



# GATESHEAD YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE

Youth Justice Plan ■ June 2023



**Gateshead**  
Council



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■ Chair of Youth Justice  
Service Board

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# Foreword

As chair of the Gateshead Youth Justice Board, I am both pleased and proud to be able to present this Youth Justice Plan, which articulates the approach the partnership will take, to support children, young people and their parents / carers to maximise their life chances away from the formal Criminal Justice System. Our overarching shared vision is to make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives and our Gateshead Youth Justice Board has pledged to ensure a child centred approach, recognising the needs and rights of every young person and their potential to make a constructive, positive change and engage with their community.

The annual Youth Justice Plan is a requirement of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. This plan is owned by Gateshead Youth Justice Board and has been formulated following development opportunities involving both the YJS and Board members. Consultation and engagement regarding the contents of the plan has been undertaken with a wide range of different people including children and young people, their families, staff, volunteers and partner agencies.

In the past 12 months Gateshead Youth Justice Service has continued to work with young people and their families to reduce offending by engaging with them in innovative and creative ways and delivering appropriate interventions to meet their needs. The introduction of new preventative initiatives such as Turnaround and Divert supports our ambition to intervene earlier and reduce the number of young people formally entering the Criminal Justice System

Gateshead Youth Justice Service was inspected by HMIP in February 2023, HMIP rated the service “Good” overall.

The Chief Inspector of Probation Justin Russell said: “This is a much-deserved ‘Good’ rating for Gateshead Youth Justice Service – they are a credit to the local community and to Tyne and Wear. They are successfully preventing children being involved in reoffending, often going above and beyond to support each child and give them every chance of a brighter future.”

HMIP commented on the “staff team being committed to achieving the best outcomes for children and families. There is a strong connection between the board and wider service, and practitioners feel heard and valued. The partnership is invested in and advocates for the YJS. We saw effective collaboration between the YJS and the police, children’s social care, and the probation service”.

There were a number of recommendations following the inspection which have been incorporated into this Youth Justice Plan.

I would like to thank the staff of the Youth Justice Service and all our partners, on behalf of the Youth Justice Management Board, for their ongoing resilience and passion in delivering child centred and effective interventions for young people, families, and victims.

**Helen Fergusson**  
Chair – Youth Justice Board

# Introduction

## About Gateshead

Total number of young people under 18 in Gateshead  
**38498**  
(0-17 ons mye 2021)



**1007**  
Children in receipt of early help



**38.6%**  
Local children aged under 16

in relative low income families (child poverty)



**1524**



Number of children in need

**212**

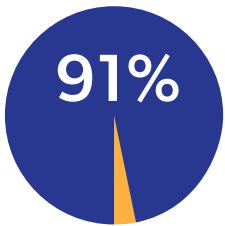


Number of children on a child protection plan

**529**  
children in care



**91%**



of schools good or better

**20**

Number of first-time entrants to YJS



**117**

Number of care experienced young people



**7836**

Number of children accessing Free School Meals



**1513**

Young People and Adults with an EHCP (0 to 25)



**234**

Number of children with a disability in Social Work Teams



## About our Youth Justice Service

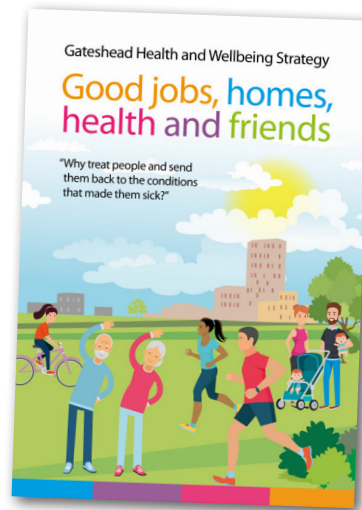
The Youth Justice Service is positioned within Gateshead Council's Children's Social Care and Lifelong learning Directorate. This has facilitated strong working relationships with education colleagues, early help and safeguarding teams including Contextual Safeguarding and those supporting Children in Our Care.

## Our Partnership Vision and Priorities

**Making Gateshead  
a place where  
everyone thrives**



Our vision has been developed in collaboration with partners and is aligned to Gateshead Council's overarching strategic approach (Thrive), our Health & Wellbeing Strategy and our Children's Social Care and Early Help strategic plan.



### **Children's Social Care and Early Help -**

**'Children and young people in Gateshead enjoy their childhood and have the opportunity to THRIVE and be their best selves'**

### **Gateshead Youth Justice Service -**

**'We will ensure a child centred approach recognising the needs and rights of every young person and their potential to make constructive, positive change and engage with their community'**

# Child First

Gateshead Youth Justice Service is committed to the Child First principles:

- 1. See children as children: Prioritise the best interests of children, recognising their needs, capacities, rights, and potential. All work is child-focused and developmentally informed.**
- 2. Develop pro-social identity for positive child outcomes: Promote children's individual strengths and capacities as a means of developing their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.**
- 3. Collaboration with children: Encourage children's active participation, engagement, and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.**
- 4. Promote diversion: Promote a childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion, and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system.**

A guiding principle for Gateshead Youth Justice Service is to have a child centred approach in all areas of our work. We recognise that children in the justice system often have multiple and complex needs. Where possible, we seek to divert children from the justice system entirely and address these needs through diversion and prevention. Youth Justice Service staff continue to work effortlessly to ensure best outcomes for the children that we work with.

Recent feedback from an external organisation praised the child first approach the case manager had taken:

**"I just wanted to pass on my sincerest thanks to [YJS Worker] and the work he has done with the young person. [YJS Worker's] dedication to his role as his YOT worker has been incredible and he has gone above and beyond to ensure the young person and his family have been supported throughout this whole process. His genuine care for the young person and his family is evident and something we have all commented on. I have worked within this field for twenty years and [YJS Worker's] is one of the very best, if not the best, YOT workers I had the pleasure to work with".**

## Voice of the Child

They listened to me

My case manager helped to take me to school and counselling appointments

I got help with my substance misuse

I was helped to get a job and I am now setting up an online business

My case manager helped me to get a passport, and got me into going to the gym

My case manager helped me to be able to keep playing football.

The Youth Justice Service helped me to attend school and help me not to drink as much.

My worker had an "ACE" attitude

Staff helped me to attend my appointments and stick to my plan when I broke my leg.

Staff were down to earth, I could talk, and they would listen, they helped me to engage.

## Listening to Young People

Gateshead Youth Justice Service works closely with the internal Children's Rights Service to ensure the voices of children are heard. Children and young people who are in contact with the Youth Justice Service have several opportunities throughout their involvement with the service to have their views listened to and acted upon. To allow young people to contribute their views, the methods used to gather Children and Young People's views. These include:

- **Young people attending the Youth Justice Service Board** - Young people attend Gateshead Youth Justice Board meetings to tell their stories and outline their experiences of the Youth Justice Service. This has offered the opportunity for board members to understand the journey of the child from their perspective and has helped them to understand how their agencies have had an impact on their life. By meeting with young people face to face it has been possible to ask questions about service delivery and areas for improvement and development.
- **Parent/Carer Representation** – Parents attend Gateshead Youth Justice Board meetings to speak about their experience of the Youth Justice Service. This has helped us to understand what works well and to consider areas for development.
- **Self-assessments** - Case managers employ interviewing skills which allow them to support young people to explore their own story. Each young person completes a YJB self-assessments as part of their assessment which helps understand the young person's perspective and their strengths and challenges. Parents and carers also complete self-assessments which help understand how the needs of the young person's family can also be supported.



- **Exit interviews** - Towards the end of their involvement, young people are invited to put forward their views through an exit questionnaire. This questionnaire helps us to understand what the young person perceived their order to be, what interventions they participated in and how useful they found this in avoiding further offending. Young people are also asked how services could be improved to better meet their needs.
- **Championing our young people** - Case managers and advocates are extremely skilled in engaging with young people. By listening to the young person and putting them at the centre of all the work we do we can build trusting relationships and promote positive change. Working together with statutory agencies and voluntary organisations makes it possible to ensure that the voice of the child is heard and a co-ordinated approach to intervention is achieved. Members of the Youth Justice Service sit on various panels across Social Care, Education, and Community Safety to advocate on behalf of young people and ensure their voices are heard.

## You said...



You should check that we are ok when we're locked up

How can you help me? What do you do?



I came to the board to share my story. You should hear from more young people like me

I was bored in my rep, you should have more choice of things to do!



## We did...

We introduced safeguarding interviews for young people in custody

We produced a child friendly copy of our strategic plan

We worked with Digital Voice for Communities, to ensure that the YJS Board and others hear your voices

We have teamed up with family hubs to provide reparative opportunities in your community

We developed a reparation information pack



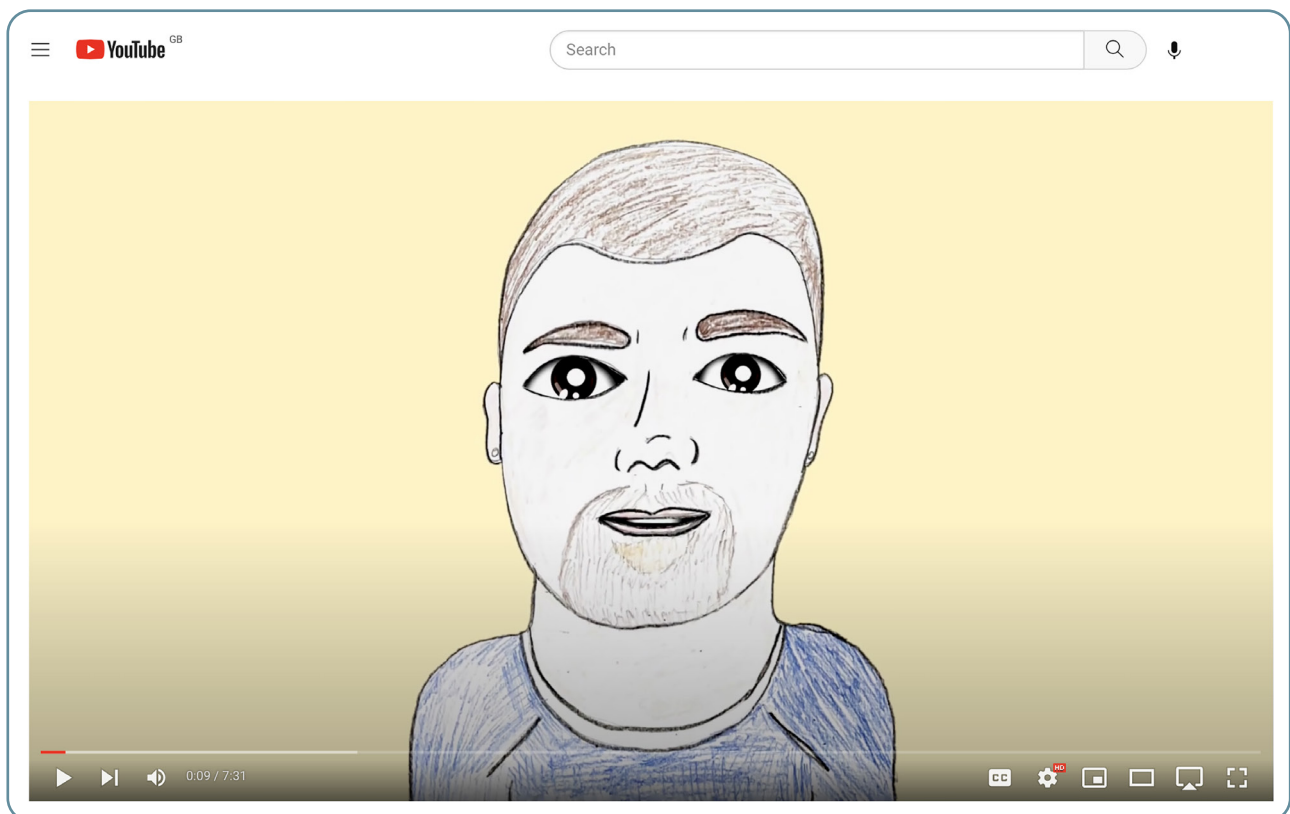


## Listen to me

In January 2023 Gateshead Youth Justice Service produced a Digital Me video with Digital Voice. Several young people helped to co – produce an animated film capturing their experiences of how they became involved in offending behaviours, their experiences of the Youth Justice Service and what worked for them to stop offending.

The video was scripted and animated by the young people. Key themes around peer pressure, substance misuse and education were reoccurring issues that the young people have experienced. The young people told us that building trusting relationships with their cases managers was important to them, this enabled them to move forward and understand how to change their behaviour.

The video can be found at <https://youtu.be/tnoyL3OhF5A>.



Gateshead Youth Justice service wanted to co-produce this piece of work so it would help other young people avoid offending behaviours. Using the young people to voice the script was important as there are very few resources available with local accents, it was felt other young people listening to this would be able to easily identify with it.

This video has been shared across Gateshead Children’s Social care, it is being used as a training tool and as a resource for working with young people at risk of offending. It has also been shared externally with partners and other services so other children, young people, victims, and the general public can see the positive impact Gateshead Youth Justice Service has on young people.

# Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements

The Youth Justice Service is positioned within Gateshead Council's Children's Social Care and Early Help directorate. This has facilitated strong working relationships with Early Intervention and Safeguarding teams including Contextual Safeguarding and those supporting Children in Our Care.

The service is led by the Youth Justice Team Manager, an Assistant Manager, 6 Youth Justice Case Managers, 3 Young People's Advocates and a Restorative Justice Practitioner. As a multi-agency partnership, Gateshead Youth Justice Services contains specialists, or access to specialist provision for children being supervised, this includes:

- **Two Police Officers are seconded from Northumbria Police and co-located into Gateshead Youth Justice Service.**
- **A Probation Officer is seconded from the National Probation Service (North East) and co-located into Gateshead Youth Justice Service. The Youth Justice Service also has access to a Probation Support Officer (shared regionally).**

## Governance

Governance of Youth Justice Service in Gateshead is delivered by a defined Gateshead Youth Justice Board. The Youth Justice Board is chaired by the Director of Children's Services, Helen Fergusson. Councillor Gary Haley, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People is also a full and active member of the Board. All statutory partners are represented alongside, Police, Probation, Children's Social Care, Health and Education. Members hold sufficient seniority to be able to commit resources and make necessary decisions. The board meets face to face on a bi-monthly basis.

Gateshead Youth Justice Board have a forward planner which is used to schedule reports and updates from internal and external partners. Terms of reference and membership of the Gateshead Youth Justice Board were reviewed in January 2023.

In addition to bi-monthly meetings, bi-annual development sessions take place to review membership, consolidate partner relationships, strengthen roles and responsibilities of board members, and develop priorities for the year ahead.

The Gateshead Youth Justice Board membership is linked with other local inter-agency structures ensuring clear lines of communication and a collaborative approach to shared responsibilities and aims. These include:

- **Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership**
- **Gateshead SEND Board**
- **Gateshead Community Safety Partnership**
- **Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
- **Gateshead Corporate Parenting Board**
- **Newcastle Gateshead Integrated Care Board**
- **Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Board**
- **Gateshead Multi Agency Exploitation Hub**

Gateshead performance subgroup supplements the delivery of youth justice provision in Gateshead and enable the Gateshead Youth Justice Board to effectively fulfil the statutory duties as set out in the practice guidance for England and Wales: Youth Justice Service governance and leadership. Membership consists of representatives from statutory and non-statutory partners and are accountable to the Gateshead Youth Justice Board. The function of the group is to,

- Review performance data
- Shape the analysis and agree the content of the Board reports in advance of Gateshead Youth Justice Board meetings.
- Monitor progress against strategic priorities.
- Ensure performance standards are met against HMIP inspection criteria.
- Support the Board in preparing for any inspection activity
- Inform service improvement

## Board development

Following some changes in the Board membership, in September 2022 Gateshead Youth Justice Service held a Board Development Day, this was well attended by all statutory partners and the majority of other board members. This session focused on providing the Board with a good induction into the role of members and the importance of advocating for young people within the Youth Justice Service, in their respective organisations. The session used the YJB's Youth Justice Service governance and leadership guidance, HMIP inspection criteria and reports to plan and deliver the session. In May 2023 HMIP found

“There is a thorough induction and continued development for board members, who understand their role and responsibilities well. The partnership is invested in and advocates for the YJS. We saw effective collaboration between the YJS and the police, children’s social care, and the probation service”.

In line with the YJB new Key Performance Indicators, Gateshead YJS will record the number of senior partners attending board meetings and will report on partners which have presented data which has identified areas of disproportionality. In the recent HMIP inspection they found there was “representation of appropriate seniority from all partners”.

The annual YJS Strategic Plan is developed with partners and key priorities are identified jointly and progress against these are monitored through the board. Board members, YJS staff and volunteers are all invited to these sessions to provide joint planning and development. HMIP reflected that “there are effective relationships between the management board and the wider service. Staff are invited to and attend the board regularly; they feel that their views are heard and responded to. They have a good understanding of the board’s activity. Board members are aware of the day-to-day activity of the YJS and have shadowed work”.

Members of Gateshead Youth Justice Service Board are involved in audit of cases and practice. This ensures board members have a good operational understanding of the service and it develops relationships between operation staff and strategic leaders. Audits are reported through the board to ensure a wider understanding of the findings.

## Progress on previous plan

Gateshead Youth Justice Service consulted with partners and agreed nine key priorities as defined in the Strategic Plan for 2021 - 2023.

### Priority 1

**Ensure our young people are “children first and offenders second”**

#### Progress

Gateshead Youth Justice Service worked with Digital Me to produce a short film asking young people about how they became involved in offending and their experiences of being involved with Gateshead Youth justice Service. The film focuses on some of the key issues that lead them into offending behaviors and allows them to reflect on opportunities for change. This is a local resource which can be used by partners and across the children’s workforce including schools, health, police, and MASH.

HMIP found “Understanding the experiences of children, families and victims is a priority for the YJS. It is proactive in ensuring that their voices are continually heard at the board and used to influence service delivery. This ethos is shared by the wider partnership, which also recognises the importance of working and collaborating with children and families”.

Life story work continues to be a key priority for Gateshead Children’s Social Care, the Youth Justice Service provide information and material to help to build the young person’s story.

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### Priority 2

**Ensure Children in Our Care are not overrepresented in the Criminal Justice Service**

#### Progress

Gateshead Youth Justice Service is acutely aware of the over representation of Cared for Children’s in the Youth Justice System. As a result of this the cohort of young people are monitored through the performance framework and weekly risk register. There is a clear understanding of the need to divert Cared for Children and avoid formal intervention. The circumstances of each offence and the young person is assessed at the point of diversion and throughout the Out of Court Disposal process. There are examples of Cared for Children not being progressed through Youth Justice but rather diverted by not coming into service or by using a lower-level intervention such as Outcome 22. Youth Justice Staff have a regular presence in local Children’s Homes, meet with young people during their intervention and keep in touch after to provide ongoing support. The 10-point check list ensures that offences within care homes are dealt with by way of a restorative intervention (where appropriate).

### **Priority 3**

**Identify and intervene early with young people to address behaviour that could lead a young person into the Criminal Justice System.**

#### **Progress**

Divert from Charge is a referral process which will no longer see young people being charged by police unless in extreme cases, such as offences that could lead to a remand. Youth Justice Service Police Officers apply an eligibility test which will assess whether an Out of Court option is appropriate. If the young person is eligible and willing to engage, they will receive either a Youth Conditional Caution (YCC) or an Outcome 22 (deferred prosecution).

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### **Priority 4**

**Ensure education teams effectively meets the needs of young people within the criminal justice system**

#### **Progress**

The Youth Justice Service, along with Information Advice and Guidance service, education partners undertake joint reviews of education for statutory and post statutory age young people and report regularly to the Gateshead Youth Justice Board. Gateshead Youth Justice Service is an active member of education panels including, fair access, complex pupils, exclusion, the attendance strategy and SEND. Education, training, and employment status is assessed with each young person in Youth Justice Service, and support offered in response to individual need. Young people in the Youth Justice Services continue to be disproportionately permanently excluded, have SEND and not being offered or engaging to full time, main stream education. This is an area of further development in 2023 / 2024. There is a strategic plan across Children's Social Care to ensure vulnerable groups of young people are actively supported to access appropriate education, YJS children are part of this group.

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### **Priority 5**

**Promote the health and wellbeing of young people in the Youth Justice System**

#### **Progress**

Gateshead Children's Social Care and Early Help and the North Cumbria Integrated Care Board have developed the Trusting Hands service. The service will focus on the children and young people who need it most, providing support to carers, social workers and other advocates of children and young people and their families to enable them to recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma, respond appropriately and seek further help and support when needed. The service will also provide speech and language screening and support recognising the impact on speech, language, and communication of trauma in childhood.

Young people in the police station are offered a Liaison and Diversion health screen, this can be followed up in the community to support the young person.

North East Counselling Service (NECS) have worked with Gateshead Youth Justice Service to support the team in their work with children and young people, specifically in terms of ongoing emotional, mental health and wellbeing needs. Intervention development sessions have been delivered to the Gateshead Youth Justice Service team by the Counselling Lead/ Manager. Gateshead Youth Justice Service has direct access to counselling services with NECS. Young people and their parents have been offered counselling support. There is scope to provide family counselling if needed. These types of wider supportive approaches can often be more impactful than directing counselling interventions towards the individual.

## Priority 6

### Support young people transitioning between Children's and Adults Service

#### Progress

The overriding objective of the Joint National Protocol for Transitions in England and behind an effective transition process is that it should be managed safely both for the child and their community. Whilst there are limited restrictions on the type of youth statutory orders that can be transferred to the Probation Service, where the child meets the age eligibility threshold, what remains fundamental is the need to jointly assess the appropriateness of the child's transfer. Gateshead Probation Service and Youth Justice Service have processes in place to make sure relevant young people are regularly discussed and decisions are made as to which service is the most appropriate to meet their needs. Gateshead and South Tyneside Probation were inspected by HMIP in September 2022, it was reported on good practice between the services "there were very low numbers of children transferring from the Youth Offending Service (YOS) to The Probation Service after reaching age 18. Decisions about whether to transfer were made jointly between YOS and the PDU based on maturity and the needs of the young person rather than on rigid." This was seen to be positive practice.

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## Priority 7

### Understand and intervene with young people experiencing criminal exploitation.

#### Progress

Gateshead Youth Justice Service is an active partner at the Missing, Slavery, Exploitation and Trafficking panel. Young people at risk of exploitation are supported by the Youth Justice Service and referrals made to appropriate services. Gateshead YJS has made a number of referrals to the National Referral Mechanism for young people who we suspected had been exploited into committing crime. Gateshead Children's Social care and YJS are actively involved in the Missing Exploitation hub across Northumbria. There are clear communication routes with the Missing Co-Ordinator and Return Home Officer to ensure information is shared effectively to understand the potential risk to the child or young person. Gateshead Youth Justice Service also works with SCARPA who provide one to one support for young people at risk of exploitation.

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## Priority 8

### Understand Serious Youth Violence in Gateshead and what can be done to reduce harm to the public and manage the risk.

#### Progress

Serious youth violence continues to be a priority for the partnership. A serious Youth violence strategy is being written by the Violence Reduction Unit, Community Safety, Youth Justice and other partners are involved in this work.

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## Priority 9

### Build our understanding of the specific problems faced by young people in Gateshead

#### Progress

We need to develop a culturally competent workforce, who are able to work effectively and inclusively with children, young people and families from all backgrounds. Gateshead Youth Justice Service needs to embed a strategic and operational approach to diversity, policies and procedures need to capture how the service will respond to all protected characteristics. This will also include addressing disproportionality.



## Resources and services

The Youth Justice Board has not yet confirmed the financial settlement for 2023/2024. However, working in a challenging financial climate the Gateshead Youth Justice Board will work collaboratively to ensure that service delivery is not compromised and that disadvantaged children are not further marginalized. The budget is split between delivering statutory Youth Justice Services and providing a Prevention offer for young people at risk of offending.

Case Managers provide appropriate adult services Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm, the Emergency Duty Team provide cover for appropriate adult requests outside of these days and times. In addition, for a standby fee, Managers and Case Managers provide weekend and Bank holiday cover for remand courts. There are also a number of volunteers supporting service delivery. The Youth Justice Service is a multi-agency team which is supported through contributions of statutory partners including Police, Probation Service and Health.

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Youth Justice Board	467,091	0		467,091
Local Authority	433,856	142,031	45,808	621,695
Police		116,686		116,686
Police and Crime Commissioner				0
Probation	5,000	43,751		48,751
Health	61,676			61,676
Other	0	0		0
<b>Total</b>	<b>967,623</b>	<b>302,468</b>	<b>45,808</b>	<b>1,315,899</b>

The cost of a custodial remand continues to be a financial risk to the service, Gateshead Youth Justice Service can deliver high quality, intensive bail packages, however if the offence was so serious there may be no alternative to a remand.

Gateshead Youth Justice Service uses the JYB grant, partner contributions and available resources to deliver these services and we believe they produce the following benefits and outcomes. Our performance will be improved in 2023/24 by delivering a greater prevention offer which will impact on the number of young people entering the Youth Justice Service.



# Performance

## **Key Performance Indicators:**

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) introduced new key performance indicators as of April 2023 to replace those already in place, namely First Time Entrants, Reoffending, and use of Custody. There are a total of ten new indicators that have been introduced to help prove how services and partners are involved with more complex caseloads despite an overall reduction in the number of children coming into services.

### **The new KPIs set by the YJB are.**

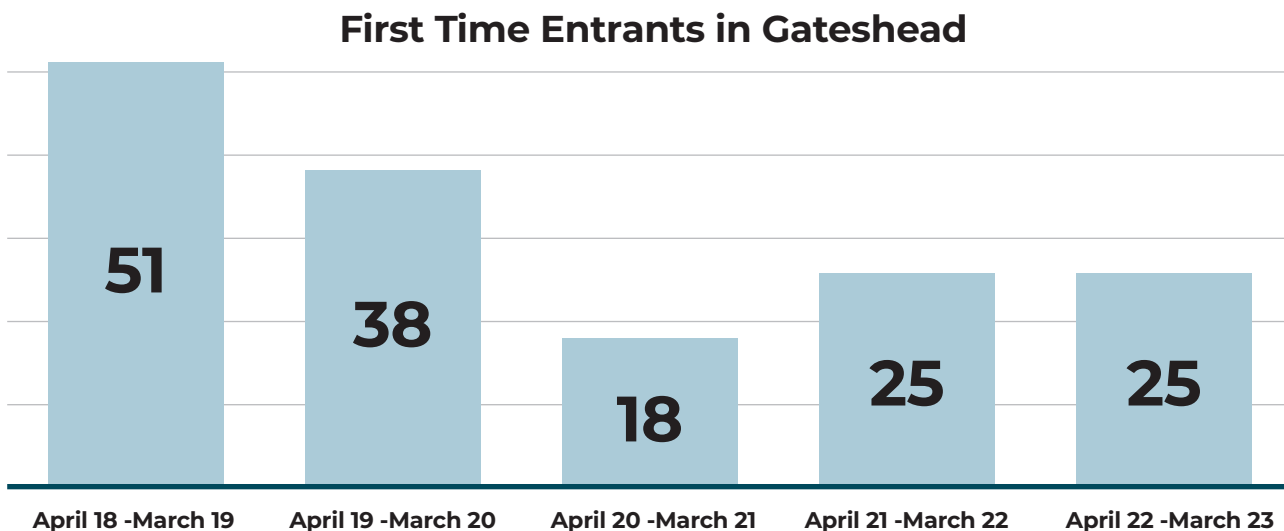
1. Suitable Accommodation – looking at the type and suitability of accommodation for young people in the community and those being released from custody
2. Education, Training and Employment – concerned with the number and proportion of children in ETE and the suitability.
3. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities /Additional Learning Needs – includes the number of children with SEND and whether they have a formal plan and are in suitable ETE
4. Mental Healthcare and Emotional Wellbeing – services are required to record the number of children screened or assessed to understand their mental health and emotional wellbeing needs
5. Substance Misuse – this KPI looks at children with a screened or identified need for an intervention or treatment to address substance misuse
6. Out of Court Disposals – reporting on the outcomes of interventions in each period and the rate of completion by young people.
7. Links to Wider Services – services are required to record the status of children classified as currently care experienced. Those children that have a 'Looked After Child,' Child in Need status or have a Child Protection Plan in place.
8. Management Board Attendance – services are required to record the number of senior partners attending quarterly meetings and the data presented that identifies any areas of disproportionality
9. Serious Violence – requirement for services to record on the caseload children cautioned or convicted of Serious Violence
10. Victims – details of the number of victims created from the offences committed by children on the caseload and the involvement with the service.

As the above KPIs have been introduced by the YJB this year there is not yet a sufficient amount of data to provide any real analysis. Gateshead YJS will be monitoring all ten indicators and using the data to support in the processes and interactions with all those that come into the service.

**Existing key performance indicators:**

**First Time Entrants (FTE) data source – Police National Computer (PNC) & Gateshead YJS (Where stated)**

First Time Entrants (FTEs) are young people referred to the Youth Justice Service in Gateshead that have received a substantive outcome for the first time. Substantive outcomes can be Youth Cautions, Youth Caution + Conditions, Referral Orders, Youth Rehabilitation Orders, or custodial sentences.



The chart above shows the numbers of FTE's in Gateshead since April 2018 and is taken from Police National Computer (PNC) data that is published by the Youth Justice Board (YJB). Overall, the number of FTEs in Gateshead has been significantly reduced (51%) since 2018. During the height of the covid pandemic (from March 2020) the country was in lockdown on several occasions which may account for the significant reduction in the FTE numbers in 2020/21 from the previous year.

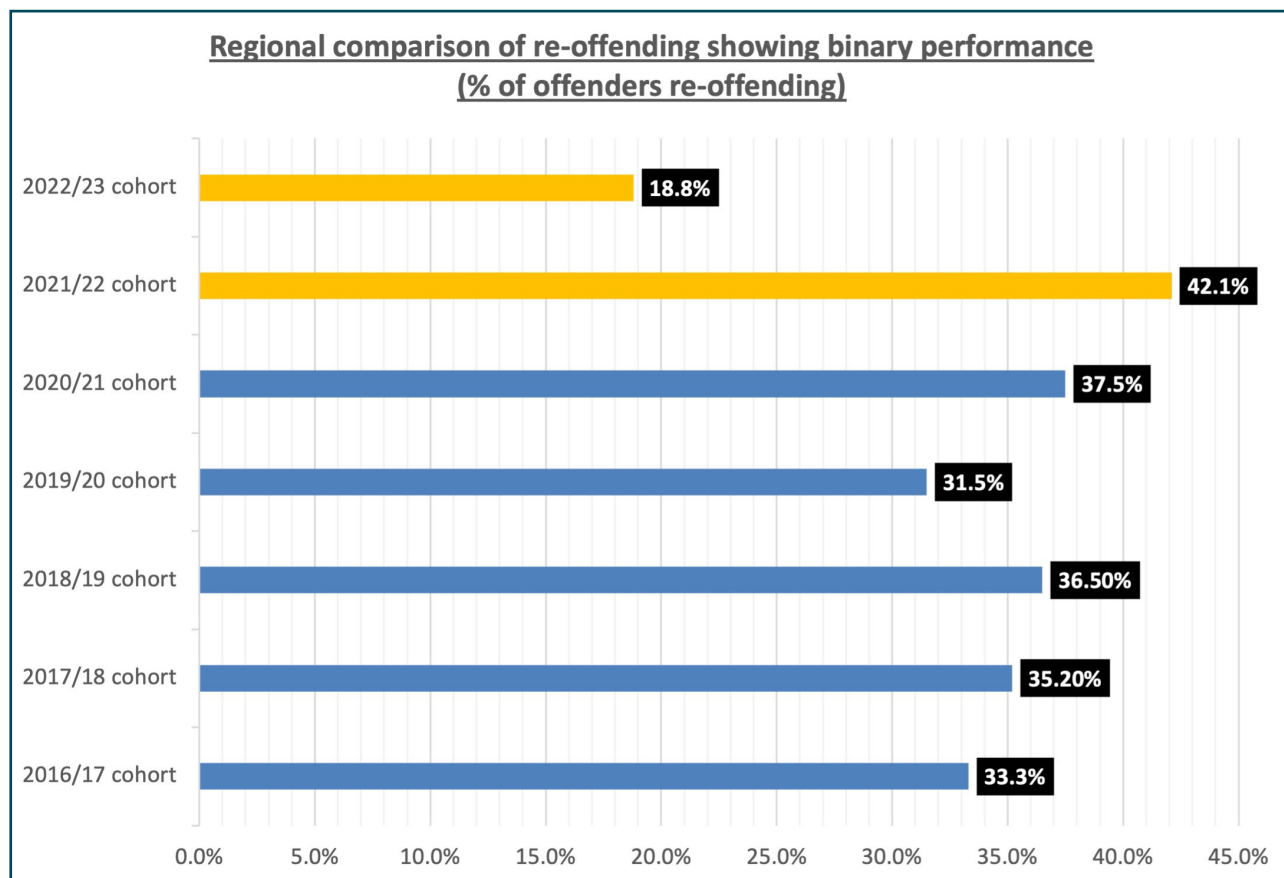
The most recent published PNC data from the YJB is for the period April 2021 to March 2022. The figures in the chart above and table below for 2022/23 have been taken from the Gateshead YJS due to the lag in published data and is therefore provisional but show there has been no increase in FTEs.

The following table shows FTE numbers and rates (per 100,000 of 10–17-year-old population) in Gateshead.

Gateshead's FTE's	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Number	51	38	18	25	25
Rate per 100,000 10-17 population	298	218	103	145	147

## Reoffending Data Source – Police National Computer (PNC) & Gateshead YJS (Where stated)

The reoffending rate within Youth Justice is measured as the percentage of young people involved with the service that commit further offences. Published re-offending data is provided on a lag therefore 2021/22 and 2022/23 data is taken from the Gateshead YJS tracking tool as provisional as it is expected to change. The most recently published PNC data period is April 2020 – March 2021. This data shows the rate for Gateshead was 37.5% which shows an increase of 6% on the previous year.



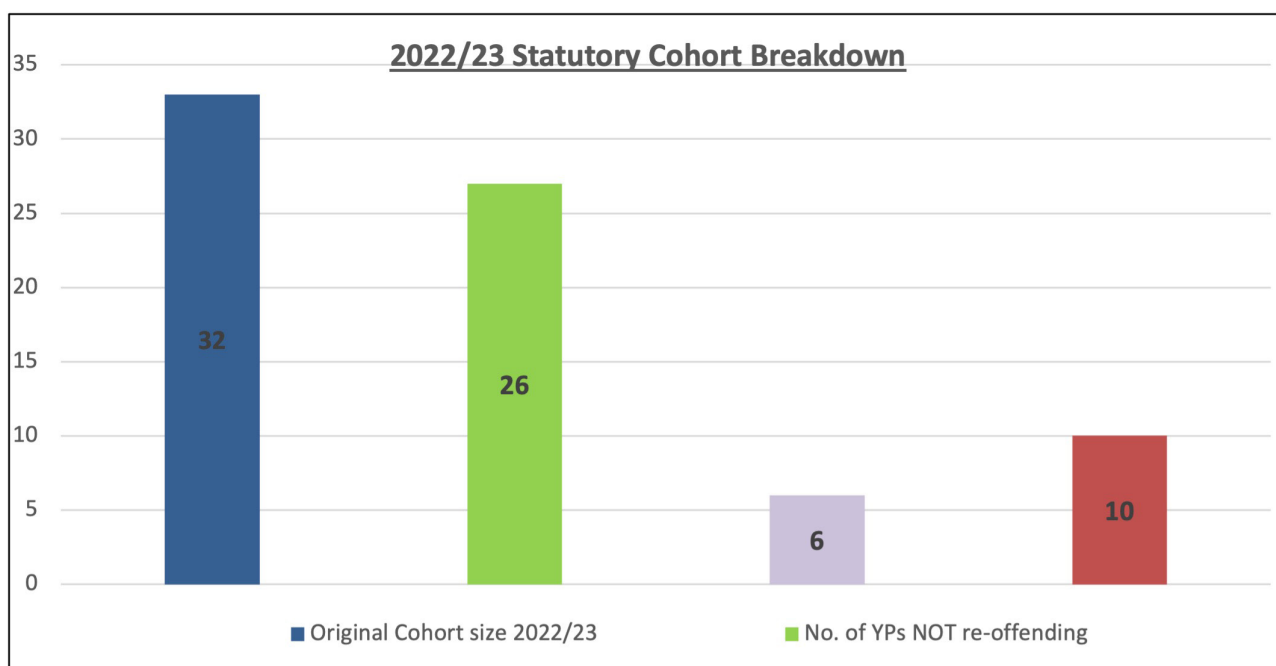
For the re-offending cohort, each young person is monitored for a 12-month period starting from the date they enter the cohort (i.e., when their disposal is received). The published data from the YJB for Gateshead reoffending rates and reoffences/reoffender (total number of further offences committed by young people that have gone on to reoffend) can be seen in the table below upon updating the cohort offending data, the YJS management team reviews those cases each month to ensure the plan in place is robust and includes the necessary objectives to prevent further offending where possible.

Gateshead's Proven Rate of Reoffending	2011 / 12	2012 / 13	2013 / 14	2014 / 15	2015 / 16	2016 / 17	2017 / 18	2018 / 19	2019 / 20	2020 / 21	2020 / 21
Reoffences/ reoffender	2.98	2.83	2.57	3.49	3.69	3.51	3.23	2.98	3.89	6.52	6.11
% Reoffending	40.1%	45.7%	40.7%	32.9%	47.8%	33.3%	35.2%	40.1%	36.5%	31.5%	37.5%

## Latest Offending Data of Gateshead 2022/23 Statutory Cohort

Young people receiving a caution or court disposal between April 2022 and March 2023 entered into the statutory cohort and are tracked for 12 months from the date they enter (date caution or court disposal is received). The data from Gateshead YJS tracking tool (as of the end of March 2023) shows the provisional reoffending rate at 18.8% (which is currently a 23.3% decrease when compared to the previous year's rate) as 6 cohort members have committed further offences since receiving their original disposal. Compared to the previous year, in total, there have been 10 further offences committed meaning the reoffences per reoffender rates is at 1.67.

The 2022/23 cohort consists of 32 young people of which 28 are still within their tracking period which means the reoffending data for this cohort is provisional and is expected to change.

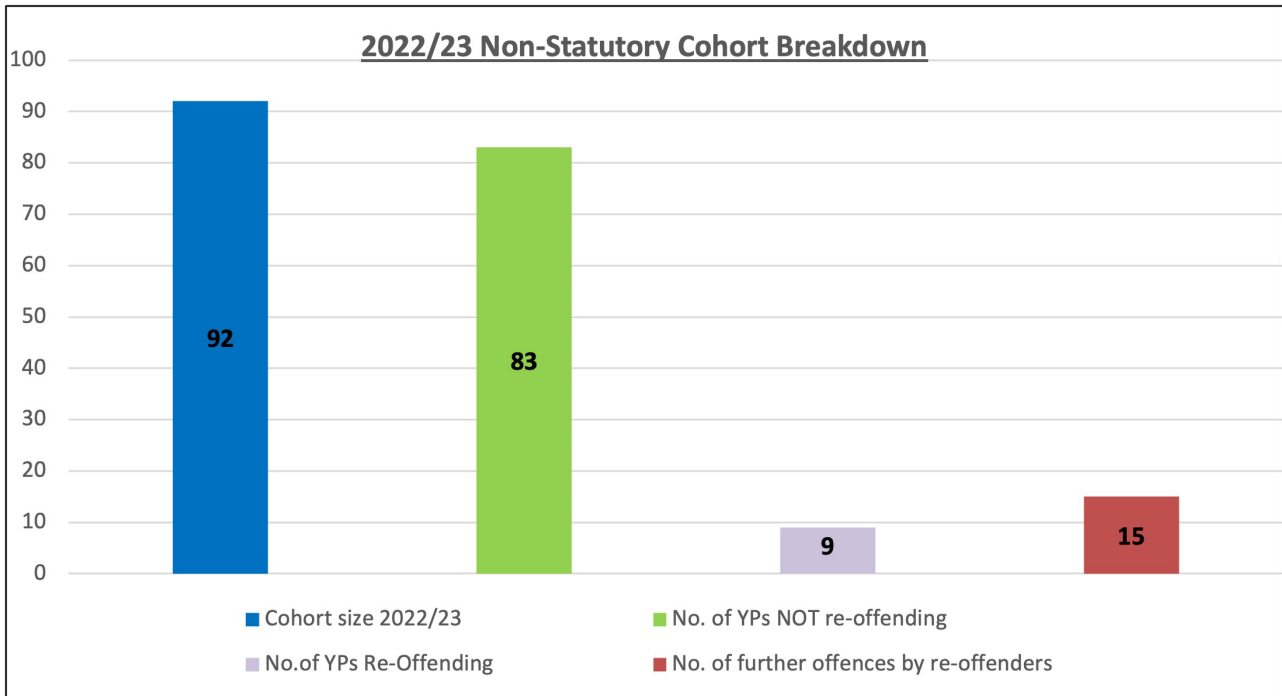


In this cohort all 32 members are male and 88% (28) are from a white British background. This means those with a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background account for 12% of the cohort which may appear high however, the number of BAME young people is low at 4. 81% (26) are between 14 and 17 years old (at the date of entering the cohort) which has been the trend in Gateshead. Of all the young people over half (56%) were previously known to the service i.e., they had received disposals before entering this cohort.

## Offending Data of 2022/23 Non-Statutory Cohort

Like the statutory cohort a tracking tool is used for those young people referred to the Gateshead service that receive an out of court disposal (OCD) between April 2022 and March 2023 and are tracked for 12 months from the date they enter (date OCD received).

This non-statutory cohort comprises of 92 young people with 80 still within their tracking period meaning this data is provisional and expected to change over the course of each member's 12-month period. The most recent cohort of young people that have entered the service receiving a non-statutory outcome (April 2022 to March 2023) shows a reoffending rate of 9.8% compared to 18% in the previous year. Again, this is provisional data and expected to change until tracking periods have ended for all the young people.



Of the 92 young people that received an out of court disposal three quarters (69) are male, 93% (86) are White-British with only 7% (6) from a BAME background. Those aged 14-17 at the date they received their disposal account for 79% (73) of the full cohort members. One in four of this cohort had previously received a disposal from the YJS in Gateshead.

## Offending Data of 2022/23 Non-Statutory Cohort

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	April 2020 - March 2021		April 2021 - March 2022		April 2022 - December 2022	
	Custodial Sentences	Rate per 1,000 of 10-17 population	Custodial Sentences	Rate per 1,000 of 10-17 population	Custodial Sentences	Rate per 1,000 of 10-17 population
<b>Gateshead</b>	2	0.11	1	0.06	1	0.06
<b>England &amp; Wales</b>	728	0.13	645	0.11	468	0.08

From the period above there were a total of 4 custodial sentences between April 2020 and December 2022 all of which were male and all aged 17 at the time of sentencing. In 2022/23 the only custodial sentence (as of December 2022) was given to a young person from a BAME background with all other sentences being given to males from a White-British background.

## Over-represented Groups

### EHCP & SEN SUPPORT

The table below shows the number and percentage of young people that have been involved with the Gateshead YJS since 2019 that have either had an Educational Health Care Plan in place or have been receiving SEN Support.

	2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Single Plan (EHC Plan)</b>	3	3%	6	4%	15	10%	10	7%
<b>SEN Support</b>	12	10%	13	8%	3	2%	2	1%
<b>Total</b>	15	13%	19	12%	18	13%	12	8%

Between 2019 and 2022 there were more young people involved with the YJS that were also involved with the SEN Team year on year but fewer in 2022/23. For the whole period the average of young people involved with both services was 11%.

We have identified education as a priority area for development in 2023/24 and have partnered with our Trauma Informed Team colleagues to provide a dedicated speech and language resource.

## Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) In Gateshead April 2019 to March 2023

According to the YJB publication of National Statistics 2021/22 13,770 children were cautioned or sentenced in the year ending March 2022 of which those with an ethnic minority background accounted for 29% of cases..

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>BAME No.</b>	2	4	10	9
<b>BAME %</b>	1.7%	2.5%	7.0%	6.1%

The chart shows a year-on-year increase in the number of BAME cases coming into the Gateshead service with binary percentages for; 2019/20 1.7%, 2020/21 2.5%, 2021/22 7% and 2022/23 6.1%. the 2022/23 rate is just below the BAME estimate of 6.5% by the Gateshead Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The overall figure for the four-year period is 4.4% (25 BAME cases from a total of 566).

This data shows in Gateshead we are seeing more young people with a White European background than previous years along with those from Black African and Other Asian backgrounds. Whilst the service remains mindful of the increase in BAME representation it is aware the actual numbers remain low and form a significantly smaller proportion of those coming into the service. An example of this would be in relation to custodial sentences in 2022/23 as 100% receiving custody were of a BAME background however, this is only 1 young person receiving 1 sentence.

A difference was noted with 34% of BAME young people receiving statutory interventions (e.g., youth Caution, referral orders, custody etc) compared with 32% from a white ethnic background in 2022/23. In the previous year, the BAME figure was 31% whilst white ethnic background was 36%, this shift would indicate BAME young people are slightly more likely to receive a statutory outcome. We must also consider the actual number of cases in Gateshead which are small, so caution needs to be exercised when drawing any conclusions

There needs to be more focus on assessing, identifying and meeting the needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic children.

In 2023 / 2024 the YJS board will work with the YJS to develop its diversity strategy and capture this in guidance and processes. The management board will also support the YJS in embedding its strategy and ensure that managers and practitioners are trained and supported to deliver it. Training will be offered to staff to recognise and respond to the diversity needs of children and families. Diversity needs to be fully understood and that practitioners have the skills and continued support to translate this understanding into practice. Recognition of and responses to diversity needs to be strengthened in casework. Greater exploration of religion, sexuality, culture, learning or communication needs will assist in understanding children's lived experience.

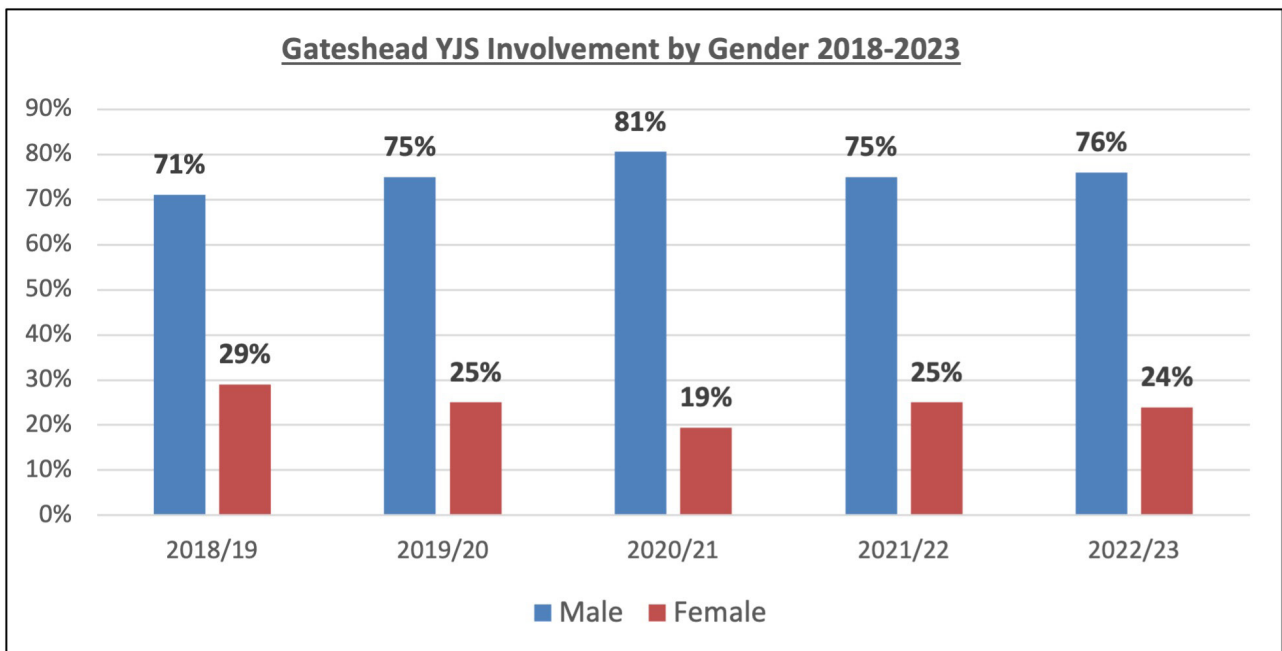


## Girls

The number of girls within the service are closely monitored through the performance subgroup and the Gateshead Youth Justice Board. Cases are allocated to workers who have a good understanding of the different approaches required to engage young women. Young women are significantly less likely to be sentenced in the court arena and are predominantly dealt with by an Out of Court Disposal. The nature of girls and young women's offending is different to that of young men, this is recognised, and interventions are delivered to reflect this. With female Case Managers and advocates available to support girls within the youth justice service with skills, knowledge and experience to meet the needs of this cohort.

To monitor and highlight changes in trends Gateshead YJS records the characteristics of the young people involved with the service. The following charts outline the demographic trends of the young people that become involved with the service.

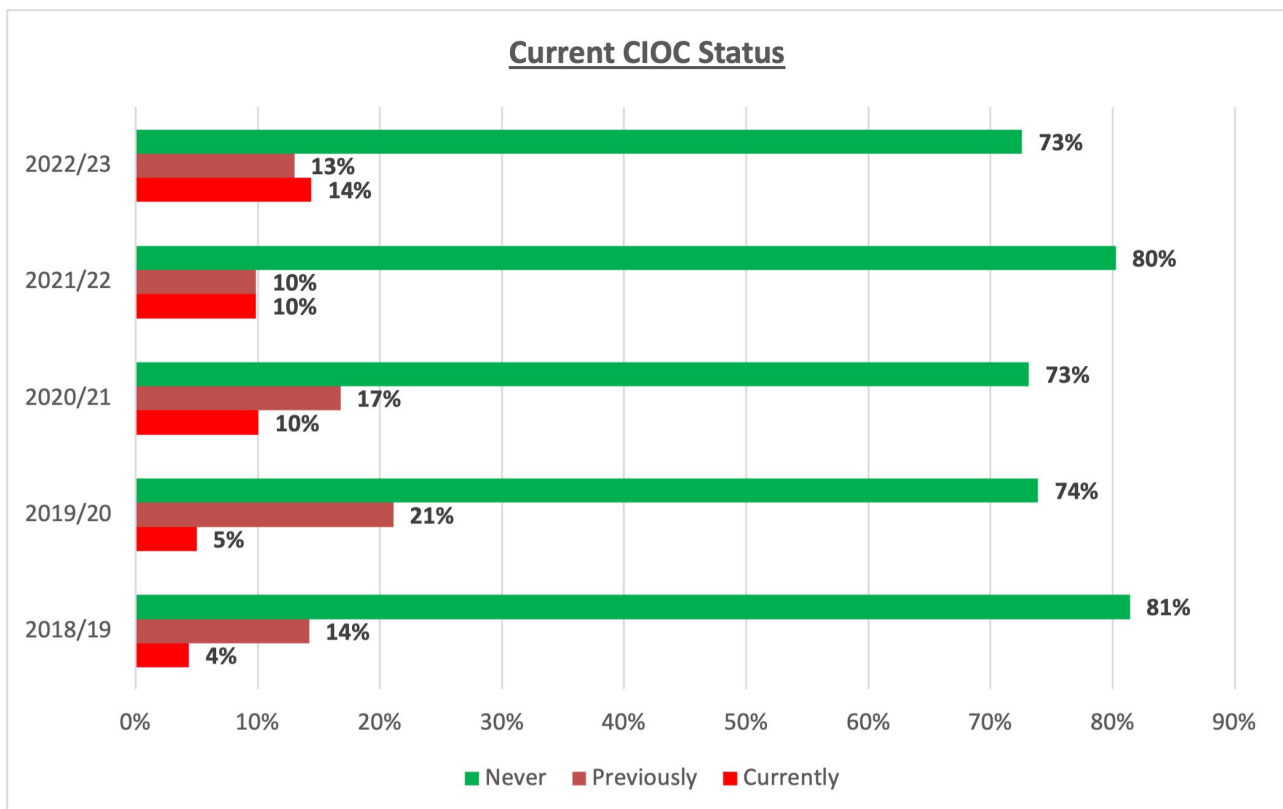
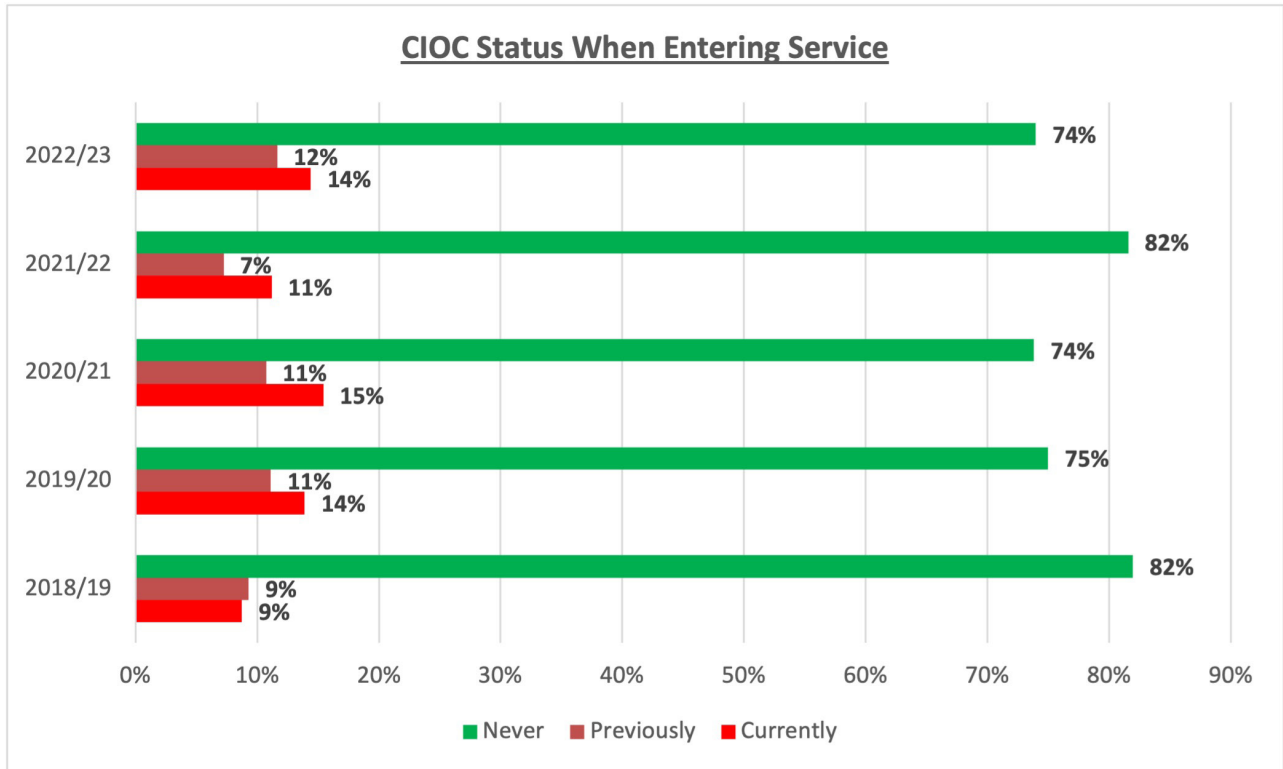
The first charts show the proportion and number of females and males coming into the service and the second shows the same information but as a rate per 100,000 of the 10-17 population for each year.



The chart above highlights the continual trend in the ratio between the genders of young people involved with the service and is approximately 3:1 towards males. The proportion of females coming into the service has remained static over the last two years showing no significant increase or decrease.

## Children in our Care

The charts below show the CIOC status of young people at the start of their intervention and their current status (as of March 2023). The data shows the majority of young people coming into the Gateshead service never have a CIOC status and for those that have or have had a CIOC status there are no significant increases or decreases.



## Prevention & Diversion

Our local partnerships work to identify children and young people displaying behaviours associated with offending to prevent entry into the formal youth justice system and offer a combination of early and targeted intervention. This is delivered through specific, evidence-based interventions from the Early Help Service, support for young people suffering abuse in personal/intimate relationships from the Domestic Abuse Team, the YOLO Project (You Only Live Once) , Criminal Justice Liaison Service and targeted health and substance misuse services.

### Turnaround

Gateshead Youth Justice Service was allocated funding to deliver the Turnaround Programme. "Turnaround was developed by the Ministry of Justice, is based on similar principles to those underlying the Supporting Families programme, including the view that children on the cusp of offending often have complex needs. Turnaround funding will support YOTs, and their local strategic partners, to expand best practice in early intervention" MOJ. The delivery model adopted in Gateshead is through our Early HelpService.

### Divert

DIVERT provides support to Children and Young People aged 10 – 18 years who come into police custody for any offence or attend as a voluntary attender for a violent offence that are ineligible for the Turn Around Programme. The primary aim of DIVERT is to contribute to the reduction of, and risk serious violence and knife crime. Gateshead Youth Justice service has committed to offering an accessible service that will support hard to reach and underrepresented individuals across our communities. We will deliver services using evidence-based approaches and to develop innovative practice to reduce individuals being drawn into criminality and reduces serious violence within Northumbria. Gateshead YJS is involved in the co-production of a serious youth violence intervention programme which can be used one to one or in groups.

### Divert from Charge

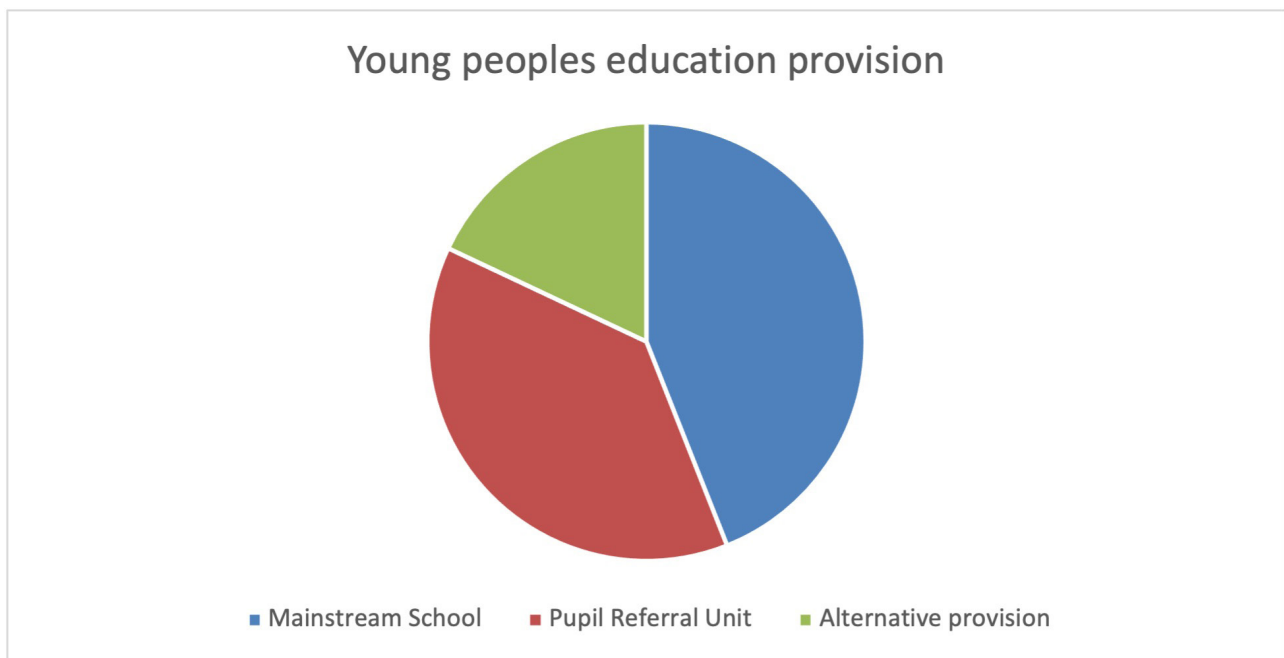
Divert from Charge is used to prevent children and young people being charged by police unless in extreme cases, such as offences that could lead to a remand and instead, cases are referred through to a panel process before a final decision is reached. As a result of the Divert from Charge arrangement, young people are not to be labelled as offenders, this helps to prevent young people from forming deviant or delinquent identities that may impact on their development. The process avoids unnecessary disproportionality in the criminal justice system and enables tailored diversionary interventions which are therapeutic, targeted, and appropriate whilst avoiding the stigma of conviction.

## Outcome 22

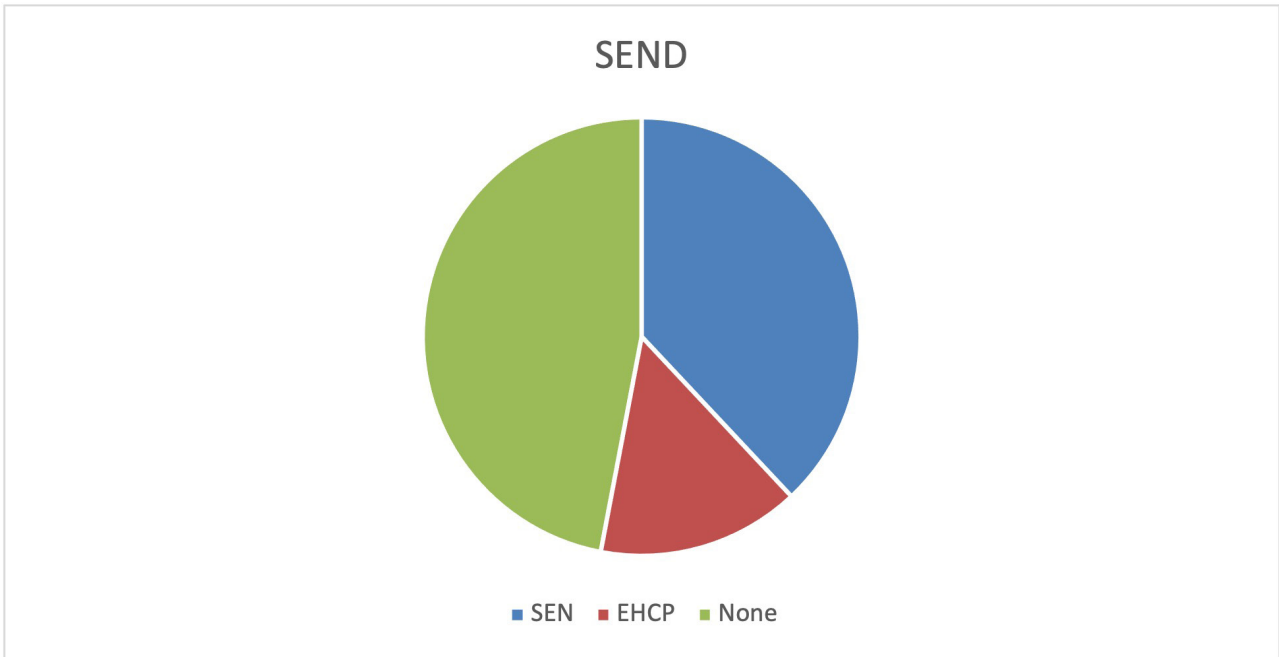
Outcome 22 continues to be used as an Out of Court disposal. This intervention is a deferred prosecution, meaning the young person will not come through the formal criminal justice system unless they fail to comply with the program. The outcome is designed to be recorded on the Police National Computer as follows: 'Outcome 22 – diversionary, educational or intervention activity, resulting from the crime report, has been undertaken and it is not in the public interest to take any further action'. The use of this disposal has ensured that young people are assessed and have intervention that best meets their individual needs. Working with the young person and their family it has been possible to divert a significant proportion of children away from the formal youth justice system, which has a huge impact on the number of young people becoming First Time Entrants into the Criminal Justice System.

## Education Young people in the YJS cohort

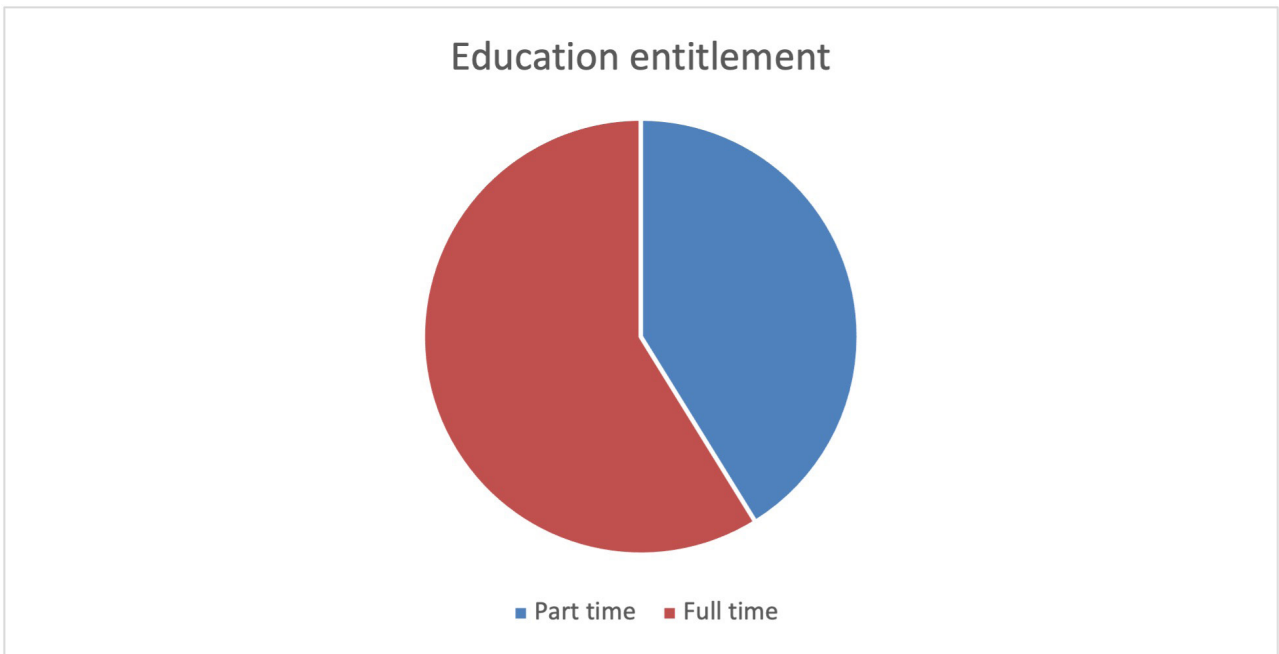
In Gateshead Youth Justice Service 44% of young people open to the YJS of statutory school age were in mainstream school, 38% were in the Pupil Referral Unit and 18% were in an alternative provision. (data taken from open case load in May 2023).



On the current case load 24% had been permanently excluded. In the current cohort 38% have SEN support and 15% have an EHCP, this gives a combined total of 53% this is also an increase from June 2022 when the total was 38%.



In this cohort 41% of the YJS statutory school age case load is receiving part time education, no young people were elective home educated.



Children in our Care account for 15% of the cohort, this figure is high but includes young people currently on remand who now have CIOC status, these young people were not previously open to Children’s Social care. Within in this cohort 3% of young people were BME and 26% were female.

Access to education, training and employment (ETE) opportunities is fundamental to the future prospects of children on youth justice service caseloads and to their desistance from further offending, but the recent HMIP thematic and local inspections show gaps in provision and major barriers to participation for some children. To support young people receiving a suitable education that meets their needs, Gateshead YJS has created a Case Manager post to take the lead on education. The role is split between half Case Manager and half Education Officer.

## **The role involves**

- Point of contact for YJS and building relationships with the schools and staff
- Undertaking SLCN screening tools with young people
- Responsibility for the young person's YJS education plan
- Supporting YJS young people in accessing education provision
- Supporting the school in recognising children's needs in relation to ETE
- Challenge and address any barriers to the young person actively engaging or attending education provision
- Support EHCP reviews
- Working towards YJB ETE KPIs
- Attending relevant ETE meetings, including the pupil placement panel and complex cases meeting.

In the recent HMIP inspection it was acknowledged that "the YJS is working proactively to develop the partnership's response to ensuring education, training, and employment provision meets the needs of children. However, at the time of the inspection we found that escalation routes to raise concerns when provision was not adequate were not always having an impact. The YJS needs to monitor this routinely and provide context about the children's experiences." Gateshead Youth Justice Service is working with education partners to improve better outcomes for young people, ensuring young people have access to suitable education provision is a key priority for the year ahead.

## **Restorative approaches and victims**

Gateshead Youth Justice Service offers every victim of youth crime a voice. Each victim is contacted by the dedicated Restorative Practitioner to seek their views in relation to the offence and try and understand the impact it has had on them. In line with the Victims Code, Gateshead Youth Justice Service offers a variety of reparative interventions including direct and indirect programmes. Where it is appropriate victims are offered face to face restorative justice conferences, shuttle mediation and letters of apology. Gateshead Youth Justice Service is starting to gather data for the new victim's key performance indicator. Gateshead Youth Justice service has created a reparation booklet which showcases the projects that young people can attend to complete activities. The YJS use the booklet to show victims of youth crime the projects that young people are involved in and what the impact is on the local community. There are various projects across the borough, this enables victims and young people to complete reparative activity in their community.

Gateshead Council is one of 75 local authorities who have been funded to develop Family Hubs which will provide a welcoming space for families and the wider community. Gateshead Family Hubs will support families of children up to the age of 19 and to age 25 for young people who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The hubs are also open to other members of the community who may need more help. There are six identified community hubs across Gateshead, the YJS is supporting the centres to provide support through reparative activities. It is envisaged that this will help young people to be more invested in their local communities.

The recent HMIP inspection found that Gateshead Youth Justice service have developed reparation provision, but "further work is needed to ensure that all projects are meaningful, structured, and give children opportunities to learn and develop skills".

In 2023 / 2024 Gateshead Youth Justice Service is going to be working with Birkshead Wild. Birkshead Wild is a community project which enables young people to learn new skills in the upkeep of livestock, growing fruit and vegetables, horticultural projects and the recycling of unwanted or bikes in need of repair.

Satisfaction surveys have told us that victims were very satisfied with the service they had received, and the process helped them to understand the young person's motivation to offend against them. They felt listened to and had their views taken seriously.

## **Serious violence and exploitation**

The Serious Violence Duty has been introduced as part of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (PCSC), alongside Serious Violence Reduction Orders (SVRO's) and Homicide Reviews. The duty acts as a key part of the Government's programme to adopt a multi-agency approach to prevent and reduce serious violence.

The Duty requires specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence, there is a requirement for all specified authorities to prepare a Serious Violence Needs Assessment that identifies the key hotspot areas as well as the specific types of violence that are most prevalent. There is also a need for authorities to develop a Serious Violence Strategy which will bring together all elements of activity and will be monitored throughout the year.

The following authorities are subject to the duty:

- Police
- Local authorities
- Youth Justice
- Fire and Rescue
- Health authorities
- Probation

Educational institutions and prison/youth custodial institutions will be under a separate duty to co-operate with core duty holders. There will be a requirement for the local partnership to consult with such institutions within their geographical area. Duty holders will work together to establish the local strategic needs assessment and will be required to develop and publish a local strategy which outlines the collective action they intend to take, this will include:

- a) A summary of the local need's assessment
- b) How the chosen partnership structure will work together
- c) Actions including specific interventions and agreed preventative action
- d) Engagement plans with voluntary and community organisations as well as young people
- e) Identified funding streams and resources to support this work



## **Plans for Northumbria Police Area Command**

The Violence Reduction Unit are implementing arrangements for the Serious Violence Duty, there is a requirement to produce a revised strategy by January 2024 that encompasses local arrangements and priorities. As part of the process there is a requirement to work with all specified authorities to agree this strategy. This will include agreement on our definition of serious violence and measures of success. There will also be an opportunity for wider consultation and engagement with stakeholders including young people and the wider community to ensure that the strategy meets their needs. It has been agreed that local implementation of the duty will be co-ordinated by the Violence Reduction Unit.

## **Learning from Serious Incidents**

Findings from recent partnership learning reviews triggered by serious incidents have included recommendations in relation to improved use of pre-existing information to support a wider understanding of the young person and their needs. This was found to be important when making decisions around thresholds. When young people move into Gateshead from other areas information is gained from the previous authority to provide a full assessment of the young person needs. Closer working relationships with the missing and return home team have been developed and regular intelligence sharing, and joint working takes place across the teams.

## **Working with the Violence Reduction Unit**

Gateshead Youth Justice Service is working with the Violence Reduction Unit to develop a whole-system approach to children and young people, aged 10- to 18-years, carrying weapons or knives. Gateshead YJS will work collaboratively with the other YJS across Northumbria, the VRU and Public Health to co-produce a consistent person-centred response to knife crime. There is a need for a more consistent trauma-informed approach to support children and young people referred to YJS for weapon/ knife carrying and related incidents. It is envisaged that a six-to-eight week / modular programme with a toolkit, comprising age-appropriate resources will be produced for use by YJS practitioners. The aim is to co-produce an intervention for pilot delivery in September 2023.

## **Operation Pecan**

Operation Pecan is the Northumbria Police and partner response to Urban Street Gangs (USG). To tackle serious violence and related criminality and safeguard those at risk of exploitation. The inception of the dedicated operation arises due to an identified trend of offending, across the Newcastle and Gateshead areas. There are links to USGs within all 6 Local Authority areas within the Northumbria Police area. In conjunction with the violence reduction unit, statutory partners, youth, third sector and voluntary organisations, identify opportunities support and divert vulnerable young persons from engaging in USG criminality in order to prevent offending and re-offending.

## **Released Under Investigation**

Northumbria Police and Gateshead YJS hold regular performance meetings to monitor the number of young people currently released under investigation. Scrutiny is placed on young people who have been RUI for over 6 months, RUI for serious category offences and RUI for multiple offences. Recent changes have come into force following the introduction of the Bail Act 2022 which now has a presumption for bail instead of RUI, this is and will continue to reduce the number of young persons on RUI with no end date and replaces this with effective suspect management through clearly defined bail conditions.

## **MAPPA and Prevent**

Gateshead Youth Justice Service refer cases to MAPPA that have met the MAPPA criteria. All MAPPA meetings are attended and YJS has been represented at a senior level. The service is involved with the Prevent agenda and ensures appropriate information sharing and attendance at relevant meetings to support the government's counter-terrorism strategy and protect the public.

## **National Referral Mechanism**

Northumbria Police service have established the missing and Exploitation Hub and have developed positive information sharing and multi-agency working with the wider partnership which results in more robust co-ordinated partnership response to safeguarding concerns and targeting adult perpetrators who are exploiting children or engaging them in acts of serious youth violence. Gateshead Youth Justice Service have made several referrals to the National Referral Mechanism for young people who we suspect are being criminally exploited. A number of these referrals have resulted in positive decisions which has significantly impacted on sentencing and interventions with these young people.

## **Contextual Safeguarding**

Understanding teenagers is an area of specialism that not all workers have, the Contextual safeguarding team as an adolescent hub that can provide varying layers of support across children services. The team is made up of experienced social workers and family advocates who can assess and intervene to address both intra and extrafamilial harm. A Girl and Young woman's advocate is able to offer a targeted response to those at risk of grooming/ exploitation. The Gateshead Youth Justice Service works closely with the contextual safeguarding team as several young people are open to both services simultaneously. Joint planning and delivery meetings take place to avoid duplication of interventions and to ensure the young person and family receive the right support from the right service at the right time.

## **Operation Victus**

Operation Victus is a multi-disciplinary group set up as part of the VVECG (violence, vulnerability, exploitation, and co-ordination group) with the purpose of early identification and prevention of criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults. Through intelligence sharing, data analysis and collaborative working Operation Victus seeks to identify those most vulnerable to exploitation, with key partners involved there is consideration to the safeguarding / support in place. Operation Victus co-ordinates the policing activity to deter and pursue these high harm offenders.

## **Detention in police custody**

Gateshead YJS is working with the police within the custody suites across Northumbria to ensure that young people who are detained in police custody are dealt with as swiftly as possible. There is a memorandum of understanding in place which enable the sharing of relevant safeguarding information at the earliest opportunity. This helps to highlight any potential issues that a young person may face whilst in custody and will enable the local authority to support the police in dealing with the young person and releasing them at the earliest opportunity.

Gateshead Youth Justice Service provides an appropriate adult service Monday to Friday during office hours, outside of this time the emergency duty team fulfil this duty.

## Remands

Between April 2020 and March 2023 8 different young people have been remanded in Gateshead showing a low use of remand in the period. Those that were remanded either had a prolific offending history, had committed serious offences, or posed potential risk to others. All eight young people remanded over the three years were male, white and aged 14-18 at the time of their court proceedings and went on to receive lengthy custodial sentences.

Age when remanded	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
14	0	0	1
15	0	0	0
16	0	0	1
17	2	2	0
18	2	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

Main Offence Type	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Totals
Breach of a Statutory Order	1	1	0	<b>2</b>
Motoring Offences	1	0	0	<b>1</b>
Violence Against the Person	2	1	2	<b>5</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>

### Constructive resettlement

The recent HMIP inspection recommended that “evaluation and review of resettlement provision is needed to understand if the partnership response to children in custody is meeting their needs. Routine analysis will provide evidence to shape and inform future service delivery.” There is a resettlement policy in place, but HMIP suggested that “further work is needed to clearly articulate how to meet all resettlement needs in practice. To promote consistency, guidance needs to capture the roles and responsibilities of the partnership and how services will work collaboratively to address resettlement.” As a result of this the resettlement policy and provision is being reviewed to ensure that provision and practice consistently meets children’s needs.

Gateshead Youth Justice Board is responsible for ensuring that the approach to custody, resettlement and transitions is evidenced based as well as ensuring that suitable and timely accommodation provision is available for all children leaving custody along with young people having equitable access to services. The Gateshead Youth Justice Board is aware of young people sentenced to custody and their individual circumstances and needs. The board provide support to address any structural barriers that may exist for young people getting back into Education Training or Employment on release and to have access to suitable accommodation.

Gateshead YJS resettlement policy is being reviewed to ensure it provides the detailed framework for this area of work, outlining the service expectations in relation to children and young people serving custodial sentences, remanded to youth detention accommodation and for those leaving custody and resettling back into their communities, including clear guidance and expectations around what support young people should expect from the service and partners.

Developing a pro-social identity, forming positive supportive networks, and addressing relationships are key in terms of supporting an effective Resettlement (Beyond Youth Custody, 2014). The approach adopted by Gateshead Youth Justice Service supports the perspective that young people serving custodial sentences must receive an effective, end-to-end service provision based on a thorough assessment of need and risk, to reintegrate them into the community. We recognise that in order to achieve this, partnership working, alongside the participation and engagement of young people and their families, is essential for Resettlement (Beyond Youth Custody, 2014).

Every young person in custody is offered a safeguarding visit by a manager to capture the views of young people, to ensure there are no concerns about their care and that they understand their rights.

## **Standards for children in the justice system**

### **National Standards audit findings**

Gateshead Youth Justice Service demonstrates good compliance with the National Standards in all five domains. There was significant evidence of young people and families being involved with the assessment, planning, and interventions. There was evidence throughout the standards of good relationships being built with young people, their family and case managers.

### **National Standard 1 - Out of Court Disposals**

Out of Court Disposal assessments were completed in all cases. They were timely, accurate, suitable and a sufficient assessment of risk for all children referred to the Service. HMIP commented that assessments were well informed; practitioners had liaised with other services and used this information as part of their analysis. Practitioners were skilled at developing balanced assessments, drawing out strengths and protective factors as well as exploring areas of concern. Interventions plans were appropriate, met the needs of the child and addressed their offending behaviour. Delivery of interventions was evidenced, and case managers had worked in creative ways to meet the needs of the young person. Reviews were completed in a timely manner and were of good quality.

### **National Standard 2 - At Court**

Gateshead Youth Justice Service ensures the attendance of a case manager at all Youth hearings within the magistrates and Crown Courts. Young people are contacted by the service prior to going to court and are offered an opportunity to attend the court building in advance to try and reduce anxiety. Reports are completed when requested and are subject to a rigorous quality improvement process. All interactions with young people and their parents are recorded on the case management system.

### **National Standard 3 - In the Community**

Intervention commences quickly after the initial Referral Order panel meeting or Court sentence. There is evidence of the Voice of the Child in assessments, intervention plans and reviews. Assessments are completed in time scales and have been quality assured. Intervention plans met the young peoples needs and the quality of contingency planning has improved. There was evidence of strong professional relationships which ensured joint planning and delivery of services to young people.

All identified victims of youth crime are contacted by our Restorative justice practitioner and offered an opportunity to share their views and offered an opportunity to participate in a restorative intervention. Victims needs and those of the young person are both carefully considered when determining the intervention plan. Victims of youth crime are kept informed of the young person's progress if this is requested. The Restorative Practitioner attends the Out of Court Disposal panel to ensure the voice of the victim is heard.

#### **National Standard 4 - In Secure Settings**

All documentation was sent to the YJS via connectivity and in a timely matter. There is evidence of good communication between the secure setting and Gateshead Youth Justice Service. Planning for release was evidence throughout the custodial phase of the sentence, this was demonstrated in the initial planning meeting and at each review. HMIP found that YJS practitioners are skilled at developing meaningful relationships with the children and their parents or carers and they found proactive efforts to maintain contact with children in custody and provide support for families who were visiting.

Resettlement work needs to be a priority for 2023/2024, HMIP recommended that Gateshead YJS need to promote consistency and guidance needs to capture the roles and responsibilities of the partnership and how services will work collaboratively to address resettlement. There were examples of effective resettlement work, however, this was not consistent for education, training, and employment and for accommodation.

HMIP felt that evaluation and review of resettlement provision was needed to understand if the partnership response to children in custody is meeting their needs. Routine analysis would provide evidence to shape and inform future service delivery.

#### **National Standard 5 - On Transitions**

The transitions element of the audit was completed on eligible cases. Gateshead Youth Justice Service has a transitions policy in place with Probation for young people nearing their 18th birthday, in each case the young people were discussed with the Probation Service and a tailored plan was made which took accounts of various factors including desistance. Where young people have had transitions during an intervention there has been support provided by Gateshead Youth justice Service, this is evident in the case diaries due to the proactive way practitioners work with young people.



## Workforce Development

Gateshead Council is committed to developing the Children's Social Care workforce to be able to meet the needs of the local community. Understanding and responding to the developing needs of the workforce is key to ensuring that staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to perform their role effectively, delivering the standard of quality service expected of them. A robust learning and development programme alongside policy and practice guidance respond ensures we respond to the workforce issues, support the need to meet future challenges, with a continuing focus on promoting equalities, diversity, and inclusive practice.



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As a pro-active learning environment, the YJS also hosts student social work placements.

In the last year, YJS Staff have received training in a range of topics including: AIM3 Training and Technology Assisted Harmful Sexual Behaviour, Attachment and Trauma Training, Neurodiversity; Do It Profiler Training Project, Reflection and Analysis, Domestic Abuse Training, narrative practice, Drug and Alcohol Awareness Training, Speech Language Communication training, PACE training and training in a range of emotional health conditions. The Assistant Team Manager achieved Level 5 Management and Leadership qualification, the Team Manager completed Peer Review training through the YJSIP, and a new member of the team completed the Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate. All YJS Officers are trained in the full remit of the service from Diversion and Prevention, Out of Court Disposals (OOC) and Post-Court, including custody and transitions.

Priority areas for training and development in 2023 -2024 are:

- Understanding and responding effectively to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Further trauma informed practice training
- Narrative training

All volunteers and staff will receive safeguarding training in line with Gateshead Council's guidelines and as individual circumstances require.

## Evidence-based practice and innovation

Gateshead Youth Justice Service is trauma informed and a key strength is building strong and effective relationships with young people to support them in building on their qualities and resilience to achieve positive outcomes. The service is committed to developing a child centred narrative practice approach to casework.

The service offers every victim of youth crime a voice.

The service is committed to participation of young people and are currently working with digital company DigitalMe to produce a short video documenting young people's experience. This has given young people the opportunity to tell their story and help other young people to understand the impact of their behaviour.

Positive Futures is the drug and alcohol service in Gateshead for children and young people. Together we have developed a strong working relationship which has led to an identified member of staff from Positive Futures who specialises in working with the YJS cohort of young people, this person spending time with the YJS team and will record on the YJS case management system.

The service has developed a dedicated education officer role within the service. This will help to ensure that young people have a suitable education offer and are supported with attendance and attainment.

We are proud of the work we have done this year to meet the emotional wellbeing and mental health needs of our young people. A partnership arrangement is in place with local provider North East Counselling to upskill staff and provide direct access to support for young people.

A significant and exciting development in Gateshead this year is the launch in May 2023 of 'Trusting Hands GATESHEAD' which is a multi-disciplinary team employed by CNTW, and includes Psychologist, SLT Therapists, specialist mental health Practitioners and Social Workers, based in Gateshead Children's Services.

The service will deliver a trauma informed model that will upskill practitioners across Children's services to be trauma informed. The service will support professionals supporting children and young people who are classed as high risk, high harm and high vulnerability from a consultation and formulation basis. The service will be focused on the children and young people who need it most, providing support to carers, social workers, YJS workers and everyone in the child/young person's care team/network of children including their families to enable them to recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma, respond appropriately and seek further help and support when needed. The service will also provide speech and language screening and support recognising the impact on speech, language and communication of trauma in childhood.



HMIP found the YJS manages risk of harm well and consistently, working with partners to monitor the safety of children. In turn, victims of crime are well supported and are involved in many aspects of how the service delivers meaningful interventions to deter children from reoffending. The inspection also found that the YJS is making substantial efforts to work with police and courts to divert children from formal court processes.

Gateshead Youth Justice Service is also actively involved in several evaluation projects.

In line with the imminent introduction of the new YJB out of court disposal (OOC) assessment document, we plan to review our OOC process to measure impact and understand the difference it makes for young.

HMI Probation are currently undertaking a thematic inspection of remand, the North East region is not being visited as part of this programme as there were not enough cases to make fieldwork viable. As a result of this, HMIP are exploring the potential reasons for the low numbers of remand in youth detention. Gateshead YJS will be part of a focus group looking at how young people are supported in the community to avoid remand periods. Gateshead Youth Justice Service has been using Divert from Charge and Outcome 22 for a significant period of time. This is part of a Northumbria wide initiative, we need to understand how successful these diversion opportunities have been especially in relation first time entrants and re-offending. The evaluation will consider any disparities across the six Youth Justice Services within Northumbria to ensure there is consistency of the guidance being applied. The Violence Reduction Unit has been approached to complete this evaluation.

The North East region is part of the Youth Justice Boards' Youth Rehabilitation Order ISS Pilot. As part of this pilot Gateshead Youth Justice Service will provide qualitative and quantitative information to help to understand how the recent changes to intensive supervision and surveillance guidance is impacting on how services are delivered, how young people are supported during interventions and the impact of the changes.

Gateshead Youth Justice Service is working with Northumbria police to complete a neurodiversity screener called the Do-It Profiler. It is anticipated that this screening tool will help to identify individual neuro-divergent traits this will allow the young person and their families to be provided with personalised guidance and support. Newcastle University is evaluating the cohort of young people assessed to identify common needs and traits and to provide an understanding of what support is required.

## Our Priorities for 2023 – 2024

### Improve the education, training and employment offer to young people

Develop the Education Training and Employment Offer for young people so they can fulfil their full potential. Gateshead YJS and our partners will further develop our response to ensuring all children have access to appropriate education, training, and employment (ETE) provision. This will include improving data analysis and escalation routes to assist effective challenge when there are concerns about ETE provision. Gateshead Youth Justice Service will work with education partners to improve the education offer for young people and increased the amount of suitable provision they can access. The YJS is part of the improving attendance strategy in Gateshead and is collaborating with the virtual school who are developing an implementation plan for education. Jointly collaborating with partners in a focused way will provide support to young people to access education and reduce exclusion. The development of the education worker post with the YJS is crucial to improving outcomes for young people. Children and young people schools and education providers need to be involved in the Out of Court Disposal panels to ensure a joined up approach to working together with the young person.

### Improve the health offer for young people

Gateshead Youth Justice Service will work with Trusting Hands GATESHEAD (See innovations section) to ensure that young people have quick access to specialist mental health provision and pathways into speech, language and communication provision is fully embedded. The service will provide the opportunity to develop trauma-informed formulations and speech and language screening for Children and young people. Trusting Hands GATESHEAD will offer a consultation service to consider the wellbeing needs of children involved with the YJS from a trauma-informed perspective.

Youth Justice Service staff will be trained and supported by Clinical Psychologists, speech & language therapists and nurse practitioners to develop an initial screening and triage process for every young person involved with the service. We will strengthen our partnership arrangements and pathways to support with CAMHS, CYPS and Counselling services to ensure young people have direct access to the appropriate counselling and support for emotional health issues.

### Understand and provide an effective response to youth violence

Understanding Serious Youth Violence in Gateshead is a key priority for 2023 /2024. Gateshead has had high profile violent incidents in the last 12 months. The YJS will work with the Violence Reduction Unit and the Community Safety Partnership and other partners to complete the serious violence strategy. Gateshead Youth Justice Service will deliver interventions to young people involved in carrying weapons this will be coproduced with young people.

## Further develop our diversity, inclusion and equality strategy

Gateshead Youth Justice Board will work with the YJS to further develop its diversity strategy and capture this in guidance and processes. The management board will also support the YJS in embedding its strategy and ensure that managers and practitioners are trained and supported to deliver it. Diversity needs to be fully understood by the service and that practitioners have the skills and continued support to translate this understanding into practice. Recognition of and responses to diversity needs to be strengthened in casework. Greater exploration of religion, sexuality, culture, learning or communication needs will assist in understanding children's lived experience.

In line with the YJB Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024, Gateshead Youth Justice Service will also take a Child First approach to promote young people's strengths and help to develop pro social identity. We will take a strengths-based model to ensure that young people can be part of our service development and they can fulfil their potential. Young people open to Gateshead YJS are proactively involved in developing how services are delivered and have been involved in developing the key priorities for 2023 / 2024.

The Youth Justice Strategic Partnership board has agreed that board members will continue to take lead roles in reporting to the board on key areas identified in the Youth Justice Plan. This will enable the board to have an overview of key wider partnership information so resources within the scope of the board can be better aligned to identified need with a view to achieving the above key priorities.

## Strengthen our resettlement policy

Gateshead Youth Justice Service will review our resettlement policy and provision to develop clear guidance in relation to preparing children for release. This will include the responsibilities of the partnership to ensure robust and effective resettlement provision across wellbeing, accommodation, education, training, and employment.

## Challenges, risks and issues

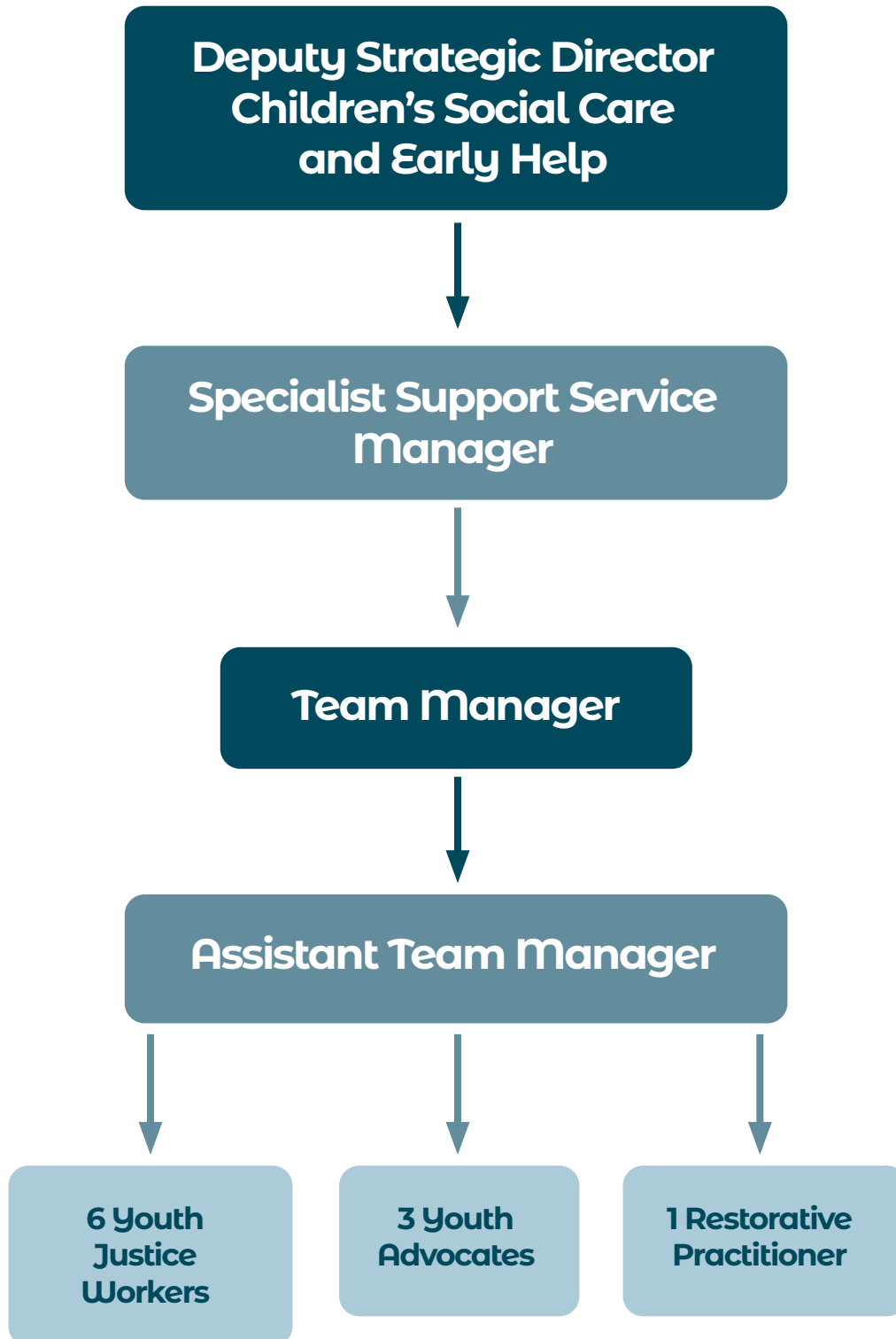
The cost of living is rising rapidly and is having a significant impact on families in Gateshead. Families already experiencing financial hardship will be further affected. A key challenge in the year ahead will be to continue to prevent young people entering the criminal justice system.

The service has reported two serious incidents to the Youth Justice Board for two separate murders, learning reviews are taking place for both young people. The young people are currently remanded into secure accommodation and are being supported by the YJS. The service is working closely with partners and regional colleagues to continue to strengthen our response to serious youth violence in communities.

Gateshead Council and statutory partners continue to face significant budget challenges which may in turn reduce Youth Justice Service funding contributions and/or lead to removal of seconded staff in the future. A reduction in budget would directly impact on the work undertaken with young people and their families.

## Appendix 1: Staffing Structure

### Youth Justice Team



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All images in this publication are taken from artwork created by young people known to Gateshead Youth Justice Service.

