.

Referrals came from a variety of sources including Schools, PRU, Early help, CSC, Police and VRP, Parents and carers, CCST, SAS, CAMHS and other health services such as school nurses and GPs.

Referrers identify reasons for referral including mental health, ASB, risks of or involvement in child exploitation, use of, or risk of use of weapons, harm in the home, harmful and inappropriate sexual behaviour.

Additional work the team have supported over the past year include:

- Supporting children to access alternative provision such as horse therapy and work experience placements
- Arranging a paddle boarding day for a group of boys to support education transition and building friendships
- Groupwork at Weston College for children where English is their second language covering work around health relationships and online safety
- Running group sessions and assemblies in schools on request where needs have been identified
- Supporting the ROTH team around mapping exploitation in the community

All preventative caseworkers are also AIM 3 (Assessment, intervention and moving on) trained to provide early intervention to children and young people presenting harmful sexual behaviour; working with the whole family to prevent further harmful behaviour and understanding their responsibility. This work is supervised by a specialist HSB Social Worker/YISP Senior Practitioner.

In 2025/26, our prevention services will lead the development of the YFPP and our criteria for prevention interventions will be sharpened further to those at most risk of crime and violence.

⁹ Cumulative figure in total 113 referral made with 102 progressing to early help assessment

14.1 Diversion

North Somerset YJS have a strategic priority to reduce First Time Entrants (FTE's) and work closely with Avon and Somerset Police to divert children away from the formal youth justice system wherever appropriate to do so. The YJS will continue to drive child first practice in 2025/26 and review and develop its processes to further align with the evidence base.

Children are eligible for diversion if they commit a low-level offence or are at risk of entering the justice system for the first time. However, children must meet the OOCDC criteria (full admission) and follow Police charging guidelines. If children are deemed 'unsuitable' for OOCDC and charged, North Somerset YJS will advocate for possible OOCDC sanctions at Court if appropriate.

Referrals are initially discussed at panel to check the offence classification is correct, check the child has been interviewed and admissions have been made, and agree on the initial Gravity Matrix Score.

This triggers the allocation of a case practitioner who undertakes a Prevention and Diversion assessment with the child. The case practitioner presents their findings of their assessment including risk factors and strengths to build upon and proposes a suitable outcome to the panel within 15 working days.

North Somerset has a multi-agency core membership from YJS, Avon and Somerset Police, YJS prevention services, substance misuse services, victim representation and Children social care Strengthening Family Connection Team. There are also partner agencies providing research and background information in education, children's social care and early help, Health, Speech and Language, and CAMHS. A joint decision is made through vote and rationale, by all members of the panel which is ratified by Avon and Somerset Police

15.0 Education

The YJPS track exclusion, SEND and Free School Meal rates in the YJPS cohort, as outlined below. In 2024/25, we challenged the YJS Management Board regarding the plans for dedicated, targeted interventions for children at most risk of poor educational outcomes. This resulted in an uplift in funding from the Virtual School and a dedicated YJS ETE worker (qualified teacher) in the service. In 2025/26, we anticipate this having further impact on the below data sets.

School census population January 2025	North Somerset children		North Somerset children other than White	
	n	% of total children	n	% of other than white
Years 5 to 13				
Total cohort	19371	100%	1757	100%
Permanent School Exclusions	29	0.1%	1	0.1%
Temporary School Exclusions Prevention cohort	894	4.6%	87	5.0%

SEND	2157	11.1%	140	8.0%
EHCP	1184	6.1%	73	4.2%
Free School Meals	3572	18.4%	233	13.3%

Table 16: School Census Population January 2025

	North Somerset children with Criminal Justice outcomes in 2024/25 (28)			North Somerset children with Out of Court outcomes in 2024/25 (46)			North Somerset children Prevention 2024/25 (417)		
	All	OTW	OTW %	YP	OTW	OTW %	YP	OTW	OTW %
Ethnic Disparity ¹⁰ of the cohort;	n	n	%	n	n	%	n	n	%
Permanent School Exclusions	0	0	0%	1	1	100%	1	0	0%
Temporary School Exclusions Prevention	6	2	33%	20	6	30%	136	15	11%
SEND	8	1	12%	10	2	20%	94	5	5%
EHCP	11	0	0%	15	4	27%	109	4	4%
Free School Meals	9	2	22%	15	3	20%	125	7	6%

Table 17: Ethnic Disparity Educational Needs & Circumstances

Post 16 Provision

The Post 16 Team support engagement in Education Training & Employment, providing continuing support if children are not engaged in EET during or on completion of YJS intervention. A monthly reconciliation is undertaken to ensure that all children working with the YJS have suitable ETE provision and if above the school age of 16, that they are known to the Post 16 service.

16.0 Restorative approaches and victims

The YJS is committed to delivering services to victims, and the concept of restorative justice involving children who have offended while ensuring that the needs of the victims are kept at the forefront. Outcomes for victims is again a strategic priority for us in 2025/26 and in late 2024/25 we completed three areas of strategic analysis and challenge regarding the needs of victims. These have resulted in a live YEF bid to support children who are at risk of offending who have also been victims of crime, Emergency worker victims and preventing high rates of assaults and corporate victims with high cost from criminal damage and ASB.

The YJS delivers victim contact work in the light of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (VCOP). All identifiable victims are contacted, where appropriate, and offered the opportunity to have input into what happens in their case. For example, at the Pre-Court stage where decisions are being made as to whether to issue a Youth Caution or a Youth Conditional Caution victims' views are sought and actively considered in the decision making. Victims are offered the opportunity to make a victim statement, receive direct

¹⁰ YP other than White

reparation (or select indirect reparation), and where possible to meet with their offender face to face including through attendance at Youth Offender Panels.

During 2024/25, 162 programmes of contact with 149 victims were initiated, 54% individuals, 38% Emergency workers and 8% corporate. In 60% of cases violence against the person was the primary offence. In 60% of cases engagement was at the Pre-Court stage.

Offence type	No	%
Criminal Damage	20	11.1%
Fraud And Forgery	3	1.7%
Motoring Offences	2	1.1%
Non-Domestic Burglary	2	1.1%
Other	7	3.9%
Public Order	11	6.1%
Racially Aggravated	3	1.7%
Robbery	2	1.1%
Sexual Offences	1	0.6%
Theft And Handling Stolen Goods	19	10.6%
Vehicle Theft / Unauthorised Taking	2	1.1%
Violence Against The Person	108	60.0%
Total	180	100.00%

Table 18: Victim - primary offence 2024/25

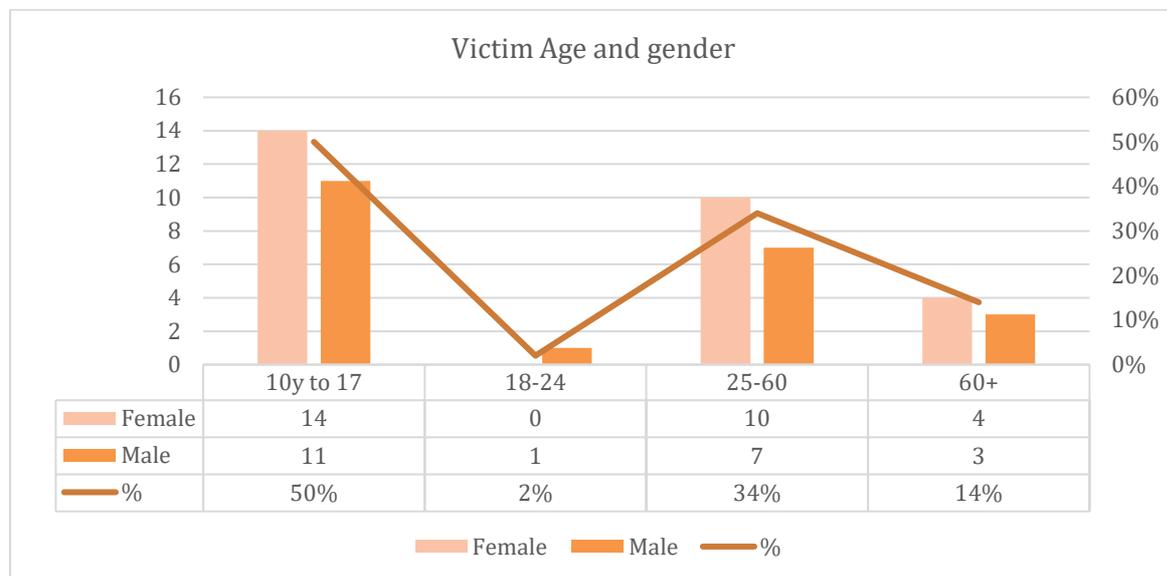


Figure 17: Victim Age & Gender 2024/25

Of the 137 individual victims 49% were male (67n), 50% female (68n) and 1% Unknown (2n). In addition, 50% were aged 10 to 17 (25n) where known).

Victim ethnicity was recorded in only 36% (35n) cases, of these 94% (33n) were recoded as being of white British or other white origin, with 6% (2) from a black or other ethnic background.

65% (51n) of interventions were successfully completed (29% unable to contact 23n).

16.1 Avon and Somerset Young Victims' Service (YVS)

YVS support children affected by crime or anti-social behaviour across Avon & Somerset, and children affected by domestic abuse in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

YVS received 592 new referrals during 2024/25, with referrals from a range of sources, including: Victim & Witness Care, Schools, Parents/Carers, Children's Services, CAMHS and Domestic Abuse/Sexual Abuse Services.

YVS is working with the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire ICB Framework for Integrated Care Vanguard, as a pathway supporting children affected by domestic abuse. This work has included reviewing the Knowledge and Skills Framework for trauma informed practice across health and criminal justice services, with a focus on influencing and improving the wider systems approach to supporting children affected by trauma.

YVS Advocates have all been trained to deliver Restorative Justice (RJ) Interventions, alongside North Somerset Youth Justice Service. RJ will form part of the offer across the five authority areas covered by YVS, in partnership with YJS's and other organisations as appropriate.

Local Authority 2024/ 25	Number of Programme Interventions*	Numbers affected by Domestic Abuse; and percentage of children by LA Split	
North Somerset	202	122	60%
Bristol	246	90	36%
BANES	60	6	10%
Somerset	264	43	16%
South Gloucestershire	159	29	18%
Total	931	290	31%

*Interventions include ongoing from previous year and new referrals

Table 19: Young Victims Service Caseload 2024/25

In 2025/26, we intend to lead a YEF funded programme (if successful) to expand and scale the work and impact of the YVS. We completed an expression of Interest in Feb/March 2025, which has been approved by YEF, in April 2025 we completed phase two of the application resulting in being asked to an interview panel in May 2025, we are awaiting an outcome from this. The focus of the scaled service is to provide all children who have been assessed as a victim of exploitation and/or crime an offer of an intervention through the lens of seeing children in need of care and protection as victims.

17.0 Serious violence, exploitation and contextual safeguarding

17.1 Serious Violence

Serious Violence and exploitation remain a priority across the strategic partnership and for our strategic plan this year. Our data and the experiences of children tell us that whilst we have low rates of serious violence as outlined in the below data, children are affected by serious violence and the increases in the region. This has directly impacted on our custody rates and the numbers of children in custody.

We are ambitious to do more, and this year will see us drive this work and outcomes further through the Serious Violence Duty and our planned evidence-based innovations.

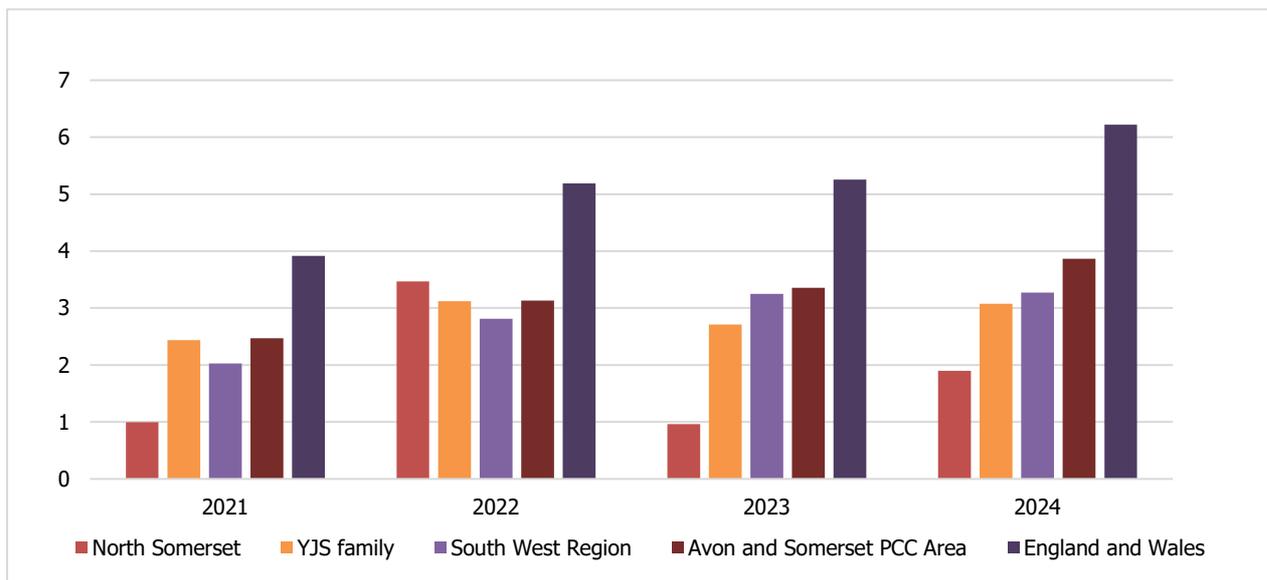


Figure 18: Rate of SYV offences per 10,000 of the general 10-17 population Year Ending December

Year ending December								
YJS family n- number / r- rate	2021		2022		2023		2024	
	Number of SV offences	Rate of SV offences	Number of SV offences	Rate of SV offences	Number of SV offences	Rate of SV offences	Number of SV offences	Rate of SV offences
North Somerset	2	1.0	7	3.5	2	1.0	4	1.9
Family average	15	2.4	20	3.1	16	2.7	19	3.1
Gloucestershire	12	2.0	26	4.4	25	4.0	25	4.0
West Sussex	31	3.9	25	3.0	22	2.6	34	4.0
Dorset Combined YOS	12	1.8	27	4.0	26	3.8	28	4.1
Cheshire East, Cheshire West, Halton and Warrington	32	3.2	47	4.5	27	2.6	36	3.4
East Riding of Yorkshire	3	1.0	4	1.3	7	2.3	7	2.3

Leicestershire	11	1.6	20	2.8	11	1.5	13	1.8
Devon	10	1.5	26	3.7	34	4.8	10	1.4
North Yorkshire	11	2.0	4	0.7	10	1.8	14	2.5
Staffordshire	29	3.7	13	1.6	13	1.6	25	3.1
Westmorland and Furness	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	11	5.7

Data for Westmorland and Furness are not available for some or all quarters since Q1 20-21 and therefore family averages should be treated with caution

Table 20: Rate of SYV offences per 10,000 of the general 10-17 population family averages

The Data outlined above indicates the rates of serious youth violence incidents increased in 2024 by 0.9 in comparison to 2023, with 2 more serious violence related offences.

However, the below local data indicates that 11 children in North Somerset have been involved in violence related offending and present with complex and multiple needs, for example, over 90% of children involved in violence have been known to children social care and over 60% have Special educational needs.

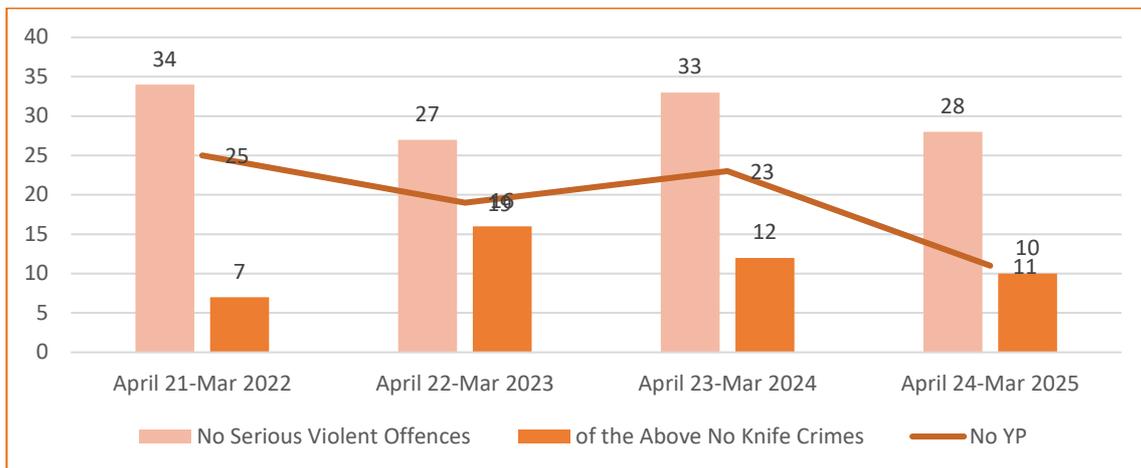


Figure 19: Serious Violent Offences April 21 to March 2025

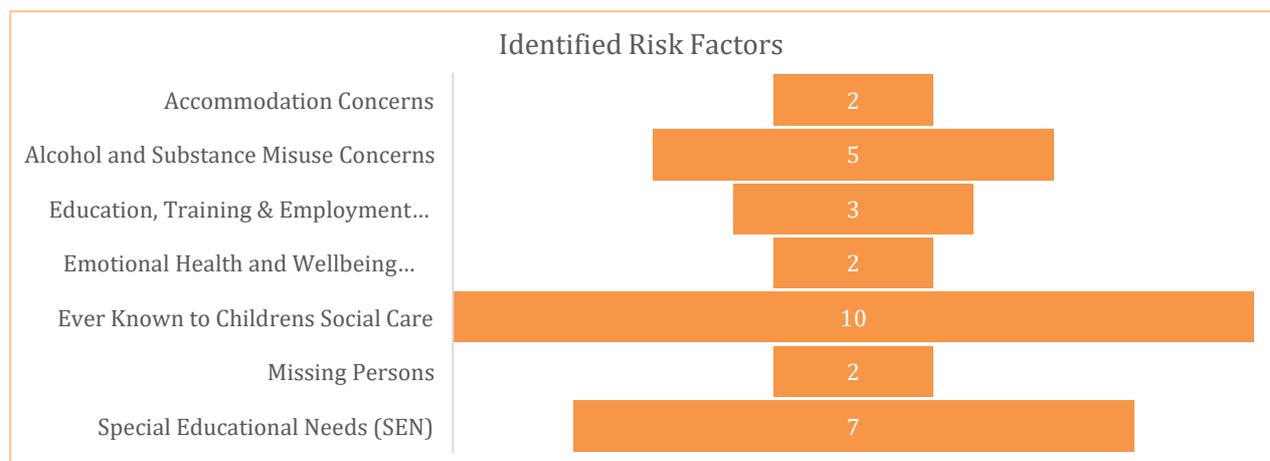


Figure 17: YP AssetPlus Risk Factors

7.2 Exploitation

The YJS are an active member of various multi-agency groups focused on addressing exploitation, and have supported to enhance and develop our local strategic and operational responses to exploitation. This includes being core members of the Risk Outside of the Home (ROTH) Subgroup. In 2024/25, YJPS have led the development of the Adolescent Safety Framework and establishing a Multi-Agency Safety (exploitation) Panel. This is beginning to have an impact and will be developed further in 2025/26.

County Lines drug dealing activity remains a concern for North Somerset, particularly in Weston-super-Mare. Drug offences continue to be a challenge in North Somerset. During 2024-25, 77 children have been identified as being at risk of criminal exploitation, of which 27 are currently open to YJS services (April 2025).

2024/25	Female	Male	Total
10y		1	1
12y		1	1
13y		4	4
14y	4	10	14
15y	5	14	19
16y	4	11	15
17y	4	19	23
Total	17	60	77

Table 21: YP at Risk of Criminal Exploitation 2024/25

The following gives a breakdown of those identified as at risk during 2024-25. A child may have more than one identified risk factor and appear more than once and in each data period.

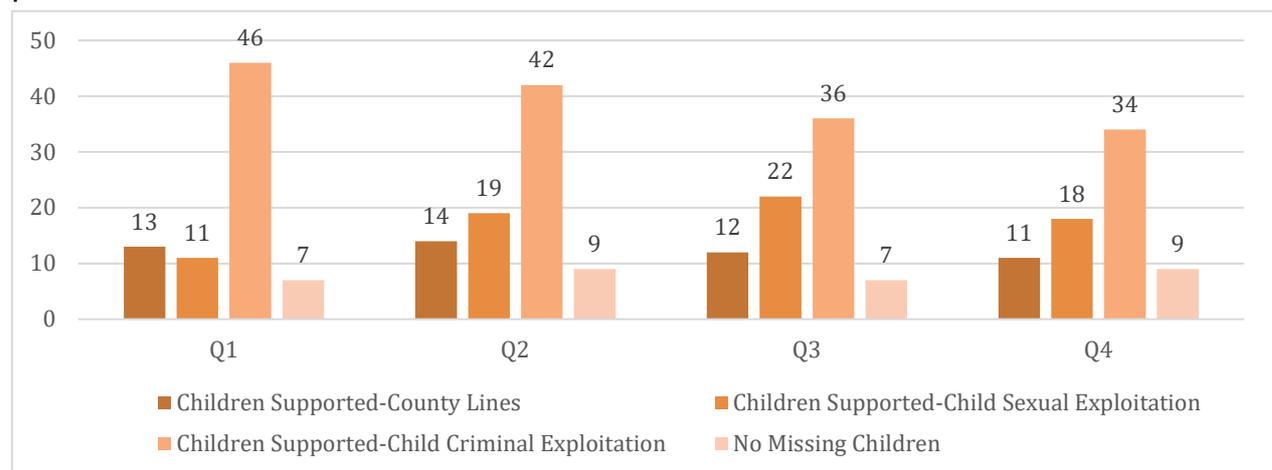


Figure 18: those identified at risk of Exploitation during 2024/25

Interventions are offered at all stages of the criminal justice process with the uses of diversionary interventions available to those children who may be at risk of exploitation or currently under investigation. The following tables provides details of interventions delivered to this cohort over time.

Interventions 2024/ 25	Closed	Open	Total	Ave Days
Criminal Justice	14	3	17	135
Out of Court Disposals	18	1	19	100
Prevention & Diversion	62	14	76	246
Youth Alcohol and Drug Diversion	6	0	6	45
Total	100	18	118	196

Table 22: Interventions delivered Exploitation Cohort 2024/25

The average length of programmes delivered is 196 days across the 118 interventions.

17.3 Community Safety and Violence Reduction

Partnerships

In North Somerset, the YJPS are part of the Violence Reduction Partnership, and we work together to protect the vulnerable people who are at risk of exploitation and violence. In 2024/25, this partnership has strengthened with increased collaboration and innovation, such as the TMEC car and greater alignment of the VRP start to finish service and our approach to transitions for young adults exiting the YJS. In 2025/26, we intend to work closely to operationalise the YFPP and are ambitious to see this align to wider Social Care Reforms with the Family Help approach and earlier interventions to reduce crime and violence.

17.4 Prevent

North Somerset Council has a Prevent strategy in place and the YJS is a core member of the multi-agency Channel panel. The Channel meeting assists agencies working with vulnerable people to meet their responsibilities under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. Section 26 of this act places a duty on certain bodies ('specified authorities') in the exercise of their functions to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. North Somerset Council is a 'specified authority' and derives this status from schedule 6 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

In April 2025, the YJPS engaged in further Prevent training following the case learning from Stockport. This was engaged with by the whole YJPS and has supported addressing extremism to become a strategic priority for us in 2025/26. Within this work, there will be a particular focus on how we can support and celebrate community integration and diversity across North Somerset. This work will be closely interlinked with our partnership with Race Equality North Somerset (RENS).

18.0 Detention in police custody

If children are held in custody at Bridgewater, they are provided with an Appropriate Adult from Somerset YJS through an agreement with North Somerset YJS. If there is a need for an Appropriate Adult in North Somerset, North Somerset YJS provides this via volunteers at our J21 Mentoring service.

In 2024-25, 31 Appropriate Adult interviews were conducted, 27 of which were provided by Somerset YOT at the Bridgwater Custody Suite and 4 in North Somerset at Weston Gateway and Nailsea Police station

The YJS hold a quarterly custody panel that reviews the individual experiences of children in custody and whether there were opportunities that could have diverted children from custody. In 2024/25, we intend to continue to develop this approach and consider what else we can do to reduce the use of police custody.

18.1 Remands

The YJS continues to work closely with the Courts and partner agencies to deliver robust community programmes and bail packages to promote positive outcomes for children and the wider society in personal, social, and financial aspects. There was 1 child remanded in custody during 2024/25 for a total of 5 days.

Episodes	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25
Number of episodes / children	0	7 (3children)	1
Rate per 1,000 children	0	0.35	0.05

Table 23: Remand Episodes

18.2 Use of custody and constructive resettlement

National and local comparisons show that North Somerset’s rate of custody has remained low in 2024-25 (0.05) and is significantly below the peak rate of 2017/18 and continues to be lower than national rates. A total of 1 custodial sentence (one child) was given in the year. In 2024/25, we completed a Multi-Agency Case Discussion review of this child and know we need to do more to improve our approach to Resettlement. In 2025/26, we will enhance our approach to child first practice and ensure this includes a focus on constructive resettlement and identity development for children in the secure estate and we intend to develop our strategic Partnership Board to ensure representation from housing, supporting wider family issues impacted on accommodation for children resettling from custody.

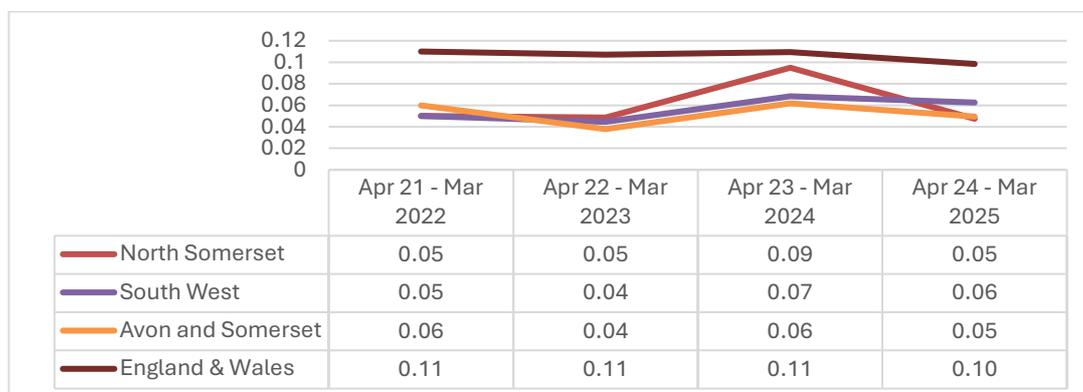


Figure 19: Custody Rate per 1,000 10-17 year olds

19.0 Working with families

“Thank you for everything you have done to help my child and myself. You involved me from the start and I felt empowered to parent my child with your support”.

Seeing children ‘as children’ means that we must work systemically with whole families to support children to move away from offending behaviour. In North Somerset, we apply the tenets of child first practice to parents, carers, and families as well as individual children. Within our Parenting Teams we have a range of evidence-based interventions and deliver 11 evidenced-based parenting programmes. We also run three parent-led ‘parenting villages’ where parents support each other through a mutual aid approach.

In 2024/25, we challenged the YJS Board and partnership to further improve our response and offer to parents being supported by the YJPS. This has not progressed as far as we would have hoped, but we have a number of planned workstreams for 2025/26 that will drive this forward. This will be further supported by our move to a dedicated YJPS location that is currently utilised for parenting interventions and the parenting villages. We will develop the offer for parents affected by youth crime and violence further and build on the principles of child first practice relating to collaboration, diverting from stigma, and building the pro-social identity of parents. We also want to align parenting offers to parents at ‘teachable, reachable moments’, such as the youth court, point of arrest, and family breakdown.

20.0 Sign off, submission and approval

The YJS Management Board approved this Youth Justice Plan in June 2025. This plan will be considered with a view to being approved and adopted by the North Somerset Full Council in September 2025.

Role	Signature and Date
Claire Sheils, Chair of YJS Board- Director Children’s Service (DCS), Children’s Support and Safeguarding, NSC	
Michael O’Connor - Head of YJS and Prevention Service, NSC	

Appendices

List of Tables

Table 1: Youth justice service management board membership	21
Table 2: YJS Services caseloads 2024/25 Social Care involvement	25
Table 3: Suitable Accommodation at Programme End 2024/25 by Qtr	28
Table 4: Suitable ETE at Programme End 2024/25	29
Table 5: Exclusions 2024/25	29
Table 6: SEND, ECHP & FSM 2024/25	29
Table 7: Substance Misuse Referrals & Treatment Exits Qtr	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Table 8: Age at time of sentence / disposal	34
Table 9: Budget 2025/26	37
Table 10: In Kind Income	37
Table 11: Remand Budget	37
Table 12: Annual school census population by ethnicity	49
Table 13: YJS and Prevention Cohort by Ethnicity	49
Table 14: Community Resolution & Diversion Cohort by Ethnicity	50
Table 15: Court & Community Supervision Justice Cohort by Ethnicity	50
Table 16: Outcomes by Gender 2024/25	50
Table 17: School Census Population January 2025	54
Table 18: Ethnic Disparity Educational Needs & Circumstances	54
Table 19: Victim - primary offence 2024/25	55
Table 20: Young Victims Service Caseload 2024/25	56
Table 21: Rate of SYV offences per 10,000 of the general 10-17 population family averages	58
Table 22: YP at Risk of Criminal Exploitation 2024/25	59
Table 23: Interventions delivered Exploitation Cohort 2024/25	60
Table 24: Remand Episodes	61

List of Figures

Figure 1 (above): 16 to 17 year olds NEET 2024	12
Figure 2 (above): Average 8 Attainment score 2023/24	12
Figure 3 (above): Children u16 living in relative low income 2023/24	13
Figure 4: Children Looked after rate per 10,000 u18 2023/24	13
Figure 5: services supporting the work of North Somerset YJPS	17
Figure 6: Rate of FTEs per 100,000 10-17 year olds - Apr 24 - Mar 25	23
Figure 7: Reoffending rate % Reoffending (PNC yearly cohort)	24
Figure 8: Reoffences per reoffender (PNC Yearly cohort)	25
Figure 9: Reoffences per offender (Ethnicity) Local Tracking	26
Figure 10: Reoffences by Sex Local Tracking	26
Figure 11: Reoffending Binary rate Local Tracking	27
Figure 12: Reoffending frequency by sex Local Tracking	27
Figure 13: Accommodation at Programme End	28
Figure 14: Suitable ETE at Programme End 2024/25	28
Figure 16: ECHM Referrals 2024/25	32
Figure 17: YP AssetPlus Risk Factors	58
Figure 18: those identified at risk of Exploitation during 2024/25	59
Figure 19: Custody Rate per 1,000 10-17 year olds	61

List of Maps

Map 1: North Somerset Children's Services Statistical Neighbours	11
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Youth Justice & Prevention Service Intervention Programmes

Court and Community Supervision:

Bail & ISSP Bail Support Programme

Civil Detention Order

Detention & Training Order Custody & Licence Programmes

Referral Order

Remand in Custody

Youth Rehabilitation Order

Out of Court Disposals:

Community Resolution Programmes

Outcome 22

Youth Caution

Youth Conditional Caution

Prevention and Diversion:

Community Resolution Police Facilitated

Diversion Programme

Advocacy & mentoring

Anti-Social Behaviour Contract

Substance Advice and Support

Voluntary Support Programme

Youth Inclusion and Support Programme Groupwork and One to One Sessions

Harmful Sexual Behaviour Programme (SO)

Community Resolution - other agency facilitated

Social Prescribing

Prevention programmes

Glossary of Terms

IFD	One Front Door
AIM	Assessment, intervention and moving on
AIR	Activities, Interactions and Roles
ASB	Anti-social Behaviour
ASF	Adolescent Safety Framework
BNSSG	Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CCST	
CR	Community Resolution
CSC	Childrens Social Care
CSP	North Somerset Community Safety Partnership
CSSNBT	Children's Services Statistical Neighbour Benchmarking Tool

DA	Domestic Abuse
DTO	Detention and Training Order
ECM	Enhanced Case Management
EEP	Education Engagement Project
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
ETE	Education Training and Employment
FCAMHS	Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
FTE	First Time Entrant
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
HMCTS	His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service
HMIP	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation
HSC+B	Harmful Sexual Behaviour
ICB	Integrated Care Board
ILACS	Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services
J21	Junction 21 Mentoring and Advocacy Service
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LA	Local Authority
MAPPA	Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements
MARAC	Multi-agency risk assessment conference
MASH	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
MH	Mental Health
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
n	Number
NEET	Not in education training or employment
NFA	No Further Action
NHS	National Health Service
NPS	National Probation Service
NSC	North Somerset Council
NSSCP	North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership
OOCD	Out of Court Disposal
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PDU	Probation Delivery Unit
PNC	Police National Computer
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
Qtr	Quarter
RJ	Restorative Justice
RENS	Race Equality North Somerset
ROTH	Risk Outside the Home Team
SAS	Substance Advice Service
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SYV	Serious Youth Violence
VANS	Voluntary Action North Somerset
VCFSE	Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise
VRP	Violence Reduction Partnership
YADD	Youth Alcohol and Drug Diversion
YC	Youth Caution

YCC	Youth Conditional Caution
YFPP	Young Futures Prevention Partnerships (panels)
YISP	Youth Inclusion Support Project
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YJPS	Youth Justice and Prevention Service
YOT	Youth Offending Team
YP	Young Person
Yrs	Years
YVS	Young Victims' Service