



## Reading YJS HMIP Improvement Plan – December 2024.

Reading Youth Justice Service was inspected by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) in September 2024. The overall outcome was Inadequate. The following recommendations were made:

**The Reading Youth Justice Service manager should:**

1. ensure that quality assurance arrangements, oversight of practice, and supervision arrangements consistently support staff and volunteer development
2. ensure that assessing activity always considers how best to achieve safety for the child and the community
3. ensure that planning activity is comprehensive and that it aligns effectively with activity undertaken by other services, including the consideration of appropriate contingency arrangements.
4. ensure that staff consistently liaise with all relevant services when delivering interventions
5. ensure that commensurate focus is given to the needs of victims.

**The Reading Youth Justice Management Board should:**

6. 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
7. assure itself that the disproportionality action plan is being used effectively across the partnership to enhance equity, inclusion, and diversity arrangements
8. work together to ensure that children have access to, and can engage with, high-quality, aspirational education, training, and employment opportunities.

The following plan sets out how the service and partnership will meet these recommendations . The plan is based on 4 pillars; Governance and Leadership, Staffing and Workforce Development, Partnership and Services; Process, Systems and Quality of Practice. Each pillar will include a number of actions and sub actions and have a nominated lead as well as board sponsor, who will work together to ensure progress against actions. Operational staff will also be involved in the delivery of specific actions. Each pillar of work will be coordinated by sub groups that will report to the YJS Management Board. Sub groups will use the following report to ensure the board is assured of progress against actions.

Add sample report

# Governance and Leadership

## What we know.

There has been significant progress made in the past 12 months to strengthen the partnership and governance arrangements of the YJS. There is a clear child first vision for the service which is shared by the partnership and driven by the Independent Chair of the Board.

**Lead:** Michael O'Connor, Independent Board Chair

**Board Sponsor:** Fiona Hostler, Head of Education Access and Support

Action/What	What did HMIP find/Why	Lead/Who	Timescale/When	Measures/How	Quality Assurance/Know	BRAG
Ensure board members are clear on their roles and responsibilities	<i>The management board needs to commit to embedding the changes it has started to make and continue the progress made.</i>	Head of Service/Board members	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board induction is reviewed and relaunched at away day with board</li> </ul>		
Develop Performance report to ensure Board can respond to the needs of the cohort	<i>Areas of focus missing from performance report – e.g. victim work, substance misuse, mental health</i>	Service Manager and YJS performance lead	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of performance report to include:</li> <li>all KPI data are included and</li> <li>richer/granular data sets provided to allow scrutiny of performance</li> <li>Local performance measures</li> <li>Timescales from offence to outcome</li> </ul>	Clear evidence of data informing Board decision making regarding operational practice and resources	

Develop audit framework and audit lead to ensure consistency	<i>Outcomes from review of audits were inconsistent</i>	YJS Performance Lead/Operational Manager	Jan 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop QA and Performance Framework</li> <li>• Review audit programme to ensure all audit outcomes are delivered to YJMB, Case and thematic.</li> <li>• Complete benchmarking exercise to ensure shared understanding of good and outstanding practice</li> <li>• Review audits to ensure board member involvement</li> </ul>		
Enhance operational involvement and leadership to address disproportionality	<i>Partnership staff were not aware of disproportionality action plan</i>	Board members	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board members to take ownership for communicating the plan within their organisations</li> <li>• Events held for partnership staff celebrating diversity and global majority leaders.</li> </ul>		

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of impact for individual children from black and global majority/GRT backgrounds</li> </ul>		
Ensure there is a strategic and operational lead for victims	<i>The voice of victims is not heard at board</i>	Service Manager/Performance lead.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victim data to be included in performance report</li> <li>Granular analysis of victim demographic and needs to ensure sufficient response</li> <li>Audit of victim work</li> <li>Explore victim representation on board</li> </ul>		
Further workforce development for Board and Operational staff to ensure Child First and Evidence based practice is embedded across all interventions with children	<i>Management team unsuccessful in operationalising child first vision and balancing against management of risk/safety and well-being</i>	Independent Board Chair/Service Manager	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff and managers to attend additional child first training with focus on how this sits alongside robust risk/Safety management</li> <li>Managers and staff to hold a follow up session to the</li> </ul>		

				<p>training to ensure consistent understanding of key messages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further workshops offered for board members for operationalising child first</li> </ul>		
Board education leads to lead on the development of a wider Alternative provision offer and pathway for children in the YJS cohort	<i>The board has been unsuccessful in tackling structural barriers, e.g. education provision</i>	Head of Education/SEN Lead/Operational Manager	September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wider alternative provision offer and development of a bespoke offer for the YJS cohort</li> <li>• Performance report to include data on children open to YJS who are not in mainstream education</li> <li>• Develop reintegration plans for each child</li> <li>• Board member to own each reintegration plan</li> </ul>		
Ensure YJS risks are understood and communicated to Board members and	<i>There is not a universal understanding of</i>	Independent Board Chair	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk register as standing item on board agenda</li> </ul>		

operational managers across the partnership	<i>risks to the organisation across the partnership</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board members to own specific risks and evidence to the Board progress against these</li> </ul>		
Board members to deliver one report each within the next 12 months to the YJS Board relating to the YJS cohort and what their organisation is doing to improve outcomes and meet the needs of children and victims in the cohort	<i>Board members need to ensure there is a clear focus on YJ children in the work they do at board and the data they bring for scrutiny</i>	Board members	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of partnership data presented to board to ensure this is relevant to children in the Youth Justice system</li> <li>• Review of Forward plan and agreement of Board member schedule for reports and progress to Board</li> </ul>		

# Staffing and Workforce Development

What we know:

Lead: Lisa Bursill, Interim Transformation lead.

Board sponsor: Chantal Foster, Head of Probation Delivery Unit, West Berkshire

Action/What	What did HMIP find/Why	Lead/Who	Timescale/When	Measures/How	Quality Assurance/Know	BRAG
Review of the YJS structure and assurance from Brighter Futures Leaders for agreed action and investment to staffing and recruitment	<i>Staffing arrangements are not conducive to delivering high quality interventions, and the absence of staff with a professional qualification impacts on service delivery</i>	Head of Service/Service Manager	September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The service will recruit at least 2 professionally qualified staff</li> <li>Review of structures to ensure high quality delivery</li> </ul>		
Agreement to recruit to vacant posts and to support growth investment from across the partnership to deliver high quality YJS services	<i>Staffing levels are not sufficient</i>	Service Manager	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment to 2 x vacant case worker posts</li> </ul>		
Agreement to recruit to vacant posts and to support growth investment from across the partnership to deliver high quality YJS services	<i>Service delivery has been impacted by the lack of the Probation officer</i>	Service Manager	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment to Transitions Officer post</li> <li>Transitions Officer to have access to n-delius and deliver the tasks a seconded Probation Officer would.</li> </ul>		



<p>Agreement to recruit to vacant posts and to support growth investment from across the partnership to deliver high quality YJS services</p>	<p><i>Current arrangements for victim work and RJ are not appropriate or sustainable</i></p>	<p>Service Manager</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment to vacant victim worker post</li> <li>• JD for post is reviewed against new inspection standards</li> </ul>		
<p>Create a dedicated workforce development strategy for the YJS team and partnership. Including Board development</p>	<p><i>Workforce development plans are under-developed</i></p>	<p>Head of Service/Service manager</p>	<p>September 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of workforce development strategy</li> <li>• Practitioners to each have a career progression plan including offering Youth Justice Degree and YJ certificate in effective practice</li> <li>• Review case worker JD to allow career progression to grade 7.</li> <li>• Managers – AYM Aspiring Future Leaders Programme</li> <li>• YJ apprenticeship for grade 5 case workers</li> </ul>		

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the feasibility of a student pathway</li> <li>• Workforce development strategy to include volunteers</li> </ul>		
Asset plus and risk assessment/Management training to be completed and embedded into process and practice	<i>The service urgently needs to re-visit Asset-Plus training. Inspectors found an overly rigid approach to assessing risk</i>	Service Manager	September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive risk assessment and risk management training to be delivered to front line practitioners.</li> <li>• Managers to ensure regular risk benchmarking delivers a clear and consistent understanding of risk</li> <li>• Practitioners to attend Child First training specifically addressing delivery of Child First vs robust risk management</li> <li>• Transitions Officer role to include regular workshops on risk delivered to staff</li> </ul>		

<p>Develop practice standards and framework for measuring 'local performance'.</p>	<p><i>Management oversight needs to consistently support high quality assessment, planning, and delivery of interventions</i></p>	<p>Service Manager</p>	<p>January 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed set of practice standards reported on monthly, which includes management oversight –</li> <li>• Management oversight guidance is reviewed to include clear guidance on quality alongside a standardised template</li> </ul>		
<p>Ensure the staffing structure has a clear lead for volunteers and volunteer training and development is included in the workforce development strategy</p>	<p><i>Volunteers receive no systematic ongoing support once they have been inducted</i></p>	<p>Operational Manager</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of supervision arrangements for volunteers – regular meetings including development opportunities</li> <li>• Volunteers invited to team meetings</li> <li>• Workforce development strategy to include volunteers</li> </ul>		

<p>Implement improvements to practice around equity diversity and inclusion and ensure these are embedded in to practice.</p>	<p><i>Practice around equity, diversity and inclusion was not consistent- there were instances of interpreters not being used and inconsistent recording of ethnicity</i></p>	<p>Operational Manager</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anti-racism and allyship training planned for 2025.</li><li>• QA forms to include this as a specific question relating to equality act and protected characteristics</li></ul>		
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# Partnerships and services

What we know.

Lead: Jonny Bradish, Head of Family Help and Partnerships

Board Sponsor: **Health**

Action/What	What did HMIP find/Why	Lead/Who	Timescale/When	Measures/How	Quality Assurance/Know	BRAG
Ensure Reconnect drugs worker is dedicated to the YJS cohort and offers routine screening and assessment for any child who identifies as using alcohol, illicit substances, cigarettes/vapes	<i>Substance misuse referrals are not consistently being made</i>	Operational Manager	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop working agreement with Reconnect on substance misuse referrals in addition to those who receive DDS</li> <li>Identify 1 Reconnect worker to deliver this work</li> </ul>		
Ensure that all YJS children have access to all services that are required to meet their needs and improve outcomes	<i>Children can not access partnership interventions in all cases</i>	Operational Manager/Team Manager CAMHS	January 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of process for referral to health interventions</li> <li>Review of strategic needs analysis and comparison of offer to meet each need. Any gaps must be addressed by the Board with regard to resource investment and growth</li> </ul>		

<p>Ensure effective escalation and challenge where children have not received an effective response from Children's Social Care</p> <p>Develop new multi-agency risk management panel to review and sign off high and very high risk/safety and well-being and contingency plans</p>	<p><i>There needs to be more consistent, effective challenge where children have not received an adequate response from Children's Social Care</i></p>	<p>Head of Service/Service Manager</p>	<p>May 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Escalation and challenge to be given a dedicated field in CV and monitored in line with management oversight and supervision frequency.</li> <li>• Review of escalation process/protocol with children's social care.</li> <li>• Joint audit work to be developed.</li> <li>• Review of Management oversight framework</li> <li>• Joint supervision to be developed</li> <li>• Multi-agency Risk Management Panel</li> </ul>		
<p>Implement the ACT now programme</p> <p>YJS to consider EH Lead on Board and EH strategy focus on preventing offending behaviour</p>	<p><i>The service needs to strengthen the approach for intervention for children upstream at 'reachable moments'.</i></p>	<p>Service Manager</p>	<p>February 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the Act Now programme</li> <li>• YJS to consider EH Lead on Board and EH strategy focus on preventing offending behaviour</li> </ul>		

Ensure interventions are within a trauma informed and child first environment of the YJS. Ensure police led interventions are focused on addressing presenting risk, but also provide opportunities for strengths based and future focused work	<i>Seconded Police Officer interventions being delivered at Police station</i>	Operational Manager	February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal agreement with TVP that interventions will be delivered within the YJS environment.</li> <li>Review of interventions delivered by YJS police Officer in line with Stay True to You principles</li> </ul>		
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<b>Process, Systems and Quality of Practice</b>						
<b>What we know.</b>						
<b>Lead: Maria Young, Director of Children’s Social Care</b>						
<b>Board Sponsor: Youth Justice, Thames Valley Police</b>						
<b>Action/What</b>	<b>What did HMIP find/Why</b>	<b>Lead/Who</b>	<b>Timescale/When</b>	<b>Measures/How</b>	<b>Quality Assurance/Know</b>	<b>BRAG</b>
Create schedule of policies for review managed within performance meeting	<i>Policies are not consistently updated</i>	Operational Manager/Performance Lead	February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create schedule of policies for review managed within performance meeting</li> </ul>		

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Priorities to develop a sentence planning process for multi-agency case formulation and planning of interventions and review of risk and safety management policy and procedures to ensure multi-agency approach to risk management and risk/safety and contingency planning</li> </ul>		
Develop a bespoke EDI policy for the YJS and ensure EDI is cross cutting across all refreshed policies	<i>Policies do not consistently support equity, diversity and inclusion</i>	Head of Service/Service manager	February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify key policies for review</li> </ul>		
Board to support growth and investment in a dedicated data and performance Lead	<i>More resource for data analysis would allow greater assurance of data integrity and sophistication of analysis</i>	Head of Service/Service Manager	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop options to allow greater resources to support with data analysis including dedicated performance analyst</li> </ul>		



<p>Develop performance dashboard relating to practice standards and timescales</p> <p>Develop weekly 'data day' for staff to understand work requiring action and prioritisation</p>	<p><i>A number of findings demonstrated the need for increased management 'grip' on practice standards and performance</i></p>	<p>Service Manager</p>	<p>February 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree local practice standards</li> <li>• Create set of local performance measures</li> <li>• Development of 'data day' process</li> <li>• Creation of caseload list and monthly caseload report</li> <li>• Managers meet weekly to review performance</li> </ul>		
<p>Develop QA framework</p> <p> </p>	<p><i>QA framework application needs to be strengthened</i></p>	<p>Service Manager</p>	<p>January 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the current Quality assurance framework against key findings from HMIP report</li> <li>• Review and update QA tools ensuring consistency across Court and OOC assessments.</li> <li>• Review management oversight guidance</li> </ul>		

				and template for management oversight.		
Police to lead a review on timescales from arrest to decision making and seek to improve processes and timescales for children	<i>The timeliness of Out of Court decision making needs to improve</i>	Detective Inspector, Youth Justice Unit.	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance report to include data on length of time from offence to outcome</li> <li>• TVP to provide report on timescales for board</li> <li>• Performance dashboard to include assessment and QA timescales.</li> </ul>		
Police and YJS to lead a detailed analysis of the O OCD cohort and ensure victim consent and completion rates for children with O OCDs is reviewed and understood	<p><i>Performance data on out of Court Disposals lacks depth.</i></p> <p><i>Analysis of Out of Court disposal data is under-developed – e.g. the partnership lacked clarity on victim consent levels</i></p>	<p>Detective Inspector, Youth Justice Unit.</p> <p>Service manager</p>	March 2025	<p>Performance report for board to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victim consent levels</li> <li>• Engagement with community resolutions</li> <li>• Background data on children becoming FTE's in the period</li> </ul>		

	<i>and engagements with community resolutions.</i>					
YJS to adopt best practice template from Swindon YJS for all OOCB rationales to be written up and placed on the system-reflecting the multi-agency decision making process and child first practice	<i>JDMP outcomes were not clearly recorded</i>	Operational Manager	December 2024	BSO minutes each meeting on standardised template including clear decision rationale and actions and these are recorded on to CV.		
Review capacity to deliver on these and ensure capacity aligns to need	<i>The lack of capacity to deliver Community Justice Panels has had a significant impact on their effectiveness</i>	Operational Manager	February 2025	Review of CJPs leads to reviewed agreement on their use moving forward.		
Ensure the needs of children in the OOCB cohort are met with the same interventions on offer in the post court cohort and ensure that services meet with the needs identified in the YJS needs analysis and performance data	<i>Access to support for children receiving Out of Court disposals was sometimes inconsistent</i>	Operational Manager	March 2025	Training to be delivered to staff to ensure a consistent approach across court and out of court work, based on Child First principles		
Develop a consistent multi-agency process for case formulation, assessment of risk and safety and intervention planning	<i>The YJS need to improve the quality of assessment and plans in relation to</i>	Service Manager	March 2025	Local case management guidance to be created including:		

	<i>keeping children and others safe</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce sentence planning forum (for Court and Out of Court cases), ensure this supports multi-agency case formulation/analysis, assessment of risk and intervention planning based on internal controls-identity development focused and external controls-presenting behaviour and risk focused</li> <li>• Agreed set of standard checks to be completed for all new cases</li> </ul>		
Ensure robust risk management arrangements are in place	<i>The service needs to improve the quality of risk management for</i>	Service Manager	March 2025	Review risk management procedures and introduce Multi-		

	<i>children assessed as high or very high safety and well-being concerns and/or risk to others.</i>			agency risk management panel to replace case planning forums. Ensure this panel is multi-agency and proactively supports and shapes risk management planning and contingency planning		
Review QA arrangements for Court and out of Court to ensure they support the delivery of high quality assessments and plans	<i>The quality of Out of Court assessments, plans and interventions was consistently of a poor standard.</i>	Service Manager	March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop quality assurance arrangements for new PDA tool which is consistent with that for AssetPlus</li> <li>• The development of the multi-agency sentence planning forum is aligned with Out of Court work.</li> </ul> <p>QA documents are reviewed in line with HMIP findings and relaunched. Tools will include checks against:</p>		

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standardised process for multi-agency checks with Police and other partners.</li><li>• Plans are aligned with the work of other partners</li><li>• Ensuring contingency plans are robust.</li></ul>		
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