

Blackpool Youth Justice Plan 2023-24



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Introduction, Vision and Strategy

Introduction:

We are proud to present Blackpool's Youth Justice Partnership Business Plan for the upcoming year. This plan outlines our strategic vision and unwavering dedication to providing exceptional support to children and families involved in the youth justice system. Building upon the progress we have already made; our goal is to ensure that the children and families we serve thrive away from the Youth Justice system. Through outlining our planned activities and initiatives, we aim to become an "Outstanding" service that consistently delivers positive outcomes.

Blackpool's Youth Justice Partnership acknowledges and supports the research-backed notion that children should be treated in a manner that considers their age, level of comprehension, and overall circumstances. This approach considers their needs and holistic well-being. Our Executive Board believe the children who display harmful behaviour, and the communities in which they live, are best served by identifying and addressing the underlying welfare and support needs that drive much of this behaviour. We understand that children are inherently vulnerable by virtue of age, levels of maturity and other factors and as such their rights should be protected- it is our duty to uphold this. Our annual Executive Board Development Day was held in April 2023 and the outcomes from this have contributed to the development of this plan.

The vision for our Youth Justice Service (YJS) is:

- 1. Diverting children from the youth justice system where appropriate:** We recognise the importance of diverting children away from the criminal justice system when it is suitable. Our focus is on early intervention and finding alternative pathways for their development.
- 2. Preventing and reducing offending behaviour by children:** Our goal is to address the root causes of offending behaviour, providing targeted interventions and support, including health and education to support children steer away from the criminal justice system. By focusing on prevention, we aim to reduce reoffending rates and create safer communities.
- 3. Promoting a pro-social identity that continues into adulthood:** We believe in nurturing the strengths and capacities of children, helping them develop a positive self-identity that aligns with prosocial values to which education, training and employment is central. Our approach emphasises constructive engagement and future-oriented planning, empowering children to make positive contributions to society.
- 4. Ensuring the safety, fair treatment, and care of children in the justice system:** It is our utmost priority to ensure the safety and well-being of children who enter the justice system. We are committed to treating them fairly, with dignity and respect, providing the necessary support and care, including health care they require. We consistently strive to uphold their rights and protect them from harm.
- 5. Always remembering we are working with children:** We support the evidence base that children should be treated with regard to their age and understanding, in a manner that takes account of their holistic circumstances and needs. Their unique needs and vulnerabilities are at the forefront of our decision-making processes and service provision.

LINDA CLEGG

Local Context:

It is important to understand Blackpool's context alongside our vision.

Blackpool is a vibrant town of 140,954 people with an estimated 27,810 children under 18, with 12,641 of those being aged 10 to 17 (95 of the population). Blackpool is the most deprived Local Authority with over 40% of our residents living in the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country.

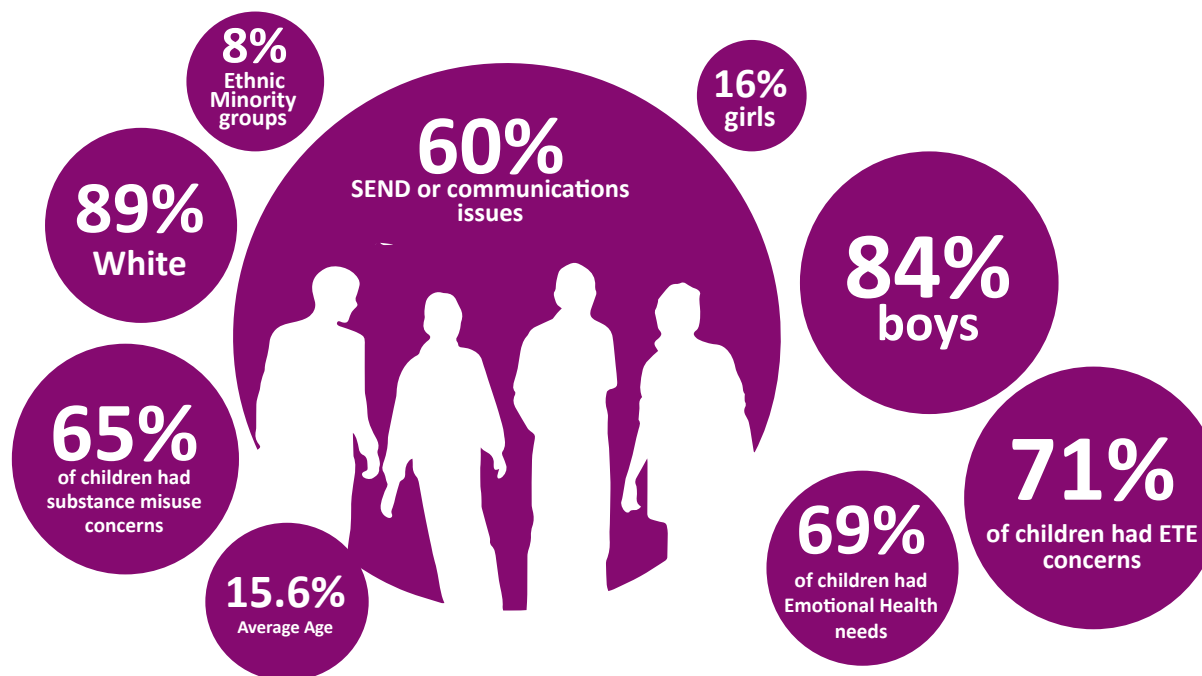
As a deprived town Blackpool has prominent levels of child poverty with an estimated 30.7% of children living in income deprived families, compared to 17.1% nationally. The life expectancy of males born in Blackpool is 73.9 – this is below the Northwest life expectancy of 77 and 78.7 in England. Similarly, the life expectancy of females born in Blackpool is 78 – this is also below the Northwest life expectancy of 81 and 82.6 in England (2020). In 2021/2022 40.4% of school aged children were eligible for free school meals compared to 22.5% nationally.

Currently less than 70% of our working age population are in employment and only 80% of our 16/17-year-olds are 'in learning'.

We have 33 registered Children's Homes in Blackpool, offering more than 70 beds for children across the town. We have a high volume of children in our care.

In March 2022 there were 609 looked after children at a rate of 218 per 10,000 of the population, the highest in the country. 3,401 children had an episode of need at some point in 2021/22 at a rate of 1,168.3 per 10,000 (twice the national average of 587.7 per 10,000); this does not include those open to early help provisions.

Infographic



Child First

CHILD FIRST

i) Child First approach

As a Youth Justice Service (YJS), we continue to strive to achieve positive outcomes for the children we support. A Child First, Trauma Informed approach is woven throughout our practice and is evidenced in the positive relationships our staff build with children and their families; advocating in their best interests when they are faced with multiple challenges. We continue to promote a child first approach with our partner agencies whilst recognising challenges of competing service requirements and ideologies – it is through this shared vision of ‘Child first’ that we have brokered the opportunity for mentoring with Lancashire Constabulary. This is for a child open to the YJS, who is well known in the community and to the constabulary for anti-social and offending behaviour. The aims being to deliver a restorative approach in addressing damaging choices, building a rapport, and altering negative perceptions of people in positions of authority and enforcement.

Treat children as children

We know that offending behaviour in children is often as a result of other challenges or adverse experiences within their lives. Adopting a holistic approach during

assessments allows us to explore internal and external vulnerabilities that impact on behaviour and a child’s choices. This assists in developing co-produced plans that consider individual and family needs.

Our practitioners take the time to get to know the children open to our service, seeing things from their perspective. This knowledge has supported us to support other agencies to understand and acknowledge a child’s vulnerabilities. This has led to increased trauma informed collaboration. This is an area that we recognise needs continued multi-agency investment and will form a large part of our development plan for the next 12 months.

We strongly align with the Lancashire Violence Reduction Network’s objective for Lancashire to become a trauma-informed county. Embracing a trauma-informed approach is more than just a practice—it becomes an integral part of our culture. It influences our beliefs, values, way of life, and the overall organization of our society. It shapes the relationships we build, the language we use, and our perception of the environment. The commitment to being trauma informed permeates every aspect of our culture.

Building a Pro-social Identity

Our practitioners are supported to have autonomy, flexibility, and time to apply a relational approach to their work with children in the YJS. This approach enables them to establish trusted and secure relationships based on care, empathy, and kindness. By deeply understanding the unique strengths of each individual child, our practitioners assist them in cultivating a positive and hopeful outlook for the future, dissociated from an identity tied to offending behaviours.

To facilitate the holistic development of the children we serve, our practitioners collaborate with both internal colleagues and external providers. Together, they create opportunities for children to enhance their skills and explore their interests. These initiatives open doors to new friendships, enriching learning experiences, and exposure to positive role models. Our efforts have encompassed diverse activities such as photography, music, and jujitsu; fostering a wide range of possibilities for children’s growth and well-being.



Encourage active participation, engagement, and wider social inclusion

We have widened our approach to encouraging participation and engagement delivering services in our children's local communities, which can negate difficulties in travelling to one central location, considers the child's individual needs and promotes children feeling safe and comfortable when delivering interventions.

The Adolescent Service has been involved in developing a multi-agency approach to community-based activities

for children and young people, including children working with the Youth Justice Service. The aim of these activities is for children to develop a sense of belonging in their community, promote a positive identity and tackle anti-social and offending behaviours. We are currently establishing a task and finish group who will be responsible for organising activities and community fun days during the school holidays. This will include the active participation of children open to the YJS or known within the local community in the planning and delivery of these events, further promoting positive community and agency presence in our 'hotspot' areas.

In addition to our 'end of intervention interviews' we are developing a method of virtual communication through online resources such as surveys to promote participation and honest feedback from children, families and victims. Our practitioners ensure regular consultation with children, parents and carers ensuring active involvement in the production and delivery of plans so that we can continuously improve services for children.

Promote a childhood removed from the formal Youth Justice System

Blackpool Youth Justice Service continues to promote collaborative working to strengthen and develop

services for children that diverts them away from the criminal justice system. We contribute to this by the following:

- Turnaround:**
 In Blackpool we see our implementation of the Turnaround Programme as a fundamental resource to divert our children away from offending by offering whole family holistic assessment and support. With the additional funding received from the Ministry of Justice we have created a time bound staffing resource allowing the opportunity to develop a small early intervention provision that sits within the Youth Justice Service, to oversee and deliver the Turnaround programme.
- Youth Partnership:**
 Blackpool is developing a coordinated and flexible youth offer led by a Youth Partnership consisting of Local Authority leads and third sector youth partners. Going forward, via a newly created service, the Local Authority will coordinate and support third sector partners to deliver on the objectives outlined within our recent youth review, focusing on collaboration and partnership working to increase the range and reach of youth provision across Blackpool.

- **Child Resolution Panel**

Blackpool continue to hold fortnightly multi agency scrutiny panels which aims to divert children from the criminal justice system through informal measures. The multi-agency panel promotes constructive and productive discussions from a wider agency perspective; considering risk, vulnerability and support needs and the most appropriate provisions to support them.

- **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Youth Partnership**

Our previous development plan references our partnership response to emerging ASB via a strategic task and finish group. These multi-disciplinary meetings continue to take place monthly; promoting effective information sharing, constructive challenge, agreed actions to tackle emerging ASB and future planning for local activity that balances a supportive and enforcement presence within the community. We have successfully worked with partners to tackle emerging anti-social behaviour, coordinating outreach and community activities in hotspot areas in line with school holidays and other key dates.

- **Multi Agency Scrutiny Panel**

A multi-agency scrutiny panel is being developed to identify learning and best practice when reviewing our first-time entrants. The first was held on 14/04/2023 and received positive feedback from

attendees. Findings were shared at our Executive Board Development Day earlier this year and will contribute to the business and development plans across all services involved.

- **Early Help Collaboration**

To promote diversion from the formal YJS our partnership strategic response to early help as set out in our Early Help strategy it details our town wide approach and plans for developing the way that we work with children and families. This strategy supports our ambition to work with families early in the life of a problem and move away from over-dependence on statutory and specialist services. This approach is morally, ethically, and financially the right thing to do and fits well with embedding the Blackpool Families Rock model of practice (Appendix 4), and restorative approaches to the way we work with our children and families. Fundamentally Early Help should be seen as everyone's business and be part of all that we do. We have a wide range of services and provision in Blackpool and there is a strong ambition to support children and their families to aspire and achieve by providing the right help, at the right time in the right place, by the right people.

Blackpool's Adolescent Service and Early Help Hub are developing a shared resource directory containing evidence-based practice that can be used across Children's Services when supporting those who are becoming involved in negative behaviours. This will further strengthen Blackpool's Early Help strategy by upskilling the wider workforce in early intervention techniques and promotes the Early Help strategy.

- **Adolescent Service**

Our YJS sits within the wider Adolescent Service, led by one Head of Service. As a result, the children open to Youth Justice have direct access to designated family workers and practitioners who specialise in supporting the following: Access to Education, Training and Employment, Awareness of Substance Misuse and specific interventions, Sexual Health & Healthy Relationships, Restorative Justice Practice (see Resources and Services section for further details).

Voice of the Child

We recognise that children and families are more likely to feel motivated to engage with support when they feel understood, valued, and heard. Capturing the voice of the child and using this to inform individual plans and the continued development of our service is a fundamental part of our function and 'Blackpool Families Rock (See Appendix 4).

- **Self-assessments**

To ensure that children working with the YJS have a voice our practitioners utilise their skills to support children to explore the reasons that they have become involved in offending behaviour. Each child completes a 'What do you think' self-assessment as part of the AssetPlus. The self-assessments assist in capturing the child's perspective of their circumstances, their strengths, and vulnerabilities in their own words. We also encourage parents, carers and family members to contribute where possible, which informs a holistic whole family approach to addressing risk, identifying unmet need, and providing support.

Our practitioners undergo comprehensive training in motivational interviewing techniques, which they effectively integrate into their daily practice. However, we acknowledge that there is always room for improvement, and as part of our commitment to quality assurance, we will be incorporating dip

sampling of self-assessments. This framework will focus specifically on how the voice of the child influences our practice. By implementing further Quality Assurance, we aim to gather valuable insights into the effectiveness of our approach and identify areas where we can further enhance our engagement with the children we serve. We recognise the importance of listening to and valuing the perspectives of the children, ensuring their voices shape and inform our practice. Through this continuous evaluation process, we strive to create an environment that prioritises the active participation and influence of the children, leading to improved outcomes and a more responsive and child-centred service.

- **Record the voice of the child following every contact**

The YJS continue to use the ACORNS method (Aim, Content, Outcome, Risk, Next Steps & Safeguarding) for recording following every intervention and to promote consistency in recording; ensuring the child's views, wishes and feelings are captured.

- **Live Reflective Feedback**

We have a process that allows Team Managers to undertake end of order feedback ensuring that they hear directly from children and their families. This allows us to develop an understanding of the child's journey within the YJS.

We are currently developing this to include feedback on the child's experience as their involvement commences and at the halfway or review point in their Order. Information from this feedback will then be incorporated into monthly operational performance meetings and further inform our development of the service based on 'lived experience'

- **Reflective Supervision:**

In line with the whole of Blackpool Children's Services Blackpool YJS undertakes regular reflective supervision on every child they support. Policy, guidance, templates, and prompt cards have been developed and training delivered that ensures consideration is given to the child's voice, their daily lived experience and that interventions provided are meaningful.

- **Peer Reflective Supervision:**

We continue to develop our peer led Learning Circles around key areas of practice. These forums serve to promote knowledge across the team so that there is a shared understanding and consistent high standard of practice within our service. We have used this forum to recognise and celebrate creative methods of engagement as well as share learning from audit findings and case reviews. The team are encouraged to share their experiences so that any challenges are acknowledged and shared with leaders and relevant partner agencies to strengthen collaboration.

- Example: **Not Just a Scrunchie**

A) “I have been supporting a child who finds it difficult to speak with adults/professionals. She has completed her out of court disposal. For her last session, I have bought her a rainbow coloured scrunchie (from Claires costing £2.50) to support an exit plan.

B) I am going to encourage her to wear it on ‘off days’ either in her hair or around her wrist to signal to her carers that she is not feeling herself or it is not a good day.

C) It means that she does not need to talk, because her carers will already know what it means and she can decide with them in advance what action she would like them to take (i.e., keep a closer eye on her, go out for a drive, do some self-care).”

Youth Justice Social Worker



MY GREEN SPACES

Personal reflections; by members of the Blackpool Boys and Girls Club



Governance, Leadership and Partnership Arrangements

The YJS Executive Board ensures our Youth Justice Partnership is provided with clear and coordinated strategic governance to support with the delivery of high-quality youth justice services with a focus on:

- Ensuring a Child First approach to Youth Justice provision in Blackpool
- Ensuring sure children and young people are safe
- Reducing the likelihood of reoffending
- Reducing the risk of harm that children and young people can cause to other people and themselves

The Board meets quarterly and comprises of senior representatives from the statutory partners across the Youth Justice partnership. The Board currently has an experienced independent chair, Linda Clegg, with a view to transition to the Director of Children's Services. The Board has several responsibilities which include providing financial governance for the partnership, to oversee and drive delivery of the improvement plan, removing barriers where appropriate, to raise the standard of the service and improve outcomes for children and young people informed by quality assurance frameworks. The board is well established and provides the service with appropriate challenge and scrutiny.

This year the Board is keen to develop a multi-disciplinary Operational Board to replace the existing Youth Justice Team Shadow Board. It is envisaged that the Operational

Board will mirror the Executive Board in terms of agency representation who sit at an appropriate operational level. The aims of the Operational Board will be:

- To provide the Executive Board with a comprehensive understanding of the service's progress and challenges. This multiagency perspective will offer insights into broader issues, emerging themes, and ideas to strengthen the service. By incorporating this frontline perspective, the Executive Board can gain valuable information to address challenges effectively and support the service's continuous improvement.
- To ensure engagement and use of the wider workforce's experience and expertise. By creating opportunities for the workforce to contribute their insights and ideas, the planning moving forward can be informed by their frontline experiences. This collaborative approach empowers the workforce, enhances their sense of ownership, and promotes a more effective and sustainable service delivery model.
- To further prioritise the voice of children. By involving young people who have direct experience with the service, their perspectives, ideas, and feedback can significantly contribute to shaping policies, procedures, and initiatives. This involvement ensures that the service remains child-centered and responsive to their needs, ultimately leading to better outcomes for the children and families we serve.

Board Development

Annually, members of the board, come together for a development day with the Youth Justice Team to review the business and improvement plan and to steer future developments within the service. This collaborative approach means that there is shared vision and understanding of the strengths and needs of the children and families we are supporting at every level.

Please see appendix 2 for all information linked to Executive Board attendance

Blackpool Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership

Blackpool is currently transitioning from a Pan-Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) arrangement to Blackpool CSAP. The Blackpool CSAP will oversee the strategic delivery of Blackpool's safeguarding priorities which include Early Help, Contextual Safeguarding, Domestic Abuse, Request for Support and Neglect. Our new governance arrangements will also bring together Adult Safeguarding and the Community Safety Partnership ensuring a holistic approach to improving outcomes and safeguarding children, vulnerable adults, and local communities across our town. The 3 boards and the Children, Young People and Families Partnership Board will be supported via a new Blackpool Joint Partnership Board.

Resources and Services

The Youth Justice Service sits within the wider Adolescent Service, a multidisciplinary service supporting vulnerable children and young people under age 25, led by our Head of Adolescent Service who reports to the Assistance Director of Children's Services. In addition to our YJS, the service also includes:

- **Our Drug, Alcohol & Sexual Health Team** which provides psychosocial, non-clinical support, for young people at risk of poor sexual health outcomes and young people misusing substances up to the age of 25 years old. The team facilitate access to clinical support including, prescribing, community and residential detox and rehabilitation. The team also provides a single point of contact for Awaken, Supporting Our Children and Youth Justice.
- **Our Leaving Care Team** which provides corporate parenting support for our care experienced young people up to 25 years old, providing a statutory duty to enable 'Our Children and Young People' to achieve their potential and to prepare for independence.
- **Our Family Worker Team** provides holistic support for children aged 16 & 17 who are homeless following a joint assessment of need via Children's Services and Housing. The team also provides destination tracking for young people, as part of a statutory duty, to promote the effective participation in Education, Training or Employment.
- **Our Youth Advisers Team** made up of young people who work alongside professionals to develop Employment and Skills support and influence systems change.



Progress on Previous Plan

Our progress on the previous plan 2022/23 includes:

- Blackpool Youth Offending Team re-branded to Blackpool Youth Justice Service, logo and documentation updated to ensure young people have a clear understanding of what to expect from the Service.
- Youth Justice Practitioners have undertaken Adolescent Trauma Training, delivered by Research in Practice (RIP), and all team members have been provided with access to Research in Practice (RIP) library of interventions and have incorporated into their practice.
- Cycle of audits and reflection including peer audits complete to support the evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions to ensure they are meeting children's need.
- Youth Justice Education, Training and Employment (ETE) Practitioner has created and launched a preparation for ETE resources increasing the tools practitioners have access to. Further developing our children's Personal and Social needs.
- Learning Circles delivered to support team development re plans to keep other people safe and contingency planning if issues in the child's life increase the likelihood of harmful behaviour.
- Pan-Lancashire Contextual Safeguarding Strategy 2022-2024 launched.
- Prevention offer increased through the Youth ASB partnership to divert children away from the Criminal Justice System.
- Further Appropriate Adult training and development to grow and support are pool of advocates.
- 'My target' plans embedded and focus on the impact on the young person. There is evidence of good practice in planning and the practitioners knowing the young people well. Effective plans continue to be a focus and reviewed through supervision.
- Turnaround Project launched and holistic whole family Early Help Support implemented.
- All operational staff have completed training in the use of the Enhancing Communication Tool (ECT). This assessment is now routinely completed with all children we have contact with. On completion of this assessment all practitioners have access to a consultation with a speech and language therapist who sense checks the assessment and offers practical support, hints and tips on working effectively with children and young people based on their assessed communication needs.

Performance

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) has, until recently, used four Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to understand the performance of the Youth Justice Service:

- First time entrants to the youth justice system
- Binary reoffending rate
- Frequency of reoffending
- Use of custody

Detailed information about the performance of the YJS in Blackpool is contained within Appendix 7.

Headlines include:



The performance of a YJS is complex. It is impacted by socio-economic and other contextual factors, and by the activity of a wide range of partner agencies including children’s social care, education, the police, the wider criminal justice system (courts etc) and a host of other organisations working around support, prevention, and diversion. In recognition of this, and that youth justice services are working with increasingly complex caseloads, the Ministry of Justice introduced a series of new KPIs with effect from 1st April 2023.

In addition to the left statistics, future reporting will include areas such as education and employment, special educational needs, mental health, substance misuse, out-of-court disposals, serious violence and victim information.

Priorities

Restorative approaches and victims

We have recently refreshed and launched our policies and procedures linked to restorative approaches and victims. This has given a clear focus to this area of work to ensure that children and their families are able to engage appropriately with restorative approaches at the same time as ensuring that victims of youth crime receive a good service. Restorative approaches are considered at every available opportunity and are embedded in our practice. It also forms part of our early interventions with children. Where there are concerns linked to risk of harm our approach to restorative work is included in assessments and risk management approaches to ensure victim safety. These approaches are reviewed throughout the life of our involvement and are commensurate to the child's levels of consequential thinking skills.

The YJS workforce has undertaken Trauma Informed practice training to ensure that they adopt this approach to assessment, considering the child's own lived experience where they may have been a victim themselves.

At this time there is no data available linked to victims, however, the Youth Justice Service has recently refreshed and launched our policies and procedures linked to restorative approaches and victims..

There is a clear audit schedule in place which is linked to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). All information linked to victims is recorded in the relevant COREPLUS module and the pending upgrade will inform our recording practice moving forward.

Turnaround

Blackpool YJS will provide early intervention support to 42 children in 2023/2024 who are not open on our statutory caseload. Through consultation with our policing colleagues, we have collectively agreed to focus our initial efforts on the following eligibility criteria which may be extended as the programme evolves:

- Those who have come to notice of agencies with enforcement powers for repeated involvement in anti-social behaviour (ASB);
- Those involved in anti-social behaviour who have received: Community Protection Warning/Notice (CPW/N);
- Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC);
- Those who have come to notice of agencies with enforcement powers for repeated involvement in anti-social behaviour (ASB)
- Those who are subject to No Further Action (NFA) decision;
- Those who are subject to a Community Resolution

We are currently supporting 10 children and their families to address the underlying issues and building on the family's strengths to support a life away from statutory services with a view to support 40+ in 2023/24.

"I lead on Alternative Provisions at St Georges. I wanted to acknowledge the excellent effort and support we have received from (Turnaround Early Help Practitioner) regarding some of our students. Kevin has been instrumental in helping two of our students improve their school attendance significantly in a short time. He has also provided invaluable assistance to a student who was at risk of becoming homeless due to family issues. (Turnaround Early Help Practitioner) provided support to the young person and helped the school with referrals for higher social care involvement, resulting in a positive outcome that we have been fighting for. Although the (Turnaround) project is a new initiative, it has already proven to be successful for our students. I am excited about the opportunity to continue working with (Turnaround Early Help Practitioner) and your service in the future."

Feedback from Education about our Turnaround Early Help Practitioner

Children from groups that are over represented

Blackpool, as a town is not culturally diverse and as a result, we do not have an over-representation of black and ethnic minority groups within our YJS. Our children are similar in gender to the national cohort and generally reflective of local ethnicity demographics (89% White British).

Although reducing we are aware that there are too many children being supported by the Youth Justice Service who are in our care (Our Children). Children's Services has co-produced its own model of practice Blackpool Families Rock. We are strengthening our Early Help and Support offer across the town to intervene early and reduce the number of children coming into our care where they are at an increased risk of contact with the Police and Youth Justice Service.

Education

We know from research and experience that Education is one of the largest protective factors in supporting desistance from offending behaviour. Working with multiple education providers and academy chains poses a challenge in meeting the individual educational needs of children supported by the YJS. Blackpool's ten-year education plan outlines the clear vision of how Blackpool will improve educational outcomes for children underpins everything we are striving to achieve for the residents and the town of Blackpool. The Educational Vision highlights the need to focus on improving outcomes at all ages and phases, so that children thrive and achieve their potential in adulthood. Through this strategy the educational outcomes for

children supported by the YJS will be improved.

The YJS has a dedicated Education, Training and Employment practitioner who acts as a conduit between educational establishments and the Youth Justice Service to promote access to a child's full educational entitlement. They also broker provision and advocate for the individual needs of children to ensure that they can access a provision that meet's their educational need. The practitioner has developed some bespoke resources linked to the development of key life skills to support YJS Practitioners direct work with children.

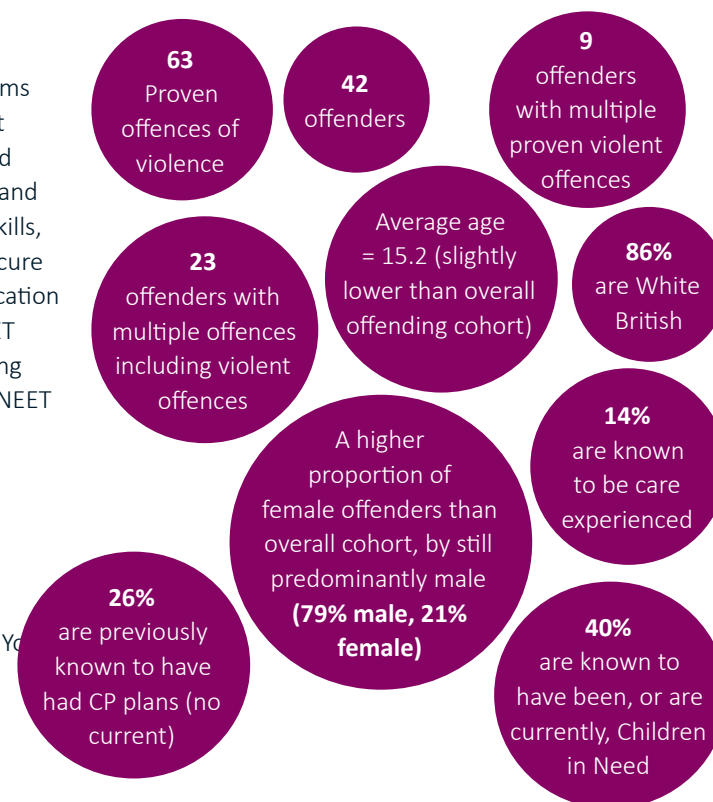
Blackpool Adolescent Service is a key driver of Blackpool's Employment and Skills strategy and aims primarily to reduce the levels of young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET) aged 16- 24 in Blackpool. Our vision is that all children and young people in Blackpool have the knowledge, skills, confidence, and networks that enable them to secure and sustain employment, training, or further education when they finish school. Our aim is to reduce NEET levels by providing the right interventions for young people, to prevent young people from becoming NEET by improving careers advice and guidance across all educational settings and sustain young people education and employment while developing a sustainable town wide approach.

See Appendix 7 for data linked to the Education, Training and Employment of children open to the Youth Justice Service.

Serious violence

In 2021/22 Blackpool had the highest volume of serious violence in Lancashire, with a rate of 62.4 violent offences per 1,000 population compared to 29.5 nationally, and 34.5 regionally (2020/21) District Needs Assessment January 2023.

Headlines – Violent Offences Cohort 2022/2023:



We continue to support the work of the Violence Reduction Network locally to ensure that the YJS is exercising their responsibility as outlined in the Serious Violence Duty and are a key partner in ensuring the delivery of the Serious Violence Duty 2023 needs assessment and strategy ready for the January 2024 deadline.

Youth Justice Managers are a key member of the Daily Exploitation Meeting (DEM). A multi-agency forum chaired by AWAKEN (contextual safeguarding team) that seeks to ensure that those children who are missing from home, at risk of, or being exploited criminally and/or sexually, and any adults of concern are discussed with clear actions and lines of accountability. This meeting allows for intelligence sharing and disruption planning allowing for a clear multi-agency response to safeguarding children. Evening and weekend outreach also serves to ensure that there are interactions with children who are at risk of or being exploited to build positive relationships, integrate them into community activities and disrupt adults of concern. Interactions are fed into the DEM to support the formation of robust actions related to exploitation.

Youth Justice Leaders represent the service at Blackpool's 'Awaken Scrutiny Panel' for any child known to the YJS where there are contextual safeguarding concerns. The panel consists of a multi-agency panel of senior managers, chaired by the Head of Service for Awaken/Assessment and Support, it meets monthly to examine high risk and high-profile children and young people. This provides opportunity at a senior level to discuss key facets and enables multi agency partners

to come together to enhance the support for the child with senior managers, who have decision making capacity, are present. Multi-agency partnership work at both operational and strategic levels enables the best interests and outcomes for our children, whilst also providing a forum for challenge. The independent child Trafficking Guardian Service is also represented at this panel to ensure that a referral to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is always considered, where appropriate and ongoing support is in place.

Detention in police custody

To support children who are detained by the Police, Blackpool YJS has bought their appropriate Adult Service in house. Trained members of the service are responsible for covering this duty during core working hours and a team of trained sessional staff carry out these duties outside of core hours. This means that Blackpool children receive a consistent, high level of support during the time that they are detained; ensuring that any key issues are addressed, families are signposted to support services and their rights are advocated for. For example, staff now have access to feminine hygiene products to appropriately meet the need of females who have been detained.

Our local PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence) procedures have been refreshed and shared with the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) ensuring that children who are detained are treated in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984). One of the YJS Practitioners have supported in developing their understanding of the child's rights and police responsibilities by delivering at a Team Meeting for EDT.

Remands

The joint protocol between the YJS and Children's Service has recently been refreshed; this document has been produced to outline the joint responsibilities for both Children's Services and the YJS in relation to children, young people, and their families ensuring that any children who are remanded to the care of the local authority receive a high level of support. It reflects the introduction of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offender (LASPO) Act 2012, specifically in relation to young people on remand and details the responsibilities of the two organisations at various stages. This means that all children receive the same high level of service and ensures that their individual needs are met during any period of remand to the Local Authority.



Use of custody

Blackpool Youth Justice Service are skilled in advocating for children in Court and presenting detailed pre-sentence reports to outline to support sentencers in understanding the most complex and vulnerable children to prevent the use of custody. Staff are committed to the children and families that they work with, and individual practitioners will attend Court to present their report and support children.

We know that custody should always be a last resort for children, however, there may be times where a Court does not assess that a community sentence is commensurate with the seriousness of their offending behaviour. Where a child has been sentenced to a period of detention, they are discussed at a multi-agency Custody Panel. This is a learning panel that seeks to reflect on the Court's decision and what could have been done differently to support an alternative to custody. Learning from this panel is feedback to the practitioner to support their individual learning and development, but also to develop the wider service in.

In Blackpool we have seen a rise in the use of custodial sentences, over the period following the pandemic (See appendix 7). Our Custody Panel review all children and findings shared.

Constructive Resettlement

Children who are sentenced to a period of detention are the most complex and vulnerable children in society. Therefore, we need to ensure that planning for their release and resettlement is robust and considers a range of factors, building on a child's strengths. In Blackpool we work to the mantra of 'Begin with the end in mind'. This means that from the point of entering any period of detention we are planning for their release, utilising a range of resources and services to do this, including release on temporary licence (ROTL), enhanced family support, accommodation and education, training, and employment opportunities. Practitioners continue to work with children in custody and build positive relationships to support the transition to the community and beyond. This approach to resettlement means that the child can re-enter the community they may have harmed, safely and allow them to develop a pro-social identity away from offending behaviour. Some of the ways that we do this include the following:

- Offering sessional worker support to ensure regular contact with the family
- Ensuring frequent visits by the YJS Practitioner in between sentence planning meetings to build and maintain relationships
- Ensuring parents attend sentence planning meetings to have their input

- Strong advocating of intervention whilst children are in Youth Detention Accommodation to address their offending behaviours
- Education, Training and Employment Officer attends all meetings and works with the YJS Practitioner to ensure appropriate provision on release
- Planning for suitable accommodation upon release
- Joint working with Leaving Care and Probation.



Workforce Development

Ensuring a highly skilled and knowledgeable workforce is key in ensuring that practitioners can assess and deliver interventions to prevent and reduce offending behaviour in children. There have been some key activities undertaken to upskill the workforce which includes monthly Core+ clinic that are led by audit outcomes, key performance indicators, change to data recording and legislative changes. These clinics are designed to ensure that there is consistent, high-quality information and data stored on the child's record.

One of our Youth Justice Service Practitioner's has undertaken the 'Train the Trainer' Training around Asset+ and they are responsible for periodically delivering Learning Circles to ensure that all staff are completing comprehensive, child focussed and address those factors supporting desistance from offending behaviour.

Practitioners offer each other peer support on a regular basis and the Performance and Support meetings provide a forum for this. We are also developing the use of Problem-Solving Circles where practitioners can discuss complex children where the practitioner is experiencing difficulties where colleagues can offer child focussed holistic solutions and approaches.

All staff receive regular 'Personal Supervision' where they are provided with a safe space where they can talk about their wellbeing in work and ensure that Team Managers are appropriately supporting them. Conversely the Service Manager also ensure that Team Managers wellbeing is appropriately supported which has included protected focus time.

Over the past 12 months the team have been able to access a range of training and development opportunities. This has included:

- Team Managers access to the Leadership Academy
- Trauma Informed approaches and Motivational Interviewing
- Delivering Restorative Justice
- Members of the wider Adolescent Service have undertaken UNITAS Effective Practice Certification
- UNITAS Child First Training

We have completed a skills and needs analysis with Youth Justice Practitioners to understand their perception of the strengths and needs to support workforce development planning for 2023/2024.



Evidence-based practice and innovation

Blackpool's Youth Partnership:

Effective youth work plays a vital role in enhancing the life chances of young people. By providing safe spaces for exploration, encouraging decision-making, boosting confidence, fostering interpersonal skills, and promoting critical thinking, youth work enables young individuals to make informed choices, positively change their activities, and experience improved outcomes. Quality youth services are essential for supporting young people's overall life outcomes and contribute to a broader ecosystem of services aimed at developing their capabilities.

To ensure that youth provision meets the needs of children and young people Blackpool in collaboration with the National Youth Association (NYA) conducted a comprehensive review. This review incorporated various research methods, including desktop research, stakeholder engagement, and analysis of effective practices in the field. Its purpose was to inform future youth provision and identify areas for improvement. As a result, the review recommends a coordinated approach to enhance the town's youth offer.

To implement these recommendations and improve the quality and consistency of youth provision across Blackpool a Youth Partnership has been developed. This collaborative effort involves Local Authority leads

and third-sector youth partners coming together to work towards a common goal. The aim is to develop, promote, and co-produce youth provision that aligns with the objectives outlined in the recent youth review. Collaboration and partnership working will be emphasized to broaden the range and increase the reach of youth services across Blackpool.

By adopting a coordinated approach and involving young people in decision-making processes, the Blackpool Youth Partnership aims to enhance the overall youth provision in Blackpool. This collaborative effort between the Local Authority and third-sector partners is expected to bring about positive changes and ensure a more comprehensive and effective support system for children.

The youth provision partnership, supported by the Youth Justice Service has collaborated on a bid from the Youth Endowment Fund which will provide two years additional funding to work with children to provide positive activities in local communities to address externalising behaviours.

This will include a focus on:

- Building and maintaining relationships
- Promoting community connectedness
- Opportunities for Education, Training and Employment
- Positive and pro-social identities
- Managing and regulating emotions



Challenges, Risks and Issues

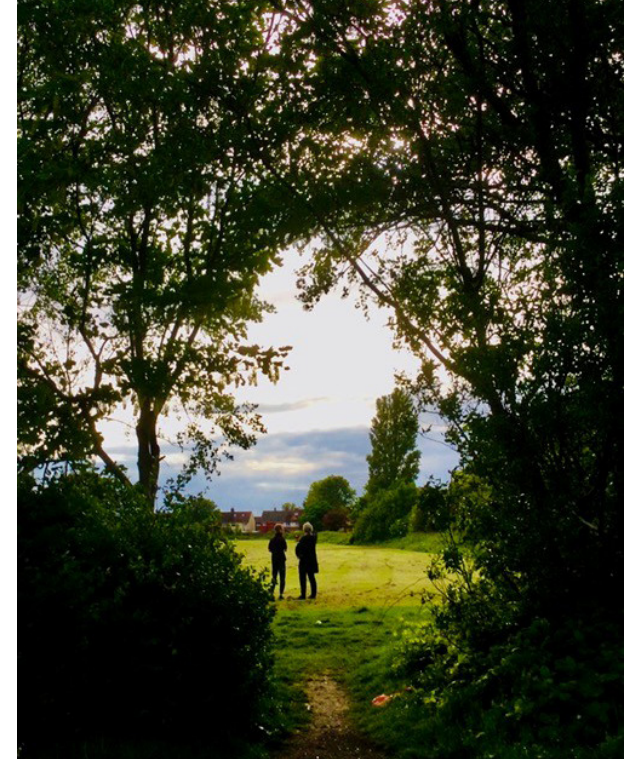
Budget pressures and funding uncertainties for Blackpool YJS is a challenge and a risk for the 2023/2024 and beyond. Within the last 12 months we have faced the challenges of ongoing efficiency agenda at national and local levels and find ourselves in a cost-of-living crisis. This impact on Blackpool will be particularly felt given that it is one of the most deprived towns in England. This has already resulted in a significant reduction in our core budget due to no longer receiving police contributions in 2021/22.

We recognise that our partners will have similar pressures, impacting on resource and joint delivery

Blackpool Children's Social Care, Lancashire Constabulary and other key partners have pledged their commitment to demonstrate trauma informed practice within their organisations. Whilst this vision is clear amongst strategic leaders, it is recognised that competing service requirements and ideologies impact on operational staff's ability to consistently meet this aspirational commitment.

Child Exploitation is becoming more apparent in our local communities and is having a noticeable impact on our ability to deliver positive outcomes for some of our most vulnerable children. We recognise that a percentage of children who are assessed as high risk are also known to Awaken (contextual safeguarding team) as victims of exploitation and are often groomed into a life of criminality that is difficult to escape. Close collaboration with our internal and external partners is crucial to ensure our children's safety and strengthen community resilience.

Education, Training and Employment opportunities is a key priority for the partnership. Challenges include children aged 16+ who are not equipped with the necessary skills required to access opportunities available and high numbers of children not accessing their full educational entitlement. In addition to limited alternative provisions that provide a variety of creative workshops/ lessons to develop new and existing skillsets.



Service development plan

To enable the Youth Justice Partnership to drive improved outcomes for children at risk of offending and re-offending, a range of strategic and operational priorities that reflect national drivers, local need, national standards self-assessment and HMIP inspection findings have been incorporated into one action plan (appendix 6). Progress on the plan is reviewed at every Executive Board meeting to challenge performance and assist with the continued shaping of delivery of the Blackpool Youth Justice Service. The development of an Operational Board will support the delivery of the strategic plan by driving forward key activity at an operational level. The plan focuses on our current priorities:

Our Priorities

Priority One: Our Youth Justice Partnership will continue to strive to ensure that the Executive Board is efficient and effective, securing positive outcomes for children and families

Priority Two: Our Youth Justice Partnership will increase prevention and diversion ensuring children receive support at the earliest opportunity to reduce the number of First Time Entrants in Blackpool.

Priority Three: Our Youth Justice Partnership will ensure our Youth Justice workforce have access to appropriate development opportunities and resources to reduce the risk of re-offending.

Priority Four: Our Youth Justice Partnership will ensure the educational needs of children open to the service are understood and appropriate action taken to ensure that they have access to high quality education and training services that met their individual needs.

Priority Five: Our Youth Justice Partnership will seek to reduce the number of children in custody.

Sign off, Submission and Approval



Director of Children's Services – Vicky Gent

26/06/2023



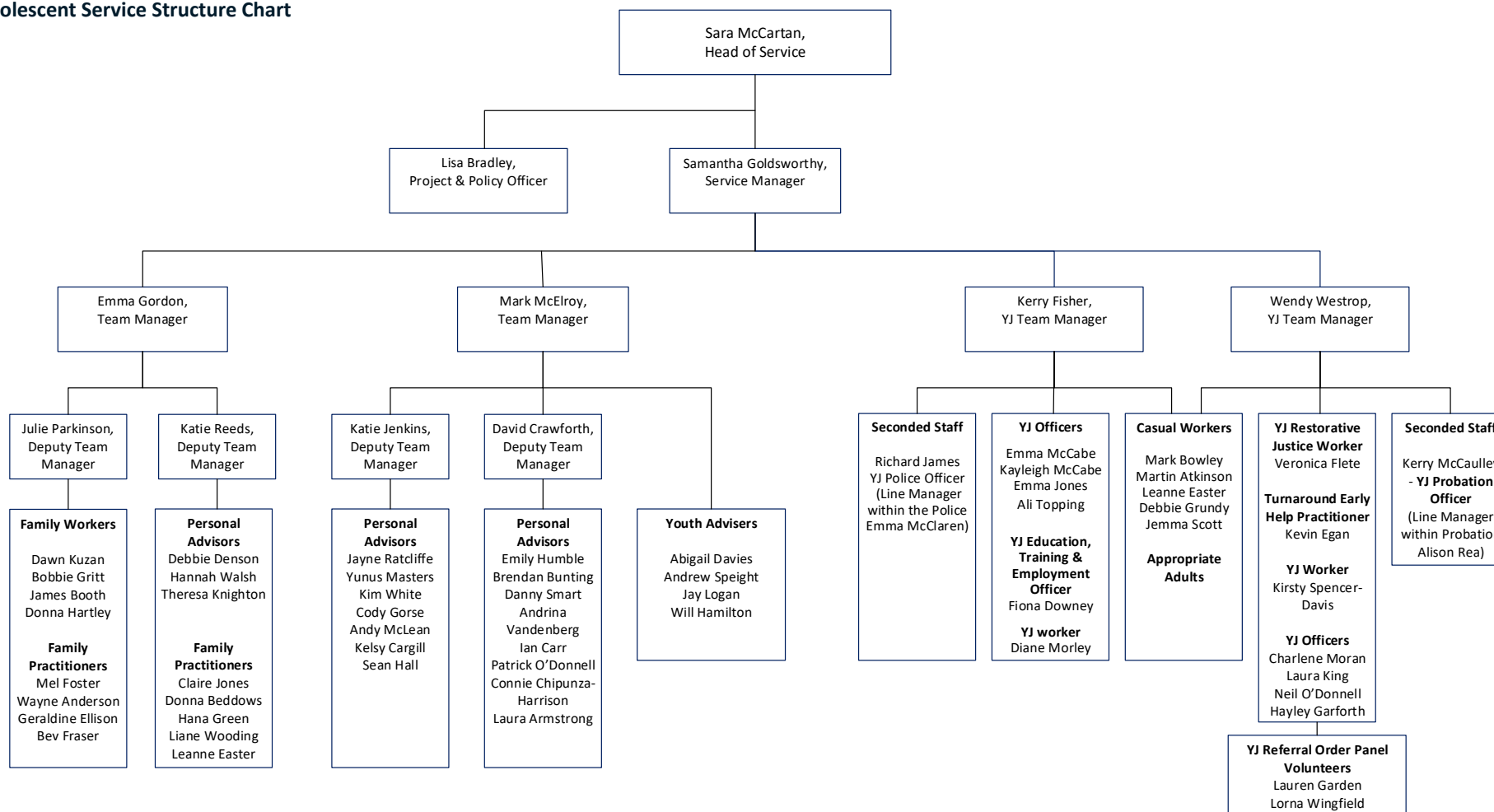
**Interim Chair of the Youth Justice Service
Executive Board – Linda Clegg**

26/06/2023

Appendix 1

Staffing structure for the
Youth Justice Service

Adolescent Service Structure Chart



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Administration Assistants Judy-Anne Runciman, Kim Peake, Rhys Davies

Co-located Mental Health Practitioner Stephanie Webster

Co-located Employment Officer Linda Aiken
(Line Managed via Positive Steps)

Specialist Health Practitioner Support, Speech & Language Therapist Consultation and Psychology Service Consultation (Contextual Safeguarding Team)

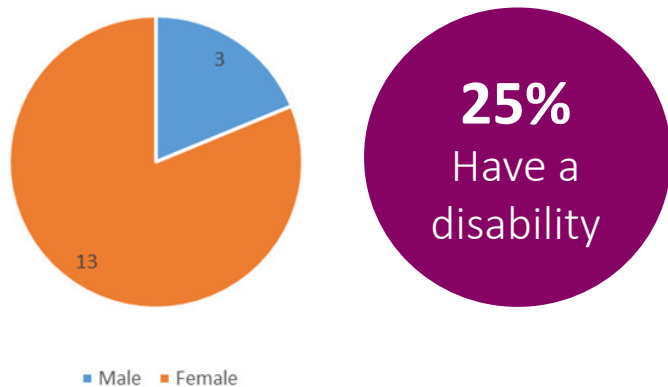
YJ Information Officer Nicola Wilson
(Line Manager Sara Coombs, Systems & Intelligence Manager)

Additional Staffing Information

Blackpool Youth Justice Service consists of:

Number	Role	Ethnicity
2	Team Manager	White British
5	YJS Officers (Social Worker)	
3	YJS Officers (Equivalent qualification)	
1	Early Help Turnaround Practitioner (seconded)	
1	Education, Training and Employment Officer	
1	Restorative Justice and Victim Worker	
1	Specialist Health Practitioner Support from the Contextual Safeguarding Team	
1	Seconded Probation Officer (PT)	
1	Seconded Police Officer	
12	Appropriate Adults	
2	Referral Order Panel Members	
4	Sessional Workers	

Gender of Staff



Appendix 2

Youth Justice Executive Board Membership and Attendance

✓ Attended

A- Apologise

Name	Role					
		May 2022	July 2022	October 2022	January 2023	April 2023
Independent	Independent Chair	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blackpool Council	Chief Executive for Blackpool Council	A		A	✓	✓
Blackpool Council	Director of Children's Services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blackpool Council	Assistant Director of Children's Services	Not in post	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blackpool Council	Assistant Director of Children's Services (Education)	A	A	✓		
Blackpool Council	Cabinet Member for Inclusion, Youth, Schools, and Transience	A	A	A	✓	✓
Youth Justice Board	Head of Region, Northwest Youth Justice Board for England, and Wales	A			✓	✓
Blackpool Council	Head of Adolescent Services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blackpool Council	Adolescent Service Manager – Youth Justice	A	✓	✓	Gap in post	✓
Blackpool Teaching Hospital	Head of Safeguarding, Blackpool Teaching Hospitals, NHS Foundation Trust	A	A	A	✓	✓
	Associate Director SEND, NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lancashire Constabulary	Head of Criminal Justice, Lancashire Constabulary	✓		A	✓	✓
Blackpool Council	Head of Corporate Delivery, Performance and Commissioning	A			✓	✓
Blackpool Council	Head of Children's Services		Deputy Attended	✓		✓
Blackpool Council	Performance, Systems, and Intelligence Manager	✓	✓	✓	Vacant Post	
National Probation Service	Head of Northwest Lancashire, NPS	✓	✓	A	✓	✓
HM Courts and Tribunal Service	Chair Youth Court Magistrates (Lancashire)	A	✓	A		

Name	Role					
		May 2022	July 2022	October 2022	January 2023	April 2023
HM Prison Service	Head of Re-settlement HMYOI Weatherby	A		✓	✓	✓
HM Courts and Tribunal Service	District Crown Prosecutor	A				
Lancashire Constabulary	Director Lancashire Violence Reduction Network	A		✓	✓	✓
Police and Crime Commissioner	Policy and Partnership Support Officer	A	A	A		
National Probation Service	National Probation Service			✓	✓	
Lancashire Constabulary	Superintendent, Operations Manager			✓	✓	
Lancashire Constabulary	Chief Inspector		✓			
HM Courts and Tribunal Service	Legal Team Manager, Preston Magistrates Court	A	✓			
Blackpool Council	Shadow Board Representatives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blackpool Council	Delivery Development Officer	✓			A	
University of central Lancashire	Researcher			✓		
University of central Lancashire	Researcher			✓	A	
Blackpool Council	Democratic Governance Senior Adviser		✓			
Blackpool Council	Democratic Governance Advisor	✓				
Blackpool Council	Democratic Governance Advisor				✓	

Appendix 3

Budget Costs and Contributions 2022/23

Agency	Staffing Costs	Other Delegated Funds	Total
Police	58,336	0	58,336
Probation	24,608	5,000	29,608
Health	39,974	15,442	55,416
Local Authority	345,016	103,807	448,823
YJB	435,178	54,251	489,429
Other	-	-	0
Total	903,112	178,500	1,081,612

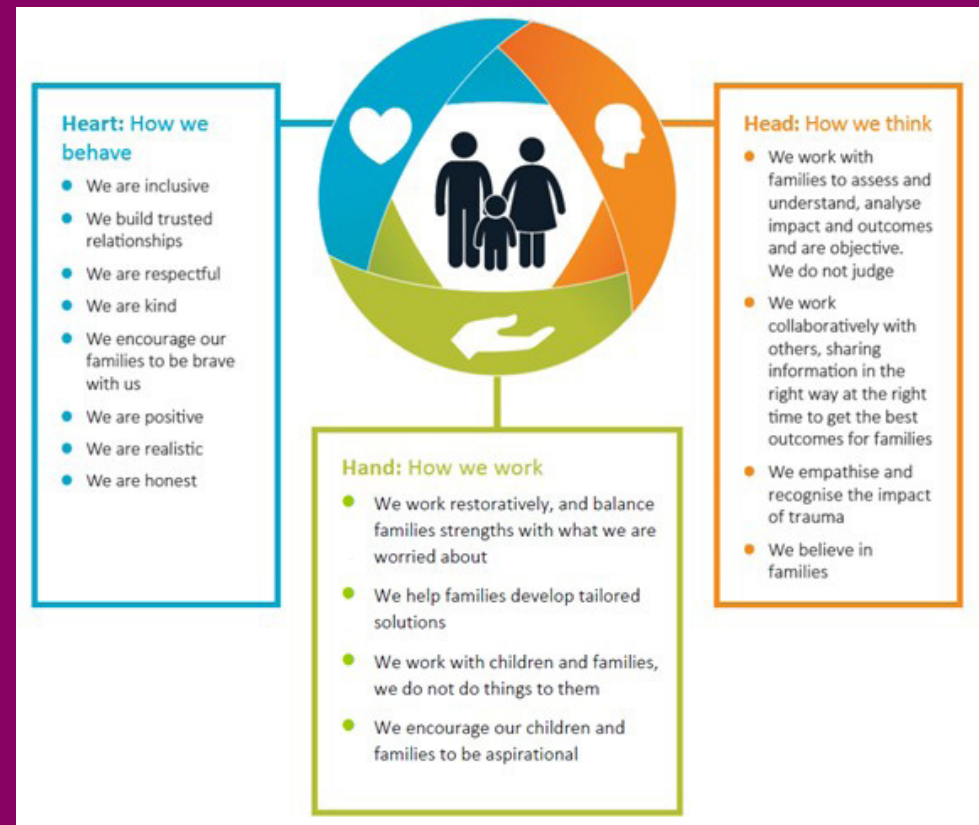


Appendix 4

Blackpool Families Rock – Model of Practice

In 2019, we worked with Blackpool families to co-produce our practice guidance principles that the group believed social workers should work to. These practice principles/behaviours shared a vision that families have the potential to be active agents of change, with social workers positively supporting them in effecting this change. The group used Social Pedagogy concepts – Head (knowledge), Heart (feelings) and Hand (physical doing) in which to place their co-created practice principles. The Head, Heart and Hand are inseparable, and by using them synergistically within practice, social workers are better able to support the well-being, learning, growth or change for families. Social Pedagogy requires social workers to engage in relationship centred practices with the families they support, which then enhances their well-being, resourcefulness, and inclusion in society. The group wanted to build on the belief that “we are all human; we all make mistakes”, which is as relevant to a family as it is to the professional social worker, and if we keep this in our hearts, it helps us to better understand and accept the other person. The group believed that by holding these principles within their practice, social workers and families would best work towards change through strength-based ideologies and promoting each individual’s potential.

Our Co-produced “Blackpool Families Rock” Values



Appendix 5

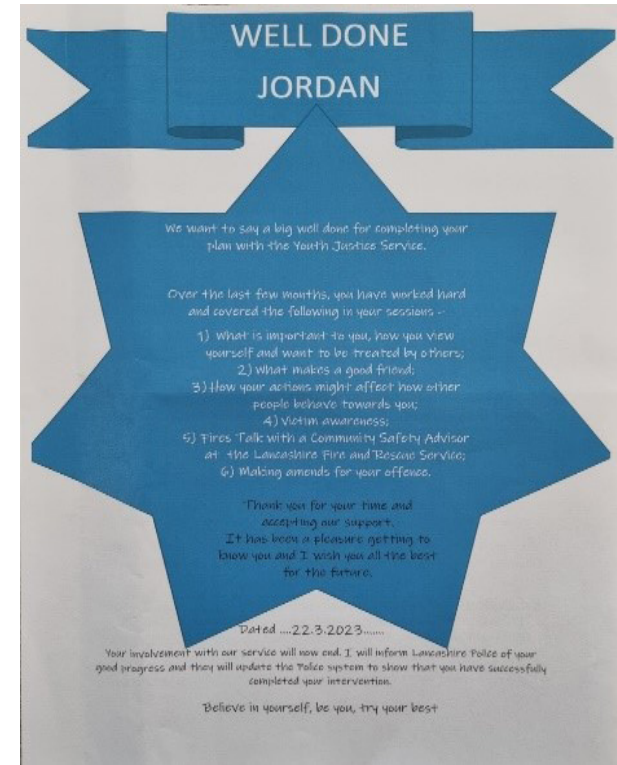
Child First Approach in Blackpool –
Promoting Community Connectedness
and self-identity



A trip to the Knife Angel to raise awareness around the risk of carrying a knife



Restorative Justice with the Fire Service to understand the important role that fire fighters have



**End of Order Certificate
Celebrating the achievements of young people**

Appendix 6

Action Plan

Central to our Business and Improvement plan is our Child First approach which is underpinned by the Youth Justice Boards (YJB) Child First Principles and the plan seeks to ensure these principles act a golden thread woven throughout:

1

Prioritise the best interests of children and recognising their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential. All work is child-focused, developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children.

2

Promote children's individual strengths and capacities to develop their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.

3

Encourage children's active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.

4

Promote a childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system.

Priority One: Our Youth Justice Partnership will continue to strive to ensure that the Executive Board is efficient and effective, securing positive outcomes for children and families

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Notes
Executive and Operational Boards informed by an analysis of partnership wide youth justice data.	Practice across the partnership improved via the support and challenge of the partnership.	Outcomes for children monitored by the board, support and challenge given to improve and maintain.	Chair of the Boards with support from Head of Adolescent Service.	New KPI set scrutinised quarterly from Sept 2023 onwards. Data Analysis commissioned June 2023. Linking of analysis across the partnership and partnership data pooled Summer 2023.	
Executive Board Terms of Reference (ToR) to be refreshed, ensure strategic representation and gain commitment to Child First principles with strategic leads.	The ToR provided clarity on the direction of the board, strengthening collaboration and a proactive response to emerging need.	The exec board can influence change that ensures Children and Families receive a consistently high standard of support during times of need.	Chair of the Board with support from Democratic Services.	All partners to have sight of and agree with the content of the ToR with a scheduled implementation plan of 04/09/2023 Quarterly monitoring via new KPI evidence appropriate representation from all key strategic leads. Evidence of Child First principles being embedded into services.	

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Notes
Multi-disciplinary Operational Board to be established.	The operational board provides valued feedback on the experiences of the workforce and emerging needs within Blackpool which informs the Exec Board and assists with influencing positive change.	The challenges/ barriers and emerging needs of the Children and Families of Blackpool are accurately represented at the Exec Board.	Head of the Adolescent Service with support from Executive Board Members	<p>Membership of the Board to be established.</p> <p>Meeting scheduled for the year and first meeting held by 30/09/2023.</p> <p>Terms of Reference will be in place.</p> <p>Routine feedback to and from the Executive Board starting November 2023.</p>	

Priority Two: Our Youth Justice Partnership will increase prevention and diversion ensuring children receive support at the earliest opportunity to reduce the number of First Time Entrants in Blackpool.

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Notes
Turnaround Programme to be embedded within Youth Justice and across the partnership.	Prevention and Diversion is strengthened in Blackpool Youth Justice service – practitioners are confident in assessing the holistic needs of the family and identifying a multi-agency response, thus reducing behaviours linked to offending.	Families receive the ‘right service, at the right time’ - their holistic needs are considered, and support implemented to reduce the likelihood of crisis situations	Adolescent Service Manager with support from Lancashire Constabulary.	Deputy Manager and Youth Justice Practitioner appointed by 31/07/23. Turnaround prevention and diversion referral form and pathway to be launched by 31/07/2023 (inc internal briefing). Prevention and Diversion assessment tool to be incorporated into Early Help Assessment prompts to evidence youth justice element in practice.	

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Notes
				<p>Quarterly Monitoring returns to the MoJ, (Q1 by 28/07/2023) and Executive Board (04/09/2023)</p> <p>Develop a shared resource directory of Evidence Based Practice between Youth Justice and Early Help & Support by 01/01/2024.</p>	
Implement and develop a Multi-disciplinary Scrutiny Panel linked to understanding the high levels of First Time Entrant (FTE)	The partnership have a clear understanding of themes linked to the higher-than-average number of children who are FTE in Blackpool and learning shared to develop practice.	Families receive the 'right service, at the right time' - their holistic needs are considered and support implemented to reduce the likelihood of crisis situations.	Adolescent Service Manager with support from Lancashire Constabulary, Early Help & Support, Childrens Social Care and Education.	<p>Quarterly scrutiny panels to be scheduled in line with Exec Board meeting</p> <p>Panel findings shared in a report with key learning, action planning and review dates.</p>	

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and Families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Notes
Youth Partnership to coordinate and lead on Blackpool's Youth Offer	Partnership collaboration and co-production with children and families is providing a proactive response to identified and emerging need within local communities	<p>Children have a sense of belonging in their local communities.</p> <p>Children have access to range of extracurricular activities that promote pro social identities.</p>	Head of the Adolescent Service & Assistant Director of Community & Environmental Services (Community & Wellbeing).	<p>Grant applications submitted by or through the Youth Provision Partnership.</p> <p>Youth Provision Partnership meeting regularly and connecting with partners from across Blackpool to proactive response to identified and emerging need within local communities.</p> <p>Development of a 'Youth Offer' capturing the Youth Provision Partnership delivery of youth provision to young people.</p>	

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and Families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Notes
				Development of a 'Youth Offer' capturing the Youth Provision Partnership	
Promote Learning and practice development in line with the Prevention and Diversion research	Staff understand research linked to prevention and diversion and how this influences practice to achieve positive outcomes for children and families	Children and Families are in receipt of the right support, at the right time, from the most appropriate service.	Adolescent Service Manager with support from Early Help Service Manager.	<p>Participate in UCLAN prevention and diversion services.</p> <p>Early Help Spoc to be identified for the Adolescent Service – identifying and signposting to wider early provisions within the wider town.</p> <p>Create shadowing opportunities for Youth Justice within Early Help.</p> <p>Whole team access Turnaround MOJ webinars and learning events to share practice.</p>	

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and Families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Notes
Strengthen the core function of the Youth ASB Partnership to promote a collaborative response to ASB	Practitioners are effectively sharing Information in a timely manner. Agreed actions are proportionate and proactive in responding to emerging need.	Children and families receive a supportive yet proportionate response to issues of ASB The Local community have confidence in agencies responsible for supporting them	Adolescent Service Manager ASB, Prevention & Problem-Solving Command unit Youth Provider (relevant to local area)	Monthly Task and Finish group- agree a Multi-Agency response in hotspot areas. Focus being on relational practice alongside enforcement.	
Ensure that wider children's services have a clear understanding of trauma informed practices linked to our children's lived experience to support in the reduction of our children known to the Youth Justice Service	Identifying potential triggers and vulnerabilities will ensure that practitioners are able to respond appropriately to reduce offending behaviours	Developing a proactive response to emerging need across Supporting Our Children and the Youth Justice Service to reduce offending/re-offending by our children	Multi-disciplinary representation	Thematic audit to focussing on First Time Entrants of Our Children Audit findings to be shared across wider children's services to inform and develop actions	

Priority Three: Our Youth Justice Partnership will ensure our Youth Justice workforce have access to appropriate development opportunities and resources to reduce the risk of re-offending.

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Milestones
Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions to ensure that they are meeting children's needs and reduce re-offending (HMIP recommendation)	<p>Practitioners deliver purposeful interventions</p> <p>Voice of the child is captured and used to influence service developments</p> <p>Staff provide an efficient response to allocation ensuring the child is seen at the earliest opportunity.</p>	<p>Wrap around support is available to reduce vulnerabilities linked to re-offending</p> <p>Children can meet and build the foundations of a trusting relationship with their key worker.</p>	Youth Justice Team Managers with support from Youth Justice Practitioners	<p>YJS practitioners to review existing interventions to identify gaps in service</p> <p>YJS workforce develop their understanding of evidence-based intervention based on the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF)</p> <p>Re-launch of Children's Service's Library with the YJS</p> <p>Evaluation schedule to be implemented at the point of allocation, review and end of order to capture feedback</p> <p>Relaunch the 'Start of Order Procedures' and embed into performance reviews.</p> <p>RJ worker to provide monthly update re RJ delivered and promote across the partnership.</p>	

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Milestones
Develop a step down and across process with Early Help to ensure continued whole family support at the point children's Court Orders expire	<p>Effective exit plans are in place to ensure continued multi agency support where needed.</p> <p>Reduction in the number of children who re-offend</p>	<p>Wrap around support is available to reduce vulnerabilities linked to re-offending</p> <p>Trauma informed Practice is embedded in exit plans so that families only tell their story once.</p>	Adolescent Service Manager with support from Early Help Service Manager.	<p>Develop a shared understanding of Early Help and Continuum of Need.</p> <p>YJS practitioners to attend Early Help Clinics where continued service support is required, strengthening exit plans for families.</p> <p>YJS practitioners to support wider partnership to take on Early Help support as part of exit planning.</p>	
Develop our Restorative Justice (RJ) and Victim Work	<p>Restorative Justice and Victim work will have clear management oversight</p> <p>Audit findings are used to develop practice</p>	<p>Increase in the number of victims who access the support.</p> <p>Victims receive a quality service.</p> <p>Children and victims have access to high quality and creative RJ.</p>	Adolescent Service Team Managers with support from RJ and Victim Practitioner	<p>Online platforms will be used to capture victim feedback.</p> <p>Monthly victim audits undertaken that inform quality assurance framework.</p> <p>Monitored via new KPIs.</p>	

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Milestones
<p>Ensure that, in all children's records, there is a plan to keep other people safe and contingency planning if issues in the child's life increase the likelihood of harmful behaviour. Where risk to the child's safety or wellbeing is identified, put in place clear contingency planning for circumstances where the risk may increase. Where risk to other people are identified, put in place clear contingency planning for circumstances where the risk may increase (HMIP recommendation)</p>	<p>Staff will have a clear vision as to how plans will support desistance</p>	<p>Reduction in re-offending rates</p>	<p>Youth Justice Team Managers with support from PDL</p>	<p>Risk of harm training to be commissioned to support assessment in the Explanations and Conclusions section of AssetPlus, including contingency planning</p> <p>All YJS staff to undertake annual refresh of the Safeguarding Children training as part of the wider Adolescent Service workforce development</p> <p>All staff to have access and use the Youth Justice Interactive Learning platform</p> <p>Themed audit- Assessment and planning linked to risk of harm and safety and wellbeing to be undertaken. Findings from the audit to inform workforce development planning.</p>	

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Milestones
<p>Updated Quality Assurance Framework embedded</p> <p>Routine audits to review effective initial assessment of children’s health and educational needs (HMIP recommendation).</p>	<p>Good practice is celebrated, and areas of development built into the improvement plan on an individual and team level</p>	<p>Children and Families receive a good quality service</p>	<p>Adolescent Service Manager with support from Team Managers.</p>	<p>Audit fortnights to be completed and fed into Heads of Service Performance Quality Assurance Meetings starting June 2023.</p> <p>Individual feedback provided to practitioner.</p> <p>Learning circles to be utilised when areas of development are identified, and key findings shared with Partners.</p> <p>Establish peer audit cycle with Blackburn and feedback to Boards,</p>	
<p>Complete the National Standards Self-Assessment: At Court</p>	<p>The board will have a clear understanding of our performance in the Court arena to celebrate good practice inform improvements required.</p>	<p>Clear actions will be in place to improve the work in Court</p>	<p>Youth Justice Team Managers</p>	<p>NS self-assessment complete by 31/10/23</p>	

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Milestones
Embed Enhance Case Management, Multi-agency case formulation and trauma informed practice	<p>Assessments and intervention informed by trauma informed practice.</p> <p>Increase in specialist support for children working with the YJS</p>	<p>Children receive the trauma informed support.</p> <p>Reduction in/desistance from offending behaviour linked to SMU</p>	<p>Head of the Adolescent Service and Adolescent Service Manager.</p> <p>With support from CAMHs & Public Health</p> <p>With support from LVRN</p>	<p>Introduce case management with psychological consultation Commission, Embed and Review by March 2024</p> <p>Adolescent Service Mental Health Practitioner Induction June 2023. Advice and guidance sessions implemented Summer 2023.</p> <p>Deliver multi-disciplinary Adolescent Development Day focussing on evidence base 23rd June 2023</p> <p>Develop the role of a Substance Misuse Specific Person and Contact (SPOC) within the YJS Monitor via new KPI</p> <p>Learning Lunch with Contextual Health Practitioners. Increase co-location Summer 2023.</p>	

Priority Four: Our Youth Justice Partnership will ensure the educational needs of children open to the service are understood and appropriate action taken to ensure that they have access to high quality education and training services that met their individual needs.

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Notes
Ensure Education has an effective response to the ETE status of children working with the YJS, understanding the link between ETE provision, vulnerability, and risk of harm	Children supported by the YJS will have access to appropriate Educational Provision providing a strong protective factor to support desistance	There will be a clear increase in the number of children in appropriate ETE provision More children will be in receipt for their statutory entitlement	Adolescent Service Manager Deputy Team Manager	Data to be scrutinised in monthly performance mtgs, commentary discussed with Operational Board and presented to Exec Board to support. Drive systems change via Youth Futures Foundation Connect Futures Programme.	
Ensure plans linked to SEND, Education, Health and Care Plans and personal educational plans are integrated into Pathways and Planning section of AssetPlus	Key educational information is recorded in the assessment and will inform planning to ensure that it is accessible to children	SMART plans will be in place that identify the educational needs of children, linked to offending behaviour and tailored approaches to interventions	Education, Training and Employment Officer with support from Education Colleagues.	SEND Team to deliver a workshop around innovative approaches to working with children who are SEND Head of Virtual School to deliver a workshop to raise awareness of the work of the Virtual School and how they can support YJ interventions	

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Notes
Reduce the number of children of school age who are not receiving their statutory educational entitlement	Children working with the YJS will have good educational outcomes and positive aspirations for the future	Increase in the number of children engaged in appropriate educational provision	Head of Adolescent Service with support from Assistant Director	<p>ETE Officer to maintain tracker of education at allocation and at end of intervention.</p> <p>Foster stronger links: Meeting with virtual schools June 2023.Meeting with AP Head July 2023.</p> <p>Share data sets with Blackpool Educational Improvement Board (BEIB).</p>	
Reduce the unacceptably high NEET rates for young people over-16 by getting more children into further education provision and vocational training, including access to services where children can gain the personal, life, and social skills they need to work towards employment (HMIP Recommendation)	Children working with the YJS will have positive aspirations for the future	Increase in the number of children engaged in appropriate ETE provision	<p>Head of Adolescent Service</p> <p>Deputy Team Manager and Education, Training and Employment Officer</p>	<p>ETE Officer to maintain tracker of employment at allocation and at end of intervention.</p> <p>Share data sets with Employment and Skills Board.</p> <p>Evaluate effectiveness of suite of life skills intervention. Draw on best practice through Youth Futures Foundation Connect Futures Programme.</p>	

Priority Five: Our Youth Justice Partnership will seek to reduce the number of children in custody.

Action	Impact on Quality of Practice	Outcomes for children and families	Accountable Person(s)	Milestones	Notes
Ensure that the Executive Board and the YJS have a clear understanding of the root causes for offending and the pathways into custody for young people via Custody Review Panels	Practitioners can confidently manage children in secure accommodation and effectively plan for their resettlement.	Children are not unnecessarily held in secure accommodation and are released to accommodation that meets their needs.	Head of Service for Request for Support Hub, Awaken and Assessment and Support Team with support from Youth Justice Team Manager	Review custody panel template in with NS by 31/08/2023. Expand membership to ensure multidisciplinary. Bi-monthly review panels.	
Deliver a Learning Circle to YJS Practitioners, based on findings of custody panels to develop, skills in managing children in secure accommodation with particular reference to resettlement planning.	Practitioners can confidently manage children in secure accommodation and effectively plan for their resettlement.	Children are not unnecessarily held in secure accommodation and are released to accommodation that meets their needs.	Youth Justice Team Manager and Leaving Care Team Manager	Learning circle will be delivered. Plan and deliver learning circles to wider children's services around the importance of resettlement planning and provision of appropriate accommodation Share finding from ADCS and Youth Custody task and finish group re resettlement.	

Appendix 7

Blackpool Youth Justice Performance

Blackpool Council

Blackpool Youth Justice Performance and Analysis 2022/23

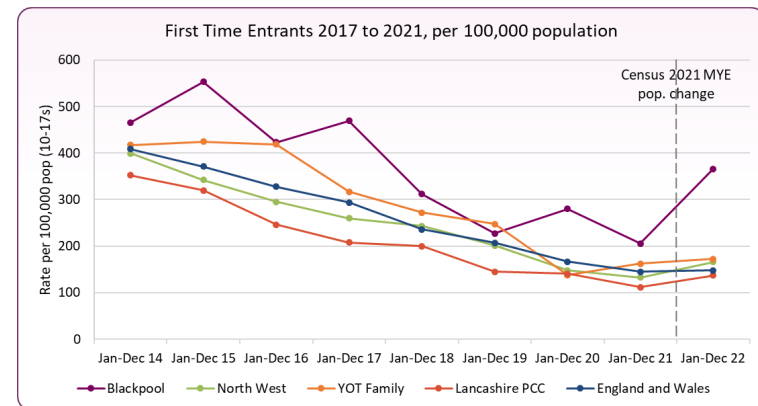
Key Performance Measures in Most Recent National Dataset
and
'First Cut' Year End Analysis

The Blackpool Population: Context

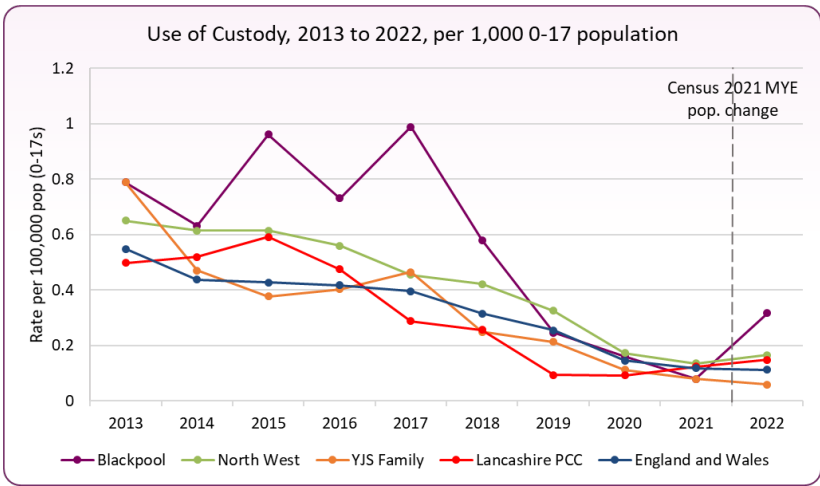
- As at June 2021 there were an estimated 140,954 people living in Blackpool
- An estimated 27,810 young people are aged under 18 (19.7% of the population), with 12,641 young people aged 10 to 17 (9% of the population)
- Blackpool is the most deprived local authority in England (IMD, 2019) with 41.3% of residents living in the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country
- An estimated 30.7% of children live in income-deprived families, compared to 17.1% nationally (IDACI, 2019)
- In 2021/22 7,980 school children (40.4%) were eligible for free school meals, compared to 22.5% nationally
- At March 2022 there were 609 looked after children in Blackpool at a rate of 218 per 10,000, the highest in the country
- 3,401 children had an episode of need at some point in 2021/22 at a rate of 1,168.3 per 10,000 (twice the national average of 587.7 per 10,000)

First Time Entrants and Custody 2022/23

Source: YJB YDS Reports



First Time Entrants	Jan-Dec 14	Jan-Dec 15	Jan-Dec 16	Jan-Dec 17	Jan-Dec 18	Jan-Dec 19	Jan-Dec 20	Jan-Dec 21	Jan-Dec 22
Blackpool	59	69	52	57	38	28	35	26	46
Lancashire PCC	480	433	331	282	272	201	200	162	203
% of Lancashire	12.3%	15.9%	15.7%	20.2%	14.0%	13.9%	17.5%	16.0%	22.7%



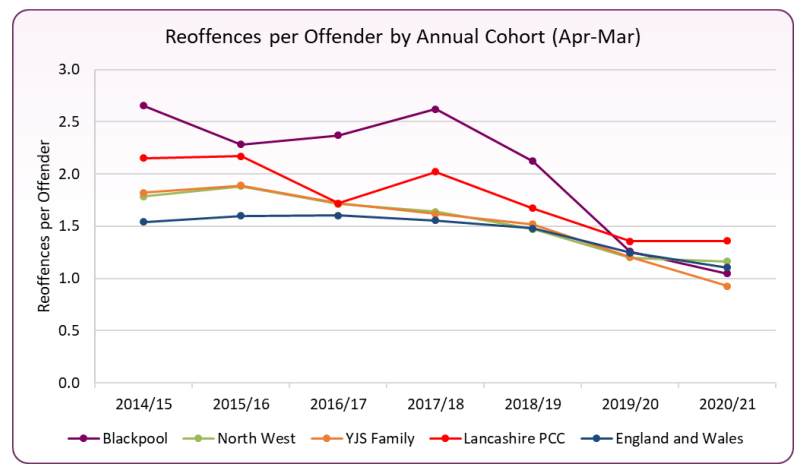
Reoffending 2022/23

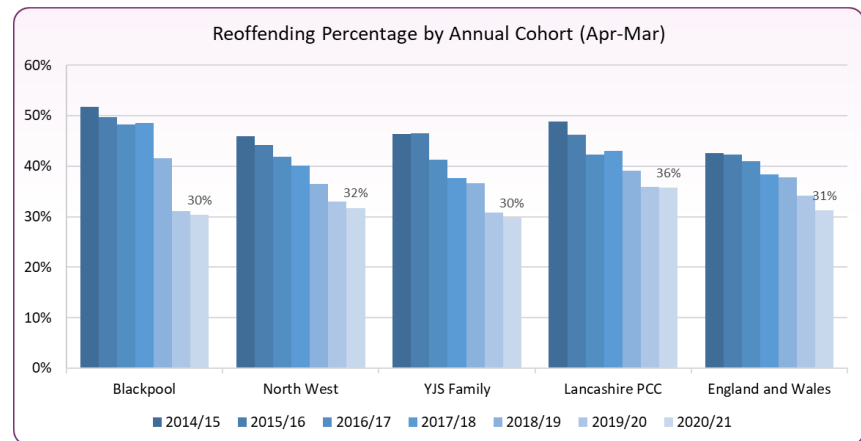
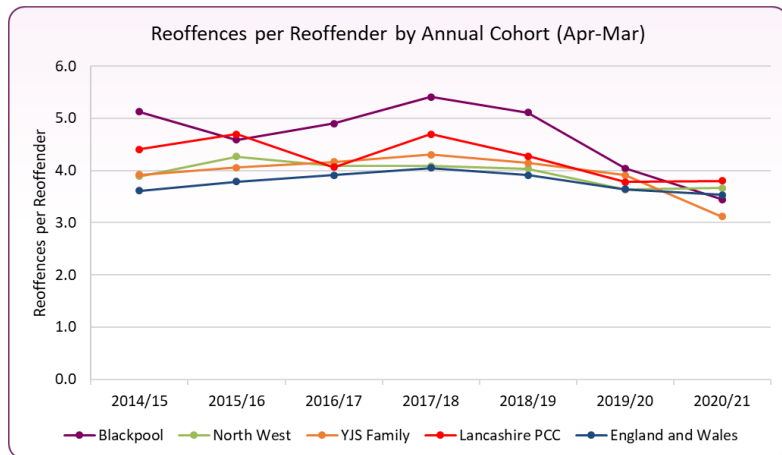
Source: YJB YDS Reports

Reoffending trends in Blackpool: Annual cohorts

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Yr Change
Number in Cohort	197	167	149	132	106	74	89	+20%
Reoffenders	102	83	72	64	44	23	27	+17%
Reoffences	523	381	353	346	225	93	93	0%
Reoffences per Reoffender	5.1	4.6	4.9	5.4	5.1	4.0	3.4	-15%
Reoffences per Offender	2.7	2.3	2.4	2.6	2.1	1.3	1.0	-17%
Percentage Reoffending	51.8%	49.7%	48.3%	48.5%	41.5%	31.1%	30.3%	-0.7%

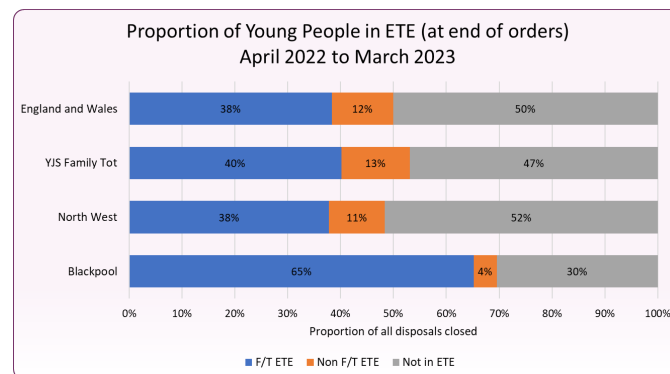
- Numbers of reoffenders from the 2020/21 cohort slightly up from previous year, but lower than pre 2019/20 levels
- Number of reoffences same as 2019/20 cohort, with rate of reoffences per offender and reoffences per reoffender slightly lower. These are both similar to national levels.
- 30.3% of 2020/21 cohort reoffended, the lowest proportion in recent history



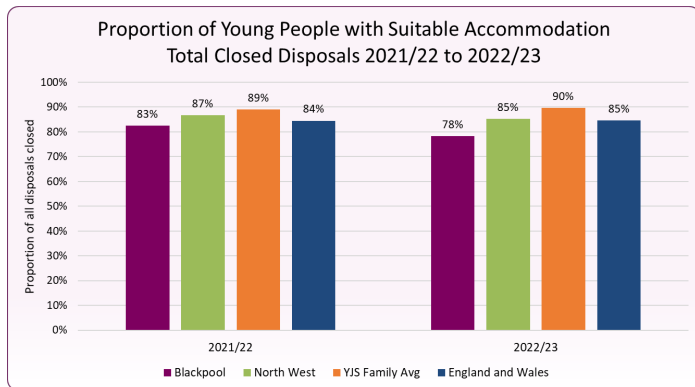


Education, Training & Employment and Accommodation

Source: YJD YDS reports



- In 2022/23 15 out of 23 young people (65.2%) were in full-time education, training or employment at the end of referral orders, YROs or on DTO license
- All school age children were in full-time ETE at this point



- In 2022/2023 (Apr-Mar) 18 out of 23 disposals closed were with suitable accommodation (78.3%), compared to 33 out of 40 (82.5%) in 2021/22

2022/23 AssetPlus Assessments

The Basics

- 108 children received an AssetPlus assessment by Blackpool YJS in the last year
 - 10 cases were completed by other YJS and transferred into Blackpool, with two of these receiving an assessment locally in 2022/23
- This compares to 104 assessments in 2021/22 (plus 13 transferred in)
- 84% were male (88% in 2021/22) – vastly disproportionate to overall population, but similar to national YJS pattern (86% male)
- 89% identified as White British (88% in 2021/22) – similar to Blackpool population (90.4%)
 - 8% were of mixed ethnicity / heritage
- Average age at completion of assessment = 15.6 (16.3 in 2021/22)

Children's Social Care Involvement

- 20% of assessed young people had been in care at some point, compared to 25% in 2021/22
- 13% (n=14) are currently subject to a care order, accommodated by voluntary agreement, remanded to LA accommodation and / or remanded to youth detention
- 35% have been subject to a Child Protection Plan at some point (50% in 2021/22)
- 49% have been identified as a Child in Need at some point (59% in 2021/22)
- 32% had parental care and supervision concerns, 22% with parent mental health concerns
- 34% had family behaviour or situational concerns (44% in 2021), and 40% had assessed concerns around significant relationships

2022/23	Child in Need		CP Plan		CiN or CP Plan	
	no	%	no	%	no	%
Currently	14	13%	<5	--	14	13%
Previously	39	36%	36	33%	44	41%
Never	54	50%	67	62%	48	44%
Yet to Clarify	<5	--	<5	--	<5	--
Total	108		108		108	

Family and Relationships

- 32% had assessed parental care and supervision concerns (same as 2021/22)
 - 22% were known to have parent / carer mental health concerns (21% in 2021/22)
 - 12% were known to have parental / carer alcohol concerns (15% in 2021/22)
- 34% had assessed family behaviour or situational concerns (44% in 2021/22)
 - 21% were known to have witnessed domestic violence or abuse (23% in 2021/22)
 - 12% had identified concerns regarding care or supervision (16% in 2021/22)
 - 9% were known to experienced parent / carer violence or abuse
- 40% had assessed concerns around significant relationships (22% in 2021/22, 50% in 2020/21)
 - 20% had loss of contact with significant people (25% in 2021/22)
 - 17% had reported aggression / violence by the young person to family members (13% in 2021/22)
 - 16% had experience of loss / bereavement (16% in 2021/22)
 - 16% reported offending by family members (15% in 2021/22)

Criminal & Sexual Exploitation, and Safety Concerns

- 32% (n=37) of young people were considered to be vulnerable to criminal exploitation – 31 males and 6 females. This is down from 40% (n=47) in 2021/22.
- 16% (n=18), all males, were considered to be involved, at risk of being involved or previously involved in County Lines activity
- 10% were considered at risk of sexual exploitation, 7 males and 5 females (28% of all females assessed in 2022/23). This is an overall reduction from 15% in 2021/22 and 20% in 2020/21.
- 27% (n=29) of young people were assessed as having high or very high overall safety wellbeing concerns (25% in 2021/22), with 61% of young people having some safety concerns (67% in 2021/22)
- 57% (n=36) young people evidenced substance misuse at assessment (61% in 2021/22)

Offending History and Likelihood to Reoffend

- 27% had previous convictions – 41% in 2021/22 and 50% in 2020/21
 - For those with previous convictions, the average number was 2.3, most commonly only one previous offence
 - Average age at first conviction of 15.5 (15.3 in 2021/22)
 - Average age at time of sentence of 14.5 (15.2 in 2021/22)
 - Average age at first sanction was 14.6 (same as 2021/22)
- There is evidence in 40% of cases that the young person may commit offences
- 9% have a high reoffending likelihood (13% in 2021/22) and 38% have a medium likelihood (32% in 2021/22)
- 13% of young people have a high or very high risk of serious harm judgement (18% in 2021/22)

Mental and Physical Health

- 69% of assessed cases have one or more mental health issue (73% in 2021/22), and for 36% this is identified as a risk or concern (38% in 2021/22)
 - 14% have a formally diagnosed mental health condition
 - 48% have had contact with mental health services
 - 13% receive prescribed medication
 - 41% suffer from anxiety, stress or irritability
 - 27% have a history of self-harm
 - 15% have previously attempted suicide
 - 12% have current thoughts of self-harm or suicide
- 18% have a diagnosed physical health condition (12% in 2021/22)
- There is evidence of a substance misuse concern in 65% of assessments (70% in 2021/22)
- 48% are identified as putting their health at risk by their own behaviour

Special Education Needs and Communication Issues

- 60% of assessed cases determine that the young person has SEND or communication concerns (77% in 2021/22)
 - 32% young people have family member-expressed concerns about social communication skills
 - 24% have professional or family member-expressed concerns about learning needs
 - 5% have been diagnosed with social communication difficulties
- Half of those assessed had difficulty thinking about thoughts a feelings of others, with 36% having difficulty showing emotions
- 40% had difficulty explaining things
- 24% had problems reading or writing
- 12% need support in daily living skills (9% in 2021/22)

Accommodation

- 79% (n=85) were living at home at time of assessment (73% in 2021/22)
- 13% were living in residential units (LA, Private or Secure)
- Several young people were homeless or living with friends
- 23% (n=24) of those with assessments completed have concerns about current accommodation
- Of those with accommodation concerns:
 - 63% were living at home
 - 21% were in residential units

Education, Training and Employment (ETE)

- 71% (n=82) of the cohort had education, training or employment concerns at the point of assessment (up from 64% in 2021/22 and 46% in 2020/21)
- 44% (n=51) had complex ETE histories, with multiple moves, disruptions and / or previous exclusions (36% in 2021/22 and 17% in 2020/21)
- 24% had concerns about undiagnosed need or difficulties (16% in 2021/22)
- Of those with any SEN identified at assessment, 84% (n=48) had education, training and employment concerns at the point of assessment

Offences and Outcomes 2022/23

Offences and Offenders 2022/23

- Total offences (n=335) in 2022/23 up by 75% on 2021/22
- Total (suspected or proven) offenders (n=108) up 29% on 2021/21
- Proven offences (n=180) up 94%, but fewer than 2020/21
 - However, 64 offences reported with no outcome at present
- In 2021/22 Blackpool's rate of proven offences was 73.6 per 10,000 10-17 population (compared to 58.4 in England and Wales). For 2022/23 it is currently 142.4 per 10,000 (England & Wales rate not yet available).
- Proven offenders (n=70) up 40% on 2022/23, but fewer than in 2020/21
- Of 108 suspected offenders, 7 offenders are associated with a third of offences (n=112)
- Similarly, of 70 proven offenders, 5 offenders are responsible for a third of offences (n=59) and three are responsible for almost a quarter (n=44)

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Number of Offences	276	191	335
No of suspected offenders	92	84	108
Proven offences	195	93	180
No of offenders - proven offences	75	50	70

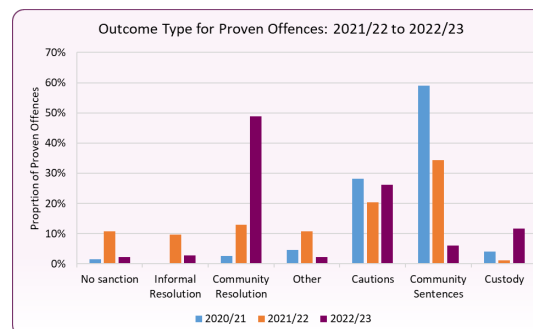
Proven Offences by Type

Proven Offences by Type (2022/23 data as at June 2023)	2022/23		2021/22	2021/22 to	England and Wales
	n	%	%	2022/23 % change	% (2021/22)
Burglary	16	9%	8%	+1%	3%
Other	23	13%	9%	+4%	9%
<i>Vehicle Theft</i>	14	8%	3%	+5%	
<i>Other (incl Breach of Bail and 'other')</i>	9	5%	5%	0%	
Breach of Statutory order	<5	--	13%	--	2%
Criminal Damage	22	12%	8%	+5%	9%
Drugs	10	6%	5%	+0%	10%
Motoring offences	14	8%	3%	+5%	12%
Public order	12	7%	11%	-4%	6%
Robbery	<5	--	2%	--	6%
Sexual offences	<5	--	5%	--	3%
Theft and handling Stolen Goods	13	7%	1%	+6%	7%
Violence against the person	63	35%	35%	-0%	35%
Total	180				

Violent Offences Cohort 2022/23

- 63 Proven offences of violence
- 42 offenders
 - 9 offenders with multiple proven violent offences
 - 23 offenders with multiple offences including violent offences
- Average age = 15.2 (slightly lower than overall offending cohort)
- A higher proportion of female offenders than overall cohort, by still predominantly male (79% male, 21% female)
- 86% are White British
- 14% are known to be care experienced
- 26% are previously known to have had CP plans (no current)
- 40% are known to have been, or are currently, Children in Need

Outcomes of Proven Offences by Offence Type



Numbers of Offences*	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
No sanction	<5	10	<5
Informal Resolution	<5	<10	<10
Community Resolution	<10	12	88
Other	<10	10	<5
Cautions	55	19	47
Community Sentences	115	32	11
Custody	<10	<5	21
Total	195	93	180

*previous years based on historical annual reporting. Subsequent completed / proven offences may lead to variation (increase) in figures. Exact values redacted. Values <10 are those ranging between 5 and 9

Conclusions

- Youth offending cohort similar in gender to national cohort (84% male), and generally reflective of local ethnicity demographics (89% White British)
- Increases in total offences, proven offences and offenders with proven offences compared to previous year, though similar to 2020/21 levels
 - Some recent increases in violent offences and possession of knives / offensive weapons
- Possible contributory factors include recording changes / improvements (e.g. in relation to community resolutions) and impact of Covid-19 (reduced activity, recording and processing lags etc.), though increases remain cause for concern
- Subsequent rise in number and rate of first time entrants, moving towards pre-2018 levels
- Number / rate of custodial sentences similarly rising, though numerically small.
- Annual reoffending rates in line with, or better than, national levels, though recent quarterly rates show slight upturn due to reoffences by a relatively small number of offenders.
- Offence types remain broadly in line with national patterns in term of proportion, with some (relatively small) figures sensitive to individual offending profiles.
- Outcomes shows considerable shift away from community sentences towards community resolutions

