

HMIP inspection of Wiltshire Youth Justice Service

Purpose of report

- 1. To appraise the Children’s Select Committee of the outcome and findings of His Majesty’s Inspection Probation Wiltshire Youth Justice Service (YJS) and points of note.

Background

- 2. In February 2024, HMIP conducted an inspection of Wiltshire Youth Justice Service. A total of 42 cases were inspected across 3 domains, Court disposals (16 cases) Out of Court disposals (24 cases) and Resettlement (2 cases) and 38 interviews were undertaken with case managers. Surveys were undertaken with children and families, YJS staff and volunteers. Throughout the week of fieldwork, there were focus groups and individual interviews that involved strategic and operational managers, partner agencies, frontline staff, and members of the YJS executive board.

Main considerations for the committee

- 3. The inspection (report published 13th May 2024, see appendix) judged the overall effectiveness of our services to be Good. The breakdown of judgements is as follows:

| Judgement | Grade |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Overall rating | Good |
| Organisational Delivery | Good |
| Court Disposals | Requires Improvement |
| Out of Court disposals | Good |
| Resettlement | Outstanding |

Key highlights from the findings are as follows:

- Wiltshire YJS seeks to place children at the centre of its work to meet their needs, promote pro-social identities, and help them to not reoffend.
- Individualised interventions, supported by a trauma-informed approach, ensure that children’s diversity needs are understood well, and that measures are put in place to help them flourish.
- The YJS executive management board is made up of highly dedicated members, who work well to advocate for YJS children in their own organisations.

- The board chair is passionate, she holds board members to account, recognises what each member brings, and makes appropriate challenge when needed.
 - Provision of services to support children is broad and there is a range of services available for children.
 - Staff and volunteers are, without doubt, the organisation's most valuable assets.
 - They are optimistic and nurture a 'can do' attitude with children. They are excellent ambassadors for the children they support.
 - The active listening to the voices of children and their parents or carers is impressive. Children frequently attend the executive board to provide testimonies of their experience of the YJS.
4. Three areas for improvement were identified which are now the focus of a service action plan. These are:
- To improve the quality of assessment and planning work to keep children safe and manage the risk of harm they present to others.
 - Ensure that management oversight is consistently effective in addressing and supporting case managers practice, so that practitioners are clear about what they need to improve and embed this within their practice.
 - Ensure that robust contingency plans are in place for all children that address their safety and wellbeing, and risk of harm to others.
5. The Youth Justice Service leadership are proud of this achievement, acknowledging, as HMIP did that during 2023, the YJS underwent a significant management team restructure which by nature, resulted in staffing changes.
6. Achieving a judgement of Good was only possible with the dedication, support, and care that our staff and volunteers give to some of the most vulnerable children and families in Wiltshire, we are very proud and grateful to them.
7. The team are both fully aware of and engaged in, the areas for development with targeted training and quality assurance activity already identified. This is outlined in detail in the action plan which was submitted to HMIP in May. The annual YJS business plan 2024/25 will be updated to reflect these areas of focus and presented back to Committee at a future date.

Conclusion

8. The Committee is informed of the outcome of the inspection of Wiltshire Youth Justice Service.
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Appendices

1. Link to published HMIP report:

[An inspection of youth justice services in Wiltshire \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)

2. Wiltshire YJS Action plan



Wiltshire YJS Action
plan 24-25.docx