

**Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending
Service (YOS)**

Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2023 - 2025

Service	Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending Service (YOS)
Service Manager/ Lead	Michaela Rogers
Joint Chairs of YOS Local Management Board (LMB)	Gareth Jenkins and Alison Ramshaw

July 2023

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Foreword

As joint chairs of the Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending Service (YOS) Local Management Board (LMB) we are pleased to set out this two-year strategic partnership plan. This 2023/2025 plan sets out our ambitions and key priorities which have been informed by, and developed from, consultation, our continuing good performance and our knowledge and experience from lessons learnt.

In May 2022 the YOS was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). The YOS achieved an overall rating of "Good". This was a fantastic achievement. There are some development areas identified from the inspection process which have been included or reflected in this plan.

The YOS continually aspires and strives to be creative, fluent, responsive and modern in its approaches and delivery. This includes being trauma and psychology informed demonstrating care to all involved which was evidenced in our recent inspection report *"Staff and volunteers felt valued by managers and their peers, and we saw that the service promotes a culture of caring both for its staff and for the children and families that it works with"*.

As a partnership we have a strong ethos of "Child First", which we know can enhance lives, reduce offending, promote safer communities and lead to fewer victims, as evidenced in the "Child First Justice: The research evidence-base" report from Loughborough University. The partnership also has at the heart of its work the vision of the All Wales Youth Justice Strategy "Children and Young People First" with a focus on the five priorities identified in the strategy.

On behalf of the LMB we would like to thank the staff and volunteers working within, and supporting, the YOS, who are essential to the service, for their outstanding work and support to children and families. We acknowledge that the achievements of the partnership are only made possible through their hard work, commitment and dedication.

Gareth Jenkins and Alison Ramshaw
Joint Chairs of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) Local Management Board (LMB)

1. Introduction, vision and strategy

The strategic aim of the Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly Youth Offending Service (YOS) partnership remains focused on preventing offending and reducing reoffending by children. This will be achieved by the delivery of integrated services that ensure children are safeguarded, the public and victims of crime are protected and those who enter the youth justice system are supported with robust risk management arrangements. Children will be supported to reintegrate into their local communities without offending and wherever possible with support from their families.

There is also a clear understanding that the role of the Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS and its partners is to have a strong preventative role in reducing the risks of children entering the youth justice system. The YOS and its partners invests and believes strongly in the strength of prevention, early intervention and diversion to support children and families.

The YOS Vision Statement is:

Inspiring, motivating and supporting children to live crime free lives.

They will do this by:

- Preventing and diverting children from anti social and offending behaviour
- Valuing the diversity of children and help them to achieve better outcomes
- Ensuring children are kept safe and the risk to the public is minimised
- Providing effective support to families and victims engaged with the service whilst working to ensure safer, inclusive communities
- Ensuring restorative practice ethos, principles and approaches are embedded in every aspect of YOS service delivery
- Investing in staff and volunteers to ensure a professional, skilled and knowledgeable workforce
- Working in partnership

This plan will also support priorities within:

- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008
- Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO)
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022
- Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000
- Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Anti-social Behaviour Action Plan 2023
- Criminal Justice Act 1991
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Leaving Care Act 2000
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Housing Act (Wales) 2014

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- Mental Health Act 1983, as amended by the Mental Health Act 2007
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Health and Social Care Bill 2011
- Education Act 2002
- Youth Justice Board (YJB) National Standards 2019
- YJB Strategic Plan 2021-24
- The Gwent Police and Crime Plan 2021-25
- The Local Authorities Future Generations Wellbeing Plans
- Gwent Safeguarding Board Strategic Plan 2020-23
- Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales November 2020
- The Local Authorities Safer Communities Plans
- Children & Young People First - the Welsh Government and the Youth Justice Board's joint strategy to improve services for children who offend or those at risk of offending
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Welsh Language Minimum Standards
- Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018
- Wales Safeguarding Procedures

2. Local context

The Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS is a dual local authority YOS covering both the Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly areas in Gwent, Wales. Gwent is made up of 5 local authorities in total. Please see attached below some demographic information regarding both local authorities.



CCBC
Demographics.docx



BGCBC
Demographics.docx

The YOS is part of Children's Services in Caerphilly County Borough Council, which sits within the wider Social Services Directorate. Caerphilly County Borough Council has "hosted" the YOS since its creation on behalf of both local authorities. Whenever the YOS audits the number of children it engages with the split is usually based on or around the 70% (Caerphilly) and 30% (Blaenau Gwent) figures, give or take a percentage or two.

3. Child First

The YOS demonstrates a creative, adaptable and flexible approach to its service delivery. The work of the YOS has evolved considerably, with the awareness and embedding of many approaches when engaging with children and families evidenced from research, theories, thematic inspections, pathfinders and evaluations. These approaches include desistance theory, relational approaches, trauma informed practice, adverse childhood experiences, equalities and diversity, the importance of "play", strengths based/building on resilience, children's rights, child centred practice, constructive resettlement and contextual safeguarding.

The YOS ensures a child centred, strengths-based approach which encompasses trauma informed practice. Restorative Justice/Approaches are an integral theme

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throughout its delivery along with the voice of the child being heard, offers of advocacy services and a rights-based ethos. Supporting children to reach their aspirations and full potential underpins everything the YOS does. All engagement is individual and responsive and based on the child’s best interests, positivity, built on trust whilst promoting desistance, strengths based and best outcomes.

The YOS is always focused on reviewing and improving their direct work and engagement skills in response to messages from desistance theory and approaches, attachment theory and trauma informed practice. The desistance thematic inspection by HMI Probation called “Desistance and children” published in May 2016 stated that “Desistance is the process of abstaining from crime amongst those who previously had engaged in a sustained pattern of offending’. In the report they confirmed that personalised approaches work best based on a good understanding of the individual’s needs, history and circumstances. The YJB AssetPlus assessment framework also helps the YOS to personalise individual desistance support for children. All members of staff in the YOS are trained in desistance theory and an action plan was developed to respond to the recommendations from the inspection. The YOS has also embedded desistance and trauma informed practice principles by:

- Ensuring positive engagement and building trusting relationships are at the start of all interventions/plans – “good beginnings”
- Strength based, personalised, individual approaches
- Increasing self assessment completion
- Embedding approaches and recording methods such as:

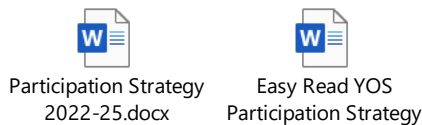
CPR	PACE	ACORDS	CRISS
Consistency	Playfulness	Aim – Human needs, good lives model etc	C - check in
Predictability	Acceptance	Content – Good lives wheel etc	R - review
Reliability	Curiosity	Outcome – what did the child learn? Grounding techniques etc	I - intervention
	Empathy	Risk of harm – any additional risk issues?	S - summary
		Diversity – Any needs? Literacy? Learning styles etc?	S - set tasks
		Safeguarding – Any issues?	

4. Voice of the child

Participation empowers children by allowing them to influence decision making and bring about change. This empowerment can mean a great deal to the children who engage with the YOS, who can often feel that their voices are not heard and that they have no control over decisions that affect their life. The YOS has embedded practice which ensures participation is inherent in its daily delivery covering a large number of its processes, procedures and functions.

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The YOS is a very reflective service and has a strong participation belief and practice at its core which is explained in its Participation Policy including the Easy Read version. Please see attached:



Children's participation is encouraged throughout the YOSs engagement, assessments, reports, attendance at Police Stations, Panels or Court. They are also involved in reviews for statutory orders and voluntary interventions. This is both during and after YOS engagement. Feedback from interventions is always gathered. This can take place in written format or via the YOSs online tool 'Viewpoint'. These feedback tools help find out children's views about different aspects of their engagement with the YOS to help the YOS achieve effective participation by, and with, children the YOS has a dedicated Children's Rights Champion.

The YOS also creates a Quarterly Participation Report which includes the voices of children which it shares with the LMB, staff, volunteers and other stakeholders. Feedback is addressed immediately and included in the Quarterly Participation Report to evidence that action has been taken timely and shared with the relevant source. Please see attached below for the latest report:



During 2023 the YOS has been working on the creation of a ViewPoint App for children to use to provide feedback. It is in the final stages and will be piloted during July/August 2023 and then rolled out hopefully from the 1st September 2023 across all interventions.

To evidence children's voices being heard as well as sharing this information previous Participation Reports have included feedback and responses relating to:

Did the Youth Offending Service give you a copy of your Bureau report before the day of your Bureau panel? *"No, it was shared over the phone"* – *Action: All children to receive by post a copy of their report, ahead of the Bureau Panel.*

There was also one action following feedback from a child who identified their case manager as what they least enjoyed. Although the question is in respect of reparation activities, this comment highlighted an action for Team Managers. It was agreed that the comment would be discussed in Team Meetings to raise the importance and benefits of forming good, relational work when supervising children across all roles and activities.

5. Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements

Caerphilly County Borough Council is the host and employing local authority (LA) for the YOS. The Chief Executives' of both local authorities delegated chairing responsibilities of the YOS Local Management Board (LMB) to the Heads of Children's Services. Strategic management is provided by both LA Heads of Children's Services who are the

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Joint Chairs of the LMB and who provide joint professional supervision for the YOS Service Manager.

The LMB provides governance to the YOS. The LMB is a high-level strategic group made up of key officers that are responsible for the strategic management of services, which are designed to prevent and reduce youth crime and anti social behaviour. The LMB meets quarterly and continues to scrutinise the YOS's resources, performance, participation feedback, acknowledge good performance and develop actions for improvement when necessary.

All statutory partners are represented (Police, Probation and Health) and these partners all second staff to the YOS as part of partnership and funding arrangements. LA representation is through Children's Services, Education, Youth Inclusion/post 16 provision, Youth Service, Housing and Cabinet Members for both LA's. Additional representation is provided by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS), Chair of Gwent Youth Magistrates Panel & Careers Wales. The Board is well attended by statutory partners and other agencies and any attendance issues are addressed by the Chairs quickly.

The LMB undertakes annual reviews of its strategic and operational links between the YOS and its partnership structures, agencies and plans. Please see attached and below:



LMB Mapping
Exercise July 2023.doc

In May 2022 the YOS was inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP). Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements formed part of that inspection. The below evidences the inspection findings which include *"The YOS's arrangements for information and facilities are rated as 'Outstanding', and its governance and leadership, staffing and partnerships as 'Good'"*.

The final report also stated *"The YOS management board receives comprehensive performance and participation reports. The service promotes a learning culture and has a robust quality assurance framework in place. However, we found little evidence to show that the partners set the direction and vision for the YOS"*. The LMB held a development event in May 2023 which set the vision and direction for the next 2 years and an LMB development event will now be scheduled annually in May. Please see below the full YOS Inspection Report and associated Improvement Plan which is still ongoing.

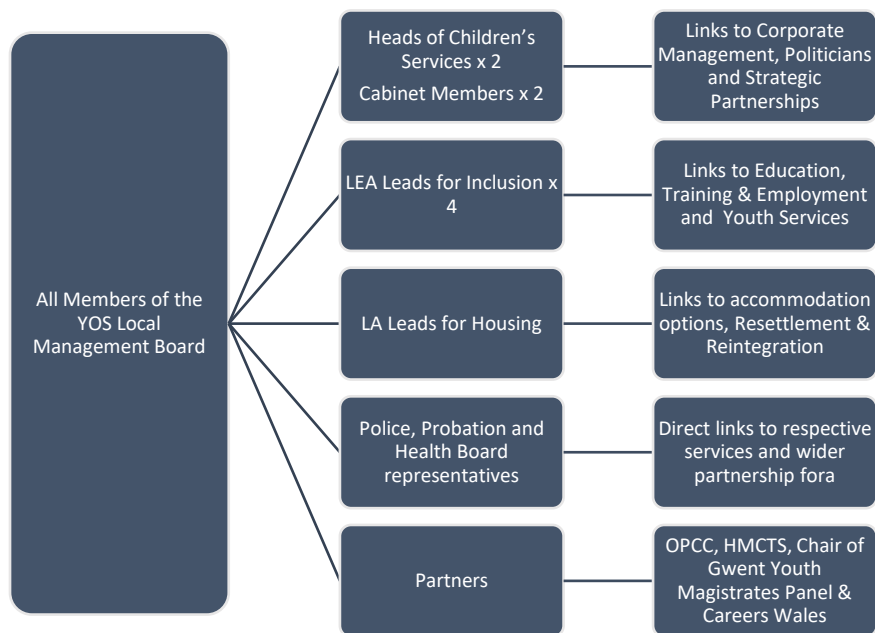


Blaenau Gwent and
Caerphilly YOS Inspect



HMIP YOS
Inspection Improvement

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The YOS LMB is accountable to both local authorities Health, Social Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee's, which the Chairs or their representatives attend. In addition, members of the LMB report to their own individual agency / body Scrutiny Groups. Arrangements to report on the performance of the YOS to Local Authority Members, Police, Probation and Health are carried out by the respective agency representative. The YOS is positioned within both authorities Children Services divisions and reports to both Heads of Children's Services who jointly chair the LMB and jointly line manage the YOS Service Manager.

The LMB takes an active role in ensuring that children at risk of entering, or those already involved in, the youth justice system have access to universal and specialist services within the YOS areas and that partner agency's recognise and maintain responsibility for contributing to the reduction of offending by children. This plan will be monitored by the LMB and there will continue to be a level of support and oversight from the Youth Justice Board (YJB) Cymru team. A YOS Workforce Development Strategy has been developed and reviewed to support the delivery of this plan.

The YOS Service Manager and both local authority Heads of Service sit both on the Regional Safeguarding Children Board and its Case Review subgroup. The YOS Service Manager also sits on the Safer Gwent Board, the Gwent Criminal Justice Strategy Board and both local authority Corporate Parenting Groups.

6. Board Development

The YOS Local Management Board (LMB) has an important role in ensuring that Child First, trauma informed principles and other child focused approaches are embedded strategically and operationally. The LMB brings together partners, cement relationships and pushes through improvement to the system. An annual development day for Board members is scheduled with the last one being held in May 2023 which focused on reviewing the previous youth justice plan and setting strategic direction for the YOS for the next 2 years. LMB members also attend development events held for staff and volunteers throughout the year along with attending and supporting YOS staff and volunteers at various multi agency initiatives such as Street Doctors and Cars and

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Consequences group events. A number of LMB members also sit on the YOS Resettlement and Reintegration Panel (RRP) as core members.

Board members development and training needs are incorporated into the YOS Workforce Development Strategy embedded below.

The LMB Members are:

Board Membership (as of July 2023)

Name & Title	Authority/ Organisation	Contact Details
Gareth Jenkins – Joint Chair - Assistant Director, Children’s Services	Caerphilly CBC	jenkig2@caerphilly.gov.uk 01443 864520
Alison Ramshaw – Joint Chair – Interim Assistant Director, Children’s Services	Blaenau Gwent CBC	alison.Ramshaw@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk 07896584764
Michaela Rogers – Service Manager	YOS	rogerm@caerphilly.gov.uk 01495 235623
Adam Edwards Mental Health Advisor	Aneurin Bevan Health Board	adam.edwards@wales.nhs.uk 01633 436835
Mike Jones – Finance Service Manager	Caerphilly CBC	jonesmj@caerphilly.gov.uk 01443 864618
Amanda Lewis Head of Probation Delivery Unit Gwent	HM Prison & Probation Service	amanda.Lewis1@justice.gov.uk 01443 494250 (320401)
Sarah Ellis Lead for Inclusion and ALN, Education	Caerphilly CBC	elliss@caerphilly.gov.uk
Lisa Adams Senior Education Welfare Officer	Blaenau Gwent CBC	lisa.adams@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk 01495 353340
Ceri Edwards Environmental Health Manager	Safer Caerphilly Partnership	edwarc@caerphilly.gov.uk 01443 811332
Andrew Parker Service Manager: Policy and Partnerships	Safer Blaenau Gwent Partnership	community.safety@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk 01495 356145
Paul Biggs – Chief Inspector	Gwent Police	paul.biggs@gwent.police.uk
Kerry Denman Housing Solutions Manager,	Housing Caerphilly CBC	denmak@caerphilly.gov.uk 01443 873548
Mark Congreve	Housing Blaenau Gwent CBC	mark.congreve@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk 07854 367028

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Team Manager - Housing Solutions and Compliance		
Helena Baker Performance and Information Manager	YOS	bakerh@caerphilly.gov.uk 01495 235623
Paty Wysom – Area Manager	Careers Wales	paty.wysom@careerswales.com 02920 84 6573
Lesley Kemp - Acting Legal Team Manager	Gwent Magistrates' Court	lesley.kemp1@justice.gov.uk 01633 261300
Eleri Thomas	Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner	eleri.thomas@gwent.pnn.police.uk 01633 876 466
Liam Thomas Engagement and Progression Co-ordinator (NEETS)	Blaenau Gwent CBC	liam.thomas@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk 01495 355690
John Poyner Engagement and Progression Co-ordinator (NEETS)	Caerphilly CBC	poynej@caerphilly.gov.uk 01443 864970
Elaine Forehead Councillor	Caerphilly CBC	elaineforehead@caerphilly.gov.uk 07792 566314
Haydn Trollope Councillor	Blaenau Gwent CBC	hayden.trollope@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk 01495 718276
Andrew Hunt J.P	Chair of Gwent Youth Magistrates Panel	andrew.hunt.jp@ejudiciary.net

Attendance and dates of Board meetings 2022-23



Attendance at LMB Meetings - 2022 - 2C

7. Progress on previous plan

There were 31 actions in the delivery plan linked to the YOS 2022-24 Youth Justice Plan. Out of the 31 actions, 21 are fully completed and 10 actions are in progress or not started. These actions have either been carried over and incorporated into this 2023-25 plan if required or will be completed as part of normal service delivery. Please see attached for further details:



Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS Imprc

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8. Resources and services

Responsibility for resourcing the YOS is shared between the Youth Justice Effective Practice grant, statutory partners' contributions, the grant from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and the Children and Communities Grant (CCG) from the Welsh Government. YOS also oversees the local authority budgets provided to meet the costs of children remanded to the secure estate. In late 2022 the YOS also received an additional grant from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to deliver the Turnaround Programme.

The YOS uses their grants, partner contributions and all other available resources to deliver personalised, individualised engagement and interventions for children and families, to meet its statutory aims and responsibilities, complete actions and maintain or improve performance areas within this plan, and to help children and families to achieve the best outcomes along with their aspirations.

The following table summarises the total YOS budget for 2023/24 and sources of funding:

B5: YOT budget Costs and Contributions

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Youth Justice Board	397,821	0	61,485	459,306
Local Authority	743,107	0	114,850	857,957
Police	158,090	0	24,433	182,523
Police and Crime Commissioner	79,150	0	0	79,150
Probation	5,240	0	810	6,050
Health	59,465	0	9,191	68,656
Welsh Government	245,002	0	0	245,002
Other (Turnaround)	201,282	0	14,599	215,881
Total	1,889,157	0	225,368	2,114,525

9. Performance

The LMB meets quarterly and scrutinises the YOS performance, acknowledges good performance and develops actions for improvement when necessary. The LMB takes an active role in ensuring the children and those at risk of entering the youth justice system have access to universal and specialist services within the YOS areas and that partner agency's recognise and maintain responsibility for contributing to the reduction of offending by children.

National Key Performance Indicators

Up until March 2023 the YOS were required to report on the following Key Performance Indicators:

- Binary reoffending rate
- Frequency of reoffending
- First time entrants

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- Use of custody

Data for the year 2022/2023 is provided below. In addition as a Welsh YOS, the following Welsh Devolved Indicators were also a recording requirement.

- Education (see Education section below for data)
- Substance Misuse (see Health Provision section below for data)
- Mental Health (see Health Provision section below for data)
- Accommodation (see Accommodation section below for data)

The YOS employs a Substance Misuse Worker, Mental Health Clinical Nurse Specialist and an Education Worker to ensure children's needs are met in relation to their specialist areas. In addition the YOS works closely with Children's Services Social Work teams to ensure that children's accommodation needs are met.

From April 2023 the previous four KPI's will remain and the Welsh Devolved Indicators will be replaced by the following ten KPI's:

- Suitable accommodation – As a Welsh YOS this KPI is already being recorded through our Case Management system and any concerns are discussed with relevant partner agencies (see Accommodation section below for data)
- Education, training and employment - As a Welsh YOS this KPI is already being recorded through our Case Management system and any concerns are discussed with relevant partner agencies (see Education section below for data). In addition we are working closely with our Education colleagues to put in a place a robust system to ensure suitability for all children is recorded and considered based on the child's needs.
- Special educational needs and disabilities/additional learning needs – ALN information is already collated and recorded on our Case Management system (see Education section and Over represented children sections below for data) through monthly reports completed by Education colleagues, however, due to delays in the information being received from schools we are currently devising a process to obtain this information directly from schools at the start of the child's intervention as well as accessing the education database directly.
- Mental health care and emotional wellbeing – Information is collated through the referrals made to our dedicated Mental Health Clinical Nurse specialist (see Health Provision section for data) and recorded on our Case Management system.
- Substance misuse - Information is collated through the referrals made to our dedicated Substance misuse worker (see Health Provision section for data) and recorded on our Case Management system.
- Out of Court disposals – All interventions are recorded on the YOS Case Management system whether they are statutory or non-statutory. AssetPlus Assessments are completed for all interventions with the exception of the Together project and Restorative Approaches as the YOS works towards the Children's Services assessment. (See Local Performance, Prevention and Diversion sections for data)

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- Links to wider services – All information is collated through liaising with colleagues in Children’s Services Social Services department. In previous years only CLA children have been reported on (see Over represented children for data), however, all information is recorded on our Case Management system.
- Management board attendance – Information is collated annually and recorded on a word document, in instances where there has been repeat non-attendees the Chair will issue a letter reminding the partner of the importance of attendance (see Board Development section for data). We are working closely with partner agencies to develop a strategy for the reporting of their data at LMB meetings.
- Serious violence – All information is recorded on our Case Level Management system and is reported to the Board annually (see Serious Violence and Exploitation section for data). In addition reports are run monthly to ensure that all Serious Incident Notifications (SIN) have been captured and reported accordingly
- Victims – Information is collated by the YOS Police Officers and is recorded on our Case Management system (see Restorative Approaches and Victims for data)

Where data is currently not recorded on the Case Management system the YOS is working closely with the system provider to update all systems in line with the new recording requirements and data returns process.

Local Performance

Twenty three children were cautioned or convicted in 2022/23 and were responsible for 76 offences. There has been a decrease of 12 children when comparing the previous year (2021/22) where 54 children were cautioned or convicted of a criminal offence and were responsible for 67 offences.

Some children had multiple Youth Cautions (YCs), Youth Conditional Cautions (YCCs) or sentences and as a result the 23 children were responsible for 28 outcomes. The average number of offences for the cohort was 3.30 offences. The highest number of offences recorded for one child was 13 offences.

The majority of the cautioned or convicted children were male, 17 out of the total 23 children (74%) and there were 6 females (26%).

All of the cautioned or convicted children identified as White British/English or Welsh (100%).

Of the children who were cautioned or convicted the majority were aged 16 or under (53.57%), however children aged 17 were cautioned or convicted the most, one child was convicted at age 18 for an offence that occurred when they were 17. The ages for the 28 outcomes were 3 at age 13 (10.71%), 4 at age 14 (14.29%), 1 at age 15 (3.57%), 6 at age 16 (21.44%), 13 at age 17 (46.42%) and one aged 18 (3.57%).

Of the children who were cautioned or convicted 8 children on 11 interventions (34.78%) were Children Looked After (CLA) at the start of the intervention, with 3 placed in

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residential care (33.33%), 1 in residential care (secure unit) (11.11%), 4 children placed in supported accommodation (44.45%) and 1 child being placed in foster care (11.11%). One child changed accommodation between their first and second conviction.

One hundred and seventeen children were open to the YOS on an Out of Court Disposal (O OCD) in 2022/23 and were responsible for 160 offences. There has been a decrease of 28 children when comparing the previous year (2021/22) where 145 children were open on an Out of Court Disposal and were responsible for 204 offences.

Some children had multiple Out of Court Disposals and as a result the 117 children were responsible for 121 outcomes. The average number of offences for the cohort was 1.32 offences. The highest number of offences recorded for one child was 5 offences.

The majority of the children were male, 74 out of the total 117 children (63%) and there were 43 females (37%).

Of the 117 children 113 identified as White British/English or Welsh (96%). Of the other 4 children, one identified as Black Caribbean (1%), one identified as White and Black African (1%), one identified as Any Other mixed Background (1%) and one identified as White and Any Other Ethnic Group (1%)

Of the children who were open on an Out Of Court Disposals the majority were aged 12 to 17 (95%). The ages for the 121 outcomes were 1 at age 10 (1%) 5 at age 11 (4.5%), 10 at age 12 (8.5%) 17 at age 13 (14%), 26 at age 14 (21%), 22 at age 15 (18%), 24 at age 16 (20%), 16 at age 17 (13%).

Of the children who were open on an Out of Court Disposal 13 children on 13 interventions (10.74%) were Children Looked After (CLA) at the start of the intervention, with 4 placed in foster care (30.76%), 5 in residential care (38.46%), 2 children placed in supported accommodation (15.38%), 1 child living with family (7.7%), 1 child living with friends (7.7%)

Quarterly reports are submitted to the LMB regarding the performance of the YOS and comparisons are made against Gwent, Wales and the YJB YOS Family for the National and Welsh indicators (where applicable). Regular updates and discussions on the YOSs performance form part of the LMB quarterly agenda and regular internal managers meetings focusing on performance are held within the YOS. Please see attached for a copy of a recent Quarterly Performance Report.



3. YOS Local Management Board P

The performance of the YOS is discussed below and the most up to date information has been used to provide information and context around the performance indicators. Where possible the most recent data has been used with comparisons to previous data referenced where possible.

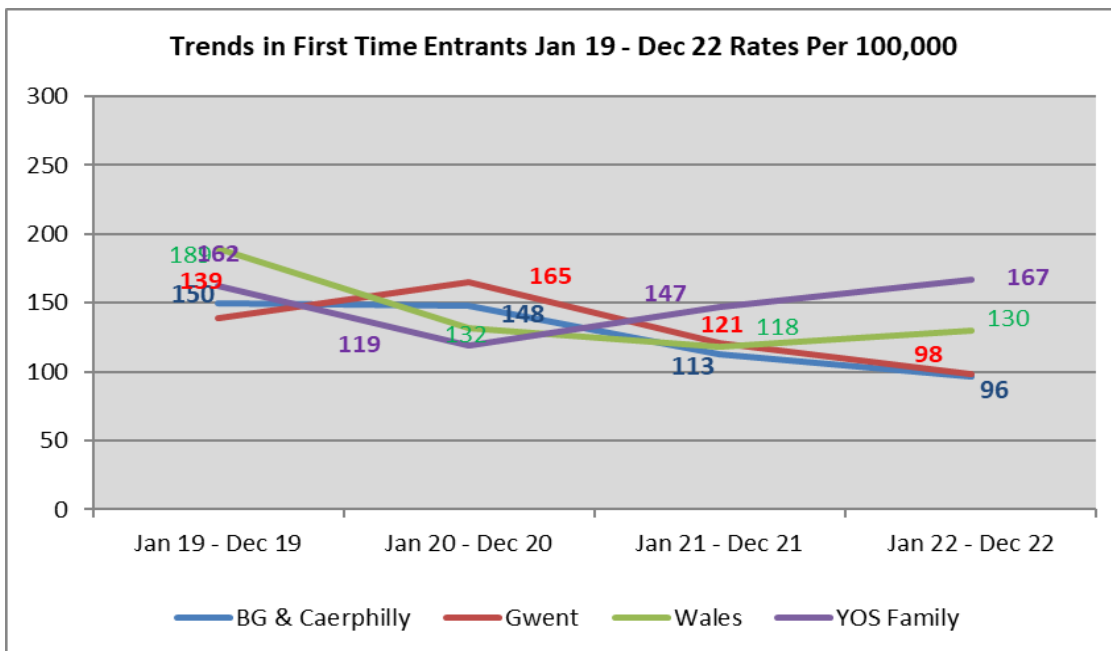
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First Time Entrants (FTE's)

The YOS Management Team continually scrutinise the FTE figures and inform the LMB of the findings to allow them to provide oversight to ensure that children are being dealt with appropriately by the agreed processes within Gwent, along with the correct proportionate disposals being administered through robust partnership working including the provision of effective interventions to prevent further offending behaviour.

The YOS Performance and Information Manager is continuing to work to resolve a discrepancy with the YOS information held on the database compared to the information which is extracted from the Police National Computer (PNC). For the past several quarters there has been a notable difference in the reported and publicised figures by the Youth Justice Board (YJB) compared to Youth Offending Service (YOS) records. The YJB FTE data is sourced directly from police information held on their databases.

When there is a disproportionate figure published by the YJB this has a negative impact on how the YOS performance is perceived. It is hoped that greater accuracy of the data held by both agencies can be achieved resulting in a true reflection of FTEs.



During the period April 2022 to March 2023 local data indicates that there were 20 FTE's. Five FTE's identified as female with the remaining 15 identifying as male. All the children were white except for one child who identified as White and Black African.

Of the children that became an FTE 5 had not previously received a Community Resoluion (CR) which would have prevented them from becoming an FTE, due to either the seriousness of the offences, similar/likeminded offences, offences committed in a short period of time, appearances in Court and/or difficulties in enaggement with YOS interventions.

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Reoffending

The YOSs work regarding the robust management of risk is informed by a number of policies and procedures, this includes the internal YOS Risk Management Policy and the YOS Risk Management Panel. Risk of harm (Future Behaviour) is identified by the completion of an AssetPlus assessment. The YOS has good working relationships with key partners who assist in the managing and reducing of children & children's risk level and behaviour. Children assessed as presenting as high or very high risk of serious harm are supervised at an intensive level.

The service has strong partnership links with Children's Services and the police. The YOS is represented at monthly Integrated Offender Management (IOM) meetings. Additionally, the service is represented within the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) meetings and monthly Youth 2 Adult (Y2A) meetings with Police and Probation colleagues. All of these connections ensure robust oversight of children who are most at risk of re-offending. Strong multi agency partnership links allow the service to provide crime prevention programmes in local communities, such as the Phoenix Project, St Doctors and the Cars and Consequences programme. The vast range of interventions available means the YOS can best reflect the preferred learning style of the child.

The YOS is located within Caerphilly County Borough Children Services Directorate and follows the Wales Safeguarding Procedures to ensure robust joint management of cases. The YOS has a Service Level Agreement in place with both Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Children's Services departments.

The YOS has stringent procedures in place to identify and assess need in relation to safeguarding children (safety and wellbeing) who are involved with the service. Initial assessments and plans are quality assured by a Team Manager, and cases are discussed in supervision. There is also a clear understanding, which is shared between all staff, regarding the referral process for social services intervention.

Please see attached a copy of the YOS Risk Management Policy.



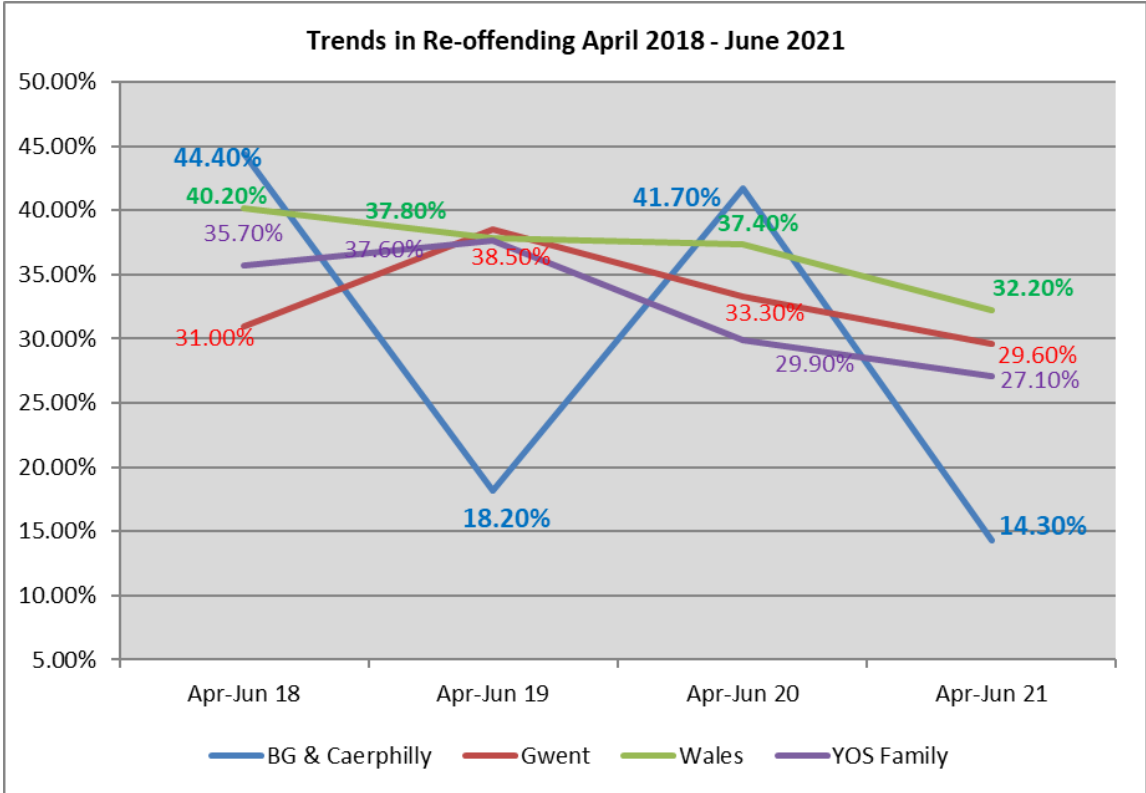
YOS Risk
Management Policy -

The development of exit strategies remains a significant strength for the YOS. "Good endings" allows the child to continue with the positive changes made after YOS intervention has ended, but they continue to feel supported in the community. It is imperative that the exit strategies are sustainable within the community. The YOS strongly advocates that case closure does not mean the end of relationships as good endings promote desistance and decrease risk.

The YOS has also identified that Children Looked After (CLA) are a disproportionate and vulnerable cohort of children when examining its first time entrant and reoffending data. The YOS has a funded part time CLA Worker in the service to work directly with these children.

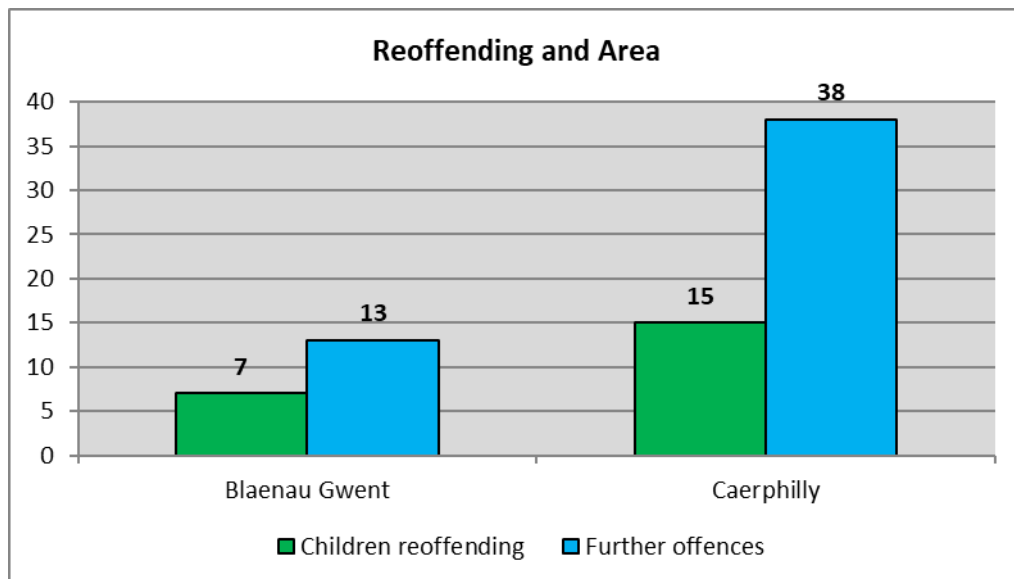
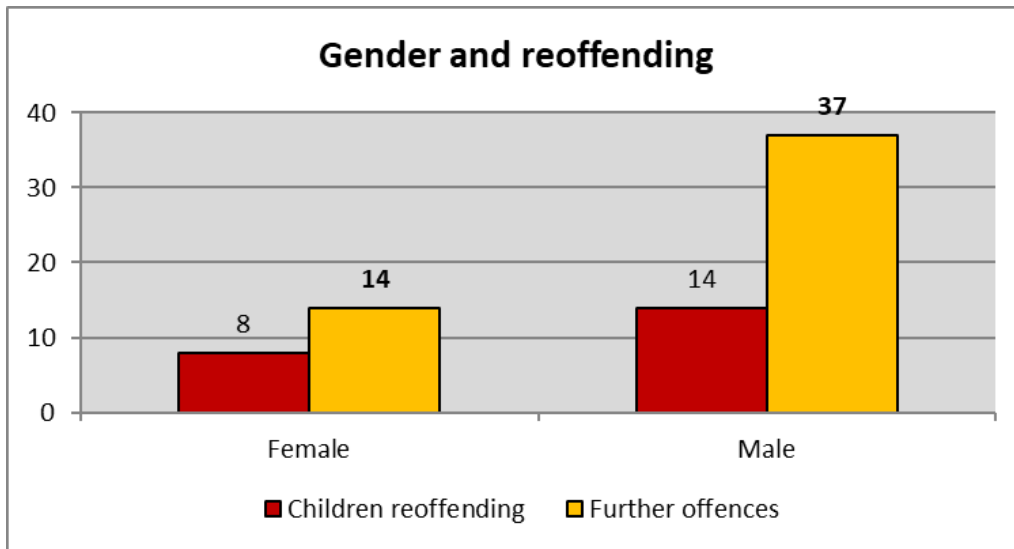
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The YOS has dedicated, skilled, and experienced staff members and volunteers trained in delivering a wide range of targeted and structured programmes aimed at reducing re-offending. This includes recognising and responding to areas of Diversity and Speech Language and Communication needs. YOS staff also attended training focusing on LGBTQ+, AIM3 and the YJB Enhanced Case Management (ECM) trauma informed practice programme. The YOS also has a Managing Anger Programme (MAP), Prevention of Burglary resource and Prevent, a tailored programme to tackle anti-social behaviour. Over the past 24/48 months the YOS has focused on reviewing and improving their direct work and engagement skills in response to messages from desistance theory and approaches, attachment and trauma informed practice. This will all help promote engagement and ensure the needs of all children are being met along with addressing risk areas.



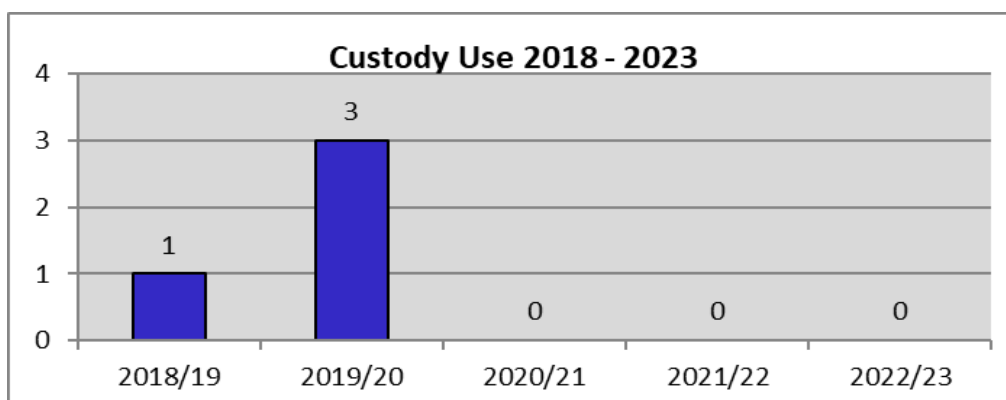
During the period April 2022 to March 2023, out of all children receiving an Out Of Court Disposal, Caution or Conviction, 22 children had reoffended by the time of this report, committing a further 51 offences, of these children 10 were Children Looked After (CLA).

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Custody

During the period April 2022 to March 2023, there were no children in custody. The number of custody interventions over the last five years are presented below.



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10. Priorities

Children from groups that are over-represented

The YOS recognises that people have different needs, requirements and goals/aspirations. It works actively against all forms of discrimination by promoting and demonstrating good relations and mutual respect. The YOS is welcoming to all and able to understand and respond to a variety of needs and requirements. This means being prepared to adapt and change what they provide when required on an individual and personalised basis.

Promoting equal opportunities is about pro-actively aspiring to meet personalised and individual needs and appreciating and celebrating difference. This is the overriding ethos that will guide Blaenau Gwent & Caerphilly YOS's equality and diversity practice. The attached Equality and Diversity Policy explains in detail the YOS approach.



Blaenau Gwent
Caerphilly YOS Equa

During April 2022 to March 2023 there were 331 interventions open to the YOS; this relates to 295 children open on prevention cases, out of court disposals (OOCs) and court interventions including Criminal Behaviour Orders.

This represents a decrease of 23 when comparing the previous year's interventions where there were 354 interventions. There were 295 children which represents a decrease of 15 children compared to last year where there were 310 children.

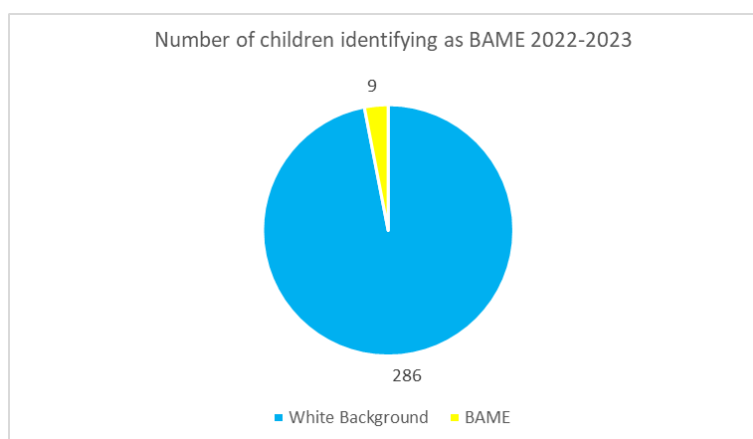
Out of the 295 children, there were 286 children who identified as 'white'; either White Welsh, British or European. There were 9 children who identified as BAME, which equates to 3.05% of the entire cohort. The 9 children were 4 males and 5 females. This represents an increase of 4 child identifying as BAME compared to the previous year where there were 5 children.

The YOS total data demonstrates that children identifying as BAME are over-represented. However, it should be noted that the 9 children are included from all interventions and 4 of the 9 children received a Community Resolution or an Outcome 22, which on Police systems would account for them receiving a No Further Action outcome and would not be included in the YJB counting rules and five children were on a Prevention Programme.

The YJB counting rules only looks at statutory interventions and when specifically looking at statutory interventions, Youth Cautions and above, there were 23 children in the cohort and there were no BAME children, which equates to 0% of the cohort. This demonstrates that the children identifying as BAME in the statutory cohort are under-represented.

Seven children were from Caerphilly, and two children who identified as BAME were from Blaenau Gwent.

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CASE NUMBER	Ethnicity	Gender
1	Any Other Mixed Background	Female
2	Black Caribbean	Female
3	Other Pakistani	Female
4	Portuguese	Female
5	White and Any Other Ethnic Group	Female
6	White and Asian	Male
7	White and Black African	Male
8	White and Black African	Male
9	White and Black Caribbean	Male

The 9 children were responsible for 9 interventions.

Out of the 9 children discussed above, no children became a First Time Entrant during the financial year. Of the nine children none are part of the youth justice system which is positive as 4 received a CR outcome or Outcome 22 and the other five were dealt with via a prevention programme. This demonstrates that all children were appropriately dealt with. The outcomes for the 9 children demonstrate that they are not unfairly being escalated through the YJS.

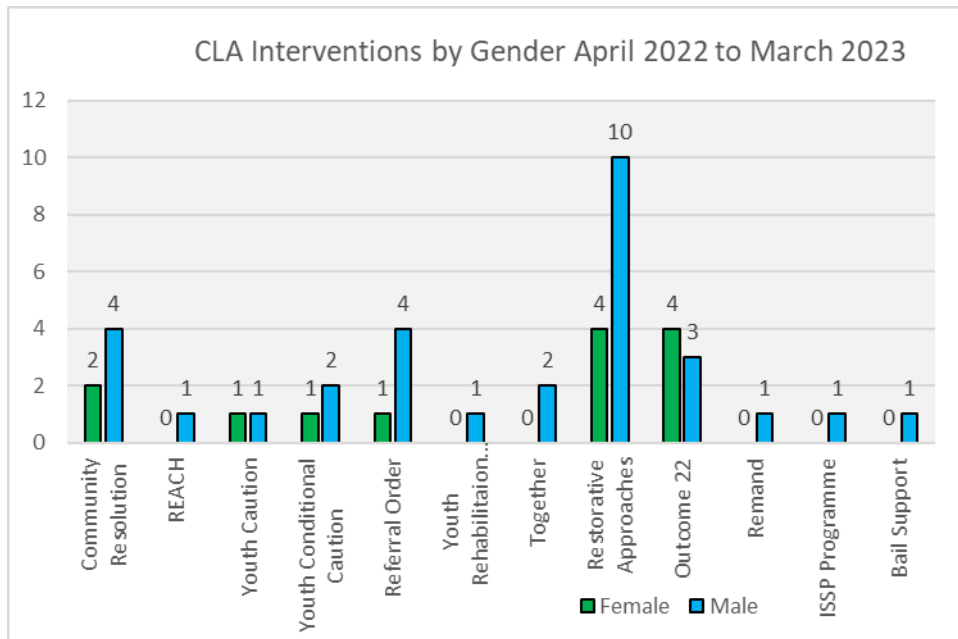
Gypsy/Roma/Traveller Community

During the period March 2022 to April 2023 there were no children identified as being from the Roma, Gypsy and Traveller Community.

Children Looked After

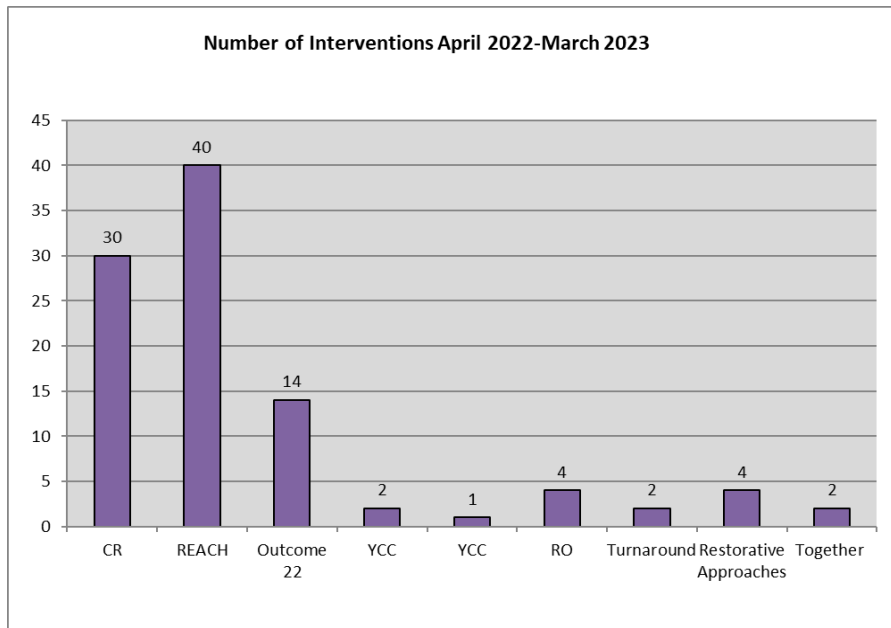
During the period March 2022 – April 2023 there were 35 children who were Children Looked After. There were 11 females (31%) and 24 males (69%). Of the 35 children there were 21 (60%) from the Caerphilly area and 14 (40%) from the Blaenau Gwent area. The 35 children were responsible for 44 interventions and committed 63 offences. The highest number of offences committed was for Criminal Damage.

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Girls

During the period March 2022 – April 2023 there were 90 children who were girls. Of the 90 children there were 52 (58%) from the Caerphilly area and 38 (42%) from the Blaenau Gwent area. The 90 children were responsible for 99 interventions and committed 79 offences. The highest number of offences committed were for Violence Against the Person.



Additional Learning Needs Provision

The introduction of the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Act places additional duties on the Education Directorate and providers of education for all children and children up to the age of 25, who require additional support to remain in education or training. Some children engaged with the YOS have ALN therefore it is important for YOS staff to

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continue to gain a more in-depth understanding of the implications of this Act to ensure that children have their support needs assessed and addressed. The YOS has a dedicated Education, Training and Employment Worker to help and support this area of service delivery.

During the period March 2022 to April 2023 there were 4 children subject to a Statement of Additional Learning Needs. All children were from the Blaenau Gwent area.

Prevention

The YOS Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy April 2023/2026 is concerned with ensuring that targeted work takes place with those children most at risk of offending/anti-social behaviour and that interventions are as effective as possible. Effective prevention of youth crime and anti-social behaviour contributes to a wide range of improved outcomes for children, their families and communities. The practice of targeted early prevention is well established locally and is recognised as a worthwhile investment in children's lives, before problems escalate and their attitudes and behaviour become entrenched.

Preventative work in the Youth Offending Service has been developed to:

- identify children 'at risk' of offending/re-offending or committing acts of anti-social behaviour
- create a referral process for professionals working with children who are at risk of offending or committing anti-social behaviour
- assess children to identify the level of risk that they pose
- provide interventions that are likely to reduce offending, reoffending and anti-social behaviour
- support families to assist in reducing offending, reoffending and anti-social behaviour
- maintain children in their home/family environment, when safe to do so
- involve community members in YOS service delivery
- promote local community resources for sustainable outcomes

There are various referral routes to access prevention and early intervention and support which are outlined in the below attached strategy.

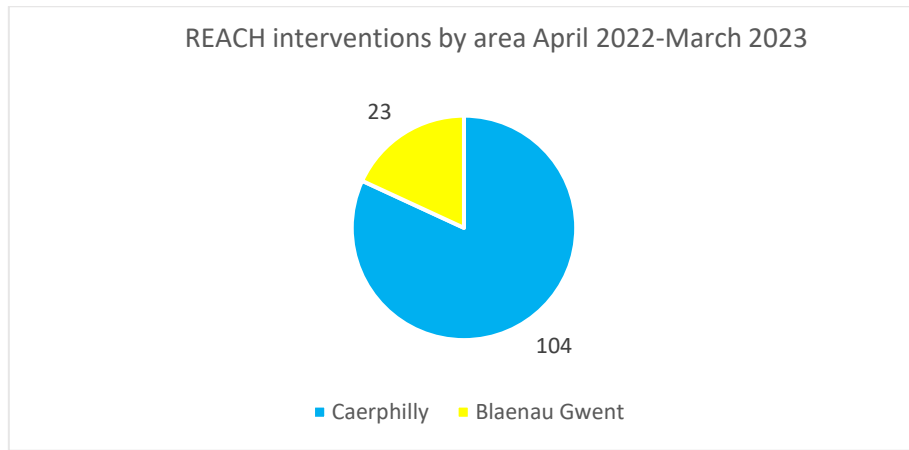


Blaenau Gwent and
Caerphilly Youth Offe

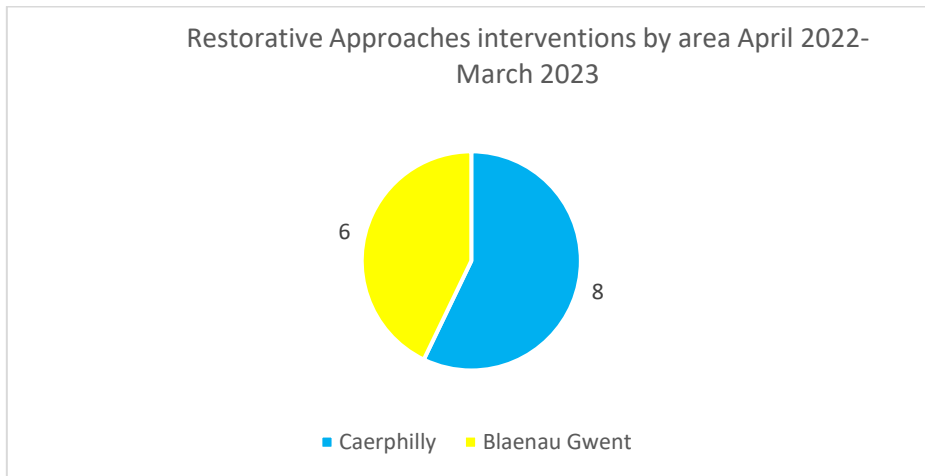
During the period April 2022 – March 2023 there were 167 Prevention programmes open to the YOS, which related to 161 children.

Reach, Engage and Change Happens (REACH) interventions

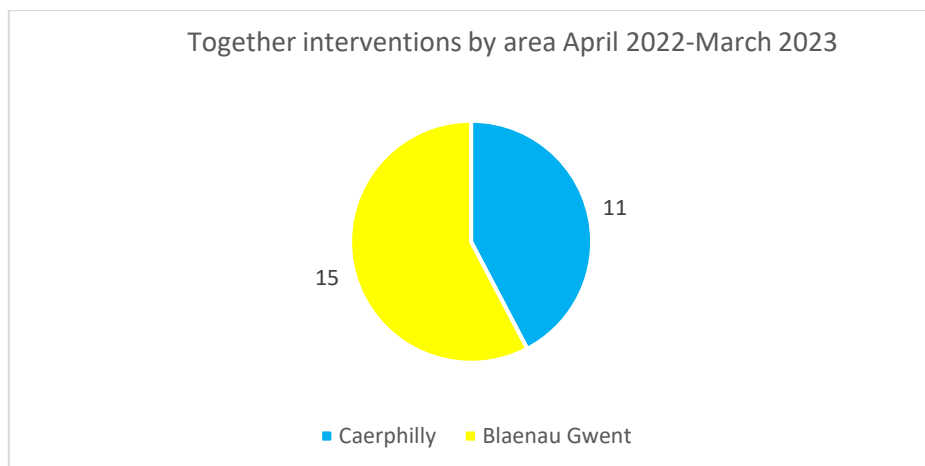
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Protocol to Reduce the Prosecution of Children Looked After (Restorative Approaches) interventions



Together Project

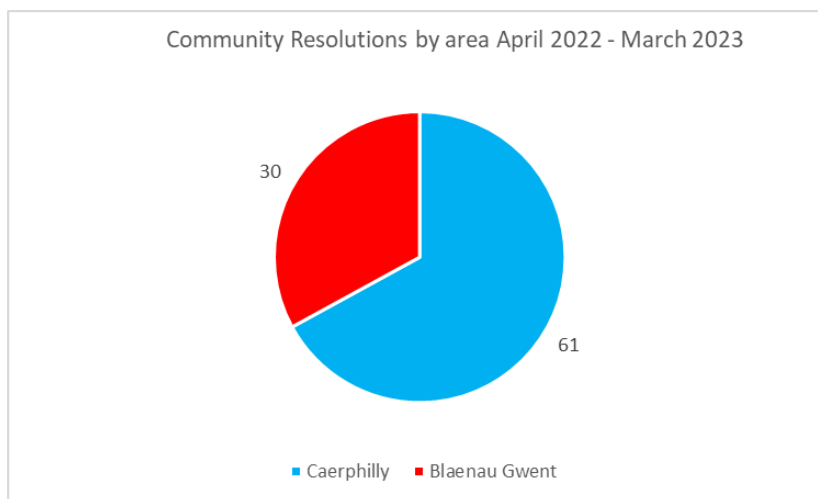


Diversion

Community Resolutions

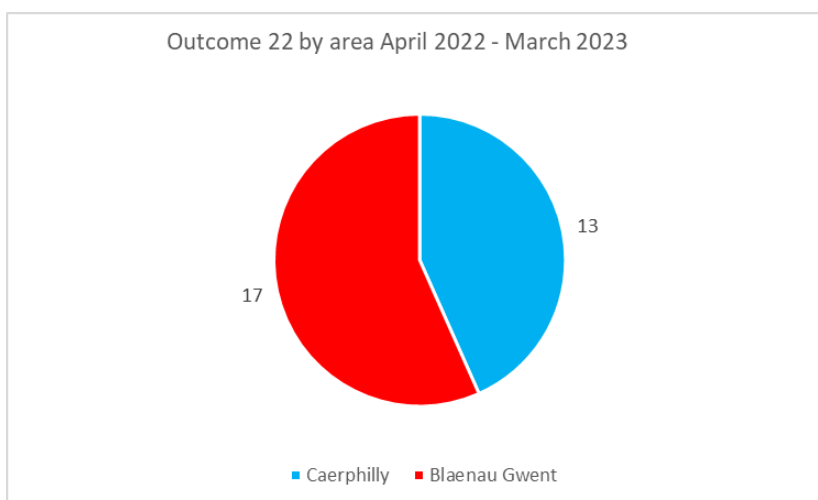
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During the period April 2022 – March 2023 there were 91 Community Resolutions open to the YOS, which related to 88 children.



Outcome 22

During the period April 2022 – March 2023 there were 30 Outcome 22's open to the YOS, which related to 30 children.



A child can receive a total of 3 Community Resolutions if these are agreed by the Team Manager for the second and Service Manager for the third. The same applies for O22's.

Road to Learning Project

01.04.2022 – 31.03.2023

- Number of children receiving a non substantive outcome Community Resolution (CR) for motoring offences = **5 children**

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- Number of children being prevented from FTE as a result of the CR = **5 Children**
- Number of children reoffending – Whether a motoring offence = **0 children**
- Number becoming FTE's as a result of reoffending = **0 children**
- Number of children referred from court for the CR = **0 children**

Turnaround Programme

Turnaround is a youth early intervention programme led by the Ministry of Justice for 10-17 year olds. Turnaround aims to:

- Achieve positive outcomes for children
- Help stop children go on to offend/commit a crime
- Provide an assessment and support for children who may be about to work with the youth justice system
- Improve the emotional, mental health and wellbeing of children
- Help services to work better together to support children

Turnaround is a voluntary intervention and needs consent from the child and parent/caregiver. Examples for referral can include mental health concerns, substance misuse, child in need of care and support, being a victim of crime/abuse, unstable family setting, school absence and exclusions and or undiagnosed educational needs.

The following agencies are examples of who can refer to Turnaround. Police, Youth Offending Service, Social Services, Education, Child Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and parents/ caregivers.

The criteria is children who:

- Are between the ages of 10-17
- Have been interviewed under caution following arrest or attending a voluntary interview
- Are subject to a No Further Action (NFA) decision
- Are released under investigation (RUI) or those subject to pre-charge bail (PCB)
- Are discharged by a court
- Are acquitted at court
- Are fined by a court
- Have received an Outcome 22

Any referral must be made within 3 months of the child meeting the above criteria. If a child has previously received a Community Resolution (CR) or Youth Caution (YC), they are still able to access support via Turnaround. If a child has previously received a Youth Conditional Caution (YCC) or a Statutory Court Order for offending they will NOT be eligible for this project. If a child is currently on the Child Protection Register or a Child Looked After, they will NOT be eligible for this project.

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Turnaround delivery expectations for the YOS linked to the grant from the MoJ state:

- Commence interventions for 13 children in the 2022/23 Financial Year
- Deliver interventions for 39 children in the 2023/24 Financial Year
- Deliver interventions for 39 children in the 2024/25 Financial Year

For the 2022/23 Financial Year the YOS managed to engage with 9 children. They did actually receive 14 referrals but for various reasons only 9 children commenced interventions. This has been reported to the MoJ Turnaround Team along with the rationale. The YOS is currently on track to meet the expectations for the 2023/24 Financial Year and hope to exceed it.

Education

The YOS works closely with partners in both education authorities to enable each child to receive their entitlement of 25+ hours of education per week in an appropriate education setting. Links with dedicated members of staff in both local authorities have helped to manage issues before they are allowed to develop, thus ensuring more positive outcomes for children. Staff meet regularly in multi-agency meetings to share information and contribute to Individual Support Plans. Meetings include monthly Children's Services meetings, Risk Panel Meetings, Problem Solving Groups, Resettlement and Reintegration Panel and Educated Other Than At School (EOTAS) panels.

The introduction of the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Act places responsibilities on the Education Directorate and providers of education for all children up to the age of 25, who require additional support to remain in education or training from September 2021. Some children engaged with the YOS are currently supported by the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice and receive annually reviewed statements, it will therefore be important for YOS staff and education practitioners to ensure a clear understanding of the implications of this Act to ensure that children have their support needs assessed and addressed under the Act.

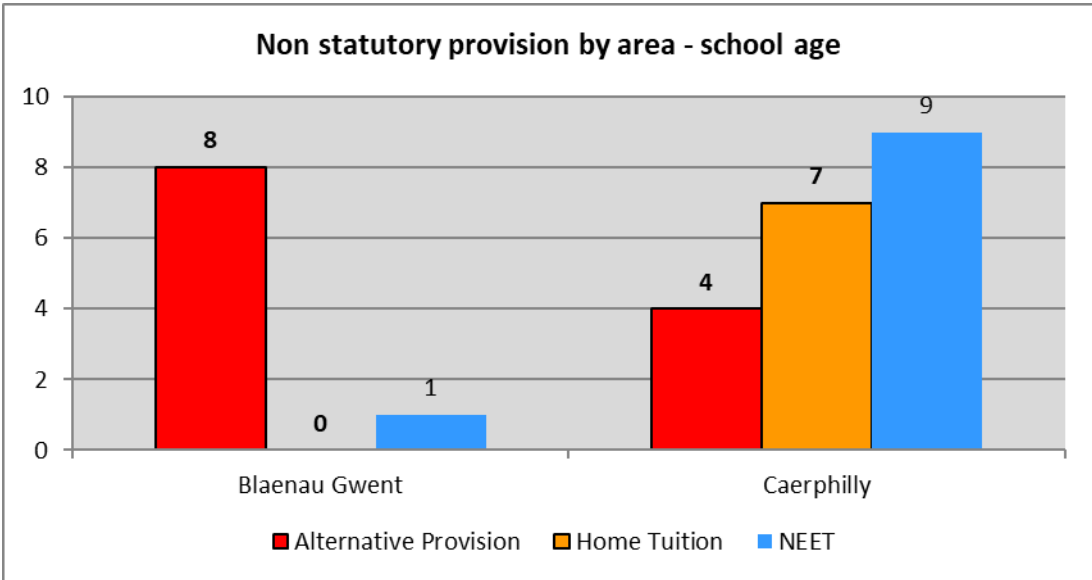
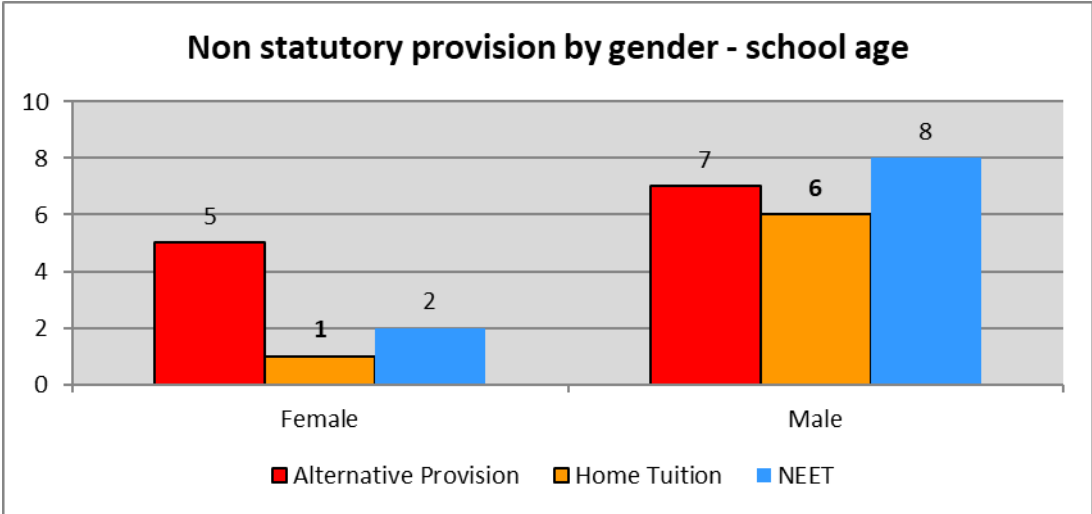
Over the next 12/24 months the YOS has committed to developing and implementing a Literacy & Numeracy Strategy. Training will be provided for YOS staff on addressing numeracy and literacy needs when assessed/identified and raise awareness of what local resources are available to support improvements when required. The YOS recognises that literacy and numeracy level identification, information gathering and recording on AssetPlus needs to be completed and reviewed at every assessment stage and inform planning.

The YOS recognises the benefits of having direct access to both local authority's education databases to allow them to directly extract information in a timely manner to inform their assessments and planning. Discussions are ongoing regarding this area of work. Access and provision of training to databases such as Tribal, Capita One, SIMS, and Strive etc. will allow the YOS to extract enrolment, numeracy, literacy, attainment, behavioural and attendance information.

During the period April 2022 to March 2023 there were 10 children of school age on non-statutory interventions who were classed as NEET, however 2 then started receiving

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Home Tuition whilst on their intervention with the YOS. There were 12 children enrolled in alternative provision and 7 children who were receiving Home Tuition. One child was permanently excluded and 2 children had a statement of Additional Learning Needs.

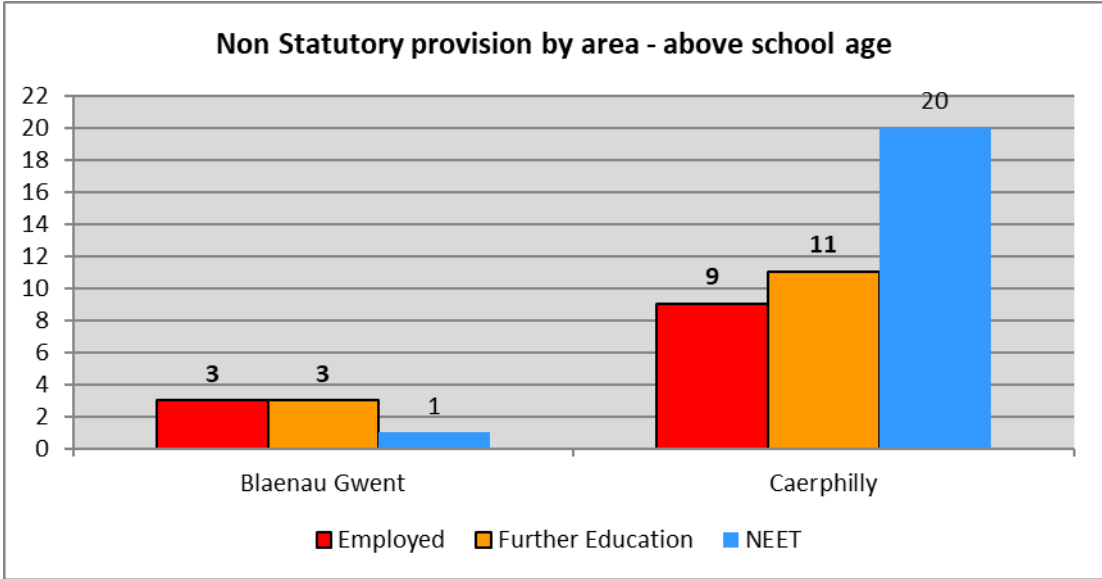
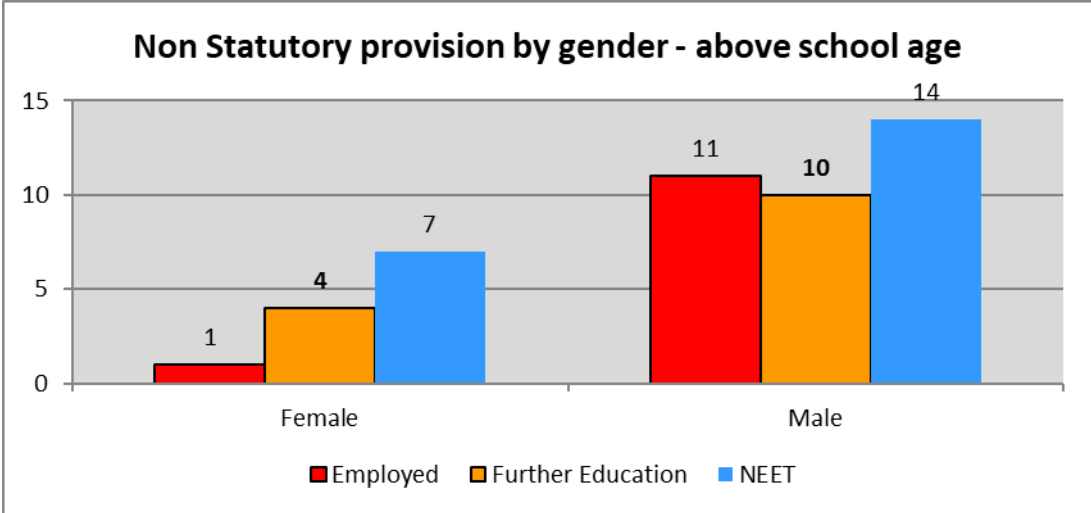


All children receiving an alternative provision or Home Tuition identified as White. Of the children who were NEET, 7 children identified as white, 1 child identified as White and Black African, 1 child identified as White and Black Caribbean and 1 child identified as Black Caribbean.

During the period April 2022 to March 2023 there was one child of school age on a statutory intervention who was classed as NEET. The child who was NEET was male, identified as White and was a Child Looked After. There was one child enrolled in alternative provision and no children who were receiving Home Tuition. The child enrolled in an alternative provision was male and identified as White. Both children were from the Blaenau Gwent area.

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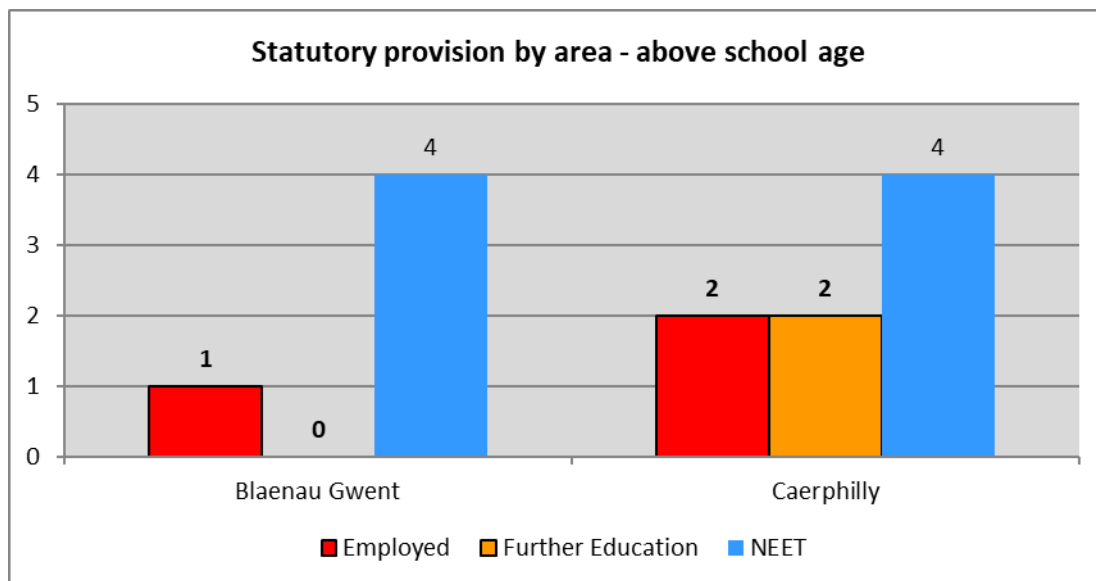
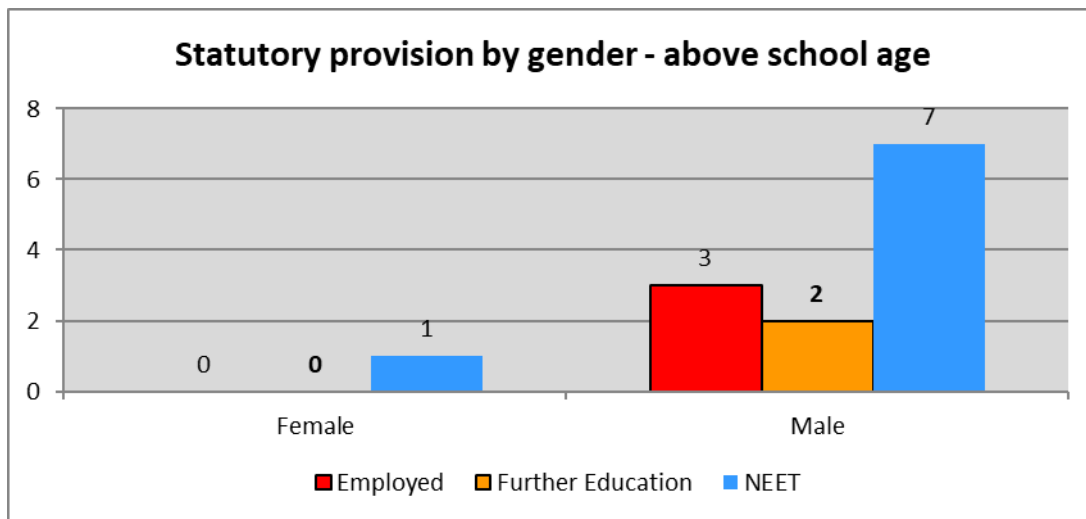
During the period April 2022 to March 2023 there were 37 children above school age on 42 non-statutory interventions. Due to changes in education status during interventions and children having multiple interventions, the figures below do not match to the number of children or interventions. There were 12 interventions where children were in further education at the start but by the end 2 had gained employment. There were 20 interventions where the children were classed as NEET at the start but by the end 2 were in further education and there were 10 interventions where the children were employed at the start of the intervention but 1 was NEET by the end.



All children identified as White British or White Welsh.

During the period April 2022 to March 2023 there were 8 children who were above school age on statutory intervention who were classed as NEET. There were 3 children who were employed including 2 children who had been NEET at the start of the intervention, and 2 children who were receiving further education. Two children had a statement of Additional Learning Needs.

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All children identified as White-Welsh or White British.

Restorative Approaches and Victims

Restorative Justice continues to remain a priority. The YOS prides itself on its excellent victim services, which has resulted in excellent victim satisfaction rates and positive outcomes for children and victims. The YOS works to the Restorative Justice Council's (RJC) principles of restorative practice which sets out the core values that should be held by all practitioners in the field. The YOS undertakes annual compliance audits against the "Code of Practice for Victims of Crime in England and Wales November 2020" and the "Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent's Victim Charter", which set out minimum standards for support to victims. Please see attached a copy of the YOS Restorative Justice/Restorative Approaches Policy and Procedure.



YOS Restorative
Justice-Restorative Ap

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During the period April 1st 2022 to March 31st 2023, there were 122 recorded victims of youth crime, all other crimes were deemed to be victimless, for example, drug offences, public order offences or driving offences, where the victim is classed as Rex. In the same period last year, there were 118 recorded victims. The number of victims has increased by 4 since the last reporting period.

Of those 122 victims, every victim of an offence referred via Police was contacted, or attempts were made to contact, by the YOS Police Officers and the Restorative Justice process explained and offered. This is done by an initial letter and then a follow up phone call, or preferably a home visit.

Of those 122 victims, 69 chose to take part in the victim process, requesting some aspect of Restorative Justice. This equates to a 57% participation rate by those victims. Victims are offered a range of services by the YOS.

The following numbers illustrate the restorative options requested by the victims:

Letter of Explanation – 70 letters requested (this number is higher than the number of victims who chose to participate as some victims received more than one letter from co-defendants)

38 letters were completed and 32 children refused to take part.

Face to face meeting/ RJ Conference – 2 were requested.

Both children refused to take part in a face-to-face conference. One child completed a letter of apology instead and the other refused to complete any RJ.

Other – 53

50 victims did not wish to take part in any reparation and 3 were uncontactable by YOS Police

All victims are provided with a final update by the YOS Police Officer.

Out of all the Restorative Justice that was requested 33 children did not wish to take part. The victim is updated with this outcome, although disappointed in most cases, it is not unexpected as all victims are aware the restorative process cannot be a compulsory element of the child's plan.

In terms of victim satisfaction rates, the YOS gather this information when providing the victim with the final update; 72 provided feedback.

The following information was collated:

6 were very satisfied (8%)

63 were satisfied (88%)

3 were unsatisfied (4%)

- 1 was unsatisfied with the child receiving an O OCD. They did not believe the outcome was proportionate to the offence.

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- 1 stated they were not happy with the disposal and believed the child had “got away with the offence”. YOS VLO tried to explain the work completed with the child, however the victim further stated they felt “let down” and then terminated the call.
- 1 victim stated they were not happy with the disposal and believed the child had “only got a slap on the wrist”. This is an ongoing disagreement between two female peers.

Serious Violence & Exploitation

During the period April 2022 to March 2023, excluding prevention cases there were 244 offences committed by children open to the YOS who subsequently received an outcome. These 244 offences were linked to 154 interventions which relates to 133 children.

This represents a decrease of 28 offences on the previous year where there were 272. Also, the interventions decreased by 40 from 194 in 2021/22 to 154 in 2022/23.

During the year April 2022 to March 2023 there was one child from the Caerphilly area who received a Restraining Order. The Restraining Order was granted for the following reason:

- behaviour towards his ex-girlfriend - repeatedly or continuously engaging in behaviour which was controlling or coercive, namely the use of unlawful violence, verbal abuse and threats to harm and kill reinforced by the having of a knife, damaging her car and mobile phone.

The child received a five year Restraining Order.

Out of the 244 offences there were 57 serious violent offences or alleged offences.

- Possession of Offensive/Air Weapon = 3 offences
- Threaten a person with an Offensive Weapon on school premises = 1
- Aggravated Burglary/Burglary/Robbery = 4
- Affray = 1 offence
- ABH = 25 offences
- Attempt to cause GBH = 1 offence
- Assault Emergency Workers = 17 offences
- Intimidate a witness/juror = 2 offences
- Concerned in the supply of Cocaine/Crack Cocaine = 2 offences
- Rape – 1 offence

These 57 offences are in relation to 46 children; 13 children were from Blaenau Gwent and 33 were from Caerphilly.

Out of the 46 children there were 17 females who were responsible for 20 interventions who committed 24 serious violent offences. The 24 offences consisting of 14 ABH offences and 10 offences of Assault Emergency Workers.

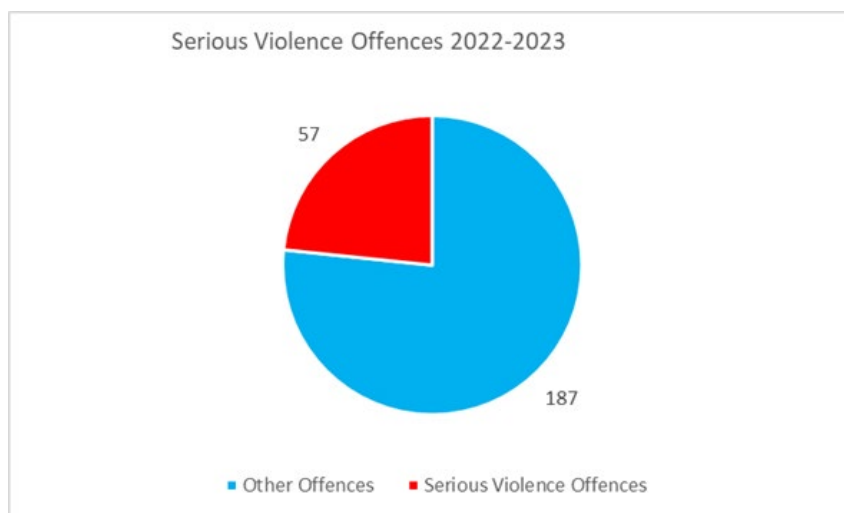
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Of the 46 children 44 children have not received a custodial sentence, however two children were Remanded to Custody and are currently on a Bail Support Programme and are awaiting sentencing. The below evidence 54 interventions, some children received more than one intervention.

- Community Resolution = 30 interventions
- Outcome 22 = 1 intervention
- Referral Orders = 9 interventions
- Youth Caution = 3 interventions
- Youth Conditional Caution = 4 interventions
- Youth Rehabilitation Order = 2 interventions
- Bail Support Programme = 2 interventions
- Remand in Custody = 3 intervention

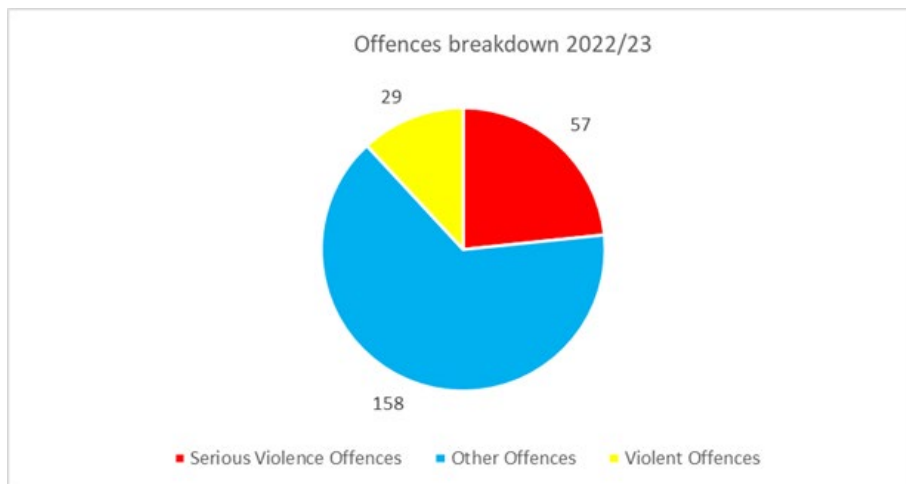
Serious violent offences for 2022/23 equates to 23.36% of the total amount of offences.

One child was on a Bail Support Programme following a Remand to Custody but all charges were withdrawn at Court following completion of a Bail Support Programme, the child went to Court for the 3 offences that would have been classed as Serious Youth Violence offences. The child has not been counted in the above figures due to all charges being withdrawn.





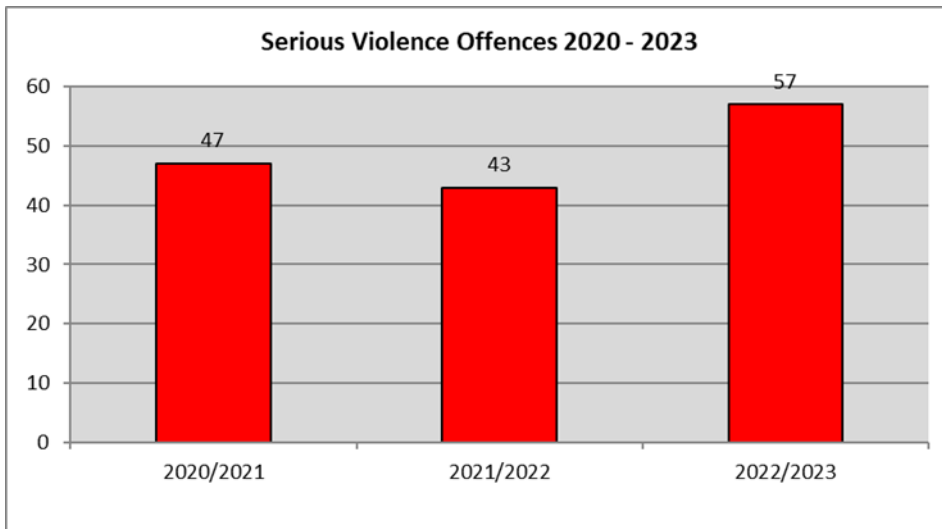
Additionally, there were 29 other violent offences committed during 2022/23. Combined with the serious violent offences this equates to a total of 86 offences (35.24% of the total amount of offences).



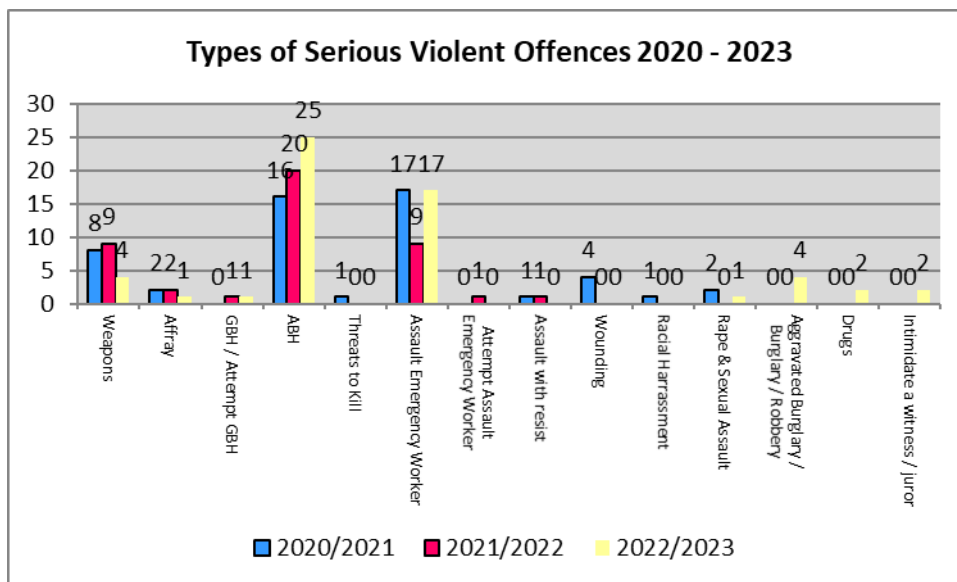
Comparison of 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23

When looking at the current year 2022/23, there is an increase of serious violence offences compared with 2021/22 where there were 43 offences: an increase of 14 offences on last year. Looking over a three-year period there has been a consistent level of offending in 2021/22 and 2022/23, however numbers have increased in 2022/2023.

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When looking at the types of violent offences ABH has increased over the three-year period.



When looking at a three-year period the violent offences have remained consistent in 2020/21 and 2021/2022 where there were 49 and 50 respectively, however there has been a decrease in 2022/23 to 29.

During the period April 2022 to March 2023 there were 19 children identified as being at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation. Of these 19 children 9 progressed to National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Panel. All 9 identified as White, 7 children were male and 2 children were female.

In 2023 the Government announced that it would bring forward legislation introducing a new Serious Violence Duty (“the Duty”) on a range of specified authorities. This will ensure relevant services work together to share information and allow them to target their interventions, where possible through existing partnership structures, collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities. The YOS is

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working in partnership to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area, the causes of that violence (so far as it is possible to do so), and to prepare and implement a strategy for preventing, and reducing serious violence in the area.

Detention In Police Custody

There is a Gwent Joint Working Agreement in place that governs this area of work. Please see below. It is noted that police custody can be a distressing time for children, many of whom are vulnerable and may have additional needs. The aim of this regional agreement is to ensure that children between 10-17 years inclusive spend the least amount of time in police custody that is required and are, where required, transferred out of police custody to appropriate local authority accommodation. In addition, where it has not been possible to achieve such outcomes, it is the aim of this agreement that all relevant agencies have measures in place to review the decisions made in these instances in order to overcome barriers in the future.



Gwent Transfers
From Police Custody



Gwent Monitoring
And Review Panel Ann

There is also a Gwent Monitoring and Review Panel (GMRP) associated with the above held monthly to retrospectively review cases. The vision of this panel is to “*Gain Knowledge, Challenge & Improve*”. The purpose of the Panel is to review cases of children held overnight in police custody (defined as 23.59hrs – 05.00 am – or longer) and any obstacles to their transfer from police custody.

It provides constructive scrutiny at an organisational and individual level to promote best practices, identify potential policy barriers, resource deficits or staff development needs whilst promoting more effective working practices between agencies. The panel has no referral or appeals capability. It assesses the relevant processes, interactions and decisions to identify any continuous learning. Please see attached above for the 2022 Annual Report. This report is shared at many arena’s including:

- Gwent Local Authority Children’s Services Senior Management Teams
- South East Wales Emergency Duty Team Management Board
- Youth Offending/Justice Services Local Management Boards
- Gwent Police’s Criminal Justice Management Team
- South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board
- Gwent Criminal Justice Strategy Board

This allows for governance and escalation mechanisms, along with good practice and learning and development areas.

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Constructive resettlement and the use of custody including remands

The YOSs Resettlement and Reintegration Panel (RRP) partnership celebrated its eighth anniversary in May 2022. Formed in May 2014, the successful partnership, coordinated by the YOS, provides additional support and great opportunities to children who have previously offended to prevent reoffending and achieve successful outcomes for children. The panel has achieved impressive outcomes by ensuring better services are available to children, helping them to reach their goals and aspirations for the future, and ultimately reducing their offending behaviour by supporting a more productive and positive lifestyle. By working alongside a framework called “The Seven Resettlement Pathways” and “Constructive Resettlement”, which are Youth Justice Board and Welsh Government initiatives, the RRP aims to ensure a child leads a crime free life after their involvement with the Youth Justice System. The Resettlement Pathways include accommodation, education, employment and training, health, substance misuse, family services, finance/ benefits/ debt and transitions. The YOS and its partners monitor the YOS and partners responses to the recommendations within the “Joint thematic inspection of resettlement services to children by Youth Offending Teams and partner agencies” through the panel.

The YOS Case Managers ensure that when a Pre-Sentence Report (PSR) is requested by the Courts that there are robust community alternatives proposed to mitigate against the use of custody. During 2020/21 and 2021/22 there were several cases which were deemed to be at risk of custody however, robust alternative community sentences were proposed resulting in the children receiving community sentences.

Remands

During the period April 2022 to March 2023, there were 3 children who were remanded to YDA, one child was remanded on two separate occasions. One child was from the Blaenau Gwent area and two were from the Caerphilly area. All children were remanded to HMIP Parc Young Offenders Institute (YOI).

The use of remand has a cost implication for both Local Authorities. Both Local Authorities receive funding from the YJB, which is allocated per year. In 2022/23 the price per night for a YOI was £307. For secure children’s home per night is £770. For Secure Training Centres the price per night is £733.

Every time a child is facing remand in any Court the YOS always offers a community based alternative, highlighting how risks will be managed. The Court Officer offered community alternatives on all occasions. However, due to the seriousness of the offence the children were remanded.

The Blaenau Gwent child first appeared at Newport Magistrates Court on 19.04.2022 after a one night remand to custody due to the seriousness of the offence. The child subsequently received a substantive outcome of a Referral Order. The child was 17 years and 5 months old at the time of the remand. The child committed an offence of Assault a person thereby occasioning them actual bodily harm.

On the second occasion the child appeared at Newport Court on 16.09.2022 and was remanded to custody for a period of 60 days. The child subsequently received a substantive outcome of an 18 month Youth Rehabilitation Order. The child was 17 years

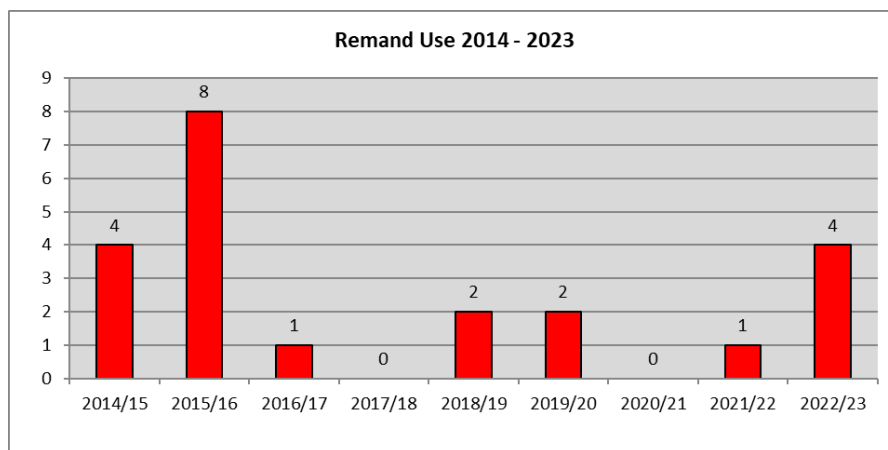
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and 10 months at the time of the remand. The child committed an offence of Attempt to cause grievous bodily harm with intent to do grievous bodily harm. The child was discussed in Resettlement and Reintegration Panel and the Y2A meetings and was transferred to Probation in February 2023.

One child from Caerphilly first appeared at Cardiff Magistrates Court on 13.05.2022 and was remanded to custody for a period of 4 days. The child was subsequently released on Bail with a Support Package from the YOS put in place. The child was 17 years and 9 months at the time of the remand. The child was alleged to have committed a number of Drug offences and an Assault by beating of an emergency worker, however, all charges were subsequently withdrawn.

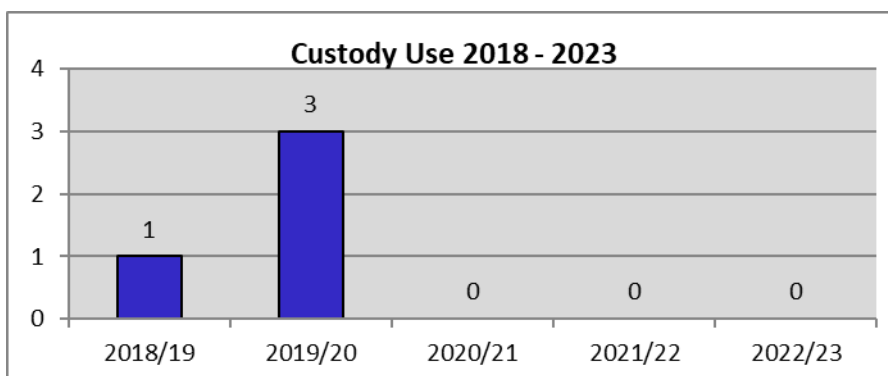
The second child from Caerphilly first appeared at Newport Crown Court on 19.12.2022 and was remanded to custody for a period of 30 days. The child was subsequently released on Bail with a Support Package from the YOS put in place. The child was 16 years and seven months at the time of the remand. The child is alleged to have committed an offence of Aggravated burglary – dwelling and is due to appear in Court in June 2023. The child is receiving ongoing support from the YOS and is being discussed in both Risk Panel and Resettlement and Reintegration Panel.

The number of remand interventions over the last nine years are presented below.



Custody

During the period April 2022 to March 2023, there were no children in custody. The number of custody interventions over the last five years are presented below.



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The YOS has a high-quality, evidence-based resettlement service for children leaving custody which has been in place since 2014. The YOS Resettlement and Reintegration Panel takes account of “The Seven Resettlement Pathways” (Welsh Government initiative) and “Constructive Resettlement”, (Youth Justice Board initiative). The resettlement and reintegration pathways include accommodation, education, employment and training, health, substance misuse, family services, finance, benefits, debt and transitions. The resettlement and reintegration panel is a subgroup of the management board and is held every six weeks. In the YOS Inspection Report in 2022 HMIP stated “*Members of the resettlement and reintegration multi-agency panel work effectively together to meet the needs of children*”.

Please see attached the YOS practice guidance that governs this area of work. Please also see the Resettlement and Reintegration Panel 2022/23 Annual Report that evidences the activity of the panel.



Blaenau Gwent &
Caerphilly YOS Cust



Resettlement and
Reintegration Panel

Accommodation

During the period April 2022 to March 2023, there were 19 children who closed to the YOS on statutory interventions. All children were in suitable accommodation at the start of the intervention, however, one child was not in suitable accommodation at the end of their intervention. The child in unsuitable accommodation at the end of the intervention had refused accommodation provided by the Local Authority choosing to remain living with his partner at his partner’s property which was assessed as being unsuitable.

Health Provision

The YOSs recent inspection report stated “*Health service provision to the YOS is of a high standard. The service can access a psychologist for case discussions and has a seconded Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services clinical nurse specialist. The YOS has a speech, language and communication therapist for two days per week and a full-time substance misuse worker. Health provision to the YOS is of a high standard.*”

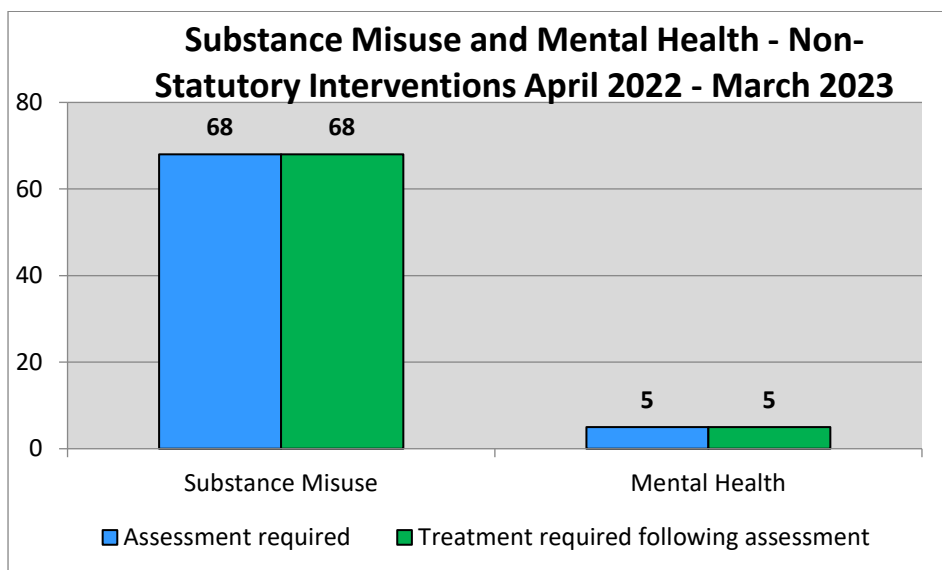
The YOS can refer to the Enhanced Case Management service and has links to both school nurses and young people sexual health provision. Please see attached a copy of the YOSs Health Pathway.



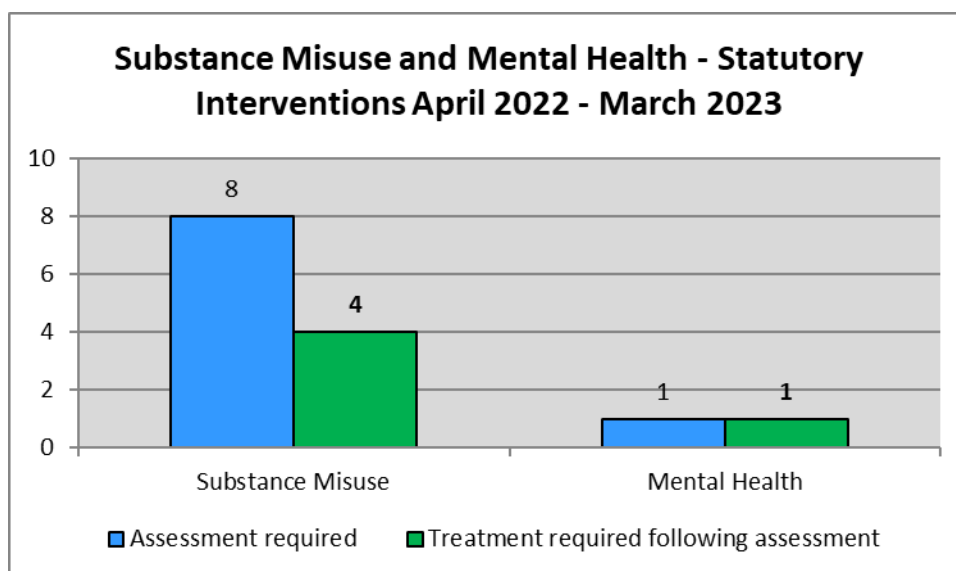
Health Pathway -
2021- 24.docx

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Please see below chart for services provided to non-statutory interventions.



Please see below chart for services provided to statutory interventions.



11. Standards for children in the justice system

In April 2019 the YJB published new National Standards (NS) for children in the youth justice system. They define the minimum expectation for all agencies that provide statutory services to ensure good outcomes for children in the youth justice system.

At the start of 2020 the YOS completed and submitted its YJB National Standards Self Assessment. It was very pleased with the findings and outcomes across all areas. However, there are always improvements identified within any auditing process, therefore the YOS created an action plan to develop any areas identified.

The YOS Service Manager receives NS performance data monthly and NS compliance is monitored via individual staff supervision sessions, quality assurance processes and as part of case management reviewing processes. NS compliance is also included for

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each of the three internal YOS teams on a rota basis as part of the LMB Quarterly Performance Report.

The below demonstrates audited NS compliance for 2022/23 closed cases by interventions. Of the 331 interventions during 2022/2023 292 had closed at the time of this plan. Of those 294, 49 did not require an assessment, therefore an audit of National Standards was completed on the remaining 245.

	Required Initial Assessments open in 10 days	Required Timely Review Assessments	Required Closure Assessments Open in 10 days
YES	236 (96.4%)	35 (100%)	228 (99.6%)
NO	9 (3.6%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)

There are various reasons for assessments not being opened within 10 days these include:

- Parent challenging the outcome and wishing to discuss with police further
- Family having COVID, therefore, a delay in visiting
- Children being on existing interventions and therefore only requiring a review assessment rather than an initial assessment

Reviews are only required to be undertaken if an intervention is longer than three months or there is a significant change.

Where a closure assessment has not been opened within 10 days this is due to the child remaining open to the YOS on another intervention, therefore a closure asset is not required.

The YOS is also aware of the YJB’s intention to audit NS2 – At Court in October 2023 which the YOS will complete as a self assessment. Any identified learning or areas for improvement will then be embedded.

Quality Assurance

The YOS uses self-assessment as a valuable learning process and endeavours to be open and honest with regard to reflecting and evaluating current practice. The YOSs Quality Assurance Framework 2020/23 underpins the YOSs drive for improved outcomes and the delivery of a quality service.

In the recent inspection it was recorded *“The YOS promotes a learning culture and has a robust quality assurance framework in place, which includes a peer-led assessment review group. Both senior practitioners and managers use a ‘QA buddy’, which can be any member of staff, to help them audit cases. The YOS performance report includes an update on the quality assurance work being undertaken in the service, and this has led*

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to themed audits taking place. At the request of the YOS, other agencies complete an independent 'deep-dive' audit of one of the cases presented to the reintegration and resettlement panel." Please see attached below a copy of the YOSs Quality Assurance Framework.



YOS Quality
Assurance Framework

Serious Incident Notifications – YJB

On the 07.02.23 the YOS submitted a notification to the YJB under the above procedure. A male child was charged with rape between 01.01.21 to 01.01.22. At the start of these offences, the male child was aged 11 and had turned 12 by the end date. A multi agency learning review is currently being undertaken.

Child Practice Review (CPR)

In 2022 the YOS engaged and contributed to a CPR for a child open to them on a preventative intervention. The YOS was praised for the engagement and work they carried out. Learning from the review has been disseminated and published.

12. Workforce Development

The YOS workforce is, and continues to be, its greatest asset and are at the heart of everything it does. The YOS is committed to the development of a professional workforce that is highly skilled and motivated ensuring that all its staff and volunteers can be effective in their work with children, victims, families, professionals and members of the public. However, it is also important to take account of the YOS Local Management Board and their learning and development where appropriate or required based on self assessment activities.

A strategy has been developed to build upon existing relevant training available, whilst encompassing the emerging body of knowledge identifying what is effective in Youth Justice (e.g. Desistance, addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), trauma informed practice, whole family approach, identification and building on strengths, restorative practice, constructive resettlement and the importance of positive relationships/engagement).

It also aims to address emerging themes and concerns regarding areas such as serious organised gangs, child criminal exploitation, human trafficking, serious youth violence and offensive weapons/knife crime. This ensures that awareness, knowledge and responses across the YOS workforce are relevant, informed and current.

Learning from the previous Coronavirus restrictions include the need for all organisations to consider amongst other things how it supports and continues to develop and meet the learning needs of its staff and volunteers through non-traditional learning and training delivery methods. This includes accessing webinars, virtual workshops, online training and materials, e-learning opportunities and seminars to name but a few. The YOS will

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need to support its training providers and its own training delivery to move to the aforementioned methods when required to ensure it maintains a skilled, knowledgeable and trained workforce.

The training and development opportunities described within this strategy all work towards achieving the YOSs vision of ***“Inspiring, motivation and supporting children to live crime free lives”***.

Please see attached the YOS Workforce Development Strategy 2023-25 and evidence of some of the training attended during 2023.



YOS Staff Volunteers
Workforce Development



Training Courses
Attended by YOS Staff

13. Evidence based practice and innovation

Evaluation

“Sown and Grown” - The Allotment Wellbeing Project began in July 2021 as a result of the ongoing impact of Covid 19, regarding wellbeing. It has developed organically in all senses of the word and is a collaboration project between the Youth Offending Service (YOS), Caerphilly Children’s Services 16+ Team, children and young people and Community Volunteers. The “Allotment Wellbeing Project Working Group” provides governance arrangements. Funding for the project is via grant applications submitted by the YOS.

The Allotment Wellbeing Project offers a way for a broad mix of people to work together, sharing knowledge, tasks, skills and experience. It also creates opportunities for extra benefits such as social gatherings, educational workshops and the enjoyment of nature and the outdoors. By sharing ideas it ensures a wide range of creative opportunities are generated to make sure a firm foundation is built based on support from a wide range of people to help guarantee success. There’s a growing body of evidence linking gardening with improved mental and physical health. Helping to grow a good crop of fruit, herbs, flowers and vegetables can do wonders for individual’s confidence and self-esteem. Please see attached for further information.



Allotment
Wellbeing Project –

Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) and Enhanced Case Management (ECM) - The YOS was a pilot and test site for the YJB Enhanced Case Management programme. The ECM draws on a range of psychological and criminological approaches, combining cognitive theories of child development, attachment theory, desistance theory and emerging understanding on neurobiological development. The YOS is still able to access the resource and does so via a psychology informed case discussion alongside the full time Clinical Nurse Specialist in the YOS who is present for each case discussion. The YOS also have trained Trauma Informed Champions.

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However, in addition to the above in 2023 the Gwent Attachment Service (GAS) and the Gwent forensic child and adolescent mental health service (F-CAMHS) have worked together with the YOS to enhance staff's knowledge and confidence in trauma-informed principles and their application. This has been achieved through the provision of bespoke attachment informed training and clinical formulation sessions. Following the success of this training, a renewed focus was placed on the sustainability of this training, leading to the development of a coproduced 'train the trainer' package. It is hoped that this framework will allow knowledge to be held within and disseminated by the YOS, with support from GAS clinicians where required, ensuring trauma-informed principles are kept live within the organisation.

The above aims to provide flexible and timely access to psychological support for children supported by the YOS, where their needs cannot readily be met by mainstream services. The GAS provides 0.1 (whole time equivalent) into the YOS to provide direct psychological intervention to identified children. Psychological interventions will be provided by National Health Service mental health clinicians with in-depth knowledge of around attachment and trauma, employed by the GAS. All interventions will be bespoke to the needs of the child and draw upon a number of models.

Interventions - The YOS has a directory of interventions which includes many programmes of work designed by staff, volunteers and children and is creative in how it works with children to address their needs. This includes the 'Road to Learning' programme which is a course for motoring offences, 'Street Doctors' and "RISK" (Reality Is Stabbing Kills) which are knife crime programme, 'Stay Safe' a fire setting and/or arson programme, a five week hate crime course, "Reckless" which is a criminal damage programme of work and 'Respect and Protect' which is a domestic abuse programme. During 2023/24 the YOS intends to increase these programmes further via internal task & finish groups focusing on topics such as diversity, arson and anti social behaviour (for example).

Award Winning - In 2020 the YOS 'Be Me' project won an award for 'Best Innovative Practice'. It was created to improve the wellbeing of children with a focus on girls. The project looks at confidence building and self-esteem through the use of beauty treatments in partnership with a local salon. Tutorials, support and advice is provided on a one to one basis and offers the opportunity for careers advice sessions as well. This project was led by children following consultation and engagement with girls known to the YOS. Following Covid this project is now fully operational again.

During 2023 the YOS nominated four of their long standing, highly committed, and valued Community Volunteers for High Sheriff of Gwent Awards for a combined service of in excess of 57 years between them. The YOS was delighted when they were all presented with the awards. Volunteers are regularly nominated for awards. This includes volunteers winning a Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) award for a number of consecutive years.

Specialist Assessments - Most staff are trained in Assessment, Intervention and Moving On (AIM3) for working with children who display harmful sexual behaviour.

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14. Service Development Plan

Service Development

The LMB and YOS has been working hard to complete the Improvement Plan linked to their recent HMIP Inspection in 2022. This will continue during 2023/24.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing & Courts Act 2022 has implemented a number of significant changes to children engaged with the youth justice system. It looks to ensure custodial remand is always used as a last resort which is welcomed, but there is a need to consider the impact of the Act on community sentences such as the increase to maximum daily curfew from 16 hrs to 20 hrs (weekly max remains 112 hours) for Youth Rehabilitation Orders (YROs). There may also be an increase from the Courts for Intensive, Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) programmes.

The YJB have announced a number of new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from the 1st April 2023. These will need to be understood, communicated, embedded and reported against as additional monitoring requirements. The YOS is also anticipating a request from the YJB regarding undertaking a National Standards audit at some point in 2023.

The YOS is currently in partnership, reviewing the framework for the delivery of Out Of Court Disposals (OOCs). This is a big piece of work that will involve a lot of consultation, communication, change, embedding and training for all involved.

The YOS is working with partners in focused areas such as serious youth violence, reducing the use of remand, increasing the use of ISS, strip/stop searches of children and the recent Anti social behaviour Action Plan.

The YOS will continue to deliver a Child First service whilst working collaboratively with children and families.

The YOS will be implementing a new ViewPoint App to assist in the capturing of children voices across a range of their service delivery.

Please see attached the YOS Youth Justice Plan Improvement Plan for 2023 – 25. Please also see the YOS Workforce Development Strategy attached above that underpins this plan and the attached Improvement Plan. Work has already started regarding the actions and areas for improvement identified within this plan.



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Challenges, risks and issues



Challenges, risk and other issues are captured throughout this plan and in the attached Risk Register.

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15. Sign off, submission and approval

Joint Chair of YOS Board	Gareth Jenkins
Signature	
Date	18.07.23
Joint Chair of YOS Board	Alison Ramshaw
Signature	
Date	18.07.23

16. Appendix 1 – Staffing Structure



YOS Organisational
Chart June 2023 - YJ



Blaenau Gwent &
Caerphilly Staffing c



Children's Services
Organisational Char

17. Appendices 2 – Budget costs and contributions 2023/24



Budget costs and
contributions 2023-

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