

# Annex A - Youth Justice Plan

<b>Service</b>	Croydon Youth Justice Service
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## 1. Introduction, vision, and strategy

The Croydon Youth Justice Service's (YJS) Youth Justice Plan is directed by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for the year 2023/24. It sets out priorities for the Youth Justice Service and its Statutory partners whilst reflecting and learning from both achievements and areas of improvement, observed in the year 2022/23. The plan will outline the current functions of the Service, how these functions are funded, detailing current strengths in addition to practice improvement requirements, informed by Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) (National Measurements/Standards) and Local Standards.

The Plan considers wider strategic plans that are interlinked and relevant to Youth Justice and its primary objectives: to prevent and reduce offending, whilst offering a narrative of the local context and needs of the children and young people open to the Service. The Plan is directly linked to the Mayor's Business Plan – specifically the objective 'Children in Croydon have the chance to thrive, learn and fulfil their potential: Ensure children and young people have opportunities to learn, develop and fulfil their potential.' The Youth Justice Plan is also referenced in the boroughs Community Safety Strategy.

Over the past 12 months further work has been undertaken to enhance joined up work between Croydon Social Care and YJS, recognising that many children are open to both Services and are some of the most vulnerable children within the borough. The work has focused on integrated planning for those subject to Child in Need Plans, Child Protection Plans and those in Care. A revised protocol setting out the joint work was completed in 2023 (appendix 9). The necessity for oversight of this work led to the development of a revised quality assurance framework that combines YJS and Social Care Managers jointly auditing across systems. Additionally, the implementation of joint supervision has been welcomed to improve practice and subsequently outcomes for children.

Consequently, this plan has been devised collaboratively in discussion with The Board, Partners (both statutory and third sector), staff and children and young people to ensure its delivery is inclusive.

\*Note: Statutory Partners refers to: Police, Children's Social Care, Education, Health, National Probation Service, Violence Reduction Unit.

### Vision

The vision of the Youth Justice Service continues to be that children and young people known to the Service will be safe, happy, and healthy and will aspire to be the best they can be avoiding further contact with the system. A vision that promotes opportunities based on individuality and personal need, recognising, and embracing diversity.

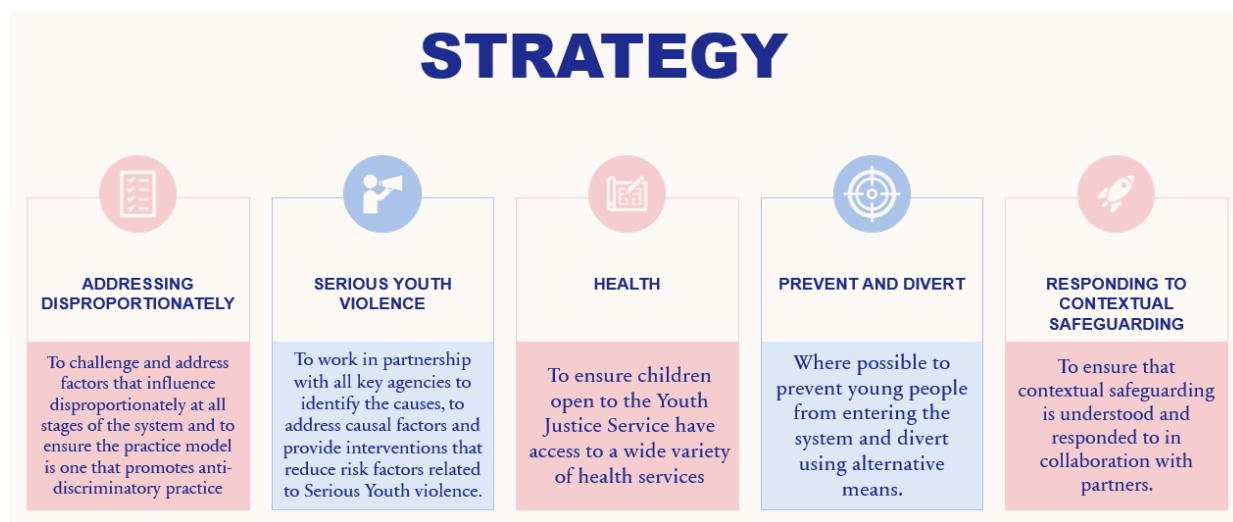
This vision is underpinned by a child-centred ethos that recognises and challenges factors that contribute to a child/young person's entry into the Criminal Justice System. The vision

requires a workforce that is representative of the community it serves, whose knowledge and expertise embed the principles of trauma-informed practice, a relational approach that is non-judgemental and promotes anti-discriminatory practice. A workforce that is committed to enhancing outcomes for children to be their best versions of themselves.

The vision recognises the importance of Restorative Justice and protecting victims, ensuring the public holds confidence in the Service. The vision recognises that often young people are the victims, both known and unknown and accepts that it has a dual role in its delivery to protect and consider these individuals and potential victims.

## Strategy

The strategy will continue to focus on the following areas:



## 2. Local context

Croydon is a London borough located in South London with a population of 386,710 people, the largest population of any London Authority, and is the largest London borough in London. It is estimated that 93,000 under 18-year-olds live in the borough subsequently giving the borough the largest youth population in London. There are 99 primary schools & 34 secondary schools. Statistically, Croydon YJS has a high throughput of under 18s making it one of the busiest in London. In 2022/23 Croydon Youth Justice Service worked with 281 children on various disposals including: Out of court triages and cautions in addition to post court statutory sentences. 63 children of the 281 were placed in borough either through other Local Authorities (placements provided by Social Care) or private arrangements with relatives. In these instances national case management guidance dictates that the area the child resides is the Youth Justice area will deliver statutory sentences/interventions and deliver out of court disposals. This process is called 'care-taking' and the receiving Youth Justice area is viewed as a 'host' with the home local authority being viewed as a 'home Youth Justice area' who retain overall case-management decision making. Conversely, 34 Croydon children were either placed out of area or temporarily residing with relatives out of area, often to reduce risk. Whilst these children may not be in the locality it is national practice for them to retain an identified 'home' Youth Justice Practitioner to liaise with the host area, write any required reports and where necessary to take enforcement action.

Disposals and Orders can last for a minimum of 3 months up to 18 months and on average there are 120+ children open to YJS at any given time. In 2022/23 158 of the 281 were deemed First Time Entrants (entering the system for the first time).

The Youth Justice Service sits within the Division of Children's Social Care, with the Service Manager of YJS also responsible for the Youth Engagement Team to ensure there is a targeted and focused prevention and diversion offer that diverts children away from criminality and anti-social behaviour at the earliest opportunity by providing holistic interventions that support children in their development.

The Local Authority recognises the uniqueness of the development stage '*adolescence*' and risks associated with this age therefore has a specialist Social Care Service called 'Young Croydon' focused on Contextual Safeguarding/extra familial harm (risks posed outside the family home) which is risk for many of the children the Youth Justice Service works with. The alignment of the two Services in the management of risk is integral to the overall Youth Justice strategy and drive to keep young people safe and to promote positive outcomes.

Social Care context: Croydon Children's Social Care data confirms that at the end of March 2023 991 Children were subject to Child in Need Plans. 507 Children were subject to Child Protection Plans and there were 527 Children Looked After, 102 Children were UASC. Of the children YJS worked with in 2022/23 the number of children known to YJS who were deemed Looked After included 89 (17%) current and 13 children who had previously been looked after. Children subject to CIN Plans totalled 62 (6%) of those open to Social Care and 32 young people subject to Child Protection Plans (6% of overall number).

Furthermore, the borough reports high levels of involvement with county-lines and is deemed to have the highest numbers in London (Rescue and Response, 2023).

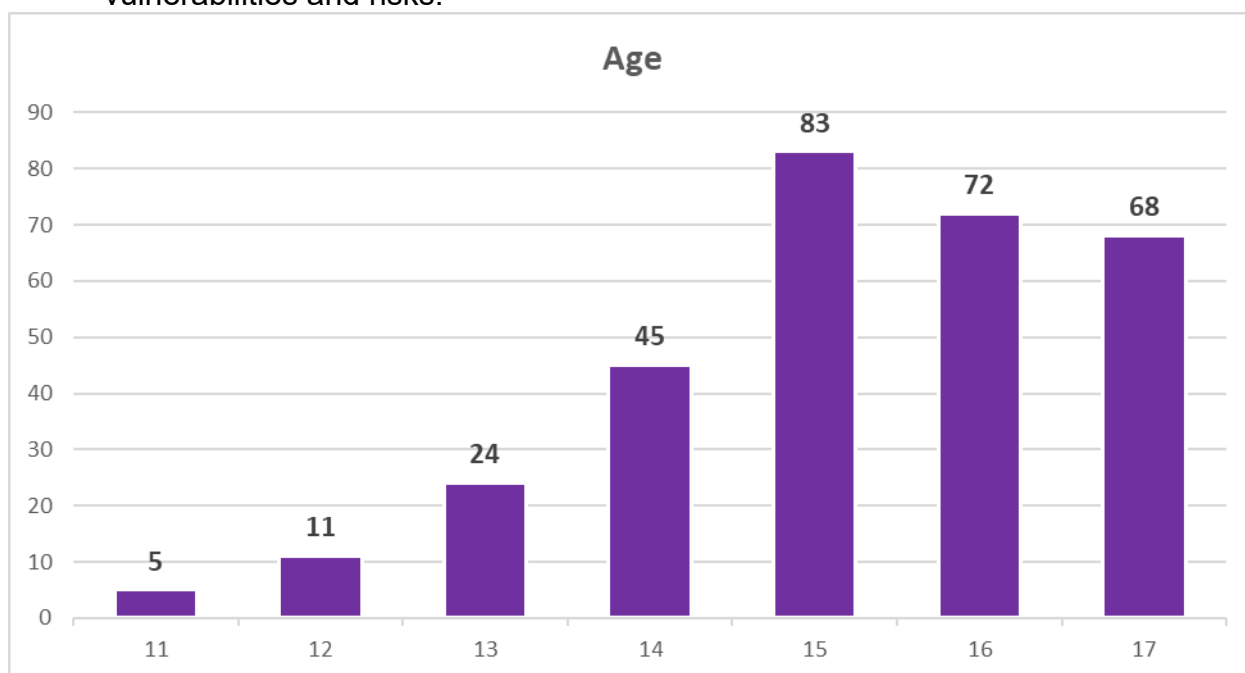
County-lines and Serious Youth Violence are often interlinked and bring with them evidence of exploitation and subsequent contextual safeguarding concerns for a child. The risk is often complex, where YJS and partners are dealing with a child's own victimisation in addition to potential risk they pose to others, primarily peers and their contact with the Criminal Justice System.

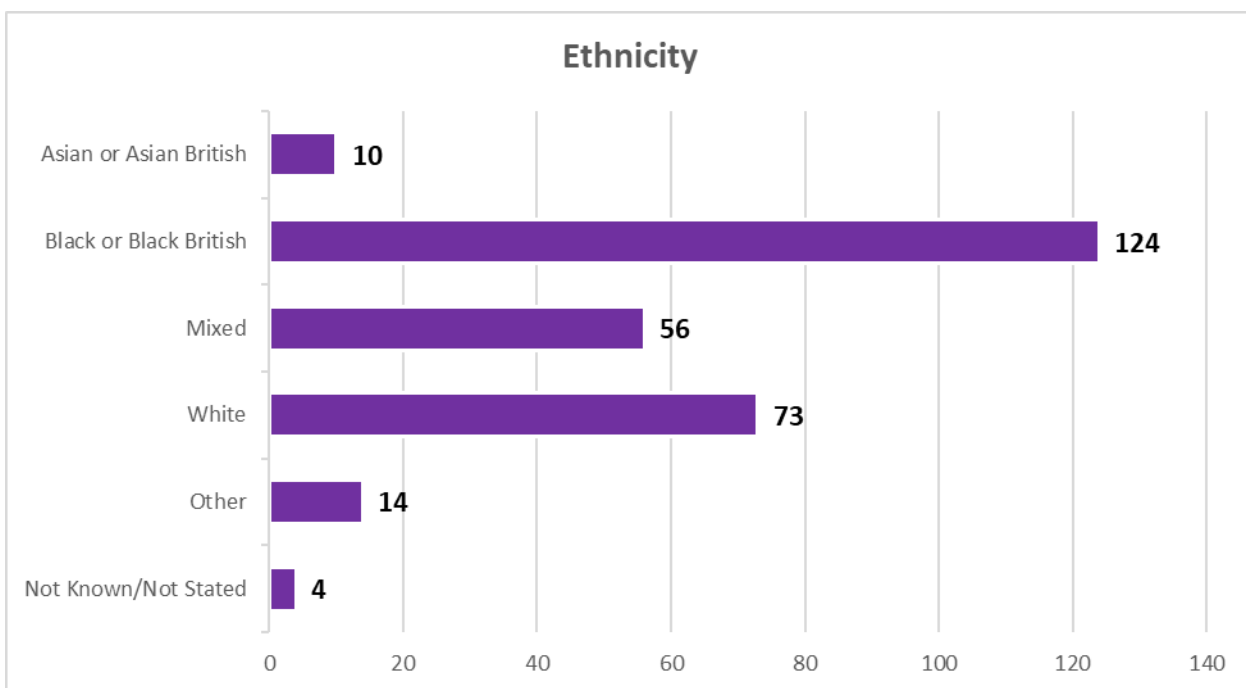
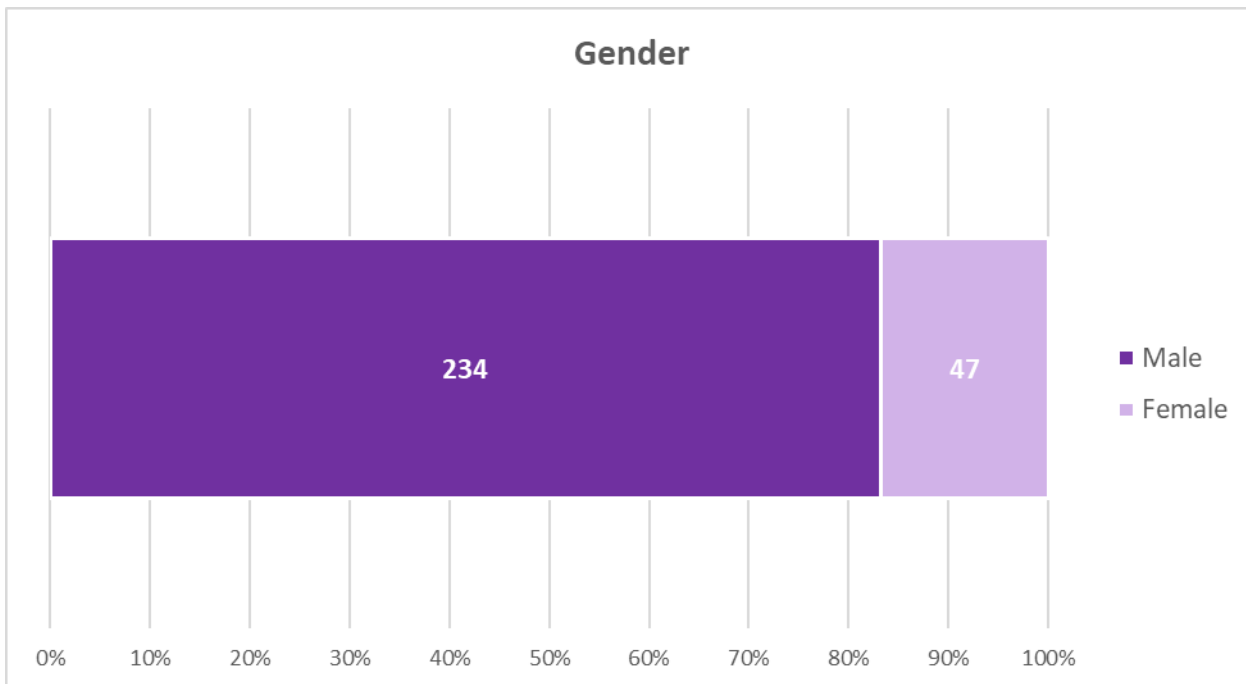
The Local Authority holds a weekly panel titled 'Complex Adolescent Panel' which oversees children where there is known or suspected Criminal and/or Sexual Exploitation. The panel's workings include application of the MACE Protocol and Pan London Child Protection Procedures. These documents provide professional guidance on how to effectively safeguard children who are suspected or at risk of exploitation. The Local Authority has an established Missing Children protocol in recognition that missing episodes are often linked to exploitation. This document sets out the process for partners and practitioners when responding to a child's missing episode. The Panel chaired by a Senior Social Care Manager jointly with the Police as Vice Chair, also attended by Health, Housing, Education, Red-Thread, Rescue and Response, Barnardo(s), Child Protection Chair and Youth Justice. An analyst supports the panel by use of analytical data and mapping exercises. The Panel also oversees children subject to National Referral Mechanism (NRM) processes. At the time of writing the plan (June 2023) 42 open to YJS had an NRM referral based on concerns related to exploitation (24.41%). In March 2023 Croydon were successful in their bid to the Home Office and are now part of a two year pilot, which means positive grounds decisions can be made by the partnership within the Council, which is completed in approx. one month rather than over a year, as it was taking the Home Office to process, this has resulted in Croydon young people getting the support they need as victims. This has already resulted in 13 conclusive grounds of positive grounds decisions since the pilot went live.

Demographics: Data shows that many of the young people known to YJS typically reside in the north part of the borough and this information correlates with the MET Police identification of 'hot spots' for crime and stop and search data, thus increased contact with the population. Please see appendix 1 that provides an overview of 2022/23 children and in which ward they reside.

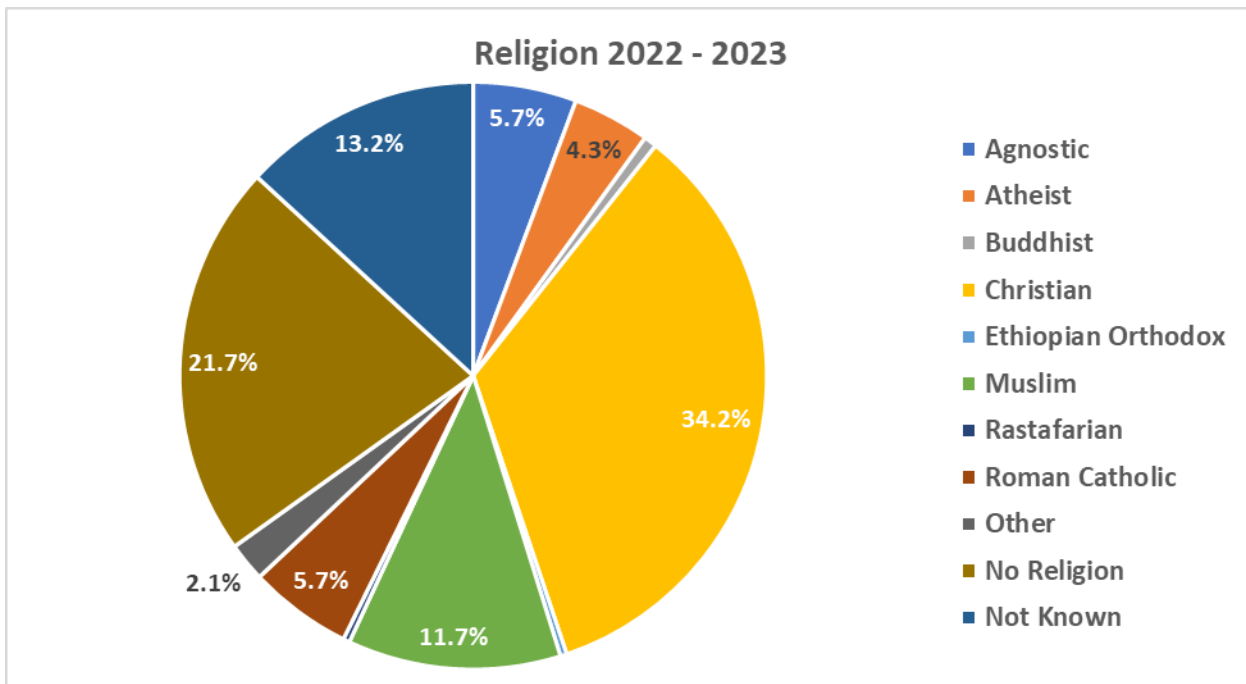
Education: Many young people, prior to contact with YJS, have experienced instability within the mainstream education setting and are attending alternative provisions such as Pupil Referral Units. The Youth Justice Service is measured on how many statutory school children are in provisions and how many 16+ children are in further education or employment. At the time of writing, the Service held 7 NEET children of Statutory School age not attending a provision. 4 of the NEET were male and 3 were females. The ethnicity of these children included 4 black children, 1 mixed heritage and 2 white.

Characteristics: Age and ethnicity break-down of the 2022/23 cohort is detailed below. The YJS continues to see an overrepresentation of ethnically diverse males, albeit there was a reduction during this period. Girls remain to be less representative within the cohort but are often younger in age (13-14 whereby the average age for males 15-17). Whilst the female cohort is low, the number is significant with females presenting with their own unique vulnerabilities and risks.





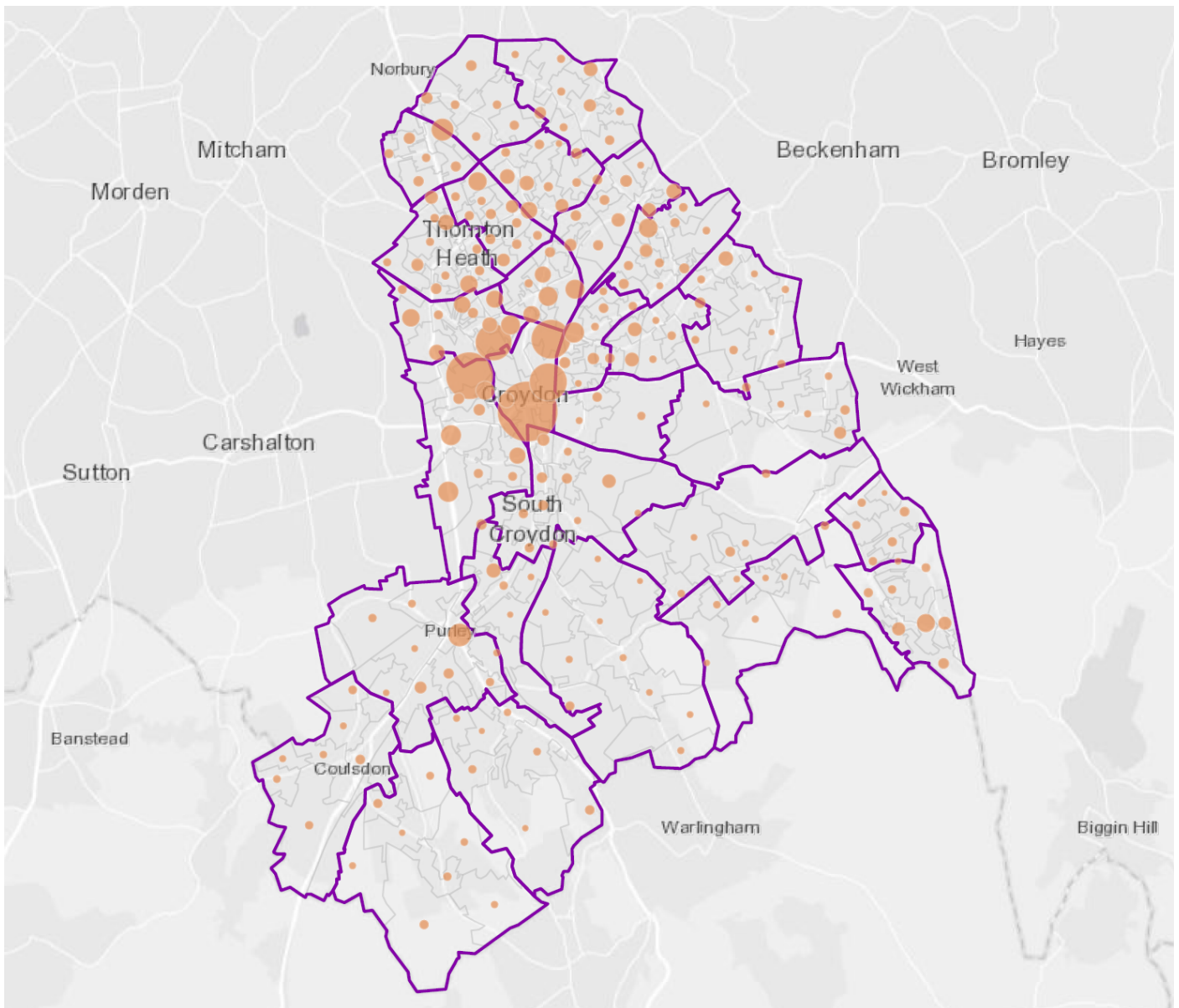




Community Safety data shows that the borough has high levels of Serious Violence – Serious Youth Violence being defined by the MET as a count of any victim for any offence of the most serious violence, gun, or knife crime where the victim is 1-19.

The levels of violence have required a multi-agency approach, this approach is detailed within the Community Safety Strategy 2023/24 and for youth specifically, the Local Violence and Vulnerability action plan and risk register. The Council is developing a Youth Safety Strategy in partnership and co-production with residents, young people and partners agencies. Data provided by the Violence Reduction Unit shows there is a clear correlation with non-domestic violence and the night-time economy that is more prevalent in certain parts of the borough and a clear correlation with ‘after school’ hours particularly in the town centre.

The YJS includes use of new initiatives Turnaround Project and Engage which provides bespoke prevention interventions for children on the periphery of the criminal justice system and for those of greater concern interventions connected to statutory orders and disposals including use of requirements where necessary: exclusions/curfews/non-associations/supervision/activities/group-work/mentoring. The Youth Engagement Service offers an Outreach Service in response to serious incidents to provide public reassurance and to engage with children and young people within the locality.



### 3. Child First

Croydon Youth Justice Service & Partners have adopted the Child First Approach principles as detailed in research completed by Loughborough University and accepted by the Youth Justice Board. The approach applies four tenets:

- See children as Children.
- Adopt a pro-social identity for positive child outcomes.
- Collaboration with children
- Promote diversion.

The Youth Justice Service embeds and applies a culture that promotes the interests of children taking account of personal need and capacities. Service delivery is developmentally informed and takes account of systemic disadvantages experienced by children known. In line with the above principles and vision, it recognises potential of all children known to the Service and encourages all partners to apply the same ethos.

YJS practice applies a strength-based model where the future is a focus, and it aims to increase protective factors. The YJS holds an array of events to ensure the voice of the child is heard and helps devise a child-friendly approach that accounts for the views and feelings of young people. This includes use of questionnaires/surveys, group discussions/forums and involvement in design of the environment, recruitment, and policies. The YJS ensures these voices are heard by Croydon's Senior Leaders including the governing Youth Justice Crime board who oversee the YJS performance and partners contributions, to YJS delivery, by way of inviting young people to forums where they are present or presenting findings from information submitted or discussed. Additionally, CYPE Practice and Performance Board is a cross directorate approach to governing outcomes for children.

Finally, the YJS where possible strives to divert away from the system. The newly implemented initiatives such as Engage and Turnaround provides a response to young people coming into contact with the system at the earliest opportunity (arrest or concern) and offers children and families accessibility to an array of interventions to divert further contact. These projects work closely with the Voluntary Community Sector, to provide activities and interventions to reduce risk of offending, within the child's own locality to promote community inclusive and positive pursuits.

#### 4. Voice of the child

The voice of the child is integrated at all stages of the Service from assessment, planning to delivery of intervention and ongoing evaluation and feedback.

Within the assessment tool (ASSET+) used by the Youth Justice Service there is a self-assessment completed by both young person and the young person's relevant adult. These are audited to identify themes. The assessment tool is reviewed every 3 months following a formal review meeting chaired by the relevant overseeing Manager, the YJS Officer, young person and their relevant adult and any other significant professionals. The Manager is responsible for completing a review document where again views of young people are logged. These are communicated with the Service Manager.

Separate to the above processes, the YJS has been involved in ascertaining the views of young people in varying forms including use of surveys and specifically designed forums. To provide impartiality, the Youth Engagement Team leads on such forums on behalf of the Youth Justice Service and the YJS has also worked with Leaders Unlocked, a charity who engage young people who have had contact with the Criminal Justice, to voice how they feel the system could improve. The aim is for young people to be part of the change and the offer involves providing training to young people to use their voice.

The YJS also regularly evaluates its own processes and completes a questionnaire for all young people subject to the Court Order 'Referral Orders'. The Referral Order is unique as it is underpinned by Restorative principles and the detail of intervention is created in contact with a Youth Panel made up of community representatives rather than Criminal Justice led.

The YJS has also worked to include children's thoughts on other operational aspects of the Service, for example in 2022 it was decided to change the Service's name from Youth Offending to Youth Justice and young people were asked on their opinion. Consequently, the change led to a change of logo whereby young people were also asked to help with the design. Young people have also been involved in re-designing the reception area of the Service, to ensure it is welcoming, informative, and compliant with health & safety

requirements. Also helping devise plans and policies including the YJS Disproportionately Action Plan that looks at ways the YJS can address overrepresentation and work with other parts of the Criminal Justice System to address factors that may cause disparities.

In 2023/24 the Youth Justice Service via the Youth Crime Board intends on looking much more deeply at overrepresentation. There is much reported research on other parts of the Criminal Justice system and discrimination and whilst some reports have been published on Youth Justice this has not been a local picture. An anonymous survey will be provided to children to answer questions specifically on discrimination and the Service's level of cultural understanding. Currently all staff are trained in cultural competency and the ethos of the Service is to ensure Practitioners and Managers gain understanding of the various cultural backgrounds they may encounter but gaining individual insight as to how the service is perceived will help determine area for improvement. For further detail please see Disproportionately Action Plan (Appendix 3). Croydon's practice framework is to work systemically emphasising the value of relationships; with many staff and all managers trained in systemic practice. The concept of systemic practice is not to view the child in isolation and consider delivery of interventions to extend to families and carers.

## 5. Governance, leadership, and partnership arrangements

The Youth Justice Service sits within the Local Authority's Division of Children's Social Care. The Service Manager for the Youth Justice Service is also responsible for the Youth Engagement Team and reports to the Head of Service for Access, Support & Intervention. As noted above YJS sits alongside 'Young Croydon' which is focused on work with vulnerable adolescents within Children's Social Care.

The Youth Justice Service operationally reports to the Head of Service's 'Practice and Performance Forum' which is also attended by other senior leaders, including Quality Assurance, Data Analysts and Transformation leads. The focus of this forum is to provide high challenge and high support environment to drive improvements, whilst focusing on the YJS overall performance using Key Performance Indicators and National Standards as measures. The YJS Service Manager alongside the Team Manager's report to this forum monthly and provide context of the YJS operationally, including cases of concern and areas of strength as well as the challenges that YJS face. The division has an overarching Service Priorities Plan, the YJS is contained within this plan and the objectives are heavily focused on joined up work with Social Care and Young Croydon specifically.

The Youth Justice Service is also subject to Quality Assurance Scrutiny and a newly devised framework has been created to ensure that there is oversight of YJS case management outside of the Service whilst auditing across the continuum of service delivery for young people who are open to both YJS and Social Care, which will provide us a clearly understanding of the impact being delivered through multiple plans. Please see Appendix 7 for further detail.

### Youth Crime Board

Strategically the YJS is governed by the Youth Crime Board, a statutory board that is held quarterly, chaired by the Corporate Director CYPE, and attended by all statutory key Senior Partners as outlined by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998: Police/National Probation Service/Social Care/Health/Education. Additional non-statutory partners such as the Victim Liaison Unit/Voluntary Community Sector/Commissioning/Court/Violence Reduction Unit

also form an integral part of the Board. For full details of membership please see Appendix 8 – Youth Crime Board Terms of Reference.

The statutory role of the Board is to ensure that all partners are contributing to the overall delivery of the Youth Justice Service, the Youth Justice plan which outlines the partnership strategy for the year, and any additional plans related to the operational running of the YJS, in accordance with statutory duties, including addressing disproportionately. The Board members must ensure they have sound knowledge of the YJS operational functions and vision. The Board is regularly attended by Practitioners and Managers to present on specific areas within the Youth Justice portfolio. Such presentations have included: Working with Children who have committed Serious Youth Violence/Resettlement/Out of Court work/Restorative Justice/Voice of the Child/Referral Order panels/Working with Over-represented young people/Turnaround Project/Victims.

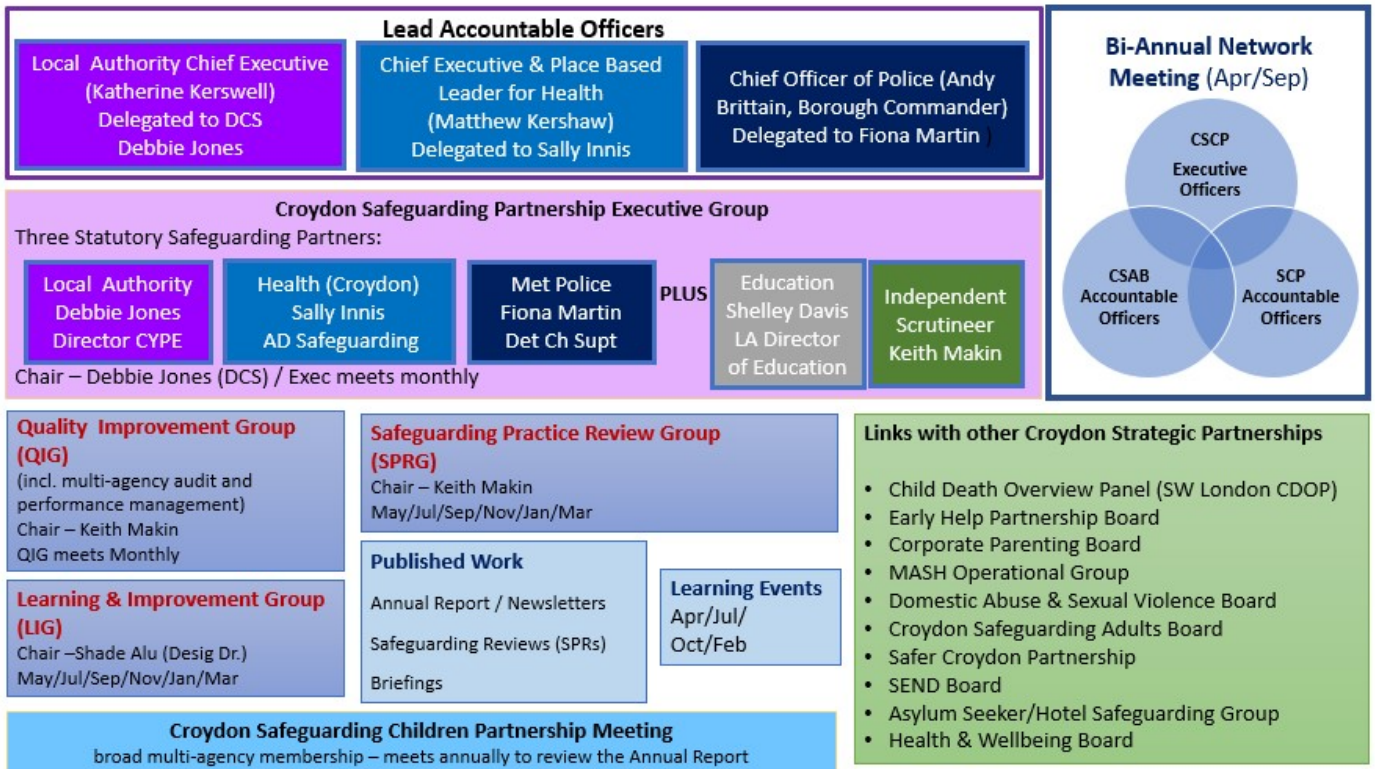
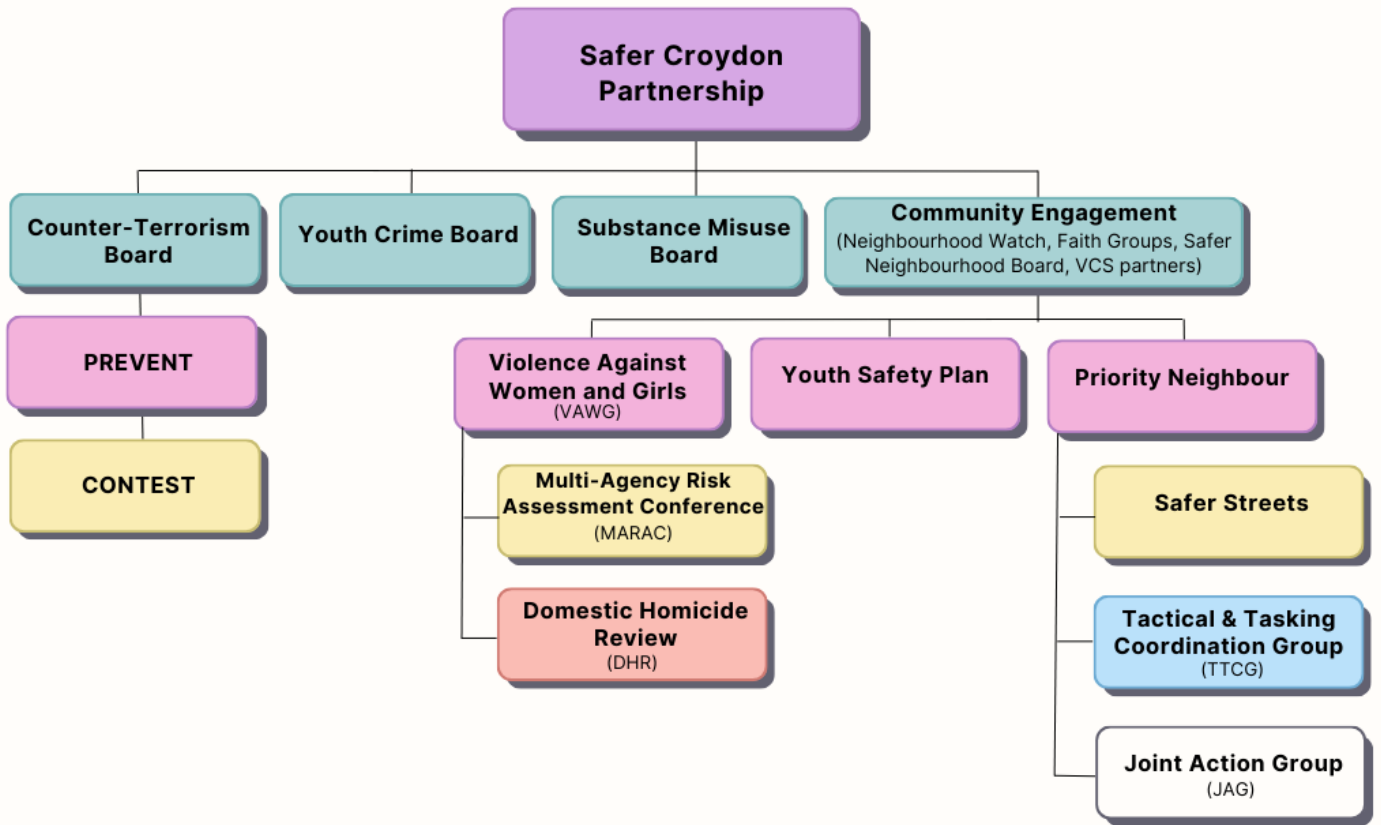
The Board must ensure they understand the characteristics of the children held within the cohort and in advance of the Board, a detailed performance report is supplied to members outlining performance for the quarter in accordance with Key Performance Indicators and other local measures of data specially detailed including: age/race/ethnicity/religion/demographics. The characteristics also contain information which is now viewed as a new key performance indicator including children subject to Child in Need Plans, Child Protection Plans, Children Looked After and Children with a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) (Positive grounds for exploitation). The report requires Board members to scrutinise at data, patterns, and themes.

A specific focus on disproportionately of ethnically diverse children is routinely discussed within the Board and overall oversight of the Youth Justice Service's devised Disproportionately Action Plan provided (Appendix 3).

The Board coordinates the partnership to ensure the Youth Justice Service are providing good quality interventions resulting in positive outcomes for our young people, identifying focus areas for improvements, whilst ensuring resourcing issues are resolved. A recent example of this, has been the developments around the physical health offer. The Board ensures that all findings from Inspections or Thematic Inspections are considered and remedied. It will also ensure oversight of all financial aspects of the Youth Justice Service.

To summarise the Board must ensure that it has effective Leadership and Oversight of Youth Justice Services for children, that the delivery contributes to local multiagency strategies and local and national criminal justice organisations and there is oversight on the safeguarding of children who receive Youth Justice Services.

The Youth Justice Crime Board is one of several Boards that feeds into Safer Croydon Partnership Board (board structure provided below).



Whilst governance sits with the Youth Crime Board, the YJS and its work is also reviewed within the strategic arrangements related to safeguarding and the YJS are representative at Boards detailed above.

## 6. Board Development

[The Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#) sets out the minimum statutory requirements for YJS as detailed above. However, the Board contains members from various organisations and overtime membership can change. It is therefore important that each Board member is inducted including a meeting with the YJS Management Team and attendance at the YJS office in addition to the introduction to the wider Team and young people. It is also important that the Board attends workshops/development days. In April 2023 a workshop was held that provided Board members the opportunity to visit the YJS Office and meet with the Team, young people also presented on a project and the time permitted wider discussion on new Key Performance Indicators and the current needs of the Youth Justice Service. In preparation of the workshop Board members were asked to complete a survey to identify their understand but also to inform the vision and plan; the information and discussions has enabled us to focus the Youth Crime Board agenda for the forthcoming year, with partnership spotlights agreed. This workshop will be repeated annually to drive improvements and identify plans and oversight required for the year ahead.

## 7. Progress on previous plan

Detailed below are the Youth Justice Plan priorities for 2022/23 in addition to a table below outlining progress to date and should be read in conjunction with the Service’s Workforce Development Plan (appendix 7) detailing training available to staff to ensure the workforce, inclusive of Managers, has knowledge of current research and practice to ensure the delivery of the plan is applied effectively. Last year we aimed to:

Priorities 2022/23	Outcomes	Actions
Addressing Disproportionately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure where possible children and young people from BME communities are diverted away from the system.</li> <li>• To mark the overrepresentation of young black males in custody and ensure they receive a sophisticated resettlement offer.</li> <li>• To ensure all key partners have an awareness of the YJS disproportionately data and to assist to address including Police and Education.</li> <li>• To mark the overrepresentation of Looked After children by way of joint working with the CLA 0-15 &amp; Young People’s Services.</li> <li>• To promote opportunities and Service, which are culturally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor progress on DAP.</li> <li>• Embed protocol with Children’s Social Care</li> <li>• Further training with the Judiciary</li> <li>• Work with Education Team on exclusions and ethnicity linked to YJS.</li> <li>• Continue to co-locate with PRU to promote support in education.</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate resource is given to diversions taking account of Stop and Search data – including the development of voluntary support offer.</li> <li>• Promote opportunities by using VCS.</li> <li>• Deliver specific service to girls.</li> <li>• Continue to run Positive male’s project.</li> </ul>

	<p>appropriate, to groups that are over-representation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure interventions are specific to diversity needs of an individual</li> </ul>	
Serious Youth Crime Inclusive of Knife Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide a systemic approach to address Serious Youth Violence collaboratively with all partners including the community.</li> <li>• To ensure the voice of the community, families and young people are heard in response to Serious Youth Violence.</li> <li>• To ensure workforce has sound understanding of the contributing factors related to Serious Youth Violence and delivers a trauma informed approach that recognises young people are often victims as well as perpetrators of crime.</li> <li>• To ensure where risk is identified procedures are followed and risk is responded to.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure staff learn from Serious Practice Reviews completed &amp; engage in learning reviews across the partnership.</li> <li>• Improved analysis of data to ensure the picture is clear and partners can direct services accordingly.</li> <li>• To continue to contribute to the Community Safety Strategy in this area.</li> <li>• Development of a Youth Safety Plan</li> <li>• Continue to be representative at CAP panel.</li> <li>• To work collaboratively with the community via the intelligence hub to ensure services are targeted and responses take account of community feeling.</li> <li>• To provide young people with education and employment opportunities to promote desistance incorporating the Youth Safety Plan.</li> <li>• To oversee those of concern at relevant panels including Gangs/IOM/RVMP</li> <li>• Joint supervision with Social Care</li> <li>• Joint planning with Social Care of those who are at risk and pose risk to others</li> </ul>
Health Offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To offer a physical health offer that screens and signposts children into services.</li> <li>• To have an in-house mental health offer where children are screened and provided with commensurate treatment and support.</li> <li>• Staff able to work jointly with health professionals to support children with neurodiverse conditions.</li> <li>• To ensure children have easy accessibility into counselling services.</li> <li>• To offer a specialist service for children who sexually harm.</li> <li>• To education and offers services related to Sexual health.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Health offer is delivered weekly to YJS children and young people.</li> <li>• Young People are getting the help they need.</li> <li>• Sexual Health Nurse will be delivering outreach services from Turnaround building.</li> <li>• Mental Health Provision is identified and recruited into.</li> <li>• Continued work and partnership occur with local counselling providers.</li> <li>• Staff complete mental health first aide training and relevant training on SALT and neurodiverse conditions.</li> <li>• Staff are trained in the delivery of sexual health education.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff are AIM trained and able to deliver interventions in partnership with specialist services for children who sexually harm.</li> </ul>
Diverting Children away from the Criminal Justice System (reducing first time entrants)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To reduce First Time Entrants and divert children away from the Youth Justice System providing alternative services that are community led and promote protective factors.</li> <li>• To continue to use community resolutions and monitor their impact.</li> <li>• To continue to work with the Voluntary Community Sector to assist in diversion of young people from the system by offer of constructive pursuits and educational opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YJS to contribute to the setup of Engage – service(s) offered at custody suite to divert children away.</li> <li>• To continue to oversee Community Resolutions</li> <li>• To continue to promote the use of VCS organisations who are embedded in the communities' children reside.</li> <li>• To ensure Out of Court Offer provides a variety of services and opportunities to reduce recidivism e.g., activities etc.</li> <li>• To offer children known to have received two RUIs a voluntary service via CLIP (Youth Engagement Team).</li> </ul>
Responding to County-lines and contextual safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team is trained and experienced responding to safeguarding risks linked to this area.</li> <li>• NRM data is collated and used to understand picture.</li> <li>• Contribute to CAP and subsequent safety planning of children at risk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved joint working with Young Croydon – Adolescent Social Work</li> <li>• Continue to collate NRM data.</li> <li>• NRM processes brought in-house to reduce time delay.</li> <li>• Continue to refer and work with Barnardo's and Rescue and Response</li> <li>• Ensure YJS keeps up to date with all national and local progress in this area via knowledge of law/policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Collaboration with Police Services locally and national as appropriate.</li> <li>• Utilising the Health Offer to identify and respond to health impacts of extra familial harm.</li> </ul>
Reduce Re-offending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular use of re-offending toolkit to ensure identification of those escalating is sighted and responded to.</li> <li>• To ensure YJS Offer meets with individuals needs and capacities.</li> <li>• To use partnership panels to promote outcomes for children and young people such as RVMP/CAP/Edge of Care.</li> <li>• To ensure reasons a young person is offending are addressed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly use of toolkit with Manager to have oversight of those escalating or those at high risk of offending.</li> <li>• For those identified tailored, robust interventions are offered jointly with partners.</li> <li>• Continued collaboration and joint work with VCS to offer interventions and YJS having extensive knowledge of community offer.</li> <li>• Factors linked to offending behaviour are raised at board to consider strategic response to pertinent factors.</li> </ul>

Reducing NEET numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversight of those NEET and offer of individualised programmes based on aspirations and personal goals provided.</li> <li>• Additional coaching and mentoring services offered to help children and young people obtain goals.</li> <li>• Continue to work with the local Pupil Referral Unit, particularly with those in year 11 and transitioning into year 12.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resume Joint ETE Panel for those identified as NEET – to be co-chaired with YJS/Croydon Works</li> <li>• Coaching/mentoring offer to be provided to those who are subject to employability project.</li> <li>• Increased joint meetings with Education Manager and Service Manager to ensure development in partnerships and provision remains a focus.</li> <li>• Regularly discussed at Board so wider partnership has oversight.</li> </ul>
Widening Resettlement Offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resettlement Panel to maintain partner attendance and to consider all relevant areas to promote desistance upon release.</li> <li>• To ensure accommodation is sought in a timely, well-planned manner that take into account this can be an anxiety provoking time for young people.</li> <li>• To ensure offer is of cultural relevance and accounts for the individuals specific needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuation of resettlement forum to oversee delivery of service both in custody and planning for a return to the community.</li> <li>• Service Manager to raise issue of accommodation with Senior Management Team</li> <li>• To ensure VCS is included in resettlement offer.</li> </ul>
Ensuring Service is Victim centric in its approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YJS continues to offer service to victims and where possible promote the use of restorative processes.</li> <li>• Continues evaluation of services ensuring the victims voice is heard and embedded into principles of YJS work.</li> <li>• To understand that many young people known to are service are also victims of crime and to widen our understanding on how the two correlate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure this is featured within all staff appraisals to press the importance of this work.</li> <li>• To continue to deliver interventions that are specific to victim awareness and consideration.</li> <li>• To remain up to date with research and practice developments in this area (Restorative Justice).</li> </ul>

Priority	Progress on 2022/23 Plan to date:
Addressing Disproportionately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YJS completed own Disproportionately Action Plan in line with specific practice areas.</li> <li>• Plan devised in consultation with Local Authorities Equalities Officer/BME Forum/Staff and Young people.</li> <li>• Plan defines a need for a Champion within the Team to lead on its delivery.</li> <li>• Plan discussed with practitioners frequently at Reflective Practice Forum.</li> <li>• YJS delivered training to the Courts on cultural competency.</li> <li>• All YJS staff trained in cultural competency by the Black Minority Ethnic (BME) Forum</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stronger partnership with the BME Forum (VCS) and attendance at their events.</li> <li>• Twice yearly scrutiny Panel held on Out of Court Disposals to look at decision making – taking account of diversity factors.</li> <li>• YJS include detail of structural inequalities within Pre-sentence Reports.</li> <li>• Positive Males Group carried out each quarter. Invite successful local black males to deliver their testimony on their achievements.</li> <li>• Forming of partnership with Aspiring Young Women (AYW) to co-design work with females, particularly young black females who are over-represented within the cohort.</li> <li>• Acknowledgement that there is an overrepresentation of Child Looked After within the cohort and consideration on how to improve practice for this group.</li> <li>• Significant percentage of cohort with educational health care plans consequently Service was awarded a practice marker in this area.</li> <li>• Overrepresentation of black females within the cohort – bespoke group work and mentoring offer.</li> </ul>
<p>Serious Youth Crime Inclusive of Knife Crime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the community led intelligence hub to work with YJS and Police to assist intelligence led responses.</li> <li>• Continuation of Weapons Awareness programme including first aide training.</li> <li>• Continuation of Integrated Offender Management model co-run with Community Safety and Police and Education.</li> <li>• Continued representation from YJS at Complex Adolescent Panel to ensure safeguarding factors related to Serious Youth Violence are addressed via a partnership response.</li> <li>• Use of YJS Risk and Vulnerability Management Panel to discuss Multi-Agency Public Protection (MAPPA) referrals and work, children released on licence and imposition of external controls, addressing vulnerability and where necessary using the panel to escalate in line with YJS and LA escalation policy.</li> </ul>
<p>Health Offer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical Health Nurse now in place screening all children open to the cohort.</li> <li>• Clinical Team embedded to Service providing consultation sessions and casework and sitting on the RMVP to enhance assessments, planning and intervention.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your Choice Cognitive Behavioural Programme being run on identified part of the cohort.</li> <li>• All staff trained in Sexual Health by NHS</li> <li>• NHS Sexual Health Team undertaking monthly visits to assist cohort.</li> <li>• All staff trained in Mental Health First Aid</li> <li>• Continued work with Forensic Child Adolescent Mental Health (FCAMHS)</li> <li>• All staff trained in trauma informed practice.</li> <li>• Continued partnership with Off the Record providing counselling Services to children who do not meet mental health thresholds.</li> </ul>
<p>Diverting Children away from the Criminal Justice System (reducing first time entrants)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of Turnaround Project to work with children who receive Community Resolutions or No Further Action by the Police.</li> <li>• Revised Youth Engagement Offer to complete low level case work, using an Early Help Framework for children displaying early signs of criminality or anti-social behaviour.</li> <li>• Introduction and implementation of Engage – Police Custody Suite engagement of young people who are arrested without charge to provide support at the earliest possible opportunity to steer away from future contact with Authorities.</li> <li>• Continued partner within the My Endz programme – offering or programmes and mentoring via the Voluntary Community Sector.</li> </ul>
<p>Responding to County-lines and contextual safeguarding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newly established pilot to support the National Referral Mechanism (NRMs) moving decision making from Home Office to the Council and partners, resulting in much quicker positive grounds decisions reducing from over one year to one month meaning our young people are recognised as victims and supported across the partnership appropriately.</li> <li>• Complex Adolescent Panel – Chaired by Social Care attended by Partnership including representation from Rescue and Response, Barnardo(s)</li> <li>• Joint work with Specialist Adolescence Service (Young Croydon).</li> <li>• Completion of jointly created Safety Plans with Social Care</li> </ul>
<p>Reduce Re-offending</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring the reasons that a child is offending are understood by way of assessment.</li> <li>• Applying child centric interventions that are focused on strengths and opportunities which</li> </ul>

	<p>research indicates is the most effective way to reduce further offending.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of re-offending toolkit to ensure resource led interventions are being targeted at those deemed prolific and children escalating. Oversighted by Management.</li> <li>• Co-managed Integrated Offender Management with Police – monitoring young people who pose the highest risk.</li> <li>• Use of Risk and Vulnerability Management Panel Chaired by YJS Service Manager to ensure all measures are taken to prevent and reduce further offending.</li> <li>• Clinical discussions on children with behaviours that are potentially linked to mental health needs.</li> <li>• Use of forums and consultations with MARAC/MAPPA/Chanel to ensure public protection is oversights when the risk meets eligibility.</li> <li>• Partnership work including offer of mentoring and work experience with approved organisations.</li> <li>• Enhanced 16+ Education and Employment Support</li> </ul>
Reducing NEET numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated ETE worker for 16+</li> <li>• Employability course via Skills Mill delivered.</li> <li>• Strong partnerships with Education and employment providers and provisions – Palace for Life, Croydon College, Legacy Youth Club.</li> <li>• Offer of mentoring and coaching to support young people in this area – Mentivity, Reaching Higher, P4YE.</li> <li>• Work with Catch 22 to assist Children in ETE and equipment that may be required.</li> <li>• Monthly ‘readiness’ workshop delivered to assist young people with CV/Interview Skills.</li> <li>• Service awarded accreditation for joint work with SEND (Lead marker).</li> </ul>
Ensuring Service is Victim centric in its approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation already set up for Victims to provide feedback.</li> <li>• Established/experienced victim worker who provides a range of restorative practices based on evidence-based research.</li> <li>• In-house training on victim awareness</li> <li>• Delivery of VRAP programme delivered to all young people.</li> <li>• Victim work included in all YJS staff’s appraisals</li> </ul>

## 8. Resources:

The Youth Justice Service is made up of various funding streams. Below is a table providing detail of the contributions made:

<b>2023-24 Budgeted Funding Streams (Staffing &amp; Non-Staffing)</b>				
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Payments in Kind - Revenue</b>	<b>Other Delegated Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>
LB Croydon	1,150,000			1,150,000
YJB Grant	535,000			535,000
Other HRA (Housing)	91,000			91,000
Unaccompanied Minors Grant	81,000			81,000
Community Safety	52,000			52,000
MOPAC	262,000			262,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,171,000</b>			<b>2,171,000</b>

Other contributions are made up of staffing/seconded staff as detailed below.

<b>2023/24 Additional Income (Unbudgeted)</b>				
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Payments in Kind - Revenue</b>	<b>Other Delegated Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>
MET Police	130,000			130,000
DFE (Pupil Referral Unit)	28,224			28,224
National Probation Service	23,750		5,000	28,750
Health Service	110,000		5,000	115,000
Skill Mill Ltd	38,000			38,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>329,974</b>			<b>339,974</b>

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places an obligation upon statutory partners to contribute to the delivery of Youth Justice this can be in the form of staffing or financial contributions.

The MET Police is a statutory partner, and the contribution provides internal Police Officers assigned to YJS and Out of Court work.

The National Probation Service is a statutory partner, and they provide a 0.3 post for a seconded Probation Officer.

Department for Education (Pupil Referral Unit) currently the DFE are funding a pilot for YJS staff to be placed on site at the local Pupil Referral Unit as a form of multiagency working this cost contributes to the cost of one Youth Offending Officer.

The Health Cost is inclusive of the Liaison and Diversion Health Worker/Crisis Team who currently is based at Croydon Custody suite to assess health needs of children when arrested. A separate form of funding contributes to the Speech and Language Worker.

Unaccompanied Minors fund accounts for the Local Authorities location with the Home Office and therefore an increased number of children who are applying for asylum.

Skills Mill Project is an employment project the YJS runs these funds are received for assistance with the costing of staff for this project.

Community Safety – 52k contributes to the Operational Management of Gangs, IOM, and Youth Engagement (targeted Services).

MOPAC – Young Adult(s) Gang Work (18-25), ETE Post 16 worker, Gangs/Serious Youth Violence Analyst and Disproportionately Lead in the Out of Court Team. Monies received also partly funds a mentoring programme offered to those in the Out of Court Team.

MOJ – The Ministry of Justice of Justice is currently funding a 3-year project titled 'Turnaround' aimed at children at risk of entering the Criminal Justice System. The role of the project is to divert children away from the System, whilst this project is linked to Youth Justice the model delivered is based on Early Help principles and systemic practice (working with the entire family).

The remaining revenue received from the Local Authority pays for all other staffing costs and the day today running of the Youth Justice Service.

The Youth Justice Board grant is issued each year to assist the YJS in the delivery of the Youth Justice Plan. The grant is based on a formula which measures throughput for each area. The total for the year of 2022/23 was £535,424.00 The grant continues to provide necessary managerial oversight in all key areas of work delivered by YJS including Restorative responses (inclusive of victim work) and education in addition to funding 1 Youth Offending Officer post. The purpose of the grant as defined by 'Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (amendment of functions) Order 2015' notes monies is offered to achieve the following outcomes:

- Reduction in re-offending
- Reduction in the use of custody
- Reduction in the number of first-time entrants
- Effective Safeguarding
- Effective Public Protection
- Improving the Safety and wellbeing and outcomes for children within the system.

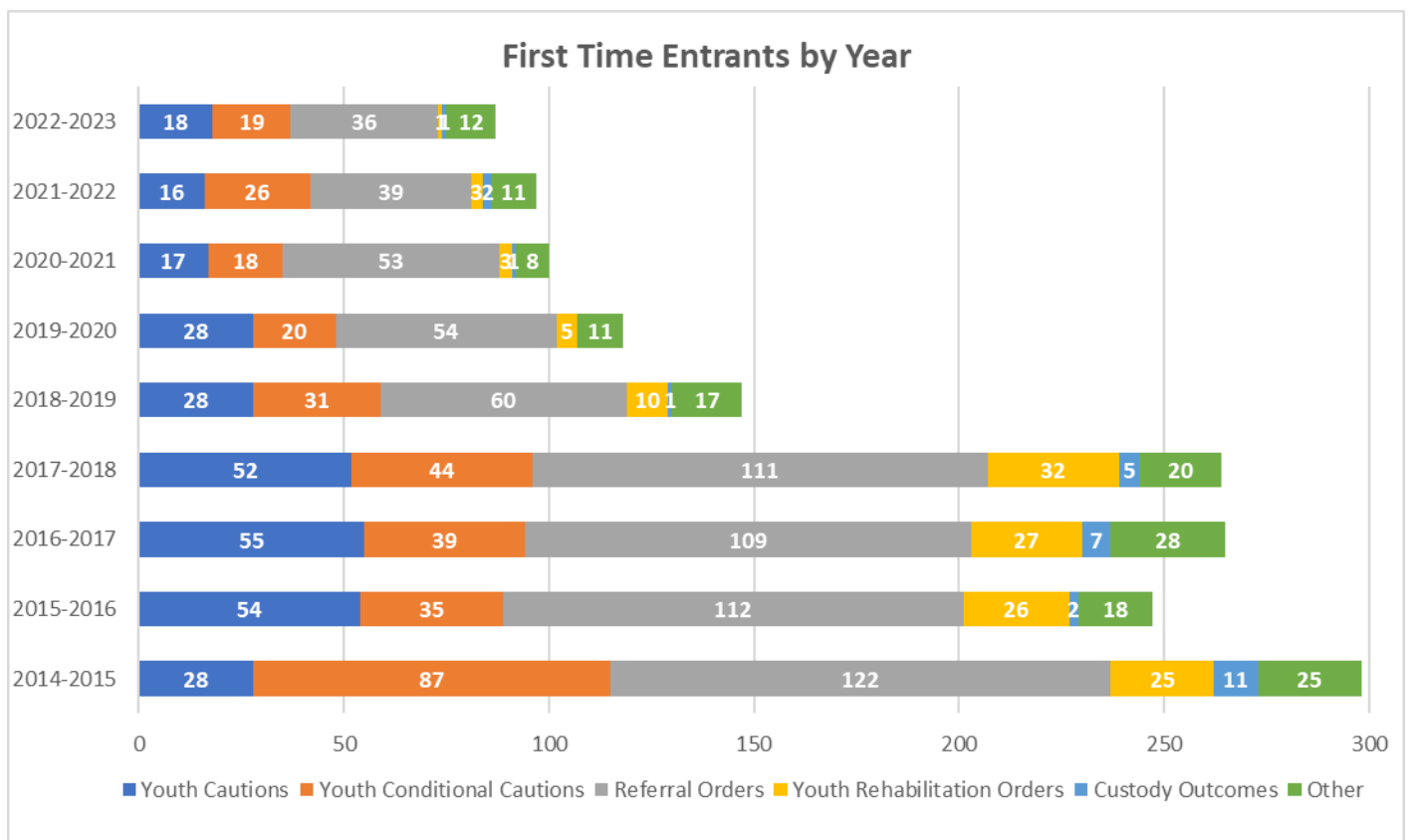
Post Description	Budgeted Grade	FTE 2023/24	Unit Cost £	Full Year Forecast
		<b>8</b>		
Operational Manager (Out of Court)	16	1	57,102	68,522.40
Operational Manager (Post Court)	16	1	57,102	68,522.40
Practise Manager (Out of Court)	14	1	49,890	59,868
Practise Manager (Court)	14	1	49,890	59,868
Restorative Justice Coordinator	12	1	46,857	56,228.40
Restorative Justice Worker	8	1	37,038	44,445.60
Education Practice Manager	12	1	46,857	56,228.40
Youth Justice Service Officer	11	1	43,815	52,578

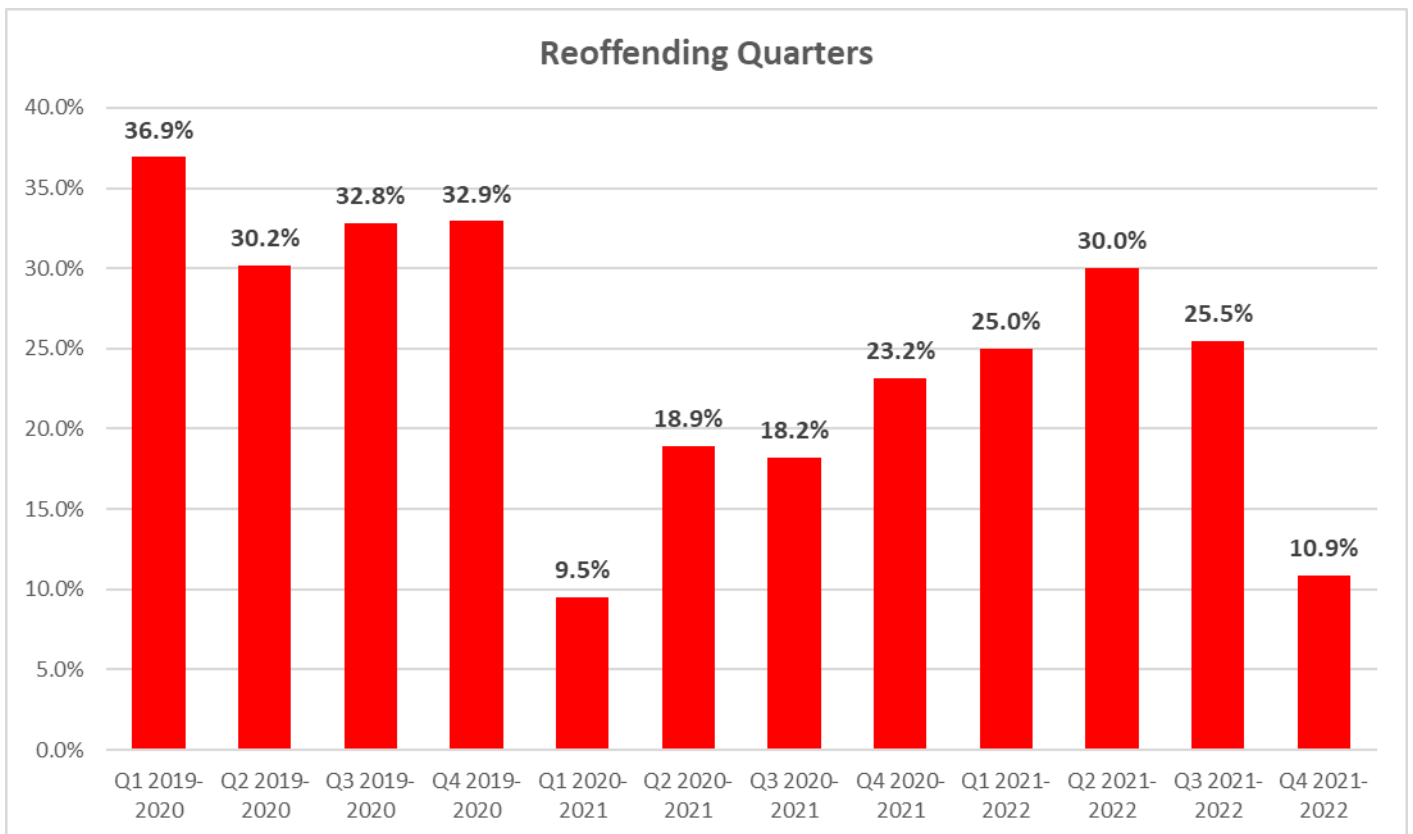
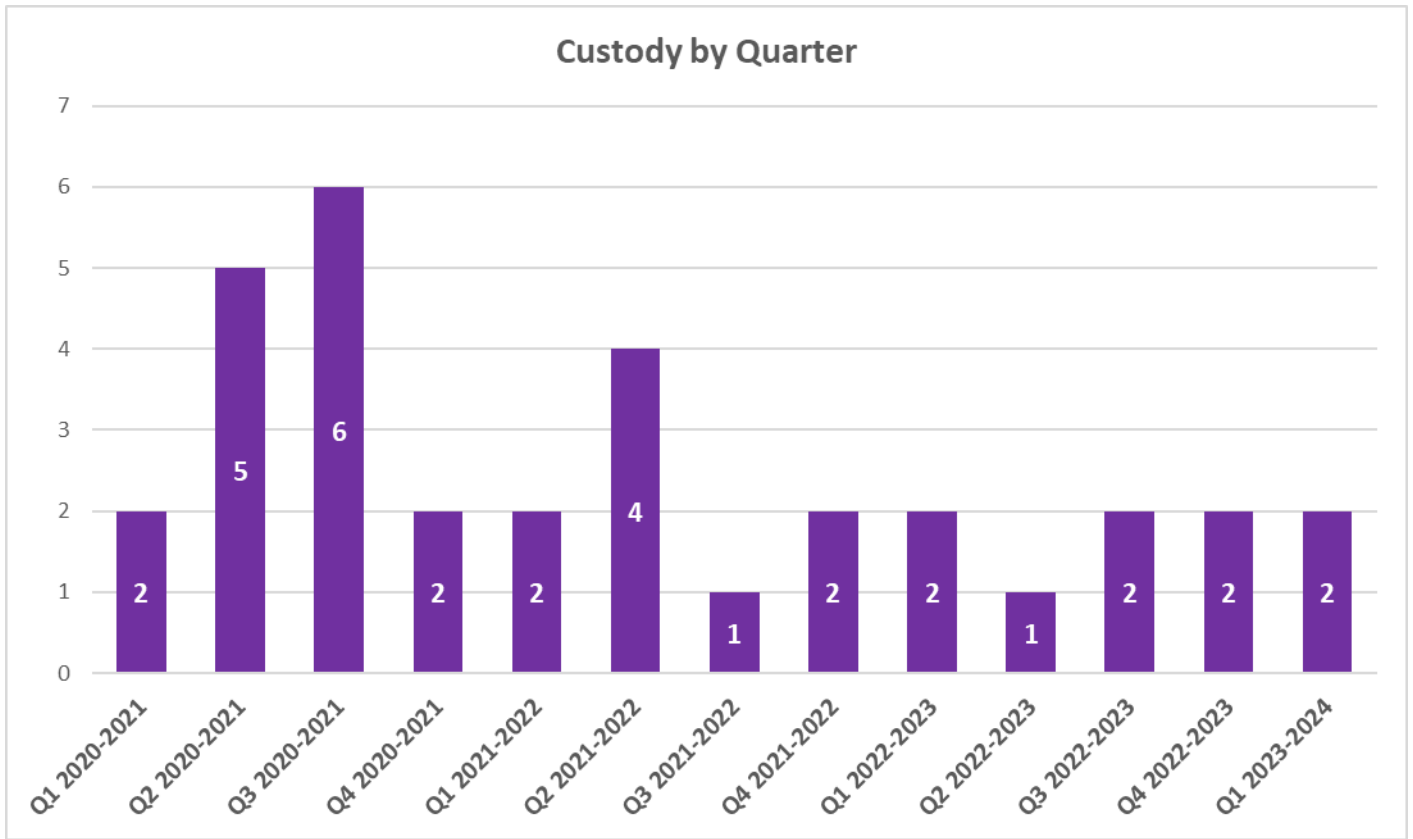
	Strategic Manager		Operational Manager(s)		Practitioner		Administrative		Sessional		Student		Referral Order Panel Volunteer		Other - Volunteer		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Asian	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Black	0	0	0	2	5	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	23
Mixed	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
White	0	1	1	1	3	11	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	25
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not known	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	0	1	1	3	9	24	1	4	0	0	0	0	2	10	0	0	<b>55</b>
Disabled	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2



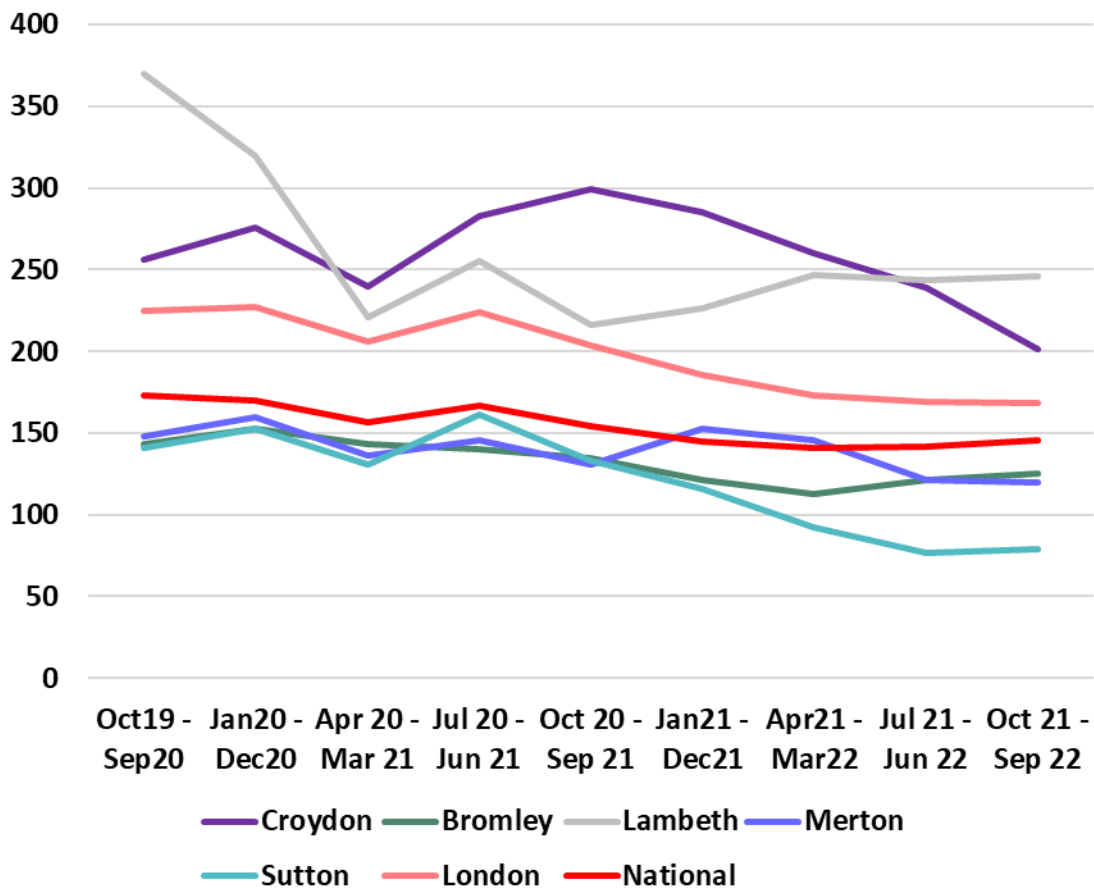
## 9. Performance

Detailed below are graphs related to 2022/23 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) used to measure the Youth Justice Service.

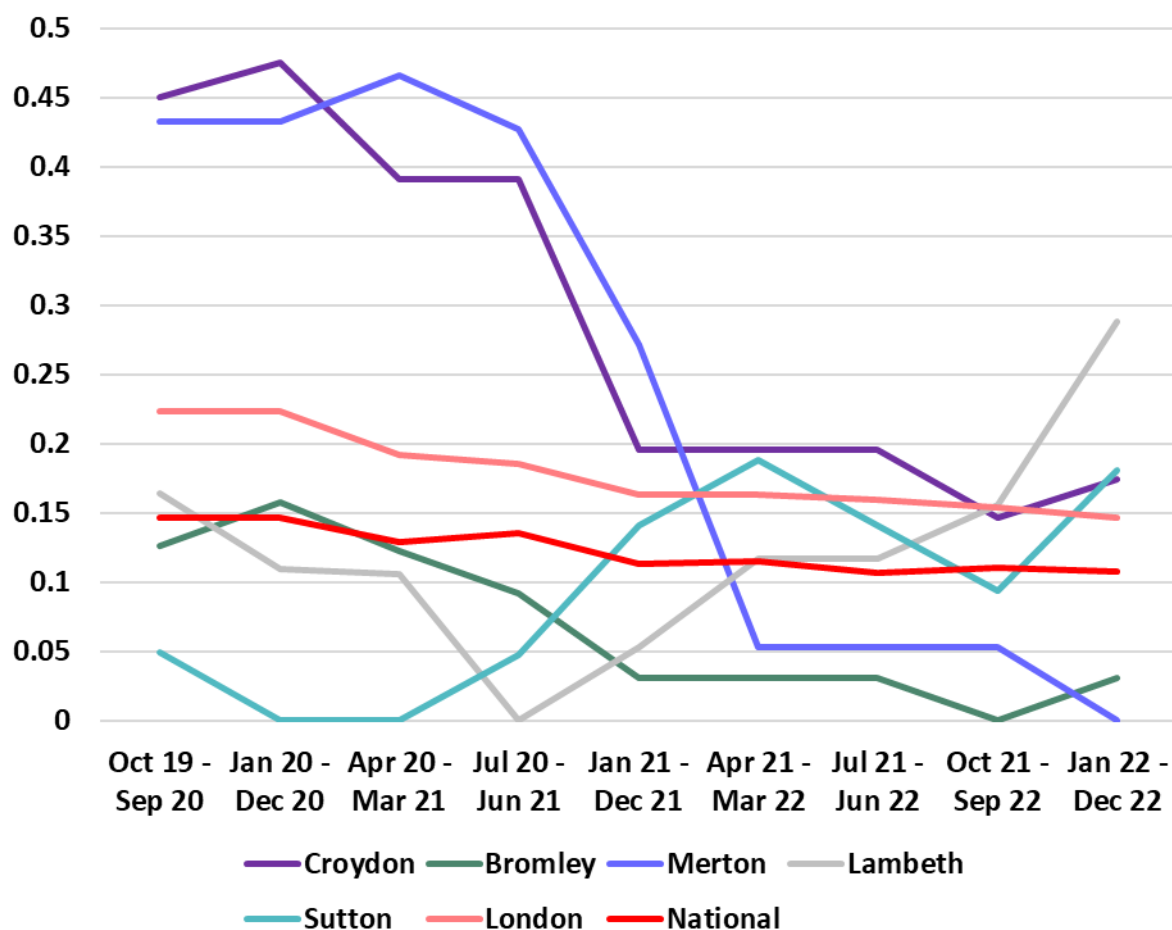




### First Time Entrants – Rates per 100,000 population



### Custodial rates per 100,000 population



**1. First Time Entrants:** Whilst Croydon Youth Justice Service remains to have high numbers of First Time Entrants in comparison to neighbouring boroughs the numbers have significantly reduced ( over what period of time ) and the trajectory is to be in line with the London average. Contextually, Croydon has a much larger youth population than other boroughs so this is a promising and positive picture. Whilst in part the reduction can be attributed to COVID 19 pandemic, and the introduction of Community Resolutions efforts have been made to continue to divert young people away from the system with a number of projects and community sector interventions offered. As noted earlier within the plan, Youth Community Resolutions have been in effect since October 2021, aimed at Children 16+ in possession of small amount of cannabis being dealt with by way of education as an alternative to criminalisation. As noted above this is also a Corporate objective and one the YJS is monitored on, not only as a KPI. To date YJS has met the target corporately on reducing First Time Entrants.

**2. Re-offending rates** – re-offending has also seen a reduction since 2020 . Re-offending is measured not solely by a return to the system but frequency and number of offending/offences. Notably, less young people have come through the system, however the YJS continues to evaluate and modify its interventions and services to assist young people in this area. It uses evidence based approaches as detailed in research to increase protective factors for desistance to reduce recidivism.

**3. Minimising the use of Custody** – Custody rates have seen a decline nationally. In 2006 the National number for children and young people in custody was 2,832. In 2020/21 the

Ministry of Justice reported 560 children in custody. In 2022 450 children were known to be in custody (figure not published) providing a picture of a continued decline in the use of custody. What remains however is a national picture of the overrepresentation of certain groups in custody and for Croydon this is the case. The above graph shows a welcomed reduction of the use of custody, with knowledge that this outcome was being over-used in previous years when robust alternatives were available for certain offence types. At the time of writing all children subject to custody (remanded or sentenced) had been accused or convicted of serious offences, reflective of the borough's issues with Serious Youth Violence. The Youth Justice Service remains to advocate for alternatives to custody and has become sophisticated in its design of robust substitutes and re-submissions of bail packages if initially refused in discussion with partners. The Youth Justice Team's relationship with the local Court is also important, and the Service has worked hard to ensure there is confidence in the Service's ability to manage risk whilst addressing criminogenic factors relative to a young person's contact with the system. Conversely, the YJS has delivered training in May 2023 to the Judiciary on Cultural Competency and the use of custody, particularly for young black males, which received positive feedback. The Court was also part of the Youth Justice Crime Board's workshop and dialogue is continuous.

## 10. National Key Performance Indicators & local performance

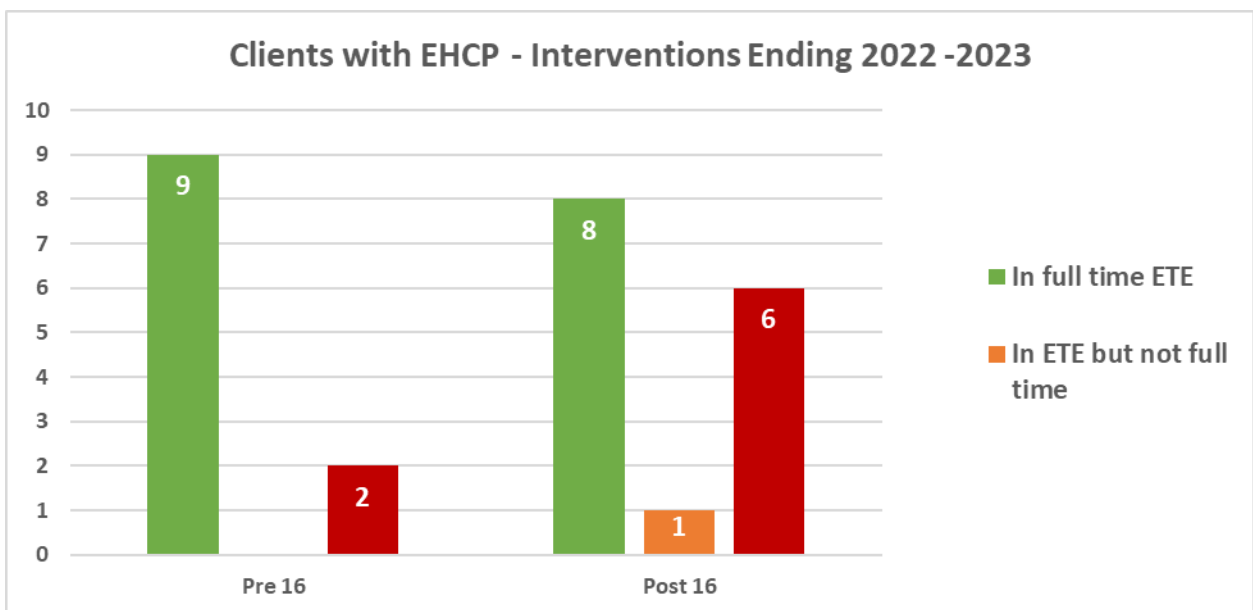
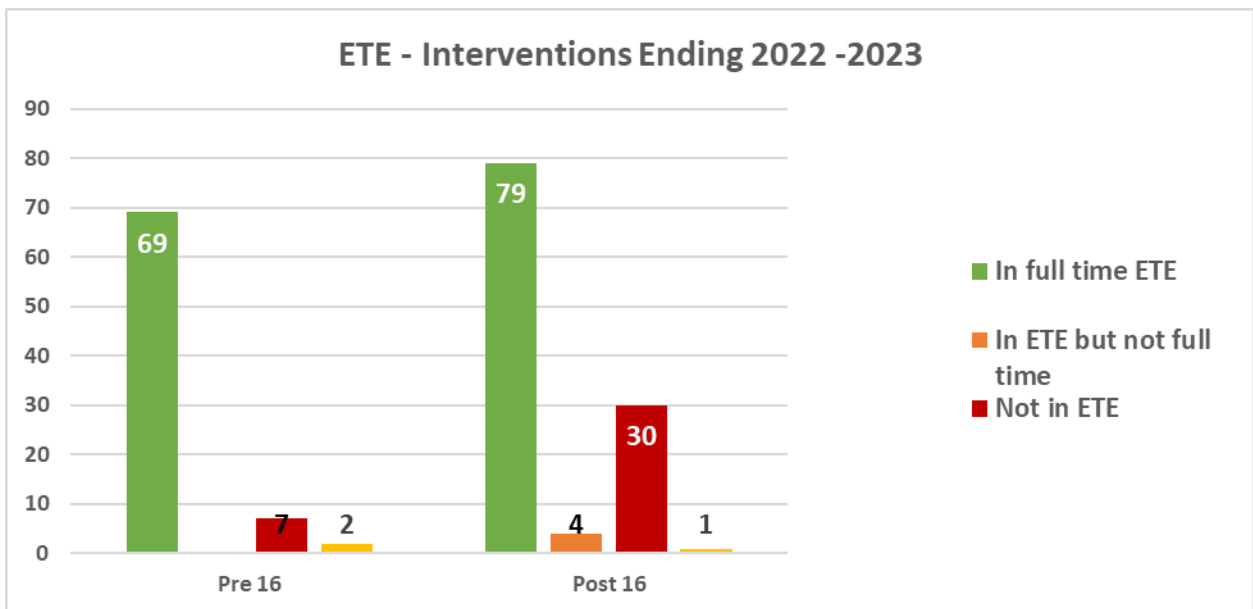
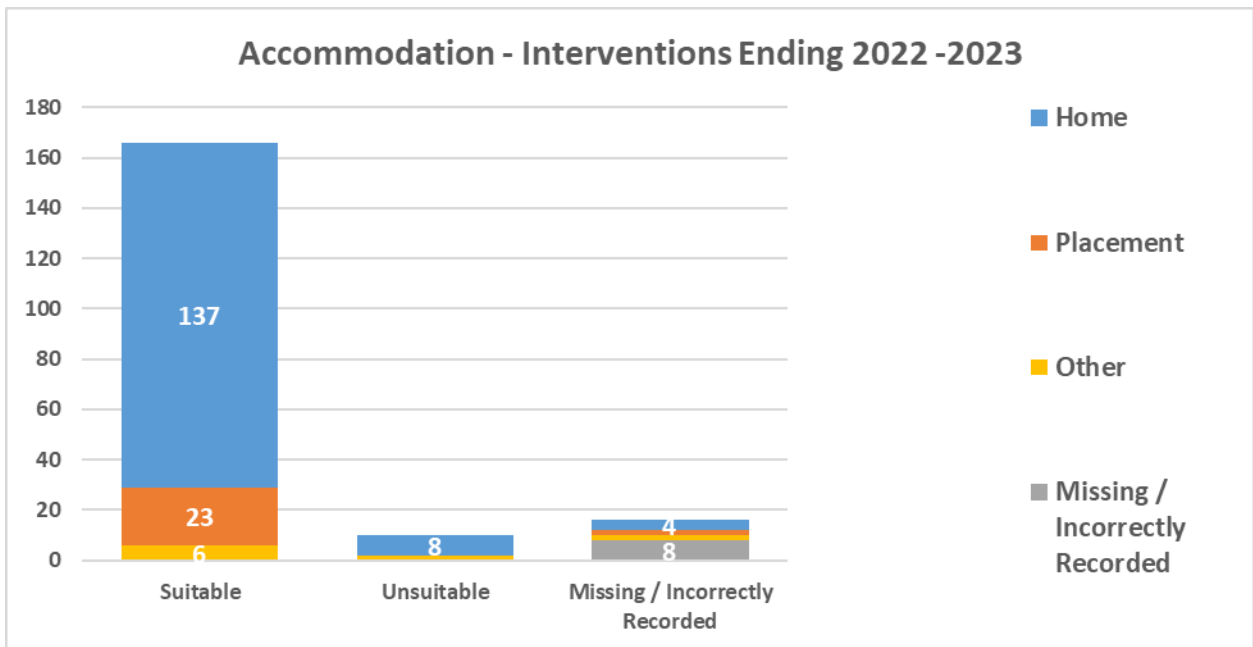
### **Performance Indicators:**

As from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2023 10 new Key Performance Indicators were issued to Youth Justice Services nationally. These include:

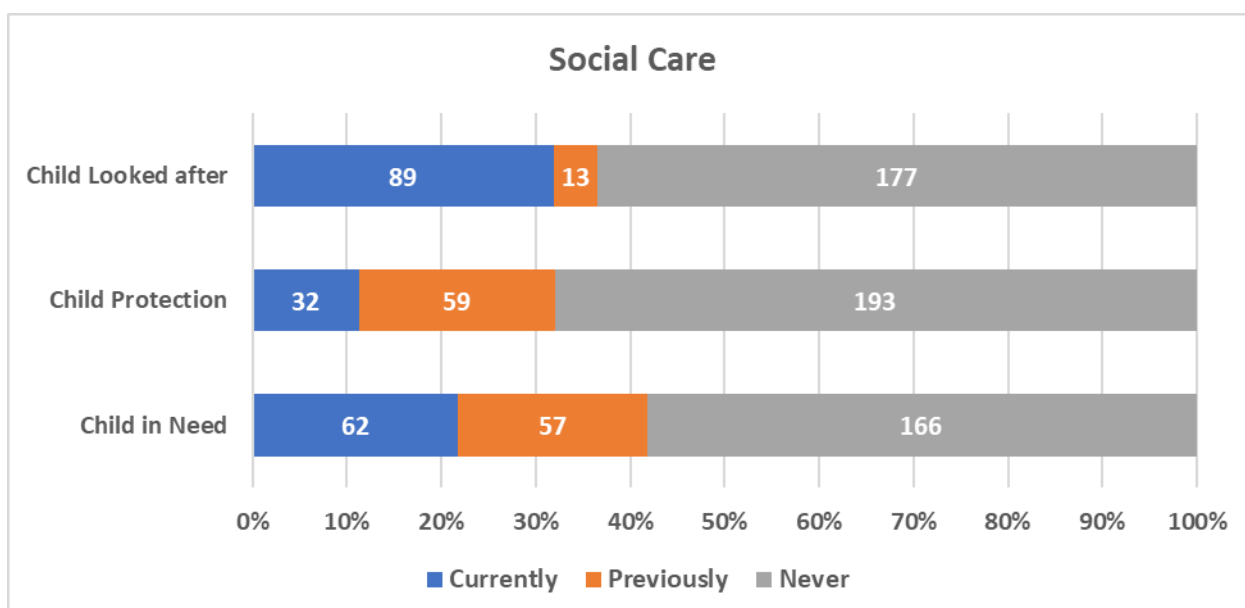
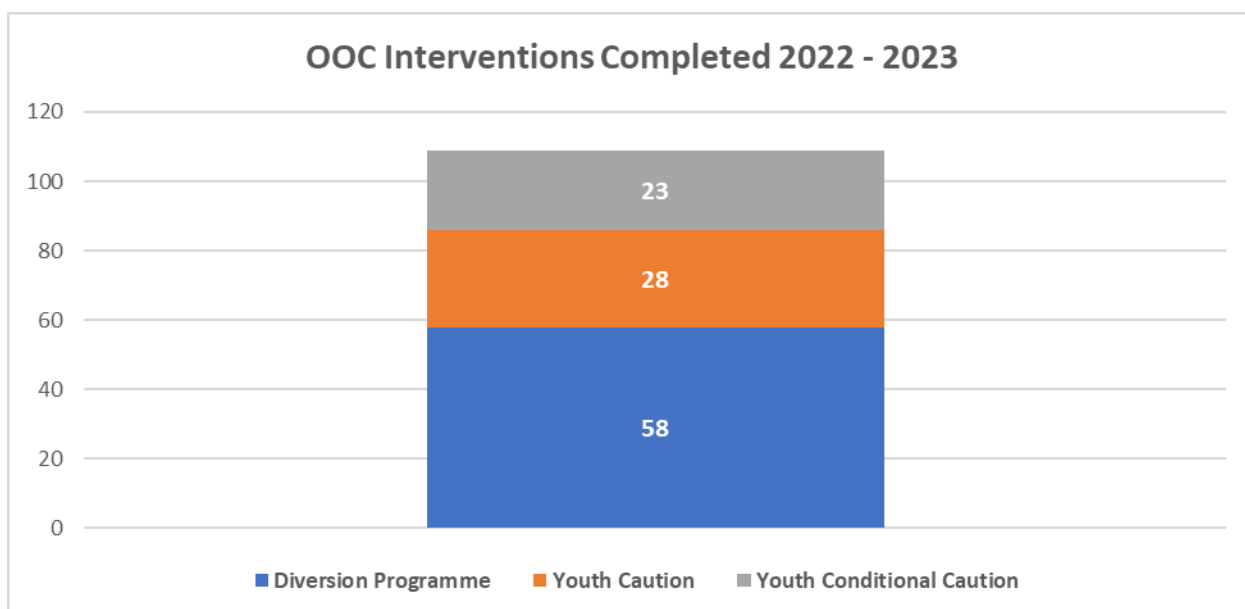
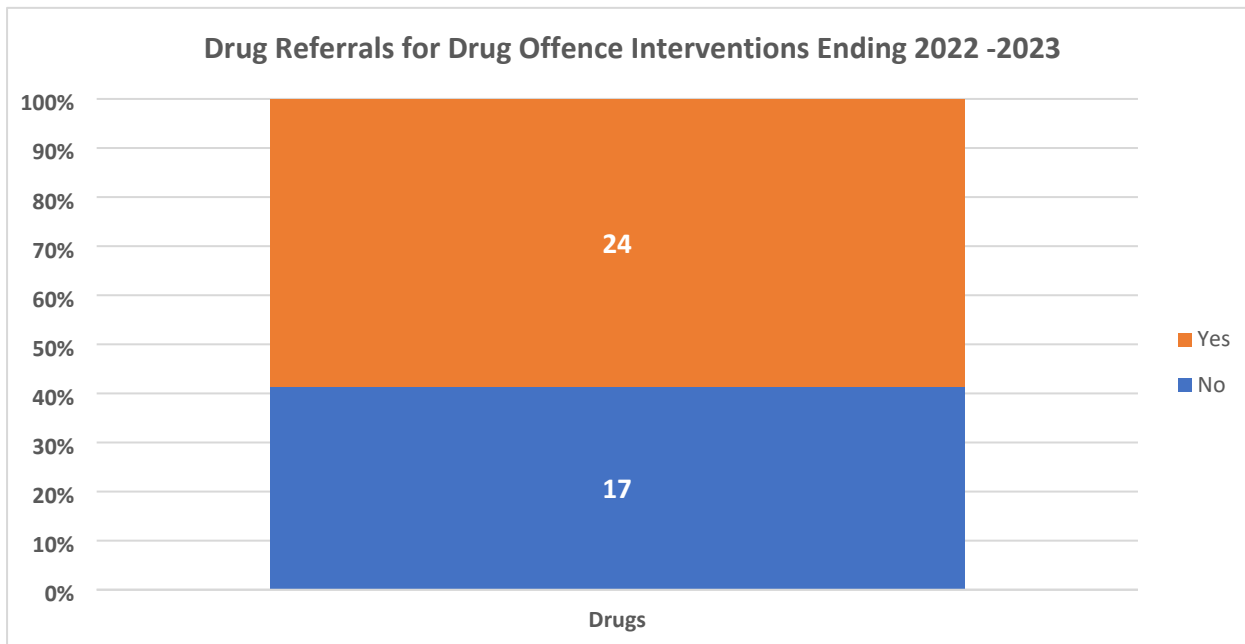
- Accommodation - % of children deemed to be in suitable accommodation.
- ETE - % of children in education or employment
- SEND – number of children with Education Health Care Plans
- Emotional Wellbeing - % of children deemed to have a need and the % of children provided with an intervention.
- Substance Misuse - % of children assessed as having a need and % of children provided with an intervention.
- Out of Court – number of children who receive Triage, Cautions, or conditional cautions.
- Youth Justice Crime Board attendance – register of partners attendance.
- Wider Services – number of children open on a Child in Need Plan, Child Protection Plan or a Child Looked After
- Serious Youth Violence – number of children who have committed specific offence types including weapon related offending.
- Victims – number of victims who have given consent and the number who received a Service.

Croydon Youth Justice Service has historically reported on the above as local indicators, consequently the service is familiar with collating the above information to ensure that it has oversight on performance related to each area and is therefore able to measure partnership contributions to ensure areas of practice overcome any difficulties.

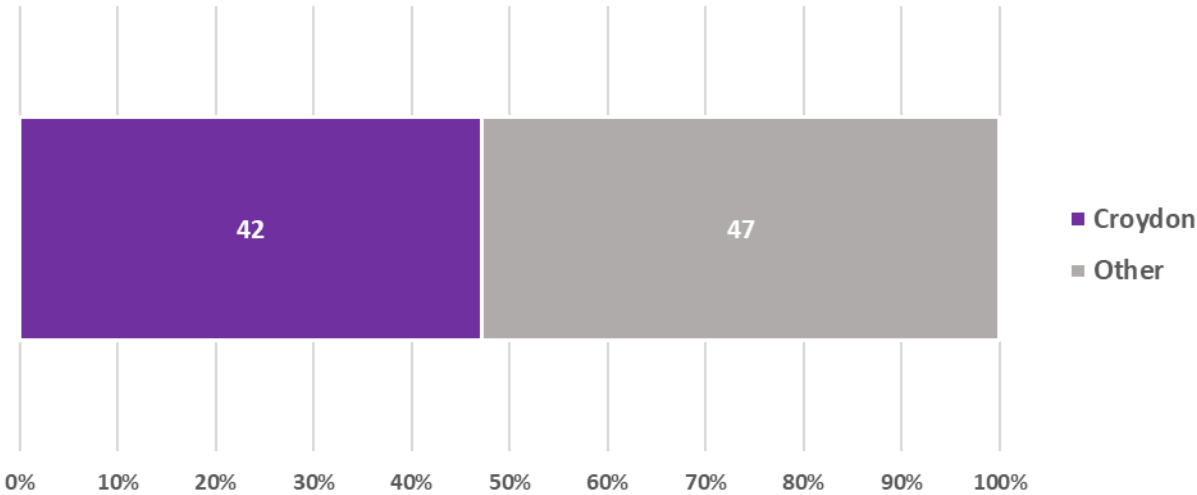
Whilst the new Indicators will not be reported on until August 2023 the picture on each new KPI for 2022/23 is detailed below:



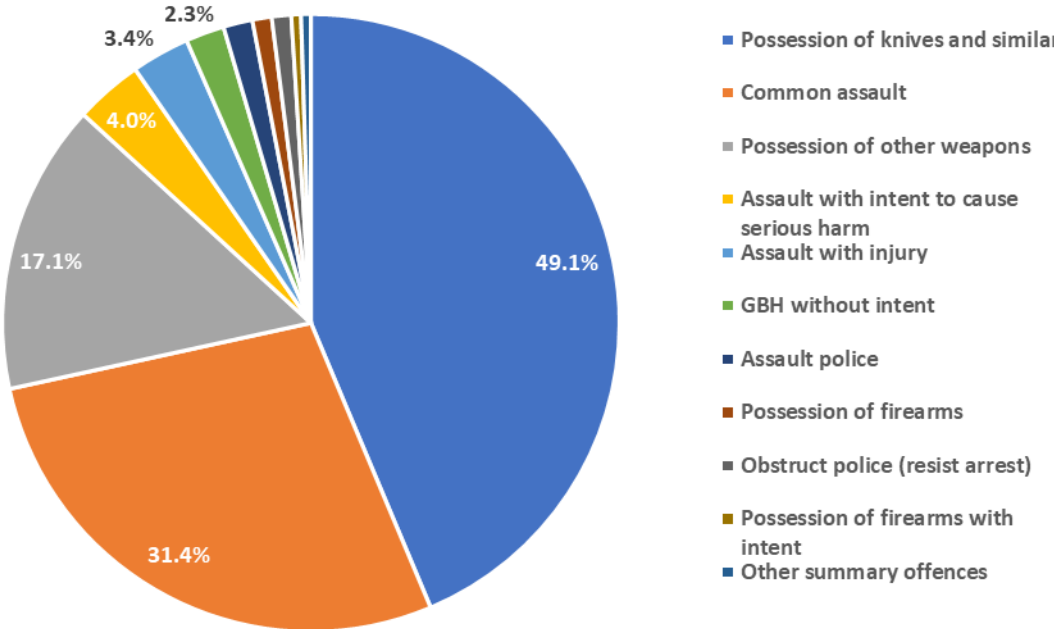
\*Unsuitable accommodation is a judgement made by Youth Justice Practitioners where accommodation is deemed not conducive to reduce re-offending. This is often identified if accommodation is temporary and in poor condition, the young person is viewed homeless, if there are others in the home who are involved in criminal activity or the home environment is viewed as a contributing factor to offending. It is also added if the young person is in custody.



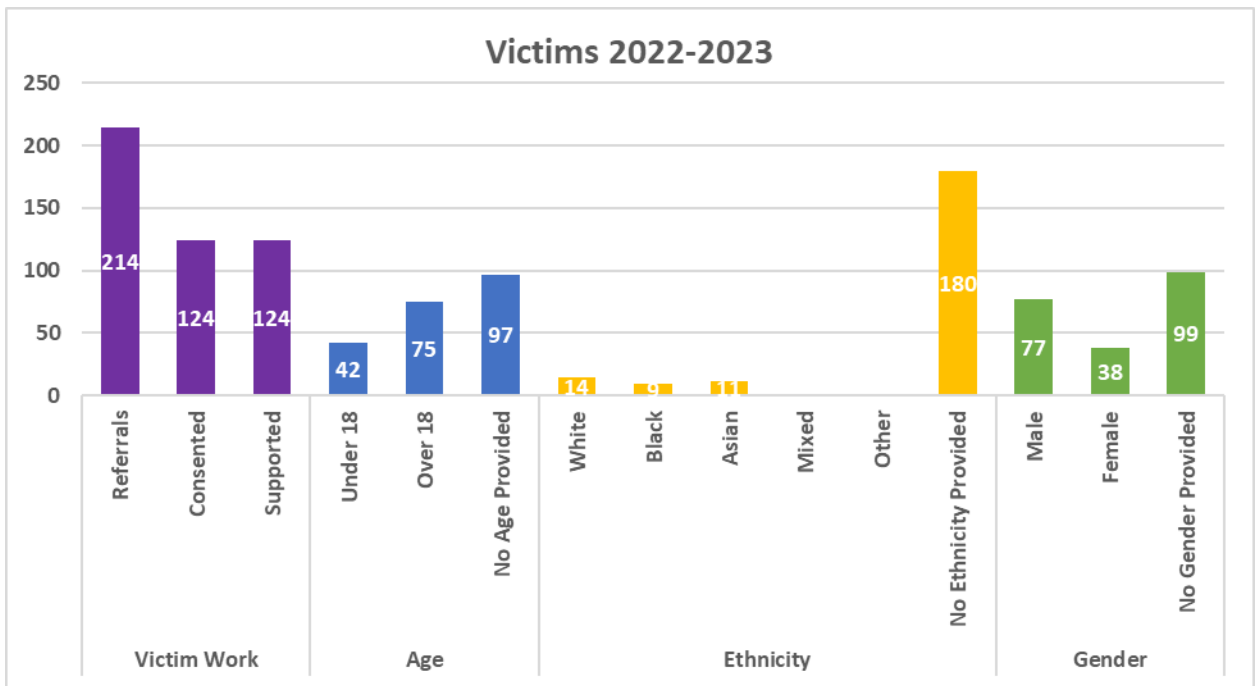
### Child Looked After Locality



### Youth Violence 2022 - 2023







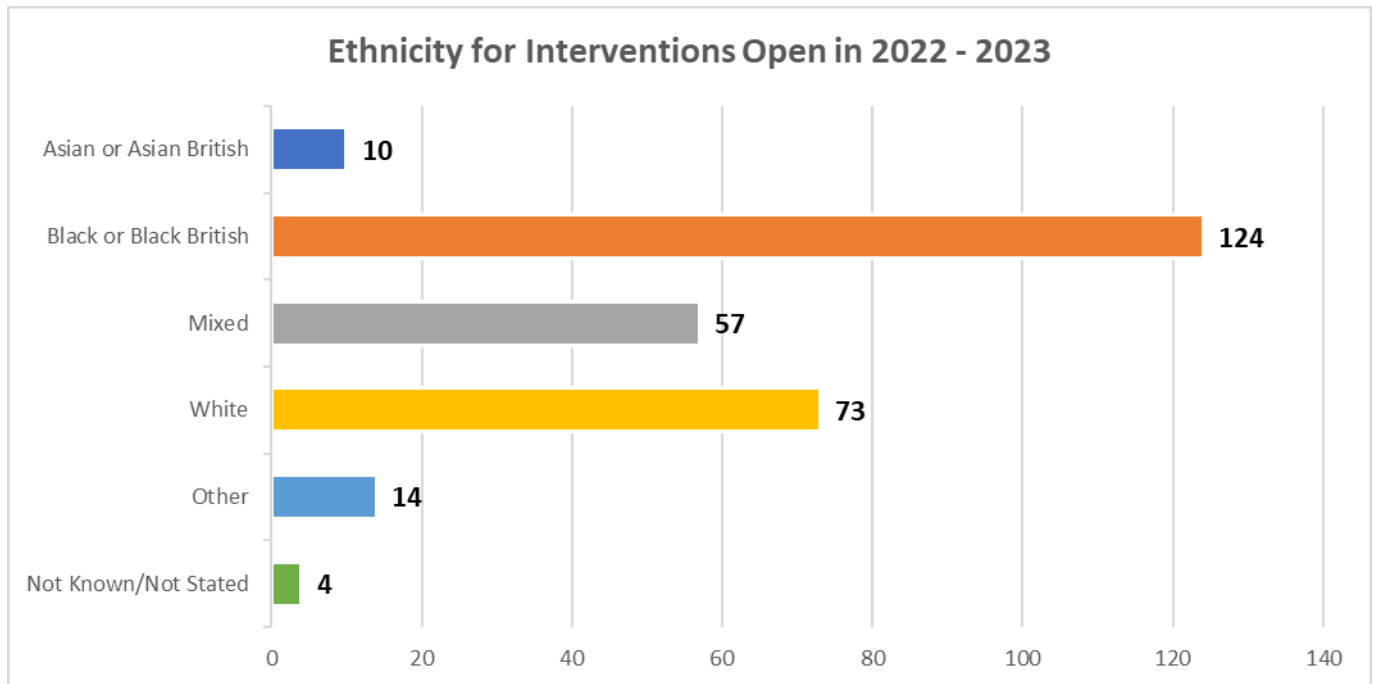
Separate to Key Performance Indicators, the Youth Justice Service is measured against 'Standards for children in the Youth Justice System (2019)'. The government produced standard expectations which sets out clear guidance on the delivery of core Youth Justice work – Out of Court work, Court work, Court disposals, Secure settings and transitions and resettlement. Weekly to monthly reports are produced for the YJS Management Team to have oversight on achieving these standards. In addition to reports, monthly audits are undertaken to ensure all aspects of work are to a high quality and meeting timeframes. All this work is scrutinised further by Senior Management within the Local Authority, including information being provided at the Services Performance Forums and again governed and referenced at the Youth Justice Crime Board.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1115435/Standards\\_for\\_children\\_in\\_youth\\_justice\\_services\\_2019.doc.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1115435/Standards_for_children_in_youth_justice_services_2019.doc.pdf)

## 11. Children from groups which are over-represented

Reducing the over representation of certain groups within the Youth Justice Service is a key priority. The YJS uses data to view characteristics of children known – characteristics include a child’s ethnicity, age, religion, gender, Social care status, demographis (where they reside) and where they attend school to provide insight.

Detailed below is a break-down of ethnicities of children open to the YJS during the year of 2022/23. \*



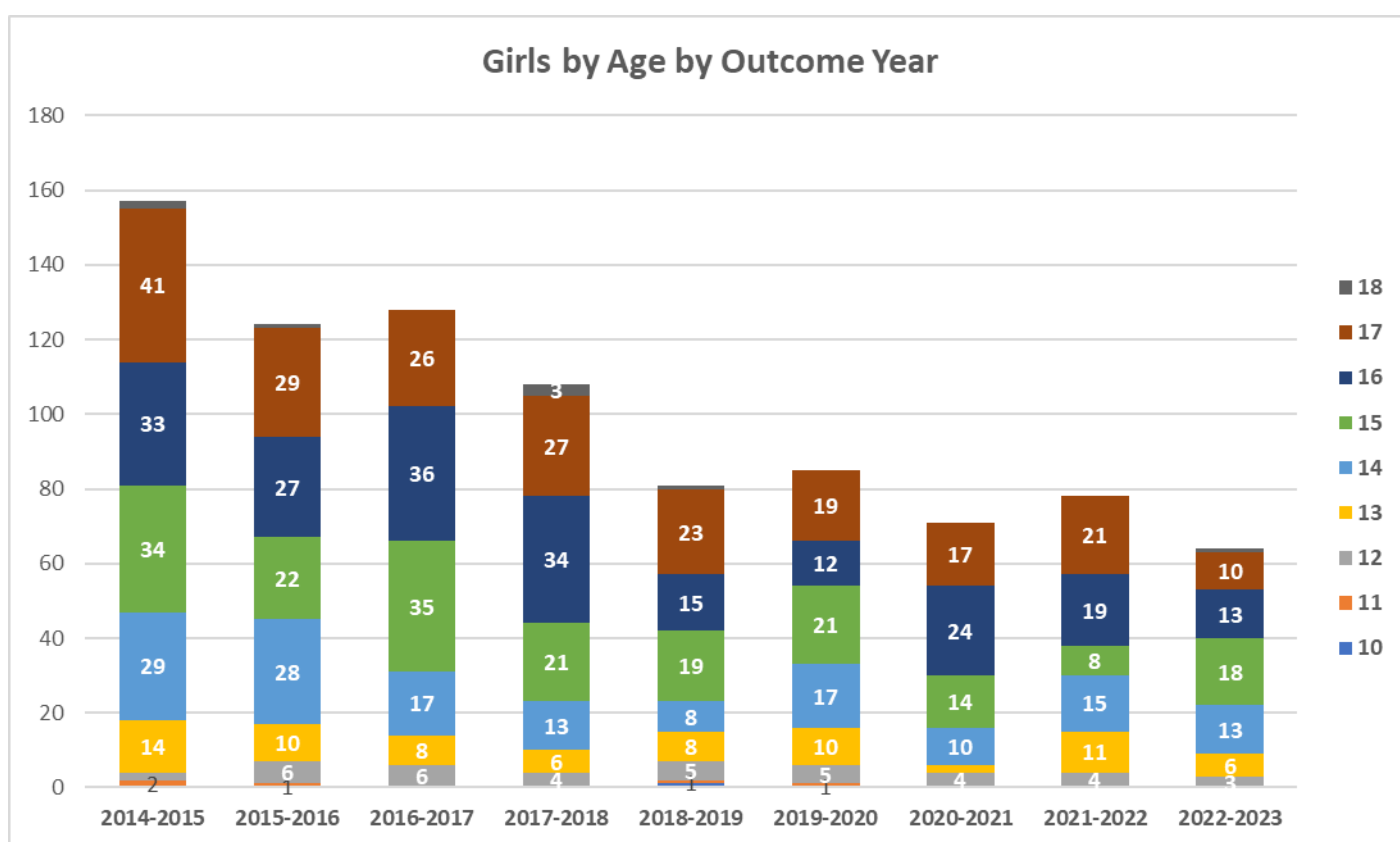
Disproportionality or the over-representation of specific groups has caused long-standing concern within the Criminal Justice System. Croydon Youth Justice Service in consultation with the BME Forum and Equalities Team, Young People and Staff have devised a Disproportionately Action Plan (appendix 3), which is renewed each year, the plan is aimed at reflectively looking at each area of practice within the Service and how over-representation can be challenged, addressed and to ensure practice is bespoke and culturally sensitive. The plan delivers on wider strategic aims that can be sighted in the Boroughs George Floyd Race Equality Pledge and Equalities Strategy, Croydon Community Safety Strategy and nationally the Youth Justice Board Strategy. The plan also ensures that the workforce are trained in cultural competency and a committed to anti-racism forms part of the organisation’s culture. The plan looks at how the Service can advocate for children, including challenge to Courts and Police, in some instances acting as a ‘gatekeeper’ for fairness by avoiding escalating children unnecessarily through the system. The Service has played a role in supporting the induction of new Police Officers and delivered training to the Judiciary inclusive of data where disparity is evident. All reports produced for Court also mark protected characteristics and draw awareness to the over-representation of specific groups with sentencers, particularly where custody is being considered.

In 2022/23 the Service began exploring the use of Stop and Search within specific parts of the community that ultimately impacted upon over-representation within the Service, subsequently a programme was delivered that enabled young people to understand their rights but also explored with them their experiences of discrimination.

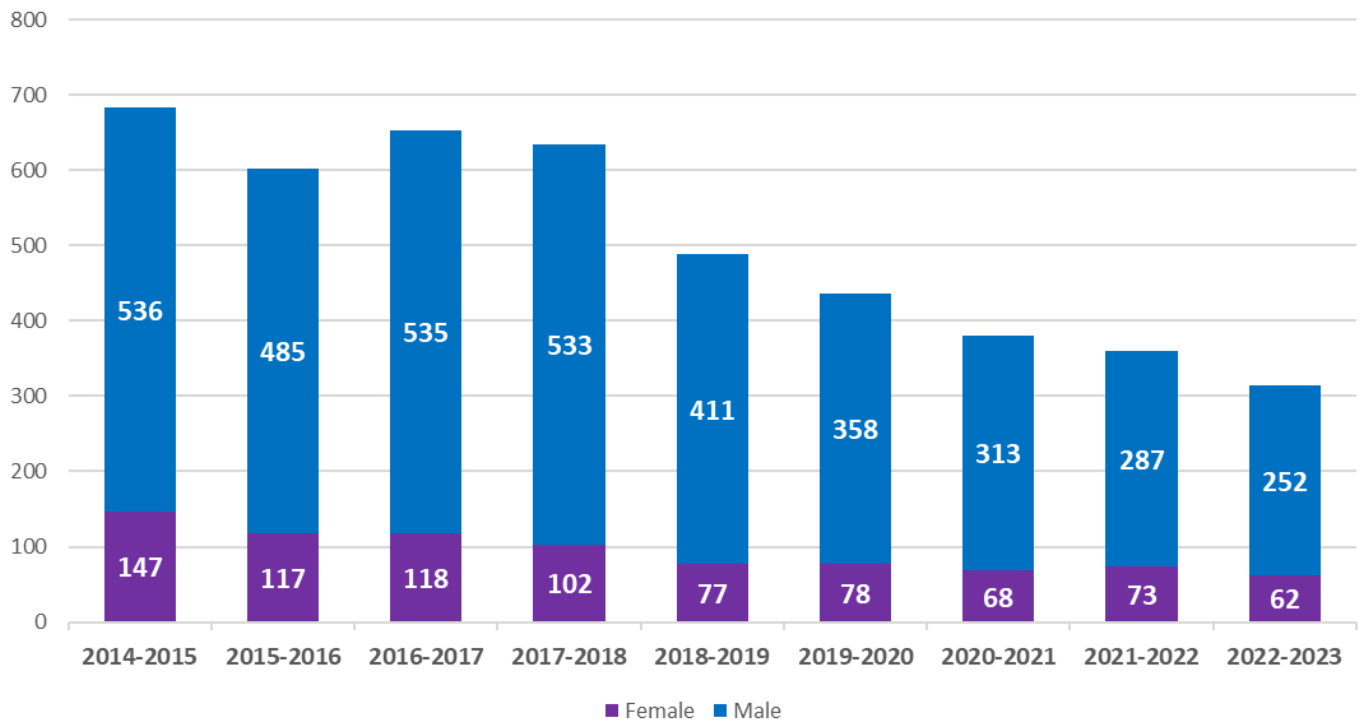
2022/23 saw a decrease in young black males of 30% (97), this group are statistically disadvantaged in several areas including education and therefore understanding the challenges for this group are important when consider the most appropriate way to intervene.

The Service has continued to see a reduction in females within the system but there has been considerable attention on those at risk of entering the system and the YJS has played a role looking at intelligence available with partners and contributing to the diversion offer by way of bespoke mentoring via the community sector and a group work offer delivered by the Youth Engagement Team.

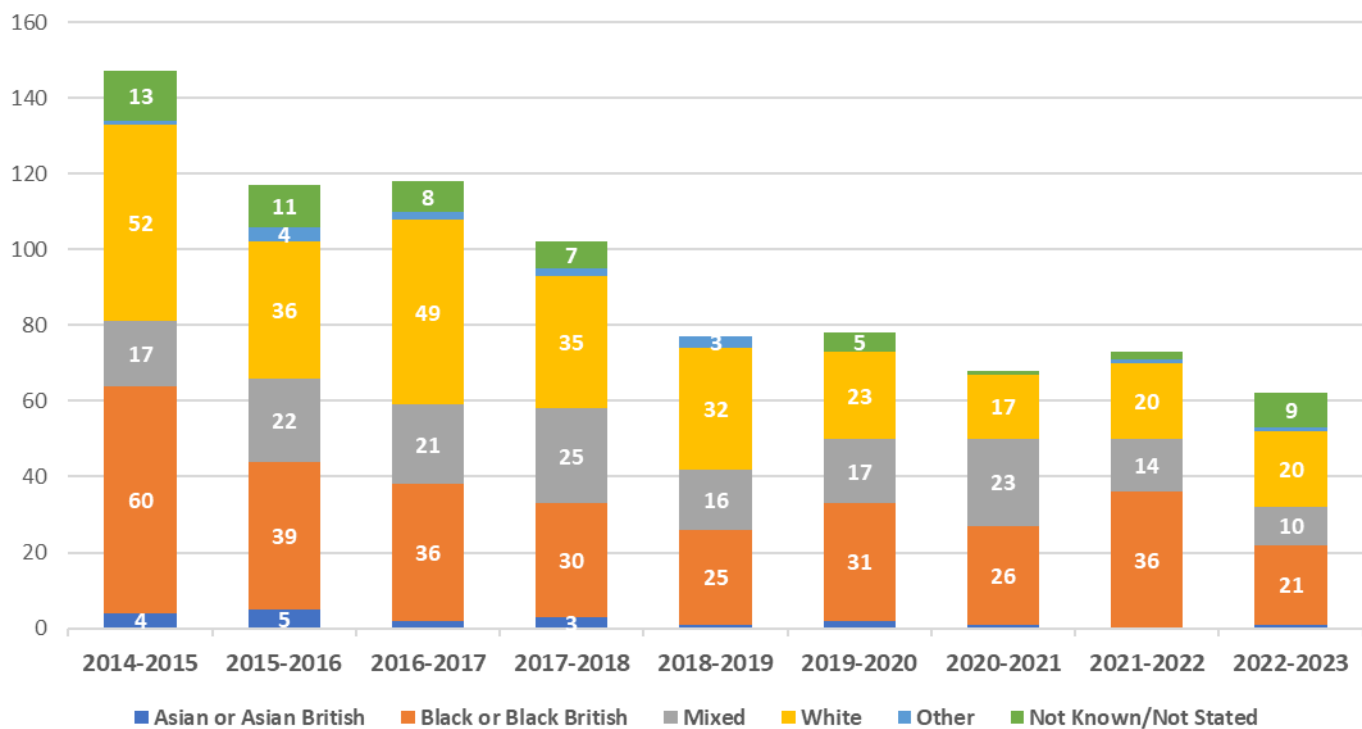
Below details the female population ethnicity and age break-down for the year 2022-23. \*



### Gender by Outcome Year



### Girls by Ethnicity by Outcome Year



Data provided above shows a reduction in black and mixed female representation where white representation has remained at the same number.

Another group that present highly in the YJS data is Children Looked After. Data detailed earlier shows a high number of young people also placed in the borough by other Local Authorities. This can bring a number of challenges – placements can be temporary meaning interventions can be difficult to start, in some instances children are placed in local crime hot

spots which is in contradiction to their own vulnerabilities, this group of children can often go missing due to the lack of connection with the locality which raises issues of enforcement and safeguarding. The Local Authority works within the National protocol to reduce the Criminalisation of Looked After Children. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-protocol-on-reducing-criminalisation-of-looked-after-children>

Looking at our practice(s) for this group will be a priority for 2023/24.

It is integral for YJS practitioners and Managers to understand other structural inequalities and experiences certain groups are more exposed to. Stop and Search data provided by the Local Authorities Violence Reduction Unit shows significant disparity with the use of this Power for certain groups and exclusion data also shows differences. National research looking at all areas of the Criminal Justice system show differences in outcomes for minority ethnic groups (Ethnic Disproportionately in remand and sentencing in the youth justice system 2021). Tackling overrepresentation therefore is for the YJS and partners to jointly challenge in addition to wider central government policy.

## 12. Prevention

The Local Authority retains an Early Help Offer for those who do not meet statutory thresholds but for families in need or where some moderate concern related to anti-social behaviour or growing links to criminality pose. The Youth Justice Service maintains a close working relationship with Early Help Services, often with the role of referring into the Service or working with when a family is known to both Services.

The introduction of the Turnaround Project in December 2022 has provided a further Early Help offer that is specifically aimed at children who are presenting early signs of criminality having been issued a Community Resolution or arrested with no further action or released under investigation. The Project is underpinned by Early Help Principles and Practice Standards and consequently the post holders are located alongside Early Help Triage and MASH to ensure referrals are identified at the earliest opportunity, screened and where appropriate allocated. Whilst the Project sits within the YJS structure there is a clear distinction that children accessing interventions through this project are not within the Criminal Justice System. The Project has seen high numbers of referrals, concluding there is a demand for specialist work in this area. The Project works within a systemic framework – meaning the practitioners consider services for the family including parents and siblings.

Since starting in December 2022 the Project has received 118 referrals indicative of a need in this area. The Project is funded to work with 47 families during 2023/24. The Project is voluntary and to date (May 2023) 18 families have progressed to assessment and intervention. Most referrals received have been driven by Community Resolutions (on the spot cautions) – 41 of the 118 referrals have been via this route.

The Service Manager for the Youth Justice Service also oversees the Youth Engagement Offer (Targetted EH Service) and subsequently prevention is a primary focus via projects such as CLIP (1:1 short term intervention for those who are presenting with concerns within their localities) and Engage (based at Croydon Police Station – meeting young people who have been arrested without charge and signposting services to prevent further contact). Areas of delivery include:

- 1:1 case work for those who present with some moderate concern
- Intervention/Project Delivery – attendance in Schools and Community Provisions to deliver educational workshops on topics such as peer pressure/resilience/personal safety/Empowerment related to self-esteem/Every Choice Matters – giving information on county-lines and knife crime/Exploitation and how to keep safe.
- Youth hub delivery in wards that feature high in MET and YJS data
- Youth hub for 8-12 year olds on the Shrubland Estate
- Youth Participation – providing platforms for young people to speak out about their experiences living in the borough and what would help improve the lived experiences of young people particularly in relation to safety.
- Outreach Work – Outreach Team accessing hard to reach young people where reports of anti-social behaviour or reported concerns related to groups has been expressed. The team will engage young people and make them aware of services available across the borough. Work is targetted around intelligence reports and critical incidents. Local Authority's local presence following serious incidents and reports back to Council on local feelings and concerns.
- Partnership Work with Community Sector including Palace for Life, Gloves not Guns and Legacy Youth Club to run activities for local children and young people.
- Delivery of sessions in the hubs around education of substance misuse.
- Joint work with Street Doctors teaching young people how to administer first aid.

The above runs in parallel with the Community Offer and the YJS has built close partnerships with the following providers: BME Forum, Legacy Youth Club, Palace for Life, Gloves not Guns, Reaching Higher, Croydon Voluntary Action and more widely the My Endz Project and its partners.

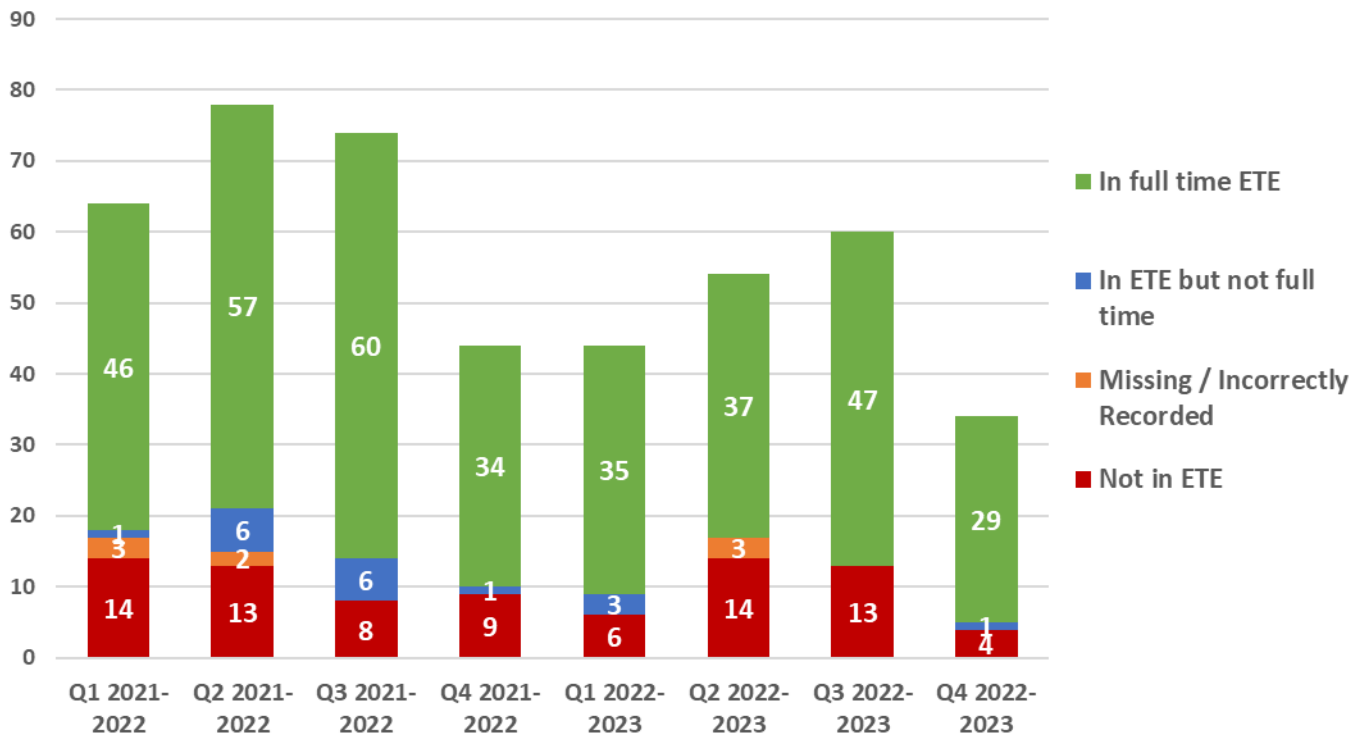
### 13. Diversion

Full detail of the Youth Justice diversion offer is captured in the Croydon Youth Justice Prevention and Diversion Strategy 2023/24. (Appendix 8).

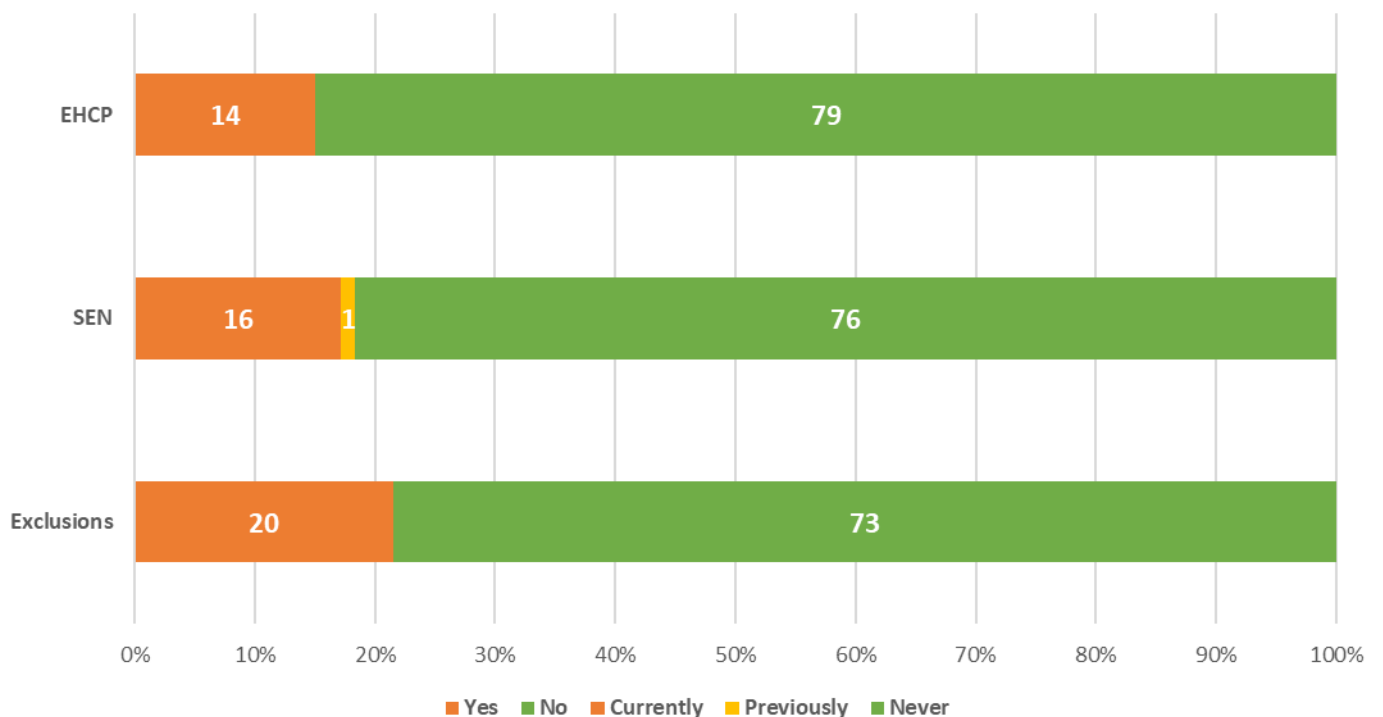
The strategy details the prevention offer as above but also provides summary of the Engage Project, a Project based at the Custody Suite to greet young people who have been arrested without charge. The aim of the project is to ensure all children coming into contact with the Criminal Justice System are screened and assisted to access services that reduce future risk of contact if unknown. Interventions are short-term and will be diverted into projects that provide longer term contact if required.

The use of Community Resolutions remains to form part of the diversionary offer, coming into the system and use of Out of Court triage and cautions remains to avoid young people entering the formal Court System. Croydon Youth Justice Service remains to have a Team dedicated to this area of work, whose purpose is to screen all young people to ensure they are kept (where possible) away from the statutory Court system.

### ETE - Interventions Ending by Quarter



### EHCP, SEN, Exclusions - Current Interventions



## 14. Education

Education, Further education and/or Employment are viewed as a significant means of desistance and reducing offending behaviour. Croydon Youth Justice Service has an Education Practice Manager who ensures all children of statutory school age are in education or alternative provision and in receipt of adequate hours and to ensure all 16+ children are attending further education or finding employment. This role requires close partnership work and attendance at panels to advocate for children known to YJS. The role also requires local knowledge of provisions for 16+ and forming partnerships with providers. The target rate is for 95% of statutory school children to be in provision and for 85% of 16+ to be in provision.

There is a dedicated 16+ ETE worker who is assigned to all children deemed NEET, whose role is, to assess young people's readiness and assist them in areas such as application completion, CV formation, intervention techniques and to work towards matching young people in accordance to their strengths and aspirations. The work undertaken in this area is linked to key partners including: local colleges, Catch 22, Sutton and District, Croydon Works and the Employment Sector. The model offered is focused on an outreach offer where the practitioner visits young people in the community to promote opportunities.

The Service also provides its own employability scheme using a Social Enterprise Project called Skill Mill. Every six months the Service interviews and appoints 4 young people to work on various different projects to gain direct work experience with the intention on finding work at the end of the period. Young people open to the Project are provided with training opportunities such as health and safety and first aid and are assisted to job search. Training includes health and safety, CSCS cards for construction, first aid training and job search support.

The Youth Justice Service often finds young people known to the Service have experienced inconsistent education history and in some instances learning needs have been undetected until full screenings have been completed by the Service. Many young people known to the Service are attending alternative provisions such as the local Pupil Referral Unit during their statutory period in education. The YJS has seconded a member of staff as part of a pilot 'Serious Youth Violence Task-Force' offered by the Department of Education to be based within the local Pupil Referral Unit. The role of this practitioner is to bring YJS expertise to the provision and engage those known to both services, whilst supporting the individual within the educational setting with the intention of playing a role in the task-force that offers bespoke services to young people at risk or involved in Serious Youth Violence. To date this has proven a successful partnership with positive outcomes for the children in receipt of this support.

The Youth Justice Service Education Practice Manager collates data on all children and as from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 this is now a Key Performance Indicator:

- How many children in the cohort have been excluded?
- How many are subject to part-time tables?
- How many children are home school elected?
- How many Educational Health Care Plans & open to SEN?
- How many children following SALT screening during each quarter required follow up?
- How many children are school refusers?
- Ethnicity of children linked to above.
- Care status of those questions above.



## Youth Justice SEND Quality Lead Status Redesignation with Child First Commendation

On 9 March 2023, Croydon YJS were awarded the Youth Justice SEND Quality Lead Status Redesignation with Child First Commendation.

The Youth Justice SEND Quality Award developed an award for the practice with children in the youth justice system with special educational needs and disability (SEND). The Youth Justice Quality Lead offered, in partnership with Microlink PC recognises consistently high levels of work between YJS and SEND in the working in the best interest of young people with an EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan) who are under the supervision of Croydon YJS. Croydon YJS and SEND have achieved the highest marker which is the 'Lead' in recognition of the partnership work between the two Teams including sharing relevant information to improve outcomes for young people with an EHCP and SEND and considering these children when in custody. This award is valid for 3 years. Croydon is one of 8 London boroughs who has been award the Quality Lead marker.

Education and addressing NEET levels is an ongoing priority for 2023/24.

The Youth Justice Service works with many schools, alternative providers and colleges both locally and across London. Reports list a number of provisions and the service has worked hard to form strong partnerships with those most frequently used. As detailed above the Service has a member of staff located within Saffron Valley a provision where a high % of children known to the Service attend. Similarly the Service works closely with Croydon College. Representation at key educational panels means direct access to schools and providers and the Service ensures accessibility to ensure information is shared, particularly when risk is factor.

### 15. Restorative Approaches and Victims

Croydon YJS Restorative Team (part of the Youth Justice Service) aim to contact all victims harmed by the young people they work with as a Service. The Service offers a wide range of direct and indirect restorative interventions that enable communication between the young person and those they have harmed. These include formal and informal restorative conferences, shuttle mediation, apology letters and videos. This is to ensure that those harmed can be heard and their needs are addressed. YJS Practice is victim-led, and the Service adheres to the Victim Code of Practice, therefore offering victims updates on the progress made by the young person as well as referrals to relevant support services, such as Victim Support. When the victim is not willing to engage, we complete individual restorative work with the young person to ensure they are given the opportunity to reflect on the harm caused. This can also be achieved through surrogate sessions with the YJS Police when the person harmed is an emergency worker and he/she is unable to participate. YJS Police are restoratively trained and use this space to also challenge pre-conceived perceptions of Police amongst the cohort.

To encourage young people's participation in restorative processes, we have developed a double AQA accredited Victim Restorative Awareness Programme (VRAP), which includes Restorative Justice theories, principles of neuroscience and trauma informed practice as well as interactive videos and live sessions with real life victims.

Using a Child First approach, the YJS is creative about mediums of communication used by including some elements of Art Therapy, Play Therapy as well as visual aids, and collaborate

with the SALT team to ensure any intervention matches the needs of the young people involved.

The Team takes a multi-agency approach, working in partnership with the Police and British Transport Police (BTP) to obtain consent for the details of people harmed by crime. The YJS Victim Team also coordinate victim contacts with other boroughs as well as Probation when there are several co-defendants or when the young person is about to become an adult to ensure consistency. There is a feedback system to ensure victims are given the opportunity to shape the service we provide. All the members of the Croydon YJS RJ Team are accredited/registered practitioners with the Restorative Justice Council (RJC) as well as experienced trainers and provide regular restorative justice training sessions to colleagues and partner agencies. When there is not a direct victim, we work closely with local communities to address indirect harm. For example, we have gained impact statements from shop workers to enable a AQA accredited programme around the consequences of shoplifting and have created reparation opportunities within the local communities often jointly with the Voluntary Community Sector such as Croydon Voluntary Action. The Service has also developed an AQA accredited intervention that draws on feedback from local communities around the wider impact of knife crime.

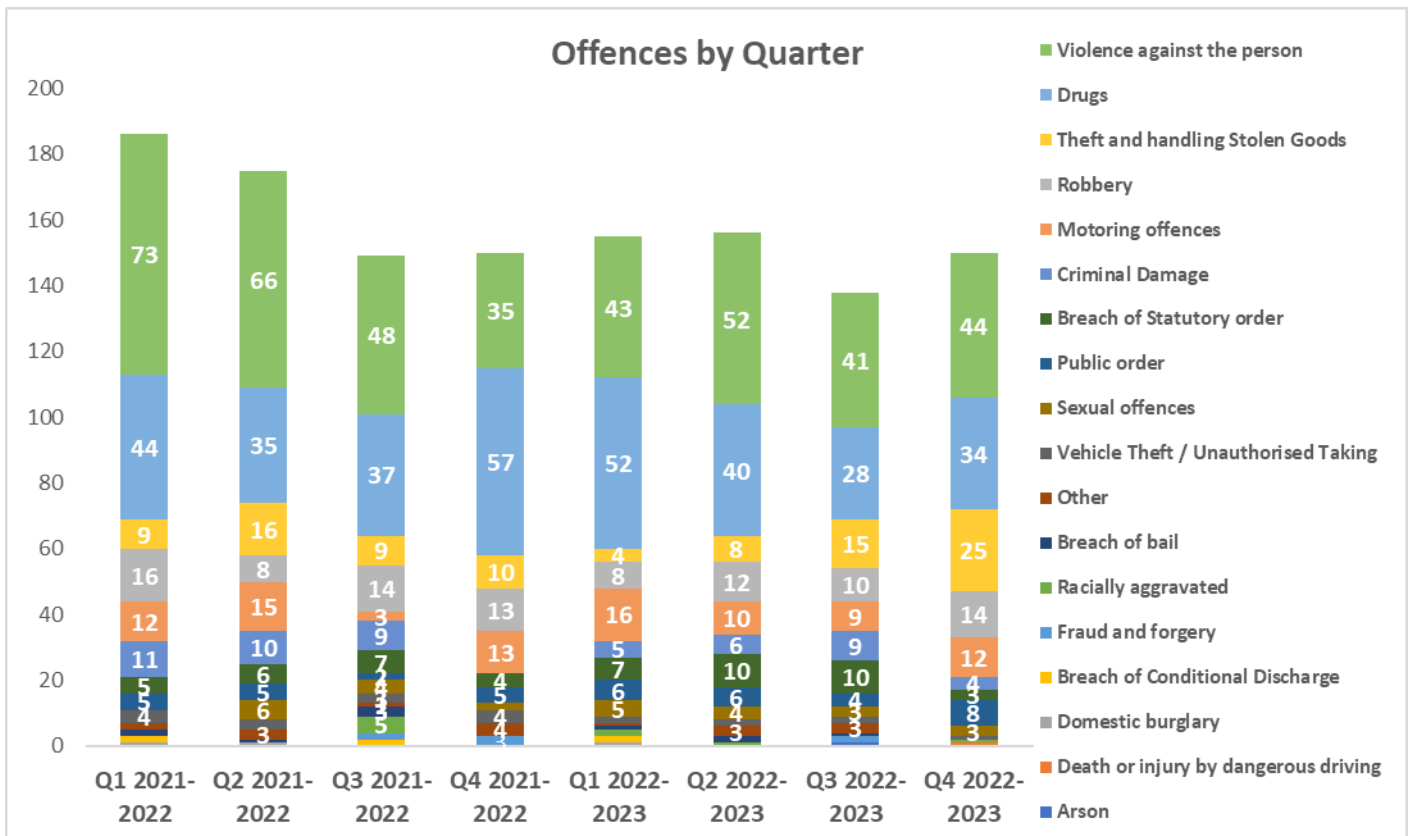
The Croydon RJ Team always discusses safety during the initial contact with victims and then raises any specific requests around non-contact or exclusion zones with the wider professional network. Any concern is then discussed at our regular multi-agency meetings such as the Resettlement Panel, New Case Panel, Joint Discussion Meeting and RVMP with the aim to create an accurate safety plan. The RJ Team has delivered specific training around victim safety and developed a visual victim mapping tool to support case managers in their assessment and planning of interventions.

Ensuring the entire Service is victim centric and to promote the voice of the victim is an ongoing practice priority for YJS. Internal and national data shows us that males of a specific age are most likely to become victims and the Service data shows us that many of the victims known (40%) are under 18. Conversely, many of the young people known to YJS have experienced their own victimisation – particularly under the category of Serious Youth Violence.

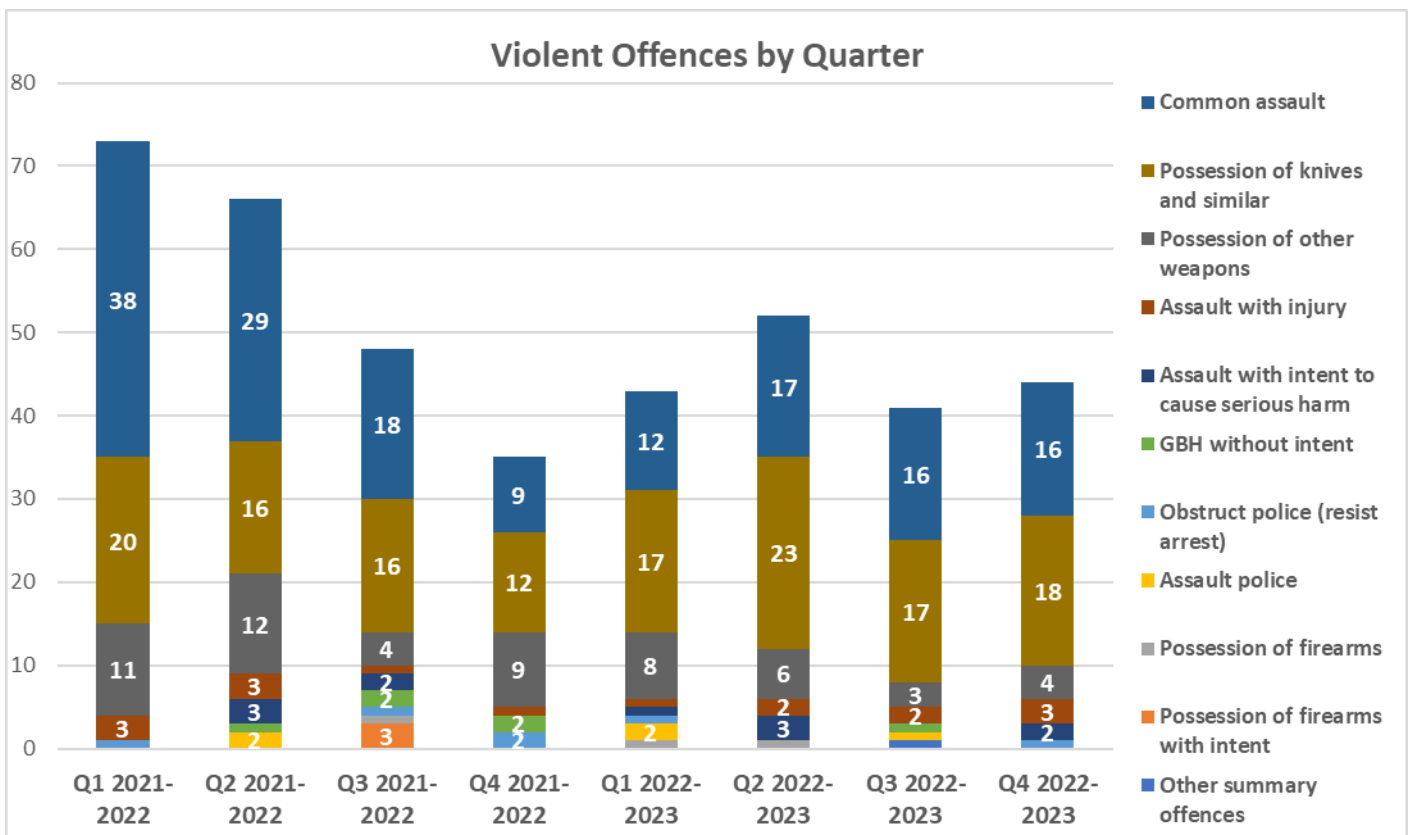
## 16. Serious Violence and Exploitation:

Using the Youth Justice Board's Definition "Serious Violence is violence against the person (which encompasses homicide and weapon offences), Robbery and drug offences with a gravity score of 5 and above" The offence type data is set out below:

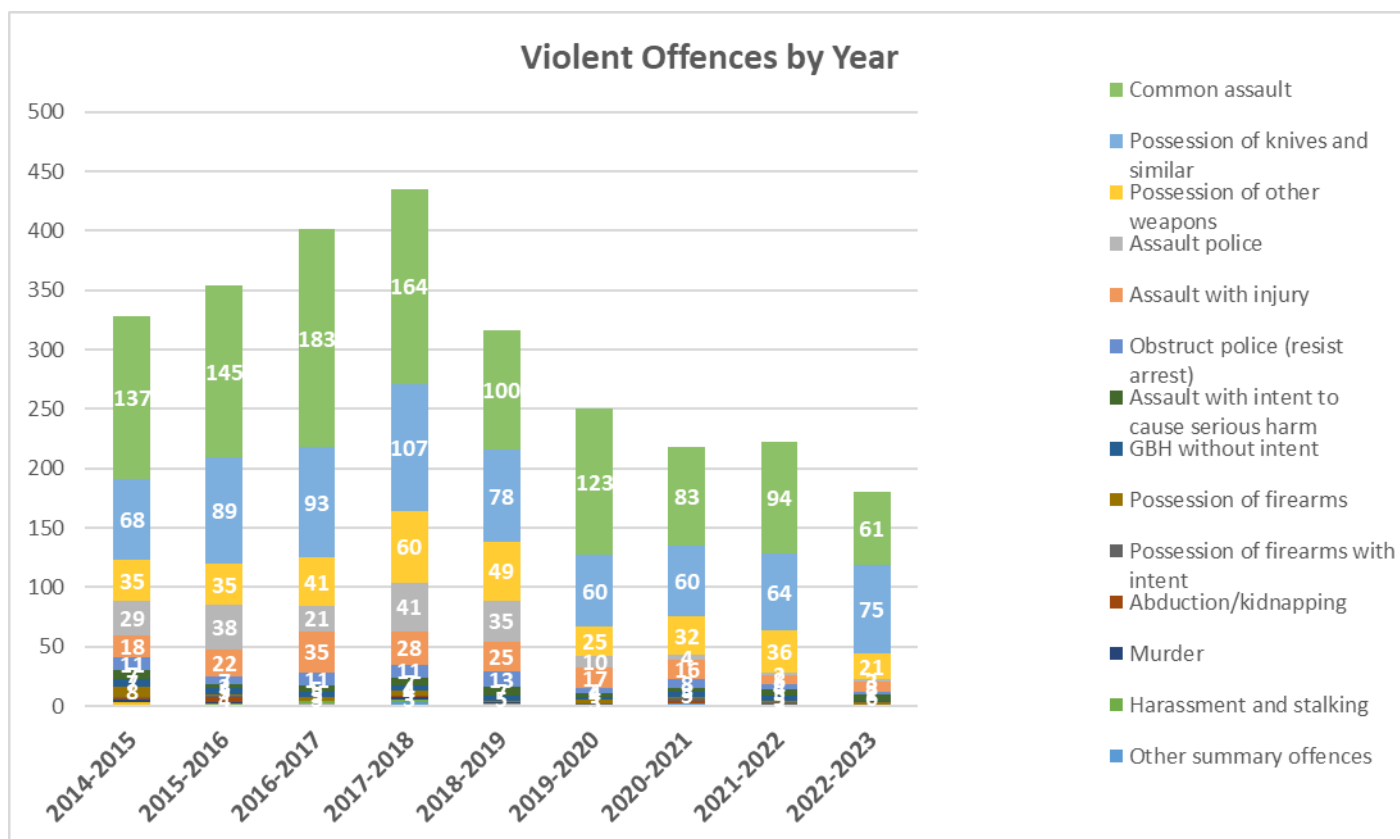
Table below details offence types per quarter since 2021.



The above confirms that 'violence against the person' in addition to drug related offending dominates offence types within the Croydon cohort. Typically 'Violence Against the Person' is indicative of weapon related offending. Further detail of violent offences is outlined below.



Combining the weapon related offences concludes that this is currently the highest offence type that Croydon Youth Justice Service intervenes with. There has been a reduction since 2018 that has seen a gradual reduction for those under 18 year olds in this category..

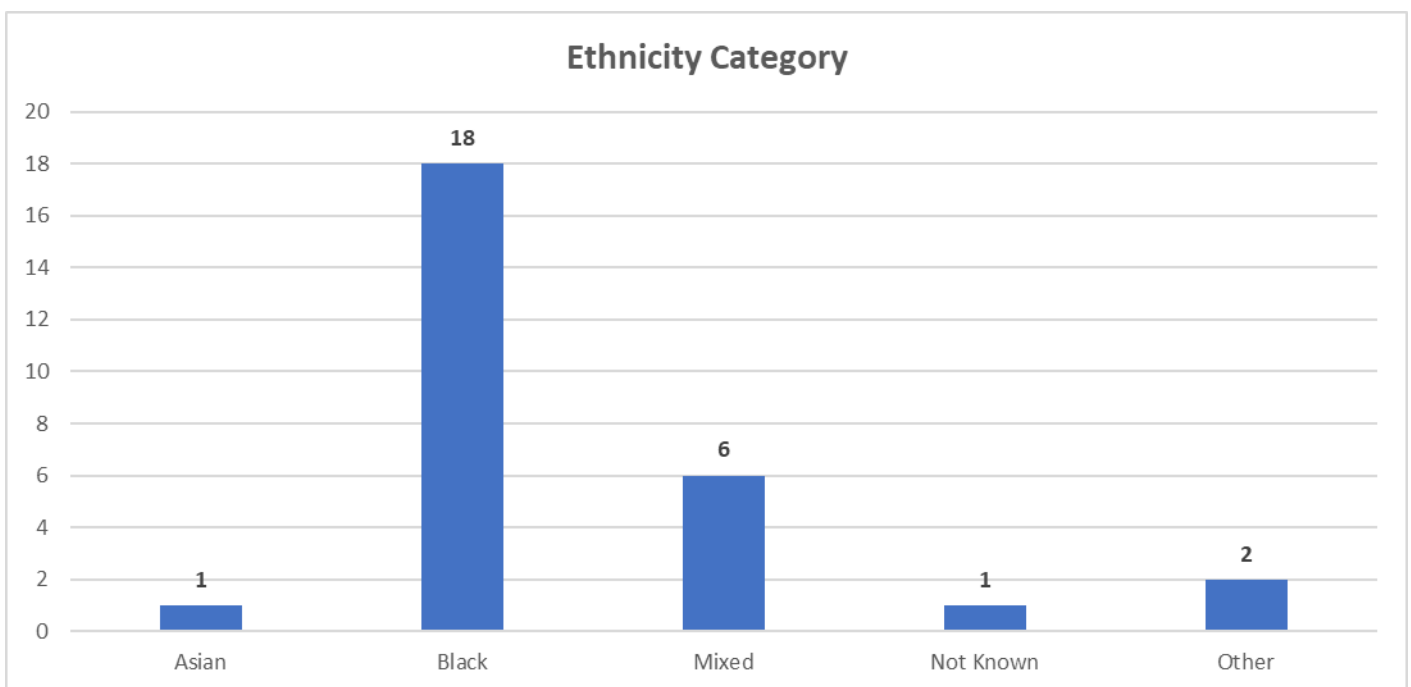
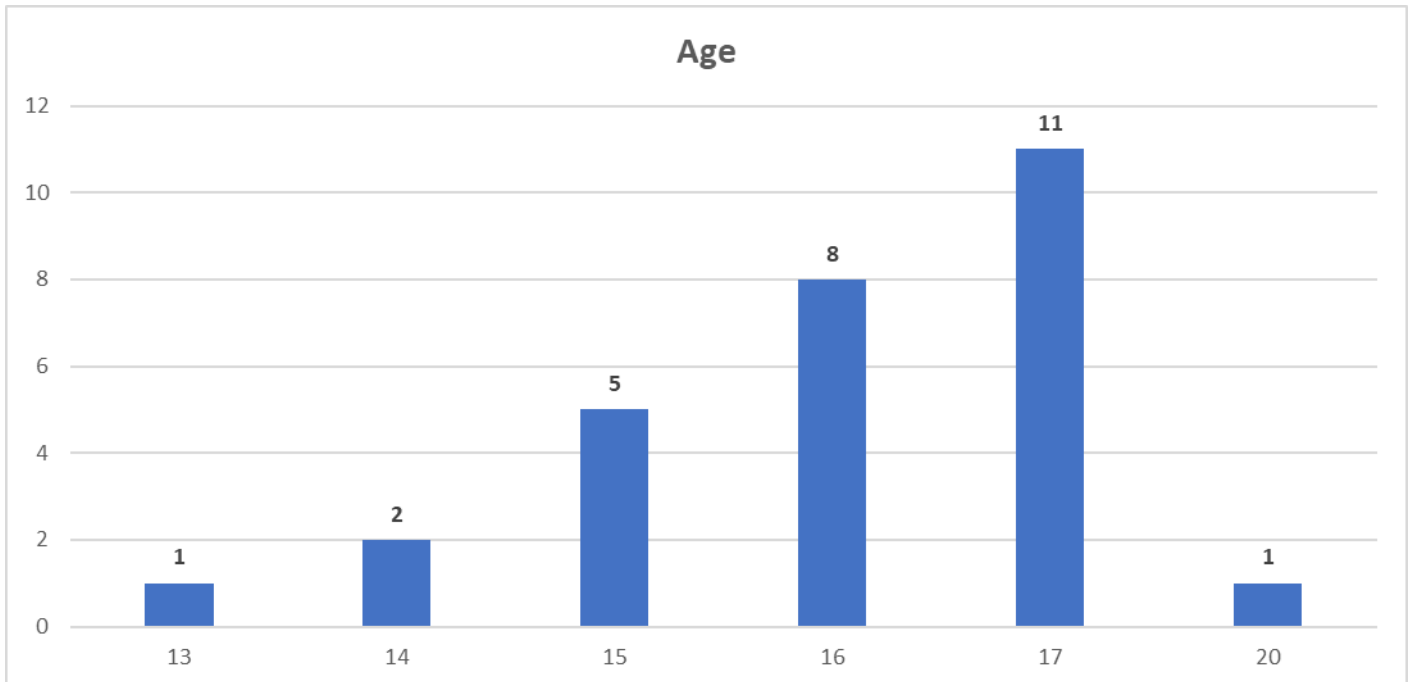


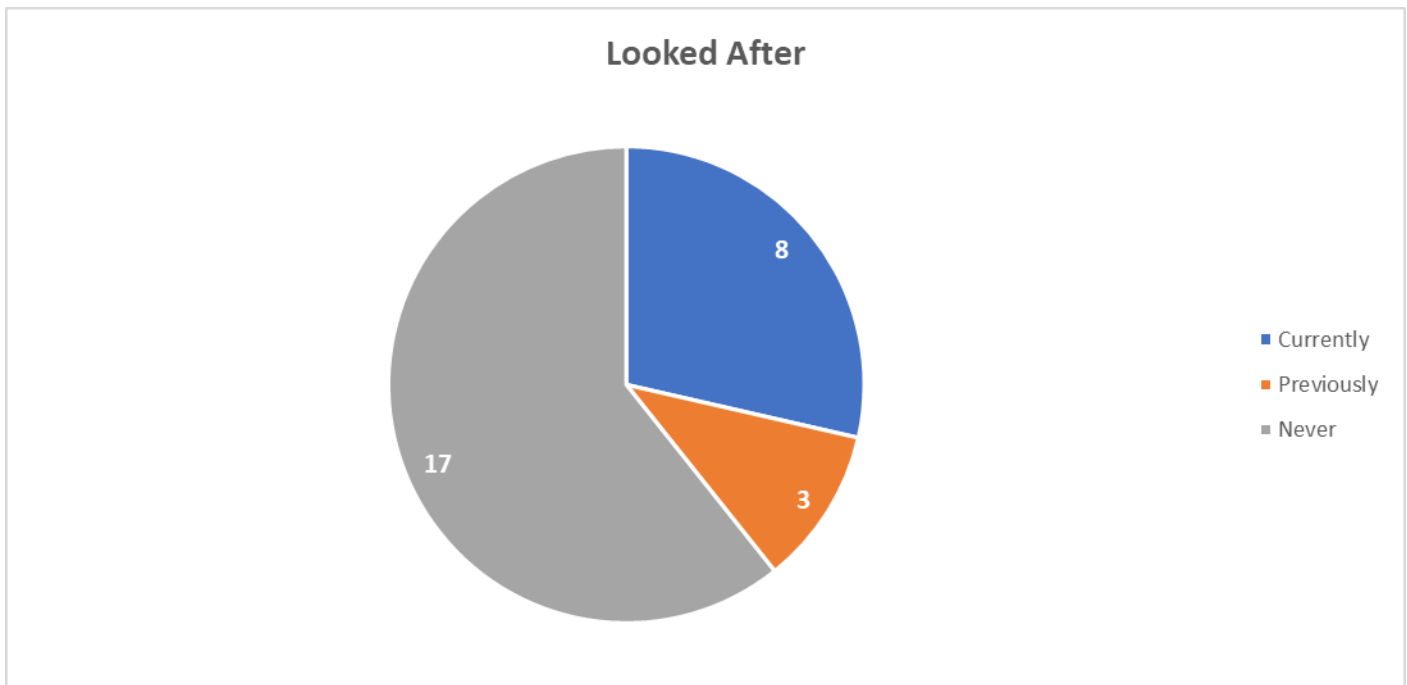
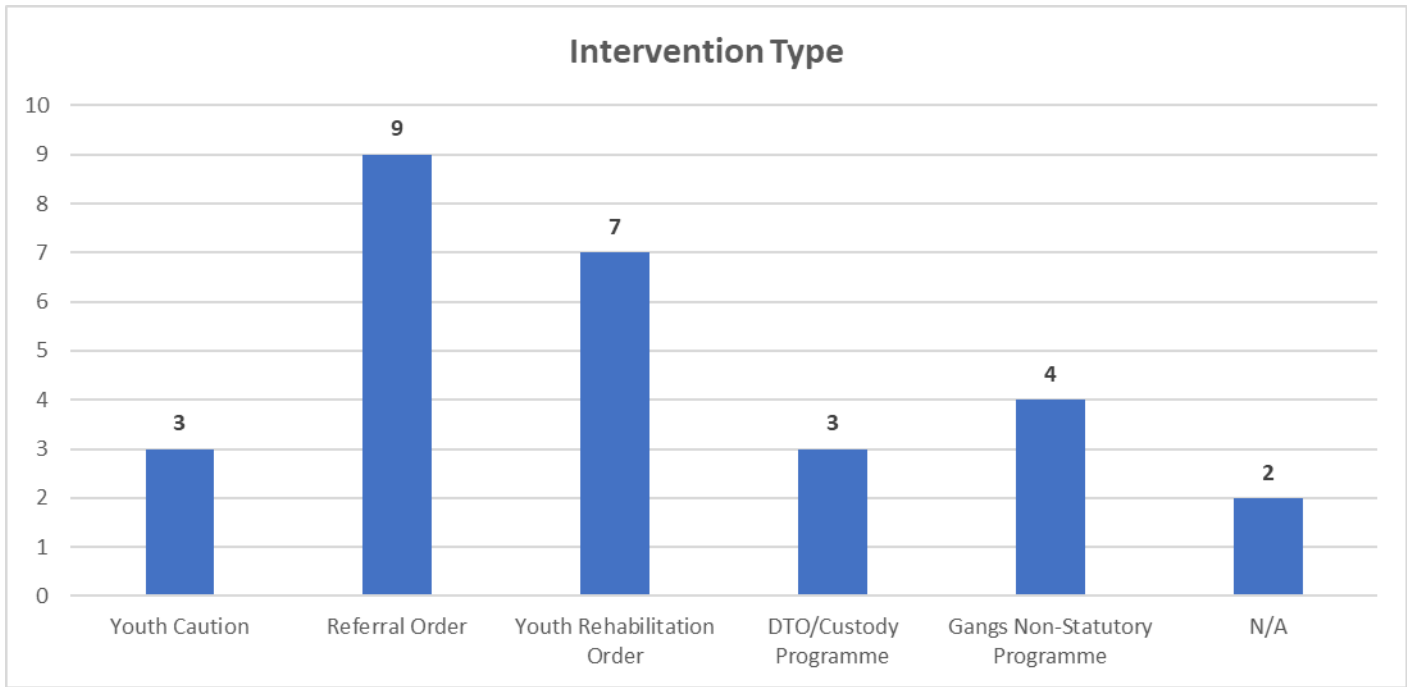
The overarching strategy to address Serious Youth Violence is detailed in the borough's Community Safety Strategy that identifies partnership roles to target Serious Youth Crime and actions are carried forward in the Local Violence and Vulnerability Action Plan.

Operational Oversight – For children who are known to pose risk of Serious Youth Violence, they are overseen by internal processes jointly with the Police, Community Safety and Education.

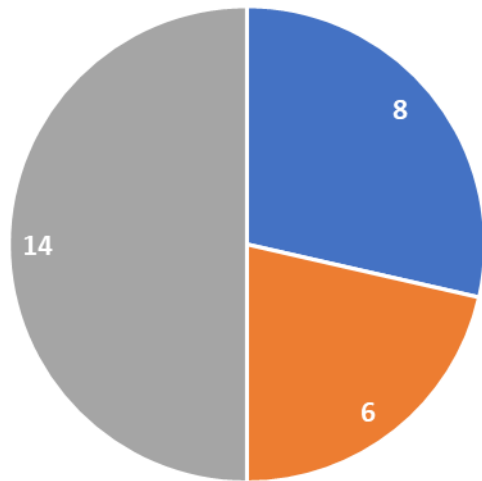
1. **Integrated Offender Management (IOM)** – Where there is known risk YJS Practitioners will refer into IOM. The referral is processed by the Police to provide intelligence. Referrals are reviewed monthly and if accepted all agencies heighten their level of monitoring of the child in question and the dosage of intervention is increased to ensure agencies have regular contact with the child and their family/carers. Children are rated red (being the most concerning), amber (of concern) and green (reduced concern). A child who remains green will be deselected from the process.
2. **Gangs Matrix** – the matrix is a Police led system that identifies children and adults who offend in groups and where there is known group identity. The children's matrix is much smaller than the adults, which is indicative that much of the Boroughs Serious Youth Violence is committed by 18-25 year olds. At the time of writing there was 1 under 18 and 12 over 18's on the matrix. However, those on the Matrix are discussed weekly to ensure there is joint monitoring between the Police and Youth Justice Service. At the time of writing this form of monitoring was being disbanded by the MET Police hence the numbers provided.
3. **Risk and Vulnerability Management Panel** – Chaired by the Service Manager of the YJS the panel provides a forum for Practitioners to discuss risk posed to and from a child. The purpose of the panel is to ensure that all reasonable actions have been taken to safeguard the child in question or/and to protect the public within the scope of the YJS. The panel is

multi-faceted, as it looks at the use of licences for those children coming out of custody, it ensures where eligible and risk thresholds met Children are escalated into processes such as Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), it ensures children are being referred into IOM where additional Policing and YJS input is required to manage risk, it also looks at how bail and sentence proposals can reduce and manage risk.



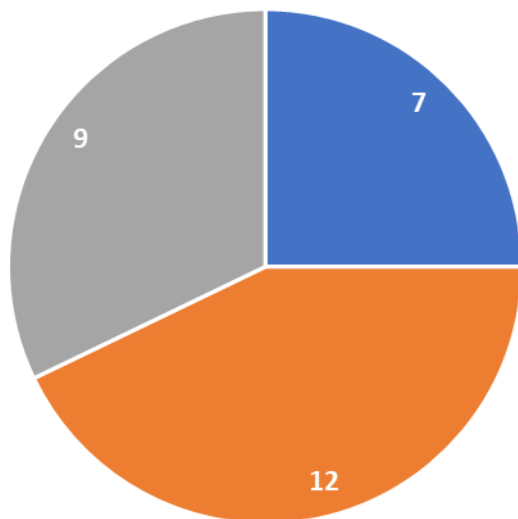


### Child Protection Plan



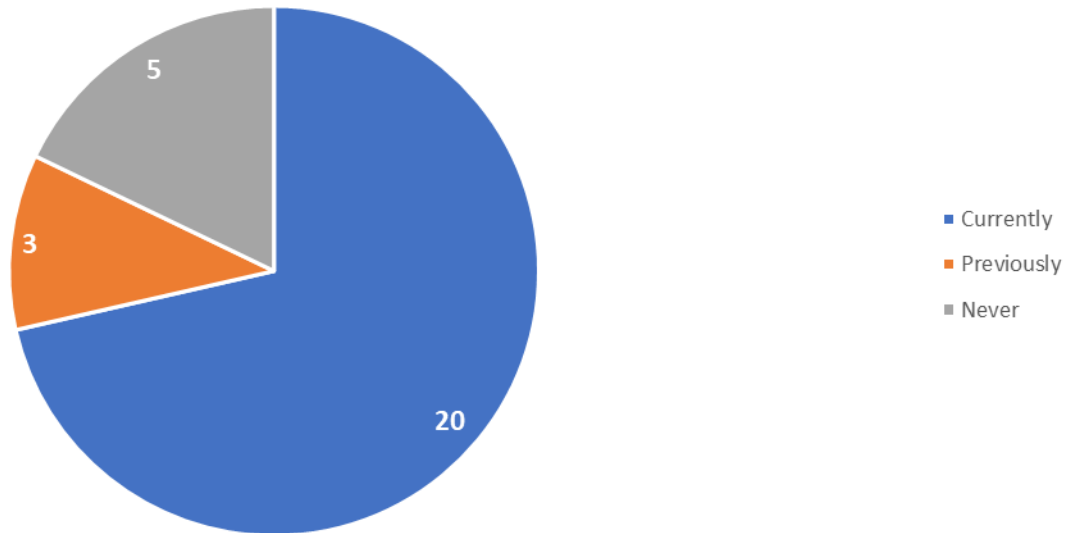
- Currently
- Previously
- Never

### Child in Need Plan



- Currently
- Previously
- Never

### Social Care Involvement



Factors related to Serious Youth Violence, are believed to stem much earlier within a child's development and linked to their own adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) alongside exposure to exploitation and contextual safeguarding. Issues such as county-lines and consequently drug related offending has seen a drastic increase within Croydon YJS offence types and it is estimated that 4000 children across London are known to have been involved in county-lines and therefore exploited. Data is suggestive that Croydon is currently ranked as number 1 for identification of children involved (Rescue and Response 2023). The issue therefore of addressing Serious Youth Violence therefore becomes a wider task than detection and enforcement but one where prevention is required and safeguarding children a necessity. There is a clear correlation between county-lines and Serious Youth Violence, often children arming themselves as a form of protection from posed risk associated.

The YJS works with all service areas within Croydon Social Care, and wider council as well as the Police to address Contextual Safeguarding concerns. Panels such as Complex Adolescent Panel (CAP) as mentioned earlier, is represented by an array of Partnership panel members both statutory services and third sector. The expertise and knowledge provides oversight on children involved with Criminal and Sexual Exploitation.

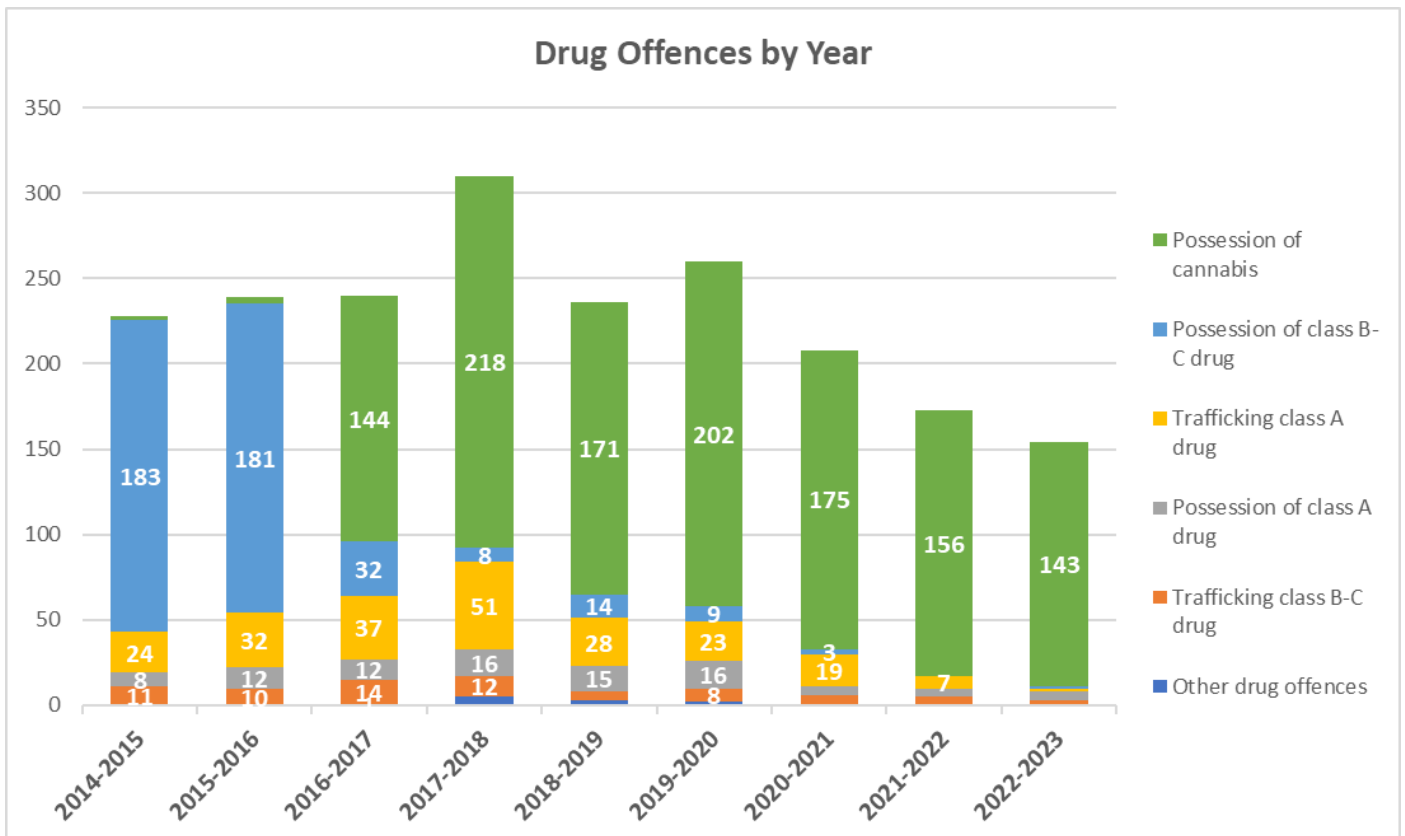
The Local Authorities response to county-lines follows the Pan London Safeguarding Procedures and the borough's Missing Protocol (May 2022).

<https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/>

Where a child is open to the YJS and Social Care practitioners and managers jointly complete a Safety Plan ensuring that the safety of the child is paramount.

Drug related offending by year is detailed in the chart below:





### Extremism & Radicalisation

Whilst extremely rare, violence related to radicalisation or extremism is addressed via the Prevent Strategy as outlined by the Home Office. There is a statutory duty upon all agencies, including YJS to make necessary referrals where any form of extremism/radicalisation is detected. Extremism/Radicalisation is defined as: *The process by which one adopts extremist views, usually a non-linear and personalised journey*

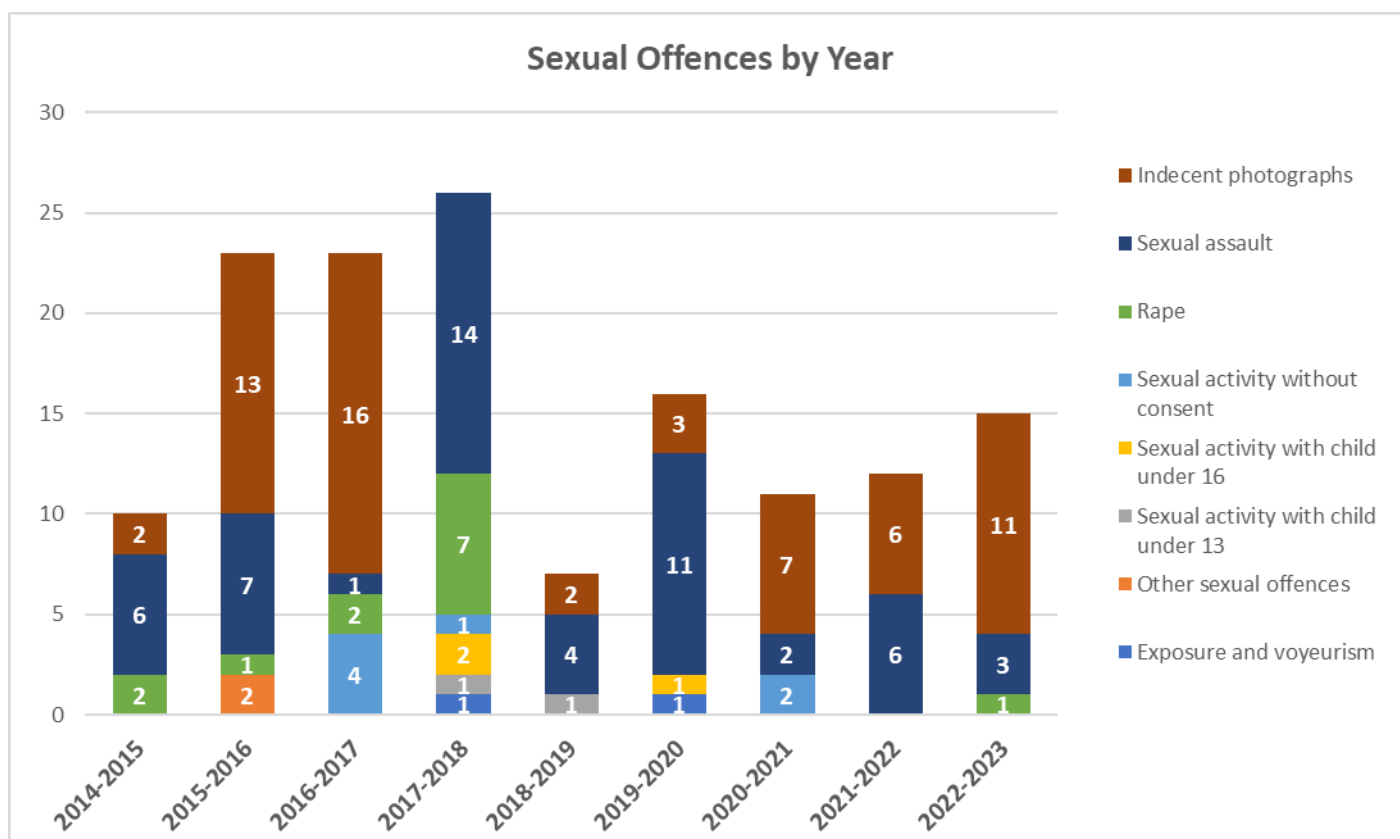
Referrals are received by the Channel Panel and where evidence is found the Prevent Panel will discuss and offer interventions on a voluntary basis. Croydon has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest referral rates in London, but it is very rare for Croydon YJS to have concerns in this area. However, the YJS is in a position of detection and staff are trained in indicators related to this area the most recent training on process being held in 2023.

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/community-and-safety/safety/prevent-strategy>

### Other violent behaviours - Sexually Harmful behaviour:

Below is a chart showing sexually harmful offences open to YJS by year. Specialist assessments and interventions are offered to children and young people who sexually harm and we co-work with Health Services to ensure the level of intervention is appropriate and responsive to all needs. Many Staff are AIM trained (an assessment tool specifically designed to assess children and young people who sexually harm) and we look to professional experts in this field to direct or co-manage this work. Such partnerships include joint work with the Lucy Faithful Foundation who have also trained YJS staff (including Manager's) beyond assessment but the delivery of interventions. Joint work with Forensic Child Adolescent Mental Health Services is also common. However, whilst the data would allude to low numbers sexually harmful behaviours can be identified without conviction and staff will respond to any identified risk in this area regardless of sentence/conviction type. Such work includes 1:1 delivery of healthy relationships and sex and the law. As noted in the information contained in the table below there has been a rise in those convicted of indecent

photographs and educational sessions are offered to children and parents on the use of Social media and what is illegal content.



### Domestic Abuse & Extra Familial Harm

The borough has seen an increase in the reports of domestic Abuse. In 2019 a scoping exercise was completed on YJS young people which confirmed suspicions that a high proportion (95%) had experienced domestic Abuse and in some instances extra familiar harm, where the young person was inflicting violence towards parents or siblings or within relationships. Whilst often not presented in the form of a conviction, the YJS works closely with Social Care, Police, and the Family Justice Centre to address these harms. There is a multitude of literature and research which concludes a child’s exposure to domestic abuse can have several adverse and damaging outcomes for a child including poor mental health, development difficulties and a poor understanding of what healthy relationships look like. The Drive Programme is a specific Domestic Abuse perpetrator intervention and the Family Justice Centre project lead on the programme alongside Rise Mutual. The YJS can refer a young person to this programme. The YJS is also familiar with the Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). MARAC is a meeting where information is shared on victims at the highest risk of serious harm or murder because of domestic abuse Training is currently being completed on practitioners understanding the risk assessment (DASH RIC) checklist under this risk category.

### Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA)

Where a young person has been subject to 12 months custody for a violent or sexual offence or there is significant concern related to violent and sexual offending the YJS has a statutory duty to comply with the above processes. Each eligible case is screened and triaged at the YJS Risk and Vulnerability Management Panel overseen by the Service Manager – where

risk is felt manageable at a local level the YJS will retain oversight jointly with partners including policing partners (MAPPA level 1), where the risk is felt to be beyond the capacities of the YJS a Level 2 referral will be made to gain expert advice on the risk management necessary. MAPPA Level 2 is a Panel co-chaired by a Senior Probation Officer and Senior Police Officer. The panel consists of all key partners including Victim Liaison, Health, Social Care LADO, Housing. The YJS presents the risk to this panel where the Panel will give guidance, escalate specific concerns and in some instances provide additional resourcing such as Police monitoring etc MAPPA Level 3 is reserved for the most enhanced level(s) of risk management including oversight of convicted terrorists or where there is significant public/media interest. This Level is extremely rare within Youth Justice.

The YJS has a clear process surrounding any child or young person eligible under these arrangements and enhanced oversight is given via the YJS internal panels.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-public-protection-arrangements-mappa-guidance>

In 2022/23 two children were identified as meeting the eligibility and were categorised as MAPPA nominals. 1 child was deemed Level 2 and 1 deemed as meeting the most severe risk category and categorised as Level 3.

## 17. Detention in Police Custody

Children arrested and presented at the Police Station are entitled to legal advice under Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. Where a parent or carer is not available to act as an appropriate adult (AA) the child is provided with an approved appropriate adult, at the time of writing The Appropriate Adult Service (TAAS) were commissioned to provide such services. The scheme is reported to run well and Police Officers are familiar with the processes that all children must have an adult that can assist a young person during their processes.

Operational Harbinger (2021), of which Croydon is a selected borough, has tightened communication between the Police and the Local Authority reporting on children who are in custody. The process requires Officers to contact MASH and the Out of Hours Team (Emergency Duty Team – EDT) to notify Social Care. Separately but in line with the process all arrests are reporting via reports known as ‘Merlins’, both Social Care and Youth Justice receive these reports.

A child in the custody suite also has access to the Liaison and Diversion Health Worker (delivered by the Crisis Team connected to Child Adolescent Mental Health Team) where a child is presenting with emotional health concerns. A child in need can be screened and this information will also be shared with both Social Care and Youth Justice and any follow up advised.

In instances where the Police Custody Sergeant views an overnight remand necessary given the nature of the offence, the Police will contact Social Care to provide a placement, avoiding Children staying at the Police station.

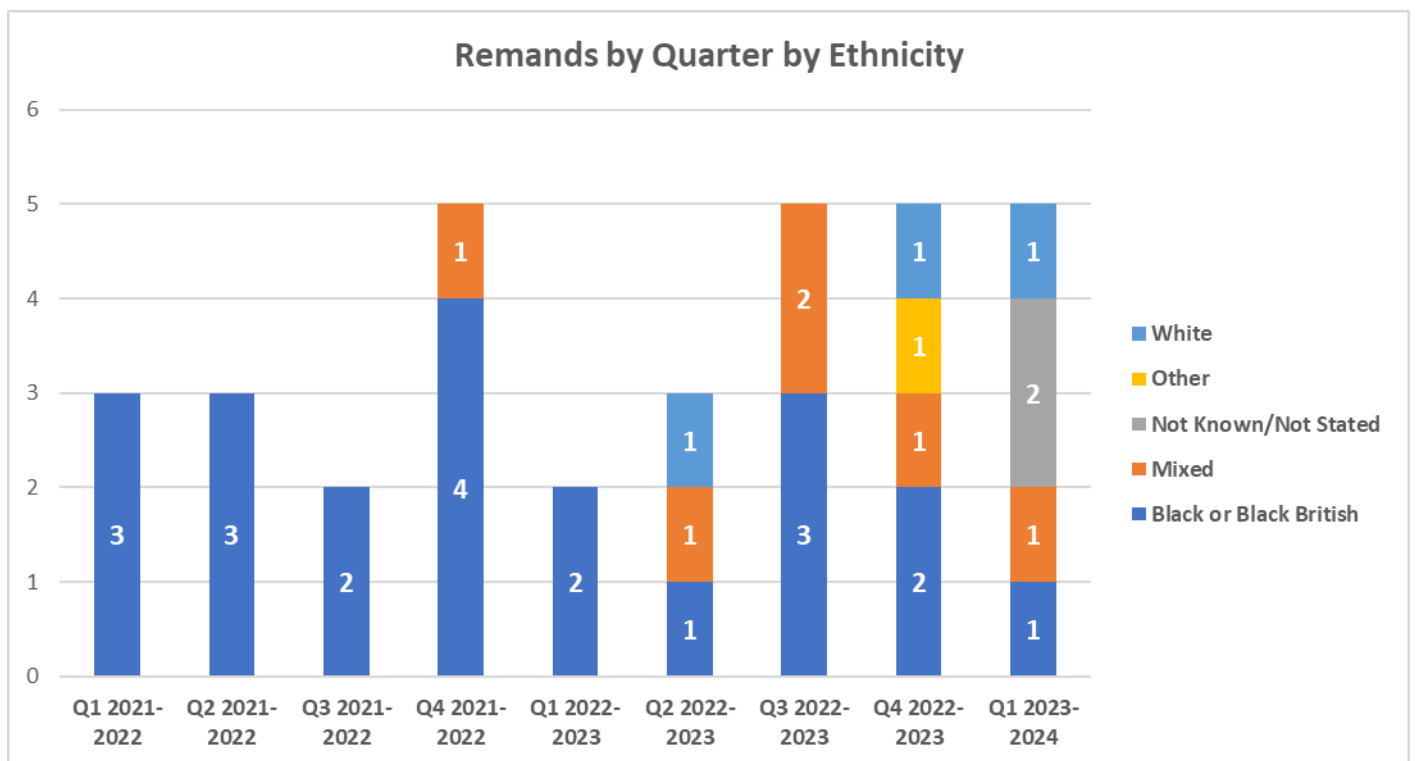
## 18. Remands

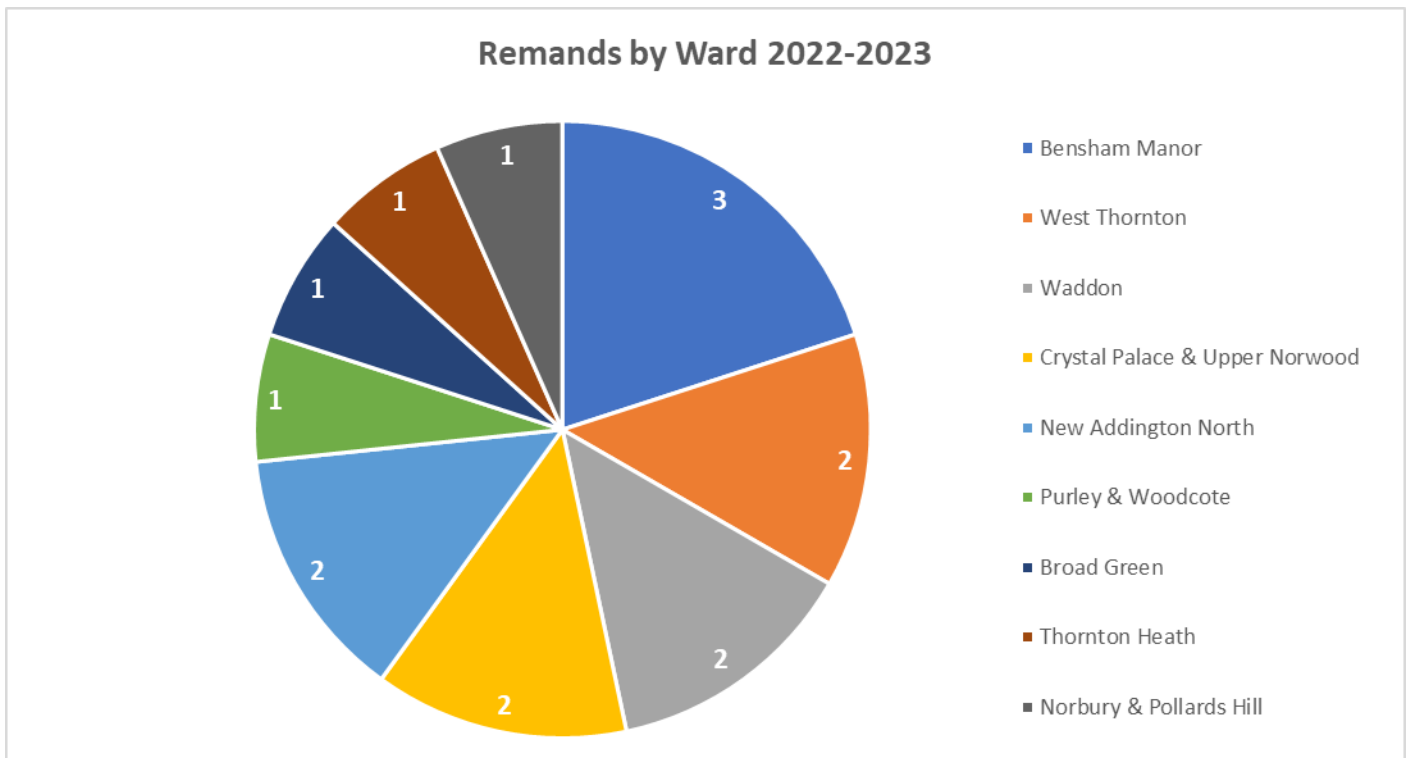
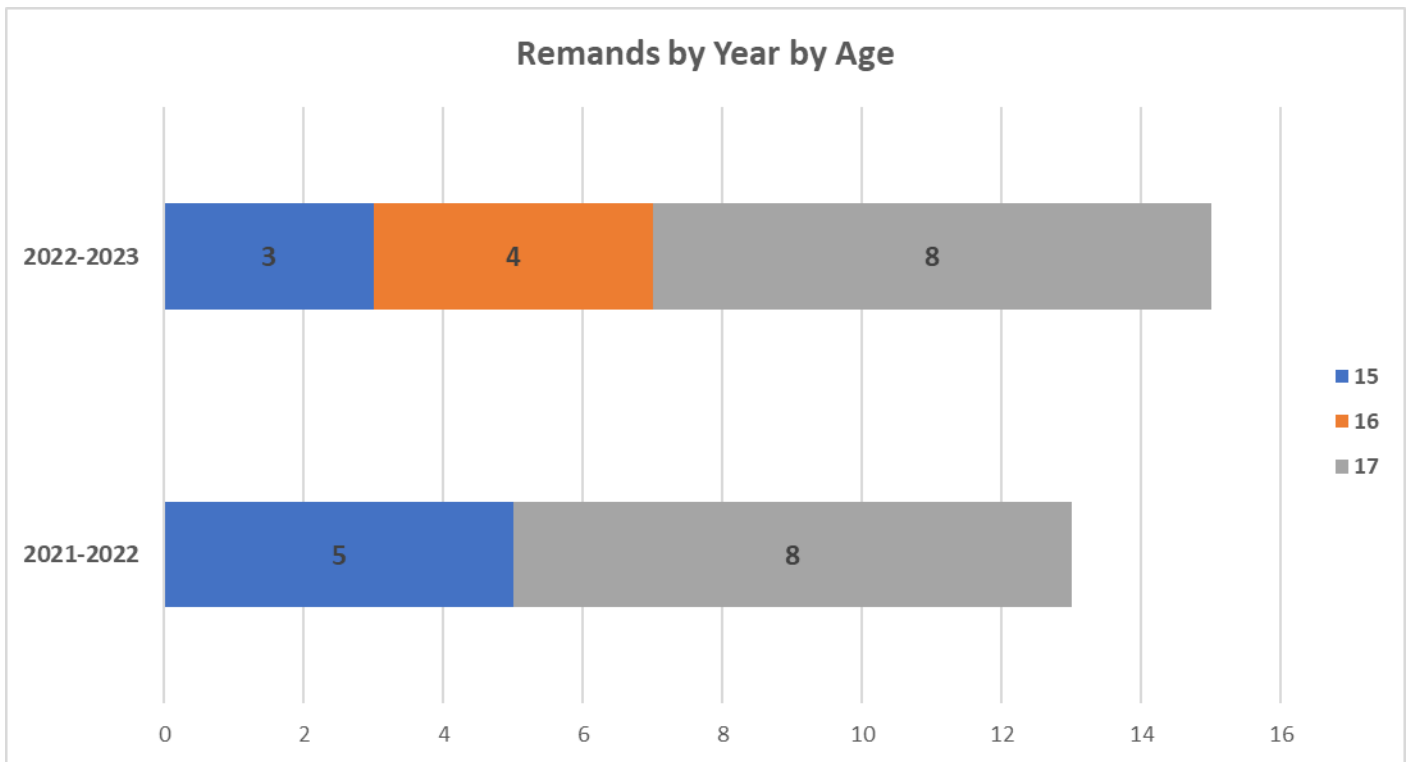
Under the Legal Aid Sentencing Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 provides the Court with powers to remand a young person – the Court can remand into:

- Local Authority
- Into Secure Training Centre
- Into Youth Detention (Young Offenders Institute)

In 2023/23 15 children were remanded for varying periods. At the time of writing 8 children were remanded. Below details ethnicity break down of those remanded in 2022/23 but also alleged offence type.

Please see details below providing remand numbers and ethnicity breakdowns:





The pie-chart above details wards young people who were remanded during 2022/23 resided. At the time of writing in June 2023 there are 8 remands.

**Reducing Remands** – Croydon YJS acknowledges that remands should be a last resort and is therefore driven to keeping young people out of custody whilst retaining public confidence and playing a role contributing to public protection. The use of bespoke bail packages that are responsive to risk are presented to Courts as an alternative were assessed as appropriate to do so. Recommendations can/may include the following:

- Victim considerations including no-contact clauses.

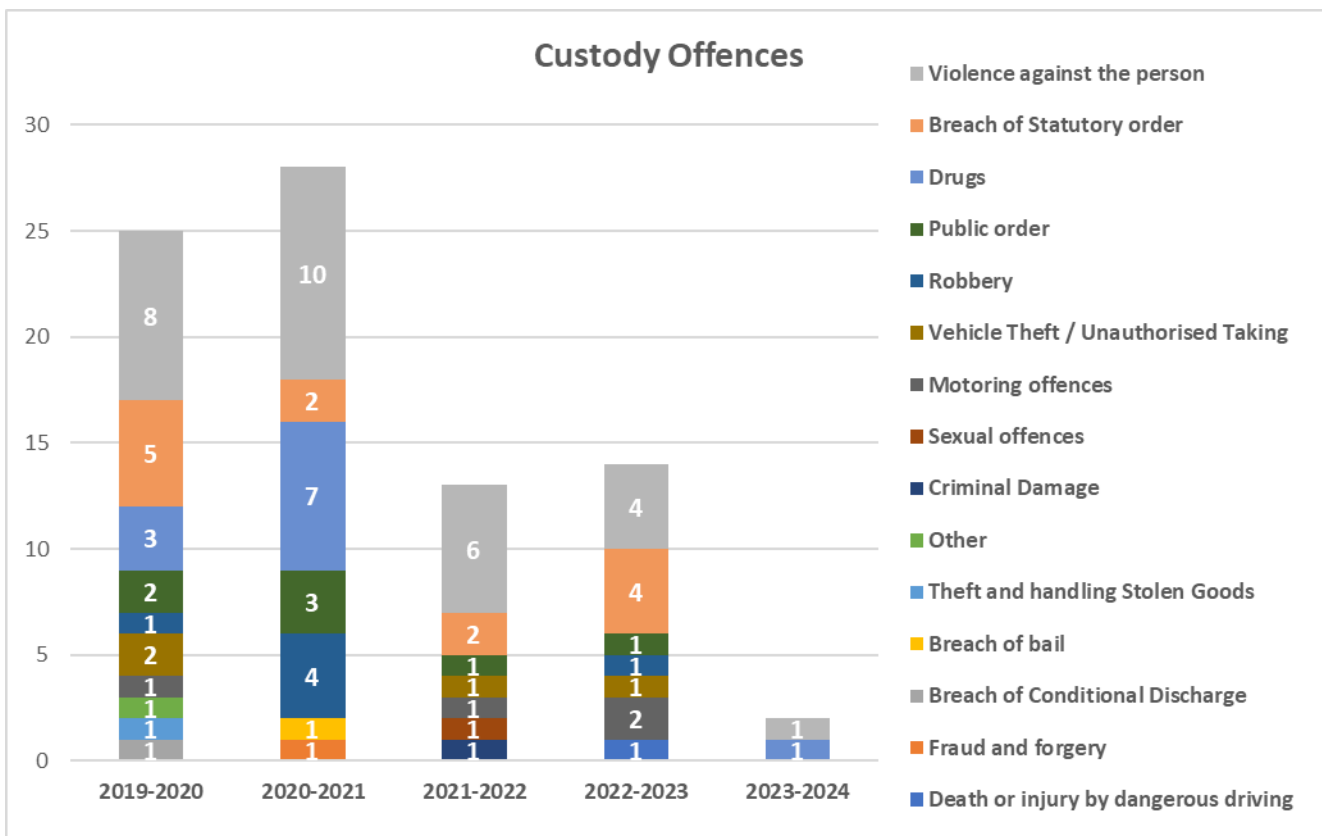
- Exclusions from specific areas
- Prohibited activities (e.g., not to travel on specific bus route or to attend a specific premise such as a school)
- Curfews (electronic)
- Non-association with co-defendants
- Reporting requirements to the YJS and following of all reasonable requests from YJS (e.g., to attend education or an activity)
- Reporting requirements to the Police
- To reside at a specific address
- Where risk is significant the consideration of the use of Intensive Supervision Surveillance (daily contact with the YJS and other means to account for a young person and how they use their time).

Practice in this area is driven by working collaboratively with statutory and third sector agencies to provide bail packages that address risk and need to promote confidence with courts to use community disposals over custody, ensure the bail packages are child focused, subject to a high level of monitoring and continuous evaluation, ensure enforcement is completed in a timely manner, when necessary, sanctions are proportionate with the breach.

## 19. Use of Custody

In 2022 there was an average of 560 children (under 18 year olds) in custody (both remands and sentenced) nationally. This population has continued to decrease during 2023 to a reported average of 450 children.

The national decline in the use of custody has been seen by Croydon Youth Justice Service. In the year 2022/23 Croydon Youth Justice Service saw 7 children sentenced to custody. A chart detailing the offences for which they were in custody is provided below:



## 20. Constructive Resettlement

At the time of writing there were seven young people in custody, three 18-year-olds, three 17-year-olds, one 15-year-old, all male, six of the seven identified as Black British and one of mixed background. Croydon YJS are committed to reducing re-offending rates amongst those leaving custody given research by the national youth justice data for 2019/2020 states that they are the highest of any group. Challenges children are faced with when leaving custody include often being the most detached from ETE, most likely to be misusing drugs and alcohol, have mental health issues, high exposure to familial or peer criminality and issues surrounding accommodation and risk. Therefore, the YJS applies a holistic approach involving multi-disciplinary assistance to address the needs of those children departing the secure estate and details of this are found in our resettlement policy which sets out our objectives in obtaining positive outcomes for this group of young people.

Croydon YJS Resettlement procedures follow the Youth Justice Service practice guidance Custody and resettlement: Section 7 case management guidance (2022). In terms of service delivery Croydon YJS standards follow National Standard 4 (in secure settings) and National Standard 5 (on Transition and Resettlement) as detailed in Standards for children in youth justice services 2019 - Addressing the Seven pathways to Resettlement.

Croydon YJS are committed to providing effective resettlement, one that focusses on the process of enabling a shift from a pro-offending towards a pro-social identity, whilst ensuring personal and structural support mechanisms are put in place. To achieve this Croydon YJS, implement the principles and best practice of: Beyond Youth Custody Effective Resettlement of young people (2015) and the London Resettlement Pathfinder - Constructive Resettlement.

#### Key Partnership work:

**HMPS**– lead agency in custody, responsible for providing Children with a safe, secure, and rehabilitative regime, case management to complete referrals and coordinating services, Resettlement planning,

**Prison Education** (Nova) to complete Education plans and deliver 25 hours education including maths and English, liaising with community agencies to ensure information is shared with community ETE providers,

**NHS** – to provide Physical health and Mental health services both in custody and the community,

**MAPPA** – Multi agency panel, lead agencies are probation and police, risk management planning for children assessed a high risk of harm and re-offending:

**Local Authority Children’s services including Leaving Care Team** – Children and young adults subject to social care support,

**Courts** for sentencing and enforcement,

#### Community Partnerships agencies.

**Substance Misuse:** To provide information to support staff and to follow up cases where it is accepted that the young person meets the criteria.

**Forensic Psychology:** To provide information to support staff in relation to screening, agree on suitability for a more in-depth consultation with a view to identify further interventions. To provide advocacy on ways of working with young people who have diagnosis such as conduct disorder, trauma, ADHD etc.

**YJS Education:** To provide information to support staff and to follow up cases where it is accepted that the young person meets the criteria.

**Virtual School:** To provide information to support staff and follow up cases where it is accepted that the young person meets the criteria.

**Educational Health Care Plan Coordinator:** To provide information to support staff and follow up cases where it is accepted that the young person meets the criteria.

**Restorative Justice Coordinator:** Attend each meeting to help inform the assessments in terms of victim considerations and to encourage victim input into any ensuing plan.



**DIZ Housing:** To provide information to support staff and follow up cases where it is accepted that the young person meets the criteria.

**Additional Staff as required:** Case managers can invite any relevant staff to the meeting who they feel have a significant contribution to make to the resettlement of the young person.

Whilst we have yet to complete a need analysis on these subject to custody, we refer to research on the custody and remand cohort provided by the London Resettlement Pathfinder which provides detailed insight into the needs of those in custody.

We work to the following principles resettlement –

**Risk classification:** Resources follow risk, our custody cohort who are often deemed our most high risk of re-offending with high support needs.

**Criminogenic need:** Assessment is important for planning and delivery - custody cohort often have complex needs, subject to multiple assessments – to avoid duplication this information needs to be shared between custody and the community, continuity of care is important, so we avoid changes in worker where possible.

**Dosage:** Scaled approach ensures that intervention is proportionate to risk and need and reporting requirements must reflect this, professional discretion is permitted where there is learning difficulties, mental health, Croydon YJS as per YJB National Standards have clear procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality, providing supportive supervision, clear lines of communication amongst relevant case workers, facilitate parental input to encourage compliance, hold regular review to monitor the child's progress.

**Responsivity:** To meet the learning style of the child Croydon YJS employ a full time Speech and Language Therapist for assessment, advice, and intervention – recommendations are shared with YJS Practitioners to improve service delivery, workers utilise a child's learning style and Self-Assessment Questionnaires to improve the child's engagement with the intervention plan, several learning tools are available to YOS workers including written, visual, and technological based.

**Community based:** Croydon YJS ensure that every child sentenced to custody is considered for 'release on temporary licence (ROTL) to support resettlement, and that ROTL placements are meaningful to support resettlement back into the community. Evidence suggests that programmes in the community have more effective outcomes than those in custody or segregated settings- Croydon YJS is a multi-agency teams, including offence focused, Restorative Justice, substance misuse, gangs' intervention, paid ETE via Skill Mill, ETE support for school children and post 16 etc.

**Intervention modality:** Croydon YJS offer group and one to one offending behaviour programmes that are skills based and emphasize problem solving within a cognitive behaviour framework, There are a range of complex interventions to address ETE, parental/carers support, purposeful activity that rely on a range of providers from other agencies.

**Programme integrity:** To ensure that programmes have a clear rationale Croydon YJS ensure that all stakeholders are clear about the programmes rationale and the role and responsibility of each worker within it, a child must be matched up with the appropriate programmes, and in terms of service delivery Croydon YJS ensure coherence and continuity

in programme components, interventions are tailored to young people needs - Croydon YOS have a data analyst to monitor performance and reports and data are provided to the Youth Crime Board who have strategic oversight.

## 21. Standards for children in Youth Justice

In early 2020 the Youth Justice Service completed a self-assessment National Standards audit. The audit focused on the following areas:

- Out of Court work
- Court work
- Community work
- Secure settings
- Transition into adulthood.

Each area was broken down using the above practice areas to measure standards and given an overall grade. The audit was subsequently turned into an action plan that has been continuously revisited. A further self-assessment is planned for 2023. Following the last self-assessment subsequent monthly audits have been completed to look at practice in more details within specific themes chosen each month. In the past 12 months this has include the following: Out of Court/Working with Girls/Children who have Weapon related offending/Use of Referral Orders and Processes/Children in Custody/Victim work. Additionally, peer audits have been completed with the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham that found 70% of those assessed were assessed as a good standard and above and an External Consultant has also reviewed files during May 2023. The Service also uses thematic inspections and inspection reports by HMPI to measure its overall standards.

In summary **Out of Court Work** received criticism in the 2019 HMPI inspection and consequently the Out of Court offer was renewed including a refined assessment tool that considers risk (risk of re-offending, risk to self, risk to others). Planning has become more inclusive of families and children and interventions are offered once a week and extended where there is a need. In an audit carried out in 2022, auditors found that in almost all instances' processes had been followed and were child centric. Audits found that often children subject to these forms of disposals can present with higher risk than the disposal and therefore the dosage of intervention and support may have to consequently be increased. The audits also found that in most instances there was clear consideration for exit strategies including the use of Early Help, Social care, or the community sector to deliver work, to remove children from the criminal justice system. The introduction of Community Resolutions for low level offending and small amounts of cannabis, has

**Court work** is one of Croydon Youth Justices strongest areas of work, with a presence at the local Youth Court 6 days a week, the Team boasts a strong relationship with Court staff, which enables staff to feel confident in advising Courts on the best possible outcomes for children and victims. Staff regularly meet with the Court and deliver annual training on topics such a race and restorative justice. Within the self-assessment framework, the measures are linked to report writing (pre-sentence report) – Croydon Youth Justice Service often receives compliments for the detailed reports they produce including use and input from a Speech and Language Therapist, drawing awareness to Adverse Childhood experiences including discrimination and measured sentence proposals that are bespoke to the child in question and importantly victim considerations both actual and potential. The role of YJS Court staff is to also ensure all children produced from Police custody are assessed including their wellbeing, putting together bail packages as alternatives to remands and consequently

liaising with the wider professional network that may surround a child. They are also responsible for processing a remand if one arises by ensuring the child and their family are communicated with on arrangements and any risk related to suggested placements is communicated with the Youth Custody Service. They complete paperwork to ensure the secure setting receiving the young person has all relevant information including medication information and details on emotional presentation, any religious or dietary considerations or risk known to others including staff. Each Court appearance of a child is recorded and where the child is known to another local authority information is shared securely. In instances where the child receives a community order – the Court staff will ensure the child and their families/carers understand what is being directed by the Court and that a first appointment is offered with the Service. Where a young person cannot be seen at the Service's Office, alternative arrangements will be made using a sister-site to ensure the child feels safe when engaging with the Service.

**Community work** – During the last HMPI Inspection in 2019 the Service was assessed as 'good' in the delivery of their oversight of Community Statutory Orders on behalf of the Court. This rating was reinstated during the self- assessment completed in 2020 and has continuously been reviewed via the auditing framework in place. The timeliness of completing assessments is a continued area for improvement, ensuring inclusivity of young people within their Youth Justice Plans and enhancing victim consideration remain ongoing focus areas. Weekly reports are sent to Managers to ensure that there is monitoring processes and audits on victim work and training in this area provides continued focus for Practitioners.

**Custody** – Those who enter custody are often some of the most vulnerable yet high risk children within the cohort and therefore joint work with the Secure Estate is essential. The YJS see a young person in custody as outlined in national standard expectations but will sustain contact through telephone calls and in some instances welfare visits outside of these expectations. The YJS and Secure estate share a joint portal YJAF, each Practitioner and Manager is expected to have log in details to this site to ensure there is readily available access to records. Croydon Youth Justice Service also has a designated member of staff attend and work regularly from YOI Cookham Wood, permitted accessibility to children within this establishment. Wider issues related to specific establishments including segregation, frequent incidents of violence, not accessing 30 hours education continue to be challenged by the YJS via safeguarding leads and where necessary direct communication with Governors. The YJS Resettlement Manager is also co-located within YOI Cookham Wood weekly to ensure there is direct accessibility to children within this establishment and communication between the two agencies is strong.

**Transitions** – For those young people open to the Youth Justice Service, who have their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday nearing, there is the potential that they will be transferred to Probation being deemed a young adult. The YJS uses National Probation Service guidance on transfers and has its own local framework to ensure that children are aware of the transition and as much preparation occurs, beginning 6 months prior to any transfer. In some instances where there is less than 6 months remaining on an Order, or the young person is subject to a Referral Order (specifically devised for Youth Justice) or there is specific vulnerability or need, the YJS will retain the supervision of 18-year-olds. In 2022/23 14 young people were transferred and 43 postponed remaining with the Youth Justice Service. Reasons for remaining with the Service could include sentence type, time period left of sentence, young person's vulnerability, or other transition considerations. During the self-assessment in 2020 transfers were deemed as 'requiring improvement'. Often a young person will be transitioning in other ways e.g., if in care leaving care to pursue independent living, transferring from Child mental health services into adult etc It is therefore important to consider transitions more widely and to ensure that preparation combines all elements of the young person's transitioning. The

improvements observed included the National Probation Service allocating in a timely way and follow up of the transition once transfer has been completed being embedded.

## 22. Workforce Development

It is important that Croydon Youth Justice Service has a well-trained and experienced Team to ensure the best possible outcomes are achieved for children and their families and victims.

The Youth Justice Service utilises a variety of courses to ensure staff have knowledge and understanding in all aspects of their practice and/or know where to gain information. Training includes use of the Youth Justice Board INSET Training, Internal training delivering courses on safeguarding particularly contextual safeguarding which is often sighted within the cohort. Specific external/bespoke courses are also offered including Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate, Systemic Practice Training, Trauma Informed Practice, Counselling, Management Courses. A training analysis for 2023 has been completed and both analysis and plan are shared with the Board to ensure the workforce is adequately trained within the specialism of Youth Justice.

The Youth Justice Service Management Team has also delivered a number of workshops during 2023 on practice areas including: ASSET+ (assessment tool), Desistance, Future Behaviours, Planning and Sequencing, Out of Court work, Court work, Restorative Justice, Serious Youth Violence and the IOM process, Contingency Planning, Speech and Language training, Referring to Social Care, National Referral Mechanism, Serious Incident Thematic feedback, Use of Resettlement, MAPPA training (inclusive of MAPPA admin), Pre-Sentence Report writing, Court work the creation of a bail packages

Bi-weekly Team and monthly Service Meetings provide a platform for guest speakers to present and the last six months has welcomed: Prevent and Chanel Manager to discuss radicalisation and processes when identification is made, Red Thread – Youth Workers in the emergency duty department of hospitals who meet with young people who have been the victims of violence of exploitation, Suicide Prevention Services, Barnardo's, Croydon Safeguarding Partnership Manager, Family Justice Centre Operations Manager, Palace for Life detailing local projects running in the North of the Borough via Crystal Palace Football Club.

For further detail please sight Appendix 7 (Croydon Youth Justice Workforce Development Plan).

## 23. Evidence Based Practice and Innovation

There are a number of approaches that research findings have found to be the most effective when working with young people within a Criminal Justice context. Primarily, a strength-based approach, utilising young people's aspirations and interests in addition to promoting their potential, this supported by a 'Child First' approach, where children are treated like children, has been found to be the most successful way of reducing/preventing offending behaviour. It is important for all partners to adopt these principles and to look at ways to enhance protective factors and support young people by providing opportunity to entice desistance. A relational approach is therefore important to provide trust in the Service and to ensure young people have confidence in the Youth Justice System. Survey(s) and Youth Participation Forums undertaken in 2023 have found young people known to the system view the Organisation positively and saw staff had their interests at heart to make change and aspire to a future away from the system.

Research also supports the use of community re-integration. The YJS has strong established relationships with the Voluntary Community Sector, to promote social inclusion and opportunity within the communities' children and young people reside. This work has brought with it local expertise and knowledge, delivered by those people, children and young people identify and resonate with as the local population. The My Ends Project is an example of statutory and community collaboration where the Local Authority works with the community to enhance outcomes for children and young people. The Project delivers a variety of projects aimed at different sub-sections of the community and includes parental and school-based work. This work has brought with it open dialogue on need and creative solutions. The networking within this group means resource and support is often found and tailored to individual need quickly. Police, YJS, violence Reduction Unit and Education dept. are the Statutory partners but there is a directory of VCS providers that play a role in this project's delivery which is overseen by the Croydon Voluntary Action Team.

## 24. Evaluation

The YJS has an audit framework that was integrated and revised during 2023 to align with a wider Social Care auditing programme 'Windows into Practice'. The revised framework extended audits to Manager's across the department inclusive of QA Managers and Social Care Managers with the addition of peer moderators alongside a moderation panel to support consistency of gradings.

The YJS continues to audit cases each month, typically with a YJS theme and a presentation is given by each auditor on the findings answering key questions under each theme and using a specific tool influenced by HMPI inspection criteria. Audits have included: work with girls, work with those in custody, out of court work, referral order work, work on disproportionately. The auditor spends time with the Practitioner and Line Manger detailing both strengths and improvements designed to improve practice. Findings have led to practice improvements including a performance oversight section within the YJS Management meeting to look at National Standards including assessment timeliness, formation of the girl's group and mentoring offer, delivery of practice workshops on all key areas of YJS practice, Managers training as Inspectors (Local assessor) to enhance their auditing knowledge, training analysis, creation of the Stop of Search programme along with the Positive Male group.

At the time of writing Croydon YJS had also partaken in a peer audit with Hammersmith and Fulham the focus on disproportionately and its consideration in practice.

## 25. Service Development Plan

Croydon Youth Justice Plan for 2023/24 should be read in conjunction with the Youth Justice Board Strategic Plan 2021-2024 [YJB Strategic Plan 2021 - 2024 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114221/yjb-strategic-plan-2021-2024.pdf)

The Youth Justice Board Strategic Plan provides an overall framework for national objectives within the sector, which Croydon YJS aspires and work towards. The Youth Justice Board is a central governing body attached to the Ministry of Justice who has oversight of the sector by ways of monitoring and providing practice support.

The Youth Justice Plan has also been devised in reference to existing and linked strategies within the borough including the Community Safety Strategy 2021-24.

## 26. Service Development

Priorities 2023/2024	Aim	Actions
Addressing over-representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To address the stark over-representation of black and mixed heritage males within the cohort of children known to the Service</li> <li>To consider practice with Children in Care and known to Youth Justice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revise Disproportionately Action Plan for 2023/24</li> <li>Continue to look at other areas where children are disadvantaged where the YJS can advocate for children – Police and Court training, work with education and advocacy related to exclusions.</li> <li>Continue to work with the Voluntary Community Sector to ensure the communities children reside play an integral role assisting children to avoid further contact with the System.</li> <li>Deliver spoke interventions such as the Positive Male Group and Girls Group</li> <li>Offering mentoring where young people can resonate and engage with their mentors through appropriate cultural matching.</li> <li>Continue to promote the rights of children e.g., Stop and Search group – empowering children with knowledge on the law.</li> <li>Enhance our practice when working with children in Care – joined up work with the Children in Care Council.</li> <li>Ensuring that we provide robust bail packages as an alternative to custody recognising this is an</li> </ul>
Prevent and Respond to Serious Youth Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To contribute as part of a wider partnership to address the causes of Serious Youth Violence and be responsive to Serious Youth Violence when it emerges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on high priority neighbourhoods by offering bespoke interventions for specific areas jointly with the VCS.</li> <li>Youth Engagement Outreach Team to show a presence following SYV incidents to provide support and advice to</li> </ul>

		<p>the children and communities it impacts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YJS has a lead role in the creation and delivery of the Council's Youth Safety Plan which is currently in development as a co-production activity.</li> <li>• Co-chair with Adolescent Service (Young Croydon) locality discussions jointly with partners to discuss children of concern to ensure appropriate services are in place.</li> <li>• Continue to manage and oversee children open to the YJS, for SYV, via internal processes such as IOM, RVMP, CAP.</li> <li>• To enhance factors for desistance by way of specialist interventions being offered – counselling/bespoke interventions/mentoring/Speech and Language/constructive activities/support with ETE.</li> <li>• Where jointly open with Social Care joint supervision to be delivered.</li> </ul>
Contribute as part of a wider partnership to tackle domestic Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To note that domestic abuse is prevalent within our cohort both as children being victims but in some instances the perpetrator and to ensure procedures are followed and staff are trained in this area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff and Managers to adhere to safeguarding processes in this area.</li> <li>• All staff to be trained in risk assessment screenings linked to MARAC processes.</li> <li>• All staff to have knowledge of the Family Justice Centre (FJC) and programmes offered.</li> <li>• Staff to ensure they are consulting with the FJC where domestic abuse is evident and where necessary</li> </ul>
Health Offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure there is a holistic health offer for children known to Youth Justice – inclusive of Speech and Language, Substance Misuse, Physical Health (including Sexual Health), Counselling Services and Mental</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruit into SALT vacancy</li> <li>• Increase number of staff trained in AIM (assessment tool linked to sexually harmful behaviour) (accounting for the increase in incident images convictions seen in data)</li> <li>• Continue to deliver Your Choice Cognitive Behavioural</li> </ul>

	and Forensic Health Services.	<p>Programme jointly with the support of the clinical team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to provide staff with Clinical support through reflective practice and case consultations.</li> <li>• Mental Health Offer to be reviewed by partnership.</li> <li>• Enhance FCAMHS offer within the Service.</li> </ul>
Prevent and divert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that children at risk or on the periphery of criminality are offered services at the earliest opportunity and to divert children away from the Criminal Justice System using alternative platforms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to evolve newly implemented Projects - Turnaround and Engage</li> <li>• To obtain data on new projects to analyse patterns &amp; themes.</li> <li>• To continue to link with key partners to prevent and divert children from the system including Police, Education, Health, Social Care and VCS.</li> <li>• Staff to continue to be based in MASH and continue to improve joint work at earliest possible stages.</li> </ul>
Responding to Contextual Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure the workforce has a sound understanding of contextual safeguarding (risks outside of the home) and extra familial harm ensuring that their practice in this area is collaborative with key partners including Social Care, Police, Education and Health in addition to the Voluntary Community Sector. Overall aim is to ensure children are safe.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to NRM processes are understood by Team.</li> <li>• All Managers to attend Decision Making Training</li> <li>• All YJS staff to jointly attend NRM decision making panel.</li> <li>• To improve quality of NRM data held on YJS children and this data is analysed.</li> <li>• To ensure plans surrounding children with positive NRMS are jointly held with Social Care</li> <li>• All staff to be trained on Contextual Safeguarding</li> <li>• YJS to continue to be representative at CAP</li> </ul>
Reduce the number of Children identified as NEET (Not in Education or Employment or Training)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure all reasonable attempts are made to provide opportunities to children open to Croydon Youth Justice Service that are deemed NEET</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work closely with Croydon Works to ensure training and employment opportunities are promoted.</li> <li>• Remain to run Skill Mill employability project.</li> <li>• 16+ Worker to continue to provide readiness sessions to</li> </ul>



	<p>and help them in their readiness within this area.</p>	<p>support young people to get ready to enter the employment sector or further training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership to be regularly briefed on employment and training challenges in borough.</li> <li>• Continue to work on relationships with providers and employment sector to create directory of offer.</li> <li>• Continue to be representative at all key panels including Fair Access Panel to ensure exclusions are minimalised for our cohort.</li> <li>• To continue to provide a staff member to the local Pupil Referral Unit to form part of their Task-force inclusive of YJS expertise.</li> </ul>
Victim Centric Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that Croydon YJS is victim centric, and victims are at the centre of the work we deliver by way of restorative processes and ensuring their voices are heard to influence practice and manage risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff to have an appraisal target to be victim centric.</li> <li>• To ensure all children open to YJS have access to restorative justice provisions taking account of victim wishes.</li> <li>• For all staff to be trauma informed trained and to acknowledge that many of the cohort are themselves victims.</li> <li>• To ensure the victim(s) voice is heard and applied in our practice.</li> <li>• To consider potential victims as part of our risk management.</li> </ul>
Resettlement Offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that there is a holistic resettlement offer that promotes recidivism by ensuring suitable accommodation is available, education and health services are offered. Offer to consider cultural relevance and to promote child-first principles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YJS Resettlement Forum to continue to oversee children in custody ensuring that all their basic needs are being met and plans for release are considered at earliest opportunity.</li> <li>• Where issues of accommodation occur for these to be escalated at the earliest opportunity</li> <li>• Create of ROTL policy and ensuring ROTL is considered where eligible as part of resettlement offer</li> </ul>

## 27. Challenges, Risks, and Issues

1. **Addressing Disproportionately** – The Youth Justice System does not determine who enters the system by way of arrest, the role the Service does play is ensuring advocacy is used to divert children away from unnecessary escalation and to ensure processes are fair. The Service is familiar with escalating with Criminal Justice Partners and drawing attention to structural racism that creates disadvantage for specific groups.

**Response** – The Youth Justice Service is committed to equality and anti-racist policy that ensures practice is fair. The creation of the Disproportionately Action Plan is intended to look at all areas of the practice model to ensure reflection and consideration is given to all aspects of practice. The work varies from training other Criminal Justice agencies to ensure our young people are heard and interventions are bespoke to the children they are intended for. Cultural sensitivity and awareness is promoted as part of the organisational culture.

2. **Serious Youth Violence** – As detailed above, Serious Youth Violence and its contributing factors remains a significant concern to the YJS. Whilst fatalities have reduced, stabbings and other forms of Serious Youth Violence, including weapon related offending remains high. The YJS alone cannot address all factors related to Serious Youth Violence, which includes poverty/inadequate housing, education/exclusions, exposure, and risk of exploitation and managing contextual safeguarding risk, detection, disruption, and enforcement action against those exploiting children. Adequate access to services and opportunities, environmental factors, discrimination, and structural inequalities have a significant impact. It is therefore the role of all services and partners to contribute to the reduction of Serious Youth Violence and an outline of such a response can be found in the Community Safety Strategy alongside the Youth Safety Plan and child / adult safeguarding protocols.

**Response** – The YJS continues to work with key Statutory Partners and the voluntary sector as a collaborative response to Serious Youth Violence. One success in 2021/22 was the implementation of a community led intelligence hub where key representatives known to the local community sector can voice concerns with the YJS and Police – this forum remains. This permits a connection with statutory services and those who know their communities and the current risks, in addition for the community sector to influence responses and approaches that are locally informed. The work in this area however continues to evolve. The YJS Service Manager, since 2021 oversees the Youth Engagement team to address concerns much earlier on to avoid entry into the Youth Justice System. This work will continue to provide children with opportunity and education, to divert away from the system and will include a voluntary offer for those released under investigation for a second time. Research indicates that prevention is key to ensure children and families receive services earlier on to divert away from criminalisation. The introduction to the Turnaround and Engage Project adds additional resource in this capacity. Both projects deliver bespoke interventions with a strong emphasis upon community involvement and delivery.

3. **Domestic Abuse** – a significant percentage of children known to the Youth Justice Service have been exposed to domestic violence/abuse. Conversely, the Youth Justice Service has a number of children who through their own experiences and trauma, normalise violence and coercion and having been victimised begin to perpetrate. Violence against parents or partners is not uncommon and often these risks are in addition to the offending behaviour for which they are known. The Youth Justice Service is responsive to these risks and will liaise with Croydon Social Care and the Family Justice Centre (FJC) to ensure these risks are adequately considered and managed. YJS Practitioners and Managers attend Multi-agency

Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) where there is concern of domestic violence. In rare instances, the YJS will also contribute to the management of restraining orders imposed and ensure that this is considered as part of the monitoring role the YJS has as one of its many functions. YJS will liaise with the Police, Social Care and FJC to ensure risk management is considered in full and information is shared to safeguard others.

**Response** – Ensuring the entire workforce is appropriately trained in this area of work and has full understanding of safeguarding processes and MARAC is essential. Whilst there are some programmes available to refer into (locally) the YJS continues to evolve their joint work with the Family Justice Centre.

4. **Health** – The current provision of health services is delivered through the established roles with both permanent and locum staff, the aim would be in 2023 to ensure that health roles are filled on a permanent basis to provide consistency and stability for our young people.

**Response** – There has been significant progress within the domain of Health – implementation of a Physical Health Nurse who screens all children open to the YJS ensuring they are signposted into appropriate health services and advocated for, implementation of monthly Sexual Health Clinic to ensure adolescents are readily accessing support in this area, inclusion of Clinical Team within the YJS, providing consultation and bespoke case-work, implementation of Your Choice Programme a Cognitive Behavioural Programme for a specific part of the cohort, continuation of commissioned counselling services such as Off the Record and Croydon Drop In inclusive of services for bereavement. Whilst the Health Offer has expanded work specific to acute mental health need poses challenge and lengthy waiting lists. The Service has a well-formed relationship with FCAMHS, and a Liaison and Diversion Service based at the Custody Suite. The Speech and Language Post is also vacant and there have been challenges recruiting which is a picture seen London wide. Staff however are trained in Mental Health First aid and trauma informed practice.

5. **Prevent and Divert** – New projects funded by the Ministry of Justice and MOPAC has enhanced the Offer of early intervention and there is a now a framework provided for children identified at risk of criminality. The framework permits an offer for children Released Under Investigation, Bailed and/or NFA'd in addition to those subject to on-the-spot cautions also known as Community Resolutions. Work delivered from the custody suite in addition to projects that ensure all children encountering the Criminal Justice System are offered services and variants of intervention dependant on need. The risk and challenge are the demand. Whilst fewer children are entering the Youth Justice Service or formal Criminal Justice System, data shows that high numbers of children still coming into contact with Police. Other factors are also at play including lengthy bail periods and release under investigation drift.

6. **Responding to Contextual Safeguarding** – Linked to Serious Youth Violence is the issue of county-lines and contextual safeguarding (risks posed outside the home). Croydon is statistically rated as number 1 in London for children's involvement in county-lines (Rescue and Response, 2023).

The YJS continues to see high levels of out of area drug related offences which is often linked to the child's own victimisation and exploitation. Whilst YJS and services attempt to safeguard children and work with specialist services such as Barnardo's and Rescue and Response, challenge remains around the policing of those exploiting children. Joint work with Social Care, Police and Housing has led to several families being moved out of area to protect the young people in question, often families report a desperation and a sense that they have lost

all control over their children. The YJS remains to use its statutory tools in effort to assist in the safeguarding of children, yet the issues are complex and require multi agency responses.

**Response** – Earlier interventions to support families, strategic responses from Police are required. The YJS understand the complex context in which it works and addresses this area by advocating services and support to protect the children and young people known to its service. Positively, the implemented National Referral Mechanism pilot has been localised ensuring children are correctly identified as victims at the earliest opportunity without delay. This has reduced the time taken to confirm a child is being exploited leading to reduced criminalisation and fast access to bespoke and targeted work by specialist services such as Barnardo's.

- 7. Not in Education or Employment Training (NEET)** – Children within the YJS cohort have often had difficult experiences within the education system. Data tells us that many, when they arrive at the system, have experienced managed moves, exclusions or have been enrolled in Alternative Provision. Information also tells us that many have not consistently been in education regardless of enrolment and many have Education Health & Care Plans. The application of the Speech and Language work has also provided the Service with insight that some young people have needs that have not been detected such as communication difficulties and understanding but also neuro-diverse conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism spectrum disorder. Children known to Youth Justice face several additional challenges particularly when considering further education and employment and often there is a need to assist a young person with 'readiness'. Children within the cohort are often without key pieces of documentation such as ID and bank accounts, struggle with concepts such as time or do not have routines that support attendance in addition to holding a criminal record and the challenges this brings. Children can be unfamiliar with leaving the borough or due to risk unable to attend certain localities. Appropriate provisions for children with these challenges are also in short.

**Response** – The Youth Crime Board has played particular focus to this area, which was raised in the Inspection 2019. The Partnership has continued to pull together to source provisions and support advocacy for these children. The YJS has also obtained a SEND accreditation for joint work with the SEND department and recruited into an Outreach 16+ worker that offers 1:1 support in this area.

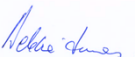
- 8. Victim(s)** – Victims are an important part of the Youth Justice Service function and ensuring they have a voice in the work we deliver. Current challenges are linked to consent being obtained for contact. The YJS has a Victim Worker designated to this area of work and is working closely with the Police to improve consent and information supplied by the Police.
- 9. Custody & Resettlement** – Croydon has seen a significant decline in the use of custody and whilst this has been seen nationally, the reduction has placed Croydon in line with the London average. Custody is reserved for the most serious offences and the children from the cohort presently in custody are there following sentence or remand for incidents of severe violence including murder. Croydon Youth Justice Service recognises that there are times when custody is warranted, when a crime is so grave that protection of the public is required, but fundamentally the use of custody is non-conducive to a young person's development and chances of rehabilitation. Inspection reports detailing environments that enable violence, segregation, limited access to services remind the Service why all efforts should be made to provide alternatives such as the use of bespoke bail packages that consider risk, or community orders that manage risk with the use of requirements are promoted. For those

who do enter the secure estate the statutory role of the YJS is to ensure that whilst there their wellbeing is considered and that they access all necessary services.

Planning for a young person returning to the community takes time and one difficulty many Youth Justice Services report is the difficulty in finding accommodation prior to release. Youth Justice Services work closely with Children's Social Care & Housing to identify accommodation. There are significant, well known and researched, local and national challenges in finding suitable placements however we continue to work together in addressing these challenges to identify placements that are safe and meet the young people's needs. This can be an anxious time for our children, YJS and Social Care will work together to reassure and plan the transition for the children. National Placement shortages and relocations can indirectly place pressure on resettlement plans, particularly when the young person is placed into a new area. Any delays in securing placements can compromise risk management; we work tirelessly to ensure services are available upon release, so the transition is a positive one.

**Response** – Any challenges with accommodation are escalated for Head of Service oversight and the challenges regarding accommodation has been raised with Partners at the Board informing our sufficiency strategy and commissioning plans.

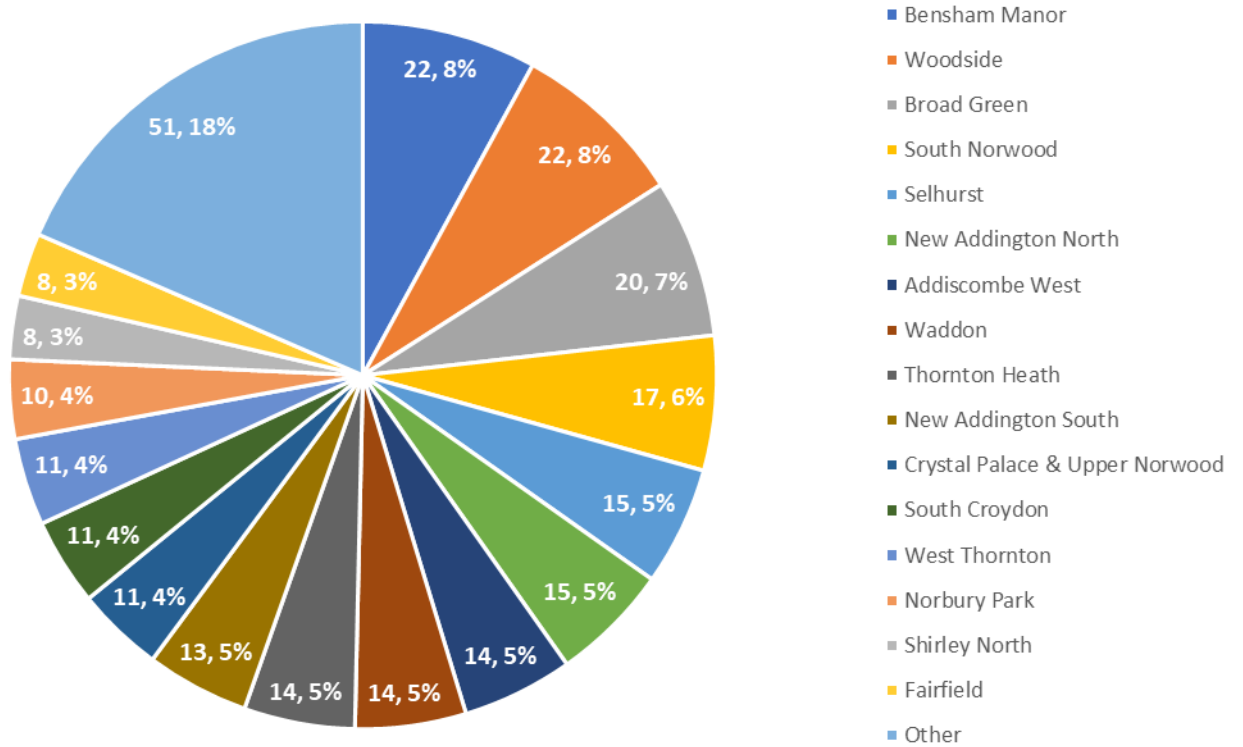
#### 27. sign off, submission and approval

Chair of YJS Board - name	Debbie Jones
Signature	
Date	13.07.23

## Appendix 1

Wards 2022 – 2023 cohort

### Wards 2022-2023 Cohort

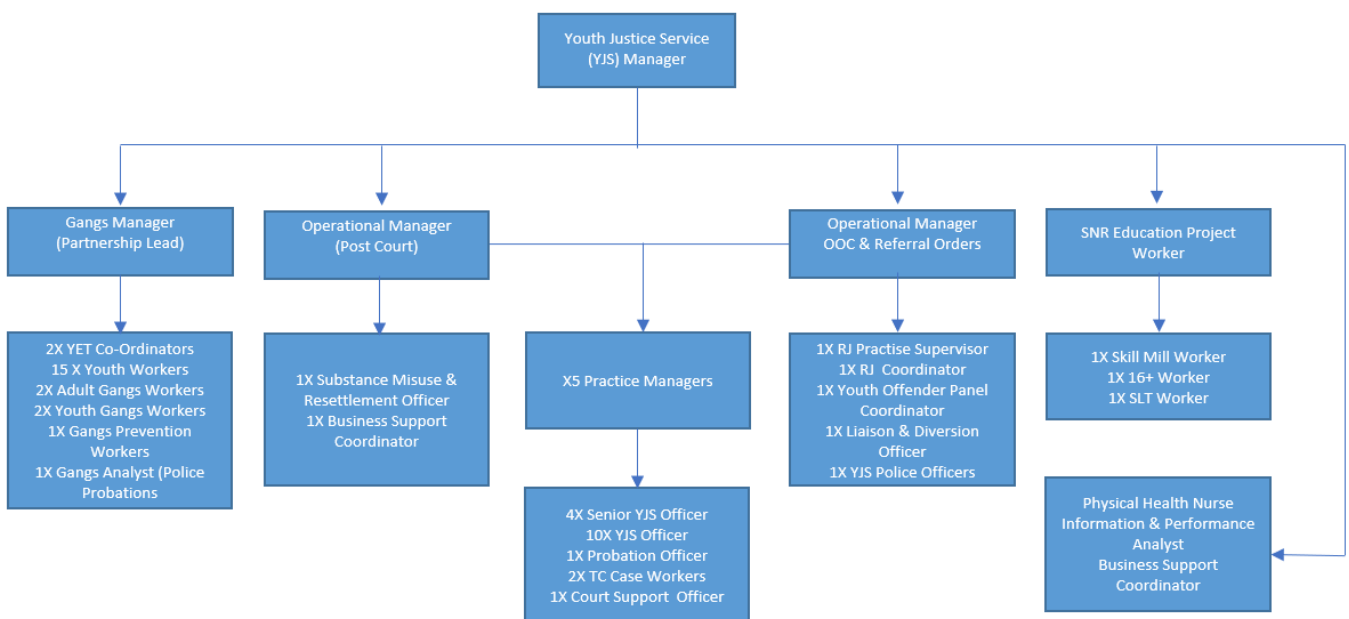


- Bensham Manor - 22
- Woodside - 22
- Broad Green - 20
- South Norwood - 17
- Selhurst - 15
- New Addington North - 15
- Addiscombe West - 14
- Waddon - 14
- Thornton Heath - 14
- New Addington South - 13
- West Thornton - 12
- South Croydon - 11
- Crystal Palace & Upper Norwood - 11
- Norbury Park - 11
- Fairfield - 8
- Shirley North - 8
- Shirley South - 7
- Addiscombe East - 7
- Sanderstead - 6
- Norbury & Pollards Hill - 5
- Selsdon & Addington Village - 5
- Coulsdon Town - 4
- Selsdon Vale & Forestdale - 4
- Purley & Woodcote - 3
- Old Coulsdon - 2
- Purley Oaks & Riddlesdown - 2

- Withyham - 1
- Seven Kings - 1
- Sitwell - 1
- Carshalton Central - 1
- Ravensbury - 1
- Beddington South - 1
- Longthornton - 1
- Streatham Wells - 1
- Herne Hill - 1

## Appendix 2

### Staffing Structure



## Appendix 3

### Disproportionality Action Plan (DAP) 2023-24



Disproportionality  
Action Plan 2023-24.d

## Appendix 4

### Reparation Projects



Available Reparation  
Projects June 2023.do

## **Appendix 5**

Croydon YJS Quality Assurance Framework



YJS CSC QA  
proposal.docx

## **Appendix 6**

Youth Justice Crime Board Terms of Reference



YCPYJS Board TOR  
2023.doc

## **Appendix 7**

Croydon Youth Justice Workforce Development Plan



Workforce  
Development Plan (Tr.

## **Appendix 8**



Prevention  
Strategy.docx

## **Appendix 9**





Joint Working  
Protocol

**Common youth justice terms**  
Please add any locally used terminology

<b>ACE</b>	Adverse childhood experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long-lasting impact on the child's health, and life choices
<b>AIM 2 and 3</b>	Assessment, intervention and moving on, an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour
<b>ASB</b>	Anti-social behaviour
<b>AssetPlus</b>	Assessment tool to be used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour
<b>CAMHS</b>	Child and adolescent mental health services
<b>CCE</b>	Child Criminal exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity
<b>Children</b>	We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.
<b>Child First</b>	A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenants to this approach, it should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion
<b>Child looked-after</b>	Child Looked After, where a child is looked after by the local authority
<b>CME</b>	Child Missing Education
<b>Constructive resettlement</b>	The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social
<b>Contextual safeguarding</b>	An approach to safeguarding children which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety
<b>Community resolution</b>	Community resolution, an informal disposal, administered by the police, for low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt
<b>EHCP</b>	Education and health care plan, a plan outlining the education, health, and social care needs of a child with additional needs
<b>ETE</b>	Education, training, or employment
<b>EHE</b>	Electively home educated, children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school
<b>EOTAS</b>	Education other than at school, children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting

<b>FTE</b>	First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal)
<b>HMIP</b>	Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect Youth Justice services and probation services
<b>HSB</b>	Harmful sexual behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves
<b>JAC</b>	Junior Attendance Centre
<b>MAPP</b>	Multi agency public protection arrangements
<b>MFH</b>	Missing from Home
<b>NRM</b>	National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery to gain help to support and protect them
<b>OOCD</b>	Out-of-court disposal. All recorded disposals where a crime is recorded, an outcome delivered but the matter is not sent to court
<b>Outcome 22/21</b>	An informal disposal, available where the child does not admit the offence, but they undertake intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending
<b>Over-represented children</b>	Appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average
<b>RHI</b>	Return home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported missing
<b>SLCN</b>	Speech, Language, and communication needs
<b>STC</b>	Secure training centre
<b>SCH</b>	Secure children's home
<b>Young adult</b>	We define a young adult as someone who is 18 or over. For example, when a young adult is transferring to the adult probation service.
<b>YJS</b>	Youth Justice Service. This is now the preferred title for services working with children in the youth justice system. This reflects the move to a child first approach
<b>YOI</b>	Young offender institution