

Southampton Youth Justice Strategy | 2017-2020

Southampton Youth Offending Service is committed to contributing to a fair and effective criminal justice system which provides value for money, justice for victims and communities, punishment, rehabilitation and positive opportunities for children. We are a service that aspires to provide the best for our children and young people; we want them to achieve and succeed and we recognise the importance of providing supervision and robust support along the way to enable this to happen.

As the service develops, we aspire to apply a strengths-based and restorative approach to our direct work with whole families, to ensure that children's needs are understood and supported within the context of their wider circumstances. To this end, the Youth Offending Service aims to be at the forefront of activity to realise Southampton's ambition to be recognised as a Restorative City.

★ Our priorities



Reduce youth crime

Reducing youth crime in Southampton will positively impact on everyone living and working in the city. There will be less victims of crime and better outcomes for young people who have previously been involved in criminal activity.



1 Reduce first time entrants to the youth justice system

Offering prevention and early help to address risk factors and build upon strengths can help prevent children and young people from offending or re-offending in the future.



Reduce custody

Custody can have a detrimental impact on the lives of children and young people and their families. Young people who serve custodial sentences are much more likely to re-offend.



Reduce re-offending

Breaking the cycle of offending can help young people significantly improve their life chances and make our local communities safer.

✓ Our successes



Reduce youth crime

- From 2014/15 to 2016/17, the number of young people working with the Youth Offending Service (YOS) reduced from 408 to 229 (43.9%). The total number of out of court disposals (young people who received support without formally entering the criminal justice process) also reduced by 43.5% from 457 to 258.
- Strong links have been established with schools and further education; especially in relation to work around restorative practice and in the close relationship that has been developed with the local Pupil Referral Unit.
- In February 2017 young people from the YOS put on a hugely successful exhibition at the Tate Modern.

- Improved partnership working with organisations such as Princes Trust and Wheatsheaf Trust to allow a faster response to issues as they emerge.
- We have improved user feedback through regular 'Have your Say' meetings with young people in conjunction with completion of HMIP Viewpoint Questionnaires.
- An action plan has been devised and implemented emanating from the Ending Gang and Youth Violence Peer Review, including the development of a service level agreement with Lewisham.



1 Reduce first time entrants to the youth justice system

- Southampton now has far fewer children entering the Youth Justice System for the first time. The number of First Time Entrants is now in the top half of comparator Youth Offending Trusts and compares favourably with core cities. This success is due to changes to the Joint Decision Making Panel as well as further alignment between the local YOS and Early Help Service.

- The proportion of young offenders who are Looked after Children fell in the first 3 quarters of the year (2016/17).
- 14 schools are now actively participating in the Restorative Network with 6 more due to join before the end of the year. Quarterly meetings are well attended and a Restorative Practice Action Plan is in place to further develop the network and links with other agencies and services.



Reduce custody

- Custody rates have reduced every year for the past three years and Southampton now has less children in custody than many similar cities.
- The Deferred Sentence Pilot was embraced by the Court and is now fully embedded as the local approach to sentencing.

- The Asset Plus assessment framework is now embedded within the team and procedures have been put in place to ensure that this is fully effective.



Reduce re-offending

- 96% of victims were offered the opportunity to participate in restorative justice in 2016/17 compared with 89.5% in 2015/16.
- A review of data over 2016/17 shows that accommodation for young offenders at point of release continues to be to be suitable and appropriate.

- Real-time re-offending data is now reviewed on a monthly basis to identify trends in re-offending which are rapidly addressed. Systems are now in place to ensure that long term trends identified by the Service's data analyst form the basis for key actions going forward from 2017-20.

! Our challenges



The number of custodial sentences given to young people per 1,000 (0.49 during 2016/17), whilst decreasing, is still significantly higher than the regional (0.2 per 1,000) and national (0.07 per 1,000) averages.



Whilst 96% of victims were offered the opportunity to participate in restorative justice in the past year, only 9.3% engaged with the service.



Whilst the rate of 10-17 year old first-time entrants into the youth justice system per 100,000 population (354) has reduced hugely since 2014/15 (550); this is still higher than the England average of 327 per 100,000 and the regional average of 256 per 100,000.



Engagement in education, training and employment provision for young people finishing interventions deteriorated over the last 12 months from the 2015/16 baseline; children engaged in education, training and employment at the end of intervention was down by 5.66%. School-age children saw the biggest decrease in participation; down by 7.16%, whilst over 16s' engagement fell by 4.11%.



The reoffending rate increased to 38.2% in 2016/17 which is above the England average of 34.6% and the regional average of 35.2%.

What young people in Southampton have told us

- During the course of 2016-17 young people undertook HMIP Viewpoint Questionnaires and attended "Have Your Say" meetings with the YOS Management Team in order to provide their perspective on service delivery.
- Viewpoint data from 2016-17 indicates the following strengths in YOS service delivery from those who participated in the survey:
- 100% of children felt that they had enough say about the contents of Referral Order Contracts

- 100% of children felt that they had enough say in the contents of supervision and sentence plans
- 96% of children said someone at YOS asked them to explain what they thought would help prevent them re-offending
- 100% of children said YOS helped them feel safer
- 80% of children who said they needed help with 'strange thoughts' said things got better after YOS intervention
- 92% of children said YOS made them realise change was possible
- 89% of children felt they were less likely to offend

- 100% of children felt the service given by YOS was good
- Areas for development include:
- Only 50% of children who spoke English as a second language were asked what language they wanted to use in sessions
- 20% of children felt external factors made it harder for them to engage
- 35% felt the Viewpoint survey itself could be improved
- 33% of children felt their Education, Training and Employment opportunities had not increased following the intervention.

What are we going to do?

Priorities	Key actions	Lead agency	Lead partners	How we will measure success in
 Reduce youth crime	Work with partners to respond to recommendations arising from the 2016 National Review of Youth Justice to reduce levels of criminogenic need of children who offend.	Youth Offending Service Management Board	Southampton City Council National Probation Service Hampshire Constabulary Southampton Clinical Commissioning Group	Decrease the % of young people who are at a high risk of re-offending according to Asset+ assessments.
	Work with schools and education providers to ensure children who are at risk of offending have access to appropriate and high quality education provision.	Youth Offending Service	Education and Early Years' Service Skills and Development Schools	Improved educational attainment at each key stage for young people who offend.
	Continue to develop a co-ordinated approach with Education Welfare, Families Matter and schools to improve the attendance of children who offend.	Youth Offending Service Management Board	Education and Early Years' Service Skills and Development Schools John Hansard Gallery Wheatsheaf Trust	Improved school attendance levels for children who offend.
	Continue to implement the recommendations of the Health Needs of Young Offenders report to achieve the stated outcomes and new models of delivery, by encouraging partners to commit resource.	Youth Offending Service Management Board	Southampton Clinical Commissioning Group Solent Health Trust Education and Early Years' Service	Increase the % of young people who are accessing health support appropriate to their needs.
	Continue to participate in the Youth Justice Board's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) project with partners to develop best practice for working with children with SEND.	Youth Offending Service	Youth Offending Service Families Matter Schools	Improvements in service delivery for young people who offend with SEND.
	Develop and enhance Quality Assurance and Audit arrangements within the team by the introduction of peer auditing and referencing activity to wider stakeholder planning (ie EHCPs, Early Help Assessments etc).	Youth Offending Service/SCC Quality Assurance Service Manager	Youth Offending Service SCC Quality Assurance Service Manager	Proportion of audits that indicate that work is of an 'excellent' standard across a range of different auditing activities.
 Reduce first time entrants to the youth justice system	Review the Southampton Joint Decision Making Panel following feedback from August 2017 HMIP Thematic Inspection to ensure that youth diversion arrangements continue to be robust.	Youth Offending Service	Hampshire Constabulary NHS Liaison and Diversion Service Families Matters	Reduction in first time entrants to Youth Justice System.
	Contribute to the Southampton Gateway Project, to extend the benefits of diversion and out of court disposals for young adults (18 to 24).	Hampshire Constabulary	Youth Offending Service Hampshire Constabulary Families Matters	Reduced offending/re-offending rates of young people aged 18 to 24 year olds who have benefited from an out of court disposal.
	Work collaboratively with Pathways, Looked After Children's Team and Virtual School Head to improve offending and re-offending outcomes for Looked After Children in Southampton.	Youth Offending Service/ Children's Social Care	Youth Offending Service Children's Social Care	Reduce the number of Looked After Children entering the criminal justice system.
	Contribute to the city's ambition to become a Restorative City by further developing restorative practice in schools and with other partners in order to provide innovative, outcome focussed opportunities for children.	Education and early years' service	Youth Offending Service Families Matter Schools	Increase the number of schools working with Youth Offending Service.
	Sell high quality training rooted in areas of Youth Offending Service expertise; particularly restorative practice.	Education and early years' service	Youth Offending Service	Level of income generated by YOS.
	Extend the reach of our arts project and restorative practice offer to benefit more young people and to develop Southampton YOS as a national exemplar of good practice.	Youth Offending Service	John Hansard Gallery Restorative Practice Council	Gaining Platinum 'Artsmark' standard for our arts provision.
 Reduce custody	Continue to work with the West Hampshire Youth Bench to identify and implement alternative approaches to youth custody via deferred sentence strategy.	Youth Offending Service Management Board	West Hampshire Youth Bench	Reduce custody rates by 20%.
	Participate in the South East Region Resettlement Forum to improve outcomes for young people leaving custody.	Youth Offending Service	No Limits Next Steps	Ensure no young people leaving custody go into inappropriate accommodation upon release.
 Reduce re-offending	Ensure that resources are targeted at the most prolific young offenders and those at risk of involvement in serious youth crime by reviewing the Priority Young People scheme with partners.	Youth Offending Service Management Board	Hampshire Constabulary Community Safety Team	Maintain a low re-offending rate. Decrease in serious youth crime and drug distribution. Decrease in violent re-offending.
	Specific focussed management support with practitioners to deliver high quality, integrated intervention planning and co-ordinated step down planning when children exit the service.	Youth Offending Service	Youth Offending Service	All plans quality assured by management team achieve rating of 'good'.
	Develop the case formulation approach to manage the risks and needs of those young people at most risk of re-offending.	Youth Offending Service	Southampton Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service	Reduction of cohort numbers subject to Priority Young People strategy by 20% as a result of reduced re-offending.
	Deliver action plan to improve offending and re-offending outcomes for Looked After Children in Southampton.	Youth Offending Service Management Board	Hampshire Constabulary Children and Families Service	Increase the use of restorative interventions with Looked After Children.