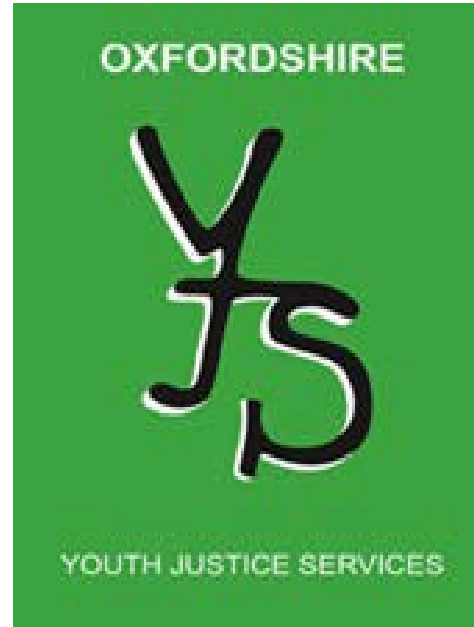




Oxfordshire YJS Youth Justice Plan 2026 - 2029

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

Foreword by Management Board Chair	2
Strategic partnership priorities for 2026-29	4
Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements	6
Achievements in 2025-26	11
Caseload data for 2025-26 & Feedback	12
Current local context	16

SECTION 2 PERFORMANCE

Reducing First Time Entrants	18
Reducing Re-offending	19
Reducing the Use of Custody	20
Progress on last year's priorities	21
Risks and Issues	26

SECTION 3 2026-29 OUR PRIORITIES & PLAN

Child First	28
Prevention & Diversion	29
Children with SEND in the justice system	30
Support for arrested children	31
Overrepresentation & Disproportionality	31
Supporting victims	32
Board and Workforce Development	33
Continuous Improvement	34

SECTION 4 NATIONAL PRIORITY AREAS

Education	35
Prevention & Diversion	37
Serious Violence, Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding	41
Policing and Detention in Police Custody	48
Custodial Remand, Custody and Constructive Resettlement	52
Children from over-represented groups	53
Working with Families	54

SECTION 5 STAFFING

Appendix A – Structure & Staffing	56
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Chair's Foreword

I am pleased to present the Oxfordshire Youth Justice Plan 2026–2029, setting out our shared partnership ambition to deliver forward thinking, preventative and child-centred youth justice services for Oxfordshire.

This plan is shaped by a period of significant national reform, including the Youth Justice White Paper, which signals a clear shift toward earlier intervention, prevention and a more consistent, proportionate system. In Oxfordshire, we are fully aligned with this direction in strengthening diversion, reducing unnecessary escalation into the justice system, and ensuring children and victims receive the right response at the right time.

At its core, our approach remains grounded in the ‘Child First’ principles —recognising that children in the youth justice system are often among the most vulnerable, with complex needs linked to trauma, exploitation, poor mental health and disrupted education. We will continue to deliver relational, strengths-based practice, alongside a clear commitment to victims and community safety.

The plan also reflects our response to national SEND reforms, recognising the high proportion of children in the youth justice system with additional and often unmet needs. We will prioritise:

- Earlier identification of need and support to prevent and reduce escalation
- Improved access to appropriate education and provision
- Strong alignment with the county's SEND improvement programme to improve outcomes for justice-involved children

As a Marmot county, Oxfordshire is committed to tackling health inequalities and addressing the wider determinants of disadvantage. Youth justice is a key part of this ambition. We recognise the strong link between inequality, adverse childhood experiences and involvement in the justice system, and will take a whole-system approach across health, education, communities and public services to improve life chances for our children. We will continue to:

- Strengthen diversion and reduce First Time Entrants
- Develop our response to adolescents to ensure we are delivering high quality, evidence-based services
- Respond more effectively to exploitation, harm outside the home and online risks

We are equally committed to tackling disproportionality and over-representation, embedding anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice, improving use of data and insight, and working in partnership with our communities. We recognise and acknowledge the issue of disproportionality across our partnership organisations for minoritized groups and hold ourselves accountable in addressing this critical issue through improved understanding of our local data and service delivery and shared ownership of our Disproportionality Action Plan.

Our Youth Justice Management Board provides strong governance across the partnership, bringing together key agencies including the local authority, police, health, probation, and the voluntary and community sector. Together, we will ensure that this plan is delivered in a way that is ambitious, evidence-led and accountable, with a clear focus on improving outcomes for children, families, victims and communities across Oxfordshire.

This plan reflects not only our statutory responsibilities, but our shared commitment to ensuring that every child in Oxfordshire has the opportunity to be safe, supported and able to achieve their full potential.

Delia Mann

Deputy Director for Oxfordshire Children's Services and Youth Justice Management Board Chair

Strategic Priorities for 2026-29

- Working in partnership to develop the prevention & diversion offer in Oxfordshire, and continue to monitor and support a reduction in First Time Entrants
- Working in partnership to improve outcomes for children with SEND in the youth justice system
- Working in partnership to improve support for arrested children
- Working in partnership to address over-representation and disproportionality for justice-involved children
- Working in partnership to effectively support victims of youth crime
- Working in partnership to tackle disproportionality and over representation for minoritised groups

“Partnership is at the heart of the Youth Justice Annual plan – our links with Thames Valley Police remain strong with both the Local Command Unit and the wider public protection commands working together to improve outcomes for children, protecting the most vulnerable and pursuing those who would exploit them. Our commitment to working together to put children first is one shared with local policing teams and community safety partnerships across the county.”



Ben Clark

Chief Superintendent

LCU Commander - Oxfordshire

“The YJ plan reflects our determination to ensure that children are at the heart of everything we do, supporting them whatever their circumstances to thrive and to overcome challenges they may be facing; working together as committed partners to achieve the best outcomes for our most vulnerable children.”

Annette Perrington

Strategic Lead for Education, Policy and Implementation

Children, Education & Families

“Health partners share the Youth Justice Partnership’s commitment to putting children first, recognising the central role that physical and emotional wellbeing plays in shaping outcomes for justice-involved children. Through health contribution, including CAMHS, 0-19 Team and the Phoenix Health Team, we are committed to working alongside partners to respond to trauma, address health inequalities and ensure children receive timely, joined-up support. There is a strengthened health provider representation at board level and supported the development of a partnership Speech and Language Therapy role within the Youth Justice team. Together, we will support prevention, resilience and improved life chances for some of Oxfordshire’s most vulnerable children.”

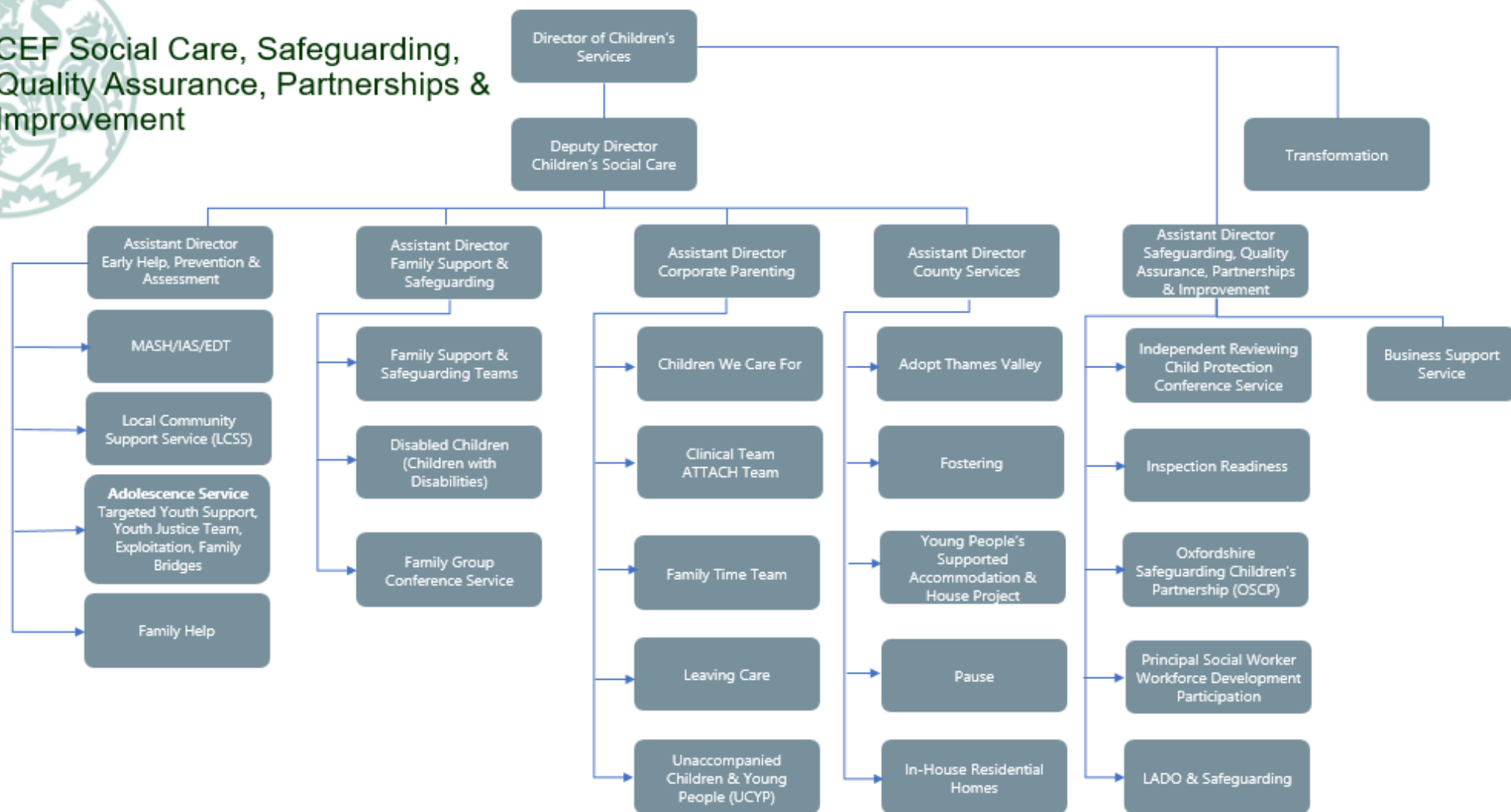


Alison Chapman

Head of Safeguarding & Designated Nurse for Children and Looked After

Children, NHS Thames Valley ICB

CEF Social Care, Safeguarding, Quality Assurance, Partnerships & Improvement



Our Youth Justice Service (YJS) is located within Oxfordshire's Children Education and Families Directorate (CEF) under the Assistant Director for Early Help, Prevention and Assessment. The YYS sits within an Adolescence & Prevention Service alongside exploitation support, targeted youth work and Family Bridges.

The designated senior manager for Youth Justice is the Service Manager for the Adolescence and Prevention Service which includes Youth Justice, the Targeted Youth Support Service, the SAFER team (risk outside the home) and Family Bridges. The Service Manager reports to the Assistant Director for Prevention, Early Help & Assessment in Children's Services. The Service Manager is the strategic lead for Youth Justice, Prevent, Exploitation and Missing Children within Oxfordshire's Children's Services.

The Service Manager represents Children's Services at the Thames Valley Violence Prevention Partnership Strategic Board, Safer Oxfordshire's Partnership Co-ordination group, Prevent Board, Violence and Vulnerability subgroup and OSCP Exploitation subgroup. The Adolescence and Prevention Service is a key partner in delivery of preventative approaches around children in the County's Violence & Vulnerability strategy and delivery plan.

Resources & Services

The Youth Justice Service uses OPCC funding to commission Cranstoun (Here4Youth) to deliver the Drug Diversion Scheme (DDS). The DDS offers a treatment-based response and support to children arrested for any drug possession offence. Thames Valley Police refer children who receive Community Resolutions through to Cranstoun, who offer a brief assessment and intervention focused on harm reduction, exploitation risk and the child's health and well-being. This intervention supports the prevention offer to children in Oxfordshire who are at risk of offending, exploitation and serious violence.



Oxford Health

NHS Foundation Trust

The Phoenix Nurse provides health assessments for children on Court Orders only (23% of caseload) and ongoing support where consent is given. For pre-Court cases (77%) they offer advice, referrals, and links to school/college nurses but not a public health nurse assessment.

Strong Forensic CAMHS partnership provides:

- Assessment, intervention and specialist support (including SAVRY, AIM3 and other specialist assessments)
- Triage, consultation, clinical oversight and joint-working
- Regular Case Formulation with YJS practitioners and wider professionals
- 'Enhanced access' for the YJS to specialist services (including Tier 4)
- Liaison & Diversion services

Resources & Services

Two Youth Justice Police Officers provide support to the service as outlined in the YJB job specification. Our YJ PCs attend the YJS Safety Panel to provide updates and act as a point of liaison with wider TVP teams and other Forces. Alongside delivery of out-of-court resolutions, our YJ PCs also support intervention with children. The YJ PCs assist in our public protection responsibilities by adding 'and maintaining flags' on children's Police records so YJ staff are swiftly notified when children are arrested or included in intelligence. The YJS is funding our YJ PCs to complete the Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate to develop their knowledge and understanding of youth justice in practice.



ACT|NOW ► **OP DETER YOUTH**

The OPCC provides funding to Oxfordshire YJS to deliver the Act Now/Op Deter Youth project – this intervention provides a 90-minute response to children in Police custody arrested for knife and weapon offences. The YJS provides this service from 9am-8pm weekdays and 9am-5pm on weekends. Custody visits are then followed by a home visit to see the child within 48 hours. We complete an assessment and then a targeted intervention to support the child and family with identified needs and reduce the risk of knife crime.

Resources & Services

Our core YJB grant is spent in its entirety on staffing costs. We use partner contributions and available internal resources to deliver our statutory and voluntary services, to meet the needs of children and victims. Oversight for the service's budget and resources is provided through quarterly Board reporting and meetings.

Identified gaps, challenges and developments

- The Probation Service currently provide fixed-term funding for an OCC-hosted YJ Probation Officer role, in lieu of provision of a secondee. We have had a staff member in this role since February 2026.
- County Council funding has been identified for a fixed-term SALT post for the Adolescence & Prevention Service with a focus on Youth Justice and recruitment is a priority for 2026.
- The Management Board is aware that the physical health offer to YJS children is insufficient, as our case-load has significantly shifted towards pre-Court work since the service provision was previously agreed.
- Funding for a specialist harmful sexual behaviour service 'CAHBS' has ceased; this service provided clinical oversight and support for the YJS' harmful sexual behaviour work. Partnership conversations are currently taking place to mitigate the impact on the service and children.

Our First Time Entrant rate has reduced by 53% since March 2025 and is now lower than regional, national and family averages

We have implemented co-location and shared training arrangements with Oxfordshire's Harm Reduction Unit (TVP) to support strong partnership working and positives outcomes for children

The Adolescence & Prevention Service won the Children, Education & Families 'Award for Innovation'

We ran First Aid courses for children to up-skill them and improve their confidence to be active bystanders in their communities

Two of our children successfully completed work experience with the 'M Group' and have been offered apprenticeships

We successfully supported 69 children via the Turnaround Programme - funding from the Ministry of Justice and the OPCC enabled us to support greater numbers of children than in previous years

Delivered training for Magistrates and District Judges, Police and our volunteers on adolescent brain development, neuro-diversity, effective engagement with children and the wider work of the service

Our service and Board have completed training on Disproportionality & Disparities with The Liminality Group

Our children completed 439 Reparation and Unpaid Work sessions in our local communities

193

Total number of children in
YJ cohort for the period

102

Number of diversionary (informal)
outcomes that may have involved YJS
intervention in the period

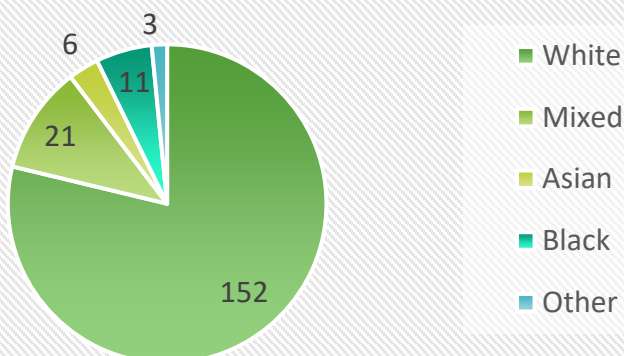
253

Total number of disposals
given to children in the period

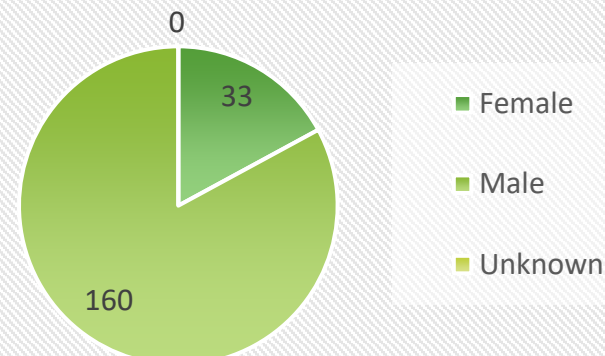
151

Number of formal pre-Court and Court
disposals given to children in the period

**Ethnicities of children within total YJS
cohort by %**



**Gender of children within total YJS
cohort by %**



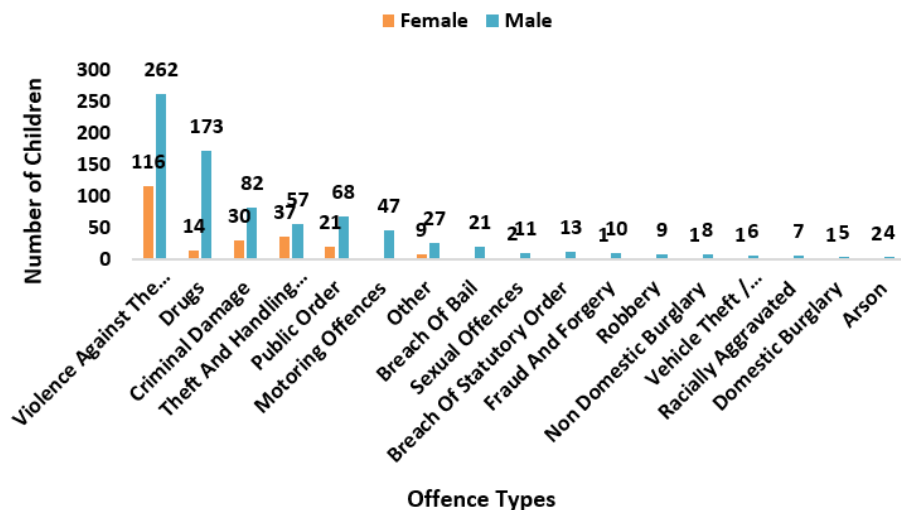
- The service is working to improve our recording and data performance processes around victim case-work in line with the HMIP Victims Standard. Vacancies within our Restorative Justice roles in 2025-26 impacted on the consistency of recording and sufficiency of reporting, which is an area of current focus within our continuous improvement work now both roles have been recruited to.

6 children were remanded between April 2025 – March 2026 in **7** episodes

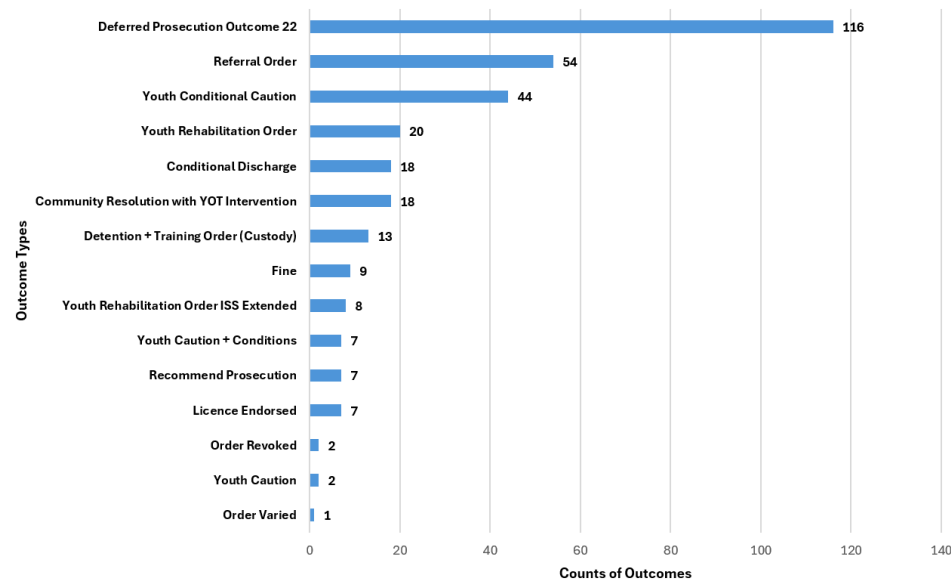
3 children received Detention & Training Orders (custodial sentence) for **serious violence** offences

Remand Type	Number of children
Remand Local Authority Accommodation (LAA)	2 (Male)
Remand LAA with GPS tag	1 (Male)
Remand Youth Detention Accommodation (YDA) - YOI	2 (Male)
Remand YDA - STC	1 (Female)
Remand YDA - SCH	1 (repeat remand for one male child)
Child	Offences
Child 1 (White male, 16)	Section 18 – Attempt wounding with intent x2, Possess knife x2, Racially aggravated stalking x2
Child 2 (White male, 15)	Possess knife x4, Possess imitation firearm, Agg vehicle taking x2, Assault x2, Theft
Child 3 (White male, 17)	Section 20 – Wound/Inflict grievous bodily harm without intent

Offence Types By Gender Apr 25 - Mar 26



Outcome Breakdown For Apr 25 - Mar 26



- The most prevalent offence types committed by children open to our YJS have consistently been violence and drug offences, particularly for boys. Girls are more likely to commit violence and criminal damage offences, which has also remained consistent over time. Inclusive of knife related offences, we have trained our case-managers across the YJS and some youth workers in TYSS on the 'Behind the Blade' intervention. OPCC funding was also secured to develop the 'Strive' intensive mentoring project which focuses on children at risk of serious violence (both as perpetrators and victims).
- The most common outcome type was Deferred Prosecution/Outcome 22 which has been a positive impact of the Youth Diversion Programme (YDP) pilot with Thames Valley Police. Whilst 527 'street' Community Resolutions were issued to Oxfordshire children in the period, 18 were agreed through Joint Decision-Making Panel with the addition of voluntary youth justice intervention. The focus on children who received Community Resolutions has been to triage these for support from the Turnaround project. We still have a high number of Referral Orders coming through Court and we are monitoring changes in TVP policy that may preclude children from out-of-court resolution consideration.

Children we worked with said:

"Working with my YJ worker has been good. She is polite and respectful and good at reminders. She knows when to bring me up and when to pull me down. She really puts the effort in to help me."

"You actually got me and the other girl to speak...we spoke about our problems, and it helped me understand more about why we got into a fight."

"Thankyou for helping and working with me, I'm really thankful. You listened to how I felt and helped me find solutions to my problems."

Parents / carers we worked with said:

"We as a family have learned a lot. You have helped my two sons not to offend and helped me understand what's been going on for them."

"You've been really helpful in making my child feel comfortable talking about a difficult subject."

"Thank you for really taking your time with J. He seems to have really taken on board what you have taught him."

Victims we worked with said:

"The RJ Worker in YJS is the only person that has reached out to me and truly listened to me. She did everything she could within her remit to support me."

"Being part of the restorative process was a lovely experience. It was interesting to see how much valuable work goes on to ensure young people are supported and helped to thrive in the community. You do an incredible job, and it was a pleasure to work with you and your team".

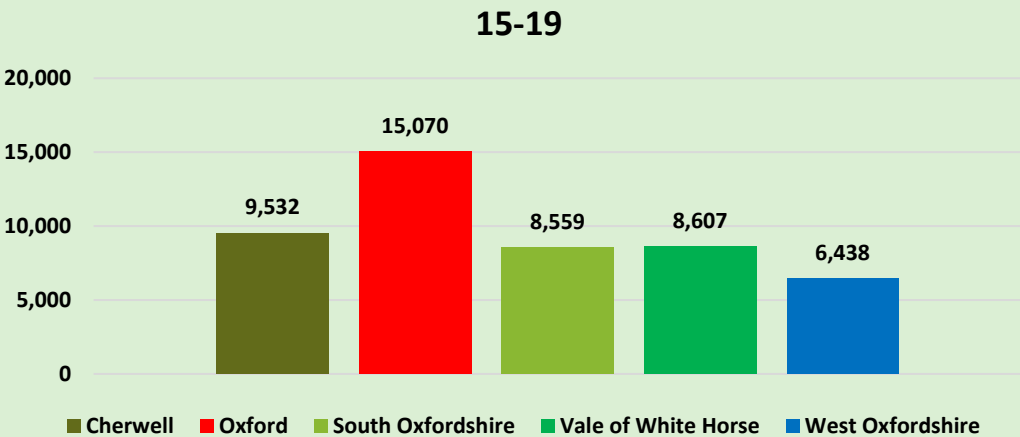
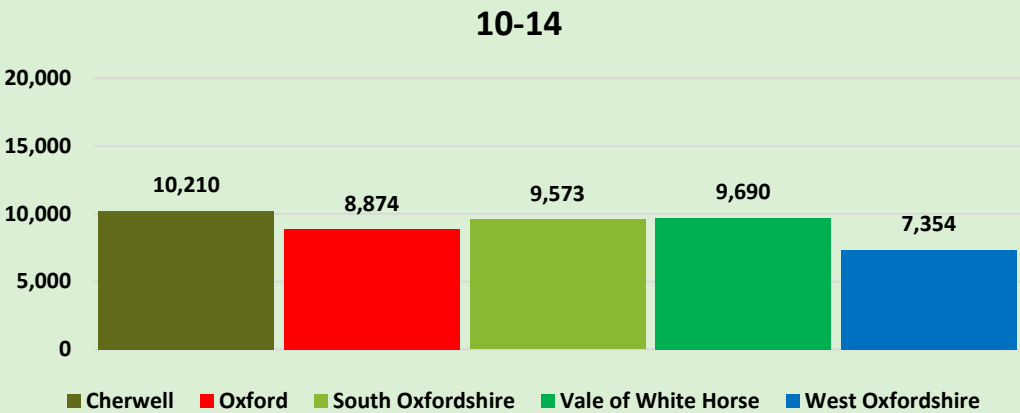
93,907

Total population of
10–19-year-olds in
Oxfordshire

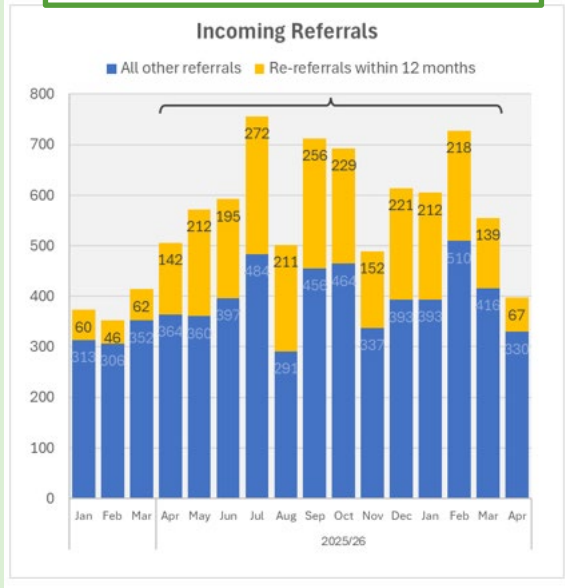
(ONS mid-year estimates
2024)

5-year age band	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxfordshire	Vale of White Horse	West Oxfordshire	Total
10-14	10,210	8,874	9,573	9,690	7,354	45,701
15-19	9,532	15,070	8,559	8,607	6,438	48,206
Total	19,742	23,944	18,132	18,297	13,792	93,907

Oxfordshire’s population of 10–19-year-olds has gradually increased year on year, with relatively even distribution between the younger and older age groups. Oxford City has the highest number of older children, followed by Cherwell.



Referrals into Children's Social Care



The percentage of 16–17-year-olds who are **NEET** has followed a similar pattern in Oxfordshire to that of the country and region. Since 2022, the percentage has increased from 1.7% to 2.7% in 2025. Most of Oxfordshire's statistical neighbours mirror this trend, where the county sits joint-seventh compared to these counties.

(JSNA, 2025)

In many of the indicators related to **absence in secondary schools**, Oxfordshire reports relatively worse statistics than the majority of its statistical neighbours. This includes: -

- Percentage of severe absentees (second highest)
- Authorised absence rate (highest)
- Overall absence rate (highest)
- Persistent absentees (highest)
- Unauthorised absence rate (third highest)

(JSNA, 2025)

Number of YJS Children open to Statutory Children's Social Care

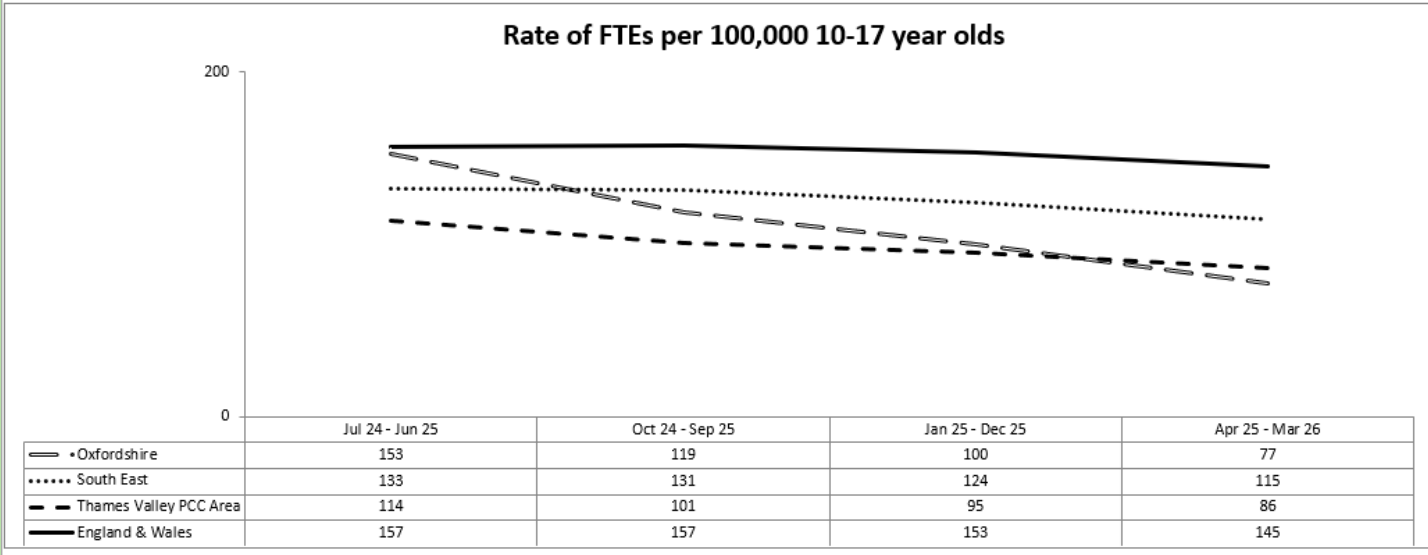
CSC Status	#	% of YJS caseload
ChIN	21	16%
CWCF	9	7%
CPP	9	7%
Open C&FA	6	5%
Allocation - Status unknown	4	3%
Total	49	38%
Not open to CSC	79	62%



36% of children open to Oxfordshire YJS in May 2026 are eligible for **Free School Meals**

- The number of contacts into Oxfordshire's MASH is high at 3600 per month. Referrals into Children's Social Care in April 2026 were slightly lower than the same month last year.
- In May 2026, 38% of the YJS caseload were open to statutory Children's Social Care (CSC). This is significantly higher than the wider population of 10–19-year-olds, of which 2.2% are open to CSC.
- The percentage of children eligible for free school meals in Oxfordshire has followed a similar path to that of the country and has risen every year since 2017/18, when it was 8.0%. In 2023/24, 15.7% of children in Oxfordshire were eligible for free school meals. Oxfordshire has the fifth-lowest percentage of children eligible for free school meals among its statistical neighbours.

Reducing First Time Entrants



Oxfordshire YJS has made significant progress in reducing our First Time Entrant rate over the last 12 months. It has reduced by 53% since March 2025 dropping from 164. That is a reduction of 64 children from last year. This reflects the hard work of the service in implementing diversionary outcomes through our Joint Decision-Making Panel including the pilot ‘Youth Diversion Programme’ (Deferred Caution/Prosecution).

First Time Entrants are measured as a rate per 100,000 of the local 10- to 17-year-old population in Oxfordshire.

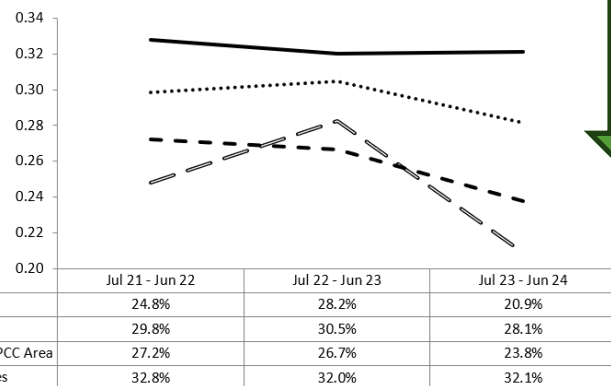
Risks to Delivery

- The ‘Youth Diversion Programme’ (deferred caution/prosecution) pilot may not be continued from June 2026 and is awaiting decision by Thames Valley Police.
- From March 2026 Thames Valley Police adopted the NPCC guidance on admissions for Out of Court Resolutions and removed the ‘no comment/silent interview’ pathway for children in Thames Valley. This means more children who give no comment or remain silent in interview will go to Court.

Reducing Reoffending

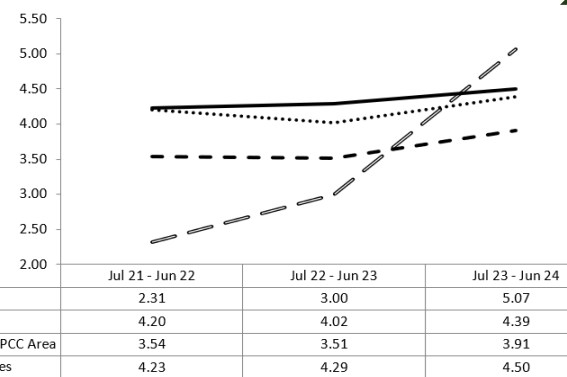
Reoffending rate (Reoffenders / Number in cohort)

Annual weighted average



Reoffences / Reoffenders

Annual weighted average

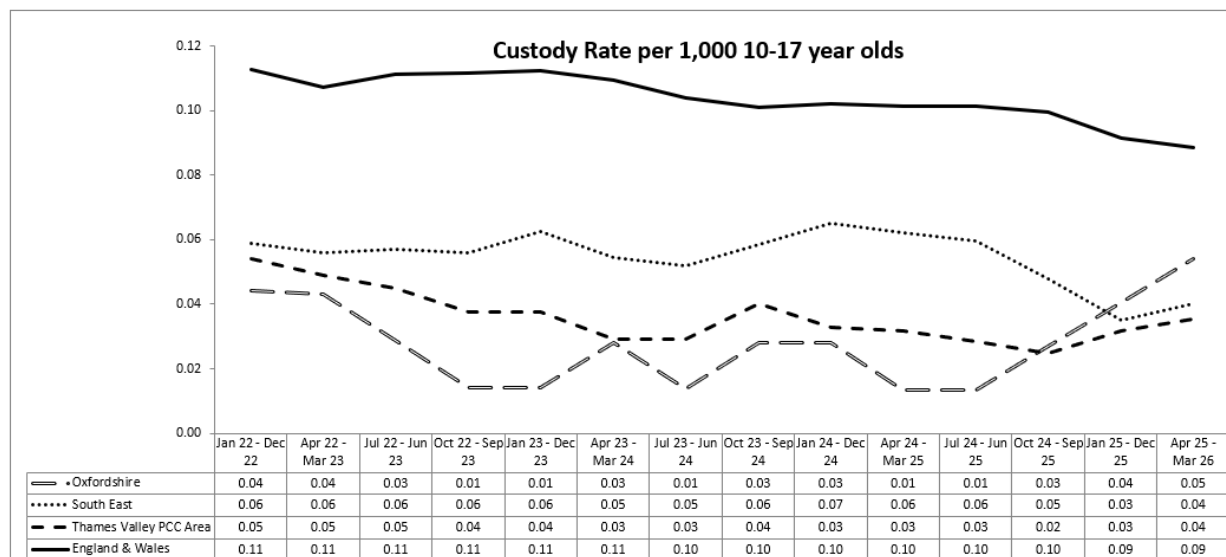


The latest available data on re-offending from the YJB indicates a positive reduction in reoffending overall by children in Oxfordshire, reducing below the Thames Valley rate. Between Q3 2023 – Q2 2024 41 children re-offended, committing a total of 208 further offences. Whilst it is positive the overall re-offending by children is reducing, our data shows that a small group of children are committing more offences when they do reoffend. The rate of reoffences per child has risen from 4.25 in 2023 to 7.83 in 2024, evidencing that a small cohort of children require more intensive intervention and support.

Risks to Delivery

- Delays in timeliness of investigations and outcomes for children impact our ability to intervene early and can lead to escalations in behaviours whilst children are subject to Bail or Released Under Investigation for lengthy periods. Outcome timeliness is monitored regionally at the Local Criminal Justice Board and outcome timeliness data for Oxfordshire is presented to the Management Board quarterly for scrutiny and oversight.
- Local interventions such as 'Strive' which provides intensive long-term mentoring for children identified as being at most risk for serious violence and reoffending are fixed-term funded via the OPCC and could end should funding cease.

Reducing the Use of Custody



The rate of custodial sentences given to children increased between April 2025 – March 2026 from 0.01 to 0.05. This represents an increase of **3** children from April 2025. Information about each of these children and the circumstances of their offending was shared with the Management Board for oversight and scrutiny around sentencing trends. A Critical Learning Review is being completed for 1 of these children.

The service also saw an increase in the use of Youth Rehabilitation Orders with Intensive Supervision & Surveillance in 2025-26 as a direct alternative to custody, with 5 children receiving ISS between Apr 25 – Mar 26 compared to 3 the previous year.

Risks to Delivery

- Any serious offending may lead to a custodial sentence, despite robust community sentencing proposals presented by the YJS.
- Offences committed as part of a group can lead to multiple children receiving custodial outcomes, which would have a significant impact on this data due to the very small sample size.
- Outcomes for children can be impacted by local and national priorities across our partnership, for example the government's focus on tackling knife crime, terrorism and violence against women and girls.
- A lack of suitable local provision for justice-involved children as direct alternatives to custody (to support Intensive Supervision & Surveillance or Remand LAA packages) in Oxfordshire negatively impacts their risk of escalation to custody.

What have we done in 2025-6?

- Supported 69 children through diversionary interventions via our Turnaround programme
- Supported 69 children via the Youth Diversion Programme (YDP) Deferred Caution/Prosecution pilot, with a further 24 currently in progress
- Our Targeted Youth Work Service supported 268 children identified as at risk of offending and exploitation via 1:1 interventions and delivered over 150 detached youth work sessions, engaging over 500 young people in our local communities
- Delivered targeted transition support to children moving from Year 6-7 who were identified using a range of vulnerability indicators
- Reviewed the demand into and functioning of our Joint Decision-Making Panel
- Engaged the Centre for Justice Innovation to support our review of diversion practice in Oxfordshire

What has happened as a result?

- Our First Time Entrant rate has decreased by 53% since April 2025
- As part of moving under an Adolescence & Prevention service umbrella the YJS has worked with the Targeted Youth Support Service to ensure alignment around triage of children using evidence-based indicators for 'right service, right time' support
- The service provided quantitative and qualitative impact data in contribution to TVP's review of the YDP pilot
- We have strengthened our partnership working with TVP'S Harm Reduction Unit in Oxfordshire and undertaken shared training to support child-centred practice
- Agreed a 'Fast Track JDMP pilot' with TVP to reduce demand and improve timeliness of resolutions for Gravity Score 1-3 offences
- Undertook a workshop on diversion with Thames Valley Police, facilitated by the Centre for Justice Innovation and completed the 'ORPIC' tool

What will we do next?

- Delivery of OPCC funded Focused Diversion programme to reach a wider cohort of children
- Ensure prevention is a key focus in local transformation programme and roll-out of Children's Social Care reforms
- Continue to work closely with the Harm Reduction Units with a planned training event to focus on partnership practice around missing children
- Continue to advocate for the continuation of a deferred caution/prosecution pathway for Oxfordshire's children
- Review the Youth Endowment Fund's ORPIC assessment and implement action plan in partnership with Thames Valley Police

What have we done in 2025-26?

- Children from the YJS have been invited and supported to participate in the SEND Youth Forum
- Colleagues from the Attendance and Inclusion teams have joined an Adolescence Service Day to improve staff awareness on processes, escalation routes and important changes in the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act
- Worked with M Group (commissioned service for Highways in Oxfordshire) to implement a pilot for work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for children involved with the YJS
- Children's ETE is a focus within the YJS Safety Panel and MACE Panel for senior manager oversight and escalation
- Escalated gap in service around speech, language and communicated needs of YJS cohort to the ICB and Board

What has happened as a result?

- Secured funding for a temporary Speech & Language Therapist role within the Adolescence & Prevention Service
- Two children in the YJS were supported to engage in work experience with M Group for a week, and then with preparation for and participation in interviews for apprenticeships which start in September

What will we do next?

- Education representative at Management Board to be confirmed and to present on SEND continuous improvement journey to ensure connectivity with Youth Justice
- We will continue to work with M Group to monitor how the pilot can be developed and rolled out further
- Recruit to the SALT post
- Establish YJ Board Task & Finish group for Education with a focus on improved outcomes for justice-involved children

What have we done in 2025-26?

- Supported 37 children via the Act Now/Op Deter Youth project which provides a 90-minute response to children arrested in Oxfordshire for knife/weapon offences. We reviewed our offer with the OPCC based on learning from the first year's delivery and adapted it based on what worked best for children and families and our service locally.
- Presented to the YJ Management Board on the Youth Remand Concordat
- Established a Remand Working Group with EDT, Police, CAMHS, Commissioning and Provider Services to self-assess partnership practice in Oxfordshire against the national Youth Remand Concordat. This identified a need for a local agreement for clarity and accountability on local processes for children held in Police custody that each organisation would ascribe to.

What has happened as a result?

- The Act Now/Op Deter Youth project is now well embedded locally and we have a good success rate in engaging eligible children at point of first contact who then go on to accept support
- Data on children held in Police custody is scrutinised quarterly and discussed at the Thames Valley Children in Custody partnership meeting, as well as being shared with the Management Board for oversight

What will we do next?

- The Focused Diversion project (being delivered by the Targeted Youth Work Service) will support this YJS' priority through targeting support for supporting arrested children
- We will continue to deliver the Act Now/Op Deter Youth project whilst it is funded via the OPCC as part of our partnership commitment to addressing the root causes of knife crime and serious violence

What have we done in 2025-26?

- The whole service and Board completed experiential Disproportionality & Disparities training with The Liminality Group
- Any dispute on outcomes for children in the JDMP are escalated to the YJ Team Manager and Police Inspector for review
- Thames Valley Police provide stop and search data for scrutiny at the YJ Management Board
- Oxfordshire contributed caseload data to an evaluation of girls within the YJ cohorts in Thames Valley led by Wokingham YJS

What has happened as a result?

- Staff report increased confidence
- Language has been adapted in service and across the YJS management board to recognise minoritised children and families
- A reviewed and updated partnership Disproportionality Action Plan has been approved

What will we do next?

- Following the impact of the YJS training, The Liminality Group are presenting at the Education Safeguarding Conference in June 2026 to schools across the County
- The YJ Management Board will ensure shared ownership and partnership accountability in delivery of the Action Plan

What have we done in 2025-26?

- Data on our victim case-load and service delivery is presented quarterly to the Management Board
- A young victim attended the Management Board to talk about her experience of Restorative Justice
- We developed a Restorative Justice Improvement Plan for the service in line with the new HMIP Victims Standard
- We have worked with CACI and our Performance and Information Analyst to develop a Victims dashboard in Metabase to improve our performance oversight and reporting
- YJ Practitioners undertook refresher training on Restorative Justice with Remedi
- Our Restorative Justice Practitioner has achieved RJC Accreditation at Advanced Level

What has happened as a result?

- Following discussions at Board, the Senior Practitioner for Restorative Justice in the YJS and a Board member undertook victim case-work audits
- Building a performance dashboard for our victim data has improved our ability to understand and interrogate our data
- Appointing to both the Senior Practitioner in RJ and RJ Practitioner roles has supported a renewed focus on victim service delivery

What will we do next?

- Focus on delivery against our RJ Improvement Plan
- Continue with victim case-work audits with a focus on the HMIP Victims Standard
- Support for victims will be a focus within Multi-Agency Case Discussions as part of our HMIP Inspection preparation and continuous improvement

Risk	Mitigation	Desired Outcome
First Time Entrant rate may increase due to TVP decisions around 'no comment/silent interviews', new Knife Crime Guidance and uncertainty around Youth Diversion Programme pilot	Board and Service monitoring of pre-Court decision-making including quarterly deep-dives of the FTE cohort Continue working with the YJB to escalate concerns around any increase in formal outcomes, charges to Court and FTE rates Oxfordshire YJS is a YJS with high levels of demand covering a large geographical area	Oxfordshire's FTE rate to remain in line with YJS family average by April 2027 Children are not inappropriately or disproportionately criminalised in Oxfordshire
Reduction in OPCC funding (40% in Year 3 of current bid cycle) will impact the Drug Diversion Scheme, Turnaround and Restorative Justice service delivery	Raised at Board as part of service finance reporting for senior leadership oversight and follow-up Horizon-scanning to identify funding opportunities for the service and pro-active approach to bid-writing Align internal triage functions across adolescence to ensure capacity is built and the right responses to prevention are used to support youth justice frameworks Incorporate funding loss into future budget forecasting and adjust recruitment as needed	Funding opportunities are identified and where appropriate applied for to contribute to resource for 2026-29 Statutory functions within service continue to be safely and sufficiently resourced and delivered and outcomes monitored Minimal to no disruption to service delivery and outcomes for children

Risk	Mitigation	Desired Outcome
Reduction in service capacity due to sickness, vacancies and difficulty recruiting to fixed-term roles impacting statutory service delivery	Recruitment to vacancies is prioritised and alternative support for statutory service delivery explored Caseloads and wider service demands are routinely monitored and reviewed to understand complexity and pressures Implementation of the service Contingency Plan in line with agreed capacity thresholds All staff receive appropriate training and CPD to enable them to provide effective and appropriate support for children and victims	Practitioners feel confident in fulfilling the functions of their roles and receive appropriate training to ensure they have the skill-set to do so Practitioners report positively in relation to wellbeing and workload management within staff surveys Children and victims receive timely and effective support, reporting positive feedback in relation to their experience of the service Support is timely and impactful in relation to reoffending and protection of the public
Youth Justice staff lack designated building space in which to see children in line with HMIP Inspection criteria	Exploration of appropriate buildings and spaces in line with wider council priorities is underway	Children feel safe and have accessible spaces to meet practitioners which are responsive to their individual needs as adolescents Staff feel they have sufficient resource in which to safely carry out their statutory roles and responsibilities The service can best evidence commitment to Child First principles through provision of child-centred environments

Listening to children and victims is a top priority. Their views inform service development and improve our understanding of the reasons children offend and the harm caused. We are updating feedback surveys for children and victims to ensure they are accessible and inclusive through improved questions and the use of QR codes

Many of our placements used for Reparation and Unpaid Work are focused on social inclusion for children and supporting investment into their local communities. Children undertake reparative activities at their local community centres, and some have chosen to continue volunteering beyond the end of their formal Reparation. Oxford Wood Recycling and Bicester Green are placements that support children to engage with environmental issues and sustainability practices, equipping them with skills for the future

Through the Local Youth Transformation Pilot for Oxfordshire, children supported by the YJS have the opportunity to feed into a countywide cross-sector Youth Voice Strategy which will inform ways in which children want to be heard. This work is currently underway alongside our Children's Social Care Engagement and Participation leads.

A
Activities



I
Interactions



R
Roles



Priority	Actions	Outcome for children/victims/staff	Leads	Timescale
Prevention & Diversion	Continue to work with the Centre for Justice Innovation (CJI) on local diversion offer	FTE rates do not increase beyond YJS family average rate	Board - All Adolescence Service Manager	For review at quarterly board meetings. Support in place until December 2026
	Closely monitor FTE rates and timely escalation of issues to Service Manager and Board	Equity of access to appropriate preventative and diversionary support for all children in Oxfordshire	YJ Team Manager TYSS Team Manager	Annual reporting into management board meeting and monitored within Children's Insight framework – monthly
	Ensure Board oversight of impact of policy decisions including TVP rescinding 'no comment/silent interview' pathway and YDP pilot review outcome	Children vulnerable to offending, exploitation and serious violence are identified and offered proportionate and timely support		
	Delivery of targeted transition support for eligible children moving from Year 6-7	Effective alignment and shared and well understood vision across Adolescence teams results in high quality, evidence-based services to children, families and victims		Relaunch in September 2026 across services with ongoing monitoring for impact
	Implement Focused Diversion project in line with OPCC guidance	Partner agencies and teams across Children's Social Care have a clear understanding of the pathways into Adolescence & Prevention and feel confident in service delivery		

Priority	Actions	Outcome for children/victims/staff	Leads	Timescale
Children with SEND in the justice-system in Oxfordshire	Set up task and finish group led by Education Board representative and SEND leads (to include M Group apprenticeship pathway) Data-led approaches are used to identify children at risk of involvement with criminal justice at earliest opportunity Board receives clear data on YJ children of statutory school age and above in relation to their characteristics, EET status, provision, attendance, suspensions/exclusions and outcomes for scrutiny and escalation where required Recruitment to SALT post Clear link is established with SEND and Attendance Strategic Boards to the YJ Management Board to ensure connectivity in continuous improvement work and oversight	All Board members have a shared understanding of the challenges justice-involved children face in relation to education, leading to increased accountability Good practice can be shared across the partnership in relation to working with children with SEND Suspensions and exclusions for the YJ cohort are scrutinised and challenged where appropriate – with increase in rates responded to pro-actively and swiftly. Partnership practice is inclusive and consistent in line with Child First evidence and research Children with SLCN in YJ are consistently identified and screened/assessed/provided timely, individualised support and advocacy Learning can be cascaded to school leaders around the needs of children open to youth justice	Board Chair Board rep for Education Adolescence Service Manager YJ Team Manager	Covered within continuous board development and evidenced through reporting into board Quarterly board reporting By September 2026 Ongoing

Priority	Actions	Outcome for children/victims/staff	Leads	Timescale
Support for arrested children	Continuation of Act Now/Op Deter Youth project in line with OPCC service level agreement Implementation of the OPCC Focused Diversion project to increase reach to children who are not currently eligible for diversionary support (Act Now/Turnaround) Board and YJ managers to continue to monitor outcome timeliness for children via the Local Criminal Justice Board and data shared with YJ Management Board TVP to present update to Board on progress of work around timeliness of investigations and processes in relation to children	Children arrested for knife and weapon possession offences in Oxfordshire receive timely and individualised support to address the root causes of behaviour Outcomes for children and timeliness of process is scrutinised and challenged where appropriate to improve experience of youth justice system for children and victims	Board – TVP rep Adolescence Service Manager YJ Team Manager Act Now Coordinator TYSS Team Manager	Quarterly reporting to OPPC August 2026 Board meeting

Priority	Actions	Outcome for children/victims/staff	Leads	Timescale
Over-representation and disproportionality for justice-involved children	Ensure disproportionality is a specific agenda item for discussion at every Board for effective oversight and delivery of Disproportionality Action Plan All Board members to provide data on disproportionality and overrepresentation as it relates to children within their own organisations as per YJB KPI 8 (Management Board Attendance)	Accountability across the Board and appropriate escalation mechanisms in place to respond to identified areas of concern and need Reductions in over-representation of marginalised groups can be well evidenced across partnership organisations	Board - All	Quarterly

Priority	Actions	Outcome for children/victims/staff	Leads	Timescale
Support for victims	Delivery against the service's RJ Improvement Plan	Assurance of high-quality casework and positive outcomes for victims is well evidenced and supported by quantitative and qualitative data	Board rep for Victims Adolescence Service Manager	Monthly monitoring through Children's Insights
	Continue to undertake case-work audits and dip-sampling	Board has shared understanding and appreciation of needs of victims and required provision to provide high quality services in Oxfordshire	YJ Team Manager YJ Senior Practitioner for RJ	Twice annually, reported into board
	Refresh feedback survey shared with victims to improve victim voice	Feedback from victims evidences positive experiences of YJS support and highlights areas for continuous improvement		Quarterly board meeting
	Work with TVP to ensure the voice of victims is best captured to inform pre-Court decision-making at JDMP	Victims receive a high quality, inclusive and timely service		
	Using the findings from our HMIP victim data dry-run to continue to develop and improve the RJ performance data for effective oversight, monitoring and support of victim case-work and outcomes	Victims feel that their views are heard and considered in decision-making processes to build trust and confidence in the youth justice system		
		Children in the YJ cohort have an improved understand of the impact of their behaviour on others and are supported to develop empathy as part of skill-building intervention work		

Priority	Actions	Outcome for children/victims/staff	Leads	Timescale
Board & Workforce Development	Board Development workshops scheduled throughout 2026 to support Board member induction and understanding of the YJS, including their roles and responsibilities as Board members	A skilled, knowledgeable and committed Board will provide effective senior leadership and oversight of the Youth Justice Service, ensuring high quality and appropriate provision is in place for justice-involved children in line with the National Standards and HMIP Inspection framework	Board Chair	Ongoing
	Board Induction pack was updated in 2025 and is shared with existing and new Board members	All YJS staff will have a robust induction and ongoing CPD opportunities to ensure they can safely and effectively undertake their respective roles	Adolescence Service Manager	
	Board Chair to schedule 1:1s with all Board members to ensure effective oversight, accountability and partnership input into the YJS as part the YJB guidance and requirements of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998	Children, families and victims receive responsive and individualised support from confident, skilled and well-supported practitioners	YJ Team Manager	December 2026
	YJ Workforce Training & Development Plan to be written for clear understanding of skills required for each role and for a clear audit trail of training delivery			

Priority	Actions	Outcome for children/victims/staff	Leads	Timescale
Continuous improvement and quality assurance	Monthly YJ Service/Team Manager meetings with CSC 'Working Group' to oversee multi-agency audits and case-file sampling.	Improved quality assurance of practice and joined-up working will ensure effective service delivery to children, families and victims	Children's Social Care QA service	Monthly and quarterly reporting
	Multi agency audits take place with partnership input			
	'Children's Insights' – Deputy Director-led monthly performance review for Children's Social Care ensuring cross-departmental oversight; YJ Service Manager and Team Manager contribute service summaries and actions for coming months.	Opportunities for learning and improvement are pro-actively sought and acted upon	Colleagues from across the partnership and Board reps as required	Twice annual multi agency audit activity
	'Learning Conversations' – monthly Adolescence & Prevention meeting focused on improvement, barriers, staff wellbeing, demand, national updates, and feedback from children, families, and victims – responsive, continuous service improvement	The voices of children, victims and families are heard across teams and up to Director level to ensure they are at the heart of practice and improvement work		Routine QA activity as part of case-management oversight
	YJS QA Policy reviewed - clear QA framework is in place for accountability for YJ managers and practitioners		AD for Prevention, Early Help & Assessment	Monthly
	Serious Incident Notifications and subsequent learning reviews are shared with Board for oversight		Adolescence Service Manager	
			YJ Managers	As required

In April 2026, **121** children were open to the YJS.
Of these:

- **75** were of statutory school age
- **55** were on a school roll

Of these 55 children:

- **69%** had an EHCP (38 children), an increase from 2025 when it was 43%
- Most common need remains **Social, Emotional and Mental Health**
- Persistent and severe absence **increased** from last year which must be a priority in the Board's Education Task and Finish group
- Positively, **0** children in the YJS cohort were permanently excluded
- **Speech, Language & Communication Needs** remain under-identified within our cohort which we are working to address via recruitment to a SALT worker post in 2026

Academic year 2025/25. Terms 1-4 (55 pupils)	No.	%	2025*	Direction of travel
Average attendance*		51%	49%	Improved
Persistent absence >=10%*	48	87%	75%	Worse
Severe absence >=50%*	26	47%	45%	Worse
1 or more suspensions*	29	53%	53%	Same
Average no. suspensions per pupil (range 1-10)*	3.5		4.4	Improved
Permanent exclusions	0	0%	4%	Improved

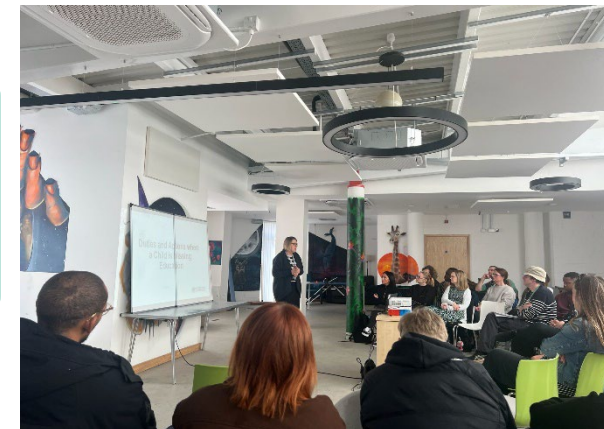
Primary Need	EHCP	SEN support only	Any SEN
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	12	2	14
Moderate Learning Difficulty	1	14	15
Multi-Sensory Impairment		1	1
Other Difficulty/Disability		1	1
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	24	21	45
Specific Learning Difficulty		4	4
Speech, Language and Communication Needs	1	3	4
Total	38	46	84

In April 2026, **121** children were open to the YJS.

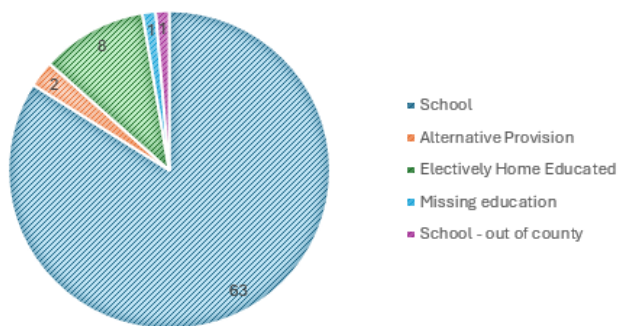
Of these:

- **75** were of statutory school age
- **55** were on a school roll
- **46** children were over statutory school age

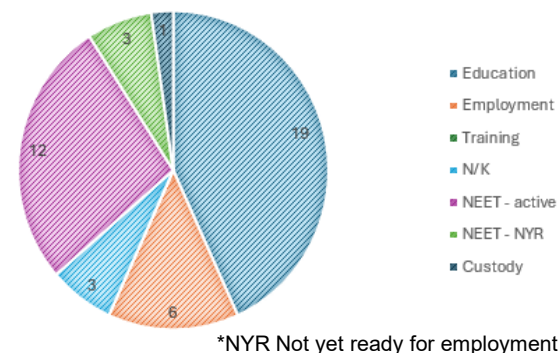
The Adolescence & Prevention Service have undertaken a workshop with colleagues from the Attendance & Inclusion teams



Statutory school age provision types



16+ provision types



*NYR Not yet ready for employment

- **9** children were electively home educated within terms 1-4, and 8 were still open at the end of term 4
- **3** children had a period of being a “child missing education” during terms 1-4, 1 of these remained open at the end of term 4
- **2** children attended alternative provision other than school

Youth Diversion and Out of Court Resolution developments

Youth Diversion Programme (YDP):

- Pilot deferred caution/prosecution scheme running between Apr 2025–Jun 2026 with 16-week intervention and use of restorative approaches
- Oxfordshire YJS' Joint Decision-Making Panel (JDMP) has made recommendations for YDPs for 109 children to date; 69 successfully completed their intervention, 24 are ongoing
- Very low incidences of non-engagement (4 cases) and evidence of strong completion rates
- Making a positive contribution to reducing our first-time entrants, with strong multi-agency support via the JDMP

Knife crime guidance (2026):

- New national guidance introduces a 4-week timeframe from disposal decision to intervention, requiring tighter joint-working with TVP
- Oxfordshire's Act Now/Op Deter Youth project work is already delivering against the new government guidance, supporting early intervention
- Removal of the "no comment/silent interview" option for out of court resolutions may increase court prosecutions and risk exacerbating disproportionality

Joint Decision-Making fast-track pilot:

- Following a partnership workshop on diversion hosted by the Centre for Justice Innovation, the YJS was able to highlight the significant demand coming into Oxfordshire's JDMP. This led to the development of a 'fast track' pilot with TVP which introduced out-of-panel triage for suitable cases. This has reduced demand on our Out of Court lead manager, reduced the length of the Panel, improved timeliness and supported partner engagement in the JDMP. A positive review of this pilot has led to extension through to Jan 2027

Key considerations and challenges:

- The CPS currently does not allow consideration of the YDP for children whose cases are returned from Court for out-of-court consideration, limiting opportunities for children to have equitable access to diversion
- The future of the YDP is uncertain and currently subject to review within Thames Valley Police
- The new Knife Crime guidance and removal of the out-of-court resolution 'no comment/silent interview' pathway has and will continue to increase the number of children charged to Court

Turnaround

Oxfordshire's Turnaround project has continued to work with children who received Community Resolutions, were on Bail / Released under investigation or were referred by partners due to concerns about police contact such as anti-social behaviour or a 'No Further Action' outcome. The work of our Youth & Family Practitioners focuses on the areas recommended in the Youth Endowment Fund Toolkit, particularly social and emotional interventions, music and sporting activities, mentoring and restorative justice. During the year we completed support with a total of 38 children, and at the end of March 2026 had a further 31 children who had been assessed and were engaging with support from Turnaround practitioners meaning we reached a total of 69 children during the year 2025-2026. Funding by the Ministry of Justice and the Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner has allowed us to extend our reach and support greater numbers of children than in previous years.

The Turnaround Project locally and nationally tracks the outcomes for children who have had support and at the end of year 4 of the project we have data for 133 children who have completed Turnaround in Oxfordshire since 2023. Only 9 out of 133 (6.8%) have been convicted at court, or received a youth caution, for an offence committed after they closed to Turnaround Support. These figures are in line with the national data. Oxfordshire has been participating in further Ministry of Justice research which is being carried out about the effectiveness of Turnaround by sharing data about the local cohort with the research team and via participation in focus groups.

Feedback from a parent of a child we supported via Turnaround:

"Our Turnaround worker has been incredibly helpful, listening to my concerns and being very patient with B, especially when he didn't always want to engage. He seemed to understand B right away and was able to implement strategies that encouraged him to connect and engage. Thanks to our Turnaround worker B is now receiving support through Early Help, and with their assistance I'm hopeful that he will get the right support to help him make better choices and stay out of trouble. I want to express my gratitude to our worker for his exceptional support. He truly went above and beyond, and I honestly don't know how I would have managed the end of last year without him. Our worker made communication with various other authorities much smoother and guided me in ensuring we got the right support from the right sources. Not only did our worker support B, but he also helped me as a parent with strategies and guidance to support both myself to stay well."

Targeted Youth Support Service (TYSS)

The Targeted Youth Support Service (TYSS) sits alongside the YJS in the wider Adolescence and Prevention Service. It's areas of focus have been reviewed and are now much more closely aligned with the priorities of the YJS in terms of prevention and diversion.

- **Early Intervention and Prevention through Youth Work – Supporting Statutory Systems**

TYSS provides a comprehensive early-intervention and prevention offer designed to reduce the likelihood of young people entering statutory services. Practitioners engage directly in communities, offering consistent, trusted adult relationships that build resilience and foster a sense of belonging which is a known protective factor against offending and exploitation. The service identifies and signposts to positive activities, supports school attendance, and advocates for young people's needs and voice in meetings with schools, families and statutory partners. Practitioners use informal education and trauma-informed approaches to build pro-social skills, emotional regulation, resilience and confidence.

- **TYSS Targeted 1-2-1 Case Work**

TYSS delivers structured, targeted 1-2-1 case work for young people showing early indicators of risk linked to offending, exploitation, and community harm. Practitioners use intervention plans aligned to identified risks, needs and strengths. These include risks such as domestic abuse exposure, deprivation, poverty, NEET risk, repeated school exclusion, free school meal eligibility and being known to police or children's services. Sessions promote problem-solving, emotional literacy, safety planning, healthy relationships and increasing pro-social connections. The approach adopts contextual safeguarding principles, supporting young people in the settings where risks occur.

- **TYSS Group Work Programmes**

TYSS offers a wide range of evidence-based and needs-led group programmes designed to address key themes. Groups build peer connection, confidence, critical thinking and safer decision-making. Programmes targeted work both in schools and community settings.

Girls-only groups: explore healthy relationships, consent, gender inequality, coercive control, online pressures and self-esteem. Facilitators offer safe, trauma-informed spaces for girls to understand healthy boundaries and increase their confidence to disclose concerns or seek help. This work contributes to early prevention of harmful behaviours and supports safer peer cultures.

Positive Masculinity Groups: Group work that challenges harmful gender norms, toxic masculinity and attitudes linked to aggression, misogyny and exploitation. The group explore respectful relationships, communication, online influences (including incel content and Andrew Tate-style messaging) and positive identity development. Practitioners create a safe environment to challenge harmful attitudes without judgement or blame.

Online Safety: To support young people to navigate online spaces safely, including grooming indicators, pornography literacy, extremism, algorithm influence, digital footprints and understanding the law. Sessions build young people's ability to recognise risks, respond safely and act as positive bystanders.

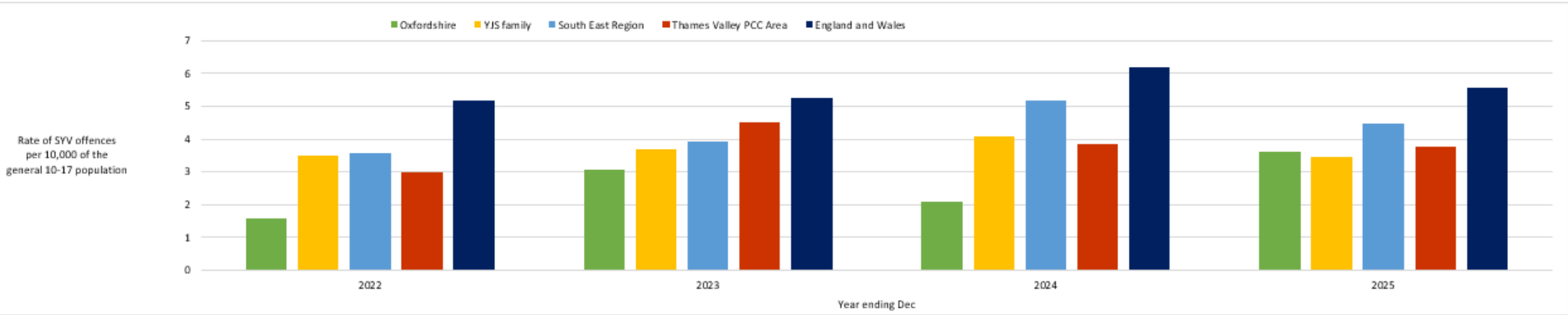
- **Year 6-7 transition programme**

These were implemented in response to national and local research and evidence that a poor transition from primary to secondary school can lead to poorer outcomes for the most vulnerable children, including reduced attendance, increased anxiety, disengagement and heightened risk of exploitation, offending or exclusion. The cohort is identified through a combination of indicators, including free school meal eligibility and/or multiple disadvantage, attendance concerns, SEND or additional needs, pastoral/behavioural concerns, previous fixed-term exclusion or high risk of exclusion and known to Children's Services. The aim is to build confidence, sense of belonging, practical skills and social-emotional readiness for secondary school. The approach supports attendance, engagement and reduces vulnerabilities associated with school exclusions.

Table 1: The number, rate and proportion of serious violence offences, Oxfordshire, Year ending Dec 2023 to Year ending Dec 2025

Oxfordshire	Latest 12 months		Change	Year ending Dec 2023	Change
	Year ending Dec 2025	Year ending Dec 2024			
Number of SV offences	26	15	+11	22	+4
Rate of SV offences	3.6	2.1	+1.5	3.1	+1
Proportion SV offences comprise of all offences	9%	4%	5.4 pp	5%	4.2 pp

Graph 9: The rate of serious violence offences per 10,000 children aged 10-17 by YJS, YJS family, YJS region, PCC area and national average, Year ending Dec 2022 to 2025



- In 2025 we saw an **increase in serious violence** offences by children to 26, up by 11 from 15 offences in 2024
- In 2025 serious violence offences comprised 9% of all offences by children in Oxfordshire, an increase of 5.4%
- **Possession of a blade/knife** has remained the most common serious violence offence since December 2024, followed by Possession of an offensive weapon
- Oxfordshire’s serious violence by children rate is **lower than the national, regional and Thames Valley rate**, but is slightly higher than our YJS statistical family rate

- The **Oxfordshire Violence and Vulnerability Strategy 2024–2027** sets out the countywide, partnership-led response to the **Serious Violence Duty**, focusing on preventing and reducing violence linked to knife crime, drug-related exploitation, and harm to vulnerable adults and children. It adopts a public health approach, bringing together agencies to deliver activity across prevention, early intervention, enforcement, and safeguarding, underpinned by shared data, intelligence, and community engagement.
- Delivery of the strategy is supported by a multi-agency subgroup which meets on a bi-monthly basis and is chaired by the OCC Fire & Rescue Partnership and Safeguarding Manager. Membership includes district Community Safety Partnership leads, Youth Justice, and the **Serious Violence Co-ordinator** (funded by the OPCC for 2025–26 and which sits in the Adolescence & Prevention Service), ensuring coordinated oversight, local delivery, and alignment with wider partnership priorities.



- The Adolescence and Prevention service has been awarded 3-year funding from the OPCC to deliver a new response to the prevention of serious violence by children in Oxfordshire using the **Youth Endowment Fund toolkit evidence base**. The **‘Strive’ project** provides **intensive long-term mentoring** for children at risk of serious violence (both as perpetrators and victims). By working across both secondary and tertiary referral pathways, ‘Strive’ will ensure that every child at risk of serious violence receives tailored mentoring support, helping them build resilience and achieve positive outcomes through relationship with a trusted and safe adult.
- Sitting within the Targeted Youth Support Service, ‘Strive’ is currently providing at a minimum, weekly one-to-one sessions for 45 children throughout Oxfordshire with capacity to support more as appropriate. Our 5 Youth Mentors, led by the Strive Lead & Serious Violence Coordinator, aim to support each child to develop a **pro-social identity** and realise their potential in line with **Child First principles**.

SAFER Team

- Safer practitioners provide 1:1 support for children where there is evidence of child criminal exploitation
- Works in close partnership with TVP's Harm Reduction Unit (HRU) to align thresholds and responses
- Provides contextual safeguarding expertise within Child in Need, Child Protection and Risk outside the Home plans
- Risk outside the Home pathway has been introduced (linked to the Families First pilot) and is being aligned with wider Children's Social Care, underpinned by research from Durham University
- SAFER will lead on key areas including Missing children, Prevent and radicalisation and the National Referral Mechanism local pilot
- The approach will be carefully integrated within wider Adolescence & Prevention to ensure effective and joined-up responses to children at risk

MACE Panels

- Co-chaired by the Service Manager for Adolescence & Prevention and the Harm Reduction Unit Inspector and inclusive of multi-agency partners including Education, Health, schools, Housing and Community Safety
- Monthly oversight of children being exploited and patterns of missing episodes
- Supports escalation of risk, disruption activity of the exploiters and wider contextual safeguarding responses within the community using the 4 P's approach (Prepare, Prevent, Pursue, Protect)

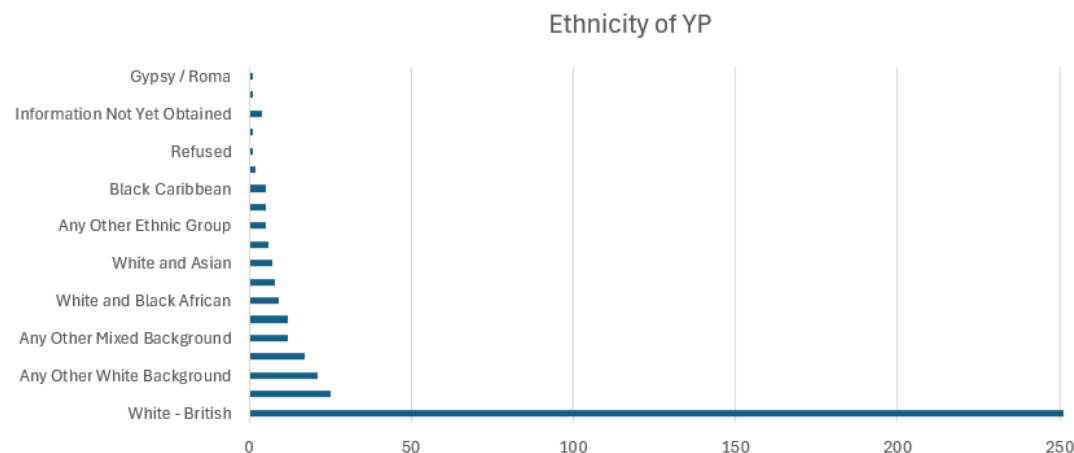
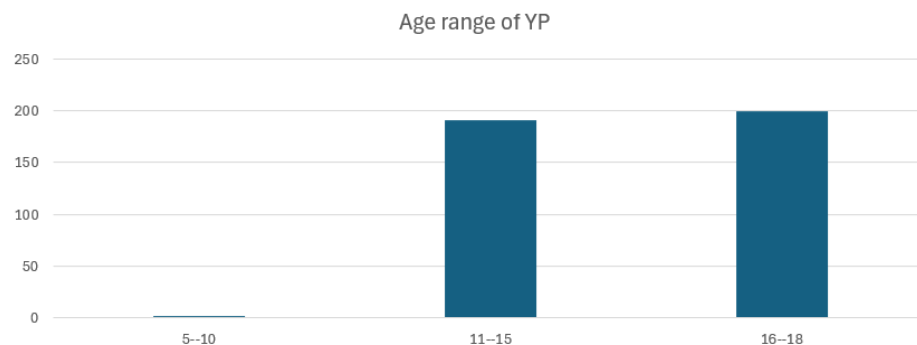
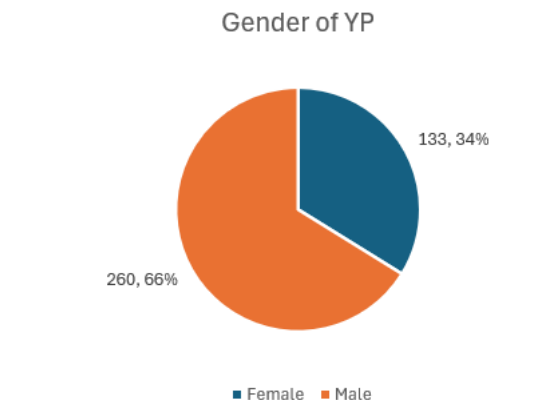
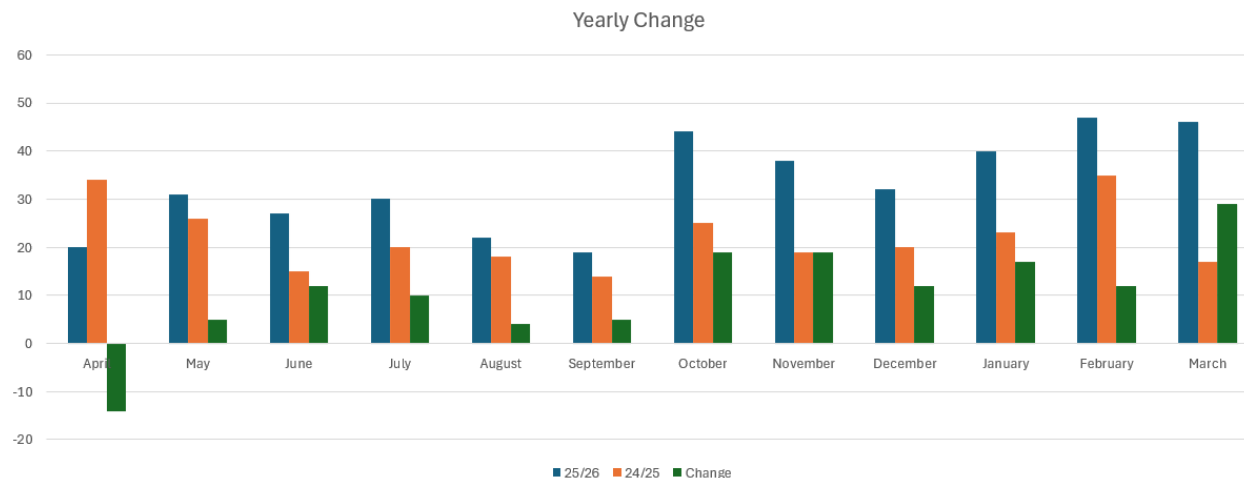
Act Now

- The YJS is meeting the new government Knife Crime guidance in partnership with Thames Valley Police via the Act Now/Op Deter Youth project. Under Act Now/Op Deter Youth the YJS is notified by TVP when a child is arrested for a knife/weapon possession offence, and we provide a 90-minute response to visit the child in police custody. We are working with TVP to ensure Inspector authorisation and caution delivery for these children are expedited to ensure intervention begins within 4 weeks.

Continuous Improvement

- The Adolescence & Prevention Service is working closely with the HRU around the use of the Philomena protocol for missing children to ensure effective join-up and information-sharing
- Corporate audit on missing children in October 2025 cited strong practice within MACE panels
- Children's Social Care's Missing Children Guidance has been reviewed and updated in April 2026 to support consistency in practice
- A performance dashboard and new recording pathways are being developed for the SAFER and Strive teams to monitor service performance and impact and track themes and trends

Data on exploitation screening tools received into Children's Services Apr 25 – Mar 26:



Data on exploitation screening tools received into Children's Services Apr 25 – Mar 26:



Screening tools are completed by multi-agency partners (incl. schools and community organisations) where exploitation is a concern.

- Significant increase this year: **266 → 396 (+230)**
- Most common concerns are poor **school attendance, parental difficulties in responding to children's behaviour** and **children being seen with older/unknown people**

How this informs practice

- Data used to target **training and awareness** for practitioners
- Supports **consistent identification of risk** and available interventions
- Drives **learning and improvement** through identification of trends, gaps in data and practice

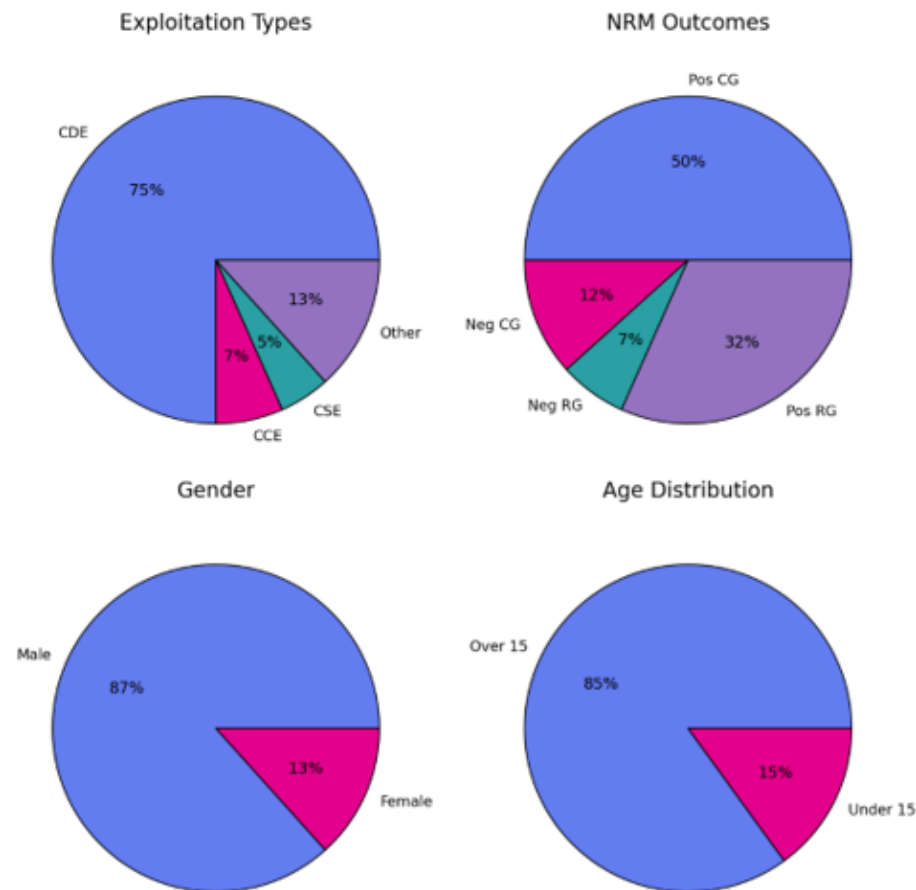
Responses available

- SAFER team and partnership support
- MACE & YJ Safety panel oversight
- 1:1 interventions with children
- Police Harm Reduction Unit disruption activity
- Detached youth work responses

The local NRM devolved decision-making pilot and coordinator function now sits within the SAFER team.

April 2025-March 2026

60 referrals between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026



Key:

CDE – Child Drug Exploitation

CCE – Child Criminal exploitation

CSE – Child Sexual Exploitation

Pos CG – Positive Conclusive Grounds

Pos RG - Positive Reasonable Grounds

Neg CG – Negative Conclusive Grounds

Neg RG – Negative Reasonable Grounds

What does the NRM pilot data tell us?

Ethnicity of children

53% White British
 3% Any Other White Background
 0% White and Black Caribbean
 3% White and Black African
 7% Black African
 2% Black Caribbean
 8% Any Other Black Background
 5% Any Other Mixed Background
 19% Any Other Asian Background

Age

51 over 15 (85%)
 9 under 15 (15%)

Gender

52 male (87%)
 8 female (13%)

Exploitation Types

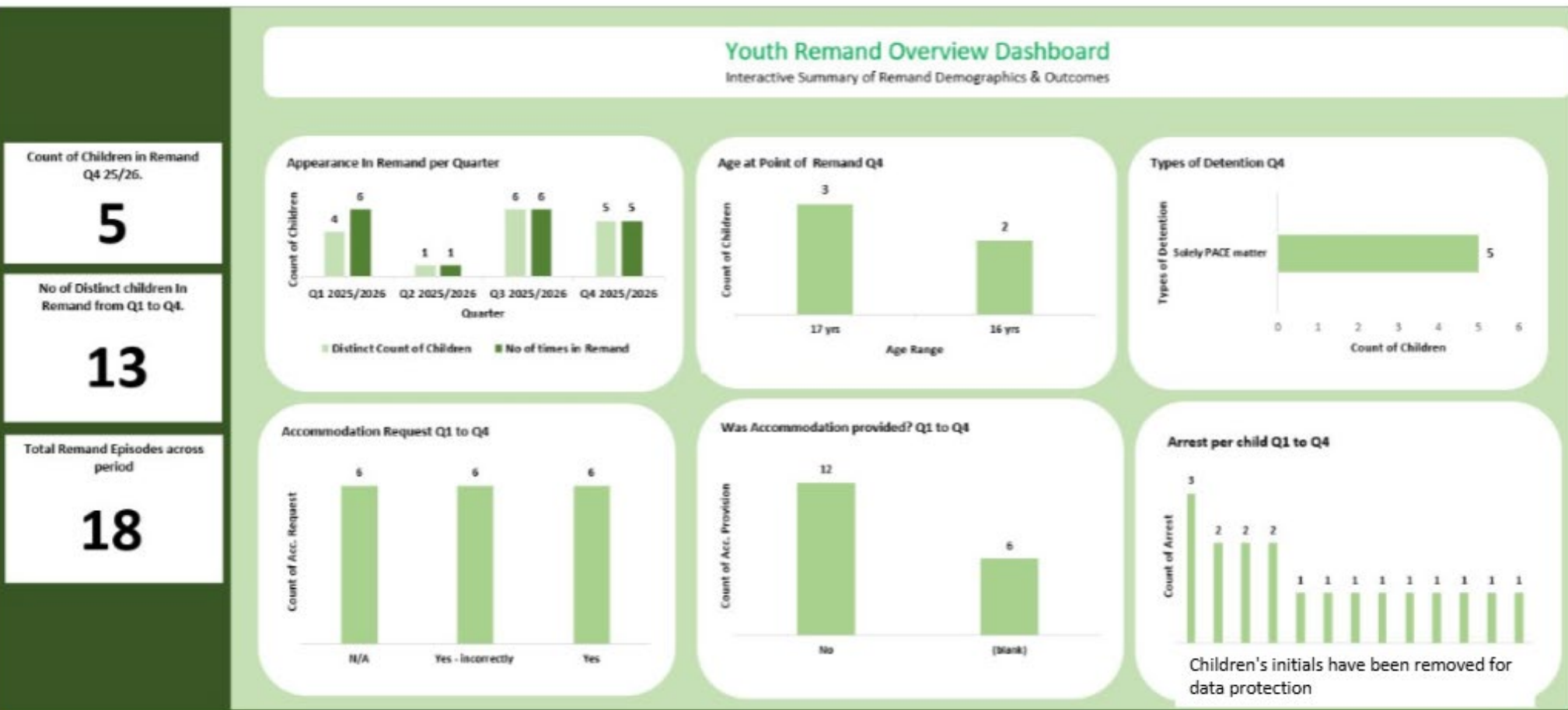
- 45 Child Drug Exploitation 75%
- 4 Child Criminal Exploitation 7%
- 3 Child Sexual Exploitation 5%
- 8 Other (Manual Labour, Kidnap for Ransom, Trafficking) 13%

Outcomes

30 Positive Conclusive Grounds (50%)
 7 Negative Conclusive Grounds (12%)
 4 Negative Reasonable Grounds (7%)
 19 Positive Reasonable Grounds (31%)

Most children referred to the local NRM panel are White British males over the age of 15. The prevalence of Positive Conclusive Ground decisions (overseen and ratified by the Single Competent Authority, SCA) indicates strength of identification, evidence and decision-making. We are mindful of the low rate of referrals for females and for Child Sexual Exploitation and this has been shared with the OSCP Exploitation Sub-Group. Next steps include further data analysis of Court outcomes for children where Positive CG were agreed, as well as comparison with other pilot areas to review trends and continuous improvement work.

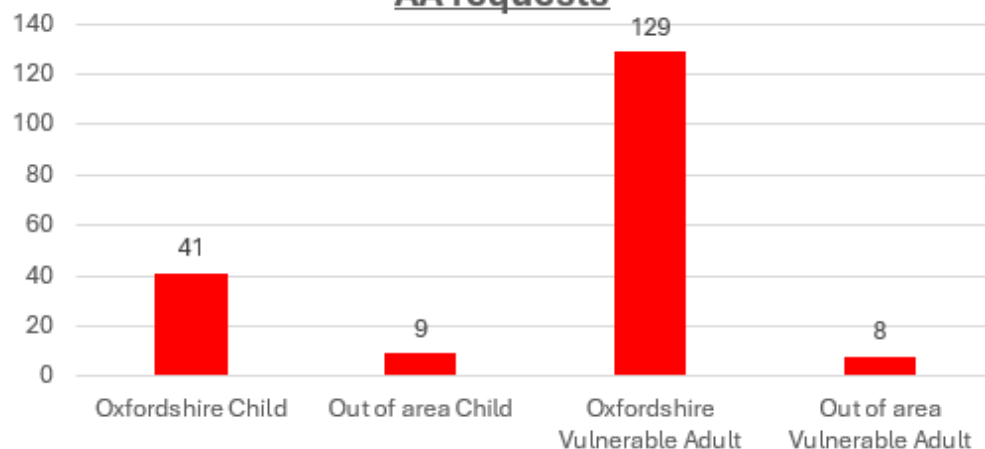
- The YJS delivers an Appropriate Adult service for children who are arrested and taken to Police custody. The YJS has a team of 37 volunteers, of which 23 are trained Appropriate Adults. All have received in-house training to ensure compliance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) and NAAN guidelines. The volunteers receive safeguarding training, regular supervision, access to support group meetings to raise any concerns / issues regarding their role, hear relevant service updates and receive specific training to enhance their skills and knowledge in the role.
- Refresher Appropriate Adult training is available, and Appropriate Adult full-day training is offered to Children's Services staff and Adult Social Care staff. The service also delivers an Appropriate Adult Awareness course twice yearly, open to all Oxfordshire County Council staff including partner agencies working with children and vulnerable adults to help them to understand this vital role. Experienced volunteers provide shadowing for new volunteers wishing to experience custody before working independently.
- The YJS monitors the number of strip-searches that a volunteer Appropriate Adult attends, including the ethnicity of the children who are strip-searched. In 2025-26 there were 8 children subject to intimate strip-searches, an increase of 7 from last year.
- A YJS Manager attends a quarterly Children in Custody meeting where data on children who are held overnight in custody suites across Thames Valley is scrutinised and discussed with partners including YJS', Emergency Duty Teams, Health colleagues and Social Care. As a result of partnership working through this meeting, data on Oxfordshire children held in Police custody is now shared with the Management Board each quarter.



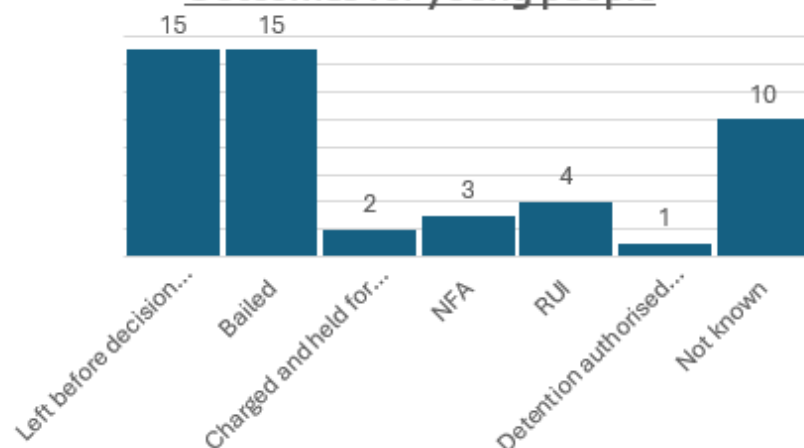
- The average number of children held overnight in Police custody between April 2025 – March 2026 was **4** each quarter. The average number of times each child was held on remand in Police custody was **4.5**.
- Only children aged 16+ were held overnight in this period.
- Alternative accommodation could not be provided by the Local Authority for any of the children.

Appropriate Adult provision April 2025 – April 2026

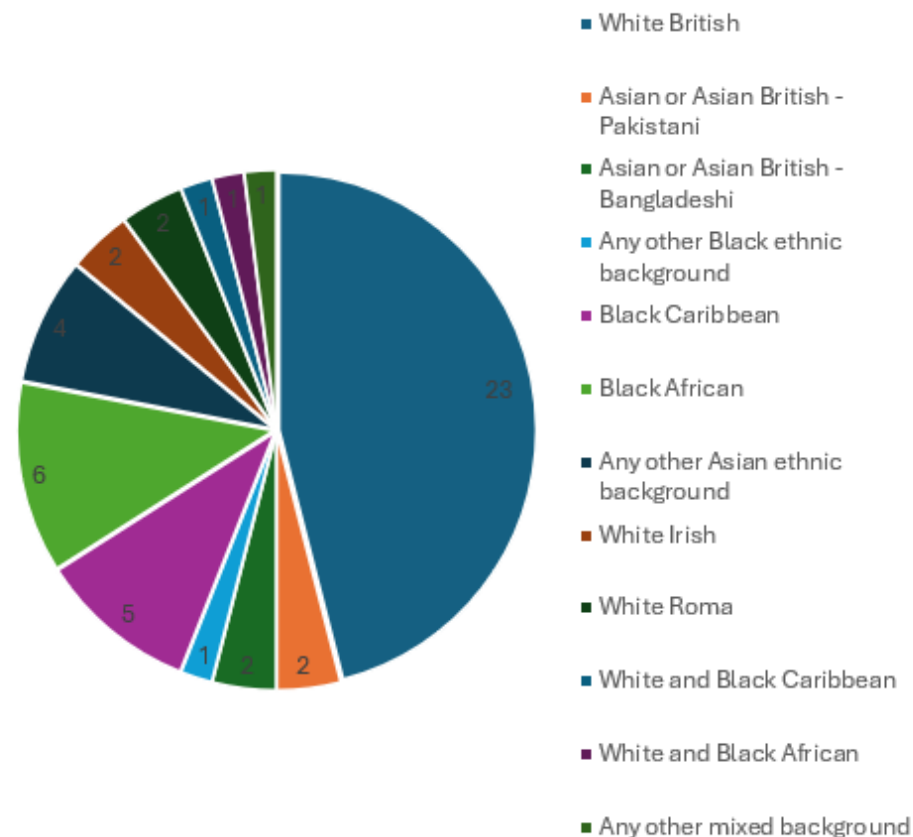
AA requests



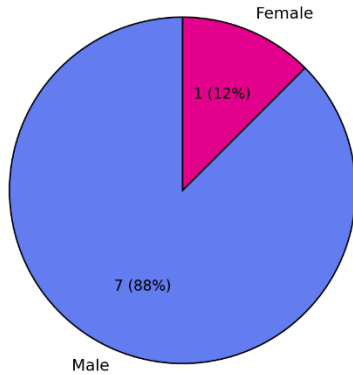
Outcomes for young people



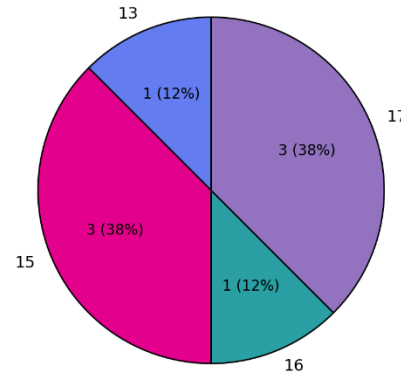
Ethnicity of young people



Strip search EIP by gender (n=8)



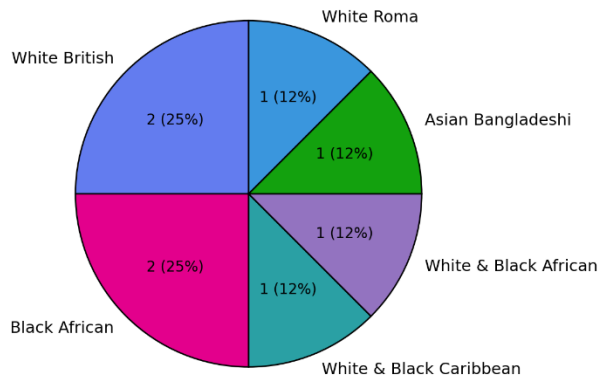
Strip search EIP by age (n=8)



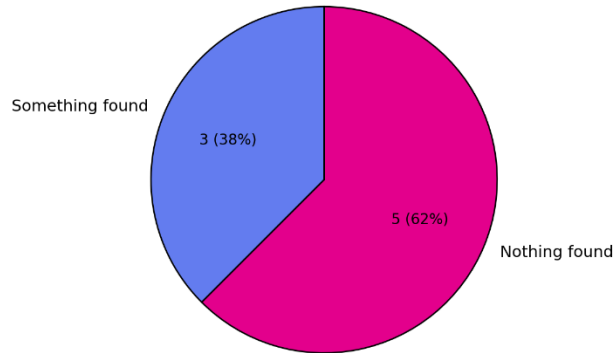
Our Volunteer Coordinators who manage our Appropriate Adult provision collate data on all children subject to strip-searches within Police custody, and this is shared with the YJ Management Board.

It is also reviewed at the partnership Children in Custody meeting for Thames Valley, led by Thames Valley Police.

Strip search EIP by ethnicity (n=8)



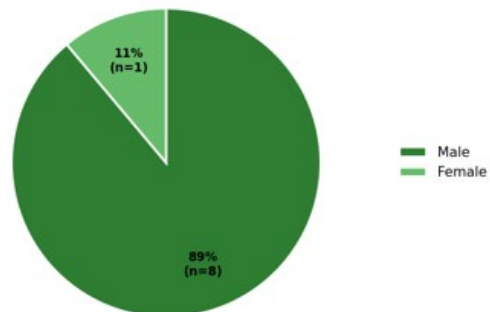
Strip search EIP outcome (n=8)



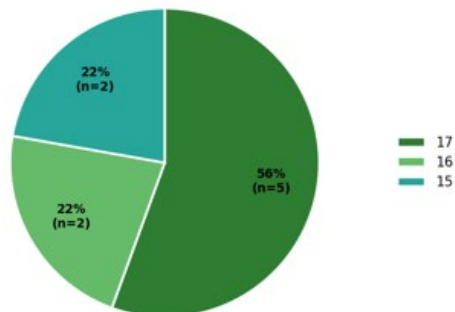
EIP = Expose Intimate Parts

Data for all remanded and sentenced (custody) children between Apr 25 – Mar 26

Gender



Age



Gender

Male: **89% (8)**

Female: **11% (1)**

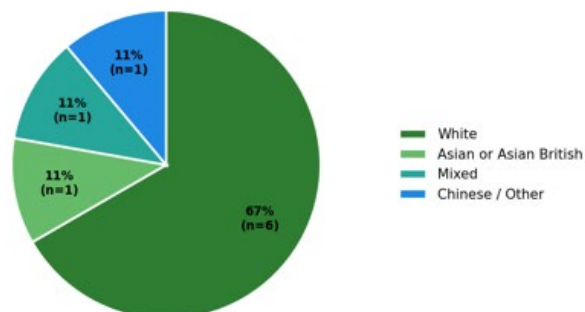
Age

17: **56% (5)**

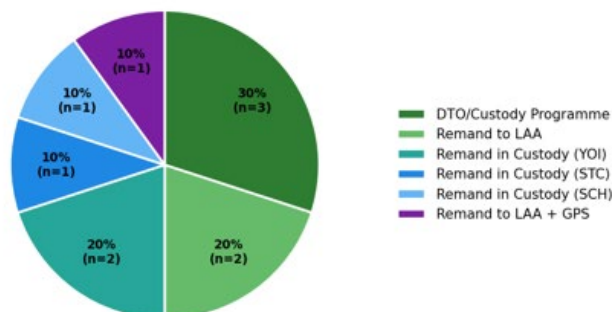
16: **22% (2)**

15: **22% (2)**

Ethnicity



Intervention Type



Ethnicity

White: **67% (6)**

Asian or Asian British: **11% (1)**

Mixed: **11% (1)**

Chinese / Other: **11% (1)**

Intervention Type

DTO/Custody Programme: **30% (3)**

Remand to LAA: **20% (2)**

Remand in Custody (YOI): **20% (2)**

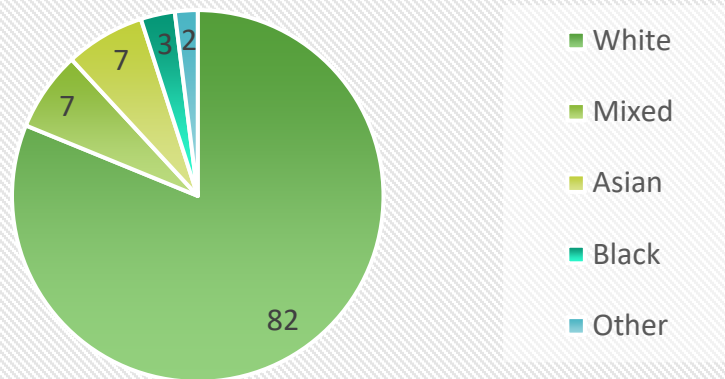
Remand in Custody (STC): **10% (1)**

Remand in Custody (SCH): **10% (1)**

Remand to LAA + GPS: **10% (1)**

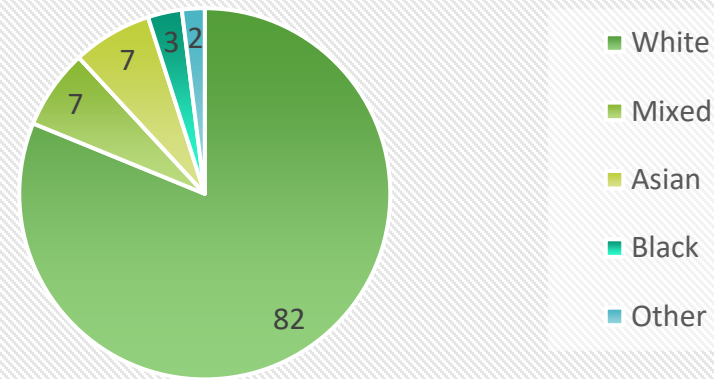
- The YJS developed a pathway for Remanded Children with Children's Social Care to ensure that newly remanded children not already open to CSC are expedited through MASH and allocated a Social Worker within 1 working day. The use of a newly developed Remand Notification informs senior leaders in Children's Services of the child's new status for oversight, support and escalation where required.
- YJS practitioners undertook training on Bail and Remand with the Youth Justice Legal Centre
- The YJS was successful in recruiting to a Youth Justice Probation Officer (in lieu of a secondee) who supports the team with oversight of transitions and resettlement practice and is lead practitioner for MAPPA.

Ethnicities of children within offending population* by % (Apr 25 – Mar 26)



*this YJB data excludes diversions

Ethnicities of children in Oxfordshire 10-17 mid-year population (2021 census)



When compared to the wider 10–17-year-old population in Oxfordshire:

- We know that Black children are over-represented within the YJ cohort by **1%**
- We know that children of mixed heritage (YJB definition) are over-represented by **3%** - this has **increased by 1%** since 24-25
- In both cases, the differences remain below the 5% threshold used by the YJB to indicate significant disparity between the offending and general populations of 10–17-year-olds, however, this must remain an issue that is closely monitored and addressed by the Management Board and service as part of our Disproportionality Action Plan.
- The service and Board recognises the need to focus on wider marginalised and over-represented groups (e.g. Girls, Gypsy, Roma & Traveller children, children with SEND) and ensure we have accurate data to drive and develop our Disproportionality Action Plan.

Our work with families is holistic, preventative and relationship-focused.

- We work with families to understand the broader context of a child's experiences, including factors that may contribute to behaviour and risks of reoffending.
- Caseworkers provide tailored support, including signposting, advocacy, and multi-agency coordination to address needs across the family unit and manage safety concerns to others and the child.
- The Family Bridges team offers targeted support where there is risk of family breakdown, using a mentalisation-based approach to strengthen understanding and rebuild relationships.
- Siblings are offered support through the Targeted Youth Work Service to create positive opportunities and help prevent negative trajectories.
- We actively seek and use family feedback to improve our service and ensure it remains responsive and effective.
- As a Family Safeguarding authority, we are committed to relational practice—working alongside children and families with empathy and respect for where they are in their journey of change. Our restorative approach recognises the impact of harmful behaviour not only on those directly involved, but also on the wider family and community.

Child 1

Joint working between Family Bridges and the YJS was particularly effective in A's case, where there had been a lack of consistency in professional support. We collaborated closely to improve responses to missing episodes and strengthen planning around the safety concerns. This included joint sessions to support introductions and contribute to the pre-sentence report writing process. We also worked together to explore A's thinking patterns and increase awareness of potential exploitation risks. This coordinated approach supported more consistent messaging and improved engagement with both A and his family.

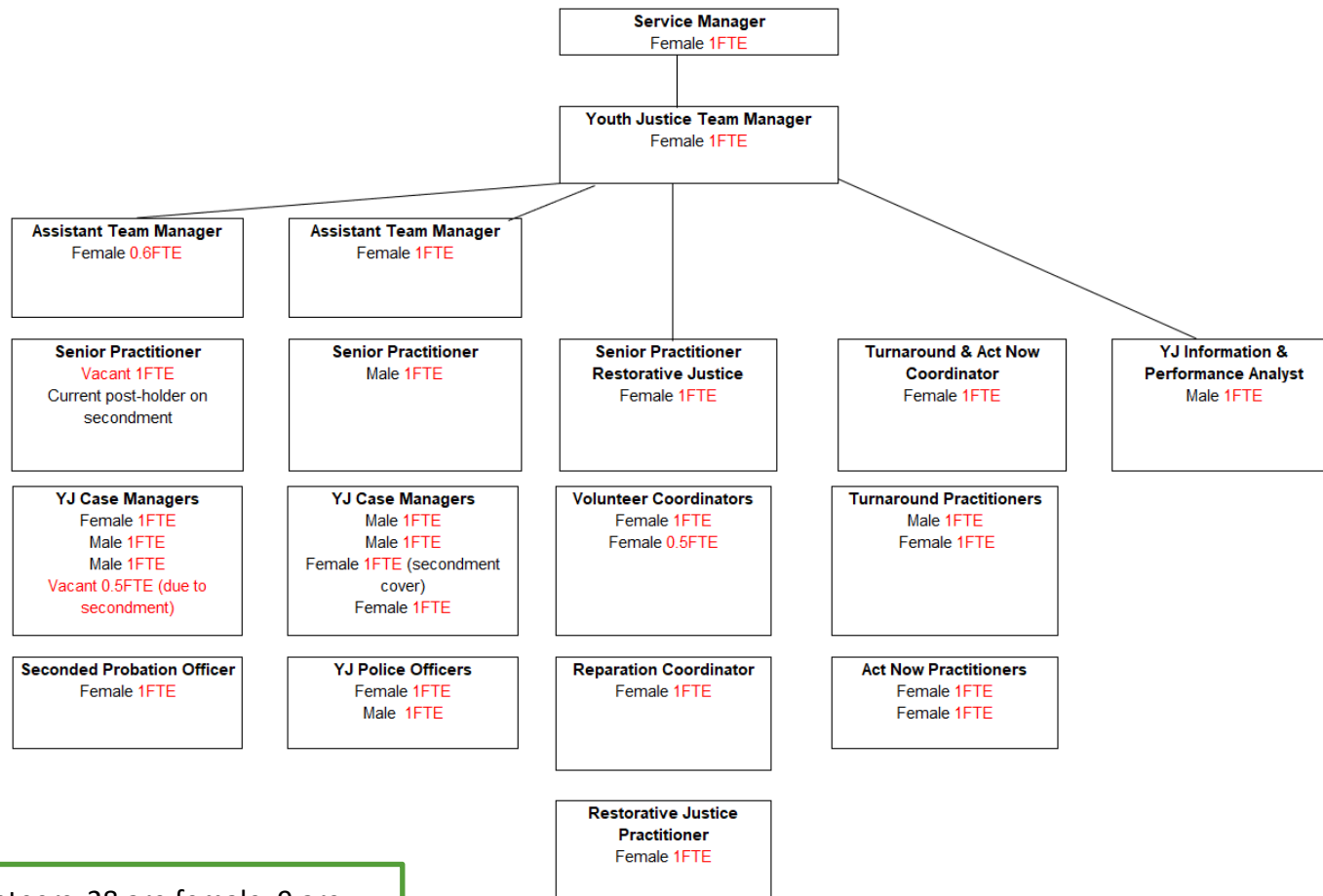
Child 2

There was strong collaboration with the YJS worker in J's case, particularly during periods of heightened safety concerns. The Family Bridges worker consulted with the YJS worker when J was found in possession of a sharp object to clarify whether this constituted a criminal offence and to ensure an appropriate, proportionate response. The practitioners worked together to support J and her mother during court proceedings, with the Family Bridges worker focused on supporting Mum to attend and engage, while the YJS worker provided direct support within Court and helped communicate J's needs. Since the completion of YJS involvement, there have been no further incidents of criminality, indicating a really positive impact.

Child 3

Multi-agency working with Family Bridges and the YJS through the Turnaround programme was very effective in B's case. Communication was strong, particularly in relation to risks around exploitation and fire-setting behaviours. The YJS worker primarily engaged directly with B, whilst the Family Bridges worker focused on supporting the parents to safety plan and respond consistently at home. This clear division of roles, alongside regular information-sharing, contributed to improved family functioning and reduced risk-taking behaviours. There have been no further incidents reported since this joint intervention.

Adolescence & Prevention: Youth Justice, SAFER, TYSS and Family Bridges



We have 37 volunteers. 28 are female, 9 are male

FCAMHS link worker 0.2FTE

Phoenix Health Nurse 1FTE

Drug Diversion Scheme Worker (Cranstoun) 0.8FTE

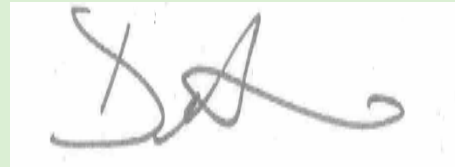
TYPE OF ROLE	NO. OF STAFF	GENDER	ETHNICITY	DISABILITY
Service Manager	1	F	White	
Team Manager	1	F	White	
Assistant Team Manager	2	F-2	White	
Performance and Information Analyst	1	M	Black	
Senior Practitioner	2	M-1 Vacant	White-1	
Youth Justice Practitioner	8	M-4 F-3 Vacant -1	White-7	
Restorative Justice Practitioner	2	F-2	White-1 Asian-1	
Act Now & Turnaround Co-ordinator	1	F	White	
Act Now Practitioner	2	F-2	White-2	
Turnaround Practitioner	2	M-1 F-1	Black-1 White-1	
Reparation Coordinator	1	F-1	White	
Volunteer Coordinator	2	F-2	White-1 Black-1	Yes
Volunteers	37	F-28 M-9	Black African x 1 Black Caribbean and White x 1 British Indian x 1 Other mixed x 1 Other mixed Arab x 1 White British x 29 White Other x 3	
Youth Justice Probation Officer (Fixed-term)	1	F-1	White	
Youth Justice Police Officers	2	M-1 F-1	Asian-1 White-1	
Speech & Language Therapist (fixed term)	Vacant			
Linked Specialists:				
Drug Diversion Scheme Worker	1	F	White Other	
SALT Worker	Vacant			
Specialist Nurse	1	F	White	
Forensic CAMHS link worker	1	F	White	

Signed by Chair of Board:

Delia Mann

Deputy Director, Children's Social Care

24th June 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SA', on a white rectangular background.