



**15 January 2025**

<b>Title</b>	Reading Youth Justice Service Inspection
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To note the report for information
<b>Report status</b>	Public report
<b>Report author</b>	Maria Young, Director Family Help & Safeguarding, BFfC, Children's Services
<b>Lead Councillor</b>	Cllr Wendy Griffith, Lead Councillor for Children
<b>Corporate priority</b>	Thriving Communities
<b>Recommendations</b>	1. That the Committee notes the contents of the Youth Justice Service HMIP inspection report and endorse the Improvement Plan

## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) conducted an inspection of Youth Justice Services in Reading between 9<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The inspection focused on 4 domains; 1 - Governance and Leadership, 2 - Post Court Work, 3 - Pre-Court Work and 4 - Resettlement.
- 1.2. HMIP published their inspection report on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024. Overall, the service was rated as Inadequate, with 4 sub ratings provided for domains 1 – 3. Domain 4 was not rated as there were no resettlement cases to inspect.
- 1.3. The report made the following 8 recommendations:
- 1.4. **The Reading Youth Justice Service manager should:**
  - ensure that quality assurance arrangements, oversight of practice, and supervision arrangements consistently support staff and volunteer development
  - ensure that assessing activity always considers how best to achieve safety for the child and the community
  - ensure that planning activity is comprehensive and that it aligns effectively with activity undertaken by other services, including the consideration of appropriate contingency arrangements
  - ensure that staff consistently liaise with all relevant services when delivering interventions
  - ensure that commensurate focus is given to the needs of victims.
- 1.5. **The Reading Youth Justice Management Board should:**
  - ensure that the YJS is both sufficiently resourced and structured to facilitate the delivery of high-quality interventions for children and the victims of crime
  - assure itself that the disproportionality action plan is being used effectively across the partnership to enhance equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB)
  - work together to ensure that children have access to, and can engage with, high-quality,

aspirational education, training and employment opportunities.

## **2. Policy Context**

- 2.1 HM Chief Inspector of Probation's responsibilities are set out in Section 7 of the *Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)*, as amended by the *Offender Management Act (2007)*, section 12(3)(a). This requires the Chief Inspector to inspect (section 1) and report to the Secretary of State (section 3) on the arrangements for the provision of probation services.
- 2.2 Under Section 7(6) of the *Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)*, HM Chief Inspector of Probation is also conferred to inspect and report on Youth Justice Teams, established under section 39 of the *Crime and Disorder Act (1998)*, and bodies acting on their behalf.

## **3 The Proposal**

- 3.1 A detailed and robust improvement plan has been created that has been endorsed by the Reading Youth Justice Management Board. This will be submitted to HMIP by 20<sup>th</sup> December.
- 3.2 The plan sets out in detail how the service and partnership will meet the recommendations and address the findings.
- 3.3 Following the inspection, the service has undertaken a full review of all open cases to provide assurance that case work meets a minimum level of safety for both children and victims.

## **4 Contribution to Strategic Aims**

- 4.1 The improvement work makes a contribution to the theme of "Thriving Communities" as set out in the Corporate Plan. It does this by delivering essential improvements to the quality of Youth Justice work in Reading.

## **5 Environmental and Climate Implications**

- 5.1 There are no environmental or climate implications linked to the Youth Justice inspection or improvement plan.

## **6 Community Engagement**

- 6.1 As a routine part of the inspection process inspectors sought feedback from children and families about the service they had received. Feedback was universally positive. The Youth Justice Service has written to children and families who are open to the service to inform them about the outcome of the inspection and our plans to improve the service.

## **7 Equality Implications**

- 7.1 Addressing disproportionality within the criminal justice system is one of the priorities for the Youth Justice Service and partnership as outlined in the Annual Youth Justice Plan 2024/25. One of the recommendations in the HMIP inspection report was to ensure that the disproportionality action plan is being implemented effectively across the partnership.

## **8 Other Relevant Considerations**

- 8.1 Following the inspection outcome, the Youth Justice Service has moved to quadrant 3 of the Youth Justice Board (YJB) 4 quadrant oversight framework. The criteria for this are that there is an identified improvement need or concern and that the service is considered a 'priority service'. The classification enables the Youth Justice Board to undertake focused engagement at a service level (or across regional statutory and/or delivery partners) and, where appropriate, provide support on their improvement journey. De-escalation from quadrants 3 and/or 4 can only be achieved through meeting the agreed exit criteria. These criteria will be defined through engagement with the Youth Justice

Board and the Youth Justice Service.

## **9 Legal Implications**

None

## **10 Financial Implications**

- 10.1 The Reading Youth Justice Service Management Board is to ensure the Youth Justice Service is both sufficiently resourced and structured to facilitate the delivery of high quality interventions to both children and victims of crime. The service will need to be resourced appropriately in order to deliver the improvements required.

## **11 Timetable for Implementation**

- 11.1 The improvement plan was submitted to HMIP on 20<sup>th</sup> December. Progress against the plan will be overseen by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB).

## **12 Background Papers**

- 12.1 An Inspection of Youth Justice Services in Reading published 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024.  
12.2 Reading YJS HMIP Action Plan.

## **Appendices**

1. An Inspection of Youth Justice Services in Reading published 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024.
2. Reading YJS HMIP Action Plan