

Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service

Youth justice plan 2025 to 2028



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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction, vision and strategy

**Councillor Paul Brading,
Chair of Children's Services, Education and Skills Committee**



It is with pleasure that I present the Isle of Wight youth justice plan for 2025 to 2028. This plan outlines our vision and priorities for the coming year with the aim of continuing to offer the best possible service to children, families, and victims of crime.

As chair of the committee for children's services, education and skills, I am proud of the service that the youth justice service provides and I recognise their commitment to our continuous improvement. The plan reviews the achievements and challenges experienced by the service over the past year. This plan is written with contributions from children, parents, carers and victims who have been supported by our service. Furthermore, it contains the views of our key partners, board members and wider workforce, including our long-standing volunteers.

The service has a fully committed, fully staffed team who are passionate about supporting and improving outcomes for children requiring support in our community. They demonstrate continuous development of their knowledge of risk, trends and key issues which impact the children they support to ensure the optimum impact. Restorative justice continues to be of utmost importance and runs through the work of the service. Victims needs and safety are prioritised and the new HMIP standards evidence the importance of this. There continues to be a variety of community reparation placements across the Isle of Wight that children, supported by staff and volunteers, can engage with. This allows children to meaningfully give back to the community in which they live.

**Ashley Whittaker,
Strategic Director of Children's Services, Isle of Wight Council and Chair
of the Youth Justice Management Board**



As chair of the youth justice service management board, I am proud to present this three-year plan. The board is comprised of elected members and senior leaders from key partners including the National Health Service (e.g. child and adolescent mental health services), police, probation, children's services, the court, the Community Safety Partnership, education, housing, restorative solutions and the voluntary sector. The board reports to the Isle of Wight Full Council annually and the local criminal justice board quarterly (attended by Southampton on behalf of the pan-Hampshire region). It also works closely with the Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Community Safety Partnership. Working in partnership is essential and is a key priority of the board.

We know that entering the criminal justice system can negatively impact the outcomes for children and we therefore seek to prevent children from entering the system whenever possible. Where this is not possible, we seek to limit harm while addressing risk and needs and supporting children to go on to live crime free and fulfilling lives.

I am immensely proud of the work of the service and their national recognition for child-first practice. Their restorative approach aligns with the Ministry of Justice's code of practice and the Youth Justice Board's case management guidance and national standards. The team's dedicated work with children, particularly their 'fresh AIR' approach (activities, interactions, and roles), inspires hope for a positive future for Island children. The Youth Justice Board of England and Wales recognition of improved practice through their elevation in August 2024 of the Island from quadrant 3 to quadrant 2 was very welcome and is helping inspire local partners to further improvements over the months and years to come.

The structure of this report reflects that stipulated for all youth justice plans by the Youth Justice Board of England and Wales

Below is the vision and strategy for the Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service as updated and agreed by youth justice management board members in June 2024.

Our vision:

“For all children we work with to achieve their full potential through leading safe, healthy, happy and fulfilling lives.”

Our strategy:

“The Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service are a partnership in the best sense of the word. Based within the Isle of Wight Council’s directorate of children’s services, together with colleagues from probation, police and health as well as those specific services, who touch on the lives of children, parents, carers and victims. Entering the criminal justice system potentially impacts on the outcomes for children therefore we seek to prevent children from entering the system and divert them wherever possible. Where this is not possible, we seek to limit harm while addressing risk and needs and supporting children to go on to live crime free and fulfilling lives.”

1.2 Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements

Governance

As per Section 37 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the principle aim of the youth justice system is to prevent offending by children. The Isle of Wight youth justice management board must ensure suitable governance arrangements are in place for the Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service. The board is chaired by the strategic director of children's services.

The board terms of reference state the board must:

- have oversight and strategic leadership of the service, including developing a clear local vision and strategic links with other local statutory agencies;
- ensure the service operates according to child first principles;
- determine how the service is composed and funded, how it operates and what functions it carries out;
- oversee the appointment of a service manager;
- understand the performance of the service and the needs of children in the justice system and any challenges to service delivery; and oversee and respond appropriately to the service's performance, and encourage innovation;
- engage with incorporating the views of children to deliver a high quality, individualised and responsive service for all;
- determine how appropriate youth justice services are to be provided and funded; and oversee the service budget;
- oversee the formulation and implementation of the youth justice plan taking note of national guidance on underlying principles such as child first, and encouraging the use of toolkits to develop specific areas of work or actions plans to address issues such as disproportionality;
- have strategic oversight of the standards for children in the youth justice system (2019) and be satisfied that appropriate systems and policies are in place to achieve positive outcomes for children;
- ensure that any action plans which comprise part of the annual youth justice plan or audits of performance are carried out;
- recognise the significance of the role of governance in inspections and participate in HMIP inspections of the service and any related follow-up activity. Actively consider HMIP findings, establishing a plan to address any failings identified and then monitor activity to deliver improvement;
- escalate challenges with partner organisations appropriately particularly if children are not receiving the services or provision, they require.

(Extract from terms of reference, June 2024)

Leadership

The Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service head of service is line managed by the service director for Isle of Wight Council children's social care, who in turn reports to the strategic director for children's services.

The work we do is underpinned by seven key aspects:

1. Workforce

Our people are our greatest asset. We invest in building a skilled, motivated, and diverse workforce that is equipped to meet current and future challenges. This includes continuous professional development, wellbeing support, and fostering a culture of collaboration and inclusion.

2. Leadership

Strong, visionary leadership guides our direction and inspires excellence. We cultivate leaders at all levels who are accountable, transparent, and committed to driving positive change. Leadership is not just about authority – it's about influence, integrity, and the ability to empower others.

3. Strategic approach

We operate with a clear, long-term vision aligned to our mission and values. Our strategic planning ensures that every initiative is purposeful, measurable, and aligned with broader goals. This enables us to remain focused, agile, and responsive to emerging needs.

4. Engaging partners

Collaboration is central to our success. We actively engage with stakeholders, communities, and partner organizations to co-design solutions, share knowledge, and amplify impact. These partnerships help us build trust, leverage resources, and create more sustainable outcomes.

5. Supporting apparatus

Behind every successful initiative is a robust infrastructure. Our supporting apparatus includes the systems, processes, and technologies that enable efficient operations, data-driven decision-making, and effective service delivery. This foundation ensures consistency, compliance, and scalability.

6. Innovation

We embrace innovation as a driver of improvement and transformation. By fostering a culture of curiosity and experimentation, we encourage new ideas, pilot creative solutions, and adapt to change. Innovation helps us stay ahead of the curve and continuously enhance our services.

7. Careful use of resources

We are stewards of the resources entrusted to us. Whether financial, human, or environmental, we use resources responsibly and sustainably. Our decisions are guided by value for money, ethical considerations, and a commitment to long-term impact.

We have three overarching principles:

1. Culture change

True transformation goes beyond policies – it requires a shift in mindset, values, and behaviours. Culture change is about embedding a child and family-centred ethos at every level of the system. By nurturing a culture of openness, empathy, and accountability, we create the conditions for sustainable improvement and better outcomes.

2. Voice of children and families

Children and families are not passive recipients of services – they are experts in their own lives. We are committed to ensuring their voices are heard, valued, and acted upon at every stage of planning, delivery, and evaluation. By centring the lived experiences of children and families, we ensure our work is relevant, respectful, and rooted in real needs.

3. Partnerships

We believe that meaningful, sustained change is only possible through collaboration. Our partnerships span across sectors – health, education, social care, voluntary organisations, and communities – ensuring that support for children and families is holistic, joined-up, and responsive.

Partnership at an operational level is supported by the provision of staff from the police, health, and probation. Current arrangements are:

- The police provide one police officer and there is a shared sergeant and inspector who oversee the work across all four pan-Hampshire authorities. There is a protocol in place and partnership meetings with the police take place monthly and include youth justice services from all four authorities.
- Child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) provide one mental health practitioner. There are links between Isle of Wight CAMHS and the central commissioned forensic CAMHS. Contact is maintained between the team manager and the CAMHS manager.
- The Probation Service provide a 0.5 probation officer, who has been in place since January 2025. The team manager and senior probation officer meet on an ad-hoc basis to discuss transitions of children 17 plus.

The staffing structure for the Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service is detailed in the appendix ([page 52](#)) in full-time equivalent roles. This shows that the service directly employs case managers, comprising of a social worker, youth justice officers and specialist practitioners.

2 Update on the previous year

2.1 Progress on priorities in the previous plan

Below are the key activities for 2024 to 2025 and our progress against them. Any actions that are outstanding are used later in this plan to help form our priorities for 2025 to 2028.

Education, training and employment

1. To enhance education, training and employment opportunities for children on the Isle of Wight, a Post-16 education representative will participate in the youth justice management board. As part of the youth justice performance reporting, education data will be collected, including levels of exclusions, attendance; not in education, employment or training (NEET) status; and those educated outside of school.

Progress: An education representative attended the last youth justice management board. Meetings including education and inclusion will be held in order to obtain the data and shape further intervention around children who are not attending or engaging with education, or who are being suspended, excluded, or placed on reduced hours provision.

We still require data in relation to education to better shape prevention pathways. We also require this to assess efficacy of intervention. This will continue to be an objective for the Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service for 2025 to 2028.

Participation

2. To ensure that services meet the needs of children and their parents or carers, children's services are implementing approaches to routinely gather, collate, and analyse their views. Microsoft Forms will be reviewed and updated to integrate with the new electronic database, facilitating the collection of service user feedback. Additionally, the engagement and participation task and finish group will explore other methods to capture and share the voices of children.

Progress: Microsoft Forms are now in place, collecting information from children, parents, and victims at the start, middle, and end of their intervention programme. This feedback is shared at team meetings to inform and shape future practice. The engagement and participation task and finish group continues to meet, considering innovative ways to gather views and make the service more accessible, such as verbal leaflets.

Ensuring that children’s voices are heard and that they are at the heart of what we do will continue to be an objective for the service for 2025 to 2028.

Physical health

3. To ensure timely and specialist physical health support for children by reviewing partnership arrangements. The health needs assessment recommendations will be implemented by the team and board members. Additionally, a working agreement between the service and the NHS 0 to 19 (health) service will be finalised to establish a clear pathway for addressing children’s physical health needs.

Progress: The review is complete, although actions related to sexual health are still outstanding. The working agreement has been completed and is in place with the child health department. Further physical health needs are now being considered, including the provision of oral health packs and immunisation clinics.

Ensuring children’s good sexual and physical health will continue to be an objective for the service for 2025 to 2028.

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

4. The service is committed to providing a comprehensive speech, language, and communication (SLC) offer to children we support, as recommended by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). To achieve this, board members are exploring funding pathways for internal speech and language provision. Additionally, an NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight representative will be identified to attend the youth justice service management board. The Isle of Wight aims to obtain an aspirational quality lead award to further enhance their services.

Progress: A NHS representative now attends the Management Board. The SEND Award was successfully received by the Youth Justice Service in August 2024. Discussions regarding the Speech and Language provision are ongoing to ensure continuous improvement and effective implementation. More information on progress around this area is given in the education section below.

The speech and language provision will continue to be an objective for the service for 2025 to 2028.

Diversion from first time entrants

5. Diverting children away from becoming first time entrants (FTE). Continue to build outcome 22 youth diversion programme numbers. Continue with youth crime prevention intervention.

Progress: First time entrants and reoffending task and finish has been held and child level data has been scrutinised to understand patterns and trends – The first time entrants rate has reduced significantly and going forward the task and finish group will focus on reoffending only. The work around first time entrants will continue to be part of the team's focus through prevention and diversion work and be monitored through the key performance indicators.

Completed.

Case management system

6. Develop and review the functionality of the case management system to ensure quality information regarding the profile and diverse needs of service children and utilize this to inform service planning and provision. Procure, build, and implement a new case management system.

Progress: New case management system – Core+ implemented on timescales and on budget. This was a big project and required significant commitment from the team.

Completed.

Management board

7. To implement the new board arrangements. Ensure the right people are in attendance at the board. Introduce a new performance report data set (scorecard). Develop the new risk log. Develop an induction for new members, including visual service structure.

Progress: Completed

Resourcing

8. A review of current staffing in relation to the budget will be conducted in readiness for April 2025, the new financial year. Additionally, the current underspend will be reviewed to support agile responses to increases in workload.

Progress: The budget has been reviewed and underspend used to bolster youth crime prevention until October 2025.

Completed.

Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

9. The funding for the youth crime prevention service was time limited. Therefore, a review of the service was required to consider alternative funding arrangements and alternative methods of response to service needs. The youth justice board conducted a review of the service. This issue was added to the risk register, and discussions were held with partner agencies and councillors.

Progress: As of March 2025, the Office of Police Crime Commissioning (OPCC) funding has been extended until 30 September 2025, and Ministry of Justice turnaround funding is in place until 31 March 2026. Additionally, the OPCC has agreed to provide £4,950 for positive activities starting in April 2025.

The delivery of the youth crime prevention service to further reduce first time entrants will continue to be an objective for the service for 2025 to 2028.

Disproportionality

10. Addressing disproportionality across a range of minority groups, including ethnicity, gender (specifically girls), SEND, and children in care, is a priority.

Progress: A disproportionality strategy is now in draft.

Disproportionality will continue to be an objective for the service for 2025 to 2028

Quality assurance

11. To develop and strengthen quality assurance processes and management oversight, a new quality assurance audit framework for 2024 to 25 will be implemented and reported back.

Progress: A new Power BI tool is being used for data collation, and three new audit tools have been created. One is a joint audit tool with children's services; one is based on the HMIP new inspection criteria; and the third one is an updated victim audit tool based on the HMIP stand-alone victim standard. An audit plan for 2025 is being agreed with the Isle of Wight Council practice improvement lead.

Quality assurance findings and their application into practice will be an objective for the service for 2025 to 2028

Learning from thematic reviews

- 12.** A national thematic review into children remanded into youth detention was undertaken by HMIP. One of the report recommendations was the need for police and criminal evidence (PACE) beds on each local authority.

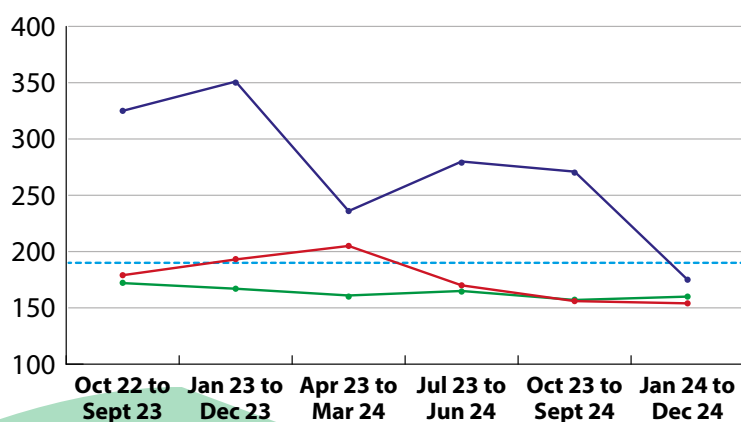
Progress: While the local authority has considered the recommendations of this national thematic review there is no current demand on the Isle of Wight for a police and criminal evidence (PACE) bed and accommodation. Due to the geographical nature of the Isle of Wight and the lack of secure placements there is not currently the ability to provide this, however for the rare occasion when a child has to spend a night in custody (less than five in the last year) the service has made arrangements to make this environment more child friendly as described below in the plan.

2.2 Performance over the previous year

National indicators

1) First time entrants

KPI ID	KPI category	KPI description	Denominator description	Numerator description	Cohort	Reporting period
1	Original KPI	Rate of first time entrants	Number of 10 to 17 year olds, Isle of Wight population.	Number of children where a substantive outcome is the first instance recorded for each child.	Offence outcome in quarter	In quarter



Latest bar chart (Jan to Dec 2024)

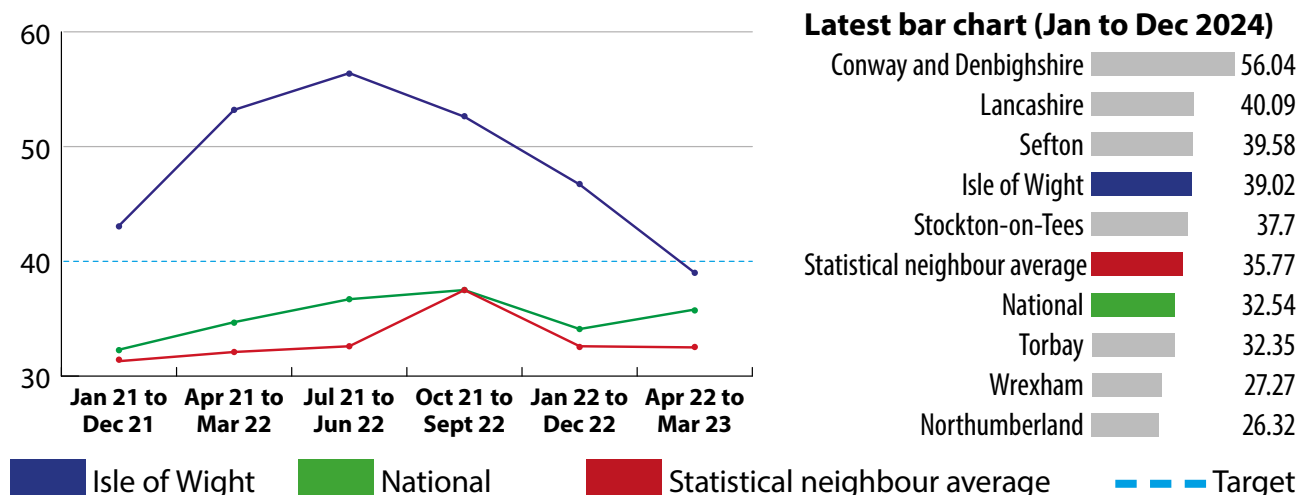
Northumberland	203.28
Cumberland	202.78
Conway and Denbighshire	201.47
Torbay	188.15
Stockton on Tees	177.79
Isle of Wight	174.4
Rotherham	170.58
National	160.18
Statistical neighbour average	154.4
Wrexham	149.28

■ Isle of Wight ■ National ■ Statistical neighbour average — — — Target

First time entrants (FTE) describes children entering the youth justice system for the first time, i.e. when they received their first substantive outcome for a proven offence. FTE data is captured by the youth justice board and is now taken from the local case management system and includes a number of motoring offences, which were previously excluded. The service has had for a number of years a high number of first entrants in comparison with statistical neighbours average or national average. Between October and December 2024 however we only had one child who became a first time entrant which has meant that the rate has significantly reduced. The youth crime prevention service and diversion programmes are having a positive impact in preventing children from committing serious offences and this focus on reducing first time entrants will continue.

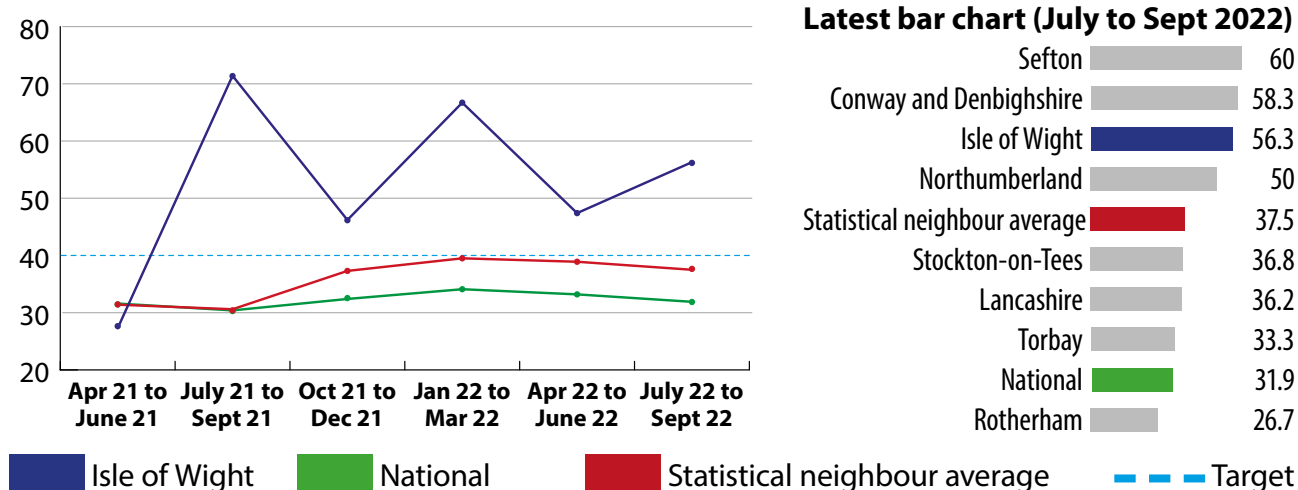
2) Reoffending

KPI ID	KPI category	KPI description	Denominator description	Numerator description	Cohort	Reporting period
2	Original KPI	Reoffending rate (rolling year).	Number of children who committed an offence with a substantive outcome in the period.	Number of children who reoffended within an 18-month period following the initial offence.	Offence outcome in rolling year	Rolling year



The service has a high number of children who re-offend in comparison with statistical neighbours' average or national average – this is the case when considering the last quarter or the rolling year. Between October and December 2024 there were nine children who re-offended within 18 months of committing an offence – 32 children in the rolling year. This number has fluctuated over the last few years but not significantly. The small cohort makes a small number of children affect the percentage significantly, however the small cohort is also an opportunity to understand patterns and themes.

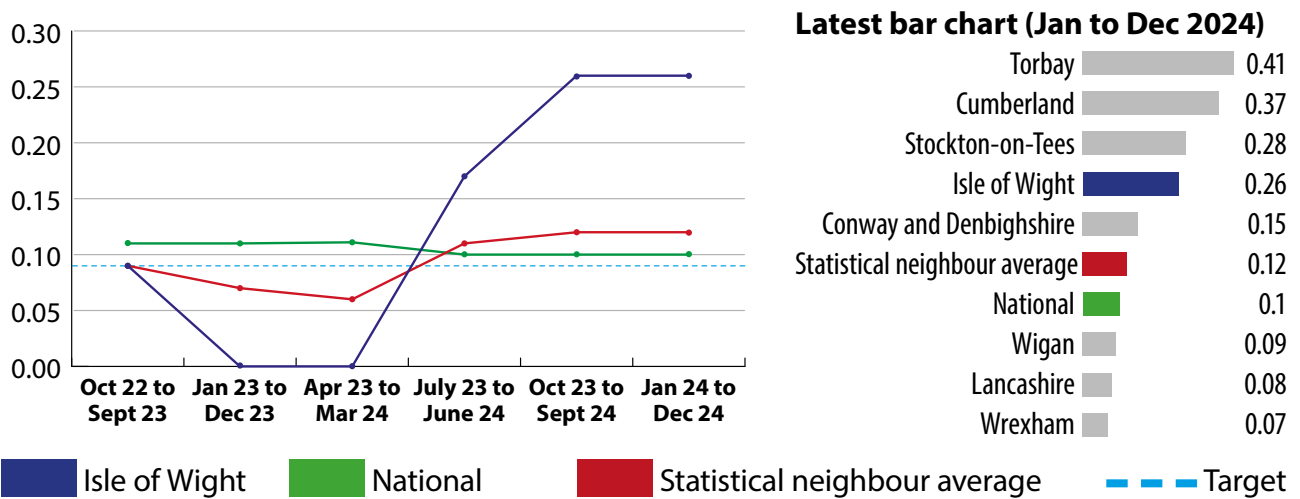
KPI ID	KPI category	KPI description	Denominator description	Numerator description	Cohort	Reporting period
4	Original KPI	Reoffending rate (in quarter).	Number of children who committed an offence with a substantive outcome in the period.	Number of children who reoffended within an 18-month period following the initial offence.	Offence outcome in quarter	In quarter



This has been an area of concern for the Isle of Wight for several years. To address this a task and finish group with a focus on the child level data in relation to the children who re-offend is in place. There were some common themes, such as adverse childhood experiences and education issues that need to be explored further in order to shape future interventions. Future meetings will have an education representative too so that discussions about early intervention in education can be held. Due to the reduction of children becoming first time entrants but the fact that reoffending is still a concern the task and finish group will now focus on reoffending.

3) Custody

KPI ID	KPI category	KPI description	Denominator description	Numerator description	Cohort	Reporting period
6	Original KPI	Rate of custodial sentences.	Number of 10 to 17 year olds, Isle of Wight population.	Number of custodial sentences within the period.	Offence outcome in quarter	In quarter



There has been an increase in the custodial sentences issued in the last quarters however even though these are three different offences they pertain to the same child. This has led to an increase in this indicator above the national average and the statistical neighbours average. The very small numbers of custody outcomes on the Isle of Wight make this indicator seem higher than what it is in reality with only one child in custody.

Key performance indicators:

The below key performance indicators, were required by the youth justice board from April 2023. Long term comparator data is not yet available from them. Key performance indicator data is taken from the following quarters and outcomes:

Quarter	Non-substantive out of court disposals with YJS intervention	Youth cautions with YJS intervention	Youth conditional cautions	Referral orders	Youth rehabilitation orders	Custodial sentences	Custodial remands of four weeks or more not resulting in custodial sentences	Total
Q3 2023 to 2024	15	2	3	1	1	1	0	23
Q4 2023 to 2024	10	3	0	4	2	0	0	19
Q1 2024 to 2025	14	1	8	6	1	3	0	33
Q2 2024 to 2025	23	2	9	3	0	2	0	39
Q3 2024 to 2025	4	1	6	8	2	2	2	25

Key performance indicator 1 – suitable accommodation

The Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service acknowledges that access to safe and suitable accommodation significantly reduces the risk of reoffending. The service collaborates closely with partners, including children's social care, to ensure appropriate housing and placement provisions are available. As of April 2025, there are no children on the Isle of Wight recorded as being in unsuitable accommodation. Monitoring this key performance indicator enables the identification of any barriers, allowing for escalation with partners when children are found to be in unsuitable accommodation.

Key performance indicator 2 – education, training and employment

There are well-established links between low educational engagement and attainment and the risk of childhood offending. Education, training, and employment remain a significant focus for the service, as substantial evidence demonstrates that participation and engagement in these areas are crucial for desistance.

At the end of December 2024 the majority of children were in suitable education, training or employment (72 per cent) however there are a significant number of children who had reduced hours provision and this has been identified as a possible factor when considering re-offending rates in the task and finish group. This is currently being considered to plan future interventions.

Key performance indicator 3 – special educational needs and additional learning needs

Identifying and responding to special educational needs and additional learning needs, and providing support early is a key focus of our work. Data gathered between October and December 2024 indicates that less than five children who had a non-substantive out of court disposal with youth justice intervention had special educational needs. The quarter before that however showed that half of the children who got youth cautions and custodial sentences also had special educational needs. Having a special educational need is discussed in the joint decision making panel and considered a mitigating factor. Considering that this is such a high percentage, this will be part of the future work that needs to be undertaken jointly by the service and education.

Key performance indicator 4 – mental health and emotional well-being

Rates of poor mental health are higher for children across all stages of the youth justice system than in the general population. In September 2024 a significant number of children (52 per cent) had mental health and emotional difficulties identified and almost the same percentage (40 per cent) was identified between October and December 2024. The service monitors access to mental health interventions via a mental health worker that works in the team and the ability to discuss children at the forensic child adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) which is a multi-agency forum chaired by a psychiatrist who offers consultation in relation to children who pose a risk of harm to others. The Isle of Wight Youth Trust is also a member of the youth justice management board.

Key performance indicator 5 – substance misuse

It is recognised that children in the youth justice system are particularly vulnerable to substance misuse. Between October and December 2024, eight out of 25 children were identified as having substance misuse issues (32 per cent). Children who have used alcohol or substances are referred to a local service so they are adequately supported through an intervention.

Key performance indicator 6 – out of court disposals

The service has a clear commitment to the engagement of children on out of court disposal. Data gathered between October and December 2024 was that out of the 11 children that had out of court disposals, less than five did not complete interventions in this quarter. In the quarter before, however all children completed their interventions and this is something that the service strives to achieve.

Key performance indicator 7 – wider services

In recognition of the importance of multi-agency working in reducing offending this key performance indicator requires monitoring of children who are care experienced or who are referred to early help services. The service has robust multi-agency working arrangements with partner agencies and with targeted early help services. Data reporting between October and December 2024 indicate that out of the 23 children that had orders finishing, less than five were children we care for, less than five had a child in need plan, and less than five were supported under child protection plans, with no other children under early help plans.

Key performance indicator 8 – management board attendance:

Attendance at the quarterly youth justice management board is monitored and there is a commitment from attendees and senior representation from a wide range of partner organisations and agencies.

Key performance indicator 9 – serious youth violence

This indicator is measuring the number of proven serious violence offences and separating types of offence by age. The reduction of serious youth violence is a key priority for the service and the wider partnership. Data gathered from October to December 2024 indicated that the majority of the serious youth violence offences being committed were by 10 to 15 year olds, which is a contrast in relation to the quarter before. When considering the rate per 100,000 there has been a further decrease from last quarter from 17 to six this quarter, which is positive. Serious violence (SV) is defined by the youth justice board as any drug or drug-related, robbery or violence against the person offence that has a gravity score of five or more. (Robbery offences all carry a gravity score of six. Gravity scores range from on (least serious) to eight (most serious).

Key performance indicator 10 – victims

This key performance indicator monitors the number of victims resulting from offences committed by children, the number contacted, and the number engaged in restorative justice opportunities as well as those who requested and were given further information and support. Youth justice services have a statutory duty to provide support to victims which is delivered through the restorative justice workers in the team and partnership with partner agencies and services in the community. Considering data obtained from October to December 2024 out of 32 victims identified (pertaining to 17 children), almost all gave consent to being contacted and 23 of those engaged in restorative work. There was however less than five victims that engaged with restorative work opportunities while the others shared their views prior to outcomes being given. This indicator demonstrates that 24 per cent of victims engage with restorative justice opportunities which is an increase from last quarter.

2.3 Risk and issues

A self-assessment has been completed prior to this plan and this identifies the following areas of risk:

Reoffending rate – As explored above in performance section.

Youth crime prevention funding and funding from multiple sources – Funding in relation to the youth crime prevention programme is only given for a short period of time and this creates uncertainty for staff and limits the ability to run long-term projects. The risk if this service is not able to run as effectively as it does, is the impact this can potentially have on first time entrants, for example. There is an added risk as the Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service has several funding streams which makes the service vulnerable to the resources of partner agencies.

Education – The service is not always informed of all school issues such as deterioration in behaviour, suspensions, exclusions, low attendance, reduced timetables, etc. If schools were in better communication at the earliest opportunity there could be preventative work undertaken which would reduce escalation of behaviour and offending. As outlined throughout this plan there are actions being taken to mitigate this risk and achieve better communication with education.

3 Plan for the forthcoming year

3.1 Child first

The child first evidence base has four tenets, summarised as A B C D:

A As children: Recognise how children are developmentally different from adults and require different support. On the Isle of Wight we do this by focusing on children's cognitive age not chronological age and using accessible language.

B Building pro-social identity: Promote children's individual strengths and capacities to develop a pro-social identity, focusing on positive child outcomes rather than just trying to manage offending. On the Isle of Wight, we do this by giving children fresh AIR (activities, interactions and roles) and as shown in this plan, they have participated in a range of sport and art based activities.

All staff and volunteers are trained in restorative justice and use the underling principles to support our practice.

C Collaborating with children: Involve children meaningfully to encourage their investment, engagement, and social inclusion. On the Isle of Wight we do this by building relationships. Children frequently provide feedback on the service they receive and we use this to shape future service delivery. Recently, children have been involved in staff interviews.

D Diverting from stigma: Promote supportive diversion from the criminal justice system where possible, or minimising stigma within it, as we know that stigma causes further offending. On the Isle of Wight we do this via our **prevention** offer (youth crime prevention and turnaround) and our **diversion** offer (outcome 22 – youth diversion programme). Of the 176 children that closed to youth crime prevention between April 2023 and December 2024, only three went on to become first time entrants within six months (youth caution or above). Of the 176 children closed to the Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service between April 23 and December 2024, only three went on to become first time entrants within six months (youth caution or above) and 21 received a community resolution within six months.

3.2 Resources and services

Below is the outturn data for 2024 to 2025:

Income	Youth justice board ¹	Local authority	Police	Police and crime commissioner	Probation	Health	Welsh government	Other ²	Total
Cash	£178,442	£379,231	£0	£30,600	£28,177	£0	£0	£46,304	£680,754
In kind		£102,016	£111,140	£0	£0	£45,217	£0	£0	£258,373
Total income	£178,442	£449,247	£111,140	£30,600	£28,177	£45,217	£0	£46,304	£939,127

Expenditure	Youth justice board ³	All other funders	Total
Salaries	£167,805	£586,092	£753,897
Other costs	£10,637	£129,722	£140,359
Total expenditure	£178,442	£715,814	£894,256

Other income:

Turnaround grant – £42,406

Serious crime duty grant – £1,622

Donations – £2,276

Below are the funding streams for 2025 to 2026:

Funding streams		Current budget contribution	In-kind contribution from partners	Total contribution
Partner contributions:				
Isle of Wight Council	52.9%	£374,285	£103,781	£478,066
Youth Justice Board grant	20%	£181,043	£0	£181,043
Ministry of justice turnaround grant	3.2%	£28,624	£0	£28,624
Police	12.9%	£0	£116,206	£116,206
Probation	3.8%	£5,000	£29,006	£34,006
Health	5%	£0	£45,212	£45,217
PCC grant – YCP	1.7%	£15,300	£0	£15,300

1 This includes **all** grants received from the youth justice board.

2 This includes all funding received from any source other than the statutory partners listed – e.g. turnaround grant. Details are recorded in the other income list.

3 Income in kind should be included in expenditure.

Funding streams		Current budget contribution	In-kind contribution from partners	Total contribution
PCC grant – anti-social behaviour fund	0.5%	£4,950	£0	£4,950
Serious crime duty grant	0%	£0	£0	£0
Miscellaneous income	0%	£0	£0	£0
Reimbursement of costs	0%	£0	£0	£0
Total budget available		£609,202	£294,210	£903,412
Carry forward		£17,290	£0	£17,290
Total funding		£626,492	£294,210	£920,702

The youth justice board grant has been confirmed as £181,043 and is reflected in the above. In-kind contributions from probation and health are based on their 2024-25 contribution and need to be confirmed for 2025 to 2026.

3.3 Board development

The Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service acknowledges the importance of providing comprehensive support and training to board members. This initiative aims to enhance their understanding of key performance indicators and foster strong, collaborative relationships between board members and team members within the service.

To achieve this, our youth justice board oversight manager conducted a training session focused on key performance indicators. This session was designed to equip board members with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively monitor and evaluate the service's performance. Moving forward, this training will be included in the induction pack for all new board members, ensuring they are well-prepared from the outset. There is also a need to have some more administrative capacity for the youth justice management board which is currently being explored by the chair.

In addition to the training session, the service organised a joint lunch for board members and team members - including volunteers. This event provided an informal setting for attendees to interact, share insights, and build rapport. Every quarter a team member is given an opportunity to shadow a management board.

3.4 Workforce development

The workforce, including volunteers, are well-supported through regular supervision and annual professional development reviews (PDRs), which incorporate observations and constructive feedback. Staff also participate in fortnightly practice meetings, providing a space for reflection, peer learning, and discussion of complex cases. Given the nature of their work supporting children who may be experiencing risk and trauma, the team are encouraged to access additional support and training opportunities to enhance their skills and resilience.

Over the past 12 months, there have been some staffing changes, which at times resulted in vacancies within the team. However, as of April 2025, the team is now fully staffed, ensuring stability and continuity in service delivery.

The service workforce benefits from training provided by multiple sources, including the safeguarding children partnership, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), the Isle of Wight Council workforce development team, and child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). In addition to these external training opportunities, the team also develops local training initiatives and commissions bespoke training to address specific workforce development needs.

During 2024 and 2025, staff have undertaken a range of training, including:

- the new youth justice service prevention and diversion assessment tool;
- respecting autistic identity in schools and education (RAISE);
- good lives model;
- Core+ case management system training;
- introduction to serious violence duty;
- training for those supporting children seeking asylum;
- various other specialist training sessions.

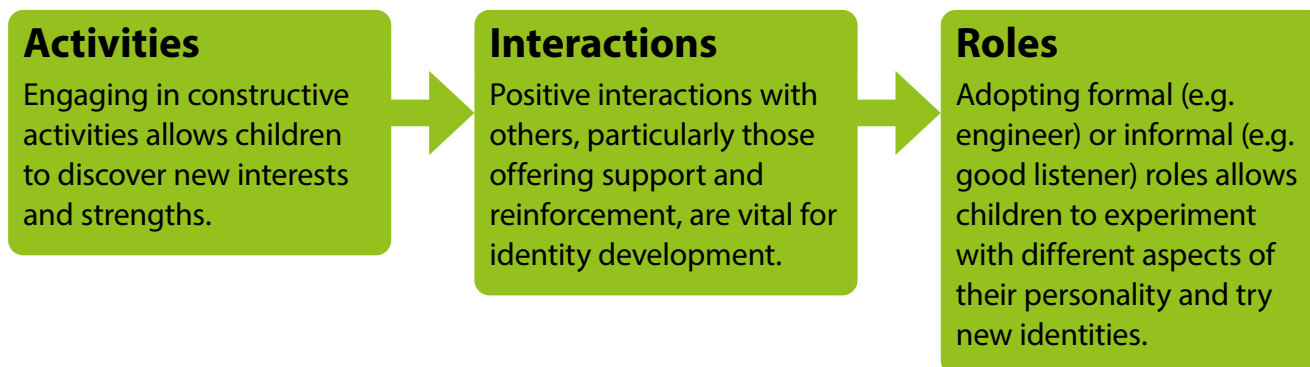
Looking ahead, the service plans to recommission AIM3 training (harmful sexual behaviour assessment) and a two-day structured assessment of violence risk in youth (SAVRY) training course was held in May 2025. Additionally, in response to the introduction of the victim domain within HMIP's new inspection framework, we are investing in enhanced training and development for our two part-time restorative justice officers. One officer is currently enrolled in restorative approaches: theory and practice level 5 course, while the other is working towards achieving registered practitioner status with the Restorative Justice Council.

Further to this the team manager has been from January 2025 the south east regional representative of the Association of YOT Managers (AYM) which means they are aware of all the work undertaken in the south east and they are their voice on the board. This has a positive impact in ensuring that the good work undertaken by the service can be shared but also to ensure that we can learn from others.

Through these ongoing efforts, the service remains committed to equipping its workforce with the knowledge, skills, and professional support necessary to deliver high-quality services to children and families.

3.5 Evidence-based practice and innovation

We have child-first practice which is delivered by our activities, interactions and roles (AIR) approach.



Some of the strategies for supporting an AIR approach are encouraging diverse activities as exposure to different activities helps children explore their identity; Listening to children's voices and letting them express what activities and roles they enjoy; creating inclusive spaces as this will support children's identity formation by embracing diverse backgrounds and abilities and guiding role development by helping children understand their roles in safe, positive ways (e.g., responsibility at home, teamwork in class, etc).



The service has also produced two videos with children. One was created by children supported by the service and contains their views about the services available on the Isle of Wight: www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTcaYNUhp84. The other is a video about restorative justice that was also created using views and voices from children that had restorative justice intervention: www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJACKG9aM80

‘Perspective’ – the Isle of Wight Youth Service’s photography project

During August 2024, three children took part in the service’s summer offer of a photography project. They have produced a book of their work and the photos were on display at the Quay Arts Centre, Newport. This gave children the opportunity to gain new skills and show case their talent.



Creative change makers – reparation project



Between February and September 2024, the service supported four children to complete a creative reparation programme. Seven children committed a high value offence together and to repair the harm, the victim suggested they complete community reparation. Four of the children have worked alongside two local artists. This piece was made by paint pouring, because the children poured paint around the property that they damaged. The artwork is currently on display at the Riverside Centre, Newport.

Child first environments – County Hall Room 8 and the police cell project

We aim to create a positive atmosphere by making spaces comfortable and interactive. We have involved children in the design of the youth court office (as referenced in the 2024 plan) and this year, the main meeting room at County Hall and the police custody cell. Children told us that they didn’t like the room that we used to see them in, so we worked with them to change this. Our student social worker met with children to gain their views, take them shopping and support them to paint the room. The room now has a lap blanket, a wobble cushion and fidget toys to support children with neurodiversity.

The police cell project has been a collaboration between the youth justice service and Artswork. Children worked together with an artist to design individual pieces of art that were digitally photographed and transferred onto Perspex. This was then transferred to the ceiling of the police cell for other children to benefit from.

The service's practice is supported by the **good lives model**, a strengths-based approach to desistance. This model emphasizes the importance of building capabilities and strengths in children who commit crimes to reduce their risk of reoffending. The good lives model is closely linked to the theory of desistance, which is the basis of the asset plus model.



3.6 Evaluation

There is no better evaluation of child first practice, than from children themselves. Below are views of children supported by our service in the past year who have undertaken positive activities and shared the benefit of this.

"She has made my appointments fun and not a chore when I have finished work, easy going"

"The knowledge I've gained from her"

"Being able to work through how I was feeling and finding different ways to show this"

"I had someone to talk to every week who actually cared and wanted to help me"

"Learning what happens when u do a crime"

"Golf and the fire station visit"

"Great contact helped me through a bad time in my life."

"Everything, having a good bond and someone I could trust. Paige was very understanding and relatable I felt like she got me and helped me genuinely change"

"Rapping in the studio"

"Having someone to talk to, we get along well"

"Lucy has helped me become a better and more mature person"

"Painting"

Furthermore, we obtained our youth justice special educational needs and disability (SEND) quality lead award with a child first commendation in August 2024. This award was won following collaboration with the special educational needs assessment and review team and speech and language colleagues.

The following is taken directly from the microlink report:

“Congratulations to the Isle of Wight area partnership for attaining youth justice SEND quality lead status with a child first commendation.” – Marius Frank, Microlink PC

The Isle of Wight area partnership have attained quality lead status with a child first commendation at the first time of asking. This is a significant achievement, and a testament to the commitment and dedication of a large multi-disciplinary team working together around children in youth justice pathways, or at risk of offending.

A stable and long-standing management team collaborate extremely well at all levels: Outstanding working relationships are now underpinned by protocols, terms of reference and inter-service agreements.

Effective practice is extensive, and includes:

- Acknowledging the prevalence of speech language and communication needs (SLCN) among children at risk of permanent exclusion, and entering youth justice pathways, speech and language therapy (SaLT) team works across education, SEND and youth justice services to train and offer advice and guidance. Youth justice workers have also taken accredited professional training qualifications delivered by ELKLAN. It is widely accepted that a co-located SaLT provision would enhance effective provision still further.
- Comprehensive screening, end-to-end assessment and personal education plans for every child in youth justice pathways, ensuring that no child slips through the net.
- Screening and assessment is backed up by provision: two multi-agency organisational structures that enable a needs-driven, child first approach to any child in youth justice pathways, or at risk of entering a youth justice pathway:
 - **Isle of Wight joint decision-making panel (JDMP)** sits once a week. This multi-agency approach to identifying and acknowledging high level complex needs, and then commissioning appropriate support, ensures that children do not slip through the net
 - Preventative work by the Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service is exemplary, offering a **youth crime prevention service** for children aged 10 to 17 who are believed to be at risk of offending or anti-social behaviour. Referrals to this service can be and are made, by SEND, social, health and child looked after teams. Children that are open to the education and inclusion service and at risk of school exclusion are prioritised.

- Strategic leadership is strong. The youth justice board is chaired by the director of children's services. A recent initiative has been the creation of a local area partnership SEND board. Recognition was given to a whole system approach, as described in the government's SEND and alternative provision improvement plan. The youth justice service, SEN and S&L teams are members of this board and will play an active role in ensure the needs of children on the Isle of Wight are understood and met.

No one can give the service a more genuine and heartfelt endorsement than a parent:

"My son is a very complex individual with learning disabilities, autism and ADHD... I knew his behaviour was out of control and he was becoming criminalized. I felt helpless. **Being able to do the youth crime prevention referral myself allowed me to do something about the situation.**"

"Having support from the youth justice service has helped my son build trusting working relationships... He has been able to access further support through the youth justice service with inclusion for substance abuse. He has also been inspired to work and has now completed a CV and cover letter with the youth justice service."

"(XXX) has been an amazing help and incredibly supportive for my son and I. She has made the biggest impact to our lives. Where many professionals haven't been able to engage with my son over the years she has. Thank you!"

Well done Isle of Wight area partnership! It has been a privilege and a pleasure working with you, and to be able to acknowledge such significant and sustained partnership practice around the child.

Others can learn much from your outstanding practice."

Quadrant change:

From November 2023 the youth justice board (YJB) was engaging with the Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service as a performance quadrant 3, however in August 2024 following a review undertaken by the YJB it was felt that we would be more appropriately supported as performance quadrant 2 due to good progress. They said, **"This change is in recognition of the progress that has been made against your improvement plan"** and, **"the YJB commends you on the progress your service has made to date and the way in which you have approached your improvement journey and focused on the needs of the children, families and the communities you serve"**.

Custody passports:

The service have now introduced **custody passports**. These are completed with children and

their families and shared with police custody, to inform the sergeant of any special educational needs that the presenting child may have. This has been recognised nationally as best practice.

Furthermore, the service have provided police custody with resources (books, fidget toys, weighted blanket, wobble cushion) for use by children awaiting police interview. Training of police officers in this arena needs to be explored.

[illegible]

3.7 Priorities for the coming year and beyond

Education – improve educational outcomes and reduce exclusions

Goal: Use education data to inform early intervention and reduce offending and exclusions.

Year	Actions	Measures of success
2025 to 2026	<p>Submit police crime commissioner (PCC) bid for further education worker.</p> <p>Meet monthly with education colleagues.</p> <p>Establish data-sharing with schools and education worker.</p> <p>Have education input into reoffending task and finish group.</p>	<p>Increase of percentage of schools sharing data.</p> <p>Baseline exclusion and attendance data available and regularly reviewed.</p>
2026 to 2027	<p>Launch early intervention pathways individually with children and explore group work at schools.</p> <p>Develop trauma-informed training for schools.</p>	<p>Reduction in suspensions and exclusions.</p> <p>Reduction in children having reduced hours provision.</p> <p>Increase in youth crime prevention referrals.</p>
2027 to 2028	<p>Evaluate impact of interventions jointly with education colleagues.</p> <p>Consider impact on reduction of first time entrants and reoffending and adapt intervention accordingly.</p>	<p>Return to school of some of the children being home educated.</p> <p>Improved attainment for children.</p> <p>Reduction in reoffending.</p>

Disproportionality – reduce inequalities in the system

Goal: Reduce over representation of minority ethnic, special educational needs and disabilities, and girls in the youth justice system.

Year	Actions	Measures of success
2025 to 2026	Develop Isle of Wight disproportionality profile Finish disproportionality strategy.	Strategy approved by youth justice management board. Baseline disproportionality data.
2026 to 2027	Deliver targeted interventions for over-represented groups. Train staff on cultural competence.	Reduction in disproportionality indicators.
2027 to 2028	Evaluate strategy impact. Refresh strategy based on findings.	

Physical health – meet children’s health needs

Goal: Ensure access to physical, sexual, emotional health and special educational needs and disability support.

Year	Actions	Measures of success
2025 to 2026	Map current health services. Identify gaps in provision. Contact services and explore working agreements. Continue discussions with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) regarding speech and language provision.	Identify children with unmet health needs and discuss accordingly with services. Speech and language therapist to be available to the service.
2026 to 2027	Embed health checks in service’s intake including immunisations and sexual health.	Children’s health needs are adequately assessed and met.
2027 to 2028	Evaluate health outcomes and whether needs are being consistently met.	

Victims – prevent offending

Goal: Continue youth crime prevention to reduce first time entrants and victims

Year	Actions	Measures of success
2025 to 2026	Continue to deliver the youth crime prevention service. Increase awareness of the service and the importance of early intervention by sharing service more widely with schools (primary and secondary).	Track impact of intervention by measuring percentage of young people diverted from offending. Reduction in first-time entrants.
2026 to 2027	Expand prevention offer to schools by delivering work at earliest opportunity, including the consideration of group work in schools identified as having children who are offending.	
2027 to 2028	Evaluate impact of intervention.	

Reoffending – reduce repeat offending

Goal: Sustain and enhance interventions to reduce reoffending.

Year	Actions	Measures of success
2025 to 2026	Review current reoffending data every quarter through task and finish group. Strengthen multi-agency plans.	Baseline reoffending rate and ascertain patterns and themes.
2026 to 2027	Launch targeted reoffending programmes.	15 per cent reduction in reoffending. Assessment of interventions determine they are timely and impactful.
2027 to 2028	Evaluate and scale successful models.	30 per cent reduction in reoffending. Assessment of interventions determine they are timely and impactful.

Quality assurance (QA) – embed QA into practice

Goal: Use QA findings to drive continuous improvement.

Year	Actions	Measures of success
2025 to 2026	Conduct quarterly audits jointly with children's services. Continue undertaking three types of audits around participation, quality of practice and victims.	Children's voices are captured and tailor service delivery.
2026 to 2027	Embed audit findings being disseminated amongst the team and captured as actions in supervision records.	Lessons from audits are embedded in practice.
2027 to 2028	Evaluate Quality Assurance impact. Refresh Quality Assurance strategy.	

3.8 Standards for children

A national standards audit was not required this year with the last one being done in October 2023. The focus was on court work and the need to focus on preparing children and their families to court hearings; ensuring the victims voices were heard and rebuilding links with the court, via the youth panel meetings. All of these were achieved and progress sustained in the last year.

Internal auditing has been completed to ensure that the quality of work is up to the standard deserved by the children we work with. We have devised three types of audits to gather and analyse information to then inform practice. One of the audits is a joint audit tool with children's services; one is based on the His Majesty Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) new inspection criteria; and the third one is an updated victim audit tool based on the HMIP stand-alone victim standard. Some of the learning has identified the need to better jointly work with children's services and to improve communication between these services and this will be taken further in the coming year.

3.9 Service development

The Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service had the last His Majesty Inspectorate of Probation inspection in November 2023. Out of this inspection an overall judgement of **requires improvement** was made and seven recommendations outlined for improvement. This stated that the Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service management board should:

- 1) **Develop and implement strategy and policy that addresses the diverse needs, across all protected characteristics of the children who come into contact with the youth justice service.**

A disproportionality strategy was planned together with Hampshire County Council. However since the end of the partnership there was a need to update this strategy and make this purposeful for the Isle of Wight. This is currently in draft and will be concluded by end of July 2025.

- 2) **Implement approaches to routinely gathering, collating and analysing the views of children and their parents or carers and utilise this to ensure appropriate services, which meet children's needs, are in place.**

There are now clear mechanisms to ascertain views of children and their parent/cares which is used to shape intervention and practice, as detailed above.

- 3) **Ensure the service has sufficient staff (including all statutory staff) with manageable workloads in order to deliver work of a consistently high-quality.**

The service is currently fully staffed and caseloads are manageable and between eight to 10 children per practitioner.

- 4) **Review partnership arrangements to ensure timely and specialist physical health support and access to services that support and improve the children's physical health.**

A needs health assessment was completed in May 2024. There is a working agreement with child health department (0 to 19 service) in order to gather information about admissions to hospital, GP consultations, immunisations, etc. There is a focus about ensuring sexual health information and planning is considered as part of assessments.

- 5) **Improve access to specialist speech and language assessment and intervention for all children working with the service.**

This is still an outstanding action however as part of each child's assessment, their special educational needs (SEN) status is reviewed, and where applicable, copies of their education, health and care plan (EHCP) are accessed. If there are concerns that certain needs may not have been identified, the asset plus speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and neurodisability screening tool is used to support early identification. Historically, this screening tool was only used for children subject to court orders. However, the service now applies it to all children, including those undergoing prevention and diversion assessments. This broader application enables earlier identification of speech, language, and communication needs, as well as neurodiversity and neurodisabilities. A working protocol is currently in place between the education sector and the service to strengthen collaboration and enhance multi-disciplinary support for the children we serve.

The Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service should:

- 6) **Develop and strengthen quality assurance processes and management oversight, to ensure the quality of assessment and planning practice around children's safety and wellbeing and the risk of children causing harm to others improves.**

As mentioned before the service has three different types of audit tools to quality assure practice. There is an experience team manager and assistant team manager who oversee all assessments and plans for children to ensure risks are managed and the right plan is put in place.

- 7) **Develop and review the functionality of the case management system to ensure quality information regarding the profile and diverse needs of the service's children and utilise this to inform service planning and provision.**

There is now a new case management system (Core +) in place which captures this type of information.

We have also undertaken two internal learning reviews – one in June 2024 and one in May 2025. The learning review undertaken in June 2024 was as a result of a seemingly sudden escalation of behaviour for one young person which resulted in offending behaviour and then an admission to hospital under the mental health act. A number of recommendations and learning were taken from this review and shared with team and partner agencies.

The internal learning review undertaken in May 2025 was completed due to a child committing a further serious offence while on bail for an already serious offence. This review was undertaken to consider any learning and recommend further actions for the service and the recommendations of this have been shared with the youth justice management board to be taken further.

4 National priority areas

4.1 Children from groups which are over-represented

The following section provides data in relation to the representation of key groups of children in our Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service cohort. The information is presented in various formats to the youth justice management board. Below is a summary of information drawn together to inform practice. It comes from consulting our partners, feedback received from health colleagues, and the voices of children involved with the service, who are recognised as a vulnerable group.

In the last youth justice service plan 2024 to 2025, an action plan was created to develop and implement strategies and policies that address the diverse needs, across all protected characteristics of the children who come into contact with the service. The aim of the plan was to reduce the number of children from over-represented groups having a substantive outcome.

Information is routinely provided to the board regarding the diverse needs and disproportionate representation of the children in the service. This ensures the subject remains at the forefront of all partner agencies' approaches and priorities.

To ensure new staff are aware of their responsibilities to challenge, they complete an induction which now includes information on the diverse needs of children. Continuous professional development is promoted for all staff members to attend a wide range of training that ensures competency in working with children from over-represented groups. Recent examples included: cultural competency webinar working with ethnic minority care leavers; virtual school safeguarding conference; adultification bias training; journey with an unaccompanied child training series – Refugee Youth Service.

Children from other minority ethnic backgrounds

Over the past year (March 2024 to March 2025), 8.7 per cent of children working with the service, have identified as having an ethnic minority background. This is an increase from five per cent the previous year. This evidences a changing need in service delivery for our cohort. It would be of benefit for our service to examine these statistics further to identify if there is a particular minority group emerging that we could offer additional support to.

Children who are known to social care (children in care)

Children cared for are significantly over-represented in the youth justice system relative to their peers. Care leavers are also significantly over-represented in the custodial system and those in secure youth settings indicating that at least a quarter of the prison population may have spent some time cared for as a child.

As of March 2025 the number of children we care for is 256, which is higher than our statistical neighbours.

The Isle of Wight Council children's services is committed to reducing the level of offending by children in their care. The national looked after child protocol (November 2018) is always considered at the joint decision-making panel and social workers always attend court, alongside the service, to advocate for the children they care for.

Over the past year, we have developed a youth justice service survey to capture views of partner agencies, which would include care providers. This has helped us to build our relationships and improve the service we deliver to children we care for. Additionally, we have been working to capture feedback from children and carers at the start of intervention to ensure we are meeting their specific needs.

We have also focussed on strengthening our joint working relationship with other youth justice services across the UK when a looked after child relocates and are more involved in less substantial outcomes while a child is residing out of area.

Also, it is the intention to develop and provide resources for staff and to commission specialist training, including directing restorative justice training working with our children cared for.

Over-representation of girls

Nationally in the year ending March 2023, 14 percent of children sentenced or cautioned in the UK were girls (Youth Justice Board 2024). On the Isle of Wight, the percentage of female children open to the service between March 2024 and March 2025 was 26 per cent. This evidences that female children continue to be over-represented within our service.

It is clear there is a need to offer focus on this area. This should include input from our partner agencies around early identification and intervention to prevent entry into the criminal justice system. We utilise resources from our youth crime prevention service to support with this. Over the past year, 44 per cent of children open to our youth crime prevention service were girls. This statistic evidences the importance of early intervention at reducing those entering our service from over-represented groups.

Overrepresentation of children excluded from school

Children in the youth justice system are often detached, or formally excluded, from formal education, training or employment, they tend to have lower reading ages than their true age, and experience poor educational outcomes. The causality of the link between education, training or employment, engagement and offending is complex (HMIP).

In February 2025, a new report from the children's commissioner called for an overhaul of how children who are excluded from education, training or employment are supported while out of provision to reduce the likelihood of them entering the youth justice system. One of her key findings was that more than half of children that were out of education for at least one academic year went on to enter a secure setting, with some missing three or more academic years. Within the service cohort, between March 2024 and March 2025, 40.1 per cent of children had been excluded or suspended from education. The service are seeking external funding for an additional education, training and employment officer to engage children supported by the prevention part of the service.

In order to focus on support children who are excluded from school and working with the service, our specialist education, training and employment officer has been attending frequent 'team around the school' meetings aimed at ensuring a multi-agency approach to those at risk or currently excluded. Furthermore, case managers regularly attend reintegration meetings held within schools for children returning to education provision. This allows for case managers to ensure the child's voice is heard and for multi-agency support to be put in place to reduce the risk of further exclusion. Restorative justice training (facilitated by the service's restorative justice officers) is being promoted and offered for those in educational settings across the Isle of Wight.

4.2 Policing

The Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service has one full-time police officer within the team who is based in the service's office in County Hall daily. This is different to other areas within the Hampshire Constabulary, who have police officers based at police stations, rather than within the service team. Due to the officer being based within the service's office, they are readily accessible to answer any queries and share relevant information and intelligence and information with the rest of the team.

There is a strong working relationship between the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Police and the service, as demonstrated by the consensus at joint decision-making panel (JDMP), and the very low number of children that are escalated due to the JDMP unable to agree a disposal. Out of court disposals are booked into a clinic in a timely manner, with the Service's police officer updating the service manager and case manager, should there be any delay (such as a case sitting with Crown Prosecution Service).

The service's police officer provides updates to local police on any children of interest and delivers training input to policing teams to make them aware of how the service operates and the various outcomes.

The service's police officer also represents the service at joint action group meetings (JAG), police tactical planning meeting, the daily police daily management meeting and monthly police neighbourhood management meetings. The service's police officer also provides updates to the priority young person (PYP) meeting and ensures any investigations involving the PYP are progressed in a timely manner.

The service police officer does not carry a service caseload but does undertake some preventative work and intervention with children, as requested by case managers. This has included visits to Ryde Police Station cell block and completing weapons awareness sessions, but this area of the role is going to be expanded in 2025 to 2026.

4.3 Prevention

The Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service continues to provide a comprehensive youth crime prevention (YCP) service for children who are on the periphery of offending and have not received a substantive police or court outcome. This service is a crucial part of our preventative strategy, aiming to safeguard children and promote positive outcomes to prevent their entry into the justice system.

Service delivery

Referrals to the YCP service can be made by any professionals working with the child, as well as by parents and carers. The primary source of referrals continues to be education colleagues, reflecting strong collaborative working across agencies. The YCP service is staffed by three dedicated workers, providing a 12-week voluntary intervention for children aged 10 to 17 who exhibit early risk indicators associated with offending. Each child undergoes a comprehensive assessment of their risks and needs upon allocation to the service.

The youth crime prevention service comprises of three youth crime prevention support workers which are funded via three separate funding streams; £30,600 is received from the Office of Police Crime Commission (OPCC), which part-funds a 0.8 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff member. This sum is supplemented by the service's underspend, taking this from 0.8 FTE to 1.0 FTE until 30 September 2025. An additional full-time worker is funded via the service underspend until 30 September 2025. Lastly, a 0.6 FTE worker is funded through the Ministry of Justice turnaround grant until 31 March 2026. This additional capacity allows us to manage children subject to community resolution, youth caution, pre-charge bail, released under investigation, and no further action decisions, particularly those receiving turnaround intervention.

During 2025 to 2026, the youth crime prevention service will seek to reinstate the locality working arrangements that were in place during 2024 to 2025, prior to staffing changes which impacted on service delivery. This involved dividing the Isle of Wight into three localities, with each youth crime prevention worker responsible for a specific area. This locality-based model previously enhanced service delivery by allowing faster allocation and enabling workers to address concerns in a more timely and responsive manner. This structure also facilitated direct communication between partner agencies and specific locality workers, promoting a more integrated approach to prevention.

Data on delivery

Throughout 2024 and 2025, the youth crime prevention service worked with 85 children, reflecting the sustained high demand for early intervention. Despite the increase in capacity, the demand continues to exceed resources, resulting in an average waiting time of 60 days. The primary reasons for referrals include 'aggressive behaviour' and 'exploitation risks', which remain key areas of concern.

The effectiveness of the youth crime prevention service is demonstrated by the significant contribution to mitigating first-time entrants (FTEs) to the youth justice system. For youth crime prevention interventions closing between quarter 4 2024 to 2025, of the 21 children supported, 0 to date have gone on to become first time entrants. By way of a comparison, in quarter 4 2023 to 2024, of the 20 children supported only one went on to become an FTE. These figures clearly highlight the positive impact of early intervention and targeted support.

Practice example

A recent case involved a 14-year-old child referred to the youth crime prevention service due to persistent aggressive behaviours at school and concerns about criminal exploitation. Following a 12-week intervention, which included one-to-one support, anger management sessions, family support sessions, and multi-agency collaboration, the child's behaviour improved dramatically, with reduced incident of aggressive behaviour. The intervention not only reduced the immediate risks but also strengthened the family's capacity to manage future challenges. Importantly, to date the child has not become a first-time entrant and has successfully re-engaged with education.

Going forward, the service remains committed to strengthening our prevention framework through collaborative partnerships, continuous service evaluation, and innovative approaches to meet the evolving needs of children at risk of entering the justice system. We will continue to promote timely and appropriate referrals, monitor service demand, and explore avenues for additional funding to enhance capacity and reduce waiting times further.

4.4 Diversion

Community resolutions (CR)

All CRs are considered for allocation, opt-in letters are sent when allocations are not made. Previous analysis shows that we were appropriately identifying the right children to work with.

Youth diversion programmes (YDP)

YDPs were introduced on 1 November 2021, administered through our joint decision making panel (JDMP). This is a deferred prosecution and children are given a 16-week intervention without becoming criminalised. This work should include an engagement activity. If the child does not respond to this offer, they are re-referred to JDMP where an alternative decision can be made.

Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, 50 youth diversion programmes were issued on the Isle of Wight. Of the 50, eight are ongoing, 41 have completed it and less than five were breached (for lack of engagement or reoffending) and returned to panel where an alternative outcome was agreed as necessary. Of the 41 children who successfully completed, six reoffended within six months which is 14.63 per cent. This shows how youth diversion programmes are being used successfully. Children who are given a youth diversion programme or a community resolution can also be referred for a turnaround programme. Those children have our prevention and diversion assessment and an early help plan.

Turnaround

Since the introduction of turnaround in November 2022, 38 children successfully completed their intervention and a further two are ongoing, thereby exceeding our target of 33 turnaround cases.

4.5 Education

The education provision on the Isle of Wight consists of 37 primary schools, six secondary schools, one all-through school, two special schools and one pupil referral unit.

More recently, the situation on the island has been difficult with school place planning challenges arising from a falling birth rate on the Island.

The Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service employs one education, training and employment (ETE) officer. Each child is assessed in relation to their education status. This is done via a prevention and diversion assessment or full asset plus assessment. Case managers can refer to education training and employment officer to support children to have access to appropriate education, training or employment.

All children discussed at joint decision making panel have an education update which outlines attendance, any SEN, behaviour concerns, any suspensions and maths and English levels. The speech language communication and neurodiversity screening tool is also used as part of all assessments. There is access to speech and language therapy consultation on a monthly basis with a qualified speech and language therapist.

The ETE officer does not work with all children with an education health and care plan (EHCP), only if attendance is problematic. Copies of EHCPs are shared by special educational needs colleagues in children's services.

The ETE officer has built good relationships with a range of relevant partners including all secondary schools, training providers, mainland colleges (e.g. Camelia Botnar Foundation, Sparsholt), Higher Training Provider (HTP), Isle of Wight College, the education and inclusion (E&I) team, special education needs assessment and review team, Prince's Trust and Island Futures (who distribute a weekly training and employment bulletin) and Skills 4 Work (16+careers services). Within schools and colleges, the officer works with single point of contacts, year heads, family liaison officers, designated safeguarding leads and head teachers.

The service is located on the same floor within County Hall as SEN, E&I, Island Futures and school admissions, making ongoing discussion with the various departments easier to achieve. Furthermore, the service benefits from the education and inclusion team manager's understanding of our cohort as they previously worked within the service.

All children known to the service have a comprehensive, strength based end-to-end assessment using the 'prevention and diversion' or 'asset plus' assessment tools. Within these assessments, education, training and employment (ETE) needs are considered. Where concerns, queries or issues are identified support is offered via the ETE officer.

As part of the child's assessment, special education needs status are checked and copies of education and health care plan are accessed where relevant. Where there are concerns that needs have not been identified, the asset plus 'speech language and communication needs (SLCN) and neuro-disability screening tool', supports early identification. There is currently a working protocol between education and the service to strengthen the links between these areas and improve multi-disciplinary work for the children we work with.

Alongside our established links with and focus on speech and language, the service has established relationships with those local health providers commissioned to deliver neurodivergent assessments on the Island. The team are able to submit referrals to both The Owl Centre (autistic spectrum assessments) and Psicon (ADHD assessments) directly, and seek updates and input on outstanding referrals. If commensurate each service will prioritise a referral for a child due to their involvement with the service. Nationally there are acknowledged delays in the wait times for assessment and

diagnosis and thus the service has formed a good working relationship with the local authority's neurodiversity multi-disciplinary team (NDMDT) who can work directly with children and families and the professionals around them while they await their assessment.

There is one pupil referral unit on the Isle of Wight, recently renamed The Lionheart School with a complete refurbishment of the building and a fresh ethos; there is frequent contact between the service and the senior staff in connection with individual children. In addition, the service team manager and service's elective home educated (EHE) worker are governors at this school. Links made with other governors there (who come from various backgrounds) have been invaluable. Significantly, the post-16 participation manager is linked to the service's ETE worker in terms of monitoring visits and has already led to a closer working relationship between the two services. In addition, two other members of the committee work in NHS, developing and co-ordinating amongst other things, services in terms of school mental health provision and the newly developed neurodiversity multidisciplinary team. This has led to the service's ETE worker being invited to meetings held by these professionals.

There are half termly meetings arranged with almost all secondary schools, HTP and the Isle of Wight College (with those in attendance), education and inclusion representative, youth crime prevention worker for that locality and the service's ETE officer. This supports early identification of children that are at risk of exclusion and of becoming excluded from school. Early youth crime prevention referrals are made off the back of these meetings and those most at risk of permanent exclusion are highlighted as a priority. Our current performance framework considers both reoffending and first-time entrants, in relation to SEND status, but specific performance measures in relation to ETE needs to be developed further. This includes data on school exclusions.

There are high number of electively home educated children on the Isle of Wight and because of this the ETE officer works closely with the EHE team. In addition to this, close links have been forged with the virtual school who have provided training sessions for service staff. This highlights the distinct needs of the children we support who are also part of the care system and as much as possible joint working is undertaken with these children.

Recent work has been undertaken to develop links with local employers to increase opportunities for the NEET cohort within the service. This is a work in progress and there are plans to develop a work experience directory and (potentially in collaboration with Island Futures), to offer drop in sessions to support job seeking, CV making, job applications and interview skills.

4.6 Restorative approaches and victims

The Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service employs two half time restorative justice officers (RJOs) both of whom are working towards becoming registered practitioners with the Restorative Justice Council (RJC). Restorative justice is a crucial component of the service which involves bringing together children, victims, and the community to discuss the impact of the crime and find constructive ways to repair the harm done. Restorative justice encourages children to take responsibility for their actions, understand the consequences of their behaviour, and work towards making amends. This process not only benefits the victims by giving them a voice but also helps young offenders develop empathy and social responsibility, reducing the chances of future criminal behaviour.

Victims are contacted in every case and their views are used in our joint decision-making panel and referral order panels to support the decision regarding outcomes and reparation. Within all communications, letters and phone calls, the victims code is adhered to, promoting victim's rights and their right to engage with the restorative process. The RJOs will meet with the victims, if they wish to engage, to support them and advise them of the options around reparation and mediation. This enables victims to feel empowered and their voice and opinions heard along with signposting for further support if required.

RJOs work with children to support them to develop a 'pro-social' identity and to help them to make a positive contribution to their community using a wide range of local placements. They also deliver victim empathy programs to enable the child to think about how they can repair the harm that has been caused by their offending behaviour. The child will be supported in all reparation projects, and in both direct and indirect mediation with the victims.

4.7 Serious violence, exploitation and contextual safeguarding

The Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service works closely with the service leads for Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton youth justice services. This is necessary as we share common partners, for example, Hampshire Constabulary and His Majesty's Courts.

The head of service for the Isle of Wight is a core member of the strategic violence reduction partnership board. The function of the group is to oversee the work in relation to the serious violence duty. This is chaired by the police crime commissioner and the responsibility of the group is to oversee the work of the violence reduction unit. There are links to the local community safety partnerships, who have a duty to deliver a local response to serious violence. The Isle of Wight team manager attends the local CSP meetings and pan-Hampshire youth justice services are represented at the MAPPA strategic management board.

According to the data available, serious youth violence on the Isle of Wight peaked in 2018-19 but has shown a decline since. There is currently one child serving a long-term sentence, this offence does not fall under the category of 'serious violence'.

The last youth justice board serious incident notification was completed in March 2025 for a section 18 grievous bodily harm offence. As a result of this, an internal learning review was completed by the service and recommendations are being implemented with the aim of reducing further serious youth violence and subsequent victims.

Regarding risks of exploitation, there are a small number of identified children on the Isle of Wight. The local safeguarding partnership has a missing exploited and trafficked risk assessment conference (METRAC). This is a multi-agency operational group which meet on a monthly basis. It receives the child exploitation risk assessment frameworks (CERAFs) and agrees on a coordinated plan to safeguard these children. The service staff complete CERAFs and participate in these monthly meetings. This process is under review and learning from other localities is hoped to bring about improvement. This is being led by the service team manager who is now a lead in exploitation for the Isle of Wight.

In addition, several referrals have been made to the national referral mechanism (NRM) process and received reasonable and or conclusive grounds decisions. It is hoped that Isle of Wight will become part of the NRM pilot to expand the use of 'devolved decision-making panels' meaning quicker decisions about those most at risk of human trafficking.

Children released under investigation (RUI) may already be supported by the service or children's social care. Liaison and diversion (L&D) are an independent service who are referred to by the police to support vulnerable people who may also offer support to those RUI. L&D services identify people who have mental health, learning disability, substance misuse or other vulnerabilities when they first come into contact with the criminal justice system as suspects, defendants or offenders. The service can then support people through the early stages of criminal system pathway, refer them for appropriate health or social care support or enable them to be diverted away from the criminal justice system into a more appropriate setting, if required.

If children are not already working with youth justice, or children's social care and they are brought in for voluntary interview then they may not be seen by L&D. This is something we are working together to improve. Currently children released under investigation can be offered youth crime prevention or a turnaround programme, however the funding for these programmes is due to expire in September 2025 and March 2026.

The service attend the pan-Hampshire quarterly concordat meeting where children held overnight in Isle of Wight police custody are reviewed. Plans following release are considered to ensure that children have robust plans in place to support them not to reoffend.

4.8 Detention in police custody

Children are rarely held in custody overnight. There are less than five children who are detained overnight, and this is typically due to bail having been refused or when the available Local Authority accommodation is not considered suitable. Work has been completed with the local police custody inspector to create a more child friendly environment within one of the police cells for those children that are held in police custody, and there is now a dedicated cell for children in custody with artwork completed by local children and professionals contained within.

The Isle of Wight out of hours duty is provided by the Hampshire local authority. Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service also joins with Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton youth justice services to provide a service to Saturday courts. This court currently sits in Southampton. In the last year less than five children from the Isle of Wight have been dealt with on a Saturday, although this includes the same child on more than one occasion. Less than five children have had bail refused by the court and further remanded, which happened on two occasions in 2024 for the same child.

4.9 Remands

The instances of remands over the previous years have been small, however, in the last 12 months less than five children have been remanded into youth detention accommodation.

This includes a child or children already in local authority care due to seeking asylum or for those subject to a full care order with bail refused based on the nature of the offence. Following sentencing less than five children received a period of intensive supervision and surveillance (ISS) as a direct alternative to custody.

Less than five children received a prison sentence of less than two years including offences of counterfeit documents and drug supply.

No children received a Section 37 hospital order based on the consideration/recommendations of psychiatric assessment.

Less than five children received a prison sentence of more than five years including offences given particular consideration for public safety, due to the nature of the offences.

In the last 12 months, less than five children have been remanded into the care of the local authority.

All remands are monitored at senior management level and alternatives to the remand are always considered, including bail intensive supervision and surveillance (ISS) which is currently in place for less than five children.

4.10 Use of custody and constructive resettlement

On the Isle of Wight our low numbers generally means that we have between 0 and two children in custody at any time. Over the past year, less than five children have been sentenced to custody, one of which was under Section 252a for a terrorism-related offences. In the latter case, this included the child being on remand for the offences since 2022 and having not previously been known to the Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service. Due to the serious nature of offences committed, the sentencing court deemed custody to be the only available option, despite the service proposing a robust Youth Rehabilitation Order within the pre-sentence report. During periods on remand, a robust multi-agency response was co-ordinated to help support the child or children and family, and aid the management of risk. The service maintained monthly contact with the child or children while on remand and regular contact with the parents and carers.

Following sentencing, the service continues to regularly visit the child or children while in custody and contribute to the custodial plan. Of relevance is ensuring that health and education needs are met within custody and indeed, followed up on release. Given the child or children's age, and the fact that they will turn 18 years old while in custody, the service will ensure that case management responsibilities are accordingly transferred to the Probation Service at the appropriate time and every effort will be undertaken to ensure that the child or children is transitioned in a manner which causes minimal disruption or anxiety.

Due to the nature of the offences committed and the sentence imposed, the child or children will be managed under multi agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) and an initial meeting will be convened approximately six months prior to release.

From 1 April 2023 youth justice services are now expected to report on 10 new key performance indicators (KPIs) as part of improved monitoring by the youth justice board. This data will be used by the board to monitor performance of youth justice services and by the Ministry of Justice to identify barriers to reducing reoffending. The new indicators will be monitored in addition to reducing first time entrants, reducing reoffending and reducing use of custody.

No children have been released from custody over the past year. Our custody rates have remained low in the past 12 months. Each instance is reported to the board via quarterly reporting for awareness and oversight. We recognise the need to ensure that we offer 'constructive resettlement' to each and every individual child experiencing youth custody through either remand or sentence.

The board has defined constructive resettlement as:

"collaborative work with a child in custody and following release that builds upon his or her strengths and goals to help them shift their identity from pro offending to pro-social. Consequently, within this approach, the clear overall role for all agencies (in policy and in practice) is to facilitate the child's identity shift."

The revised policies and procedures from 2023 continue to emphasise child-centred planning, focusing on both individual strengths and the management of risks. Key initiatives include:

- **robust pre and post-sentencing support** – targeted interventions during custody and coordinated transitional arrangements;
- **enhanced transition support** – leveraging our seconded probation officer to facilitate seamless transitions into and out of custody.
- **data-driven oversight** – quarterly performance reports and the implementation of 10 new youth justice board key performance indicators, alongside existing metrics such as reducing first-time entrants, reoffending, and custody use;
- **Collaborative strategic planning** – continued multi-agency partnerships addressing challenges such as suitable accommodation, mental health support, and educational needs.

Our focus remains on minimising the use of custody and ensuring that every child receives the holistic, tailored support necessary to rebuild their lives and reintegrate positively into the community.

4.11 Working with families

The Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service recognises that effective engagement with families and wider support networks is essential to improving outcomes for children involved in the justice system. Our approach is centred on the whole family, acknowledging that parents and carers are often key to enabling and sustaining positive change. The service's parenting support service is delivered by a dedicated parenting officer, employed on a part-time (18.5 hours), permanent basis. Every parent or carer of a child open to the service is assessed by the allocated case manager to determine whether parenting support is required and whether parenting capacity is contributing to the child's risk of offending. Where appropriate, referrals are made to the parenting officer for further assessment and targeted intervention.

Support is tailored to each family's individual needs, and may include:

- developing consistent boundaries and behaviour management strategies;
- support with addressing adolescent-to-parent violence and abuse (APVA);
- guidance on routines, consequences, and relationship-building;
- assistance with accessing additional services where necessary.

A trauma-informed approach is taken throughout, recognising that many families may have experienced adverse events or ongoing challenges. Cultural sensitivity and inclusivity are embedded in our practice, ensuring our support is responsive to diverse family structures and experiences.

Initial support is offered on a voluntary basis, typically for 12 weeks, with flexibility to extend where needed and appropriate oversight. Contact frequency ranges from weekly to monthly depending on assessed need. In cases where voluntary engagement is unsuccessful and parenting challenges are deemed to significantly increase the likelihood of reoffending, the

parenting officer may apply to the Isle of Wight Youth Court for a statutory Parenting Order. These orders ensure structured engagement while continuing to offer constructive support. The statutory requirement to attend parenting sessions typically lasts for three months, with additional conditions potentially lasting up to 12 months.

In 2024, the parenting officer introduced monthly face-to-face drop-in sessions aimed at providing informal advice and support to parents and carers. However, uptake was limited, and feedback suggested that many parents and carers were unable to attend due to work and other commitments. In response, we are exploring the potential to re-establish these sessions in a virtual format, making them more accessible and inclusive for busy or working families.

Looking ahead, the service is also exploring the feasibility of introducing a 'parent champion' volunteer role, inspired by practice in other local authorities such as Islington. This would involve recruiting a parent with lived experience to support and mentor others, helping to build trust and peer-to-peer engagement.

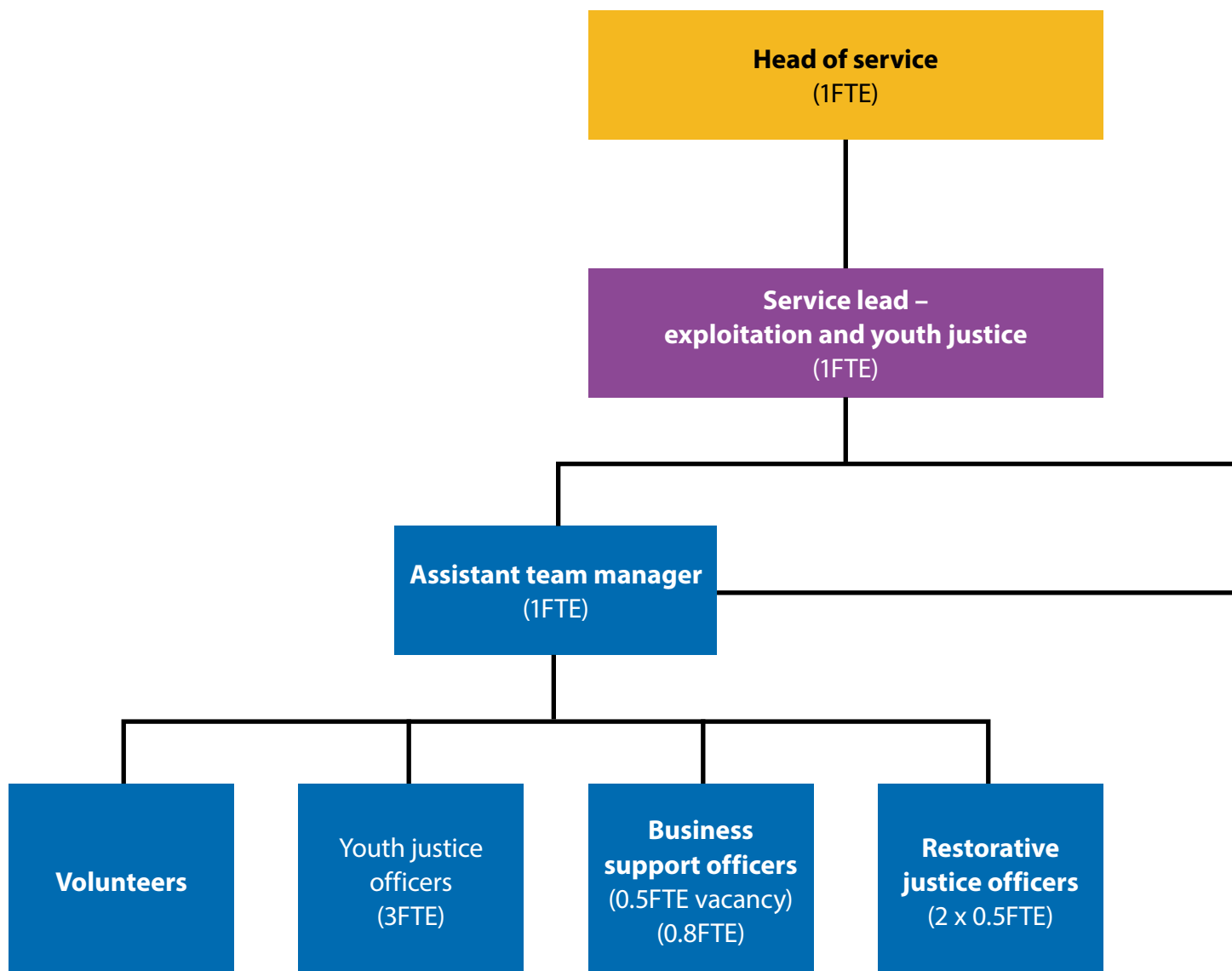
In addition, we are developing a directory of wider support and services available to parents and carers on the Isle of Wight. This resource will be used by case managers and the parenting officer to strengthen signposting and referral pathways, ensuring families can access the right help at the right time, including more specialist or intensive provision where required.

To expand the range and reach of parenting interventions, the service will also seek to build stronger partnerships with third sector agencies such as Barnardo's. Where appropriate, we aim to co-facilitate evidence-based parenting programmes, including 'who's in charge?', which is specifically designed to support parents experiencing child-to-parent violence. These collaborations will enhance our offer and enable families to benefit from shared expertise and community-based delivery.

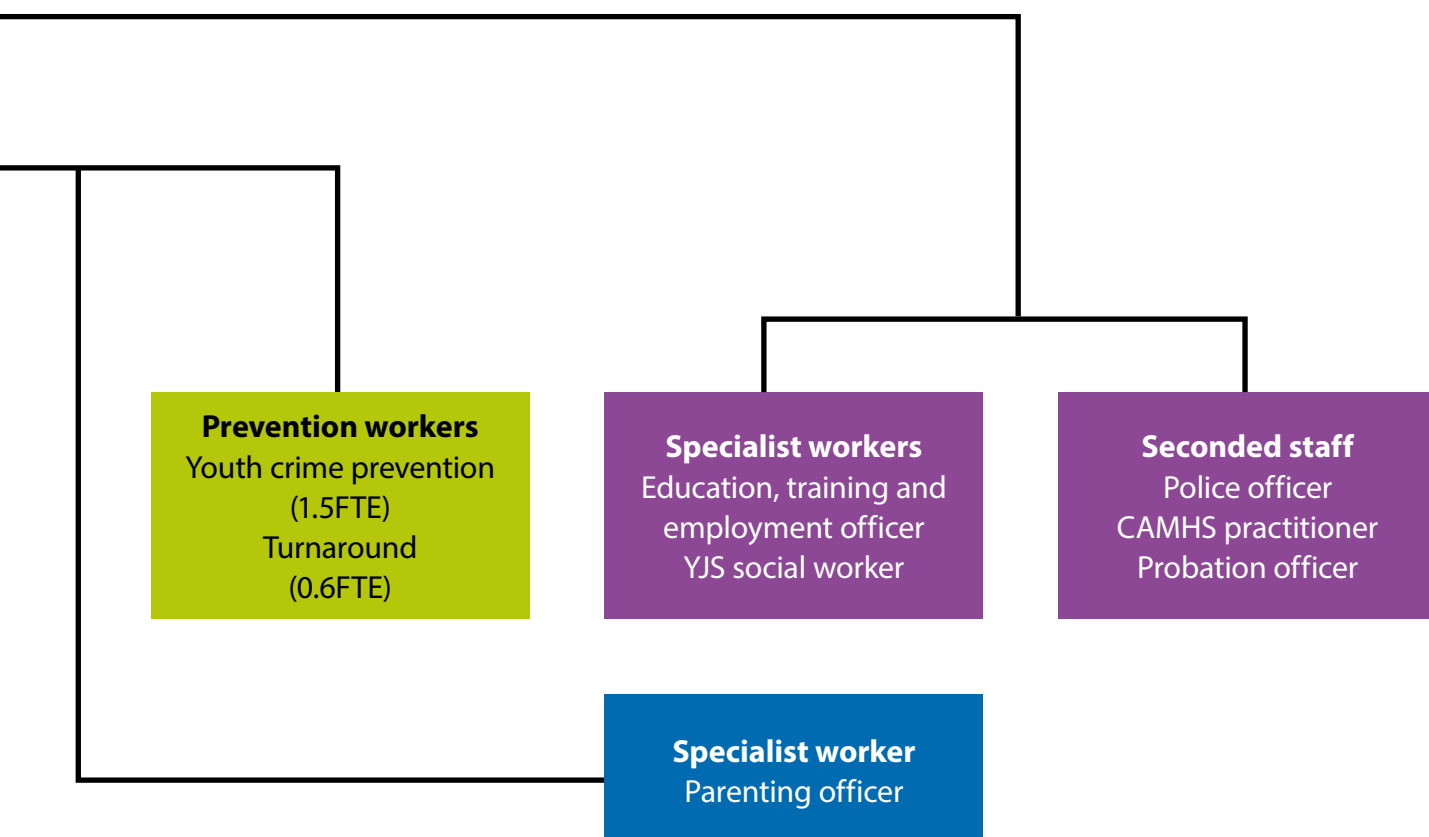
We hope you have enjoyed reading our youth justice plan. If you have any questions regarding the plan, these should be sent to youthjusticeservice@iow.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Staffing structure

Please see the chart below detailing Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service staffing structure.



FTE – full time equivalent



Isle of Wight Youth Justice Service

Youth justice plan 2025 to 2028



If you have difficulty understanding this document, please contact us on 01983 821000 and we will do our best to help you.